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A Hypothesis about the Origin of Závaš's Cross (or about a Lost Serbian Reliquary)

Abstract: The documents testifying to the conflict between Serbian king Stefan Uroš I (1242/1243–1276) and Hungarian king Béla IV (1235–1270) from the 1260s also bring news about the Serbian king's reliquary that was seized at the time. Following the destiny and specificities of Závaš's cross, we indicate the possibility of this being the same precious item.

Keywords: Stefan Uroš I, Závaš of Falkenštejn, Béla IV, reliquary, True Cross, treasury

A part from obvious and indisputable transfers of literary concepts from the Serbian to the Hungarian milieu and vice versa, material heritage in the form of items of religious or other content was doubtless transmitted within cultural patterns as a consequence of mutual contacts.¹ One precious reliquary – the staurotheke which we assume to have originated from the Serbian milieu may be classified into such category.² Namely, it is known that the True Cross relic (*Lignum Crucis*) is highly venerated in the entire Christian world, both Orthodox and Roman Catholic. The main centres of its cult and places wherefrom the relics were disseminated were Jerusalem and Constantinople.³

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¹ About the examples of transmission of literary cultural patterns, I. Komatina, "Cultural translation and transmission in the Serbian-Hungarian relations during the mid XIIIth century" (in preparation).

² D. Popović, "On Two Lost Medieval Serbian Reliquaries. The Staurothekai of King Stefan Uroš I and Queen", *Balcanica* 50 (2019), 39–40. Dr Danica Popović gave important suggestions for this paper, and I sincerely thank her on this occasion as well. Also, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Cistercian Abbey of Vyšší Brod, which kindly provided me the photos of the Závaš's cross.

³ The cult of the True Cross relic sprang up owing to the pilgrimage of empress Helen, the mother of emperor Constantine I, who found the place and the cross on which Christ was crucified. Emperor Constantine deeply respected the True Cross relics. As of the time of emperor Heraclius (610–641), Constantinople became the seedbed of the True Cross cult after Heraclius transferred its major part from Jerusalem to that city, W. S. Wood, *True cross in tradition, history and art* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's and son, 1898), 114–126; W. C.

In time, the right to distribution of the relics became an exclusive prerogative of the Byzantine emperor.⁴ In Serbia, its cult was particularly fostered owing to Stefan Nemanja and St Sava, as well as subsequent members of the Nemanjić house.⁵ Just like his predecessors, king Stefan Uroš I (1242/1243–1276) possessed the staurotheke with a True Cross relic. We learned of this staurotheke and its intangible and tangible value in a quite unusual way. Namely, of five preserved documents that testify to the king Uroš's attack on Mačva, which, in all probability, took place in late 1265 or early 1266, two of them mention that when clashing with the Serbian king, the Hungarians seized, among other things, a precious cross.⁶ This document, dated in the publication 9 April 1269 and incorporated in the charter of 13 July 1275 (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár, HU-MNL-OL-DL 671),⁷ reads that king Béla IV issued it in order to award with

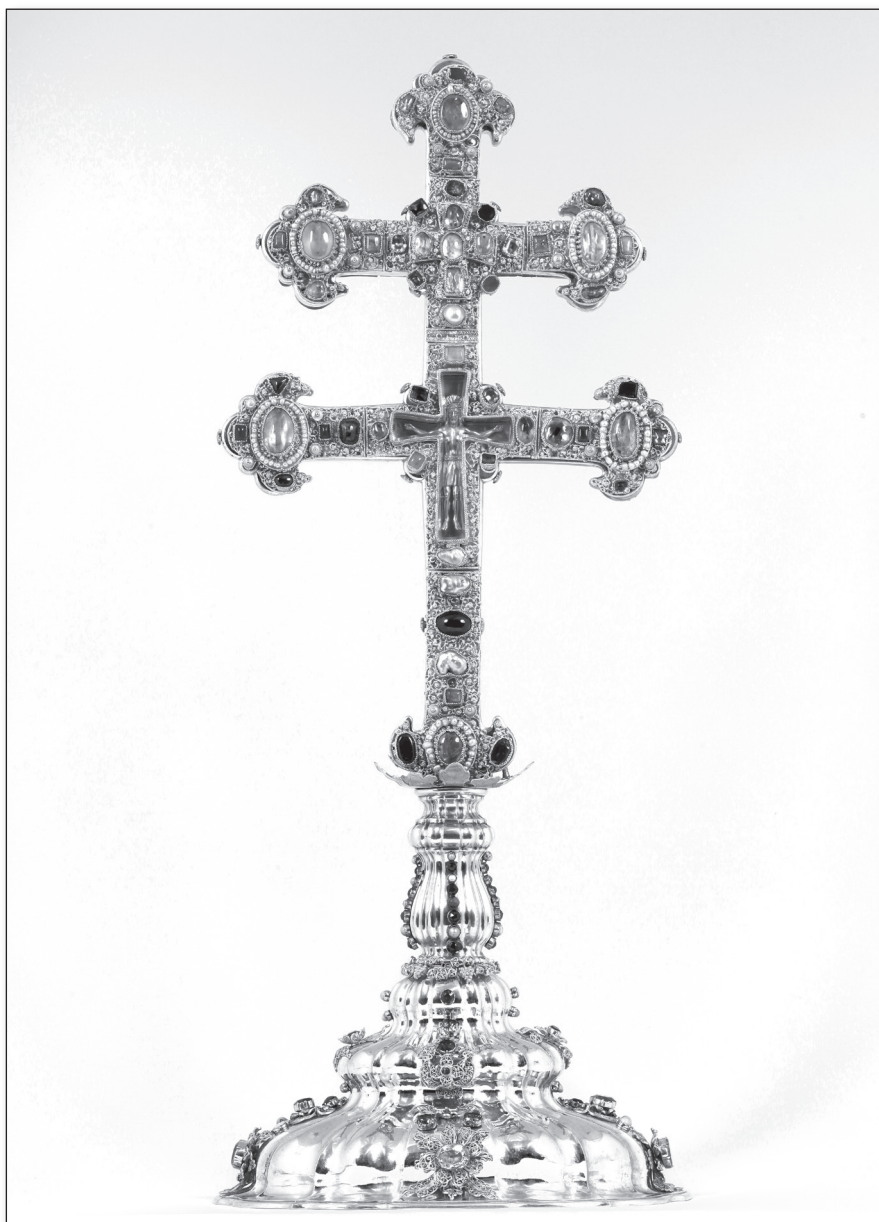
Prime, *Holy Cross. A history of the invention, preservation and disappearance of the wood known as the True Cross* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & company, 1877), 23–30; A. Frolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix* (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines 1961), 55–74; D. Popović, "Relikvije Časnog krsta u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji". In *Konstantin Veliki u vizantijskoj i srpskoj tradiciji*, ur. Lj. Maksimović, (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2014), 99–121, with a detailed overview of literature dedicated to the True Cross relic.

⁴ Frolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, 55–152. The True Cross relics came to the West most often as gifts of Byzantine emperors until the time of the Fourth Crusade, while as of 1204 their appearance in the West became widespread, Frolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, 88–89, 144–147; H. A. Klein, "Eastern Objects and Western Desires: Relics and Reliquaries between Byzantium and the West", *DOP* 58 (2004), 300–306.

⁵ About the possession and importance of the True Cross relic from the time of Stefan Nemanja until the disappearance of the Serbian medieval state with extensive quotation of medieval sources testifying to it, Popović, "Relikvije Časnog krsta u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji", 99–121 (with annexes). See S. Marjanović Dušanić, *Vladarske insignije i državna simbolika u Srbiji od XIII do XV veka* (Beograd: SKZ & Clío, 1994), 32–33, 123–124; B. Miljković, "Hilandarski Časni krst i stara manastirska stavroteka", *ZRVI XXXVIII* (1999/2000), 287–297.

