

Surrounded by Ancestors

Depiction of Luxembourg and Plantagenet Genealogies in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

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Abstract. The ruling dynasties literally surrounded themselves with their ancestors (real ones, as well as imaginary ones), creating galleries of their predecessors or artifacts, such as scrolls with genealogical diagrams. A lineage represented in such a manner could then be presented not only to the royal family but also to their courtiers and foreign diplomats, reminding everyone of the position of the dynasty depicted in contemporary political struggles and in the history of Christianity. This argument is underlined by the fact that within the portrayal of the family, the prophecies of the end of the world and the approach of the Kingdom of Heaven were also included. The paper examines the way the members of two great European dynasties (the Luxembourg and Plantagenet) used pedigrees, the actual members they emphasised in them, and the imaginary characters they incorporated into their lineage. The two case studies consist of an ancestral gallery of the Luxembourgs in Karlštejn Castle and a pedigree scroll of Edward IV from the Plantagenet dynasty. This project evaluates the material from geographically distant areas and detects common features of pedigree construction strategies.

Keywords: Genealogies, Luxembourg, Plantagenet, Royal Representation

Introduction

Genealogies emerged as a crucial aspect in the justification of royal authority during the Middle Ages. The practice of presenting one's lineage based on ancient forefathers was common for most noble houses. The purpose of portraying rulers in prominent

locations and sites of representation was not only to reconnect the ruling dynastic past constantly, but also to establish their succession in the future.¹ Pedigrees and lists of ancestors defined the relationships among individuals and groups, whose names and heroic deeds were meant to be remembered to enhance the dynasty's prestige. However, the incorporation of multiple groups into the overall dynastic structure was sometimes confusing and complicated.² From the eleventh century onwards, diagrams were utilised in monastic settings as a tool for memorisation and to represent abstract concepts. Genealogical diagrams that represented selected kin relationships functioned as mind maps and provided a tangible visualisation of the otherwise abstract family structure.³

Diagrammatic displays were usually employed to illustrate complicated family relationships, particularly Christ's genealogy.⁴ Initially, they were highlighted by floral motifs and stressed only the significant lines of relations. However, over time, this evolved into the family tree or the so-called Tree of Jesse. These diagrams may take the form of a mere list of names, arranged linearly to indicate relationships (i.e., linear arrangement), or a more complex depiction with lines connecting various individuals.⁵ In the case of complex genealogical diagrams, it is necessary to mark the relationships with clear lines. Conversely, in the case of a list of names, their order determines the continuity of relationships and serves as a simpler variant of the family diagram.

Gabriela Spiegel conceptualises genealogies as a genre that can be applied across a wide range of media, often employed side by side.⁶ The multiplicity of uses suggests that the genealogical diagram was considered a means of refining the narrative of family history. The function of the display and the purpose of its message were conditioned by the medium chosen. The construction of the genealogical diagram was affected by the selection (and omission) of individuals or entire groups

1 This study was supported by Charles University grant scheme START CZ.02.2.69/0.0/0.0/19_073/0016935 sub-project n.START/HUM/057 "Surrounded by Ancestors. Depiction of Luxembourg and Plantagenet Genealogies in the 14th and 15th Centuries". Research team: Jakub Jauernig and Barbora Uchytlová.

Current research dealing with genealogies: Bartlett, *Blood Royal*; Bláhová, *Genealogy*; Holladay, *Genealogy*; Bloch, *Etymologies*; Radulescu and Kennedy, *Broken Lines*; Spiegel, *Genealogy*; Trevisan, *Ancestry*.

2 Holladay, *Genealogy*, 53.

3 Holladay, *Genealogy*, 28.

4 For a broader discussion on genealogical diagrams see: De Labordie, *A New Pattern*, 45–47.

5 Some medieval scribes noted a similarity between Peter of Poitiers' genealogy of Christ, as depicted in the scroll diagram, and the genealogies of the English kings. This observation suggests that the work was widely popular in the British Isles and was regarded as legitimate: Holladay, *Genealogy*, 28–30; *Genealogia Christi*.

6 Spiegel, *Genealogy*.

to correspond to the purpose of the work commissioned.⁷ Some scholars suggest that the genealogical diagram could resemble a family photo album over which the family would gather to reminisce, each member contributing to a collective memory based on their recollections. In the case of ruling families, this process of collective memory formation takes on a constitutional structure dimension.⁸

The main goal of this study is to explore the possibilities of constructing and depicting genealogical diagrams. In order to understand the general principles of a dynastic strategy of pedigree compilation, we chose the Luxembourg and Plantagenet dynasties in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to compare two noble houses. We assume that the selection of different media (chronicles, scrolls and ancestral galleries) and the choice of two distant geographical areas (Bohemia and England) enables us to find their general principles. It seems that one of the crucial features they share is the incorporation of mythical ancestors and dynastic founding fathers.

Chronicles are well-preserved media depicting pedigrees. In the British Isles, the most comprehensive works up to the fifteenth century are the so-called *Brut* chronicles,⁹ whose mythical beginning is based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. In the Bohemian context, several chronicles of world history were produced during the period, but we will focus on Giovanni Marignolli's work. Prophecies are an integral part of both chronicles and are reflected in the visual representation of the family trees.

Taking the form of sculptures and mural paintings, the ancestral gallery is the most common visual medium used to depict pedigree and is frequently employed as part of the iconographic programme decorating a representative site. The *Luxembourg genealogy* in Karlštejn Castle is presented in the first part of this study. Scrolls, on the other hand, are a specific medium more commonly used in the British Isles and are presented in the second part of this paper. Both of these media utilise a linear form of vertical genealogy, in which "genealogy reads like a stripped-down narrative in which the only verb is »begat« or »succeeded«."¹⁰ (or *genuit* in the *Luxembourg genealogy*).

Genealogical diagrams emphasise dynastic continuity, often with a focus on royal succession. The composition of the pedigree is primarily based on blood relations, though some links may have been artificially created. Genealogical diagrams tend to have a dual or hybrid structure, but one of the two is often dominant:

7 Holladay, *Genealogy*, 32.

8 Coote, *Prophecy, Genealogy and History*, 28–29.

9 Definition of the *Brut* genre, Rajsic, *Looking for Arthur*, 449.

10 Holladay, *Genealogy*, 3.

- a consanguinity structure, which links the last depicted ruler to the founding father, thereby creating an unbroken kinship;
- a constitutional structure, emphasizing the continuity of rule, regardless of the kings' lineage.¹¹

Most genealogies favour a bloodline that is not necessarily tied to a particular title, emphasizing the antiquity of the lineage of the last offspring, thus accentuating the primarily dynastic, rather than constitutional, nature of the diagram. However, a variation of the two types can be observed in the representation of Emperor Charles IV in the *Luxembourg genealogy*. The inspiration for the visual propaganda of this dynasty came from the French court where the Emperor grew up, but this paper does not aim to deconstruct that knowledge.¹² Conversely, in the English setting, the line of the state is often emphasised because of the numerous dynastic changes on the English throne.¹³

Current research on genealogical diagrams tends to rely on comparative evaluation that is limited to locally similar examples and does not usually identify general trends.¹⁴ This study proposes an alternative approach that could lead to new research questions. It offers fresh interpretations of broader phenomena by focusing on two European courts—the Plantagenet and Luxembourg—located in geographically distinct areas. Our intention, however, is not to present an exhaustive survey of the genealogical representation of these dynasties, but rather to compare and contrast aspects and visual forms of their genealogies through two selected case studies. We aim to foreground the diversity of these two historical settings and to highlight elements and practices unique to each dynasty, rather than obscuring them due to their proximity. Through this analysis, we explore the differences and similarities between the two and consider the strategies employed in the construction of their pedigree.

