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# Imperial Memory and the Charles Bridge

## Establishing Royal Ceremony for Future Kings

Though bridges have been admired throughout history, the multitude of roles that they performed in the past has often been overlooked in art historical research.[1] In the Middle Ages the role of bridges went beyond the practical and as cities grew near rivers, bridges became the main streets of their medieval urban centers. It was common for chapels, houses, towers and other buildings to cover bridges; and for ceremonies such as punishments, coronation processions and even jousts to use them as their stage. Due to 'a preference for the uncluttered' in the 17th and 18th centuries, very few medieval bridges survive to illustrate these scenes.[2] Therefore, using the example of the Charles Bridge in Prague, this article aims to redefine these structures, by looking beyond their practical quotidian functions and investigating the roles they played in medieval ceremonies instead.

## The History behind the Charles Bridge

Built during the reigns of Charles IV (1346-1378) and his son, Wenceslas IV (1363-1419), the Charles Bridge crosses the river Vltava in Prague, joining the Old Town on its eastern side, the commercial hub of the city, and the Hradčany and Malá Strana on the west, where the castle and cathedral are located (fig. 1). These two sides were connected by only one bridge until the 19th century and this bridge served as a main street, depended upon by everyone, despite the dangers that plagued it throughout the centuries. The planning of the 14th-century bridge, begun after the collapse of the earlier Judith Bridge in 1342, was commenced in 1357 under Master Otto, and finished by Peter Parler and his workshop in c.1380. A tower on the Malá Strana, which had belonged to the Judith Bridge, was incorporated into the new stone structure, and a further tower, with extensive sculpture, was built to aggrandize the Old Town side of the Bridge.[3]
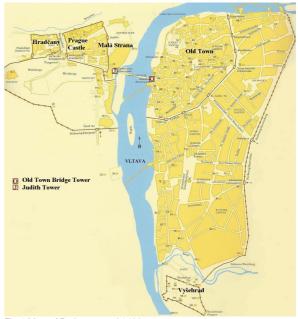


Fig.1 Map of Praha, around 1400.

Before looking at the Charles Bridge, it is important to examine the earlier medieval bridge that stood in this location. Although a bridge had existed in Prague since the early Middle Ages, it was not until the second half of the 12th century that the first stone bridge was constructed here. This bridge is known today as the Judith Bridge and was built by Vladislav II of Bohemia (1140-1174) and later named after his wife Judith. Vladislav II's ascent to the Bohemian kingship underwent two stages - he was first crowned in Regensburg on January 11th, 1158 when Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (1155-1190) placed a circulum on his head.[4] This was followed by another coronation in Milan on September 8th, 1158 when the emperor repeated the gesture and officially elevated Vladislav II to the rank of king.[5] Shortly after Vladislav II's return to Prague, the building of his new stone bridge began. The coronation in Regensburg is significant here because a large stone bridge across the River Danube had been constructed in that city only eleven years

prior to Vladislav's arrival, probably inspiring the Bohemian ruler to erect a similar structure in Prague.[6] Prague changed significantly during the time of Vladislav II and it has been said that the impact of his reign on Romanesque Prague can be compared to that of the reign of Charles IV on Gothic Prague.[7] Among the changes that took place – apart from the construction of the bridge – were the rebuilding of the castle and a campaign to build new stone houses in the Old Town.[8]


Fig. 2 Towers on the West Side of the Charles Bridge.

The Judith Bridge was finished by 1175 and although a few of its remains can still be found in the river and on both banks of the city, its exact appearance is unknown due to its collapse in the flood of 1342. However, it has been ascertained that the Judith Bridge spanned 500 meters and was 7.5 meters wide.[9] It consisted of 20 piers and 22 arches and was thus smaller than the Charles Bridge in all respects. The eastern end of the Judith bridge began only a few meters north of the current Old Town Bridge Tower and the western end met the Malá Strana in the same place as the 14th-century bridge does today (fig. 2). Probably it also had two towers flanking the western

approach to the bridge – connected by a gate – and one tower on the east side of the bridge road.[10] This third tower, which was located near the present-day Old Town Bridge Tower, was almost certainly a later addition, forming part of the building of the Old Town fortifications in the 13th century which ran along the river bank of the town.[11] Of these towers, only one survives today, namely the smaller of the two towers on Malá Strana, connected to the Charles Bridge. This tower is also interesting because a monumental relief sculpture has been uncovered on its eastern façade in the late 19th century.[12] This sculpture, composed of a kneeling figure and an enthroned figure, is most often interpreted as the coronation of Vladislav II by Frederick Barbarossa.[13]

