

**Women's Books? Gendered Piety and Patronage in Late Medieval Bohemian Illuminated  
Codices**

by

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University of Pittsburgh, 2019

The manuscripts forming the core of this dissertation's four case studies are some of the most artistically ambitious and theologically rich books to emerge from fourteenth-century Bohemia—and the European Middle Ages broadly—but they have not yet been considered together as an art historical phenomenon. Made at a moment when aristocratic women were playing a new role as divine matriarchs, these complicated and dynamic manuscripts open new avenues of inquiry into the intersection of later medieval gender and patronage. The pictorial programs of these manuscripts visualize the agency of their patrons, owners, and subjects in challenging and expansive ways and enrich our understanding of late medieval devotional practice and art production in the broadest terms.

Each of the four case studies centers on a group of objects, people, and geographies that have often been pushed to the periphery of medieval manuscript studies, building upon pivotal investigations first put forward in the 1980s and 90s by a new wave of inquiry into the visual culture of late medieval women's mysticism. The first case-study chapter considers the richly illustrated manuscripts of Queen Elizabeth Richeza and recuperates Richeza's role as an influential art patron through a close look at twelve vibrant donor portraits found within her manuscript corpus. The *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* is the focus of the second case study, which unpacks the manuscript's illustrated dedicatory page and the ways it subverts expectations about male–female monastic relationships and traditional scholarly assumptions about Kunigunde's

interventions in the manufacture and use of her *Passional*. The third case study, which focuses on the *Hedwig Codex*, investigates why male patrons commissioned works of art for and about women. The fourth and final case study considers the so-called *Krumlov Picture-Codex*—a manuscript whose origins are contested in modern scholarship—and explores the interpretive potential of assigning both a female patron and user to the manuscript. Together, these case studies demonstrate that works of art ostensibly made for or about women were used by both women and men to assert political ambitions, establish hereditary power, and claim a place in heaven.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

The following abbreviations have been used for commonly cited institutions in shelf-marks throughout:

JPGM: J. Paul Getty Museum

KBR: Knihovna benediktinů v Rajhradě

MZAB: Moravský zemský archive v Brně

NKČR: Národní knihovna České republiky

ÖNB: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek



## Preface

A number of granting bodies supported my research and writing. I'd like to acknowledge the Wilkinson Prize for funding my first solo research trip to Germany and the Czech Republic, where I learned the lay of the land; the Czechoslovak Nationality Room for an extended stay in the Czech Republic to study the early literature on the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*; the J. Paul Getty Trust for funding travel to Austria and the Czech Republic to study the Richeza manuscript corpus; and numerous travel and research grants from the University of Pittsburgh to study the *Hedwig Codex* in Los Angeles and to attend exhibitions and conferences in the United States and abroad.

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## 1.0 Introduction

The art of late medieval Bohemia was a substantial force in the development of European devotional visual culture. In the second half of the fourteenth century, Prague was the seat of the Holy Roman Empire and the center of Charles IV's glittering art patronage. Due to political circumstances affecting Central and Eastern Europe throughout the twentieth century, though, much of the works of art created during this period have yet to receive the sorts of careful analyses in English-language scholarship that one might expect for comparably significant French, English, or German objects. The manuscripts made during the Gothic period in Bohemia offer a particularly exciting opportunity to consider this region anew because of the complex ways that these books registered the presence of the people who made and used them. Scribal and illustrative features clearly announce such information, and the visibility and portability of codices meant that they directly influenced artistic developments in Bohemia and beyond.

Knowledge of this exciting corpus of medieval art began to trickle into North American academic discourse in the 1990s, as a concurrent thread of feminist scholarship was looking closely at works of art made by, for, and about medieval women. Illuminated manuscripts, in particular, have proven fruitful case studies in this endeavor: they often include scribal indications of maker, owner, and date of manufacture, allowing them to be directly tied to an individual, family, or convent. The most lavish examples often contain portraits of their donors and readers, allowing scholars unique glimpses at how medieval people interacted with their art objects. While the early feminist literature acknowledged that Bohemian examples of women's devotional manuscripts had

much to offer with regard to the study of patronage, gender, and late medieval devotional practice, there have been few in-depth studies. This project shows that the study of these manuscripts broadens contemporary understanding of how people have historically negotiated their power and privilege through works of art and especially how women—long assumed powerless in this regard—have used works of art to both confirm and subvert personal and institutional identities.

### **1.1 Bohemia, Medieval and Modern**

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, medieval Bohemian art gained visibility and accessibility, invigorating scholarship on as yet unknown or understudied objects. Displaced and obscured by centuries of cultural and political developments, from the Hussite Revolution to the aftermath of World War II, medieval Bohemian manuscripts were, until recently, largely absent from Western art historical narratives. The study of Gothic art in particular has focused primarily on artistic developments in Paris following the illustrious reign of the French King Louis IX (1214–1270). This emphasis on Paris has naturally skewed the geography of late medieval art to the west, underestimating, for instance, the glittering art patronage that emerged from the court of Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV (1316–1378) in Prague. It is only since the turn of this century, with landmark publications like *Magister Theodoricus, Court Painter to Charles IV* (1998) and *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia* (2005), that English-language scholarship has truly embraced Prague as a center of artistic production rivaling Paris's reputation in this period. Prague's evolving status has been a boon to the study of Central European art, but the focus on urban centers has often neglected smaller sites that were also producing significant works of art outside of the major cities. This dissertation looks to the patronage of aristocratic elites in Bohemia—an area that

includes Prague but also smaller towns like Český Krumlov and Hradec Králové—as an answer to an older model which assumes all major monuments for aristocratic patrons emerged from cities in the Middle Ages.

This older model also assumes that aristocratic men were at the center of the most impressive and significant monuments, but a great body of scholarship from the last four decades or so has proven that women also shaped their worlds and mobilized significant artistic developments through their patronage.<sup>1</sup> This seems to have been especially true in Bohemia in the fourteenth century, a time when shifting power structures meant that aristocratic men and women were commissioning great works of art to assert their right to rule on earth and secure an eternal place in heaven. The period in Bohemian history that this dissertation concentrates on saw great political shifts: the end of the centuries-long rule of the Přemyslid dynasty and the introduction of foreign Luxembourg line. Women were pivotal players in this dynamic political situation; they offered crucial access to their inherited power through marriage and accumulated great wealth and assets in the process.

A group of fourteenth-century Bohemian devotional books that engage these issues orbiting patronage, gender, and agency in dynamic ways will form the core of this project: the collected manuscripts of Queen Elizabeth Richeza (ÖNB, Cods. 1835, 1813, 1774, 417, 1772 & 1773; KBR, R 355, R 600; MZAB, Ms F M 7); the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* (ÖNB, Cod. 370); the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* (NKČR, MS XIV. A. 17); and the *Hedwig Codex* (JPGM, MS

<sup>1</sup> For an essential (and relatively recent) primer on the many shapes women's patronage took throughout the long Middle Ages, see the collection essays of Therese Martin, ed., *Reassessing the Roles of Women as 'Makers' of Medieval Art and Architecture* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

Ludwig XI 7). These manuscripts were made for a group of genealogically and spiritually interrelated women and men who bore witness to the rapid evolution of the Bohemian lands from a kingdom to the seat of the Holy Roman Empire in the fourteenth century. They were made at a moment when aristocratic women were acquiring newfound social power through their devotional practice, and the pictorial programs of the manuscripts that they made and used indeed present this agency in novel ways. The manuscripts at the core of this dissertation were all made at this resoundingly rich moment in the history of Bohemian art and reflect their owners' status as devotional and political agents. These books envision the identities of their patrons through their complicated and dynamic pictorial programs, and present an opportunity to engage in the ongoing art historical questions of gender and patronage through an assemblage of codices that have not, as yet, been considered together.

Behind the Iron Curtain for most of the twentieth century, and with its foundational Czech literature largely inaccessible to many North American scholars, Bohemian art has yet to generate the same sorts of conversations as French, English, and German art, and has by and large been excluded from more theoretical considerations of women, art, and patronage in the later Middle Ages. There are tensions between the realities and restrictions of our modern geographies and those of the later Middle Ages. In the fourteenth century, the Bohemian lands were thoroughly connected to Western Europe, and the connections between Prague, Paris, London, and the towns in between were far more active and reciprocal than commonly assumed.<sup>2</sup> In the last two decades,

<sup>2</sup> For instance, Bonne of Luxembourg (1315–1349), Charles IV's sister, and Anne of Bohemia (1366–1394), Charles IV's daughter, were married to King John II of France (1319–1364) and King Richard II of England (1367–1400), respectively. In modern scholarship, their Bohemian origin is discussed in terms of "other" while their role as patron in the context of their adopted homes in France and England is studied in much detail. John of Luxembourg,

medieval Prague has formed a part (if still a peripheral one) of English-language art historical considerations of Central Europe, as the blockbuster show *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia* (2005) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art attests.<sup>3</sup> The exhibition, which borrowed extensively from Central European collections, certainly showcased Prague as a thriving cultural center with its own stylistic idioms. The curators placed a great deal of emphasis on the sheer luxury of the objects, on the development of the so-called Beautiful Style, and on Charles IV's penchant for intricately wrought sacred objects. A narrative of stylistic evolution emerges with Charles IV at its center.

With his hereditary and political ties to thriving arts hubs in France and Italy, Charles IV serves as a vector for the diffusion of international sensibilities, especially in painting and sculpture. His patronage of large public works in Prague (such as Saint Vitus Cathedral and the Charles Bridge) and Nuremberg as well as countless acts patronage of private and semi-private works have been credited with shifting the artistic landscape of the late Middle Ages eastward, at least for a time. The styles that he favored were decidedly international—resonances with and borrowings from French court painting, English vaulting techniques, Italian stone- and metalwork, and Byzantine icons, for example, are readily apparent. The works created under Charles IV were, perhaps because of this exuberant internationalism, also uniquely Bohemian, making late medieval Bohemian art idiomatic and easily identifiable.

Charles IV's influence as Holy Roman Emperor and great patron of the arts cannot be denied, but because he and the capital city of Prague have so often been placed at the center

the patriarch of the family, was born and educated in Paris. He became King of Bohemia through his marriage to Elizabeth of Bohemia.

<sup>3</sup> *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia 1347–1437*, edited by Barbara Drake Boehm and Jiří Fajt, Exhibition Catalogue (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, c. 2005).

of all discussions of Bohemian court art, more nuanced investigations of how patronage shaped art production in fourteenth-century Bohemia have been neglected. There has been a tendency to situate all of late-medieval Bohemia's art objects in relation to Charles IV's imperial influence or around the larger influence of the Luxembourg Dynasty.<sup>4</sup> This engenders more interest in mapping genealogies of style than in providing an account of the diverse ways that individuals shaped works of art through their patronage. The manuscripts explored in this dissertation do not always fit neatly within this supposed evolution of an imperial Bohemian style. The *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, for instance, although very likely commissioned by Charles IV's third wife, Anna Svídnická, did not appear in the Metropolitan catalog, and it is rarely mentioned in other studies of the court arts of imperial Bohemia. Stylistically, the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* does not conform to the late fourteenth-century Bohemian court style, and questions as to its state of completion remain open. When these devotional manuscripts are mentioned in larger studies of Bohemian art, it is often the images that most closely follow an international style that are selected for study. The donor portrait from the *Hedwig Codex* (see fig. 4.1), for instance, appears again and again in surveys of Gothic art because it resonates so clearly in both content and style with (especially French) International Gothic contemporaries. The codex's remaining eighty-plus illuminations, however, are largely ignored.

<sup>4</sup> See especially, *Kunst als Herrschaftsinstrument: Böhmen und das heilige römische Reich unter den Luxemburgern im Europäischen Kontext*, edited by Jiří Fajt and Andrea Langer (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009), which organizes all of its articles around the rise and influence of the Luxembourgs in the development of an international style in Bohemia.



## 1.2 Gendering Medieval Devotion and Patronage

Although the manuscripts in question in this dissertation often fall both geographically and stylistically outside of established art historical conversations, they can and ought to be engaged with the flourishing body of scholarship surrounding medieval women, art objects, and mystic devotion. Scholarship on medieval spirituality came into focus at the intersection of the history of devotion and feminist methodologies in the early 1980s, thanks in large part to Caroline Walker Bynum's paradigm-shifting work *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*.<sup>5</sup> This book reconsidered somatic religious experience—which had previously been gendered feminine and placed at the bottom of the hierarchy of spiritual understanding—as an essential lens through which to view medieval spiritual experience as a whole, for both women and men. Scholarship on devotional art has been particularly focused on how matter gave way to spiritual vision in the Middle Ages, especially in regard to women's private and mystic devotion.<sup>6</sup> By the fourteenth century, it was often through

<sup>5</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> For more general studies of art and visionary experience, see especially, Sixten Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions: Notes on the Place of Art in Late Medieval Private Piety," *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 6th ser., 73 (1969): 159–70; and Suzannah Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (Basingstoke, England, 2002). For studies relating particularly to art objects and women's visionary experience, see especially, Jeryldene M. Wood, *Women, Art, and Spirituality: The Poor Clares of Early Modern Italy* (New York, 1996); and Jeffrey Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998). And for an indispensable overview of medieval theories of spiritual vision, see Barbara Newman, "What Did It Mean to Say 'I Saw'? The Clash between Theory and Practice in Medieval Visionary Culture," *Speculum* 80, no. 1 (2005): 1–43.

portraiture in personal devotional manuscripts that women and men found their way into mystical devotional experience. In her study of owner portraits in late medieval France and England, Alexa Sand has shown how these portraits created a self-reflexive mode of viewing at a time when lay spirituality was on the rise, allowing the viewer to quite literally become a part of the mystical scene playing out on the page.<sup>7</sup> The very same moment that Sand mines in her study of France and England saw some of the most daring and novel manuscripts produced for female patrons in Bohemia. All but one of the manuscripts in question in this dissertation contain securely identifiable donor portraits, and they instantiate the phenomenon described by Sand in surprising and expansive ways.

Because of women's special relationship to visionary religious experience in the Middle Ages, one arm of contemporary art historical scholarship has focused on art objects made and used exclusively by women. From these explicitly gendered studies, there emerges a spirituality of the feminine, one whose focus is on the material world, and especially the (female) body.<sup>8</sup> This dissertation questions the utility of focusing exclusively on women's experience, because even though the manuscripts in question foreground women's spirituality, they were made and used by

<sup>7</sup> Alexa Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation in Late Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). See also, Jeffrey Hamburger, *The Rothschild Canticles: Art and Mysticism in Flanders and the Rhineland circa 1300* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

<sup>8</sup> As others have noted, "gender" has become shorthand for "women" in medieval studies. See Brigitte Kurmann-Schwarz, "Gender and Medieval Art," in Conrad Rudolph, ed., *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, 2nd ed., 195–220 (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2019); and Pamela Sheingorn, "Gender in art," in Margaret Schaus, ed., *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*, 313 (New York: Routledge, 2006)

both men and women. Rather than reflecting the realm of women's spirituality in isolation, this dissertation interprets the devotional manuscripts made for Bohemian women as objects with fluid appeal to both genders, varied in their intended audiences but united in reflecting a very particular set of aristocratic identities, values, and aspirations.<sup>9</sup>

The intersection of feminism and art history also took on a revisionist tone in the 1980s as entire classes of objects that had once been ignored were incorporated into the canon.<sup>10</sup> Scholarship concerning late medieval women and their patterns of manuscript ownership became especially prominent throughout the 1980s. Susan Groag Bell, in her 1982 article "Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture," was one of the first to tackle the as yet unaddressed question of how patterns in lay women's book ownership, especially in France and England, transformed the larger picture of religious writing in the vernacular and the spread of affective piety.<sup>11</sup> Her article describes in rich detail the ways that later medieval women bought and used books, and is an indispensable cache of knowledge on the circumstances of lay book production and ownership broadly speaking.

<sup>9</sup> In his posthumously published monograph on the *Psalter of Saint Louis*, Harvey Stahl considers the figure of Saint Louis as patron and questions the extent the king himself affected the iconography and to what extent a more general "court school" dictated his manuscript's appearance. See Harvey Stahl, *Picturing Kingship: History and Painting in the Psalter of Saint Louis* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> In a recent *Gesta* article, Caroline Bynum reflects on her first experience with the beguine cradle at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, in the 1960s, when it was described as an example of decorative metalwork and not, as it has now come to be appreciated, as a devotional object with deep material resonance for its medieval user/viewer. See, Caroline Walker Bynum, "Encounter: Holy Beds," *Gesta* 55, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 129–31.

<sup>11</sup> Susan Groag Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture," *Signs* 7, no. 4 (Summer, 1982): 742–68.

Bell, however, focuses on women's use exclusively—she emphasizes instances where women bequeathed manuscripts to other women, at the expense of instances of men giving books to women or vice versa. In singling out patronage, gift-giving, and bequests by and between women only, Bell implies that there is something unique about these instances. Indeed, her article is satisfying because she fleshes out as yet untold histories, situating women's book patronage within the larger picture of book culture. Nevertheless, it establishes women's patronage as fundamentally different—women patronized books that were to be used at home, in teaching their children or as a part of lay, affective piety, while men patronized books to be used in ecclesiastical and university settings. This gendered division ignores, for instance, the lay men who were also engaged in affective piety and the cloistered women who would have had access to, and indeed a hand in producing, theological and philosophical works.

Much of the scholarship on works of art made by or for women suggests, if only implicitly, that there is something *different* about women's patronage. This scholarship also tends to assume that the biographies of women manuscript donors and owners provide a window into understanding why their art objects look the way they do.<sup>12</sup> Madeline Caviness's "Patron or Matron? A Capetian Bride and a Vade Mecum for Her Marriage Bed" reads the iconography in the *Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux* as a mirror of Jeanne d'Evreux's (1310–1371) life at court in the

<sup>12</sup> For two relatively recent examples of the biographical approach to patronage studies, see, Jaroslav Folda, "Melisende of Jerusalem: Queen and Patron of Art and Architecture in the Crusader Kingdom," in Martin, ed. *Reassessing the Roles of Women as 'Makers,'* 429–78; and Martin, "The Art of a Reigning Queen as Dynastic Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain," *Speculum* 80. No. 4 (2005): 1134–71.

early fourteenth century.<sup>13</sup> Caviness describes the young queen's delicate political situation as the third wife of Charles IV of France and the Capetian line's last hope of producing a male heir. In order to restore honor to the French throne—Charles's previous wives had recently embroiled the court in scandal—Jeanne would have been encouraged to devote herself to private and public piety. Caviness argues that the *Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux*, and in particular the Annunciation scene featuring the portrait of Jeanne, literally put the young queen in her place, showing her that safety could be found kneeling at her prie-dieu in front of the Virgin in her private chapel (fig. 1.1). The grotesques and bawdy scenes in the margins, Caviness argues, would have reminded Jeanne of the temptations and impropriety that awaited her were she to turn away from her devotions.

Caviness's interpretation is both satisfying and problematic. On the one hand, it situates the manuscript's iconography within a very specific set of historical circumstance, one that we can be fairly convinced would have been known to Jeanne. On the other, the essay does not consider wider trends in manuscript illumination as a possible explanation for the nature of the marginal illuminations.<sup>14</sup> Caviness expanded on her interpretation of women's books in a later article,

<sup>13</sup> Madeline H. Caviness, "Patron or Matron? A Capetian Bride and a Vade Mecum for Her Marriage Bed," *Speculum* 68, no. 2 (1993): 333–62.

<sup>14</sup> Under Caviness's account, the beasties and grotesques in the margins are directed at Jeanne's gender—because she is a woman she is particularly susceptible to lewd and lascivious acts. But there are plenty of contemporary instances of bawdy marginalia in manuscripts made for men that would not permit a similar reading. For instance, the contemporaneous *Luttrell Psalter* (London, British Library, Add. MS 42130) was commissioned by an aristocratic man for his own use (and presumably the use of his family) and teems with beasties and grotesques that outperform anything found in Jeanne's Hours.

arguing that these manuscripts were not so much made *for* women as *against* them.<sup>15</sup> Like Bell, Caviness is looking at post-thirteenth-century books in England and France, and imagines a world stratified by gender. She ignores, however, the wider picture of manuscript use: that, for instance, Jeanne d'Evreux also owned the thirteenth-century *Psalter of Saint Louis* at this time, and it was one of her most prized manuscripts. This is to say that a book made for a man was used and beloved by a woman. Would Jeanne have approached this manuscript with the knowledge that her gender was different from that of its original owner (Louis IX), or would such considerations have been eclipsed by other aspects, such as the book's perceived antiquity and sanctity? And to what extent would Jeanne's book have been thought to have been individually tailored to her particular biographical circumstances, and to what extent are its singularities a mere symptom of its larger artistic milieu?

The manuscripts made for Bohemian women in the fourteenth century all reflect varied approaches to the construction of identity, each one to some extent filtering the biography of an individual woman through a unique set of artistic concerns. Each manuscript has a prominent woman at the core of its manufacture and use, either as patron, owner, or both. Instead of arguing that the patronage and use of medieval manuscripts by women was something "different" or "other," this dissertation explores the ways in which medieval gender roles and gendered expectations played out in aristocratic manuscripts. My project insists on a more inclusive consideration of the people who made and used these books by examining the manuscripts not

<sup>15</sup> Madeline H. Caviness, "Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons of Intercessors and Matrons?" in June Hall McCash, ed., *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, 105–154 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996).

only through their visual programs but also in the context of their provenances and the histories of the people and foundations who created and owned them. To this end, the manuscripts will be considered as whole objects. That is, while individual donor portraits will be highlighted in the study, they will be taken into consideration along with other pictorial and codicological aspects. These manuscripts, furthermore, will be contextualized not only in terms of the prominent women associated with their manufacture and use but also in terms of their expanded circle of patrons and readers and their more general artistic milieu. This methodology reveals how individual and institutional agency came to bear on image-making in the later Middle Ages and will necessitate a broader approach to definitions of donor and owner.

The first case study will focus on the manuscript patronage of Queen Elizabeth Richeza (1288–1335), queen consort of Bohemia prior to the rule of John of Luxembourg (1296–1346) and Elizabeth of Bohemia (1292–1330). Polish princess Richeza was married at a young age to Wenceslas II (1271–1305), King of Bohemia, who died only two years after their marriage and left Richeza large sums of money and land. Richeza was remarried shortly thereafter to Rudolph III of Austria and Styria (1281–1307) but found herself widowed and in possession of a healthy dowry once again when Rudolph died less than one year later. For the next decade, Richeza would find herself at odds with the new King of Bohemia, Roman outsider John of Luxembourg, who had married her stepdaughter, Elizabeth of Bohemia, in a political takeover that would fundamentally change the course of Bohemian history.

Though functionally stripped of her power, Richeza dedicated the rest of her life to the patronage of public and private works of art. Her ambitious patronage began with the foundation of the cathedral in her dowry town, Hradec Králové. She later dedicated herself to a cloistered life in Brno, where she financed the creation of a collection of devotional manuscripts, including a

psalter, a hymnal, a lectionary, and a gradual. Throughout these manuscripts, donor portraits of Richeza show her kneeling in prayer on the foliation of initial letters. Both her royalty and piety are shown, as her head is covered with a white veil and topped with a golden crown. These representations could be read with an eye toward Richeza's biography, using a method similar to that adopted by Caviness in her analysis of the donor figure of Jeanne d'Evreux. These donor portraits quite literally envision Richeza as a marginal figure—she is not, like Jeanne d'Evreux, neatly nestled within the historiated initial, but is rather perched on its edge, her feet dangling into the empty void of the margin. If, as Caviness argues, devotional manuscripts were made against women rather than for them, Richeza's donor portraits could be read as persistent reminders of her failures to secure power through marriage and her marginal status at court as enemy of the new king of Bohemia. Indeed, the modern historiography surrounding these manuscripts would seem to support Richeza's marginal status: she and her manuscripts are rarely mentioned as significant players in the development of Bohemian courtly arts. This chapter will recuperate Richeza's agency by looking again and more closely at her donor portraits, which in fact give sight to a great deal of power and privilege on her behalf among the community of nuns at Aula Sanctae Mariae in Brno.

After establishing a lesser-known figure in the field of late-medieval women's patronage, the second case-study chapter will turn to a comparatively better-studied figure, Kunigunde of Bohemia (1265–1321) and her richly illuminated *Passional*.<sup>16</sup> The *Passional* was apparently made for or at the behest of Kunigunde, abbess at Saint George's convent on the Hradčany in Prague in

<sup>16</sup> So-called *Passional*. It is actually a collection of various texts and sermons, the longest of which centers on the Passion of Christ. The technical term, however, is typically used to describe collections of saints' lives.



the first quarter of the fourteenth century, and is remarkable for the window it provides into late medieval mystical devotional practice, especially as it was enacted through religious women.

Kunigunde has been centered in the scholarly literature as the agentive force behind both the making and viewing of the manuscript. This chapter seeks to expand and reorient this focus on Kunigunde as maker/viewer to include the wider network of nuns and monks at Saint George. By considering visual evidence present in both the oft-reproduced dedicatory portrait and throughout the manuscript, a more complicated picture emerges of the identities of both patron and reader, revealing multiple modes of making and owning in the later Middle Ages.

The third case study focuses on the *Hedwig Codex*, an illustrated vita of the thirteenth-century local saint, Hedwig of Silesia. The manuscript was commissioned by Ludwig I of Liegnitz, Saint Hedwig's great-great-great-grandson, and features a prototypically Gothic donor portrait depicting Ludwig and his wife Agnes kneeling on either side of a monumental Saint Hedwig. The manuscript was donated by Ludwig at his death to the shrine of Saint Hedwig at the collegiate church in Brzeg (Silesia). Although the manuscript is ostensibly about Saint Hedwig—she is featured in the eighty-plus half-page scenes praying, performing miracles, and tending to the infirm—Ludwig's presence as a politically motivated man at the court of Charles IV is in fact quite prominent, especially in the initial pictorial cycle that serves to preface Hedwig's vita. This chapter explores how the pictorial program reveals Ludwig's political machinations, and the gendered tension that emerges between Ludwig as a man at court and Hedwig as a saintly woman.

The final case study considers the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, a so-called *biblia pauperum*, or heavily illustrated biblical manuscript, in the possession of the Minorite double monastery at Český Krumlov since the 1350s. Among the many narrative scenes, there are only two full-page illustrations: one, the manuscript's frontispiece, depicts the Virgin as the Woman of the

Apocalypse, and the other, a rendering found much later in the manuscript, shows an idiosyncratic representation of the seven deadly sins mapped onto a woman's body. These two images present a typology of femininity—virtuous on the one hand, given to venality and sin on the other. Unlike the other case studies in the dissertation, no single donor can be attributed to the manuscript, though individuals have been suggested in the modern scholarship. As such, there are also no donor portraits properly speaking within the manuscript's heavily rendered pages. This chapter posits one woman in particular, Anna Svídnická (1339–1362), third wife of Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, as the likely patron. This hypothesis is evidenced by historical circumstances and the iconographic prevalence of the Madonna as the Woman of the Apocalypse both in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* and in works of art made at the court of Charles IV during Anna's brief but significant tenure. With recourse to the complicated illustrative program, I explore how Anna's identity and agency are both registered and obscured by the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*.

At the core of all four chapters is the complicated question of patronage. By tracing the contours of patronage through the highly varied pictorial programs of these manuscripts, these case studies demonstrate the ways in which the books were shaped to reflect the biographies of the aristocratic women for whom they were made. Each study proves well the idea that no single model of patronage can be applied to all acts of medieval art-making and art-giving; even though all four studies narrow in on an ostensibly homogenous group of people and art objects, they each demonstrate a very different manifestation (both historically and visually) of medieval art donation.<sup>17</sup> Gender also forms a core critical issue for this study, as the selected manuscripts could

<sup>17</sup> See especially Holly Flora, "Patronage," *Studies in Iconography* 33 (2012): 207–218; and Jill Caskey, "Whodunnit? Patronage, the Canon, and the Problematics of Agency in Romanesque and Gothic Art," in Conrad

all be said, by dint of their female patrons and owners, to be specifically *women's books*, that is, somehow categorically different because of who made and owned them. Nevertheless, as this dissertation will show, all of these manuscripts could be said to move beyond the women at their core, reaching extended audiences of both women and men in spite of, or perhaps because of, the explicitly mystical feminine iconography. By focusing on Bohemian manuscripts, this dissertation also contributes to a fuller understanding of manuscript patronage in late medieval Europe. It shows that although these manuscripts have been understudied in modern scholarship, they have the power to redefine discussions of gender, patronage, and image-making.

Rudolph, ed., *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 193–212 (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2019).

## 2.0 The Marginal Queen: The Manuscript Corpus of Elizabeth Richeza

In the last two decades of her life, former Queen of Bohemia Elizabeth Richeza (1288–1335) commissioned a group of nine manuscripts to serve as a foundational gift to the newly established convent of Aula Sanctae Mariae in Brno. In all but one of the manuscripts,<sup>18</sup> the queen is shown on multiple occasions kneeling in prayer on the outside of or in roundels beneath various historiated initials (fig. 2.1a, b). Richeza's manuscripts offer the first instance in medieval Bohemia of an individual female donor who not only commissioned a group of manuscripts but also had her presence boldly registered in their pages. While the use of embedded donor portraits in devotional books was already well established in France and England in the thirteenth century, it is difficult to point to any one female donor who commissioned a comparable corpus. Richeza's pictorial presence, small but insistent, offers an enticing case study to scholars of medieval women's spirituality and royal patronage. Nevertheless, Richeza's donation and the donor portraits contained therein have received little attention with regard to medieval women's art patronage and the growing phenomenon in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries of donor portraits as personal devotional tools.

Born as Ryksa to King Przemysł II of Poland (1257–1296) and Ryksa of Sweden (ca. 1270–ca. 1292), the Polish princess would take the Czech name Eliška (Elizabeth) after her

<sup>18</sup> It is likely that there were in fact donor portraits in all of Richeza's manuscripts. Cod. 1773 (the first of a two-part lectionary from the ÖNB) is missing its initial quire. Andreas Fingernagel proposes that it was very likely this quire that contained a donor portrait. See Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I. (ca. 1250–1350)*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1997), 225.

marriage to Wenceslas II of Bohemia (1271–1305) in 1303.<sup>19</sup> Wenceslas died shortly after their marriage, and Richeza was left as a part of her dowry the Bohemian town of Hradec Králové. After the death of her second husband, Rudolph III of Austria and Styria (ca. 1282–1307), she provided for the foundation of the town's cathedral. By this time, John of Luxembourg (1296–1346) had seized the Bohemian crown, a power shift that would decidedly turn these historically contested lands toward the west, ushering in an age of cultural and political growth and, for a time, instability. The manuscript collection was made in the wake of King John's ascendancy, during a time when the relationship between Richeza as former queen and King John as political usurper was particularly fraught.

The donations left by the queen upon her death in 1335 reflect a significant record of art patronage. They include the cathedral in Hradec Králové,<sup>20</sup> the convent of Aula Sanctae Mariae and its impressive manuscript donation in Brno, and a number of other smaller gifts in both towns. With respect to the scale of her efforts, Elizabeth Richeza ought to be considered in the contemporary scholarship among the most illustrious art patrons of the twelfth through fifteenth centuries. The written records concerning Queen Melisende of Jerusalem (1105–1161), for

<sup>19</sup> I have chosen to use the Anglicized variant of the Polish *Ryksa*, Richeza. It is not clear to me that she was ever referred to by the modern Czech appellation *Eliška-Rejčka* during her lifetime or shortly thereafter, and the inscriptions found within her manuscripts refer to her as *Elyzabeth* (Latin) and *Elzbeten* (German). In order to differentiate her from the many royal Elizabeths, I refer to her here simply as Richeza. The German and French literature often refers to her as *Richenza*.

<sup>20</sup> Richeza initiated the work, but the cathedral would be built through a series of campaigns (and destructive fires) throughout the following centuries. Toward the end of the fourteenth century, another Bohemian queen, Elizabeth of Pomerania (ca. 1347–1393), was involved in the development of the cathedral.

instance, relay that she was a generous patron of civic and religious structures and objects, yet there is no single work of art that can be definitively attributed to her patronage. Her reputation as patron and owner of great works of art has prompted art historians to enthusiastically link one of the most luxurious manuscripts to emerge from Crusader Jerusalem directly to her, encouraging elaborate speculations about the personal and political motivations that undergirded the creation of the book.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the most illustrious late-medieval book patron is Jean, Duke of Berry, who commissioned around ten very beautiful works of manuscript illumination and famously ran out of money trying to complete them.<sup>22</sup> Richeza and Jean de Berry seem to have commissioned about the same number of books that they commissioned, and Richeza may even outstrip him with regard to the scale and focus of her patronage. But Jean is credited with ushering in the Northern Renaissance through his support and dissemination of the work of budding court artists.<sup>23</sup> The art

<sup>21</sup> See Jaroslav Folda, "Melisende of Jerusalem: Queen and Patron of Art and Architecture in the Crusader Kingdom," in Therese Martin, ed., *Reassessing the Role of Women as 'Makers' of Medieval Art and Architecture*, 429–78 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), who helpfully points to Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098–1187* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 119–328, as well as two more recent doctoral dissertations: Helen Gaudette, "The Piety, Power, and Patronage of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem's Queen Melisende" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 2005), and Deborah Gerish, "Shaping the Crown of Gold: Constructions of Royal Identity in the First Kingdom of Jerusalem" (PhD diss., University of California at Santa Barbara, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> See Timothy Bates Husband, ed., *The Art of Illumination: The Limbourg Brothers and the Belles Heures of Jean de France, Duc de Berry* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008).

<sup>23</sup> The foundational text on the Duke of Berry's patronage is Millard Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Late Fourteenth Century and the Patronage of the Duke* (London: Phaidon, 1967). For an insightful look at the various motivations behind the duke's manuscript patronage, see Michael Camille, "'For Our Devotion and Pleasure': The Sexual Objects of Jean, Duc de Berry," *Art History* 24.2 (2001): 169–94.

historical impact of Richeza's commissions have been characterized as insular and largely non-influential in the literature; most point to a clear French influence, but never posit any influence that the books may have asserted themselves.<sup>24</sup>

It is worth exploring here why, exactly, Richeza and her art patronage have been neglected, especially in the most recent scholarship.<sup>25</sup> There are a number of possible reasons why, some

<sup>24</sup> See especially Max Dvořák, "Die Illuminatoren des Johann von Neumarkt," in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kunstgeschichte*, 73–207 (Munich: R. Piper, 1929), who wants to see the translation of the French style to the Richeza corpus as a product of the movement of Cistercian monks across the continent; Albert Kutal, *Gothic Art in Bohemia and Moravia* (London: Hamlyn, 1971), 33, who also identifies Italian and East Anglian influence; and Erich Bachman, ed., *Gothic Art in Bohemia: Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting* (London: Phaidon, 1969), 7, who describes Bohemia as an "isolated and backward territory" (with art that reflected that status) prior to the intervention of the Luxembourgs toward the middle of the fourteenth century.