I. The *Luxembourg Genealogy*¹⁵

In an attempt to support Charles IV's election as King of Romans, the first archbishop of Prague emphasised his dynastic continuity at the time when the Pope visited Avignon in 1346. Arnošt of Pardubice stressed his Luxembourg and Přemyslid

11 Maree Shirota describes the same phenomena with the term 'royal' dynasty: Shirota, *Unrolling History*, 33.

12 Rosario, *Propaganda*; Fajt, *Karls IV*; Holladay, *Genealogy*; Trevisan, *Ancestry*.

13 De Laborderie, *A New Pattern*, 55–57.

14 Exceptions are the works of Joan Holladay and Olivier De Laborde, which, together with those of Gabrielle Spiegel, we use as the main methodological framework of the paper.

15 We are aware that this term does not refer to this dynasty only, as will be shown. It refers to the ancestral gallery in Karštejn Castle and is also known as the *Karštejn genealogy*.

origins.¹⁶ The Prague Augustinian Nicholas of Louny also introduced Charles's ancestry on his father's side in a sermon he delivered to the clergy in the Prague Cathedral on the occasion of Charles's coronation as King of Bohemia on 2 September 1347.¹⁷ In an attempt to legitimise his succession to the throne of Bohemia, Nicholas accentuated the proximity of Charles' names (he was baptised as Wenceslas) and the links to Charlemagne and St. Wenceslas. Fundamental was the interpretation of the king's anointing, thus, the emphasis that he was called to rule by God—an idea included in the Luxembourg representation.¹⁸

The visual representation of the Luxembourg dynasty ruling in the Bohemian environment in the fourteenth century was emphasised especially in the residential places associated with Emperor Charles IV, with Karlštejn Castle occupying a prominent place among them. This case study focuses on the visual dynastic representation in this residence; thus, certain spaces and their decoration are deliberately omitted.¹⁹

Karlštejn Castle

The interior decoration of Karlštejn Castle has been preserved mainly within the context of the surviving wall paintings. Still, the surviving written records or drawings from earlier centuries can give more clues to the overall reconstruction of the iconographic programme.²⁰ However, the original layout of the castle, famous for its sacred spaces for the collection of relics and the subsequent storage of the crown jewels of the Holy Roman Empire, did not initially envisage such ambitions. Therefore, most of the rooms were rebuilt during or shortly after the construction.²¹ Tracing the iconography of the decoration is thus closely linked to the constructional changes of the entire castle, of which the earliest completed and habitable building was the Imperial Palace. This was the location of a representative mural ancestors' gallery of Emperor Charles IV, which was destroyed during the sixteenth

16 Kubínová, *Monumental mural painting*.

17 Kubínová, *Imitatio*, 157; Kadlec, *Die Werke* 23, 268. "...rex noster et ex paterna et materna linea processit ex altissimo sanguine non solum regum, sed et imperatorum" [Our king comes from the noblest bloodline of kings and emperors from both the mother's and the father's lineage]; Bláhová, *Genealogy*, 8. For the etymology, see Bloch, *Etymologies*.

18 Žůrek, *L'usage comparé des motifs*, 118–27; Žůrek, *Coronations*, 39–41.

19 This paper therefore does not aim to provide an overview of the research, but only refers to the most important and recent works. For the artistic decoration, see Fajt, *Theodoricus*.

20 Studničková, *Theological Metaphor*.

21 For the reconstruction, see Chudárek, *Building*, 128–38; Chudárek, *A contribution to the knowledge*, 106–38. Recently the thematic issue of *Zprávy památkové péče* 79 (2019) has focused on Karlštejn's Lesser Tower, especially Chudárek, *Constructional transformations*.

century.²² It has survived only as a drawing record of the figures of the *Luxembourg genealogy* in two manuscripts (*Prague and Viennese manuscripts*) from the second half of the sixteenth century.²³

This mural pedigree was placed on the Imperial Palace's second floor and was created just after the 1355—after the completion of the palace, which was built in the late 1340s.²⁴ While the mural gallery's exact layout is unknown, it can be reconstructed from the two manuscripts²⁵ and a list of names in the so-called *Wolfenbüttel manuscript* on fol. 16v.²⁶

With some exceptions, the figures in the Prague and Viennese manuscripts are on separate sheets and stand or sit on pedestals with identifying inscriptions that indicate their family ties and lineage. Based on the layout of their gestures and direction of views, the gallery could begin with two rows above each other. Thus, a linear row of Emperor Charles IV's ancestors would emphasise the continuity leading to the imperial couple. The minimal information on the pedestals would then explain the couple's positioning in the most damaged part of the hall. The analogy of such a representation of linear continuity is the arrangement of the rulers' gallery with mythical ancestors, as seen in the example of *Pharamundus* in the Grand Salle in Paris.²⁷

A key to understanding the gallery composition can be found in the universal chronicles, such as the one Giovanni Marignolli composed for Charles IV. The concept of this chronicle is in some aspects and structural arrangements derived from Godfrey de Viterbo, to whom the text makes direct reference.²⁸ Marignolli sets the history of the Bohemian lands in the context of world history, where he introduces the Bohemian rulers' ancestors.²⁹ The chronicle, which Marignolli divides into three parts, can be seen as an ideological system reflected in the structure of the *Luxembourg*

22 “The room is the palace in which the house of Emperor Charles was painted.” A relation from 1598, Vilímková, *Survey*, 21–23.

23 *Prague manuscript* = Codex Heidelbergensis (cca 1574–1575, Archiv NGP, sign. AA 2015) and *Viennese manuscript* = Stammbaum Kaiser Karls IV. (cca 1571, ÖNB, sign. Cod. 8330). See Pokorný, *Manuscript*. The Viennese manuscript is available online: https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_2999728&order=1&view=SINGLE, accessed on 7 April 2023.

24 Chudárek, *Building*, 138.

25 See note 23.

26 Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, Cod. 60.5. Aug. 2. The list bears the inscription “Linea Caroli III Imp. Et Regis Bohem(iae) ... auf Carlstein daselbst Im Saal von altem zierlichen Gemald abgenommen).” Heinemann, *Die Augusteischen*, 319. Stejskal, *Attributions*, 347. Further reading: Stejskal, *Die Wandzyklen*; Stejskal, *Die Rekonstruktion*.

27 Bennert, *Propagande*, 50–51.

28 Žůrek, *Viterbo*.

29 Kubínová, *Figures*, 30–36.

genealogy.³⁰ The first part is described as a “divine or lawful natural guiding principle...” that progresses from Adam to Noah, who stood as the first genealogical figure within the *Luxembourg genealogy*.³¹ The chronicle traces the lineage of the tribe of the Bohemians through Japheth (son of Noah), who is presented as the ancestor of the Slavs (and Přemyslids), placing them on a par with the Franks, Germans, and Italians.³² From this lineage comes Charles’s mother, Elisabeth of Bohemia.³³ However, Charles’s lineage in the *Luxembourg genealogy* continues deliberately to the line of Ham, another son of Noah’s, whose lineage continues through the French kings to the Luxembourg dynasty. Ham’s descendants, Chus and Nimrod, became the first-world rulers, but they were not of blessed lineage.³⁴ Marignolli explains the presence of these evil and violent men in the chronicle,³⁵ stating that Charles’s ancestors include not only heroes and bearers of sovereign virtues,

“but since the rose is born of thorns, and Christ was born of both good and bad parents, even throughout the holy books he endeavours to describe two families or communities, namely, the good and the bad, of which the first, namely, the community of the bad, took its origin from his brother Cain to Lamech the murderer, and its line is continued after the flood by Nemprot [Nimrod]...”³⁶

In the *Luxembourg genealogy*, this giant Nimrod was depicted on a larger scale, as can be seen from the following two figures (Belus and Ninus) looking up at him. This is followed by the incorporation of the pagan gods Saturn and Jupiter, described in St. Augustine’s interpretation as the first rulers of Italy.³⁷

Next is the group of Trojan ancestors both in the *Luxembourg genealogy* and in the chronicle. This passage is abbreviated, since, according to the chronicler, it is well known to everyone.³⁸ It was precisely this part of the genealogy that Wenceslas IV himself pointed out to the Brabant diplomat Edmund de Dynter during his visit to Karlštejn Castle, showing him the ‘sua genealogia’ tracing to the Trojan ancestors.³⁹

30 Bažant, *The Function of Travelogue*; Kubínová, *Imitatio*.

31 Kubínová, *Imitatio*, 159–60.

32 Vojtíšek and Žůrek, *Entre idéal et pomémique*, 94–95.

33 For the interpretation of the origin of the Slavs and the etymology of the name of Elisabeth of Bohemia as a descendant of the House of Elisa (son of Japheth and ancestor of the Slavs), see Kubínová, *Imitatio*, 160–64.

