

## **Genealogical Manuscripts in Cross-Cultural Perspective**

# **Studies in Manuscript Cultures**



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# **Genealogical Manuscripts in Cross-Cultural Perspective**

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Edited by  
Markus Friedrich and Jörg B. Quenzer

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# Contents

Markus Friedrich

**History of Genealogy and Manuscripts Studies: New Perspectives  
for a Cross-cultural and Trans-epochal Approach — 1**

## West and Central Asia

Kazuo Morimoto

**A Compendium of *Sayyid/Sharīf* Genealogy in Diagrammatic Format  
from the Late Tenth Century — 31**

Evrin Binbaş

**The King's Two Lineages: Esau, Jacob, and the Ottoman Mythical Imagination  
in the *Subhatu'l-Ahbar* — 63**

Devin DeWeese

**Narratives of Conquest and Genealogies of Custody among the Sacred Families  
of Central Asia: Manuscript Charters of Ancestral Islamization and Hereditary  
Privilege — 97**

## East Asia

Christopher S. Agnew

**Distinguishing Pearls from Fish Eyes: The Branch Lineage Genealogies  
of the Descendants of Confucius — 123**

Michela Bussotti

**Chinese Genealogies and Tables of Generations:  
A Few Examples from Huizhou — 147**

Xin Yu

**Copying Is Editing: Handwritten Copies of Printed Genealogies  
in Late Imperial China, 1450–1900 — 195**

Steffen Döll

**Genealogical Diagrams in Chan/Zen Buddhism: Sources, Production,  
and Functions — 219**

## **Europe and Americas**

Vitus Huber

**The Fabrication of Lineage: Genealogical Manuscripts and the Administration  
of the Spanish Empire (Fifteenth–Eighteenth Century) — 269**

Fiona Vicent

**Data Organisation in two Bourgeois Genealogies from Eighteenth-  
and Nineteenth-century Basel — 299**

**Contributors — 327**

**Indices — 329**

Markus Friedrich

# History of Genealogy and Manuscripts Studies: New Perspectives for a Cross-cultural and Trans-epochal Approach

Genealogy, the social practice of creating extended knowledge about historical or now-living individuals considered to be ‘relatives’, is more popular and widespread in the twenty-first century than it ever has been. The advent of digital technologies and DNA testing have given it new perspectives. Long seen the privilege of elite groups, it is now a beloved pastime for people from very different walks of life. Some scholars would even say genealogy has been democratised. Exciting new work explores these recent developments. Scholars investigate the relevance of new technologies for contemporary understandings of ancestry, descent, kinship and family.<sup>1</sup> Important as these recent discussions may be, they often fall short in assessing the deep history and historical variety of genealogical practices. While certainly not all civilisations developed articulate genealogical practices, many, nevertheless, did. There is a rich, millennia-old history to the field.

Given the enormous richness of genealogy’s history, especially when seen in a trans-epochal and global perspective, it is challenging to identify shared features. In fact, considering the different uses and forms that genealogy eventually acquired, the term itself almost looks like a somewhat vague umbrella term, linking together different and often distinct practices and cultural contexts. One way of bringing the many genealogical cultures of different times and regions into meaningful conversation, however, consists of a careful investigation of the material products they have created. The following papers discuss one of the most important material manifestations of genealogical activity across time and space: handwritten artefacts. Manuscripts were a highly prominent feature of many – perhaps even most – genealogical cultures, even when other media for storing and presenting relevant information were used as well. This introductory essay highlights several crucial characteristics of a manuscript-based approach to the history of genealogy; the following nine papers highlight the importance of manuscripts and manuscript production for genealogy regarding various richly contextualised case studies.

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1 Creet 2020; Morgan 2021.

# 1 The many media of genealogy

Before zooming in on genealogy-related manuscripts, the role of handwriting for historic genealogical cultures needs to be briefly contextualised.<sup>2</sup> There is no exclusive relationship between genealogy and any one medium. Leaving aside purely pictorial evocations of descent lines, whether in the form of Aztec pictorial codices or European genealogical portrait galleries, there are three other major genealogical media discernible in addition to handwriting: oral communication, epigraphic inscriptions and prints.<sup>3</sup>

Oral forms of preserving and transmitting knowledge about family and ancestors have always existed. A large body of ethnological scholarship has studied oral genealogy, focusing not only on so-called non-literate societies but also highlighting the enormous relevance of orality in (semi-)literate contexts.<sup>4</sup> Medieval sources from India, for instance, frequently mention bardic recitation of genealogies.<sup>5</sup> A Chinese family from Shanghai claimed in 1721 that ‘the line of descent has been orally transmitted’ for more than 700 years.<sup>6</sup> The oral transmission of genealogical information also occurred in Europe, although oral recitations of ancestry were not strongly institutionalised here. Children of the nobility, for instance, learnt frequently about their ancestors from parental storytelling; this presumably often happened in connection with other media and objects, such as epitaphs, buildings or paintings.<sup>7</sup> In such cases, oral and written genealogical media should not be seen as alternatives but rather as mutually reinforcing possibilities. Objects, including written artefacts, may serve as props for oral storytelling, which, in turn, is very frequently a valuable source of information for newcomers and the uninitiated.

Secondly, genealogical knowledge was often stored and made public by epigraphic inscriptions in stone, metal or other hard materials. India, again, provides impressive

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2 As the focus of this volume is on premodern examples, I leave aside here discussion of the various digital media which play a very prominent role in contemporary genealogy. Today, computer-based practices are not only of paramount importance in finding and creating genealogical knowledge, but also in providing visual or textual manifestations. A whole range of digital tools is now available to create charts or family trees on screen and disseminate them via document-sharing technologies.

3 On Aztec genealogies, see Diel 2015; see also the relevant sections in Diel 2018.

4 Relevant works include Henige 1974; Vansina 1985; Shryock 2008.

5 Teuscher 2013, 161.

6 Berkelbach van der Sprenkel 1973, 89. This is from a 1721 preface, included in a twentieth-century edition of a *zongpu* of a family claiming very ancient origins. The quote continues by saying that oral memory does not go back further than the tenth century; before that, ‘the order of generations and the names [of individuals] [...] cannot be ascertained’ based exclusively on the orality in this example.

7 Friedrich 2024.

examples as Brahmans created elaborate epigraphic genealogies of kings in Sanskrit, mostly for ritual purposes.<sup>8</sup> It seems that epigraphic genealogies are practically the only contemporary historical sources for the early medieval period for much of Southeast Asia.<sup>9</sup> Impressive bodies of epigraphic genealogies survive, for instance, from pre-Angkor and Angkor rulers in today's Cambodia.<sup>10</sup> European funeral monuments, including epitaphs and mausolea, often display a (noble) family's pride in and knowledge of their ancestry.<sup>11</sup> Among the first instances of writing that is today known from Japan is an impressive genealogical inscription on the so-called Inariyama sword, a ceremonial artefact uncovered from a monumental tomb in Musashi. It recounts one Owake-no-omi's seven patrilineal ancestors.<sup>12</sup>

Recent scholarship has particularly highlighted the role of epigraphy in the context of Chinese genealogical culture. Stelae made from stone were inscribed and erected by families and served as crucial manifestations of family-related memory during most of Chinese history. They contain a wealth of information about ancestors and relatives, and their erection was a major assertion of a family's collective identity. Epitaphs have recently attracted attention especially in Northern China, since scholarship traditionally held that these areas showed only a few signs of elaborate genealogical activities. Yet, a large number of surviving epitaphs from the region demonstrate clearly that families during the eleventh and twelfth century CE consciously collected family-related knowledge and displayed it on stone.<sup>13</sup> Genealogical memory in Northern China during the early fourteenth century relied predominantly on epigraphic writing.<sup>14</sup> Even though scholars continue to debate whether or not the erection of stelae presupposed extensive genealogical practices within the families, it is, nevertheless, clear that significant bodies of family-related knowledge were available and presented in highly self-conscious ways.<sup>15</sup>

Stone inscriptions retained a central role even in other parts of China where manuscript and print media were used much more heavily in local genealogical cultures. Several genealogical stelae have become famous for their enormous influence, including, most prominently, the one created by Ouyang Xiu in the elev-

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<sup>8</sup> Teuscher 2013, 167–168, for the distinction of oral bardic (courtly) and written Sanskrit (ritualistic) genealogies.

<sup>9</sup> Whitmore 2012, 103–107.

<sup>10</sup> Vickery 1990.

<sup>11</sup> For example, Sherlock 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Piggott 1997, 54–55.

<sup>13</sup> Man Xu 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Iiyama 2023.

<sup>15</sup> Man Xu 2016, 163–164 and n. 114.

enth century for his family.<sup>16</sup> Epigraphic evidence was also highly important as source material for numerous Chinese genealogists. According to Zhao Mingheng (1081–1129), for instance, inscriptions were the most reliable sources from which to lift genealogical information:

[Historical texts] have been transmitted from long ago. They were supposed to be reliable. However, when we examine the date, place, official title and lineage [in historical texts] against [inscriptions on] bronzes and stelae, differences [between these sources] often occur in three or four out of ten cases. This is because historical texts were composed by later people, who were thus unable to avoid mistakes. But inscriptions were established contemporaneously, and thus can be trusted without doubt.<sup>17</sup>

Thirdly: In some cases, including premodern China and Europe, printing became a defining medium of genealogy. German genealogists started using Gutenberg's technology after about one generation as a new tool to publicise their princes' pedigrees. Perhaps the earliest printed genealogy of a princely house was published in 1491 in Germany.<sup>18</sup> Soon after, print products started to appear more frequently, and many elite families considered publication of a printed genealogy the crowning achievement of their genealogical activities. As had been the case with manuscript genealogies, the printed family trees and family histories also often aspired to luxurious visual sophistication. Lavishly illustrated genealogies were printed in large numbers from the late sixteenth century onwards, often including dozens of first-rate illustrations. Eventually, as prints became a marketable commodity, a proper book market also emerged for genealogical works. By the late seventeenth century, the latest market forces and the reading public's expectations required genealogists and publishers to invent new genealogical media formats.<sup>19</sup> These eventually included the creation of genealogical calendars or yearbooks, most prominently the *Gotha*, a yearly register of Europe's noble families that appeared until 1942.<sup>20</sup>

A printed genealogy also became the preferred outcome of many genealogical projects in late Imperial China. Many families who undertook the labour to research and recreate their family histories hoped to see them eventually appear in print. Differing from Europe, however, most printed Chinese genealogies remained part of the non-commercial, private sector of the publishing industry.<sup>21</sup> Even if printing, thus, did not automatically imply publication, it, nevertheless, allowed

<sup>16</sup> On Ouyang Xiu's influence, see, e.g., He 2020.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted from Sena 2019, 156.

<sup>18</sup> This was Sunthaim 1491. For the chronology, see Bauer 2013, 130.

<sup>19</sup> Bauer 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Von Fritsch 1968; for a parallel, see Jettot 2023.

<sup>21</sup> Yu 2022.

for the easier circulation among the family. Well into the Ming dynasty, Chinese printed genealogies were probably predominantly produced via wood-block printing, while wood letter printing became more important from the Qing onwards.<sup>22</sup> Book historians have argued that genealogies were especially suited to the application of the newer technology.<sup>23</sup> After roughly 1450, visual materials, including maps, portraits and depictions of important buildings or monuments, also became a prominent feature of printed Chinese genealogies. Families would often go to great lengths to create aesthetically convincing books, outsourcing the production of prints and employing specialist illustrators.<sup>24</sup>

A final point that deserves a special mention from the outset: genealogical media rarely existed in isolation. Instead, the multiple media of genealogy should be seen as a continuum, with numerous transformations back and forth. As Xin Yu demonstrates in his paper below, the relationships between print and handwritten texts in the field were fluid and circular. Not only can we expect manuscript drafts for printed works; there also was a widespread habit of copying printed genealogies by hand. Moreover, printing and handwriting intersected when published works were corrected, updated or annotated by hand – a practice well-attested not only for numerous Chinese copies of printed genealogies.<sup>25</sup> In many European libraries, handwritten continuations of printed genealogies can also be easily found. Using flyleaves or empty spaces at the bottom of family trees, annotators consciously tried to keep outdated prints useful by inserting new up-to-date information in manuscripts.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, oral knowledge often formed the basis for written genealogies, whether in print, manuscript or on stone. Stone inscriptions, in turn, were frequently considered as important sources for genealogical works in print or handwriting, as we will see on several occasions below. Collections of handmade copies of funeral inscriptions were a distinctive genre of scholarly manuscripts (*épitaphier*), also popular among genealogists, in Europe.<sup>27</sup> In short, while this volume highlights the particular importance of genealogical manuscripts, this is not meant to indicate that they existed in isolation. The seamless continuity of various genealogical media will be highlighted throughout this introduction and in many of the papers below.

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Hong 2010.

<sup>23</sup> Hong 2010, 128.

<sup>24</sup> Bussotti 2017.

<sup>25</sup> Yu 2022, 68, 71 (image).

<sup>26</sup> Examples appear, e.g., in Friedrich 2023b.

<sup>27</sup> Suykerbuyk 2021.

## 2 Varieties of genealogy, varieties of manuscripts

### 2.1 ‘Genealogy’: Two meanings and their relevance for manuscript studies

‘Genealogy’ is an ambivalent term. At least two meanings can be distinguished. On the one hand, ‘genealogy’ refers to an intellectual enterprise or a task, a project, or an area of expertise, perhaps even a distinctive field of scholarship, as is the case of the Arab *‘ilm al-nasab*. Taken in this sense, ‘genealogy’ is something people do and pursue, a social practice or a collective endeavour that could be defined as organised and self-conscious memorialisation of the past and present membership of a given family beyond casual, everyday knowledge. Sometimes, these activities are executed in a highly expert fashion, for example, by specialised professionals (‘genealogists’) or dedicated social institutions; elsewhere, such intensive caring for knowledge about ancestors depends on individual initiatives.<sup>28</sup> As a process or activity, ‘genealogy’ must be analysed as a social practice, sometimes involving multiple (generations of) collaborators.

This procedural understanding of genealogy as a set of ongoing activities has important implications for how we should approach the remaining material traces, including genealogical manuscripts or inscriptions. Since genealogy-as-a-practice extends over time and space, it frequently relied on intermediary steps of writing down preliminary results which could be stored and transmitted to other participants in the process, for instance, to new generations of future genealogists. Seeing genealogy as an ongoing process, involving numerous circles of inquiry, publishing, updating, improving, reworking and republishing relevant information, requires scholars to understand the production and usage of manuscripts as ongoing and dynamic activities. No genealogical manuscript should be studied in isolation; instead, genealogy as a social process relied on iterations of manuscript practices. Genealogical manuscripts, accordingly, probably change their function throughout their lives; they were ‘living’ texts, constantly in need of reinterpretation and updating, improvement and expansion.<sup>29</sup> What was once the final result of a genealogical project may end up as the starting point of a future project, thereby becoming the object of, for instance, annotations, revisions or other forms of reuse. The iterative nature of genealogy and genealogical media usage emerges clearly from a descrip-

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<sup>28</sup> On genealogists, see Butaud and Piétri 2006, *passim*; Li 2014, *passim*.

<sup>29</sup> On genealogies as ‘living’ texts, see Genicot 1975.



tion of genealogical activities in the prominent Kwŏn family in Korea from the late fourteenth century onwards:

My maternal uncle, Kwŏn Kūn [1387–1445] for the first time compiled a brief genealogy, and his son, Kwŏn Nam [1416–1465], continued his father's intention and, by widely collecting material and visiting far and wide, he greatly augmented it, but it was not yet complete. With my kinsmen, Pak Wŏnch'ang and Ch'oe Howŏn, I again intensified the search, filled up lacunae, corrected mistakes, and arranged everything in three volumes of genealogical tables.<sup>30</sup>

As described here for medieval Korea, there were layers upon layers of genealogical activities, each of them closely connected to specific manuscripts and manuscript-related practices. Seeing genealogy as an ever-ongoing practice, thus, invites scholars to pay particular attention to the embeddedness of individual manuscripts, including their form and content, into the *longue durée* of genealogical reckoning. Individual manuscripts are, therefore, only made intelligible by studying their changing position in longer sequences of genealogical activities. Even when earlier or later steps in genealogical memorialisation are not adequately documented, either because they occurred only orally or the once extant documentation has vanished, the surviving manuscripts, nevertheless, still need to be understood as nothing more but one step in a longer process of genealogical research. Genealogical manuscripts, especially when surviving in isolation, too often make genealogy appear as a static worldview, enshrined in unique documents. The manuscripts seem to freeze into standstill what were *de facto* unending social processes of continuous genealogical memorialisation. While focusing on individual, isolated genealogies produces the mirage of *written* genealogy being more 'rigid' or stable than *oral* genealogy, the appreciation of the sequential nature of genealogical media usage would actually highlight the malleability of written genealogical knowledge.<sup>31</sup>

And yet, the focus on individual genealogical artefacts is not only widespread, it also has its merits.<sup>32</sup> Speaking of 'genealogy' in the singular, then, refers to 'a genealogical work or artefact'; 'genealogy' as a plural would be equivalent to something like a genre of 'genealogical literature.' In this sense, 'genealogy' often serves as a shorthand expression for the material outcome of such intellectual activities. Such

<sup>30</sup> This passage comes from the preface to the Andong Kwŏn genealogy from the late fifteenth century, the first surviving Korean genealogy, translated in part in Lee 1993, 570.

<sup>31</sup> For a classic discussion of writing's role as providing more 'rigidity which rendered it [i.e. genealogy] less amenable to the influence of the present,' see Freedman 2020, 69 and 71. Freedman insists, against Bohannon 1952, that fictional genealogical connections were quite frequent even in printed Chinese genealogies, thereby, nuancing her much stricter opposition of oral and written genealogy in terms of flexibility.

<sup>32</sup> This sense dominates, for instance, in Holladay 2019, 4–5 or in the classic survey by Genicot 1975.

a usage of the term tends to train our focus on individual pieces of writing, often on the most satisfying and aesthetically pleasing ones. In this way, Sō Kōjōng (1420–1488), the writer of the passage just quoted, referred in an exemplary fashion to the Kwōn family's 'three volumes' as a genealogy. A 'genealogy,' in this sense, is some sort of material representation of past and present family members, often viewed as definitive or final. It is these seemingly static written artefacts that are often the empirical basis for studies of any one particular genealogy's ideological implication.

Such works or genres in many cultures are associated with specific titles or designated by typical terminology, including *zongpu*, *zupu*, and *jiapu* in China, *Genealogia* in Europe or *nasab* in Arabic.<sup>33</sup> These titles also often signify well-defined literary and formal characteristics of the works. While purely textual forms of genealogy are prominent in all genealogical cultures under consideration here, diagrammatic presentations of genealogy in visual formats are also widespread. Most manuscript cultures, at some point, started to use diagrams as tools for genealogical knowledge presentation. Genealogical diagrams, in fact, have attracted particular attention in scholarship.<sup>34</sup> While it is generally agreed that genealogical diagrams play a very significant role in the broader history of diagrammatic writing, there are still many open questions regarding the precise chronology and formal development of genealogical visualisation.<sup>35</sup>

## 2.2 The ups and downs of genealogy and genealogical writing

Genealogy (in both senses of the word) is widespread but not omnipresent.<sup>36</sup> It is certainly neither timeless nor natural.<sup>37</sup> Rather, genealogy truly has a history. Sources for the study of genealogical cultures are very unevenly distributed, with some eras and areas being blessed with an abundance of evidence, while others feature only isolated fragments. This very unevenness in documentation, however, is not only a mirror of broader trends in manuscript survival; it has just as much to do with uneven production. The relevance of genealogy within any society often changed, and with it, the production of records. Even highly literate societies show significant waves in the production of genealogy-related manuscripts. The for-

<sup>33</sup> On Chinese terminology, see, e.g., the extensive discussion in Wang 2023, 3–18.

<sup>34</sup> For example, Bouquet 1996.

<sup>35</sup> Hamburger, Roxburgh and Safran 2022. For a new chronology of genealogical diagrams in Arabic genealogy, see Morimoto's contribution below.

<sup>36</sup> A point forcefully made, for example, by Szombathy 2013, and Webb 2016. See also Jussen 2023.

<sup>37</sup> Sahllins 2013.

tunes of genealogical manuscript production can frequently be closely connected to moments of social change or disruption. As Sō Kōjōng explained in the fifteenth century, looking back to earlier genealogical media practices in Korea:

I think that in ancient times there was a ‘clan law’ according to which the clan members were arranged in the *chao-mu* [*zhao-mu*] order and differentiated on the basis of branch lines so that even one hundred generations of descendants could be identified. After the clan laws deteriorated, the genealogical records came into use.<sup>38</sup>

This passage suggests not only that genealogical writing emerged at a rather specific time in Korean history, it also implies a drastic shift in the media configuration of genealogical memory away from an architectural to a manuscript basis. Initially, a specific physical arrangement of graves (*zhao-mu*) was the preferred device of genealogical mnemonics. Manuscript ‘records’, by contrast, became more common only as a replacement once social changes had overthrown these earlier practices. A significant expansion of genealogical culture also happened in Japan towards the end of the early modern period, after 1600 or so, in connection with significant changes in government policies.<sup>39</sup> Ottoman society, outside the Imperial dynasty, also seems to have seen comparatively little genealogical (hand)writing – extant non-Imperial genealogical manuscripts are few in number and from a rather late period in Ottoman history.<sup>40</sup>

These examples highlight that the existence of genealogy-related media, even in highly literate cultures, must not simply be taken for granted. Rather, the production of genealogical manuscripts of whatever type requires explanation through careful contextualisation, as the papers collected here demonstrate forcefully. The relatively sudden rise of specific genealogical manuscript traditions can often be linked quite directly to specific social, religious or political necessities. The case of early Islamic Arabia is illustrative here. There is, as of now, no unanimous consensus concerning the exact nature and extent of genealogical practices in mostly oral pre-Islamic Arabia.<sup>41</sup> What scholars agree upon, however, despite significant nuances of interpretation, is the fact that the highly literate form of Arab genealogy (*ilm al-nasab*), which developed from the ninth century CE onwards, was a more or

<sup>38</sup> Lee 1993, 570.

<sup>39</sup> Carré 2010, 70–71. For an eighteenth-century case study, see Amos 2013.

<sup>40</sup> Bouquet 2011. Majer 1978, accordingly highlights only documentary sources and biographical lexica as sources for a genealogy of the *ulema*, but no genealogical works as such. For a rare (and late) non-Imperial case, see Lowry and Erünsal 2010.

<sup>41</sup> Nuanced assessments of pre-Islamic Arabia, including several statements about genealogy (passim), appear, for example, in Hoyland 2001; Mackintosh-Smith 2019.

less unprecedented scholarly phenomenon, tied to the new challenges of Arab ethnogenesis in the wake of the early-Islamic conquests from Central Asia to Spain.<sup>42</sup>

The sharp rise of genealogical practices and writings in Late Imperial China, both manuscript and printed, is tied to substantial social and political changes, often characterised as a recalibration of local and central powers, which opened opportunities for local lineages to assert themselves and their power claims on a regional level.<sup>43</sup> In the context of broader societal changes and political rearrangements, specific genealogical manuscript practices became popular, including the usage of tabular notation systems, pioneered by the hugely influential eleventh-century CE writer and genealogist, Ouyang Xiu.<sup>44</sup> New social elites elaborated a distinctive genealogical culture of unprecedented intensity and social reach.<sup>45</sup>

The ups and downs in genealogical manuscript production were, furthermore, often closely associated with changes in political ideas about king- and rulership. By no means all monarchical systems of governance relied prominently on genealogical reckoning, as royal charisma was not necessarily tied to descent. Yet, genealogy ended up acquiring paramount importance in the numerous cases where monarchical rulership over time became connected to notions of dynastic continuity.<sup>46</sup> This happened, for instance, in early Japan. The first written (royal) genealogies in Japan are estimated to date from the late sixth century CE, an era which saw a growing centralisation of political power and enhanced dynasty-building by the ruling family, a process reflected in, and further enhanced by, increasing genealogical activity.<sup>47</sup> The interdependence of the growing importance of genealogy and political changes are also evident in late medieval and early modern Europe, where much of the nobility's genealogical production may be said to be directly or indirectly connected to claims of dynastic rulership.<sup>48</sup> Mongol and Timurid ideas about kingship and genealogy can be fruitfully compared to these European structures.<sup>49</sup> Both the various Mongol and the Timurid dynasties are characterised by rich, and richly nuanced, traditions of genealogical manuscript production.<sup>50</sup> As Evrim Binbaş discusses in detail in his contribution below, the Ottomans also followed this tradition of dynasty-building via genealogy.

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<sup>42</sup> Usage of 'ethnogenesis' occurs in Webb 2016; Christys 2010.

<sup>43</sup> Clark 2007, 257–261; Faure 2007; McDermott 2013.

<sup>44</sup> He 2020.

<sup>45</sup> Clark 2004.

<sup>46</sup> Duindam 2019.

<sup>47</sup> Piggott 1997, 46, 65 and 67.

<sup>48</sup> For one powerful case study, see Hecht 2006.

<sup>49</sup> Geevers and Favereau 2018.

<sup>50</sup> See, e.g., Woods 1990; Lefèvre 2012.

