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THE ROLE OF THE IMITATIO HELENÆ IN THE  
HAGIOGRAPHY OF FEMALE RULERS UNTIL THE  
LATE THIRTEENTH CENTURES

*Ролята на Imitatio Helenae в агиографията на  
жените-владетелки до късния XII век*

*Статията е посветена на мита за св. Елена като парадигма за жените-владетелски светци през средновековието. Подобно на Константин Велики, който се превръща в до голяма степен митологичен модел на християнски владетел, и неговата майка става пример за владетелските съпруги-християнки и християнските жени-владетелки. Византийският модел, от своя страна, намира подражание в средновековна Западна и Централна Европа. Благотворителната и милосърдна дейност на жените от политическия елит, т.нар. Kirchenpolitik и Klosterpolitik, се превръща в неразривна част от модела на св. Елена.*

The etymology of the name Helena comes from a Greek word for *torch*, or a *corposant*, but it can also be tied with the meaning of the word *selene*, meaning moon. Therefore, it is well understandable that already the ancient Greek embodiment of this word, Helen of Troy, and her legend developed these hidden meanings. The *imago Helenae* has represented an image of the most beautiful woman in the world since the ancient times, and has belonged to the most powerful images of woman.

A philosophical and theological treatment of the theme of Helena is found in the learning of the founder of all gnosis, Simon the Magus, about an androgynous couple (Helena and Simon), about separation and unification of the female and male element in the history of salvation – *Simonianismus*<sup>1</sup>.

The understanding of beauty and femininity and the loss and regaining of the original androgynous unity of the human being were frequently the subjects of speculation and poetic creations in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. It is not surprising then that it found its way into the third act of the second part of Faust by Johann Wolfgang

Goethe as well (known under the name *Vor dem Palaste des Menelas zu Sparta* – so-called *Helene-Akt*)<sup>2</sup>.

The criticism of this understanding of Helena and of the role of woman in society in general, and the search for a new Christian content of femininity was certainly one of the tasks of the Church Fathers (Ireneus of Lyon, Jerome, Ambrose, etc.). Besides them, it was a task of Church historians of the fourth and fifth centuries to create a new model (Eusebius<sup>3</sup>, Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, Paulinus of Nola and Sulpicius Severus<sup>4</sup>). The final shape of the new model was influenced by three factors: the development of the cult of the Virgin Mary – the Mother of God; the behaviour of Roman patrician women (St Makrina the Younger † 379/Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa; St Paula † 404/Jerome; St Julia Eustochia † 419; St Melanie the Elder † 409 and Melanie the Younger † 439/Jerome, Augustine, e.g. Paulinus of Nola) and the cult of the Holy Cross, which developed in Jerusalem in the second half of the fourth century. The interrelation of the three factors led to a formulation of the *Legend of the Invention of the Holy Cross* by saintly Empress Helena. Apart from the details, in which particular renderings of the legend differ, St Ambrose's version of the legend<sup>5</sup>, which appeared in his famous funeral speech to Emperor Theodosius I on February 25, 395 (chapters 40 – 49), is considered as the most important one.

The legend contains the following *topoi*:

- 1) the humble origin of Helena – *stabularia* (die Gaswirtin/inn-keeper);
- 2) the inspiration by the Holy Spirit as the reason of her journey (pilgrimage) to Jerusalem and the search for the Holy Cross;
- 3) the *Imitatio Mariae* – Helena as another Mary, the invention of the Holy Cross, the defeat of the devil;
- 4) the construction of a church at Golgotha, and other churches = support of the Church;
- 5) the diffusion of relics connected with the Holy Cross (wood, nails, table) and their connection with imperial power (bridle, helmet, imperial diadem) – *heridas fidei* = legitimisation of the dynasty through its sacralisation by means of preservation of the holy relics.

St. Helena is one of the most outstanding women in world history: it is generally accepted that she was one of those who had the greatest merit in the fact that the Late Roman world accepted Jesus Christ and became Christian<sup>6</sup>. Tradition created from the Roman *augusta* who had received Christianity the first Christian female ruler ever. Her legend has become an exemplar, a model and at the same time a myth. Its power has survived in various manifestations until today<sup>7</sup>. Because – for example, in what other way could charitable activities of today's wives of presidents and high-profile politicians be explained?

It was not different in more distanced history either. That is to say, the forming power of the legend – *imitatio Helenae*<sup>8</sup> – appeared with a higher or lower intensity in the case of almost every female ruler in Christian world<sup>9</sup>.

I will apply this thesis to a sample of female rulers of holy fame, who lived (or allegedly lived according to their legends) in the tenth century: Bohemian st. Ludmila, st. Olga-Helena of Kievan Rus', Croatian Jelena (Helena), and Polish-Hungarian Adelaide, and partially also Bohemian-Polish Dubravka (Dubrawa)<sup>10</sup>. The method in which I attempt to identify the traces of the *imitatio Helenae* is also important. Firstly, I identify the indirect analogies – through an analysis of particular morphological elements of the hagiographical image of St. Helena on its own and their comparison with the elements of sainthood of St. Ludmila and other female saints. Secondly, this study looks for direct analogies on the basis of an identical name, or the explicit utterance of comparison “like Helena.”

As I have already mentioned, St. Helena has frequently been a subject of historical research<sup>11</sup>. Historical empress Helena was born around 250 as a pagan, probably in a family of not very good reputation<sup>12</sup>. We do not know anything reliable concerning the place and childhood of the future saint. Her son Constantine was born from her relationship (a wife, concubine) with Constantius Chlorus, a Roman general (and later emperor). In spite of that, Constantius broke up with Helena (around year 289), most probably because of his further career<sup>13</sup>. Future standing of the ambitious woman depended only on a successful career of her son. He achieved the highest rank of the contemporary world and became the Roman Emperor. He has forever distinguished himself from other emperors by the Edict of Milan, which offered Christianity to Rome in 313. It is interesting that according to a later tradition it was Helena who convinced Constantine about the true faith<sup>14</sup>. *Augusta* Helena's conflict with her daughter-in-law, *augusta* Faustina, Constantine's second wife, is a sad and unclear story from Helena's life. The conflict ended up with the death of the latter — we do not know who was to blame<sup>15</sup>. However, Helena stood out especially with her pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Later tradition recorded that she had found the Holy Cross, on which Jesus Christ had died, there<sup>16</sup>. She had several churches built during her life<sup>17</sup>. It would not be anything exceptional, had they not been the first official Christian churches (together with those whose construction was initiated by her son Constantine) built by the state in the Roman Empire. Empress Helena died in 330 at the age of around eighty years.

As it was already said the development of the cult of the first Christian female ruler started with the first Christian historians. But it was St. Ambrose who compared her to the Virgin Mary<sup>18</sup>. She was denoted as *beata* already in the *Liber Pontificalis* from the fourth century<sup>19</sup> and she appeared as *sancta* in the sources from the end of the eighth and beginning of the ninth century<sup>20</sup>. The popularity of St. Helen and the Holy Cross increased in the time of the Crusades. In the thirteenth century at latest the Legend of St. Helena and of the Invention of the Holy Cross was incorporated into the *Legenda Aurea*<sup>21</sup>. The fate of St. Helena's remains is also interesting. Originally they were placed in her Roman mausoleum (more precisely, in the rotunda part of the complex of Sts. Peter's and Marcellin's Basilica in Via Labicana)<sup>22</sup>. Later tradition would have liked to see them in Constantinopolitan Basilica of St. Apostles, where they were said to have rested in a

sarcophagus together with those of Constantine the Great, the founder of the church<sup>23</sup>. The relics of St. Helena, however, remained in their original place for long and only in the years 841/842 a part of them was translated to France. During the pontificate of Innocent III (1130–1143) the rest of the relics were translated into the Basilica Santa Maria in Araceli in Rome. Ten years later, during the pontificate of Anastasius IV they were once again translated into the Lateran Basilica<sup>24</sup>. The “movement” of St. Helena’s relics indicates the intensity and the main centres of her cult: they were Rome, Gaul (France) and the British Isles in the Western Christianity (St. Helena was allegedly born here according to another tradition)<sup>25</sup>; and Constantinople, Helenopolis, Jerusalem and others in the East.

The character and the morphology of St. Helena’s cult spontaneously resulted from the character of her life. The cult functioned either independently as the cult of the personality of St. Helena, or in the form of the myth of the *parental Christian ruling couple* together with her son Constantine the Great<sup>26</sup>. It is to be underlined, however, that in both cases the cult was connected with veneration of the Holy Cross. The memory of Constantine and Helena was being strengthened with veneration of the Holy Cross<sup>27</sup>. Let us first describe the morphology of the individual cult of St. Helena.

J. McNamara has already tried to depict the morphology in her article dealing with imitation of St. Helena. She identified the most important features of the hagiographic model of the first Christian female ruler in the way that it found its expression in Western Christianity<sup>28</sup>. First of all, she emphasised the significance of St. Helena as a woman who had helped to convert a country to Christianity<sup>29</sup>, had supported the development of the Church in the country (by constructing new Christian churches and monasteries, by supporting clergy and development of monastic life, etc.), had looked after widows, orphans, the poor, the sick and the weak<sup>30</sup>, had collected and retained the relics (especially the Holy Cross, which has later become literally a symbol of the female rulers of saintly fame) and who had made a holy pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It is not to be forgotten that St. Helena by the finding of the Holy Cross contributed to legitimisation of her son’s imperial power, and also to sacralisation of the new Roman Christian dynasty<sup>31</sup>.

There are, however, also other features of the *imitatio Helenae*, which McNamara did not mention – Helena as a mother and a founder of dynasty<sup>32</sup>. Helena is compared to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God<sup>33</sup>. Her peacemaking function is also important<sup>34</sup>. Besides that the splendour of the Byzantine imperial court and the spiritual power of St. Peter’s See contributed significantly to the power and appeal of the *imago* (image) of the Christian female ruler similar to saintly empress Helena.

The comparison of Christian female rulers to Helena (as a new quality of her cult) appeared for the first time in the year 451, during the rule of Empress Pulcheria<sup>35</sup>. Venantius Fortunatus compared also Empress Sophia (530?–600?) to Helena<sup>36</sup>. At the same time he used the comparison also for Frankish Queen Radegund (525–587)<sup>37</sup>. In 601 saintly Pope Gregory the Great denoted Berta, the first Christian female ruler of the Anglo-Saxons, like this. Two years later the same Pope called Byzantine Empress Leontia

in the same way<sup>38</sup>. Pope Hadrian I (in 785) called Byzantine Empress Irena (?–803) as a new Helena<sup>39</sup>. As a result, the possibility of being like St. Helena has become important for medieval female rulers<sup>40</sup>. What was even more important was the fulfilling of the character of her sovereign saintood, which magnetised the most important female figures of the European ruling houses. There are several characteristic cases of female rulers with reputation of holiness from the Ottonian period, although no comparison to the saintly empress can be found *expressis verbis* among them, except for some iconographic representations<sup>41</sup>. The queens like Edit († 946)<sup>42</sup>, Matilda († 968)<sup>43</sup> and Adelaide († 999)<sup>44</sup> were, however, not completely accidentally presented by their hagiographers as ideal wives, widows and women of saintly fame (female saints)<sup>45</sup>, collectors of holy relics, nurses of orphans, widows, the poor and the needed, and also as generous *mecenae* of the Church, founders of churches and supporters of monasteries<sup>46</sup>. The power of the myth, which moulded into a hagiographic model, is further affirmed by examples like St. Gizela († 1060)<sup>47</sup>, the wife of Hungarian king Stephen I, and her contemporary holy queen Margaret († 1093)<sup>48</sup> from distant Scotland. She also took care of the sick and the weak, supported the Church, founded monasteries, etc. We could also mention other examples, but this group will suffice as a characteristic sample of female rulers of holy reputation for the moment.

Another well-known form of imitating St. Helena, although not thoroughly formulated until now, is connected with the cult of her son. This pattern can be defined as imitation of St. Helena and Constantine (*imitatio Helenae et Constantini*) or imitation of *saintly ruling (dynastic) parental couple*<sup>49</sup>. Like each hagiographic model, it has its own attributes. For example, it usually appears in the beginnings of statehood, Christianisation, or in the periods of intensifying Christianisation, or in a moment of a new beginning, i.e. a qualitative historical turning point in a particular European country.

In Byzantium it had a character of deliberate identification with the greatness of its origins, with the neverending work of Christianisation of the world. The comparison with Constantine and Helena was, however, utilized as a means of legitimisation at the time of succession of a new dynasty<sup>50</sup>. The name of Constantine then became a signification of greatness of a new return to the origins, and even an indication of saintood (notably also in Western Christianity)<sup>51</sup>.