34 Kubínová, *Imitatio*, 85–89; Hlaváčková, *The Idea of a Good Ruler*, 2.

35 Bažant, *The Function of Travelogue*, 7.

36 FRB III, 493.

37 Kubínová *Imitatio*, 87.

38 Kubínová *Imitatio*, 88.

39 Dynter, *Chronica*; Martindale, *Heroes*, 5.

The line was then led directly through Dardanus—brother of Troy, through whom the Trojan origin is proved, then through Herictonius and Ylus the founder of Troy to his grandson Priam.⁴⁰ In the *Wolfenbüttel manuscript's* list, the mythical ancestors from Noah to Priam is crossed out and separated from the rest by a line.

Furthermore, the *Luxembourg genealogy* follows the ancestral line of the French kings, through Marcomir (as a descendant of Priam) and Pharamund, the legendary king of the Franks, and furthermore Merovingian and Carolingian (Charlemagne). Further, the Dukes of Brabant, who also linked their origins to the Trojan–Merovingian–Carolingian line, were incorporated into the pedigree, as was reflected in their chronicling tradition in the late thirteenth century.⁴¹

Charles was related to the Brabant line through the marriage of his grandfather Emperor Henry VII with Margaret of Brabant—both of whom were depicted in the *Luxembourg genealogy*.⁴² The Dukes of Brabant allowed the son of an erstwhile opponent of the Battle of Worringen (1288) to be related to the Brabant family and to share their status and reputation.

A number of historiographical and literary works were produced at the court of Henry's father-in-law, John I, glorifying the hero of Worringen and also attributing to his family a glorious origin from the Carolingians and the heroes of the Bible and antiquity.

The Luxembourg dynasty thus drew on a literary and historiographical fund that provided them with all-round legitimation for their new position. Besides the courtly tradition of chivalric epics, it also offered a genealogical construction of Carolingians and even mythical origins.

Such tendencies appeared in an abbreviated version of Jan van Boendal's Brabant genealogy, *Korte rijmkronijk van Braband*, which is regarded as the inspiration for the *Luxembourg genealogy*.⁴³ The pedigree was concluded by John of Bohemia with Elisabeth of Bohemia and the imperial couple Charles IV and Anne of Świdnica,⁴⁴ which corresponds to the dating of the creation of the genealogy to the period between 1355–1357. The exact figure type of the queen can be found in the figure of Anne of Świdnica on the lintel of St. Catherine's Chapel in the Lesser Tower of Karlštejn Castle.

40 Kubínová, *Imitatio*, 88; FRB III, 520 "Iohanes, rex illustris, descendens a Magno Karolo de Troyanis."

41 Cf. Bláhová, *Herrschergenealogie*, 383. For Brabant chronicle tradition, see Adde and Margue, "Luxemburg, Brabant und die Karolinger."

42 Adde and Margue, "Luxemburg, Brabant und die Karolinger."

43 Adde and Margue, "Luxemburg, Brabant und die Karolinger."

44 Even though the inscription on the pedestal in both manuscripts labels her as Blanka, most researchers have identified her as Anne of Świdnica.

The style of figures in the two manuscripts noted was linked with the figures in the murals of the *Relic Scenes* in the Lesser Tower and the figures in the *Adoration of the Twenty-Four Elders* in the Chapel of the Holy Cross, where the figure compositions of the Karlštejn genealogy were modified in various ways. Such variations and templates within a single commission were used due to time constraints. Thus, several workshops under the supervision of Master Theodoric operated side by side.⁴⁵ However, this variation also had a symbolic overlap and was used purposefully for some specific figures.

We argue that such use of figurative and compositional models can be found in the *Adoration of the Magi* mural (Figure 1) in the Chapel of the Holy Cross, where Charles IV was repeatedly identified in the figure of the second kneeling king. When comparing the figure types in the two manuscripts of the Karlštejn genealogy, we see not only the compositional pattern of Charles IV's figure in the third (most distant) king, but also the figure type of his father John of Bohemia in the figure of the second king and his grandfather Henry VII of Luxembourg in the figure of the first king. The intentional use of patterns for concrete figures of the Luxembourg rulers in the *Adoration of the Magi* can be interpreted not only as demonstrating the operation of the workshop but also as a glorification of the ruling dynasty and a manifestation of Charles IV's legitimate claim to the imperial throne, justified by the genealogical continuity with biblical ancestors.⁴⁶

The mural paintings on the staircase of the Great Tower bear technological parallels and compositional variations analogous to other murals in the castle, and the use of these compositions facilitates the dating of the decoration of the Chapel of the Holy Cross.



Figure 1 Adoration of the Magi, Chapel of the Holy Cross, Great Tower, Karlštejn
(Photo by Barbora Uchytílová, 2017)

45 Fajt, *Theodoricus*.

46 Dvořáková, *Court*, 499.

Figures in the staircase

The construction works related to the transformation of the second residential floor of the Great Tower into the Chapel of the Holy Cross were carried out in the years 1362–1363.⁴⁷ The original entrance to the chapel from the north was replaced by a staircase in the newly added tower from the south, and only when the masonry had dried out was it possible to proceed with the artistic decoration of the staircase.⁴⁸ The walls are covered by the legend of St. Wenceslas, which is proceeding from the bottom up (the outer part of the staircase), and the legend of St. Ludmila (the inner part of the staircase), which in turn is told from the top down. These mural paintings have a clear *post quem* date, since it is unlikely that materials for constructing the chapel and the roof should have been hauled upwards through the new staircase. Originally, the lower part of the walls contained an illusionary drapery with a motif of printed flower patterns, which is also noticeable in certain sketches by Professor Sequens, who documented the state of the paintings before the reconstruction at the end of the nineteenth century. This decor can be traced in the lower part of the Church of the Virgin Mary, and in the Royal Palace of the Prague Castle.⁴⁹

The legends are replaced by kneeling figures situated in painted arcades in front of the chapel. The secondary construction of the staircase caused cracks in the upper part of the tower, in front of the Chapel of the Holy Cross entrance, which in some cases were up to half a metre wide, and thus affect the current state of the mural paintings.⁵⁰ The worst damage has been made to the figures at the top of the staircase, ravaged by the weather and inconsiderate overpainting in the nineteenth century.⁵¹

The kneeling figures on the staircase had previously been identified as the Emperor's ancestors, but their precise identification was possible only after the discovery of the drawing on fol. 17r of the *Wolfenbüttel manuscript* (Figure 2).⁵² The folio is arranged in three tiers—the top one representing a scene from the lintel of

47 In 1360–1361, the rough construction progressed to the level of the third floor of the Great Tower. Chudárek, *Building*; Chudárek, *A contribution to the knowledge*.

48 See Chudárek, *Building*; Chudárek, *Contribution*.

49 The motifs of the stencil painting were used during the reconstruction of Karlštejn Castle in the nineteenth century. The pattern of the stencils can also be found on a transfer of a wall painting from the Old Royale Hall at Prague Castle, now in the archive of the Prague Castle Collections. The stencils preserved in situ in the Old Royal Palace of Prague Castle include more Chotěbor, *Prague*, 266.

50 Chudárek, *Building*; Vilímková, *Treatise*, 21–23.

51 During the reconstruction, sketches were made of the original fragments, according to which over-paintings were created, which were intertwined with the original medieval painting. Bareš and Brodský, *Problems*.

52 See above.

St. Catherine's Chapel. The imperial couple, Charles IV and Anne of Świdnica, are depicted, although the manuscript states 'Carolus IIII' and 'Blanca Valencia' above the figures. Charles's first wife Blanche of Valois is also listed in fragmentary inscriptions in the Church of the Virgin Mary, which also include Anne of the Palatinate and Anne of Świdnica.