<sup>25</sup> The only recently published (i.e., in the last forty years) exhibition catalog to actively consider Richeza as an important patron of the arts in early fourteenth-century Bohemia is *A Royal Marriage: Elisabeth Přemyslid and John of Luxembourg ~ 1310; History Guide*, exh. cat., Miroslav Kindl and Pavla Státníková, eds. (Prague: Prague Gallery, 2010). It is unclear from the catalog, however, whether and to what extent examples from the Richeza corpus were included in this exhibition. Richeza was taken up a handful of times in the 1990s with reference to her patronage of the architectural structures of Aula Sanctae Mariae in Old Brno by Klara Benešová, "Das Zisterzienserinnenkloster von Altbrunn und die Persönlichkeit seiner Stifterin," in Jerzy Strzelczyk, ed., *Cystersi w kulturze średniowiecznej Europy*, 83–100 (Poznan: UAM, 1992); and Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 62–64, who describes Aula Sanctae Mariae as "the most important monastic structure built in Bohemia during the first half of the fourteenth century." The only scholar to focus on Richeza's manuscript corpus in English is Charles E. Brewer, "Cantus Regine: The Liturgical Manuscripts of Queen Alžběta Rejčka," *Cantus Planus, International Musicological*

having to do with the queen's own historical circumstances, some with political situation of the twentieth century, and some with art history's own prejudices. This chapter explores these multiple historical marginalizations of Elizabeth Richeza and reorients her identity as a significant aristocratic patron. By looking closely at the manuscript collection that she commissioned in Brno, and especially at the donor portraits they contain, this chapter posits that the queen's patronage was a significant and environment-shaping endeavor in the Bohemian towns of Hradec Králové and Brno and identity-shaping for the former queen and her familiars. The books and buildings that Richeza donated provided a path to assert her agency and autonomy as an aristocratic ruler and to secure her space on earth and in heaven.

One of the most astonishing features of the queen's manuscripts is the clear and forceful inclusion of donor portraits. Her presence is asserted repeatedly both in illustrations—eleven portraits in total across the nine manuscripts—and inscriptions. In contemporary studies of French and English books donated or owned by women in the Middle Ages, the biography of the matron in question has tended to inflect the interpretation of the object heavily. The roughly contemporaneous *Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux* has received just such a biographical treatment numerous times.<sup>26</sup> Although Jeanne d'Evreux (1310–1371) has never been identified as the book's

*Society, Chant Study Meeting (7th, 1995: Sopron, Hungary)*, 123–37 (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1998), who considers the manuscripts not in terms of their artistic legacy but with regard to their musical notation.

<sup>26</sup> The *Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux, Queen of France*, ca. 1324–1328, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 54.1.2. See especially Madeline H. Caviness, "Patron or Matron? A Capetian Bride and a Vade Mecum for Her Marriage Bed," *Speculum* 68.2 (April 1993): 333–62; and Joan A. Holladay, "The Education of Jeanne d'Evreux: A Personal Piety and Dynastic Salvation in Her Book of Hours at the Cloisters," *Art History* 17.4 (December 1994): 585–611.



owner with absolute certainty,<sup>27</sup> the presence of a small crowned figure kneeling at her prie-dieu beneath the Annunciation scene on folio 16r, alongside positive description in the queen's registries, has solidified this assessment in the contemporary scholarship.<sup>28</sup> Such donor figures allow a certain interpretive richness—we can imagine the reflexive relationship an owner might have had with her book, that the owner saw herself and her act of devotion reflected back at her when she read. In the case of Jeanne d'Evreux's Hours, the unstable political circumstances and the queen's young age at the time of her marriage to Charles le Bel (1294–1328) have been brought to bear on the interpretation of the arrangement of donor portraits and marginalia, which have been posited as mechanisms for keeping the young queen in line.<sup>29</sup> Caviness describes how the main donor page in Jeanne d'Evreux's little book of hours inscribed her existence (see fig. 1.1). The figure of the queen is literally cloistered on the page by the initial D. Below her, a bawdy court

<sup>27</sup> Although references in her will to “un bien petit livret d'oraisons . . . que Pucelle enlumina” [a very small book of prayers illuminated by Pucelle] lend a great deal of credence to the assertion.

<sup>28</sup> This is the best known and most widely studied of the donor portraits in this manuscript, but one can also be found of the young queen on folio 102v within a miniature depicting a miracle of Saint Louis, her Capetian ancestor.

<sup>29</sup> Caviness, “Patron or Matron?”; and then echoed by Holladay, “The Education of Jeanne d'Evreux”; and Alexa Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation in Late Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). It has been proposed that Jeanne d'Evreux found herself with the weighty mission of carrying forth the flagging Capetian line in the face of Charles le Bel's two previous marriages that failed to produce a male heir (Charles was, coincidentally, previously married to Marie of Luxembourg, John of Luxembourg's sister. Marie was carrying a male heir when she and her unborn son died in a carriage accident). Jeanne was also apparently tasked with restoring the sullied reputation of the French court, which had fallen into scandal with the Tour de Nesle affair about a decade earlier. The semiotics of the marginalia are asserted to have functioned as a forceful education in courtly propriety and religious devotion.

game—known as hot cockles—plays out.<sup>30</sup> But the figure of the queen kneeling at her prie-dieu gazes steadfastly at her book, accessing the divine Annunciation scene unfolding just above. Caviness sees here very clear and deliberate messaging aimed at the young queen—that she should ignore the amorous distractions of court life by keeping steadfast in her daily devotions.

Whether these pictorial strategies were devised specifically with the queen’s biography in mind invites careful consideration. The same strategy—bringing the queen’s fraught biography into conversation with the pictorial mechanisms of her manuscripts—might productively be applied to the donor portraits in Richeza’s books. After all, like Jeanne, Richeza was a political pawn at the center of a succession controversy, and her marginal status seems to be literalized by the marginality of the donor portraits on her manuscripts’ pages (see fig. 2.1a). This chapter will show, however, that when such a treatment is applied to queen Richeza, her books, and the donor portraits they contain, an opposite picture emerges, one where the agency lies squarely in Richeza’s hands. It is not that Richeza’s books were used against her, as Caviness suggests was the case with Jeanne d’Evreux and other aristocratic women,<sup>31</sup> but rather that they could be mobilized on the queen’s behalf, securing her place on earth and in heaven.

<sup>30</sup> See Richard H. Randall Jr., “Frog in the Middle,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 16, no. 10 (1958): 269–75.

<sup>31</sup> Madeline H. Caviness, “Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons of Intercessors and Matrons?” in June Hall McCash, ed., *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, 105–154 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996).

## 2.1 The Historical Moment

The Luxembourgian era in fourteenth-century Bohemia is considered by many scholars to be a watershed moment in the development of an international, courtly style of art and for the debut of Prague as a cultural and economic center on the Western European political stage. A French outsider, John of Luxembourg came to power in Bohemia during a time of (and as a result of) a succession controversy and political unrest in the region. But to understand how John of Luxembourg came to rule Bohemia, we must first understand the power vacuum created there in the first decade of the fourteenth century. It is precisely in this power vacuum that the story of Elizabeth Richeza as queen of Bohemia comes to light.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Přemyslid dynasty, which had ruled Bohemia at that point for over four centuries, was facing a succession controversy. Wenceslas II (1271–1305), the penultimate king of the Přemyslid dynasty, needed to produce a male heir in order for his line to maintain its hold of power. After the death of Wenceslas II's first wife, Judith of Habsburg (1271–1297), the Přemyslid king married the young Elizabeth Richeza, princess of Poland, through whom he gained the much-contested Polish crown. The marriage between Wenceslas II and Richeza lasted only two years and produced a single female child (and Richeza's only issue), Agnes of Bohemia (1305–1337). At Wenceslas II's death in 1305, Wenceslas III, the son of Wenceslas II and last of the ruling Přemyslid males, took the crown. Murdered in Olomouc in 1306, Wenceslas II would reign for less than a year, and his untimely death left the throne open to a number of competing factions and once again brought Elizabeth Richeza to the center of the succession controversy. As Queen Dowager of Bohemia and Queen of Poland, she offered considerable power to her future husband. At the same time, the Přemyslid princesses, now also Elizabeth Richeza's stepchildren, presented another avenue of power for politically ambitious men

from neighboring dynasties through the maternal line. Richeza quickly married Rudolf of Habsburg in 1306, the first viable royal marriage with claims to the Bohemian throne, but the couple held power for only one year. Rudolf died of dysentery in 1307, and the Bohemian crown was turned over by the Bohemian nobles to Henry of Carinthia (1265–1335), husband of Anne Přemyslid, Wenceslas III's oldest sister.

Henry and Anne's rule was not without its detractors, and a movement of Cistercians and Bohemian nobles led by Henry of Lipá arranged for a destabilization of the couple's power through the marriage of Anne's younger sister, Elizabeth, to John of Luxembourg, son of the King of the Romans. After their marriage in 1310, John was forced to invade Bohemia and depose Henry of Carinthia. The entry into the city was largely peaceful, and Henry and Anne fled to Carinthia without incident. With the support of powerful religious leaders and nobles, John and Elizabeth transitioned to power in Bohemia easily, at least for the first few years. John's reign would be continually pressured by a rising anti-Roman (i.e., anti-German) sentiment among the Slavic populations of Bohemia, and he would spend much of his time away from his Bohemian kingdom. He was credited with a great skill in international politics but cursed with an unsteady grasp on the Bohemian crown. The instability of the rivaling towns in the region was difficult for him to control, and the language and culture was apparently impenetrable to an aristocrat raised at the French court.<sup>32</sup> His political power was weakened in 1313 when his father, Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII, died. Many of King John's foreign advisors returned to Germany, no longer bound by Henry's will. Rivaling groups of nobles set the king and queen against one another, and around the time of his father's death, John sent his wife and children to a castle in Mělník. Fearful that his eldest son

<sup>32</sup> Jaroslav Pánek and Oldřich Tůma, *A History of the Czech Lands* (Prague: Karolinum Press, 2014), 123.

Wenceslas (i.e., Charles IV, future Holy Roman Emperor) would be used as a bargaining chip amongst the towns and nobles, John sent him to be educated at the French court in Paris.

Elizabeth Richeza continued to pose a threat, if only a theoretical one, to John of Luxembourg's hold of power. If she were to remarry, as twice Queen Dowager of Bohemia, she and her hypothetical husband could assert their claim to the Bohemian throne, potentially causing a movement against John of Luxembourg and Elizabeth Přemyslid with enough support from powerful nobles and church leaders. Richeza also offered a line to the kingdom of Poland, a territory which would elude John of Luxembourg's grasp for his entire life. The outsider king thus had every reason to negotiate with the former queen, and she remained a central figure in Bohemia's political landscape throughout the first ten years of John's reign. Known as the Queen of Hradec Králové,<sup>33</sup> Richeza was suspected of conspiracy against the Luxembourg reign and was forced out of her dowry town. She had already provided for the foundation of the cathedral there, and she followed her impulse to patronage in her new home in Brno. There she settled in 1316 or 1317 with her lover, Henry of Lipá, the same Bohemian noble who championed John of Luxembourg's marriage of Elizabeth Přemyslid and their entry into Prague. Perhaps because of this alliance with a figure so sympathetic to Luxembourg ambition, Richeza's relationship with the ruling family improved. Richeza's move to Brno also roughly coincided with King John's rejection of Queen Elizabeth, and so it seems that, with political threat that his marriage caused solved, John softened his approach toward Richeza.

<sup>33</sup> Antonín Friedl, *Malíři Královny Alžběty: Studie o vzniku České školy malířské XIV. století* (Prague: Aventinum, 1930), 122.

The last twenty years of Richeza's life were spent mostly in Brno, where she provided for the foundation of the Cistercian convent of Aula Sanctae Mariae. The convent was officially founded in 1323, although Richeza seems to have inaugurated the production of her manuscript donation much earlier in 1316 or 1317.<sup>34</sup> She and Henry of Lipá would both be buried on the grounds of Aula Sanctae Mariae, in the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady (Bazilika Nanebevzetí Panny Marie). At the time of her death, Richeza's long record of patronage would include at the very least the cathedral of the Holy Spirit (Svatého Ducha) in Hradec Králové, the convent of Aula Sanctae Maria in Staré Brno, and the corpus of manuscripts that served as a foundational donation. Certainly there were other objects accompanying the manuscripts in this initial foundation gift, and Richeza's involvement in other works of art and architecture is almost guaranteed.

## 2.2 Modern Historiography

Richeza's life story can reasonably be described as marginal: she was a political pawn in the securing of Bohemian and Polish power in her youth, married twice to ambitious men who both died shortly after their marriage. Her queenship was only secured by the political instability

<sup>34</sup> See Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I*, 225. The earliest from the group is likely the two-part lectionary (ÖNB 1773 & 1772), which contains colophons in both the first and second parts (1773 dates to 1316 and 1772 to 1317). The inscriptions suggest that the recipient of the manuscript was not yet in mind when the work was inaugurated. It has been proposed that the work was begun to commemorate the betrothal of Richeza's daughter Agnes to Silesian Duke Henry I of Jawor in 1317, however nothing but the proximity of the dates suggests that.

in Bohemia fueled by the crisis of Přemyslid succession, and her authority was easily eclipsed by a powerful foreign contender. It is at this contentious juncture that historians mark a sharp divide, a moment of rupture in the history of the Bohemian lands. In the art historical scholarship, this marks a break between the Romanesque and the Gothic. The centuries-long Přemyslid rule, some scholars propose, was a sustained moment of Slavic political development that allowed traditional Romanesque forms to flourish. It is not until the western Luxembourgs entered at the beginning of the fourteenth century that a Gothic tradition could begin to take shape, nearly a century after its initial flourishing in France.<sup>35</sup>

Richeza was a deposed queen between two shining dynasties, her reign couched between (and overshadowed by) the fall of the great Přemyslids and the blossoming of the Luxembourgs. Her extensive art patronage tells another story, though, of a queen with a great deal of land and monetary resources intent on shaping her world through works of art and architecture. But because of historiographically determined narratives about the development of Gothic style in the Middle Ages (and especially about its delayed development in Bohemia), Richeza's extensive record of art patronage never quite finds a home in the literature. Even though the majority of her patronage overlaps with the reign of John of Luxembourg and is contemporaneous with such oft-cited works as the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* (discussed here in Chapter 3), Richeza's work is almost entirely excluded from dominant narratives of the flourishing art scene in Bohemia in the fourteenth century. This is especially evident in the most recent exhibitions and studies.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> For this line of thinking, see Erich Bachman, ed. *Gothic Art in Bohemia: Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting* (London: Phaidon, 1967); and Albert Kutal, *Gothic Art in Bohemia and Moravia* (London: Hamlyn, 1971).

<sup>36</sup> See especially *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia, 1347–1437*, exh. cat., ed. by Barbara Drake Boehm (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Markéta Jarošová, Jiří Kuthan, and Stefan Scholz, eds., *Prag und die grossen*

This is not to say, however, that the Richeza corpus has been entirely neglected by the history of art. Central European scholarship from the beginning of the twentieth century in fact takes up the collected Richeza manuscripts with some interest. The corpus was addressed at length in two in-depth monographs in the early 1930s: Antonín Friedl's *Malíři Královny Alžběty* (1930) and Jan Květ's *Iluminované rukopisy královny Rejčky* (1931).<sup>37</sup> Both catalogs consider the corpus in its entirety, minus one of the Vienna manuscripts (Cod. 417), which is mysteriously absent from both authors' accounting. The monographs of Květ and Friedl are both dedicated to the project of showing how a distinctly Czech school of painting emerged in and around the court of Charles IV in Prague toward the middle and end of the fourteenth century. For both scholars, the project of studying the Richeza manuscript group centers around demonstrating a nascent tendency in the early fourteenth century that foreshadowed—but did not necessarily lead to—a Czech school of miniature painting later in the century.<sup>38</sup>

This drive to place the Richeza corpus within the narrative of the development of style was first inaugurated by the Czech-born Austrian art historian Max Dvořák in his 1901 dissertation

*Kulturzentren Europas in der Zeit der Luxemburger (1310–1437)* (Prague: Togga, 2008); and Klára Benešová, ed., *King John of Luxembourg (1296–1346) and the Art of His Era: Proceedings of the International Conference, Prague, September 16–20, 1996* (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1998).

<sup>37</sup> Friedl, *Malíři Královny Alžběty*; and Květ, *Iluminované rukopisy královny Rejčky*. As far as I can tell, the only earlier publication directly dealing with the Richeza manuscript corpus is Karel Chytil, "Breviář královny Elišky Rejčky," *Zlatá Praha* 10 (1893).

<sup>38</sup> In the 1971 translation of Albert Kotal's *Gothic Art in Bohemia and Moravia*, Kotal aims to outline the development of a courtly school of painting in Prague. The Richeza corpus is classified as "not without its followers," but its artistic virtuosity is definitely downplayed (35). Even though Kotal was a Czech art historian, there is a general devaluing of pre-Charles-IV-era works of art as "provincial" because they exist outside of a courtly context (33).



“Die Illuminatoren des Johan von Neumarkt.”<sup>39</sup> Dvořák aimed to contextualize the seemingly new and cohesive school of miniature painting that developed toward the end of the fourteenth century in and around Prague, specifically in relation to the group of manuscripts owned by Charles IV’s chancellor John of Neumarkt. Dvořák identified in the Richeza corpus a definite tendency toward the French gothic court style that seemingly has no other precedent in early fourteenth-century Bohemia–Moravia. He attributed the appearance in these manuscripts of a seemingly international style to the movement of Cistercian monks throughout Western and Central Europe in the fourteenth century. This is to say that he attributed this new style not to the tastes of the queen herself but to the movement of books and objects in the hands of maker-monks. Dvořák brought the corpus to the attention of his readers as a sort of precocious anomaly—while the Richeza corpus may have been the first instance of this new style in the region, it is not actually the cause of, or directly connected to, its later development.<sup>40</sup> The Richeza corpus is presented as an interesting, but not particularly pivotal or important, entry in the history of style in Central Europe.

There is another thread in both Květ’s and Friedl’s narratives whose origin needs to be mined a bit further—this is the tendency of both authors to specifically tie certain elements of the books’ decoration to various nations and regions in Western Europe. This seemingly anachronistic

<sup>39</sup> The original: Max Dvořák, *Die Illuminatoren des Johann von Neumarkt* (Vienna: Tempsky, 1901). I am citing from the later reprint of the full dissertation in the volume *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kunstgeschichte*, by Max Dvořák, 73–207 (Munich: R. Piper, 1929).

<sup>40</sup> “Diese Werke sind singulär geblieben und wirkten nicht weiter und tiefer ein als anderweitige fremde Vorlagen. . . . Die Weiterentwicklung knüpft jedoch keinesfalls an diese Arbeiten an, sondern entsteht, wie wir sehen werden, zunächst aus anderen Anfängen.” Dvořák, “Die Illuminatoren des Johann von Neumarkt,” in Dvořák, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, 86.

urge to manufacture nationalist ties in medieval art may be traceable to the state of Czech nationhood and politics after World War I. The publication of the two catalogs falls within the period of the first Czechoslovak state (i.e., Czechoslovakia), which existed between 1918 and 1938. A result of international agreements and alliances, the First Czechoslovak Republic flourished under the leadership of Tomáš Masaryk, who united five at times disparate regions and peoples—Bohemia, Moravia, Czech Silesia, Slovakia, and Subcarpathian Ruthenia—and actively sought to connect this Slavic conglomerate to neighboring Western Europe and the United States. The Munich Agreement of 1938 would bring an abrupt end to the First Republic, requiring Czechoslovakia to cede the Sudetenland to Germany and opening the door for the Nazi occupation in 1939. The Czechoslovak nation would collapse under the German occupation of Bohemia and Moravia until the end of the war in 1945.<sup>41</sup>

The dissolution of the First Czechoslovak Republic was likely unforeseen when Friedl and Květ published their catalogs. The creation of Czechoslovakia was largely achieved through post–World–War–I Allied policy, and President Beneš’s foreign diplomacy relied heavily on the League of Nations and France in particular. The historiography of western medieval art generally advances the notion that the gothic style originally blossomed in France in the thirteenth century, with regional variations in England and Germany developing in the following decades. This idea—that Gothic art was a French phenomenon with derivative variants in other parts of the western world—both gained traction and faced resistance throughout the twentieth century. The bombing of Reims

<sup>41</sup> For a historical overview of the lands of the Bohemian crown from the Middle Ages through to the formation and evolution of the modern Czech state, see William M. Mahoney, *The History of the Czech Republic and Slovakia* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2011).

Cathedral by the Germans in World War I pushed this tension to its breaking point. The Germans were cast as Barbarians with no regard for European artistic patrimony and the French were made to be cultural victims.<sup>42</sup> Variations of this German/French Gothic tension would play out throughout the twentieth century.

The narratives that Friedl and Květ construct betray a certain idea of Bohemia as a western territory and a desire to historically ally the Czech lands in particular with France and England. Both authors note a heavy borrowing in the Richeza manuscript corpus of English and French decorative motifs and posit a flow of artistic information from France, England, and the Netherlands through Cologne and Metz and on to the workshop of Elizabeth Richeza. There is hardly a pictorial element in the Richeza group that is attributed to local style, aside from some characteristic pen-flourished initials seemingly executed by the scribes that are identified as particularly Slavic (fig. 2.2). Everything else is attributed to the penetration (a term used widely by both authors) of western cultural traditions into Bohemia.

And, indeed, the international nature of the books' decoration is quite apparent, as Fingernagel's 1997 assessment of the manuscripts in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek bears out.<sup>43</sup> They exhibit many similarities in their general arrangement and decoration to English and French aristocratic books from the same period (cf. the *Tickhill Psalter*, New York Public Library, Spencer Collection Ms. 26; and the *Psalter of Queen Isabella*, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Gaehtgens, *Reims on Fire: War and Reconciliation between France and Germany* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute: 2018).

<sup>43</sup> Fingernagel posits a "direct" influence from France and East Anglia. Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I*, 233–34, an assessment which he acknowledges was already elaborated with comparanda by Friedl, *Maliři Královny Alžběty*, and Květ, *Iluminované rukopisy královny Rejčky*, and has been echoed by all assessments since.

Gall. 16), but they also incorporate many specifically Bohemian elements, especially in the form of the abovementioned pen-flourished initials, as well as in terms of the codices' contents, which expectedly follow the liturgical arrangements corresponding to the region in which they were made and include within their litanies local, Bohemian saints.<sup>44</sup> This decidedly international style is a feature of Bohemian art that has been specifically related to Charles IV in the numerous recent exhibitions of late fourteenth-century Bohemian court art. Charles, who grew up at the French court and travelled throughout the medieval West and East on relic-collecting campaigns, is credited with absorbing and introducing a variety of styles and techniques through his extensive patronage, which included the employment of a cadre of artists from around the Holy Roman Empire. But Richeza's patronage precedes that of Charles IV by more than fifty years, and yet we see the same sorts of borrowing, referencing, and intermingling that we might expect from a much later work of art. Nevertheless, because of the seeming insularity of Richeza's books, in terms of both their chronology, location, and patron, the corpus never manages to join the dominant narratives.

The story of specifically Czechoslovak artistic invention and autonomy decidedly blossomed in the 1950s, once Czechoslovak national unity had been won and lost three times over. By midcentury, Czechoslovakia was a satellite state of the Soviet Union, known as the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. In a massive exhibition of over 1700 archival documents at the

<sup>44</sup> This includes, for instance, long-form lections dedicated to Saint Hedwig and Saint Wenceslas in ÖNB Cod. 1772.

Prague castle complex in 1958,<sup>45</sup> recording in eight historically defined sections the cultural development of the Czech and Slovak people, an antiphony (MZAB Ms F M 7) from the Richeza corpus was exhibited. The antiphony appeared in the first of these eight historical sections, “Nejstarší období našich dějin, doba předhusitská” [The oldest period of our history, the pre-Hussite period], alongside the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* and four other illuminated manuscripts under the subheading “Rozvoj písařského umění” [The development of written art], in the subsection “Písemné památky z úbodí vzniku našeho státu” [Written relics from the origin of our state].

The exhibition catalog labels the Richeza antiphony as “Antifonář Elišky Rejčky, manželky Václava II” [Antiphony of Eliška Rejčka, wife of Wenceslas II]. It is rather ironic that the curators chose to identify Richeza as the wife of Wenceslas II, even though she had remarried shortly after his death and her manuscripts collection was not made until both husbands were long dead. But this small detail betrays the larger bias of the exhibition: to create an identity for the Czech and Slovak people through the documents of other ethnically Czech and Slovak people. Richeza was neither, but her first husband, Wenceslas, was, and his presence is thus signposted in the description of Richeza’s manuscript. The socialist messaging of the exhibition is clearly stated throughout the catalog. The exhibition summary proudly states: “The exhibition is evidence of the care the socialist state offers to the cultural heritage which is today the property of all the people.”<sup>46</sup> In another ironic twist in the story of the exhibition of Richeza’s lectionary, someone took the term

<sup>45</sup> For the exhibition catalog see *Celostátní výstava archivních dokumentů: Od hrdinné minulosti k vítězství socialismu* [The national exhibition of archival documents: From the heroic past to the victory of socialism], exh. cat. (Prague: Ministerstvo unitra, 1958).

<sup>46</sup> *Celostátní výstava archivních dokumentů*, 198.

“property of the people” quite literally when they cut the folio containing the only donor portrait of Richeza from the manuscript.<sup>47</sup>

Onto the very short historiography surrounding the Richeza corpus one can superimpose the history of the development of the Czechoslovak state: early interpretations of the corpus aim to place it within a Western European cultural and political scene, while the later interpretations want to see the manuscripts as a product of a latent Czechoslovak identity. But in all cases the status of the manuscripts and their matron remains marginal. For Dvořák, Friedl, and Květ, the manuscripts are interesting but not quite a part of the narrative that they’re trying to tell. For the curators of the 1958 Prague Castle exhibition, only one of the manuscripts is used not to illustrate the artistic vision of its maker (who was Polish) or the significance of the book’s style but as early evidence of Czechoslovak ingenuity. Its actual artistic features or facts surrounding its creation seem inconsequential to the larger project of the exhibition.

By the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, it is as if the art historical significance of the Richeza corpus has been totally obliterated. The studies and exhibitions of Bohemian art from the 1990s and early 2000s have been primarily concerned with the agency and personhood of John of Luxembourg and Charles IV in the development of art in the Bohemian kingdom in the fourteenth century. The books of Elizabeth Richeza, a marginal early-century queen, found little traction in this story. But even if they are only a blip in the fourteenth-century Bohemian *Kunstwollen*, the richness of their pictorial strategy and the insistent presence of their matron can be brought into discussion with contemporary scholarship on late medieval devotion and donor portraiture. The manuscript corpus was, in a sense, Richeza’s corpus, her body after her fleshly body died.

<sup>47</sup> My thanks to Pavlína Kotlíková at the Moravský zemský archiv in Brno for alerting me to this fact.

### 2.3 The Richeza Manuscript Corpus

In total there are nine manuscripts that form the collected works of Queen Elizabeth Richeza, now housed in three separate collections: the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (Cods. 1773 & 1772; 1774; 417; 1835; and 1813); Knihovna benediktinů v Rajhradě (R 355; R 600); and the Moravský zemský archive v Brně (Ms F M 7).<sup>48</sup> All of the manuscripts were designed to serve a liturgical function. There are two antiphonaries (R 600 and Ms F M 7), one gradual (Cod. 1774), one book of collects (Cod. 1835), one two-part lectionary (Cods. 1773 and 1772), one psalter (R 355), one choir-psalter (Cod. 1813), and one martyrology bound together with a copy of the Rule of Saint Benedict (Cod. 417). Taken as a whole, this is a rather diverse group of manuscripts that would have allowed its users to execute the liturgy year-round.<sup>49</sup> The thoroughness and breadth of the collection supports well the proposal that the corpus served as a foundational gift to the community at Aula Sanctae Mariae.

Three of the queen's manuscripts, Vienna Codices 1773 and 1772 (together forming a two-part lectionary) and Rajhrad R 600, contain colophons that directly link them to Richeza and

<sup>48</sup> My thanks to Jiří David, librarian at the Museum of the Brno Region, for informing me of the manuscripts' current locations.

<sup>49</sup> In the context of a late medieval convent, the liturgy extended beyond the Mass properly speaking to include the daily celebration of the Divine Office, meaning the seven times each day that the community would gather "for the major and minor hours in the spaces reserved for the divine services in order to speak and sing an established sequence of psalms and hymns, to hear a reading from the Bible, to which they responded with certain prayers, and finally to be dismissed with a blessing." See Gisela Muschiol, "Time and Space: Liturgy and Rite in Female Monasteries of the Middle Ages," in Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti, eds., *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, 191–206 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 192.

specify a date of manufacture. The colophons in the Vienna two-part lectionary are of special interest, as they are given in both Latin and Old German. In Cod. 1773, the colophon reads:

*Domini millesimo trecentesimo quintodecimo comparatus est liber iste a serenissima ac Deo devota domina Elyzabeth, quondam regina Bohemie ac Polonie, ob perpetuam memoriam sui ac generacionis sue, ut ad quodcumque cenobium datus fuerit, perpetua memoria sui habeatur, vive sive defuncte, ac genealogie sue, principum sive regum, defunctorum, ut in sompno pacis dormiant, vivorum, ut prosperitate et in colomitate gaudeant, posterum, ut in mille generaciones crescent. Amen.*<sup>50</sup>

In the year of Our Lord 1315 this book was prepared for the serene and devout woman Elyzabeth, onetime queen of Bohemia and Poland, to perpetuate her memory and that of her ancestors, so that it may be given to a monastic house, so that her perpetual memory might be held, living or dead, and that of her ancestors, of princes or kings, of the dead, so that they may sleep peacefully, of the living, so that they may prosper and rejoice in posterity, that they may increase a thousand generations. Amen.

And in Cod. 1772:

<sup>50</sup> Both Latin transcriptions drawn from Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I*, 236 and 237, respectively.

Translations are my own.



*An dem Tusende und an dem drihundurten und an dem sechcenten iar von Cristes gebort is ditz buech erzuget, von der hochgeborn vrowen, vrowen ELZEBETEN, der werden zwire kuniginen, zu einem ewigen gehuēknisse iris namen, und allers geslechtes, fuersten und kunige, in welch closter ditz buech wirt gegeben, daz men ir da ewicliche gedenke, zum ersten der di da tot sin, daz die slafen in Gotes fride, und zu der ewigen freude kumen, di da noh leben, daz sich di vreuwen selde und lanklebens, der nachkuemelingē, daz si in tusent geslechte wachsen. Amen.*

In the 1316th year after Christ's birth this book was prepared for the highborn woman, lady ELZEBETEN, who was twice queen, for the perpetual memory of her name, and that of her family, princes and kings, in which this book will be given to a monastery, to perpetuate the memory, foremost of those who are dead, so that they may sleep in God's peace, and that eternal happiness may come to those who still live, to the woman herself, long-lived, and to her descendants, that they may increase a thousand generations.

And the much shorter KBR R 600 colophon on folio 223r reads:

*Anno Domini millo CCCo XVIIo constructus est ab illustri Elyzabeth, regina Bohemie et Polonie liber iste.<sup>51</sup>*

<sup>51</sup> Latin transcription pulled from Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I*, 225. Translation from the Latin into English my own.

In the year of Our Lord 1317 this book is made by/for the  
highborn Elizabeth, queen of Bohemia and Poland.

The two-part lectionary dedications vary slightly, owing more to the demands of Latin and Old High German than to authorial creativity. Importantly, these inscriptions establish a timeline for the early manufacture of the corpus. The work was likely begun in 1315 with the first of the two-part lectionary, proceeding from that point until around the founding of the convent in 1323.<sup>52</sup> They both emphasize that Richeza is a *former* queen, and repeatedly mention both her ancestors, living relations, and descendants. The inscriptions also relate that the two-part lectionary was intended for a monastic house, although they do not specify which one. The calendars are devised for a community under Cistercian rule,<sup>53</sup> which implies the Cistercian cloister of Maria Saal (Aula Sanctae Mariae) in Staré Brno (Old Brno). That the two parts of the lectionary should each be given dedications in different languages reflects well the background of its patron and users: a well-educated, aristocratic laywoman, who would have been fluent in the vernacular and to an extent in church Latin, and the convent to which the manuscript was gifted, filled with similarly literate women.<sup>54</sup> The Latin-German inscriptions also reflect the political circumstances in Bohemia at the time. There was a rising population of German-speakers, and with the introduction

<sup>52</sup> Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I*, 225.

<sup>53</sup> Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I*, 240.

<sup>54</sup> For a discussion of how regional identity and language inscribed works of art and architecture in Bohemia, see Seth Hindin, “Ethnische Bedeutungen der sakralen Baukunst: ‘Deutsche’ und ‘tschechische’ Pfarrkirchen und Kapellen in Böhmen und Mähren (1150–1420)”, in *Böhmen und das deutsche Reich: Ideen- und Kulturtransfer im Vergleich, 13.–16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Eva Schlotheuber and Hubertus Seibert, 11–33 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2009), esp. 12.

of John of Luxembourg, a king of “Roman” origin, German would have been widely spoken in the region.<sup>55</sup> It is significant that Slavic does not appear in any of the Richeza manuscripts.

The two-part lectionary contains no donor portraits, a surprising circumstance given that it is otherwise richly illustrated and announces the presence of its donor/owner clearly in the colophons. The first quire is missing from Cod. 1773, and it has been suggested that it contained a donor portrait similar to the one found at the beginning of Brno Codex R 600.<sup>56</sup> Given that all but one other manuscript in the Richeza corpus contain donor portraits and that there is a missing section in Cod. 1773 where a donor portrait would likely be found, it can be reasonably assumed that Cod. 1773 had a donor portrait from its inception. The term “donor portrait” is used broadly here to mean any figure in the Richeza group who is highlighted in the margins and whose bodily comportment suggests prayerful subservience (i.e. kneeling with hands clasped at about chest height).<sup>57</sup> Such figures were shorthand for the donor type throughout the later Middle Ages, although their placement relative to the page began to shift in the thirteenth century as they began to take on new meaning, not simply as book donors, but as book owners who saw their devotional

<sup>55</sup> John of Luxembourg’s Germanness certainly came up against certain notions of regional Czech identity. The development of the Slavic language was inextricably tied to the church and the cult worship of local saints, like Saints Wenceslas, Ludmilla, and Procopius. Saint Procopius, who was canonized at the beginning of the thirteenth century, was revered for having expelled German monks from Sázava monastery in the eleventh century. Czech identity was very much tied to the cult of local saints and the rejection of German influence. See Mahoney, *History of the Czech Republic*, 45.