In 1342 a flood caused disastrous damage to the Judith Bridge, and although there were initial plans to repair it, this decision had changed by 1348 when taxes began to be collected for the building of a new bridge.[14] A wooden bridge was built as temporary solution and it took fifteen years until a new stone bridge was begun. These fifteen years, however, mark a crucial phase in the urban development of Prague as they are associated with the accession and rise of Bohemia's new ruler, Charles IV. In 1344 Prague was elevated to an archbishopric and in 1346 Charles IV was crowned King of Bohemia and elected King of the Romans. In 1355 he was finally crowned Holy Roman Emperor in Rome and by the time he personally laid the first stone of the new bridge in 1357, it was clear that the reputation and status of Prague had drastically changed. The city was now an archbishopric, a centre of learning due to its new university, and the imperial capital. This drew thousands of people here, increased traffic and raised the need for a permanent river crossing.

By the time the construction of the new bridge began, the city walls that once fortified the Old Town along the river were no longer functional.[15] Despite this, Charles IV decided to build a colossal tower at the Old Town side of the bridge (fig. 3). This tower was thus no longer needed as part of the fortification system, hence the striking difference between the Judith Bridge Towers – which were primarily defensive structures built as gates in the city walls – and the Old Town Bridge Tower, whose size was no longer

associated primarily with military purposes. Rather, this tower was built as a symbolic structure, emphasizing the rule and authority of its patron, Charles IV, and his lineage.



Fig. 3 Old Town Bridge Tower.

As Prague's status changed, so did the physical landscape of the city. On the eastern bank of the river, Prague was significantly enlarged by the addition of the New Town, the establishment of the Charles University, and the construction of a plethora of churches (fig. 1). Additionally, a new cathedral and palace were being built on Hradčany, towering over the west bank. In view of these dramatic changes in appearance and importance, the bridge became an increasingly inte-

gral link between the two sides and a podium for elaborate ceremonies and processions. Such rituals united the inhabitants of medieval cities, transcending their differences in terms of locality, status and profession.[16] Besides religious rituals, the city witnessed coronations, funerals, royal entries and weddings. These significant and elaborate events were public displays of royal power and therefore demanded ceremonial routes that could traverse both sides of the city. For this reason the Charles Bridge served not only as essential physical link, but also as stage upon which royal ceremony was to unfold.

This was especially important to Charles IV as his passionate interest in public display was reflected not only theoretically in his writings but also put into practice in the layout of his New Town which included colossal squares designed for spectacle.[17] The Charles Square, for example, is one of the largest medieval squares in Europe, testifying to the amount of people that the ruler expected as public audience. Hence, it is easy to see why Charles IV, a patron so sensitive to the theatrical possibilities of architecture, used the opportunity that presented itself with the collapse of the 12th-century bridge and chose to replace it with the more spectacular and costly Charles Bridge. This new bridge could now become a stage upon which the highly dramatized aspects of medieval life of Prague would take place. This is something that Charles IV was surely aware of and consciously prepared the bridge for by architectural means, adding a complex sculptural program to its Old Town Bridge Tower. This program consists of depictions of the enthroned Charles IV and his son Wenceslas IV, who are clearly differentiated by their age, as the focal point. Charles IV sits on the right side to underline his more significant role even though his posture points to his increasing age. Between the two kings stands a figure of St. Vitus on top of a model of the bridge and above them are two more patron saints of Bohemia - Sts. Adalbert and Sigismund. These figures are framed by ornate tracery, and complemented by coats of arms,[18] a large statue of a lion and smaller figures on corbels below.