In the middle tier, there is a row of eight kneeling figures facing right, and in the bottom tier, there are nine figures facing the opposite direction. The directions of the two rows match the coats of arms above the figures, which, however, are not present on the staircase today, probably as a consequence of damage and interventions in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁵³ Their interpretation follows the heraldic practice described by the Italian jurist Bartolo de Sassoferrato, who served as an advisor to Charles IV around 1355 and is also the author of the *Tractatus de insigniis et armis*, completed in 1358.⁵⁴ The treatise deals with heraldic insignia and presents a codification of the common practice of reading, displaying, and comprehending coats of arms and insignia.⁵⁵ The last chapter considers coats of arms on fabrics and walls and explains their appropriate positioning and orientation in the rooms where the ruler's figure is displayed.⁵⁶

“What if a figure of a prince or another preeminent person, or perhaps a royal coat of arms, has to be painted in the middle of a wall? In this case, the coats of arms depicted on the two sides of that figure should be turned toward the figure, thus disregarding left or right, as, for example, the ceiling of a room or a court; then, from what was said above one can determine the top and the bottom of the coat of arms.”⁵⁷

The usage and arrangement of coats of arms was a common feature of painted spaces. This practice must have been familiar to the painting workshops, which routinely handled such commissions for representative spaces with armorial galleries and knew how to produce this decoration.

53 The coats of arms could have been on the mural close to the figures (behind or below them)—this would reflect the use of marks specifying the colors and the orientation of the coats of arms respecting the rotation of the figures. Nevertheless, we must also consider the possibility that the coats of arms were created only in the manuscript, which, however, seems less likely for the reasons given above.

54 The treatise was disseminated only after Sassoferrato's death in 1358. Vrtel and Munková, *Treatise*, 7–29.

55 This seems to be a system that also describes the practice of displaying and laying out certain types of paintings which could be followed by both painters and scribes.

56 Bartolo's works with a system of representation in which he understands the coat of arms as the identification of its bearer.

57 Cavallar et al., *Grammar*, 156.



Figure 2 Figures in the staircase, Great Tower, Karlštejn, fol. 16v, Cod. 60.5. Aug. 2
 Source: Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel

From the layout of the drawing in the *Wolfenbüttel manuscript*, it is apparent that these figures represent those on the walls in front of the entrance to the Chapel of the Holy Cross. The coats of arms in the manuscript above the figures are not rendered in colour; however, colours are indicated by marks that previous research has overlooked.⁵⁸ Most colours are marked with their first letter, except for green, which is given the symbol of a leaf. This system of marking was primarily used in armorials, where they are seen as an underdrawing of the completed arms and as an instruction of unfinished arms. By deciphering the colours, we were also able to determine the transposed orientation of the coat of arms corresponding to the directional orientation of the figures. These lead to the last mural painting in front of the chapel entrance, which will be described below. According to Bartolo's description of the layout of the coats of arms in the rooms (see above), it is easier to identify their bearers (Tables 1–2).⁵⁹ While from left to right, the upper row displays Emperor Charles with his wives and descendants, from right to left, the lower row features the descendants of John of Bohemia.

The paintings thus depict all the descendants, even those who died in childhood. The absence of Václav IV, son of Charles IV, would indicate that the paintings were created before his birth, i.e., before 1361, which seems unlikely given the constructional development of the castle as outlined above. The figures, however, point towards the last scene in front of the chapel, as the family offspring of John of Bohemia on the inner side and the descendants of Charles IV on the outer side of the staircase. This scene (not included in manuscripts), with seven figures, is dominated by the altar, to which Emperor Charles IV leans with an item in his hands (Figure 3). Similarly to the *Relic scenes*, the painting here also commemorates the historical event of the consecration of the chapel on 7 February 1365, or depicts the transfer of the relics of the Chapel of the Holy Cross.⁶⁰ This draws the recipients' attention to the sacred quality of the space behind the painting, the Chapel of the Holy Cross.⁶¹ The scene shifts the date of the creation of the paintings to the time following the chapel's consecration.

To the left of Emperor Charles IV, there are Bishops Jan Očko, Jan of Středa, and Albert of Šternberk standing. The kneeling persons to the right of the Emperor depict his family at the consecration. In the foreground, there is his kneeling wife

58 Fajt and Hlaváčková, *Depiction*. The authors suggested the identification of some figures. Kubínová responded to them by considering placing the paintings in the Chapel of the Virgin Mary. However, the figures could not fit there in that order. Cf. Kubínová, *Figures*, 35–36.

59 The list corresponds to the reading of the characters from left to right, numbered according to the manuscript.

60 Kubínová, *Figures*, 28–29.

61 The Chapel of St Catherine has the same dedication as the Chapel of the Holy Cross, whose dedication was moved to the Great Tower. For further details, see Fišer, *Karlštejn*.



Figure 3 Scene in front of the Chapel of the Holy Cross, Great Tower, Karlštejn
(Photo © Petr Zinke, Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences)

—at this time Elisabeth of Pomerania, who features with the Bohemian crown (crowned in 1363). The figures behind her would then be Wenceslas IV and Elisabeth of Bohemia (Charles IV's daughter).⁶²

These facts determine the time when the paintings were made, namely the period just before the consecration of the Chapel of the Holy Cross. The practical impossibility of the passage and operation of the Chapel of the Holy Cross, if the paintings had been created after its consecration, is another argument to consider in the dating. In fact, it was for such practical reasons that during the last restoration of the staircase paintings the operation of the castle was suspended.⁶³

62 Wenceslas IV was earlier identified by Vítovský, who identified the figure next to him as Joanna of Bavaria and thus postponed the dating of the staircase paintings to the 1370s. Cf. Vítovský, *Notes*, 7.

63 Alternatively, the paintings could have been created at a short time interval.

Genealogy as a pillar

In the pedigrees at Karlštejn Castle, in addition to rulers, we find their wives, saints, and other figures, contrary to other ruler cycles, such as the vanished cycle in the Prague Castle representing the catalogue of kings and emperors.⁶⁴ However, the intention of the *Luxembourg genealogy* was more related to underline the continuity of the dynasty. The line here joined individuals whose selection was conditioned by their glory, but they could also represent an entire family group.

Besides splendour, the dynasty members were to emphasise the redemptive element of legitimacy to the imperial crown. Thus, the imperial title was to be presented as a dynastic inheritance, not a matter of choice,⁶⁵ which was viewed as a family inheritance rather than an election. The naming the Castle after Charles underscores the incorporation of the Luxembourgs into the dynastic continuity of local rulers.⁶⁶

Thus, the *Luxembourg genealogy* in the palace depicted those who had established themselves as pillars within the history of the dynasty—including the mythical ancestors upon whom the dynasty's splendour and majesty were built. The redemptive aspect was then reflected in the practical use of figural compositions in the mural paintings of the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Chapel of the Holy Cross, which referred to the dynasty's genealogical continuity bound together by artificial relationships with mythical ancestors going back to Noah.

II. The *Coronation Roll* of Edward IV of York

In 1461, Edward IV, a youthful king, assumed the English throne. Although his accession was triumphant, it was tainted by the possibility that the previous king, Henry VI, might break free from prison and regain the throne. Thus, it was not a straightforward succession, and the legitimacy of the new king's rule needed to be more secure. According to contemporary accounts, Edward was almost two metres tall, charismatic and capable, thus an imposing young man, particularly when compared to his predecessor who suffered from mental illness. However, Edward could not rely solely on his personal attributes to justify his right to rule. The most significant factor supporting his claim to the throne was his membership in the ruling Plantagenet dynasty. Nonetheless, as the son of the Duke of York, Edward belonged to the secundogeniture of the Plantagenet family, whereas Henry was the son and grandson of the English kings of the senior Lancastrian branch. Thus, it was necessary to establish an additional basis for Edward's claim to the throne.