When discussing the different roles and functions of genealogy and genealogies, note should be additionally taken of the connection between genealogical activities, including manuscript production, and specific religious ideas. In Christian contexts, although the theological and biblical record on genealogy was very ambivalent, a tradition of biblically grounded and oriented genealogical work existed. Since late Antiquity, Christian scholars worked hard to understand why the New Testament provided two conflicting versions of Jesus Christ's genealogy (Mt 1:1–16; Lk 3:23–38).<sup>51</sup> Another example where genealogy and spirituality intersected in Christianity was the application of genealogical models to the formation of religious communities, especially in the context of religious orders. While Catholic clergy could, by definition, not legally have biological offspring, religious communities sometimes conceived of spiritual influence between prominent monks or clerics as spiritual procreation.<sup>52</sup> Such genealogical links between spiritual authorities were, however, much more important and strongly articulated elsewhere, for instance in East Asia. As Steffen Döll demonstrates below, notions of spiritual kinship – again manifested in artful and expansive genealogical manuscripts in diagrammatic form – are a constituent part of the Buddhistic tradition.<sup>53</sup>

Genealogy in Islam was not detached from religious and theological thinking either. Genealogical activities were discussed in several putative sayings of Muhammad (*hadith*). His authority was claimed to both promote and constrain genealogical thinking.<sup>54</sup> Some medieval Arab authors even seemed to suggest, based on such texts, that Muslims may have an actual 'duty (*farḍ*)' to investigate genealogy, at least for the case of the Prophet and/or Caliphs.<sup>55</sup> Religious charisma and genealogical (manuscript) activities also intersected in the case of the so-called *sayyids*, direct descendants of Muhammad.<sup>56</sup> While descent from the Prophet did not necessarily endow the *sayyids* with any special religious charisma, it is, however, clear that their kinship relation to Islam's highest authority (next to God) entailed considerable social and economic privilege. In this context, genealogy was a powerful tool to ascertain elevated social prestige and privilege. Devin DeWeese's article on genealogical manuscripts from Central Asian pious foundations also links genealogical practices to the realm of the holy, again combining economic and spiritual reasons for manuscript production. Chris Agnew's parallel study of Confucius's off-

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<sup>51</sup> For a recent contribution to the scholarship, see Macfarlane 2018.

<sup>52</sup> Marschall 2023.

<sup>53</sup> On Buddhist notions of lineage in a Chinese context, see also Morrison 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Ardiç 2012.

<sup>55</sup> Khalidi 1973, 53–65, discussing Ibn Hazm (d. 1064) and Yāqūt (d. 1229).

<sup>56</sup> Kazuo Morimoto is the leading scholar of this aspect; see, e.g., Morimoto 2012; see also Bernheimer 2013; Peskes 2005.

spring and their genealogical manuscripts finds analogous connections between descent-oriented memory, political and social history, and spiritual charisma.<sup>57</sup>

### 2.3 Opportunity or burden? Genealogy from the outside

In a somewhat schematic way, two types of stimuli for genealogical activities can be distinguished: family-internal and -external. Outside incentives to create and make available genealogies may originate, for instance, from political or religious authorities. State-driven projects to compile, evaluate and codify the genealogies of important families, in particular, were prominent almost everywhere. Top-down requests to collect genealogical information appeared in seventh-century China or came from the early Caliphs in Iraq and Spain.<sup>58</sup> In Europe, early modern governments, such as the French monarchy under Louis XIV, implemented official scrutiny of the nobility. Vast campaigns of ‘research on the nobility’ forced local noble families to produce valid documents detailing their genealogical descent from properly noble origins.<sup>59</sup> The early modern obsession with the ‘purity of blood’ in Spain led to ongoing campaigns about controlling genealogy that combined top-down structures with local initiative, as Vitus Huber shows below.<sup>60</sup>

Japan also has a long tradition of top-down control of genealogical materials. Tenno Ingyō, who ruled in the fifth century (r. 412–453), was supposedly not only complaining about his nobility’s frequent genealogical forgeries and fraudulency.<sup>61</sup> He also found a brutal way to distinguish false from true genealogies: He had nobles put their arm into boiling water in order to determine whether their genealogical claims were correct or not. Authentication by ordeal, though, was not an option for long, and in the eighth century less dramatic mechanisms of control were established in the form of a dedicated governmental bureau. The emperor’s attempt to fix noble genealogies in authoritative ways led in 814/815 to the creation of the *Newly Compiled Records of Kinship Groups* (*Shinsen shōjiroku*). This book, most of which is now lost, listed 1,182 families and their genealogies.<sup>62</sup> Under Tokugawa rule, a millennium later and in very different political circumstances, between 1641

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<sup>57</sup> See also Agnew 2019.

<sup>58</sup> For a brief review of the various assessments of the Caliphal *diwan*, see, e.g., Robinson 2020, 60–63.

<sup>59</sup> For a case study, see Hickey 2001.

<sup>60</sup> See also, for various additional aspects and consequences of anti-converso politics in the field of Iberian genealogy, Pike 2000; Nirenberg 2002.

<sup>61</sup> For this story, see Aston (tr.) 1896, vol. 1, 316.

<sup>62</sup> Brownlee 1987, 122–133.

and 1643, again roughly 1,400 genealogies were brought together in 186 scrolls to ‘enshrine’ the nation’s elite in an official compilation (*Kan’ei shoka keizu den*).<sup>63</sup>

Under the Chinese Qing dynasty, a specialised government office, the *Zongrenfu* (*Office of the Imperial Lineage*), constantly collected personal data about the many thousands of members of the imperial dynasty, including questionnaires and other informative media. Hundreds of volumes of these materials, together with hundreds of volumes of genealogies (the so-called ‘Jade Registers’), survive to this day.<sup>64</sup> Such outside initiatives were frequently moments of massive manuscript mobilisation, as written documentation needed to be forwarded from peripheral repositories to central bureaus or offices. In the case from premodern Japan cited above, for example, such information transfers to the capital of Edo happened via numerous manuscripts. Then, a small army of scribes and other personnel in the capital did the actual work of evaluating the incoming manuscripts.<sup>65</sup> They presumably needed to rely on mountains of handwritten artefacts as preliminary documents.

In addition to the state-sponsored administration, genealogy was often forced upon families in the contexts of law and legal privilege. European courts of law frequently required genealogical information in the process of sanctioning marriages.<sup>66</sup> Other forms of social and legal privilege were also tied to a demonstration of proper genealogical status, whatever that meant in the particular context. The *sayyids* in the Muslim world needed to prove their genealogy-based claim to special social status with solid documentation, a procedure that could send individuals scrambling for evidence. Manuscripts frequently played a key role in the process, as is evident from a legal query discussed by the sixteenth-century Ottoman chief imperial mufti Ebu’s-Su’ud Efendi:

In the presence of the judge, the neighborhood’s preacher and imam, and several Muslim witnesses testified that Zeyd possessed a sealed [genealogical] tree that had been [transmitted] for generations (*eben ‘an ced*) from *Bahr al-ansab* [a fifteenth-century genealogical work]. If the judge also accepted the testimonies and recorded them in the *sicill* [court record], is Zeyd’s *sayyidship* established?<sup>67</sup>

The answer of the mufti was affirmative. The combination of written genealogy and oral testimony produced social trust in the family history under consideration. A similar combination of verifiable empirical evidence in the form of written

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<sup>63</sup> Spafford 2016. See also Berry 2007, 113–115. For a historical demographer’s exploitation of the data, see Yamamura 1985.

<sup>64</sup> Harrell, Naquin and Deyuan 1985. On the *Zongrenfu* under the Qing, see Keliher 2019, 123–146.

<sup>65</sup> Spafford 2016, 284–285.

<sup>66</sup> Hauck 2022.

<sup>67</sup> Quoted in Burak 2019, 816.

documentation and peer-group acclamation in oral form applied in Europe, where noble families often needed to demonstrate an impeccable pedigree before being allowed membership in prestigious social corporations, such as cathedral chapters, military orders or privileged courtly offices. In all these cases, European nobles had to subject ‘proofs of nobility’ to their peers. As recent scholarship has amply demonstrated, here, too, a mixture of evidence-based empirical documentation and oral statements from influential peers was applied.<sup>68</sup> Thus, social standing was *de facto* as important as good documentation to prove noble pedigree.<sup>69</sup>

In all of these cases, their enormous social or political differences notwithstanding, genealogical manuscripts – their production and their shape – responded to family-external demands, usually articulated as bureaucratic requirements by heavily institutionalised authorities. Yet, it would be wrong to view such top-down initiatives simply as authoritarian impositions. A more nuanced reading of these episodes reveals that families and interest groups themselves often actively promoted or, at least, benefitted from such seemingly rigid structures of genealogical control. The monarchy’s involvement in controlling noble genealogies in France had been explicitly requested by the nobles themselves in 1614, hoping to instrumentalise the nascent state to weed out frauds and fakes.<sup>70</sup> Cleverly using state or religious institutions to promote one’s own (genealogical) goals was, in fact, a widespread practice. Prudently feeding one’s own genealogical information about family structures, lineages and individual kinsfolk to state bureaucrats, as Michael Szonyi has demonstrated, was a key strategy of southern Chinese lineages in the Ming era. It was part of a specific ‘Art of Being Governed’.<sup>71</sup>

### 3 Producing genealogical knowledge: The role of manuscript practices

It would be wrong to assume that people simply know about their families.<sup>72</sup> Quite the contrary, casual and habitual family knowledge is often limited.<sup>73</sup> The very act

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<sup>68</sup> See, e.g., Harding and Hecht 2011; Müller 2017.

<sup>69</sup> Spafford 2016, 290.

<sup>70</sup> De Grolée-Virville 1978, 16.

<sup>71</sup> Szonyi 2017.

<sup>72</sup> For a Europeanist perspective, see Eickmeyer, Friedrich and Bauer 2019.

<sup>73</sup> Without ‘genealogical records’, as the preface to the Korean Andong Kwŏn, the fifteenth-century genealogy of the Kwŏn family, stated, ‘after several generations the names of the ancestors in the four ascending generations were lost, and their descendants consequently became estranged from each other, looking at one another like strangers in the street’, see Lee 1993, 570.



of learning about genealogy was complex and challenging, often requiring extensive searches for information, which, in turn, produced a fascinating subset of research-related manuscripts. Many sources attest to the enormously complicated and never-ending, often also highly frustrating nature of genealogical knowledge production. The statement from the preface of the Japanese *Shinsen shōjiroku* from 814/815 is typical:

Some [families] lost the knowledge of their own ancestors, and in dismay put themselves into another line and made the ancestors into their own. New and old are in wild disorder, and it is not easy to clear away. There are innumerable cases of confusion and mistakes in one thing and another.<sup>74</sup>

Hence, complex research was required, in this case even requiring the emperor's direct help, who provided some rare writings and books to help reconstruct genealogies. Many sources also highlight the constant usage of handwriting to overcome these challenges. While some of the preparatory manifestations of research processes still exist, indirect evidence about their erstwhile existence is even more abundant. The latter applies, for instance, to ninth- and tenth-century Iraq, where a group of dedicated Muslim scholars carefully harvested genealogical knowledge among Bedouin tribes in a manner that Zsoltán Szombathy has likened to modern anthropological fieldwork – with the important caveat that these early Arab scholars followed a very specific political and social agenda, and hardly subscribed to ideals of objectivity.<sup>75</sup> These research activities clearly involved heavy usage of handwriting.<sup>76</sup> Not for nothing did one early Muslim scholar, al-Khalīl (718–786 CE), claim that he 'exhausted fifteen glass bottles of ink in recording' the Bedouins' genealogies.<sup>77</sup>

Even when the genealogists' own preparatory writing practices are not explicitly mentioned, the sources still abound in references that highlight how genealogical research was intimately bound to handling, reading, assessing and transmitting extant manuscripts. The Kurdish biographer Ibn Khallikan, while composing a biographical sketch in the thirteenth century of no less a personality than the famous eleventh-century sultan Salah al-Dīn, experienced significant difficulties in tracing the sultan's ancestry.<sup>78</sup> Ibn Khallikan repeatedly consulted with knowledgeable men and read 'a great number of title-deeds and instruments establishing pious foundations', all in vain. It was only when finding a 'roll', produced by one al-Hasan

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<sup>74</sup> Brownlee 1987, 127.

<sup>75</sup> Szombathy 2013.

<sup>76</sup> For a broader perspective on handwriting and scholarly investigation in Islamic societies, see Hirschler 2022.

<sup>77</sup> Szombathy 2013, 109.

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Khallikan 1872, 479–480.

ibn Gharib ibn Imran al-Harasi from Egypt, which contained a fuller genealogical account that he was finally satisfied. Continuous searches for relevant data, and the systematic pursuit of various sources and scholarly pathways were necessary in the everyday work of genealogy. Genealogical specialists from the tenth or eleventh century in Mewar, Western India, also consciously gathered and collected older (epigraphic) records to compile updated versions of the genealogies of their rulers. Such research protocols became more elaborate in the thirteenth and especially the fifteenth centuries, always at moments of renewal of genealogical activity. One epigraphic inscription in 1460 explicitly mentions that the genealogy it recorded was produced ‘according to the study of many old inscriptions’.<sup>79</sup>

Sources in China speak frequently about genealogical knowledge-making and they habitually indicate that this involved significant work with numerous manuscripts from different sources. According to the *Old Tang History*, Emperor Taizong wanted to revise the national register of noble families in 632. To do so, ‘all the genealogy-pedigrees in the realm were investigated, and historical accounts were used to determine their authenticity’.<sup>80</sup> He could presuppose sophisticated clan-internal routines of genealogical knowledge management, including complex media and manuscript practices. Shortly afterwards, for instance, one Li Hua (eighth century), a member of an important Chinese clan, wrote to his brother-in-law, Lu Fu:

I regret not having seen you in order to carry out a broad inquiry [into your clan genealogy]. Into how many branches is the southern branch divided? [...] Draw up the branches and lines of descent and send them to me. Not long ago, I composed an epitaph for my maternal uncle Chün-ch’i and put at the end an account of the origins of the branches and the clan. I hope to make an account like that one [...].<sup>81</sup>

Three hundred years later, and in very different social and political circumstances, Ouyang Xiu, the famous literatus, antiquarian and genealogist, wrote a similar though more detailed passage:

I combined the information from the genealogies [of two branches of his family] with the knowledge of my kin. They all gathered the documents they had collected, and I then compared where they were similar and different. Thus I listed the successive generations and compiled the descent chart (*p’u-t’u* [*putu*]).<sup>82</sup>

Similarly, in 1106, one Xua Duo (b. 1052), from a local family in Fujian, reported that his ‘family’s records (*jiadie*) have been revised by numerous hands’. He then men-

<sup>79</sup> Teuscher 2013, 167, 173 and 176.

<sup>80</sup> Johnson 1977b, 48.

<sup>81</sup> Johnson 1977b, 45. On Li Hua, see also McMullen 1973; Vita 1988.

<sup>82</sup> Quoted from Clark 2004, 267.

tions, in particular, one of his forebears who ‘compiled a family genealogical chart (*jiapu*). He carefully clarified the traditions and made his distinctions’.<sup>83</sup> One local Fujian genealogist in the mid-twelfth-century ‘went to the doors of all the surrounding Zheng households and collected their old genealogical records’, when attempting to update his lineage’s pedigree.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, though again in very different contexts 150 or so years later, the eminent Yuan-era scholar Liu Minzhong (1243–1318), when composing a genealogy for one Gua Guan, wrote: ‘I consulted the biography written by Yu Qin, Instructor at the Directorate of Education. [...] Owing to the loss of the genealogy, we do not have a detailed account of their ancestors before our great-great grandfather.’<sup>85</sup> Finally, a story from the early Ming throws additional light on such processes of acquiring and vetting genealogical information, and on the interplay of manuscript and printed sources:

The early Ming official and book collector Yang Shiqi (1365–1444) once read the gazetteer of Raozhou, Jiangxi in the Palace Library after receiving a request that he write a Preface to a Raozhou native’s genealogy. The genealogy compiler, an official stationed in Guizhou named Zheng Jingyue, sent his work to the capital with a Guizhou surveillance official who approached Yang on Zheng’s behalf. In the genealogy there was a record written for Zheng’s great-grandfather’s ancestral hall. Yang went to the Palace Library, read the Raozhou gazetteer, and noted that the great-grandfather’s affairs were in fact as recorded in the genealogy.<sup>86</sup>

The making of genealogies, thus, required researching ‘night and day’, as one late Ming author noted around 1550.<sup>87</sup> While these examples from the Tang to the Ming era come from vastly different social and political contexts, they, nevertheless, all mention complex research practices in the ongoing process of generating, cultivating and representing genealogical information. This implied the habitual conscious handling and scrutinising of extant manuscripts. And, while not always explicitly mentioning intermediary writing practices, such as note-taking, excerpting or drafting of summaries, such practices may reasonably be conjectured.

Such conjecturing becomes even more likely when one considers that, in some cases, such preparatory and intermediary manuscripts actually still do exist. Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Muslim genealogists, for instance, have left a few manuscripts documenting their everyday working routines. Frédéric Bauden has devoted a series of articles to the notebook of the great Muslim scholar and historian al-Maqrīzī (1364–1442), and used his excerpt book to reconstruct his working

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<sup>83</sup> Clark 2007, 279.

<sup>84</sup> Clark 2007, 278.

<sup>85</sup> Iiyama 2016, 160 n. 22.

<sup>86</sup> This is the summary of Dennis 2011, 121.

<sup>87</sup> Quoted in Szonyi 2002, 40.

methods in detail.<sup>88</sup> Although not primarily a genealogist, at least one of the handwritten excerpts made by al-Maqrīzī is expressly classified as ‘genealogical’ by Bauden.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, Kazuo Morimoto has unearthed one working manuscript from an early modern *sayyid* genealogist from mid-fifteenth-century Iraq.<sup>90</sup> This notebook, today in the British Library, contains different pieces of information about the prophet’s descent and is marked-up with black and red ink to facilitate later usage. These notebooks, while rare and unusual, provide important evidence for the existence of manuscript-based research routines of Muslim genealogists.

The working routines of European genealogists are much better documented. *Ego*-documents of individuals working in the field constantly mention logistical challenges (travelling to many archives), epistemic problems (correctly understanding individual pieces of evidence) and psychological hurdles (mustering the necessary *Sitzfleisch* and patience). The material evidence of extant manuscripts corroborates these points in striking ways. Among the most famous examples of such endless paper trails of genealogical knowledge production are the manuscripts connected to the genealogical projects of the Habsburg Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519). He employed up to a dozen highly trained humanists who scoured central Europe’s manuscript depots for many years searching for evidence of the imperial family’s history. Several of these individuals left extensive bodies of working papers behind.<sup>91</sup> Doing genealogical research in late medieval and early modern Europe, thus, implied, above all, the virtuoso application of numerous paper technologies.<sup>92</sup> Knowledge-creation works via handwriting, and it required numerous handwritten ‘little tools of knowledge’, including excerpts, marginalia, drafts, and annotations.<sup>93</sup>

Such scholarly activities, including their impressive manuscript manifestations, should, however, not be naïvely confused with historical objectivity. No matter how wide-ranging such research campaigns were, premodern genealogists were not usually acting as disinterested parties. Falsehood and forgery were generic elements of genealogy across the world, despite widespread claims of factual accuracy.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps the most obvious examples of blatant fictionalisation are the so-called

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<sup>88</sup> Bauden 2003.

<sup>89</sup> Bauden 2006, 94.

<sup>90</sup> Morimoto 2008.

<sup>91</sup> Silver 2008; Kagerer 2017.

<sup>92</sup> Te Heesen 2005. I have tried to write on the history of genealogy c. 1700 almost entirely on the basis of such working papers in Friedrich 2023a.

<sup>93</sup> Becker and Clark 2001.

<sup>94</sup> One typical claim to present no fiction occurs in the genealogy of the Andong Kwōn: ‘This genealogy is detailed from Munjōng to Munt’an on, but sketchy before them. This is because we have recorded what is known and omitted what is not known in an effort to transmit only reliable facts to future

‘mythical genealogies’. Elite families almost everywhere created ‘fable origins’ for various reasons, claiming some sort of ‘mythical ancestry’ for themselves and their relatives.<sup>95</sup> The seventeenth-century *Akbarnama*, for instance, the official history of the Mughal Emperor Akbar’s reign (1542–1605, r. from 1556), contains a long chapter on Akbar’s ultimate descent from Adam, bolstering the ruler’s claim to illuminated rulership with claims of divine origin.<sup>96</sup> Similar self-association with Biblical frameworks occurred all over Western Asia in Islamic dynasties.

Such narratives served multiple purposes. They bestowed special kinds of prestige and anchored current social arrangements in broader cosmologies. Cosmological frameworks of genealogy also provided a chronological framework, by mapping time between the world’s origin and now. Yet, while the narrative and ideological value of invented and mythical genealogies is beyond doubt, in most cultures, such fables eventually ran up against alternative epistemological criteria. Distinctions between ‘true’ and ‘false’ descent claims are part of almost every genealogical culture, despite enormous variations as to how the distinction should be drawn and how ‘true’ genealogies should be evidenced. As fable genealogies seemed to habitually break such evidentiary rules, however, genealogy, in many cases, eventually came to face considerable skepticism. ‘Genealogists lie’, the Prophet Muhammad is said to have opined in one prominent, anti-genealogical *hadith*.<sup>97</sup> Similar sentiments existed in all genealogical cultures, reflecting and rejecting the ideological instrumentalisation of genealogy.<sup>98</sup>

Yet, even falsehoods and mythical origin stories often required careful preparation. While Akbar’s descent from Adam may be fictional, finding the fifty-three ancestors required to substantiate and flesh out that link, was not easily done, no matter whether they were found through imaginative invention or historical research. Getting fictional lines of descent right required a deep familiarity, for instance, with a plethora of myths, often of various cultural origins, that needed to be collated and harmonised. There was hardly less confusion about mythical ancestors than historical ones. European evidence shows in detail how the production

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generations’ (Lee 1993, 570). For Europe, see, e.g., Fumi 1902. On this case, see also Bizzocchi 1991.

95 Trevisan 2018. The volume is, despite one contribution each on the Mughals and the Ottomans, *de facto* focussed on premodern Europe. A slightly broader perspective is available in Ragon 2007. Cf. also Bizzocchi 2016.

96 Abu-l-Fazl 1993, vol. 1, 143–145. This is, significantly, followed by a lengthy discussion of universal chronology, so as to determine how reasonable such a lineage of 53 ancestors might be. For Akbar’s ideology of kinship, including the necessity to fabricate such genealogical claims, see Richards 1993, 48. For further discussion, see also Quinn 2021, 53–65.

97 See the discussion of this *hadith* in Webb 2016, 208–210.

98 Clark 2004, 256, for a Song quotation from the eleventh century.

of meaningful fictional genealogies depended on wide-ranging manuscript-based excerpting, annotating and drafting.<sup>99</sup> In fact, as much recent scholarship has highlighted, scholarly practices, including prominently manuscript practices, have served both forgers and critical philologists in parallel ways. Genealogical manuscripts, with their often inextricable connection between facts and fiction, evidence and invention, demonstrate this very well.

## 4 Treasured, and still destroyed... Preservation and loss of genealogical manuscripts

A final point merits attention when discussing genealogical manuscripts, and that is their transmission through time. Family histories were not only hard to produce and difficult to substantiate; they were also often materially fragile. Hence, genealogical manuscripts were sometimes singled out for particularly careful preservation. The European nobility started to develop an archival consciousness partially because of their archives' importance for genealogical scholarship. Genealogical compilations in China, both printed and unprinted, were meant to be kept among families for future inspection and usage, sometimes resulting in the conscious build-up of evidence over a long time for future projects to create authoritative genealogies.<sup>100</sup> Such sources occasionally allow us an insight into the storage arrangements for genealogical manuscripts (and, potentially, prints): 'Hitherto, our elders have transmitted the family genealogy (*jiapu*). They stored it up as a treasure and rarely showed it to others.'<sup>101</sup> The perfectly stratified preservation of genealogical manuscripts looked like this in an idealised, retrospective view from the decades around 1300: 'Formerly [i.e. in an idealised *Tang* era], the study of descent (*shih-hsi* [*shixi*]) flourished. Families (*hsing* [*xing*]) had their archives (*yüan* [ *yuan*]), officials (*kuan* [*guan*]) had their tables (*p'u* [*pu*]), and the great clans (*shih-tsu* [*shizu*]) had their records (*chih* [*zhi*]).'<sup>102</sup> Japanese families, including not only elite but, from the seventeenth and eighteenth century onwards, also more

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<sup>99</sup> See, e.g., Heinemann 2015.

<sup>100</sup> See the quotation from Szonyi 2002, 32, about a fifteenth-century 'descent-line chart (*zongtu*)' from Fuzhou: 'This genealogy was never printed, but [according to the preface mentioning the manuscript] "preserved in the family, to await a later time, when an earlier genealogy can be obtained and compared for consistency".'

<sup>101</sup> Stele from 1171, quoted at length in Iiyama 2016, 157.

<sup>102</sup> Ma Duanlin, quoted from Clark 2004, 240.

lowly ones, were increasingly storing genealogical records.<sup>103</sup> Often enough, these were important treasures, guarded carefully and protected under risk of life. One (fictional) Samurai slit open his belly to store genealogical manuscripts and protect them from fire when his master's house burnt down.<sup>104</sup>

However, these instances of well-curated preservations may have been rather the exception than the rule. As innumerable sources also indicate, family knowledge was especially vulnerable to social, political and economic upheavals. Many Chinese authors of the Song period, specifically the eleventh century, diagnosed a break in the transmission of family-related knowledge in the previous century, often associated with the end of the Tang dynasty in 907.<sup>105</sup> Indeed, almost nothing of the rich Tang era genealogical culture has survived, giving the extant source base of Chinese genealogy a distinctively modern outlook despite its much richer and deeper history.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, many European noble families quoted wars, fires, economic distress or other pragmatic reasons as excuses for neglecting to keep genealogical memories and memorabilia alive.<sup>107</sup> For all the importance of genealogy and genealogical artefacts in various contexts, genealogical knowledge, nevertheless, proved to be very fragile and destructible. Seen from the material side, there is no need to wonder why genealogies had to be reimagined time and again.

## 5 Concluding remarks

The focus on genealogical *manuscripts* helps to reorient scholarship on genealogies away from its traditional focus on the content and function of this literature. While the study of individual genealogies and lines of descent as forms of social capital is indispensable, this often gives genealogy a fairly static outlook. Individual genealogical works appear as definitive and self-confident representations of a family's or individual's social or political aspirations. A genealogy seems to be a clear and thought-through statement, implying a decipherable message, making a precise and

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**103** Carré 2010, 73, 79 and 81 with ambivalent assessments. The ready availability of documents is the go-to-assumption in Spafford 2016.

