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The Problem of an Ideological and Sacral Structure of the Přemyslids Seat at Czech Vyšehrad (10th–12th Centuries), and Its Relations to the Prague Castle

Problem ideologicznej i sakralnej struktury siedziby Przemyślidów na Wyszehradzie (X–XII w.) i jej relacji do palatium praskiego

SUMMARY

The author of the article shows the principles that governed the division of ceremonies and rituals of ostentation of power in the Czech central space between the 10th until the 12th century. He deals with the issue of idealized valuation of two Czech centers of power at those time: Prague and Vyšehrad. He also analyses what were the conditions for choosing the place for the residences of the ruler. The conclusion of the deliberations – simplifying the wide problem – is to say that the power for its ceremonies needed the space that was free of alien interference. In Prague resided the bishop who was partially independent from the monarch's power. Therefore, many Czech rulers preferred to reside in Vyšehrad.

Keywords: authority; space; ostentation of power; places of power, Přemyslids, Prague, Vyšehrad

As a historian looks at a site plan of present-day Prague, he can notice that in medieval times there existed within it two centres of Bohemian capital state power. The first, we can say traditional, was located in Prague Castle, but on the other river bank of the Vltava was situated the second – Vyšehrad[1]. These two

[1] A dozen years ago, I published a monograph devoted to the analysis of the function of the castle and the town during the earlier Middle Ages. See: A. Pleszczyński, *Vyšehrad – rezidence českých panovníků. Studie o rezidenci panovníka raného středověku na příkladu českého Vyšehradu*,

places are separated by a distance of only 4 kilometres in a straight line, however, in the Middle Ages, they were treated as two different towns. The second of them, less known than Prague Castle, occupying the high rock hill over the river, was always the most fortified stronghold in the whole country throughout Czech history. Also today, more intrepid visitor, who ventures beyond the typical set of tourist attractions of Prague, can observe at Vyšehrad the large powerful citadel built by the Habsburgs in the 19th century[2].

But in the Middle Ages not only military aspects signified the special role of Vyšehrad in the capital space of the Přemyslids state. We have information that many of the Czech rulers, particularly between 10th and 12th centuries, preferred that residence to the traditional seat in Prague. The written testimonies confirm that in particular the first Bohemian king, Vratislav I (1061–1092) and his grandson Soběslav I (1025–1040) were so fond of Vyšehrad, that at that time, the place was referred to as *totius provinciae caput*[3] ("the head of whole country") or *omnium terrae illius civitatutum quasi mater et domina*[4] ("all this province cities as if mother and mistress").

However, at the same time, Prague remained the capital of the state and the Přemyslids frequented the castle, organised meetings with the aristocracy there and performed other actions that signified the centre of power of that time. So, we can say that, in fact, in the high Middle Ages (10th–12th centuries) the Czech state had two simultaneous capitals. Examples from other countries show that this case is not so strange as we might suppose because before the time of established, durable monarchies (12th–13th centuries) here and there all over medieval Europe we find the phenomenon of a double capital or two contemporaneous capitals if you prefer. The problem is intriguing, and its European examples have been examined many times but never comprehensively explained[5]. The subject of double seats of

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Praha 2002 (the corrected translation of the book published in Polish: *Przestrzeń i polityka. Studium rezydencji władcy wcześniejszego średniowiecza. Przykład czeskiego Wyszehradu*, Lublin 2000). This sketch is an extract of the most important theses of the mentioned book confronted with new discoveries made by Czech archaeologists – L. Varadzin, B. Nechvátal, *Nové poznatky o předrománském kostele centrální dispozice na Vyšehradě (předběžná zpráva)*, „Průzkumy památek" 2012, Vol. 19 (2), pp. 170–176; B. Nechvátal, *Kapitulní chrám sv. Petra a Pavla na Vyšehradě*, Praha 2004.

[2] I. Boháčová, J. Frolík, Z. Smetánka, B. Nechvátal, L. Hrdlička, *Prague Castle, Vyšehrad Castle and the Prague Agglomeration*, [in:] *25 Years of Archaeological Research in Bohemia. On the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Institute of Archaeology*, ed. J. Fridrich, Prague 1994, pp. 153–164.

[3] *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum*, [in:] *MGH Scriptores rerum germanicarum*, ed. B. Bretholz, Vol. 2, Berlin 1923, p. 253 (available on www.dmgh.de, access: 09.04.2017).

[4] *Ibidem*, p. 252.