64 Stejskal, *Die Wandzyklen*; Uličný, *Ploughman*.

65 This element was also closely related to the notion of the national, as Éloïse Adde shows.

66 Bartlová, *Reflections*, 50–57.

The House of York made extensive efforts and expended significant resources in legitimising their actions, which we would call propaganda.⁶⁷ The dispute centred around the intricate dynastic relationships within the Plantagenet dynasty during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Edward III had eight sons, five of whom survived to adulthood, yet none of them ascended the throne after him. Instead, Richard II, Edward III's grandson and son of his eldest son, Edward the Black Prince of Wales, became king. Richard II was later deposed by Henry Bolingbroke, also a grandson of Edward III, and son of John of Ghent, Edward's third son. The primary argument for Richard II's deposition was his tyranny. John of Ghent's descendants held the English crown for three generations before they were challenged by the descendants of Edmund of Langley, Edward III's fourth son.⁶⁸

In their propaganda, the Yorks depicted the Lancastrians as usurpers, contending that Richard II's deposition was illegal and that the principle of primogeniture had been violated. As John of Ghent was only the third surviving son of Edward III, his descendants had leapfrogged the right of the second-born Lionel of Antwerp and his descendants. Although Lionel had no male heir, his only daughter, Philippa, married Edmund Mortimer, the third Earl of March, and their son, Roger Mortimer, the fourth Earl of March, was Richard II's dedicated heir. However, for the Yorkist propaganda, this was more than just a denial of the right of a distant relative from the Welsh Marches. Roger's daughter, Anne Mortimer, was an important link between the descendants of Edward III, as she had married into the House of York and was the mother of Richard, third Duke of York, and grandmother of King Edward IV. This dynastic arc served as evidence for the Yorks that their right to the throne did not come from Edmund of Langley, the fourth son of Edward III, but from Lionel of Antwerp, the second son of Edward III. Therefore, they claimed that the House of Lancaster had violated the law of primogeniture.

The family structure and claim to the English throne began to be recorded in increasingly complex diagrams. The parchment scroll was the most common medium that captured the dynastic diagram in the British Isles. This medium offered several advantages over its contemporary competitors, the codices.⁶⁹ Even in their original length, these scrolls consisted of several equally wide pieces of parchment glued or sewn together to form one long strip of parchment.

One unique aspect of English pedigree rolls is that they stop tracking the ruler's line directly. They started to include collateral branches of the family on one side, and

67 For further details, see Allan, *Yorkist Propaganda*; Anglo, *British History*; Hughes, *Arthurian Myths*.

68 For further details about Edward IV and the War of the Roses, see Carpenter, *The War of the Roses*; Kleineke, *Edward IV*.

69 De Laborderie, *Histoire*, 47–79.

foreign dynasties on the other. This phenomenon emerged in the early fifteenth century, after the deposition of Richard II and the accession of the Duke of Lancaster's descendants. It seems that the complex dynastic situation associated with Edward III's descendants was the reason for this new, more complex type of diagram.

A scroll for the king

The *Coronation Roll* is a manuscript created at the beginning of Edward IV's reign,⁷⁰ possibly prior to his 1464 marriage to Elisabeth Woodville, who is not depicted in the scroll.⁷¹ Its primary purpose is to detail the genealogy of Edward IV's family, with each member of the dynasty identified by name and accompanied by a brief description. Each figure is situated within a coloured square and connected to its relatives. What distinguishes the *Coronation Roll* from other genealogical diagrams of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is its unique composition and layout. Typically, genealogical diagrams of this era position the main monarchical lineage down the centre of the scroll, tracing and reflecting the supremacy of the island of Britain, and consequently, the Kingdom of England.⁷² In such cases, the line of British kings

70 Also known as the *Edward IV Roll*. Free Library of Philadelphia, Lewis, J. F., & Free Library of Philadelphia. Rare Book Dept. [The Edward IV Roll]. MS. Lewis E201. The complete scroll has been digitised and is accessible through the following link: <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/feature/medieval-edward-index>, (accessed on 30 November 2022) which also provides a basic description of the manuscript and its contemporary context. However, a modern edition is not yet available partly due to the lack of established editing practices for this type of source, making it a challenging task. The study of genealogical diagrams in scrolls remains an area with limited research and literature. Despite its uniqueness, this manuscript has received little direct scholarly attention, and previous efforts have resulted in only brief descriptions of its content. The only notable analysis of the manuscript's contents is presented in the book "Arthurian Myths and Alchemy: The Kingship of Edward IV" by Johnathan Hughes. While Hughes presents interesting ideas and interpretations, some of his arguments about alchemy lack thorough development and rely heavily on speculation, particularly regarding certain sources, such as the *Coronation Scroll*. The limited scholarly literature available about the *Coronation Scroll* has prompted much of the interpretation in our research.

71 Tanis and Thompson, eds, *Leaves of Gold*, 228. The attributions to the titles of Edward's siblings previously led scholars to believe that the scroll was made after 1468, because of the use of Margaret of York's title as Duchess of Burgundy. <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/feature/medieval-edward-index>, accessed on 30. 11. 2022.

72 E.g., Oxford, MS. Bodl. Rolls 5, *Genealogy of the Kings of England to Richard III*, a highly decorated scroll most probably commissioned by the House of Percy. There are more excerpts from the historiographical texts than in the *Coronation Scroll*. Another scroll used during the War of the Roses is the so-called *Canterbury Roll* (<https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/rolling.shtml>). For further reading about the use of rolls in medieval propaganda, see Shirota, *Unrolling History*.

from the *History of the Kings of Britain*,⁷³ beginning with Brutus and ending with Cadwallader, usually occupies the central position. In contrast, the parallel line of Saxon leaders, beginning with Woden, is relegated to the margins and runs along one of the scroll's edges. Following the end of the Heptarchy and the ascension of King Egbert of Wessex, his Anglo-Saxon line became dominant and central until the reigns of Edward the Confessor and Harold Godwinson. Eventually, the line of the Norman dukes, with William the Conqueror as King of England, emerges as the central lineage which extends to the final ruler depicted on the scroll.

The *Coronation Roll* depicts the individual ruler arranged sequentially in ordered frames, even at the cost of omitting the chronological order common in other scrolls. Each noble house is designated with its own colour, and a square around each person is drawn in the colour of their family. Some individuals, particularly members of the Cambro-Norman Mortimer dynasty and the Plantagenets from the time of Edward II onwards are framed in multiple colours to indicate their mixed ancestry. Finally, with Edward IV, all the family lines depicted are mixed, signifying his ancestral claim to the English throne.

The scroll comprises three primary dynastical lines, namely the British/Welsh (green), the French (blue), and the Saxon (yellow), along with six subsidiary lines, including the Iberian (pale red), the Norman (deep red), the Mortimer (also deep red), the de Clare (white), the Plantagenet/Anjou (green), and the Dukes of Aquitaine (blue). As mentioned above, the genealogical scroll commences with the Fall of Man, leading to the first family branch of Seth, and subsequently to Noah and his sons, followed by the Flood of the world. Noah's three sons are presented, but only the branch of Japheth continues. The three main branches⁷⁴ at this point on the scroll begin, and each is labelled in golden letters. The first branch points from Japheth towards the left, and a green line is drawn from it, beginning with a list of the Trojan ancestors in the first green frame, and continuing with Brutus and the other British kings. A blue line of Frankish and French kings runs through the centre of the scroll, which, however, is not graphically linked to either the sons of Noah or the Trojan kings, contradicting classical tradition.

The third primary dynasty, the Saxons, denoted by yellow, were directly connected to Japheth with the British line. Notably, the scroll presents an uncommon depiction of Saxon pagan history compared to other genealogical manuscripts from the British Isles. Most manuscripts illustrate the Heptarchy by individual Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. In contrast, the *Coronation Roll* visually merges the Heptarchy into one unit. The entire opening frame concludes with a summary of the Anglo-Saxon

73 Wright, *HRB*.

74 Britons, the French, and Saxons.

monarchs and their unification under King Egbert. Alongside this lengthy section summarising Saxon history, the scroll displays 24 Frankish and 48 British kings.