<sup>56</sup> Fingernagel, *Mitteleuropäische Schulen I*, 225.

<sup>57</sup> This pose only began to signify prayer toward the later Middle Ages (as opposed to the palms-out pose more common in earlier representations) and is deeply tied to medieval conceptions of courtly and aristocratic conduct and supplication. See Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 16–18.

praxis reflected back at them. The Richeza donor figures lucidly represent the shift in donor types found in late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, where she is removed from a hieratic donor page properly speaking and incorporated into the marginal spaces that play out around the main illumination. These donor figures are typically in some sense apart from but interacting with the main illumination through their gaze or through the penetration of their hands or head into the sacred plane. Though in some ways marginal, they can be distinguished from the various beasts and babewyns in the margins by their supplicating pose and relative proximity to the main illuminated scene.<sup>58</sup>

Of the thirteen apparent primary donor figures across the Richeza oeuvre, nine are decidedly of the queen.<sup>59</sup> Of the remaining four, two show an unidentified male figure, perhaps

<sup>58</sup> Where the donor figures usually kneel just outside of the historiated initial, and often maintain eye contact with one of the main Biblical figures, the beasties, by contrast, exist in a separate temporality, satisfied to taunt and mock each other, and perhaps the viewer, but never interrupting the sacred space of the initial. Where the monstrous was more central in Romanesque art, it was thoroughly banished to the margins (and became a site of play) in the Gothic period. For an overview of the study of monstrosity and marginality in medieval studies, see Thomas E. A. Dale, “The Monstrous,” in Conrad Rudolph, ed., *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, 2nd ed., 357–81 (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2019). For a consideration of how donor figures related to the margins, see Corine Schleif, “Kneeling on the Threshold: Donors Negotiating Realms Betwixt and Between.” In Elina Gertsman and Jill Stevenson, eds., *Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces*, 195–216 (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012).

<sup>59</sup> All but one of the donor portraits in the group are extant in their original locations within their respective manuscripts. In 1958, Brno Ms M 7 was exhibited at Prague Castle in the exhibition *Celostátní výstava archivních dokumentů* [The national exhibition of archival documents]. It was vandalized during the exhibition, when folios 84, 85, 86, and 87 were cut and stolen. They have yet to be recovered. My thanks to Pavlína Kotlíková at the Moravský

the queen's lover, Henry of Lipá,<sup>60</sup> while the remaining two are markedly female figures who may or may not be representations of Richeza (fig. 2.3a & b).<sup>61</sup> Neither of these two female donor figures wears a crown, denying an immediate identification with Richeza and suggesting perhaps a nun or abbess, or perhaps even the queen's only child, Agnes of Bohemia, who would have been married at around the time of the inception of the manuscript corpus.<sup>62</sup> The sheer number of donor portraits in the queen's books indicates a forceful assertion on the part of Richeza; even after her death, these portraits would serve as ever-present reminders of her donation. The manner of representation is on the whole consistent: the queen is shown kneeling, either in a void space or at an altar/prie-dieu, either to the immediate left of the illuminated initial or in a roundel that trails in the lower left of the page off of the marginal foliation. In addition, Richeza is shown in two

zemský archiv in Brno for alerting me to this fact. Luckily, black-and-white reproductions of the donor image can be found in Friedl (1930) and Květ (1931). The only known donor portrait in MZAB Ms M 7 was found on 84v and shows the queen kneeling before a throne with foliate terminations. As usual, she is shown with veil and wimple and crown and has her hands clasped in prayer. In front of her, a tablet with the words "miserere mei Deus." Below, a secondary male figure appears, as in other manuscripts in the collection. The main historiated initial shows the Coronation of the Virgin. The Moravský zemský archvi v Brně offers a high-quality color digital facsimile of the manuscript, minus the missing folios.

<sup>60</sup> Psalter, KBR R 355, fol. 59v; and Choir-psalter, ÖNB Cod. 1813, 119r.

<sup>61</sup> Psalter, KBR R 355, fols. 121r and 188r.

<sup>62</sup> Agnes was married to Henry I of Jawor in 1316. As cousins, the couple required papal dispensation to marry, which they received in 1325. It has been suggested, because of the confluence of dates, that some of the manuscripts were made on the occasion of her marriage. No codicological evidence, however, bears that out.

instances reading aloud to two nuns, but these are not, strictly speaking, donor portraits.<sup>63</sup> In the standard donor portraits, she is sometimes shown with a book (three times) and sometimes with a dog (three times).<sup>64</sup> There is a limited repertoire of Biblical subjects that the donor portraits (including the unidentified male and female figures) are represented alongside. These subjects include Creation (twice; Rajhrad R 355, fols. 8v and 59v); scenes from the life of David (twice; ÖNB 1813, fol. 8r, and ÖNB 1774, fol. 2v); the three Marys at the Holy Sepulchre (once; Rajhrad R 600, fol. 121r); the Coronation of the Virgin (once; Brno Ms F M 7, fol. 84v); Virgin and Child enthroned (three times; Rajhrad R 355, fol. 188r, ÖNB 1835, fol. 23r, and ÖNB 417, fol. 1v); Christ in Majesty (once; ÖNB 1813, fol. 195r); a *Gnadenstuhl* (twice; Rajhrad R 355, fol. 121r, and ÖNB 1813, fol. 119r); and one unidentified scene depicting a robed and bearded man communicating with a small head of God the Father, potentially Paul the First Hermit or Saint James as Pilgrim (Rajhrad R 600, fol. 1v). The queen's donor portrait typically appears toward the beginning of the book, often on the first or second folio, but additional portraits can sometimes be found deeper within the codices. In three of the queen's donor portraits (Brno 355; Brno Ms F M 7; and Vienna 1774), a secondary male donor figure is included in a liminal space just below the queen. This individual has been tentatively identified again as the queen's lover, Henry of Lipá.

<sup>63</sup> These instances are discussed in much greater detail in the last section of this chapter. I do not classify them as standard donor portraits, and they are thus not included in the subject tallies above.

<sup>64</sup> Those subjects always appear together in ÖNB Cod. 1774, fol. 2v; ÖNB Cod. 1813, fol. 8r; and KBR R 600, fol. 1v.

## 2.4 Richeza's Place in Her Manuscripts

What can donor portraits actually tell us about the patron? A foundational piece of evidence in patronage and manuscript studies has been the donor portraits they contain, which have often been read as diminutive reflections of their users, as ways for the reader to transport herself into the act of prayer, or into the Biblical scene played out on the page. But in the long history of donor portraits, these apparently personal images often functioned less like mirrors and more like tomb effigies or portal figures (i.e., as memorials, as objects for others to adore, as assertions of power). In order for these donor figures to have meaning, they must be able to work *absent* the patron; they must also signify something to others. This is the situation presented by the donor portraits in the Richeza corpus: they were both seen by Richeza herself and by many other people, functioning as both mirrors and monuments. The following section closely considers the Richeza donor portraits and unpacks the visual content they deliver about the books' patron and reader(s).

In her in-depth study of owner portraits in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century French and English books of hours, Alexa Sand draws a distinction between donor portraits strictly speaking (i.e., a monumental type) and what she describes as devotional portraits that “testify to the centrality of reflection and reflexivity to the visual culture of devotion toward the end of the thirteenth century” and that are concerned “with visualizing the visionary experience toward which prayer and devotion were intended to lead practitioners.”<sup>65</sup> The distinction here is one mainly of function: the monumental-type donor portrait typically serves a political purpose, to mark and commemorate an act of donation to an ecclesiastical or monastic body. She points explicitly to the

<sup>65</sup> Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 6.

donor portrait in the *Hedwig Codex*, discussed in this dissertation in Chapter 3, as an example of this type of manuscript donor portrait: it was meant to serve as a memorial function for the monastic and lay viewers at the shrine in Brzeg, where the book's patron, Ludwig, eventually donated the manuscript. This assessment is supported by the portrait's location in the book—it is found toward the beginning and thus serves as a quasi-frontispiece—and by the particularities of its intent: Ludwig and Agnes were never necessarily the *owners* of the book, and so would not have engaged in the sorts of reflexive looking that Sand is talking about. Rather, they stood on the page as a reminder to its readers of the patrons' good deeds, as an exhortation to the monastic reader to keep them a part of her devotions.

But the donor portraits in the Richeza manuscripts fall somewhere in between the monumental-type portrait as such and the sort of reflexive owner portrait that Sand wants to define as a strictly French, English, and Franco-Flemish phenomenon.<sup>66</sup> But where the donor figures Sand discusses often find themselves in the throes of the miniatures' action, interacting with saints and holy personages, enacting in very literal terms the imagery of their devotions, the Richeza figures are much more staid. The Richeza figures are also not strictly of the monumental donor type. Although often found toward the front of the manuscript, they are never featured in a full frontispiece. They seem in part meant for Richeza's eyes and in part for the eyes of other readers. They are specific enough, with their crown and veil, that they indicate the queen, but are general enough that they could function as a point of identification for any female viewer.

The donor portraits in the Elizabeth Richeza corpus demand a consideration of what it meant to exist in the margins in the Middle Ages. This question was most famously taken up by

<sup>66</sup> Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 10.



Michael Camille in the early 1990s in his small but mighty tract *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art*. Drawing upon—and often refuting—earlier scholarship on the beasts teaming and tormenting in the margins of manuscripts, cathedrals, and cloisters, Camille constructs a theory of marginality in order to not merely divine the meaning of these creatures<sup>67</sup> but to contextualize them as an essential component of the medieval mindset. In the later Middle Ages especially, as the written word moved from a highly ornamented and unbound recitative aid to more contained system of visual signification, the margins, Camille argues, became a zone of pictorial play.<sup>68</sup> Where the central illustrations in later medieval devotional books focused with great order and clarity on Biblical scenes and holy people, the margins exploded with untamed animals, composite creatures, profane human actors, and self-devouring flora. The manuscripts of the Richeza corpus all beautifully demonstrate the late medieval fascination with marginal play, with its inclusion of disembodied heads, strange foliation, and humanoid beasts. But it must be noted, too, that Richeza herself exists in the margins of her manuscripts, rubbing elbows with beasts and birds. It is worthwhile to consider how the queen's apparent marginality actually plays out.

While marginal images appear wild and unbound in their content, they in fact adhere to a very rigid hierarchy, never invading the sacred space of the main illumination.<sup>69</sup> This hierarchy is evidenced in the Richeza group, where a tripartite separation between the main religious content,

<sup>67</sup> For a more indexical approach to marginal imagery, see Lillian M. C. Randall's thorough study *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

<sup>68</sup> Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), 18: "But this extra-textual space only developed into a site of artistic elaboration as the idea of the text as written document superseded the idea of the text as a cue for speech."

<sup>69</sup> Camille, *Image on the Edge*, 22.

the donor, and the marginal beasts is carefully maintained. Richeza is most often depicted in a liminal zone, an imagined space separate from both the void of the margins and the holy scenes taking place in the historiated initials. Sometimes a diapered background or a specific piece of furnishing, like an altar or a throne, signals to the viewer that Richeza is in a space apart from both the marginal zones and the historiated scenes (see figs. 2.1a & b). In the inclusion of these context-lending features, though, Richeza is more closely aligned with the sacred spaces of the historiated initials than she is with the marginal void space. Often, it is the foliation that extends off the main historiated initials that envelops and delimits the space for Richeza, and she will occasionally cross the boundaries of the historiation with her hands (fig. 2.4). Through her prayer, these portraits seem to assert, Richeza is able to access the divine, to palpate the outer edges of heaven.

In most instances, Richeza is at once on the edge and a part of the divine pictorial space in her manuscripts, but in one instance, folio 150r of Codex 417 at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Richeza is fully incorporated into the action of the main historiated initial (fig. 2.5). This initial is found on the incipit page to a copy of the Rule of Saint Benedict that forms the second half of the manuscript, and on it Richeza engages in prayer recitations before two kneeling nuns. Above her in the upper register of the initial A, Saint Benedict delivers his Rule to a monk. The two registers, upper and lower, mirror one another in a way that finds parallel to the infamous so-called authorship portrait from the Morgan quire of the *Bible of Saint Louis* (fig. 2.6).

This miniature from Cod. 417 was painted roughly 100 years after the authorship miniature from the *Bible of Saint Louis* (1315–25 for the former, 1226–1234 for the latter), but similarities in their pictorial strategies are striking. The Saint Louis miniature is now famous for setting up interesting spatial and gestural dichotomies between teacher/student, active/receptive. In the lower register of the Saint Louis miniature, a tonsured man, perhaps an abbot, sits before a lectern with

open book and gestures with his pointed index finger to a young, seemingly secular artist/scribe, who paints what is clearly legible as the opposing roundels of a moralized bible. In the upper register, a queen figure seated in a foliate throne turns her body and gestures with both hands, as if in a moment of instruction, toward a seated young king, who holds an orb and scepter in his hands and turns and looks receptively toward the queen. Their gestures and placement in a heavenly space are reminiscent of the Virgin's celestial coronation by Christ. The entire double-register scheme is divided by two sets of double trefoil arches, such that left and right and top and bottom are all mirrored. The tops of each pair of trefoil arches are populated by the cupolas and towers of a multicolored fictive microarchitecture. The background is adorned with geometrically incised gold leaf. The juxtaposition of author/scribe and queen/young king becomes a distillation of medieval creation. The older, more knowledgeable figure imparts their wisdom to the next generation, who shapes the world with this knowledge via, in this case, art and divine rulership. Here, too, is a distillation of patronage: as queen, Blanche would have paid for the manuscript, the author would have dictated the contents, the scribe would have created the material object, and the young King Louis would have read the manuscript.

The ÖNB Cod. 417 initial creates similar dichotomies in its upper and lower registers. In the lower section of the A-initial, a woman identifiable as Elizabeth Richeza with her white veil and crown sits on a cushioned, high-posted throne before a lectern with open books. She holds the book open with her left hand and gestures with her right toward two kneeling nuns, dressed and veiled in black. The forwardmost nun holds open a small book in her right hand. Both nuns gesture with their left hands toward the queen figure. Above them, and similarly arranged, Saint Benedict, dressed in the Order's black robes and nimbed with gold halo, sits on a low throne and gestures with both hands toward a standing monk figure on the right of the page. The standing monk

gestures open-palmed with his right hand toward the nimbed monk and holds in his left hand a small, closed book bound in brown leather. This miniature can be understood as the explanation of the Rule of Saint Benedict, not only because of its particular iconography but also because of the pages content, i.e. the incipit to the Rule of Saint Benedict. The background of upper and lower registers is consistently covered in a purple diapering. The registers are divided from one another by the crossbar of the A, creating a canopy for the nuns below and a carpet for the monks above.

In both miniatures, the left-hand portion of the illumination is concerned with knowledge delivery, while the right-hand side with knowledge reception; the left of both with age and experience, the right with a youthful novitiate. There is also a privileging of the upper register, which is reserved as a royal space in the Saint Louis miniature and as a saintly/male space in the Cod. 417 miniature. The mirroring between the upper and lower registers is intentional in both, allowing the lower register in each to serve as the earthly, lesser version of the divine realm above.

In order to unpack how Richeza fits into these schemes, though, the miniature in Cod. 417 ought also to be compared to other manuscript illuminations depicting the delivery of the Rule of Saint Benedict. An especially elucidating example comes from MS 0098 at the library of the University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign (fig. 2.7). In one painted initial from this late thirteenth-century Rule from a French convent, Benedict delivers his Rule to a group of four nuns directly. This manuscript's feminine prayer endings and dedication indicate that it was made for a community of Benedictine or Cistercian nuns at the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, in the historiated initial of the incipit to the Rule of Saint Benedict in MA 375 of the Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai, Saint Benedict delivers the Rule directly to a coterie of kneeling nuns (fig. 2.8). This

<sup>70</sup> See object file at <https://archives.library.illinois.edu/rbml/?p=collections/controlcard&id=618>.

Italian manuscript is roughly contemporary with Cod. 417 (ca. 1310–1320 for the former) and exhibits a very similar composition in terms of its foliate extensions on the top, left, and lower margins. In both comparative manuscripts we see none of the mediation that takes place in the Cod. 417 miniature: the front-most nun in Urbana-Champaign MS 0098 touches with both hands the Rule that Benedict passes on from his own hand, and they even stand on the same level as one another. In the Italian example, the nuns maintain a more subservient kneeling pose, but a direct connection between the nuns and the nimbed saint is created between the hand gestures of the two parties: as Benedict gestures toward the nun and the nun gestures back toward him in prayer, a circular conversational flow is created.

Female communities were an essential component of the Benedictine Order in the Middle Ages,<sup>71</sup> and it is clear from the abovementioned comparanda that women were equally envisioned as direct recipients of Benedict's Rule. It is not especially surprising that a representation of the community of women at Aula Sanctae Mariae would be included in this miniature, but what is surprising is the presentation of Richeza herself as community prayer leader. The abbess would typically be the individual to conduct the community in the readings of the Divine Office.<sup>72</sup> Not the abbess but the donor, Richeza is a somewhat unusual figure to take on such a role. How, then, are we to unpack this representation of Richeza?

An image nearly identical to the one found in the lower register of the Cod. 417 miniature can be found in another of Richeza's manuscript, Rajhrad Cod. Ms. 355 (fig. 2.9). The main

<sup>71</sup> See Muschiol, "Time and Space," 192, which points out that the Benedictine Rule was adapted for female communities already in the Carolingian period.

<sup>72</sup> Muschiol, "Time and Space," 192.

miniature depicts God the Father enthroned in the upper roundel of the initial B and, in the lower roundel, God separating the earth from the sea. On the outer edge of the B, Richeza kneels in prayer in a snarl of foliation while a small dog seated on her cape snarls protectively toward the left-hand margin. In the roundel in the bottom left margin that extends from the foliation of the main initial, Richeza, identifiable with her crown and white veil, sits before a lectern with open book in hand and reads aloud to two nuns kneeling beneath her in the bottom right quadrant. What's instructive about this particular miniature in Ms. 355 is its relation to the kneeling donor portrait at the top of the page. That the two representation of Richeza exist simultaneously on the page in such varied formulations tells us that there is a category distinction between these two portraits and that they were meant to convey different meanings to the reader-viewer. In one instance, we have Richeza as reader-devotee; she is at once in the void space of the margin and penetrating the divine, through both her vision that peers intently at the sacred scene before her and her hands that touch the gold foil of the heavenly space. In the lower roundel representation, Richeza takes on the guise of earthly matron-instructor. The physical materiality of the book is emphasized in the lower roundel—it is evidently large and opened toward the reader, revealing two pages (now quite faded) of text punctuated by foliated initials. The mini narrative created in this roundel asserts Richeza's centrality both in the material outfitting of the convent (shown by the representation of the book itself) and in the very founding of this community of religious women (shown by the proximity and posture of the two seated nuns). This is a kind of donor portrait different from the two types proposed by Sand: it is neither the monumental-type nor the scopic-devotional type. What this portrait does is narrativize the act of donation, envisioning the networks of objects and people that made up the religious community in space and time. This

snapshot of religious instruction stands for the very foundation of the community. As God creates His earthly kingdom above, so Richeza creates her community below.

This is precisely the pictorial force of the lower register of the initial A in Cod. 417. Here brought into the primary narrative of the historiated initial, Richeza's act of donation is made akin to the Benedictines' act of intellectual-devotional creation. The visual mirroring of the two figures, top and bottom, provides a path for the assertions of Richeza's agency in the foundation of the convent. In this respect, she serves as a devotional ancestor of Saint Benedict himself as deliverer of divine codices. In the same way that the Saint Louis miniature has been understood in the contemporary literature as a distillation of authorship, so too can the historiated initial of Cod. 417 be understood as a quasi-author-portrait that takes not only the creator of the words on the page but the progenitor of the very book itself into account. Conspicuously missing from this vision of authorship, though, is the artist or scribe: here it is the intellectual and spiritual forces behind the production of the manuscript that are most highly valued.<sup>73</sup> A book's donor was an essential link in the production and dissemination of knowledge—she not only paid for the book, but often, to a greater or lesser degree, dictated its contents, and then disseminated those same contents by gifting the book to a religious community or family member.

<sup>73</sup> Authorship in the Middle Ages was distributed and can (and was) be attributed to individuals who had nothing to do with the physical manufacture of the object. Some scholars have even suggested the recipient be considered a sort of “maker” in the Middle Ages. For an in-depth and well-supported outline of the scholarship on medieval authorship, especially with respect to women patrons, see, Therese Martin, “Exceptions and Assumptions: Women in Medieval Art History,” in Therese Martin, ed., *Reassessing the Roles of Women as 'Makers' of Medieval Art and Architecture*, 2 vols., vol. 1, 1–36 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

It is from these two significant representations of Elizabeth Richeza as divine donor-matriarch that we can begin to recuperate her agency as an active living patron of valuable objects and ideas, a shaper of religious communities and benevolent queen. The insistent repetition of her portrait throughout her manuscript corpus was meant to eternally reiterate Richeza's presence. As Alexa Sand formulates it, "the owner portrait incessantly returns the gaze to its original owner and reinstates her body and her performances within a matrix of texts and images."<sup>74</sup> After her death, the portraits acted as physical reminders to the nuns of Aula Sanctae Mariae to tend to their donor's perpetual memory. The books were both their reminder and medium, standing where Richeza herself once stood to lead the sisters through the Divine Office.

## 2.5 Recovering Richeza's Agency

In the history of medieval art, the reputations of some patrons and owners precede the artworks they commissioned. The Duke of Berry's richly illuminated books, for instance, lie always in the shadow of the duke's outsized personality; he was an aesthete with a loose and mismanaged money purse, and his lavish books, in their varying stages of excess and completion, seem bound to reflect that. The *Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux*, with its intimate size and precious drawings, is so closely understood in terms of the biography of the young queen who likely owned it that it can hardly be understood otherwise. So too can the manuscripts of Queen Elizabeth Richeza exist in a reflexive relationship with their owner, who appears bound to the margins in both her life and her art. This chapter asked, can the queen's biography tell us anything about these

<sup>74</sup> Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 266.



portraits, or can the portraits tell us anything about the queen's biography? With a little knowledge of Richeza's history, it is tempting to read a certain tragedy in her marginal status within the historiated initials: banished to Brno (an arguably marginal town in the landscape of medieval Bohemia–Moravia) after John of Luxembourg won the crown, the former queen is similarly banished to the outer borders of religious experience in her manuscripts. And the queen's marginal historical status vis-a-vis the rise of the Luxembourg dynasty in fourteenth-century Bohemia is reproduced again in the modern historiography, which never quite finds a proper place for Richeza.

But there may be a way to redeem the queen's agency yet, by considering the donor portraits not as visual analogies of the queen's dogged political status but as well-formulated entries in the long history of monumental aristocratic donor portraiture. The sheer number of donor portraits, both of Richeza and her intimate familiars, indicates a forceful assertion of identity on the part of the queen. And the manner in which Richeza is represented, as divine matriarch and leader of the community that she founded, proffers a powerful agency to the queen that has as yet been ignored.

### 3.0 Patronage and the Passional, beyond Kunigunde

In the previous chapter it was shown how the agency of a marginalized historical figure can be recuperated by looking carefully at the record of her patronage and the pictorial programs of her books. The literal marginality of Elizabeth Richeza in her manuscripts contributed to the erasure of her patronage. In this chapter, which focuses on one of Richeza's close contemporaries, Abbess Kunigunde (1265–1321) and her Passional (NKČR, XIV.A.17), an opposite picture emerges. Both Kunigunde and her Passional have been evoked in the art historical scholarship (both recent and distant) numerous times and to numerous ends, but most often as proof of late medieval women's devotional agency.<sup>75</sup> The tactile Christological iconography throughout the Passional centering on the *arma Christi* and Christ's side wound evince the personal affective piety that took hold in the later Middle Ages (fig. 3.1). Kunigunde has often been imagined at the center

<sup>75</sup> The most recent monographic studies of the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* are, in English, Jennifer S. Vlček Schurr, "The Passional of Abbess Cunegund: Protagonist, Production, and Questions of Identity," (MPhil[R] Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2009); and, in German, Gia Toussaint, *Das Passional der Kunigunde von Böhmen: Bildtheoretik und Spiritualität* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003). Prior to Toussaint's study, there was a gulf of about thirty years between it and the most recent monographic investigation of the Passional: Emma Urbánková and Karel Stejskal, *Pasionál Přemyslovný Kunhuty = Passional Abbatissae Cunegundis* (Prague, 1975); and about fifty years prior to that, Antonín Matějček, *Pasionál abatyše Kunhuty* (Prague: Jan Stenic, 1922). Numerous studies throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries cite the Passional, some in great detail. The first extended discussion in the scholarly literature of the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* appeared in Gelasius Dobner, *Monementa historica Bohemiae*, vol. 6 (Prague: Literis Joannis Josephi Claser, Regii Typographi, 1785).

of this, both as the conceptualizer and as the viewer.<sup>76</sup> The artistic quality of the manuscript's paintings, furthermore, has been cited as unprecedented, especially for early fourteenth-century Bohemia, and the *Passional*—and Kunigunde by proxy—are credited with ushering in a new pictorial mode in manuscript and panel painting that is uniquely Bohemian and portends the so-called Beautiful Style.

This chapter separates the pictorial force and stylistic ingenuity of the *Passional* from Kunigunde herself, arguing that Kunigunde's role in shaping the manuscript was less direct than has been asserted and that the *Passional* cannot really be used as an index for Kunigunde's agency. It starts by bringing Kunigunde and Richeza together in their early fourteenth-century Bohemian context and shows that the two women shared history and an artistic legacy. Despite their shared history, the two women were very different kinds of patrons, and their respective manuscripts clearly envision that difference. The chapter then dissects the visual language of the *Passional*'s dedicatory page, arguing that the artist called upon older donor portrait types than what we find in Richeza's books. Bearing in mind the visual evidence, I then consider the dedicatory language of the inscriptions, both in the *Passional* and in the earlier books commissioned by Kunigunde for Saint George's convent. Together, the dedicatory language and illuminations show that Kunigunde was certainly dead before the creation of the dedication portrait, and likely had less involvement with the pictorial and textual programs of the *Passional* than has previously been surmised. The nuns at Saint George's convent, along with the canons at Saint George's abbey, are offered as the

<sup>76</sup> Vlček Schurr, "The *Passional* of Abbess Cunegund," places her squarely as conceptualizer; and Touissant, *Das Passional der Kunigunde*, also considers her as a viewer.

Passional's intended audience, who form a network of patronage and use that extends far beyond Kunigunde alone.

### 3.1 Kunigunde and Richeza: History and Historiography

While both Kunigunde's *Passional* and Richeza's corpus of manuscripts have been recognized as important early works of Gothic manuscript illumination in Bohemia, they are discussed in the secondary literature as if they were created in isolation from each other. Their purported influence on the history of Czech painting are characterized as utterly different: where Richeza's books mimicked outmoded styles from France and England, Kunigunde's *Passional* ushered in an entirely new mode of iconographic and pictorial representation.<sup>77</sup> Against the narrative of Elizabeth Richeza, a queen marginalized in her manuscripts, by her political circumstances, and through modern historiography, the Abbess Kunigunde serves as an illuminating foil. Where Richeza is mostly relegated to the margins of her manuscripts, Kunigunde is central, larger-than-life. Where, on the surface, Richeza appears to have been used as a political pawn in her married life and after, Kunigunde held a privileged status as a Přemyslid princess and abbess of Saint George's Convent in Prague. And where Richeza has all but been forgotten in modern scholarship on early fourteenth-century Bohemian art, Kunigunde's manuscript has been singled out and revered as a shining example of medieval women's artistic agency and mystical

<sup>77</sup> Albert Kotal, *Gothic Art in Bohemia and Moravia* (London: Hamlyn, 1971), spares no praise for the *Passional*. Even though he maps it as the progenitor of a great lineage in Bohemian Gothic manuscript painting, he qualifies: "none of these derivations has the excellent quality of the *Passional*" (35).

devotion. But there is, in fact, significant confluence in the details of their biographies, similarities that reveal affinities also in their manuscripts, inviting us to reconsider their disparate treatment in current art historical literature.

Richeza and Kunigunde were in fact sisters-in-law. The daughter of Přemysl Otakar II (ca. 1233–1278), King of Bohemia from 1253–1278, Kunigunde was also the sister of Wenceslas II, Richeza's first husband. As described in the previous chapter, one of the main motivating influences behind Wenceslas's marriage to Richeza was the access to the Polish crown that she provided to the King of Bohemia. Prior to his marriage to Richeza, though, Wenceslas had arranged for his sister Kunigunde to marry Count Boleslav II of Mazovia in 1291, with a similar aim of gaining access to the Polish throne through marriage. The couple divorced in 1302, however, and it was after that that Wenceslas sought marriage to Polish princess Richeza to maintain his ties to the north.

Both Richeza and Kunigunde were chess pieces in the Přemyslid succession crisis that arose after the death of Wenceslas II. Richeza had claim to the Bohemian throne through her marriage to Wenceslas II, and Kunigunde through her direct Přemyslid lineage. But by the time of Wenceslas's death, Kunigunde had already been living in the convent of Saint George in the Prague castle complex for three years, serving as the community's abbess practically from the moment of her arrival in 1302.<sup>78</sup> Just as the political threat that Richeza posed to John of

<sup>78</sup> Kunigunde also saw after the education of her niece, the young Elizabeth Přemyslid, at Saint George between 1305 and 1310, prior to Elizabeth's marriage to John of Luxembourg and ascendance to the Bohemian queenship. Elizabeth entered into Kunigunde's care in the same year that her father (Kunigunde's brother), Wenceslas II, died.

Luxembourg lessened as she settled into conventual life in Brno, so, too, did Kunigunde's as she took the veil at Saint George.

That both women also left behind illuminated devotional manuscripts is also significant, and the ways that these manuscripts may have influenced the development of a Czech school of manuscript painting has been taken up by the modern art historical literature a number of times.<sup>79</sup> The *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* has been studied with far greater interest and has been imputed with broader significance in terms of its supposed influence on the dissemination of style and iconography in Bohemia. The illustration program of the *Passional* is undeniably more coherent as a *program* than that found in any of the Richeza manuscripts. Each tract of the *Passional* contains multiple full-page illustrations. Where the miniatures of the Richeza corpus are scattered across the many volumes and mostly confined to the initials and borders, in a sense emphasizing or magnifying the text, the Kunigunde miniatures convey a narrative of their own—they work both alongside and separate from the text.

But it is not the narrative force or coherence of their respective illustration programs that accounts for the different ways they have been treated in the secondary literature. Rather, for the last century or so scholars with an eye toward connoisseurship have argued that the *Passional* is stylistically more significant than the Richeza corpus. Although Richeza and Kunigunde and their respective books are sometimes cited together as contemporaries, it is always the *Passional* that is singled out for praise for the deftness of the illumination and for what some scholars view as the

<sup>79</sup> See especially Bachman, *Gothic Art in Bohemia*; and Kutal, *Gothic Art in Bohemia and Moravia*. This tracking of stylistic “influence” that Bachman and Kutal do is quite problematic. Their approach fits squarely into earlier art historical methodologies that sought to trace stylistic evolution over time and to identify those pivotal works of art that likely served as precedents for future works.

stylistic influence the manuscript had on future works of book illumination and panel painting in Bohemia and beyond. In 1971, Albert Kutal described the miniatures as “genuinely outstanding painting . . . The work shows a master of rhythmical line drawing, a feeling for volume and an aptitude for depicting complex movement and expressing emotional content with great skill. . . . The main characteristic is a soft, smooth-flowing line which expresses many symbolic meanings and fills the picture with human emotions.”<sup>80</sup> Influences on the Passional’s illuminations have been identified as “international” by numerous sources,<sup>81</sup> and its iconography has in the more recent literature been posited as directly inaugurating the devotional use of the image of Christ’s side wound.<sup>82</sup>

But it is nearly impossible to say whether the manuscripts were received and valued differently at the time of their creation for their artistic or stylistic qualities. More likely the difference in the reception of the manuscripts would have rested on their institutional affiliations and geographic locations—the Richeza corpus was made and remained in Brno at a newly

<sup>80</sup> Kutal, *Gothic Art in Bohemia and Moravia*, 33.

<sup>81</sup> Arthur Saliger, “Das Prager Kunigunden-Passionale und der Meister der Wiener Passions-Reliefs,” in *King John of Luxembourg (1296–1346) and the Art of his Era*, Proceedings of the International Conference, Prague, September 16–20, 1996, 230–37 (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1998), 230; and Kutal, *Gothic Art in Bohemia and Moravia*, 33.

<sup>82</sup> See Alexa Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation in Late Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 247; Flora Lewis, “The Wound in Christ’s Side and the Instruments of the Passion: Gendered Experience and Response,” in Lesley Smith, ed., *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, 204–229 (London: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 1997), 211; and Margaret M. Manion, “Women, Art and Devotion: The Three French Fourteenth-Century Royal Prayer Books,” in Margaret M. Manion and Bernard J. Muir, eds., *The Art of the Book: Its Place in Medieval Worship*, 21–66 (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1998), 22.

established and relatively provincial convent, whereas the *Passional* was made and used at the well-established royal convent on the Hradčany in Prague, a context that would have provided more money and resources for manuscripts and works of art. But the *Passional* is small (25 x 30 cm, or about 10 x 12 in), and its precise use—whether in public masses or in private devotion—is unclear, while the *Richeza* corpus comprises numerous large-scale books that would have certainly been used during public or semi-public masses. Nevertheless, the speculative reception in the Middle Ages is of little concern here; what we can say for certain is that the two women's books have been valued very differently in modern literature. The only instance where they were given relatively equal representation was in the 1958 exhibition of archival material put on by the Czechoslovak state at Prague Castle.<sup>83</sup> The *Passional* and the Brno Antiphony (MS M 7) from the *Richeza* corpus were presented side-by-side as shining examples of the development of the medieval “art of writing” [Rozvoj písarského umění] in Bohemia. And it was the *Richeza* Lectionary, not the *Passional*, whose miniature was cut and stolen during that exhibition, suggesting that, to this particular art thief at least, the Lectionary was more artistically appealing in mid-century Czechoslovakia.

Returning to the actual artistic milieu of early fourteenth-century Bohemia, there is evidence that both Kunigunde and *Richeza* orbited around similar groups of artists, that Kunigunde herself was not exclusively privy to more international styles in Prague, that the *Passional* did not mark some totalizing shift in the progression of the so-called Czech school of miniature painting.

<sup>83</sup> *Celostátní výstava archivních dokumentů: Od hrdinné minulosti k vítězství socialismu* [The national exhibition of archival documents: from the heroic past to the victory of socialism], exh. cat. (Prague: Ministerstvo Unutra, 1958), discussed more fully in the preceding chapter.