[5] Z. Dalewski, *Władza, przestrzeń, ceremoniał*, Warszawa 1996, pp. 11–54; M. Biddle, *Winchester: The development of an early capital*, [in:] *Vor- und Frühformen der europäischen Stad im Mittelalter*, Bd. 1: *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Phil.-hist.*

authority in mediaeval Bohemia, despite of above mentioned publication, is still not decisively cleared and has many opened question.

One interesting aspect of the Přemyslids system of ruling over the country was the close proximity of Prague and Vyšehrad centres of power which were both located in the not wide space of the Prague Valley. This fact was explained in the past rather simply. The land that could be used for agriculture was mainly situated in the centre of Bohemia (surrounding Prague and Vyšehrad. The indeed small terrain was thickly populated and surrounded by mountains or highlands. The geography had determined the Prague valley as the natural centre of medieval Bohemia[6]. There is a lot of reasoning in these kinds of views, but, on the other hand, many examples argue that natural conditions are only the foundation for human activity, and that specific solutions have always been determined by specific culture and specific historical circumstances. The situation that occurred in the medieval Bohemia was really complex. However, due to the nature of this text, it is necessary to lay out the matter as concise as possible.

So, let us look at the crucial problems that are important for describing the role of Vyšehrad and its relationship to Prague Castle and the place of both centers of power in the political system created by the Přemyslids in Bohemia during the 10th to the 12th centuries.

The old, conducted many decades ago, archaeological excavations indicated clearly that the stronghold at Vyšehrad was built at the end of the 10th century[7]. From this time, came the strong testimonies which bear witness to the special ties between the ducal power and Vyšehrad, namely coins that bear the inscription with the often deformed name of the city VISEGRAD CIVITAS[8]. But the most interesting is the fact that on the face of the coins we see an outline depicting a temple in front of which is the word IAN or in other designs – BOZE[9]. The first inscription must be referring to the title of the ducal palace chapel at Vyšehrad – *S. Joahannis in curia regis*, as the latter document called this object. The second

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Klasse, Dritte Folge Nr 83, Göttingen 1973, pp. 229–261; A. Lombard-Jourdan, *Les antécédents de Paris comme « lieu du pouvoir »*, [in:] *Lieux du pouvoir au Moyen Âge et à l'époque moderne*, éd. M. Tymowski, Warszawa 1995, pp. 72–91.

[6] *Praha středoveká (Čtvero knih o Praze)*, ed. E. Poche, Praha 1983, pp. 9–10, 60–61; T. Kalina, *Vývoj polohy sidle v Pražské kotlině od 10. do pol. 14. století*, „Historická Geografie" 1978, Vol. 17, pp. 311–363. See also: L. Hrdlicka, *The archeological study of the historical centre of Prague: 196–1993*, [in:] *25 Years of Archaeological Research…*, pp. 174–184.

[7] B. Nechvátal, *Výšehrad*, Praha 1975, p. 47.

[8] J. Hásková, *Výšehradská mincovna na přelomu 10.–11. století*, „Sborník Národního muzea v Praze, řada A – historie" 1975, Vol. 29 (3), pp. 105–160; G. Skalský, *O denárech vyšehradských. Příspěvek k otázce vyšehradské a ke chronologii nekterých typů mincé Boleslava II*, „Numismaticky casopis" 1927, Vol. 3, pp. 172–189.

[9] F. Cach, *Nejstarši české mince*, Vol. 1: *České denary do mincovní reform Břetislava I*, Praha 1970, No. 134, 142.

word BOZE is most frequently interpreted as the Slavic name for God – *Bože*[10]. This is especially significant because there are some later accounts, about a century later, of the existence at Vyšehrad of a centre of Slavic liturgy, which was tolerated in Bohemia until the end of the 11th century[11]. It is worth noting that, at the same time, in Prague there were minted similar coins that bear the Latin inscription *DEUS*[12].

Recently, however, Czech archeologists have managed to discover the remains of foundations of a very important architectural object on the Vyšehrad Hill that is very intriguing for researchers[13]. Its form, the material that was used and its placement under the foundations of the dating at the end of the 11th century the church of St. Lawrence links strongly the remains of the founded building with the times when the Vyšehrad minting appeared, with the epoch of the end of the 10th century. The relics reveal clearly that the church is about, but its form was quite unique for the then Western European architecture. There was a central building whose core was a large square with a side spanning until 12 and a half meters. From the west, a narrower rectangular addition, probably a vestibule (narthex), was attached to this form. On the north and south sides of the object were found quite deep conchs. On the east – it seems, what the analogies suggest – also had to be a conch (chancel). However, we could not find the remnants of this part of the building.