## The Pre-Coronation Procession

The ceremony that should be particularly associated with the Charles Bridge was the pre-coronation ritual, a part of the Ordo ad Coronandum Regem Boemorum,[19] probably written by Charles IV himself.[20] This stage of the ceremony consisted of a procession from the royal palace on Hradčany taking place at the eve before the coronation of a new king. The king-elect's destination was the castle and precinct of Vyšehrad in the south of Prague, the ancient cult centre and residence of the previous ruling dynasty of Bohemia, the Přemyslids. When the king-elect arrived at Vyšehrad, he was shown the shoe and satchel of Přemysl Orač, the founder of the Přemyslid dynasty, so as to be reminded of his humble origins and his duty to rule the land without vanity.[21] After paying homage to his Přemyslid roots on Vyšehrad, the king-elect processed back through the New and Old Towns and across the Charles Bridge to Hradčany, a ritual intended to remind him of his ancestry and provide models for his future rule.

A similar idea – expressing ancestral legacy in a pre-coronation procession – was enacted during the coronations of the kings of the Romans in Aachen and partly orchestrated by Charles IV.[22] Aachen was significant to Charles IV because it had been the favorite residence of Charlemagne – the first emperor of the post-classical West – and his palatine chapel served as the coronation church of the kings of the Romans. Charles IV saw himself as successor of Charlemagne and drew many links between Aachen and Prague, the city he devised as the new capital of the Holy Roman Empire, including the construction of the church of St. Charlemagne, which was a 'copy' of Charlemagne's famous centralized church in Aachen. Although Charles IV's 1349 coronation ceremony in Aachen is not as well documented as his Ordo ad coronandum regem Bohemorum, he was crowned there, as was Wenceslas IV. The importance of the Aachen coronations to Charles IV was underlined by his donation of a reliquary bust of Charlemagne (fig. 4), commissioned in c.1357, which later became a significant part of the coronation ceremony there.[23] This is first documented for the coronation of Frederick III in 1442; however it formed probably already part of the coronation ceremony of Wenceslas IV in 1376.[24] The Charle-

magne bust is important to our discussion because, like the memoria of Přemysl Orač, it played an important part in a pre-coronation procession. The king-elect would have been met at the gate of Aachen by the reliquary bust of Charlemagne, which then escorted him to the chapel, where the crown may have been taken from the bust and placed on his head.[25] This ceremony, like the Prague vigil, literally enacted a union between a king and his ancestor, and endowed him with a model of rulership.



Fig. 4 Reliquary Bust of Charlemagne (Aachen).

When envisaging the pre-coronation procession in Prague, one is tempted to imagine the route that this procession may have taken and the associated sites the king-elect may have encountered on his way to the cathedral. There is, however, no concrete evidence for this since no documents about this procession survive other than the Kronika Česká written by Pulkava in the 1370s, who only narrates that the king-elect returned to Hradčany after visiting Vyšehrad on the night before the coronation ceremony in Prague

Cathedral.[26] A ceremony that was closely connected with the coronation of the new king – offering perhaps a glimpse into what the pre-coronation procession looked like – was the funeral of the old one.[27] The funeral procession of Charles IV, which took place on December 11th, 1378, resembled the coronation procession in that it was directed from Hradčany, via the Charles Bridge, to Vyšehrad. This lavish procession included 26 horses and the upper echelons of society marching along the biers carrying the richly dressed body of the emperor and his three crowns.[28] Citizens, from various social classes, marched behind this cortege, while it halted at numerous stations such as the Emmaus Monastery, the New Town Hall in the Charles Square, the Old Town Square and the church of St. Clement, near the Charles Bridge.[29] This journey took four days to complete and every station distinguished a particular site.[30] The Charles Bridge was without question a structure that every procession across the city could not avoid, and its imagery was clearly built to serve a theatrical purpose.