⁶ *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*, IV/3, ed. G. Fejér (Budae: Typis typogr. Regiae Universitatis Ungaricae, 1829), 490–493; Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 24–25.

⁷ It is worth noting that the transcript clearly shows that Béla's original charter was lost, but that in 1275 nobleman Michael Csák arrived before king Ladislaus IV asking him to confirm the privileges granted to him by king Béla IV because the charter was lost, Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/2, 248–249. Since the lost charter was compiled by notary Demetrius, king Ladislaus IV invited him to confirm, as a scribe, that he compiled it, which was done. Michael then "clearly presented" to king Ladislaus "the confirmation letters" of king Stephen V, "the content and outline of the lost charter under the main seal of king Béla, of blessed memory... compiled, of the following content..." and stated the privilege of king Béla IV, whose contents we described and which is dated 9th April 1269. After the contents are retold, it is specified that king Ladislaus IV wishes to confirm the privileges granted by his grandfather and father, Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 249–250; I. Komatina, "O vremenu napada kralja Uroša I na Mačvu i njegovom zarobljavanju", *ZRVI LVIII* (2021), 83–84.



Závíš's cross (front side), Cistercian Abbey Vyšší Brod, photo archive



Záviš's cross (back side), Cistercian Abbey Vyšší Brod, photo archive

estates reputable nobleman Michael Csák for his merits in the clashes with the Serbian king.⁸ During these skirmishes, Michael Csák was even wounded and the Hungarian army managed to seize, as we explained, the precious cross, as well as weapons, and took captive the son-in-law of king Uroš and his treasurer's son.⁹ All this was confirmed, as stated in the charter, by king's daughter Anna and grandson Béla.¹⁰ King Béla IV then questioned the captives who said they would break free "once they collect 800 marks for (our faithful) Michael", while "the same Michael received from them the precious Lord's wooden cross before the eyes of duke Béla", which king Béla IV with his queen, "the dearest wife", wished to see.¹¹ King Béla IV and queen Maria saw that it contained the Lord's wood, was one and a half palms long, and one palm wide; was encrusted in gold (worth) ten marks, wondrously adorned with magnificent gemmae and precious stones, with the estimated value of five hundred marks of gold, precious stones and gemmae.¹² The fact that the king was to give to Michael Csák 500 Hungarian marks for the relic, while 800 Hungarian marks were to be paid out for the redemption of the noblemen, testify sufficiently to the kind of relic it was. Any suspicions about the statement concerning the manner in which the cross was obtained and its value contained in the charter dated 9th April 1269 but preserved in the transcript from 1275 completely disappear with the discovery

⁸ As stated in the document, king Béla IV sent military aid to Béla Rostislavich (nepotem nostrum Belam ducem de Macho), the son of king's daughter Anna and Rostislav Mikhailovich, the ruler of Mačva. About Béla Rostislavich, Đ. Hardi, "Gospodari i banovi onostranog Srema i Mačve u XIII veku", *Spomenica Istorijaskog arhiva Srem* 8 (2009), 73–74.

⁹ "...Michael, filius Petri de genere Chak, in conflictu ipsius regis contra oppositam aeiem fortiter dimicauit, letale vulnus excipiens, laudabiliter preliando, sicut etiam per karissimum ducem Belam nobis constitit, vt idem Michael in ipsa area certaminis, duos Barones, videlicet generum eiusdem Wros, et filium magistri tauarnicorum suorum, captiuasset, quos cum armis militaribus et dextrariis valentibus, nobis presentauit..."; Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491; S. Stanojević, "Da li je kralj Uroš 1268. god. bio zarobljen od Mačara?", *Glas SKA CLXIV* (1935), 202–203; Popović, "On Two Lost Medieval Serbian Reliquaries", 39–52.

¹⁰ "...nobis presentauit; quorum veritas et noticia per karissimam filiam nostram, Annam ducissam, et karissimum nepotem nostrum Belam, Ducem de Macho, nobis fuit reuelata..."; Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491.

¹¹ "...qui per nos cum fuissent inquisiti, retulerunt, vt cum Michaele fideli nostro in octingentis marcis conuenissent, se redempturos, de quibus etiam idem Michael crucem pretiosam de ligno Domini, ad visum Bele Ducis recepisset quam nos vna cum regina consorte nostra karissima inspicere requisuissemus..."; Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491.

¹² "...ipsam crucem vidimus continere de ligno domini longitudinem vnus palme, et dimidie, latitudinem valere palmam; formatam in auro decem marcarum, preciosis gemmis et lapidibus mirabiliter ordinatam, estimantes in valore quingentas marcas; auri, lapidum, et gemmarum..."; Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491; Popović, "On Two Lost Medieval Serbian Reliquaries", 41–43.

of almost the same testimony about king Uroš's attack on Mačva, the seizure of the precious cross and weapons, and the captivity of the son-in-law of king Uroš and the son of his treasurer in the original charter of 15th June 1270 (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár, HU-MNL-OL-DL 712). King Stephen V issued it to brothers Dominic and Michael Csák so as to confirm the privileges granted to them by his father, late king Béla IV for their merits in Mačva against Serbian king Uroš I.¹³ Also, the description of the cross in that charter is almost identical to its description in the charter dated 9th April 1269.¹⁴ It is worth noting that both charters mention that Michael Csák, i.e. brothers Michael and Dominic Csák, agreed to deliver to king Béla IV such a wonderful relic, but only in exchange for an estate, stated as "a land called Erdeuchucana... in the Simigiensi county".¹⁵

Namely, after 1265/1266 Hungarian king Béla IV possessed the important True Cross relic which had belonged to Serbian king Uroš and which, in all probability, was of high material value, in addition to spiritual. It should be emphasised that this reliquary ranks among proven symbols of the royal treasury, i.e. is of confirmed authenticity and antiquity. In the Serbian scientific milieu, and it seems beyond, the king Uroš's staurotheke is considered today lost given the sparse and almost no data about its further destiny both in domestic sources and those of western provenance.¹⁶

Dealing with the biography of Serbian king Uroš and collecting material about this distinguished Serbian king, I came across an important note by editor János Bak in his *Online Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae. The Laws of the*

¹³ It also notes that the king's son-in-law and the son of his treasurer were taken captive, that 800 Hungarian marks were to be paid for the redemption of noblemen, and that king Béla IV and the queen personally assessed the value of the relic, "...et filium magistri Tawarnicorum eiusdem captiuassent, quos cum armis militaribus et dextrariis valentibus eidem Domino Bele Regi presentassent; qui quum per eundem fuissent requisiti, sibi taliter retulissent: vt cum praedictis Dominico et Mycliale in octingentis marcis conuenissent, se redempturos, de quibus eciam antedicti Dominicus, et Mychael crucem pretiosam de ligno Domini recepissent, quam idem Dominus Bela, vna cum matre nostra karissima consorte eiusdem, inspicere requisissent, ipsam crucem vidissent contineri de ligno Domini..."; Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 25.

¹⁴ "...ipsam crucem vidissent contineri de ligno Domini, longitudine vnus palmae et dimidia, latitudinem valere palmam, formatam in auro decem marcarum, preciosis gemmis et lapidibus mirabilibus ordinatam, estimantes in valore quingentas marcas quam sibi pro pecunia dare recusassent..."; Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 25.