This passage is positioned in the middle of the upper part of the scroll and is separated from the lower part by the inscription, “[... Jesus] passing through the midst of them, went his way”.⁷⁵ It is followed by a row of seven rulers, arranged from left to right: the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cornwall, the King of France, the King of England, the King of Castile and Leon, the Duke of Aquitaine, and the Duke of Normandy. From this point onwards, the remaining minor families of varying sizes gradually merge with the Saxon line. Some kings have their medallions framed in multiple colours, indicating mixed ancestry and the combination of hereditary claims.

Most of the remaining minor families are extinguished by the last female heir, who joins and perishes with the Saxon line. The exceptions consist of the line of the House of Mortimer—which joins the line of the British kings by a union between Gwladus Ddu and Ralph Mortimer, which is marked by a white and red dragon—and the blue line of the French kings, which ends with Charles IV Capet and his sister Isabella. Her marriage to Edward II gives a new dimension to the diagram, as their descendants in the next few generations are highlighted in equal amounts of yellow and blue.

The culmination of the colour scheme is in the person of Edward IV, whose medallion is bordered by an eight-pointed star formed by two large squares. The straight square is made up of the colours of Edward’s ancestors in the maternal line, i.e., green (the British kings), white (the Cambro-Norman House of de Clare), and deep red (the Cambro-Norman House of Mortimer). The square placed on one of the corners represents Edward’s paternal line, consisting of yellow (the Saxon/English kings), blue (the French kings), and pale red (the Castilian-Leon kings).

Hidden in colours and symbols

The colour markings found throughout the manuscript serve multiple levels of meaning. The first and most straightforward level of meaning is the simple indication of distinctions between different dynasties. This allows the reader to easily identify the dynastic membership of each particular ruler and the relations between dynasties.

The second, less apparent dimension of the colour scheme is ideological. The entire scroll is heavily influenced by *Matter of Britain* and prophecies derived from the *History of the Kings of Britain*. It should be noted that Geoffery of Monmouth’s *History* narrates the struggle between the Britons and the Saxons, culminating in the

75 IHC autem transiens per medium illorum ibat. Luke 4:30.

defeat of the Britons. However, Merlin's prophecy about the two dragons promises a return of British sovereignty and the punishment of the Saxons. It is important to emphasise that in the fifteenth century, even more than in Geoffrey's time, the nations of the Saxons and the Britons were literary-historical designations of entities bearing both positive and negative qualities. Geoffrey's Britons are a mighty nation of brave heroes with the strongest claim to an insular realm, but they are also a nation of sinful and haughty people who must undergo repentance and redemption through their saints. On the other hand, the Saxons are portrayed as a nation of pagan traitors, perjurers, and tricksters who eventually convert to Christianity, unite, and gain control of the island. With this knowledge, we can analyse the symbolic meaning of the colour scheme of each ruler or group of rulers.

In this scroll, the British green line is depicted as the senior, unbroken line that through the Welsh princes traces back to Cadwallader the Holy King, then to King Arthur, and to Brutus, the first ruler, and last Trojan. It is worth noting that the green branch of the Britons continues beyond the last Welsh prince and is connected to the House of Mortimer, portrayed equally in green and red. Furthermore, the British-Mortimer union is symbolised by two rondels featuring a red and a white dragon, which are the primary symbols of Merlin's prophecy of the struggle between the Britons and the Saxons. These symbols signify that the Mortimers are the true heirs of British heritage, and through this bloodline, Edward IV is linked to the prophecy of the restoration of British sovereignty.

The line of English kings, identified at the very beginning as Saxons and depicted only in yellow, is linked to the French line through the marriage of Edward II and Isabella of France. Through this union, the English kings acquired a new blue-yellow frame. From Isabella of France onwards, the French line is marginalised. Its border remains blue but is marked by a thin line, and the connection of each of the kings of France with his successor is crossed out by a black hatched line. The members of the Valois dynasty are then marked by saying: "This line is closed and is an ungrateful divergent line by right of succession to the French crown."⁷⁶ A graphically similar marking is written below the medallion of Edward III with the inscription: "This is the direct bloodline for the succession to the crowns of England and France."⁷⁷ All the direct and indirect descendants of Edward III have medallions in blue and yellow framing, except for John of Ghent and the youngest Thomas of Woodstock, who are marked in pure yellow. For John of Ghent and his descendants (Henry IV–VI), once again an explanatory sentence is added: "This line is closed

76 Coronation Roll – *Ista linea clausa et ingrata est linea colaturalis in iure succendi que ad coronam ffrauncie.*

77 Coronation Roll – *Ista linea est de recta linea consanguinitatis quo ad successionem coronarum Anglie et ffrauncie.*

and is an ungrateful divergent line by right of succession to the crowns of England and France.”⁷⁸ Furthermore, the line of John of Ghent is cut off by black hatching, just like the dynasty of Valois for the claim to the French crown.

We consider the following point to be of utmost significance in comprehending the symbolic layer depicted in the scroll. Yorkist propaganda portrayed the descendants of John of Ghent primarily as usurpers and traitors, and even associated them directly with the Saxons and the white dragon in Geoffrey’s *History*.⁷⁹ Accordingly, the portrayal of the Lancasters with a pure yellow frame is intended to signify their Saxon nature, which is characterised by deceit and treachery. Furthermore, this symbolic depiction not only establishes the traits of the Lancastrians but also highlights the historical significance of the Lancastrian–Yorkist struggle for the throne. The Yorkist King Edward IV is depicted as a descendant of the Britons, the island’s indigenous inhabitants, whose sovereignty was lost but is prophesied to be restored. In contrast, his adversary, Henry VI, is believed to represent the descendant of the Saxon lineage. Although the text of the scroll does not explicitly state this, the colour scheme of the family lines implies a conflict between the Britons and Saxons predicted in Merlin’s prophecies, along with the subsequent restoration of British sovereignty.

Several indications in the manuscript support the argument that the scroll was heavily influenced by both prophecy and the *History of the Kings of Britain*. Firstly, prophetic figures are ascribed to some individuals in the scroll, particularly kings. While these figures are first used for Edward I, they mostly appear among the descendants of Edward III and Edward IV. This section pertains to individuals whose kinship directly impacted English politics during the first half of the fifteenth century and at the outset of the War of the Roses. Individuals in the manuscript are identified with figures such as *sol*, *taurus*, *draco*, *rubeus draco*, *stella*, *vulpes*, or *talpa*. These designations are not directly explained in the text. However, when viewed in the context of other sources of Yorkist propaganda and political prophecies, they suggest an identification with prophetic figures from Merlin’s prophecies, particularly *the Prophecy of the Six Kings*. The exegesis of this prophecy was widely employed during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.⁸⁰ Contrary to classical

78 Coronation Roll – *Ista linea clausa et ingrata est linea colaturalis [collateralis] in iure succendi [succeedendi] que ad corona(s) Anglie et Ffrancie.*

79 Allan, *Yorkist Propaganda*, 188; British Library, Add. 18268 A. The scroll consists of three columns. The left one is composed of British kings, Welsh princes, and members of the House of York. The names of the monarchs are accompanied by the inscription *Rubeus Draco*. The middle column consists of the kings of France. The right-hand column consists of the Anglo-Saxon kings and members of the House of Lancaster. The inscriptions of this column are then *Albus Draco*.

80 Daniel, *Les prophéties*, 418–38, 474–78.

interpretation, the *Coronation Roll* frequently assigns more than one prophetic figure to a person.⁸¹ The association of the figure of the proud mole (*talpa*) with the Lancastrian king who will bring suffering to the island demonstrates another connection to *the Prophecy of the Six Kings*.

The figure of *gallus* features in the scroll alongside the English kings and Yorkist pretenders to the throne. These individuals are framed in yellow and blue, as the manuscript author perceives them as the true and rightful descendants of Edward III and his mother, Isabella of France. In *The Prophecy of the Six Kings*, Isabella is described as the flower of life,⁸² thereby providing a redemptive role for the English/Saxon kings.

The second prophecy is Merlin's and is recorded in the sixth book of the *History of the Kings of Britain*.⁸³ This is evidenced by the figure of the red dragon that corresponds to Edmund Mortimer. Notably, Edmund's depiction is the last medallion bordered in red and green, which marks the connection of the Mortimer family to the ancient line of British kings. Furthermore, the depiction of the red and white dragon is positioned at the intersection of these two family lines, further delineating an important bloodline that holds the potential for the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecy.