The above sketched form of the church indicates rather the eastern, Byzantine provenance of the architectural design of the object not the western one – although it is not easy to find any direct, strict analogies[14]. Regardless of these difficulties, described discoveries justify not only the appearance of coins with the Slavonic inscriptions on the Vyšehrad Hill – as consequences of the appearance the by Byzantium inspired Slavonic literature in Bohemia, but also in the medieval Czech legends, which repeated the motif of the existence on the Vyšehrad Hill a center of the Slavic liturgy that was a consequence of former St. Cyril and Methodi-

[10] *Słownik prasłowiański*, t. 1, Wrocław 1974, p. 296. See also: A. Brückner, *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego*, Warszawa 1989, p. 33 f.; F. Sławski, *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego*, t. 1, Kraków 1952–1956, p. 40.

[11] F.W. Mareš, *Die Slawische Liturgie in Böhmen zur Zeit der Gründung des Prager Bistums*, [in:] *Millenium Dioeceseos Pragensis 973–1973*, „Annales Instituti Slavici" 1974, Bd. 8, pp. 95–110; W. Beumann, *Die Literatur des Mittelalters in Böhmen. Deutsch – lateinisch – tschechische Literatur vom 10. bis zum 15. Jahrhundert*, Wien 1978, p. 21 f. See also: F. Graus, *Slovanská liturgie a pisemnictví v premyslovských Čechách 10. století*, „Československý Časopis Historický" 1966, Vol. 14, pp. 473–495.

[12] F. Cach, *op. cit.*, No. 134; J. Hásková, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

[13] L. Varadzin, B. Nechvátal, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–175.

[14] *Ibidem*, p. 174.

us' mission in Great Moravia[15]. In addition, the discovery of the aforementioned building gives some credence to the issue – which was briefly mentioned only in written medieval sources (will be discussed shortly) – of the important role of the Vyšehrad Castle in the state of the Přemyslids at the end of the 10th century.

When we notice the special connection between the Czech ruler and Slavic liturgy, then seventy years later we find in the Prague valley the same situation but better described in sources. Then the Czech king Vratislav I (1061–1092) was in the midst of a long and fierce quarrel with his brother, the Bishop of Prague, Jaromír Gebhard (1068–1090)[16]. Because the churchman refused to celebrate Holy Mass in the attendance of the monarch and did not want to place the crown on his head, Vratislav used the help of Božetech, the abbot of Sazava, the Benedictine monastery, but using Slavic language in the liturgy[17].

This situation of permanent conflict with the bishop whose seat was in Prague Castle, where he had his entourage in the cathedral chapter, forced the monarch to avoid the traditional capital of the state. Instead, Vratislav I resided at Vyšehrad where he formed his own chapter which was in addition subject directly to the pope's authority (*exemptio*)[18]. The brothers fought against each other for more than thirty years, each seeking help from the German monarch, then the head of the country and local church, and from the pope in Rome as well[19].

When we look back at Czech history we notice that this situation of permanent conflict between the ruler and bishop had existed during the reigns of Boleslav II (973–999) and his son Boleslav III (999–1002) who fought with Bishops Adalbert Vojtěch (983–995) and Thiegdag (998–1017)[20]. Looking forwards beyond the époque of Vratislav I, one can see that some of his successors fell foul of the senior luminaries in the local Church, especially Soběslav I (1025–1040)

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[15] V. Chaloupecký, B. Ryba, *Středověké legendy prokopské. Jejich historický rozbor a texty*, Praha 1953, pp. 119, 155–156, 247–248.

[16] P. Hilsch, *Familiensinn und Politik bei den Přemysliden. Jaromir-Gebhard, Bischof von Prag und Kanzler der Königs*, [in:] *Papstum, Kirche und Recht im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Horst Fuhrmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, Hrsg. H. Mordek, Tübingen 1991, pp. 215–231; D. Kalhous, *Jaromír-Gebhard, pražský biskup a říšský kancléř (1038–1090). Několik poznámek k jeho životu*, „Mediaevalia Historica Bohemica" 2003, Vol. 9, pp. 27–45.

[17] *Monachi Sazaviensis continuatio Cosmae*, [in:] *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores*, ed. G.H. Pertz, Vol. 9, Hannoverae 1851, pp. 149–163. See also: P. Sommer, *Sázavský klášter*, Praha 1996.

[18] A. Weiss, *Biskupstwa bezpośrednio zależne od Stolicy Apostolskiej w średniowiecznej Europie*, Lublin 1992, p. 109 ff.; H. Hirsch, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des päpstlischen Schutzes*, „Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichte" 1942, Bd. 54, pp. 363–433.