¹⁵ "...pro concambio dominicae crucis, mirabiliter ordinate, quamdam terram conditionalium nostrorum, Erdeuchucana vocatam, prope villam Vyssunta, in Comitatu Simigiensi..."; Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491; "...pro tali igitur preciosa re quamdam terram conditionalium suorum Erdewchukuna vocatam, in comitatu Symigiensi constitutam..."; Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 25.

¹⁶ Popović, "On Two Lost Medieval Serbian Reliquaries", 39–43, 49–52.

Medieval Kingdom of Hungary. In the confirmation privilege for the petty nobility of king Béla IV and his sons Stephen and Béla the Younger of September 1267, they at the end take an oath to keep their promise, invoking the name of the Lord, the Holy Gospels and the Life-Giving wood of the Lord's cross: "...Sic nos Deus adiuvet et sancta Dei evangelia et vivificum dominice crucis lignum...". The editor then adds that "vivificum dominice crucis lignum" probably refers to the Holy Cross relic (staurotheke) and assumes it is a part of treasure of the Árpád dynasty. It is known, as underscored by editors, that the Esztergom staurotheke was never owned by the royal family,¹⁷ but that Závaš's cross was in possession of the royal family "around 1267 until it came to Bohemia with the treasures of King Béla's daughter, Anna."¹⁸ Anna, the duchess of Mačva and daughter of king Béla IV came to Bohemia after her father's death in 1270, fleeing from Hungary before her brother, king Stephen V.¹⁹ Based on the document from 1271, we find out that new Hungarian king Stephen V renounced the right to the above mentioned treasury.²⁰ A few years later, the treasury was subject to a dispute between Bohemian king Přemysl Ottokar II (1253–1278) and new Hungarian king Ladislaus IV the Cuman, but the cross, despite the wish of

¹⁷ J. Bak, *Online Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae. The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary* (Logan: Utah State University, 2019), 189, nap. 19; A. Somogyi, "La staurotheque byzantine d'Esztergom", *Balkan Studies* 9 (1968), 139–154.

¹⁸ Bak, *Online Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae*, 185, 189, n. 19 (the privilege in entirety 183–189). We believe it is worth noting that the oath may have been given even without the presence of the relic, i.e. importance was imparted to the oath by the very invocation of those names and the name of the Lord, but this does not exclude the possibility that the legal act could often be carried out before the very sacred objects, S. Stanojević, *Studije o srpskoj diplomatiji*, I (Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1928), 299–300; G. Laing, *Bound by Words: Oath-taking and Oath-breaking in Medieval Iceland and Anglo-Saxon England* (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University 2014, doctoral dissertation), 27–35.

¹⁹ J. Deér, *Die heilige Krone Ungarns* (Wien: Denkschriften der Öster. Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse 91. Bd, 1966), 251–261; É. Kovács, "Signum crucis–lignum crucis: A régi magyar címer kettős keresztfének ábrázolásairól". In *Eszmetörténeti tanulmányok a magyar középkorról*, ed. S. György (Budapest: Akadémiai Budapest 1984), 407–423.

²⁰ Hungarian king Stephen V and Bohemian king Přemysl Ottokar II signed a peace agreement in July 1271, which interestingly notes that the Hungarian king renounces the royal insignia, i.e. the crown, sword, necklace, star, shields and other precious items and valuables that his sister duchess Anna brought to Bohemia: "...Renunciamus insuper iuri et actioni, nobis et nostris heredibus competentibus, de insigniis regalibus, corona videlicet, gladio, monili, stella, scutellis et aliis clenodiis ac thesauro, delatis per Dominam Annam in regnum Bohemorum..."; Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 126; I. Komatina, *Kralj Stefan Uroš I Veliki i njegov vek* (Beograd: Istorijski institut, 2021), 228–230.

It is in the charter of 1271 that we find the first certain testimony to the conclusion of marriage between the son of Serbian king Uroš, Dragutin and the daughter of Stephen V, Katalina, Komatina, *Kralj Stefan Uroš I*, 226.

Hungarian kings to return the alienated treasure, remained in Bohemia.²¹ In regard to our topic, it is important to state the hitherto knowledge about Závíš's cross and indicate why duchess Anna transferred it to Bohemia.

Závíš of Falkenštejn (c. 1250–1290) was a Bohemian nobleman who played an important role in the struggle against Rudolf of Habsburg after the death of Bohemian king Přemysl Ottokar II in the battle on the Marchfeld in 1278.²² Závíš married queen Kunigunda, the daughter of duchess Anna and the granddaughter of king Béla IV, i.e. the widow of the above mentioned Bohemian king, and assumed power in Bohemia in the name of their underage son Wenceslaus II (1278–1305).²³ Several years after Kunigunda's death in 1285, in 1288 he married Hungarian princess Elisabeth, the sister of the then Hungarian king Ladislaus IV. In the context of conclusion of the new marriage, we find out that Závíš earlier appropriated "not only the wife, but also the treasury and the entire glory of late king Ottokar", i.e. certainly the treasury that used to be in possession of late queen Kunigunda, i.e. her mother duchess Anna, with the aim of leaving an impression on new bride Elisabeth and the Hungarian court.²⁴ Ac-

²¹ Based on the agreement between Roman-German king Rudolf of Habsburg and Hungarian king Ladislaus IV from 1277, *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum* (Const.) 3, ed. J. Schwalm, MGH Leges (Hannoverae – Lipsiae: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1904–1906), 140, 144; Bohemian king Přemysl Ottokar II committed to return to the Hungarian king the treasury brought to Bohemia by his aunt Anna, the duchess of Mačva, "...tamen promittens rex Boemie memorato regi Ungarie omnes thesauros reddere..., videlicet duas coronas aureas et scepra regalia, ac preciosissimam amphoram auream nobilissimis gemmis undique adornatam mire pulcritudinis, et alia quam plura clenodia aurea..."; *Continuationes Claustroneburgenses, Scotorum, Sanctucensium Zwetlenses, Novimotenses, Vindobonenses*, ed. W. Wattenbach, MGH SS, IX (Hannoverae: Impensis Bibliopolii Aulici Hahniani), 708, and it is then noted that his wife queen Kunigunda, Anna's daughter encouraged him to fulfil what was promised: "promissiones factas, sicut anno priori per arbitros diffinitum extiterat, resignare recusavit"; *Ibidem*, 709, while in 1278 there is also a note of the interesting explanation of Přemysl Ottokar II as to why, despite this, he did not want to return the royal insignia that were also a part of the treasury that duchess Anna took to Bohemia: "dyademata vero regis Ungarie reddere noluit, asserens quod hec et alia iuveni regi Ungarie adhuc puerulo usque dum perveniret ad annos discretionis, dignis quam alius et fidelius teneretur propter lineam, consanguinitatis conservare"; *Ibidem*, 709.

²² J. Žemlička, "The Realm of Přemysl Ottokar II and Wenceslas II". In *A History of the Bohemian Lands*, eds. J. Pánek et al., (Prague: Charles University, 2018), 117.

²³ *Petra Žitavského kronika zbraslavská*, ed. J. Emler, *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, IV (Praha: nákladem nadání Františka Palackého 1884), 22; Žemlička, "The Realm of Přemysl Ottokar II and Wenceslas II", 117–118.