There is possibly a direct artistic connection between Kunigunde and Richeza in the form of a reliquary plenary (fig. 3.2) that was made for Saint George's between 1306 and 1310, which is to say sometime toward the middle of Kunigunde's tenure and before the Passional was begun.<sup>84</sup> The reliquary is adorned with two miniatures painted on vellum and set beneath rock crystal sheets, one of which shows two female figures standing on either side of a *Gnadenstuhl*, or throne of mercy (fig. 3.3). The women have been variously identified in the secondary literature. Anežka Merhautová and Karel Stejskal identify them as Kunigunde on the right and on the left her niece Elizabeth Přemyslid (i.e., the wife of John of Luxembourg and Richeza's step-daughter).<sup>85</sup> More recent scholarship, picking up on the faintly etched haloes not visible in the earlier black-and-white reproductions, identifies the women as Saint Ludmila on the right accompanied by an unidentified female saint on the left.<sup>86</sup> The faintly etched haloes are not incontrovertible evidence that these two women are saints; one might also anticipate other, more obvious attributes to signify their sanctity, and those are absent here. There is also the distinct possibility that these representations were intentionally ambiguous: they could evoke both Ludmilla/Kunigunde and young female saint/Elizabeth Přemyslid, as a way of visually enforcing the *beata stirps* of the Přemyslid line at a moment of dynastic crisis.

<sup>84</sup> Anežka Merhautová and Karel Stejskal, *St-Georgs-Stift auf der Prager Burg* (Prague, Obelisk, 1991), 58. Although the catalog entry for the plenary in catalog for the exhibition *Open the Gates of Paradise* (Prague, Národní galerie, 2014) complicates this, suggesting that certain parts of the goldsmithing were made in the thirteenth century and that the vellum miniatures could have been painted as late as 1330. See *Open the Gates of Paradise: The Benedictines in the Heart of Europe*, exh. cat. (Prague: The National Gallery, 2015), cat. no. VI.45.

<sup>85</sup> Merhautová and Stejskal, *St-Georgs-Stift*, 59.

<sup>86</sup> *Open the Gates of Paradise*, 328.

The composition of the plenarium Gnadenstuhl directly mirrors that of the Gnadenstuhl found on fol. 119r of the Vienna book of Collects (Cod. 1813) from the Richeza Corpus (fig. 3.4). Although the current state of conservation on the Vienna Gnadenstuhl makes it difficult to assess whether the same artist painted both miniatures, it is clear based on composition alone that one was referred to in order to paint the other or that both were based on the same model. Both show a fully frontal seated God the Father, forearms outstretched to support the weight of the capital-T-shaped cross bearing Christ's dead and limp body. The geometry of Christ's body most clearly suggests that the miniatures share a point of reference; the severe bend in his knees and heavily slumped head create a deep collapse in the torso, more clearly articulated in the Vienna example. The Holy Spirit is present in both as a dove diving downward toward Christ's head from God's mouth. The similarity of these two miniatures becomes more apparent when compared to contemporary French and English examples, which show a tendency toward a beardless God the Father and more enlivened crucified Christ.

It also seems that throughout the fourteenth century the Gnadenstuhl was an important symbol to the Přemyslid royalty. The so-called *Zbraslav Chronicle*, written in the first half of the fourteenth century with amended illustration later in the century, instructively contextualizes the iconographic significance of the Gnadenstuhl. One folio of drawings inserted at the beginning of the chronicle depicts on each side two registers of Czech dynastic lineage, the Přemyslids on the recto and the Luxembourgs on the verso (figs. 3.5 and 3.6).<sup>87</sup> This folio was added at the end of

<sup>87</sup> On fol. 6r: Ottakar II, Wenceslas II, and Wenceslas III, and beneath them, Kunigunde (wife of Ottakar; mother of Abbess Kunigunde), Guta of Habsburg, and Elizabeth Richeza (both married to Wenceslas III); and on 6v: Henry II, John of Luxembourg, and Charles IV, and below them, Margaret of Brabant (wife of Henry II, mother of

the fourteenth century and demonstrates the continued Luxembourg reverence for their Přemyslid predecessors. On the top left of the Přemyslid side, accompanying the men, a Gnadenstuhl is shown (coincidentally very similar to the plenarium and Richeza examples, but of course much later); at the bottom, the women of the Přemyslid line are accompanied by the *Anna Selbdritt*, an iconographic type representing Anne with the Virgin Mary on her right knee and the infant Christ on her left. The Luxembourgs, appearing on the opposite side of the same page, receive no such accompaniments.

Both the Gnadenstuhl and the Anna Selbdritt convey the notion important in the later Middle Ages of holy lineage, or *beata stirps*. The Gnadenstuhl not only conveys the tripartite nature of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit simultaneously conveyed) but also the father-son relationship of God and Christ. A Gnadenstuhl from one of the Richeza manuscripts makes the connection very explicit—God is shown holding the crucified Christ in his lap in much the same way that the Virgin is typically shown holding the infant Christ in images of the Madonna and Christ enthroned (fig. 3.7); the image is intimate and playful, not the severe frontality characteristic of other depictions of the Gnadenstuhl. The familial intimacy of the Anna Selbdritt is typically more explicit, and indeed the Zbraslav example is no exception: Anne holds the Virgin and Christ upon each knee, the Virgin as diminutive as Christ and holding between them a *globus cruciger*. There's an obvious gendered division playing out on this page as well. The Přemyslid men are accompanied by the depiction of holy male lineage, while the women are accompanied by a feminine equivalent. The implications are perhaps obvious but worth stating nonetheless: the Holy

John of Luxembourg); Elizabeth Přemyslid (first wife of John of Luxembourg), and Anna Svídnická (third wife of Charles IV).

Family set the divine precedent as rulers of heaven, and the Přemyslids were their earthly instantiation. What's more, women provided the material means for salvation, whereas men provided the spiritual impetus.

The later-fourteenth-century *Zbraslav Chronicle* (see figs. 3.5 and 3.6) and the more contemporary Saint George plenarium (see figs. 3.2 and 3.3) demonstrate how important certain iconographic schemes were to the Czech dynastic lineages during the century, and that Kunigunde and Richeza claimed the same artistic lineage, both iconographically and stylistically. The proposed date for the plenary places its miniature just a few years before Richeza's Vienna Collects, and may, therefore, indicate that Richeza called an artist from Prague who had worked for Kunigunde to lead the artistic program on her manuscripts in Brno. In addition to showing the long-term significance of the Gnadenstuhl to the Bohemian royalty, the example of the later *Zbraslav Chronicle* illustrated folio also underlines how important Richeza was to the conception of a Czech dynastic lineage in the fourteenth century—she was the last true Přemyslid queen and is esteemed as such alongside other Přemyslid queens and kings. Though she held a very privileged status during her lifetime as the abbess of Saint George's convent on the Hradčany in Prague, Kunigunde was rather insignificant in terms of fourteenth-century dynastic developments, which were of utmost concern to a historically marginalized region like Bohemia.

### **3.2 Donor Portraits as Evidence**

We have already seen quite clearly how donor portraits were devised for the patron-qua-owner in the manuscript corpus of Elizabeth Richeza. These manuscripts are precise contemporaries of the Kunigunde's richly illustrated book and were created in an artistic milieu

that had a great deal of overlap with that of the *Passional*. Although one was made in the imperial sphere of Prague's Hradčany and the other in the comparatively provincial sphere of the budding convent at Aula Sanctae Mariae in Old Brno, artists and expertise appear to have moved freely between them. Richeza lived to use her books or to see her books used by the community of nuns, and her prayerful likeness is clearly and repeatedly embedded in the books she commissioned. Her portrait aligns with the more active French types that Alexa Sand identifies as appearing in French and English books in the mid-thirteenth century and flourishing throughout the fourteenth. In this mode, the donor is removed from the hierarchic structures of the dedication page, signifying the act of prayer to the viewer as they maintain a close proximity to the holy scenes that play out in the painted miniatures. Richeza's prayerful likeness appears frequently, perched on the edges of initials, peering into the sacred space, and even becoming a part of the sacred as she is shown reading the divine office. Kunigunde, on the other hand, only appears for certain on the dedicatory page, and she is shown not as the owner-user of the book, but more properly as its donor-impetus. This distinction, between portraits representing book users and those representing the person to whom the book is dedicated (and who perhaps financed the book) has been more recently explicated in scholarship on medieval women's patronage.<sup>88</sup>

Kunigunde's and Richeza's manuscripts cast their participation in the production and consumption of their books in strikingly different ways. Where Richeza is balanced on the edges of the historiated initials, seeing the holy image play out before her eyes and being seen by the book's viewer (who may have been Richeza herself), Kunigunde is memorialized in her

<sup>88</sup> Most thoroughly in the recent scholarship by Alexa Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 8–12.

monumentality and frontality (fig. 3.8). The type of donor portrait used for Kunigunde has more in common with much earlier types that can be found not only in books but also on other liturgical structures and regalia, sculpted into cathedral portals and incised on the backs of processional crosses. The monumentality of Kunigunde in combination with the diminutive stature of Colda and Beneš especially suggests that the maker of the Passional page was referencing a donor portrait type that was developed centuries earlier. In this early donor portrait scheme, the larger, central figure is always a saint or holy personage, such as the Madonna. They are the figure to whom the book is dedicated. The object's "donor" is almost always smaller, almost always kneeling in supplication; it is a manner of hieratic scale that does not always perfectly reflect actual power structures.

Take, for example, the dedication page from the eleventh-century *Uta Codex* (Clm. 13601, Bavarian State Library, Munich) (fig. 3.9). Although the geometric scaffolding of the page is quite different from the more pared-down scheme of the Passional's dedicatory portrait, the act of donation is shown in strikingly similar terms. Uta, though not exactly kneeling, is depicted in supplication beneath an enthroned Madonna as Queen of Heaven with an infant Christ seated in her lap, to whom she proffers a golden codex. Like Kunigunde's, the Madonna's body remains rigidly frontal, while her head turns to view the diminutive donor beneath her. The physical separation between Uta and the Madonna and Christ on the page visualizes the status difference between them: the Madonna and Christ in a heavenly space, Uta in an earthly realm. While the spatial organization of the Passional's dedication page is not quite so explicit, the architectonic framing around Kunigunde and the lower ground line on which Colda and Beneš kneel does imply a categorical difference in their respective statuses. Although the *Uta Codex* is a few centuries older than the Passional, late medieval people, especially in monastic and aristocratic settings,

would have been familiar with Ottonian works of manuscript painting and other rich liturgical objects. Although hieratic scale in donor portraits was more or less outmoded by the fourteenth century, patrons and artists did still look toward these prestigious, antique examples for inspiration.

The architectural framing around Kunigunde places her in a heavenly space, which is made explicit by the inscription beneath the angel on the upper left-hand side of Kunigunde. It reads: *Mundum sprevisisti regnum terrestris liquisti* [You scorned the world and left the kingdom of the earth].<sup>89</sup> While this inscription could be interpreted as a metaphor for cloistered living in dedication to Christ, it is more likely a literal recording of the fact of Kunigunde's death. The folio containing the dedicatory portrait is a pastedown, meaning that it was likely conceived of and added after all other quires had been gathered and bound, either at the initial binding or perhaps at a later re-binding.<sup>90</sup> The simple wooden cover boards are consistent with early- to mid-fourteenth-century bookbinding processes, and their simplicity has been interpreted as evidence that Kunigunde was not alive at the time of the binding. The implication is that Kunigunde would have invested more money into the cover of her luxurious book, and the simple covers were furnished as a matter of

<sup>89</sup> Transcription and translation per Jennifer Vlček Schurr, "The Dedication Illustration of the 'Passional of Abbess Cunegund' and Questions of Identity," in Sandra Cardaerelli, Emily Jane Anderson, and John Richards, eds., *Art and Identity: Visual Culture, Politics, and Religion in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, 193–218 (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 195. The inscription beneath the angel on the right reads: *Felici dono jam te premiando corono* / I bestow on you a blessed crown as a reward; per *ibid.*, 195.

<sup>90</sup> The spine, however, is consistent with a later re-binding. See Vlček Schurr, "The Passional of Abbess Cunegund," 27.

practicality.<sup>91</sup> There is visible evidence of repeated rubbing on and around Kunigunde's face, suggesting that her likeness was touched and kissed, almost certainly after her death.<sup>92</sup> This is all to say that the *Passional* bound as we know it today was almost certainly not available to Kunigunde. While she may have been invested in the project on a number of levels, and perhaps viewed and read the separate treatises as they were completed, she may not have conceived of the manuscript as an independent whole. Her outsized likeness is by no means an index of her direct involvement in the manuscript—it primarily indicates that she was held in great esteem, that the book was dedicated to her but not necessarily used by her.

<sup>91</sup> Urbánková and Stejskal, *Pasionál Přemyslovny Kunhuty*, 15–16, suggest that Kunigunde would have never received the completed manuscript. According to the chronology and analysis set out by Vlček Schurr, “The *Passional* of Abbess Cunegund,” 19–21, the *Passional* was assembled in a piecemeal fashion, with multiple years passing between the various sections. But Vlček Schurr does not see in this slow process a lack of interest or investment in the project on Kunigunde's part, or evidence that the *Passional* was incomplete at her death. Rather she believes “that the work was complete as it was intended to be and that it would have been in use within the convent for several years prior to Cunegund's death in 1321” (25).

<sup>92</sup> Such actions left physical marks on the manuscripts, such as paint smudging and fading and deposits of oil and dirt. Kissing rituals were carried out in both public and private, by both the clergy and the laity. Kathryn M. Rudy has very recently discussed the ritualized rubbing and handling that took place with the *Passional*. See Kathryn M. Rudy, “Touching the Book Again: The *Passional* of Abbess Kunigunde of Bohemia,” in *Codex and Material*, ed. Patrizia Carmassi and Gia Toussaint (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2018), 247–58; and for more general discussions of ritualized touching, see Rudy, “Dirty Books: Quantifying Patterns of Use In Medieval Manuscripts Using a Densitometer,” *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 2 (2010): 1–44; and Rudy “Kissing Images, Unfurling Rolls, Measuring Wounds, Sewing Badges, and Carrying Talismans: Considering Some Harley Manuscripts through Physical Rituals They Reveal,” *Electronic British Library Journal* (2011), article 5, 1–56.



### 3.3 Reconsidering Kunigunde's Agency as Patron

The Passional's now-famous dedication page is undoubtedly striking, especially for the agency lent by the page's visual hierarchy to Kunigunde. The largest figure on the page, Kunigunde sits regally at its center upon an acanthus throne, golden crozier in her left hand, and right hand extended toward the book being offered to her. Above her, two nimbed angels dip out of the tracery of the Gothic arch to place a golden crown upon her head. The next largest figures are the nuns who stand on the right of the page, elegantly swaying in unison with heads cocked toward Kunigunde but seemingly looking down at the book being gifted to their abbess. Each nun whose body is visible to the viewer cradles a book in her left arm, visually very similar to the book being proffered to Kunigunde. At the far-right edge of this group, a small nun stands, fitting neatly in the crook of the neighboring figure's S-curve.<sup>93</sup> She is only slightly smaller than the two male figures who kneel at the left-hand edge of the page. Closest to Kunigunde is a Dominican monk, with black hooded robe and tonsure, who delivers the above-mentioned book with his right hand and with his left allows a long, red-lettered banderole to unfurl upward. Behind him, another

<sup>93</sup> There is a red inscription extending along the lower right-hand edge of the page by this figure that reads: *Nonna perhta dominae abbatissae filiae regis gnatta*. There is a longstanding argument in the Passional literature about whether *gnatta* [daughter] is in fact *gnana* [drawf]. Per Vlček Schurr, Urbánková and Stejskal, *Pasionál Přemyslovny Kunhuty*, 12, read it as *gnana*. Vlček Schurr argues that the nun's small size was meant to indicate her filial relationship to Kunigunde. A similar visual strategy is used in Hedwig's family portrait (JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 10v; here fig. 4.4), where all of her children are depicted slightly smaller than Hedwig, and there are two extra-diminutive figures meant to represent grandchildren and especially young children.

tonsured male figure kneels, this one a bit smaller, with hands clasped and head tilted upward to gaze at Kunigunde's face.

The power of this composition clearly lies with abbess Kunigunde and her nuns. Not only are they dominant in terms of their size, they also visually dominate through their uniformity, dressed in the same flowing black robe with a stiff cape and black veil. Where the two observant males appear as discreet individuals, the nuns appear as a group; the hierarchy leans decidedly in their favor. Vlček Schurr indicates that Kunigunde's dominant size "stresses her role not only as convent abbess, but as a Bohemian princess."<sup>94</sup> And indeed the accompanying heraldry and inscriptions on the dedication page emphasize her political position as Přemyslid royalty. The red inscription on the upper left-hand side of the page reads:

*CHUNEGUNDIS / abbatissa monasterii / sancti georgii in  
castro / pragensi serenissimi / boemiae regis domini / Ottacari  
secundi / filia*

Kunigunde, the most serene abbess of the monastery of Saint George in the citadel of Prague, and the daughter of His Majesty Otakar II the King of Bohemia.<sup>95</sup>

Kunigunde's political status certainly secured her position as abbess at Saint George, but whether that status also conferred privileges capable of overcoming the entrenched gendered hierarchies of the Benedictine monastic life is another question entirely.

<sup>94</sup> Jennifer Vlček Schurr, "Dedication Illustration," 195.

<sup>95</sup> Transcription and translation thanks to Vlček Schurr, "Dedication Illustration," 195.

Pointing to Kunigunde's elevated status as an imperial abbess in Prague, recent scholarship on the *Passional* has at times assumed and even explicitly stated that Kunigunde held a great deal of sway in determining the appearance and contents of the *Passional* itself. The most recent scholar to write on the *Passional* in English, Kathryn Rudy places the appearance of the dedicatory page and its later reception squarely in Kunigunde's hands:

Kunigunde used manuscript patronage in order to demonstrate her status and that of the Benedictine convent she headed. She commissioned this manuscript as a part of her project to expand the conventual library. She secured her legendary status through the texts and imagery in this manuscript by presenting herself in a central, unmissable position: she appears on the dedication miniature, which serves as a frontispiece.<sup>96</sup>

Rudy's assumes here that Kunigunde masterminded her legacy through the *Passional*, but the dedicatory portrait does not actually evidence such firsthand involvement. Rather, it presents Kunigunde as the quasi-saintly person to whom the book is dedicated, as the individual who intercedes on behalf of the book's real patron/maker, Colda of Coldice, not the person who made or used the book. Based on the visual evidence of the dedication page, and the textual evidence of the dedications in both the *Passional* and other books in the Saint George library commissioned by Kunigunde, the following section gives a richer picture of Kunigunde's involvement in the creation and consumption of the *Passional*.

<sup>96</sup> Rudy, "Touching the Book again," 250.

As an imperial abbess, Kunigunde exercised a great deal of power. She would have overseen property owned by the church and individuals under its jurisdiction and made important structural and mundane decisions about the goings-on at Saint George. From very early in her tenure at the convent, Kunigunde concerned herself with building up the library through book commissions. Based on their inscriptions, she is certain to have gifted at least five books to Saint George other than the Passional, none of which were illustrated, and many of which must have been made concurrently with the Passional.<sup>97</sup> The dedications all emphasize Kunigunde as creator-agent. For example, the dedication in NKČR XIII. E.14c reads:

*Anno dominice incarnationis M.CCC.III. venerabilis  
domina Chungundis, abbatissa monasterii sancti Georgii in castro  
Pragensi, magnifici Bohemiae regis domini Otthakari secundi filia  
istud volumen....comparuit et contulit ecclesiae sancti Georgii,  
benedictionis sue anno secundo....*

In the year of the Lord's incarnation 1303, the venerable Mistress Cunegund, abbess of the Convent of Saint George in the citadel of Prague, daughter of the magnificent Lord Otakar II, king

<sup>97</sup> Those books include NKČR XII E.14c (1303; Writings of Saints Bernard and Bonaventura); NKČR XIV D 13 (1306; psalter); NKČR XII D 10 (1310); NKČR XIV E 10 (1312; varia); and XII D 11 (1318; orationes). See Vlček Schurr, "Appendix IV: Surviving Codices from 14<sup>th</sup> Century Library of the Convent of St. George during the Incumbency of Abbess Cunegund," in "The Passional of Abbess Cunegund," 103.

of Bohemia, collected and compiled this volume for the Church of Saint George, in the second year of her benediction.<sup>98</sup>

This inscription emphasizes Kunigunde's agency, asserting that she "collected and compiled" the contents of the manuscript. Whether and to what extent these verbs reflect the reality of the situation—did she physically select, copy, and bind the texts, or did she merely order the work—is of lesser concern here. We know that, in the Middle Ages, the person who directed or paid for the work could be considered a sort of "maker," and this inscription suggests that Kunigunde was considered as such in the creation of this book.

The tenor of the dedicatory language in the *Passional*, however, is decidedly different, as it puts forward compiler Colda as one of the primary agents in the book's creation.

*Suscipe dictata de regum semine nata, ad laudem Christi que  
me dictare fecisti, de sponso plura sub militis apta figura*

Receive these written things, daughter from the seed of kings, which you had me write in praise of Christ, many things about the bridegroom in the fitting guise of a soldier.<sup>99</sup>

This is the inscription that can be read on the banderole unfurling from Colda's hand on the dedicatory portrait. As it accompanies the act of donation taking place visually on the page, this text emphasizes the act of Kunigunde's reception of the text and Colda's role in realizing her desires. Colda registers here as the "maker" in a very direct way, and Kunigunde as maker-qua-

<sup>98</sup> Transcription of the Latin and English translation from Vlček Schurr, "The *Passional* of Abbess Cunegund," 42.

<sup>99</sup> Vlček Schurr, "The *Passional* of Abbess Cunegund," 18.

impetus: she initiated the creation of the *Passional*, and Colda saw to its material realization. Other dedicatory language in the *Passional* also emphasizes Colda's part in the making of the manuscript, namely, that he is working on Kunigunde's behalf to realize her request. He writes in especially literary terms on folio 31r:

*Ignose michi Paulam te nomino / quae sanctae Paulae  
parificaris studio. Illa die / noctuque fletibus poenae cecata crebis  
orationibus invigilans vacabat attentissime studiis / lectionem  
instigabat ad librorum translationem sanctum jeronimum. Tu  
longis orationibus decursis lectionibus fatigata assiduis / quedam  
conpingere opuscula me conpettis*

Forgive me that I call you Paula as you are one who is made equal to Saint Paula in devotion. During the day and night, punishing herself with tears, she stayed awake in long conversations, and made time for attentive studies in books and instigated a translation of the books, by Saint Jerome. You go through long speeches and, (although you are) tired by frequent reading, you require me to depict some small work.<sup>100</sup>

That Colda should identify Kunigunde with Saint Paula and himself with Saint Jerome allows even further insight into the way their creative relationship was envisioned, if not by both Kunigunde and Colda then at least by Colda. It is not merely that this passage signals Kunigunde's role as impetus for the creation of the *Passional*. Rather, it creates a holy precedent for the pair;

<sup>100</sup> Vlček Schurr, "The *Passional* of Abbess Cunegund," 19–20.

the relationship that Jerome had to Paula as her spiritual advisor is mirrored by Colda and Kunigunde. And it is no small fact that Colda should equate himself, however obtusely, with Jerome, whose prolific oeuvre of early Church writings and letters was unsurpassed and was held up as the highest example of exegetical writing. Latent in this inscription is Colda's self-valuation as spiritual advisor and author. Like Paula, Kunigunde is his wealthy, intelligent, and fiercely devout pupil who desires books and scriptures that only Colda could provide.

Never in the *Passional*, as we see in the unillustrated books that Kunigunde commissioned for the conventual library, is the primary making verb attributed to Kunigunde herself; the creation is always mediated through Colda. Although Kunigunde clearly enacted her agency through the commissioning of books for the conventual library (and certainly through other official and daily tasks), there were also numerous rights and responsibilities that she would have been denied, merely by dint of her female sex. Namely, she could not spiritually minister to the community of nuns at Saint George, meaning that she could not deliver the Mass or any of the sacraments, like confession, communion, or extreme unction.<sup>101</sup> For that, a male advisor would need to be brought in. In addition to the communal ministry, this advisor would have helped to shape and guide the personal spiritual life of the female religious in his charge. By interpreting Biblical texts and glosses, the advisor in many ways dictated both the interior reception and the outward expression of religious devotion. As Jeffrey Hamburger reminds his readers: "We must not forget that, above all else, the *cura monialium* was designed to ensure that women and the images produced for them

<sup>101</sup> For a historical overview of when and by what means women were denied the right to minister in the Christian tradition, see Klaus Schreiner, "Pastoral Care in Female Monasteries: Sacramental Services, Spiritual Edification, Ethical Discipline," in *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. by Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti, 225–44 (New York, Columbia University Press, 2008).

were anchored to systems governed by men.”<sup>102</sup> This mediation of information from male spiritual advisor to a female audience is clearly evidence in the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*.

The very book that Colda is shown delivering on the dedication of the *Passional* (i.e. the *Passional* itself) (see fig. 3.8) is perhaps the deepest expression of the extent to which the male advisor could shape and control the religious experience of a female devotee. Here, Colda is not merely guiding the interpretation of a pre-existing text, but devising one from scratch, its contents his unique vision of salvation. There is evidence that Colda was working on this tract well before Kunigunde’s *Passional* was envisioned. Even as it stands in the *Passional*, the text is at times addressed to a male audience, suggesting that he had been delivering this extended meditation on the nature of Christ’s sacrifice to a male audience prior to its codification in the *Passional*,<sup>103</sup> that it is not quite the vision of female devotional agency that the pictorial program might suggest. Thus, the extent to which Kunigunde dictated the shape of Colda’s writing, devising the content of the *Passional* prior to its creation, is brought into question again.

<sup>102</sup> Jeffrey Hamburger, “Art, Enclosure, and the *Cura Monialium*: Prolegomena in the Guise of a Postscript,” *Gesta* 31, no. 2 (1992): 109.

<sup>103</sup> See Vlček Schurr, “The *Passional* of Cunegund,” 76n254, who characterizes this as carelessness on Colda’s behalf (that he passed the unaltered sermon manuscript on to the scribe, Beneš, who would not have caught such errors in the Latin. This does not suggest carelessness to me, but rather a manner of indifference on behalf of both maker and user. Or perhaps further still an acknowledgment that the manuscript would be used by both women and men.



### 3.4 Audience as Agent: The Nuns at Saint George's

This idea that the *Passional* was more properly Colda's than it was Kunigunde's invites closer consideration of the third party for whom the *Passional* held significance: the nuns at Saint Georg's convent. They take up more than a third of the pictorial space in the dedicatory portrait, and they are also envisioned in numerous, sometimes indirect ways, throughout the manuscript. An inspection of the pictorial program beyond the initial dedicatory portrait will expand upon the gendered dichotomies that play out in the *Passional* and flesh out the network of patronage and use at play.

Although the dedicatory language in the *Passional* always emphasizes Colda's relationship to Kunigunde, and Kunigunde's relationship to the book, the community of nuns who would no doubt use the manuscript were at the forefront for the makers of the manuscript, especially for whoever was in charge of the painted program. Pictorial evidence later in the manuscript supports the idea that it was intended for a larger audience of nuns at Saint George. There is not much to support that the *Passional* was made for Kunigunde's personal use and, if it is anything like the other books she commissioned earlier in her life, it was meant for the convent's library, not for Kunigunde herself or for anyone in particular. The image of a Dominican nun kneeling before a risen Christ on folio 7v of the *Passional* illustrates this point (fig. 3.10). In a red inscription which runs below his wounded right hand, Christ says to the Dominican nun kneeling before him: *Aspice vulnera seuque verbera que toleravi* [See the wounds and cruel blows that I have endured].<sup>104</sup> The nun replies, in the red inscription trailing beneath her clasped hands: *Fili christe dei tu*

<sup>104</sup> Transcription of the Latin from Toussaint, *Das Passional der Kunigunde*, 173. Translation my own.

*miserere mei* [O Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me], and beneath the entire scene, the inscription reads: *Queso michi da te totum, ne disgreger a te* [I beseech you, give yourself wholly to me, lest I be separated from you].<sup>105</sup>

This figure has been repeatedly referred to as Kunigunde herself in the literature.<sup>106</sup> There is nothing to suggest, however, either from the inscription or the representation itself, that this is in fact the case. The unspecificity of medieval donor images served a purpose, here and in many devotional books: they could be no one in particular and everyone at once, shifting depending on the viewer.<sup>107</sup> At this important devotional passage in the manuscript, an almost meta-scene that falls between Christ's humiliation and his crucifixion, the viewer is invited to meditate upon the

<sup>105</sup> Transcription and translations of the Latin from Flora Lewis, "The Wound in Christ's Side and the Instruments of the Passion: Gendered Experience and Response," in Lesley Smith and Jane H. M. Taylor, eds., *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, 204–229 (London: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 1996), 212 and 226n34.

<sup>106</sup> Such as Toussaint, *Das Passional der Kunigunde*; Lewis, "The Wound in Christ's Side"; Urbánková and Stejskal, *Pasionál Přemyslovny Kunhuty*, 27; and Jaromír Homolka, "Passionale der Äbtissen Kunigunde und die Kunst des 14. Jahrhunderts in Böhmen," in *King John of Luxembourg (1296–1346) and the Art of his Era, Proceedings of the International Conference, Prague, September 16–20, 1996*, 5–9 (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1998), 7.

<sup>107</sup> Here the portrait/type distinction set out by Steven Perkinson is useful, where the portrait is meant to denote physiognomic likeness and the type, "which use conventional, non-mimetic representational systems to refer to group, rather than individual, identities"; see Steven Perkinson, *The Likeness of the King: A Prehistory of Portraiture in Late Medieval France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 6. The donor types in this dissertation, though not physiognomic likenesses, could refer to both individual and group identities. See also Wright, Georgia Sommers Wright, "The Reinvention of the Portrait Likeness in the Fourteenth Century," *Gesta* 39, no. 2 (2000): 117–34.

salvific force of Christ's passion. This figure is not likely Kunigunde; rather she is more likely a generic type for a female Dominican observant, an image that could have guided both female and male viewers toward an understanding of the devotional significance of Christ's passion.

The idea that femininity could be mobilized toward devotional aims has been well established. Caroline Walker Bynum's groundbreaking *Jesus as Mother* (1982) demonstrated nearly forty years ago that male clerics turned to images of mothering and motherhood with regard to Christ and their communal devotional structures, where such notions came to stand for nurturing and unconditional love as well as for sacrifice and life through death.<sup>108</sup> Another structural devotional metaphor that held a great deal of meaning in the later Middle Ages was bridal mysticism, where devotees imagined their relationship to Christ as a mystical marriage. Such imagery held for both men and women, with the *sponsa*, or bride, of Christ coming to stand for the soul, rather than the physical body, of the devotee. Such imagery is called on at least twice in the *Passional*: first, in the opening treatise of the manuscript, the Parable of the Invincible Knight (fol. 3v), where Christ as heroic knight rescues his bride (the *sponsa*) from prison, releasing her from temptation and servitude (fig. 3.11); and later in the manuscript, Christ leading the *sponsa* to heaven (fol. 18r; fig. 3.12). Although the object of Christ's attention and affection in both scenes is female, it cannot be assumed that such imagery appealed to or was directed at female viewers only. Such imagery provided an avenue for both men and women to envision and embody their devotion to Christ.

<sup>108</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

### 3.5 Networks of Patronage

The Passional's resplendent pictoriality alone in some ways points to a female audience, or at least to an embrace of a feminine spirituality, which, in the later Middle Ages, could in many ways be categorized as visually motivated.<sup>109</sup> Whereas text was the domain of the male preacher and advisor, images were the primary mode of female devotional expression. But, as Jeffrey Hamburger has pointed out, the image-word/female-male dichotomy is too reductive, noting that text informed images in the *cura monialium* and that women devised “countervailing models of their own” in their devotional lives.<sup>110</sup> It is at the point play between the two modes that the iconic image of the male advisor peering in on the female novice who is engulfed in visionary devotional

<sup>109</sup> Foundational scholarship on visibility and women's devotion and the problem of sight in the Middle Ages includes Elizabeth Alvilda Petroff, *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Jeffrey F. Hamburger, “The use of Images in the Pastoral Care of Nuns: The Case of Heinrich of Suso and the Dominican Author(s),” *The Art Bulletin* 71 (1989): 20–46; Hamburger, *The Rotschild Canticles: Art and Mysticism in Flanders and the Rhineland circa 1300* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Petroff, *Body and Soul: Essays on Medieval Women and Mysticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998); Suzannah Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); and Barbara Newman, “What Did It Mean to Say ‘I Saw’? The Clash between Theory and Practice in Medieval Visionary Culture,” *Speculum* 80, no. 1 (2005): 1–43.

<sup>110</sup> See Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary*, 466–67, who says: “To the devotional practice of women, exemplified by images, I have opposed the devotional theory of men, expounded in texts. The two categories, however, are deceptively simple. Devotional conduct and the images on which it was founded were informed by textual apparatus of the *cura monialium*, but male codes of conduct did not define female practice. Nor were women unable to develop countervailing models of their own.”

fervor emerges: where the female novice gains access to the world of text through her male advisor, the advisor gains access to direct vision of the divine through his female ward (fig. 3.13). Something similar could be said to be taking place with the *Passional* itself. Prior to the moment when it was bound as a codex—which is to say, its literal codification—the text of the *Passional* was just that: Colda had devised it in writing and delivered it aurally, but it was not until Kunigunde set in motion the creation of the *Passional* and image accompanied word that the devotional force of the tract could really take shape.

The fact that Kunigunde died sometime before the manuscript was properly bound together or shortly thereafter invites a consideration of the wider network of people for whom the book held meaning. We ought to assume that, even though Kunigunde commissioned the manuscripts nearly ten years before she died, this broad network of users was already in mind when the manuscript was conceived. It also demonstrates an interesting assertion of the collaborative nature of monastic patronage—with the dedication page acknowledging in turn Kunigunde as patron-impetus, Colda and Beneš as patron-maker, and the nuns at Saint George's as patron-reader, each impacting in their own way how the book was made and used.

By broadening the focus to hold in view a full spectrum of individuals and their motivations, we can also begin to consider how Kunigunde and the *Passional* fit in to larger patterns of patronage in early fourteenth century Bohemia. The case of Elizabeth Richeza is especially instructive, as she was Kunigunde's sister-in-law and direct contemporary. Both women also commissioned a group of manuscripts for a monastic space—Richeza the nine manuscripts for *Aula Sanctae Mariae* in Old Brno and Kunigunde the *Passional* plus at least five unillustrated manuscripts for the library at Saint George's convent on the Hradčany in Prague. Where Richeza's donation represents a coherent and forceful assertion of her power and agency and desire for

perpetual memory, Kunigunde's donation was carried out in a piecemeal fashion over the course of more than a decade. The boldness of the Passional's illuminations has been conflated with Kunigunde's own boldness as a patron, but a closer look at the dedicatory language and illustrative program reveals the network of invested individuals behind the manuscript's patronage and use.