[19] *Cosmae Pragensis Chronicon* (II, 26), p. 119 ff. See also: V. Richter, *Podivín, Sekirkostel a Slivnice*, „Foliae Historiae Artium" 1958, Vol. 2, pp. 67–87.

[20] P. Hilsch, *Der Bischof von Prag und das Reich in sächsischer Zeit*, „Deutsches Archiv" 1972, Bd. 28, pp. 1–41; G. Rupp, *Die Ekkehardiner, Markgrafen von Meißen, und ihre Beziehungen zum Reich und zu den Piasten*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, p. 54 ff.

who fought with Bishop Meinhard[21]. The Czech churchmen always found some help against their monarchs from the opposing aristocracy, often from the youngest members of the ruling dynasty as well and in addition were supported by the German Church with its main dignitary, the Archbishop of Mainz who was the head of the Czech Church[22].

This situation forms the basis of the quarrels between the two hierarchies in Bohemia which occurred sporadically until the beginning of the 13th century when finally the Czech monarch received the right to hereditary kingship authority combined with the investiture of the local bishop[23]. Only then did the conditions cease that had led to Vyšehrad competing with Prague Castle as the main place of residence of the ruler. But there remained an awareness of the extraordinary role of that place for Czech rulers and, as a result, many legends were created, whereby the city was introduced as the origin of Přemyslids authority, older than Prague, and the centre of Slavic liturgy[24]. During the reign of Charles IV in Bohemia (1347–1378), the legend had been materialized into the form of a ceremony that the king and emperor had introduced in Vyšehrad. He ordered that the Czech *ordo coronandi* (the order of coronation) should contain the ritual of hanging on the shoulder of each new ruler the shoes and the bag of Přemysl, the mythic founder of the state and dynasty. This ritual had to be performed in the Vyšehrad church of St. Peter before the coronation in Prague Castle[25].

The time of Charles IV was the last bright period in the history of old Vyšehrad because during the Hussite wars in the following century the stronghold was completely destroyed and the wars of subsequent periods did little to help save the place which was fortified many times. So today archaeologist have really serious problems in separating the strata of buildings built over the centuries[26].

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[21] A. Pleszczyński, *Sobeslaus – ut Salomon, ut rex Ninivitarum. Gesta, rituály a inscenace – propagandické nástroje boje českého knížete v konfliktu z opozicí (1130–1131)*, „Český Časopis Historický“ 2003, Vol. 101 (2), pp. 237–259, 237–259.

[22] A. Huber, *Die Metropole Mainz und die bohmischen Lander*, „Archiv für Kirchengeschichte von Böhmen-Mähren-Schlesien“ 1973, Bd. 3, pp. 24–57.

[23] Lately on the subject: M. Wihoda, *Zlatá Bula Sicilská. Podivuhodný příběh ve vrstvách paměti*, Praha 2005.

[24] B. Nechvátal, *Vyšehrad und die alten böhmischen Sagen*, [in:] *Rapports du IIIe Congrès International d'Archeologie Slave. Bratislava 7–14 Septembre 1975*, Vol. 1, Bratislava 1979, pp. 563–572. See also: A. Pleszczyński, *„Fetyszyzm początków" w ideologii władzy czeskiego średniowiecza*, [in:] *Origines mundi, gentium et civitatum*, red. S. Rosik, P. Wiszewski, Wrocław 2001, pp. 153–159.

[25] J. Cibulka, *Český rád korunovační a jeho puvod (Knihovna Casopis u katolického duchovenstva)*, Praha 1934, p. 103 f. See also: A. Pleszczyński, *„Fetyszyzm początków" w ideologii władzy…*, pp. 153–159.

[26] F. Kašička, B. Nechvátal, *K problematice – Curia Regis – na Vyšehradě*, „Archaeologia Historica“ 1979, Vol. 4, pp. 95–103. See also: B. Nechvátal, *Studies on the ducal and royal centre at Vyšehrad*, [in:] *Archeology in Bohemia 1986–1990*, Praha 1991, pp. 149–158; *idem*, *Vyšehrad*

In the 19th century, critical historiography proved that all legends about the precedence in origin of Vyšehrad before Prague Castle were untrue[27]. It was also shown that the series of documents that supported the extraordinary status of St. Peter's chapter at Vyšehrad were forgeries. Even today, in Czech historiography, prevails the view that Vyšehrad's functioning as a capital is doubtful and is viewed with suspicion and so a serious scholar does not deal with it. The matter belongs rather to national mythology than to the sphere of "real" history[28].

But in fact, some accounts of the sources and sparse remains of the old Přemyslids' residence allow us to form an opinion on the real capital's functions and the aims of this seat of the Czech rulers during the 10th–12th centuries. Let us look at some examples.