**104** Quote in Spafford 2016, 297 n. 52.

**105** Johnson 1977a. Whether or not this point is completely valid is highly contested, see, e.g., the recent (pro-Johnson) book by Tackett 2014. See also important remarks in Clark 2007, 261–262.

**106** For a chronological charting of extant Chinese genealogies, see Berkelbach van der Sprenkel 1977 for a (slightly dated) survey of the genre. Several more recent, and much higher, counts of currently still extant genealogies are reviewed in Shiue 2016, 464–465. For a few fragments of Tang era genealogies found in Dunhuang, see Johnson 1977a.

**107** Friedrich 2017.

definitive point. When seen from a manuscript studies perspective and from the vantage point of the history of knowledge, however, individual genealogies need to be placed into a continuum of previous and consecutive written artefacts. Highlighting that every genealogy is always but one step in a never-ending process of genealogical knowledge production provides a counterpoint to the widespread understanding of genealogies as assertive documents. The approach favoured here points to the fragile status, the complex character and the unending need for improvement and rewriting of genealogies. Most of the classic genealogical manuscripts were embedded in a series of preparatory notes and drafts, and, in turn, often served as starting points or working manuscripts for later and renewed genealogical projects. Even when the preparatory artefacts are no longer available (as in most cases), ample evidence, nevertheless, tells stories of preliminary writing and later reuse of genealogies. Most importantly, a number of the surviving manuscripts still bear features of preparatory or consecutive annotation, excerpting or emendation.

Finally, genealogical manuscripts highlight the socially embedded nature of handwriting. What genealogical manuscripts looked like, what manuscripts were preserved, which kinds of manuscripts were made public and by whom – all of these related strongly, though in complex ways, to the ever-changing nature of family and kinship structures, which, in turn, reflected broader social, cultural and political realities. Even the very existence of genealogical manuscripts per se, as we have seen, was no historical necessity. Nonetheless, as this volume demonstrates so clearly, genealogy and genealogical handwriting have been widely present among many different cultures from around the globe.

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**West and Central Asia**





Kazuo Morimoto

# A Compendium of *Sayyid/Sharīf* Genealogy in Diagrammatic Format from the Late Tenth Century

**Abstract:** This study discusses the genealogical diagram presented in an untitled genealogical work, Bağdathī Vehbī Efendi, 1305, a manuscript preserved by the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul. After describing the diagram found in this fifteenth-century manuscript, I demonstrate that the structure and format of the diagram retain those of the original diagram composed in the late tenth century. This and other findings show that the diagrammatic representation of genealogy by use of the *bn*-line (i.e. the word *bn* [بن—————]) turned into the line – often branched and prolonged – to connect a father with his children) was practiced in Islamicate genealogical writing well before the late tenth century.

## 1 Introduction

Bağdathī Vehbī Efendi, 1305 (hereafter BVE 1305), kept by the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul, is a manuscript from the late fifteenth century of a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy, that is, a book aimed at presenting the genealogy of the whole range of people who are regarded as the kinfolk of the Prophet Muḥammad. The anonymous compendium originally composed in the late tenth century as preserved in the codex is written in diagrammatic format. The main part of the work consists of one single genealogical diagram that runs for as many as 322 pages. This study offers the first detailed study of this genealogical manuscript and the compendium preserved therein. I pay close attention to the format and structure of the genealogical diagram in the manuscript which, as I will show below, retain those of the original diagram quite faithfully.

There are two reasons why I take up BVE 1305 in this study. The first is that the manuscript is a fine example of a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in diagrammatic format. The genealogical diagrams typical for these compendia display an interesting formal feature that has to do with the genre's emergence in an environment where Arabic language in Arabic script was used.<sup>1</sup> The diagram can also be

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<sup>1</sup> Although I have also seen a work in Persian (see n. 40 below), a crucial formal feature of the diagrams (the use of *bn*-lines, which will be explained below) demonstrates that the format used in the diagram came into being in an Arabic-writing environment.

considered a fine example of the kind of genealogical diagram that gives priority to the effective presentation of genealogical connections per se (i.e. genealogy) without much regard to the efficient representation of chronological flow (i.e. history) therein. The overall structure of the diagram, in addition, shows that the diagram is also designed in such a way that it visualises the lineage-based hierarchy that it reinforces by the very fact of being composed.

The second reason why BVE 1305 deserves close examination is that the genealogical compendium from the late tenth century preserved therein can be considered the earliest known extant specimen not only of a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in diagrammatic format but of an Islamicate genealogical writing in diagrammatic format writ large. So far, the earliest known extant work containing diagrammatic representation of genealogy in Islamicate literary traditions is a historical work in Persian composed in Northern India in the early thirteenth century, namely, the *Shajara-yi ansāb* (*The Tree of Genealogies*) by Fakhr-i Mudabbir (d. c. 1228).<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, BVE 1305 also reveals that the original author of the compendium preserved therein knew, as early as in the late tenth century, previous genealogies in diagrammatic format. The discussion of BVE 1305 will contribute to a better understanding of the beginning and early development of diagrammatic representations of genealogy not only among the experts on *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy but in Islamicate literary traditions of genealogy writing more broadly. Although BVE 1305 has been recognised by some Twelver Shi'i ulama with expertise in *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy and the written heritage related to it, its importance as explained here has never been noted.<sup>3</sup>

This study proceeds as follows. After a few preliminary remarks about *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy, I first give a brief description of BVE 1305 and present what we

2 Rosenthal 1968, 98; Binbaş 2011, 470. The *Shajara-yi ansāb* is extant today in a codex unicus from the sixteenth century, Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, 364. Only the introductory part of the work (in prose and consisting of two prefaces) has been published (with misidentification of the author and the work itself) as Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh, *Tārīkh-i Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, ed. Denison Ross 1927. I thank İlker Evrim Binbaş for kindly letting me consult the reproduction of Chester Beatty Library, 364 in his possession.

3 Ulama (religious scholars) affiliated to Twelver Shi'ism (a branch of Shi'ism currently with the largest population whose most important centres of scholarship are located in Iran and Iraq) have occupied an important place in the production and transmission of knowledge about *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy. The Āyat Allāh Mar'ashī Najafī Library in Qom, which holds a rich collection of genealogical materials, holds a reproduction of BVE 1305 (Hā'irī 1990–1991, 95–96). Mahdī al-Rajā'ī not only mentioned our compendium as one composed by 'an early author' but also transcribed part of the work's preface and the manuscript's colophon in Abū Naṣr al-Bukhārī, *Sirr al-silsila al-'Alawiyya*, ed. al-Rajā'ī 2011, 4, n. 2 (continuing to p. 6). His appraisal of the compendium, however, is limited to that it is 'in greatest perfection'. Murtaḍā Shūshtarī also mentioned the manuscript, referring to al-Rajā'ī's partial transcription (Shūshtarī 2014–2015, 328).

learn about the anonymous genealogical compendium preserved therein (such as the date and the objectives of composition) from the work's preface. Then, I will turn to the genealogical diagram in the manuscript and discuss its format and structure. The assessment of the extent to which the format and structure of the diagram in the fifteenth-century manuscript retain those in the original composition will follow. Finally, the concluding part of the study will raise broader points about the rise of diagrammatic representation of genealogy among Muslim writers.

## 2 *Sayyid/Sharīf* genealogy: Preliminary remarks

The author of our compendium was clearly an expert on *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy (hereafter *sayyid/sharīf* genealogist). *Sayyid/Sharīf* genealogy came to constitute a distinct area of expert knowledge among Muslim genealogists towards the middle of the ninth century. Such knowledge was increasingly needed with the emergence of *sayyids/sharīfs* as a ubiquitous but privileged social category in Muslim societies around the same time. The status as a *sayyid/sharīf* not only brought respect and precedence in different scenes of social life; it often also meant qualifying for different privileges such as rights to pensions and tax exemptions, too. *Naqībs* (state-appointed heads of local communities of *sayyids/sharīfs*) came to examine genealogies of individual *sayyids/sharīfs*, and that required expert knowledge to rely upon. *Sayyid/Sharīf* genealogists contributed their knowledge to that operation by becoming *naqībs* themselves or by serving them as their aides. *Sayyid/Sharīf* genealogists certified the genealogies of *sayyids/sharīfs* if they found father-son links therein trustworthy. Those *sayyids/sharīfs* whose genealogies contained father-son links that could not be admitted to be (even plausibly) true were declared as 'impostors' (*daʿī*, pl. *adʿiyā*) by the genealogists.

Moreover, *sayyid/sharīf* genealogists were also keepers and presenters of the 'family history' of the kinfolk of the Prophet Muḥammad as represented in terms of genealogy and biographical information that accompanied it. The very fact that their expert knowledge focused on *sayyids/sharīfs*, in addition, contributed to the differentiation of *sayyids/sharīfs* from those who were not.<sup>4</sup> All these features of the knowledge and practice of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogists are reflected in the form and content of our compendium as we will see in the following pages.

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<sup>4</sup> For more details about *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy as a field of expertise, see Morimoto 1999; 2014; Bernheimer 2013, 13–31.

Who the kinfolk of the Prophet are and what standing they should have in the Muslim Community (*Umma*) has been the subject of debates and controversies throughout Islamic history. For the purposes of this study, however, it should suffice to note that the term '*sayyids/sharīfs*' here denotes the people who putatively belong to the kinfolk of the Prophet and that *sayyid/sharīf* genealogists most frequently defined the remit of their expert knowledge as the genealogy of the Ṭālibids, the progeny of the Prophet's paternal uncle Abū Ṭālib (d. c. 619).<sup>5</sup> The Ṭālibids included the descendants of Abū Ṭālib's son 'Alī ('Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib; d. 661) from his marriage with Muḥammad's daughter Fāṭima (d. 11 AH / 632–633 CE), who were, irregularly in view of the patrilineal principle of the Arab notion of genealogy, considered equivalent to the patrilineal linear descendants of the Prophet. This made the Ṭālibids exceptional among the parallel kinship groups constituting the Hāshimids, the descendants of Muḥammad's grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Except for this special treatment of Fāṭima as, so to speak, equivalent to a son, the status as *sayyids/sharīfs* could be passed down only patrilineally, from a father to his children, at the time of the original compilation of the compendium under study.<sup>6</sup>

We will, however, see that the anonymous author of the compendium preserved in BVE 1305 treats the 'Abbāsids, another of the parallel kinship groups constituting the Hāshimids, also as part of the kinfolk of the Prophet in his work. The 'Abbāsids, the kinship group among whom the caliphate resided from 749 to 1258, claimed the status as the Prophet's kinfolk based on their Hāshimid lineage, and the author's attitude mirrors this historical fact.<sup>7</sup> It must, however, be noted that the author allocates only eight pages of his diagram to the 'Abbāsids, in contrast to the 272 pages he devotes to the Ṭālibids. It is obvious that he did not consider the 'Abbāsids on a par with the Ṭālibids as *sayyids/sharīfs*.

BVE 1305 also includes a small section that presents the concise genealogy of the rest of the humanity going back to Adam. Why this section is found in the manuscript will be discussed below.

<sup>5</sup> '*Sayyid/Sharīf*' combines two representative honorific titles used for a member of the Prophet Muḥammad's kinfolk. For this appellation, see Morimoto 2004b, 88.

<sup>6</sup> This has not always been the case. See, e.g. Mudarrisi Ṭabāṭabā'i 2009, 75–149; Kılıç 2012, 129–131.

<sup>7</sup> For the inclusion of the 'Abbāsids among the kinfolk of the Prophet, see, e.g. van Arendonk 1996, 331b–332a.

### 3 Bağdatlı Vehbi Efendi, 1305 and the genealogical compendium it preserves

BVE 1305 is a codex of 167 folios and the compendium of *sayyid/sharif* genealogy occupies all but three pages at the end. The manuscript can thus be considered a single-work manuscript, although two of the three remaining pages carry a separate genealogical diagram presenting the genealogy of a family whose member had a role in the transmission of the compendium (more shortly).<sup>8</sup> The compendium of *sayyid/sharif* genealogy examined in this study has also been available in a facsimile edition of another manuscript.<sup>9</sup> However, the manuscript in question, that is, the early-twentieth-century manuscript held by the Muḥammad–al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' Library in Najaf, does not preserve the original form of the diagram to an extent comparable to BVE 1305.<sup>10</sup> The existence of three other manuscripts preserving the same compendium is also known to me. The references I have seen, however, do not even reveal their (current) locations. The three manuscripts also appear to present substantial augmentations and modifications made to the original work.<sup>11</sup>

BVE 1305, according to the colophon, was copied in 903 AH / 1498 CE by 'Abd al-Mun'im ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, nicknamed Gharībān.<sup>12</sup> Gharībān also writes in the colophon that he copied the genealogical compendium on the basis of an earlier copy produced in 805 AH / 1402–1403 CE which, in its turn, was allegedly based on the original of the work.<sup>13</sup> The place of the BVE 1305's production is not known, but both Gharībān and the figure who produced the exemplar in the early fifteenth century can safely be considered to have been Twelver Shi'i in their confessional identity. In addition, the above-mentioned family genealogy appended at the end of the codex shows that the family of the producer of the ear-

<sup>8</sup> The verso of the last folio is blank.

<sup>9</sup> Kharrāzī et al. 2012–2013.

<sup>10</sup> Compare, for example, the layouts of the leftmost terminal of the genealogy of the 'Abbāsids in the diagrams in the two manuscripts (BVE 1305, fol. 137r; Kharrāzī et al. 2012–2013, 205). The layout in the Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' Library manuscript shows no resemblance to that in BVE 1305 which retains the original layout from the late tenth century, as I will demonstrate below. The shelf number of the Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' Library manuscript is not clearly indicated in the facsimile edition. Either 1999 or 76 (or possibly 23118?) might represent the shelf number (Kharrāzī et al. 2012–2013, 2).

<sup>11</sup> See al-Ṭahrānī 1983–1986, vol. 2, 384–386; Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, *al-Mukhtaṣar*, ed. al-Mūsawī 2015, 609 and 611.

<sup>12</sup> BVE 1305, fol. 162r.

<sup>13</sup> BVE 1305, fol. 162r.

ly-fifteenth-century exemplar had lived for generations in Karbala', an Iraqi shrine city dominated by the Twelver Shi'is, at least until the generation of his father.<sup>14</sup>

BVE 1305 is a beautifully executed manuscript. The manuscript's opening is marked by two fully decorated pages (fols iv–iir) on which a text describing the manuscript's contents is presented in two parts in two large medallions (one medallion on each page).<sup>15</sup> Full-page opening pages of sections of the genealogical compendium, albeit with less elaborate decoration, are also found on fols 41v and 107v. Different colours (black, red, blue, and gold) and pens of different sizes (two, roughly speaking) are used in the copying of the genealogical diagram and the notes that accompany it.<sup>16</sup>

The genealogical compendium preserved in BVE 1305 includes a prose preface (fols iiv–1r) and one single diagram which runs from fol. 1v to fol. 162r (i.e. the 166<sup>th</sup> folio). In the preface, the author refers to the subject of his work by the expressions 'the genealogy of the kinfolk of the Apostle' (*ansāb āl al-Rasūl*) and 'the genealogy of the People of the House, that is, the house of the Apostle of God' (*ansāb Ahl al-Bayt, bayt Rasūl Allāh*).<sup>17</sup> This justifies calling the work a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy. It was composed, according to the author, after 'some of the fellows from among the *sayyids/sharīfs* [or noble *sayyids*] residing in Transoxiana and the lands on this side of the Oxus River' (*ba'd al-aṣḥāb min al-sāda al-ashrāf al-muqīmīn bi-Mā warā'a al-Nahr wa-dūna al-nahr*) told him that they needed 'a book on the genealogy of the Ṭālibids and the 'Abbāsids' that would help them when strangers claiming affiliation to those kinship groups arrived in their domiciles, namely, by enabling them to 'distinguish impostors from the true ones' (*li-yu'rafa al-ad'iya' min al-aṣiḥḥa*).<sup>18</sup>

14 Gharībān's Twelver Shi'i identity is understood from the fact that he also copied a manuscript of al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī's (1250–1325) *Nahj al-ḥaqq wa-kashf al-ṣidq*, a work of polemical nature in which al-Ḥillī attacked Sunni positions from various perspectives (Dānish-pazhūh 1960–1961, 505 [the date of the copying, 904 AH, is wrongly read in the catalogue as 704]). For the producer of the early-fifteenth-century exemplar, Tāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Zaynabī, and his family, see al-Ṭahrānī s.a., 75 and the genealogy of his family found in BVE 1305, fols 162v–163r.

15 Multiple numberings are seen on the first folios of the manuscript. I follow the numbering made in red ink (then in black from folio 117 onwards), since that is the only one which continues throughout the manuscript. The numbering, however, does not begin on the first folio. I therefore refer to the first few folios with Roman numerals. The manuscript, according to this system, consists of iv + 163 folios.

16 My observation through the manuscript, however, detected no special purposes other than embellishment in the differentiations.

17 BVE 1305, fols iiii and 1v. The People of the House is a Qur'anic term that is generally taken to refer to the kinfolk of the Prophet.

18 BVE 1305, fol. 1r. See also BVE 1305, fols iiii and ivv for other mentions of the distinguishment of the true *sayyids/sharīfs* from false ones as the main objective of the knowledge of their genealogy. As said above, the space the author actually allocates to the 'Abbāsids is incomparably small vis-à-vis the space he devotes to the Ṭālibids.

The preface contains evidence for the work's provenance from the late tenth century. Firstly, the author clearly states that the information he put together in the work pertains to the period down to 'the present day (*yawminā hādha*), that is, the year 380/990–991'.<sup>19</sup> This date is corroborated by two other pieces of information found in the preface. The first is the identity of the two genealogists to whom, as reported by the author, the draft of the work was presented for a check. The author states that he presented the draft to Shaykh al-Sharaf al-Ubaydalī (338 AH / 949–950 CE –437 AH / 1045–1046 CE), 'residing in Baghdad', and Ibn al-Muntāb al-Tha'labī – these were, indeed, two highly reputed *sayyid/sharif* genealogists, rightly designated by the author as being 'today among those most knowledgeable about the genealogy of the Hāshimids [i.e. the 'Abbāsids] and the Ṭālibids'.<sup>20</sup>

The second corroboration comes from the enumeration of hadiths (that is, reports on the sayings and doings of the Prophet Muḥammad) and other traditions the author presents.<sup>21</sup> The lifespan of all the nine figures I have been able to identify out of twenty-three transmitters from whom the author received the traditions belong to an era slightly before the compendium's (alleged) date of composition in 380 AH / 990–991 CE; they mostly died towards the middle or during the third quarter of the fourth AH / tenth century CE.<sup>22</sup> The compendium's origin in the year 380 AH / 990–991 CE is thus quite secure.

19 BVE 1305, fol. 1r.

20 BVE 1305, fol. 1r. The term 'the Hāshimids', when juxtaposed with 'the Ṭālibids' like in this place, can generally been taken to mean the 'Abbāsids. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*, ed. de Goeje et al. 1964–1965, series 3, 1522; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, ed. al-Bārūdī 1988, vol. 4, 29. For the profiles of the two genealogists, see Kammūna 1972, 217; al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī 1989–1990, 39–40, 44–45; Shūshtari 2014–2015, 197–201. Although we do not know precise dates of Ibn Muntāb's life, he reasonably was active in the late tenth century.

21 BVE 1305, fols iiir–1r.

22 The nine identified transmitters are: (1) Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ja'far ibn Ḥayyān al-Iṣfahānī (i.e. father to [8]; d. 310 AH / 922–923 CE or 319 AH / 931–932 CE) (Abū al-Shaykh al-Aṣbahānī, *Ṭabaqāt al-muḥaddithīn bi-Aṣbahān*, ed. al-Bundārī and Ḥasan 1989, vol. 4, 349–350); (2) Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb ibn Yūsuf al-Akhram (d. 344 AH / 955–956 CE) (al-Ziriklī 1998, vol. 7, 145); (3) Abū'l-'Abbās Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb al-Aṣamm (d. 346 AH / 957 CE) (al-Ziriklī 1998, vol. 7, 145); (4) Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Khiraqī (d. 351 AH / 962 CE) (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, s.a., vol. 9, 389–390); (5) Abū 'Alī Ḥamid ibn Muḥammad al-Rafā al-Harawī (d. 356 AH / 967 CE) (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, s.a., vol. 8, 172–174); (6) Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-'Alawī (i.e. Ibn Akhī Ṭāhir or al-Dandānī; d. 358 AH / 969 CE) (Kammūna 1972, 198–200); (7) Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Zabbāra/Zubāra al-'Alawī (paternal uncle of [9]; d. 360 AH / 970–971 CE) (Ibn Funduq, *Lubāb al-ansāb*, ed. al-Rajā'ī 1989–1990, 493–495); (8) 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥayyān (i.e. Abū'l-Shaykh al-Iṣfahānī; son of [1]; d. 369 AH / 979 CE) (al-Ziriklī 1998, vol. 4, 120); (9) Abū Muḥammad Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad al-'Alawī (nephew of [7]; d. 376 AH / 986–987 CE) (Ibn Funduq, *Lubāb al-ansāb*, ed. al-Rajā'ī 1989–1990, 496–502; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, ed. al-Bārūdī

The author cites hadiths and other traditions in the preface to make two points. He first cites the hadiths and traditions that demonstrate the special status of the kinfolk of the Prophet. Then he highlights, in his own words and by citing relevant hadiths, the necessity to distinguish those who are truly entitled to that special status from those who are not. Corresponding to this, the author clearly has two main goals in his composition. One is to record the historical and biographical facts pertaining to the members of the kinfolk of the Prophet as the people specially endowed with the special status demonstrated by the traditions he cited. The other is to produce a reference for the use of those people who are in the position to examine the truth or falsehood of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogies.

The author enumerates twice in the preface the kind of historical and biographical information he intends to put down in the work, each time almost in the same manner. The topics that he deems worth recording are: uprisings launched by the members of the Prophet's kinfolk, those who were killed among them (as a result of their uprisings or otherwise), the individuals whose status as imam was claimed by different parties (*ḥash al-ikhtilāf*), and the individuals whose occultation and return at the end times was claimed by different parties.<sup>23</sup> The author's outlook, therefore, is not bound to that of a particular confessional group, above all to any of the formal Shi'i groups. He also states that he notes important religious scholars and learned people (*al-'ulamā' wa'l-afāḍil*) from the group of *sayyids/sharīfs* as well as the mothers of well-known figures.<sup>24</sup>

The preface thus shows that the compendium has two aspects. On one hand, it is a family history in genealogical framework whose goal is not only the presentation of historical information per se but also the demonstration, or the celebration, of the special status of *sayyids/sharīfs* as a distinct social category. The book, on the other hand, is also intended as a reference work to be used by examiners of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogies.

Unfortunately, the author does not reveal his own identity in the compendium. We know that he had contacts with Shaykh al-Sharaf al-'Ubaydalī, Ibn al-Muntāb, and the twenty-three hadith transmitters. It also becomes clear that he had travelled quite extensively before the composition of the compendium. His presence in Baghdad can be inferred not only from the fact that he presented the compendium's draft to Shaykh al-Sharaf who was residing in the city but also because he

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1988, vol. 3, 129). Āqā Buzurg al-Tahrānī, who knew another manuscript of our compendium (see n. 11 above), had previously identified nos. (3), (5), and (7) (al-Tahrānī, however, conflated [7] with the figure's brother in the course of his discussion).

<sup>23</sup> BVE 1305, fol. 1r.

<sup>24</sup> BVE 1305, fol. 1r.



heard a hadith from one of the twenty-three transmitters there.<sup>25</sup> The records of hadith transmission also reveal his presence in Herat and Hamadan.<sup>26</sup> His connection with, if not presence in, Transoxiana is suggested by a reference to his communications with *sayyids/sharifs* in ‘Transoxiana and the lands on this side of the Oxus River’. The preface, at the same time, contains several passages that clearly show the author’s adherence to Mu’tazilī theology, although whether he was Twelver Shi’i, Zaydī Shi’i, or Sunni in his confessional identity is not clear to me.<sup>27</sup>

BVE 1305 does not reveal the compendium’s title, either. The copyist Gharībān uses the phrase ‘*baḥr al-ansāb*’ (the ocean of genealogy) to refer to the alleged original from which his exemplar was copied in 805 AH / 1402–1403 CE. This, however, should not be taken as the work’s title since the phrase is used quite often to refer generically to genealogical compendia, especially those in diagrammatic format.<sup>28</sup> We, therefore, know neither the author nor the original title of this compendium at the moment.

## 4 The format and structure of the diagram in Bağdatlı Vehbi Efendi, 1305

The vocabulary the anonymous author uses to refer to his genealogical compendium in the preface indicates that he composed it in diagrammatic format of one kind or another. In addition to calling the work ‘this book’ (*hādhā al-kitāb*), the author refers to it by the expressions ‘the lofty *mushajjar*’ (*al-mushajjar al-munīf*; ‘*mushajjar*’ means ‘that which is rendered into arboreal format’) and ‘the noble *shajara*’ (*al-shajara al-sharīf*; ‘*shajara*’ signifies ‘tree’).<sup>29</sup> He also states that his work presents kinds of information ‘the likes of which are not presented in a *shajara* (*fī l-shajara*) so that the

25 BVE 1305, fol. ivv.

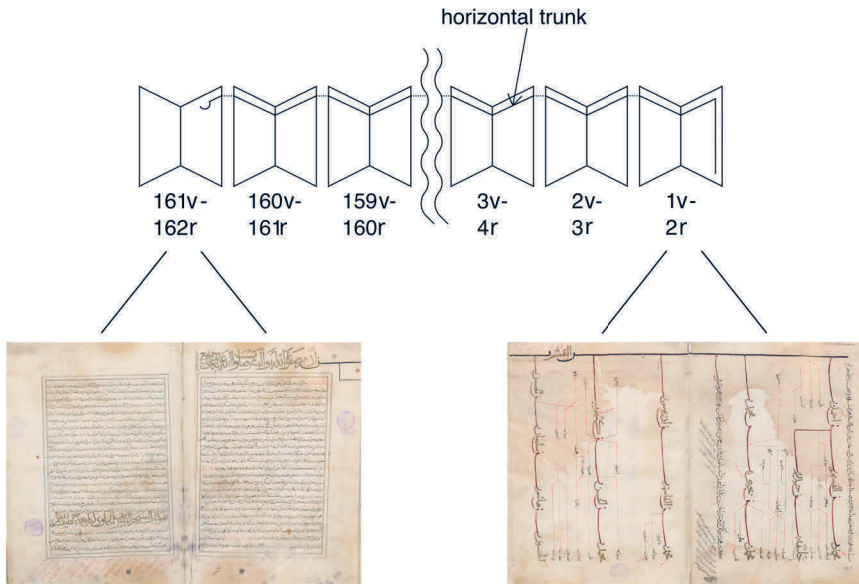
26 BVE 1305, fols 3v and 4r.