The roots of this topos are very difficult to trace. We know, however, that the figures of the Emperor and his mother holding a cross were found on the entrance arch in the *Forum Constantini* in Constantinople<sup>52</sup>. The Council of Chalcedon in 451 proclaimed Empress Pulcheria and her husband Marcian as a New Helena and a New Constantine<sup>53</sup>. This thought operation or ideological concept achieved special popularity in Byzantium in the last years of the eighth century, in the time of restoration of the worship of images. It was exactly then that the imperial pair – Constantine VI (780–797) and his mother Irena – was compared by Pope Hadrian I to Constantine and Helena<sup>54</sup>. Similarly, when the Macedonian dynasty succeeded to the throne, its first representative

Basil I together with his wife Eudokia was proclaimed as a New Constantine and New Helena at the Church council already two years after his violent usurpation of power (869)<sup>55</sup>. More analogical examples could be certainly found in Byzantine history. After the iconoclastic schism (9<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> century) the motif of the saintly ruling pair was massively used in art and in ideology – the motif of Helena handing over the cross, or a double cross (a symbol of faith, or victory) to Constantine, or the theme of imitation of the pair.<sup>56</sup> Therefore the motif is found on many Byzantine monuments, which got to numerous European courts<sup>57</sup>. The last Byzantine example is a comparison to Constantine and Helena used by the patriarch of Constantinople for the imperial pair of Manuel II (1391–1425) and Helena Dragas<sup>58</sup>.

The imitation of the imperial pair appeared with analogical functions not only in Constantinople, but also in Western Europe. Gregory of Tours, for example, compared the founder of the Frankish Empire Clovis to Constantine the Great. Although his wife, St. Clothilda, was again not verbally compared to St. Helena by anybody, she persuaded (*mulier suadens*) Clovis to accept Christianity, similarly to Helena<sup>59</sup>. Besides that, likewise Helena, she constructed churches and monasteries, supported clerics, cared for the prosperity of the Christian Church, reconciled various disputes among the Merovingians, etc. Thus, Clothilda had all substantial features of the *imitatio Helenae*. The only possibly missing element is her correlation with the cult of the Holy Cross. This is, however, present in Radegund (518–587), another female saint and Frankish queen, who is directly compared to Helena. Radegund was the wife of Clovis' son Clothar, whom she left because of his immoral behaviour. She lived in a state that had already been Christian nominally. However, she strived to further deepen the Christianisation by generous donations to the Church, but especially by founding monasteries (the best known was the monastery of the Holy Cross in Poitiers), by collecting the relics of saints and by mediating missions (with varied success) among other Merovingians, who were incessantly fighting for the throne. I will mention for illustration a sentence from her official life written in the sixth century: "What Helena did in the eastern countries, Blessed Radegund did in Gaul."<sup>60</sup>

Irrespective of the fact that Clovis has never become a saint (Constantine the Great, to whom Gregory of Tours indirectly compared Clovis, has also never become a saint<sup>61</sup>) and that St. Clothilda is not compared to St. Helena anywhere, they can be considered as a *founding sovereign pair of saintly fame* among the Franks, inspired by the exemplar of St. Constantine and Helena. We can talk about a certain *imitatio Constantini et Helenae* only indirectly here though. Intentionality of such construction of the origins of early-medieval Frankish state in a broader Latin world is documented by another example. King Ethelbert and Queen Berta (who convinced her husband to convert to Christian faith) formed the first Christian Anglo-Saxon royal couple and in year 601 Pope Gregory the Great compared them in his two letters to Helena and Constantine<sup>62</sup>. Thus, a deliberate tendency to sacralise the Christian beginnings through the actualisation of the imperial pair of Constantine and Helena is found in two countries, which are the cradle of Western European hagiography in a particular way.

The evidence of the power of this model can be found also in other Western European countries. Already in the tenth and eleventh centuries, in the period when the Byzantine Empire and its *splendor imperii* had once again hit European ruling courts with full strength, an increased interest in the cult of the Holy Cross showed itself here. The representations of the sovereign pairs with the Holy Cross (not dissimilar to the icon of Constantine and St. Helena) thus occurred in the Ottonian court as well. They served as one of the ideological weapons of their saintly wives and mothers, who skilfully utilised them for the needs of the sacralisation of the Ottonian dynasty. Adelaide and Otto I (the tenth century) and St. Henry II and his saintly wife Cunegond (the eleventh century) are two interesting examples of this representation<sup>63</sup>. And there is also another example: St. Margaret of Scotland and her saintly son David, who also show all substantial features of the *imago* of a saintly sovereign pair<sup>64</sup>. All these examples deserve a more thorough enquiry.

In a similar spirit the principles of female dynastic saintood were quite naturally developing also in the central-eastern part of Europe from the tenth century. The *imitatio Helенаe* is represented in a smaller or greater extent in both its forms in the cases of most female representatives of early-medieval statehood of Bohemia, Croatia, Kievan Rus', Poland, Hungarian Kingdom and later Serbia. In this place I will demonstrate in what way it found its expression in the figures of holy Bohemian Duchess Ludmila, Croatian Queen Jelena (Helena), holy Princess Olga (Helena), Hungarian Grand Duchess Adelaide (or, if you like, Queen Gisela, the wife of St. Stephen) and Polish Princess Dubravka. These women, in keeping with the ruler model of St. Helena, help with the conversion of the state to Christianity, or help to strengthen the state by supporting the local Church directly or through their husbands, look after the poor, widows, orphans, and relieve dynastic tensions. Their names are connected with the cult of the Holy Cross. They are the mothers of the dynasties, and thus the mothers of the states. Their holy reputation is usually bound to the founding role of their husbands, sons, or grandsons. However, together with their male counterparts they act as the *pairs of rulers of saintly fame*, and thus they are likened to Constantine the Great and his mother Helena. The image of a Christian *parental couple* of the state and at the same time of the local Church is thus found in the following pairs of rulers in Bohemia and in Kievan Rus': St. Ludmila and St. Wenceslas, St. Olga and St. Vladimir. The pattern is found in a not-fully developed form also in Poland (Dubravka and Boleslaus the Brave), in Croatia (Jelena and Stephen Držislav) and Hungary (Adelaide and St. Stephen, or St. Gizela and St. Stephen). The phenomenon can be explained basically in an analogical way as elsewhere in contemporary Europe. On the one hand, there is a natural (unconscious) tendency to mythologise own's own history in a concentrated form of a *male-female founding parental couple*<sup>65</sup>. On the other hand, there was a conscious effort on the part of hagiographers to implant a specific type of the Christian myth into this space – and to introduce a local variant of the *first Christian sovereign couple* similar to the *first male-female Christian sovereign pair* of Constantine and Helena<sup>66</sup>.

Let us now turn to particular cases<sup>67</sup>. The starting point will be the figure and the cult of the first Bohemian duchess known by name and a saint, Ludmila. What to do with the fact, however, that written sources have not preserved any direct textual reference to St. Helena<sup>68</sup>? Does it really mean that the holy empress was an unknown person for those who constructed Ludmila's saintood? Not exactly. It has to be realised that the power of a tradition does not vanish even if the continuator is not consciously aware of its founder (e.g. the wives of present presidents and Helena). Because the sources concerning St. Ludmila lack any written reference to St. Helena, we have to search for the evidence of an inspirative influence of this female saint on the origins of the cult of St. Ludmila in a different way. Firstly, I consider the possibility that the legends of St. Ludmila originated without utilizing any previous model excluded. Where to look for the model though? (This question can be broadly applied also for St. Olga, Croatian Jelena, etc.) I have already mentioned that only two significant cultural centres in the contemporary Europe, which had an experience with the sacralisation of their fundamentals – the Byzantine Empire and the Frankish Empire, can be taken into consideration. Which female saint does resemble St. Ludmila the most? The data from the lives of possible models of Ludmila's saintood will serve for the purpose of identification: among them especially the setting in a period of the transition from paganism to Christianity or a period of the corroboration of Christianity, her heroic status (a ruler, a widow), her primary deed (the reception of Christianity, the support of the young Church). Accidentally or not, St. Helena and St. Clothilda (or Radegund) correspond with the defined data the most. I have already demonstrated that the hagiographic model of the first Christian woman on the Frankish throne was based on St. Helena. Therefore we can turn to identification of the motifs pertaining to St. Helena in the cult of the first Bohemian female saint now.

Let us now compare further biographical data. Both women lived quite a long life for their periods (St. Helena was eighty-years old, St. Ludmila around sixty). Both were widows, rulers, recipients and fortifiers of Christianity. In both cases the frontier moment of their lives develops from their conflicts with their daughters-in-law (Helena versus Faustina, and Ludmila versus Drahomira). The solution to the conflict is seemingly different – on the one hand, an ambiguous death of Faustina, on the other hand, the murder of the mother-in-law, Ludmila. In the end, both cases led to the sanctity of both women – thanks to a holy pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the invention of the Holy Cross, or thanks to the miracles accomplished at Ludmila's grave.

I have already observed that the figure of St. Ludmila, similarly to St. Helena, was connected with the fate of the early Church to a certain extent<sup>69</sup>. The cult of St. Ludmila, however, is also directly connected with the beginnings of Bohemian female monastic movement. More precisely, the origins of female monasticism are related with the translation (*translatio*) of her remains from Tetín to the spiritual centre of the contemporary Bohemian state, the Church of St. George in Prague. The first Bohemian Benedictine nunnery was established at this church under the rule of Boleslaus II the Pious in 967<sup>70</sup>.

It was not only the first monastery in Bohemia, but also the first ecclesiastical institution in the territory of Bohemia (it originated even several years earlier than the bishopric of Prague)<sup>71</sup>.

The charitable element of the image of St. Helena is in St. Ludmila represented rather pointedly by the archetype of Christian virtues of Old-Testamental Job<sup>72</sup>. The legend *Fuit* writes about her: "...she [Ludmila] became the mother of the poor man, the leg of a lame, the eye of a blind, and a good supporter of orphans and widows"<sup>73</sup>.

No mention of a special relationship towards relics is found in written sources pertaining to her. It developed *post mortem*, though. Her cult has become to be connected with the cult of the Holy Cross through the space of the Basilica of St. George. While examining the deposition of the saint's body together with the original interior decoration of the sanctuary, I found a reference to the altar of the Holy Cross, which stood above the tomb of Boleslaus II in the nineteenth century<sup>74</sup>. However, I suppose that either the first Abbess Mlada or at latest the abbess-restorer of the monastery Berta in the twelfth century placed it there<sup>75</sup>. The existence of the altar itself implies that St. Ludmila was enriched with another important attribute of female rulers' sanctity after St. Helena by means (*ex voto*) of the Cross<sup>76</sup>. And one more connection: an altar of St. Helena was located in the same Basilica of St. George in Prague<sup>77</sup>. The holy remains thus facilitated the logical correlation of cults of the two female saints.

The saintood of Ludmila sacralised the legitimacy of the rule of the Přemyslid dynasty in Bohemia. Not accidentally is she called a "patron of the Bohemians" ("patrona Bohemorum") in a later homily *Factum est*<sup>78</sup>.

The peacemaking function of Ludmila appears in her legends in the form of her voluntary handover of power to her daughter-in-law Drahomira: "I do not want to rule and I do not desire for even a particle of your power. I only ask you to allow me to serve God peacefully until the end of my days"<sup>79</sup>. St. Ludmila in Bohemia showed a way of resolution of dynastic conflicts with her gesture (like her grandson Wenceslas, but also like Boris and Gleb in Kievan Rus').

The only condition that St. Ludmila does not fulfil with respect to the provided scheme of the *imitatio Helenae* is her pilgrimage to a holy place. Her common journey with husband Bořivoj to Moravia, to St. Methodius, during which they were baptised, could be hypothetically considered as such. It would remind of the baptism of St. Olga in Constantinople. Nevertheless, this will most probably stay only a hypothesis, as sources always mentioned only Bořivoj in this connection<sup>80</sup>.

The oldest part of St. Ludmila's hagiographical model originated and developed on the basis of the model of sanctity of the first Christian female ruler, Empress Helena, although a direct textual reference to this fact is missing in the sources about St. Ludmila. Nevertheless, could the creators of the ideological construction of the Bohemian state afford to ignore such an influential hagiographic current? With difficulty only – because it was the main current of female rulers' sanctity in that period. The selection of the heroine and its formal details (pagan women who received, spread and fortified Chris-

tianity, widows, female rulers, the cult of the Holy Cross, the foundation of a nunnery at the place of the rest of the remains of St. Ludmila, the mother of the dynasty, reconciliators, and so on) cannot be a result of a mere coincidence, but a result of a deliberate work of the oldest “ideologues” of the Bohemian statehood. On the other hand, it is to be acknowledged that St. Ludmila’s saintood did not later develop in this direction, but searched for new forms and patterns, the result of which is especially the homily *Factum est*, as I shall try to argue in another place<sup>81</sup>.