The first written account about the special status of Vyšehrad within the power system of Přemyslids comes from the German chronicler Thietmar and concerns events that happened in 1004. At that time, the Czech Duke Jaromír with the help of Henry II, the king of the Reich, displaced from the country Polish troops that had been occupying the land for more than two years[29]. Then Jaromír:

> […] received petitioners before the gates of the city [i.e. Prague], confirming rights and granting forgiveness for past offences [many Czech magnates had in the past supported the Polish duke Boleslav the Brave]. After being allowed to enter, he was joyfully installed in his former dignity [of ruler]. […] Delighted with many gifts, he was then led to Vyšehrad where his rulership was acclaimed and he promised both the king's [Henry] favour and a long-desired reward to those who had stayed with him until this point[30].

This is only one so clear statement about dividing the enthronement ceremony of the state ruler between Prague and Vyšehrad. But there are some accounts that inform us that the new rulers or dukes, who had recovered power over the state, wanted to mark in a ritualistic way his presence not only in Prague but also in Vyšehrad. They did this by means of the ceremonial entry (*adventus regis*) to

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a archeologie, [in:] *Královský Vyšehrad. Sborník prískpevků k 900. výrocíúmrtí prvního ceského krále Vratislava II. (1061–1092)*, eds. B. Nechvátal, J. Huber, Praha 1992, pp. 112–139.

[27] J. Lippert, *Die Wyschehradfrage*, „Mitteilungen des Vereines für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen" 1893–1894, Bd. 22, pp. 213–255.

[28] Skeptical in this subject is, for example, the review of my book (see note No. 1) about Přemyslids' centre at Vyšehrad by D. Kalhous, – D. Malaťák, „Časopis Matice Moravské" 2003, Vol. 122, pp. 229–233.

[29] *Ottonian Germany. The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg*, ed. D.A. Warner, Manchester 2001, p. 245 f. (VI, 12). Original edition: *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg und ihre Korveier Überarbeitung. Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi chronicon*, Hrsg. R. Holtzmann, Berlin 1935 (Bd. 6: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores*, Bd. 9: *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, Series Nova), p. 289 f. (online: www.dmgh.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb00000689_00001.html, access: 13.04.2017).

[30] *Ottonian Germany…*, p. 246.

the second of these cities, by meeting there the political elite of the state, especially to carry out court justice there, or by celebrating Easter in the church of St. Peter. This last occasion was extremely important for the ruler at that time. The celebration of Easter Holy Mass gave men of authority in the Middle Ages the chance to perform a special show whose purpose – to explain the matter in simple terms – comes down to comparing them to the Heavenly King, Jesus Christ, and their states to Heavenly Jerusalem, the state of God as it was believed in[31].

This aforementioned issue was well known in Western European monarchies. Especially the main part of the kings' Holy Mass – litanies, the so-called *laudes regiae* (royal prayers) – had been written during the Middle Ages in many versions[32]. Modern historiography has examined the texts very carefully, but from Eastern Europe we have almost nothing concerning the *laudes regiae*[33]. In the case of Vyšehrad only few statements of contemporary chroniclers and some other testimonies suggest that the Czech rulers used to perform the same acts so loved by their Western counterparts.

Both Cosmas, the first Bohemian chronicler, and his successors inform us that subsequent dukes of the land made huge efforts in order to spend Easter in their seat in Vyšehrad[34]. Unfortunately, they did not explain why. But we have a document – albeit a forgery – containing the message that Pope Alexander II (1061–1073) reputedly asked if only in the church of St. Peter at Vyšehrad could *laudes astante duce* (prayers in absence of a duke) be celebrated[35] – the term, one assumes, must also cover the aforementioned litany *laudes regiae*. The text, in fact, emerged in the second half of the 12th century, most probably in the chapter of

[31] See for example: G. Beyreuther, *Die Osterfeier als Akt der königlichen Repräsentantz und Herrschaftsausübung unter Heinrich II. (1002–1024)*, [in:] *Feste und Feiern im Mittelalter. Paderborner Symposion des Mediävistischenverbandes*, Hrsg. D. Altenburger, J. Jarnut, H.H. Steinhoff, Sigmaringen 1991, pp. 245–253; R. Jacobsson, *The concept of Easter in the liturgical celebration. Reflected in the poetry of the Medieval Church*, [in:] *Feste und Feiern im Mittelalter…*, pp. 283–307.