Another important point to consider in the pre-coronation procession is the direction which the procession was meant to take, thus determining the sequence in which the visual references offered by the Old Town Bridge Tower would have been perceived during these movements. It is obvious that the king-elect would have had to process first from the Hradčany, where the castle was located, to the Vyšehrad, where the pre-coronation procession began, and during this initial journey he would have been presented with the west façade of the Old Town Bridge Tower. This façade was destroyed during the Swedish attack of 1648 and only panoramic views of Prague, such as Michael Peterle's panorama from 1562 and Aegidius Sadeler's panorama from 1606, offer clues to its appearance.[31] Even these drawings, however, do not tell us more than that this façade probably had a large statue in the center, flanked by two kneeling figures. This ensemble has most frequently been suggested to have been a depiction of the Virgin Mary in the center, flanked by Charles IV and his wife.[32] However two earlier images of this west façade suggest that it may originally not have had any sculptures at all. These speculations do not have any implications with regard to the more significant direction – from Vyšehrad to Hra-

dčany – of the coronation procession. Moreover, the importance of the previously discussed direction – from Hradčany to Vyšehrad – was further diminished by Wenceslas IV who moved his residence to the Old Town of Prague in 1380. This relocation is important in relation to the Old Town Bridge Tower in that it dramatically changes the course of the first phase of the pre-coronation procession: henceforth, it would move from the Old Town directly to Vyšehrad without encountering the west façade of the Old Town Bridge Tower at all. And although Charles IV was surely the primary catalyst behind the design of the Old Town Bridge Tower, the building was in fact completed during the reign of Wenceslas IV as testified by the small kingfisher birds, one of his devices. Thus seeing Vyšehrad as the starting point of the procession would allow the king-elect and his entourage to interact properly with the Old Town Bridge Tower façade as well as other important memoriae – such as the east façade of the Judith Tower as well as the mosaic above the south portal of St. Vitus' Cathedral – on this sacred journey.

The association between the coronation ceremony and the Charles Bridge is not only founded in the necessity to cross the bridge when processing from the Vyšehrad to the cathedral but also expressed in the imagery on the Old Town Bridge Tower (fig. 5, 6). As previously mentioned, sculptures once decorated both the east and west sides of this tower; however, today only the imagery on the east façade and the painted vault beneath the tower survive.[33] The sculptures of the east façade have been replaced by copies and the original figures are kept in the Lapidárium of the National Museum of Prague. Crown imagery assumes a central role here, not only because the emperor and his son wear crowns[34] but also because the two winged helmets between Charles and Wenceslas are surmounted with Bohemian crowns. Furthermore, the figure of Charles IV holds a representation of a sword, almost certainly the sword of St. Wenceslas, which also played an important part in the coronation ceremony.[35] From as early as the Carolingian times, the sword represented royal authority and justice while also symbolizing the ruler's legitimacy.[36] In the Coronation Ordinal, it can be read that the sword – having been blessed by the archbishop during the ceremony

– was given to the king. Upon receiving this sword, the king was meant to understand that he had taken control over the entire kingdom at this very moment.[37] Dressed in coronation attire, the sculptures of Charles IV and Wenceslas IV on this east façade were to remind the future king-elect – on his return from Vyšehrad – of his destiny and provided him with models of ideal rulership. The two rulers, therefore, sit on the façade as if to foreshadow what is to come in the cathedral on the day following the procession. This reminder of the cathedral is further underlined by St. Vitus, to whom the cathedral is dedicated, and Sts. Adalbert and Sigismund, whose relics are kept there.[38] The vault, with a carved crown as its boss, further evokes the cathedral as it is a small version of the net vault in its choir. The crown assumes meaningful significance as the centerpiece of this vault and reminds the viewer of the coronation ceremonies, as it represents the Bohemian coronation crown[39] with its French-derived fleur-de-lis. The metaphorical associations between the bridge of Prague and the Bohemian crown are further emphasized in the chronicle of František Pražský who laments the destruction of the Judith Bridge " as if the crown of the kingdom had fallen in 1342 when that bridge collapsed."[40]


Fig. 5 Old Town Bridge Tower, East Facade.