#### 4.0 Patron Saints and Sainly Patrons: Imaging Male Interests in the *Hedwig Codex*

In many respects, the *Hedwig Codex* (JPGM, MS Ludwig XI 7), completed in 1353, is a book about female devotion.<sup>111</sup> Saint Hedwig (1174–1243), duchess of Silesia and the manuscript's titular matron, is shown throughout the sixty-plus brightly colored illuminations praying fervently, performing acts of charity and humility, and working miracles. Much of the recent literature on the codex, particularly by North American scholars, has indeed considered its illuminations through the lens of late-medieval women's mysticism. The *Hedwig Codex* as a whole, however, is more than a simple retelling of a local female saint's devotion; it is a multilayered record not only of Hedwig's life but also of the lives and worldviews of the book's patrons and makers. It is also a mirror of the broader cultural and political climate surrounding its creation. A close reading of the images in the codex, particularly of the first four illuminated folios that constitute its introductory pictorial cycle, shows that the lives and concerns of Hedwig's male descendants are in fact foregrounded. This chapter explores the gender tensions that are raised by this observation and examines the ways in which a late medieval book about a thirteenth-century woman can in fact shed light on male experience in fourteenth-century Bohemia.

<sup>111</sup> For essential introductory reading on the *Hedwig Codex*, see Wolfgang Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwig's Codex von 1353* (Berlin: Mann, 1972), a two-volume set including facsimile and commentary. The commentary provides both useful introductory material to Saint Hedwig and the manuscript, as well as a complete transcription of the Latin text with facing German translations.

The four-folio pictorial quire found toward the beginning of the manuscript (fols. 9v–12v) is unique among the other illustrations of the codex. This illuminated gathering contains three main elements, and this chapter will consider each in turn. The first of these elements, Hedwig’s family tree (9v–10r), aptly shows how the political climate surrounding the manuscript’s creation shaped its pictorial contents. The second, eight quasi-narrative scenes on folios 10v–12r, presents an opportunity to look closely at its images in relation to the accompanying captions and other related texts throughout the manuscript. The final element, the grand portrait of Hedwig flanked by her great-great-great-grandson and his wife on the last folio of the quire (fol. 12v), offers interesting parallels to contemporary donor portraits and complicates the subtle gender- and power-plays that are often at work in this type of imagery. This analysis will reveal how the pictorial quire, instead of prefacing Hedwig’s sanctity and devotion, allowed the male patron of the codex to himself make claims to sanctity through his illustrious family lineage. The method involves close looking at the images alongside close reading of the text, revealing the ways in which visual knowledge was constructed in late-medieval manuscripts about family, devotion, and dynasty.

The *Hedwig Codex* was commissioned by Hedwig’s great-great-great-grandson, Ludwig I of Liegnitz (ca. 1321–98), and his wife, Agnes of Glogau (ca. 1321–62). The pair commissioned the manuscript in 1353, and it is just one of Ludwig’s many lavish donations that established Hedwig’s cult in Silesia in the fourteenth century.<sup>112</sup> The codex was initiated in the decade

<sup>112</sup> Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe*, trans. Éva Pálmai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 246. Among these commissions are images of Saint Hedwig in the chapel of Leuben, as well as liturgical props, books, and reliquaries for the church in Trebnitz. See the essay by Josef Krasa and Klaus Kratzsch in Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 12–13, for a further discussion of Ludwig’s commissions.



preceding the centennial of Hedwig's canonization, which took place in 1267 under Pope Clement IV (ca. 1195–1268). The canonization occurred only fourteen short years after Hedwig's death (1243), a speedy but not necessarily unusual for an aristocratic saint in the thirteenth century.<sup>113</sup> As a part of the canonization process, the facts of Hedwig's life, in particular of her spiritual life, were recorded and copied at least once around the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century, and these documents were copied again for inclusion in the *Hedwig Codex* later in the fourteenth century.<sup>114</sup> Her legend relays that prior to her death, Hedwig had been living a life of piety and chastity at Trebnitz Abbey, a convent that she and her husband, Heinrich I (ca. 1165/70–1238), had founded in 1201, and which her daughter, Gertrud, would eventually come to lead as abbess. Hedwig had eight children in all, but she and her husband (at Hedwig's insistence) took a vow of chastity later in life.<sup>115</sup> Her legend also tells of how Hedwig eschewed all of the luxuries afforded to a woman of her station and, despite not taking official vows, was a model of

<sup>113</sup> There were no less than nine aristocratic female saints in Hedwig's extended family alone in the thirteenth century, many of whom were canonized only a few years after their deaths. Hedwig's niece, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, was canonized only four years after her death at the age of twenty-four and quickly became one of the most widely venerated saints of late-medieval Germany. Hedwig was still alive when Elizabeth was canonized. See Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 208.

<sup>114</sup> Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*.

<sup>115</sup> Married couples taking vows of chastity is a commonly cited occurrence in the *vitae* of aristocratic lay saints. The most famous example in medieval Germany is the case of Ottonian Emperor Heinrich II (972–1024) and Cunigunde (c. 975–1040). See Ursula Liebertz-Grün, "Women and Power: On the Socialization of German Noblewomen 1150–1450," *Monatshefte* 82, no. 1 (1990): 17–37.

Christian devotion to all of the women at Trebnitz.<sup>116</sup> Hedwig's highly constructed legend needs to be read critically, as it can be difficult to separate fact from posthumous reputation. Although it has been filtered through this hagiographic agenda, it is nonetheless essential for knowing how Hedwig was understood and received following her death.

The fourteenth-century *Hedwig Codex* contains copies of the thirteenth-century canonization documents (now lost), which are bound along with Hedwig's legend and three additional elements. The fact that the original canonization documents have since disappeared underscores the point that the codex's patron, Ludwig I, was not interested in preserving the authentic, thirteenth-century documents with his commission. Instead, Ludwig must have imagined his commission as a sort of presentation piece, as it was the first copy of the canonization record to have illustrations. The *Hedwig Codex* turned the facts surrounding Ludwig's family saint's canonization into a precious object with fourteenth-century cachet.

The manuscript opens with a seven-folio treatise on Hedwig's ancestors and descendants.<sup>117</sup> This is followed by four folios of illuminations (the subject of this chapter), which can be thought of as pictorial elaborations of the preceding treatise. These first elements were certainly formulated in the fourteenth century.<sup>118</sup> The codex then continues with the *legendas maior* and *minor*, 134 folios of text from Hedwig's legend outlining her acts of devotion and

<sup>116</sup> See Peter Moraw, "Vollständige textkritische Wiedergabe der lateinischen Texte mit deutscher Übersetzung," in Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 53–224.

<sup>117</sup> Folios 2v–8v. The Latin title of the section is: *Tractatus sive speculum genealogie sancta Hedwigis*.

<sup>118</sup> That is, not copied from the original canonization documents. This is obvious because it addresses all of Hedwig's descendants to Ludwig I.

miracle-working.<sup>119</sup> The *legendas* are accompanied by thirteen illustrated folios interspersed throughout the neatly ruled text pages. These illustrated folios all take the same form: two half-page miniatures stacked top-to-bottom on each side of the folio. Following the *legendas* are the canonization record of Pope Clement IV (fols. 149r–158v), the sermon that Pope Clement IV gave for Hedwig’s canonization (fols. 158v–164r), and an explanation of the name of Saint Hedwig (fols. 164v–165r), all likely copies of the original canonization dossier. Four homilies by Bernard of Clairvaux (fols. 168r–203v) on the Annunciation then follow.<sup>120</sup> These are preceded by one folio of four half-page illuminations showing on the recto two scenes of Bernard and his fellow monks (fol. 167r) and on the verso two scenes from the Annunciation (fol. 167v). The last element of the codex is a letter from the scribe, Nikolaus of Poznan, to Ludwig extolling first the virtues

<sup>119</sup> The *legenda maior* is divided into twelve chapters: 1) Her youth, her marriage her love of chastity and austerity; 2) On the humility of the blessed Hedwig; 3) On her patience; 4) On the chaste life of the blessed duchess Hedwig; 5) On the prayer and piety of the blessed Hedwig; 6) How the blessed Hedwig practices mercifulness and charity; 7) On the wonder that the blessed Hedwig performed during her lifetime; 8) On the gift of prophecy; 9) On the death of blessed Hedwig and of the wonders which have come to pass since the time of her return home; 10) On the wonders that have come to pass after the death of the blessed Hedwig; 11) On the canonization of Hedwig and the wonders that came to pass then; 12) On the celebration surrounding the elevation of the blessed Hedwig and of the wonders that came to pass then.

<sup>120</sup> The writings of Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), the famous French abbot who championed the Cistercian order, were widely read across Europe by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Their inclusion in the *Hedwig Codex* warrants further investigation.

of Saint Hedwig at length and then the virtues of Ludwig for having memorialized Hedwig with such a beautiful commission (fols. 204r–v).<sup>121</sup>

Like many medieval manuscripts with lavish decoration programs, the *Hedwig Codex* has a long and complicated provenance. At his death in 1398, Duke Ludwig left the manuscript to the newly established shrine to Saint Hedwig in Brzeg, Poland. It remained there for about 250 years before being passed around by minor royalty in Bohemia until the beginning of the eighteenth century. It was then donated to a Piarist monastery in Schlackenwerth (Czech Republic) where it remained until 1876, when it was acquired by the local municipal library. In 1910, it was purchased by two Viennese art dealers, who then sold it to the Austrian philanthropist Ritter von Gutmann.<sup>122</sup> During the Second World War, the manuscript was confiscated from Gutmann, but it was later restituted to him in 1947. Gutmann then sold the manuscript to H. P. Kraus, an Austrian-born book dealer from New York City. It was then acquired by the Ludwig Collection in Cologne, where it remained for less than a decade before much of that collection was purchased by the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in 1983.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Nikolaus of Poznan also praises some other Hedwig-related works of art commissioned by Ludwig, including wall paintings and reliquaries. See Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 221–23, which provides a transcription of the letter in Latin with facing German translation. Bernard's homilies and the letter from Nikolaus of Poznan to Ludwig deserve far more attention than they have received in the scholarly literature. A textual analysis of them would likely prove very fruitful for showing how the codex was initially used.

<sup>122</sup> The names of the Viennese art dealers are Gilhofer and Ranschburg.

<sup>123</sup> The entire provenance is summarized in *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia 1347–1437*, exh. cat., ed. by Barbara Drake Boehm and Jíří Fajt, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005), 138.

The *Hedwig Codex* arrived at the Getty at an opportune moment. The 1980s saw a proliferation of feminist art history, especially in North America, and the *Hedwig Codex*'s status as a record of women's devotion meant that it piqued—and continues to pique—the interests of prominent medievalists. Prior to its arrival at the Getty, that is, when the manuscript remained in Germany, scholarship on the *Hedwig Codex* was mainly concerned with hagiography, situating Hedwig in terms of her relation to the cult of lay female sanctity in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Scholarship continues to be produced, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe, that focuses on the codex in these terms.<sup>124</sup> This scholarship does not, however, consider the codex qua art object as its main entry point, largely ignoring questions of the manuscript's aesthetic and social function. The few works that consider the art objects surrounding Hedwig's cult tend to do so very broadly, providing catalogs of objects spanning the twelfth to the twentieth centuries.<sup>125</sup> This provides a complex view of the cult of Saint Hedwig and the objects that it produced over the

<sup>124</sup> Most of this scholarship is in German and Polish: Joseph Gottschalk, *St Hedwig, Herzogin von Schlesien* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1964); Gottschalk, *Die Grosse Legende der heiligen Frau Sankt Hedwig, geborene Fürstin von Meranien und Herzogin in Polen und Schlesien* (Wiesbaden: G. Pressler, 1963); Eckhard Grunewald and Nikolaus Gussone, eds., *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig in Mittelalter und Neuzeit* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996); Ewald Walter, *Studien zum Leben der hl. Hedwig Herzogin von Schlesien* (Konrad Theiss Verlag, Stuttgart and Aalen, 1972); Benigna Suchoń, "Święta Jadwiga. Księżna Śląska," *Nasza Przeszłość* 53 (1980): 1–132; Aleksandra Witkowska, ed., "Jadwiga Śląska," in *Nasi Święci, Polski słownik hagiograficzny*, 239–56 (Poznań: Księgarnia Św. Wojciecha, 1996). Michael Kaczmarek and Marek L. Wójcik, *Księga Jadwiżańska. Międzynarodowe Sympozjum Naukowe. Święta Jadwiga w dziejach i kulturze Śląska, Wrocław-Trzebnica 21–23 września 1993 roku* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1995). The only scholarship of this genre to be translated into English is Klaniczay, trans. Pálmai, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*.

<sup>125</sup> Grunewald and Gussone, eds, *Das Bild der hl. Hedwig in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*.

centuries, but it does little to explain the peculiarities of the illustrations of the *Hedwig Codex*. This thesis seeks to remedy—or, at least, to begin to remedy—the somewhat superficial treatment that the images in the *Hedwig Codex* have received in terms of their ability to construct a strong argument about the social function of the codex in the fourteenth century.

After its arrival at the Getty, art historians shifted their attention toward more nuanced interpretations of the imagery in the *Hedwig Codex*. Since its acquisition by the Getty, the manuscript has been featured in a number of international exhibitions, where it has served as both a stunning example of Bohemian book illumination and as a rich record of women’s monastic devotion in the late Middle Ages.<sup>126</sup> It was not until the 1990s that scholarship on the manuscript began to appear in North America, most notably in Jeffrey Hamburger’s seminal work *The Visual and the Visionary*.<sup>127</sup> Hamburger presents the codex as evidence of art’s evolving status in monastic contexts from “props” to “principal protagonists.”<sup>128</sup> He looks to the full-page portrait of Hedwig at the end of the pictorial quire of the codex (fig. 4.1) and to some scenes in the later part of her *legenda maior* that foreground her intimate relationship with her Madonna and child statuette. Hamburger shows how Hedwig’s ivory statuette becomes very much a part of her own body throughout the illustrations of her *legenda*; carried with Hedwig everywhere she goes, the

<sup>126</sup> Exhibitions such as: *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Summer 1984; *Gothic Manuscript Illumination: 1250–1375*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Winter 1985; *German Illuminated Manuscripts*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Winter 1986; On Loan: *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Prague Castle, 2005–2006; and *Hojo Tokimune to sono idea ten*, Fukuoka City Museum, 2001.

<sup>127</sup> Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 434–36.

<sup>128</sup> Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary*, 428.

statuette evolves into a sort of extension of Hedwig herself. The statuette is further conflated with the body of the saint when it is translated along with her body-part relics to the Abbey church at Trebnitz.<sup>129</sup> Hedwig's *legenda* relays that the saint clutched the statuette as she died and that it remained in contact with her hand while she was interred. Her continued contact with the statuette is said to have preserved the flesh of her left hand, proving both the saintliness of Hedwig and the miraculous powers of the statuette. Hamburger takes the behaviors described in Hedwig's *legenda maior* to be not just a peculiarity of her fervent march toward sainthood but rather as a more general indication of the increasing significance of art objects in women's devotion in the later Middle Ages. Hamburger's work was an essential call to look again and more closely at the images in the *Hedwig Codex*. He used the images of Hedwig's personal ivory Madonna, however, as a point of departure for an investigation of the more general use of portable devotional figurines by medieval women. This chapter focuses on the images themselves in order to clarify how they both inscribe and are inscribed by social constructs of the fourteenth century.

In general, North American scholarship has primarily dealt not with the codex itself as a work of art but with the art objects represented within the book. These discussions have focused on the objects that are found clutched in Hedwig's hands in the dedicatory portrait on folio 12v: her ivory Madonna and Child statuette, prayer book, rosary beads, and boots. Several studies have contended that the Hedwig portrait can tell modern viewers a great deal about how women interacted with their devotional objects in the late Middle Ages.<sup>130</sup> In an elaboration of sorts of

<sup>129</sup> Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary*, 438.

<sup>130</sup> Jacqueline Jung, "The Tactile and the Visionary: Notes on the Place of Sculpture in the Medieval Religious Imagination," in Colum Hourihane, ed., *Looking Beyond: Visions, Dreams, Insights in Medieval Art & History*, 203–40 (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2010); and Corinne Schleif, "St. Hedwig's Personal Ivory

Hamburger's presentation of the *Hedwig Codex*, Corinne Schleif argued that Hedwig uses her Madonna statuette in three main contexts: liturgical rituals, public miracles, and private devotion.<sup>131</sup> She claimed that although Hedwig's interactions with her statuette cannot be read as factual (i.e. that the historical Saint Hedwig actually owned such objects) their inclusion in the codex nevertheless accurately reflects fourteenth-century beliefs about female devotion. Jacqueline Jung further asserted that the illustrations of the *Hedwig Codex* should not be read as factual illustrations of the saint's life, but that its images tell the viewer how devotional objects were increasingly associated in the fourteenth century with the user's own body. She noted how Hedwig's statuette seems to quite literally come alive in the scenes from her *legenda*, the positions of the hands and heads of the Madonna and Child shifting to mimic Hedwig's own bodily comportment.<sup>132</sup> Most of the North American art historical scholarship on the codex focuses again and again on Hedwig's devotional objects. Indeed, these objects have prompted scholarly inquiries that extend beyond the somewhat limited realm of the codex itself into the larger territory of works of art that informed and inscribed women's devotion and monasticism in the late Middle Ages.

Madonna: Women's Agency and the Powers of Possessing Portable Figures," in Evelyn Staudinger Lange, Elizabeth Carson Pastan, and Ellen M. Shortell, eds., *The Four Modes of Seeing: Approaches to medieval Imagery in Honor of Madeline Harrison Caviness*, 382–403 (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2009).

<sup>131</sup> Schleif claims that Hamburger adopted her ideas on the codex and the personal ivory Madonnas before she had the opportunity to take them to print. See Schleif, "St. Hedwig's Personal Ivory Madonna," 385, 386.

<sup>132</sup> Jung, "Tactile and Visionary," 203. See also Jung, "The Boots of Saint Hedwig: Thoughts on the Limits of the Agency of Things," in *The Agency of Things in Medieval and Early Modern Art: Materials, Power, and Manipulation*, ed. Grażyna Jurkowlaniec, Ika Matyjaskiewicz, and Zuzanna Sarnecka (New York: Routledge, 2018), 173–96.



The codex has also proven a rich source for the exploration of *beata stirps*, or dynastic sanctity, most prominently by Gábor Klaniczay. Klaniczay's methods are primarily historical rather than art-historical, and his work focuses almost exclusively on dynastic lineages and the push for family saints, particularly female saints, among royal families in Bohemia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He explores how the cults of these women were promoted in order to make claims to greater familial power and authority.<sup>133</sup> Instead of looking at the *Hedwig Codex* as a rich historical argument in and of itself, Klaniczay refers to the codex and other objects that were made as a part of the promotion of her sanctity merely as material evidence of her saintly cult. When referring to key points of Hedwig's life as outlined by the text of her *legenda*, he sometimes provides a miniature from the codex as illustration, but he never goes into the mechanics of the images that he cites.

Both the hagiographic scholarship from Eastern and Central Europe and the North American art historical work treat the *Hedwig Codex* as a historical record of objects and their use, but the images of the manuscript ought also to be read as reflections of the desires of its patron and his social context. The *Hedwig Codex* is the only document of its kind. Canonization records are common artefacts of the late Middle Ages, but the *Hedwig Codex* stands out because of its luxurious program of miniatures. All of the illustrated folios, save for the first four, were added individually and are interspersed at regular intervals throughout the text. The first four illustrated folios, however, are bound together in a single quire, and were added separately from the rest of

<sup>133</sup> Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*.

the pages.<sup>134</sup> Despite the unique construction of this pictorial quire, it has not been addressed as a whole.<sup>135</sup> North American scholarship especially has tended to select illuminations from the quire (in particular the full-page portrait on folio 12v) in order to bring them into relation with other illuminations throughout the book. This chapter, however, takes as its underlying assumption that the images in the initial pictorial quire are thematically different from the images interspersed throughout the *legendas maior* and *minor* and should therefore be considered independently from the rest of the manuscript's illuminations. The images of the pictorial quire, unlike the images in Hedwig's *legenda*, do not show Hedwig actively performing her religious duties and devotions. Instead, they show Hedwig placed within her family's hierarchy, visually signifying her subservience to the male-dominated power structures inherent in fourteenth-century aristocratic society. By emphasizing the patrilineality of Hedwig's line through the imagery of the pictorial quire, the manuscript's patron, Ludwig I of Liegnitz, was able to boldly and directly stake his own claims in Saint Hedwig's sanctity and the *beata stirps* of the Piast line more generally.

<sup>134</sup> See Jeffrey F. Hamburger, "Representations of Reading – Reading Representations: The Female Reader from the *Hedwig Codex* to Châtillon's *Léopoldine* and *Livre d'Heures*," in Gabriela Signori, ed., *Die lesende Frau*, 177–239 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009), 187.

<sup>135</sup> Hamburger calls the pictorial quire an "afterthought," in Hamburger, "Representations of Reading," 187.

#### 4.1 The Noble Branches of Hedwig's Family Tree

The prefatory cycle of the *Hedwig Codex* does not begin with any figural representations or narrative but with an idiosyncratic family tree (fig. 4.2). At the top of the family tree, red text scrolls across both pages of the opening reading:

*Isti sunt quasi quidam nobiles arborum rami, inter quos pululavit et de quibus nascendo processit flos ill pulcherrimus beata Hedwigis, fructibus generosis venustus, ut in principio huius voluminis scriptum habetur.*

There spring from the family tree of Saint Hedwig some noble branches, from the middle of which the most beautiful bloom springs forth, and she adorned herself with generous fruits, as it is written in the beginning of this book.<sup>136</sup>

The schema of this family tree is more chaotic than the linear, hierarchical versions that the modern eye is accustomed to, as the names are not distributed evenly but are rather clustered together in asymmetrical arrangements around the page. It is clear where Hedwig lies in this arrangement: there is one circle at the center of the page that is outlined in a thick line of blue ink, rather than in red ink like the rest of the name-inscribing circles. The text above also emphasizes her literal position on the page and her figural position within her family's lineage *inter quos*.

<sup>136</sup> The Latin transcription is taken from Moraw, "Vollständige textkritische Wiedergabe," in Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*.

The fruit-bearing tree metaphor would have brought to mind the Tree of Jesse, drawn or written lineages of Christ beginning with the Old Testament figure Jesse found prominently across a variety of media in the later Middle Ages. The earliest example of the scheme seems to occur in a much-esteemed eleventh-century Bohemian manuscript, the *Vyšehrad Codex* (NKČR, XIV.A.13); the Hedwig family tree would have thus resonated strongly for its aristocratic Bohemian viewers.<sup>137</sup> The number of ancestors shown on any given Tree of Jesse varies, but it will usually include Jesse, Solomon, David, Mary, and Christ. Jesse is typically shown sleeping at the bottom, with a branch growing from his side leading a hierarchy of successive generations with Christ at its pinnacle. In the description of Hedwig's family tree, it is Hedwig, like Jesse, who is the stem from which the "noble branches" descend.

The visual arrangement of the family tree tells a different story. Even though Hedwig is the literal and figurative center of her family, this is still a patrilineal presentation of the line. All members funnel down from a single circle at the top of the page that reads:

*Proavus sancta Hedwigis fuit CONRADUS, comes et  
Mysnensis atque orientalis marchio, uxorem habens de Swewia  
nobilem.*

The grandfather of Saint Hedwig was Conrad, count and Margrave of Meissen and eastern Marquis, having a wife of Swabian nobility.

<sup>137</sup> See Jean Anne Hayes Williams, "The Earliest Dated Tree of Jesse Image: Thematically Reconsidered," *Athanos* 18 (2000): 17–23, for the Vyšehrad Tree of Jesse; and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *L'arbre des familles* (Paris: La Martinière, 2003), for a more general look at the development of the iconography of the Tree of Jesse.

It is thus Conrad the Great (ca. 1097–1157), Hedwig’s grandfather, from whom all of the noble branches descend. The tree then branches off to three of Conrad’s six sons (he had twelve children altogether), Otto (1125–1190), Dedo (ca. 1130–1190), and Friedrich (†1182). Each of Conrad’s three sons has a line that extends four generations. Hedwig’s line is shown in the middle; she descends from her mother Agnes, who descends from Dedo, son of Conrad. Six of Hedwig’s seven children are listed as her descendants, with Conrad (†1235/7), Boleslaus (†1208), Agnes (†before 1238), and Sophia († before 1238) all sharing one circle, and Heinrich (†1265) and Gertrud (†1268) each receiving their own. Heinrich receives his own circle as the eldest and most politically advanced son, and also as the son of Hedwig from whom Ludwig I (the commissioner of the manuscript) descended. Gertrud, who went on to become an abbess at the convent at Trebnitz, where Hedwig herself had spent the last years of her life, receives her own circle likely because she, along with Heinrich’s wife, Anne (ca. 1204–1265), championed Hedwig’s canonization shortly after her mother’s death.<sup>138</sup> The clearest and most direct line in the entire family tree is the one extending from Conrad the Great to Dedo, Agnes, Hedwig, and then Heinrich. All other lines are presented more or less as haphazard webs, with Hedwig’s line being direct and orderly. This orderly presentation of the most dominant line visually recalls the neat hierarchy connecting Jesse to Jesus in representations of the Tree of Jesse. If a Tree of Jesse shows descendants beyond the main five (Jesse, Solomon, David, Mary, Christ), it will often show those descendants in tangled webs on either side of the main trunk. It should be noted that in the two clusters on either side of Hedwig’s, the ones descending from Otto and Friedrich, descent is only shown through the males. The only women to appear from Otto’s line are listed in a single cluster

<sup>138</sup> Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 221.

in the last generation. More women appear in Friedrich's tree, but never as main progenitors of a line.

The lines of Otto and Friedrich end after four generations. Hedwig's line, though, is extended through her son Heinrich. From his circle, a band of red text scrolls across both folios reading:

*Isti sunt filii Henrici secundi ducis totius Slesie occisi a Thartaris et fuit filius Henrici ductu cum barba, cuius uxor erat beata Hedwigis. Iste vero sunt Henrici ducis secundi occisi a Thartaris.*

These are the sons of Henry the second, duke of all of Silesia and killed by the Tatars, and who was the son of Duke Henry the Bearded, whose wife was Saint Hedwig. It is true that Duke Henry the second was killed by the Tatars.

From this line extend nine circles, representing nine of Duke Heinrich II's ten children. Two of Heinrich's sons, Conrad I (†1273/4) and Boleslaus II (†1278), each have lineages extending three generations on the left side of the tree. Another son, Heinrich III (†1266), has two of his offspring listed, but his line is not extended further. Interestingly, two of the daughters of Heinrich II have one- or two-generation lines extending from them as well. The lines of Conrad and Boleslaus end at the generation of adults who would have been alive for the creation of the *Hedwig Codex*. Ludwig I, who commissioned the *Hedwig Codex*, is found within the fifth circle from the left edge of folio 9v, next to his brother Wenceslas (†1364). It is perhaps surprising that his spot within the tree is so nondescript, but a bolder indication of his place would have seemed

ostentatious in a book dedicated to Saint Hedwig and to the greatness of the Piast lineage more broadly.

The absence of one person in particular from the branches surrounding Ludwig is noteworthy: Anna of Svídnická (1339–1362), Hedwig’s great-great-great-granddaughter and Ludwig’s second cousin.<sup>139</sup> Her absence is conspicuous because she and Ludwig were both actively engaged in commissioning works of art that glorified Saints Hedwig and Elizabeth at the court of Charles IV (1316–1378), Holy Roman Emperor, in the 1350s and 60s.<sup>140</sup> Anna was the third wife of Charles IV, and the first to provide a legitimate heir to the throne. The same year, 1353, that Anna was crowned queen of Bohemia by way of her marriage to Charles, Ludwig commissioned the *Hedwig Codex*. Two years later, Charles became Holy Roman Emperor and Anne Holy Roman Empress.

Sometime between her coronation and death (1362), Anna likely commissioned an illustrated collection of saints’ lives known today as the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* (ÖNB, Cod. 370; subject of Chapter 5 in this study). Anna, along with Charles IV, was also responsible for commissioning works of art in and around Prague dedicated to her family’s saints. The *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is the most enticing corollary to the *Hedwig Codex* because of the similar subject (family saints) and style (half-page illustrations with captions). Executed entirely in line drawings of red-brown ink, the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* begins with a *biblia pauperum* that is followed by a hodge-podge collection of legends and apocrypha, featuring the lives of some Bohemia’s most

<sup>139</sup> The literature on both Anna and Ludwig repeatedly refers to them both as Hedwig’s great-great-grandchildren, however the family tree indicates that they are in fact her great-great-great-grandchildren.

<sup>140</sup> Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 220.

honored saints.<sup>141</sup> Hedwig's niece, Saint Elizabeth, is the subject of a nine-folio section in the middle of the codex depicting some highlights of her legend, but Hedwig is nowhere to be found (fig. 4.3).

The exclusion of Anna from the *Hedwig Codex* and Hedwig from the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is vexing, but it may have served a political purpose. Anna's absence from the family tree in the *Hedwig Codex* is likely not a willful or spiteful exclusion on Ludwig's part, although, given that she achieved the highest marriage of all of Hedwig's great-great-great-grandchildren, she could have added an even greater air of legitimacy to the tree. Both Ludwig and Anna were simultaneously (and perhaps cooperatively) working together to promote the *beata stirps* of the Piast line in Prague, so they cannot be said to have been in competition with one another. In all likelihood, they were working to promote their family line at the court of Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV at Prague, who was very interested in laying his own claim to Piast lineage because of its reputation for saintly ancestors.<sup>142</sup>

Ludwig seems to have been exclusively interested in commissioning works that venerated Saint Hedwig, whereas Anna lionized a much broader swath of her *beata stirps*. Although she was perhaps the most famous of the family saints, Elizabeth provided only a very distant line to Ludwig and Anna. Like Hedwig, Elizabeth was canonized shortly after her death. Elizabeth, however, died at a much younger age than Hedwig and had eschewed family life almost completely much earlier

<sup>141</sup> Saints Wenceslas, Ludmila, and Elizabeth are the only saints that can be easily traced as ancestors of Anna of Świdnica. The layout of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is really quite interesting, as the legends of these three Bohemian saints flow right into the legends of the early saints and martyrs with no obvious organizational divisions, making a very bold visual argument for the importance of the Bohemian saints.

<sup>142</sup> Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 222.



in life.<sup>143</sup> Hedwig, as the mother to a brood of high-achieving offspring, was a better vehicle through which to represent lineage, especially male lineage, into which Ludwig wanted very much to imbricate himself. Ludwig could legitimize himself and the other illustrious men in his family directly through Hedwig. Elizabeth, who was only survived by a daughter, could not be used to prove Ludwig's direct line to the Piast family saints in this way.<sup>144</sup> Elizabeth could, however, be used to show a more general trend of sanctity in the Piast lineage, which is likely why she was included in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, a book that has none of the obsession with mapping lineages found in the *Hedwig Codex*. Unlike Ludwig, Anna had no need for self-promotion, as she had already achieved the title of Holy Roman Empress.<sup>145</sup> She did, however, want to promote the status of her family more broadly, proving her right to her title while also promoting her husband's desires to himself stake a claim in the saint-riddled Piast lineage.

<sup>143</sup> Elizabeth's husband, Louis IV, Landgrave of Thuringia, died when she was only a teenager, after which she was put in the tutelage of a draconian brother-in-law. Though she had had two children, she more or less removed herself from their upbringing by confining herself to convent life. Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 211.

<sup>144</sup> In fact, Elizabeth did have a son, however he shows up very little in the literature. He died at a young age, perhaps poisoned by his uncle, who had his eye on (and eventually attained) his elder brother's title. In any case, neither of Elizabeth's children are mentioned in the *Hedwig Codex*.

<sup>145</sup> Not to mention, her status as a woman, even a high-standing one, would have prevented her from such behavior.

## 4.2 Image and Text in the Pictorial Quire

Following the family tree are two thematic openings. On folios 10v–11r, four half-page illuminations show various family scenes: a portrait of Hedwig among her immediate family, a depiction of her marriage to her husband, a scene of prayer, and a portrait of Hedwig with her husband and offspring (figs. 4.4 and 4.5). The following opening, folios 11v–12r, presents four additional half-page illuminations, the first three of which are battle scenes, and the final a depiction of Hedwig receiving and relaying a divine vision (figs. 4.6 and 4.7). Each half-page illumination is captioned with one line of red script running across the top of the scene. Unlike the rest of the illuminations throughout the codex, which almost exclusively depict Hedwig performing the pious deeds outlined in her *legenda*, the scenes of the initial pictorial quire show Hedwig removed from her quest for sainthood. In these scenes, Hedwig is shown to be much more static; she is not the living, breathing, bleeding woman in the pages of her legend but rather an object of veneration, a cog in the wheel of the *beata stirps* of the Piast line. What is more, the images and accompanying texts of these eight scenes emphasize the actions and authority of the men in the family, such that they, not Hedwig, are the agents of Hedwig's sanctity.

The first figural illustration of the prefatory cycle (top, fol. 10v) finds Hedwig seated among her immediate family.<sup>146</sup> There are eleven figures in all, ten of whom are seated side-by-side, with the eleventh figure seated at a good distance below this group, gazing upward toward them. The group sits atop a long, rectangular (stone?) bench/stall. Seven pointed, foliate canopies

<sup>146</sup> The inscription above this scene reads: “Bertholdus dux Meranie, pater sancta Hedwigis, et Agnes uxor eius cum filiis et filiabus suis infra positus,” (Berthold, Duke of Merania, father of Saint Hedwig, and his wife Agnes with their sons and daughters sitting next to them). Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 35.

and six crocketed spires float above the heads of the group, framing them and offering some sense of context. This device is used often throughout the manuscript, usually to describe the space of Trebnitz Abbey. From the center out to either of the two sides, the heights of the figures diminish, such that a gently bowing arch is created by the tops of their heads. All of the figures except the lone figure below the group, along with Hedwig and her parents, are labeled in red script above their heads. From left-to-right, the group can be identified as: Saint Elizabeth (1207–1231), Gertrud (1185–1213), Agnes (†1201), Hedwig (1174–1243), Agnes [the elder] (†1195), Berthold [IV] (†1204), Berthold [V] (1180–1251), Ekbert (†1237), Otto (1180–1234), and Heinrich (†1228). Hedwig's family tree indicates that there was a fourth daughter, Tohu, among the siblings, but she is not pictured. The figure seated at the feet of the group is likely the youngest daughter, Mechtild (†1254), who was an abbess at Kitzingen. She wears the nun's black habit and veil and sits with a small book open between her hand and a trefoil crozier cradled in her elbow. Of the six women pictured, only Gertrud and the younger Agnes wear crowns. Hedwig and Saint Elizabeth are instead nimbed with golden halos, and the elder Agnes wears neither. Both she and her husband wear epaulettes on each shoulder bearing the familial coat of arms.