Moreover, St. Ludmila together with St. Wenceslas resembles another pattern of the imitation of St. Helena, i.e. the pair of St. Helena with her son Emperor Constantine the Great. The starting point of this argument is simple: If we suppose that Helena was a model for Ludmila, then we should also assume that Constantine was a model for Wenceslas. The hagiographic models of St. Ludmila and her grandson have been from their beginnings closely interrelated with each other, like the hagiographic models of the *first Christian imperial couple* have been interconnected<sup>82</sup>. In both cases these are the models of a *founding (parental) Christian ruling couple*.

Let us look at the possible Constantinian motifs in the legends of St. Wenceslas in more detail. If we rule out the story about the “tonsuring” (“postriziny”) of St. Wenceslas from the short variant of the *First Church Slavonic Life of St. Wenceslas*<sup>83</sup>, then what remains is a single short passage in *Christian’s Legend (Legenda Christiani*, the end of the tenth century). It describes the fight of St. Wenceslas with a pagan duke from the castle of Koumim. Like in the case of Constantine (or also in the case of the Frankish King Clovis), a sign of the Holy Cross appears to St. Wenceslas, and eventually decides about his victory<sup>84</sup>. At first sight the story does not mean much, but it is certainly more than the missing direct references to St. Helena in the case of St. Ludmila.

In spite of that, the example of Emperor Constantine the Great did not probably remain unknown in the learned part of Prague society in the tenth century. Rather, by contrast, it as well must have reflected the contemporaneous climate, the Carolingian, Ottonian and Byzantine “fashion wave”, and also the influential European tradition of comparing the first significant rulers of particular communities to Constantine the Great as the *archetype of the Christian ruler*<sup>85</sup>. Therefore it is probable that the imperial pair of Constantine and Helena was perceived as a certain impulse, as an inspiration for the idea of sacralisation of the fundamentals of the Bohemian state through the canonization of its *parental ruling couple* – St. Ludmila and St. Wenceslas.

On the other hand, this statement cannot lead to disregarding of the local sources of the pair’s saintood. It is evident that the existence of a previous reputation of sanctity, which the *parents of the Bohemian state* must have enjoyed in the community of the old Czechs, remained an indispensable pre-requisite for realization of this idea. The original motivation of the cult, however, is not identical with the practical realization of the motifs of Constantine and Helena in the legends and cult of both Bohemian saints. Certainly this is not the first time in the history of their cult that somebody realized this. For example, in his times Charles IV utilized the figures of St. Ludmila and St. Wenceslas in

his own ideological concept, by which he sacralised his political power in Bohemia and elsewhere in Europe.

St. Olga of Kievan Rus' is another example of the imitation of St. Helena, because she in a practical and exemplary way copied the first Christian empress in both basic forms of her *image*. I have already mentioned that St. Olga's (Helena's) part in the conversion of Kievan Rus' to Christianity is more than evident<sup>86</sup>. The *Povest vremennykh let* (hereafter *PVL*) contains several mentions concerning her contribution to Christianization<sup>87</sup>. Olga, like St. Helena or Ludmila, was a pagan before the conversion<sup>88</sup>. After the baptism in Constantinople, which is by all means the most significant act of her life, she became a model Christian. The *PVL* explicitly underlines that she received the name Helena on the occasion: "...after the ancient empress, the mother of Constantine the Great"<sup>89</sup>. The motif has been then developed by a number of local hagiographers in Kievan Rus'. They (together with her grandson Vladimir) are compared to Constantine the Great and his mother Helena also in Ilarion's *Slovo*<sup>90</sup> (written sometimes between 1046–1051): "with unsuccessful ambition of creating favourable atmosphere for Vladimir's canonization..."<sup>91</sup>. St. Olga is also presented as St. Helena in later sources, which originated in connection with the efforts of her canonization:<sup>92</sup> for example, in the *Proložnoe žitije kňaginy Ol'ge* or *Synaxarion*<sup>93</sup>, dated to the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century<sup>94</sup> and in its Southern-Slavic variants from the fourteenth century<sup>95</sup>. At the same time, one of the Southern-Slavic texts denoted St. Olga as: "in all similar to St. Helena..."<sup>96</sup>. This study does not aim to examine particular nuances of meaning in the comparison of St. Olga with St. Helena. I consider essential only to utter a hypothesis that the imitation of St. Helena by St. Olga is very close to the identification with her, which does not have a counterpart in European dynastic hagiography. To put it simply – St. Olga has become the St. Helena of the Eastern Slavic nations.

It may seem redundant to enumerate other attributes of the *imitatio Helenae* pertaining to St. Olga. St. Olga, like St. Helena (and also like St. Ludmila), is a widow, a ruler, a woman active in charitable sphere, and so on<sup>97</sup>. However, the example of St. Olga is not only a piece from the mosaic of the holy female rulers of the dynasties from Central and Eastern Europe in the tenth to thirteenth centuries, it is an example, which markedly helps to reconstruct the form of the early pattern of female dynastic saintood in the context of whole Europe as well.

St. Olga made a pilgrimage to Constantinople<sup>98</sup>. As early as the middle of the eleventh century Ilarion underlined that Olga as a new Helena and her son as a new Constantine had brought the Holy Cross from this city to Kievan Rus'<sup>99</sup>. One of the later Southern-Slavic prologue lives of St. Olga added that St. Olga had received a part of the relic from the patriarch after her baptism. The legend maintained that the Holy Cross: "stands until today in Hagia Sophia on the right side of the altar"<sup>100</sup>. The cult of St. Olga is thus totally unequivocally (not only through the space of the church like in case of St. Ludmila) tied with the cult of the relic. Therefore it is not surprising that later tradition ordered to depict St. Olga with a cross in the same way as saintly empress Helena. It is

noteworthy, though, that St. Ludmila was recommended to be represented in a similar way<sup>101</sup>.

The context of St. Olga's cult offers another level of analogies with St. Helena. Namely, the hagiography quite evidently bound the origins and the development of Kievan Rus' with the activity of St. Olga. The *Praise of Vladimir Monomax by Iakov (Poxvala knjazu Vladimiru mnixa Jakova)*, when enumerating his [Vladimir's] apostolic activities (he was spreading baptism and faith in Rus', destroyed pagan temples and built Christian churches), noted that he had been doing that "together with his divine and godly-wise mother Helena"<sup>102</sup>. Because monk Iakov remains in the sacral time of the hagiographic monument, the time gap between the death of Princess Olga and the baptism of Rus' does not play any role. The emphasis of the tradition on Olga's role in the origins of the Church in Kievan Rus' (besides Olga as a lawgiver) is essential<sup>103</sup>.

The place and the way of St. Olga's burial are also noteworthy. The same source informs that she is buried: "in the church of St. Mother of God, which was founded by Blessed Prince Vladimir". This place is in a special way the heart of the princely family of Kievan Rus'. It is a sort of a family church of the oldest Kievan Rurik dynasty<sup>104</sup>. Therefore it is necessary to more thoroughly examine St. Olga's relationship to the roots of monasticism in Kievan Rus' (*Klosterpolitik*). A. Poppe correctly pointed out<sup>105</sup> on the basis of an analysis of Thietmar's account from 1018<sup>106</sup> that there had been two important ecclesiastical institutions in contemporary Kiev: the *Tithe Church (Desjatinnaja cerkov)*, the family church of the Rurik dynasty) and the monastery of St. Sophia, which was the metropolitan see of Kievan Rus', i.e. the official ecclesiastical institution of Kievan Rus'. An institution like the *Desjatinnaja cerkov* in Kiev must have had its own service, which was supplied by monks in Poppe's view. It was an unwritten rule in entire contemporary Europe that the local monastic community, equipped with goods precisely for this purpose, took care of the cultivation of dynastic memory (*memoria*)<sup>107</sup>. Whoever was the author of the idea of establishing this institution (Poppe is inclined to believe that the initiative came from Byzantine Princess Anna, the wife of St. Vladimir), the described context makes it clear that it was not an original idea, but it followed a contemporary pattern. Its first objective was to strengthen the power of the ruling dynasty through the commemorating of the outstanding position of its members after death as well (e.g. by the construction of a separate necropolis in the sacred centre of the state). The second objective was the cultivation of the holy reputation of the dynasty (e.g. through the monastic community), and perhaps even sacralisation of the dynasty through canonization (composition of a life, miracles, and so on) of a member/or members of the dynasty. Rather logically, the state's founding couple – *the archetypal father and mother of the dynasty and the state* – belongs to the first saints. It is not an accident that St. Olga (similarly to St. Helena and St. Ludmila) has become the patron of the Russian ruling dynasty and she is often called as "the mother of all Russian tzars"<sup>108</sup>.

The peacemaking function of St. Olga, in which she resembled St. Helena, remains to be discussed. She deliberately renounced her sovereign power and handed it

over to her son Svjatoslav (like St. Ludmila, but perhaps also Croatian Queen Jelena), so that she could retire from the public life to her Christian retreat.

Another aspect of her cult – as I have already suggested – results from the fact that St. Olga frequently appears in the context of the cult of her saintly grandson Vladimir. Ilarion likened the holy pair of Kievan Rus' to the imperial pair of Constantine and Helena already in the middle of the eleventh century<sup>109</sup>. The aim of the *Slovo* – Vladimir's canonization<sup>110</sup> – is being asserted here by traditional hagiographic method – by deliberate ideologization, or more precisely, by sacralization of the history, in this case through a reference to the Byzantine court. Being like Constantine and Helena in connection with Vladimir and Olga in Ilarion's *Slovo* means to refer to the holy origins of the Byzantine (and with it the world) Christianity (Christ – Mary, or, if you like, Adam and Eve). However, such reference contains a whole range of other analogies, which cannot be addressed here<sup>111</sup>. It is to be emphasised, nevertheless, that this way of veneration of St. Olga is present in the later prologue lives as well. Moreover, this aspect eventually started to dominate in the *imago* (image) of St. Olga. No other ideological concept of the beginnings of statehood in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Bohemia, Croatia, Poland, Hungary) contained such a straightforward reference to an *imperial ruling pair*, as in the case of the *Christian (parental) ruling couple* of Sts. Olga and Vladimir of Kievan Rus'. Let us add only that the potential of the model has fully developed in the case of Olga and Vladimir only after the official acceptance of their sanctity in the middle of the thirteenth century<sup>112</sup>.

The example of Croatian Queen Jelena (Helena) is very interesting as well. Let us therefore analyse it in more detail. She died around year 975<sup>113</sup>, i.e. approximately at the time of the composition of the oldest legend of St. Ludmila and St. Wenceslas, seven years after the death of Olga in Kievan Rus'. As I have already mentioned, most of our knowledge of her until now has come from a short epitaph in Latin, which was found in the archeological excavations of a sacral-memorial complex at Otok (Island) near Solin at the end of the nineteenth century<sup>114</sup>, and from the *Chronicle of Archdeacon Thomas* from the thirteenth century. The chronicle is clear about the fact that it was Jelena (Helena) who had the Basilica (*ecclesia*) of the Virgin Mary constructed at Otok near Solin, which she endowed with goods and donated forever to the Archbishopric of Split. The text also implies that Croatian kings were to be crowned and buried in the church and that regular divine worships in their honour were to take place there<sup>115</sup>. The fragmentary information about Jelena (Helena) moulds into a single interesting picture in the context of our present knowledge concerning holy female rulers.

The name of the ruler is itself very telling. It automatically (*via spiritual adoption*) refers to St. Helena. It is necessary to point out that Queen Jelena (Helena) was not the first Christian female ruler in Croatia<sup>116</sup>. Her case of the *imitatio Helenae* is a bit different from the “founding” form (meaning foundations of Christianity or of a state), which we know from the case of St. Olga, St. Ludmila, St. Clothilda, and Berta (although the Croatian ruler possessed some common features with this group of holy female rulers as

well). Her imitation of the first Christian empress could be compared to Matilda of Saxony, Adelaide of Burgundy, Cunegond of Bavaria, and Margaret of Scotland. These saints were concerned with the issue of spread and fortification of Christianity in the societies that had already been Christian (formally at least).

I have mentioned before that the establishment of the sacral-memorial complex at Otok and its endowment with material goods has remained the best known deed from the life of Croatian Jelena (Helena) thanks to Archdeacon Thomas. Its construction started during the rule of King Michal Крелѣimir II († 969?), who stabilised the Croatian Kingdom after a temporary decline after the death of King Tomislav (910–928) and King Michal Krešimir I († 945)<sup>117</sup>. The text of an inscription in the basilica emphasised in a laconic way that Queen Helena (buried in this place in 976)<sup>118</sup> had been the wife of this king. At the same time it underscored that she had also been the mother of Croatian King Stefan Držislav (969–995)<sup>119</sup>.

A person who had such a basilica like Queen Jelena (Helena) built can be considered a zealous Christian. This leads us to another feature of the *imitatio Helenae*: to the connection between female dynastic saintood and the support of the young Church. Apart from the initiative of the construction, the complex must have also had its custodians. I have already suggested that Benedictine monks became its keepers<sup>120</sup>. The support of ecclesiastical institutions and monastic movement were in this case (likewise with St. Ludmila and St. Olga) bound with the figure of the ruling woman.