²⁴ "...Sed quoniam non solum uxorem, verum etiam thesaurum universumque apparatus regis Ottakari olim defuncti sibi vendicaverat, regalibus sibi assumptis insigniis in Ungariam proficisci disposuit, quatenus regis sororem sibi nuper desponsatam duceret et forsitan cultu decoratus regio gloriosus in aliene gentis presencia compareret..."; *Petra Žitavského kronika*

According to the *Zbraslav Chronicle*, he was plundered on his way to Hungary, but doubtless preserved a lot of treasure. In 1289, Bohemian nobleman Závíš was taken captive by his stepson king Wenceslaus II, who accused him of treason because he refused to hand over the property of his late mother queen Kunigunda, and then sentenced him to death. In August 1290, he was beheaded in front of the Hluboká castle in the presence of his brothers.²⁵

The first written mention of the cross appears in a document dated 1st August 1464, which is kept in the archive of the Vyšší Brod monastery. Abbot Thomas and the monastery confirmed thereby that John of Rosenberg returned to them the monastery seized from them by his father Oldřich, and there is also the first note about the cross, i.e. it was returned on that occasion: "...item magnam crucem auream, quam legavit dominus Zawissius..."²⁶ In the somewhat younger Rosenberg'sche Chronik by Jacob of Novohrad, there is a note from 1479 in the monastic necrology: "Anno domini M^oCCLXXX, IX Kalendas Septembris obiit dominus Zawissius de Falkenstain, qui donavit huic monasterio lignum sacrosancte crucis domini preciose ornatum et sepultus est hic in capitulo nostro", confirming the donation of the cross to the above monastery by Závíš of Falkenštejn.²⁷ According to the even later Rosenberg'sche Chronik by Norbert Heermann from the 17th century, he donated the "precious item, i.e. the golden cross with precious stones with a True Cross relic" to the Vyšší Brod monastery in the southeast of present-day Czechia shortly before he passed away.²⁸ It is based on this statement that it is presumed that Závíš gifted the

zbraslavská, 31; P. Komatina, "Kralj, kraljice i srodnici. Bračne strategije i pravci politike". In *Sveti kralj Milutin. Vladar naraskršću svetova*, ur. S. Pirivatrić, S. Marjanović Dušanić, D. Popović, (Beograd: Zadužbina Svetog manastira Hilandara, 2022), 97.

²⁵ "...Post hec rex municiones regni, quas Zewischius in sua potestate habuerat, recuperare satagens, fratrem suum, duces Nicolaum, exercitus sui ductorem constituit, qui circa castrum, quod Vroburg vulgo dicitur, figens tentoria, presertim cum amici Zewischii desuper habitantes ipsum castrum resignare renuerent, Zewischius in eiusdem castris suburbio fratribus suis aspicientibus, decollari mandavit, quatenus ceteris ex hoc metu incuteret et eos ab insidiis insultibus timore supplicii refrenaret...", *Petra Žitavského kronika zbraslavská*, 32–33; K. Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závíšův* (Praha: Archeologická komise, 1930), 14; Žemlička, "The Realm of Přemysl Ottokar II and Wenceslas II", 118.

²⁶ *Urkundenbuch des Cisterzienser Stiftes B. Mariae zu Hohenfurth in Böhmen*, ed. M. Pangerl, *Fontes rerum Austriacarum. Dîpölmata et acta XXIII* (Wien: Aus der kaiserlich-königlichen Hof- und Staatsdruckerei), 1865, 303; Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závíšův*, 15.

²⁷ Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závíšův*, 15.

²⁸ "...Herr Zawiss hat ain khostliches Clainot, das ist ain guldens Craicz mit Edlstain, mit ainer Partikl Holz von dem h. Craicz, daran unser Haill gestorben wardt, diesem Closser khurcz vor seinem Ende verehret...", *N. Heermann's, Rosenberg'sche Chronik*, ed. M. Klimesch (Prag: Königl. Böhmische gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, 1897), 36.

precious cross to the Vyšší Brod monastery somewhat before his death, and certainly after Kunigunda's death, i.e. between 1285 and 1290.²⁹

Záviš's cross is still kept in the Vyšší Brod monastery as one of the most revered relics in Czechia, while in 2010 it was declared a national cultural monument.³⁰ In scientific works it is noted that the original cross is 44.5 cm high and 28 cm wide, while the upper horizontal beam is 23.5 cm wide. The base and statue of Christ were added later.³¹ According to Karel Chytil, the cross contains 51 precious stones of blue, red, violet and green colours and four large pearls, including 22 medium-size pearls.³² It is made of silver with little leaves of Arabian gold. On the front, at the section of the vertical and lower horizontal beam, there is a cross-shape opening, containing a silver-gilt presentation of the Crucifixion. Below it there is the most valuable relic – the True Cross wood. The back is adorned with Byzantine medallions which, covered in enamel, show eight saints with their images and names written in Greek: Georgius, Paul, Thomas, Georgius, Peter, John the Theologian, Luke, Demetrius and Athanasios. It is stated with high certainty that they are of Byzantine origin – one from the 10th century, five from the 12th century, three from the 12th, i.e. 13th century.³³

There are today in science several hypotheses about the origin of Záviš's cross. The nature and origin of individual parts of the cross and the manner of their creation doubtless influenced such differing views. Emanuel Poche believes it belonged to Bohemian kings, while Karel Chytil states it was produced in art workshops in the Meuse valley in the first half of the 13th century (c. 1230–1250), but that Záviš came into its possession through his wife Kunigunda, the daughter of Hungarian princess Anna and prince Rostislav Mikhailovich, or through his second wife Elisabeth.³⁴ However, Chytil concludes: "We feel the historical and artistic value of the work, but when and where, on whose order and who

²⁹ N. Heermann's, *Rosenberg'sche Chronik*, 36; Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závišův*, 14–15.

³⁰ [https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/N%C3%A1rodn%C3%AD_kulturn%C3%AD_pam%C3%A1tka_\(%C4%8Cesko\)](https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/N%C3%A1rodn%C3%AD_kulturn%C3%AD_pam%C3%A1tka_(%C4%8Cesko)) (last accessed on 3rd August 2022).

³¹ J. Franc, J. J. Berka, *Zawisch-Kreuz: eines der wertvollsten Reliquiare der Welt Libice nad Cidlinou Verlag Gloriet s.r.o.* 2013 (brochure); Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závišův*, 18.

³² Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závišův*, 25. The cross was initially adorned with 44 gemmae and 166 pearls, while A. Cechner states it had 174 pearls https://encyklopedie.ckrumlov.cz/cz/region_histor_zavikr/ (last accessed on 3rd August 2022).

³³ The preserved engraving of Gerhard Gross from the late 17th century reveals later changes, Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závišův*, 17–22; K. Chytil, *Byzantské emaily Závišova kříže ve Vyšším Brodě* (Praha: Seminarium Kondakovianum, 1930), 17–22, 31–57.

³⁴ Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závišův*, 16–17, 62–63. Chytil also allows the possibility that the cross belonged to the family of Anna's husband Rostislav Mikhailovich, the Chernigov princes in Russia, Chytil, *Byzantské emaily*, 25–26.

created it, remains a mystery for us.³⁵ Herman Fillitz believes that, judging by the manner of its production, it must have been created in the Kingdom of Sicily, but emphasises that it is a double cross of Byzantine type, adorned with Byzantine enamel.³⁶ Hungarian art historians such as T. Gerevich, J. Deér, Eva Kovács and I. Takács believe that the cross originates from the Hungarian royal treasure of the Árpád dynasty and that it came to Bohemia in the 13th century.³⁷ In recent times, the opinion of Hungarian art historians has also been shared by Jiří Franc, who holds it belonged to king Béla IV and that Anna de Macsó brought it to Bohemia together with the royal treasury while fleeing from her brother Stephen V.³⁸ Petr Balcárek also assumes that the cross originates from the estate of Kunigunda Rostislavna or perhaps from the property of Béla IV.³⁹ Also, art historians noticed an important detail – Závíš of Falkenštejn could not have bought the cross, as it was doubtless a precious item, a reliquary that could be owned only by a king or a close member of the royal family.⁴⁰ For the sake of reminder, as testified by the *Zbraslav* chronicler, Závíš appropriated not only the wife, but also the treasure and the entire glory of king Ottokar. It should also be noted that Bohemian king Ottokar II had a different, but certainly an equally precious reliquary, just as Hungarian king Béla IV.⁴¹

Art historians unanimously believe that the double cross type such as Závíš's was taken from Byzantium. Namely, the double cross (*crux gemina*) first "became popular" in Byzantium, particularly after the iconoclastic controversy during the 9th century with the acceptance of tradition about the discovery of the True Cross, while its creation was most probably spurred by the testimony in the Gospel of John (John 19:19), according to which the upper shorter hori-

³⁵ Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závíšův*, 27.