It is interesting that Saint Elizabeth is included, given that she is the granddaughter of Agnes and Berthold. This is to prove that sanctity is not just relegated to Hedwig, but practically congenital. Elizabeth is shown to be quite small among this group, seated at the far left of the picture. The men and women are divided equally, with five women on the left and five men on the right. All four of the women direct their gazes to their left, toward the elder Agnes, who points with her right hand at her husband. Berthold clutches Agnes's hand in his right hand and looks directly out of the picture plane, the only figure to do so in the entire group. The four sons to Berthold's left gaze at their father. Perhaps Mechtild is shown at the bottom of the scene because

if she were included, she would throw off the numeric balance of the seated figures. It is quite telling that they move Mechtild to the bottom of the scene in favor of bringing in Saint Elizabeth, who was not a sibling but is perhaps the most famous member of the family.

This early family portrait shows a group of people whose lifespans only barely overlapped. The elder Agnes and Berthold both died before some of their children had reached maturity (1195 and 1204 respectively), and both they and their daughter Agnes died before Saint Elizabeth was born in 1207. There is an inexact birth order indicated by the diminution of size from the central figures out to the two edges. Saint Elizabeth is shown to be smaller than the rest of the group, perhaps an indication of her generational remove, and Mechtild is also shown to be quite small. Furthest to the right, Heinrich is dwarfed by his other brothers. Although his position in the birth order is not datable, he was likely the youngest of the males, given that he only achieved the title of “margrave” in his lifetime. His position in the family portrait also indicates this. Sources indicate, however, that Berthold was younger than Otto, and yet he is shown closest to his father and therefore the tallest among the male offspring. The brothers Berthold and Eckbert were both bishops, so perhaps rather than depicting birth order, the order of the sons in this portrait is dictated by achieved status. In any case, this portrait cannot be thought of as a “snapshot” in time but is instead a highly constructed imagining of a powerful, saintly family shown 100 years after the last of them had died. In this fanciful family portrait, Hedwig is shown fully veiled, covering the entirety of her hair, chin, and neck. This veil is assuredly a sign of her maturity, piety, and status

as a married woman. In the miniature below this, Hedwig is shown fully unveiled with long, flowing hair, and wearing a fitted *cote hardie*.<sup>147</sup>

The Hedwig in the lower miniature is clearly much younger than the Hedwig in the miniature above, shattering any diachronous effect that modern viewers may seek on this folio. Like many aristocratic women of the time, Hedwig was quite young (fourteen) when she married her husband. Or, as emphasized by the use of the passive voice in the inscription above the scene, when Hedwig was *married to* her husband:

*Hic copulatur sancta Hedwigis Henrico dicto cum barba  
duci totius Slesie.*

Here Saint Hedwig is married to Heinrich the Bearded, Duke  
of all Silesia.<sup>148</sup>

Hedwig can be said to have very little agency in this scene, as she, the only woman in the group, is presented by a cadre of male familiars to her groom and his party of supporting men. This is a depiction of the joining of two family lines, but, save for Hedwig herself, only men are necessary for depicting such an affair. Hedwig looks frail, her body taking the form of a sinuous and fragile S-curve; it is as if she is quite literally being held up by her father, who stands behind her. Heinrich and his band of men are differentiated from the men of Hedwig's family, who have

<sup>147</sup> A *cote hardie* was a "sleeved garment that clung tightly around the upper body and revealed a great deal of the shoulders," according to Margaret Scott, *Fashion in the Middle Ages* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011), 118.

<sup>148</sup> The inscription above this miniature reads: "Hic copulatur sancta Hedwigis Henrico dicto cum barba duci totius Slesie" [Here Saint Hedwig is married to Heinrich the Bearded, Duke of all of Silesia]; Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 35.

accompanied her, by their style of dress and hair. The men on Heinrich's side all sport hatless, coarse mop-tops, and only Heinrich and his father have beards. Heinrich is identifiable because he holds a shield with his coat of arms in his left hand. The outfits of Heinrich's men seem more ragtag than those of the men on Hedwig's side, with furs and cloths draped and tied around them somewhat affectedly. The man closest to the left of the scene carries a type of stick that is typically seen carried by "fools" or jester-type figures in manuscript paintings. The men on Hedwig's side are much more luxuriously dressed, with tall feathered hats and elaborately sheathed swords. Three of the five sport flowing beards and long hair. These are the men delineated in the family tree on the preceding folios, and they are thus given pride of place in this scene.

The marriage is presided over by a bishop who joins the right hands of Hedwig and Heinrich. Hedwig's father presents Hedwig, literally supporting her by the shoulder and left forearm. He cradles her arm in his two hands, a scene that is mirrored later in her *legenda maior* when the uncorrupted flesh and bones of Hedwig's left arm and hand are carried by a family member in the translation of her relics (fig. 4.8).<sup>149</sup> This gesture is also repeated again almost exactly in a scene from the *legenda maior* where Hedwig's youngest daughter, Gertrud, joins the order at Trebnitz Abbey (fig. 4.9). Gertrud was the only child of Hedwig's with a spiritual calling and would go on to become the Abbess at Trebnitz. Hedwig's *legenda* relays that in spite of Gertrud's prodding, Gertrud was never able to successfully convince Hedwig to officially take vows.<sup>150</sup> In the scene of Gertrud's vow-taking (fol. 18v), Hedwig, accompanied by two lay women,

<sup>149</sup> The man cradling Hedwig's arm bone in this scene is likely Hedwig's grandson through Heinrich, Conrad I (†1273/4).

<sup>150</sup> Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, 251.

presents her daughter, already bedecked in the nun's habit, to a group of four nuns. The ceremony is presided over, much like Hedwig's marriage, by a centrally placed bishop. These two marriages—one earthly and the other celestial—bear a striking resemblance to each other. Like Hedwig and Heinrich, Gertrud joins hands with another nun (presumably the abbess) in front of the Bishop, uniting the two halves of the composition.

The most anomalous of the four illustrations in this opening is found at the top of 11r (see fig. 4.5). It is not a group portrait like the other three but is instead a sort of invasive peak at Hedwig's private life. The inscription reads:

*Hic orat sancta Hedwigis marito suo Henrico dicto cum  
barba dormiente.*

Here prays Saint Hedwig while her husband, Heinrich the  
bearded, sleeps.<sup>151</sup>

The scene takes place underneath a rustic canopy that is very much reminiscent of the sorts of shelters found in Nativity scenes in Bohemia in the fourteenth century (fig. 4.10). Heinrich lies naked, or at least shirtless, under a blue and orange blanket, still wearing his orange ducal cap. His right arm is exposed and stretches out across the bed. In the left corner of the canopy at the foot of the bed, Hedwig kneels in prayer at a prie-dieu.<sup>152</sup> Above Hedwig hangs a lantern with a strongly burning flame, indicating the fervency of her prayer.

A passage from later in Hedwig's *legenda* (f. 15v) gives greater context to this scene:

<sup>151</sup> Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 35.

<sup>152</sup> Unlike French examples, Hedwig's prie-dieu is stony and architectonic. The style of her prie-dieu matches the heavy, architectural furnishings throughout the codex.

*Nam in contrahendo matrimonium illud suorum potius progenitorum quam propriam voluntatem creditor implevisse, ut ex post facto constrare sufficientissime potuit, dum tam notabili se continencie loro strinxit. Coniugali enim vincula alligata studebat secundum doctrinam apostolic honorabile connubium et thorum immaculatum in omnibus custodire, leges ac iura matrimonii peroptime conservare. Per filiorum quippe generacionem eternam salute consequi sperans, Deo nichilominus castitatis amore placer desiderans, quantum pro tempore licuit, de mariti consensu se lege continencium [vinciebat].*

It is said that in her marriage she followed more the will of her parents than her own. Later, this presented itself quite clearly when she vowed to take a life of chastity. Compelled by the bond of marriage, she strove according to the teachings of the Apostles, to preserve this allegiance in honor and in every respect unblemished and to painstakingly perform the rights and duties of marriage. She hoped through the birth of children to obtain everlasting salvation, but wanted also to win the pleasure of God through chastity, and therefore vowed to abstinence with the consent of her Husband, insofar as the marriage permitted it.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Transcription of the Latin from, Moraw "Vollständige textkritische Wiedergabe," in Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 73.



This text from her legend now clarifies the juxtaposition of Hedwig's family portrait to this admittedly private scene. Hedwig has succumbed to the will of her parents, the two most imposing figures seated one scene to the side. The text relays that Hedwig was forever torn between the will of her husband and her parents and the will of God. This tension is present in the image as well. The inscription on the top of the page indicates only that Hedwig prays while her husband sleeps, and so it at first seems merely to be a representation of the fervor of Hedwig's devotion—she prays long into the night while the rest of the world sleeps. This image, however, is not so simple. Hedwig's fervent devotion is juxtaposed against the overwhelming presence of her nude, slumbering husband, showing her rejection of the marriage bed. Heinrich's right arm seems to feel around the empty spot in the bed where Hedwig should be. Hedwig rejects Heinrich's carnal advances, albeit, as the text of her *legenda* tells us, dutifully, and chooses instead the celestial bridegroom, Jesus Christ. By rejecting her husband, Hedwig also rejects her family in favor of a spiritual family: the community of nuns and confessors at the abbey. The rhetoric of spiritual family and lineage was very much a part of medieval monastic life, where the various familial roles—mother, father, sister, brother—were taken on fluidly by its members.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>154</sup> According to Alexa Sand, "The familial context of female devotion was not limited to laywomen, as the rhetoric of family and lineage was common in monastic settings as well- not only did Bernard of Clairvaux consider himself mother, father, brother, and sister to his monks, but monastic communities themselves were profoundly interested in their spiritual genealogies, as numerous foundation legends and forgeries attest," in Alexa Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation in Late Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 227. Carolyn Walker Bynum wrote the foundational text for understanding high medieval monastic self-structuring, in particular how fluid notions of gender affected these structures and the interpretation of scripture. See especially,

The lower miniature on folio 11r shows that Hedwig has not yet been able to turn herself over to her spiritual family, as we are presented with the fruits of Hedwig's dedication to her earthly marriage. The text of Hedwig's *legenda* relays that if Hedwig could not find salvation through chastity, then she would do so by carrying out her marital duty to be fruitful and multiply. The inscription above the scene is merely descriptive:

*Dux Henricus dictus cum barba et uxor sua santa Hedwigies  
cum pueris suis.*

Duke Heinrich the Bearded and his wife, Saint Hedwig, with  
their children.<sup>155</sup>

Indeed, we find Heinrich and Hedwig surrounded by their offspring. The inscription gives primacy to Heinrich, just as the inscription above the scene atop 10v gives primacy to Hedwig's father, Berthold. Heinrich, like Berthold, is the only figure to look directly out at the viewer, wearing a ducal cap and arms-bearing epaulettes. Hedwig takes nearly the exact same position as she does in her family portrait in the upper register of 10v. She wears the same blue dress with golden cape, white veil, and beige halo. She once again holds her hands in prayer over her heart and looks to her left with her head tilted slightly upward, her gaze directed reverently at her husband. Hedwig and Heinrich are seated atop a wide, modest throne, with two daughters standing on Hedwig's side and two sons standing on Heinrich's. At the feet of Hedwig and Heinrich, a son and daughter are kneeling. The daughter kneels at Hedwig's feet and the son at Heinrich's. These

Carolyn Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

<sup>155</sup> Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 35.

seated figures are identified as Sophia and Duke Conrad. The daughters to Hedwig's right are designated Gertrud, Abbess of Trebnitz, and Agnes. The sons to Heinrich's left are identified as Heinrich and Duke Boleslaus. Hedwig and Heinrich's children, too, are similarly composed to Hedwig and her siblings on 10v: they all direct their gaze toward their parents, specifically to Heinrich.

The text of Hedwig's *legenda* suggests that Hedwig was torn between two families, earthly and spiritual, both of which she sought to dutifully uphold. Other images in Hedwig's *legenda* illustrate the division between Hedwig's two families, with her sanctity ultimately resting on the rejection of her earthly family through her dedication to her spiritual family. The first narrative image of Hedwig's *legenda*, that is, the first image after the prefatory cycle, shows Hedwig and Heinrich kneeling before the bishop to take a vow of chastity (fig. 4.11). Below, Hedwig, backed by a group of the poor and infirm writhing and contorted by their disease, stands in opposition to Heinrich and a group of his men. The inscription relates that Hedwig, with the financial support of Heinrich, cares for the poor and infirm *ut mater suos filios* (as a mother to her children).<sup>156</sup> This folio is an interesting reply to folio 11r. Hedwig achieves the vow of abstinence that she so fervently prays for at the top register of folio 11r, replacing her brood of well-healed offspring in the lower register for a band of children to whom she is spiritually bound.

Hedwig is nothing if not willful in the images that accompany her *legenda*. She disobeys her husband and confessor by refusing to wear shoes and ministers to the poor and infirm in the face of protests and looks of disgust from her familiars. By contrast, in the pictorial quire, Hedwig is thoroughly subservient to her place within her family line. The power lies not with the miracle-

<sup>156</sup> Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 37.

working Saint Hedwig, but with the men who head the families as political entities. These scenes logically follow the patrilineal family tree on the preceding folios, a pictorial reply to its schematic presentation of male power and hierarchy. The two-folio opening that follows these scenes from Hedwig's family life are quite explicitly a presentation of male power and hierarchy. They show the fateful battle of Duke Heinrich the Younger against the Tatars and his mother's prescient vision of his death.

The scene in the upper register of folio 11v shows a chaotic battle ensuing. The caption above tells the viewer that this is the Battle of Wahlstatt, which was fought between the Mongol Empire and joined European forces:

*Hic pugnat dux Henricus, filius sancta Hedwigis, cum  
Thartaris in campo, quod dicitur Wolstat.*

Here fights Duke Heinrich, son of Saint Hedwig, with the  
Tatars on the battlefield, known as the Battle of Wahlstatt.<sup>157</sup>

The battle seems to have only recently begun, with just a few bodies trampled underfoot in the center of the composition. Plunging spears and arrows jutting across the empty space divide the two forces, with lances from the European side violently meeting the faces and necks of the frontline of the Mongol forces, who are differentiated by their pointed caps. It seems at this point in the battle that the Europeans have the upper hand. In the upper left corner of the scene, a banner bearing the bearded likeness of the Mongol king, likely the reigning khan, Batu (1207–1255), is

<sup>157</sup> Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 36.

displayed.<sup>158</sup> The horses of the Mongol troops appear much smaller than those of the European's, with some of the riding animals in the front appearing to be another species entirely. The horses of the European troops are much larger and plunge forcefully ahead toward the Mongol line. The European troops display a variety of coats of arms—at least ten different displays are shown. Duke Heinrich is identifiable in the center of the European forces by his coat of arms, which he carries on his shield and which is also carried on a waving banner by a knight at his side. Besides the variety of coats of arm, the Europeans also display a number of bludgeoning and blade weapons in the upper right corner of the group.

The scene in the lower register of folio 11v shows the bloody aftermath of the battle above. The inscription tells the reader that Duke Heinrich has been beheaded, and that his soul has been carried off the battlefield by angels.<sup>159</sup> The Mongol forces, still carrying the banner of their king, trample the bodies of the Europeans as they move across the scene. It is a chaotic image, with the bodies of men, horses, and coats of arms tangled wildly within each other. The arms of Duke Heinrich are shown three times: once, toward the middle of the scene, by the body of a knight with a Mongol sword plunged into his back; second, left of center at the bottom of the composition, the banner carrying Heinrich's arms lies next to a pile of crushed and bleeding bodies; and finally, at the bottom left of the scene, Heinrich's shield lies just outside the boundaries of the composition next to Heinrich's beheaded corpse. This procession of arms is likely meant to be read

<sup>158</sup> Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 196.

<sup>159</sup> *Hic decollator idem duc Henricus, filius sancta Hedwigis, a Thartaris, cuius anima suspecta est in celum ab angelis* [Here Duke Heinrich, son of Saint Hedwig, beheaded by the Tatars, whose spirit is carried into heaven by angel]; Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 36.

narratively—within the melee of the battle the viewer watches Heinrich’s death unfold from right to left. Just above the decapitated Heinrich’s heels, a hellmouth filled with the tiny souls of the Mongol troops can be discerned. Just below the banner bearing the image of the Mongol king, an angel with an orange halo carries Heinrich’s soul heavenward, toward a sheet stretched taut by two angels in the upper right, which carries a group of about fourteen tiny souls. Heinrich is easily identifiable among these souls, centrally placed among them and wearing his orange ducal cap. Much of this battle imagery tends to be ignored in the art historical scholarship on the *Hedwig Codex* because it does not fit neatly within the milieu of female devotion. Although unusual within the female devotional context, these battle scenes constitute nearly half of the eight narrative miniatures of the pictorial quire and therefore deserve critical attention.

In the scene in the upper register of folio 12r, the Mongol forces are shown carrying the disembodied head of Heinrich impaled on a lance to the walls of Liegnitz castle.<sup>160</sup> A group of about twelve Mongol forces ride fully armored on horseback on the left-hand side of the composition. On the right, Liegnitz castle is shown as a moated fortification with battlements. Six figures stand atop the castle, shooting arrows toward the approaching Mongol army.

In the final narrative scene of the prefatory cycle, an angel carrying the soul of Duke Heinrich, represented as a childlike figure with an orange ducal cap, enters from the upper left corner. The angel hovers above Hedwig, who is asleep in her bed. The inscription tells us that Hedwig receives a vision of the soul of her dead son and how it was carried into paradise by

<sup>160</sup> *Hic fertur caput eiusdem ducis Henrici, filii sancta Hedwigis, in lancea a Thartaris ante castrum Legnicz* [Here the Tatars carry the head of Duke Heinrich, son of Saint Hedwig, upon a lance in front of the castle of Liegnitz]; Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 36.

angels.<sup>161</sup> Her bed is shown in primitive perspective; long and narrow, it has a similar architectonic structure to the prie-dieu that can be seen in the upper register of folio 11r. Hedwig sleeping takes up about half of the scene, a sort of mirror image of her slumbering husband on the recto of the preceding folio. The other half is populated by Hedwig seated in a chair with three figures seated on the floor at her feet. Hedwig sits erect in the chair, her head turned over her right shoulder towards the viewer as the right hand points with extended index finger to a group of three women at her feet. From Hedwig's left hand extends a banner with the inscription *Nolite flere, karissimi, voluntas Dei est* (Do not cry, my dear, it is the will of God). The seated women are, like Hedwig, veiled in white, indicating that they too are lay sisters. The two women seated cross-legged in the front hold their hands to their faces, as if weeping. The woman behind them seems to embrace them in a gesture of comforting. The entire scene is canopied from the top by a series of six-and-a-half pitched rooftops, shown in three-quarter perspective. The style of these rooftops is much plainer than the ornately foliated pointed peaks and spires seen in both registers of folio 10v. Perhaps this indicates that this scene takes place in the more modest setting of Trebnitz Abbey.

In her analysis of this dream sequence and Hedwig's revelation to the women of the Abbey, Jacqueline Jung notes that this scene is out of sync chronologically with the rest of the narrative of Hedwig's *legenda maior*: historically, Duke Henry died only two years before Hedwig, yet this scene appears at the front of Hedwig's *legenda*.<sup>162</sup> What Jung seems to overlook, though, is that this scene is bound up in the initial pictorial cycle, the illustrations of which do not fall in

<sup>161</sup> *Hic vidit in sompnis beata Hedwigis animam filii sui ducis Henrici ducentem ab angelis in paradysum.* [Saint Hedwig sees in her dreams how the soul of her son, Duke Heinrich, was carried by angels into paradise] Braunfels, ed., *Der Hedwigs-Codex von 1353*, 36.

<sup>162</sup> Jung, "Tactile and Visionary," 203.

chronological order. There is a loose sort of chronology in the first four miniatures of the pictorial quire—the miniature depicting Hedwig’s marriage precedes the miniature that presents her husband and offspring—but that order is jostled by a number of pictorial elements, for instance that Hedwig appears older in the first miniature than the second.

The events in the pictorial quire should not be thought of as coming chronologically *before* any of the events in Hedwig’s *legenda*. The pictorial quire prepares the reader for what is to come. It proves Hedwig’s *beata stirps*. It is not the case, as Jung suggests, that the scene depicting Hedwig’s vision is meant to show the “supernatural mechanism by which the duchess learned of her son’s death.” Jung never really offers a reason why this scene, of all of the scenes throughout Hedwig’s *legenda maior*, was chosen for the initial pictorial quire. The divine vision of Heinrich’s death is not Hedwig’s only miracle—she also catches on fire without being consumed when she prays (fol. 46r), and on folio 70r, Hedwig’s book remains unharmed by a fallen torch which burns on its surface through the night. Hedwig’s visionary miracle was not chosen at random but rather because it clearly situates not only Hedwig but also Hedwig’s family as benefactors of saintly fortune. It is not just Hedwig’s divine prescience at work here but also the incorruptibility of her son’s soul, swooped up from the gruesome battlefield to heaven and delivered, cradled like a child in the arms of an angel, to his mother’s bedside. If we turn back a few folios to the family tree that begins the prefatory cycle, it is clear, for Ludwig I at least, that Heinrich is Hedwig’s most important progeny—it is with his line of offspring only that Hedwig’s family tree is continued, and it is from his lineage that Ludwig I was born. It is not the “supernatural mechanisms” that matter here but the very real link between both and son.



### 4.3 Patron Saints and Sainly Patrons

Generational divides collapse on the final illustrated folio of the prefatory cycle. This is where the portrait of Hedwig that has become quite famous is to be found, showing the elegant saint flanked on either side by Ludwig I and his wife, Agnes. Hedwig takes up about three-quarters of the height of the page and is shown in much greater detail than in the other representations of her in the prefatory cycle. Her almond-shaped eyes, sculptural brow and nose, and rosebud mouth all reflect her status within the Bohemian tradition. Her elegance is typical of the so-called Beautiful Style, the branch of International Gothic that was a product of Bohemian aristocratic circles. Her clothing is equally sumptuous with white brocade work on her charcoal cape lined with orange. A seemingly iridescent gown shows through the partings of her cape. She wears her usual white veil, but this time it exposes golden curls that frame her face. Her halo is no longer the modest beige of the previous pages but radiates in orange foliation from behind her head. In her right hand, Hedwig clutches her Madonna and child statuette. Over her right arm, a pair of boots is slung, a sign of her refusal to wear shoes in imitation of Christ, even in the harsh Silesian winters. A few fingers of her left hand mark the pages of a small devotional book, as if she were in the middle of her prayers. A set of rosary beads is pinned by an amulet to her heart.

Hedwig stands in front of an elaborate architectonic structure that appears to be her throne.<sup>163</sup> Structural overhangs on either side of the throne are reminiscent of the structures found throughout the other illustrations of the codex that signify the architectural surroundings of

<sup>163</sup> Her throne is very similar to other examples from a similar time and place. See, for example, the *Klodzko Madonna*, oil on canvas over wood, after 1350, Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie (1624).

Trebnitz Abbey. These little architectural protrusions provide a shelter and framing device for the two donor figures kneeling on either side and suggest, beyond the real space of Hedwig's throne, a secondary space, such as a personal devotional chapel, for Ludwig and Agnes. Ludwig kneels on the left of the page, but at the right (dexter) hand of Hedwig, and is given the best view of the family saint, who could certainly make eye contact with him if she were not doing so with the viewer. He also gets the best view of Hedwig's personal devotional effects. His orange gown carries similar brocade work to Hedwig's cape, connecting him to her visually. Ludwig's wife, Agnes, is much more modestly dressed and kneels on Hedwig's left, or sinister, side and is pushed further back on the seat of Hedwig's throne than Ludwig.<sup>164</sup> This device can also be found in the first miniature of the *legenda* following this donor portrait, where Heinrich and Hedwig kneel before a bishop to make their vow of chastity (fol. 18r). Here, Heinrich is shown closer to the viewer in the picture plane than his wife, as his foot penetrates the text of the inscription to the lower miniature. Hedwig, on the other hand, stays neatly within the unmarked bounds of the scene. The divisions of space in both images are clearly used to create a gendered hierarchy: the men are given superior locations to both view and be viewed.

Imagining Agnes's point of view makes it clear that her line of sight is decidedly less exciting than her husband's, as Hedwig twists toward Ludwig and reveals only her back to Agnes. Alexa Sand makes note of similar configurations in French books of hours where husband and wife are presented in owner portraits.<sup>165</sup> To a certain degree, it makes a great deal of sense that

<sup>164</sup> Agnes's modesty of dress also visually distances Agnes from Hedwig. Jeffrey Hamburger notes in *Krone und Schleier* that this difference indicates that she does not take part in Hedwig's sanctity in the same measure as her husband. See *Krone und Schleier: Kunst aus mittelalterlichen Frauenklöstern*, exh. cat. (Munich: Hirmer, 2005), 366.

<sup>165</sup> Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 246–51.

Hedwig should give the most prominent view to one of her own and, as it happens, to the very person responsible for commissioning the book. Even though the books of hours in Sand's discussion were made by and large for women, when the husband is included in the owner portrait, he is typically given pride of place. Sand notes that in the fourteenth century, masculine authority began to be emphasized to a much greater degree in devotional books.<sup>166</sup> It ought to be pointed out, though, that the *Hedwig Codex* is not a book of hours and was not used for a woman's personal devotion. Nevertheless, like the patrons of books of hours, Ludwig likely conceived of his commission as a way to memorialize his own familial and political contributions for future generations.

The emphasis on male primacy and authority on the last page of the pictorial quire of the *Hedwig Codex* falls very much in line with the preceding images. With the final image in the pictorial quire, Hedwig herself become an object of devotion, as her descendants kneel and pray before her, in much the same way that we find Hedwig kneeling in prayer before a statue of Christ (24v) and Saints Bartholomew and Vincent (46v) later in the *legenda* (figs. 4.12 and 4.13). Ludwig, too, experiences a similar sort of transformation, as he is memorialized on the page for future generations. Alexa Sand calls this process "votive doubling," which locks the subject of the donor portrait in an "ideal, unchanging state of being," and which "provides a link to a past constructed perhaps as more pious, more chaste, and closer to God than the present age."<sup>167</sup> The *Hedwig Codex* is especially fertile ground for this so-called votive doubling, as images of Hedwig and members of her immediate and distant family are repeated again and again throughout the manuscript.

<sup>166</sup> Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 260.

<sup>167</sup> Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 215.

Ludwig not only memorializes Hedwig; he memorializes himself. He is inextricably linked to Hedwig's passion and devotion, ensuring that future viewers are reminded not only of Hedwig's piety but also of his own.

#### 4.4 Women's Books for Men

The initial pictorial quire of the *Hedwig Codex* certainly tells the reader a good deal about Saint Hedwig, however its main function in the codex is to introduce not Hedwig's power as a family saint but Ludwig I's own dynastic and ancestral claims. Instead of appealing to the imagery of the *Hedwig Codex* as a record of female monastic devotion, this chapter considered the illuminations themselves as a series of constructed images that activate our understanding of the social concerns of the manuscript's patron, Duke Ludwig I of Liegnitz. Furthermore, the repeated emphasis in the scholarship of the last few decades on female piety has ironically overlooked the gendered hierarchies that exploit the historical figure of Saint Hedwig to fulfil male political aims.

The schematic family tree, the eight miniatures of the quire, and the donor portrait all reinforce one another visually and thematically and allow Ludwig I to make claims about his position in the *beata stirps* of the Piast line. The patrilineal construction of the family tree allows Ludwig to give visual evidence of his direct line to Saint Hedwig. It also shows that while Hedwig is at the center to the Piast line's *beata stirps*, it is the males who carry forth her memory by means of their political importance. The eight half-page scenes following the family tree more or less repeat this line of thinking. Although Hedwig is present in the first four scenes, she is almost always visually and textually subservient to the men surrounding her. The last four narrative scenes eclipse Hedwig almost completely, as they relay the earthly defeats and heavenly triumphs of

Hedwig's son Heinrich. These scenes were chosen not because they are particularly telling of the nature of Hedwig's divine visions, but because they emphasize the semi-divinity of Heinrich, the son from whom Ludwig descended. The concluding donor portrait of the pictorial quire memorializes both Saint Hedwig and Ludwig, collapsing a century-long divide and binding Ludwig explicitly to Hedwig's sanctity.

Whether and to what extent Ludwig was involved in dictating the program of miniatures in the pictorial quire remains in question. The fact that Ludwig's concerns are featured so heavily in the pictorial quire suggests at least preliminarily that he had a not insignificant role in devising its contents. His choice to not preserve the original thirteenth-century canonization documents with his commission, instead opting for a new and embellished copy and expansion, indicates Ludwig's desire to imprint his own interests—and the interests of the court of Charles IV more broadly—onto his commission. Readings of the images of the *Hedwig Codex*, especially in the initial pictorial quire, ought to be done with an eye toward Ludwig's concerns and the sorts of fourteenth-century interventions that those concerns imposed on the presentation of Saint Hedwig both visually and textually.

## 5.0 Queens of Heaven and Earth: The *Krumlov Picture-Codex* Reconsidered

The *Krumlov Picture-Codex* (ÖNB, Cod. 370)—with its abundant brown- and red-ink line drawings running left-to-right and top-to-bottom across its 172 folios—is perhaps the most visually bold and pictorially complex of the manuscripts under consideration in this study. Its origins, however, remain frustratingly uncertain. Its pages contain none of the usual markers of its date of manufacture, maker, or owner that have been present in the manuscripts discussed thus far, though scholars have offered a number of hypotheses.<sup>168</sup> The most thorough analysis of the manuscript to date, Gerhard Schmidt’s introduction to the 1967 facsimile edition, surmises that

<sup>168</sup> For literature dealing exclusively with the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, see: Gerhard Schmidt, “Der Codex 370 der Wiener Nationalbibliothek,” *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* (1956): 14–48; Schmidt, *Krumauer Bilder Codex: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Codex 370*, Textband zur Facsimile-Ausgabe (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstaltung, 1967); Schmidt, “Die Fresken von Strakonice und der Krumauer Bilder Codex,” in Gerhard Schmidt and Martin Roland, eds., *Malerei der Gotik: Fixpunkte und Ausblicke*, 145–52 (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstaltung, 2005); Hans Biedermann, *St. Brandanus, der irische Odysseus: 62 Tafeln aus dem Krumauer Bilder Codex; Codex 370 der Österreichische Nationalbibliothek* (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstaltung, 1980); Ulrike Jenni, “Biblia pauperum: Krumau Picture Bible,” in Andreas Fingernagel, ed., *Das Buch der Bibeln*, 348–55 (Cologne: Taschen, 2016); Jenni, “Die Elisabeth-Legende im Krumauer Bilder Codex,” *Elisabeth von Thüringen, Aufsätze* (2007): 353–80; and Jenni, “Realistische Elemente im Krumauer Bilder Codex,” in Klara Benešová and Karel Stejskal, eds., *King John of Luxembourg and the Art of His Era (1296–1346), Proceedings of the International Conference, Prague, September 16–20, 1996*, 260–69 (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1998); and Ivan Gerát, “Einige Interpretationsprobleme der Elisabethlegende im Krumauer Bilder Codex (Cod. Vind. 370),” in *Prague und die grossen Kulturzentren Europas in der Zeit der Luxemburger (1310–1437)*, ed. Markéa Jarošová, 751–61 (Prague: Togga, 2008).

the manuscript was made by and for the use of the Minorite monks of Český Krumlov in southern Bohemia, sometime between 1355 and 1360. This conclusion, however, is drawn from a largely speculative assessment of the various hands involved in the manuscript's illustrations and ignores some very important facts about the foundation of the Český Krumlov monastery and the larger political situation in Bohemia. More than twenty years later, in his study of the late medieval veneration of family saints, Gábor Klaniczay would assert that the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* was commissioned by Holy Roman Empress Anna Svídnická (1339–1362);<sup>169</sup> he offers little, however, in support of this claim. Here I argue that both the historical evidence and an iconographic analysis of the manuscript show that Anna Svídnická is a very likely royal patron of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. I also explore the interpretive potential of considering women readers of the manuscript, asking whether the gender of the potential reader was held in mind when devising some of its more idiosyncratic iconographic content and if and how the iconography changes meaning depending on the gender of its viewer.

While there is little in the manuscript to suggest any direct connections to Anna Svídnická, as a whole it does indeed fit within larger patterns of patronage, both at the court of Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV (1316–1378) generally and specifically within Anna Svídnická's own habits as a donor and owner of luxurious art objects that propagated the cult of Bohemian saints. The

<sup>169</sup> Gábor Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses: Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 220: "It was Anne of Swidnice, St. Hedwig's great-great-granddaughter (who married Emperor Charles IV in 1353), who was responsible for the churches dedicated to Elizabeth and Hedwig in Prague, the numerous frescoes, and the wonderful illustrated codex (the so-called *Krumlov Picture-Codex*) recounting, along with a number of other legends, the story of Elizabeth's life in a series of pictures of unprecedented detail." Klaniczay does not offer a citation to this claim of the manuscript's patronage.

codex also echoes other instances of female patronage and image use throughout late medieval Europe. Such patronage tended to privilege the pictorial over the scribal, emphasizing the viewer's embodied connection to the Virgin Mary, Christ, and the saints. An iconographic analysis of the manuscript's three full-page illustrations presented alongside a history of the development of the monastery at Český Krumlov shows that a female patron and/or user is not only possible but probable. This analysis reinvigorates scholarship on this often-neglected manuscript, bringing it into current conversations on women's art patronage and mystical devotion in the later Middle Ages.

### 5.1 The Picture-Codex Described

As a Latin manuscript of Czech origin held by an Austrian library, the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* goes by a number of names in the literature: by its ÖNB shelf-mark, Codex 370; as *liber depictus*, a sobriquet derived from an old inscription on the title page; and by the various vernacular translations of the Latin moniker with the name of its town of origin, Český Krumlov, appended: in German, the *Krumauer Bildercodex*; in Czech, *Krumlovsky obrazovy kodex*; and here, in English, the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. As its name suggests, the codex abounds in illustrations; the entire manuscript, save for a few inscriptions, consists entirely in brown-ink line drawings depicting typological pairings of Old and New Testament scenes and thirty-two separate narrative accounts of saints' lives and apocryphal legends. The first twenty-eight folios contain the typological pairings of Old and New Testament scenes arranged in double-registers that run across the folio openings (fig. 5.1). This section has been described as a *biblia pauperum*, or Bible of the Poor, a nineteenth-century term coined to describe an increasingly popular genre of the fourteenth



century. These “paupers’ bibles” were used by both laypeople and the clergy; the later name and pictorial nature of these books belying the fact that their readers were mostly wealthy and literate.<sup>170</sup> The rest of the manuscript (the lower half of 28r through 171v) relays numerous saints’ lives and apocrypha, similarly arranged in double- and triple-register narrative strips that run across the folios. The saints whose legends are told in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* are an unusual admixture of local, relatively recent (by fourteenth-century standards) saints alongside more ancient figures; the lives of Bohemian patron saints Wenceslas and Ludmilla are told alongside that of Saint Christopher, for example. There are only three full-page representations in the entire codex: the first, on folio 1r, shows the Madonna as the Woman of the Apocalypse with the Man of Sorrows emblazoned on her abdomen (fig. 5.2); the last two are found toward the end of the manuscript on facing pages that form a single opening (folios 155v and 156r). The image on 155v shows an enigmatic composite woman-creature with seven visual allegories emblazoned on her body representing each of the seven cardinal sins (fig. 5.3, left). The image on folio 156r depicts a composite New Testament narrative: against a fenestrated architectonic background, scenes from the Annunciation, Nativity, and Ascension are shown (fig. 5.3, right). Analysis of each of these full-page drawings below will show how the female body is repeatedly overlaid with theological ideas in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*.