[32] E.K. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae. A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Mediaeval Ruler Worship*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1958; B. Opfermann, *Laudes regiae*, [in:] *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, Hrsg. J. Höfer, K. Rahner, Bd. 6, Freiburg im Breisgau 1961, pp. 825–826 (lit.); N. van Deussen, *Laude regiae*, [in:] *Procession, Performance, Liturgy, and Ritual. Essays in Honor of Bryan R. Gillingham*, ed. N. van Deussen, Ottawa 2007, pp. 83–118.

[33] B. Kürbis, *Zum Herrscherlob in der Chronik des Gallus Anonymus (Anfang 12. Jahrhundert). Laudes regiae' am ponischen Hof?*, [in:] *Patronage und Klientel. Ergebnisse einer polnisch--deutschen Konferenz*, Hrsg. H.-H. Nolte, Köln-Wien 1989 (Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, Beiheft 29), pp. 51–67.

[34] *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica* (II, 50), p. 157; *Cosmas* (III, 8), p. 168, (III, 57), p. 233; *Canonici Wissegradensis continuatio Cosmae*, [in:] *MGH Scriptores*, ed. G.H. Pertz, Vol. 9, Hannoverae 1851, pp. 132–148, 143.

[35] *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica* (Anhang II), p. 254: *Laudes, quas sub diademate statutis diebus proclamare solemus, solummodo in ista ecclesia astante duce summa diligentia Christum collaudare permittimus*.

St. Peter at Vyšehrad, and its content does not testify to the rights but only shows clearly that the circle of clerics connected with the ducal seat competing with Prague wanted to keep the important and prestigious ceremony of power within the confines of its own centre[36].

Another account strongly relates to the problem of the performances of rulers' authority at Vyšehrad. This time the account is wide-ranging and more complex than the one cited earlier. The so-called Vyšehrad canon, in reality an anonymous chronicler from the first half of 12th century, perhaps one of the monks from the chapter of St. Peter[37], wrote that the Czech Duke Soběslav I (1125–1140) made many and various expensive investments at Vyšehrad. He ordered the complete renovation of St. Peter's church (the main in the city), painting the walls, and built there something like an archway *porticus in circuitu* ("colonnade going round"?) and – most importantly – ordered the making of a large candlestick for hanging inside the main church of the residence. The founded objects, considering especially the building for which they were destined, had an exceptional meaning. The chronicler explained the activity of the duke in this way: "He [i.e. Soběslav] hung in the face of the church the golden crown that weighted twelve pounds of gold, eighty pounds of silver, exclusive of bronze and iron"[38]. In a document prepared then for the Vyšehrad chapter by the same duke we can read that: "[…] the crown made from gold and silver decorates the face of the church"[39].

By "the face of the church" it may mean the place which is present over the apse between it and the aisle, one of the most important points in the Christian temple[40]. And the numbers 12 and 80 cited in the Czech chronicle symbolize the aforementioned Heavenly Jerusalem, because 12 represented the number of fundaments of God's city, mentioned in the Apocalypse of St. John, and 80 is ten times the number of the eighth day considered as the day of the Last Judgment[41].

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[36] A. Pleszczyński, *Vyšehrader Interpolation in der Chronik der Böhmen des Cosmas von Prag, oder was uns ein Falsifikat erkennen lässt*, „Qestiones Medii Aevi Novae" 2001, Bd. 6, pp. 297–318.

[37] W. Baumann, *Die Literatur des Mittelalters in Böhmen. Deutsche, lateinische, tschechische Literatur vom X. bis zum XV. Jahrhundert*, München 1978, p. 37; M. Borská-Urbánková, *Kanovník vyšehradský a jeho kronika*, [in:] *Královský Vyšehrad. 3. Sborník príspevku ze semináre Vyšehrad a Premyslovci*, eds. B. Nechvátal, J. Huber, J. Kotous, Praha 2007, pp. 161–166.

[38] *Canonici Wissegradensis continuatio…*, p. 134: [...] *coronam auream in ea suspendit, quae ponderat 12 marcas auri, argenti vero 80, aes et ferrum sine numero*.

[39] *Codex Diplomaticus Bohemiae*, ed. G. Friedrich, Vol. 1, Praha 1907, No. 111, p. 112: [...] *corona ex auro et argento facta faciem templi decoravi*.

[40] F. Kreusch, *Zur Plannung der Aachener Barbarossaleuchter*, „Aachener Kunstblätter" 1961, Bd. 22, pp. 21–36.

[41] V. Denkstein, *Nekdejšívyšehradský lustr z r. 1129*, [in:] *Královský Vyšehrad. Sborník*, eds. B. Nechvátal, J. Huber, Praha 1992, pp. 83–89. See also: R. Konrad, *Das himmlische und das irdische Jerusalem im mittelalterlichen Denken. Mystische Vorstellung und geschichtliche Wirkung*, [in:] *Speculum Historiale. Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung (Festschrift Johannes Spörl)*, Hrsg. C. Bauer, L. Boehm, M. Müller, München 1965, pp. 523–540.