A statue of St. Wenceslas does not actually appear on the east façade of the Old Town Bridge Tower, which may seem odd since Charles IV strongly identified himself with this canonized Bohemian prince and saw him as his direct and legitimate predecessor. The importance of this connection is underlined by the fact that Charles IV wrote 'The Legends of St. Wenceslas' to link himself with the great Přemyslid rulers.[41] Furthermore, these legends, including the lives of St. Wenceslas and Ludmila, are also painted on the walls of the staircase between the Church of the Virgin Mary and the Great Tower at Karlštejn Castle where Charles IV's image appears as the face of St. Wenceslas.


Fig. 6 Old Town Bridge Tower, Vault.

However, in spite of the absence of a statue of St Wenceslas on the Bridge Tower façade, his presence – and therefore the presence of Přemyslid history – is suggested by Charles IV's wearing of "the Byzantine 'scaly' mail shirt" which forms part of the standard iconography of St Wenceslas.[42] Since the coronation insignia used in the Bohemian coronation ceremony comprise objects that were associated with St. Wenceslas,[43] there was an obvious nexus between this patron saint of Bohemia and all future Bohemian rulers. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that there would have been an image of St. Wenceslas prominently displayed on the coronation route from Vyšehrad to Hradčany as another and highly significant visualization of sacred Bohemian rulership addressed to the king-elect. Rudolf Chadraba argued that St. Wenceslas was deliberately not placed on the Old Town Bridge Tower because Charles IV wanted to

proclaim Prague as a new Rome, with St. Vitus, a Roman martyr, replacing St. Wenceslas.[44] The Bohemian coronations, he argued, were therefore becoming less important than the imperial ones. However, Chadraba does not take into account the fact that – even though a statue of St. Wenceslas is not on the Old Town Bridge Tower itself – visual references to the saint do appear on this coronation route: the insignia associated with St. Wenceslas, kept in the Cathedral, are represented on the Old Town Bridge Tower,[45] St. Wenceslas' crown is the central feature of the vault, his sword is held by the figure of Charles IV, and a small image of St. Wenceslas is painted on the vault of the Bridge Tower.

In addition, a large sculpture of St. Wenceslas once stood on a column in front of the Old Town Bridge Tower, complementing the sculptural program.[46] This column and its baroque statue from 1676 are now located near the south façade of the church of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star. Most art historians agree that the Baroque statue replaced a Gothic one, which was commissioned by Charles IV, and some even hypothesize that the Gothic statue may have replaced an even earlier one which stood at the foot of the old bridge as a reminder of the translation of the body of St. Wenceslas across a bridge to Hradčany in the 10th century.[47] If this continuous renewal of the St. Wenceslas column bears any truth, then the bridges of Prague were very closely connected with the journey that the body of St. Wenceslas had made across an early medieval wooden bridge, and his column image would have marked that occasion. As was discussed earlier, the funerals of kings were usually very closely connected with the coronations of their successors, and at times were even incorporated as integral parts of coronations. Thus, commemorating the burial journey of St. Wenceslas here, during a pre-coronation procession, would have marked a 'funerary procession' of the first great Bohemian monarch. Furthermore, St. Wenceslas would not only have been venerated during the pre-coronation journey; rather, he would have embodied the climax of the entire ceremony as objects associated with him were used in the actual coronation ritual inside the cathedral. At this stage, the king-elect would have been presented with the sword of St. Wenceslas, which

contained the actual relics of the saint, and would have been crowned with the crown of St. Wenceslas. This process would have become the final reminder of the legacy of Bohemian monarchs on the two-day coronation journey through Prague.