The manuscript’s incessant pictoriality in tandem with its striking lack of color makes it an unusual example in the broader corpus of Latin manuscripts from the Middle Ages. There are a

<sup>170</sup> There is a very close relationship between the *biblia pauperum* and the *bibles moralisée*, or moralized bibles, which peaked in popularity at the French court in the thirteenth century. See John Lowden, *The Making of the Bibles Moralisées* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

few red tituli scattered throughout the first four quires of the manuscript, but apart from those instances, the entire manuscript—both its inscriptions and its drawings—is executed in a brown ink. There are faint and crude underdrawings, which have been worn away from erasures, scantily visible beneath the ink outlines.<sup>171</sup> Because there are no traces of paint anywhere in the manuscript, it is difficult to say if it is unfinished. If a full program of paint and gilding was intended, then the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* could be regarded as one of the most ambitious unfinished manuscripts in the entire medieval canon. Unfinished manuscripts tend to show some sign of their intended color, usually evidenced by finished pages toward the beginning of the codex.<sup>172</sup> If color was never intended, however, then it could be interpreted as a model book, either for illuminated manuscripts or cyclic wall painting, and thus never a “complete” work of art in and of itself. A third option also exists: that color was never intended for the manuscript, which is to say that it was conceived of and executed as an un-colored manuscript. This is not unprecedented, both in the late-medieval Bohemian context and in the broader milieu of western illuminated codices, but it is nonetheless unusual.<sup>173</sup> The famous *Utrecht Psalter*, for example, seems to have been purposefully rendered

<sup>171</sup> This, according to Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*. They are not legible on the digital facsimile.

<sup>172</sup> The *Tickhill Psalter* (New York Public Library, Spencer 26) is perhaps the most famous example of this, where the lavishly painted and gilded pages give way to line drawings, which were meant to ultimately be filled, toward the end of the manuscript. See Melanie Holcomb, ed., *Pen and Parchment: Drawing in the Middle Ages*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013), cat. no. 36.

<sup>173</sup> Scholars mostly agree that the *Utrecht Psalter* was intentionally left uncolored and is thus regarded as a masterwork of medieval draftsmanship. For an overview and facsimile of that manuscript, see Koert van der Horst, ed., *Utrecht-Psalter: Vollständige Faksimile-Ausgabe im Originalformat der Handschrift 32 aus dem Besitz der Bibliothek der Riksuniversiteit te Utrecht* (Graz: Akademisch Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1984). The catalog for the

using monochrome line-drawing and some shading only, and the later copying of the manuscript evidenced by the *Harley Psalter* and others suggests that such drawing-only manuscripts were highly valued. A style of tinted drawings was especially popular in Bohemia in the second half of the fourteenth-century, and both the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* and the *Hedwig Codex* could be categorized as such, where the power of the rendering lies in the line rather than in the color, which tends to be washy or unevenly applied.<sup>174</sup>

The manuscript most closely related to the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* in terms of its content and presentation as well as its geographic point of origin is the so-called *Velislav Bible* (NKČR, XXIII.C.124) from the middle of the fourteenth century (fig. 5.4).<sup>175</sup> The *Velislav Bible* uses ink washes sparingly throughout and offers a sense of how color may have been deployed if it had been used in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. Another manuscript which minimizes the use of color and employs multi-register page division is a book of hours now in the Morgan Library (Morgan Library & Museum, MS M.739). Known as the *Cursus Sanctae Mariae Virginis*, the manuscript was made in Germany (possibly Bamberg) at the beginning of the thirteenth century and then successively owned by Saint Hedwig of Silesia and Saint Agnes of Bohemia. In this example, the

Metropolitan Museum of Art's 2009 exhibition *Pen and Parchment: Drawing in the Middle Ages* explores the place of drawing—both as intentional product and relic of painting—in medieval manuscripts.

<sup>174</sup> See Mojmir Frinta, "On a Few Specific Technological and Decorative Features of Bohemian Art Painting to Contact Abroad," in Klára Benešová, ed., *King John of Luxembourg (1296–1346) and the Art of His Era*, 238–43 (Prague: Koniasch Latin Press, 1998).

<sup>175</sup> There are other manuscripts from different regions of the medieval west that used ink washes rather than opaque layers of paint and gilding. See, for example, the *Holkham Picture Bible* (ca. 1327–35, British Library, Add MS 47682).

backgrounds of the registers are fully painted with a semi-transparent ink wash of red, green, and blue, while the figures themselves are left uncolored, save for the red and green ink that was used to render the outlines (fig. 5.5). This provides yet another regional example against which the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* can be compared.

Given the narrative cohesion of *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, it seems unlikely that it was used as a model book strictly speaking, although there is evidence that at least one scene from the life of Saint Paul the First Hermit was used as a possible source elsewhere.<sup>176</sup> Rather, it was most likely used in a didactic-devotional setting, where its lack of color was viewed as inconsequential by its Franciscan users. Color, similar to what we find in either the *Velisav Bible* or the *Cursus Sanctae Mariae Virginis*, probably was intended. The most thorough analysis of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* remains Gerhard Schmidt's 1967 introduction to the facsimile edition of the manuscript, where he identifies three primary hands at work in the book's illustrations. Hand I, identified by Schmidt as the most confident artist, is responsible for over half of the drawings in the *biblia pauperum*. Hand II, the most prevalent, is responsible for the full-page figure of the Virgin on 1r, the remaining scenes in the *biblia pauperum*, nearly all of the saints' lives, and the other two full-page renderings later in the manuscript on 155v and 156r; Hand III is apparently responsible for fols. 64r–75v and a minor amendment to 57r.<sup>177</sup> Because of the apparent collaboration between Hands I and II within the *biblia pauperum*, Schmidt surmises that the two were likely in the same workshop, with Hand

<sup>176</sup> See Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *Rothschild Canticles: Art and Mysticism in Flanders and in the Rhineland, ca. 1300* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 294n55. Although it is unclear how Hamburger proposes the chronology to work in this case. He dates the Rothschild Canticles to ca. 1300, at least a half-century prior to the most commonly accepted date for the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*.

<sup>177</sup> Schmidt, "Beschreibung der Handschrift," in *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 7.

I as master and Hand II as apprentice. The apparent confidence of Hand I and its sudden disappearance from the manuscript suggests to Schmidt that he<sup>178</sup> died in the midst of its manufacture and that Hand II then took over as its primary artist.

Earlier analyses of the manuscript placed its date of manufacture to shortly before 1350,<sup>179</sup> and some to 1330/40,<sup>180</sup> but Schmidt urges for a slightly later moment, 1355/60. If we accept the later date proposed by Schmidt, which also corresponds with the tenure of our would-be patron, Anna Svídnická, then we can also propose a reason for its lack of color finishing: funding for the completion of the book had dried up after her death in 1362. The facts surrounding the location of its manufacture remain murky, but an eighteenth-century stamp on 11r indicates that the manuscript was the property of the Minorite monastery in Český Krumlov at least since then. Schmidt points to the unique full-page rendering of the Virgin on folio 1r—which envisions both the Virgin as Queen of Heaven and the body of Christ—as evidence that the drawing was made specifically at that monastery in the fourteenth century at the moment of its consecration “in honore Corporis Christi et gloriosae Virginis Mariae” in 1357.<sup>181</sup> Because of Hand I’s sudden disappearance, Schmidt argues that the manuscript was begun by Hands I and II shortly before the

<sup>178</sup> Schmidt does indeed presume a male maker.

<sup>179</sup> The ÖNB’s digitized card catalog record (representing an assessment prior to Schmidt’s) offers “before 1350.” Its current digital catalog is much more imprecise, providing a range of “1300–1399.”

<sup>180</sup> Kurt Holter and Carl Oettinger’s assessment placed the manuscript earlier, per Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, who says this dating was made mostly with regard to the stylistic qualities of the manuscript, which Holter and Oettinger categorized as poor.

<sup>181</sup> Schmidt, “Beschreibung der Handschrift,” 9. I will argue later that this opening rendering is in fact evidence for Anna Svídnická’s patronage.

consecration of the monastery, probably somewhere in southern Bohemia, and that after Hand I's death Hand II brought the manuscript to Český Krumlov for its completion, which took place sometime on or after the consecration in 1357 with the help of Hand III. He ties the creation of the dedication page on 1r directly to the moment of the monastery's consecration, and the completion of the other elements of the manuscript to the years shortly following.

Schmidt's account is, of course, largely speculative. If the rendering on the first folio of the manuscript does indeed prove that the book was made for the Minorite monastery at Český Krumlov, then Schmidt has only established a *terminus post quem*—the manuscript has to have been completed in or after 1357. Based on the manuscript's stylistic and iconographic characteristics, it was almost certainly made before 1400, leaving a forty-year span in which it could have been carried out. With a more generous window for its dating, a number of important historical facts at the Český Krumlov monastery and the nearby court at Prague can inflect our understanding of the circumstances surrounding the manuscript's manufacture and use. More specifically, considering a range of ca. 1357–62 allows the book to be situated in relation to the important changes happening both locally and at the court of Prague at the time.

Schmidt's account fails to mention the important addition of two women's houses at the Krumlov monastery shortly after its consecration: a sister convent of the Poor Clares was established at the site in 1361, and a beguinage was added there nearly fifteen years later in 1375. Indeed, the monastery was founded by a woman, Kateřina z Rožmberka (d. 1355), in 1350 (though it would take a long time for it to be built), and it was very likely intended from its beginning to house both men and women. It is therefore shortsighted to assert *a priori* that the manuscript was made for and used by the monks at Český Krumlov—to do so would ignore an important segment of its population. A number of different analyses can be laid over Schmidt's careful study of the

changing hands in the manuscript, which wrongly assumes that Hand I must have been dead if Hand II, the putative apprentice, carried out the opening full-page illustration of the Virgin. This is a rather bleak vision of medieval workshop practice that allows only the best artists to carry out the most important pictures. But because Hands I and II collaborated fluidly throughout the first 28 folios, there's nothing to suggest Hand I's authoritative primacy. So perhaps Hands I and II began the codex together at Český Krumlov, and Hand III later joined the project to complete the extensive cycle of saint's lives and apocrypha. If we are to accept that the opening illustration of the Virgin definitively links the manuscript to the Český Krumlov cloister, then this project must have begun after the consecration, and that could be as late or later than 1361, when the house of Poor Clares was officially added there. Suffice it to say that there is no codicological evidence<sup>182</sup> *precluding* the participation of the nuns and beguines at Český Krumlov in the manuscript's manufacture and use; instead, the historical circumstances suggest that they very probably *included*.

<sup>182</sup> Scholars have been able to identify the gender of certain manuscripts' users by studying the inflections of the words in certain prayers. Jeffrey Hamburger used such methods to support his hypothesis that the intended user of the Rothschild Canticles (Beinecke MS 404) was a woman. See Hamburger, *Rothschild Canticles*; and Barbara Newman, "Contemplating the Trinity: Text, Image, and the Origins of the Rothschild Canticles," *Gesta* 52, no. 2 (2013): 133–59, for another example of how textual analysis can be used to identify owners, makers, and donors. The text in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is scant and does not permit such study.

Circumstances a bit further afield at the royal court in Prague also offer a potential motive for the creation of the manuscript.<sup>183</sup> As noted above, Gábor Klaniczay indicated Anna Svídnická as the patron of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* in his 2002 study of the perpetuation of *beata stirps*, or saintly lineage, among royalty (and especially women) in Central Europe in the later Middle Ages.<sup>184</sup> This ascription is offered in passing, and he does not elaborate his supporting evidence. The underlying assumption is that the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*—one of the largest pictorial records of saints' lives, many of whom were important to the Bohemian royalty—was probably made at the behest of someone with vested interest in the veneration of regional saints. This sort of patronage—of distant royal support given to a religious house for the creation of works of art—is well founded throughout the Middle Ages and is demonstrated in the present study by the donations of Elizabeth Richeza to Aula Sanctae Mariae, Ludwig I of Liegnitz to the collegiate church in Brzeg, and Anna Svídnická to the Krumlov minorite community. Religious communities had good reason to seek the protection of a noble patron, who could offer money as well as physical and legal protections, and nobles likewise had good reason to seek affiliation with a religious house, which could guarantee spiritual intercession and the continued veneration of their lineage.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>183</sup> Schmidt's analysis is lacking in this regard—the putative monk-artists in his account seem to make the codex of their own accord. But the question remains: who gave them the money for supplies, and what was the motivation?

<sup>184</sup> For a thorough elaboration of the concept of *beata stirps* and its manifestations in medieval Central European material culture, see Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princess*.

<sup>185</sup> Hedwig Röckelein, "Founders, Donors, and Saints," in Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti, eds., *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, 207–24 (New York: Columbia University Press), 211.



Convents were especially likely to play an intercessory role for their patrons through their daily prayers, in which they commemorated both living and dead benefactors.<sup>186</sup>

The saints in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* can be tied to the *beata stirps* that all Bohemian royals affiliated themselves with—namely, Saints Wenceslas, Ludmilla, and Vitus, who were the most important saints from the region. They can also be tied to Anna Svídnická’s own lineage, specifically in the case of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary,<sup>187</sup> who was distantly related by blood.<sup>188</sup> Anna Svídnická, one of the most powerful women in Europe in the fourteenth century (if only for a short time), had the wealth to provide for the material goods needed for the manuscript’s production, while the nuns at Český Krumlov would have had the spiritual means to guarantee the memory of the queen and her lineage. And indeed, the moment around the consecration of the Český Krumlov cloister and the introduction of the house of the Poor Clares there coincided with some pivotal moments in Anna Svídnická’s life, moments that might warrant the creation of a

<sup>186</sup> Röckelein, “Founders, Donors, and Saints,” 212.

<sup>187</sup> Out of all of the individual saints’ lives in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, the Elizabeth legend has received the most focused attention. See Jenni, “Die Elisabeth-Legende im Krumauer Bildercodex” and Gerát, “Einige Interpretationsprobleme.” Gerát’s analysis offers some interesting considerations for the dating of the manuscript with recourse to other monuments related to Saint Elizabeth throughout Bohemia, including scenes in the *Hedwig Codex*. His interpretation places the manuscript squarely within the decade of the 1350s.

<sup>188</sup> Anna Svídnická is first cousin of the patron of the *Hedwig Codex* (JPGM, MS Ludwig XI 7, discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation), Ludwig I of Liegnitz. In addition to shared blood relation to Saint Elizabeth, they also both descended from Saint Hedwig. Both Hedwig and Elizabeth can be understood within the thirteenth-century phenomenon of lay nobility taking vows of poverty and chastity after marriage and having children and being sanctified shortly after death. See Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, for a history of both women’s sanctifications and how they contributed to the *beata stirps* of the Piast bloodline.

luxurious manuscript for the commemoration of the young queen's lineage. In 1355, only two years prior to the consecration of the monastery, Anna Svídnická was crowned Holy Roman Empress in Saint Peter's in Rome at the age of sixteen. In 1361, the same year that the convent of the Poor Clares was established at Český Krumlov, Anna gave birth to Wenceslas, heir to the throne. She died only one year later while giving birth to her daughter, Elizabeth.

Anna certainly had the motivation to commission works of art during the window in which the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* was likely made. Originally betrothed to Charles IV's infant son and heir apparent Wenceslas,<sup>189</sup> she was ultimately married to Charles IV himself when Wenceslas and his mother, Anne of Bavaria, died. Pressure on Anna to produce a new heir would have been great. Indeed, it was during their marriage that Anna of Svídnická and Charles IV oversaw much of the work on the jewel-box chapels at Karlštejn Castle, works of art that are understood to have solidified Charles's right to rule from Prague as an outsider Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>190</sup> In the lower chapel of Saint Catherine at Karlštejn, Charles and Anna are famously depicted carrying a bejeweled processional cross (fig. 5.6), which can be understood as a visual distillation of one of the many acts of art patronage that the two carried out during their brief marriage. Both in the chapel where this representation of the couple is found and in the grander chapel of the Holy Rood just above it, depictions of various saints and church fathers cover the walls (fig. 5.7). Such exhaustive visual accounting of holy personages is unrivaled except by the *Krumlov Picture-*

<sup>189</sup> Not to be confused with Charles IV and Anna Svídnická's own son Wenceslas.

<sup>190</sup> See Jiří Fajt, "Charles IV: Toward a New Imperial Style," in *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia 1347–1437*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Jiří Fajt (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art), 3–16.

*Codex*, which, in relation to the portraits at Karlštejn, can be understood as the narrative elaboration of the iconic project.

The historical circumstances supporting the assertion of Anna Svídnická as patron and the nuns and beguines at Český Krumlov as the maker/users of *Krumlov Picture-Codex* are thus in place. Anna would have found a receptive community in the nuns at Český Krumlov, who would have needed external, royal support as a newly founded convent. The content and tenor of the manuscript fit squarely in the realm of the arts patronage carried out by Anna and Charles elsewhere in Bohemia. The following section presents a close reading of the manuscript's three full-page drawings as further evidence for a female patron and audience.

## **5.2 The Full-Page Illustrations and the Scopic Economy of Women's Devotion**

While it may seem trivially true that the subjects of the three full-page illustrations feature women prominently, it is in fact vitally important. On 1r, the Virgin Mother is shown; on 155v, the woman of the seven deadly sins appears; and on 156r, again the Virgin features prominently, although here in tandem with Christ, Gabriel, and God the Father (at the Annunciation, Nativity, and Ascension). That there are only three full-page representations in a 170-plus-folio suggests that we ought to pay attention to them, that they have particularly important messaging or were singled out for special study by its users.

In this typological manuscript, there are no accidental juxtapositions. That two of the three full-page illustrations were juxtaposed across a single opening was certainly intentional. Although they might not necessarily *look* like they belong together, at least not in their composition or narrative strategy, together they offer their viewer a clear message about sin, redemption, and the

role of confession. The illustration on 155v is an uncommon allegorical woman-monster, which can be found in only four other manuscripts and a handful of single-page woodcuts (see fig. 5.3, left).<sup>191</sup> In contemporary German scholarship she has been given the name *Siebenlasterweib*, or the woman of the seven deadly sins, but in the Middle Ages she would have been understood as an *imago mundi*, a representation of the sinfulness of the world.<sup>192</sup> The *Siebenlasterweib* in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is shown with the head and torso of a young woman. On her head she wears a crown of ostrich feathers, a symbol *superbia*, or pride, which the inscription just above indicates. In her right hand she holds a bow (*ira*, or wrath) and in her left an overflowing bag of money (*avaricia*, or greed). From her abdomen protrudes the head of a fox with protruding tongue; the inscription next to it marks it as *gula*, or gluttony. The woman's hind morphs into a serpent (*invidia*, or envy), which bites the creature's leg, here in the shape of a bird's claw, which represents *accidia*, or sloth. Only six of the seven deadly sins are named here—*luxuria*, or lust, is absent. In other representations of the *Siebenlasterweib*, *luxuria* is appended to the woman's deeply cut tunic.

The scene facing the *Siebenlasterweib* on folio 156r (see fig. 5.3, left) could not be more different. Here, the viewer is presented with a common series of New Testament scenes: the Annunciation, Nativity, and Ascension. Their particular arrangement against a scenic architectonic

<sup>191</sup> As of Schmidt's 1967 account. There are four manuscripts and a number of single-page woodcuts showing the *Siebenlasterweib*. They are: Cod. Helmst. 35a, Wölfenbüttel Bibliothek; Cod. Ca. 1404, Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense; an Armenbibel from the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek; and Clm. 8201, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Our manuscript, Cod. 370, is one of the earliest examples (if not the earliest). The Wölfenbüttel manuscript may be earlier.

<sup>192</sup> Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 22.

backdrop and the other images that accompany them (God delivering the message to the Angel Gabriel and a Gnadestuhl) are somewhat less common, especially in combination with the images below. The architectonic backdrop—a manner of crenellated structure with three trefoil portals on the lower level and two on the upper—is reminiscent of other architectural framing motifs in contemporaneous Bohemian manuscript and panel paintings, for example in the previously discussed *Hedwig Codex* (cf. fig. 3.13). The particular arrangement in the Picture-Codex has been related to the stage sets used for the popular late medieval Passion plays, and indeed the backdrop here serves to at once isolate and highlight each of the scenes, allowing them to be both sequential and simultaneous.<sup>193</sup> There is a division in the upper and lower areas of the castle framing device between earthly and heavenly space—the scenes with the Virgin on the lower level occupying the former and the scenes with God and the angels the latter. The two zones are connected by Christ, who literally climbs a stairway to heaven in the bottom center portal. His cross-nimbed head breaks the barrier between the two realms.

The two full-page drawings on 155v and 156r have been said to be connected rather inconsequentially—that the *Siebenlasterweib* represents worldly sin and the summation of the scenes on 156r offers as a response in heavenly redemption.<sup>194</sup> I argue that these scenes are even

<sup>193</sup> Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 20, 39nn57&58. The scene in the upper left-hand zone, God sending Gabriel to deliver the message to Mary, is rather unusual in the broader field of western Annunciation imagery. Few other examples can be cited, but one can in fact be found in the *Hedwig Codex* (fol. 167v), suggesting that this is a particularly late fourteenth-century Bohemian formulation. Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 20, suggests that this image comes directly from such scenes in contemporaneous Passion plays.

<sup>194</sup> Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 22, who also mentions that in two other scenes of the *Siebenlasterweib* (Wolfenbüttel and Munich), the monster is faced by a representation of Saint Benedict, who wards off the creature

more closely related—that the author purposefully manipulated the conventional representation of the Siebenlasterweib in order to create a visual redemption narrative that starts at the top of 155v and works its way down to the bottom of that folio, across to the bottom of 156r, and through to the heavenly space of the top of that folio.

Gerhard Schmidt carefully noted the differences between the Siebenlasterweib in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* and the handful of other contemporaneous instances available to us. In particular, there are major differences between which sins are ascribed to which parts of the monster-woman's body. The general form is the same—of a woman's head and torso propped atop a bird's foot bitten by a serpentine tail—but the monster of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is missing a set of bat's wings, which is present on all other instances (fig. 5.8). According to Schmidt, in the other instances the bird leg symbolizes life (*vita*), the serpent death (*mors*), a money-belt avarice (*avaricia*), out of which wrath (*ira*) and envy (*invidia*) grow as two animal heads. The arms are also rendered differently in the other examples: the right hand holds a goblet of gluttony (*gula*), while the left hand hangs empty and slack, thus representing sloth (*accidia*). Similar across all representations is the assignation of *luxuria* (lust) to the wide-cut tunic and *superbia* (pride) to the ostrich-feather crown.<sup>195</sup> However, not all representations provide nearby inscriptions for each of the sins.

While all of the representations convey the seven deadly sins in some way, in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* the sins of the Siebenlasterweib are specifically devised to follow the order, from with a cross banner and the words *Vade retro, Sathana*. This, Schmidt argues, is meant to offer its viewer a solution to the problem of sin through monastic living; the juxtaposition of the Siebenlasterweib and Christological cycle in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* delivers an even stronger message—salvation from sin through Christ.

<sup>195</sup> Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 22.

top down, of the acronym *SALIGIA*, which was devised as a mnemonic to remind confessors of the seven deadly sins.<sup>196</sup> Following the acronym across the *Siebenlasterweib*'s body, the viewer moves from her crown, to the bag of money in her left hand, across her chest and to the bow in her right, down to her abdomen, and then down her leg to the bottom of the folio; the visual movement is unequivocally downward here, whereas in other instances of the *Siebenlasterweib* the eye moves in a cross-wise motion around the upper half of the woman-monster in order to read the acronym sequentially (from head, to groin, to chest, to left arm, right arm, then back and forth on abdomen). The downward motion of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* *Siebenlasterweib* leads the viewer to the lower register of the facing page: namely, the Annunciation. The visual movement of this folio opposes that of the *Siebenlasterweib*; one moves from bottom up here, from the earthly narrative of the Annunciation and Nativity, up the ladder mounted by Christ and into the Heavenly realm occupied by God the Father on the left and an image of the Trinity, or *Gnadenstuhl*, on the right.

<sup>196</sup> Arthur Watson, "Saligia," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 10 (1947): 148. Watson points to a representation from a late thirteenth-century Flemish Psalter (Pierpont Morgan Library MS. 183, fol. 9v) of a woman, who he posits is the Virgin Mary, with the seven letters of *SALIGIA* surrounding her head. Adelaide Bennett argued against Watson's identification of the female figure, positing instead that she is likely a representation of Mary Magdalen. See Adelaide Bennett, "Mary Magdalen's Seven Deadly Sins in a Thirteenth-Century Liège Psalter-Hours," in Colum Hourihane, ed., *Insights and Interpretations: Studies in Celebration of Eighty-Fifth Anniversary of the Index of Christian Art*, 17–34 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). Such mnemonic representations are evident as early as the eleventh century, when they were used alongside *versus rapportati* to cue the reader/viewer to the divisions of the verse. See Thomas E. A. Dale, "The Monstrous," in Conrad Rudolph, ed., *Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, 2nd ed., 357–81 (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2019), 372; and Mary Caruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

These sorts of compositions, designed to lead the viewer through a highly scripted physical relation to the pictorial plane, exist across the medieval corpus. Perhaps the most famous example can be found on the eleventh-century bronze doors at Hildesheim (fig. 5.9),<sup>197</sup> where the left-hand door of the monumental double portal envisions the fall of humankind—it begins at top with the creation of Eve in the first of eight panel scenes and ends with Cain’s murder of Abel at the bottommost panel. The redemption narrative then begins on the lowest panel of the right-hand door with the Annunciation and culminates in the topmost panel with the *Noli me tangere* and Ascension of Christ. The fall of humankind is dramatically realized through a literal visual descent, and the redemption through an opposing ascent. Both the bronze doors at Hildesheim and the folio pairing from the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* acknowledge and play on the embodied nature of viewing; one’s gaze must fall and rise along with the narrative contents of the reliefs/illustrations.

Like the doors at Hildesheim, which juxtapose Old and New Testament scenes in their opposing door panels, the full-page folio pairing in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* showing the *Siebenlasterweib* and the New Testament cycle offers the viewer a clear typology. Harvey Stahl argued that Bishop Bernward’s bronze doors engender two ways of viewing: the vertical descent and ascent in the sixteen panels of the two doors, which envision the diachronic narratives of Old and New Testament; and the anachronic, typological pairings between each of the eight Old and New Testament scenes on either door.<sup>198</sup> The viewer of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* would have been well prepared for such anachronic looking from the *biblia pauperum* at the beginning of the

<sup>197</sup> Harvey Stahl, “Eve’s Reach: A Note on Dramatic Elements in the Hildesheim Doors,” in Elizabeth Sears and Thelma K. Thomas, eds., *Reading Medieval Images*, 163–75 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002).

<sup>198</sup> Stahl, “Eve’s Reach,” 13.



manuscript. There, Old and New Testament scenes are presented in a continuous narrative style, along registers that run across the gutters of the openings. Unlike other contemporaneous bibles of the poor, which tend to isolate the typological pairings into discrete roundels,<sup>199</sup> the pairings of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* run one right into the next (see fig. 5.1), requiring at once a great deal of concentration from the viewer to discern the pertinent pairings and the viewer's flexibility in navigating the fluid connections amongst the proximate scenes.

That the viewer of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* would have not only expected but also ably navigated the significance of the pairing of the two full-page scenes on folios 155v and 156r is nearly certain. Who that viewer was, though, is open to interpretation. The visual mechanics of the two scenes have thus far been discussed, but the nature of their subject matter has not; and it is the particular emphasis on female sin and salvation that, as I argue below, allows us to better understand who used the manuscript and how. In their 2001 interpretation of the Hildesheim bronze doors, Adam Cohen and Anne Derbes point out the explicitly eroticized manifestation of Eve in the panels of the left-hand door. Like the Tournian bibles on which the doors were ostensibly modeled,<sup>200</sup> Eve's role in the Fall is paramount. The specific connection of Eve's sexuality to the Fall of humankind was commonplace in contemporary theological discussions, Cohen and Derbes note, but it was specifically and emphatically drawn on in the bronze doors at least in part because their putative designer, Bishop Bernward of Hildesheim, was in a prolonged conflict with a powerful woman in a neighboring town, Sophia of Gandersheim (975–1039). In

<sup>199</sup> As is the case with the most iconic example of the genre, the three-part Oxford-Paris-London *bible moralisée*.

<sup>200</sup> Adam S. Cohen and Anne Derbes, "Bernward and Eve at Hildesheim," *Gesta* 40, no. 1 (2001): 22.

the years preceding the production of the bronze doors, Bernward was in a protracted battle with Sophia and the nuns at Gandersheim, who, Bernward's biographer would record, were living a "dissolute life."<sup>201</sup> Bernward repeatedly sought to take control of the wayward convent, and in January 1007 his goal was ultimately met.<sup>202</sup> Cohen and Derbes posit that the iconography of the bronze doors was devised specifically with this conflict in mind; according to them, "the doors subtly celebrated Bernward's ultimate triumph over a woman condemned by his supporters for her allegedly dissolute behavior."<sup>203</sup> The extent to which Bernward's supposed grudge actually manifested in the bronze doors is questionable, but there is no doubt that the female body was actively inscribed with meaning there.

In their apt and incisive discussion of the potential origins of the Eden panels on the left-hand door of the double portal, Cohen and Derbes neglect to deal as carefully with Eve's typological other, the Virgin Mary. Although they note the historical precedence for the Virgin as the antitype to Eve, they do not fully explore the interpretive potential of the Virgin panels in terms of the double portal's larger message about femaleness: namely, that sin was both born and resolved through woman. As the third-century Church Father Tertullian declared:

For it was while Eve was yet a virgin, that the ensnaring word had crept into her ear which was to build the edifice of death. Into a virgin's soul, in like manner, must be introduced the Word of God which was to raise the fabric of life; so that what had been

<sup>201</sup> Cohen and Derbes, "Bernward and Eve," 30.

<sup>202</sup> Cohen and Derbes, "Bernward and Eve," 31.

<sup>203</sup> Cohen and Derbes, "Bernward and Eve," 33.

reduced to ruins by this sex, might by the selfsame sex be recovered to salvation. As Eve had believed the serpent, so Mary believed the angel.<sup>204</sup>

If sin was inaugurated in woman then it must also be absolved in her. And indeed, on the Bernward doors, after Eve and Adam's fall, the embodiment of wrath in Cain is directly followed by and typologically paired with the embodied humility of the Virgin Annunciate. The reading of the doors is thus orchestrated up and down but also side to side. Their opening and closing would dramatically enact the pulling apart and pushing together of this typological relationship, much as would occur in the opening, closing, and page-turning of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*.

This very same scene that answers Adam and Eve's fall on the Hildesheim doors, the Annunciation, is the first answer in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* to the problem of carnal sin posed by the Siebenlasterweib on the facing page. Although the Siebenlasterweib cannot be said to be a specific female personage from the Bible, like Eve or Mary, she is nevertheless obviously gendered female. And, like the Eve of the Hildesheim bronze doors, her sin is decidedly eroticized. It was briefly mentioned above that the word for lust—*luxuria*—is missing from the drawing of the Siebenlasterweib. In his analysis of the drawing, Gerhard Schmidt chalks this up to the absentmindedness of the scribe. But could the inscription have been omitted on purpose? Perhaps the carnal sin of lust—so clearly and obviously tied to the female body in the visual culture of

<sup>204</sup> Tertullian, *De carne Christi*, XVII, 5–6, trans. P. Holmes, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, III (New York, 1885; reprint Peabody, MA, 1994), 536; cited in Keith John Glaeske, "Image of Eve in Anglo-Saxon, Middle English, and Old Irish Literature," (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, 1997), 120; as cited in Cohen and Derbes, "Bernward and Eve," 29. Cohen and Derbes focus only on the first section on Eve's sin.

monastic space at least since the eleventh century—need not be named at all. The erotic nature of the Siebenlasterweib is emphasized by the embodied *gula*, or gluttony: the head of the fox, its tongue a phallic protrusion, cannot be said to exactly emerge from her abdomen, the seat of hunger, but rather from her loin. The Siebenlasterweib’s erotic desire is both inevitable and insatiable.

The inevitability of the Siebenlasterweib’s sin is directly met by the inevitability of the Virgin’s sinlessness, which is first elaborated on the manuscript’s opening folio, what could be considered a sort of title page, of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* (see fig. 5.2). Here, the viewer is met with a composite vision of the Madonna: as Queen of Heaven with Christ child; as the Woman of the Apocalypse; and, as I argue below, as *Vierge ouvrante* and *Virgo lactans*. Because of this multilayered, complicated rendering of the Virgin, it has been argued that the author of this representation was working in a largely Scholastic mode of didactic-theological image-making.<sup>205</sup> This argument is made largely in service of proving that the manuscript was made by and for the use of the Minorite monks of Český Krumlov.<sup>206</sup> In his introduction to the 1967 facsimile edition, Schmidt argues that the composite image of the Virgin was meant as a complicated visual distillation of the monastery’s patronage. He argues that the image makes a visual argument about

<sup>205</sup> Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 17.

<sup>206</sup> Although the argument is never explicitly motivated in those terms. As Therese Martin notes in her introduction to her 2012 edited volume on medieval women’s patronage, “medieval art is not approached from a position of neutrality but rather presumed masculine in origin and intent.” See Therese Martin, “Exceptions and Assumptions: Women in Medieval Art History,” in Therese Martin, ed., *Reassessing the Roles of Women as ‘Makers’ of Medieval Art and Architecture*, 1–36 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 1. In the case of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, which was most thoroughly considered in 1967, that the manuscript should have a male maker and audience was taken for granted.

the nature of the Virgin's Immaculate Conceptions and that, since the Franciscans took a positive stance on the doctrine in the fourteenth century, this title image was used as a way for the Minorite monks to assert their Franciscan identity. Schmidt points to Franciscan philosopher Dun Scotus's (1266–1308) account of the Immaculate Conception, who argued that by virtue of the anticipated sacrifice of Christ, Mary was free from original sin from the first moment of her existence.<sup>207</sup> This, Schmidt argues, is visually achieved through the inclusion of the Man of Sorrows, a sign of the foreknowledge at her conception of her sacrificial role as Mother of God.