The candlestick presented to St. Peter's church in Vyšehrad has not been preserved. Perhaps it was destroyed when in 13th century the church was burned or later, during the Hussite revolution, along with the whole city[42]. But we have similar artefacts from Germany and France that help us to understand which purposes Soběslav's investment served[43]. The most famous medieval royal candlestick hangs until today in Aachen in the church of Our Lady, in the past the palace chapel of German kings. Under this *corona*, the king used to sit during the "festival of coronation" which could happen several times a year, but the most important being celebrated on Easter Sunday. At exactly this time, the people gathered in the church praised Jesus Christ, in the person of their king, by means of *laudes regiae*[44].

Obviously, in St. Peter's church in Vyšehrad, Holy Mass must have been celebrated and rituals which were similar to those in Aachen and many other European rulers' residences must have been carried out. What is the most interesting is the fact that accepting this view of events, we can decipher the functions of the few preserved relics of the architectural structure of the whole Přemyslids centre of power.

Let us look at the reconstruction of the route system and the building of the old Vyšehrad. We have only one that shows clearly the situation in the 15th century[45] – this which supposedly demonstrates the condition earlier in the 11th and 12th centuries is rather doubtful. Looking at the situation in the 15th century clearly shows that the main way inside the stronghold repeated the old Roman system with two axes: north-south: the so-called *cardo*, and west-east – *decumanus*[46]. It is of no consequence at the moment if this system referred to the ancient Roman urban architecture or not but we should remember that where the system of *cardo* and *decumanus* was employed in the place of a crossroads a large square appeared

[42] A. Merhautová, *Raně středověká architektura v Čechách*, Praha 1971, p. 236.

[43] F. Kreusch, *op. cit.*, p. 21 ff.; H. Wimmer, *The Iconographic Programme of the Barbarossa Candelabrum in the Palatine Chapel at Aachen. A Re-interpretation*, "Immediations. The Research Journal of the Courtauld Institute of Art" 2005, Vol. 1 (2), pp. 24–39; R.A. Johnston, *All Things Medieval: An Encyclopedia of the Medieval World*, Santa Barbara 2011, p. 448 ff.

[44] F. Kreusch, *op. cit.*, p. 22 f.; S. Kobielus, *Niebiańska Jerozolima. Od sacrum miejsca do sacrum modelu*, Warszawa 1989, p. 140 ff.

[45] *Old Prague on old postcards*, www.old-prague.com/history-prague-vysehrad.php [access: 14.04.2017] – the view on Vyšehrad (c. 1429), and the reconstruction of late medieval – modern routs in the castle: *7 Places Worth Seeing While Taking a Stroll Around Vyšehrad*, www.youth-time.eu/articles/7-places-worth-seeing-while-taking-a-stroll-around-vysehrad [access: 14.04.2017]. See also: F. Kašička, B. Nechvátal, *K problematice…*, p. 96; F. Kašička, B. Nechvátal, *Vyšehrad a Karel IV*, „Staletá Praha" 1979, Vol. 9, pp. 103–125.

[46] More on the subject: W. Müller, *Die heilige Stadt. Roma quadrata, himmlisches Jerusalem und die Mythe vom Weltnabel*, Stuttgart 1961.

often with an obelisk or a column in the middle. Until today a lower part of such a column from Vysehrad has been preserved[47].

Such a square was an important part of a residential space, of such great ideological value as a ruler's palace or a capital church, as, according to old tradition widespread across Europe, the crossroads had a special sacral meaning. In short, it was believed that it helped the community gathered there to make contact with supernatural power[48]. Therefore, public meetings which were organised there, were often combined with law courts and executions. All these events were conducted at Vyšehrad as sources confirm[49]. We do not know where for sure, but the fact of such crossroads existing near the church and palace suggests that there was a place for these occasions in the past.

Generally in the earlier Middle Ages, there was a serious reason behind the prevalence of such a square inside the ruler's residence because at that time, the authority was not firmly and institutionally established in society, and the ruler needed direct personal contact with as great a number of his subjects as possible[50]. The Vyšehrad seat of the Czech rulers must also have been formed in order to fulfil these necessities.