³⁶ H. Fillitz, "Das Kunstgewerbe der romanischen Zeit in Böhmen". In *Romanik in Böhmen. Geschichte Architektur, Malerei, Plastik und Kunstgewerbe*, eds. E. Bachmann, J. Mašín and H. Fillitz (München: Prestel-Verlag, 1977), 237, 252–253.

³⁷ Deér, *Die heilige Krone Ungarns*, 251–261; E. Kovács, "Béla és Antiochiai Anna halotti jelvényei", *Művészettörténeti Értesítő* XXI (1972), 1–14; T. Gerevich, "Magyarországi művészet Szent István korában". In *Szt. István emlékkönyv*, III, ed. S. Juszinián (Budapest: A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia kiadása), 81–110; I. Takács, "Corona et Crux. Heraldry and Crusader Symbolism on 13th century Hungarian Royal Seals", *Hortus Artium Medievalium* 21 (2015), 58.

³⁸ J. Franc, J. J. Berka, *Zawisch-Kreuz* (brochure).

³⁹ P. Balcárek, *Byzantium in the Czech Lands (4th–16th centuries): Historical and Art Historical Perspectives*, (Leiden: Brill 2022), 318–319. He also leaves the possibility that it could have been brought to Bohemia by Elisabeth, Závíš's second wife, who once was the Queen of Serbia.

⁴⁰ Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závíšův*, 61–62; E. Poche, *Svatovitský poklad*, Praha 1971.

⁴¹ Fillitz, "Das Kunstgewerbe der romanischen Zeit in Böhmen", 252–253.

zontal beam contained the inscription INRI (Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum), while Jesus' arms were nailed on the longer beam.⁴² In Byzantium, the double cross was an important part of the royal insignia – the sceptre, and this type of the cross first spread across the countries under direct Byzantine rule.⁴³ Already at the time of king Géza I (1074–1077), the Hungarians accepted the royal insignia – the crown sent by Byzantine emperor Michael VII Doukas (1071–1077), which was certainly based on insigniological and hierarchical understandings of Byzantium.⁴⁴ At the time of king Béla III (1172–1196), the double cross also appeared on coins that he issued during the last years of his rule, and the same symbol later appeared on the large seal of king Emeric (1196–1204) and his and his successors' orbs from the 13th century, while there is no evidence that it was used as an element of the royal coat-of-arms before the rule of Béla IV.⁴⁵ D. Popović put forward important assertions that the double cross became “not only a customary form of Byzantine staurotheke, but also the metaphor of the relic itself, gaining in such way a recognisable identity”, and added that “particularly in the western world, such cross indicated the Byzantine origin of the sacred item and was therefore the guarantee of its authenticity”.⁴⁶ In Serbia, on the other hand, given that it belonged to the Byzantine spiritual and cultural circle,

⁴² Frolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, 120–131; Wood, *True cross in tradition, history and art*, 134–139, 356–357.

⁴³ Frolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, 95–97, states that rulers in the area of Bulgaria and Serbia, often aiming to emulate Byzantine emperors, gifted reliquaries with True Cross relics.

⁴⁴ Although it was later changed, Deér, *Die heilige Krone Ungarns*, 251–261; D. Vojvodić, “Ka carskom dostojanstvu kraljevske vlasti. Vladarske insignije i ideologija u doba prvih Nemanjića”. In *Kraljevstvo i arhiepiskopija u srpskim i pomorskim zemljama Nemanjića*, ur. Lj. Maksimović, S. Pirivatrić (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti i Srpski komitet za vizantologiju, 2019), 315–326.

⁴⁵ Kovács, “Signum crucis – lignum crucis”, 407; P. Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary, 895–1526* (London – New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 86; Takács, “Corona et Crux”, 55–61. About the Byzantine origin of the Esztergom staurotheke, one of the most important examples of the reliquary with the presentation of the double cross in Hungary, Somogyi, “La staurotheque byzantine d’Esztergom”, 139–154; G. Prinzing, “Zur Datierung der Staurothek von Esztergom aus historischer Sicht”. In *Ars Graeca – Ars Latina. Studia dedykowane Profesor Annie Różyckiej*, ed. Wojciech Balus (Krakow: Wydawnictwo UJ, 2001), 87–91; G. Prinzing, “The Esztergom Reliquary Revisited. Wann, weshalb und wem hat Kaiser Isaak II. Angelos die Staurothek als Geschenk übersandt?”. In *ΦΙΛΟΠΛΑΤΩΝ. Spaziergang im kaiserlichen Garten. Schriften über Byzanz und seine Nachbarn. Festschrift für Arne Effenberger zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. N. Asutay-Effenberger and F. Daim (Mainz: Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2013), 247–256; Takács, “Corona et Crux”, 57. The suspicion that the staurotheke was part of the royal wealth of the Árpáds, cf. Bak, *Online Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae*, 189, n. 19.

⁴⁶ Popović, “Relikvije Časnog krsta u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji”, 103.

the double cross symbol was present already from the 9th century and is seen in various presentations of Uroš's predecessors and successors on the Serbian throne.⁴⁷ As Serbia also fostered strong insigniological Byzantine tradition, the question is posed as to whether there are grounds to recognise an important sacred item such as Závaš's cross as today's lost reliquary of king Uroš, about whose unusual, but partial destiny after the conflict with the army of king Béla IV we find out from the above documents kept in the National Archives of Hungary and the Slovak National Archives.⁴⁸

Namely, the said documents testify that a highly precious reliquary was seized during the struggles in Mačva between the Serbian and Hungarian army in late 1265 or early 1266. It is known that Hungarian heir to the throne Stephen feared for his position at the time, believing that king Béla IV was much more inclined to his sister Anna, the wife of the ban of Mačva Rostislav and to his younger brother Béla, the duke of Slavonia. After the death of Rostislav Mikhailovich in 1262/1263, the Duchy of Mačva was governed by his wife, duchess Anna with her sons Michael and Béla.⁴⁹ The tensions between cousins calmed down for a little while when king Béla IV ceded to Stephen all territories

⁴⁷ The well-known specimens with a clear representation of the double cross are the seal-die of Strojimir (9th century), T. Živković, "Golden Seal of Strojimir", *Istorijski časopis* 55 (2007), 23–29; the seal of John Psellos, the bishop of Polog, in the area of the Ohrid Archbishopric (11th century), *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art*, vol. 5, The East (continued), Constantinople and Environs, Unknown Locations, Addenda, Uncertain Readings, eds. E. McGeer, J. Nesbitt, N. Oikonomides (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, 2005), no. 127.1, 157–158, under whose jurisdiction Serbia was at the time; the fresco of Stefan the First-Crowned (13th century) with the double cross symbol preserved in the Mileševa monastery, Vojvodić, "Ka carskom dostojanstvu", 315–354; the coinage of king Radoslav that fully emulated Byzantine patterns, unlike the seals that also carry western influences, B. Hekić, *Pečati srpskih srednjovekovnih vladara između zapadnih i vizantijskih uzora* (Belgrade: Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2021, doctoral dissertation), 267–268; the coinage of kings Dragutin, Milutin, Stefan Dečanski and Stefan Dušan (13–14th centuries), V. Ivanišević, *Novčarstvo srednjovekovne Srbije* (Beograd: Stubovi kulture, 2001); V. Ivanišević, "Obim kovanja srpskog srednjovekovnog novca kraljevskog perioda". In *Kraljevstvo i arhiepiskopija u srpskim i pomorskim zemljama Nemanjića*, ur. Lj. Maksimović, S. Pirivatrić (Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti i Srpski komitet za vizantologiju, 2019), 503–520, and numerous representations of Serbian kings and saints in frescoes in medieval monasteries.