The imagery of crowns on the Old Town Bridge Tower provided a clear connection between the Charles Bridge and the coronation ceremony, which was designed to bring together the king-elect and his eminent ancestors. Just as in Karlstejn, there seems to be a deliberate aim here to present Charles IV and his son as part of this eternal history of monarchs, which begins with Přemysl on the Vyšehrad and ends with the anticipated future coronations in the new cathedral. The connection of past, present and future is one of the principal themes of Charles IV's art and politics.[48] In art, he and his advisors visualized these concepts in the murals of Karlštejn Castle, where a genealogical cycle of the Luxembourgs was painted in the palace, while murals of Charles IV as a "Christian world ruler" decorated the Marian Tower, and panels depicting a multitude of saints were created for the Chapel of the Holy Cross in the Great Tower.[49] The following of a processional route dictated the manner in which the cycles in each tower would be seen, that is, the viewer would move through each tower in succession and thus read the murals in chronological order. This order demonstrated a movement through time; the ancestors of Charles IV in the palace stood for the past, while the images of Charles IV in the Marian Tower symbolized the present time as well as his role as the collector of those relics kept successively in this tower and the Chapel of the Holy Cross.[50] Future and eternal time was thus illustrated by religious scenes and the inclusion of a plethora of saints in the Chapel of the Holy Cross.[51] The programme on the Old Town Bridge Tower can therefore also be interpreted as part of a chronological cycle which starts on Vyšehrad and ends with the coronation in the cathedral. This further underlined the continuity of the Luxembourg lineage – an idea that was crucial to Charles IV's perception of his reign and featured on various monuments in Prague, which he visualized as a place of ceremony, pilgrimage and medieval ritual.

## Acknowledgements

## Endnotes

1. Among the most notable scholars of medieval bridges are: Sauerländer 1994, Two Glances; Boyer 1976, Medieval French Bridges; Maschke 1977, Die Brücke; Wilson 2009, L'architecte bienfaiteur; Pierce 2002, Old London Bridge.
2. Boyer 1976, Medieval French Bridges, p. 8–9.
3. Karlův most 2010; Chadraba 1991, Staroměstská mostecká věž; Chadraba 1971, Staroměstská mostecká věž; Homolka 1976, Staroměstská mostecká věž; Veselý/Patrný 2008, Románská věž; Vilímková 1975, Ke stavebním opravám; Vítovský 1994, K datování ikonografii.
4. Petráň 2009, Denár, p.130.
5. Petráň 2009, Denár, p. 130–131.
6. Paulus 1986, Die Steinerne Brücke; Bartosch 1994, Der Südliche Brückenkopf.
7. Líbal/ Muk 1996, Staré Město.
8. See Líbal/ Muk 1996, Staré město; Dragoun 2009, Romanesque Prague.
9. Dragoun 2010, Juditin most.
10. Dragoun 2010, Juditin most.
11. Dragoun 1987, Stav a perspektivy, p. 39–70.
12. Veselý/ Patrný 2008, Románská věž, p. 8–9.
13. Benešovská 1999, Architektonickej vývoj, p. 29–30; Dragoun 2010, Juditin most; Sauerländer 1994, Two Glances, S.197. Recent analysis by Zdeněk Dragoun has revealed that the sculpture was most likely carved in situ and is therefore almost certainly no later addition.
14. „Quod si forte, quod absit, aliquo impedimento vel causa illegitima interveniente seu ex alia malicia pontem ipsum per longa tempora non contingeret reformari, quantumcunque in tantum fuerit reparatus, quod comode et competenter sine periculo equis et curribus transiri poterit, dicti fratres cum stella sua bona omnia denuo libere et pacifice possideant cum censibus, proventibus, theloneis ac utilitatibus omnibus supradictis." In: Teige 1915, Základy starého, p. 336. Zahradník 2007, Opravy a poruchy, p. 282–304. See also Vítovský 2010, Panovnícka nadace, p. 46.
15. Dragoun 1987, Stav a perspektivy.
16. Muir 1999, Ritual, p. 252–260; Schoell 1999, Nuremberg, p. 166.
17. Opačić 2009, Architecture, p. 136–149.
18. Heraldic shields of territories under Bohemian rule are situated beneath the enthroned rulers. These shields include the territories of (left to right) Neisse, Breslau, Brandenburg, Moravia, the Empire, Bohemia, Luxembourg, Görlitz, Bautzen and Lower Lusatia. Larger shields of Moravia, Bohemia, the Old Town of Prague and the Holy Roman Empire flank the two kings.
19. A good translation: Kuthan/Šmied 2009, Korunovační.
20. Crossley/ Opačić 2005, Prague; Crossley 2000, Politics.
21. V předvečer korunovace českých králu totiž kanovníci a přeláti jdou v procesi ustřic budoucímu králi, ukažou mu střevíce a položí mu mošnu na ramena, aby měli na paměti, že pocházejí z chudoby a aby nikdy nezpichli. See Pulkava 1987, Kronika, p. 269–413.
22. Hilger 1978, Der Weg.
23. Opačić 2003, Emmaus, p. 129.
24. Opačić 2003, Emmaus, p. 129.
25. Hilger 1978, Der Weg, p. 351. Note, however, that it was common for rulers to encounter relics upon their ceremonial entry into cities. Charles IV, for instance, was greeted by relics when ceremonially entering Zurich, Lübeck and Dortmund. Thus the donation of the bust of Charlemagne to Aachen, though perhaps conceived to become associated with future coronation ceremonies, also contributed to this civic ritual. See Puth 2009, Christus Dominus, p. 526-527.
26. Pulkava 1987, Kronika, p. 269–413.
27. "The triumphal entry of the new king of France into Paris usually took place not long after his coronation… The Porte Saint-Denis was always the entry point and the route through the city to Notre Dame was absolutely traditional. It happens that the same route in the other direction is the one always taken by the royal funeral cortege on its way to the royal necropolis in St. Denis. Therefore, the last crowned king the Parisians saw before the new king made his first entry was his predecessor (in effigy) ma-