The coat of arms

The scroll is entirely bordered with fifty-four reflective coats of arms displayed on banners and shields. These emblems belong to noble families, territorial units, and rulers, whether real or mythical.⁸⁴ Most of the coats of arms are inscribed, making it easy to identify their respective owners,⁸⁵ even for those that are lesser-known or attributed. The selection of individual coats of arms reflects an effort to establish Edward IV as the rightful ruler of England. Alongside the emblems of noble houses, such as Mortimer and de Clare, there are also coats of arms associated directly with Edward's

81 *The Prophecy of the Six Kings* and its traditional 15th century exegesis: Henry III = the Lamb; Edward I = the dragon; Edward II = the goat with silver horns; Edward III = the lion or boar with tusks at the gates of Paris; Richard II = the donkey with lead hooves; Henry VI = the proud mole. The opponents of the last king, the proud mole, are to be a dragon (Owain Glyndŵr), a wolf (Henry Percy), and a lion (Roger Mortimer), who will divide the mole's kingdom. Taylor, *The Political Prophecy*, 138.

82 Taylor, *The Political Prophecy*, 48–51.

83 Wright, *HRB*, 144–47.

84 Their full enumeration and descriptions can be found in the description of the digitised scroll on: <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/feature/medieval-edward-history/> accessed 20. 1. 2023.

85 Only two coats of arms are not identified by inscriptions in the scroll, and four others were probably inscribed only secondarily.

closest relatives, including the arms of the Lord of Ireland, held by his father Richard of York. The coats of arms attributed to specific individuals can be divided into several categories. The first comprises the saints and patrons of England. The second category comprises the important heroes from whom Edward derives his legitimacy. Moreover, this group consists of real persons and their genuine coats of arms, such as Edmund of Langley or Llywellyn ap Gruffyd, real persons with attributed coats of arms, such as King Sebbi and Constantine the Great, and also fictitious characters with their emblems, including King Arthur, and above all, Brutus of Troy.

The genealogy of Edward IV of York, the King of England, traced back to the Expulsion from the Garden of Eden, is accompanied by the patron saint of England, St George, and his coat of arms (1), as well as the attributed coat of arms of St Sebbi, the Anglo-Saxon king associated with the vision of the Holy Trinity (2).⁸⁶ At the end of the manuscript, two similar arms are positioned adjacent to Edward IV's medallion. On the left, there is the coat of arms associated with Edward himself, which is a combination of the Castilian–Leonian arms, the Anglo–French arms, and a heart-shield bearing the arms of Brutus (3). On the other side, there is a banner inscribed with the title 'King of England and France', held by a white stag (4). How are we to interpret this armorial decoration? The beginning and the end of the pedigree are the most important parts, and the manuscript highlights the most important patron of England (1), a vision of the coming of the Holy Trinity (2), the English royal arms apparently alluding through the white stag to Richard II (3), who, according to Yorkist propaganda, was the last legitimate king of England, and finally the arms of King Edward himself, who is the final offspring of all bloodlines and depicts his claims to the various kingdoms in heraldic form (4). Therefore, the use of the coats of arms on the boundaries of the manuscript emphasises Edward's arrival as the legitimate and prophesied king of England.

The second important arm, integral to the interpretation of the scroll's heraldic system, is the coat of arms of Brutus of Troy, *Azure*, with three crowns in pale *Or*. These arms appear in four different variations throughout the scroll, with a prominent placement at both the beginning and the end as a heart shield within Edward IV's arms. In one instance, it is combined with that of King Pandras of Greece, Brutus's father-in-law. In another instance, Brutus's coat of arms stands independently to the left beside the middle row with depicted figures of rulers. Inscribed with *Invictissimi Bruti*, it is juxtaposed with the arms of the Saxon king of Kent,

86 The connection between St Sebbi, the coat of arms with three crowns and the vision of the divine trinity depicted in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* of the English is highlighted by an anonymous description of a digitised scroll: <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/feature/medieval-edward-history/>, The Banners and Shields of the Edward IV Roll, right 1: banner, accessed on 20.1.2023. See above for the importance of the Trinity and the visions associated with it within the Yorkist propaganda.



Figure 4 Middle part of Coronation Roll of Edward IV. Illustrative image with a row of seven kings and Coat of Arms of Brutus, Æthelberht, Prince of Wales and Cadwallader.

Source: Lewis E 201, Rare Book Department, Free Library of Philadelphia.

Æthelberht, inscribed with *Regis xpi Ethelbti*.⁸⁷ The author of Æthelberht's Coat of Arms had significant freedom in its creation⁸⁸ due to its unconventional composition. The white dragon in these arms probably signifies Æthelberht's descent from the mythical Hengist, the first Saxon leader. King Æthelberht is important because Bede claims he was one of the *Bretwaldas*, the seven Saxon kings of the entire island, and the first Saxon king to convert to Christianity.⁸⁹ Æthelberht's and Brutus's arms appear to function in conjunction with each other as a substitute for Merlin's dragon prophecy of the age-old conflict between Britons and Saxons. The placement of this pair of coats of arms is crucial, as they appear along with a row of depicted kings at points on the scroll's timeline when the balance of power shifts from Britons to Saxons. The next pair of coats of arms also highlights this same *translatio imperii*. Arms inscribed *The Principality of Wales* and *King Cadwallader* refer to the *History of the Kings of Britain* narrative about the last British king whose descendants ceased to be kings and became princes. That led to the important name change of 'Britons' to 'Welsh'.⁹⁰

The coat of arms of Brutus of Troy, with three golden crowns, holds great symbolic importance as it represents the supreme authority over the entire and undivided island of Britain during Brutus's time. The incorporation of these arms into Edward IV's is intended not only to signify a consanguinity with the Trojans but also to identify Edward as the fulfiller of Merlin's prophecies about the restoration of British sovereignty, returning Britain to the order of Brutus's era. In this context, Brutus's coat of arms assumes the greatest significance among the depicted arms, serving as a powerful symbol of a universal island realm, a testament to both the continuity of the royal lineage and the validity of the prophecies.

The manuscript known as the *Coronation Roll* constitutes an utterly unique source of medieval royal representation and power propaganda, principally founded upon a genealogical framework. Although its textual content of historical arguments and prophecies is not dissimilar to other contemporary scrolls, its distinctive graphic design, colour structure, and armorial decoration, render it entirely exceptional. By associating Edward with the British kings, he imbues his claim with a veneer of

87 The Saxon line at the beginning of the manuscript consists of a description of the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy, with Kent listed as the first kingdom, and Æthelberht himself given a prominent place, including his conversion to Christianity at the hands of the missionary Augustine sent to Britain by Gregory the Great.

88 In a red field, there are two golden roundels and one golden mandorla. In the first gold rondel, there is a silver lion, in the second a silver dragon and in the mandorla, there is a standing king in red robes with all the regalia.

89 Sellar, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, 80.

90 Wright, *HRB*, 280–81. For further details, see Pryce, *British or Welsh*.

antiquity and continuity, situating him not only among the spiritual successors of Brutus's realm but also among his direct offspring with the utmost legitimacy.

Conclusion

As demonstrated by these case studies, the primary purpose of the sources utilised was to present the ruler with a distinguished and ancient lineage. The main goal of this study was to highlight the similarities in composition strategies of the presented genealogical diagram, despite being in different mediums. Both examples are unique representations of their standard type.

The first shared characteristic between the Luxembourg and Plantagenet court depictions is the principle of awe-inspiring splendor. Whether the recipient was standing in a representative place surrounded by a gallery of ancestors or regarded *the Coronation Roll* unfurled at its full length of several meters, adorned with numerous kings, the genealogical diagram was designed to impress. Notable ancestors were thus presented in the immediate proximity of the current ruler, the final link in the chain. It was crucial to impress the recipient at first glance, without requiring further examination.

The second shared trait is the historiographical background of the material. The recipient who commenced a closer examination of the diagrams probably required profound historical awareness to comprehend their meaning. An analysis of the *Coronation Roll* reveals that such comprehensive understanding of the symbolic significance was attainable through familiarity with the historical narrative of Geoffrey of Monmouth, which was principally rooted in the British Isles. In the *Luxembourg genealogy*, a deeper historiographical understanding was apparent in the selection of ancestors, which aligned with Giovanni Marignolli's chronicle interpretation.

The third feature common to both case studies is the blending of consanguinity and constitutional principles, which are intricately intertwined. The dynasty and genealogical diagrams depict a selective part of the ruling house and their ancestors, who are more or less kin. Consanguinity is one of the primary arguments for the continuity of medieval rulership. The examples presented show the demand for making false bonds or constructing mythical kinships.

These principles become intermingled, with the diagram emphasising a continuous line of rulers even at the cost of grafting kinship. This highlights the unbroken legitimacy of a given title. Although these false bonds tend to be few, they are crucial and can easily be misconstrued as being part of the lineage, which typically invokes the concept of kinship. Thus, during the Middle Ages, lineage was not viewed purely in terms of consanguinity but rather as a complex web of bonds.

The fourth point is the incorporation of biblical, ancient, or mythical ancestors with whom the kinship ties are entirely fictional. These fabricated kinship ties are accorded the same importance as real relationships. Such figures include the legendary founders of dynasties (Brutus and Faramundus), as well as rulers of famous fallen realms (Troy and Babylon), and even pagan deities portrayed as heroic figures (Saturn and Woden). Both types of genealogies share a common thread in the inclusion of Trojan ancestors, which lends antiquity and prestige to the entire lineage.

A fifth aspect that can enhance the prestige of a genealogical diagram is the presence of a redemptive element. Ancient ancestors add an aspect of the worldly glory of conquerors and rulers that is not sufficient in its own right. In both cases discussed, the bearer of the redemptive element is the queen, who is not a saint but plays a crucial role in prophecies. In the case of Edward IV's pedigree and the *Coronation Roll*, this role is fulfilled by Isabella of France, who brings redemption to the line of Saxon kings. In Marignolli's chronicle of Charles IV's lineage, it is his mother, Elisabeth of Bohemia, whose lineage is linked to descendants of the biblical Japheth. She thus adds this virtue to the Luxembourgs, who, on the other hand, are descendants of another son of Noah's, Ham. The redemptive role of both queens is symbolised in the prophecies by the lily flower⁹¹ seen in 'Flower of Life' in Merlin's *Prophecy of the Six Kings* used in the *Coronation Roll*, and similarly, in Marignolli's chronicle, Elisabeth of Bohemia is named as the 'flores heliseos,'⁹² or 'Fleur de lys'.

These observations constitute a shared strategy for constructing genealogies. We consider the term 'genealogy' as a selection of kinship ties, and since it is a selection, genealogy can be regarded as a genre. This genealogical genre can be applied in the two non-bordering areas under examination. Genealogy and chronicle are both genres that convey the same narrative, but the difference is that the chronicle is typically more intricate, allowing for a more detailed account of the relationships and significant actions of important characters. On the other hand, genealogy presents a selection of characters and relationships from the narrative that is often more broadly described in chronicles. The selection may be presented in the form of a genealogical diagram, which could be depicted in a simple line on a mural or in a more elaborate version on a scroll. The genealogical diagram is a selection of ancestors the commissioner wanted to surround himself with.

91 Pastoureau, *History of Symbols*, 92–96.

92 FRB III, 521.

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Table 1 Description of figures with coats of arms in the middle tier of fol. 16v, Cod. 60.5. Aug. 2, Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel

Middle tier directed to the left: members of Charles's IV family										
person	lifespan	number according to Wolfenbüttel ms.	coat of arms n 1	Title/House	coat of arms n 2	Title/House	coat of arms n 3	Title/House	relation to Charles IV	note
Charles IV of Luxembourg	1316–1378	1	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	son of Bohemian king/ King of Bohemia	Or, an eagle Sable	King of Romans/ Roman Emperor	x	x	x	x
Anne of Świdnica	1339–1362	2	Party per pale Argent and Or, an eagle displayed per pale Gules and Sable armed with a crescent treflée Argent	daughter of duke of Świdnica	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	Queen of Bohemia	Or, an eagle Sable	Queen of Romans/ Roman Empress	3 rd wife	x
Elisabeth of Bohemia	1358–1373	x	Per fess indented Gules and Argent	betrothed to duke of Bavaria	x	x	x	x	daughter	betrothed until 1366 to Otto V of Bavaria
Anne of Palatine	1329–1353	3	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	Queen of Bohemia	Or, an eagle Sable	Queen of Romans	x	x	2 nd wife	
Wenceslas	1350–1351	4	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	son of Bohemian king	x	x			son	

<i>person</i>	<i>lifespan</i>	<i>number according to Wolfenbüttel ms.</i>	<i>coat of arms n 1</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 2</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 3</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>relation to Charles IV</i>	<i>note</i>
Blanche of Valois	1317–1348	5	Azur, semé-de-lys Or	daughter of French king	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	Queen of Bohemia	x	x	1st wife	
Catherine of Bohemia	1335–1349	6	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	daughter of Bohemian king	Gules, a fess Argent	Duchess of Austria	x	x	daughter	married Rudolf IV of Austria until 1365, from 1366 married to Otto V of Bavaria
Margaret of Bohemia	1342–1395	7	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	daughter of Bohemian king	Per pale, I barry of eight Gules Argent II Azur, semé-de-lys Or	Queen consort of Hungary	x	x	daughter	

Table 2 Description of figures with coats of arms in the bottom tier of fol. 16v, Cod. 60.5. Aug. 2, Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel

Bottom tier directed to the right: members of the John of Bohemia's family										
<i>persone</i>	<i>lifespan</i>	<i>number according to Wolfenbüttel ms.</i>	<i>coat of arms n 1</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 2</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 3</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>relation to John of Bohemia</i>	<i>note</i>
Margaret of Luxembourg	1313–1341	8	Per fess indented Gules and Argent	Duchess of Bavaria	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	daughter of Bohemian king	x	x	daughter	
Bonne of Luxembourg	1315–1349	9	Azur, semé-de-lys Or	wife of Duke of Normandy, later French king	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	daughter of Bohemian king	x	x	daughter	John II of France became French king after Bonne's death, but he was king at the time of the creation of the paintings

<i>persone</i>	<i>lifespan</i>	<i>number according to Wolfenbüttel ms.</i>	<i>coat of arms n 1</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 2</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 3</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>relation to John of Bohemia</i>	<i>note</i>
Charles IV of Luxembourg	1316–1378	10	Or, an eagle Sable	King of Romans/ Roman Emperor	Or, a lion rampant queue forchée Sable	unidentified	Gules, a lion rampant Or	unidentified	son	There is the possibility that 2 nd and 3 rd arms are imaginary and they should represent kingdoms of Italy and Burgundy
Ottokar	1318–1320	11	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	son of Bohemian king	x	x	x	x	son	
John Henry of Luxembourg	1322–1375	12	Azure, an eagle chequé Gules and Argent	Margrave of Moravia	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent	son of Bohemian king	x	x	son	

<i>persone</i>	<i>lifespan</i>	<i>number according to Wolfenbüttel ms.</i>	<i>coat of arms n 1</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 2</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>coat of arms n 3</i>	<i>Title/House</i>	<i>relation to John of Bohemia</i>	<i>note</i>
Anne of Luxembourg	1323–1338	13	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	daughter of Bohemian king	x	x	x	x	daughter	
Elisabeth	1323–1324	14	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	daughter of Bohemian king	x	x	x	x	daughter	
Elisabeth of Bohemia	1292–1330	15	Gules, a lion rampant queue forchée Argent crowned	daughter of Bohemian king, Queen of Bohemia	x	x	x	x	1st wife	
John of Bohemia	1296–1346	16	Barry of ten Argent and Azure, a Lion rampant Gules	Count of Luxembourg	x	x	x	x	x	A coat of arms identifying him as the King of Bohemia is shared with Elisabeth or absents