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“Who was the Reader of the Passional of the Abbess Cunigonde? Passion Imagery and Devotion in St George Monastery, Prague”

The sumptuously illuminated manuscript of the Passional of Abbess Cunigonde indisputably belongs to the most famous medieval Bohemian manuscripts. There is a long tradition in the scholarship claiming that the manuscript was commissioned by Cunigonde, daughter of Přemysl Otakar II and sister of Wenceslas II. However, the question of its use has never been asked. In my lecture, I am going to talk about the text-image relationship as a tool in private devotion as well as in the education of medieval women. This variability in the use of the Passional manuscript becomes clearer as soon as the principle of reading aloud as a common practice in the Middle Ages is considered. Moreover, recent discoveries in the manuscripts made for the Convent show that the Passion imagery does not apply only to the visual depictions but also to various rituals performed in St George's.