king his final exit."See Giesey 1990, Inaugural Aspects, p. 40–41. See also Opačić 2003, Emmaus.

28. See Opačić 2003, Emmaus, p. 131 and Šmahel 1993, Smuteční, p. 401–411.

29. The main source for this funerary procession, not contemporary but probably copied from earlier sources, is the Ausberg Chronicle from 1369-1469. See Opačić 2003, Emmaus, p. 130-2.

30. Šmahel 1993, Smuteční, p. 410.

31. See Vítovský 1994, K datování, p. 23.

32. Homolka 1976, Staroměstská Mostecká Věž, p. 29

33. The painted vault underneath the tower was restored in 1877, by Petr Maixner, after a careful study by a panel of historians and restorers, who found it to be authentic. The only element that was added was the symbol of the New Town and the inscription on the west side which records the 1877 restoration. See Vilímková 1975, Ke stavebním, p. 16–25.

34. The crowns are specifically identified as the crown of Charlemagne on the statue of Charles IV and the imperial crown on the statue of Wenceslas IV. See Chadraba 1991, Staroměstská mostecká věž, p. 70.

35. Rosario 2000, Art, p. 83.

36. Geary 1994, Living, p. 50–74. See also Opačić 2007, Karolus, p. 221–246.

37. See Kuthan/ Šmied 2009, Korunovační.

38. A more detailed analysis of the relationship between the imagery on the Old Town Bridge Tower and the cathedral is offered by Homolka 1976, Staroměstská Mostecká Věž.

39. Chadraba 1991, Staroměstská mostecká věž, p. 66.

40. „Jako by spadla koruna království, když se sřítil onen prosluhý most." See František 1987, Kronika, p. 133.

41. Charles IV 1971, Legenda, p.1; see also Dvořaková/Krása/ Merhautová/ Stejskal 1964, Gothic, p. 61.

42. Rosario 2000, Art, p.49.

43. The coronation crown was called 'St. Wenceslas' crown' by Charles IV, although Rudolf Chadraba claims that it was made by Charles IV following the model of older Přemyslid crowns. See Chadraba 1991, Staroměstská mostecká věž, p. 66. The sword used in the ceremony was believed to have been the actual sword of St. Wenceslas, which also had a relic of St. Wenceslas inserted into it. Rosario notes that the Cathedral Treasury in Prague possessed not only this sword but also the helmet and armor of St. Wenceslas. These objects were documented to have been in Prague from as early as 1333. Rosario argues that this is the sword that is held by the figure of Charles IV on the Old Town Bridge Tower. See Rosario 2000, Art, p. 82- 83.