At the time of completion of the basilica Croatian Helena was a widow and a mature woman<sup>121</sup>. She most probably (again like St. Olga and St. Ludmila) practically executed the highest political power in the state. However, she later renounced it, like both aforementioned saints and also holy Empress Adelaide of Burgundy<sup>122</sup>, in exchange for a Christian *otium*. In her own particular way she was also “condemned” to look after her dead, which is again a specifically female function, which has been known from the times of St. Helena already. Like her contemporaries in Nordhausen, Quedlinburg, or Prague, she actively practiced the cultivation of *memory (memoria)* of her lineage<sup>123</sup>. The sacral-memorial complex at Otok is a *memorial foundation (Gedenkstiftung)* with a particular purpose of ideological elevation of the Croatian dynasty by means of the cultivation of the *memory* of its outstanding rulers. The basilica at Otok (the church had been the largest sanctuary in Croatia for long) was to become a necropolis, a sacred place, and an identification symbol of the Croatian dynasty (the family of Queen Jelena), and through that also of the Croatian state<sup>124</sup>. Undoubtedly, its construction was a deliberate initiative on the part of this woman (certainly, in cooperation with the contemporary intellectual elite, the educated Benedictine monks), which was inspired by the existing European models and contemporary trends<sup>125</sup>.

The significance of this concept is underlined by Jelena’s (Helena’s) burial in the central church of the Croats<sup>126</sup>. Namely, it points to an outstanding role that she was to play in Croatian community still after her death. Like in the case of St. Ludmila, Olga, Mathilda of Saxony and Margaret of Scotland, Jelena (Helena) too was becoming its

symbol. The text of the epitaph called her not completely accidentally “regn(i) mater” (“the mother of the kingdom”). Another part of the text, which is well preserved, would support this claim. It reminds of her Christian virtues in the sphere of charity (traditional use of the archetype of Old-Testamental Job, which has repeatedly occurred in connection with the female dynastic sanctity from the times of St. Helena). The text reads as follows in this place: She [Jelena] was a “protector of orphans and widows” (“pupilor/um/ tuto/rque/ viduar/um/”)<sup>127</sup>.

Therefore I maintain that had the Croatian state not merged with the Hungarian one in 1102, Jelena would have most probably become (like St. Ludmila, St. Olga, St. Mathilda of Saxony and Adelaide of Burgundy, but also St. Margaret of Scotland) the holy mother of the ruling dynasty and of Croatia.

The hidden logic of the sacral object prompts to this possibility. Two significant patrocinia appear in connection with the object: – the Virgin Mary and – or St. Stephen. Jelena (Helena) was buried in the Basilica of the Virgin Mary, while the remains of Croatian kings, like archdeacon Thomas noted, were to rest in the atrium of the Basilica of St. Stephen. In that simple manner Jelena (Helena) was bound with the Virgin Mary (*imitatio Mariae*) and Croatian kings were bound with Stephen, an apostle, the holy protomartyr and a popular contemporaneous royal patron-saint<sup>128</sup>.

The fact that the son of Queen Jelena (Helena) received the name Stephen rules out the possibility that the choice of the name for the shrine of Croatian kings was incidental<sup>129</sup>. The connection – Mary and Apostle Stephen, Jelena (Helena) and her son Stephen – is evident. Is it a variation of the aforementioned thesis that the tradition (or its ideological creators) assigns the cradle (or a qualitative rupture equal to a new origin) of some medieval European states with a Christian *male-female ruling couple*? If yes, then we have to examine the role of the great imperial pair here.

We have seen in the case of St. Ludmila and St. Wenceslas that the Western Church tends in some periods to avoid direct analogy with this couple, because it had indisputably Eastern (Orthodox, Byzantine) associations. On the contrary, Eastern hagiographic tradition, like in the case of St. Olga and St. Vladimir, was built exactly on this pair. Nevertheless, because the western part of Europe could not go without a Christian variant of the *parental couple* either, the ideologues left out either one name (Jelena and Stephen) or both names (Ludmila and Wenceslas, St. Margaret of Scotland and her son St. David, St. Cunegond and her saintly husband Henry II) associated with Byzantium and substituted them with other models of holiness. However, the apostolic substance of the *Christian parental couple* remained unchanged.

Thus, a royal son Stephen could not have got a name after the Christian protomartyr and apostle Stephen by accident<sup>130</sup>. The name Constantine played a key role in the Byzantine court in a certain period<sup>131</sup>. Catholic Jelena (Helena), although she carried a name after the first Christian ruler herself, had to (regardless of herself) look for a different, but similarly ideologically loaded name from Christian history<sup>132</sup>. It was a logical choice. We can only hardly suppose that the queen realized how far-reaching

consequences it was going to have on the ideological construction of Central and Eastern Europe. There is no need to repeat that the entire ideological axis of the kingdoms of Hungary or Serbia arose on the concept of St. Stephen. However, she certainly anticipated that the sacred-memorial complex (of the Virgin Mary and St. Stephen), which she had constructed, would forever commemorate the founding role of the initiators of its construction in Croatian society.

The case of another saintly woman, Polish-Hungarian Adelaide (the wife of Grand Duke Geza), and her son St. Stephen is typologically similar. The model of the *Christian parental couple* inspired by the Christian ruling pair of Constantine and Helena was most probably used for their “creation”. The story is recounted only in the *Hungarian-Polish Chronicle*<sup>133</sup>. I have dealt with it in my previous studies<sup>134</sup>; therefore, only a summary will be presented here. Adelaide had a dream in which protomartyr Stephen announced to her (like Archangel Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary) that she would conceive a son and give him a name after him, and the son would gain a crown from Rome and achieve sanctity. The Christian pair of the Virgin Mary and Apostle Stephen is a variant of the *parental couple* of Christ and Mary, and of their terrestrial variation of Constantine the Great and Helena, as this study has demonstrated above. A whole range of monuments proves the knowledge of the legend about the *founding ruling couple* in Hungarian environment from the tenth (the eleventh at latest) century. It is noteworthy that the *Hungarian-Polish Chronicle* was composed at the Croatian-Slavonian court of Coloman of Galicia (the brother of Bela IV), also for the needs of his wife Salomea, in the 1230s. Its author’s negative attitude towards Byzantine environment is legible directly from the text of the chronicle. As a result, the author could not do anything else, but do away with an older Croatian model – Queen Jelena (Helena) and her son Stephen.

Another candidate for a *founding parental couple* in Hungarian environment is St. Stephen and his wife St. Gisela. With regard to a negative evaluation of Gisela in later Hungarian historiography (because of the blinding of Vazul), this variant has not developed in Hungarian hagiography either.

The first Polish Christian, Dúbravka of Přemyslid dynasty, is also a specific case. Medieval authors preserved records about her exemplary holiness, about reputation of her sanctity, and a topos of the *persuading woman (mulier suadens)*. Interestingly, tradition attributed to her the initiative of the foundation of the church (rotund) of the Virgin Mary built on an island on the river Warta in Poznan, next to a large basilica, the shrine of the first Polish sovereigns – Mieszko I and Boleslaus I the Brave<sup>135</sup>, similarly to the tradition about Croatian Queen Jelena (Helena). The sacred-memorial and certainly also representative complex was constructed in the same period as similar complexes (with regard to their function at least) in Croatia, Bohemia, Hungary, but especially in Germany. We do not know how Dúbravka herself contributed to the foundation of the complex. Through the foundation, Dúbravka (like St. Helena) certainly supported the expansion of the early Church (as a *mulier suadens* she stood directly at her roots). Her son Boleslaus the Brave as the real founder of the Polish state became the subject of an

attempt to establish a cult himself<sup>136</sup>. Unfortunately, both in his case and in the case of Důbravka the cult has eventually not developed and the entire issue had remained rather only a theoretical possibility in the Middle Ages. We can talk about an *imitatio Helenae* concerning Důbravka only in connection with the construction of the rotund of the Virgin Mary and the support of the early Polish Church.

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The manner of establishment of their feasts is an evidence of intentional and deliberate construction of a common *image of a Christian parental couple* for the founders of new European dynasties. For example, the anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Wenceslas is celebrated on September 28 and that of St. Ludmila on September 16<sup>137</sup>. The gap between them is twelve days. It is even more visible in the case of St. Olga and her saintly grandson Vladimir. She died allegedly on July 11 and her grandson died on July 12. The gap is only one day.

Let us now examine the ecclesiastical practice in this matter. The date of St. Monica's death is celebrated on August 27 and the death of her son St. Augustine on August 28. The feast of the decease of St. Helena is observed together with her son's death on May 21 in the Eastern Church even nowadays. It is only little probable that the dates were not established like this on purpose. It looks really strange that all these saintly pairs would have been dying in such a "planned" way. Therefore, we have to admit that dates of their decease (its liturgical commemoration) were most probably determined according to an old practice of the Church, built on the fact that the feast of the heavenly pair of Christ and the Virgin Mary were also originally venerated one after another – on December 25 and 26 (Nativity of Christ and a feast of the Virgin Mary) – and only later (in the Latin Church) was the latter feast moved to the first day of the new year. Still, the gap is only seven days here. However, there is no space for further discussion of this issue in this place.

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This study illustrated that a strong need to sacralise the foundations of the states existed in Central and Eastern Europe in the tenth to thirteenth century (like several centuries earlier in Western Europe). Besides the ideological means known until now, like for example the idea of placing the holy rulers into the prehistory of a particular state (Wenceslas, Boris and Gleb, Stephen, Ladislaus), an idea came up in the same environment to do the same with a female ruler, a supporter of early Church, a widow, a mother of the dynasty, a model of charity. My analysis has demonstrated that the *model of the first Christian Empress Helena* was utilized in the construction of female dynastic sanctity in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the period from the tenth until the thirteenth century. Naturally, in each analysed country the extent of building on the example developed in a particular way. Especially noteworthy is the case of the female saints who were typologically closest to each other – Ludmila of Bohemia and Olga of Kievan Rus'. In the first case I cannot help the impression that the name of St. Helena was deliberately avoided; in the case of the latter, on the contrary – St. Olga became the St. Helena in the environment of the Eastern Slavs.

The pattern of the *founding couple of Christian rulers* was utilized for the same purpose. The “ideologues” of the states used to put the parents of the state, the Church or the nation to their roots into the centre of their world instead of the universal heavenly pair of Christ and Mary (or its terrestrial archetype – the pair of Constantine and Helena). The imitation of the model of Constantine and Helena was popular especially in Orthodox milieu (Byzantium, Kievan Rus’, later Serbia). On the other hand, this practice perhaps led to the fact that the Catholic part of Central Europe had to substitute the concept with a similar one (while preserving its ideological nature). The Croatian solution, which preserved the name “Helena” acceptable by Western Christianity (Helena was buried in Rome) and substituted the name of Constantine with Stephen, the name of the apostolic protomartyr predestined to become a royal name, proved as an ideal response. The Christian parental couple of the Hungarian state, Adelaide and St. Stephen, appears to be a variant of this solution. The name of Adelaide has got a similar function as Helena, while the contemporaneous Hungary referred rather to a later sacred tradition pertaining to the name Adelaide. The pair of St. Ludmila and her grandson St. Wenceslas is a special example of a *Christian parental dynastic pair*, although the sources provide no direct reference to any ideological plan. However, the context of the sources and the character of their cults make it clear that such a plan must have been known to the authors. The main way of sacralisation of the Přemyslid dynasty was particularly its absorption into the depth of its own tradition of saintood. In the end, it is to be mentioned that the model of the first Christian pair has not developed in Polish hagiography, which this is a Polish particularity.

### *Conclusion*

A question of creation of a new complex of symbols, which would correspond with a different quality of perception of the role of the ruling class in the society, appeared with the transformation of the Roman Empire to a Christian state. Like Constantine the Great became the model for a Christian ruler (in the eastern part of the Roman Empire at least), his mother Helena became a model for female rulers. A model that was valid for Byzantine empresses was understandably equally valid for those who were formally subjected to the empress. Besides the legend of St. Helena, the practice of courtly life diffused through imitation to entire medieval Europe. Although the historical Empress Helena herself did not most probably find the Holy Cross, her legend has become the core of the image of a Christian female ruler. Undoubtedly, it formed the basis for the activities of the female rulers, which are generally called *Kirchenpolitik* – support of the Church, e.g. *Klosterpolitik*. The charitable and reconciling activities of the women who stood at the top of the states are indispensable parts of the model of St. Helena.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See the entry on **Simon Magus** – *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esoterism*, ed. Wouter J. Hanegraaf, vol. 1–2, Leiden and Boston, 2005, 1069–1073.

<sup>2</sup> **Goethe, Johann Wolfgang** : *Faust : Texte und Kommentare*, ed. Albrecht Schöne, the 6th edition. Frankfurt am Main : Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1994, 335–389.