In showing how the image can be understood as a distillation of Franciscan theology and assertion of the monastery's identity, Schmidt downplays other points of cultural and art historical contact that this image participates in: namely, the culture of female visionary devotion in the late Middle Ages. The unusual way that that this image layers Virgin-types, one right on top of the other, is understood by Schmidt as a layering of argument: by showing the Virgin in all of her aspects, the artist demonstrates her ever-sinless state, from conception to ascension. This interpretation privileges the knowledge and experience of the manuscript's learned Franciscan compiler but does nothing to explain how the image would have been received, especially by someone without such rarified knowledge of theological debates.

We know from accounts of late medieval religious people, especially women, that the various aspects of the Virgin were well known and appeared to them in visions. For instance, the *Life of the Blessed Aldobrandesca* (1245–1310) notes two sequential visions of the Virgin in various aspects—as Queen of Heaven, adorned in luxurious clothing and jewels, and as the Woman of the Apocalypse:

<sup>207</sup> Schmidt, *Krumauer Bildercodex*, 16.

On Sundays, in particular, she used to pay homage to Mary, Queen of Heaven. Because of the fact that the more often she enjoyed heavenly visions, the more she longed for them in deep desire, she one time requested Our Lady herself to grant her a vision of her. And this she obtained. For on the next Sunday, the Mother of God appeared to her, dressed in the most splendid white linen, adorned with precious jewels, with a golden crown of marvelous beauty; and again, another Sunday she beheld her in a golden garment, having on her head a crown of twelve stars, and the moon beneath her feet, and a tablet in her hand, on which was written: “Daughters, be obedient to the law of the Mother.”<sup>208</sup>

The late thirteenth-century saint’s life also recounts an instance of Aldobrandesca commissioning a work of art: “she had the Virgin Mother painted, holding in her arms the body of her son which had been taken down from the cross, and applying her mouth to that wound on his side.”<sup>209</sup> That the Virgin of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* title page should distill numerous aspects of the Virgin at once does not immediately suggest a complicated visual argument meant to engage with contemporary theories of the Immaculate Conception; it just as well relates to popular religious attitudes aimed at giving sight to both the suffering and triumph of the Virgin. The

<sup>208</sup> “Life of the Blessed Aldobrandesca of Siena, Widowed Tertiary of the Umiliati (1245–1310),” Latin translation of the Italian by Gregroy Lombardelli, trans. Elizabeth Petroff, *Consolation of the Blessed* (New York: Alta Gaia Society, 1979), 173.

<sup>209</sup> “Life of the Blessed Aldobrandesca,” 172.

Madonna of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* title page is loving mother, engaged in a tender moment of physical and visual contact with her son, all the while knowing of his impending sacrifice, its image emblazoned on her womb. She is at the same time triumphant as the Woman of the Apocalypse, her status marked by a crown of twelve stars, her ability to escape sin indicated by her wings.

The Madonna from the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* title page permits multiple readings, some not even touched on by Schmidt in his analysis. Two popular themes pertaining to the maternal corporeality of the Virgin can be interpreted here: gestation and lactation. The first theme, the Virgin's pregnancy with Christ, is symbolized on Krumlov title-page Virgin by the Man of Sorrows, set within a sun-disc mandorla emblazoned over the Virgin's womb. Schmidt's analysis ignores the placement of the mandorla and the obvious connections to the womb that it engenders. Interior visions of the Virgin's womb were a popular theme in the later Middle Ages—sculpted and painting representations of the Visitation show Mary and Ann's abdomens illuminated by their sacred contents. In sculpted renditions, this could take the form of highly polished rock-crystal cabochons set upon their swollen bellies (fig. 5.10).<sup>210</sup> In paintings, the infant Christ and John the Baptist are shown within radiant mandorlas. Another popular art form that envisions the Virgin's maternal corporeality in striking terms is the *Vierge ouvrante*, or Shrine Madonna, which literally reveals the contents of the Virgin's abdominal cavity when the figure is opened, usually along a

<sup>210</sup> On this sculptural group, see Jacqueline Jung, "Crystalline Wombs and Pregnant Hearts: The Exuberant Bodies of the Katharinenthal Visitation Group," in Rachel Fulton Brown and Bruce Holsinger, eds., *History in the Comic Mode: Medieval Communities and the Matter of Person*, 223–37 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Jung explores what these holy pregnant bodies meant to the nuns at Katharinenthal, women whose very vocation was predicated on their not being (or becoming) pregnant.

bifurcating seam (fig. 5.11 a, b).<sup>211</sup> These sculptures were popular at least since the late thirteenth century,<sup>212</sup> and rather than envisioning a preterm Christ, they typically show the Virgin's womb enclosing a token of Christ's suffering, often the Crucifixion or Gnadenstuhl. Of course, the Krumlov title-page Virgin does not literally open like the *Vierge ouvrante*, but she inaugurates—and I would argue that this relationship is very intentional—the literal opening of the manuscript's pages, a corpus of a different sort, fleshy in its own way. She also, like the *Vierge ouvrante*, encapsulates the special suffering that Mary endured as the mother of Christ, at once tenderly engaged with her infant son and burdened by the knowledge of his sacrificial death.

The exterior corpus of nearly all *Vierges ouvrantes* show the Virgin and Christ child, often in the form of the *Virgo lactans*. The manifestation of the Divine Mother as *Virgo lactans*—a tender image of breastfeeding meant to signify the life-giving and redeeming nature of the Virgin—was especially popular among women in the later Middle Ages,<sup>213</sup> and it seems the author

<sup>211</sup> On themes of cleaving and fragmentation in medieval art, see Elina Gertsman, *Worlds Within: Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2015), 19, who coins a “generative fragmentation” that does not “render the object broken” but rather “multiplies its potency and meaning through the very rhetoric of breakage.” And for more general discussion of the theme in art and literature, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 2012). For the broader medieval reception of this imagery, by both men and women, see Melissa R. Katz, “The Non-gendered Appeal of *Vierge Ouvrante* Sculpture: Audience, Patronage, and Purpose in Medieval Iberia,” in Therese Martin, ed., *Reassessing the Roles of Women as 'Makers' of Medieval Art and Architecture*, 2 vols., 1:37–92 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

<sup>212</sup> Gertsman, *Worlds Within*, 8.

<sup>213</sup> For an in-depth consideration of the iconography of the *Virgo lactans*, see Beth Williamson, *The Madonna of Humility: Development, Dissemination, and Reception, ca. 1340–1400* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2009); and



of the Krumlov title page also sought to take part in this tradition. The Krumlov Virgin holds in her right hand a *globus cruciger*, which she pulls across her chest to offer to the infant Christ. She suspends the orb over her left breast such that it becomes a stand-in for her anatomy. There is a small circle drawn at the center of the orb: when read qua *globus cruciger*, this could be a decorative element or dimple in the metal; read qua breast, this is an aureole. Such ambiguous imagery held particular capital at the court of Charles IV, where, at Karlštejn Castle and Saint Vitus Cathedral, Charles IV's artisans were embarking on an ambitious program of stonework masonry that played on the fixity of the image of the cross.

Because of this ambiguity, the *Virgo lactans* in the Krumlov title page is not a *Virgo lactans per se*. Here, this aspect of the Virgin is suggested, rather than explicitly shown. By comparing this instance to contemporary examples, however, it is clear that this act of visual suggestion was intentional. A fourteenth-century aristocratic woman's book of hours now housed at Yale's Beinecke Library features a painted miniature of the *Virgo lactans* preceding a miniature of the Annunciation (fig. 5.12).<sup>214</sup> In the Beinecke example, the Virgin proffers her left breast with her right hand to the infant Christ, an exact parallel of the gesture made by the Krumlov Madonna. The moon at the Virgin's feet and the halo of stars around her head in the Beinecke miniature also indicate Mary as the Woman of the Apocalypse. As in the Krumlov title page, the Virgin displays

Williamson's earlier dissertation on the subject, "The Virgin Lactans and the Madonna of Humility: Image and Devotion in Italy, Metz and Avignon in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries" (PhD Diss., University of London, 2009). See also Margaret R. Mills, *A Complex Delight: The Secularization of the Breast, 1350–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

<sup>214</sup> Hours, use of S.-Arnoul-les-Metz, 1325–1350, Yale, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS 657, 20v–21r.

multiple aspects at once, and indeed it was common to combine the *Virgo lactans* with the Virgin as Woman of the Apocalypse in the fourteenth century.<sup>215</sup> The Beinecke opening, of the *Virgo lactans* as Woman of the Apocalypse facing the Annunciation, was clearly of great importance to its original owner. It is on the Annunciation page that the first of two donor portraits can be found, and the breast and body of the *Virgo lactans* has been worn away by repeated rubbing.<sup>216</sup> A contemporaneous panel paintings from Vyšehrad in Prague also demonstrates how *Virgo lactans* imagery was not always entirely explicit (fig. 5.13). As in the Beinecke example, the *Vyšehrad Madonna* sits in a *hortus conclusus*, or enclosed garden evoking virginity, and she is cloaked in blue with a halo of stars around her head and the crescent moon at her feet, marking her dual signification as Madonna and Woman of the Apocalypse. The infant Christ cradled in her lap partially occludes his pursed mouth with his right hand and reaches around with his left hand to lift the Virgin's blue mantle, engaged not in the act of breastfeeding but in the moment just before or after.

The development of *Virgo Lactans* imagery and Apocalyptic Woman imagery were very closely bound in later fourteenth-century Bohemia. Charles IV is credited with introducing the iconography to the region, as he would have been exposed to early examples in Italy in particular on his political and relic-collecting campaigns in the 1340s and 50s.<sup>217</sup> Charles is likely to have

<sup>215</sup> Williamson, *Madonna of Humility*.

<sup>216</sup> A sign of devotional use, not of intentional defacement. Kathryn Rudy's pioneering research using a densitometer to measure the literal dirtiness of manuscripts have given new meaning the grime and smudges that often besmirch a book's pages. See Kathryn Rudy, "Dirty Books: Quantifying Patterns of Use in Medieval Manuscripts Using a Densitometer," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 2, no. 1–2 (2010): 1–26.

<sup>217</sup> Williamson, *Madonna of Humility*, 87–111.

commissioned the *Vyšehrad Madonna* sometime between 1355 and 1360, a moment that corresponds with his marriage to Anna Svídnická. Also during that time, work was being completed on the architectural and ornamental outfitting of his imperial getaway at Karlštejn Castle. There, among the many and elaborate frescoes and panel paintings depicting saints and church fathers as well as imperial portraiture exists in the Chapel of Our Lady an image of the Madonna as Woman of the Apocalypse with an infant Christ (fig. 5.14). The compositional and iconographic similarities between the Karlštejn and Krumlov Madonnas are striking: both Madonnas stand with their weight on their left legs, a contrapposto that corresponds to the weight placed on her left hip by Christ. The infant Christ in both strokes the face of his mother with his right hand. In the Karlštejn example, the Madonna extends her right hand to Christ instead of using it to proffer a globus cruciger/breast, as in the Krumlov example. Both Madonnas are winged and stand on moons; both also have abdomens engulfed in rays of light.

The similarities of the Krumlov and Karlštejn Madonnas should not be understated; they both seem to derive from the same model. That they both have wings—an iconographic feature that is shared by no other contemporaneous representations of the *Virgo lactans*, *Woman of the Apocalypse*, or *Virgo Assumpta*—signals an important and deliberate link between these two images. It has been suggested that the Karlštejn Madonna functioned as a crypto-portrait of Anna Svídnická, as a dramatic statement of Anna's role in bearing a son and heir to the throne through Charles IV.<sup>218</sup> Anna was Charles's third wife, but the first to give birth to a male heir (future King

<sup>218</sup> See Jiří Fajt, ed., *Magister Theodoricus, Court Painter to Emperor Charles IV: The Pictorial Decoration of the Shrines at Karlštejn Castle* (Prague: National Gallery, 1998), 155; and Williamson, *The Madonna of Humility*, 109.

of Bohemia Wenceslas IV [1361–1419]), and she thus held an elevated position in Bohemian dynastic history (see fig. 3.6). I would argue that a similar relationship held between Anna Svídnická and the Krumlov Madonna, that it served as a sort of crypto-portrait for the empress and marked her involvement as patron of the manuscript.

### 5.3 The *Krumlov Picture-Codex* and Its Audience

The way the author of the Krumlov Madonna layered various aspects of the Virgin speaks to the later medieval mode of devotional image-making that defies strict interpretation along theological lines. Such images are capacious and permit multiple readings, which is to say that Gerhard Schmidt’s interpretation of the image as a distillation of the doctrine of Immaculate Conception is plausible. But the parallels between it and other contemporaneous works of popular devotional art (especially of the sort we find used by nuns and lay religious women) suggests that there are many more points of confluence and contact. In citing the theory of Duns Scotus, a famous thirteenth-century Franciscan, Schmidt neglected another, perhaps more important, figure: Saint Bonaventure. On the nature of contemplative union with the Divine, Bonaventure wrote: “If you wish to know how these things may come about, ask grace, not learning; desire, not the understanding; the groaning of prayer, not diligence in reading; the Bridegroom, not the teacher; God, not man; darkness, not clarity; not light, but the fire that wholly inflames and carries one into God through transporting unions [*sic*] and consuming affections.”<sup>219</sup> Bonaventure here describes

<sup>219</sup> Bonaventure, *Works of Saint Bonaventure*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. P. Boehner and M. F. Laughlin (St. Bonaventure, NY, 1955–56), 2:101; cited in Hamburger, *Rothschild Canticles*, 159.

the sort of visionary religious experience that medieval women were disproportionately reported to have had; indeed, the Virgin of the Krumlov manuscript would have been just the sort of image to help them achieve their mystical sight.<sup>220</sup>

Whether this Virgin is interpreted as a complex theological argument or as a multimodal participant in the visual culture of women's mysticism,<sup>221</sup> the baseline significance of the Virgin Mary to the viewer of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is without question. The three full-page miniatures of the manuscript can be read as a treatise on femaleness broadly speaking—the ways in which sin is inaugurated and absolved through the female. Of course, feminine imagery or imagery that emphasizes the role of the Virgin does not preclude a male audience. As has already been shown, the maternal aspects of Christ's sacrifice, for instance, were celebrated among cloistered men.<sup>222</sup> The veneration of the Virgin was the rule, not the exception, and her gender was not seen to necessarily set her apart but rather to enable her participation in human redemption. But the fact remains that the most plausible patron for the codex was Holy Roman Empress Anna Svídnická, and there was indeed a group of cloistered women who likely participated in the production and certainly engaged in the viewing of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. There is an obvious symbiotic relationship between patron and maker/user here: Anna needed the intercessory prayers and veneration of her saintly lineage that both the nuns at monks at Český Krumlov could

<sup>220</sup> See Barbara Newman, "What Did It Mean to Say 'I Saw'?: The Clash between Theory and Practice in Medieval Visionary Culture," *Speculum* 80, no. 1 (2005): 1–43; and Jeryldene Wood, *Women, Art, and Spirituality: The Poor Clares of Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>221</sup> See Hamburger, *Rothschild Canticles*, 161.

<sup>222</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

offer; conversely, the community needed a wealthy patron for their newly founded chapter of Poor Clares and for the continued material sustenance of the community as a whole.

This reinterpretation of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* also affects the status of the manuscript as a contemporary art-historical object, which has been excluded from all major twenty-first-century exhibitions of Bohemian court art, both in Central Europe and in the United States. There are any number of reasons for this exclusion, but it is likely because the current body of scholarship places it in within a closed milieu—made by and for monks in the small town of Český Krumlov, any relationships it may have to Charles IV and his glittering art patronage are less than consequential. By broadening the scope of the discussion beyond the specific purview of Anna Svídnická, and by placing the manuscript into dialogue with women’s devotional experience more broadly, the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is enlivened, not only for the contemporary scholarship but also for the history of Central European art as a whole.

## 6.0 Conclusion

This study of late medieval women's devotional books necessitated the piecing together of information from disparate institutions and sources; the result of these efforts is a coherent picture of women's manuscript patronage in fourteenth-century Bohemia. The women at the core of this study were connected—to each other, via dynastic and political ties, and to God, through a shared devotional practice. Kunigunde and Richeza were sisters-in-law who both offered viable paths to the Bohemian crown during the Přemyslid succession crisis. Kunigunde took her niece, Elizabeth Přemyslid, under her wing at Saint George's convent before she went on to marry outsider John of Luxembourg and become Queen of Bohemia, a union that would quash any further aspirations Richeza had to the throne. As a Polish princess, Richeza was sure to include dedicatory prayers to Saint Hedwig in the manuscripts she commissioned for a southern Bohemian community of nuns. And just as Kunigunde cared for her young niece at Saint George, a century earlier at her convent in Trebnitz Saint Hedwig tutored a young Agnes of Bohemia (1211–1282), a direct relative of Kunigunde, Elizabeth Přemyslid, and Anna Svídnická.

These patterns and connections repeat and intertwine because of the power and privilege that was fiercely guarded by a select group of ruling dynasties. The influence of international tastes apparently ushered in by outsiders John of Luxembourg and Charles IV was met in equal force by the monuments made by and for aristocratic patrons from across the kingdom of Bohemia. That some of the most challenging and interesting examples originated from aristocratic women should come as no surprise. Aristocratic women across Europe were experiencing newfound recognition in popular devotional culture in the late thirteenth and throughout the fourteenth centuries. The illuminations in their personal devotional manuscripts brought this agency to life, with private acts

of prayer monumentalized on vellum. The scope and content of the fourteenth-century Bohemian examples are particularly impressive; perhaps these patrons had more at stake at this politically unstable moment. Furthermore, it was not just women who benefited from and enjoyed these books; men also recognized both the political and spiritual power at stake in these works of art and participated in both their production and consumption.

All of the case studies in the present project have shown what illuminated manuscripts can and cannot tell us about the people who made and used them. The marginality of Richeza in her manuscripts seems to suggest the marginality of the queen herself, and the absence of Anna Svídnická from the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* would likewise seem to obliterate the agency of the young empress entirely. In contrast, the outsized visual presence of Hedwig and Kunigunde in their respective books boldly suggests their power and presence in life. In fact, the opposite is true: Richeza probably had the greatest hand in shaping her manuscript corpus, as she actively donated an exhaustive group of liturgical codices to her newly founded convent in Old Brno. And Anna Svídnická is envisioned in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* not as a mere mortal donor but via a crypto-portrait of the Madonna as Woman of the Apocalypse. Meanwhile, Hedwig was dead for a century before the creation of the book that carries her name, and it was instigated at the behest of Ludwig I, as a way to assert his own power by way of his dynastic lineage, not necessarily as a way to give power to Hedwig as a historical figure. Kunigunde, too, is given visual pride of place in her manuscript, even though other figures—in particular the compiler Colda and the nuns at Saint George—likely had a more dominant role in the manuscript's conceptualization and use.

The varied provenances of these manuscripts have informed their reception in contemporary art historical scholarship as much as their pictorial contents have. The *Hedwig Codex* arrived in Los Angeles in the 1980s, at a moment when scholarly interest in women's



devotional praxis was growing, especially in North American scholarship. The manuscript had resided in Germany for more than a century prior to its acquisition by the J. Paul Getty Museum, and had already been subject to considerable scholarly treatments during the twentieth century because of Saint Hedwig's regional significance and the still very active devotion to her in Poland and northeast Germany. Future study of the *Hedwig Codex* would benefit from a longer view of the manuscripts and cult objects related to Saint Hedwig, a closer look at which individuals and groups have historically been invested in maintaining her cult and why. Another potentially vital approach to the study of Saint Hedwig would be to closely scrutinize the manuscripts and art objects that are known to have been in her possession during her lifetime: what did Hedwig see and touch, beyond the ever-present ivory Madonna that she clutches in her hand throughout the *Hedwig Codex*? How did the objects that she interacted with model the saintly comportment that she is purported to have exercised throughout her lifetime? A longer history of the later reception of her cult could extend into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when her role in Silesian historical identity became pivotal in a moment of political change.

These are both questions that the *Hedwig Codex* cannot really answer when studied in isolation. Although ostensibly a record of Saint Hedwig's thirteenth-century life, it is more accurately a reflection of late fourteenth-century ideals, particularly as they played out in an imperial court. There are, no doubt, more questions to be asked about that milieu that the *Hedwig Codex* might help us answer. The present study addressed the priorities and concerns of the manuscript's male patron, Ludwig I of Liegnitz, but an equally rich agent (or group of agents) in the history of the manuscript's production and use is the community of lay and religious readers at the collegiate church of Brzeg. The way the manuscript was used at Brzeg in the late fourteenth

and into the fifteenth century might be the key to understanding later artistic instantiations of the cult of Saint Hedwig.

Next to the *Hedwig Codex*, the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* has received the most attention in the modern scholarship to date, but it was only very recently subject to monographic study in English. Thus, while relatively “well-known” in the field of Bohemian manuscript studies, it is only beginning to be taken under consideration in thematic studies and surveys. Further study on the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* should, as with the *Hedwig Codex*, look backward and forward from the point of its creation. There is no single, systematic study of the manuscripts owned and commissioned by Kunigunde at Saint George’s convent. But by considering the corpus of manuscripts orbiting around Kunigunde, including the *Passional*, we might be able to better understand the motivations behind the *Passional*’s manufacture and the extent—as the present study seeks to elucidate—that Kunigunde was or, as the case may be, was *not* involved in the creation and use of her most renowned manuscript. Similarly, a view of the manuscripts and art objects made at Saint George after Kunigunde’s death would illuminate if and how the *Passional* influenced the visibility of devotional practice there. The fact that all other manuscripts that Kunigunde owned or had made for the library at Saint George were completely unillustrated suggests that devotion was not visually motivated—or at least not primarily so—on the Hradčany in Prague. The *Passional* was an exceptional object, but it remains to be seen whether it marked a true turning point in the devotional practice of the communities that use it.

The case studies that book-end this dissertation, on the manuscript corpus of Elizabeth Richeza and the so-called *Krumlov Picture-Codex*, offer the most fertile ground for future study. The Richeza manuscript corpus is virtually unstudied, not only in the English-language scholarship but also in the literature coming from Central and Eastern Europe in the last fifty or so years. The

vast majority of the Richeza corpus has resided in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek for the better part of two centuries, where it has been thoroughly cataloged but not brought into larger studies of late medieval women's patronage or the artistic landscape of Bohemia under the early Luxembourg reign. The three remaining manuscripts from the Richeza corpus not residing in Vienna are housed in smaller city libraries in the Czech Republic—although they are by no means inaccessible, they are no doubt overshadowed by works of Bohemian manuscript illumination either in Prague-based institutions or that are now held in Western European or U.S.-based collections.

Elizabeth Richeza is a fascinating late medieval patron. Interest in the works she commissioned began to bubble up in the 1990s in relation to the architectural structures of Aula Sanctae Mariae in Old Brno,<sup>223</sup> but her patronage has not been considered in its totality. A more complete study would include the manuscript corpus gifted to Aula Sanctae Mariae, the structure itself, as well as the earlier cathedral in Hradec Králové. Such a study would fit well into the recent research by scholars such as Therese Martin to flesh out our understanding of medieval art-making and art-giving by considering women's contributions to visual and material culture. The fact that the study of women as patrons and makers has in the past been considered “niche” only reflects how strongly medieval studies once defaulted to conversations about men. It is only in the past generation that the activities of women have come to be seen as essential to our past, and many significant lacunae still persist. A fuller picture of Richeza's patronage enlivens the Bohemian

<sup>223</sup> In 1992, Benešková, “Das Zisterzienserinnenkloster von Altbrunn und die Persönlichkeit seiner Stifterin”; and in 1998, Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary*, 62–64.

landscape—the narrative becomes not just one of John of Luxembourg and later of his son Charles IV in and around Prague but of competing aims in cities and towns throughout the region.

The final case study in this dissertation considered the group's most enigmatic book. Like the majority of the Richeza corpus, the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* is presently housed in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna. While, like the Richeza corpus, it has been thoroughly cataloged, it has not been activated in more recent studies of patronage, gender, or mysticism. Perhaps this has to do with its original cataloging, which was rather conservative and assumed monk-artists and -readers; this assumption has been carried through even the most recent scholarship on the manuscript. Both the content and structure of the *Picture-Codex*, however, are highly daring and quite puzzling and invite equally bold hypotheses about the patron and users of the book. I proposed, through a close-reading of the manuscript's opening full-page illustration as well as later images, that the patron was likely Holy Roman Empress Anna Svídnická, and that the nuns at the Česky Krumlov double-monastery likely viewed the book alongside the monks there.

The apparently unfinished state of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* can, I argued, be attributed to Anna Svídnická's early death, when the impetus and funding for the manuscript would have evaporated. It is difficult to recuperate Anna's agency as patron given that she died so young, but there is still a great deal more to unpack in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* itself. There is no end to the iconographic richness of the manuscript—this dissertation only permitted close viewings of three of its illustrations. These three were singled out because of their significance as the only full-page illustrations, but the narrative registers of Biblical stories, apocrypha, and saint's lives offer a trove of visual evidence. Future studies should look to what the broader illustrative program can reveal about the manuscript's maker and user, whether the rest of the program is as heavily gendered as the three full-page illustrations.

When preliminary research on this project was begun in 2014, less than half of the manuscripts in question had serviceable print or digital facsimiles. As I write now at the end of 2019, all eleven are fully digitized and freely available to view through their holding institutions or a digital asset aggregator. The digital facsimile of the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde* made available through the Manuscriptorium project was indispensable for my study of that book, which has been deemed a national treasure by the Czech government and is barred from hands-on scholarly study.<sup>224</sup> Manuscriptorium was equally essential for the study of those manuscripts that I was unable to travel to in person, such as the Rajhrad and Brno manuscripts from the Richeza corpus. A handful of manuscripts at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek—specifically the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* and two of the Richeza manuscripts—are classified as too fragile to handle. The ÖNB just recently digitized those fragile Richeza manuscripts and has made available a digital facsimile of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex* for some time. My early research on the *Hedwig Codex* was made possible by the 1972 print facsimile, and the high-quality digital images now provided free to the public by the J. Paul Getty Museum have made late-night queries and public presentations possible. New technology is changing the way these books can be studied for the better. As long as the servers are kept running and the free exchange of information and ideas is a value upheld, geopolitics will not hinder inquiry as they did in the twentieth century. As more and more people have access to these fascinating books, a truly feminist history of medieval art can take hold.

<sup>224</sup> Manuscriptorium: Digital Library of Written Cultural Heritage, [www.manuscriptorium.com](http://www.manuscriptorium.com).

## Appendix A Figure Captions

Illustrations have been redacted due to copyright considerations.

Figure 2.1a, b. Two donor portraits of Elizabeth Richeza. From L–R: Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 1774, fol. 2v; and Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 1813, fol. 195r. Photo by Allison McCann, by permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Figure 2.2. Initial H demonstrating black-ink foliate style typical of Bohemian manuscripts. Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 1774. Photo by Allison McCann, by permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Figure 2.3a, b. Unidentified male and female donor figures from the Richeza manuscript corpus. From L–R: Rajhrad, KBR R 600, fol. 188r; Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 1813, fol. 119r. Photo by Allison McCann, by permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Figure 2.4. Richeza's hands invade the heavenly space of the historiated initial. Rajhrad, KBR R 355, fol. 8v. Photo by Allison McCann, by permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Figure 2.5. Incipit to the Rule of Saint Benedict, showing Benedict delivering his Rule in the top register and Richeza leading two nuns in prayer in the lower register of the initial A. Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 417, fol. 150r. Photo by Allison McCann, by permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Figure 2.6. So-called authorship portrait from the Morgan quire of the *Bible of Saint Louis*, France, probably Paris, ca. 1227–1234. New York, The Morgan Library and Museum MS M.240, fol. 8. Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 2.7. Incipit to the Rule of Saint Benedict showing Benedict delivering his Rule directly to a group of nuns. University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library, MS 0098. Photo: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library.

Figure 2.8. Incipit to the Rule of Saint Benedict showing Benedict delivering his Rule directly to a group of nuns. Bergamo, Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai, MA 375, fol. 1r. Photo: Biblioteca civica Angelo Mai.

Figure 2.9. Richeza reading aloud to a group of nuns in lower marginal roundel. Rajhrad, KBR R 355, fol. 8v. Photo by Allison McCann, by permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Figure 3.1. *Arma Christi, Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*. Prague, NKČR, XIV.A.17, fol. 10r. Wikimedia Commons.

- Figure 3.2. Strahov Plenary, front and back. Bohemia, 1300, additions after 1330 and ca. 1800. Prague, The Royal Canonry of Premonstratensians at Strahov, Inv. No. 1310. Photo courtesy Jan Pařez, curator of manuscripts, Strahov Monastery.
- Figure 3.3. Painted parchment insert from the Strahov Plenary depicting the *Gnadenstuhl* flanked by two female figures (Kunigunde and Elizabeth Přemyslid? Saint Ludmila and unidentified saint?). Bohemia, 1300, additions after 1330 and ca. 1800. Prague, The Royal Canonry of Premonstratensians at Strahov, Inv. No. 1310. Photo courtesy Jan Pařez, curator of manuscripts, Strahov Monastery.
- Figure 3.4. Gnadenstuhl. Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 1813, fol. 119r. Photo by Allison McCann, by permission of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
- Figure 3.5. The Přemyslid dynastic lineage. *Zbraslav Chronicle*, text 1313–1321, illustration late 14<sup>th</sup> century. Jihlava, Státní okresní archive v Jihlavy, fol. 6r. Photo: manuscriptorium.com.
- Figure 3.6. The Luxembourg dynastic lineage. *Zbraslav Chronicle*, text 1313–1321, illustration late 14<sup>th</sup> century. Jihlava, Státní okresní archive v Jihlavy, fol. 6v. Photo: manuscriptorium.com.
- Figure 3.7. A tender Gnadenstuhl. Rajhrad, KBR R 355, fol. 121r. Photo: manuscriptorium.com.
- Figure 3.8. The dedicatory illustration from the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*. Prague, NKČR, XIV.A.17, fol. 1v. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.
- Figure 3.9. Dedication page of the *Uta Codex*. Munich, Bavarian State Library, Clm. 13601. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.
- Figure 3.10. Dominican nun kneeling before a risen Christ, *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*. Prague, NKČR, XIV.A.17, fol. 7v. Photo: manuscriptorium.com.
- Figure 3.11. Christ as Invincible Knight, *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*. Prague, NKČR, XIV.A.1, fol. 3v. Photo: manuscriptorium.com.
- Figure 3.12. Christ leading the *sponsa* to heaven, *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*. Prague, NKČR, XIV.A.17, fol. 18r. Photo: manuscriptorium.com.
- Figure 3.13. Saint Hedwig is engulfed in devotional flames as her advisor, Boleslas, looks on, the *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 46r. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.1. The donor portrait of the *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 12v. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.2. Hedwig's Family Tree, the *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fols. 9v and 10 r. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.

- Figure 4.3. Scenes from the life of Saint Elizabeth in the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. Vienna, ÖNB Codex 370, fols. 85v and 86r. Photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
- Figure 4.4. Hedwig's immediate family portrait; Hedwig and Heinrich are married. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 10v. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.5. Hedwig prays while Heinrich the Bearded sleeps; Hedwig and Heinrich's brood. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 11r. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.6. European forces battle the Tatars; Heinrich is killed and carried to heaven. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 11v. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.7. Heinrich's head is brought to Liegnitz; Hedwig's divine vision. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 12r. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.8. The translation of Hedwig's relics. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 137v. Photo J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.9. Gertrud joins the convent at Trebnitz. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 18v. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.10. Master of Hohenfurth (or of Vyšší Brod; active 1350–70), *Vyšší Brod Altarpiece*, ca.1350. Prague, National Gallery. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.
- Figure 4.11. Hedwig and Heinrich take a vow of chastity; Hedwig claims new children. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 18r. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.12. Hedwig kneels before a statue of Christ. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 24v, top. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 4.13. Hedwig kneels before statues of Saints Vincent and Bartholomew. The *Hedwig Codex*. Los Angeles, JPGM MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 46v, top. Photo: J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Figure 5.1. Initial opening of the *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 370, fols. 1v–2r. Photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
- Figure 5.2. The Virgin Mary as Woman of the Apocalypse with infant Christ, *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 370, fol. 1r. Photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
- Figure 5.3. Siebenlasterweib and Christological cycle, *Krumlov Picture-Codex*. Vienna, ÖNB Cod. 370, fols. 155v–156r. Photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
- Figure 5.4. Scenes from the story of Joseph, *Velislav Bible*, Prague, NKČR, XXIII.C.124. Photo scanned from: *Velislav Biblia picta*. Prague: Pragopress, [1970].



- Figure 5.5. Folio from the *Cursus Sanctae Mariae Virginis*. New York, Morgan Library and Museum, MS M.739, fol. 13v. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.
- Figure 5.6. Fresco depicting Charles IV and Anna Svídnická carrying a processional cross, Saint Catherine's Chapel, Karlštejn Castle.
- Figure 5.7. Chapel of the Holy Rood, Karlštejn Castle. [www.hrad-karlstejn.cz](http://www.hrad-karlstejn.cz).
- Figure 5.8. Siebenlasterweib and a monk face off. Wölfenbüttel, Wölfenbüttel Bibliothek Cod. Helmst. 35a. Photo: Wölfenbüttel Bibliothek.
- Figure 5.9. Bernward's Doors, Hildesheim. Wikimedia Commons.
- Figure 5.10. The Visitation, ca. 1310–1320. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.724. Photo Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Figure 5.11a, b. Shrine Madonna, closed and opened, ca. 1300. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.185a, b. Photo Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Figure 5.12. Virgo lactans as Woman of the Apocalypse; Annunciation with donor portrait. New Haven, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS 657, fols. 20v–21r. Photo: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.
- Figure 5.13. Anonymous (Bohemian), *Vyšehrad Madonna*, ca. 1360, 68.5 x 54 cm. Prague, Národní galerie. Photo: *Magister Theodoricus, Court Painter to Emperor Charles IV: The Pictorial Decoration of the Shrines at Karlštejn Castle*. Edited by Jiří Fajt. Prague: National Gallery, 1998, 249.
- Figure 5.14. The Woman of the Apocalypse from the Chapel of Our Lady at Karlštejn Castle, ca. 1355–1360. Photo: *Magister Theodoricus, Court Painter to Emperor Charles IV: The Pictorial Decoration of the Shrines at Karlštejn Castle*. Edited by Jiří Fajt. Prague: National Gallery, 1998, 85.

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