44. Chadraba 1991, Staroměstská mostecká věž.

45. See note 39.

46. Chadraba 1991, Staroměstská mostecká věž, p. 70 and Homolka 1976, Staroměstská mostecká věž, p. 25.

47. The existence of an older image of St. Wenceslas on a column prior to the creation of the Baroque statue in 1676 by Jiří Bendl has been noted by Herain 1908, Karlův most ; Svátek 1899, Ze staré; Homolka 1976, Staroměstská mostecká věž; Chadraba 1991, Staroměstská mostecká věž. These accounts, however, are problematic as they do not quote any medieval source. It is only Svátek who claims to quote an un-cited chronicle in recounting that the people who travelled from Stará Boleslav to Prague built a wooden column with an image of St. Wenceslas in commemoration of the saint's translation. Accordingly, the column was placed near the bridge where they had stood with the body of the saint before crossing the river. See Svátek 1899, Ze staré, p. 156. Svátek's narrative continues with an account of the column's replacement in stone during the time of Charles IV, with the statue of St. Wenceslas on top. This statue would have stood in front of the Old Town Bridge Tower. In 1676, this statue was replaced again on account of it being much damaged. A coat of arms was hung near the new statue which contained a symbol of the Old Town and a Latin inscription, stating that an old statue of St. Wenceslas built by Charles IV once stood ten steps further to mark the spot of the gothic pillar. However, when the pillar was moved in 1778, a memorial plaque was installed where the original pillar had stood. This plaque, as Svátek notes, no longer exists. See ibid., p. 211. Looking for pictorial evidence, surviving drawings from the 18th and early 19th century depict a coat of

arms hanging behind this pillar which may be identical with the coat of arms that Svatek mentions. See František a Filip Hegerové, "Křižovnické náměstí od jihu", kol.1795, Archiv hl. města Prahy, Sbírka grafiky, sign. G 119a; Samuel Prout, "Křižovnické náměstí od východu", kol.1825, Archiv hl. města Prahy, Sbírka grafiky, sign. G 294; and J. J. Dietzlera, "Korunovační průvod Marie Terezie v roce 1743," 1743.

48. The temporal dimension of Charles IV's patronage is addressed fully by Crossley 2000, Politics.

49. Dvořaková/ Krása/ Merhautová/Stejskal 1964, Gothic, p. 53 and 137. Crossley 2000, Politics, p. 143. For more on Karlstejn see Studničková 2009, Karlstejn.

50. See Studničková 2009, Karlstejn, p. 171.

51. For full accounts, see Homolka 1998, Palace, p. 45–107; Fajt 1998, Great Tower, p. 107–217.

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## Illustrations

Fig. 1 Prag, die Krone des böhmischen Königtums unter dem Hause Luxemburg, um 1400. Plan der Stadt, in: Karl IV. Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden. Kunst und Repräsentation des Hauses Luxemburg, ed. Jiři Fajt, München / Berlin 2006, p. 199.

Fig. 2, 4, 5 Jana Gajdošová.

Fig. 3, 6 Courtesy Thomas Kaffenberger

## Summary

The Charles Bridge was an integral part of medieval ceremonies and processions in medieval Prague, and the imagery on its Old Town Bridge Tower was likely created to participate in these ceremonies. One such ceremony was the pre-coronation procession, imagined by Charles IV, which journeyed from Vyšehrad, the old seat of the Přemyslid rulers, to the Hradčany, where the new castle and cathedral were located. This article argues that the sculptural program on the Old Town Bridge Tower was designed to present Charles IV and his son as a part of eternal history of Bohemian monarchs, and to highlight the rule of the ageing emperor on the route of this pre-coronation procession.

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