There, besides the square – that originally must had been wider than in the 15th century – we have information about two other objects that served to glorify the ruler's authority. Three decades ago, archaeologists discovered a specific construction directly in front of the main door to the church of St. Peter's. It looks like a bridge[51], but there had never flowed any river or creek underneath and this construction covered only the route, one of the aforementioned axes, the western part of the *decumanus*. If we consider the reasons for building such a bridge, there can only be one answer: it must have been constructed as a part of the ceremonial way from the duke's palace to the main church in the residence – the *porticus* mentioned in the above cited source. And this arch was specially erected high in order that the ruler entering the church could be seen by the audience standing below on the square.

We ought to finally mention one more object that served the ceremonial purposes of the Czech rulers. There in the north side of the walls surrounding the

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[47] http://eldar.cz/archeoas/lokality/vysehrad_en.html [access: 14.04.2017].

[48] W. Müller, *op. cit.*; D. Forstner, *Die Welt der christlichen Symbole*, Innsbruck 1986.

[49] *Canonici Wissegradensis continuatio…*, p. 134; *Monachi Sazaviensis continuatio…*, p. 157.

[50] C. Brühl, *Remarques sur les notions de 'capitale' et de 'résidence' pendant le haut moyen âge*, « Journal des Savants » 1967, pp. 193–215; T. Zotz, *Königspfalz und Herrschaftspraxis im 10. und frühen 11 Jahrhunderrt*, „Blätter für die deutsche Landesgeschichte" 1984, Bd. 120, pp. 19–46. See also: K. Neitmann, *Was ist eine Residenz? Methodische Überlegung zur Erforschung der spätmittelalterlichen Residenzbildung*, [in:] *Vorträge und Forschungen zur Residenzenfrage*, Hrsg. P. Johanek, Sigmaringen 1990, pp. 11–43.

[51] F. Kašička, B. Nechvátal, *Románský most na Vyšehradě*, „Uměni" 1991, Vol. 39 (4), pp. 281–285.

stronghold at the mouth of Vyšehrad *cardo* stood the Jerusalem Gate[52]. The name and, of course, the function of the doors represented the capital of biblical Israel and the Golden Gate through which Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem[53]. There is no time to enumerate the European capitals which had similar objects in their walls but it is necessary to know that always such gates were used by rulers to imitate the Heavenly King in whose name it was thought they reigned[54].

To briefly summarize this consideration I would notice that Vyšehrad during the 10th to the 12th centuries was a kind of private residence of the Czech rulers. But, at the same time, the monarchs wanted that the castle was able to meet the foreign standards of official seat of the sovereign ruler, the king. Prague Castle was the traditional capital of the country and in a way it belonged to the community not only to the ruler, but in Vyšehrad the dukes were "at home"; here their power was almost unlimited. Perhaps, therefore, some of them, who generally preferred this residence, treated the Vyšehrad church of St. Peter as their own familiar temple, organised a series of private prayers and, finally, ordered they be buried there, and had prayers of intention arranged to be said eternally.

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[52] F. Kašička, B. Nechvátal, *Vyšehradské brány*, „Staletá Praha" 1977, Vol. 8, pp. 233–253.

[53] J. Morgenstern, *The Gates of Righteousness*, "Hebrew Union College Annual" 1929, Vol. 6, pp. 1–37; P.-L. Muray, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Art and Architecture*, Oxford 1996, p. 202.

[54] M. Dygo, *Złota Brama kaplicy zamkowej w Malborku a ideologia władzy zakonu niemieckiego w Prusach*, [in:] *Zakon Krzyżacki a społeczeństwo państwa w Prusach*, red. Z.H. Nowak, Toruń 1995, pp. 149–163; T. Mroczko, *„Stań w bramie świątyni…" (Jer. 7, 2). Pewien układ architektoniczny, jego źródła i literacka legenda*, [in:] *Pogranicza i konteksty literatury polskiego średniowiecza*, red. T. Michałowska, Wrocław 1989, pp. 261–281.

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STRESZCZENIE

Autor artykułu opisuje zasady, jakie decydowały o podziale ceremonii i rytuałów ostentacji władzy w przestrzeni centralnej Czech X–XII w. Zajmuje go zarówno kwestia ideowego wartościowania dwóch miejsc centralnych ówczesnych Czech (Pragi i Wyszehradu), jak i przesłanki stojące za wyborem na stolicę wczesnego państwa i rezydencję władcy. Konkluzją rozważań – upraszczającą rozległy problem – jest stwierdzenie, że władza dla swoich ceremoniałów potrzebowała miejsca wolnego od obcej ingerencji. W Pradze rezydował biskup tylko częściowo zależny od monarchy, dlatego czeski władca często wolał rezydować na Wyszehradzie.

Słowa kluczowe: władza; przestrzeń; ostentacja władzy; Przemyślidzi; Praga; Wyszehrad