<sup>3</sup> The core of the historical narrative about the first Christian female ruler Helena is found in – **Eusebii Pamphili** Caesareae Palaestinae episcopi De Vita imp. Constantini libri quator, ed. Jean-Paul Migne – *Opera omnia 2. Patrologia Graeca* (hereafter *PG*) 20. Paris, 1857, coll. 1103–1107.

<sup>4</sup> For the history of the Helena’s Legend, see **Drijvers, Jann W.** Helena Augusta, The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of her Finding of the True Cross. Leiden; New York; Kobenhavn and Köln, 1992, 95–145.

<sup>5</sup> The author of the legend about the invention of the Holy Cross is St. Ambrose. See – **Sancti Ambrosii** Mediolanensis episcopi De obitu Theodosii oratio, ed. Jean-Paul Migne – *Opera omnia 2/1. Patrologia Latina* (hereafter *PL*) 16. Paris 1866, coll. 1462–1466.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, the entry on Elena by **Croce, E.** – *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, vol. 4. Rome, 1964, 988–996.

<sup>7</sup> The cult of Helena is very intensely represented in the territory of today’s Bulgaria. It is mostly a question of ethnography. Bulgarian ethnologist Mihail Arnaudov dealt with it as early as the first half of the twentieth century. See also **Kalojanov, A.** *Balgarskoto shamanstvo*. Sofia, 1993. In general, the cult of St. Helena and her son Constantine supposedly substituted the ancient Thracian rituals pertaining to gods Sabazij and Bendida. It is also connected with so-called “nestinarstvo” (fire-dancing). See **Popov, R.** Calendar Reincarnation of St. Helena – *Bulgarian Ethnology*, 1996, 3, 71–79 and **Mincheva, E.** Fire-Dancing Through the Eyes of Researcher – *Bulgarian Ethnology*, 2006, 4, 75–78.

<sup>8</sup> The author of this term is most probably Jo Ann McNamara, who in 1996 described the power of the image (*imago*), or, if you will, of the hagiographical model of St. Helena in Western Europe. See **McNamara, Jo A.** Imitatio Helenae. Sainthood as an Attribute of Queenship – *Saints, Studies in Hagiography*, ed. Sandro Sticca. New York, 1996, 51–80. The author of this interesting article demonstrated the power of Helena’s model on the construction of the *imago* of Western European female rulers in a correct, though not complex way. For example, she did not distinguish between the two models of the imitation of St. Helena in this part of the world: Helena represented on her own, and Helena in a pair with her son Constantine the Great – *imitatio Helenae et Constantini*.

<sup>9</sup> St Helena and the Invention of the Holy Cross is mentioned even among the saints of Egypt. See – **O’Leary, De Lacy.** *The Saints of Egypt*, reprint. Amsterdam : Philo Press, 1974, 37 and 151.

<sup>10</sup> In this study I will not focus on Jelena Anžujaska, the Queen of Serbia (1237–1314). See **Marjanović-Dušanić, S.** *Vladarska ideologija Nemanja*. Beograd, 1997 and **Idem.** *Sveti kralj. Kult Stefana Decanskog*. Beograd 2007.

<sup>11</sup> For more about her, see – **Drijvers, Jann W.** *Helena Augusta; Idem*, Helena Augusta Exemplary Christian Empress – *Studia Patristica*, 1993, 24, 85–90. **McNamara, Jo A.** Imitatio Helenae, 51–80. **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego w świetle historii – *Zeszyty naukowe KUL*, 1962, 18, 53–76. For relations among particular *Lives of Emperor Constantine the*

*Great* and her mother Helena, see – **Winkelman, F.** Das hagiographische Bild Konstantins I. in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit. – *Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte im 7. – 11. Jahrhundert*, ed. Vladimír Vavřínek. Praha, 1978, 179–203.

<sup>12</sup> **Kazhdan, Alexander P.** “Constantin imaginaire” Byzantine Legends of the Ninth Century about the Constantine the Great – *Byzantion*, 1987, 57, 211–213. Only her non-aristocratic origin is almost certain. See – **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego, 55.

<sup>13</sup> **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego, 56.

<sup>14</sup> The logical core of this tradition is the fact that St. Helena found the Holy Cross, on which Christ had been crucified. According to St. Ambrose, the author of the legend, the finding of the Holy Cross on its own had brought salvation to her son Constantine the Great. See – *PL 16*, coll. 1464–1465: ...“visitata est Maria, ut Evam liberaret: visitata est Helena, ut imperatorem [Constantine] redimeretur.” In fact, already so-called Fredegar recorded her *expressis verbis* as a “persuading woman” (*mulier suadens*) in the seventh century. See – **Fredegarii** et aliorum Chronica. Vitae Sanctorum, ed. Bruno Krusch. – *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum* (hereafter *MGH SRM*) 2, Ed. 2. Hannover 1984, 66. See – **Ewig, E. von.** Das Bild Constantins des Grossen in den ersten Jahrhunderten des Abendlandischen Mittelalters. – *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 1956, 75, 162. In Central-East Europe we find the tradition of Helena as a persuading woman in the *Prayers of Princess Gertrude* from the eleventh century. See – *Modlitvy księżnej Gertrudy z Psalterza Egberta w Cividale*, Ed. and trans. Brygida Kłrbis. Kraków, 1998, 100–105.

<sup>15</sup> **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego, 64–66.

<sup>16</sup> Like this already St. Ambrose – *PL 16*, col. 1464.

<sup>17</sup> The following places are considered as more or less certain: – St. Peter’s Basilica and St. Marcellin’s Basilica in Via Labicana in Rome, Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (the Holy Cross in Jerusalem), the sanctuary of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem (she had it constructed together with her son), the Basilica of Lord’s Nativity in Betlehem, of the Ascension in the Mount of Olives, the cathedral in Trier. Less certain are the churches in Cyprus, in Helenopolis and Constantinople. **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego, 69–72.

<sup>18</sup> *PL 16*, col. 1463 and 1464–1465.

<sup>19</sup> Libri Pontificalis 1, ed. **Theodorus Mommsen** – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Gestorum Pontificum Romanorum* (hereafter *MGH GPR*). Berolini 1898, 65–66. **Deichmann Friedrich W. and Tschira A.** Das Mausoleum der Keiserin Helena und die Basilika derheiligen Marcellinus und Petrus an der Via Labicana vor Rom – *Jahrbuch des Deutschen archologischen Instituts*, 1957, 72, 74.

<sup>20</sup> **Deichmann Friedrich W. and Tschira A.** Das Mausoleum 78. See also – **Ewig, E. von.** Das Bild Constantins, 159.

<sup>21</sup> De Inventione Sancte Crucis – **Iacopo da Varazze** *Legenda Aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Sismel, 1998, 459–470.

<sup>22</sup> **Deichmann Friedrich W. and Tschira A.** Das Mausoleum passim. **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego, 63 and 74.

<sup>23</sup> It could have been characteristic of the Byzantine form of the cult of St. Helena, inextricably connected with the cult of her son Constantine. **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego, 63. The founder of the famous construction was Constantine himself, who had it built as his mausoleum. **Limberis, V.** *Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople*. London and New York 1994, 26–27.

<sup>24</sup> **Deichmann Friedrich W. and Tschira A.** Das Mausoleum 80–81.

<sup>25</sup> See in general – **Farmer, David H.** *Oxfordský lexikón svätcov*, trans. Helena Brtáňová et al. Bratislava 1996, 227.

<sup>26</sup> Drijvers distinguishes two ways of preservation of the memory of St. Helena: 1) Byzantine tradition, which reveres Helena as the first Christian female ruler, together with Constantine as a co-founder of Christian empire. 2) Latin tradition, in which Helena is the first Christian saintly female ruler, famous especially for her devout deeds. See – **Drijvers, Jann W.** *Helena Augusta Exemplary Christian Empress*, 90.

<sup>27</sup> **Ewig, E. von.** *Das Bild Constantins*, 159. The cult of the Holy Cross is usually connected with the well-known vision of Constantine the Great and with a later, not less known, “archeological” find of his mother Helena. The cult of the relic culminated in the eighth to tenth century. See – **Kazhdan, Alexander P.** “Constantin imaginaire”, 242–243, 247. According to this author, from the middle of the tenth century the Byzantine hagiography recommended to depict the Holy Cross on a common icon of Constantine the Great and his mother. See – *Ibid.*, 231. The Holy Cross is also connected with the cult of saintly female rulers (Radegund, Theodolind, Margaret of Scotland). Among its worshippers are also Charlemagne and other Western saintly rulers. See below.

<sup>28</sup> **McNamara, Jo A.** *Imitatio Helenae*, 51–52.

<sup>29</sup> I discussed this specific function of saintly women as a medieval *topos mulier suadens* (persuading woman) in the following studies – **Homza, M.** *The Role of Saint Ludmila, Doubravka, Saint Olga and Adelaide in the Conversions of their Countries (the Problem of Mulieres Suadentes, Persuading Women) – Early Christianity in Central and East Europe* (hereafter *Early Christianity*), ed. Przemysław Urbańczyk. Warszawa, 1997, 187–202.

<sup>30</sup> This is the already mentioned charitable aspect of the *imitatio Helenae*, which is merged into some extent with the archetype of Old-Testamental righteous Job, as a model Christian saint, the prototype of a virtuous Christian. See – **Homza, M.** *Pokus o určenie obrazu svätej Ludmily a jeho typológia vo svetle homílie Factum est*, in: *Studia archeologica Slovaca mediaevalia*, ed. Dušan Caplovič a Michal Slivka, 2000, 2. Bratislava, 2001, 96.

<sup>31</sup> **McNamara, Jo A.** *Imitatio Helenae*, 54–55.

<sup>32</sup> As an old mother of the *caesari* – Crispus, Constantine and Constantius – she appeared on several solemn inscriptions. See – **Zwolski, E.** *Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego*, 62.

<sup>33</sup> *PL* 16, coll., 1463 and 1464–1465.

<sup>34</sup> **McNamara, Jo A.** *Imitatio Helenae*, 51. It could have manifested itself especially after the conflict between Emperor Constantine and his wife Faustina, who had most probably caused the death of Constantine’s first-born son Crispus. Regardless of the result (Faustina was eventually murdered), this event from her life has also become an inspiration for female rulers of holy reputation during their involvement in later conflicts in the Christian states in Europe.

<sup>35</sup> It happened in connection with the Council of Chalcedon, which was presided by Pulcheria as a woman. For a more detailed analysis of the phenomenon, see – **Ewig, E. von.** *Das Bild Constantins*, 139. **Holum, Kenneth G.** *Theodosian Empresses. Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley; Los Angeles and London 1982, 216. **McNamara, Jo A.** *Imitatio Helenae*, 55–58. **Whitby, M.** *Images for Emperors in Late Antiquity. A Search for New Constantine – New Constantines. The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (hereafter *New Constantines*), ed. Paul Magdalino. Cambridge, 1994, 89. It is noteworthy that Jerusalem gave the title of a “new Helena” also to Pulcheria’s sister-in-law and rival Eudokia (Athénais).

<sup>36</sup> **Ewig, E. von.** *Das Bild Constantins*, 143. **Cameron, A.** *The Empress Sophia – Byzantion*, 1976, 45, 11.

<sup>37</sup> Venantius Fortunatus contributed to it as early as the sixth century with his eulogic Latin poems and official *Life of St. Radegund*. See – **Fortunatus, V. H. C.** *De Vita Sanctae Radegundis libri duo*, ed. Bruno Krusch – *MGH SRM 2*, ed. 2. Hannover, 1984, 388.

<sup>38</sup> **Ewig, E. von.** *Das Bild Constantins*, 156; 166 and 143. **Whitby, M.** *Images for Emperors*, 89.

<sup>39</sup> **Ewig, E. von.** *Das Bild Constantins*, 143.

<sup>40</sup> See the example of Blessed Sadalberga (605–670), who was also likened to St. Helena. See – Sadalberga, Abbes of Laon – *Sainted Women*, 192, or St. Margaret of Scotland – **Folz, R.** *Les saintes reines du moyen âge en Occident VI<sup>e</sup> – XIII<sup>e</sup>. siècles*. Bruxelles, 1992, 97–98. Concisely – **McNamara, Jo A.** *Imitatio Helenae*, passim.

<sup>41</sup> For example, the image of St. Adelaide on the sarcophagus of Gertrude of Brunswick/Braunschweig (nowadays in Cleveland) accompanied by Constantine the Great, St. Helena and St. Sigismund, is an exception. See – **Bornscheuer, L.** *Miseriae regum. Untersuchung zum Krisen- und Todesgedanken in der herrschaftstheologischen Vorstellungen der ottonisch-salischen Zeit*. Berlin, 1968, 59. **Corbet, P.** *Les saints Ottoniens. Sainteté dynastique, sainteté royale a sainteté féminine autour de l'an Mil*. Sigmaringen, 1986, passim.

<sup>42</sup> **Corbet, P.** *Les saints Ottoniens*, 111–116.

<sup>43</sup> Matilda is a key figure for understanding the character of sainthood of the Ottonian queens and empresses. See – *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior & Vita Mathildae reginae posterior*, ed. Bernd Schütte – *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* (hereafter *MGH SRG in us. schol.*) 66. Hannover, 1994, 109–202. **Corbet, P.** *Les saints ottoniens*, passim. **Schütte, B.** *Untersuchungen zu den Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde*. Hannover, 1994, passim. **Stinehart, Anne C.** “Renowned Queen Mother Mathilda”: Ideals and Realities of Ottonian Queenship in the Vitae Mathildis reginae (Mathilda of Saxony, 895?–968). – *Essays in History (Published by the Corcoran Department of History at the University of Virginia)* 1998, 40, 1–38.

<sup>44</sup> **Lothar, B.** *Miseriae regum*, 48–68. **Beyreuther, G.** *Keiserin Adelheid. “Mutter der Königreiche” – Herrscherinnen und Nonnen. Frauengestalten von der Ottonerzeit bis zu den Staufern*, ed. Erika Uitz; Barbara Pätzold and Gerald Beyreuther. Berlin 1990, 43–79. **Corbet, P.** *Les saints ottoniens*, 59–111.

<sup>45</sup> *A History of Women in the West. Silence of the Middle Ages 2*, ed. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. London 1992, 29.

<sup>46</sup> Concisely – *A History of Women*, 235. They regularly became abbesses in these monasteries, although it was not necessarily so. See the case of Radegund in Poitiers *MGH SRM 2*, passim. For Matilda’s monastic policy, see – *MGH SRG in us. schol.* 66, 131, 158, 172.

<sup>47</sup> **Veszprémy, L.** *Kunigin Gisela von Ungarn. – Europas Mitte um 1000. Beiträge zur Geschichte, Kunst und Archäologie*, vol. 2, eds. Alfried Wieczorek and Hans-Martin Hinz. Stuttgart, 2000, 608–612.

<sup>48</sup> **Rushforth, R.** *St Margaret’s Gospel Book. The Favourite Book of an Eleventh Century Queen of Scots*. Oxford, 2007.

<sup>49</sup> The replies to the questions concerning the motivation of origins of this type of sainthood are also interesting. At first sight the imperial couple of Helena and Constantine resembles evidently the heavenly pair of the Virgin Mary and Christ, or even Adam and Eve, the *parental couple* of whole Jewish-Christian civilisation. Inspiration by these prototypes and reference to them then served to build the saintly fame of particular European dynastic pairs. The roots of the effort at this

kind of reference were explained in the best way by C. G. Jung. The deifying projection of the *archetype of male-female pair* to their parents should be in the eyes of this author natural to human psychic in itself. See – **Jung, Carl G.** O archetypu ze zvláštním zřetelem k pojmu animy, trans. Eva Bosáková; Kristina Černá and Jan Černý – *Výbor z díla. Archetypy a nevědomí 2*, ed. Karel Plocek. Brno 1997, 169–177. Thus, the authors of the ideas in particular European communities acted in keeping with the most natural prerequisites of the human psychic. Then, the *ideal parents* of Byzantine statehood and of Eastern church – Emperor Constantine and his mother St. Helena are nothing else but a reference to another variant of “archetypal syzygia” frequently appearing in mythological systems – *a deified male-female parental couple*. I attempted to demonstrate this thesis on a Hungarian example of Adelaide and her son St. Stephen in a study – **Homza, M.** Pokus o interpretáciu úlohy kňažnej Adelajdy v Uhorsko-poľskej kronike – *Historický časopis* (hereafter *HC*) 1999, 47, 377–380.

<sup>50</sup> *New Constantines*, passim.

<sup>51</sup> Paradoxically, because Constantine has never been acknowledged as a saint in Western Christianity. For the normative influence of his model, see – **Ewig, E. von.** Das Bild Constantins, 141. The author further argues that the first rulers of Franks, Anglo-Saxons, and even Visigoths are also denoted as Constantines (166–188). From Charlemagne the Constantinian legend got to the Carolingians and through them to the Ottonians, especially Otto III. For a detailed analysis, see – **Fried, J.** *Ottón III i Bolesław Chrobry*, trans. Elżbieta Kaźmierczak and Witold Leder. Warszawa, 2000, 60. The tendency to refer to Constantine existed also in a broader context of Slavic history, or history of rulers in Central and Eastern parts of Europe. The *Life of St. Constantine* contains a reference about a Moravian sovereign Rastislav as Constantine the Great. See – Constantinus et Methodius Thesalonicenses, ed. and trans. Franciscus Grivec and Franciscus Tomšić – *Fontes, Radovi staroslavenskog instituta*, roč. 4. Zagreb, 1960, 130. The analogy was developed by A. Avenarius, with addition of two similar cases of Bulgarian Boris and Kievan Vladimir – **Avenarius, A.** *Byzantská kultúra v slovanskom prostredí v 6. – 12. storočí. K problému recepcie a transformácie*. Bratislava, 1992, 167. See also – Idem: Metropolitan Ilarion on the Origin of the Christianity in Rus’: The Problem of Byzantine Influence – *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* (hereafter *HUS*). 1988–1989, 12–13, 691–696. An unusual influence of this model is documented after all also by the fact that the author of the fresco decoration in Karlštejn castle used Constantine the Great as a prototype, maybe on a direct request of Emperor Charles IV. For this, see a monumental and exhaustive work of – **Magister Theodoricus, dvorní malíř císaře Karla IV.** *Umělecká výzdoba posvátných prostor hradu Karlštejna*, ed. Jiří Fajt. Praha, 1997, passim.

<sup>52</sup> **Zwolski, E.** Helena, matka Konstantyna Wielkiego, 73.

<sup>53</sup> **Ewig, E. von.** Das Bild Constantins, 133–192. **Whitby, M.** Images for Emperors, 89.

<sup>54</sup> **Kazhdan, Alexander P.** “Constantin imaginaire”, 246. *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 2, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan et al. New York, 1991, 909.

<sup>55</sup> **Markopoulos, A.** Constantine the Great in Macedonian Historiography. Models and Approaches – *New Constantines*, 160.

<sup>56</sup> **Collenberg, Wipertus H. Rudt de.** Le Thorakion – *Recherches iconographiques*, 1971, 83, no. 2, 263–361.

<sup>57</sup> **Collenberg, Wipertus H. Rudt de.** Le Thorakion, passim. **Lothar, B.** Miseriae regum, 59. See also – Folz, R. *Les saintes reines*, 75.

<sup>58</sup> **Drijvers, Jann W.** Helena Augusta Exemplary Christian Empress, 89.

<sup>59</sup> **Gregorii Turonensis** *Historia Francorum*, ed. W. Arndt – *MGH SRM 1*. Hannoverae, 1885, 90–92.

<sup>60</sup> *MGH SRM 2*, 388.

<sup>61</sup> *MGH SRM 1*, 93. Eventually, like Constantine also Clovis had himself buried in a church dedicated to saint apostles, which he and his wife had built. See – *Ibid*, 106.

<sup>62</sup> **Ewig, E. von.** *Das Bild Constantins*, 156 and 166–167.

<sup>63</sup> **McNamara, Jo A.** *Imitatio Helenae*, 75–76.

<sup>64</sup> The specific of this pair is perhaps only the fact that St. Margaret of Scotland received her education during the exile of her parents in Hungary.

<sup>65</sup> **Jung, Carl G.** *O archetypu ze zvláštním zřetelem k pojmu animy*, 169–177.

<sup>66</sup> I have been led to utter this thesis by the general diffusion of the cult of the imperial couple of Constantine and Helena, corresponding to the holy heavenly pair of Christ and the Virgin Mary (or rather Adam and Eve) in Central and Eastern Europe during the tenth to thirteenth centuries, in the period of transition from paganism to Christianity, stabilisation of Christianity and strengthening of medieval states. Because the need to ideologise one's fundamentals by means of creating a complex structure of thought pertaining to a state, consisting of a whole range of identification symbols and myths, existed also here. The notion of an ideal (sometimes saintly) *male/female parental couple of rulers* belonged to them understandably.

<sup>67</sup> I have dealt with the issue of sources pertaining to them in connection with an analysis of the medieval topos of *mulier suadens* (*persuading woman*). **Homza, M.** *The Role*, 187–202.

<sup>68</sup> The only exception in the cycle of the legends of St. Ludmila and Wenceslas is the utilization of the name of St. Helena in the minea (short) version of the “First Church-Slavonic Life of St. Wenceslas”. Namely, during the “tonsuring” (“postriziny”) of little Wenceslas the bishop blessed him also with the names of the emperors “equal to Apostles” – Constantine and Helena. See – Ruská redakce původní staroslovanské legendy o sv. Václavu: Text minejní, ed. a. trans. Josef Vajs – *Sborník staroslověnských literárních památek o svatém Václavu a svaté Ludmile*, ed. Josef Vajs. Praha, 1929, 21. Although some attempts appeared to interpret this passage (from certain point of view it was highly important for the argument for existence of the Eastern liturgical practice in Bohemia in the tenth century (**Vajs, J.** *Postřiziny sv. Václava – Časopis katolického duchovenstva*, 1929, 70, 48 – 63), the significance of the mention of the imperial pair in the context of the “postriziny” of young Wenceslas remains underrated. Why would a man have been blessed with an exemplar of a female saint? Unfortunately, the legend is extant only in very late copies and, moreover, in Orthodox milieu.

<sup>69</sup> St. Ludmila has become the symbol of the Bohemian Church. I have pointed to this in the in the article – **Homza, M.** *Pokus o určení obrazu svätej Ludmily*, 97. This process was completed in the homily “Factum est”. This source from the beginning of the thirteenth century designated St. Ludmila directly as the patron of the Bohemian clergy and the Church. *Factum est. Homilie o svaté Ludmile z konce XI. století*, ed. Václav Chaloupecký – *Prameny X. století legendy Kristiánovy o sv. Václavu a sv. Ludmile. Svatováclavský sborník 2* (hereafter *Prameny*), ed. Václav Chaloupecký. Praha, 1939, 554. It happened in spite of the fact that the sources do not contain any evidence that would imply that St. Ludmila herself founded any monastery or church. Nevertheless, her voluntary retirement from the public life (like St. Helena, and St. Clothilda as well) to the castle of Tetín reminds of the departure of other female rulers of saintly fame to monasteries (St Radegunda, St. Matilda, St. Adelaide). But Tetín was a castle (a fortification), and not a monastery. On the other hand, at the time of St. Ludmila's murder there was no monastery in Bohemia. Therefore, Ludmila's

retirement from public life resembles a Christian *otium*. In this respect (so-called *Klosterpolitik*) the cult of St. Ludmila, as it were, differed both from its possible Byzantine, or Frankish model, and from their later representatives. See – **Zoepf, L.** *Das Heiligen-Leben im 10. Jahrhundert – Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters und Renaissance*, ed. W. Goetz. Leipzig; Berlin 1908, passim. **Graus, F.** *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger: Studien zur Hagiographie der Merowingerzeit*. Praha, 1965, passim. **Portmann, M.-L.** *Die Darstellung der Frau in der Geschichtsschreibung des früheren Mittelalters*. Basel, 1958, 52–101.

<sup>70</sup> *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum*, ed. Bertold Bretholz – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum. Nova Series* (hereafter *MGH SRG NS*) 2. Berlin, 1923, 42–44.

<sup>71</sup> The first abbess was Princess Mlada-Maria from the Přemyslid dynasty as well. We owe for the beginnings (the initiative in writing up the legend) and the early development of the cult of St. Ludmila to her and to Abbess Berta, the restorer of the monastery (after a heavy fire of 1142). Eventually, it is also evident from the reconstruction of the monastic complex. **Borkovský, I.** *Svatojiřská bazilika a klášter na Pražském hradě*. Praha, 1975, 15–33, and passim. **Merhauptová, A. and Stejskal, K.** *St.-Georgs-Stift auf der Prager Burg*. Praha, 1991, 9–17. **Frolík, J. et al.** *Nejstarší sakrální architektura Pražského hradu*. Praha, 2000, 141. Another Abbess Agnes, also from the Přemyslid dynasty, was most probably behind another qualitative turn of St. Ludmila's cult thanks to the homily "Factum est" at the beginning of the thirteenth century. See – **Homza, M.** *Pokus o určení obrazu svätej Ludmily*, passim.

<sup>72</sup> I have dealt with this issue in detail in the work – *Pokus o určení obrazu svätej Ludmily*, 96. For comparison – Job 29:12–16.

<sup>73</sup> *Fuit in provincia Bohemorum: Legenda o sväté Ludmile z prvé polovice X. století*, ed. Václav Chaloupecký – *Prameny*, 470.

<sup>74</sup> **Borkovský, I.** *Svatojiřská bazilika*, 25, 142.

<sup>75</sup> **Merhauptová, A. and Stejskal, K.** *St.-Georgs-Stift*, 19–20.

<sup>76</sup> This way of identification of the cult of St. Constantine the Emperor is used also by – **Brubaker, L.** *To Legitimize an Emperor. Constantine and Visual Authority in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries – New Constantines*, 141. The preserved tradition prompts also to some analogy between the cult of St. Ludmila and the cult of the Holy Cross. On the basis of an older reference, which was published in the work of I. Borkovský, it is possible to suppose that the altar of the Holy Cross stood originally "above the tomb of St. Ludmila" in St. George's Basilica. See – **Borkovský, I.** *Svatojiřská bazilika*, 25. See also an analogy with St. Olga. Apart from that, the same author points to an interesting, but hard to define, find of a masonry cross under the floor of the original basilica. Its construction preceded the deposition of Boleslaus II and was perhaps connected with the modifications, which accompanied the foundation of the monastery. See – *ibid.*, 28–32. For the most recent examination concerning the functions of the cross, see – **Frolík, J. et al.** *Nejstarší sakrální architektura*, 135. One of the outstanding devotees of the Holy Cross in Czech history was also Emperor Charles IV. See the extensive material in – *Magister Theodoricus*, passim. It is not uninteresting that St. Ludmila, and possibly also St. Helena, had their place besides images of other saints in the imperial chapel of the Holy Cross (*ibid.*, 232, 372 and 372, 410–413, respectively).

<sup>77</sup> An altar dedicated to St. Helena was located in the interior of the church. See – **Merhauptová, A. and Stejskal, K.** *St.-Georgs-Stift*, 11.

<sup>78</sup> *Factum est* (ed. Chaloupecký), 542, 554.

<sup>79</sup> Fuit (ed. V. Chaloupecký), 472: “regnare ego (Ludmila) nolo neque ullam potestatis tue particulam habere volo, sed rogo, ut concedas michi libera mente Deo servire, usque dum finiantur dies mei.” For St. Olga’s (and possible Croatian queen’s Helena’s/Jelena’s) renunciation of political power in the state, see below.

<sup>80</sup> According to “Christian’s Legend”, St. Methodius baptised Bořivoj in the court of the Prince Swentibald (Svätopluk). See – *Legenda Christiani. Vita a Passio Sancti Wenceslai a Sancte Ludmille Ave eius*, ed. a trans. Jaroslav Ludvíkovský. Praha, 1978, 20 and 21. Ludmila’s presence is uncertain. Sources reveal only that the baptism happened some time after her marriage with Bořivoj. **Třeštík, D.** *Počátky Přemyslovců. Vstup Čechů do dějin (530–935)*. Praha, 1997, 315. The author maintains that the date of their marriage was 874/875. The connection between her and her husband’s baptism cannot be denied. Třeštík, D. *Počátky Přemyslovců*, 110, 114. A variant of the later tradition (from the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century), which was preserved in “Diffundente sole” maintained: “In a short time Methodius, mentioned above, came to Bohemia and baptised St. Ludmila, together with many others.” See – Diffundente sole. *Apologetický spis slovanské bohoslužby z druhé polovice X. Století*, ed. Václav Chaloupecký – *Prameny*, 491: “Veniens vero in brevi tempore prefatus Metudius Bohemiam, sanctam Ludmillam baptizavit cum multis.”

<sup>81</sup> **Homza, M.** Pokus o určenie obrazu svätej Ludmily, passim.

<sup>82</sup> The fact that their first legends were written at the same time (in the last third of the tenth century) would point to that. **Třeštík, D.** *Počátky Přemyslovců*, 174.

<sup>83</sup> See footnote 68. With respect to the milieu in which they originated and the time of their creation, the text itself cannot perhaps have a bigger testifying value than, for example, the fact that St. Wenceslas was connected with the cult of the Holy Cross within the concept of Master Theodoric in his decoration of Karlštejn Castle of Emperor Charles IV in the fourteenth century.

<sup>84</sup> *Legenda Christiani* (ed. J. Ludvíkovský), 100 and 101, 102 and 103. D. Třeštík explains the sign of the cross in the following way: a sign resembling the cross is found also on the helmet of St. Wenceslas. See – Dušan Třeštík: *Počátky Přemyslovců* (1997), 412. A similar situation occurred in connection with Clovis (see Gregory of Tours – *MGH SRM 1*, 92) or later with the Holy Cross of Charlemagne.

<sup>85</sup> **Ewig, E. von.** Das Bild Constantins, 166 – 188.

<sup>86</sup> For Olga as a *mulier suadens* in connection with the beginnings of Christianity in Kievan Rus’, see – **Homza, M.** The Role, s. 194–196 and **Idem**, St. Ol’ga : The Mother of All Princes and Tsars of Rus’, – *Byzantinoslavica*, 2005, 63, s. 131–141.

<sup>87</sup> *Poves vremennyh let* (hereafter *PVL*), ed. Valeria P. Adrianova-Peretts. Moskva, 1950, 40–43.

<sup>88</sup> For the paganism of St. Olga, see **Homza, M.** St. Ol’ga: The Mother, passim.

<sup>89</sup> *PVL* (ed. V. P. Adrianova-Peretts), 44. There is not enough space for an analysis of various opinions on the time of origin of the information in the *PVL* in this place. According to a representative opinion of A. I. Rogov, it originated already in the tenth century and belonged to so-called oldest *Ruskogo svodu*. See – **Rogov, Aleksandr I.** Slovanské legendy z doby vzniku českého státu a jejich osudy na Rusi – *Staroslověnské legendy českého původu*, ed. a trans. Aleksandr I. Rogov; Emilie Bláhová and Václav Konzal. Praha, 1976, 26–27.

<sup>90</sup> *Slovo o zakone i blagodati Ilariona*, ed. A. M. Moldovan. Kijev, 1984, 97.

<sup>91</sup> **Fennel, J.** When Was Olga Canonized? – *Slavic Cultures in the Middle Ages. Christianity and the Eastern Slavs I*, ed. B. Gasparov and O. Raevski-Hughes. Los Angeles; Oxford 1993, 77–83.

<sup>92</sup> **Fennel, J.** When Was Olga Canonized, 77.

<sup>93</sup> Proložnoje žitije blagoslavennoj kňagini Ol'gi: Redakcija, izvlečennaja iz "Pamjati" mnicha Jakova, ed. Nikolaj I. Serebrjanskij – *Drevne Russkija kňážeskija žitija. Obzor redakciji i teksty*, ed. Nikolaj I. Serebrjanskij. Moskva, 1915, 13. Other editions, see – Pamja i pochvala Vladimiru monomacha Jakova – *Istorija ruskoj cerkvi. Period pervyj, kijevskij il'i domongol'skij I*, ed. E. E. Golubinskij. Moskva, 1901, 241. Proložnoje žitije blagoslavennoj kňagini Ol'gi. Drevnejšaja proložnaja redakcija v jugo-slavianskich spiskach, ed. Nikolaj I. Serebrjanskij – *Drevne Russkija*, 6–7.

<sup>94</sup> **Fennel, J.** When Was Olga Canonized, 78.

<sup>95</sup> **Pavlova, R.** Žitia kňagini Ol'gi v južnoslovianskich rukopisjach XIII. – XIV. vv – *Bolgarskaja russistika*, 1989, no. 5, 42–53. Already Fennel was highly sceptical about the possibility of discovery of other sources containing new information about St. Olga. **Fennel, J.** When Was Olga Canonized, 78.

<sup>96</sup> **Pavlova, R.** Žitia kňagini Ol'gi, 50.

<sup>97</sup> Hagiographers endow her with Christian virtues after the model of Old-Testamental Job. See – Proložnoje žitije blagoslavennoj kňagini Ol'gi. Redakcija, izvlečennaja iz "Pamjati" mnicha Jakova (ed. Nikolaj I. Serebrjanskij), 13: "[Olga]...dressed the naked, gave drink to the thirsty, fed the hungry, took care of the poor, widows and orphans, loved everybody in humility and gave them everything with charity of her heart ...". Concisely – **Homza, M.** Pokus o určenie obrazu svätej Ludmily, 96.

<sup>98</sup> In Olga's case it was not a diplomatic journey in its own right, see – **Filippov, S.** Christijanskaja sviatos i jazyčeskaja magija v letopisnom povestvovanii o kňagine Ol'ge – *Studia Slavica Hungaricae*, 2001, 46, 92. In contrast to the author, I do not think that this holy pilgrimage can be considered as the first manifestation of Russian Palamism, but it was rather an act of imitation of Empress Helena's holy pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

<sup>99</sup> *Slovo o zakone i blagodati Ilariona* (ed. A. M. Moldovan), 97.

<sup>100</sup> **Pavlova, R.** Žitia kňagini Ol'gi, 51. **Serebrjanskij, Nikolaj I.** *Drevne Russkija*, 5. The information concerning the actual translation of the Holy Cross (most probably a part of it) to Kiev belongs to specific information of Southern-Slavic variants of prologue lives of Princess Olga. The information appears interesting when compared with the location of Holy Cross altar in St. George's Basilica in Prague, close to the place of St. Ludmila's deposition. See above.

<sup>101</sup> However, instructions concerning the depictions of these holy women come from a relatively late period (the sixteenth century). Moreover, there are no earlier depictions of the saint in Rus'. Therefore it is difficult to determine if the analogies in representations of Ludmila, Olga and Helena are a result of a longer process, during which the originally different conceptions of visual representation were merging; or whether the uniform view has been present from the very beginning. See – **Rogov, A. I.** Slovanské legendy, 37–38. In Rogov's view, the mural paintings of all these three saintly female rulers – Olga, Helena and Ludmila – were present in the cathedral of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Tutajev (earlier Romanovo-Borisoglebsk) in the seventeenth century. Ludmila is depicted opposite Olga. Several depictions of St. Helena are found on the columns as well. The author of the article underlined correctly that the cult of the women was connected with the cult of the Holy Cross. For a copy of the painting of St. Ludmila from this church, see – **Kantor, M.** *The Origins of Christianity in Bohemia: Sources and Commentary*. Evanston (IL) 1990, 102.

<sup>102</sup> This issue has been noted already by – **Šachmatov, Alexej A.** *Razyskanija o drevnejšich Russkich letopisnych svodach*. S.-Peterburg 1908, 16.

<sup>103</sup> **Solovjov, Sergej M.** *Istorija Rossii iz drevnejšich vremen 1 – 2*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Moskva, 1959, 156–157.

<sup>104</sup> Proložnoje žitije blagoslavennoj kňagini Ol'gi. Redakcija, izvlečennaja iz "Pamjati" mnicha Jakova (ed. N. I. Serebrjanskij), 13. The church was located close to the palace of the princes of Kievan Rus'. It stood in the central place of the Kievan state, similarly to St. George's Church in the Bohemian state, or St. Mary at Otok in Croatian state, and the rotund of the Virgin Mary on the island on the river Warta in Poznan. (See below). For more details concerning the function of this place in Kievan Rus', see – **Poppe, A.** Państwo i kościół na Rusi w XI wieku – *Rozprawy Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego*. Warszawa, 1968, 40 – 50. The author interestingly maintained that an initiative of Anne, Byzantine princess and Vladimir's wife, was behind the church dedication (to Mother of God). The influence of Theotokos cult on the course of the imperial life in Constantinople (especially in the basilica of Blachernae) is well-known. Vladimir and Anna were to be buried there later (Ibid., 41), together with Princess Olga of course. With respect to this, a hypothesis that St. Ludmila could have been originally buried also in the church of the Virgin Mary in Prague Castle is not insignificant. The only information about the translation of her body to St. George's Church is late. See – **Chaloupecký, V.** Prameny X. století legendy Kristiánovy o sv. Václavu a sv. Ludmile – *Prameny*, 40. The construction of a wooden church dedicated to the Virgin Mary (nowadays a part of the monastic complex of St. George known as St. Anne's Chapel?) could have preceded the construction of the monastery itself. The grave no. 102 from the tenth century could testify to that. See – **Frolík, J. et al.** *Nejstarší sakrální architektura*, 252. **Sommer, P.** Smrt kněžny Ludmily a začátky české sakrální architektury – *Český časopis historický*, 2000, 98, 241. See below. Likewise, Croatian Queen Jelena (Helena) was buried in a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. That would also imply, however, that the tomb of Princess Dubravka is to be looked for in the rotund of the Virgin Mary in Poznan.

<sup>105</sup> **Poppe, A.** Państwo i kościół na Rusi, 42. A similar ambiguity is evident in the case of St. George in Prague, but also St. Stephen (if you like, the Virgin Mary) at Otok. See below.

<sup>106</sup> **Thietmar** *Kronika Thietmara*, ed. and trans. Marian Z. Jedlicki. Poznań, 1953, 620, 621.

<sup>107</sup> **Duby, G.** *Damy XII wieku*, trans. Alicja Choicka and Krzysztof Choicki. Warszawa, 2000, 117.

<sup>108</sup> For example – Proložnoje žitije blagoslavennoj kňagini Ol'gi: Drevnejšaja proložnaja redakcija v jugo-slavianskich spiskach (ed. N. I. Serebrjanskij), 6.

<sup>109</sup> *Slovo o zakone i blagodati Ilariona* (ed. A. M. Moldovan), 97.

<sup>110</sup> **Fennel, J.** When Was Olga Canonized, 77 – 83.

<sup>111</sup> For example, St. Helena and her son Constantine are considered in the Eastern (Orthodox) Church as "isopostolos" ("equal to the apostles"). **Limberis, V.** Divine Heiress, 58. So, having got a name Constantine or Helena in the East or being compared to them had a higher value than only a symbolic one there. Each pair like this could be more easily considered as partaking in the "isopostolic" substance of the imperial couple. **Avenarius, A.** Metropolitan Ilarion, 697–698, etc. However, already in the case of Ilarion, it was not a denotation from outside, like it was for example in the case of the Anglo-Saxon holy rulers' couple, but it was their own adaptation of a European (in that period predominantly Byzantine) tradition.

<sup>112</sup> **Fennel, J.** When Was Olga Canonized, passim.

<sup>113</sup> The only source for the life of Croatian Queen Jelena (Helena) is an inscription (a Latin epitaph) engraved in the rock, which was discovered in the place of her burial, i.e. in the Basilica of the Virgin Mary at Otok, in the nineteenth century. See – **Goldstein, I.** *Hrvatski rani srednji vijek*. Zagreb, 1995, 315. See also earlier works – **Šišić, F.** *Povijest Hrvata u vrijeme narodnih vladara*. Zagreb, 1925, 437. **Idem** *Priručnik izvora hrvatske historije (do god. 1107) 1*, čest 1. Zagreb, 1914,

126–129. **Katić, L.** Zadužbine hrvatske kraljice Jelene na Otoku u Solinu – *Rad JAZU* 306, Zagreb, 1955, 187 – 219. **Klaić, N.** *Povijest Hrvata u ranom srednjem vijeku*. Zagreb, 1970, 316 – 320, etc.

<sup>114</sup> There are several differing interpretations concerning the damaged inscription of the epitaph. Their summary is found in – **Katić, L.** Zadužbine hrvatske kraljice, 192–193.

<sup>115</sup> **Thomae Archidiaconi** ecclesiae Spalatensis *Historia Salonitana*, ed. Frato Raiki. Zagrabiae, 1894, 55: “His temporibus celebrata fuit sinodus in civitate nonensi (Nin) sub Johanne cardinali, apostolice sedis legato. Ubi proclamationem faciente Laurentio archiepiscopo illustris vir Demetrius cognomento Suinimir, rex et sancte Mariae in Salona cum omnibus earum bonis. Has siquidem ecclesias edificavit et dotavit quedam Helena regina, donans eas Spalatine sedi iure perpetuo possidendas. Que ob reverentiam regalium sepulcrorum concessae fuerant quibusdam regularibus ad tempus, qui assidue in eis officiorum ministeria exercebant.” In another place the same author writes that Croatian King Krešimir was buried together with many other kings and queens in the atrium of the Basilica of St. Stephen (chapter 16): “Ibi namque magnificus vir Cressimirus rex in atrio videlicet basilicae sancti Stephani tumulatus est cum multis aliis regibus et reginis.” For a solution to the problem of which of the churches are the Virgin Mary’s Basilica and St. Stephen’s Basilica, see – **Rapanić, Ž. and Jelovina D.** Revizija istraživanja i nova interpretacija arhitektonskog kompleksa na Otoku u Solinu – *Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju Dalmatinsku*, 1968–1969, 70–71, ed. Željko Rapanić. Split, 1977, 107–135. A part of the information, which could have resulted from the (external) circumstances of the find of the inscription, has got lost due to the contemporary attitude to archaeology. The revision research of the location was accomplished in 1972; its results are summarised in the aforementioned article.

<sup>116</sup> **Tomljenović, I.** Wann begegneten die Kroaten dem Christentum – *Early Christianity*, 43–47.

<sup>117</sup> **Šišić, F.** *Povijest Hrvata*, 430–437.

<sup>118</sup> She was allegedly buried in this place on March 10, 976. The date of her death is traditionally cited as October 8, 975. See – **Šišić, F.** *Povijest Hrvata*, 437. Other cited dates are March 24, 976, and October 8, 976. See – **Katić, L.** Zadužbine hrvatske kraljice, 196–197. Of course, some attributes necessary for the beginning of canonization (process) derive from the date of death or burial. For example, if she had died on October 8, 975 and had been buried in a new tomb in the Virgin Mary’s Basilica later, the new burial would have been a translation of her remains (i.e. *translatio*). Then, the date of the translation would be more than interesting.

<sup>119</sup> I have suggested before that the text is not entirely clear about the date of her husband’s death, because the date of his death has usually been considered with respect to the time of her son’s succession to the throne. From which follows that we cannot be completely sure if Jelena as a widow ruled as a regent in place of her son for a certain period. Nevertheless, it is probable. The fact that she is denoted as the mother of King Stephen in the text would also imply that. We can suppose that Stephen Držislav received the crown around year 969 (or 970). See – **Šišić, F.** *Povijest Hrvata*, 438. Bulić’s reading of the text would confirm this hypothesis: Jelena (Helena) allegedly said: “deliciis renuit regni”, i.e. “reject the temptations of the reign” (meaning renounce the power in the kingdom). Cited after – **Katić, L.** Zadužbine hrvatske kraljice, 192. Unlike Šišić [“(habensquet) enuit regni” (“and having the kingdom in hands”)], Katić proposed a reading: “pacemque obtenuit regni” (“and she held the royal office in peace”). *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>120</sup> The same interpretation in – **Klaić, N.** *Povijest Hrvata*, 319. Other keeper of the object could have been the archbishopric of Split. See – *Ibid.* An analogy with St. Ludmila and her foundation of a Benedictine nunnery at St. George’s Basilica (and also an analogical practice in

contemporaneous Western Europe) would support the first interpretation. See – **Duby, G.** *Damy XII wieku*, 117.

<sup>121</sup> Her son was adult in the time when the inscription originated, because he was crowned. As being adult meant being fifteen years old at least in that period, his mother could have been thirty at least, but more probably forty or maybe several years older.

<sup>122</sup> Adelaide renounced her influence in the state first in favour of Theofanu and after her death in favour of Otto III. See – **Beyreuther, G.** *Keiserin Adelheid*, 69, 72.

<sup>123</sup> **Duby, G.** *Damy XII wieku*, 114.

<sup>124</sup> **Katić, L.** *Zadužbine hrvatske kraljice*, 207.

<sup>125</sup> Matilda of Saxony – Nordhausen, Cunegond of Bavaria – Kaufungen, or Bamberg, Margaret of Scotland – Dunfermlin, Mlada-Maria of Bohemia – the convent of St. George in Prague, Anna of Kievan Rus' – the Desatinnaja Cerkov in Kiev, Dubravka of Bohemia-Poland – the Rotund of the Virgin Mary near the necropolis of first Polish rulers in Poznan, and Gisela (together with St. Stephen) – the Basilica of the Virgin Mary in Székesfehérvár. The relation with Hungarian realia is especially important for this study. A sacral-memorial complex – the Basilica of the Virgin Mary in Székesfehérvár was the place of coronation and burial of Hungarian kings. It was completed in 1031, i.e. sixty years after the initiative of Otok. The commissioner of the work was King Stephen I and his wife Gisela. See – *Diplomata Hungariae antiquissima* (hereafter *DHA*) 1, ed. Georgius Györffy. Budapestini, 1992, 96. The *Hungarian-Polish Chronicle* ascribes the act clearly to St. Stephen. See – *Chronica Hungaro-Polonica*. (hereafter *CHP*), ed. Béla Karácsonyi – *Acta Historica Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila Jyzsef nominatae*, 1969, 26, 44.

<sup>126</sup> An analogical situation occurred in case of the shrine of St. Ludmila in the country's "most important" church, in the Basilica of St. George at Prague Castle, whose construction was begun most probably by Duke Wratislaus (Vratislav) and which was later rebuilt by Boleslaus II. See – **Třeštík, D.** *Počátky Přemyslovců* (1997), 411. See also – **Borkovský, I.** *Svatojiřská bazilika*, passim. **Sláma, J.** *Svatojiřské kostely na raně středověkých hradištích v Čechách – Archeologické rozhledy*, 1977, 29, 269–280. In the same manner, the tomb of St. Olga is located in the central place in Kiev, in the Desatinnaja Cerkov of Holy Mother of God. Its construction was commenced by Prince Vladimir (a later saint), who was most probably buried with his wife Anna at the same place. See – **Poppe, A.** *Państwo i kościół na Rusi*, 40–50. See above.

<sup>127</sup> Cited after – **Katić, L.** *Zadužbine hrvatske kraljice*, 192. For utilization of this archetype of female dynastic sainthood, see my study about St. Ludmila. In connection with potential origins of the cult and later canonization of Jelena (Helena) it is necessary to "dust up" an old reading of her epitaph by Bulić (p. 192), according to which she was buried as a "fa(mula Dei)", i.e. a handmaid of God, which reminds of the way St. Ludmila was called ("religiosa dei famula") in the earliest extant variant of her life known under the title *Fuit* (ed. V. Chaloupecký), 471.

<sup>128</sup> Creating a relation through a burial in a church dedicated to one's patron-saint belongs to traditional medieval ways of sacralisation of a certain person. A classical and model example for the entire Middle Ages was the location of the shrine of Constantine the Great in the centre of the church dedicated to Holy Apostles. **Limberis, V.** *Divine Heiress*, 26–27.

<sup>129</sup> **Katić, L.** *Zadužbine hrvatske kraljice*, 187–219. St. Stephen, the protomartyr, was chosen as an apostle later. See – Acts 6:5.

<sup>130</sup> An increase of the saint's popularity had started already in the fifth century, when two Theodosian empresses (and rivals) Eudokia and Pulcheria devoted unusual attention to his remains and started to dedicate churches to him. Pulcheria had the relics of St. Stephen even placed

in her personal church of St. Lawrence, which she had constructed in her palace Pulcherianum. See – **Holum, Kenneth G.** *Theodosian Emperresses*, 196, 219. Therefore, the flourishing of St. Stephen's cult meant for the construction of their image (especially that of Pulcheria) as much as the Holy Cross meant for St. Helena. **Drijvers, Jann W.** *Helena Augusta Exemplary Christian Empress*, 88. In this manner, the cult of protomartyr Stephen was gaining from its beginning also the functions similar to those pertaining to the cult of the Holy Cross, or the cult of the *parental Christian ruling pair of Constantine and Helena*. Its etymology (Greek *stefanos* – *crowned*) predestined the name Stephen to become a sacred Christian name. At the time of the rule of Jelena (Helena) the cult of St. Stephen enjoyed outstanding popularity in the Ottonian court, and thanks to that in every place within the reach of their empire's influence. It is not our aim now to solve the issue whether the Byzantine or the Saxon (or Latin) influence dominated in Croatian environment. It suffice to observe that Queen Jelena (Helena) was behind the origin of the idea.

<sup>131</sup> From 912 until 959 famous Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and from 976 until 1028 his successor Constantine IX ruled there. Both were from the Macedonian dynasty of Basil I, who was not of aristocratic origin, as is widely known. For the ideological uses of the name Constantine in this dynasty, see – **Ewig, E. von.** *Das Bild Constantins*, passim.

<sup>132</sup> The foundation of a church dedicated to the Holy Cross in the capital of the contemporaneous Croatian state, Nine, dates back to the tenth century. A well-known inscription of župan Godeslav dated to the years 780–800 was found in its interior. See – **Šišić, F.** *Priručnik izvora*, 118–119.

<sup>133</sup> **Homza, M.** *Pokus o interpretácii úlohy kňažnej Adelajdy*, 357–382.

<sup>134</sup> **Homza, M.** *Pokus o interpretácii úlohy kňažnej Adelajdy*, 357–382. Idem: *Reflections on the System of the Proper Personal Names in the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle* – *Slovak Studies* 2002, 33–34, Rome, 2002, 83–96.

<sup>135</sup> **Kara, M.** *Posen (Poznac) – Europas Mitte um 1000. Handbuch zur Ausstellung 1*, ed. Alfried Wiczorek and Hans-Martin Hinz. Stuttgart 2000, 477.

<sup>136</sup> **Kürbis, B.** *Epitafium Bolesława Chrobrego. Analiza literacka i historyczna* – *Roczniki Historyczne*, 1990, 55–56, passim.

<sup>137</sup> Not entirely arbitrary anniversaries have already been noticed by – **Kalandra, Z.** *České pohanství*. Praha, 1947, 477. I cannot agree completely with his speculations concerning paganism though. Especially if we realize that the anniversary of grandmother Ludmila's death corresponded with the octave of the Virgin Mary's Nativity, or with a later established Feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary. See – **Warner, M.** *Alone of all her Sex. The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*. New York, 1983, 218.