⁴⁸ Komatina, "O vremenu napada kralja Uroša I na Mačvu", 92–96.

⁴⁹ S. Stanojević, "Kralj Uroš", *Godišnjica Nikole Čupića* 44 (1935), 42–43; M. Dinić, "O ugarskom ropstvu kralja Uroša", *Istorijski časopis* 1 (1948), 30–36; S. Ćirković "Zemlja Mačva i grad Mačva", *Prilozi za KJIF* 74 (2008), sv. 1–4, 5–6. In the document of 13th April 1264, Rostislav is mentioned in the context of the Battle of Jaroslaw in 1245, Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 197, while in the papal charter of 15th July 1264 he is mentioned as deceased, A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia*, I (Romae: Typis vaticanae

east to the Danube including Erdély and Srem.⁵⁰ However, heir to the throne Stephen continued to attack the territories belonging to his mother and sister Anna, which is why she raised an army in 1264 and forced Stephen to withdraw.⁵¹ In autumn 1264, a ceremony was held in Vienna to mark the wedding of Béla the Younger and Kunigunda, the daughter of markgrave of Brandenburg, while Serbian king Stefan Uroš I was even among the wedding guests, which also indicated peaceful relations between Hungary and its southern neighbour, Serbia.⁵² However, already next year Stephen launched a counter-attack and forced his father to conclude peace and confirm the earlier distribution of territories. Serbian king Uroš most probably availed of these circumstances of mutual conflicts and “rose out of haughtiness”. As further stated by king Béla IV in the charter dated 8th April 1264 (1268 or 1269!), “he not only rejected our jurisdiction [Hungarian, note by I. K.], but he also daringly attacked the borders of our [Hungarian, note by I. K.] kingdom, wreaking havoc and destruction, and inflicting numerous losses...”⁵³ We find these lines in the first of five pre-

nis, 1859) 273, given that we hold that Rostislav died in 1262/1263. Komatina, *Kralj Stefan Uroš I*, 220, note 775.

⁵⁰ P. Rokai, et al. *Istorija Mađara* (Beograd: Clio, 2002), 87; Komatina, *Kralj Stefan Uroš I*, 218.

⁵¹ Zsoldos, *Családi ügy*, 11–143; Komatina, *Kralj Stefan Uroš I*, 218.

⁵² *Annales Otakariani a. 1254–1278*, ed. D. R. Köpke, MGH SS, IX (Hannoverae: Impensis Bibliopolii Aulici Hahniani, 1851), 186–187, reads that the ceremony was held on 28 September 1264, on St Wenceslaus Day near Pozsony (Bratislava) in the presence of leaders from different countries, but king Uroš is not mentioned. King Uroš's presence at the above ceremony is not mentioned in the Brandenburg Chronicle either, “Hic a. d. 1264 filiam suam Conegundim maritavit Bele, filio Bele regis Ungarie...”, *Chronica Marchionum brandenburgensium, Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preussischen Geschichte*, ed. R. Koser (Leipzig: Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, 1888), 126. The *Rhymed Chronicle* contains the following lines: “...siner süne wärn zvéne dâ / Stephan unde Wêlâ / die dâ gekrônet sâzen / und der kunic von Râzen / und der kunic von Matschouwe / des selben hûsfrouwe / was ân underwint / kunic Wêlâns kint – / und der kunic von Sirvie...”, *Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik*, ed. J. Seemüller, MGH Deutsche Chroniken, V/1 (Hannoverae: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani), 1890 106, i.e. it is explicitly stated that the Serbian king (kunic von Sirvie) was with king Béla. The news about the conclusion of the said marriage is also found in the work of somewhat later Austrian historian T. Ebendorfer, *Chronica Austriae*, ed. A. Lhotsky (Berlin: Weidmann 1967), 133–134; M. Gavrilović, “Srbi u delima austrijskog hroničara Tomasa Ebendorfera”, *ZMSI* 98/2 (2018), 11–12.

⁵³ *Codex diplomaticus patrius Hungaricus*, VIII, ed. I. Nagy (Budapest: Typis societatis Franklinianae, 1891), 96–97. Most researchers agree that the charter is doubtless original, but the dating is by all means wrong. In historiography, the charter is most often dated 1268 or 1269. Pauler, *A Magyar nemzet története az Árpádházi királyok alatt*, II, ed. Gy. Pauler (Budapest: Atheneum Irod. és Nyomdai R.T., 1899), 265–271, opts for 1268. I. Szentpétery brings regesta and dates it 8th April 1269, but adds a question mark along with the year, Az

served documents that testify to the conflict between the Serbian and Hungarian armies. We learn from it that king Uroš was not only defeated in the battle, though it is not stated where, but also that he was taken captive together with his magnates, while in the sign of triumph, the king's flag was taken to Buda.⁵⁴ This document does not mention the seizure of the precious cross, which, by all odds, was not with Serbian king Uroš at the time. Another charter, the second in terms of the time of creation, testifies to the struggles in Mačva. Namely, the above mentioned charter of king Béla IV, dated 9th April 1269 and incorporated in the charter of 13th July 1275, states that the mentioned Hungarian king sent an army to help Béla Rostislavich, the son of late duke of Mačva Rostislav, against Uroš, the king of Serbia, who "wreaked havoc in the land of Mačva". It also explicitly states, as we emphasised in the first part of the paper, that Hungarian magnate Michael Csák seized the cross that belonged to king Uroš I and that king Béla IV had to give the estate to Hungarian nobleman Michael Csák in order to redeem it. Furthermore, the charter dated 9th April 1269 reads that *duchess Anna and her son Béla* confirmed the news and the truth "that on that battlefield the same Michael took captive two magnates, i.e. the son-in-law of the same Uroš and the son of his treasurer". These very lines directly testify why the precious item was not with the king when he was captured, as attested by the first preserved document about the conflict, dated 8th April 1264 (1268 or 1269!), but that it doubtless belonged to him. Namely, as seen from the following document dated 9th April 1269, it was taken away from the king's treasurer, who certainly had the task to take care of it, but, by all odds, was in another part of the battlefield during the combat. As highlighted above, such reliquary could be in possession only of a king or a close member of the royal family. It also further states that "of them [Serbian captives, note by I. K.], Michael received the precious cross of the Lord's wood "before the eyes of duke Béla", which king Béla with queen Maria Laskarina then wanted to inspect.⁵⁵ In the charter that

Árpád-házi királyok okleveleinek kritikai jegyzéke. Regesta regum stirpis Arpadianae critico diplomatica, III, ed. I. Szentpétery (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1930) 488–489. T. Smičiklas states it was issued on 8 April 1268 or 1269, *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, V, ed. T. Smičiklas (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1907), 484–485. After a diplomatic analysis in the paper, Komatina, "O vremenu napada kralja Uroša I na Mačvu", 74–76, we opted for 1268 or 1269.

⁵⁴ "...et in signum triumphii vexillum eiusdem Vros regis ante aulam nostre maiestatis erectum exhibuit et ostendit...", Nagy, *Codex diplomaticus patrius*, VIII, 97. As the following four documents that mention the Serbian-Hungarian conflict state that he was attacking Mačva at the time, there is no reason why the place of the conflict, spoken about in the first document, although it is not explicitly stated, should not be Mačva, Komatina, *Kralj Stefan Uroš I*, 221.

⁵⁵ Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491.

Stephen V issued on 15th June 1270 to confirm the privileges for Michael Csák's war merits in Mačva, though they are in that charter also ascribed to Michael's brother Dominic Csák,⁵⁶ it is stated, similarly to the previously mentioned document, that Dominic and Michael received from the Serbian captives the precious cross of the Lord's wood, and that the king and queen asked to see it, but it is omitted that this took place "before the eyes of duke Béla."⁵⁷ As we have stated, what both charters (1269 (1275) and 1270) have in common is that they contain a valuable and relatively detailed description of the seized precious item to which we shall devote particular attention. Before that, it is worth noting that two more original charters from 1271 and 1272 testify to the conflict between the Serbian and Hungarian armies in Mačva. Namely, queen Elisabeth, the wife of new Hungarian king Stephen V, awarded a certain Emeric with estates in Teskánd and Dobronhegy since he, during the rule of king Béla IV and queen Maria, fought in the army sent by the said queen "against the king of Serbia", when "the same king was captured".⁵⁸ The last, fifth document that mentions Béla IV's warfare against the Serbian king in Mačva, was created in 1272 and was issued by king Stephen V in order to grant to Michael and Dominic Csák the land of Kőrös in recognition of their merits in the warfare. It also states that Uroš rose above his power, wreaked havoc in the land of Mačva and was taken captive in the conflict with the army of king Béla IV.⁵⁹ So, the charters of 1264 (1268 or 1269!), 1271 and 1272 testify to the capture of the king and his magnates, while the charters of 1269 and 1270 speak about the capture of the king's son-in-law and the son of the king's treasurer by Michael, i.e. the Csák brothers.

Hence, two documents directly testify that the cross came to the treasury of king Béla IV after the conflict between the Serbian and Hungarian armies in Mačva in 1265/1266. It is this treasury that duchess Anna, according to other sources, took away with her after her brother Stephen V seized power in Hungary in 1270 and then delivered it to her daughter Bohemian queen Kunigunda, who later married Závíš of Falkenštejn.⁶⁰ This clearly indicates that, in spatial and chronological terms, a valuable relic, such as the cross of king Uroš, could

⁵⁶ Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 24–25; Stanojević, "Da li je kralj Uroš 1268, god. bio zarobljen od Mađara?", 203. Stephen issued the document shortly after the death of his father king Béla IV (3rd May 1270), whose last wish was that Přemysl Ottokar II should take care of and protect duchess Anna and her successors from his son and heir Stephen V, Z. J. Kosztoľnyik, *Hungary in the Thirteenth Century* (New York: East European Monographs, 1996), 247, 258.

⁵⁷ Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 490–493.

⁵⁸ *Zala vármegye története*, Oklevéltár I. (1024–1363), eds. I. Nagy, D. Véghely et Gy. Nagy (Budapest Históriaantik Könyvesház Könyvker. és Kiadói Bt.), 1886, 57–60.

⁵⁹ Fejér, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 238.

⁶⁰ Chytil, *Byzantské emaily*, 25.

have arrived in the Bohemian milieu. Apart from historical circumstances and documents that indubitably testify that a Serbian precious item – a cross, was confiscated by the Hungarian king, and was then, in all probability, transferred to Bohemia, which allows for the possibility that the still mysterious origin of Závaš's cross can be recognised in it, the description of the precious item found in the two documents seems to further corroborate the presented hypothesis since they contain a relatively detailed description of Uroš's reliquary.

It is stated that "it contains the Lord's wood of the length of one and a half palms, and the width of one palm; that it is encrusted with gold of ten marks, wondrously adorned with magnificent gemmae and precious stones, estimated at five hundred marks of gold, precious stones and gemmae".⁶¹ So, the length of Uroš's lost reliquary was one and a half palms, i.e. spans, and its width was one palm. One palm could equal 22–28 cm, i.e. in terms of today's metric system, this suggests a relative measure indicating that the dimensions of Uroš's reliquary could be, in the broadest sense, from 22x33 cm to 28x42 cm in today's measurements, of course with smaller deviations.⁶² In this regard, it is perhaps the safest to describe the size of the reliquary in the 2:3 ratio. The same ratio can be ascribed to Závaš's cross, whose size, according to today's metric system, equals 28x44.5 cm. Also, Uroš's lost reliquary was encrusted in gold worth ten marks, while the decoration of precious stones and gemmae is estimated at 500 marks. It seems worthwhile to point out to the term *gemma*, *gemmae* (f.), which we kept in the original form in translation from Latin for several reasons. The term *gemma* can signify a bud, an object or decoration made of a precious stone – a ring, seal, die, seal or pearl. In our case, the precious decoration may be the wonderful Byzantine medallions (made of enamel), although the possibility that those were pearls should not be excluded either.⁶³ It should be emphasised that Serbian 13th-century reliquaries were adorned with Byzantine enamel. The Peć manuscript of Domentijan's *Life of St Sava*, Uroš's uncle, the section describing the translation of the relics of St Sava from Tarnovo to Mileševa reads that Sava's incorrupt body was placed in the wooden coffin and presented to the faithful

⁶¹ Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491; Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, V/1, 25.

⁶² I. Bogdán, *Longitudes and Surveys of Hungary, 1601–1874* (Budapest: Publications of the Hungarian National Archives, IV. Archives and Historical Source Sciences 6, 1990), 134–135; I. Bogdán, *Space, Volume, Weight and Piece Scales in Hungary until 1874* (Budapest: Publications of the Hungarian National Archives, IV. Archives and Historical Source Sciences 7, 1991), 677–678; M. Vlajinac, *Rečnik naših starih mera u toku vremena*, IV (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka, 1974), 696–698, 704–705, used in the Serbian language are also the terms *peda*, *pedak*, *pedalj*, *pedaljka*, *pedanj*, *pedao*, *pedenj*, *pedlja*, *pedo*, *peđo*; Popović, "On Two Lost Medieval Serbian Reliquaries", 42–43.

⁶³ M. Divković, *Latinsko-hrvatski rječnik* (Zagreb: Kr. slavonsko-dalmatinska zemaljska vlada, 1900²), 446.

for veneration “..[и] иже послѣд(ь) сребромъ и злато[м]ь б(о)ж(ь)ствьныхъ вбразь изва[та]нк[мь] съ хинев[с]ы...”, i.e. as art historian Bojan Miljković correctly indicated the meaning of the Serbian-Slavonic text, the sarcophagus somewhat later got the silver and golden revetment adorned with divine images in enamel, in which one should certainly recognise the images of saints in medallions such as those in Závašs cross.⁶⁴ The description of the deposit of župan Desa, the nephew of king Uroš, which was kept in Dubrovnik from the mid-13th century, also refers to numerous reliquaries adorned with enamel.⁶⁵ Analysing Serbian reliquaries, art historian Danica Popović indicated, among other things, the material value of Uroš’s lost reliquary. She noted that it was, in all probability, the so-called Hungarian mark, also known as the mark of king Béla IV, which equalled 233.35 grams of silver, which means the reliquary was worth 116.676 kg, i.e. the value in gold would equal around 3000 of the then Florentine florins.⁶⁶ It should also be borne in mind that the fact that Závašs cross was certainly thoroughly remodelled, i.e. subjected to an intervention, which was, as

⁶⁴ B. Miljković, *Žitija Svetog Save kao izvori za istoriju srednjovekovne umetnosti*, (Beograd: Vizantološki institut SANU, 2008), 197, f. 695 (Slav. hineu[s]’i < Gr. χύμεισις, χείμεισις); D. Popović, “Mošti Svetog Save”. In *Pod okriljem svetosti. Kult svetih vladara i relikvija u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU, 2006), 82.

Also, in the later Ta’likizade’s narrative we find an interesting description of relics held in the Mileševa monastery. Described, among other things, is the sarcophagus where St Sava’s relics were held – it is stated that it was wooden with silver revetment of around 23 kg, N. Filipović, “Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Pasha and the Ottoman Non-Muslims”: in *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries*, eds. T. Krstić, D. Terzioğlu (Gorgias Press, Piscataway, NJ, 2022), 623.

⁶⁵ On 1 July 1281, Uroš’s son and successor king Dragutin sent his people to take Desa’s deposit, which is when its detailed description was made. The deposit contained icons, church vestments, tetraevangelions and other items important for spiritual life in Serbia, and, among other things, “...pecia una de xamito per quadrum de palmo uno et dimidio cum smaldis et perlis; “...Item liber alius evangeliorum cum tabulis operatis argento et cum petris duplicibus et cum smaldis...; “...caput sancti Gregorii, una cum cruce smaldi in vertice...; “...Smaldi tres parvi et bocla una de argento deaurata...”, i.e. numerous sacred items adorned with enamel (smaldus in middle Latin certainly implies enamel, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, VII, éd. C. du Cange et al. (L. Favre, Niort 1886), col. 501a; *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis regni Hungariae*, con. A Bartal (Academiae litterarum Hungaricae, Lipsiae 1901), 617. There is also a detailed description of valuable objects from everyday life (valuable fabrics, glasses, sashes, scarves, mirrors etc.), *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, VI, ed. T. Smičiklas (Zagrabiae: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1908), 390–391. About the deposit of župan Desa in detail, M. Malović Đukić, “Poklad župana Dese”. In *Kralj Vladislav i Srbija XIII veka*, ur. T. Živković, (Beograd: Istorijski institut SANU, 2003), 31–39.

⁶⁶ Popović, “On Two Lost Medieval Serbian Reliquaries”, 42, notably f. 12.

a rule, typical of authentic reliquaries, does not allow us to fully construe the original appearance of Uroš's relic.⁶⁷ There is no doubt that the double cross of king Uroš could also have a handle similar to known to us and preserved reliquaries from the Serbian milieu – the staurotheke of St Sava, kept today in the Diocesan Museum of Pienza, or the staurotheke of the church of Sts Peter and Paul in Ras, which was a gift of king Stefan Uroš II Milutin and is kept today in St Dominic's convent in Dubrovnik.⁶⁸ A separate question is whether the potential handle of Uroš's reliquary carried an inscription or not.⁶⁹ Therefore, based on the outer beauty and material value of the cross, we could say that the "cruce[m] pretiosam de ligno Domini", as Uroš's reliquary is called in documents, could in fact be Závaš's "lignum sacrosancte crucis domini preciose", as stated in the charter of the Vyšší Brod monastery.⁷⁰ Apart from the exceptional material value, Uroš's staurotheke is invaluable in spiritual terms, just as Závaš's cross is, as it is stated that it contains True Cross relics.

Hence, although Závaš's cross has underwent numerous changes to date, its preserved initial dimensions and the testimony to its rich decoration and material value even before the subsequent modifications and creation of the base indicate that the equally valuable reliquary of Serbian king Uroš I should perhaps be recognised in it. Such type of staurotheke of Byzantine features, i.e. the double cross, was rather widespread in the Serbian milieu at the time of the Nemanjić dynasty, with Uroš also being its significant representative. Namely,

⁶⁷ There is evidence of numerous examples of reliquaries from the Serbian milieu continuing their religious path in the treasuries of cities in the West, where they underwent significant changes, primarily due to their veneration, and it was mainly through the care of new owners that the exterior of the precious items was changed, i.e. restored, such as the reliquary where the right hand of John the Forerunner was kept, which originated from the Serbian milieu and which was, amid unusual historical circumstances, purchased by pope Pius II, who, in 1461, gifted it to the cathedral temple of the city of Siena. In 1482, reputable nobleman Alberto Aringhieri built, along the cathedral, a separate chapel dedicated to St John the Baptist, intended for keeping the relic of the Forerunner's right hand. It is owing to his care that the precious relic got a new luxurious gold revetment – more details in D. Popović, "The Siena relic of St John the Baptist's right arm", *Zograf* 41 (2017), 77–92. Pope Pius II also bought from the last ruler of Morea despot Thomas Palaiologos the relic of the True Cross, i.e. the staurotheke which is rightly believed to have belonged to first Serbian archbishop Sava (1175–1235), and then gifted it to his native town of Pienza, D. Popović, "A staurotheke of Serbian provenance in Pienza", *Zograf* 36 (2012), 157–167.

⁶⁸ D. Popović, "The staurotheke of the church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Ras, Serbia. A contribution to research", *Zograf* 42 (2018), 73–84.

⁶⁹ Even if there was an inscription about the attribution of the relic, it is not surprising that the charters mentioning the reliquary do not state this detail, because the precious cross, as the spoils of war, belonged since then to the victorious side, in our case Hungarian king Béla IV.

⁷⁰ Fejer, *Codex diplomaticus*, IV/3, 491; V/1, 25; Chytil et al., *Kříž zvaný Závašův*, 15.

the mentioned staurothekes in the form of the double cross of Sava Nemanjić (St Sava), the brother of Uroš's father Stefan the First-Crowned and the reliquary of Uroš's son and later Serbian king Milutin (1282–1321), are an example of the importance and, to an extent, the cult of staurothekes in the Serbian ruling family.⁷¹ This is also indicated by the today unfortunately lost reliquary, the double cross of Serbian queen Jelena, the wife of king Uroš I, which also had an unusual destiny since it was for some time in possession of the Austrian Habsburg dynasty, whose attitude towards it was almost magical.⁷²

* * *

Finally, we wish to conclude that we have presented a new hypothesis about the origin of Závíš's cross, i.e. we would like to state that the lost reliquary of Serbian king Uroš I should perhaps be recognised in it. First of all, the documents describing the great victory of the Hungarians against the Serbs on the battlefield in 1265/1266 in Mačva (Sirmia Ulterior) indubitably suggest such conclusion. Serbian king Uroš was taken captive and the declaration of the triumph was further reinforced with the seizure of the flag of Serbian king Uroš, which was officially presented before the court in Buda. The documents testify that the precious reliquary of king Uroš was also confiscated during the combat. Attesting to the value of the reliquary is the fact that in order to come into its possession, Hungarian king Béla IV had to cede an estate to his magnate. Also, it should not be overlooked that it was an authentic sacred item which ensured effectiveness that was questionable after 1204 and the "inflation" of the True Cross relic in the western Christian world. The beautifully adorned double cross of king Uroš was certainly kept for several years in the royal treasury, which duchess Anna later transferred to Bohemia. The treasury then belonged to her daughter, Bohemian queen Kunigunda, and was later appropriated by her second husband Bohemian nobleman Závíš of Falkenštejn. As testified by the history of priceless relics, which is, as a rule, unusual, he gifted the precious reliquary of the double cross to the Cistercian Abbey of Vyšší Brod, where it is, as it befits, kept and venerated.

⁷¹ Popović, "A staurotheke of Serbian provenance in Pienza" 157–170.

⁷² Popović, "On Two Lost Medieval Serbian Reliquaries", 43–52.

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