27 The praise of God at the beginning of the preface contains, among others, the phrase ‘the one who judges rightfully and never does injustice to people; it is rather the people who do injustice [to themselves]’ (*alladhī yaqḍī bi’l-ḥaqq wa-lā yazlim al-nās shay’an walākinna al-nās anfusahum yazlimūna*) (BVE 1305, fol. iiv). The author also names ‘the divine unity, divine justice, the warning and the promise’ (*al-tawḥīd wa’l-adl wa’l-wa’d wa’l-wa’id*) as representative tenets of Islam (BVE 1305, fol. iiiv). The phrase ‘some of the fellows’ (*ba’ḍ al-aṣḥāb*) the author uses in his reference to the *sayyids/sharifs* in Transoxiana and ‘the lands on this side of the Oxus River’ may refer to fellow members of his confessional community. It, however, does not reveal the identity of the community.

28 Abū Ismā’il al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Muntaqilat al-Ṭālibiyya*, ed. al-Khirsān 1968, 26 (in the editor’s introduction).

29 BVE 1305, fols iiir and 1r.

book will be more useful'.<sup>30</sup> We can, thus, safely understand that the tenth-century original work was diagrammatic in nature. Moreover, the preface's explicit explanation reveals that the author of the original work thought that his work innovated on previous diagrammatic genealogies. It is the inclusion of the historical and biographical information enumerated in the previous section that represented the innovation in the author's mind.<sup>31</sup>

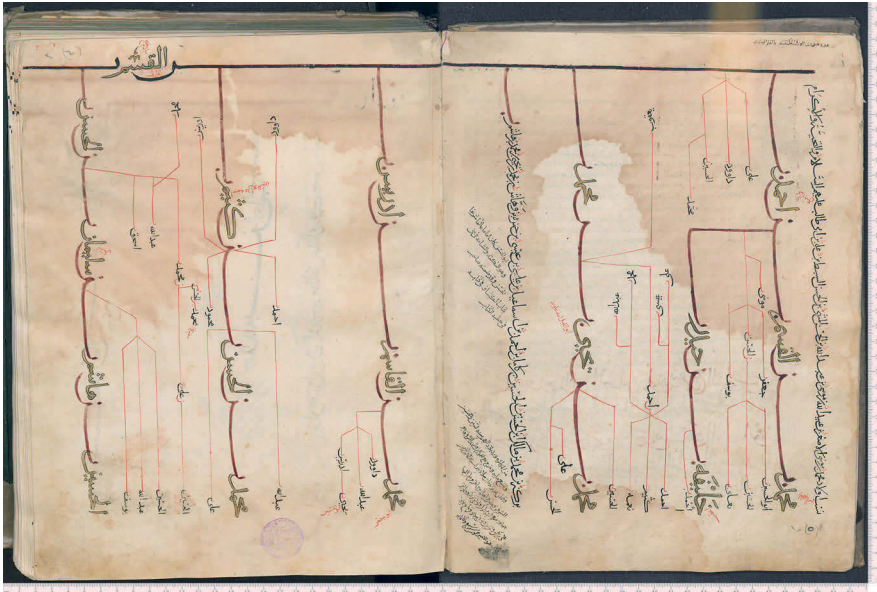


**Fig. 1a:** The beginning and the end of the genealogical diagram in BVE 1305 with a schematic sketch of the folios in between; BVE 1305, fols 1v–2r and 161v–162r; © Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı.

What does the diagram in BVE 1305, that is, as represented in a copy from the late fifteenth century, look like? As said above, one single diagram occupies the 322 pages (fols 1v–162r) that follow the preface on fols iiv–1r. At the rightmost terminal of the diagram, that is, on fol. 1v, is found the name of a Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Aḥmad, a descendant of al-Ḥasan, the eldest son of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (Fig. 1a). The line of ascent (rather than the line of descent) of this Muḥammad ibn

<sup>30</sup> BVE 1305, fol. 1r.

<sup>31</sup> BVE 1305, fol. 1r.



**Fig. 1b:** Detail of Fig. 1a (right).



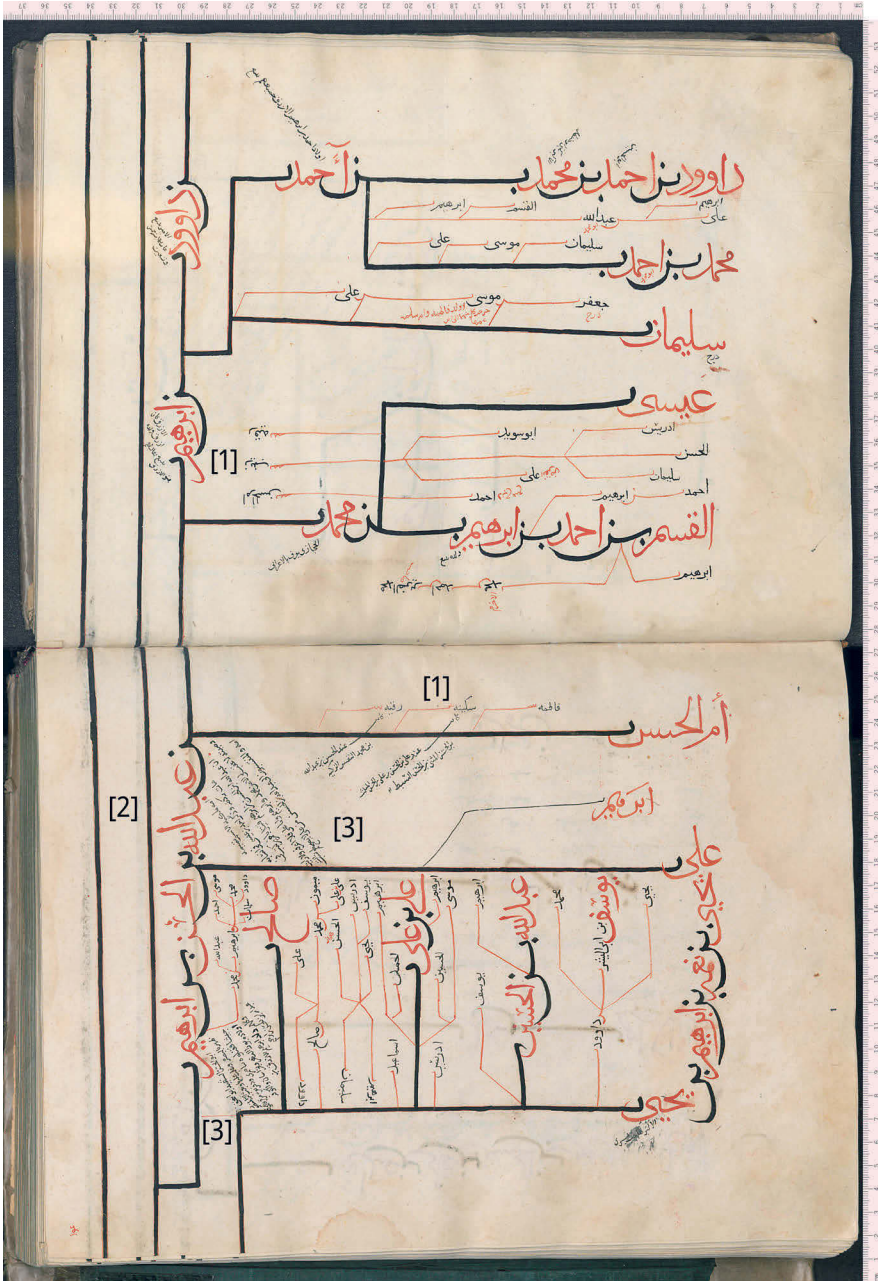
**Fig. 1c:** Detail of Fig. 1a (left).

al-Qāsim, after it has passed through the name of his grandfather Aḥmad, begins to be presented horizontally and in leftward direction through the uppermost section of the folios. The line of ascent terminates, after presenting the names of Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim's paternal forefathers in ascending order, with the name of Adam, the progenitor of humankind, at the leftmost terminal of the diagram (fol. 161v; then mythical biographical information about Adam follows). The lines of ascent of all the other individuals appearing in the diagram but Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim's ascendants are presented by means of the many branches shooting out of Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim's line of ascent – be it a primary branch or a secondary branch shooting out of it or a branch of a lower order shooting out of them. Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim's line of ascent, thus, functions as the backbone, or the horizontal trunk to use a word with arboreal association, of the whole diagram.

A crucial feature of the diagram that dictates its structure is the fact that the Arabic word '*ibn*' (ابن; meaning 'son of') is used as the line connecting a father to his son in it. According to the Arabic grammar, the word takes the form '*bn*' (بن) when placed between the given names of the father and the son. It is this *bn*, often in its prolonged form (ن————) and undotted, that is used in the diagram.<sup>32</sup> The use of this word-cum-line, which I will hereafter call *bn*-line, gives the diagram an interesting feature: the diagram can literally be read as text while words can be viewed as diagram. For example, 'Aḥmad ن———— al-Qāsim ن———— Muḥammad' in the diagram reads also as the text 'Muḥammad, son of al-Qāsim, son of Aḥmad' (Muḥammad *bn* al-Qāsim *bn* Aḥmad) from right to left in Arabic, supposing that the three names are written in Arabic script. This dual nature of word-cum-line-schema entails a fundamental feature of the diagram's structure that was explained above. Because *bn*-lines are expected to be read as words in a language that is written horizontally from right to left, the diagram is also laid out horizontally, with the name of the progenitor appearing at its leftmost terminal. It follows that the graphic depiction of the genealogy downward in the diagram proceeds basically from left to right, that is, in the direction opposite to how the diagram should be read, with branches shooting out from the trunk.

A branched *bn*-line, formed by connecting multiple *bā*'s (————) to one single *nūn* (ن), is used when a father had more than one son (numerous cases in point in Fig. 2). The word-cum-line '*bint*' (———— بنت), meaning 'daughter of', replaces the *bn*-line when only one or more daughter is mentioned for a father. The *bint*-line, however, is not treated on equal terms with the *bn*-line. It is connected to the *nūn* part of a *bn*-line (ن) to form a branched line combining *bn*(s) and *bint*(s) when the

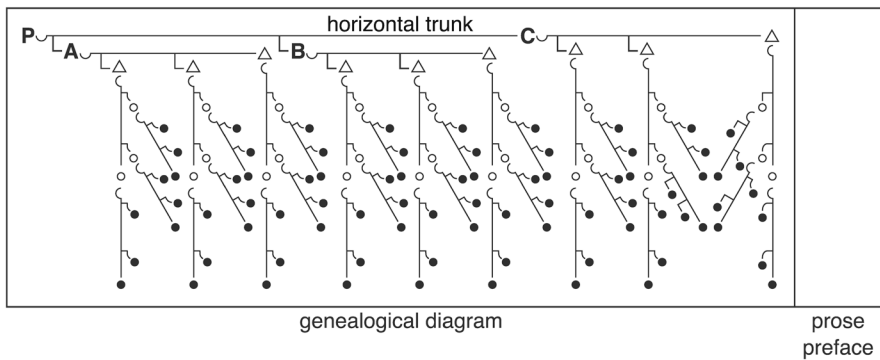
<sup>32</sup> Prolonging some letters horizontally for aesthetic purposes as well as dropping diacritical dots when deemed unnecessary are common customs in Arabic-script languages.



**Fig. 2:** BVE 1305, fols 13v–14r; © Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı.

father has one or more son along with one or more daughter (Fig. 2, [1]). The *bint*-line, in other words, is treated merely as the *bā'* part (——) of the *bn*-line modified to indicate the gender of the child in this case. For this reason, I will use 'bn-line' to represent both *bn*- and *bint*- lines in the rest of the article.<sup>33</sup>

As said above, Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Aḥmad's line of ascent connecting his name ultimately to that of Adam functions as the horizontal trunk of the diagram that runs over one hundred sixty folios (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, [2]).<sup>34</sup> It is by extending *bn*-lines as much as necessary that the construction of the lengthy horizontal trunk (and major horizontal branches) is realised. The longest *bn*-line among those constituting the horizontal trunk runs through as many as 162 pages.<sup>35</sup>



**Fig. 3:** Schematic presentation of how the diagram in BVE, 1305 is constructed. P represents the progenitor of the imaginative five-generational kinship group (consisting of men only, for the sake of convenience) drawn in the diagram; A, B, and C stand for P's sons; the remaining figures are shown by the symbols corresponding to the respective generations to which they belong; every member of the first four generations in the diagram is supposed to have had three sons.

The use of prolonged *bn*-lines contributes to the construction of the extensive diagram running through hundreds of pages not only by enabling to build the horizontal trunk connecting both its terminals. The fact that it also enables the

<sup>33</sup> Thus, the treatment of the daughters is never equal to the treatment of the sons. Not only less daughters than sons are mentioned throughout the diagram, but, as a rule, no descendants of the daughters are included in it.

<sup>34</sup> The horizontal trunk is differentiated from the other lines by the banded pattern in black and white on fols 38v–109r and by the same pattern in red and white on fols 109v–146r.

<sup>35</sup> The *bn*-line in question connects al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī (fol. 41r) with his father 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (fol. 122v).



(quasi-)horizontal positioning of the genealogy of parallel kinship groups is also of utmost importance. Fig. 3 schematically presents how the diagram in BVE 1305 is constructed. The imaginative kinship group whose genealogy is presented in the diagram consists of five generations (all members are male, for the sake of convenience). In addition, not only the progenitor (P) but also every member of the first four generations is supposed to have had three sons. A, B, and C represent the progenitor's sons, but the remaining figures are all represented by the symbols corresponding to their respective generations.

As shown in Fig. 3, what the prolonged *bn*-line enables is to spatially defer the presentation of the genealogy of B's and C's progeny while the leftmost primary branch stemming out of the horizontal trunk, along with all its subsidiary branches, presents the genealogy of A's progeny. Of course, the 'line' that connects the progenitor with his three sons A, B, and C is a single, branched *bn*-line. The use of the same method throughout the diagram, that is, also in the treatment of parallel kinship groups of lower levels, enables the drawing of a genealogical diagram comprising a great number of figures in a rectangular space with limited height, if it is accepted that the diagram be disproportionately wide. And that is exactly what the writing space provided by a multi-folio codex looks like when its pairs of opposing pages are imaginarily put side by side like a horizontal scroll. Not only the horizontal trunk but all branches of higher orders are drawn horizontally at the top of the folios (finding five parallel horizontal lines on the top of the folios is not rare in the actual diagram) and the space left open below them are filled by the branches of lower orders that shoot out downwards of the lowest horizontal branch.

As understood from the positions of A, B, and C in Fig. 3, little inclination is attested to place the names of brothers, or progenitors of parallel patrilineal kinship groups, in the same horizontal position in this format. The format, in other words, clearly does not give priority to positioning different figures in accordance with the chronological order of their periods.<sup>36</sup> In fact, it is only when figures appearing in the diagram are lineally related that the chronological order between them can readily be understood. What is given priority to, instead, is the clarification of genealogical connections per se. Although the preface of the work reveals that the author intended his compendium to be both a 'family history' and a reference for examiners of *sayyid/sharif* genealogies, it was clearly the latter aspect that dictated how the diagram was constructed. Historical and biographical information, with possible inclusion of dates, is presented in the diagram only in the form of notes attached to the names of important figures (two of the relevant examples

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<sup>36</sup> Imagine what it takes you to figure out that the figures represented by the same symbol belong to one and the same generation, if they are instead represented by their actual names.

in Figure 2 are marked [3]) which, as said above, are not necessarily positioned in accordance with the chronological order of the figures' periods.

How is the diagram in BVE 1305 as a whole structured in terms of the order in which different peoples and kinship groups are positioned therein? The presentation of genealogy in the diagram, provided that we see and read it from right to left, begins with the lineal descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad, that is, 'Alī's progeny from his marriage with Fāṭima (fols 1v–107r).<sup>37</sup> This is followed by the genealogy of the rest of 'Alī's progeny (fols 107v–126v; including a lengthy biographical note on 'Alī [fols 122v–126v]) and then by the progeny of 'Alī's brothers (fols 127r–136v). The different sub-groups of the Ṭālibids, occupying about 85% of the diagram's space altogether, are thus positioned in the descending order of the perceived degrees of their kinship closeness to the Prophet Muḥammad. The same principle also applies to the order in which the other groups and peoples are dealt with in the remaining space of the diagram. The Ṭālibids are followed by the other parallel branches of the Hāshimids (fols 137r–146v, including a lengthy treatment of Muḥammad and his father [fols 141v–145v]) among which the 'Abbāsids, with the mentions of their caliphs, get the most space (fols 137r–140v). Then come the rest of the Quraysh (fols 147r–149v), the rest of the Northern Arabs (fols 149v–151r) and then the rest of the humankind, before the diagram terminates at its leftmost terminal with the name of Adam (on fol. 161v).<sup>38</sup> Thus, different kinship groups and peoples are positioned in the diagram in such a way that highlights the special position alleged for *sayyids/sharīfs*, or for different sub-groups of *sayyids/sharīfs* to be more precise. Put differently, the special status of *sayyids/sharīfs* the author emphasises in the preface of his work is visually displayed by the diagram as a whole.

The genealogy presented on the leftmost portion of the horizontal trunk in BVE 1305 is the biblical genealogy of the patriarchs from Adam to Noah (fols 162r–159v; we are following the diagram from left to right now). Then, after about ten generations (fols 159r–154r), the names of Abraham and his son Ishmael appear respectively on fols 154r–153v and 152v. Subsequently, after an interval of eight generations (fols 152r–151v), the genealogy of the Northern Arabs (descendants of 'Adnān) to which the Ṭālibids belong gets grafted to the biblical genealogy. As for the branches that shoot out on the way, it is noteworthy that special regard is given to the genealogy of the

<sup>37</sup> First comes the progeny of al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī (fols 1v–41r) and then the progeny of al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī (fols 41v–107r).

<sup>38</sup> The only exception to this description is how the genealogy of the pre-Islamic Persian kings is presented (explained shortly). The Arabs in the scheme of the genealogists comprised Northern and Southern Arabs with significantly different origins (disregarding those groups which were believed to have died out). The Quraysh were considered part of the Northern Arabs.



pre-Islamic Persian kings.<sup>39</sup> In sum, the fundamental conception of the genealogy of humankind that underpins the content of the leftmost portion is biblical in nature and the important ‘foreign’ elements added to it are limited to Arab and Persian.

All in all, the genealogical diagram in BVE 1305 displays a high level of sophistication. The diagram effectively realises the presentation of genealogical connections among different lines of *sayyids/sharīfs* as well as the display of the special status of those people among humankind in a horizontal scroll-like space provided by a codex through the effective use of *bn*-lines. It is true that the format in which the diagram is written is not fit for representing chronological flow. That, however, is never a sign of immaturity of the format. It rather indicates that the chronological display of historical data was simply not a priority in the formative process of the format.

The format and structure of the diagram in BVE 1305 resembles in outline those found in other – and later – compendia of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in diagrammatic format. *Tadhkirat al-ansāb* by Ibn Muhannā al-'Ubaydalī (latter thirteenth century), *al-Aṣīlī* by Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā (end of the thirteenth century), *al-Mushajjar al-kashshāf li-uṣūl al-sāda al-ashraf* by Ibn 'Amīd al-Dīn al-Najafī (late fifteenth century), and *Mushajjar-i Ibn-i Jamīl* by Ibn Jamīl (sixteenth century) are compendia that are all similarly constructed.<sup>40</sup> Diagrams in all these works, as represented by the manuscripts that have been available to me in original or in reproduction, are invariably

<sup>39</sup> The genealogy of the pre-Islamic Persian kings begins on fol. 157v with the name of Kayumars (Ḥayūmarth [for Jayūmarth?] in the text), presented as Japheth's son, and continues down to Yazdgird III on fol. 149r. The genealogy is presented by means of a lengthy horizontal line with only a limited number of branches shooting out of it that runs near the bottom of the folios. On the relevant folios, the diagram looks as if it had two horizontal trunks at the top and near the bottom. This layout is seen in no other place of the manuscript.

<sup>40</sup> The manuscripts and editions of the mentioned works that I have consulted to examine their diagrams are as follows: [*Tadhkirat al-ansāb*] Mashhad, Āstān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, 3626; ed. al-Rajā'ī 2000–2001 (a facsimile edition published under the title *al-Tadhkira fi l-ansāb al-muṭahhara*); [*al-Aṣīlī*] the reproduction of a manuscript kept at the Kitābkhāna-i Takhaṣṣuṣī-yi Tārīkh-i Islām wa Īrān, Qom, under the call number *ansāb wa khāndānā* 1-6-32 (downloadable from <https://historylib.com>, accessed on 20 February 2021); Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa'l-Wathā'iq al-Qawmiyya, al-Khizāna al-Taymūriyya *ta'rīkh* 930, 1–320; the reproduction of a manuscript kept at the Markaz-i Ihya' al-Mirāth-i Islāmī, Qom, under the call number 341/1; the reproduction of a manuscript kept at the Mu'assasat Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', Najaf, under the call number 498; Kitābkhāna-i Majlis, 4459; [*al-Mushajjar al-kashshāf*] New Haven, Yale University Library, Landberg MSS, 118; Medina, Majma' al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz, Maktabat al-Ṣāfi 136; ed. al-Kutubī al-Ḥasanī 1999 (a somewhat incomplete facsimile edition of the Medina manuscript), both of the last two items are entitled *Baḥr al-ansāb al-musammā bi'l-Mushajjar al-kashshāf li-uṣūl al-sāda al-ashraf*; [*Mushajjar-i Ibn-i Jamīl*] *Tashjīr-i Umdat al-tālib*, ed. Rajā'ī 2008. Except for the *Mushajjar-i Ibn-i Jamīl*, a work in Persian language, the works enumerated here are all written in Arabic.

built with the use of *bn*-lines and the horizontal trunk.<sup>41</sup> They also present different kinship groups and peoples in fundamentally the same order as in BVE 1305 with Adam's name appearing at their leftmost terminals.

## 5 A faithful representation of the late-tenth century original

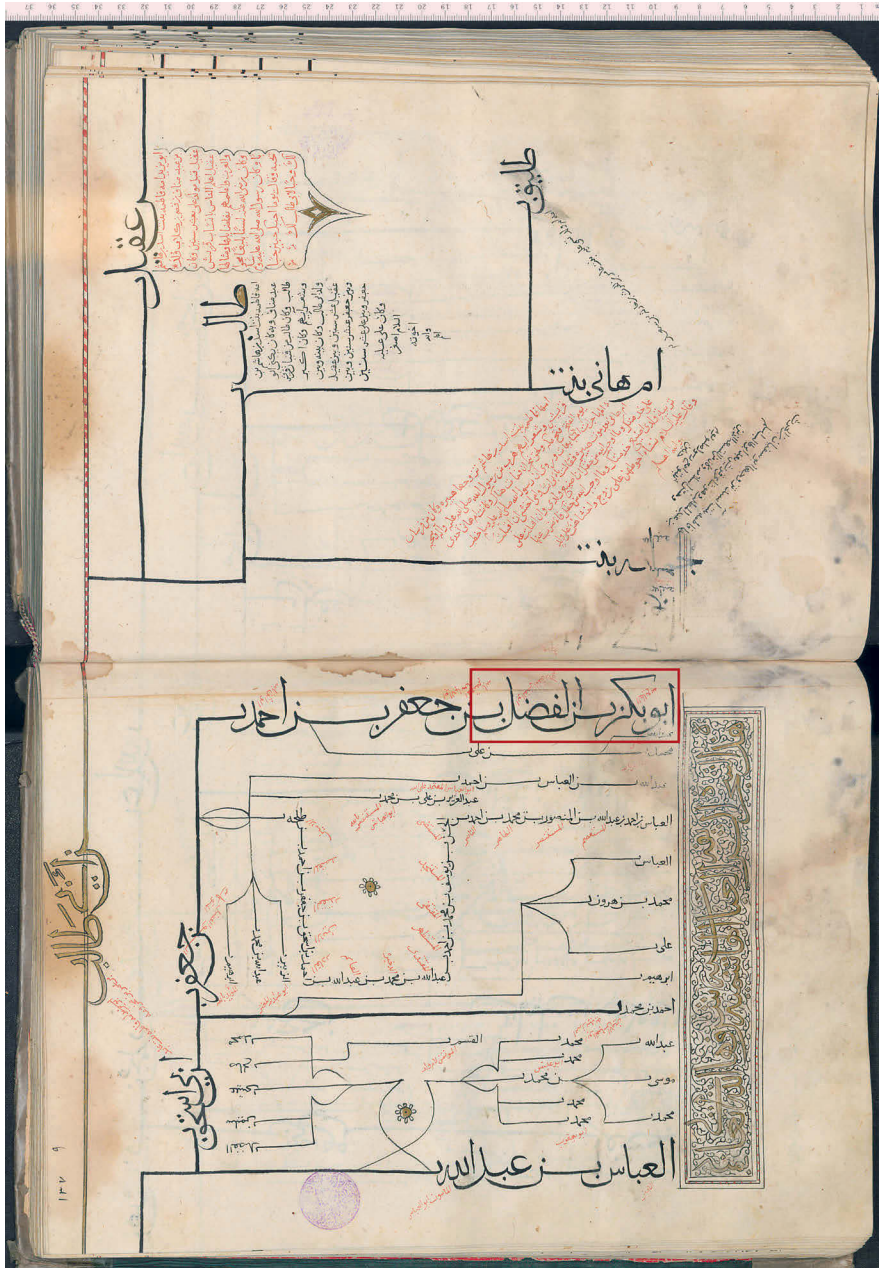
A question that must be addressed at this point is to what extent the format and structure of the diagram in BVE 1305 described now can be considered to derive from the original composition in the late tenth century. There is no doubt that the diagram of *al-Aṣīlī* was composed towards the end of the thirteenth century with the use of *bn*-lines, including very long ones, and the graphic depiction of genealogy therein proceeded downward from left to right. This is because the author Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā explains the format he names '*mushajjar*' (in contrast to '*mabsūṭ*', i.e. 'in prose') in the work's preface in this way, evidently on the premise that *al-Aṣīlī* is written in that very format.<sup>42</sup> The same observation can also be applied to the diagram of Ibn Muḥannā's *Tadhkirat al-ansāb*, since it is evident from the palpable resemblance of the layouts that Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā used the diagram of this earlier work as the basis for his diagram in *al-Aṣīlī*.<sup>43</sup>

Hence, it is clear that the typical format was much older than BVE 1305 – but could it have also been the format of the compendium's original, dating from the tenth century? Put differently, how far back does the format with the prolonged *bn*-line actually go? Of crucial importance for the consideration of this question is the layout of the diagram on fol. 137r, the rightmost terminal of the section dealing

<sup>41</sup> Note, however, that the horizontal trunk and major horizontal branches in the *Tadhkirat al-ansāb* and *al-Aṣīlī* run at the bottom, instead of at the top, of the folios. *Al-Mushajjar al-kashshāf* in its original form also had one single horizontal trunk, although the trunk as we find it in the manuscripts and the editions mentioned in the previous note has been fragmented into fifteen parts by a later copyist (for the copyist's explanation of the revision he made, see Yale University Library, Landberg MSS, 118, fol. 1v; Majma' al-Malik 'Abd al-'Aziz, Maktabat al-Ṣafī, 136, fol. 1v [not reproduced in al-Kutubī's facsimile edition]).

<sup>42</sup> Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, *al-Aṣīlī*, ed. al-Rajā'ī 1997–1998, 32 and 34–35. Al-Rajā'ī's edition is a prose adaptation of *al-Aṣīlī* based on three manuscripts. I use this edition only when citing *al-Aṣīlī*'s text, that is, when not discussing its diagram.

<sup>43</sup> I used Kitābkhāna-'i Takhaṣṣuṣī-yi Tārīkh's reproduction of a manuscript of *al-Aṣīlī* and Āstān-i Quds, 3626 of the *Tadhkirat al-ansāb* for the comparison between the two works. Both Ibn Muḥannā al-'Ubaydalī and Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā were Twelver Shi'i genealogists from Iraq and Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā cites Ibn Muḥannā in *al-Aṣīlī* (Kammūna 1972, 368–369, 388–390; al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī 1989–1990, 78, 79; Shūshtarī 2014–2015, 367–385).



**Fig. 4:** The rightmost terminal of the ‘Abbāsīd genealogy in BVE 1305 (fols 136v–137r); in the rectangle is the name of Abū Bakr ibn al-Ḥaḍl or the Caliph al-Ṭāʾi; © Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı.

with the ‘Abbāsids. As seen in Fig. 4, the diagram presents the name of Abū Bakr ibn al-Faḍl at the end of the branch located at the rightmost terminal of the ‘Abbāsīd genealogy. It is clear that the descent line to which Abū Bakr belonged is given a special importance in the layout of the page.<sup>44</sup> Now, what is significant is the fact that this Abū Bakr represents the Caliph al-Ṭā’i li-Allāh (r. 363 AH / 974 CE–381 AH / 991 CE) who was not only the reigning caliph in 380 AH / 990–991 CE but also a caliph who did not pass the caliphate down to his linear descendants.<sup>45</sup> Al-Qādir bi-Allāh (r. 381 AH / 991–422 AH / 1031 CE), who succeeded to the caliphate after al-Ṭā’i’s dethronement, was al-Ṭā’i’s paternal cousin and the caliphate remained in the hands of al-Qādir’s linear descendants until the end of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate.<sup>46</sup> In other words, a composer of a genealogical diagram after the dethronement of al-Ṭā’i in 381 AH / 991 CE would not have placed the descent line of al-Ṭā’i where we find it in our diagram but would instead have written al-Qādir’s line there.<sup>47</sup> This demonstrates that this page retains the original layout of the year 380 AH / 990–991 CE.

This observation is important firstly because not only the fact that the page retains its original layout but the very layout that is preserved therein show that *bn*-lines were used in the original diagram of our compendium. The graphic presentation of the genealogy on the page proceeds downward from left to right, and that is exactly a trait that the use of *bn*-lines entails.

Furthermore, the fact that the layout of the page is clearly set upon the premise that the page presents the continuation of the ‘Abbāsīd genealogy presented in the following pages lets us understand that the horizontal trunk running throughout the width of the diagram was also used in the original composition. The genealogy on the page begins only with Hārūn al-Rashīd’s (r. 786–809) sons and the reader must go through seven more pages to reach the name of al-‘Abbās, the eponym of the ‘Abbāsids. And notably, this eight-page presentation of the ‘Abbāsīd genealogy is made possible by use of a horizontal trunk of its own that runs through its entire

<sup>44</sup> The same observation remains valid even if we disregard the difference in the sizes of the pens used to write different lines in consideration of the uncertainty about to whom we should attribute the differentiation.

<sup>45</sup> The genealogy here is slightly incorrect, however. The correct genealogy is Abū Bakr ibn al-Faḍl ibn Ja’far ibn Aḥmad ibn **Ṭalḥa ibn** Ja’far ibn Abī Ishāq [...], with the addition of the portion in bold.

<sup>46</sup> Sourdel 1974; Bosworth 1996, 6–10. In fact, the page presents the genealogy of the line of caliphs descending from al-Qādir that terminates with a grandson of the last caliph of Baghdad, al-Musta’ṣim bi-Allāh (r. 1247–1258 CE). This genealogy, presumably with those of some parallel lines around it, is clearly a later addition (the absence of Ṭalḥa in al-Ṭā’i’s genealogy in the original caused a confusion as to how this added portion, which includes Ṭalḥa’s name, be grafted).

<sup>47</sup> Note, however, the fact that the Samanids and the Ghaznavids continued to recognise al-Ṭā’i as Caliph for about a decade, refusing to accept his dethronement by the Buyids (Zetterstéen 1991).

width. Now, every major horizontal branch in the diagram that we find in BVE 1305 can in fact be considered the horizontal trunk for the relevant portion that is nested in the diagram as a whole (see Fig. 3). In other words, the diagram consists of the portions which may belong to different hierarchical levels (section, subsection, and so on) but are fundamentally of the same structure in schematical terms. The confirmation that the horizontal branch/trunk consolidating the 'Abbāsīd genealogy comes from the original thus also indicates that the horizontal branch one level up also functioned as a horizontal trunk in the original. And incidentally, the horizontal branch one level up in this case is actually *the* horizontal trunk running throughout the width of the diagram from its beginning to the end.

Based on all these, we can conclude that the original composition of our compendium also presented a single consolidated diagram built with the use of *bn*-lines and the horizontal trunk.<sup>48</sup> The format in which the diagram as we now find in BVE 1305 is drawn is not an alien format superimposed on the original diagram at a later date but derives from the late tenth century. The way the author calls his compendium in the preface is also worth recalling here. He calls his book 'the lofty *mushajjar*' and 'the noble *shajara*' in singular. This also appears to indicate that the main part of his book consisted of one single diagram in its original form, too.

A caveat, however, appears necessary. It is possible that the leftmost portion of the diagram beyond the name of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, that is, the point where the genealogies of the Ṭālibids and the 'Abbāsids converge, may be a later addition. As we saw above, the scope of the work repeatedly stated by the author is exclusively the kinfolk of the Prophet, or the Ṭālibids and the 'Abbāsids to be more precise. Yet, about 13% of the width of the diagram from its leftmost terminal, that is folios 141r to 162r, are occupied by the genealogy and personal information of those who do not belong to the two kinship groups, that is, the rest of the Quraysh, Northern Arabs, and humankind. This may be because the author saw it appropriate to trace the genealogy of the Ṭālibids and the 'Abbāsids as far back as to Adam, plausibly in order to highlight the special status of *sayyids/sharīfs* among humankind. It is, however, also possible that the relevant portion is a later addition.

At least in one other parallel case, in Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā's *al-Aṣīlī*, the leftmost portion of the diagram beginning with the name of Adam is in fact a later addition to an earlier, otherwise complete diagram. Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā, as late as at the end of the thirteenth century, clearly did not consider it an established custom to trace the gene-

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<sup>48</sup> Binbaş states that, despite the term *shajara* (lit. 'tree') to denote the genealogical diagram, 'the arboreal imagery seems to be alien' to the composers of genealogical diagrams from the early thirteenth century onwards that he discusses in his article (Binbaş 2011, 509). The conclusion here suggests that the same observation is valid for as early as the late tenth century.

alogy back to Adam in a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in diagrammatic format. He explicitly states in *al-Aṣīlī*'s preface that he terminated his diagram with the name of 'Adnān, the ancestor of the Northern Arabs who is twenty-nine generations away from Adam.<sup>49</sup> Yet, the diagrams in all the manuscripts of *al-Aṣīlī* whose leftmost terminal I have been able to examine so far terminate with Adam's name.<sup>50</sup> It appears that the appearance of Adam's name in the manuscripts indicates the fact that the practice of including his name in the diagram of a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy became prevalent sometime after the compilation of *al-Aṣīlī* in the late thirteenth century.<sup>51</sup> Although the situation is not clear in the case of our compendium at the moment, the possibility of a later addition certainly deserves to be noted.<sup>52</sup> It may be possible that the 13% of the diagram from the leftmost terminal does not derive from the original composition at all. The original diagram must certainly have positioned different branches of *sayyids/sharīfs* (including the 'Abbāsids) according to the perceived order of their respective kinship closeness to the Prophet Muḥammad. Whether it also displayed the special status of *sayyids/sharīfs* vis-à-vis the rest of the humankind, however, is therefore an open question.

In addition to its overall structure, most of the details seem also to go back to the original tenth-century work. In the section dealing with the descendants of 'Alī

49 Ibn al-Ṭiḡṭaqā, *al-Aṣīlī*, ed. al-Rajā'ī 1997–1998, 52. He also mentions the possibility that he may later expand the diagram to include the name of Qaḥṭān, the ancestor of the Southern Arabs. This also suggests that he did not regard the inclusion of Adam's name as a standard custom.

50 See above n. 40 for the information about the manuscripts I have consulted. The manuscript represented by the reproduction kept at the Kitābhkhāna-i Takhaṣṣuṣi-yi Tārīkh has a lacuna at the end and we cannot confirm with whose name its diagram terminated. However, the last name that appears on the horizontal trunk before the lacuna is that of Muḍar's, that is, 'Adnān's great-grandson's.

51 Note, however, that a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in diagrammatic format composed in the first half or the middle of the thirteenth century, the *Dīwān al-nasab* by Ibn al-Murtaḍā (d. before 664 AH / 1266 CE), appears to have presented the genealogy and personal information of the first generations of the humankind (including Enoch, only six generations away from Adam) at the leftmost portion of its diagram in its original form. The process through which the practice of including Adam's name at the leftmost end of the diagram came to prevail requires further careful examinations. See Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Faraj al-mahmūm*, 1984–1985, 22; Ibn al-Ṭiḡṭaqā, *al-Aṣīlī*, ed. al-Rajā'ī 1997–1998, 177–179.

52 The following observations might be taken to suggest a discontinuity between the leftmost portion and the rest of the diagram: (1) the two parallel quasi-horizontal trunks on the folios where the genealogy of the pre-Islamic Persian kings is presented (see above n. 39) are something that is not attested in the rest of the manuscript; (2) biographical notes attached to the names of important figures in the leftmost portion are generally far longer than their counterparts in the rest of the diagram. Note, however, that the existence of a discontinuity between the two portions as we see them today, even if proven, does not necessarily signify that the original diagram lacked a (previous version of the) leftmost portion that (also) included Adam's name.

ibn Abī Ṭālib (fols 1v–122v) where the author is expected to have endeavoured the most to make a fuller presentation of genealogy, the figures whose names appear at the end of descent lines, that is, at the end of the many branches of the lowest order in the diagram, are generally from nine to eleven generations away from ‘Alī. This tallies well with the composition in 380 AH / 990–991 CE.<sup>53</sup>

In contrast, the branches that come down to the generations significantly later than the eleventh generation from ‘Alī are found only sporadically in the diagram. As an illustration, only three out of some forty-five vertical branches that shoot out of one of the horizontal lines running at the top of the folios in the first ten pages (fols 1v–6r) of the diagram deserve this characterization fully or partly. Notably, all the three branches can clearly be identified as later additions on the basis of their contents.<sup>54</sup> The sense that the diagram preserves its original form rather well also in its details is reinforced by the retainment of the original form in the case of the ‘Abbāsīd genealogy discussed above, too.

The same observation, however, does not apply to biographical notes found in the diagram, as the texts of many of the notes clearly derive from the periods later than the late tenth century. For example, the text of the note attached to the name of Muḥammad ibn Šāliḥ ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mūsā al-Jawn ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (seven generations away from ‘Alī) clearly originates, whether directly or indirectly, from the *‘Umdat al-ṭālib fī ansāb al-Ṭālibīyyīn* by Ibn ‘Inaba (d. 1424 CE), a well-known compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in prose from the turn of the fifteenth century.<sup>55</sup> The same can also be said about the note concerning Abū Aḥmad al-Mūsawī (b. 916–917 CE, d. 1009–1010 CE), a famous figure contemporary to the author who held, among others, the position as the

53 In the table of the hypothetical periods for the prime of life of the members of different generations of the Ṭālibids I compiled elsewhere, the values given to those who were nine, ten, and eleven generations away from ‘Alī’s generation are 332, 367, and 402 AH, respectively. Morimoto 2004a, 312.

54 They present the genealogies of (1) Sayyid Baraka, Timur’s spiritual advisor (BVE 1305, fol. 1v), (2) Rumaytha ibn Abī Numayy (Rumaytha ibn Abī Sa’īd in the manuscript), the ruler of Mecca in the first half of the fourteenth century, and his sons (BVE 1305, fol. 2v), and (3) a line settled in Karbala’, down to the generation twenty-two generations away from ‘Alī, along with some collateral lines (BVE 1305, fol. 5r). The limited extensions made to the branches of the diagram indicates that Gharībān and the copyist(s) preceding him considered the compendium as a reference work that dealt with the earlier and more fundamental portion of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy. Such a reference work was not useless, since a genealogy claimed by a *sayyid/sharīf* living in a later period was also expected to correspond in its earlier portion with what was found therein in order to be admitted as authentic. See n. 11 above for information about other manuscripts of the same compendium (the apparent) existence of the updates in which indicates perceptions of the use of the work that is no doubt quite different.

55 BVE 1305, fol. 7r; Ibn ‘Inaba, *‘Umdat al-ṭālib*, ed. al-Rajā’ī 2004, 138–141.

*naqīb* of Baghdad, as well as the notes attached to the names of his sons al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (967–1044 CE) and al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (970–1016 CE). The texts of the three notes again originate from the *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib*.<sup>56</sup> Although the anonymous author's words in the preface make it clear that he inscribed a good amount of biographical information in the original work, we have to expect that much of that information we find in BVE 1305 today is not what he wrote in the late tenth century.<sup>57</sup>

## 6 Conclusion

This study has offered the first detailed examination of Süleymaniye Library, Bağdatlı Vehbi Efendi, 1305 and the anonymous compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy preserved therein. In addition to presenting the manuscript as a fine example of compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in diagrammatic format, I have shown that the format and structure of the diagram in BVE 1305 basically, if not wholly, preserve those of the original. The anonymous author of the compendium in the late tenth century already possessed sophisticated technique for composing an extensive multi-folio genealogical diagram with the use of *bn*-lines and the horizontal trunk. The author, in addition, certainly knew previous genealogies in diagrammatic format when he stated that his compendium presented the kind of biographical information 'the likes of which are not presented in a *shajara*'.

As said in the introduction, the extant examples of genealogical diagram that had been recognised as the earliest in Islamicate literary traditions were those con-

<sup>56</sup> BVE 1305, fol. 44v; Ibn 'Inaba, *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib*, ed. al-Rajāʾī 2004, 247–250, 253–257. Each one of the three notes includes the death date of the relevant figure which is invariably later than 380 AH / 990–991 CE. The note pertaining to al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā even includes a mention of a *sayyid/sharīf* genealogist descending from him who flourished from the first half to the middle of the thirteenth century (i.e. Ibn al-Murtaḍā; see n. 51 above). The text of the relevant portion also shows much resemblance to what is found in the *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib* (ed. al-Rajāʾī 2004, 252). Other examples of the notes with texts from later periods include the note on the twelfth imam of the Twelver Shī'ism (ten generations away from 'Alī) with references to Abū Ishāq al-Tha'labī (d. 1035 CE) and Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas'ūd al-Baghawī (d. 1122 or 1117 CE) therein (BVE 1305, fol. 43r). The text of this note does not derive from the *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib* (cf. Ibn 'Inaba, *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib*, ed. al-Rajāʾī 2004, 242).

<sup>57</sup> The notes attached to personal names also include short comments that provide various kinds of additional information about the relevant figures, such as '*inqaraḍa*' (i.e. his progeny has died out), '*daraja*,' (i.e. he did not leave a male child behind), '*lā 'aqib lahu*' (i.e. he has no progeny), '*li umm walad*' (i.e. born to a female slave), and '*bi'l-Kūfa*' (i.e. [he lived] in Kufa). A figure's *kunya* (an epithet composed of the word *abū* [i.e. father of] or *umm* [i.e. mother of] and a name, often that of the person's first son) is regularly presented in the same format, too. To what extent these comments can be attributed to the original composition is not clear to me at the moment.



tained in a work composed in the early thirteenth century in Northern India. The work in question, the *Shajara-yi ansāb* by Fakhr-i Mudabbir, presents universal history in 139 stand-alone genealogical diagrams.<sup>58</sup> The diagram preserved in BVE 1305 therefore represents an example that is more than two centuries earlier than the ones previously recognised as the earliest in Islamicate literary traditions.

The findings of this study have further significance to the discussion about when the diagrammatic representation began. The knowledge the anonymous author possessed about earlier genealogies in diagrammatic format suggests that the opinion put forward by Franz Rosenthal that the practice of diagrammatic representation emerged ‘in the 3rd/9th century, if not earlier’ can plausibly be on the mark.<sup>59</sup> Rosenthal’s opinion is based on textual references to the works called *mushajjar* or *shajara* or to the act of *tashjūr* (to render into arboreal form/format) in relation to a genealogist found in literary sources.<sup>60</sup> The reliability of such references, however, has been questioned by İlker Evrim Binbaş who noted that the *Shajara-yi ansāb* should be considered to mark the beginning of the practice ‘until we find an earlier source’.<sup>61</sup> The unmasking exactly of one such earlier source in this study would now suggest that the kind of textual references as used by Rosenthal should not be disregarded altogether. For example, and apart from the sources Rosenthal cites, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī’s (1297–1363 CE) mention of the *Mushajjar ansāb Quraysh* by Muḥammad ibn ‘Abda al-‘Abdī (d. before 300 AH / 912–913 CE) could possibly be counted as a piece of evidence that suggests the use of diagrammatic representation of genealogy in the ninth century.<sup>62</sup> Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad Mādarānī’s *‘Shajara’*, also not known to be extant but cited in Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Qumī’s *Tārīkh-i Qum*, appears to have predated our compendium, too.<sup>63</sup> The same can be said about the ‘comprehensive *mushajjara* in which [the author] treated the Hāshimids and traced their genealogy for generations’ (*mushajjara jāmi’a ‘uniya fihā bi-Banī Hāshim wa-dhayyala*), attributed to Ibn ‘Adī al-Dhārī/Zārī of Basra and mentioned by Abū’l-Ḥasan al-‘Umārī in *al-Majdī fī ansāb al-Ṭālibiyyīn*

<sup>58</sup> For details of the work, see Binbaş 2011, 468–482.

<sup>59</sup> Rosenthal 1992, 967<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> Rosenthal 1992, 967<sup>b</sup>; 1968, 97–98.

<sup>61</sup> Binbaş 2011, 468–470, 521 (the quotation is from the latter). See also 466, 476, 482, 487.

<sup>62</sup> Al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi’l-wafayāt*, ed. Ritter et al. 1931–2013, vol. 3, 222. Cf., however, al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Sayyid 2009, vol. 1, 325.

<sup>63</sup> Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Qumī, *Tārīkh-i Qum*, tr. Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī Qumī, ed. Anṣārī Qumī 2006–2007, 583 (see also *ibidem*, 490, 492, 496, 499, 502, 504, 508, 512, 527, 528 where apparently the same ‘*Shajara*’ [*‘Shajara-i ansāb-i ‘Alawiyya’* on 490] is cited; *Tārīkh-i Qum* was written in 378 AH / 988–989 CE). Is this Mādarānī the same person as ‘Abū Bakr al-Mādarānī’ mentioned in Abū Zayd 1998, 128?

(composed in 443/1051–1052).<sup>64</sup> Clues to what such references truly signify should be sought after earnestly.<sup>65</sup>

The fact that BVE 1305 is the earliest extant example of diagrammatic representation of genealogy in Islamicate literary traditions known to us also signifies that the two earliest examples of the genealogical diagram in those traditions known to us now are built with *bn*-lines, since the 139 stand-alone diagrams in the *Shajara-yi ansāb* are also built with them.<sup>66</sup> The technique of building genealogical diagrams with *bn*-lines thus appears to have been known beyond the circle of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogists and spread widely in geographical terms in the earliest phase of the

64 Al-'Umarī, *al-Majdī*, ed. al-Mahdawī al-Dāmghānī 2001–2002, 474. See also ibidem, 205; al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Muntaqila*, ed. al-Khirsān 1968, 208. Is the author a later kinsman of Abū'l-Haytham Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Adī al-Numayrī al-Baṣrī al-Dhārī (d. between 241 AH / 855–856 CE and 250 AH / 864–865 CE; al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, ed. al-Tadmuri 1990–2000, vol. 18 [241–250 AH], 295) or possibly himself (the latter scenario appears rather unlikely from contents of the accounts in *al-Majdī*, though)? In any case, it is highly unlikely that he died as early as in the second century/eighth century as Kammūna al-Ḥusaynī (1972, 103) and al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī (1989–1990, 22) hold. On another note, The questionable nature of the attribution of a *Kitāb al-tashjīr* to Daḡfal ibn Ḥanzala al-Sadūsī (d. 65/695) by al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī and the attribution of a work with the same title to 'Ilāqa ibn Kurshum/Kursum al-Kilābī (fl. seventh century) by Abū Zayd can be understood by referring to Sezgin's bio-bibliography in Arabic translation they evidently or explicitly referred to (al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī 1989–1990, 13; Abū Zayd 1998, 30; Sizkin 1991, 41).

65 Several scholars, mostly Twelver Shī'i ulama from the previous and the current centuries have named a work entitled *al-Ghuṣūn fī Āl Yāsīn* and attributed to al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Umar (d. 290 AH / 902–903 CE) as the first genealogy in diagrammatic format ever compiled (they must have meant 'by a Muslim writer') (al-Ma'lūf [1929], 418; Ibn 'Inaba, *Umdat al-tālib*, ed. Āl al-Ṭāliqānī 1961, 274, n. 1; al-Ṭahrānī 1983–1986, vol. 16, 58; Kammūna 1972, 9–10, 141; al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī 1989–1990, 27, 32). The title, 'The [Book of] Branches on the Family of Yāsīn [i.e. the Prophet's kinfolk]', suggests that it (if ever existed) was a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy. However, I have not been able to find a mention of the work in a source prior to the materials written by those scholars themselves. Further research is needed to clarify how we should deal with this thesis.

66 Fakhr-i Mudabbir, *Shajara-yi ansāb*, Chester Beatty Library, 364, fols 50r and 56r–125v; Binbaş 2011, Figs 1–2 (on pp. 537–538). Note, however, that this observation is premised upon the assumption that the unicum manuscript of the work from the sixteenth century retains the original format of the diagrams. On another note, I am not following here Binbaş's interpretation of the ambiguous passages in the second preface of the *Shajara-yi ansāb* that Fakhr-i Mudabbir claims therein to have invented diagrammatic representation of genealogy per se (Binbaş 2011, 476–477). It would appear to me that what Fakhr-i Mudabbir claims as original to himself is the order in which he arranged smaller stand-alone diagrams in his work so that they would together represent a semblance of the genealogy of the humankind (i.e. Adam's progeny) as a whole (Fakhr-i Mudabbir, *Shajara-yi ansāb*, Chester Beatty Library, 364, fols 39v–43v; ed. Denison Ross 1927, 62–68). If my interpretation is correct, what we gather from the passage is that Fakhr-i Mudabbir knew how to draw a stand-alone diagram with the use of *bn*-lines but did not know or did not choose to adopt the way how *sayyid/sharīf* genealogists constructed consolidated multi-folio diagrams.

development of diagrammatic representation of genealogy in Islamicate literary traditions known to us today. The multi-folio diagrams constructed with use of the horizontal trunk in compendia of *sayyid/sharif* genealogy should be considered a sub-type of the diagram built with this technique. It is in a sense unsurprising if the technique to draw genealogical diagrams with *bn*-lines was indeed the earliest technique used by Muslim writers. The convenience of branched *bn*-lines may spontaneously be discovered typically when one needs to record the genealogy of paternal brothers – they help the writer save ink, space, time and energy. And once a branched *bn*-line is used, the outcome is already a genealogical diagram, albeit of the simplest kind.

The diagram built with *bn*-lines continued to be used widely among later Muslim genealogists and historians, too. That *sayyid/sharif* genealogists continued to use that type of diagram in compendia of *sayyid/sharif* genealogy in diagrammatic format has already been mentioned. Their employment of the same type of diagram in drawing smaller stand-alone genealogical diagrams can also be confirmed, for example, by reference to a notebook of one of them from the latter fifteenth century.<sup>67</sup> The continued use of the same type of diagram outside the circle of *sayyid/sharif* genealogists can also be confirmed. For example, Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1402 CE) and Ashraf al-Ḥusaynī (composed his diagram in 1398–1399 CE) drew their diagrams with the use of *bn*-lines under Mamluk rule (if not further to the west) in the fourteenth century.<sup>68</sup>

The construction of genealogical diagrams with the use of *bn*-lines can thus be recognised as the earliest prevalent technique for drawing genealogical diagrams among Muslim genealogists and historians known to us today. The continued use of the technique in the later centuries can likewise be confirmed. How, then, did the type of genealogical diagram drawn with the technique come to co-exist with other types of genealogical diagram and how did different types possibly interact with and influence one another? By way of illustration, scholars of Persianate historiography will probably think here of the type of genealogical diagram that apparently originated from the formats allegedly invented by Rashīd al-Dīn in early-fourteenth-century Iran.<sup>69</sup> The diagrams of that type, built typically not with *bn*-lines but with ruled straight lines, are vertical in their overall structure and the names (and the portraits) therein are often presented in frames whose shapes and colours are given specific meanings. As Binbaş has shown, Rashīd al-Dīn's diagrams wielded

67 Al-Mūsawī al-Najafī, [Untitled manuscript], London, British Library, Or. 1406, fols 4v, 9r, 19v, 23r–v, 24r, 25r, 27v and 32v–33v. For the images of the diagrams on fols 9r and 23r–v, see Morimoto 2010 and Morimoto 2016, respectively. For the manuscript in question, see Morimoto 2008. The producer of the notebook was an Iraqi genealogist with records of extensive travels mainly in Iran.

68 Binbaş 2011, 504–509.

69 See Binbaş 2011, 485–499; Akasaka 1998, 151–155; Kamola 2020, 122–130 for the formats of genealogical diagram Rashīd al-Dīn devised.

a profound influence on the genealogical diagrams drawn by historians writing in Persian in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries.<sup>70</sup> In addition, it appears plausible to understand that the diagrams used in Ottoman dynastic genealogies an example of which Binbaş discusses in the present volume can also be considered inheritors of the new tradition established by Rashīd al-Dīn's diagrams. Now, noteworthy here is the fact that the *Dīwān al-nasab* by Ibn al-Murtaḍā (d. before 664 AH / 1266 CE), a compendium of *sayyid/sharīf* genealogy in diagrammatic format from the first half or the middle of the thirteenth century which no doubt shared the same features with our compendium or other comparable works such as *Tadhkirat al-ansāb*, is cited in Rashīd al-Dīn's *Shu'ab-i panjgāna*.<sup>71</sup> This might suggest the possibility that Rashīd al-Dīn intentionally chose not to use the format he knew from the *Dīwān al-nasab* in his compositions.<sup>72</sup> The recognition of the diagrams built with *bn*-lines as a distinct type of genealogical diagram drawn by Muslim genealogists and historians makes it possible to raise new questions such as these that will certainly help advance our knowledge of the history of diagrammatic representation of genealogy in Islamicate literary traditions.

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### Abbreviation

BVE 1305 = Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Bağdatlı Vehbi Efendi, 1305.

<sup>70</sup> Binbaş 2011, 499–521.

<sup>71</sup> Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Ahmed III, 2937, 12v (I thank İlker Evrim Binbaş for letting me consult the manuscript's reproduction in his possession); Ôtsuka 2017, 199. For Ibn al-Ṭiḡṭaḡā's explanation of the structure of the *Dīwān al-nasab*, see *al-Aṣṣīlī*, ed. al-Rajā'ī 1997–1998, 177–179. See also n. 51 above.

<sup>72</sup> See, however, Akasaka 1994. Akasaka argues that the *Shu'ab-i panjgāna* as available to us today represents a version that has not been reviewed by Rashīd al-Dīn himself although it was certainly composed by his assistants for his approval.

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Evrım Binbaşı

# The King's Two Lineages: Esau, Jacob, and the Ottoman Mythical Imagination in the *Subhatu'l-Ahbar*

for Stefanos Yerasimos

**Abstract:** It is well known among historians of the Ottoman Empire that an important component of Ottoman political discourse was the genealogical fiction connecting the Ottoman dynasty with a mythical figure called Oghuz Khan. In this genealogical fiction, the figure of Oghuz Khan connected the Ottoman dynasty with Japheth, son of Noah, hence locating the dynasty in the ranks of those 'Japhetic lineages' that represented the nomadic northern peoples in the Islamic mythology. The prominence of the Japhetic lineage in the sixteenth century was often explained as a manifestation of the Ottomans' dire need to legitimize their authority in the eyes of their subjects. However, what is less known is that there was actually another genealogical fiction that replaced the ancestral figure of Oghuz Khan with Esau, son of Isaac, hence giving the Ottoman dynasty a 'prophetic lineage'. This paper attempts to explain why there were two parallel genealogies in the Ottoman political discourse and discusses how Ottoman genealogists used visual strategies to depict this genealogical duality.

## 1 Introduction

The *Subhatu'l-Ahbar*, or *Rosary of Times*, is a splendidly executed example of the Ottoman art of painting.<sup>1</sup> In just seventeen folios, it depicts the genealogy of the Ottoman dynasty in tree format from Adam to the Ottoman sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648–1687), in a visual repertoire that includes 102 portraits in roundels accompanied by concise historical and biographical information. It is one of numerous genealogical codices or scrolls composed during a noticeable upsurge of such works in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There are about seventy-five of these texts, composed from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, in various manuscript collections in the world. Some of them are lavishly illustrated, as in the

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1 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50. The *Subhat* includes 102 portraits painted by Hüseyin al-Musavvir al-Istanbuli. On this painter, see Majer 1999, 462–467.

case of the *Subhatu'l-Ahbar* (henceforth *Subhat*), and some of them are beautifully illuminated in very large scale, as in the case of the *Tomar-ı Hümayun*.<sup>2</sup> Others are quite humble, even sparse, in terms of their visual characteristics, as they consist only of circles and lines drawn in a very crude manner, without any illustrations or illuminations.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, one thing is common to most of these manuscripts: they visually depict world history from the viewpoint of the Ottomans with diagrammatic and pictorial-visual devices.<sup>4</sup>

Similar to other examples of the same genre produced in the early modern period, the *Subhat* traces the genealogy of the Ottoman dynasty back to Adam. Human history begins with Adam and proceeds via prophets, kings, and caliphs, culminating first in the Mongol and then in the Ottoman dynasty.<sup>5</sup> The intended message of this sequence is quite straightforward: the Ottoman Empire is the indisputable sovereign of the world. The seemingly understated and simple organizational style of the majority of genealogies has created the impression among scholars that all these works are mere copies of each other, and have very little to tell us about history. Hence, it is not surprising that these genealogical codices and rolls have been studied mainly for their aesthetic qualities – insofar as they have any – and that art historians have been the pioneers in exploring this complex genre.

The main objective of this article is to contribute to our understanding of the content of genealogical trees by looking at issues beyond aesthetics and textual content, and to highlight the importance of the structure of genealogical trees. I will argue that the colour schemes used in their compositions are, in most cases, not arbitrary. They may contribute significantly to our knowledge about the articulation of historical and political ideas in genealogical trees. To this end, I will focus on a specific artefact, the *Subhat* (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek,

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2 *Tomar-ı Hümayun* is a large scroll, 31.16 meters in length and 79 centimetres in width. It is lavishly illuminated and includes many sections written in gold. It starts with a geographical and astrological introduction and continues with a world history in tree format from Adam to the sultan Mehmed III (r. 1566–1603). See Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Ms. A. 3599, 'Tomar-ı Hümayun'. For an analysis of its contents and structure, see Eryılmaz Arenas-Vives 2010, 229–256. See also Eryılmaz 2013, 114–115.

3 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ms. Lala İsmail 347.

4 I have discussed the origins and the pre-1500 history of genealogical trees in Islamicate historiography in the following article: Binbaş 2011, 465–544. See also, in this volume, the paper by Kazuo Morimoto, pp. 39–48.

5 So far, I have noticed just two exceptions to this generalizing observation. The first one is a genealogical codex titled *Jam'î tarikh* ('Collection of History') at the Ethnography Museum of Ankara (Ms. 8457), and the second is a scroll at the Free Library of Philadelphia (Lewis Collection Ms. O 37). To compare, see the following manuscript in which the genealogical tree culminates in the Safavid dynasty: Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ms. Hasan Hüsnü Paşa 1289-2.

Ms. A.F. 50). The distinct colour scheme of this manuscript allows us to study the use of different colours in the design of genealogical diagrams in a detailed manner.<sup>6</sup>

Although the text itself gives no clue about the identity of its author, Ottoman historiographical tradition attributes authorship of the *Subhatu'l-Ahbar* to a certain Derviş Mehmed b. Ramazan. The roots of this assumption go back to a reference in the famous bibliographer Katib Çelebi's (d. 1657) *Kashf al-Zunun*. According to Katib Çelebi, Derviş Mehmed b. Ramazan composed a 'long genealogical roll' (*tumar-i tawil*) entitled *Subhatu'l-Ahbar ve Tuhfatu'l-Ahyar*. He adds that the *Subhatu'l-Ahbar* includes kings, sultans, prophets, and viceroys arranged according to their lineage, from the time of Adam to that of Süleyman the Lawgiver.<sup>7</sup> Another Ottoman genealogical work, this time a scroll in Persian kept in Vienna, suggests that a person called Sharif-i Shafi'i also composed (or translated from Persian) an Ottoman genealogy. The translator's name is sometimes mentioned as Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Latif; both author and translator lived during the reign of Süleyman the Lawgiver.<sup>8</sup> This view is supported by a manuscript in Istanbul that was translated into Turkish by Yusuf 'Abd al-Latif in 1546 and dedicated to the reigning sultan Süleyman the Lawgiver.<sup>9</sup>

6 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50 has twice been published in facsimile. See *Rosary of Times. Subhatu'l-ahbâr*, ed. Rado 1968 and reprint of the 1968 edition *Rosenkranz der Weltgeschichte*, ed. Holter 1981. The manuscript is also available online at the library's website. See <http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/baa18848669> (accessed on 25 January 2021). In this article, I will refer to folio numbers, which can easily be located in both editions as well as in the digital edition. The *Subhat* was not the first Ottoman genealogical tree to be published; a much earlier lithograph was published in 1873. See *Subhatü'l-ahbar min zübdati'l-asar*, ed. Ahmed Kemal, 1289 AH / 1873 CE. Two other Ottoman genealogical trees have been published in facsimile. The first one is Ankara Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Ms. 1872, which includes the Ottoman genealogy from Adam to Mehmed IV (r. 1648–1687). This manuscript, dated to 1094/1682, was illustrated by Musavvir Hüseyin, and it has already been published by Sadi Bayram in much inferior print quality as part of his article on this manuscript. See *Silsile-nâme*, 2000; Bayram 1981, 253–338. Sadi Bayram has also published another Ottoman genealogical codex, this one titled *Zübdetü't-tevarih* (Bayram 1994, 51–116). This manuscript is at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (Ms. T. 423); it was composed in Baghdad in 1006 AH / 1598 CE and illustrated by Abu Talib Isfahani.

7 Katib Çelebi, *Kashf al-Zunun*, ed. Yaltkaya and Rifat 1943, vol. 2, 975. Gustav Flügel, the renowned cataloguer of the National Library in Vienna, was aware of this fact, for he said: 'According to the contents Derviş Mehmed b. Ramazan is the author of the work, but the text itself provides no indication' (Flügel 1865–1867, vol. 2, 99; my translation).

8 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. H. O. 11 and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. Mxt 487. See also Flügel 1865–1867, vol. 2, 75–76, 97–98. Franz Babinger and Yuri Bregel have repeated this information almost verbatim: Babinger 1927, 71; Stori and Bregel 1972, 504. For further discussion on this topic, see Taner 2018, 147–151.

9 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ms. Ayasofya 3259, fols 2a and 64b. For a similar manuscript, see *Catalogue des manuscrits* 1852, 468–470. Ayasofya 3259 is one of the earliest Ottoman genealogical works.

## 2 Blue, red, black, and the significance of lines

The *Subhat* is divided into two main parts. The first part (fols 1b–4a) is an introduction to world history and includes a section on the calculation of time since Adam and a brief description of the lunar and solar calendars. Moreover, it gives a short description of Islamic dynasties, which are also depicted visually in the genealogical section of the book. The second part (fols 4b–17a) is a genealogical tree with short textual sections, and is the part that I will discuss in the following pages.

The first illustrated page of the *Subhat* includes a painting of Adam and Eve, surrounded by a narrative section radiating counterclockwise from the central image (see Fig. 1).<sup>10</sup> Following the painting of Adam and Eve, the author divides the page into three vertical sections, respectively dedicated to three of Adam and Eve's four sons: from left to right, 'Abd al-Haris, Seth, and Abel. The fourth son, Cain, is found under the painting of Abel. Among these four sons, only Seth and Cain are depicted with their progeny, for Abel was killed by Cain and God had caused 'Abd al-Haris to die, as evil had been associated with him even before Eve's pregnancy.<sup>11</sup>

The first illustrated folio marks the beginning of three lineages. The colours black and red are used to connect the figures representing these lineages. The black line goes directly to Cain. One of the red lines goes to 'Abd al-Haris, while another goes to Abel; neither of them has progeny. Seth, Cainan, and Enosh are not connected to each other by a line, but their medallions touch each other. A third red line connects the medallion of Cainan with that of Kayumars. Hence, in the third generation after Adam and Eve, the author establishes a tripartite structure of world history. The central lineage depicted in the middle of the page represents the pedigree of Seth, and subsequently reaches the antediluvian prophets. The left side of the page is reserved for mythical Iranian shahs, represented in red, while the right side of the page is for the descendants of Cain, the ancestor of Pharaoh – the quintessential evil person in Islamic mythology – represented in black.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, at the end of the first page, the author demonstrates that the tripartite structure of the book, based on the descendants of Kayumars, those of Seth, and those of

<sup>10</sup> Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50, fol. 4b.

<sup>11</sup> The *Subhat* does not mention the story of 'Abd al-Haris, the first child of Eve. During Eve's pregnancy, Satan comes and asks if she wants this baby to live. After Eve's affirmative answer, Satan asks her to name the baby 'Abd al-Haris. Al-Haris literally means 'plowman' and was the original name of Satan. Thus, 'Abd al-Haris means 'servant of Satan'. Later, an angel comes and asks why she did not name her child 'Abd al-Rahman, the servant of God. Adam and Eve become extremely frightened, and God causes 'Abd al-Haris to die. See al-Tabari, *The History of al-Tabari*, vol. 1, tr. Rosenthal 1989, 320–324.

<sup>12</sup> Pharaoh is the tyrant, the unjust despot par excellence in Islamic narratives. See the article 'Fir'awn', in *EI*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 2, 917–918 (A. J. Wensinck).



**Fig. 1:** *Subhatu'l-Ahbar*. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50, fol. 4b; © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Cain, can be followed by the colours of the lines that connect the mythico-historical figures in each category, and by the positioning of the medallions on the page. The following table shows the political underpinnings of this intricate organization:

**Table 1:** The tripartite division of the lineages on fol. 5a.

Position on the page	Left	Centre	Right
<b>Progenitor of the line</b>	Kayumars	Seth	Cain
<b>Description</b>	The first man and first king in Iranian mythology, son of Cainan in Islamic narratives	Son and heir of Adam and the beginning of the prophetic lineage	Murderer of his brother Abel, inventor of fire-worshipping
<b>Colour of the connecting lines</b>	Red	Blue (starting on 5a)	Black
	<b>Kingly Lineage (Red line)</b>	<b>Prophetic Lineage (Blue line)</b>	<b>Pharaonic Lineage (Black line)</b>

The author puts three half circles at the top of folio 5a, each associated with one colour and one lineage (see Table 1). In so doing, the author establishes the political taxonomy of the work on the first two pages of the manuscript in so far as the division of political authority in subsequent generations. Both the centre of the book and the colour blue, are associated with prophets and prophethood. The left side of the page is associated with kings, and the right side with ultimate evil, which culminates and ends in the person of Pharaoh on fol. 7a.

The black line ends abruptly in the middle of fol. 7a with Pharaoh. The internal logic of the black line is not as complex as that of the other two lines. For example, there is a single painting, that of Cain, on this line, and it continues from the beginning to the end without branching out.

The blue line, the prophetic lineage, starts with the Prophet Enoch (Idris) on fol. 5a, and continues straightforwardly, one generation after another, without interruption until folio 6a: Adam, Seth, Enosh, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared,<sup>13</sup> Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Sadar, Shayikh, Hud.

<sup>13</sup> This name is written in two different ways on folios 4b and 5a: BZD, BRD. The inscription near the circle of Jared also says that some people call him Narid. Al-Tabari gives two different versions: Jared and Yarid. al-Tabari, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 1, tr: Rosenthal 1989, 336. The *Subhat* gives this name in three different orthographies: BZD (in the circle) and BRD or NRD (in the inscription) on folio 4b. Although it does not match the orthography of the *Subhat*, I have preferred to use ‘Jared’ for the sake of convenience.

The *Subhat* initially uses the red line for two purposes: two sons of Adam and Eve, Abel and 'Abd al-Haris, are connected to their parents by a red line, but the real emphasis on the red line starts with Kayumars, who is connected to Cainan, grandson of Seth, by a red line.

After Kayumars, the red line follows Persian mythology; Siyamak follows Kayumars, and then Hushang, Tahmurath, and Jamshid in sequence. However, by the beginning of folio 5b, where the story of Noah's three sons is introduced, the red line begins to branch out. Japheth and Ham, two sons of Noah, are connected to their father and to their own sons by a red line. Until folio 8b, where the Prophet Muhammad appears, any non-prophetic and non-Pharaonic connection is depicted with a red line: these are the descendants of Japheth and Iranian mythical figures. The reason for this complexity in the use of the colour red is the adoption of two mythical redistributive models in the same genealogical tree on folio 5b, the Iranian model and the Semitic model.<sup>14</sup> According to the Semitic model, the world is divided among the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The Iranian model, on the other hand, divides the world between the two sons of Faridun (Afridun), Tur (who bears the title *faghfur*) and Iraj (who bears the title *shah*). Each son of Noah and Faridun is also the ancestor of a group of people (see Table 2).

**Table 2:** Semitic and Iranian models of redistribution.

Semitic model of redistribution	
Shem	The prophets of the Arabs and Iranians, saints ( <i>ak çehreler</i> , lit. 'people with white faces'), good people ( <i>eyü kişiler</i> )
Ham	Blacks, Ethiopians, Zangis (slaves), tyrants, unjust rulers
Japheth	Turks, Chinese, Slavs, Gog and Magog ( <i>Ya'juj wa Ma'juj</i> )
Iranian model of redistribution	
Tur ( <i>faghfur</i> )	Turkistan, Chin, Khitay
Iraj ( <i>shah</i> )	Iran ('Iraq, Basra, Baghdad, Hijaz, Khurasan, Gilan, Tabaristan)

Since the blue line is assigned only to the prophetic lineage, i.e. the lineage of Shem, the *Subhat* uses the red line for the descendants of Japheth and Ham, as well as

<sup>14</sup> I am following Barbara Flemming's terminology, which uses the term 'Semitic model' for lineages going back to Shem, and 'Japhetic model' for genealogies going back to Japheth. See Flemming 1988, 123–137.

figures from Persian mythology. This diversity of mythical references makes the red line very difficult to follow on subsequent folios.

Japheth has three sons: Abu al-Haris, Gog, and Magog (*Ya'juj* and *Ma'juj*). The latter two do not have any descendants, and Abu al-Haris's lineage is eventually connected to the Ottoman lineage. At the top of fol. 6a, red lines spring from six circles. One of these circles leads to the descendants of Abu al-Haris, son of Japheth. Abu al-Haris has just one son, Machin. The design of the blue line on this folio is rather complicated, because the inscription in the top circle reads: 'This is the lineage of Ham; this circle represents the descendants of Hud.'<sup>15</sup> However, on folio 5b, the Prophet Hud is shown as part of the lineage of Shem. The author of the *Subhat* appears to be combining different textual traditions here. Hud is considered to be a member of the tribe of 'Ad, a tradition also repeated in the inscription written near the painting of the Prophet Hud (*'Ad kavmine geldi*, lit. 'he came to the 'Ad tribe'). Thus, one would logically expect the painting of Hud to be placed in the lineage of 'Ad, grandson of Ham, in the *Subhat*.<sup>16</sup>

The Japhetic line, which is still depicted in red on folio 6b, continues with Numish Khan son of Koy Khan son of Machin. In this part of the genealogy, the Japhetic line for the first time starts including individuals with the title *khan*, a title in Turco-Mongol political vocabulary. Afrasiyab, a figure from Iranian mythology who was the king of Turan and an enemy of Iranians, also appears here, but his lineage dies out at the very beginning of the following folio. Afrasiyab's lineage goes back to Tur, son of Afridun, the possessor of Turkistan and China, as mentioned above on folio 5b. At the bottom of the folio, the two sons of Isaac, Jacob and Esau, are depicted side by side in two medallions.

The organization of folio 7a is of great significance for the main argument of this paper, which is why I will discuss it in detail in the following section. In brief, the red line includes the famous Iranian kings Sam, Zal, and Rustam, and the Japhetic line is parallel to it, with such names as Koy Khan. The blue prophetic line includes the Prophets Joseph, Job, Joshua, Dhu al-Kifl, and Bashir. At the top of folio 7b, the red and blue lines conflate in a very subtle way. Two Koy Khans appear at this place in the manuscript: Koy Khan from the line of Japheth and Koy Khan from the line of Shem. The descendants of the first Koy Khan continue with Baytemür, Kurluğa Khan, Kurcul Khan, Süleyman Khan, and Kara Oğlan Khan. According to the *Subhat*, the second Koy Khan is the predecessor of the Prophets Moses and Aaron. The left side of folio 7b is again occupied by pre Islamic Iranian figures, such as Siyavush and Bahman.

<sup>15</sup> The name of Japheth's son Abu al-Haris is written twice as 'Abu al-Hash' on fol. 6a.

<sup>16</sup> 'Ad is the symbol of a corrupt and unfaithful tribe in Islamic narrative traditions. See the article 'Ād.' in *ET*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 1, 169 (F. Buhl).



**Table 3:** The organization of the *Subhat* is based on a dualism that corresponds to two different models of legitimization, one biblical/Islamic and the other Iranian/Turkic.

Folios	Red Line (Kings)		Blue Line (Prophets)	
Ancestors (fol. 4b)	Kayumars		Adam	
Antediluvian period (fol. 5a)	Iranian kings		Antediluvian prophets	
Redistributive Models (fol. 5b)	Afridun and his sons Tur and Iraj		Prophets and biblical figures	
Fragmentation in red Line (fol. 6a)	Descendants of Tur and Iraj	Descendants of Japheth	Prophets and biblical figures	
Fragmentation in blue line (fol. 6b)	Afrasyab and other descendants of Afridun	Emergence of Tur-co-Mongol themes (Numish Khan)	Descendants of Isaac, Esau and Jacob	Descendants of Abraham, Isma'il
Appearance of Ottoman lineage (fol. 7a)	Iranian heroes	Ottoman lineage	Descendants of Esau and Jacob	Descendants of Salaman
Conflation of red and blue lines (fol. 8a)	Ottoman lineage	Ashkaniyan and Greek figures	Sasanid kings, Alexander the Great	Descendants of 'Adnan
Blue line culminates in the Prophet (fol. 8b)	Ottoman lineage	Sasanids	The Prophet Muhammad and four caliphs	
fol. 9a	Ottoman lineage	Umayyads	The fourth caliph 'Ali and twelve imams	
fol. 9b	Ottoman lineage	Buyids	Abbasids	
fol. 10a	Ottoman lineage	Ghaznawids and Khwarazmshahids	Abbasids	
fol. 10b	Ottoman lineage	Seljukids and Ismailis	Abbasids	
fol. 11a	Ottoman lineage		Chinggisids	Abbasids
fol. 11b–12a	Ottoman lineage		Chinggisids	
fol. 12b–13a	Ottoman lineage		x	
fol. 13b–16a	–		Ottoman lineage	

Folio 8a includes many minor figures whose names are written in blue and red circles. The usage of colours becomes more intricate on this folio, as the blue circles on the left side represent the Sasanian kings and the red circles on the right side represent Greek rulers and the wise men of Greek and Roman antiquity, such as Aristotle and Ptolemy. The prophetic lineage continues with David and Solomon at

the top and extends to Alexander the Great and Jesus at the bottom-left corner of the folio.<sup>17</sup>

Folio 8b features the portraits of the Prophet Muhammad and the first four caliphs, as well as of the prophet's grandfather 'Abd al-Muttalib. The right side and the middle of folio 8b are devoted to the ancestors of the Prophet Muhammad and the first four caliphs. The left side is dedicated to the Japhetic genealogy. The lines emanating here trace a path to the Ottoman house. Folio 9a is a detailed representation of the house of the fourth caliph 'Ali b. Abi Talib (d. 40 AH / 661 CE). The Umayyad caliphs are depicted quite modestly, in red circles with no paintings, on the right side of the folio. The top of the folio shows paintings of the children of 'Ali b. Abi Talib, Hasan and Husayn, who are the second and third Twelver-Shi'i imams, respectively. The lower part is reserved for the paintings of the eighth Twelver-Shi'i imam 'Ali al-Rida (d. 203/818); al-Shafi'i (d. 820) and Abu Hanifa (d. 767), the founders of the Shafi'i and Hanafi legal schools of Sunni Islam; and Abu Muslim al-Khorasani (d. 755), one of the leaders of the Abbasid revolution of 750. On this folio, the author states that the lineage of the Iranian kings has ceased to exist (*münkati' oldu nesl-i müluk-i 'Acem*). The term 'Iranian kings' refers to the descendants of Anushirvan the Just (*Anushirvan-ı 'Adil*), whose name is located next to the painting of the Prophet Muhammad, but without any portraiture. Curiously, folio 9b of the *Subhat* depicts Imam Abu Hanifa, founder of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, with a blue line to Anushirvan. The kingly lineage represented by Anushirvan becomes a prophetic lineage when it converges with a significant Muslim intellectual.

Folios 9b to 11a include the genealogies of various Islamic dynasties, such as the Samanids, Buyids, Ghaznavids, and Khwarazmshahs (see Table 3). Folio 11a takes a very sharp turn in the organizational flow of the text, as here there are two blue lines: the lineages of the Abbasids and the Mongols. The Chinggisid lineage is depicted with a double blue line.<sup>18</sup> In accordance with the overall impact of the Mongols on political discourse in the Middle East, the textual narrative, which

<sup>17</sup> This part of the *Subhat*, in my opinion, is the first and most palpable representation of the unity of 'prophecy' and 'universal rule'. The painting of Alexander the Great is painted on the lower part of the page together with the prophets Jesus, Elijah (Yahya), and Zacharias (Zakariyya). Alexander the Great is shown as a prophet-like figure with a holy flame above his head.

<sup>18</sup> The use of the double parallel line suggests that the author of the *Subhat* could have modelled his work after Rashid al-Din's *Shu'ab-i Panjgana*, in which the main lineage is drawn with two parallel lines (*amud al-nasab* in Rashid al-Din's terminology). However, this explanation seems very unlikely, as we have no evidence to suggest that the author of the *Subhat* had access to the *Shu'ab-i Panjgana*. On the *Shu'ab-i Panjgana* and the pillar of the lineage, see Binbaş 2011, 494.

connects the Chinggisid lineage to the general structure of the diagram, covers the entire top of the page. The Chinggisid lineage starts with Qaidu Khan.<sup>19</sup>

We should note some peculiarities of the Chinggisid lineage in the *Subhat*. First, instead of following a dynastic-linear pattern, the *Subhat* skips several major figures in Mongol history. The names of the great khans who ruled over the empire after Chinggis Khan (d. 1247) are not mentioned as part of the main Chinggisid line. Then again, the painting of Tolui Khan (d. 630 AH / 1233 CE), who was never elected as great khan, sits at the top of folio 11b. Obviously, the author claims a clear Toluid standpoint vis-à-vis Mongol history. Only Chinggis Khan's son Tolui and the Ilkhans Hülegü (d. 663 AH / 1265 CE), Ghazan Khan (d. 703 AH / 1304 CE), and Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan (d. 1335) are visually represented. This genealogical order is usually described as the 'Toluid bias' by historians of the Mongol Empire.<sup>20</sup> Other members of the Chinggisid ruling family are arranged around the main blue line and connected to this main line by curved lines. The last figure in the Chinggisid lineage is the ilkhan Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan on folio 12a.<sup>21</sup>

After the Mongols, the blue line is discontinued for two pages until the emergence of Orhan Gazi (d. 763 AH / 1362 CE). The following two folios are devoted to the lineage of the Ottomans from Kızıl Buğa Khan through 'Osman Gazi (d. c. 724 AH / 1324 CE) on folios 12b and 13a. The text summarizes the story of 'Osman Gazi with a special emphasis on the role of the Seljuq family. The blue line resumes with Orhan Gazi on folio 13b. After that point, all the relationships in the Ottoman dynastic family are depicted in blue until Mehmed IV, who is the last Ottoman sultan in the *Subhat*.

<sup>19</sup> For a standard Chinggisid genealogy, see Rashid al-Din, *Jami' al-Tawarikh*, ed. Rawshan and Musawi 1373 SH / 1994 CE, 221–283. The Chinggisid genealogy presented by Rashid al-Din goes like this: Alan Qo'a, Bodonchar, Dutum Menen, Qaidu Khan, Tümbine Khan, Qabul Khan, Qutula Qa'an, Bartan Bahadur, Yesügei Bahadur, Temüjin/Chinggis Khan.

<sup>20</sup> The 'Toluid bias' is a term referring to a general historical perspective among Mongol historians in Iran and China, where the Toluid branch of the Chinggisid dynasty ruled. Since major chronicles of the Mongol Empire were written in Iran and China, their perspective on the Mongol past reflects the Toluid view of history and ignores the perspectives of other major ruling lineages, most prominently the views of the Jochids, Ögedeids, and Chaghadaids. See Jackson 1978, 188.

<sup>21</sup> At the end of this section, the author of the *Subhat* states: 'After Abu Sa'id, there is no independent ruler from the lineage of Chinggis Khan. After that everybody wanted to be king here and there and the lineage of Chinggis Khan ceased to exist.'

### 3 Prophetic lineage and Ottoman political culture

The first time that the name of the Ottoman dynasty appears in this genealogy is on folio 7a. The author inserts a very short sentence near the line emanating from Koy Khan, son of Numish Khan, reading ‘this line goes to the Ottoman dynasty’ (*Bu çizî Al-i ‘Osmana çıkar*). At the top of the page, two circles serve as the starting points of the lineages of Japheth and Shem, respectively. On folio 6b, the Japhetic line descends from Afrasiyab, and the Semitic line from Esau, son of the Prophet Isaac. The Japhetic lineage continues with Koy Khan in red, and the Semitic lineage continues with Bashar in blue. Bashar’s circle is drawn in blue next to the name of Koy Khan. However, the author does not connect the blue line to the circle of Bashar; rather, the blue line circles around the name of Bashar and, by some miracle, becomes red at the very moment when the line approaches the name of Koy Khan and the beginning of the Ottoman lineage (see Figs 2a–2b). After this change in colour, it turns blue again and continues towards the Prophet Job (Ayub) on the same folio.

In this visual detail of the *Subhat*, the Ottoman dynastic lineage coming from Japheth converges with a lineage coming from Esau. There is no textual explanation for the colour change, but it is very unlikely that this design feature was arbitrary. There was a well-established genealogical narrative in Ottoman historiography connecting the Ottoman dynasty to Esau, son of Isaac: therefore, the conflation of the Japhetic and Semitic narratives in the *Subhat* must be related to debates among Ottoman historians on the ancestry of the Ottoman dynasty in the early modern period. Although the Japhetic paradigm often connects the Ottoman dynasty to Japheth via another Turkic mythical figure, called Oghuz Khan, Esau was also accepted by some contemporary Ottoman historians as the progenitor of the Ottoman dynasty. The earliest reference to Esau in Ottoman narrative sources is found in the *Saltukname*, a collection of stories about Sarı Saltuk, who was a Muslim Turkic hero in Anatolia and the Balkans. Ebu’l-Hayr i Rumi collected and collated the stories on the order of Cem Sultan, son of Mehmed II, between 1473 and 1480. According to the *Saltukname*, the Ottoman dynasty descended directly from Esau.<sup>22</sup> Ebu’l-Hayr-i Rumi narrates a curious story connecting the Ottomans’ Esavitic lineage

<sup>22</sup> Rumi, *Şaltuk-Nâme*, ed. İz, 1974–1984, Part IV, fols 308b, 310a; Part VI, fol. 528a; idem, *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Halûk, 1987, vol. 2, pp. 108, 110; vol. 3, 238. Rumi says in another place that Bosnians, who are described in the text as a people with a fair complexion, are also descendants of Esau. This is certainly a reference to a narrative in which Esau is considered the ancestor of the Blonde Race (*Banu al-Asfar*) in the Islamic apocalyptic narratives. See Rumi, *Şaltuk-Nâme*, ed. İz, 1974–1984, Part I, fol. 408b; idem, *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Halûk 1987, vol. 1, 78. See also Aydoğan 2017, 123.



Fig. 2a: Ottoman genealogy and the inscription that announces the Ottoman dynasty. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50, fol. 7a; © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.



**Fig. 2b:** Detail of Fig. 2a. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50, fol. 7a; © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

with their claims to kingship. When Sarı Saltuk comes to Sinop, the people there protest his extreme reverence for ‘Osman I, founder of the Ottoman dynasty. The conversation that takes place between the protesters and Sarı Saltuk is relevant for our purposes:

This is a tribal leader and a holy warrior, not a king (*padishah*), but you are giving him advice as if he were a king. The hero (Sarı Saltuk – EB) said: ‘Oh people! This young man (‘Osman) is a scion of the kings. He is a descendant of Esau, son of Isaac, son of Abraham (peace be upon them!). ‘Osman came from Esau. Three Prophets blessed this lineage. The first one is the Prophet Abraham, the second is the Prophet Isaac, and the third is the prophet of the latter days, Muhammad Mustafa (peace and prayer be upon them!). Therefore, the kings who ruled in this world have come from this lineage. Then, God most exalted shall give kingship (*sultanlık*) to this young man and his descendants and his lineage shall become (*olısar*) great sultans.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See Rumi, *Şaltuk-Nâme*, ed. İz 1974–1984, Part IV, fol. 310a; Rumi, *Saltuk-Nâme*, ed. Akalın 1987, vol. 2, p. 110. The use of the *-iser/-ısar* suffix in the verb of the final sentence, *olısar*, is significant. This future tense suffix was used in certain Turkic languages until the end of the sixteenth century, but then disappeared. It was already a rare and unusual grammatical form by the fifteenth century, and its use was often related to prognostications and foretelling about the political and social events of the future. For a survey of the relevant literature, see Yıldız 2013, 29–46.

After this brief reference to the Esavitic narrative, there are longer and more detailed references to Esau in several dynastic chronicles. The earliest is the Oxford Anonymous, which was written for the Ottoman sultan Bayezid II, brother of Cem Sultan, in 1484, just a few years after the composition of the *Saltukname*. It includes a lengthy section on the story of Jacob and Esau and then appends the Ottoman dynastic genealogy in the following manner:

Ertuğrul, son of Selman Shah [...] Gökalp, son of Oghuz, son of Kaz Khan, son of Koy Khan, which corresponds to Esau in the Coptic language. Esau is the son of Isaac, who is a descendant of Shem, son of Noah. According to one account, Koy Khan does not refer to Esau, but to one of the sons of Japheth, the son of Noah.<sup>24</sup>

The Oxford Anonymous does not exclude the Japhetic paradigm. It states at the beginning that the Ottomans descended from Kayı Khan, son of Oghuz Khan, but the Oghuz narrative is much shorter and lacks many of the details that we find in other texts highlighting the Oghuz ancestry of the Ottoman dynasty.<sup>25</sup> Although the Oxford Anonymous was mistakenly attributed to another historian, called Ruhi (early sixteenth century), current scholarship considers the Oxford Anonymous an independent chronicle. Yet Ruhi's text also includes a reference to Esau. In Ruhi's narrative, which is very close to that of the Oxford Anonymous, Esau goes to Turkistan after quarrelling with his brother Jacob, and there his descendants multiply. Some Oghuz tribesmen from the line of Kayı Khan, son of Oghuz Khan, come to Ahlat in Eastern Anatolia under the pressure of the Tatars.<sup>26</sup> The Kurdish historian Idris-i Bidlisi (d. 1520) copied the same narrative in his *Hasht Bihisht*. Written in an ornate Persian, the *Hasht Bihisht* is the first true Ottoman dynastic chronicle to narrate the history of the first eight Ottoman sultans, hence its title, *Eight Paradises*. Following the Oxford Anonymous, Idris-i Bidlisi states that the ancestor of the Ottoman dynasty was Oghuz Khan, but he also connects Oghuz Khan to Esau in a very complicated narrative plot. According to him, the genealogy of Oghuz Khan goes back to Esau:

According to some historians, the branches of the lineages of humans, sovereigns, and the kings of the East, especially the khans of the tribes of Turkistan, and the khaqans, who currently rule over most of the world, especially in the Eastern and Northern countries, and some [parts of] Iran, and the Ottoman dynasty, which is the conqueror of lands, all of them are kings, and they are all descendants of Oghuz Khan. Oghuz is the ancestor of Turkish sov-

<sup>24</sup> Yücel and Cengiz 1989–1992, 375; Kastritsis 2017, 61–62. I have modified Kastritsis's translation above. The attribution of this text to the Ottoman historian Ruhi by Yücel and Cengiz is incorrect. For further discussion and references, see Ménage 1964, 11–14.

<sup>25</sup> For a survey of the late medieval and early modern narratives on Oghuz Khan, see Binbaş 2010.

<sup>26</sup> Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ruhi, *Tevarih-i Al-i 'Osman*, Ms. or. quart. 821, fols 11b–12a.

ereigns and the seal of the khaqans and khans. According to the opinion of these historians, the lineage of Oghuz Khan goes back to Esau, son of Isaac, in two steps, and his name is Qayi Khan in Turkish.<sup>27</sup>

İdris-i Bidlisi merges the Japhetic and Semitic paradigms in his reconstruction of the Ottoman genealogy by referring to Esau as Qayi Khan. The paradigm of dual ancestry is reflected in the work of another influential Ottoman historian, Ibn Kemal (d. 1534), who was also an eminent legal scholar and the grand mufti of Istanbul in the early years of the reign of Süleyman the Lawgiver:

According to a well-known and more conspicuous tradition, Qayi Khan is Esau, son of Isaac. The origin of his pedigree reaches back to Shem, son of Noah; however, according to another opinion, the genealogy of his illustrious ancestors goes back uninterruptedly to Japheth, son of Noah. However that may be, the grace and fortune of this garden of flowers of justice are due to the prophetic dynasty, which is the abode of the heavenly springs.<sup>28</sup>

Ibn Kemal's position adds another dimension to the debate by emphasizing the lineage itself. In other words, according to Ibn Kemal, it does not matter who the ancestor is, since all the lineages go back to Adam. Instead, the nature of the lineage is the crucial issue. In his solution, the Ottoman lineage is a prophetic lineage, which is divinely mandated through the progeny of all prophets.

Other Ottoman historians, however, categorically reject the Semitic narrative and promote the Japhetic paradigm. One of the chief representatives of the opposing party was the Ottoman historian Neşri (d. before 1520), who claimed that the mythical ancestor of the Ottomans, Oghuz Khan, descended directly from Japheth.

The engineers of the edifices of life stories and the reminders of the secret meanings have related that the glorious lineage [of the Ottoman dynasty] goes back to Oghuz, son of Kara Han, who was a descendant of Bulcas, son of Japheth, son of Noah (peace be upon him!), in the following manner: Ertuğrul, son of Süleyman Şah [...] Gök Alp, son of Oğuz, son of Kara Han, son of Zib Takoy, son of Bulcas, son of Japheth, son of Noah (peace be upon him!). Some say that when they say Kara Han, they mean Esau. Oğuz Khan was the son of Esau, son of Isaac, son of Abraham (peace be upon him!), but they made a mistake, because Esau was the ancestor of Lesser Rome, which was the Second Rome. He is from the lineage of Arfakhshad, son of Shem.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, İdris-i Bidlisi, *Hasht Bihisht*, Ayasofya 3541, fol. 17a; [Akkaya] 1934, 29. There are now two excellent monographs on İdris-i Bidlisi and his intellectual persona: see Markiewicz 2019; Genç 2019.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman: I. Defter*, ed. Turan 1970, 39.

<sup>29</sup> Neşri, *Cihânnümâ*, ed. Öztürk 2013, 28.



In an excellent article on the Esavitic narrative in Ottoman historiography, Hiroyuki Ogasawara suggests that after Idris-i Bidlisi, only Seyyid Lokman, a court historian who died after 1601, and Mustafa 'Ali, a renowned Ottoman historian (who composed one of the most famous Ottoman universal chronicles, titled *Künhü'l-Ahbar*), mention Esau as the ancestor of the Ottoman dynasty. Mustafa 'Ali cites Neşri to refute the Esavitic narrative.<sup>30</sup> However, references to the Esavitic narrative appear to have continued well into the late seventeenth century. For instance, Vani Mehmed Efendi (d. 1685), an influential scholar and preacher during the reign of the Ottoman sultan Mehmed IV, alludes to the Esavitic narrative in his Quranic commentary, titled *'Ara'is al-Qur'an*. Vani Mehmed was an enthusiastic proponent of holy war, and he was particularly supportive of the Ottoman conquest of Vienna. In his commentary, he refers to the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 and argues that the Ottomans are predestined to conquer the land of Rum – land formerly controlled by the Byzantine Empire. The proof of this predestination is the conquest of Constantinople, a historical event that was predicted by the Prophet Muhammad. In this divine plan of events, Turks are the descendants of the Prophet Isaac. However, Vani Mehmed does not refute the more famous narrative, which connects the Ottomans to Oghuz Khan, a descendant of Japheth, but instead offers a noteworthy solution. According to him, Oghuz Khan is the Quranic figure Dhu al-Qarnayn, who is often interpreted as Alexander the Great in Islamic prophetology. He further suggests that Oghuz Khan was a contemporary of the Prophet Abraham. Therefore, he concludes, the Ottomans were the descendants of Japheth from their father's side and Isaac from their mother's side. It is important to note that Vani Mehmed does not mention Esau in his narrative; he refers only to the Prophet Isaac.<sup>31</sup>

The brief survey on the Esavitic narrative demonstrates that Ottoman historians played with two different genealogical narratives referring to two different ancestors, Japheth and Esau, and the author and painter of the *Subhat* appear to have been very well aware of this debate that took place in the sixteenth century.

## 4 The dual nature of politics

What was really at stake when Ottoman historians discussed Esau as an ancestor of the Ottoman dynasty? Although the Oghuz Khan narrative is very well known to

<sup>30</sup> Ogasawara 2017, 53; Mustafa 'Ali, *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, 1861–1869, vol. 5, 19.

<sup>31</sup> İstanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Vani Mehmed Efendi, *'Ara'is al-Qur'an*, Yeni Cami 100, fol. 544b. For a discussion of this curious passage and a translation into Turkish, see Pazarbaşı, 1997, 197.

students of the Ottoman dynasty, the Esau narrative has not attracted much attention until recently. For modern historiography, the debate on Esau was in fact triggered by a short exchange on early Ottoman historiography between J. H. Mordtmann (1852–1932) and Paul Wittek (1894–1978) in the 1920s, which culminated in Paul Wittek's influential rejection of Ottoman genealogical narratives as reliable historical sources in his famous book titled *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire* in 1938. Wittek was well aware of the competing genealogical narratives, including the Esavitic narrative. He thought that the Oghuz Khan narrative was historically significant, because it was part of the ideological scaffolding that Ottoman intellectuals constructed as the dynasty recovered from the disastrous confrontation with the Central Asian warlord Timur (Tamerlane) at the Battle of Ankara in 1402, but he dismissed other narratives as the inventions of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century historians.<sup>32</sup> For various historiographical reasons – Wittek's forceful promotion of the Japhetic Oghuz narrative and the prevalence of nationalist historiographies in the twentieth century, among others – the Esavitic narrative was by and large ignored by scholars until the late 1980s, when Barbara Flemming and Stefanos Yerasimos brought it back into discussion. More recently, Hiroyuki Ogasawara and Ali Anooshahr have highlighted the importance of this narrative in Ottoman political discourse.<sup>33</sup> However, before we go into how the narrative should be interpreted, let us summarize the main elements of the Esavitic narrative and the roles of the twins Esau and Jacob.

According to the Book of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible, Esau is the Prophet Isaac's son and the Prophet Jacob's twin brother.<sup>34</sup> Esau is red-haired, very hairy, and a skilful hunter. He lives in the open country. Jacob, on the other hand, is a very quiet man and lives among the tents (Gen. 25:24–28). Isaac has a taste for wild game (Gen. 25:28). In his old age, Isaac's sight deteriorates and he can no longer see. He asks Esau to bring him wild game. He further says: 'Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die.' Esau goes to the open country to find what his father desires (Gen. 27:1–5). Isaac favours Esau, but Rebecca loves Jacob (Gen. 25:28). She overhears this conversation and asks Jacob to bring two choice young goats so that she can prepare what Isaac

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<sup>32</sup> Wittek 1925, 97–100; Wittek 2012, 38–43. Wittek takes the Oghuz genealogy more seriously, as he thinks it might include a real historical reference in its kernel, but to him the Esavitic narrative is just an 'Arabic' genealogical tree (p. 39). For further discussion on this topic, see Woods 1999, 173–182; Kafadar 1995, 96–97; Binbaş 2010. It is very unfortunate that Hiroyuki Ogasawara's detailed philological study on early Ottoman genealogical narratives, in Japanese, is not available in a language that I can read. For future reference, see Ogasawara 2014.

<sup>33</sup> Flemming 1988, 134–137; Yerasimos 1990, 198–199; Ogasawara 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Biblical translations are from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible. New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

wants. Then she says: 'Then take it to your father to eat, so that he may give you his blessing before he dies' (Gen. 27: 6–10). Jacob, however, is not sure about his mother's plan because of the hairy body of his brother. He says that if his father touches him, he will notice that he is not Esau, and this in turn will bring a curse instead of a blessing (Gen. 27:11–12). Rebecca gives Esau's clothes to Jacob, and Jacob covers his hands with goatskin so as to resemble his hairy brother. Jacob takes the food to his startled father, who wonders how Esau could prepare the game so quickly. Isaac touches Jacob and says: 'The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau' (Gen. 27:22). Isaac eats the food and drinks the wine and asks his son to kiss him. He smells Esau on his clothes, and says:

Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. May God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you. (Gen. 27:27–29)

When Esau returns and learns that his brother has stolen his blessing, he grows very angry and asks his father to bless him, too. Isaac says:

See, away from the fatness of the earth shall your home be, and away from the dew of heaven on high. By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you break loose, you shall break his yoke from your neck. (Gen. 27:39–40)

In the rest of the narrative as told in the Hebrew Bible, Jacob becomes the ancestor of the Israelites, and Esau becomes the ancestor of the Edomites, as had been planned by God all along (Gen. 25:23). This aspect of the narrative played a crucial role in the development of Islamic narratives on Esau and Jacob. Islamic narratives of biblical prophets (*Isra'iliyat*) embraced this story and repeated it, often almost verbatim, but with some changes and alterations. One of the most important changes in the narrative is the fact that while Jacob becomes the ancestor of the prophets, Esau becomes the ancestor of the Rum, or Romans, and later Greeks, and his descendants were called Banu al-Asfar, 'Sons of the Red One' or the 'Blonde Race'. The Banu al-Asfar played a significant role in Islamic apocalyptic narratives, according to which the apocalypse and the final hour will not come until Muslims conquer Constantinople, followed by a counterattack by the Blonde Race against the conquering Muslim army.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> The narratives on Esau in Islamic literatures have not yet been properly studied, but we can tentatively suggest that the Islamic narratives were deeply influenced by the Jewish and also perhaps Christian narratives on Esau. See the article 'Aşfar' in *EF*, vol. 1, 687–688 (I. Goldzieher); Cohen 1991, 324–325.

Barbara Flemming and Stefanos Yerasimos centre their analysis on this particular element. The Esavitic narrative surfaced in Ottoman genealogical discourse when the Ottoman political, administrative, and literary elite were still trying to come to terms with the massive reverberations of the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. Constantinople was not just another name on the list of cities that they had conquered; rather, it symbolized the transformation of the Ottoman polity from a regional power in the Balkans and western Anatolia into a highly sophisticated state apparatus with universalist political ambitions. As far as the Ottomans were concerned, they had conquered the city of Rome – or the Second Rome, depending on one's perspective – but they were the uncontested inheritors of the Roman Empire, and the clock of the Apocalypse had just made a big leap.

Needless to say, there were many among the Ottoman ruling elite – especially the warriors and their supporters who protected the Balkan borders and launched *razzias* into neighbouring polities – who were unhappy about the overextension of the sultan's power.<sup>36</sup> In other words, there were pro-imperialist and anti-imperialist factions in the Ottoman elite. The anti-imperialist faction expressed its dissatisfaction through stories that relied on biblical narratives or imagined the destruction of the third temple, the Hagia Sophia, in Constantinople. If the creation of a new Roman Empire was analogous to the reconstruction of Solomon's temple in the capital Constantinople, then that temple had to fall in order to rein in the empire's power.

Flemming, and more pronouncedly Yerasimos, have contextualized the Esavitic Ottoman genealogy in this intellectual environment of competing ideologies in the post-conquest period. Yerasimos has suggested that the Esau narrative was inserted in Ottoman dynastic genealogy by those who harboured pro-imperialist sympathies. Neither Flemming nor Yerasimos is entirely sure how the Esavitic narrative would enable an imperialist ideology, but they have located the discourse squarely in the imperialist camp vis-à-vis those narratives that criticize the Ottoman imperial ideal.<sup>37</sup> Hiroyuki Ogasawara, on the other hand, has expressed doubts about the Esavitic narrative's eschatological and imperialistic underpinnings: he has argued that the prophetic tradition (*hadith*) that prognosticated the conquest of Constantinople as a sign of the end times is not mentioned as part of the Esavitic narratives. Rather, Ogasawara argues, the narrative was related to how some Ottoman intellectuals understood the notion of kingship. Esau must have been considered superior to Japheth: he was the son of a prophet, hence providing a stronger basis of legitimacy for a dynasty that had been rapidly expanding in regions formerly controlled

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<sup>36</sup> For a detailed account of this transformation in Ottoman history, see Kafadar 1995, 118–154 (esp. 151–154).

<sup>37</sup> Flemming 1988, 134–137; Yerasimos 1990, 198–199.

by various other Muslim dynasties. Ultimately, Ogasawara develops a utilitarian approach in which the idea of the 'divine rights of kings' is the main thrust behind the Esavitic narrative in Ottoman chronicles.<sup>38</sup>

Ali Anooshahr has interpreted Idris-i Bidlisi's narrative as an attempt to reconcile different political cultures, one Central Asian and the other Islamic. According to him, the Esavitic narrative is first and foremost an Islamic narrative that has its roots in the Quran, and Idris-i Bidlisi was well aware of this. *Quran* 45:16 says, 'And indeed We gave the Children of Israel the Book, judgement (*al-hukm*), and prophethood (*al-nubuwwa*), and We provided them with good things, and We favoured them above the worlds.' Idris-i Bidlisi also cites *Quran* 4:54: 'We gave the House of Abraham the Book and Wisdom (*al-hikma*), and We granted them a mighty sovereignty (*mulk<sup>an</sup> azim<sup>an</sup>*).'<sup>39</sup> For Anooshahr, Idris-i Bidlisi's main concern was first and foremost to bring the Ottoman dynasty into the framework of these two Quranic verses. He observes, quite accurately in my opinion, that Idris-i Bidlisi's main intention was to elevate the status of the Ottoman dynasty to the level of the prophets. Furthermore, just like Jacob and Esau reconcile at the end of the narrative in Idris-i Bidlisi's version, the Ottoman dynasty represents the reconciliation between the Central Asian and Islamic political cultures.<sup>40</sup>

I would like to propose a different approach in this article. My analysis takes its cue from Ogasawara's work in the sense that the Esavitic narrative was related to the development of political ideas in the Ottoman Empire, but instead of the theory of the divine rights of kings, I argue that the Esavitic narrative may be related to how the sacrality of political authority was constituted in Ottoman political discourse. One point I would like to highlight is the fact that the above-mentioned scholars put their focus on the figure of Esau and his position in the genealogy of the Ottoman dynasty. However, neither Esau's position nor his relationship with his father Isaac or brother Jacob changes in these narratives. Instead, the crucial point in the Esavitic narrative is what Isaac gives to Jacob and Esau. A brief look at the different versions of the story written before the Ottomans should provide a better understanding of this narrative.

As Yerasimos has observed, the Ottoman Esavitic narratives rely on a framework that first took shape in the tenth century, above all in al-Tabari's (d. 923) universal chronicle. Al-Tabari introduces Isaac and his family in these words:

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<sup>38</sup> Ogasawara 2017, 50–51.

<sup>39</sup> *Quran* 45:16; 4:54 (pp. 216–217, 1221–1222).

<sup>40</sup> Anooshahr 2018, 35–50.

We will now return to the discussion of Isaac b. Abraham and of his wives and descendants, since after the Persians no nation except for them has a continuous, unbroken history. This is because the Persian kings continued in unbroken succession from the days of Jayumart [...] until they vanished with the coming of the best nation brought forth from humanity, the nation of our prophet Muhammad. *Prophecy and kingship* [my emphasis – EB] continued in an unbroken succession in Syria and its environs among the children of Israel b. Isaac [i.e. the children of Jacob – EB], until those things vanished from among them with the coming of the Persians and Byzantines after John b. Zacharias and after Jesus b. Mary.<sup>41</sup>

Al-Tabari sets the leitmotiv of the narrative as the continuity of *prophecy and kingship* in the lineage of the Prophet Isaac. But the question is: Which progeny of Isaac should we follow in order to understand the relationship between prophecy and kingship? According to the biblical narrative and the subsequent Islamic prophetology, Esau and Jacob were twins, and the rivalry between these two brothers was a matter of debate among medieval authors. Let us follow al-Tabari's narrative at this point:

As the two boys grew up, Esau was more loved by his father while Jacob was more loved by his mother. Esau was a hunter, and when Isaac grew old and blind, he said to Esau, 'O my son! Feed me some game, and draw near me so that I may invoke a prayer over you which my father did for me.' Esau was a hairy man while Jacob was a hairless man. Esau went forth seeking game, and his mother, who had overheard the conversation, said to Jacob, 'O my son! Go to the flocks and slaughter a sheep therefrom, then roast it and dress yourself in its skin. Then go and present it to your father, and say you are Esau.' Jacob did that, and when he came he said, 'O my father, eat!' His father asked, 'Who are you?' He said, 'I am your son, Esau.' Isaac felt him and said, 'The touch is that of Esau, but the smell is that of Jacob.' His mother said, 'He is your son Esau, so pray for him.' Isaac said, 'Present your food.' Jacob presented it and Isaac ate of it, then said, 'Come closer.' Jacob drew near him, and Isaac prayed that *prophets and kings should be appointed from among his offspring* [my emphasis – EB]. After Jacob left, Esau came and said, 'I have brought the game as you ordered me to do.' Isaac said, 'O my son! Your brother Jacob preceded you.' Esau became angry and said, 'By God! I shall surely kill him.' Isaac said, 'O my son, a prayer is left for you. Come here and I will invoke it for you.' Then he prayed for Esau, saying, 'May your offspring be as numerous as the dust and may no one rule them but themselves.'<sup>42</sup>

In al-Tabari's narrative, Jacob's progeny unites prophecy and kingship. It is not surprising to find different versions of a story with such significant political associations in later narrative sources. For instance, in the *Qisas al-Anbiya'* by al-Rabghuzi (fl. 1310), the story is initially very similar to al-Tabari's account. Isaac craves game and asks Esau to bring it to him. Rebecca overhears the conversation, and then Jacob dresses as Esau and brings the meat to Isaac, but the concluding part of the narrative diverges from al-Tabari significantly:

<sup>41</sup> Al-Tabari, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 2., tr. Brinner 1987, 133; Yerasimos 1990, 198.

<sup>42</sup> Al-Tabari, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 2., trans. Brinner 1987, 133; Yerasimos 1990, 137–138.

Jacob put on the sheepskin and went inside. He said: 'Here, father! I have brought the roast game.' Isaac ate the mutton. Jacob said: 'I have come to ask for the benediction.' Isaac took Jacob's hand and when he felt the skin, he exclaimed: [...] 'The flesh is Esau's, but the voice is Jacob's voice.' He then pronounced this benediction: 'May your progeny become prophets and be good and pious.' The almighty Lord granted Isaac's prayer on behalf of Jacob. After that Esau returned from hunting, bringing meat. And he asked for the benediction. Isaac said: 'You were already here, and I have blessed you.' Esau said: 'I have not been here.' Isaac said: 'Oh Esau, Jacob has played this trick on you, together with his mother.' Thereupon Isaac blessed Esau, but it did not have the force of conferring prophethood. For this reason a feud arose between Esau and Jacob. Isaac feared the feud between them and sent Esau to the land of Rum. The Greeks are all descendants of Esau. Because of Isaac's benediction, all the prophets descended from Jacob's family line.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, the gist of the story is that Jacob receives the legacy of prophecy, and Esau the land of Rum. In terms of the prophetic lineage, al-Rabghuzi and al-Tabari do not differ from each other: both attribute prophecy to Jacob's lineage. In terms of the kingly lineage, however, al-Rabghuzi has a more ambiguous attitude, as he does not make any reference to a kingly lineage in his narrative. Rather, he connects the progeny of Esau with the Greeks, which was not an uncommon attribution among medieval authors.

In al-Rabghuzi's account, one still feels the ambiguity of the post-Mongol political environment of the fourteenth century, when the caliph, as the only legitimate inheritor of the prophetic lineage, was gone, but the Mongol dynasty, as the sole political authority in the western part of the Islamic world, had yet to reach a level of recognition and acceptance that would allow them to influence the discourse of a prophetic narrative, such as the one presented by al-Rabghuzi. If we put it in another way, al-Rabghuzi chose to exclude any reference to kings and rulers from the narrative, despite the fact that he presented his book to a Mongol prince, Toq Buqa, in 709 AH / 1310 CE. Whatever al-Rabghuzi's personal motivations were, his narrative marks the beginning of a split in the definition of religious and political authority as defined in genealogical terms.

In the Oxford Anonymous, this story takes a different turn. The anonymous author reiterates the basic plot: Isaac sends Esau out hunting, but Jacob receives the benediction thanks to his mother Rebecca's intervention. Isaac tells Jacob: 'O God! For the sake of the glory and greatness of Your divinity and grandeur, may all messengers and prophets (*mürsel ve nebi*) who appear from this time onward be from among this man's [Jacob's – EB] sons.'<sup>44</sup> When Esau returns and gives the meat

<sup>43</sup> Al-Rabghuzi, *The Stories of the Prophets*, ed. Boeschoten, Vandamme and Tezcan, vol. 1, 108–109 (text); vol. 2, 134–135 (trans.).

<sup>44</sup> Yücel and Cengiz 1989–1992, 372; Kastritsis 2017, 57.

to his father; Isaac regrets that the benediction went to Jacob, and gives political authority to his older son:

The Prophet Isaac (peace and prayers be upon him!) said, ‘That prayer was supposed to be yours, but it fell upon Jacob. Once by God’s will the arrow of prayer has joined the target of response, it cannot be reversed. But let me make a prayer for you as well, so that your sons and descendants may enjoy a comfortable condition and be honoured and exalted.’ He raised his hand and said, ‘O God! By virtue of Your perfect power, may all future padishahs, beys, and champions be from among this man’s sons.’<sup>45</sup>

In the Oxford Anonymous, prophethood and kingship are divided between the descendants of Jacob and Esau. Idris-i Bidlisi follows the same narrative template. According to him, Isaac prayed for the investiture of prophethood in the progeny of Jacob, and the investiture of worldly power, government, and political leadership in the progeny of Esau.<sup>46</sup> Mustafa ‘Ali also divides kingship and prophethood between the descendants of Esau and Jacob.<sup>47</sup> Yet we should also observe that the narrative becomes much shorter and more simplified from the late fifteenth to the late sixteenth century. We can tabulate the sources discussed above in the following manner (see Table 4):

**Table 4:** Esau and Jacob in Islamic and Ottoman historical narratives.

	Al-Tabari	Al-Rabghuzi	The Oxford Anonymous, Ruhi		Mustafa ‘Ali
<b>Jacob</b>	Prophethood and kingship	Prophethood	Prophethood	Prophethood	Prophethood
<b>Esau</b>	Numerous offspring, independent rule	Land of Rum, ancestor of Greeks	Kingship	Kingship	Kingship

The basic theme of this narrative is very similar to the semantic differentiation of blue and red, namely, the separation of prophethood and kingship, in the *Subhat*.

Let us now return to the second Koy Khan, whose connection to Aaron and Moses we had found difficult to explain. As discussed above, there were conflicting views on the identity of Koy Khan. For instance, the Oxford Anonymous suggests that the

<sup>45</sup> Yücel and Cengiz 1989–1992, 372; Kastritsis 2017, 57. I have slightly revised Kastritsis’s translation. Ruhi’s narrative is no different from that of the Oxford Anonymous. See Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ruhi, *Tevarih i Al i ‘Osman*, Ms. or. quart. 821, fols 7b–8a.

<sup>46</sup> Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Idris-i Bidlisi, *Hasht Bihisht*, Ayasofya 3541, fol. 18a.

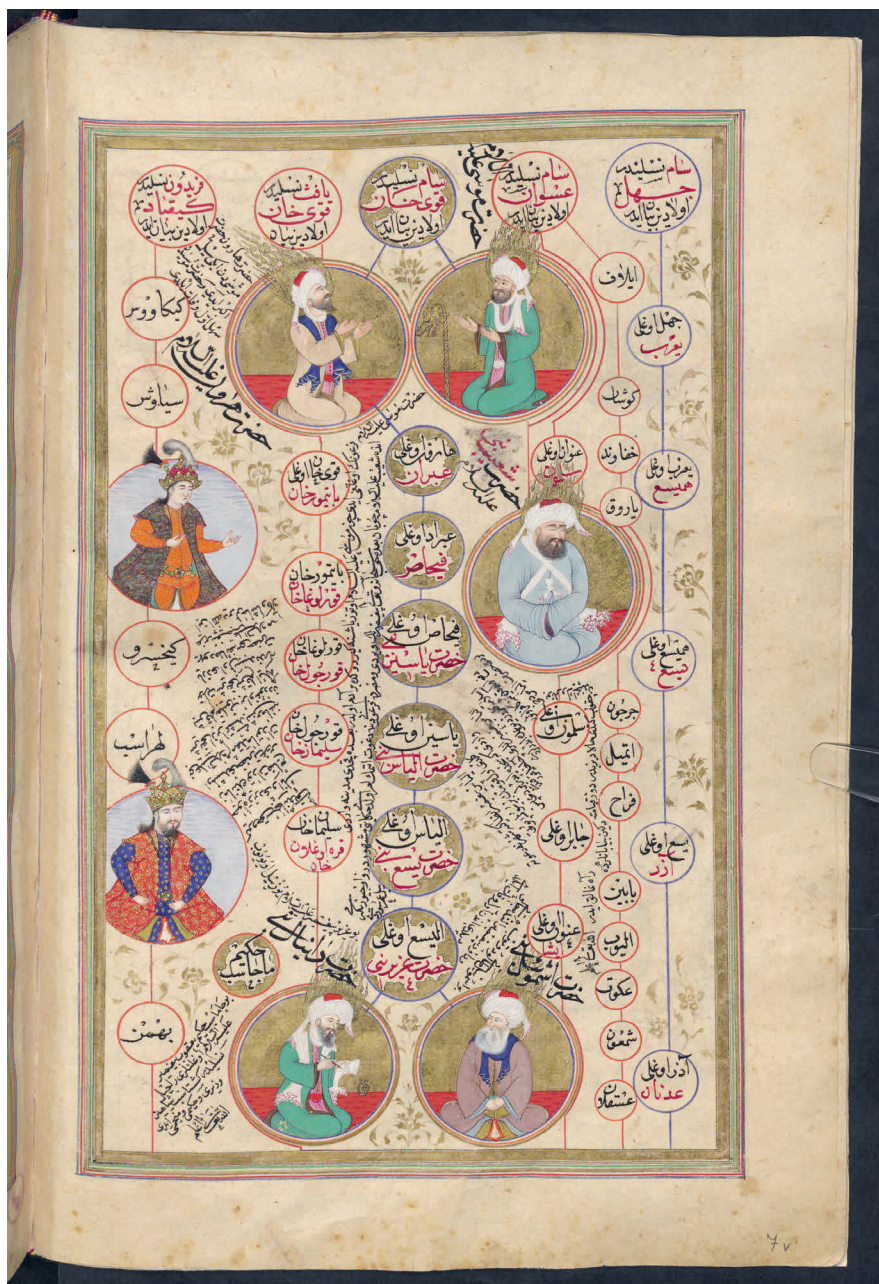
<sup>47</sup> Mustafa ‘Ali, *Künhü’l-Ahbar*, 1861–1869, vol. 5, 18.



name Koy Khan may refer to Esau or a descendant of Japheth. If we assume that the *Subhat* includes both Koy Khans presented by the Oxford Anonymous, we should have a direct connection between the second Koy Khan and the Prophet Ezekiel, whose painting is found at the bottom of folio 7a. However, the inscription near the painting of Ezekiel reads that his lineage does not continue (*munkati' oldu*). The same is true for Yusha', the other prophetic figure at the end of folio 7a. The only blue line that continues from folio 7a to 7b is the line of Salaman, but that line is not connected to Koy Khan in the blue line. Salaman's line eventually reaches the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, the blue line that connects Aaron and the Prophet Moses to Koy Khan is a completely new line that starts on folio 7b. This line eventually reaches the Prophets Daniel and Samuel. The *Subhat* does not depict the descendants of these two prophets, but the Prophet Daniel is located on the red line that eventually reaches the Ottoman dynasty. In conclusion, the *Subhat* endorses the Ottoman dynasty's dual lineage, one prophetic and one kingly, on folio 7b as well (see Figs 3a–3b).



**Fig. 3a:** Detail of Fig. 3b. The prophets Daniel and Samuel. The Prophet Daniel is connected to both blue and red lines. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50, fol. 7b; © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.



**Fig. 3b:** The Prophet Daniel on the left and Samuel on the right on folio 7b. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. A.F. 50, fol. 7b; © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Mirroring dualist political authority in genealogical imagery and reconstructing it in a world-historical framework is not an unprecedented discursive tool in Islamic history. As early as the eighth century, the Umayyad caliph Yazid b. al-Walid b. 'Abd al-Malik (r. 126/744) stated, 'I am the descendant of the Persian emperor, my forefather was Marwan, and both the Emperor of Byzantium and the Khaqan of the Turks were my ancestors.'<sup>48</sup> I believe the most relevant comparison, however, would be to the *Nasihāt al-muluk*, which is a work in the mirror-for-princes genre and considered to have been written by the late eleventh-/early twelfth-century Muslim philosopher and theologian Muhammad al-Ghazali (d. 1111 CE). In this work, al-Ghazali articulates a form of dual kingship conceived in genealogical terms. Al-Ghazali says:

It was narrated in the histories that Adam had many sons, but he chose two of them: Seth and Kayumars. He gave forty pages from the pages of great books to them so that they would behave accordingly. Then, he delegated to Seth the business of that world and looking after religion. He delegated to Kayumars the business of this world and kingship.<sup>49</sup>

Al-Ghazali divides religious and political authority between two brothers. Adam confers prophethood and religious authority on Seth, and kingship on Kayumars. His proposition is an attempt to find a resolution to a very real problem: the relationship between religion and political authority. By the time of al-Ghazali, politics had long been dominated by military warlords or local dynasties, rather than the Abbasid caliphs, who were supposed to be the only legitimate sovereigns over the community of believers.<sup>50</sup> These warlords and local dynasties tried to legitimize their rule with mythical or semi-historical genealogies going back to Iranian kings and heroes or Arab tribes other than the Quraysh, the tribe of the Prophet Muhammad and all subsequent caliphs.<sup>51</sup> Al-Ghazali formulated a balance among different

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<sup>48</sup> Muhammad b. Habib al-Baghdadi, *Kitāb al-Muḥabbar*, ed. Lichtenstädter 1361 AH / 1942 CE, 31, quoted in Bosworth 1973, 53.

<sup>49</sup> Al Ghazali, *Nasihāt al-Muluk*, ed. Jalal al-Din Huma'i 1361 SH / 1982 CE, 84–88. It has been argued that the *Nasihāt al-Muluk* is either partially or entirely part of a huge pseudo-Ghazalian literature. Patricia Crone has suggested that the first part of the book, which is 'the treatise on the faith', was definitely written by al-Ghazali, but the second part, the 'mirror-for-princes' section – which is actually the part most relevant to this paper – was written by somebody close to the vizier Nizam al-Mulk (d. 485 AH / 1092 CE). In any case, this is irrelevant for my purposes, because shortly after al-Ghazali's death in 1111 CE, the book was translated into Arabic, and the Arabic translation includes both sections of the book, attributing both to al-Ghazali without any doubt of their authorship. See Crone 1987, 169 and 190. The *Nasihāt al-Muluk* was used by Ottoman genealogists as well: the *Silsile-name*, which is in the Library of the General Directorate of Foundations (Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü), lists the *Nasihāt al-Muluk* as one of its sources. See Bayram 1981, 280.

<sup>50</sup> Woods 1999, 4.

<sup>51</sup> Clifford Bosworth's article adduces many examples from Iranian dynasties, such as the Tahirids, Saffarids, and Samanids. See Bosworth 1973, 51–60.

political positions, i.e. caliphal and sultanic authority.<sup>52</sup> Hence, the phrase *al-din wa-l-dawla taw'aman* ('religion and state are twins') became common parlance among Islamic political thinkers.<sup>53</sup> In this understanding, political authority and religion are inseparable – two faces of a single coin. Religion means a fundamental contract between God and men, and it is incumbent upon men to believe in the unity of God. However, political authority is important, because without it, we cannot attain happiness.<sup>54</sup>

The visual discourse of the *Subhat* responds to this line of thought, though the *Subhat* associates Seth with Cainan – thus changing the balance proposed previously by al-Ghazali – and favours prophethood over kingship. In the *Subhat*, Seth is Kayumars's great uncle. Nevertheless, the duality persists throughout the book until the emergence of the Ottoman Dynasty.

In the *Subhat*, the entire work rests on the idea that prophetic authority (blue line) supersedes and absorbs kingly authority (red line). It includes a linear succession of three lineages that were respected in the early modern period, namely the prophets and caliphs, the Chinggisids, and the Ottomans. The connection with the Chinggisids attests to the importance of the Chinggisid lineage, according to which only a Chinggisid can claim universal sovereignty. Similarly, by connecting the Ottomans with the caliphs, the author justifies the claim that the Ottomans were the true sovereigns of the Islamic community. However, the ideological framework of the *Subhat* goes beyond these two levels to include the prophetic lineage. The Ottoman sultans, according to the *Subhat*, are the true successors of the prophets, hence creating the impression that their rule and authority are sacred, unchallengeable, and universal. Sultanic authority was connected with the divine through a succession of lineages in the *Subhat* (see Table 5).

**Table 5:** The prophetic lineage (blue line) in the *Subhat*.

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**Prophetic Lineage:** From Adam and Eve to the last Abbasid caliph al-Musta'sim

**Chinggisid Lineage:** From Qaidu Khan to Sultan Abu Sa'id

**Ottoman Lineage:** From 'Osman Gazi to Mehmed IV

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<sup>52</sup> For a summary of al-Ghazali's political thought, see Black 2001, 97–107.

<sup>53</sup> Al-Ghazali does not use this term in the section quoted above. He says that Seth and Kayumars are just two of Adam's many children. Later in the *Nasihah al-Muluk*, however, he devotes a full section to the meaning of this phrase. See al-Ghazali, *Nasihah al-Muluk*, ed. Jalal al-Din Huma'i, 1361 SH / 1982 CE, 106–126. This term is a political maxim attributed to the Sassanid ruler Anushirvan the Great. For the historical development of this concept before the Ottomans, see Arjomand 2010, 233–240.

<sup>54</sup> Black 2021, 100–101.

A comparison of the *Subhat* with another, earlier Ottoman genealogical manuscript highlights the significance of this organizational model. A Dublin manuscript entitled *Zübdetü't-Tevarih*, dated to 1598, proposes another solution to this debate. The detail that differentiates the Dublin manuscript from the *Subhat* is a modification in its colour scheme. A note below the painting of Japheth says, 'This golden line goes generation by generation to the Ottoman family' (*Bu altun çizi ferzend be-ferzend Al-i 'Osmana çıkar*), and the author draws a golden line connecting Japheth and the Ottoman dynasty.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, the author isolates the Ottoman lineage visually from the lineages of the prophets and caliphs, who are located on a blue line. In the Dublin manuscript, the Ottoman dynasty does not appear as an inheritor of the Chinggisid or the caliphal-prophetic dynastic lineage; rather, it stands alone, unprecedented and unique in history. It seems that these two authors, namely the author of the Dublin manuscript and the author of the *Subhat*, agree on the argument that the Ottoman dynasty had a lineage going back to Japheth. However, the Dublin manuscript rejects the dual nature of politics, and Ottoman political power does not appear as a continuation of any previous model of sovereignty, such as the Chinggisid and caliphal models.

## 5 Conclusion

The duality of religion and political authority appears to be one of the overarching themes of early modern Islamic political ideas. In the fifteenth century, the idea of the dual caliphate, external caliphate, or caliph of this world, and the spiritual caliphate, or the caliph of the other world, was formulated to constitute a political system in which a non-religious ('secular') political figure and a religious political figure (often a Sufi sheikh or a messianic revolutionary) would share the authority. During the Timurid period in the fifteenth century, this vocabulary emerged as a reaction to more radical political ideas that defended the investment of the entire political authority in a single political figure. This idea of duality was carried over to the Ottoman sphere, one of the main conduits of this transmission being Idris-i Bidlisi, who developed a unified notion of sovereignty under the title *khilafat-i rahmani* ('caliphate of God'). It appears Idris-i Bidlisi formulated this idea to come up with an absolutist solution by using a more conventional political terminology in the sixteenth century.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. T. 423.

<sup>56</sup> Binbaş 2016, 274–278; Yılmaz 2018, 206–209; Markiewicz 2019, 240–284.

The *Subhat* is a visual depiction of the duality of authority, which sees dynastic fortune and religion as twins (*al-din wa-l-dawla taw'aman*). On the other hand, the author of the *Subhat* goes one step further: in the post-Mongol political environment, devoid of a caliph as a representative of religious authority, religion and dynastic fortune, or the sacred and the profane, are conflated in the Chinggisid and Ottoman lineages. Therefore, the Ottoman lineage and the Ottoman sultan embody both sacred and temporal authority, which was initially divided between the sons of Seth and Kayumars. Thus, religion and state are no longer twins in the discourse presented in the *Subhat*, but just two faces of an absolute ruler, the Ottoman sultan.

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### Abbreviation

*EP* = *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New edition*, Leiden: Brill, 11 vols and on volume of supplement, 1960–2004.

### Genealogical trees in manuscripts

Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Ms. A. 3599 (*Tomar-ı Hümayun*).

Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ms. Ayasofya 3259.

Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ms. Lala İsmail 347.

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- Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. H.O. 11.
- Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. Mxt 487.
- Philadelphia, The Free Library of Philadelphia, Ms. Lewis O 37 Genealogical tables.
- Ankara, Ethnography Museum, *Jam'-i Tarikh*, Ms. 8457.
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Devin DeWeese

# Narratives of Conquest and Genealogies of Custody among the Sacred Families of Central Asia: Manuscript Charters of Ancestral Islamization and Hereditary Privilege

**Abstract:** This essay discusses a Turkic genealogical text, first recorded within a Sufi community of fourteenth-century Central Asia, that narrates the exploits of three figures credited with conquering and Islamizing parts of Central Asia in the second century of Islam. The narrative and its genealogical framework underwent several adaptations from the sixteenth century to the twentieth, some of which were used to advance claims of specific prerogatives for the reputed descendants of the three heroes. The essay explores various iterations of the narrative and genealogy and their connections with the Yasavī Sufi tradition and with the sacred shrines that inscribed the ancestral traditions on the landscape.

## 1 Introduction: A tale of Islamization in a Sufi treatise

At some point in the first half of the fourteenth century, probably nearer to the middle of that century than to the beginning, a Sufi master of Central Asia compiled a treatise, in Turkic, based on the teachings and practice of his own Sufi preceptor, who was also his father. The author of the treatise, Ishāq Khwāja, and his father, Ismāʿīl Ata,<sup>1</sup> were part of the Sufi tradition linked with the more famous figure of Khwāja Aḥmad Yasavī,<sup>2</sup> who is usually said to have died in 562 AH / 1166–1167 CE, but in fact probably lived into the early thirteenth century. Aḥmad Yasavī figures prominently in the work of Ishāq Khwāja, which has come down to us in two basic redac-

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1 'Khwāja' is a title, of Persian origin, translatable as 'master' or 'lord'; 'Ata' is the Turkic word for 'father'. 'