Thronis meis binis: Validation Through History
in the Court Art of Charles IV

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Abstract

Bohemian art of the second half of the fourteenth century is closely associated with the personality of Charles IV, Emperor of the Romans and King of Bohemia (1316-1378). In an effort to legitimize his reign as ruler of the Holy Roman Empire and to raise the profile of his ancestral Bohemian lands, he leaned on the power of history to reveal his heritage as stemming, on one side, from an illustrious line of emperors including Charlemagne, and on the other, from the dynasty of Bohemian sovereigns. He recognized that art could display this legitimization and so implemented a programme of historicism in his artistic commissions. His impact on Bohemian art was indirect as well: his ideas influenced the art patronage of his closest court advisers, as seen in this paper through the examples of two illuminated manuscripts, the *Evangeliary of John of Opava* and the *Liber viaticus*.

L'art bohémien de la seconde moitié du quatorzième siècle est associé étroitement avec la personnalité de Charles IV, Empereur des Romains et Roi de la Bohême (1316-1378). Dans ses efforts pour légitimer son règne, en tant que gouverneur du saint empire romain et pour élever le profil de ses terres bohémiennes ancestrales, il s'appuya sur la puissance de l'histoire pour révéler son héritage comme étant issu, d'une part, d'une lignée d'empereurs illustres incluant Charlemagne, et d'autre part, d'une dynastie de souverains bohémiens. Il reconnût que l'art pouvait aider à cette légitimation et, dès lors, mit en oeuvre un programme d'historicisme dans le cadre de ses commissions artistiques. Son impact sur l'art bohémien fut également indirect de par ses idées qui influencèrent le mécénat de ses plus proches conseillers à la cour, comme nous le verrons dans ce document, par le biais des exemples de deux manuscrits éclairés, soient l'*Évangéliaire de Jean d'Opave* et le *Liber viaticus*.

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I dedicate this thesis to my grandfather, Yaroslav Haywas, who has always been instrumental in my pursuit of knowledge through his ceaseless study and countless editorials of history and current events, his animated way of relating his own history to me, his various nation-building endeavors, and his mastery of oratory which stems from a sharp and realistic perception of facts. His encouragement and persistent nudges finally resulted in this thesis, which is itself about history and nation-building.

Review of Literature

Charles IV. Emperor of the Romans, King of Bohemia.

There has been much written on Charles IV and all aspects of his reign: political, social, economic, cultural. Biographies of Charles IV in monograph form include: Josef Šusta's *Karel IV. Otec a syn 1330-1346* (Prague 1946), *Karel IV. Za císařkou korunou 1346-1355* (Prague 1948) and František Kavka's *Vláda Karla IV. za jeho císařství 1355-1378* (Prague 1993). Other biographies include: Jiří Spěváček's *Karel IV. Život a dílo. 1316-1378* (Prague 1979), Ferdinand Seibt's *Karl IV. Ein Kaiser in Europa 1346 bis 1378* (Munich 1978), Heinz Stoob's *Karl IV. und seine Zeit* (Graz - Vienna - Köln 1990), and František Kavka's *Karel IV. Historie života velkého vladaře* (Prague 1998). Numerous studies in collected works tackle such subjects as early humanism and Bohemian art under Charles' reign, and prophetic historicism and the Přemyslid tradition in *Karolus Quartus*, edited by Václav Vaněček (Prague 1984). Other compilations are: *Kaiser Karl IV., Staatsmann und Mäzen*, edited by Ferdinand Seibt (Munich 1978), *Kaiser Karl IV. 1313-1378., Forschungen über Kaiser und Reich*, edited by Hans Patz (Göttingen 1978), and *Karl IV., Politik und Ideologie im 14. Jahrhundert*, edited by Evamarie Engel (Weimar 1982).

Bohemian art under Charles IV.

Max Dvořák's work, *Die Illuminatoren des Johann von Neumarkt*[1], sparked the study of Bohemian book illumination in the Caroline age and, as a result, it began to receive wide attention much earlier than did panel and wall painting of the same period.[2] He

[1]Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses XXII, 1901.

[2]Josef Krása, "Knižní malba," *České umění gotické 1350-1420*, ed. Jaroslav Pěšina (Praha: Academia 1970) 244.

was the first to bring the *Liber viaticus* into the light of scholarship.[3] Two decades later in *Čechy a Avignon*, E. Dostál acknowledged Dvořák's contribution to the study of Bohemian book illumination and further noted that subsequent studies by Czech art historians had much relied on Dvořák's seminal work. However, Dostál states that while Dvořák rightly showed that manuscript illumination came into its own in the circle of the chancellor John of Středa around 1360, comprised a new style of miniature painting, and was compatible with French and Italian art, he errs in writing that this innovative trend was invented by Czech illuminators.[4] Dostál, together with Karel Chytil in his edited work *Památky českého umění illuminátorského*[5], also rejected Dvořák's theories about the Avignonese origin of the Italianism of the master of the *Liber viaticus* and instead offered that Italianism in Bohemian book illumination originated in the Sienese painting of Ambrogio and Pietro Lorenzetti and Simone Martini, and their contemporaries in book illumination, especially the Master of the Codex of San Giorgio, Niccolò Tegliacci and Lippo Vanni, while Gerhard Schmidt offers a possible Bolognese origin.[6] Dostál was the first to suggest that the coronation journey of Charles IV to Rome in 1355 had a more substantial impact on Bohemian book illumination than was previously thought[7] and that French Gothic painting was another main influence on that art.[8]

Post-World War II scholarship concerning Caroline painting grew to such an extent that in quantitative terms it equals all previous literature on the subject, and it is in this period that scholars first cite historicism as a characteristic of art under Charles IV.[9]

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[3]Ibid. 268.
[4]E. Dostál, *Čechy a Avignon. Přispěvky k vzniku českého umění illuminátorského v XIV. století.* (Brno: Matice Moravské, 1922) 1.
[5]vol.1 (Praha: Archaeologická komise při České Akademii, 1915) 58.
[6]Gerhard Schmidt, "Bohemian Painting up to 1450," *Gothic Art in Bohemia*, ed. Erich Bachmann, trans. Gerald Onn (Oxford: Phaidon Press Limited, 1977) 43.
[7]Dostál 61.
[8]Ibid. 100-2.
[9]Jaroslav Pesina, "Otázky ceského malírstvi doby Karlovy," *Karolus Quartus*, ed. Václav Vanecek (Praha: Univerzita Karlova, 1984) 372, 375.

Gotik in Böhmen (Munich 1969) edited by Karl Maria Swoboda, and its English translation *Gothic Art in Bohemia* (Oxford 1977), were instrumental in widening the audience of the study of Bohemian art, while Samuel Harrison Thomson's "Learning at the Court of Charles IV"[10] reveals the erudite circle of advisers that the emperor assembled and their capacity for the patronage of the arts.

Antonín Friedl has published widely on the life and work of the emperor's court painter, Theodoric: *Master Theodoricus: On His Style of Painting* (Prague 1947), *Magister Theodoricus* (Prague 1956), and *Počátky mistra Theodorika* (Prague 1963).

Other leading scholars in the field of Bohemian art in the period of Charles IV include Karel Stejskal, whose work *European Art in the Fourteenth Century* (Prague 1978) does much to illustrate the art patronage of Charles IV; Josef Krása through his numerous publications on Bohemian manuscript illumination; and Antonín Matějček and Jaroslav Pěšina who published a collaborative study, *Czech Gothic Painting 1350-1450* (Prague 1950).

[10]*Speculum*, 25 (1950) 1-20.

Introduction

The golden age of Bohemia and consequently of Bohemian book illumination occurred in the latter half of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century under the reigns of Charles IV and his son, Wenceslas IV. To understand the nature of Bohemian art of this period it is necessary to be acquainted with the personality of Charles IV, Emperor of the Romans and King of Bohemia (1316-1378), and to know the motivations behind his various state-building initiatives, because it was Charles who in fact sparked the beginning of a wide-ranging programme of court art through his patronage; it was he who inspired his closest advisers to be equally active patrons; and it was his desire to raise the quality of cultural production of his nation that brought foreign artists to Bohemia. His importation of architects, painters, mosaicists, and book illuminators from the west and south resulted in the formation of a new art in Bohemia which was born from the melding of Byzantine, Italian, and French styles filtered through local aesthetic sensibilities.

Charles IV descended from the House of Luxembourg and the Bohemian dynasty of the Přemyslids. Even before being crowned king he set forth to invigorate his ancestral Bohemian lands and raise their profile from one of a backwater to that of a leading European state. His primary reason for doing so was to establish the kingdom of Bohemia as an advantageous foundation and power base from whence his line would rule the Holy Roman Empire. His policy therefore was to confirm the royal power in the Bohemian lands by economic, legal, and cultural reforms and to make that kingdom the center of the empire, thus securing the imperial throne for the Luxembourg successors.

Having spent his youth at the court in Paris, he gained an impressive education in letters and a profound comprehension of the royal sphere and its duties and possibilites which enabled him to nurture a similar court in Prague with the accompanying

ceremonies, to assemble a capable cabinet of advisers, and to create a visual vocabulary (such as a cathedral in the style of the French High Gothic) needed to reflect the majesty of the Bohemian royalty.

Later, Charles' adolescent years proved highly valuable in forming his diplomatic skills. His father, John of Luxembourg, sent him to defend the Luxembourg holdings in northern Italy and after several battles, intrigues, and negotiations, Charles learned the art of politics. Gradually Charles developed a keen sense of *realpolitik*, to borrow a nineteenth-century term, as seen in his response to Petrarch's request that the emperor renew Rome as *caput mundi*. Charles refused point blank because he considered the idea of a *renovatio Romae* too idealistic and rejected "antiquarian enthusiasm as inadequate for the basis of a practical political program."[1]

The future king embarked on his quest of state-building initially by travelling to Avignon in 1344 to seek the favor of the pope in creating an archbishopric in Prague in order to shed its dependence on the Mainz archbishopric. Subsequently, Charles and his father laid the foundation of the cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague in the same year. Charles tackled his plan from all sides. Politically, he gained the loyalty of the Bohemian nobles and was elected King of Bohemia, then King of the Romans and was finally crowned Roman Emperor in 1355. In the all-important sector of the economy, he took advantage of the geographical crossroads that is Prague and fortified towns on the main east-west and north-south trade routes, while building a "New Town" in Prague that was to become the financial center of the new bustling capital city of the Holy Roman Empire. In the area of education Charles established a university to attract students to Prague and himself contributed to the recording of the nation's history for posterity in the numerous chronicles and histories he wrote and commissioned; in the cultural sphere he

[1]C.C. Bayley, "Petrarch, Charles IV, and the 'Renovatio Imperi,'" *Speculum*, 17 (1942), 323-341.

instigated a plethora of programmes including the decoration of abbeys, churches, and his own castle at Karlštejn. Charles IV achieved his lifetime goal of reinvigorating the kingdom of Bohemia as is evidenced in the

> growing prosperity of crafts and trade, a solid monetary system enjoying hard currency status (thanks to the minting of coins of the kingdom's own metal) [which] naturally roused interest in the development of contacts with the countries of the Crown of Bohemia [and] inevitably brought about a situation whereby the economically powerful Czech state in the heart of Europe was gradually becoming its true center.[2]

Charles IV's example of taking action inspired his advisers to do the same. Indeed, his enthusiasm for initiating economic or cultural programmes undoubtedly effected the copious cultural patronage of the first archbishop of Prague, Ernest of Pardubice, who founded and furnished monasteries in Kladsko, Sadsko, and Rokycany, commissioned books for their libraries and that at Roudnice monastery, and contributed to the decoration of St. Vitus cathedral. He also supported a scriptorium for the production of liturgical books, which employed at least two painters.[3] Bishop John of Dražice brought many books from France which were used as examples by the scriptorium at Roudnice, and also commissioned books from that workshop.[4] Chancellor John of Středa was the bibliophile *par excellence* of the Caroline court and employed scribes and illuminators in Prague and in the village centers of Kroměříž, Brno, and Modřice, providing them with prebends so that they could devote themselves entirely to that endeavor.[5] He provided

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[2]Bohumil Dušik and Karel Soukup, *Karlštejn* (Praha: Středočeské Nakladatelství a Knihkupectví, 1984) 32.
[3]Josef Krása, "Knižní malba," *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění*, ed. Rudolf Chadraba (Praha: Academia, 1984) 405.
[4]Karel Chytil, ed., *Památky českého umění illuminátorského*, vol.1 (Praha: Archaeologická komise při České Akademii, 1915) 58.
[5]Miriam Bohatcová et al., *Česká kniha v proměnách staletí* (Praha: Panorama, 1990) 70-78.

the necessary conditions at court to nurture the arts, advising the emperor on all matters pertaining to culture.[6] The second archbishop of Prague, John Očko of Vlašim, commissioned a votive panel[7] for the archbishop's chapel in Roudnice in which are pictured six Bohemian patron saints as well as Charles IV and Wenceslas IV, revealing a knowledge and appreciation of the Bohemian past on the part of the archbishop, no doubt instilled by Charles IV's profound respect of history and heritage. This is merely a small number of examples of the contribution of Charles' advisers to the spread of court art, and his impact on their commissions.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate the personality and motivations of Charles IV as an indispensable tool in understanding Bohemian art of the second half of the fourteenth century. It was through the example of his own cultural patronage that his advisers followed his lead in their own commissions, thereby spreading the styles of the Prague court art into the countryside in the various monasteries they endowed.

Second, an in-depth study of two manuscripts of the period in question follows which shows the character of Bohemian art as a melding of foreign styles (Byzantine, Italian, and French) and local traditions, a character which resulted directly from the policies of Charles IV in his various state-building actions. I have chosen to address book illumination to show Charles' indirect influence on Bohemian art, and because manuscripts constitute a well documented area of art of this time in which the court advisers were most active in commissions.

The emperor's appreciation of history (in the form of recorded chronicles) as a legitimizing agent, which would bring prestige to the kingdom of Bohemia as the product of a long and illustrious history, was mirrored in his implementation of historicism in the artistic programmes of Karlštejn, the Prague cathedral, and many other examples.

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[6]Krása in *Dějiny* 408.
[7]Prague, National Gallery, inv. No. 084.

Charles' desire to be abreast of current trends in other leading European countries, for instance humanism in Italy, because of his own intellectual interests, and to align his kingdom with the level of those countries, led to his inviting artists to Prague from abroad which in turn resulted in the presence of foreign elements in Bohemian art. Even his highly personal approach to religion, as seen through the confessions in his autobiography, his writing of prayers to the Virgin Mary, and his propagation of the cult of the Virgin Mary by the College of Mansionaries established by himself and Ernest of Pardubice, affected the depiction of religious images; hence, subjects like the lives of Christ and Mary which emphasize their humanity were increasingly painted.

Bohemian art of the second half of the fourteenth century is inherently linked to the person of Charles IV, whether it was through his direct or indirect involvement in artistic programmes. Direct involvement meant the commissioning of decorative projects like that of the Chapel of the Holy Cross at Karlštejn or the sculptural busts of St. Vitus cathedral, the significance of which will be discussed in detail in the paper; indirect involvement took the form of Charles' influence over his cabinet of advisers and his instilling in them his own concept of historicism, his veneration of Bohemian history and heritage, his appreciation of Italian art.

No written documents survive as to Charles' wishes pertaining to specific programmes, but through close observation of his character, writings, and activities much can be inferred. For example, scholars like Antonín Friedl and Karel Stejskal have shown that the emperor cultivated personal relationships with artists. The town records of Hradčany (the castle district of Prague) reveal that there is a record for the "house of the Emperor's painter Theodoric," reflecting Theodoric's relatively high economic position, one that must have been due to Charles' "personal attitude" to the painter and a "reward for his work."[8] Stejskal cites the "exceptional conditions at the court of Charles

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[8]Antonín Friedl, *Master Theodoricus: On His Style of Painting* (Prague: Artia, 1947) 26.

IV, where creative personalities were given outstandingly high appreciation," such as the emperor's conferring the term 'ingenioso' in praise of Theodoric's execution of the decoration of the main Karlštejn chapel, or Charles' response to a letter from Francesco Petrarch dictated to the Roman Tribune Cola di Rienzo and Chancellor John of Středa in which Petrarch is called "imperial friend and husband of the Muses of Helicon."[9] Such intimate nomenclatures must be a sign that the emperor himself was actively involved in the production of the artistic and architectural projects he so carefully conceptualized so that they could portray the majesty of his reign. Furthermore, a comparison between the first and second halves of the fourteenth century in terms of the output and quality of art discloses that the first indications of the substantial flowering of Bohemian art occur in the 1340s, and this coincides with Charles' introductory phases of state-building. Indeed, Charles had a hand in all aspects of his reign - political, economic, social, religious, cultural - so that it is impossible fully to comprehend this period in Bohemian art without studying his contribution to these areas.

Jaroslav Pěšina has remarked that attributing the historicist elements in Bohemian art of the Caroline era completely to the emperor's personal initiative is difficult, because it is not known to what extent the reception of antique and Byzantine styles was due to "commonly known connections with the Slavic East and the Greek origins of Christianity in the Bohemian lands."[10] However, as Karel Stejskal points out, Byzantium only in limited instances had direct bearing on Bohemia through imports and the activities of Greek goldsmiths in Prague, and that the intermediary between Byzantium and Bohemia was Venice. That city and its surrounding areas, which long had connections with the Byzantine and Slavic East and in which many artists of Greek origin were active, initiated ties with Bohemia already in the thirteenth century through political, economic,

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[9]Karel Stejskal, *European Art in the Fourteenth Century* (Prague: Artia, 1978) 190-2.
[10]Pěšina "Otázky," 376.

and cultural relations.[11] Those connections were reinforced by Charles IV, who in his youth was involved in northern Italian affairs in his position as governor of the Luxembourg lands in place of his father, and who invited artists from that region to work on the various artistic programmes of the Prague court. I submit that the presence of Byzantinizing elements in Bohemian art was indeed due to those northern Italian artists and to local Bohemian artists who copied Italian works, and thus was another example of the impact that Charles IV had on the art of his time.

The Byzantinizing aspects mentioned above constitute one instance of historicist tendencies apparent in Caroline art. Other periods of history that are drawn upon in the art include the biblical, Carolingian, and earlier French Gothic among others, as seen in the decorative programmes of Karlštejn, the Prague cathedral, and panel paintings commissioned by Charles' cabinet advisers, all of which appear in this study. The amount of different periods and media in which historicism appears in Bohemian art is significant and the extent of Charles IV's instigation of this cannot be underestimated. The emperor leaned on history for specific ends: he viewed it as an aid in lending legitimacy to his reign which was a necessary weapon against the opposition to his imperial throne. If he could show a line of descendancy from illustrious rulers, he could support his claims to the throne. Also, he strove to cement the present and future of the kingdom of Bohemia by showing the past strength of the Bohemian lands. Charles believed in history's capacity to verify, to lend credence, because of its very nature of being a vast passage of time. He had a profound sense of the distance of time and of his kingdom's, his empire's, and his own place in that time. Hence, Charles commissioned the writing of chronicles of his crown lands, and even composed a Bohemian history himself. His autobiography was intended to instruct his successors in matters of

[11]Karel Stejskal, "Theodorik, Byzanc a Benátky," *Umění a řemesla*, ed. Jana Lomová and Ondřej Sekora, vol.2 (Praha: Panorama, 1978) 32.

diplomacy through accounts of the events of his early career; thus the recording of contemporary incidents claimed the same weight as the distant past, and probably was related to the glorification of Charles' reign. History, then, proved a sufficiently substantial and effective tool that it was implemented in the field of art as well, if not by direct order of the emperor, then incontrovertibly through the weight of his ideas and his importation of foreign artists who brought with them Byzantinizing or French High Gothic styles recalling glorious reigns and moments in history which, incorporated into Bohemian art, would enhance the kingdom it represented, and through it, Charles and his Luxembourg line. The role of Charles IV, King of Bohemia and Roman Emperor, then, comprised an inherent part of the creation of Bohemian art of the second half of the fourteenth century and is inseparable from its analysis and understanding.

Chapter 1: Charles IV, Emperor and King

The education and rise of Charles IV.

Charles IV was born in Prague on 14 May 1316 to King John of Luxembourg and Elizabeth, daughter of King Wenceslas II and the last offspring of the Bohemian dynasty of the Přemyslids. Charles' grandfather, the Count of Luxembourg who later became Henry VII, Emperor of the Romans, had married his son to the Bohemian princess in an effort to aggrandize his power and strengthen his family line. In 1311 John was crowned King of Bohemia and that country was added to the Luxembourg holdings[1], which were located in the Ardennes between the Rhine and Maas and where the family had been counts since 1160.[2]

It was as the result of his father's connection to French royalty[3] that Charles spent his formative years at the French court. He was sent to Paris at age seven for a number of reasons, one being that his father spent most of his time abroad and feared any court intrigues that might turn his son and heir against him. Other reasons included the need for a proper royal upbringing befitting a Luxembourg heir and the possibility for an advantageous marriage. Soon after his arrival in Paris Charles was married to Margaret, called Blanche, of Valois, daughter of Charles of Valois, uncle of the French king.[4]

For seven years Charles lived in Paris and gained knowledge first by learning to read the Hours of the Virgin, then through instruction from his tutor, Pierre Robert de Rosiers, abbot of Fécamp, the future Pope Clement VI. Charles relates in his autobiography that

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[1]Joachim Leuschner, *Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. Sabine MacCormack (New York: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1980) 104.
[2]F.R.H. Du Boulay, *Germany in the Later Middle Ages* (London: The Athlone Press, 1983) 34.
[3]John of Luxembourg's sister, Marie, was married to Charles IV of France.
[4]Kavka 26.

he was so moved by "the abbot's facility of speech or eloquence" during a particular mass that he acquainted himself with de Rosiers who "treated [him] kindly and fatherly, often teaching [him] the sacred Scriptures."[5] The chronicler Beneš of Weitmil writes that Charles knew the Latin classics, and was particularly interested in the historians. Little evidence exists as to the extent of his involvement in the university of Paris although Beneš of Weitmil does state that Charles did attend the university in some capacity[6]; however, it is reasonable to assume that Charles mastered Latin and French during his seven years in Paris and, perhaps more importantly, acquired first-hand knowledge of the workings of a royal court, its protocol and traditions, by being an eyewitness and occasional participant. He writes that his uncle, the French king, "had good counsellors, and his court shone with a group of elder statesmen, spiritual and secular,"[7] a useful observation which he must have recalled when he assembled his own circle of political advisers, themselves learned scholars and church officials, in Prague. At court, the concept of state piety as espoused by Louis IX, the teachings of Thomas of Aquinas about the moral authority of the state, and the ideals of absolutism must have made an impression on the heir apparent.[8]

Even as a young child and adolescent, Charles would have been impressed by the pomp of official functions, the grandeur of spaces like the Sainte-Chapelle, with its sublime colored light, the mystery of venerated relics of Christendom contained in that same lavish chapel built by Louis IX especially for that purpose. Charles IV could have modelled the annual ceremonies he instituted in Prague surrounding the royal and imperial relics on those performed on Good Friday at the Sainte-Chapelle paying homage

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[5]Charles IV, "Autobiography," *Readings in Medieval History*, ed. Patrick J. Geary, 2nd ed. (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1997) 618.
[6]Kavka 32.
[7]Charles IV, "Autobiography" in Geary 617.
[8]Kavka 34-35, 166.

to the relics there[9]; indeed, he probably fashioned Karlstejn castle, his own repository of relics, after the Sainte-Chapelle, as is discussed below.

As regards other forms of art, Charles, the student, learned to read Latin from Bibles, Books of Hours, and perhaps other manuscripts illuminated by the best craftsmen in Paris located within the royal collection. He would have seen impressively decorated codices used in liturgical processions where the king was in attendance. Perhaps it was in Paris where Charles' expansive appetite for collecting precious objects, such as relics, and antique and Byzantine cameos, was whetted; the French royal treasury contained many of these.[10] It was certainly his years at the French court, then, that a substantial and indelible mark was made on the future Charles IV in terms of his education of letters and history, his perception of royalty and all its accoutrements, and the role of art and architecture as displays of royal magnificence.

Having spent seven years in Paris, Charles turned to military matters. His father sent him to Luxembourg and then to northern Italy where Charles fought to augment the possessions of the house of Luxembourg. Some of the towns already under the protection of King John - Brescia, Parma, Reggio, Modena, Pavia, Bergamo, Cremona, and Lucca - were secretly being divided between the king's enemies, Robert King of Apulia [Naples], the governors of Florence, Milan, Mantua, Ferrara, and the Lord of Verona. Following the battle of San Felice Charles claimed his first military victory with his allies, the leading citizens of Parma, Reggio, Modena, Siena, Cremona, Pistoia, and

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[9]Jiří Fayt and Jan Royt, *Magister Theodoricus, Court Painter of Emperor Charles IV: Decorations of the Sacred Spaces at Castle Karlštejn*, trans. Dagmar Steinová, exhibition catalogue (Prague: National Gallery, 1997) 54.

[10]"...the best-known of these [antique carved cameos] was the Grande Camée de Sainte-Chapelle with the Apotheosis of Germanicus...It probably came to the Chapelle under St. Louis, who perhaps had it given to him by the Emperor Balduin II of Constantinople. In 1334 it became for a time the property of Charles' one-time teacher Clement IV, who collected such antiquities." Stejskal 27.

Lucca.[11] Three years spent in northern Italy as governor in place of his father taught the still youthful Charles the arts of war and diplomacy which groomed him into an able negotiator, strategist, and tactician. And as such he returned to Prague in 1333 with the title of Margrave of Moravia, which endowed him with royal powers in the absence of the king.[12]

Back in Bohemia Charles attempted to regain some of the royal political strength whittled down by the nobles who reigned rather freely while King John was frequently away. For two years the young prince used the diplomatic skills he obtained in Italy, gained whatever loyalties he could among the various baronial factions, and consolidated his power among the leading monasteries and important towns, so that by the time John returned to Prague, Charles had built up a significant following. He managed to repurchase some castles and royal possessions that the king had pawned and even repaired the Bohemian castles of Tyrov, Lichnice, Luže, Nové Hrady, Písek, and others and the Moravian castles of Luckov, Telč, Olomouc, Brno, and Znojmo. Charles also began reconstruction of the royal residence in Prague in 1334, having seen in France that the splendor of the residence reflects the might of the ruler. However, the king was not ready to be outsmarted by his own son and proceeded to divest him of all his offices save the title of Margrave of Moravia. Once again he sent Charles beyond the borders of the kingdom of Bohemia, this time to Poland, to subdue the territory of Münsterberg so that the entire region of Silesia and Oppeln could be incorporated into the Luxembourg lands.[13]

By 1341 Charles was becoming more popular with the Bohemian nobles and in that year was confirmed heir to the throne. A year later father and son agreed to a contract

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[11]Charles IV, "Autobiography" in Geary 623.
[12]S. Harrison Thomson, "Learning at the Court of Charles IV," *Speculum*, 25, no.1, (1950) 2.
[13]Charles IV, "Autobiography," in Geary 623-4.

which would financially compensate the former in the amount of 5000 measures of silver each year in exchange for his not returning to Bohemia.[14] Finally the *de facto* ruler of Bohemia, Charles could proceed with his many plans for the renewal of the Bohemian lands, although he did still engage in his father's military campaigns until 1346 when at the Battle of Crécy King John was killed fighting the English on the side of the French. Charles' succession to the Bohemian throne was assured and in 1347 he was crowned King of Bohemia.

His rise to the imperial throne, however, proved more complex and resulted from a lengthy and bitter conflict between the papacy and Ludwig of Bavaria, King of the Romans. Pope John XXII, and after him Clement VI, had desired to install the French king in the position of Roman emperor. In a series of ill-fated measures Ludwig lost the support of the German princes who had long favored him but who now wanted to save the empire. Five of the royal electors, including John of Luxembourg as King of Bohemia, conspired to overthrow Ludwig and set up Charles as opposition-king. The two absent electors were the Palatinate and Brandenburg electors, who were both members of the Wittelsbach family, Ludwig's relatives. On 11 July 1346 the five electors named Charles King of the Romans. However, Ludwig maintained himself as head of the empire and convened a diet of the imperial cities in September 1346 which declared Charles' election unlawful. Ludwig died in October 1347 and a second election took place in 1349 after a unanimous vote and Charles became Roman king this time beyond any legal doubt.[15] On 5 April 1355, he was crowned emperor in Rome henceforth using the title Charles IV, Emperor of Rome.[16]

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[14]Peter Demetz, *Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes in the Life of a European City* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997) 74.
[15]Leuschner 114.
[16]Kavka 116, 341-2.

In order to prevent the ambiguities that so often resulted from the elections of the Roman king, Charles issued a document called the Golden Bull in 1356 in which the electoral procedure was specifically outlined, as were the seven persons of the electoral college, their privileges and responsibilities. It also constituted a response to the recurrent contentions for the imperial throne by Charles' rivals, the Roman emperor Ludwig of Bavaria until his death in 1347, then his son, Ludwig of Brandenburg.[17] Moreover, the constant making and breaking of alliances among the imperial electors heightened the uncertain grasp of the crown. The Golden Bull was to ensure the continuity of the empire with no long interregnum periods.

Charles IV's reinvention of Prague as a center of commerce and culture.

Charles' motives for developing Prague into a vibrant capital of Bohemia and a strong European city stemmed from his attempts at harnessing a loyal base that would be the core of power for the Luxembourg dynasty. He sought to rebuild the powerful realm that existed under Přemysl Otakar II (1233-1278) and extended from the Baltic Sea almost to the Adriatic and from Austria to Carniola, a territory stretching east to Ljubljana. Under Otakar II's rule his lands underwent progressive changes, which included the switch from a feudal to a money economy invigorated by the influx of German immigrants, farmers, artisans, and skilled laborers.[18] The prosperity nurtured by Otakar II slowly disintegrated after his death, however, because of periods of foreign occupation and neglect, and the disorder arising from rivalries between nobles. Charles writes of this grave situation in his autobiography: "...the barons were often tyrannous and did not fear the king as they should have done, and the kingdom was thus divided."[19] The frequent absences of King John of Luxembourg also contributed to the general tumult. It is not difficult to imagine

[17]Ibid. 41.
[18]Demetz 38-9.
[19]Charles IV, "Autobiography," in Geary 623.

why Charles, upon returning to Bohemia for the first time as a young adult, "found that kingdom desolate." He further writes in his autobiography that "Prague had been desolated and destroyed since the days of King Ottokar. So I decided to build a new palace which should be large and handsome. It was built at a high cost, as is evident today to whoever looks at it."[20] Charles knew the potential that the Bohemian kingdom realized under Otakar II and could again realize, and he had the vision to attempt to renew it.

An initial step in promoting the identity of Prague as an independent and self-sustaining city occurred in 1343 when Charles, as yet uncrowned, ventured to Avignon to ask Pope Clement VI (his childhood tutor, Pierre de Rosiers) to create an archbishopric in Prague. The bishop of Prague was subordinate to the archbishop in Mainz; moreover, all other central European kingdoms had their own archbishoprics. Charles hoped that a strong church organization with an archbishop in Prague and monasteries throughout the Bohemian landscape would serve as a strong ally against any baronial factions[21] and that the existence of an archbishopric would raise the political status of Prague. According to the court chronicler, Beneš of Weitmil, in 1344 "the pope, with the consent of the whole curia, at the instance of Charles, released the church of Prague from all obedience to the metropolitan church of Mainz and raised it to an archiepiscopal see,...and made the bishop, Ernest, the new archbishop."[22] In that same year on 3 March, Charles and his father began the construction of the cathedral on Hradčany hill within the royal residential complex, an unusual location by contemporary standards, because it negated the independence of the archbishop from the king, and later, emperor. Indeed, the relationship of the cathedral to Charles was more that of private church, considering that it housed the Bohemian royal jewels, was the site of the

[20]Charles IV, "Autobiography," in Geary 622.
[21]Demetz 75.
[22]Thomson 4.

coronation of the king as stipulated in the Coronation Order issued by Charles himself, and became the burial place of his ancestors; moreover, the first archbishop of Prague, Ernest of Pardubice, was a close personal adviser to Charles, and his court officials consisted mostly of canons and bishops.[23] Charles probably considered the Prague archbishopric the result of his own inspiration and wanted to keep it under close watch as a useful tool in the future.

Having settled the political status of Prague as archbishopric, Charles next set out to improve its economic life. In the fourteenth century Prague lay at a highly advantageous crossroads of trade routes, which was one reason why he decided to move the imperial residence to that city. The north-south route ran from Venice on the Adriatic Sea to Gdansk on the Baltic and in order to safeguard the trade along this road, Charles built a fortified castle in Wrocław in 1359. Westward trade linking Prague with Frankfurt and Cologne was ensured by renovations in Nuremberg ordered by Charles in 1349 including the creation of a central market place. Nuremberg was an important city to Charles, because of its location between Prague and Frankfurt, the site of the royal elections, and also because in the Golden Bull of 1356 he had made provisions for the imperial Diet to meet in Nuremberg after the election of each new king of the Romans. After the election in Frankfurt, the royal coronation at Aachen, and the first mass in Cologne, the king would travel to Nuremberg on his way to Prague, passing through imperial cities and making the new king of the Romans visible to everyone. The political significance of Nuremberg was recorded visually in the architecture of the Church of Our Lady[24] which faced the central square. On the balcony balustrade hang "representations of the imperial eagle, Rome as the site of the emperor's coronation, as well as the arms of the imperial

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[23]Stejskal *European Art*, 166.
[24]constructed in 1352, consecrated in 1358: Norbert Nussbaum, *German Gothic Church Architecture*, trans. Scott Kleager (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000) 123.

electorate."[25] The newly elected king would be seen at the balcony and associated with these representations and understood from them as having been elected king of the Romans by the seven members of the electorate. No ambiguity surrounding the identity of the king, who would be crowned emperor in Rome, nor the lawfulness of his election would exist, as provided by the Golden Bull, and furthered by the visual connection made at the Church of Our Lady, which was constructed at Charles' instigation.[26]

A strong economy is crucial to any state which aspires to compete internationally. In an effort to invigorate Bohemia's economy, the Bohemian king boldly initiated the construction of a major new section of Prague, which was, and is to this day, called the New Town. Its web united all the villages situated on its territory, and it became the modern center of commerce of a newly revitalized capital. Construction of this quarter, covering an area of 2.4 square kilometers, bloomed in the years 1348 to 1367 when about 1,450 houses were built, along with five monasteries, four churches, two hospitals, a town hall and a market hall, all surrounded by a fortified wall measuring 3,430 meters in length. The significance of the New Town continued throughout the centuries as evidenced in the fact that the chief commercial hubs of the New Town, the horse and cattle markets, are present-day Prague's central business and tourist centers, namely Wenceslas Square and Charles Square, respectively.[27] The annual procession and display of imperial relics in the New Town as instituted by Charles IV, in addition to serving as a spectacle of the grandeur and majesty of the King of Bohemia and Emperor of the Romans, acted as a magnet for pilgrims whose participation in the celebrations supported the local economy.

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[25]Nussbaum 124.
[26]The church was built on the site of a synagogue which Charles ordered razed together with the Jewish Quarter to make way for the church and market square. Ibid. 123.
[27]Ibid. 136-9.

Both the construction of the New Town and the creation of an archbishopric of Prague, together with the erection of the cathedral and royal residence on Hradčany hill, constituted Charles IV's efforts to revitalize the capital city of the kingdom of Bohemia. These were pragmatic, critical steps to the attainment of his goal; however, the measure taken to cement his intention to rule from his ancestral homeland was highly symbolic. Charles IV transferred the coronation jewels of the Holy Roman Empire from Munich to Bohemia. In 1350 after having been crowned Roman king in Aachen, Charles brought the jewels to Prague, subsequently depositing them at Karlštejn castle, located approximately 28 kilometers southwest of Prague, in 1358. This act was a deliberate statement on the part of the King of the Romans that he would thenceforth rule from Prague, not from any other more standard point in Germany, considered more central to the empire. The precious crown jewels were veritable emblems of the empire, symbols of its wealth, power, and age-old traditions. They included the crown, dating from the eleventh or twelfth century, the imperial orb, from before 1200, and the sword, made in Palermo around 1220 for Frederick II. Every year the coronation jewels, together with the imperial relics mentioned above, were taken from Karlštejn to Prague and displayed to the public after grand ceremonies in the New Town, thereby enhancing the prestige of Prague, the capital of the Kingdom of Bohemia and the site of the imperial residence, and raising the image of the kingdom, once a backwater of the empire, from one of relative obscurity to that of the heart of the Holy Roman Empire.[28]

Another project undertaken by Charles to heighten the prestige of Prague was the establishment of a university. Charles knew that universities attracted leading minds from all over the continent, lending those cities fame and stature. But Charles was not merely concerned with enriching the city's reputation; his motives were based also on the conviction that his entire imperial realm would benefit from the foundation of

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[28]Naděžda Kubů, *Karlštejn Castle* (Berlin: RV Verlag, 1993) 22.

universities and this belief arose from his own love of learning. On 7 April 1348, after convening an imperial diet and the Assembly of the territories of the Bohemian crown, Charles issued a royal charter whereby he founded the first university in central Europe in Prague, today named Charles University after the emperor.[29] His intentions are clearly delineated in the charter as follows:

> "...the chief concern of our thinking is that our kingdom of Bohemia, which claims primacy of love in our heart above personal dignity and estates whether hereditary or by good fortune acquired, and whose states we desire to enhance by every care and diligence... may be adorned in our time with an abundance of wise men...so that the loyal inhabitants of our Bohemian realm...may not be obliged to beg for ample feast yet ready for them at home...We desire that the high repute of our kingdom should be magnified by new and fortunate discoveries, and have decided to found, build and newly establish a university in our metropolitan and most charming city of Prague..."[30]

Charles took both political and economic steps to ensure the continuity of the Luxembourg claim to the imperial throne mainly by bolstering the Bohemian kingdom. However, his efforts were extended to the areas of art and architecture, as is discussed below.

The circle of counsellors at the court of Charles IV.

A study of the flowering of learning and culture in Prague and the Bohemian lands during the reign of Charles IV must include a discussion about the prime instigators of cultural commissions and their impact on the art of the time, because after the king himself his court counsellors were the leading patrons of art in Bohemia. As mentioned above, Charles learned from an early age in his years at the French court that it was

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[29]Thomson 6.

[30]Alexej Pludek, *Carolus Quartus, Romanorum Imperator et Boemie Rex*, trans. Jarmila and Ian Milner (Prague: Orbis Press Agency, 1978) 14.

important to incorporate competent and knowledgeable counsellors into his cabinet. His closest advisers were Ernest of Pardubice, the first archbishop of Prague; John of Středa, the imperial chancellor; and John Očko of Vlašim, the second archbishop of Prague.

Ernest of Pardubice, Archbishop of Prague (1344-64), was involved in numerous projects initiated by the king. In fact, there are few areas in which he did not have a direct hand. Ernest studied canon and civil law at the university of Bologna and assisted Charles in drafting the *Majestas Carolina*, a constitution for the kingdom of Bohemia which sought to modernize the judicial system of the land.[31] More than anyone else at court, Ernest seems to have been the emperor's closest confidante. He acted as ambassador, chief policy adviser, and participated in, if not outright directed, initiatives in issues of church reform (of the liturgy and clergy; supported the use of the vernacular in religious service and literature), and legal reform (as in the *Majestas Carolina*). As Archbishop of Prague, Ernest was obliged by the papal bull of 1347, which sanctioned the establishment of a university, to serve as its chancellor. His duties included the fundamental task of organizing the university: hiring staff, overseeing the curriculum, ensuring the quality of education.[32]

Throughout his tenure as archbishop Ernest was a keen patron of the arts primarily through the foundation and decoration of churches and monasteries throughout the Bohemian lands. In Roudnice, situated 65 km northwest of Prague, he furnished the first Bohemian monastery for Augustinian canons, which was established by his predecessor, Bishop John IV of Dražice in 1334; Ernest completed the construction of the church of St. Giles in Prague in 1371. He financed the manufacture of stained glass windows for one of the gallery chapels in the cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague. In 1349 the archbishop

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[31]Among other stipulations, it proscribed the use of hot iron or cold water, or the cutting off of noses and ears as forms of punishment; "section 50 of the *Majestas*...would have been the first ecological law to protect Bohemia's famous green forests so they would remain 'untouched and eternal'." Demetz 85.
[32]Thomson 6-7.

founded an Augustinian monastery in Kladsko, his childhood home, to which he donated embroidered vestments and numerous paintings, among them an altarpiece of the Madonna and Child.

In the area of manuscript production Ernest of Pardubice employed a group of scribes and illuminators and commissioned a number of books. Unfortunately, only a handful has survived: the *Laus Mariae*, or *Mariale Arnesti*[33] dated to before 1360, a gradual from 1363[34], the *Orationale Arnesti*[35] from before 1364, and a set of nine hymnbooks presented to the Prague cathedral.[36]

John of Streda (1310-1380), imperial chancellor for twenty-one years, was another of Charles' trusted aides. Before his rise to the chancellery in 1353 he served the court as notary and chaplain. In 1352 he became Bishop of Litomyšl, in 1364, Bishop of Olomouc. His primary responsibilities as chancellor included acting as the emperor's spokesman, handling all correspondence and protocol, the guidelines of which he formally outlined in the *Summa Cancellarie Caroli IV*. John of Středa's literary contributions as a translator of Latin texts into German are substantial and mostly of a religious character reflecting the spiritual orientation of Charles IV's time, i.e. Augustine-neoplatonic meditations, contemplative prayers, especially Marian prayers characteristic of the contemporary movement of *devotio moderna*.[37] More specifically, these include the prayers of Sts. Augustine and Anselm, the epistles of Sts. Augustine and Cyril, the *Stimulus amoris* of the Franciscan, John of Milan, and the pseudo-Augustinian *Liber soliloquiorum anime ad Deum*.[38]

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[33]Prague, Library of the National Museum, MS. XVI.D.13.
[34]Prague, Chapter Library, MS. P.7.
[35]Prague, Library of the National Museum, MS. XIII.C.12.
[36]Stejskal *European Art*, 64-65.
[37]Krása in *Dějiny*, 407-8.
[38]Thomson 15.

The chancellor was perhaps even more of a bibliophile than Ernest of Pardubice. His extensive library consisted of works by Seneca, Cassiodorus, Dante, and Petrarch among others.[39] Following the example of the Roman curia who employed the foremost artists of the day, he financially supported a private scriptorium which provided devotional books for its patron and the emperor and its works are considered among the best examples of Bohemian manuscript illumination of the second half of the fourteenth century, even higher in quality than the manuscripts produced under Wenceslas IV at the end of the century when medieval manuscript illumination in Bohemia reached its peak.[40] The leading compositions of the circle of John of Středa include the *Liber viaticus*[41], a luxurious breviary made around 1360 for the chancellor himself, the *Missal of Provost Nicholas*[42] of around 1364, the abovementioned *Laus Mariae* and *Orationale Arnesti*, a detached page from a missal with a miniature of the Resurrection[43] from before 1360, and the *Evangeliary of John of Opava*[44] dated 1368. Some of these manuscripts are discussed more extensively in Chapter 2.

Ernest of Pardubice's successor as archbishop of Prague, John Očko of Vlašim, was another of Charles' counsellors whose commissions have left their mark on the art and architecture of Bohemia. Before being appointed to the archbishopric, John Očko was the Bishop of Olomouc, and in 1378 became the first Bohemian cardinal. His most outstanding contribution to the contemporary landscape of Prague was the construction of the Hospital of the Humility of the Virgin Mary in 1352-64. Also, like his predecessor, the archbishop donated funds toward the building and decoration of a chapel in the cathedral of Prague. In the area of painting he commissioned a votive panel in

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[39]Stejskal *European Art*, 67.
[40]Schmidt 56.
[41]Prague, Library of the National Museum, MS. XIII.A.12.
[42]Brno, City Archives, St. Jacob's Library, MS. 10/1.
[43]Olomouc, Archbishop's Library.
[44]Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 1182.

1371, once located at the archbishop's residence in Roudnice, now at the National Gallery in Prague.[45] It is divided into two strips, the upper showing the Madonna and Child flanked by a kneeling Charles IV and St. Sigismund on the left, with Wenceslas IV and St. Wenceslas on the right. On the bottom half the archbishop is shown kneeling before St. Adalbert with Sts. Procopius, Vitus, and Ludmila in attendance. The prominent depiction of personages from Bohemian history, past and present, is a revealing reflection of the archbishop's own veneration of his national heritage, a regard deeply shared by his emperor, Charles IV, who probably promoted and encouraged a sense of historical consciousness among his counsellors.

Albrecht of Sternberg, Bishop of Schwerin, Litomyšl, and Archbishop of Magdeburg, can be counted among the members of the emperor's closest circle of advisers. Like Ernest of Pardubice he was educated abroad, at Bologna and Paris, and also founded a monastery for Augustinian canons in Moravia in 1372. His support of court painters and craftsmen is evidenced in the chapel of his castle in Sternberg in which wall paintings one sees the hand of the successor of the Prague Master of the Emmaus cycle of wall-paintings. The choir was built by the masonic lodge of Matthew of Arras, the first architect of the Prague cathedral. The only surviving manuscript that was commissioned by Albrecht is a pontifical[46] from 1376, an illustration of which portrays him worshipping Christ Enthroned next to the emperor.[47]

The promotion of court art was guaranteed by the many projects undertaken by Charles IV's counsellors who employed both his official artisans and their own. Through their patronage court art developed not only in the capital city of Prague, but spread throughout Bohemia and Moravia, thereby nurturing the imperial ideal and proving to be

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[45]Stejskal *European Art* 72.
[46]Prague, Library of the Museum of National Literature, Strahov Monastery, MS. Dg.I.19.
[47]Stejskal *European Art* 76.

an effective means by which Charles IV's programme of historicism could be dispersed throughout the kingdom of Bohemia. Next, the emperor's own inclination towards historicism must be examined in order to comprehend its presence in Bohemian art of the second half of the fourteenth century.

Charles IV's concept of historicism.

Charles IV had a profound knowledge of and respect for history, and this regard for the institutions and values of the past was nurtured through his education at the French court. His attention to history began from an early age. At his confirmation he requested to be renamed Charles after Charlemagne (he was baptized Wenceslas), and already this served as a testimony to his identification with the tradition of the Empire[48] and the beginning of his appropriation of the past.

Charles cultivated in his court a paradigm of the weighty significance and role of history, primarily Bohemian, through commissions and his own historical writings. A number of chronicles of Bohemia already existed[49], however, Charles took the initiative to update or supplement them with his own. The degree of his personal involvement in the writing of chronicles cannot be underestimated. For instance, in his biography of the emperor František Kavka states that even though medieval manuscripts differ as to the true authorship of a particular history, the Bohemian chronicle of Přibík of Radenín, whether the said Přibík was commissioned by Charles to write it or merely to translate it into Czech, or whether Charles himself composed it, one manuscript does indicate that Charles "himself collected all the chronicles of the monasteries and magnates and with

[48]Leuschner 149.

[49]Cosmas of Prague recorded events from the beginnings of Bohemian history to 1125; a versed chronicle in Czech was written by Dalimil in the early fourteenth century; Peter of Zittau's *Cronica Aule Regie* and the *Cronica pragensis* of Canon Francis of Prague provided information on the reign of John of Luxembourg. From Thomson 9.

utmost care examined them, and told Přibik to write on their basis a single, true chronicle."[50] This direct connection of Charles IV to the process of the recording of history was clearly known outside of his court and whether it is true that he himself put pen to paper is not as interesting here as is the fact that he is so personally associated with history keeping.

Charles IV's reasons for the composition of chronicles were manifold. First, he wanted to cement the present and future of the kingdom of Bohemia through the legitimizing nature of history, in other words, to show that the kingdom was strong in the past and had the capacity to be so again. As his hereditary land, Bohemia was a much-needed, loyal power base for Charles against his opponents, most notably Ludwig of Brandenburg, who aspired to the imperial throne.

Also, he ventured to build Prague into an effective capital and raise the profile of the kingdom of Bohemia, which was a formidable task, and so in combination with the various state-building projects he initiated, he sought to establish a firm basis for the kingdom, and that basis was the legitimacy that came with history. On the sound foundation of history a new and convincing center could flourish. Thus, he was formulating and presenting an identity of himself, his kingdom, his dynastic line, and its place in the world. Legitimacy was crucial to the preservation of Charles' position as Roman king, because of the conspiratorial nature of the pseudo-election of 1346 outlined above, and that was the reason why another election was called in 1349, namely, legally to elect Charles as Roman king.

Charles' regard for the importance of recorded history as witnessed by his numerous directives of the writing of chronicles brings into question the historicity of those chronicles, that is, their truthfulness. The first accounts of the king's political efforts and successes up to 1353 written by a Prague canon by the name of František were rejected

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[50]Kavka 294.

by Charles as not being laudatory enough of the glory of his deeds[51] and this was one of the reasons why he endeavored to write his autobiography. The potential manipulation of history that this account suggests coincides with the example given earlier of his appropriation of history through his taking the name of Charles at his confirmation. The reliability of the chronicles written under Charles can be checked against other chronicles and histories and this lies outside the scope of the present study; but truthfulness aside, the historicism of Charles IV is doubtless as is his reliance on recorded history to legitimize the present.

The foremost example of Charles' attempts toward the creation of his identity as king and emperor is the *Vita Caroli*, Charles' autobiography, which is considered in more detail below. Other works composed by Charles himself were a 1353 biography of the Bohemian patron saint, Wenceslas, and a history of Bohemia from 1374.[52] The most information about the reign of Charles IV lies within the chronicles of Beneš of Weitmil whom Charles appointed as court historiographer. Beneš held a number of different posts at the Prague court: from 1355 he was chief of construction of the cathedral, and in 1359 he became one of its canons. In 1363 he was made archdeacon of Zatec. His work, *Cronica ecclesie pragensis*, spans the period from 1283 to the year of his death in 1374.[53]

Another motive behind the emphasis which Charles placed on the writing of histories and the keeping of chronicles was the formulation of an ideological testimony to the integrity of his reign. After the election of 1346 which unlawfully conferred the position of king of the Romans to Charles, his enemies, those still loyal to Ludwig of Bavaria, called him *Pfaffenkaiser* or 'pope's emperor' because they considered him to be a pawn

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[51]Jiří Spěváček, "Charles IV and His Autobiography," *Karel IV. Vlastní životopis - Vita Caroli Quarti*, ed. Jan Binder and Mireia Ryšková (Praha: Odeon, 1978)
[52]It is not clear whether Charles actually wrote the history; some records suggest that he employed Přibik Pulkava of Radenin to do so. Ibid.10.
[53]Ibid. 10.

of the pope. In retaliation Charles needed to portray himself as an independent sovereign and a capable ruler who, as a Luxembourger, descended from another emperor of the Romans, his grandfather, Henry VII. Also, Charles obviously had a vision of the future of his realm and what he endeavored for it to be, as his far-reaching enterprises indicate. Chronicles would be useful in the education of later generations about Bohemian history. Indeed, this kind of foresight was one of the reasons behind the *Vita Caroli*, namely, that it serve as a model of effective rulership for his Luxembourg successors to emulate so that they could continue to promote the glory of his line and kingdom.[54]

Charles' autobiography, the date of which is unknown, is divided into twenty chapters: the first fourteen characterize the author's youth and political activities to the year 1340, and the last six describe the events of 1341-46. Considering that Charles was elected King of the Romans only in 1346 and King of Bohemia a year later, his intentions behind the writing of the autobiography might be perceived as rather presumptuous that is to say, he could hardly expect a record of his apparent inexperience of ruling to serve as a guide for his successors. It should be noted, however, that Charles was the *de facto* sovereign of the kingdom of Bohemia from 1342, having concluded an agreement with his father, John of Luxembourg, as to the latter's financial compensation in exchange for Charles' assumption of power.

A closer look at an exerpt from the *Vita Caroli* will reveal another motive behind its conception and that was to show that Charles' idea of state was in accordance with the program and goals of his Přemyslid ancestors. In the first sentence of the preface to the autobiography Charles addresses the intended audience of the work "to my successors, who will sit on my double throne..."[55] In using the words "my double throne" - in Latin,

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[54]Ibid. 169.

[55]"Secundis sedentibus in thronis meis binis..." *Karel IV. Vlastní životopis - Vita Caroli Quarti*, ed. Jan Binder and Mireia Ryšková (Praha: Odeon, 1978) 10.

thronis meis binis - Charles precludes the possibility that two people occupy his throne, since he does not write "two thrones" (Latin - *duobus*) i.e. the Roman and Bohemian. In doing so, he justifies the legitimacy of his position as both the Roman and Bohemian king, and proclaims the principle behind the joining of the two thrones in the person of the Bohemian king, namely himself, and his immediate successors from his Luxembourg line. This premise was substantiated in reality when Charles' heir, Wenceslas IV, ascended to that same double throne.[56]

Through his autobiography and the various commissions of the writing of Bohemian histories, Charles attempted to establish an identity for himself as sovereign descended from two prestigious dynastic lines, who was worthy of being Emperor of the Romans, and whose wise and just rule would be an example for posterity. His sense for history was not, however, limited to the Bohemian lands and dynasties, but rather stretched further back in time and place.

Charles IV's programme of historicism.

Charles IV consciously employed a programme of historicism in his artistic and architectural projects and his vast collections of precious objects. The periods of history that he attempted to evoke vary: architectural elements of the Prague cathedral recall the High Gothic forms of French cathedrals, although there are very modern innovations in this building as well; the decorative schemes of Karlštejn castle portray biblical motifs and the Bohemian past; the glory of the Byzantine era is represented in numerous examples of the emperor's personal possessions and in certain depictions of himself in Byzantine garb. There was a definite reason behind every choice of historical period, choices that were made by Charles, an emperor highly aware and educated for his time.

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[56]Spěváček 169.

The Cathedral of St. Vitus.

For the past six centuries the cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague has stood as a visual testimony to the ambitious intentions of Charles IV, who envisioned for his new capital an imposing cathedral building that would hover high aloft the Vltava river and sprouting new city districts. The cathedral was incorporated within the royal castle complex and practically served as the king and emperor's church, the place of royal coronation and burial, fitted with a special entranceway at the south portal facing the royal palace for the exclusive use of the emperor and his entourage. Charles, still Margrave of Moravia, ordered the construction of the cathedral with his father, John of Luxembourg, in 1344, the year of the establishment of the Prague archbishopric. The first master-builder of the Gothic cathedral, whom Charles IV brought to Prague from Avignon, was Matthew of Arras. He supervised the building works from the founding of the cathedral in 1344 until his death in 1352. He began construction on the empty space beyond the eastern chevet of the standing Romanesque basilica, which served its purpose until the consecration of the main altar in the new choir of 1365. Matthew of Arras built on the design of the Gothic cathedrals of southern France, since he was familiar with contemporary developments in the cathedral works there (in Narbonne, Toulouse, Rodez). The main work of the ground-floor section of the chevet was constructed according to his plan: nine pillars of the arcades of the inner choir, the corresponding part of the gallery, and the chapels all the way to the sacristy in the north and the Chapel of the Holy Cross in the south.[57] Charles IV employed an architect from France in an effort to import the French style to recall the prestige and splendor of Paris and its royal court which he witnessed during his youth. The same illustriousness and history associated with the French High

[57] *The Builders of the Cathedral*, trans. Kathleen Hayes, exhibition catalogue (Prague, n.p.,1999) 5.

Gothic cathedral would lend themselves to the foundling capital, making it worthy of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles hoped.

After Matthew's death in 1352 Charles hired Peter Parler from Cologne in 1356 to direct the building works. Under his direction, the entire choir with its gallery and chapels including the vaulting and buttressing system was completed by 1385, the Chapel of St. Wenceslas by 1367, and the great towers on the ground floor. He also began construction of the triple nave in 1392.[58] The choice of an architect this time from Cologne may suggest a shift in Charles' orientation from the emulation of the French style and by extension the French court which had supported his rise to the imperial throne, to forms more readily equated with the Empire. By 1356 Charles had been crowned emperor and in that year he signed the Golden Bull which effectively cemented the royal election process and provided a framework for the continuation of the empire. Charles was identified by this time as the Emperor of the Romans and the cathedral in Prague, then, needed to espouse forms befitting the imperial capital. An architect from Cologne who was familiar with the cathedral there, Peter Parler would paraphrase its designs into the rest of the Prague cathedral, appropriately enough, since both Cologne and Prague were the seats of archbishops.

However, the choice of a builder from Cologne extends beyond archiepiscopal allusions, and relates to the French court style, and specifically the Sainte-Chapelle constructed in the early 1240s, because the design of the choir of Cologne cathedral was based on that royal structure. Branner suggests that the reason behind Cologne cathedral's reference to the Sainte-Chapelle was that "the canons wanted to create a new and splendid setting for the relics of the Three Magi which Frederick Barbarossa had brought from Milan in 1162."[59] The Sainte-Chapelle was itself the repository of the

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[58]Ibid. 9.

[59]Robert Branner, *St. Louis and the Court Style in Gothic Architecture* (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd., 1965) 131.

Crown of Thorns of Christ the King and would have been an appropriate model for the Cologne reliquary of the Three Kings that the cathedral was supposed to be. The forms of the choir of Cologne above the gallery are almost a copy of the Sainte-Chapelle with the five-partite apse, shafts that consist of a series of thin shafts linked by wave-like masonry, and the intricate stained-glass windows. Cologne's reference to Louis IX's chapel would not have been lost on Charles IV and he probably wanted to draw on the idea of a grand reliquary with the Chapel of St. Wenceslas, which housed the newly-translated saint's body, and the French court style as well to bolster the image of Prague as the seat of the king and emperor.

During Parler's early years at the cathedral he used historicist elements as seen in the construction of the inner choir shafts which recall those of Cologne, dating to 1248. They are the same shafts described above and relate in turn to the Sainte-Chapelle. The flying buttress system in the choir of Prague corresponds to that of Cologne with its double buttresses supporting the choir walls by pairs of fliers.[60] But at Prague the moulding of architectural elements and bar tracery throughout the cathedral add a sense of plasticity, which is unique to the traditionally linear character of High Gothic cathedrals. For example, the pier buttresses between the ambulatory chapels show their pinnacles extending through the eaves above, with finials emerging on the other side. Such instances of coalesced elements do not exist independently of each other in the sculptural decoration of the cathedral, "but literally grow into each other as if they were organic material."[61]

At the south portal, also called the Golden Portal which was the royal entrance also used during the coronation procession, Parler was able to link the older type of portico with the most modern vaulting constructions. He divided the portal into two and pulled

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[60]Nussbaum 128.
[61]Ibid. 130.

both halves out of the frame at a ninety-degree angle to the wall. The ribs of the vault rise from the outer corner of the resulting angle of the doors. More modern elements introduced by Parler were the smaller undulating clerestory windows within the larger window form which create depth and a feeling of movement. Perhaps the most glaring departure from tradition was Parler's new vaulting system in the choir. The vaults, rather than being arranged in bays, contain double ribs that run parallel to each other and do not correspond to neatly delineated bays, resulting in a rhythm leading the eye from one side of the ceiling to the other until it finally ends in the apse.[62] The melding of historicist forms with new inventions is the quintessence of the cathedral in Prague. This same combination of old and new is evidenced in manuscript illumination of the time, as discussed in Chapter 2, and is inherently linked to the personality of Charles IV whose awareness both of history and of current trends inspired court art.

A crucial testimony to the direct involvement of the emperor with the programme of decoration of the cathedral exists in the presence of the sculptured busts in the inner triforium. There are twenty-one life-size sandstone busts. Likenesses of the ruling family preside in the central apse space; along the sides of the choir they are followed by busts of the first three archbishops of Prague, the five directors of construction and the two master builders of the cathedral. The busts in the polygon might have been set there in the spring of 1375, and those along the sides in 1379-80. The highest quality busts of the ruling family are believed to be the work of Peter Parler himself, along with his own likeness.[63] Charles IV must have made the decision regarding the decoration of the triforium; indeed, the inclusion of the busts of Matthew of Arras and Peter Parler not only shows the respect rendered to the architects, but is evidence that there was a close relationship between them and the emperor, because without his permission and probably

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[62]Ibid. 131-2.
[63]*The Builders of the Cathedral* 15.

express instructions the architects' busts could presumably never have been fitted on par with the emperor's, nor within the same artistic programme. This integrated group of portrait busts is unique in the decoration of a cathedral, for while royal or imperial busts and those of architects were portrayed individually in cathedrals, never was there a programme that included all these personages.

It is important to consider the reason behind this anomaly, that is, the motive of the emperor, if it is to be believed that he in fact ordered this conglomeration of busts. The presence of the emperor, his family, the archbishops, and the main characters in the construction of the cathedral constitutes an extraordinary record of history. It visually documents a period of time that was fundamental in the creation of Prague as the new capital of the Holy Roman Empire with the creation of the Prague archbishopric and the building of the cathedral. This record was fused into the fabric of the cathedral, in the inner triforium, as part of its history for all to witness. Charles IV envisioned this sculptural programme as a record of history which went hand in hand with his other efforts of history writing for the benefit of his own time and that of future generations. The emperor's practice of documentation must have been imparted to the next generation, because during the tenure of the fifth director of the cathedral's construction, Wenceslas of Radec, carved inscriptions were affixed next to the portrait busts, which outlined facts about the individuals. The Latin inscriptions are dated to 1380-1392. Their mission was to preserve for eternity the names and deeds of the personalities who gained recognition for their part in constructing the cathedral, or who were close relations to Charles IV.[64] The portrait busts and inscriptions are yet another example of the prime importance Charles IV ascribed to the recording of history.

The final element of the cathedral which is offered in this paper as evidence of the direct involvement of Charles IV pertains to the decoration above the south portal,

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[64]Ibid. 16.

namely, the mosaic of the Last Judgment. It was executed in 1370-1 by Venetian artists invited to the Prague court by Charles IV.[65] The central area shows Christ in a mandorla with kneeling saints at his feet, and below, the kneeling figures of Charles IV and his wife, Elizabeth of Pomerania. To the left are those rising from their graves, to the right St. Michael the Archangel, devils and the condemned.[66] The practice of the laying of mosaics is uncommon in central Europe, and even more so the display of a grand-scale mosaic (which measures 85 square meters) on the exterior of a cathedral as in Prague. But as is shown in Chapter 2 and above with the examples of Matthew of Arras and Peter Parler, the import of foreign artists to produce art and architecture in Bohemia was integral to Charles IV's plans of ushering in the current trends of those areas into his revitalized kingdom, which stood on the foundation of a long history, but which would compete with the leading countries of Europe.

Karlštejn castle.

Karlštejn castle and primarily two of its artistic conceptions are perhaps Charles' most personal expressions of his historical sensibilities, because they show aspects of his two heritages, that of his father's Luxembourg line and his mother's Premyslid ancestry.

Founded in 1348, Karlštejn commands a unique place in the history of the Bohemian lands. It was conceived by Charles not only as the administrative center of the empire, but also as the site of safe-keeping of the imperial coronation jewels and of the imperial collection of holy relics. The architectural design of the castle reflects this double duty in its exterior fortress-like appearance and its lavish decoration. However, yet another significance was applied to Karlštejn, and that was the definition and legitimization of

[65]Stejskal *European Art*, 172.
[66]Ibid. 194.

Charles' reign as the product of two honorable heritages,[67] which were documented in the wall-paintings of the *Luxembourg Cycle* and the frescoes depicting the life of St. Ludmila and the legend of St. Wenceslas, as well as in various panel paintings of Czech patron saints contained within the castle.

The *Luxembourg Cycle* (fig.1) was located in one of the large rooms[68] of the palace, which constituted the lowest level of the castle's tripartite plan. These wall-paintings showing legendary, mythological, and ancestral figures were destroyed in the course of time, but have since been recreated on the basis of late Renaissance manuscript illuminations.[69] An earlier example of a painted genealogy, the *Přemyslid Family Tree* of 1134 in the Chapel of St. Catherine in the town of Znojmo, attests to the fact that such depictions were known and rendered in the lands of the Bohemian crown. The genealogical cycle at Karlštejn showed Charles' predecessors on the imperial throne beginning with biblical sovereigns, passing down through time to Roman emperors, Merovingian and Carolingian kings, among them Charlemagne, and finally John of Luxembourg, Elizabeth Přemyslid, Charles' parents, ending with Charles himself.[70] The representation relates a fictitious but symbolically important lineage in that as elected King of the Romans, Charles assumes comparable power and status to mighty kings of the past through his double ancestral line. This procession of royal and imperial personages would not have been lost on the visiting dignitaries for whose benefit the paintings were doubtless intended that they may have been convinced of its message and conveyed it to their respective bases.

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[67]Again, Charles needed to strengthen his status as King of the Romans in the face of persistent threats to his crown by rival houses, most notably the Brandenburg.
[68]Today that room is called the Hall of Ancestors.
[69]"The theme of these frescoes...is reported in historical sources and also in a miscellany written for Emperor Maximillian II by Matouš Ptáček Ornys z Lindperka in 1575, which contains miniatures picturing individual figures." Kubů 54.
[70]Ibid. 54.

The murals which exhibit Charles' Přemyslid orientation are situated on the walls of a winding staircase leading to the Chapel of the Holy Cross. The inner part of the staircase is reserved for the life of St. Ludmila, while the outer reveals the legend of St. Wenceslas. Charles highly regarded his mother's legacy and included it in his grand project that was Karlstejn, since it was this side of his parentage and the Bohemian tradition to which he devoted most of his energies. And because Karlštejn was supposed to be a kind of *pièce de résistance* which defined Charles' legitimacy and reign, both lines of his ancestors were represented. Another keen example illustrating his historical sensibilities and his deliberate evocation of the Přemyslid past was his design of the royal crown of Bohemia, the so-called St. Wenceslas crown[71] which was antiquated in shape, because it was based after the pattern of the Přemyslid crown dating to the eleventh or twelfth century.[72]

Biblical history is involved in yet another part of Karlštejn, the Chapel of the Holy Cross, located in the highest tower of the complex. The chapel was meant for the Bohemian kingdom, and in effect for all of the Holy Roman Empire, to be what the Sainte-Chapelle was for France, namely, a lavish receptacle of holy relics. Charles transferred the imperial relics here in another effort to seal his intention to rule from his hereditary lands, and to emphasize the significance of the Bohemian kingdom among the other kingdoms of the empire. The chapel is the focus and culmination of the entire Karlštejn castle complex. Its gilded vaulted ceiling sparkles with glass stars, its walls glimmer with precious inlaid stones constituting a scene that was supposed to recreate the new Jerusalem, a heavenly Jerusalem, as described by St. John in his book of Revelation:

> "It had all the radiant glory of God and glittered like some precious jewel

[71]St. Wenceslas was the tenth-century king and patron saint of Bohemia.
[72]Stejskal *European Art*, 82.

> of crystal-clear diamond [21:11]...The city walls stood on twelve foundation stones [21:14]...The wall was built of diamond, and the city of pure gold, like polished glass. The foundations of the city wall were faced with all kinds of precious stone: the first with diamond, the second lapis lazuli, the third turquoise, the fourth crystal, the fifth agate, the sixth ruby, the seventh gold quartz, the eighth malachite, the ninth topaz, the tenth emerald, the eleventh sapphire and the twelfth amethyst."[73]

An early Christian practice existed of visually depicting the new Jerusalem, as seen in the mosaics of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome and San Vitale in Ravenna.[74] In the Karlštejn Chapel of the Holy Cross the new Jerusalem is a three-dimensional space replete with the inlaid walls as outlined in Revelation and cut precious stones are suspended on the wrought gilt grille which delineates the sanctuary. It was here, in this heavenly Jerusalem, then, that the most holy relics of the Holy Roman Empire and the kingdom of Bohemia as well as the imperial crown jewels rested.

These treasures were intimately guarded by one hundred thirty panel paintings of saints, which were executed by Master Theodoric, who was later court painter to Charles IV. The panels were arranged into four rows running continuously throughout the four walls. Each panel represented a saint, a patriarch, a pope or other church official, an angel, or a prophet. Many were those of Czech patron saints, like Sts. Vojtech and Ludmila. Although there are other subjects rendered in painting, for example the Crucifixion and a triptych by Tommaso da Modena of the Madonna and Child, Sts. Wenceslas and Palmacius, the panels as a whole do not tell an epic story. Rather, they share the idea of God's manifestation. The saints represent the Church Triumphant, the community of persons who had achieved sanctity. These hallowed beings were models for Charles on how to receive identical honors through piety and wise government.[75]

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[73]Saint John, *Revelation, The Jerusalem Bible* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966) n.pag.
[74]Fayt exhibition catalogue, 25.
[75]Jiří Fayt and Jan Royt, *Magister Theodoricus: Dvorní Malíř Císaře Karla IV*, museum exhibit, 13 November 1997 - 26 April 1998 (Prague: National Gallery).

Charles utilizes historicism in Karlštejn on several levels: to show both his paternal and maternal lineages, albeit fictitiously adding kings from several past periods, in a conscious effort to lend credence to his reign as King of the Romans; to emulate Louis IX, the French saint-king and builder of the Sainte-Chapelle; and to model his own rule based on moral authority after Louis', with whose legacy Charles was acquainted after his years at the French court. Curiously, only select people could visit the Chapel of the Holy Cross by express permission of the emperor, and only the archbishop or the Karlštejn dean could perform the Mass, itself limited to only very special occasions.[76] The chapel, then, was not created with spectators in mind who would spread the word of its magnificence and the glory of the Bohemian kingdom, as would have been the case with the *Luxembourg Cycle*, located as it was in the more accessible Imperial palace and viewed by visiting dignitaries, ambassadors. The plethora of Bohemian saints in the paintings surrounding the worshippers, the painstaking attention to detail in the recreation of the heavenly promise of a new Jerusalem: these were to be witnessed by so few. Perhaps the chapel was meant largely for Charles and his awareness of it, the knowledge that he, like St. Louis, collected relics and had a private chapel housing them, thereby providing the accoutrements of a wise and saintly king. Charles' intellectual abilities, his forward-thinking projects, and his capabilites of fulfilling them suggest that the plans for the chapel were drawn up by Charles himself in 1348, early in his career, as a necessary imperial fixture, a chapel suited for an emperor.

In another historicizing measure, Charles IV, as King of the Romans and Emperor from 1355, evoked the memory of Charlemagne, the first medieval Roman emperor of the west, in numerous instances to pay proper homage to his predecessor and to recall the glory of his reign that it might shed some of its brilliance on his own. As mentioned

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[76]Kubů 61.

above, Charles has changed his name from Wenceslas at his confirmation to show his identification with Charlemagne and the tradition of the empire. Charles was crowned King of the Romans in Aachen, Charlemagne's imperial residence, from whence he brought three of Charlemagne's teeth to Prague in 1349 as a symbolic act coupled with the move of the imperial residence to that city.[77] He visited Aachen seven times and donated gifts to its cathedral's treasury, among them three richly decorated reliquaries; he commissioned a gilt reliquary bust of Charlemagne to retain that emperor's skull in 1376.[78] Charles IV's knowledge of Charlemagne's own consciousness of history could account to some extent for his appreciation for historicism. In fact, Charles was no doubt aware of Charlemagne's own revival of the past, the "Carolingian Renaissance" as it is called today, which was based on the revival of classical antiquity and on the idea that Charlemagne's empire was a continuation of the empire of Rome.

Charles IV also recalled the Byzantine Empire in his acquisitions of Byzantine objects[79] and a representation of himself in a Byzantine coat of mail on the seal of the Prague university. He considered himself an inheritor of Byzantine culture through his Bohemian heritage. During his rule Charles IV reintroduced, with the reluctant support of the pope, the Slavonic liturgy in the Bohemian kingdom. Permission for the establishment of one monastery which would perform the liturgy was granted and on 29 March 1372, the 'monastery of Saint Jerome the Slav', or the 'Monasterium Slavorum,' was consecrated in Prague's New Town.[80] The Slavonic liturgy dates from the times of

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[77]Thomson 11.
[78]Ibid. 90.
[79]"...the number of antique and Byzantine cameos in Charles' collections alone amounted to hundreds..." Stejskal *European Art*, 82; "Charles showed a preference for Byzantine works in his collecting...On the first reliquary scene at Karlstein castle Charles is depicted in a valuable robe with a pattern of trees and two parrots. A strikingly similar pattern adorns the Byzantine brocade from the 10th-11th century, found in the royal tomb in Prague cathedral." Ibid. 92.
[80] It was dedicated in honor of the Virgin Mary, Sts. Jerome, Cyril, Methodius, Adalbert and Procopius. Ibid. 147.

Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the two Christian missionaries sent by the Emperor of Byzantium, Michael III, in 863, to institute a church organization in the Slavic lands on the request of Prince Rostislav, ruler of the Moravians. Cyril created the first Slavonic script, called Glagolithic, translated liturgical texts into Slavonic for easier apprehension by the native populations, and founded the Slavic church services.[81] Charles IV invited Benedictines from the Slavonic monasteries of Tkon and Senj on the Dalmatian coast to help install the Slavonic rites. They were also enlisted by Charles to translate the Bible into Czech[82], and to write and copy manuscripts in Latin and in the Glagolithic script.[83]

Charles IV's reasons for reintroducing the Slavonic liturgy in Bohemian lands were twofold. He sought to develop favorable relations with the neighboring Slavic regions of the kingdom of Bohemia which would protect the eastern trade routes, from Venice to Riga and Novgorod, and from the North Sea to Kyiv and Constantinople.[84] The Slavonic rite, which acknowledged the Pope as head of the Church but utilized Byzantine-based services and rituals as instituted by Sts. Cyril and Methodius and observed by Bohemia's Orthodox neighbors, would help Charles maintain a peaceful dialogue between East and West, since his kingdom was situated in that central geographic position. Secondly, by stimulating the Byzantine heritage left by Sts. Cyril and Methodius to Moravia, which was later incorporated into the kingdom of Bohemia, and by taking advantage of his Czech and Slav parentage, he underscored his own inheritance of Byzantine culture and effected a parallelism to that illustrious line of Byzantine emperors, thereby lending legitimacy and integrity to his own rulership.

I return to Karlštejn and its Chapel of the Holy Cross to demonstrate the prime example of the high degree to which Charles IV regarded Byzantine culture and utilized

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[81]Josef Poulík, *Great Moravia and the Mission of Cyril and Methodius* (Prague: Orbis Press Agency, 1985) 20-21.
[82]Thomson 14.
[83]Demetz 97.
[84]Stejskal *European Art*, 146.

it to his own ends. In his article, "Theodorik, Byzanc a Benátky [Theodoric, Byzantium, and Venice]"[85] Karel Stejskal shows that the decoration of the Chapel of the Holy Cross reveals relations to Byzantine art which came to Bohemia mainly by way of Venice and surrounding areas extending to both shores of the Adriatic Sea. For example, the early Byzantine basilica of Parenzo on the Istrian coast contains walls inlaid with semi-precious stones which are mirrored in the Chapel of the Holy Cross and which Charles himself could have ordered, having visited Parenzo in 1337. Also, Theodoric's painted panels of saints placed in long rows on the chapel walls (fig.2) resemble a Byzantine *ikonostasis*, the screen of saints in painted panels or mosaic that separates the sanctuary from the public. On his alleged Italian trip Theodoric would have seen the main Venetian church, the basilica of St. Mark, and its *ikonostasis* which was in place in the second half of the fourteenth century.[86]

In a further parallel, Byzantine artists also developed the ancient plastic technique of gilt stucco which was adopted by Theodoric and covers the background and frames of his panels in the Karlštejn chapel, and in some cases the draperies and attributes of the painted saints. Stejskal traces the duality of the textures present in Theodoric's panels, that is, the patterned stuccoed backgrounds and smooth painting of facial features to Byzantine paintings from the outlying areas of Venice, and in particular to a thirteenth-century Byzantine *Descent from the Cross* in the castle of Montegaldo in Vicenzo rendered by an unknown Greek artist. The composition of this *Descent* is a combination of mosaic in the background and figures painted directly on wood. In addition to the use of gilt stuccoed backgrounds in his panels it is necessary to look at yet another technique used by Theodoric that has Byzantine origins, more specifically, the hammered gold or silver coverings of icons. These thin relief sheets partially obscure the

[85]Stejskal "Theodorik" 30-37.
[86]Ibid. 34.

painted icon, usually revealing only the heads of the figures. The technique is apparent in the Byzantine east from the eleventh century. Stejskal cites the Madonna Nikopoia from San Marco in Venice as an example of such an icon.[87] Theodoric apparently knew of these partially covered icons and was inspired by them so that on thirteen of his panels of sovereigns he added gold and silver shields (fig.3). It is important to note that while Theodoric borrowed the Byzantine styles outlined above, the intentions behind their functions were not always identical to the intentions of the Byzantine artists. The metal shield accoutrements on the paintings of the sovereigns do add a sense of majesty to the figures and correspond to the same function of the metal coverings in Byzantine icons; however, the *ikonostasis* effect of the rows upon rows of panel paintings in the Karlštejn chapel clearly is not consistent with the use of the *ikonostasis* screen in Byzantine churches. Here, then, emerges the deliberate borrowing of Byzantine styles, but for a different purpose than originally intended, that purpose being the manifestation of the Byzantine heritage of Bohemia, tempered by local traditions and necessities and the passage of time and place. Charles IV, having been a Venetian *condottiere* in his youth, would have been well aware of the Byzantine art of Venice and undoubtedly would have sought to emulate the brilliance of such a space as the basilica of St. Mark and to evoke the prestige of Byzantium and its legacy to Bohemia and his reign in this, the most significant spiritual space defining his own imperial eminence that was the Chapel of the Holy Cross at Karlštejn.

Charles IV's appreciation of history prompted his extensive implementation of historicism in Karlštejn castle, the Prague cathedral, and various abovementioned deeds which recalled the glorious pasts of Bohemia, France, Byzantium, the Carolingian, even the biblical periods. To counter attacks on his reign as King of the Romans, and later

[87]Stejskal "Theodorik," 32.

emperor, and to establish a powerful Bohemian kingdom, the ruling Luxembourg dynasty of which would be in the position to wear the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles instituted a programme of historicism, because it was his belief that legitimacy came with history.

In the next chapter I will examine the presence of historicizing styles in the manuscript illuminations of the second half of the fourteenth century as a deliberate plan on the part of Charles IV to evoke past eminence and renown that they might be shed on his own reign.

Chapter 2: Book Illumination in the Caroline Period

Background.

The end of the Caroline era is usually dated in relation to the death of Charles IV in 1378; however, designating a year to the beginning of this period in Bohemian art proves more difficult. Charles ascended the Bohemian throne in 1346, but he could already have exercised some influence on the art of that kingdom from 1333, when as Margrave of Moravia he reestablished the seat of the Bohemian rulers in Prague castle. But as Jaroslav Pěšina asserts[1], it is hardly possible to connect any painting from the 1330s or 1340s to Charles, because it seems likely that he stayed in the shadow of the extensive art patronage of the last bishop of Prague, John of Dražice (who died in 1343), and had not yet developed his own plans or ideas of art as a tool in the glorification of his reign. Furthermore, art of the early reign of Charles IV does not share the same stylistic characteristics with that of the later years, which is why it is more accurate to designate this type of art as art produced during Charles' time and not "Caroline art."

As regards book illumination, this first period still shows a variety of techniques, a search for a unified style or programme which drew on two archetypal orientations in manuscript painting - the French Gothic with its developed decorative system and its precise stylizations, and the Italian, with its classically arranged designs. Two leading examples of this kind of adoption of foreign styles by local Bohemian artists are the *Velislav Bible*[2] (fig. 4), the pure lines of which resemble the early thirteenth-century line drawings of Villard de Honnecourt and the *Missal of Provost Nicholas*[3] (fig. 5) in which

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[1]Pěšina 372.
[2]Prague, University Library, XIII C 124, from 1345-50.
[3]Brno, City Archives, St. Jacob's Library, MS. 10/1, from c.1355.

the Crucifixion on folio 181v is likely copied from a Bolognese manuscript[4]. Thus, the general trait of Bohemian book decoration of the second third of the fourteenth century was dictated by the principle of selecting preferred styles in the effort to create a synthesis appropriate to local tastes and needs. Josef Krása states that only at the end of this period was an original style formed from acquired, indigenous, and individual aesthetics, as first claimed by Max Dvořák in 1901.[5]

The actual beginning of art that can be termed "Caroline" dates to the years immediately following the return of Charles' entourage from the coronation journey to Rome in 1355. A distinct programme of the new imperial art emerges that was supposed to portray the power of the state and act as an instrument of the emperor's ideas and intentions.[6] An influx of Italianizing elements in Bohemian illumination occurs as a result of members of the court bringing back Italian manuscripts to Prague, and the emperor's invitation of artists from that country to participate in the various decorative projects in the capital and at the imperial residence of Karlštejn. Another cause behind the gradual overrun of Italian over French principles as the main influence of Bohemian painting[7] arose out of contemporary currents in religious feeling which was "manifested in a yearning for deep personal religious experience attained through emotion stirred up by sensual ideas"[8], thus heralding a trend of naturalism in the depiction of religious subjects. There was a desire among the large new urban population for an explanation of human salvation and of God through more readily understandable forms including the

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[4]Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MS. lat.III.97, fol.66v; the similarities between the Brno missal and the Bolognese manuscript was made by Amanda Simpson in her Ph.D. thesis entitled, *The Connections between English and Bohemian Painting during the Second Half of the Fourteenth Century*, Courtauld Institute of Art, 1978 (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1984) 69.
[5]Krása in *Dějiny*, 405.
[6]Dostál 61.
[7]Schmidt 43.
[8]Antonín Matějček and Jaroslav Pešina, *Czech Gothic Painting 1350-1450* (Prague: Melantrich, 1950) 13.

lives of Christ and Mary rendered naturalistically, so that their stories could be easily interpreted, and they could be used as models for moral living. A heightened cult of the Virgin also developed as evidenced in the countless numbers of Madonnas in sculpture and panel paintings in the second half of the fourteenth century. The volume of figures and their surroundings as introduced by northern Italian art replaced the linearism of the earlier part of the century.[9]

The following discussion offers two manuscripts of the Caroline period as archetypes illustrating the prevailing artistic tendencies toward humanism and historicism in Bohemian art which were in fact the direct and indirect effects of the policies and personal predilections of Emperor Charles IV.

The *Evangeliary of John of Opava*.[10]

The *Evangeliary of John of Opava* contains the complete texts of the four Gospels and provides the date of its execution and the identity of its scribe and illuminator within its own pages in the following inscription on folio 190v: *Et ego Johannes de Oppavia presbiter canonicus Brunensis plebanus in Lantskrona hunc librum cum auro purissimo de penna scripsi iluminavi atque deo cooperante complevi in anno domini millesimo trecentesimo sexagesimo octavo.*[11] The highly skilled execution of the written text and the richly decorated full-page miniatures constitute the remarkable character of this manuscript. The text is written in gold and colorfully framed with acanthus ornament. Each of the four Gospels begins with a full-page initial which faces a polyptych composition on the opposite page illustrating twelve scenes from the life of the evangelist. The Gospels, themselves containing 85 initials with epic scenes from the

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[9]Friedl 15.
[10]Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 1182. Parchment, 191 folios, 37.5 x 25.6 cm.
[11]Simpson 73.

Bible stories, end with folio 191r on which is pictured a full-page Christ in Majesty, based on a Byzantine *Deesis* scheme: Christ in a mandorla with angels and the kneeling intercessors, Mary and John the Baptist.

As the inscription given above reveals, the scribe and illuminator of the evangeliary, John of Opava, was a Brno canon and pleban in Lanskroun. He worked at court and is thought to have been associated with the personal scriptorium of Chancellor John of Středa. The evangeliary was meant for the Austrian Archduke Albrecht III, and the arms of Austria, Styria, Karinthia, and Tyrol all appear within the manuscript. The archduke was Charles IV's son-in-law, having married Charles' daughter Elizabeth in 1366.[12] It is not clear whether it was commissioned by the archduke as a result of the fame of the chancellor's scriptorium, as articulated by Stejskal[13], or whether it was a gift to the archduke from John of Středa himself, who knew both Albrecht and his older brother Leopold.[14]

The evangeliary was intended to serve as a ceremonial codex. For this reason, it was also supposed to recall the past, the early medieval Gospel books of Carolingian and Ottonian emperors and Byzantine codices, which were kept as treasured reliquaries in cathedral repositories.[15] Albrecht III's sense for the legitimizing nature of history, similar to that of Charles IV, is apparent in the following account. The archduke attempted to re-utilize the *Privilegium Majus*, a charter forged by his brother Rudolf[16], to claim the primacy of Austria. The documents used by Albrecht were the alleged *Privilegia* of Caesar and Nero issued by the ancient emperors, which, Albrecht hoped,

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[12]Ibid. 73.
[13]Stejskal *European Art*, 69.
[14]Simpson 73.
[15]Krása in *Dějiny*, 413.
[16]"by which he himself claimed immense privileges for Austria and its dynasty, as well as the title of archduke," see "History of Austria," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol.2 (1974), 452.

would exclude Austria from imperial jurisdiction. Charles IV enlisted the help of Petrarch to verify those documents, and in the end rejected them (although later they were sanctioned by the Habsburg emperor Frederick III in 1442 and 1453[17]). This attempt to legitimize a political claim on the basis of historical documents from the distant past parallels Charles IV's own appreciation of the power of history, and the staff of artists at the Prague court was experienced enough in historicist styles to be able to produce a codex that was intended to evoke the past.

Possible sources for the historicist elements, discussed at length below, include a Gospel book from the ninth century (Prague Chapter Library, cim 2) of northern French extraction[18] and the full-page miniature scheme of an early Byzantine type among the Byzantine manuscripts of the Prague court, which were available to the court illuminators.[19]

The large size of the codex (37.5 x 25.6cm) and opulence of the gold binding with lions' heads and solar beams, ancient ruler motifs, coincide with its purpose of enhancing the majesty of its owner, Albrecht III, in glorious processions[20] which relied on historical references to Carolingian, and even more so, Ottonian regalia. Such codices were used then in rare times in the presence of the king for liturgical and other processions. John of Opava drew upon the Romanesque tradition, in his decoration of the evangeliary in an attempt to evoke a former age which would lend some of its glory to the archduke who desired to rule Austria himself, much like Charles used historicism to show the legitimacy of the young line of Luxembourgs as the inheritors of the imperial dynasty by adopting the traditions of prestigious past reigns.

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[17]"History of Austria," 452.
[18]In *České umění gotické 1350-1450*, Krása cites G. Schmidt's evidence, 272.
[19]Ibid. 272.
[20]Krása suggests that this was a coronational codex, 272.

The architectural vocabulary used in the polyptych scenes of the four evangelists is similar to the Carolingian rendering of architecture as a signifier of location. Buildings and figures are not proportionate to each other, the former usually existing on an extremely miniaturized scale; rather, constructions such as churches, city gates, and townscapes on a large scale, and lecturns, altars, and thrones on a smaller scale, act like generic indicators of place. Their importance lies in their ability to provide a visual identification with a certain place - a church, a town, an interior, an exterior; a realistically proportionate relationship to figures is always secondary. For example, ten of the twelve scenes with St. Luke employ some kind of architectural construction which is disproportionately small - the entrance to the city is equal in height to the figures in one scene (fig. 6); a city gate in a scene with St. Mark is actually short enough to force the saint to walk through it hunched over (fig. 7). This use of architecture in the *Evangeliary of John of Opava* to provide a setting while still retaining its identifiable quality which requires it to be unnaturally minute was adopted from the styles of much older manuscripts, such as the Carolingian Bible of San Paolo fuori le Mura[21] in which the frontispiece to the book of Revelation pictures buildings representing the seven churches of Asia, but which are inconsistent with the figures inhabiting them in size (fig. 8).

Another historicizing element on the St. Mark page is the appearance of a Romanesque rotunda which corresponds neither to the saint's time period nor to the period of the manuscript's production, but somewhere in between. Its inclusion is undoubtedly meant to inspire a time and place in the past, perhaps merely a general feeling of the distance of time, or perhaps more specifically that of Bohemian history, and by extension the weighty significance of the Bohemian lands based on their long existence. Three Romanesque rotundas have survived to the present day in Prague and

[21]Abbazia di San Paolo, Rome, MS. f.1.m.337. Produced in Reims, c. 870.

were readily available to the illuminator of the evangeliary for imitation.[22] The reference to Prague could also have been intended as a reminder to foreign viewers (including the evangeliary's owner, Albrecht III of Austria) of the kingdom of Bohemia's extensive history and contemporary importance.

All the decorative elements in the evangeliary contribute to its most vital characteristic, that of its monumentality. The codex's large size and gold lettering combine with two more decorative devices to enhance its grandiosity: the polyptych scenes of the evangelists' lives and the initial pages, which were painted on facing pages so that when opened and held aloft, as in a procession, the manuscript's full glory would have been visible to all.

Both of these types of ornament are anchored in older traditions, as is the practice of writing in gold, which probably came to Bohemia through Byzantine and Carolingian manuscripts, but which was already seen in antique books. Christopher de Hamel cites a reference by Suetonius of a poem by Nero that was written in gold and a Homer in gold on purple vellum in the possession of Emperor Maxentius. He continues, "Manuscripts written in gold on purple had a promotional value in symbolizing imperial culture. That is one reason why...spectacular manuscripts were made for distribution by Charlemagne's family to communities in his Christian empire."[23] Charles IV, in his continuous emulation of Charlemagne, no doubt adopted this method to illuminate his own reign, and what better way to propagate its magnificence than to have manuscripts decorated in this fashion and distributed to neighbors like Albrecht III of Austria *à la*

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[22]The Rotunda of St. Martin has stood in Vysehrad since the second half of the eleventh century; the Rotunda of St. Longinus from the end of the eleventh century is located in the New Town; and the Rotunda of the Holy Cross located in the Old Town dates to the second quarter of the twefth century: Jaroslava Staňková, et al., *Pražská architektura: Významné stavby jedenácti století* (Praha, n.p.,1991).

[23]Christopher de Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1994) 48.

Charlemagne? Of course, there is no concrete evidence for Charles' instructions in this matter however, given his skills in diplomacy, his foresight in economic and cultural programmes, and his knowledge of the propagandistic power of art, it is easy to imagine his blanket influence in the production of art, especially that art which was exported.

Let us return to the discussion of the first abovementioned kind of monumental ornament in the evangeliary: the four pages with scenes from the lives of the Evangelists. The division of events into twelve parts within a larger rectangular framework, as is seen in figure 7 showing the scenes from the life of St. Mark, is a version of pictorial narrative closely related to the Romanesque technique of separating consecutive episodes of a story into a unique compositional scheme, itself modelled on Carolingian, Byzantine, and even antique forms. No single norm prevailed in such an execution, as evidenced in the three-banded format of the scenes from the life of St. Jerome in the Carolingian *Vivian Bible*[24] written in Tours c. 846; the two-banded configuration with Christ crowning the emperor and his wife, Queen Cunigunde, as the world adores in the bottom register in the Ottonian *Gospel Lectionary of Henry II*[25] painted at Reichenau in the early eleventh century; or the six creation scenes in the *Michaelbeuern Bible*[26] from the second quarter of the twefth century (fig. 9). The twelve illustrations from the *Evangeliary of John of Opava* most closely resemble the last example, the *Michaelbeuern Bible*, in its division of a rectangular space into six equal, framed squares each picturing a different day of creation. The use of Carolingian and Ottonian models by scribes and illuminators at the court of Charles IV was not accidental. As was discussed in Chapter 1, Charles IV nurtured a connection between his reign and that of Charlemagne through his personal collections of that emperor's relics and donations to the cathedral treasury at Aachen. Charles IV, in his capacity as Roman emperor, drew on the trappings of that other Roman

[24]Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms.lat. I, fol.3v.
[25]Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4452, fol.2r.
[26]Michaelbeuern, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Perg.1, fol.6.

emperor as a deliberate way of equating the strength of both rulerships, and imbued his court with a taste for historicism through his own historicizing measures.

The second type of monumental ornamentation in the evangeliary is the initial page. In this case as well a concerted effort was made by John of Opava to imitate the Romanesque. The page with the initial L (fig. 10) explodes with a hodge-podge of lively creatures and flourishes, rivalling the best Carolingian full-page initial decorations. Here, a panoply of angels sporting musical instruments line the inside of the initial, while a sequence of winged grotesques with human heads interlinked by their long necks create a carpet in the center of the composition. Acanthus leaves wrap around the edges of the frame, while wild arms of anemone-like plants stretch out at the corners. There are even motifs of Carolingian interlace on the four sides of the frame, a pattern based on Celtic ironwork originating in Irish manuscripts, but the visual reference being made in the fourteenth-century evangeliary is most probably to the Carolingian period, since there would be less reason to recall the Irish tradition of the early Middle Ages and copies of those books would have been few, if any, at the Prague court. The sumptuous decoration subordinates the text to an insignificant minimum of barely intelligible lines. The *horor vacui* nature of the embellishment of this page recalls the same in the initial page to Genesis - *In Principio* - in the Bible of San Paolo fuori le Mura[27] (fig. 11), as does the all-important attention given to the initial letter. The solitary letter acted as a pictograph which was assigned a "sacred or magical significance" in early medieval Gospel books.[28] The grotesque creatures existing on the initial "L" page and within initials in other parts of the evangeliary, for example in the initial "U" with the three Marys (fig. 12), harken back to Carolingian examples. The knot interlace is also present elsewhere in the evangeliary, such as on the page with scenes from the life of St. John the Evangelist (fig.

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[27]Folio 10r.

[28]Florentine Mütherich and Joachim E. Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting* (New York: G. Braziller, 1976) 121.

13). The initial page in the *Evangeliary of John of Opava* mirrors corresponding Carolingian works to the smallest detail, including the subordination of the text to the profusion of ornamentation, with the exception of the dominance of the letter, grotesques, interlace patterns, and floral motifs. This page layout is consistent with the other initial pages of the evangeliary, as seen in the initial "F" (fig. 14) which shows slightly different details, but retains the identical principles outlined above. The purpose behind such imitations of this Carolingian style was to attach brilliance, splendor, and monumentality to the codex, which were in turn reflected onto the book's owner. Not only this, but if one step in the life of this book is removed, it is evident not only to us but also to any past viewer who knew of its origin that the richly decorated manuscript was created at the court of Charles IV, a distinguished court which was a leader in the high quality production of art and which rivalled other European states in strength and heritage. This final conclusion must have been the underlying intention of the creation of this lavish manuscript.

Another remarkable characteristic of the miniatures of the evangeliary that relates directly to Charles IV's personal views and projects, this time regarding religion, is the absence of text or symbols of the evangelists in the four pages with scenes from the lives of the evangelists. The frontispieces beginning each Gospel traditionally portrayed the evangelist at work on his Gospel or a symbol of the evangelist.[29] The central role of the illustration containing no text can be explained by its intended use - in processions. The reading of a text by onlookers standing at various positions, some near, some far, would not be as important as the opulent display of illustration and grandeur of the codex. Also, the identifying symbol of the evangelist need not be present there, since his life was already pictured in the twelve scenes, presumably already identifying him. Plus, it must

[29]St. Matthew - winged man or angel; St. Mark - winged lion; St. Luke - winged ox; St. John - eagle.

be remembered that the facing page contains the initial and first words of text of the Gospel in question. What is remarkable in the pages with scenes from the evangelists' lives is that scenes from their lives are shown at all. As a codex used in procession, it would have been wiser to paint a less complicated composition, perhaps with just the one figure for easier comprehension by the public. The question must then be asked, why are twelve relatively small vignettes from the lives of the evangelists depicted? The unique choice of depicting the lives of the evangelists rather than their symbols likely arose from the model provided by the emperor in his attitude toward faith.

Charles adopted his own personal approach to religion as evidenced in his writings and directives. For example, Chapter I of his autobiography is a philosophical "treatise" on spiritual life and its higher meaning, and eternal versus physical, transient life. Chapters XI-XIII are homilies on the liturgical pericopes of the feast of St. Ludmila.[30] Clearly, Charles IV took an interest in religious and spiritual life and by writing his autobiography as a teaching tool for his progeny, exhorted his successors to do the same. The emperor also wrote prayers to the Virgin Mary and propagated a cult to her in Prague through the establishment with Ernest of Pardubice of a College of Mansionaries. The large collection of Marian hymns in the beautifully illustrated *Laus Mariae* was composed by Konrad of Haimburg on the command of the emperor and archbishop for the Prague church of Mansionaries, the choir of which was founded by Charles on 5 October 1343, when he was still Margrave of Moravia. The emperor's affinity to Mary was sparked by a vision he had of her in Parma during his youth on the feast day of her Dormition and he instituted a practice of the singing of hymns to her glory in the church of Mansionaries.[31] A further note must be made about the emperor's institution of the public display of saints' relics held annually in Prague. This event afforded a visual

[30]Kavka 293.
[31]Chytil 10-11.

connection between the public and the most holy objects of the kingdom and empire, bringing religion to the level of the public, as it were.

Charles' advisers also participated in the veneration of Mary. John of Streda wrote and compiled prayers to the Virgin at the Prague College of Mansionaries.[32] In addition to supporting the cult of the Virgin alongside Charles, Ernest of Pardubice had a particular interest in the contemporary Dutch *devotio moderna* of introspection based on spiritual exploration and assisted the Augustinians in that movement. Similarly as in the case of cultural patronage, the emperor's cabinet followed his lead in matters of religion. Thus, in yet another instance of Charles IV's permeation of all aspects of his reign, this one illustrating his influence on the practice of religion in Bohemia, it is possible to witness his imprint on art, and in particular the scenes from the lives of the evangelists, who are not mere symbols but real persons, in the *Evangeliary of John of Opava* as a manifestation of the personal approach to faith taken by Charles.

Liber viaticus.[33]

The *Liber viaticus* is the first of the new type of court *manuscrits de luxe* which appeared in Prague in the second half of the fourteenth century. It takes its name from the inscription included on all the bottom margins of folios 1-304r, which in full reads: *Liber viaticus d/omi/ni Johannis - Luthomisl/ensis/ epi/scopi/ imp/er/ial/is/ cancell/arii/.* As indicated by this inscription, the manuscript was commissioned by Chancellor John of Streda during his tenure as Bishop of Litomysl (1353-1364).[34] It dates to c.1360. His

[32]Matějček and Pěšina 13.
[33]Prague, Library of the National Museum, XIII A 12. 319 folios, 42.5 x 31 cm.
[34]Krása in *České umění gotické*, 266.

coat of arms as Bishop of Litomyšl appears in the form of a heraldic shield of a gold cross on a black background within the pages of the manuscript.[35]

The *Liber viaticus* takes the form of a breviary. In the twelfth century a shorter version of a prayer book appeared in Rome and was adopted by the Franciscans in the thirteenth century because its abbreviated format, which included all the offices of the year, was useful for their frequent missionary trips. This kind of breviary was called: "*breviaria portatilia*," "*breviaria portiforia*," or "*viatica*." However, it seems that the name of the manuscript in question may have been distorted from its original derivation, because there are instances of books called "*viaticus*" in Prague that served sedentary purposes: the inventory of the cathedral of St. Vitus from 1354 includes a *Liber magnus viaticus, qui trup dicitur, quem dedit Thobias episcopus Pragensis*;[36] the canon Pribík from Lestkov (1342-70) donated a *viaticus* to the altar of St. Antonín at the cathedral in Prague for the express use of the keepers of the altar. The Chapel of St. Wenceslas in that cathedral also had its own *viaticus*, which was guarded by a knight for the sole purpose of ensuring that it be used only by the keeper of the altar in the chapel and not taken elsewhere.[37] These books were presumably valuable enough to have been guarded and reserved for the most important sacred spaces of the land. It must have been out of this tradition, then, that our *Liber viaticus* emerged and took its name.

The contents of the *Liber viaticus* are as follows: fol.1-9 display a liturgical calendar, 9v-59v the Psalter section, 60r-67v a hymnal, 69v-198v the *proprium de tempore*, 199v-289v the *proprium de sanctis* coupled with the *officiem in dedicatione ecclesiae* (289v-291v), 291v-303v the *commune sanctorum*, 303v-304r the *cursus B. Mariae*, 304r-305v readings about St. Zigmund, 305v readings about Sts. Peter and Paul, 308r-312v an account of Christ's suffering and death and a letter of Innocent VI about his

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[35]Chytil 22.
[36]Thobias was bishop from 1279-1296.
[37]Chytil 17.

Passion, 312v-318v the legends of St. Wenceslas composed by Charles IV, and finally 318v contains Christmas hymns.[38]

The decoration of the manuscript is unusually rich and various. Apart from the historiated and illuminated initials there are elaborate bas-de-page scenes and ornaments with half-figures of prophets in the side margins. Both the Italian acanthus leaf (of antique origin) and French trefoil tendril motifs are used here as framing devices. In the Psalter section the historiated initials house various depictions of King David: fol.9v shows Christ Enthroned with David composing the psalms at his feet and scenes of David and Goliath in the bas-de-page; David with two musicians on fol.33v; David with singers on 38r. Among the other historiated initials are pictured: Christ Enthroned and God the Father (43v), Madonna and child (47r), the Annunciation (69v) with Samson in combat with a lion in the bas-de-page and John of Středa in a side medallion, the Nativity (83v) and Annunciation to the Shepherds in the bas-de-page, St. Stephen (86r), St. John the Evangelist (87v), the Three Magi (97v), the busts of prophets and Apostles (107r, 109r, 110v, 112v, 114r, 116r, 119r, 123r, 127r, 131r, 135r, 138v, 141v), the Three Marys at the tomb (145v) with the Easter tradition of the blessing of eggs and the Easter feast below, typical scenes in breviaries which show customs associated with the church calendar, the Resurrection (146r), the Ascension (157v), the Pentecost (161r), the Holy Trinity (164r), Job (178v), Tobias (180r), St. Nicholas (200r), the Meeting of Joachim and Anna (201r), St. Paul (207v), the Presentation in the Temple (209r), St. Dorothy with the Christ child (212v), the Annunciation (220r), St. Vojtěch (223r), St. Vitus (229v), St. John the Baptist (233v), Sts. Peter and Paul (236v), St. Margaret (241v), St. Mary Magdalen (243v), the Death of the Virgin (254v), St. Wenceslas (268v), the Kingdom of Heaven with Christ, Mary, St. John the Baptist, the evangelists, apostles, prophets, martyrs and virgins, St.

[38]Krása in *České umění gotické*, 266.

Martin (281v), St. Catherine (287v), Jacob's dream (289v), and the Martyrdom of St. Wenceslas (313r).[39]

I outline most of the subjects of the historiated initials to emphasize the wealth of illustration and the range of the repertoire of the Master of the Viaticus, as the illuminator of the manuscript has been labelled. Indeed, scholars have credited the creation of the so-called "new style" of the imperial court art to the illuminator of the *Liber viaticus*.[40] In fact, I have chosen this manuscript as the quintessential example of the general artistic trend in the art of Charles IV's court. A discussion of the characteristics and significance of the *Liber viaticus* will be followed by additional cases of manuscripts and a panel painting in an effort to highlight the prevalent styles in Bohemian court art during the reign of Charles IV and of his effect on its development.

The *Liber viaticus* shows a massive absorption of foreign styles, namely Italian or more precisely contemporary Sienese and Bolognese, and French Gothic painting, which were incorporated into a local style that produced a highly original work. This melding of foreign and domestic traditions is the hallmark of Bohemian court art of the second half of the fourteenth century.

The Master of the Viaticus probably started work on the illustrations shortly after the Italian coronation journey of Charles and his entourage in 1354-5 during which he was crowned emperor in Rome and officially received the title of Charles IV, Emperor of the Romans. This journey is universally cited in the literature[41] as the single foremost

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[39]Ibid. 266-267.

[40]The first scholar to do so was Max Dvořák in his seminal work of 1901, *Die Illuminatoren des Johann von Neumarkt*. After Dvořák, who exceedingly underlined the isolation of the Master of the Viaticus, K. Chytil, E. Dostál, and V. Kramář succeeded in describing the local conditions which affected the Viaticus master, and Dostál advanced the theory of the Sienese painters' (the Lorenzetti brothers, S. Martini, the Master of the Codex of San Giorgio, N. Tegliacci, and L. Vanni) influence on the Viaticus master, while G. Schmidt added the impact of the Bolognese book illuminators. See Krása in *České umění gotické*, 268.

[41]Dostál was the first to make this assertion. See *Čechy a Avignon*, 61.

instigator of the adoption of Italian styles in Bohemian book illumination. Moreover, this was Chancellor John of Středa's first trip to Italy and it is not difficult to imagine the influence that he had on the production of art in his scriptorium, judging by his following words: "That happy day and happy hour when he [Charles IV] turned his steps towards Italy and passed, as it were, into a golden century through the Gates of Paradise."[42] The chancellor became acquainted with the emergence of humanistic learning and the new art which recalled the past glory of Italy upon passing through towns and cities such as Padua, Pisa, Siena, and Rome.

Another opportunity wherein northern Italian art penetrated the kingdom of Bohemia coincided with the presence of Italian artists in Prague. They had come by invitation of Charles IV to lend their skills to the decoration of his castle in Karlštejn and the cathedral in Prague. Tommaso da Modena, whom Charles IV met in Treviso in 1354 during his Italian trip[43], produced works at that castle including a diptych of Mary and the Man of Sorrows from c.1355, and a triptych of the Virgin with Sts. Wenceslas and Palmatius from 1356 that hung over the main altar in the Chapel of the Holy Cross.[44] The Italian mosaicists, mentioned in Chapter 1, installed the Last Judgement over the south portal of St. Vitus cathedral in 1370-1. Later in date than the *Liber viaticus*, it probably influenced subsequent Bohemian painting.

Frequent trips to the Avignon papal court by members of the Bohemian court also had a direct impact on Bohemian art and book illumination, especially with the import of books from Avignon by Bishop John of Dražice who deposited them among other places at his scriptorium at Roudnice. Ludvík Svoboda places him there during the visits of William Ockham and Petrarch.[45] His successor, Ernest of Pardubice, also travelled to

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[42]Stejskal *European Art*, 67.
[43]Chytil 42.
[44]Ibid. 105, 127.
[45]Ludvík Svoboda, "Raný humanismus doby Karlovy," *Karolus Quartus*, ed. Václav Vaněček (Praha, Univerzita Karlova, 1984) 236.

Avignon, where a fusion was occurring between the two leading cultures of Europe, the Italian and French. The Sienese Simone Martini whose activity at the papal court is not well documented[46] nonetheless must have left some impression on the visiting Bohemian dignitaries. Nicholas of Kroměříz, assistant to John of Streda, was sent on several diplomatic missions to Avignon as well.[47] He may be connected with a missal which is numbered among a group of manuscripts associated with the style of the *Liber viaticus*, because the inscription in the missal ascribes its ownership to *Dominus Nicolaus praepositus Brunensis*.[48] It must also be remembered that Archbishop Ernest of Pardubice had lived and studied in Bologna for fourteen years, and another of Charles' advisers, Albrecht of Sternberg, also had studied in Bologna and Paris,[49] and so both were closely acquainted with art from those areas.

In an analysis of the painting of the *Liber viaticus* it will perhaps be useful to compare it with a panel painting from a series called the *Vyšší Brod* altarpiece named after the South Bohemian Cistercian abbey from which it originates. The Italianate forms of the *Liber viaticus* have been linked to paintings from that cycle and give evidence to the tight relationships between the imperial court and the various monasteries throughout Bohemia and Moravia, some of which have been pointed out above in reference to the patronage of Augustinian monasteries by Ernest of Pardubice and John of Dražice.[50]

The *Vyšší Brod*[51] cycle dates to about 1350 and consists of nine panels depicting scenes from the life and sufferings of Christ. The Annunciation scenes from both this cycle (fig.15) and the *Liber viaticus* (fig. 16) show remarkable similarities in the poses of

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[46]One example is his panel depicting *The Child Jesus Returning from the Disputation in the Temple*, now in the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, and dated to 1342. See Enzo Carli's *Sienese Painting* (New York: Scala Books, 1983) 26-7.
[47]Dostál 5.
[48]Simpson 69.
[49]See Chapter 1.
[50]See Chapter 1.
[51]Prague, National Gallery.

the figures of the angel and the Virgin, and the construction of the thrones, both of which appear to have two different perspectival systems, the top halves being viewed from slightly below the throne, and the bottom halves from above. Rather than filling in the rest of the background in a flat gold surface like that in the *Vyšší Brod* version, the Master of the Viaticus has gone further in his attempt to create space and a limited sense of depth with the building behind the angel that seems to inhabit the middle ground and recedes in a zigzag towards the central background. While the master of the *Vyšší Brod* Annunciation had clearly studied Sienese painting, and perhaps the art of Simone Martini, on which his gold background and rather emaciated figures are based, not to mention the angel's scrolled tidings, the Viaticus master draws his inspiration from the perspectival arrangements of architecture of painters like Ambrogio Lorenzetti and his *Effects of Good Government* (1337-9) in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena.

In a comparison with a manuscript by Niccolò di Giacomo, the Bolognese illuminator active between the 1350s and 1380s, the attempt to position figures at angles to the picture plane, as seen in the Annunciation to the Shepherds, matches the *profile perdu* of Bologna's Roman soldiers from Lucanus' *De bello Pharsalico*[52] (fig. 17). However, the Viaticus master did not entirely base his illustrations on foreign models. He followed local tradition as well, as witnessed by the figures of the Madonna from the *Liber viaticus* (fig. 18) and the Mourning Virgin from the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde*[53] (fig. 19). The drapery of both figures seems to hide any physical structure underneath it. The shading of the Madonna and Child is somewhat softer than that of the Mourning Virgin, which renders her more naturalistic, but the lessons from the *Passional* of the

[52]Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 1373. This comparison is made by Schmidt in *Gothic Art in Bohemia*, 44.
[53]Prague, University Library, c.1320.

shading, the slight contrapposto, and the definition of the body by means of drapery are definitely present in the Viaticus master's Madonna.[54]

Another stylistic parallel between the *Liber viaticus* and Sienese painting shows a borrowing of the Italian but translated into a northern Gothic liveliness. The images in question are the prophet in the left margin of folio 6v in the lower left-hand corner of the initial B of the *Liber viaticus* (fig. 20) and the figure of St. John the Baptist in Lippo Memmi's *Madonna Enthroned*[55] (fig. 21). The Master of the Viaticus uses the same kind of precision in modelling the curly hair of his prophet in individually separated locks as does Memmi, but goes further by adding motion to them so that they dance around the head of the prophet and continue the suspended movement created by the airborne scroll he holds behind his back. This type of modified adoption of foreign styles is the *modus operandi* of the Viaticus master, seen again in the technique of page layout of the manuscript, which includes bas-de-page scenes in direct imitation of French illuminated books, displayed here on folio 83v with the Nativity in the initial P and a continuation of the same story in the bottom margin of the Annunciation to the Shepherds (fig. 22). The French bas-de-page method of decoration combined with the three-lobed "crockets" on the side of the initial P on the same page which are based on the trefoil vine design derived from that same tradition, and added to the Italian acanthus leaf framing device marks the conglomerate quality of the *Liber viaticus.* Moreover, the Bohemian background of the illuminator provides yet another facet to the manuscript, that being the local tradition as found in earlier Bohemian books, such as the *Passional of Abbess Kunigunde.* The caliber of vibrant ornamentation of the *Liber viaticus* promoted it to the best examples of Bohemian book illumination and thus it became the model for subsequent manuscript painting.

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[54]Schmidt 44.
[55]San Gimignano, Palazzo del Popolo, 1317.

Other Examples of Court Art.

The adoption and adaption of Italian motifs in the *Liber viaticus* occurs in most instances of Bohemian court art from the 1360s and 1370s. An examination of the *Laus Mariae*[56], the collection of Marian hymns mentioned above in connection with the Prague College of Mansionaries, will make this more clear, while the impact of the composite character of the *Liber viaticus* on other miniatures produced in the scriptoria of John of Středa emerges in the *Missal of John of Středa*[57].

The *Laus Mariae*, also called the *Mariale Arnesti*, is a book of prayers to the Virgin Mary compiled in 1356 by Konrad of Haimburk from the writings of Sts. Hieronymus, Augustine, Ambrose, Anselm, Bernard, and others, for Menhard of Hradec, who was the bishop of Trento and a friend of Archbishop Ernest of Pardubice.[58] Figural illustration is limited to two full-page miniatures: the Presentation in the Temple on folio 34v (fig. 23) and the Annunciation on folio 55v (fig. 24). The color scheme of both compositions is similar to the Italian, especially Giotto's Arena Chapel frescoes, with its blue backgrounds and bright hues. The throne in the Annunciation bears resemblance to those in the same subject of the *Liber viaticus* and the *Vyšší Brod* altarpiece in its various perspectival systems. The viewpoint of the front section is from above, while the slim structure to the side of the actual throne is seen from below. The facial features, swaying motion, and flow of drapery of the Virgin is very close to that of the Madonna in the *Liber viaticus* (fig. 18), which is hardly surprising since this manuscript was illuminated in the same scriptorium and at relatively the same time as the *viaticus*. The angel's robe

[56]Prague, Library of the National Museum, XVI D 13. 170 folios, 30 x 20 cm. Date: before 1360.
[57]Prague, Chapter Library, Cim 6. 235 folios, 44.5 x 32 cm. Date: after 1364.
[58]Krása in *České umění gotické*, 268.

is arrested in motion in a similar way as was the prophet's scroll in the *viaticus* and the angel's robe in Simone Martini's *Annunciation*.

The overall impression given by these two miniatures is one of the monumentality of panel paintings. Indeed, an attempt has been made in the image of the Presentation in the Temple to create the depth of the receding space of a Gothic interior, like that of the same subject by Ambrogio Lorenzetti[59] (fig. 25). Although the illuminator uses the same architectural vocabulary as Lorenzetti, a system of vaulted arcades, polychrome columns and pointed arches, the effect of depth is not as drastic as Lorenzetti's, but it is to a certain degree successful, or at least as successful as the Bohemian illuminator intended it to be. Again, the practice of the Bohemian artist was not to copy Italian works blindly, but rather to study them and modify their principles to suit the local aesthetic, which to a large extent clung to northern Gothic qualities of flatness both in figural representation and space.

This controlled absorption of foreign styles is further evident in the *Missal of John of Středa*, which postdates the *Liber viaticus* and *Laus Mariae* by four to five years. The Annunciation scene in the missal (fig. 26)[60] uses lessons of depth learned from the Italian prototypes, but limited to the bottom portion of the Virgin's throne. Absent here are the attempts towards architectural perspective of the *Liber viaticus* and *Laus Mariae* Annunciation scenes. Instead there is an interesting interplay in the missal beween the Italian and Romanesque traditions. For example, the knotted frames of the initials O with Christ Enthroned between Sts. Peter and Paul (fig. 27) and P with the Nativity (fig. 28) betray a leaning toward historicist tendencies, which were discussed above in relation with the *Evangeliary of John of Opava*, but coexist on the same pages with Italianate

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[59]Florence, Uffizi Gallery. 1342.

[60]The figure kneeling at the feet of the Virgin in the miniature is a bishop of Olomouc, as indicated by the coat of arms in front of him. The manuscript was presumably, then, produced for the bishop.

acanthus leaves (fig. 28). In the Annunciation scene an added twist to the coexistence of styles occurs: the angel hands the Virgin a letter with the tidings of the miracle to take place. This is not a reference to the Gospel, where no such description of events is found, but to a verse in Dante which reads: "L'angel che venne in terra col decreto."[61] The presence of a humanist allusion is heightened by the fact that there are verses in honor of St. Jerome, some of which were composed by Francesco Petrarch[62], a friend of Ernest of Pardubice, John of Středa, and Charles IV himself. Thus, the *Missal of John of Středa* stands as another instance of the relationship that existed between the historicist and humanist elements in Bohemian book illumination.

At this point it is necessary to examine briefly some aspects of Charles IV's reception of humanism, because it indicates the direct involvement of the emperor in Bohemian artists' espousal of foreign, in this case northern Italian, idioms.

Petrarch's presence at the imperial court[63] and his friendships with the emperor, Chancellor John of Středa, and Archbishop Ernest of Pardubice, brought Italian humanism directly to Bohemia. The Italian poet's sense of history must have left an impression on the emperor's own acuity in this area. Petrarch heralded a new historiography which reflected humanity's active participation in the historical process rather than the emanation of divine volition; a greater attention to individual character and motive was implemented in humanist historiography.[64] Petrarch's letter to posterity (*Ad posteros* or *Posteritati*) written in 1351 was intended to serve as a likeness of himself for anyone who wished to know more about his life. He forged an image of himself through descriptions of his interests, his views, his personality.[65] The motivation behind

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[61]Stejskal *European Art*, 226.
[62]Ibid. 226.
[63]Petrarch visited Prague on one occasion in the summer of 1356, Thomson 8.
[64]Walter Ullmann, *Medieval Foundations of Renaissance Humanism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977) 172.
[65]Christopher Kleinhenz, "Petrarch," *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, ed. Paul F.

this autobiographical portrait is much like that of Charles in his autobiography. Both men recreated historical personae for themselves in ways through which they wanted others to understand them, their individual roles in history and their impact on the events of their time. In addition to autobiography, the family chronicle emerged as a new type of history. The Florentine Donato Velluti (c. 1367) recorded his genealogy and the events of his ancestors' lives in order to "hand on useful information to his descendants so that they might draw a lesson from his experiences."[66] Was not this one of the aims behind Charles' autobiography? It is perhaps through this new emphasis on the human experience and biography as evidenced in the *Vita Caroli* and Petrarch's writings that the scenes of the lives of the evangelists in the *Evangeliary of John of Opava* should be understood.

The incident of Albrecht of Austria's forged 'historical' documents and of Petrarch's analysis of them stands as an example of the method of historical criticism characteristic of the humanist scholarship of history that Petrarch was among the first to introduce.[67] This incident of the authentication of historical documents again brings up an important question concerning historicity, discussed in Chapter 1 in reference to Charles' commissions of chronicles. We saw there that some chronicles did not satisfy his desire for praise of his early successes, and that this might have suggested a manipulation of historical events to suit his needs. In contrast, the pains taken to authenticate the Austrian duke's documents show the emperor's respect for the truthfulness of history. However, these two episodes should not be viewed as converse directives on the part of

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Grendler, vol.4 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1999) 451-8.

[66]Ullmann 179.

[67]Petrarch's analysis produced the following results: that "the obviously forged document employed the first rather than the Caesarean third person singular; Austria was falsely and un-Romanly termed 'eastern'; and that the language in which it was written was in many ways 'both barbarous and modern." From Donald R. Kelley, *Renaissance Humanism* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991) 13.

Charles IV, but perhaps as instructions stemming from the same motivation to use history to serve the present: the king commissioned chronicles of his early years to reflect his capability to rule the empire, whether they exaggerated the truth or not; he rejected the documents of Duke Albrecht of Austria because they were indeed falsifications and because he wished Austria to remain within the empire.

Charles IV learned from his relations with the Italian humanists, from Petrarch and his Italian-educated advisers, that "the long-term goal of humanism, the achievement of wisdom...through the restoration of a hypostasized *antiquitas*, was to be attained...through an encyclopedic 'reintegration' of ancient culture as a whole."[68] The emperor clearly agreed with this historicist approach, if one is to judge by his establishment of a university where the humanities would be taught; his invitation of Italian artists to install a mosaic, in the ancient and Byzantine tradition, on a grand scale over the imperial entrance to the cathedral; his instructions for the decoration of Karlštejn castle to incorporate wall-paintings portraying Bohemian patron saints and legends; his emulation of Charlemagne.

As a final example of the composite quality of Bohemian art from the second half of the fourteenth century, I should like to address a panel painting, the *Death of the Virgin of Košátky*[69] (fig. 29), which shows a fusion of Sienese and northern European principles. The attempt to create a three-dimensional space by means of an architectural vocabulary, previously seen in the *Laus Mariae* Presentation in the Temple scene, appears again here especially with the wooden ceiling beams which recede into the back wall, and the vaulted arcades receding even further. The division of the composition into three parts by the use of the wooden posts is a device which emphasizes the feeling of depth, because the posts are no longer a frame, as initially perceived, but an integral

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[68]Ibid. 32.
[69]Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. After 1350.

part of the architecture behind which the figures exist. The artist has taken the lessons learned from Sienese painting, perhaps from such panels as Pietro Lorenzetti's *Nativity of the Virgin*[70], which is also separated into an unconventional triptych composition, the space behind the plane of the frame being united (at least between the central and right-hand divisions). Another parallel to Sienese painting is given by Schmidt, who states that the three-dimensional interior resembles Martini's frescoes in the Lower Basilica in Assisi.[71] Indeed, the framing technique of the thin spiralling columns in the *Funeral of St. Martin*[72] (fig. 30) match the posts of the Bohemian artist's panel and the event likewise takes place in one area behind the picture plane. However, while the Sienese feeling of volume has been adopted in the *Death of the Virgin from Košátky*, the voluminous figures of Martini's and Lorenzetti's paintings have not: the Bohemian characters are still relatively flat in spite of drapery folds and shading. The reason for this dichotomy of style has to do with local aesthetics and tradition. However much the Italian innovations of rendering three-dimensional space was exciting and challenging, Bohemian artists clung to northern linearism when it came to the depiction of figures.

A discriminating blend of foreign styles and domestic tradition is evident in both Bohemian book illumination and panel painting of the latter half of the fourteenth century, as seen in the illustrations of the *Evangeliary of John of Opava*, the *Liber viaticus*, the *Laus Mariae*, the *Missal of John of Středa*, and the *Death of the Virgin from Košátky*. The reason for this amalgamation lies in the motives and tastes of their patrons, who made up the imperial cabinet of advisers, and most of whom were educated abroad, or were directly exposed to Italian and French art as a result of their travels. The other factor, crucial to the understanding of this art, is the all-pervasive influence of Emperor

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[70]Siena, Cathedral Museum. 1335-42.
[71]Schmidt 41.
[72]Assisi, Lower Basilica.1324-26.

Charles IV whose ideas on the legitimizing power of history led to the implementation of a programme of historicism in his court art, which were passed on to his advisers and their own objects of patronage.

Conclusion

The attempts of Charles IV to create a strong kingdom and a prestigious reign respected in Europe succeeded as did his primary goal of bolstering the Luxembourg holdings. The purpose of the aggrandizement of Bohemia by political marriages and diplomatic negotiations was to make his hereditary dominions of Bohemia so powerful that they might serve to make the Roman crown hereditary in the House of Luxembourg. Charles IV married four times and gained either additional territory or political support from his wives' families. His first wife, Blanche of Valois, was the niece of the French king. Marriage to his second wife, Anne of the Rhine Palatinate, gained him support from the Rhineland; a portion of Silesia was added to the kingdom of Bohemia with the next marriage to Anna of Schweidenitz, niece of the king of Hungary. Charles' final marriage to Elizabeth, daughter of the duke of Pomerania and granddaughter of Casimir the Great of Poland, carried his sphere of influence eastward.[1]

A testimony to Charles' prestige as emperor was the lavish reception he was given at the court of the French king, Charles V, who was Charles IV's nephew. The visit took place in December to January 1377-78, the year of Charles IV's death. Already weak from gout and age, the emperor ventured to make the journey more out of a sense of nostalgia to see his nephew and his family and to revisit the city where he spent seven years of his youth than for any more politically motivated reason.[2] To have been received with such grandeur and deference to his eminence by the king of France in a land where he was partly raised and the kind of renown of which he had hoped for his own kingdom must have been a personal achievement indeed. The splendor and

[1]Du Boulay 37-38.
[2]Kavka 318-320.

pageantry exhibited at court on this occasion were described in length in the chronicles of Charles V's reign. Folio 473v (fig. 31) of the *Grandes Chroniques de France*[3] showing the reception for Charles IV records the pomp and spectacle of the event. Charles V, in appropriate robe of fleur-de-lys, is flanked by Charles IV at his right and Wenceslas, King of the Romans and Charles IV's son, to his left.

The influence of Charles IV, as has been shown in this paper, was felt in all areas of his reign, not least in the sphere of culture and art. He himself commissioned the grand decorative schemes of his imperial castle at Karlštejn, the programmes of which display the king's Bohemian heritage, and it was he who brought the French architect, Matthew of Arras, to Prague to design a great cathedral in the French High Gothic tradition. His indirect impact on Bohemian art can be traced through his closest advisers, the Archbishop Ernest of Pardubice, the Chancellor John of Středa, the second archbishop of Prague, John Očko of Vlašim, who shared Charles' admiration for French and Italian art and adopted his sense of historicism in their commissions.

At the beginning of his reign it was crucial for Charles to prove his worthiness to hold the elected office of King of the Romans and to do so he instituted a programme of art which displayed a line of genealogical precedence both through his maternal Bohemian dynasty and his appropriated imperial heritage. This use of history as legitimization of a present reign was expressed directly by Charles in written histories of Bohemia and in the visual, artistic documents at, among foremost examples, Karlštejn in the *Luxembourg Cycle* which outlined his fictional and actual royal genealogies through Carolingian and

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[3]Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Fr. 2813. "The *Grandes Chroniques de France* were composed at the beginning of the reign of Philippe le Hardi. They go back to the mythical origins of the Kings of France , and were regularly brought up to date during the 14th century by the monks of Saint-Denis, the official historiographers of the monarchy...Particular importance has been given to the visit to Paris in 1378 of Emperor Charles IV of Luxembourg," in François Avril, *Manuscript Painting at the Court of France* (New York: George Braziller, 1978) 107.

biblical times, at the Chapel of the Holy Cross with its Byzantine undertones, and in the rather antiquated design of the Prague cathedral, a mark of a city that had arrived to greatness and wealth.

Charles' indirect influence on Bohemian art took the form of patronage on the part of his advisers, especially in the area of book illumination. The *Evangeliary of John of Opava*, made by the scriptorium of John of Středa, portrays historicist styles to refer the glory of a past time to its owner, Albrecht of Austria, while simultaneously advertising the adeptness of Bohemian artists and the fame of the Prague court in foreign lands. The *Liber viaticus* shows the application of French and Italian techniques, the former because France was the leading producer of manuscript illumination in Europe and John of Středa and Charles IV clearly desired to rival the best; the latter because both the Sienese tendency toward Byzantine forms and the humanist sense of history suited the emperor's needs, to which the chancellor would have been sensitive and would have wanted his personal manuscript to espouse.

The characteristics of Bohemian art of the second half of the fourteenth century are so closely linked to the sensibilities and inclinations of Charles IV that the art of this period can be considered to be almost entirely the art of the Prague court and cannot be considered without a thorough knowledge of the motivations and character of Charles IV, Emperor of the Romans and King of Bohemia.

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List of Illustrations

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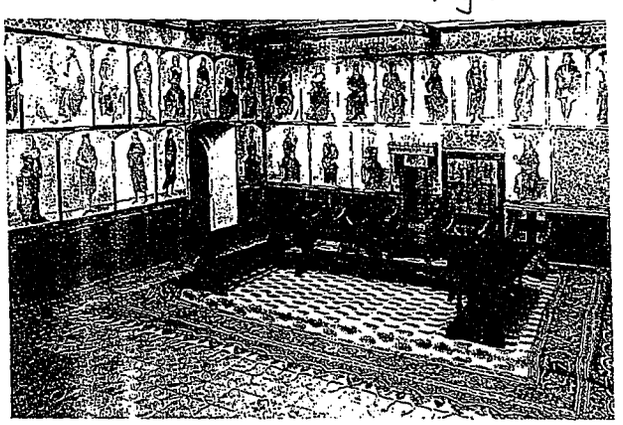
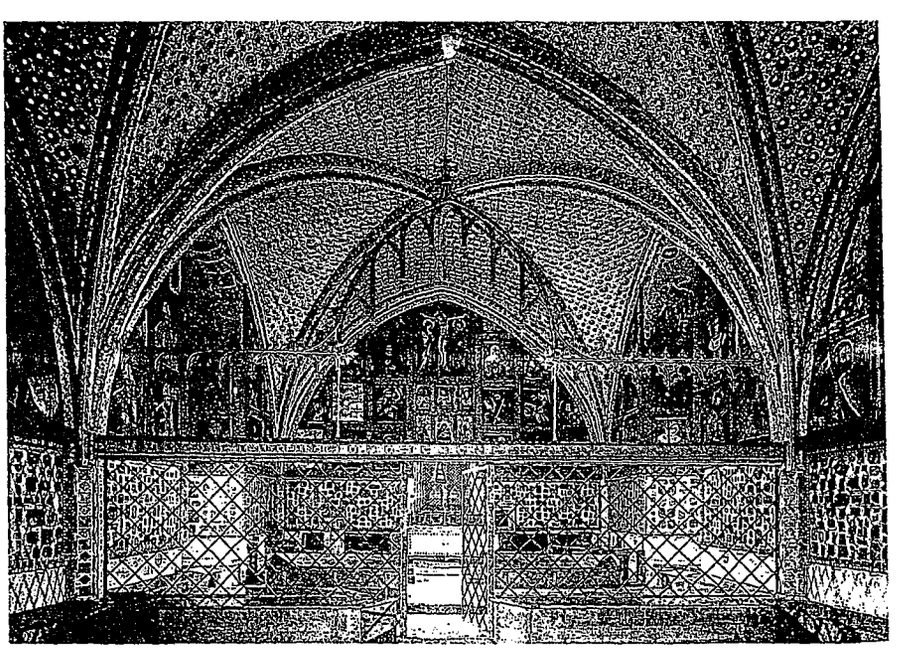
28. Prague, Chapter Library, Cim 6, *Missal of John of Středa*: Page with initial P.
29. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts: *The Death of the Virgin of Košátky.*
30. Assisi, Lower Basilica, Simone Martini: *Funeral of St. Martin.*
31. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Fr. 2813, *Grands Chroniques de France*: The Reception for Emperor Charles IV, fol. 473v.

Fig. 1





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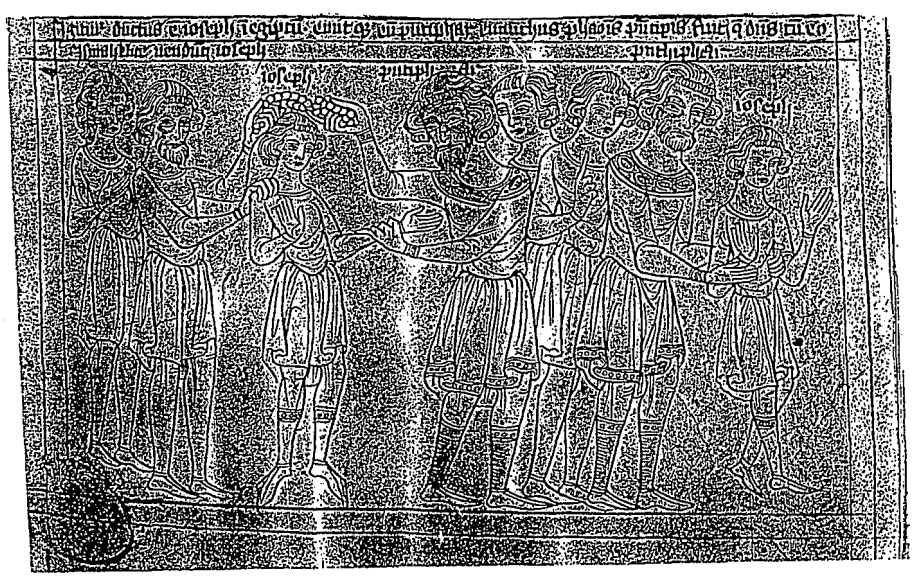

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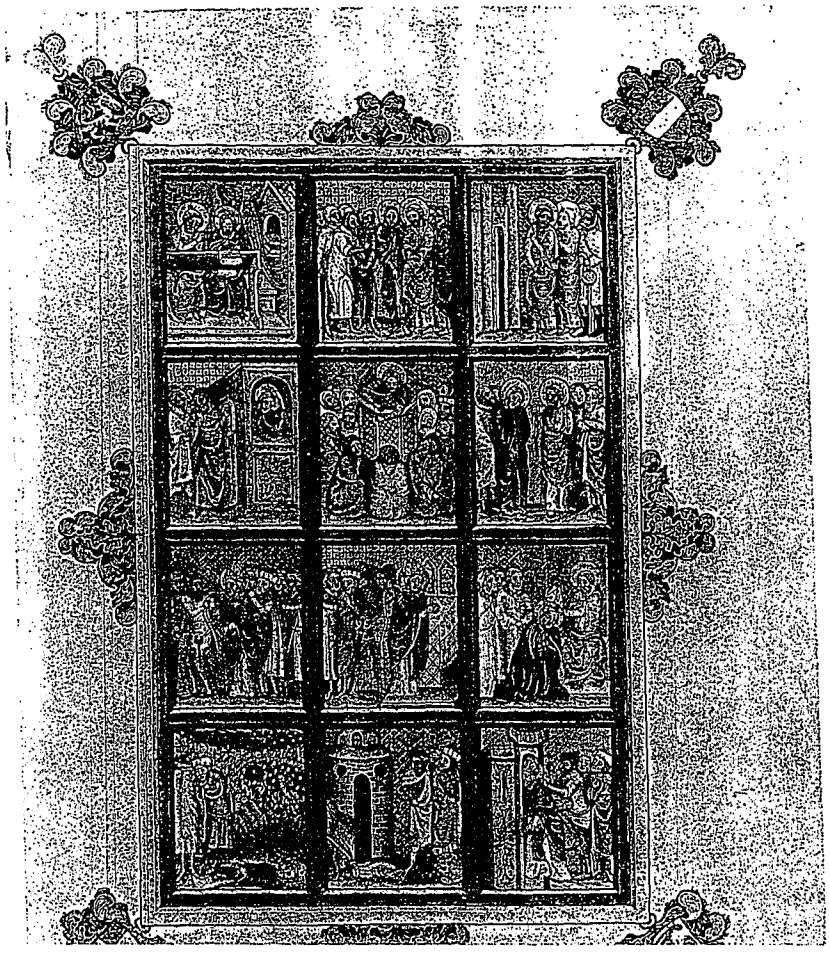

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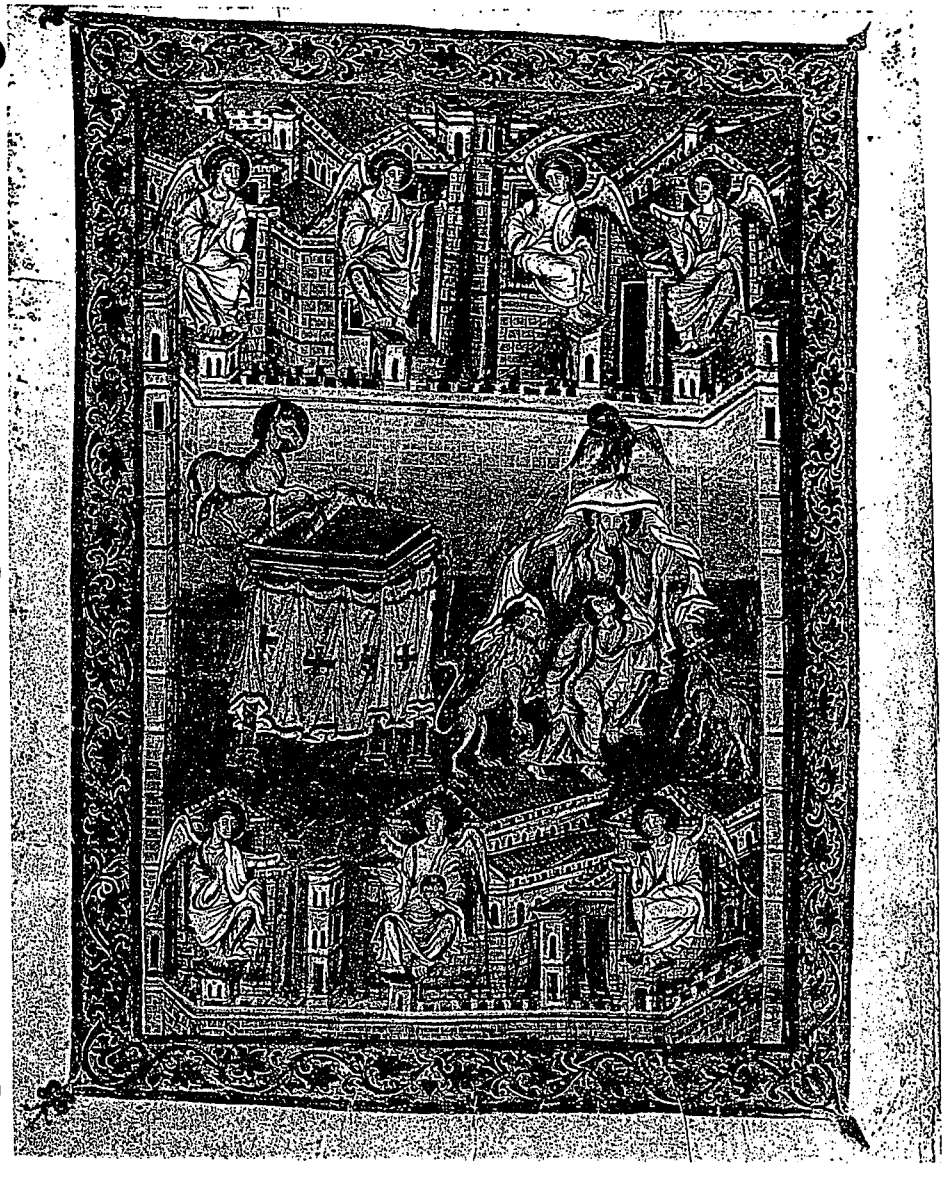

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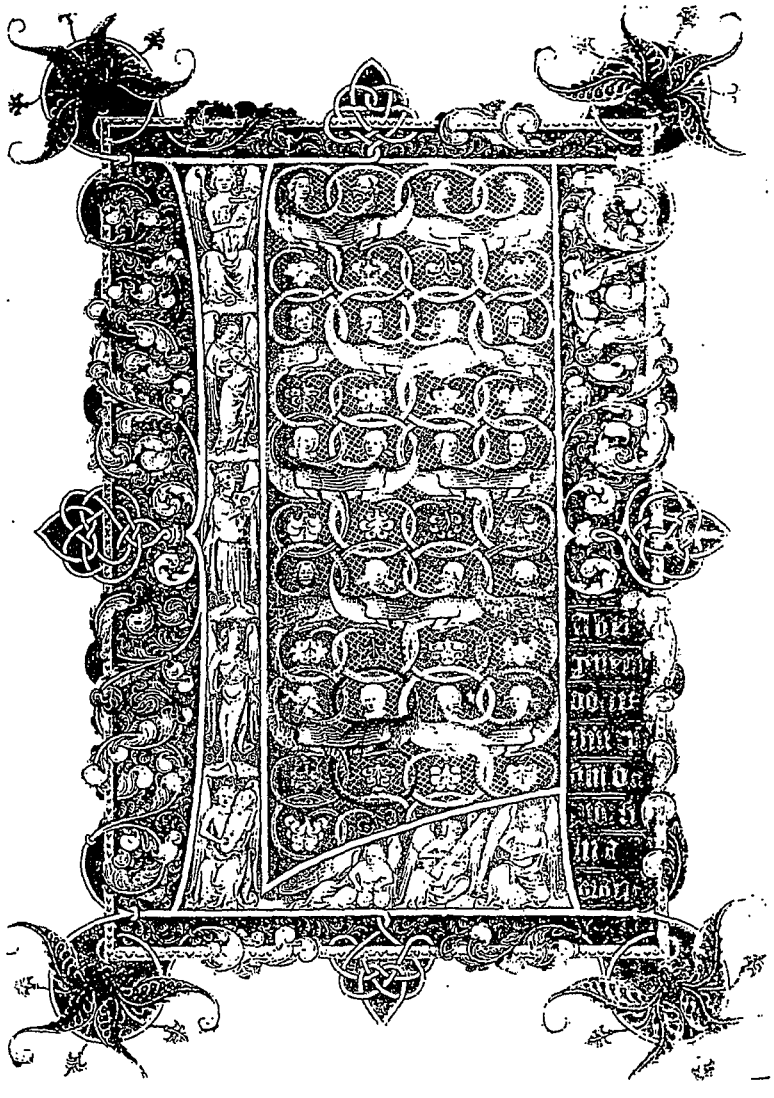

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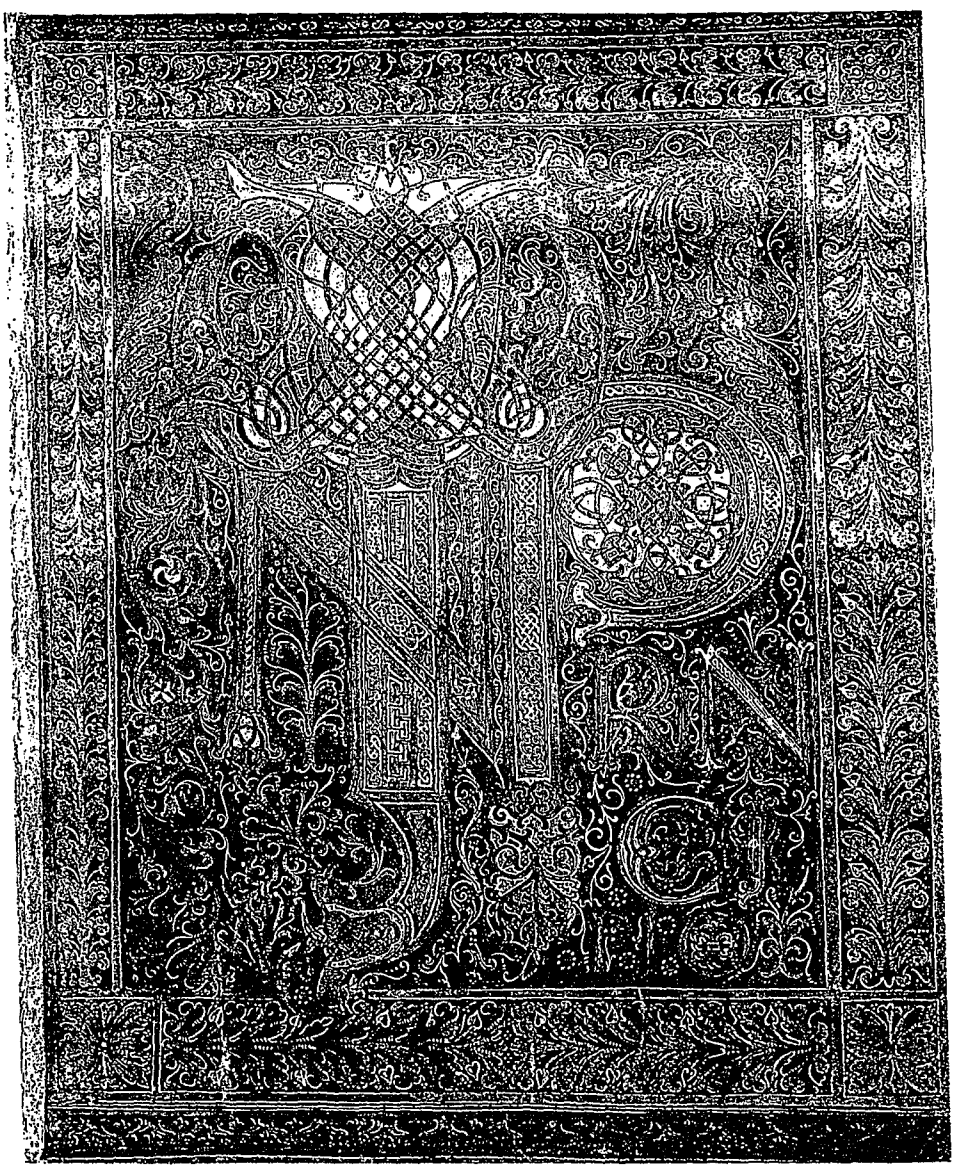

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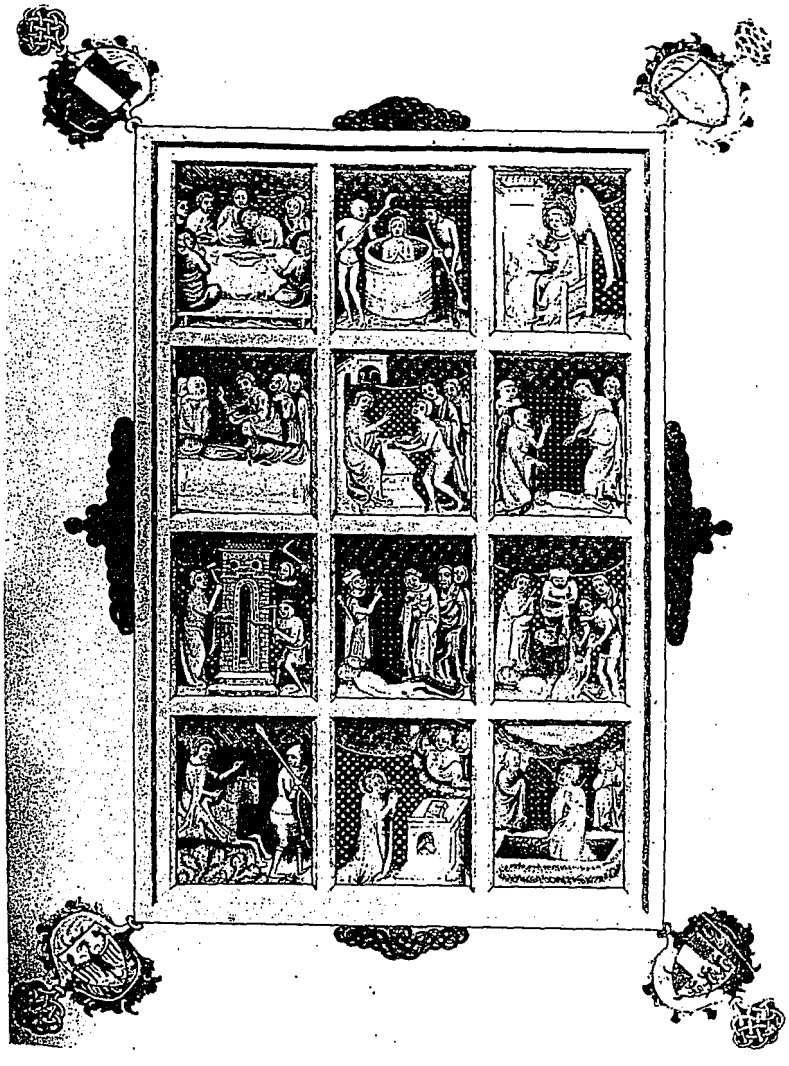
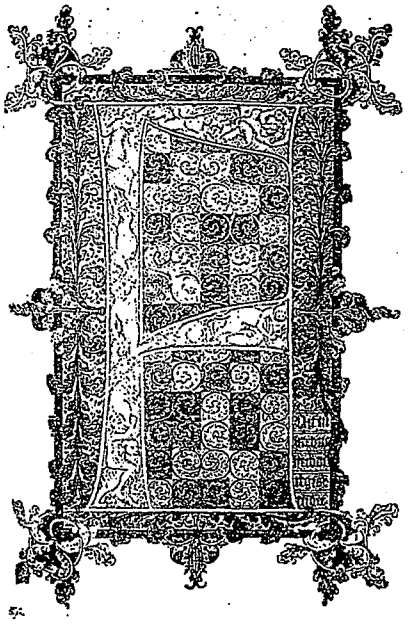


Fig. 14



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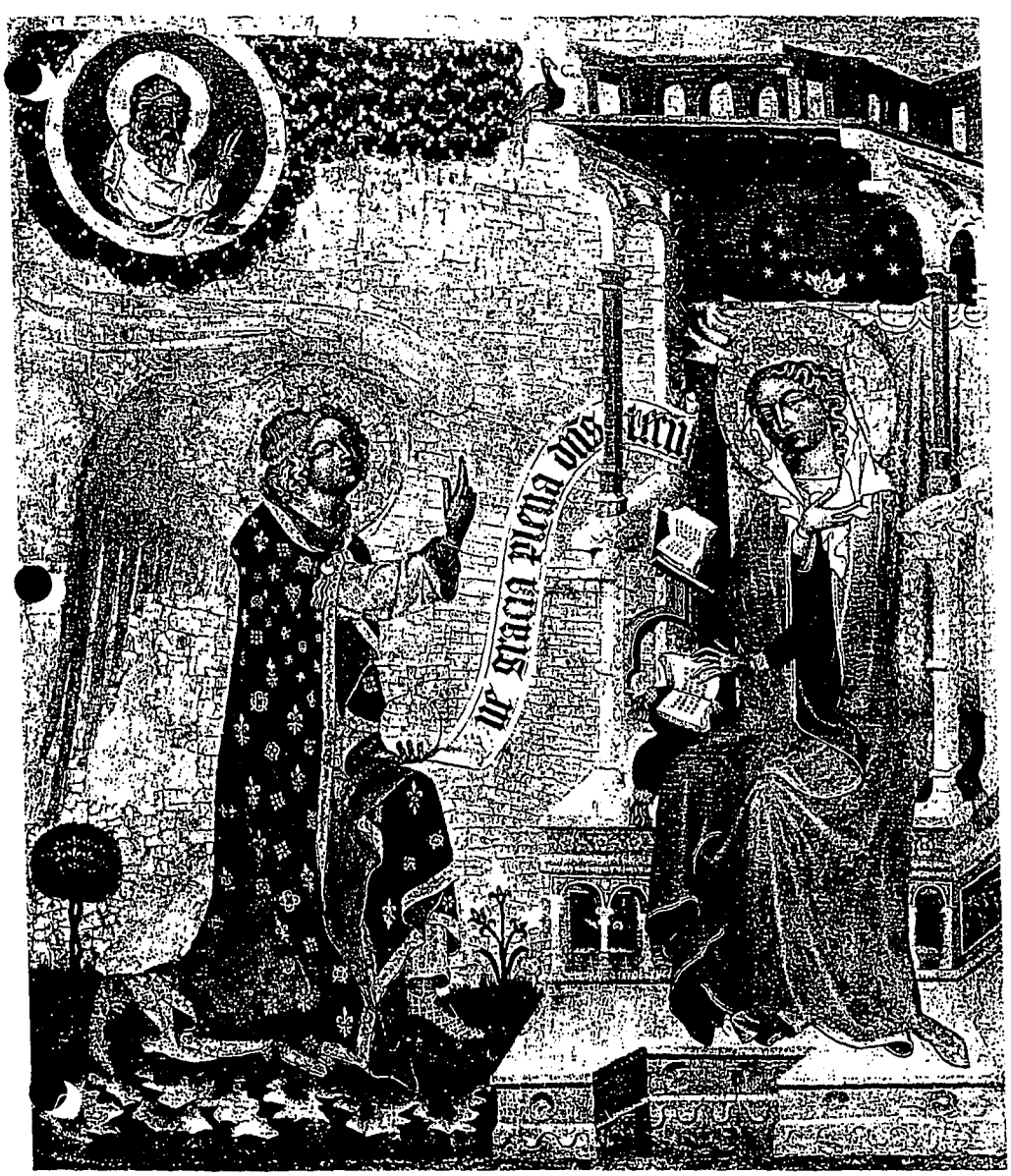

Fig. 16

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us pans sāctuos p omnia ut inte
ger spē uester ꝛ anima ꝛ corpus sine q
rela in aduentu dñi nr̄i ihu xpi s
uetur· Deo gr̄s Ecce dies uenunt dicit
dominus ꝛ suscitabo dauid gīnen iustū ꝛ reg
nabit rex ꝛ sapiens erit ꝛ faciet iudiciū ꝛ iusti
ciam in trā· Et hoc est nom̄ qđ uocabunt eū
dominus iustus nr̄ y In diebꝫ illis saluabit
tuda ꝛ isrl habitabit confidenter· Thoc· y dem
redēptor· y Gloria celi· Ad mgt ant Ecce

Fig.17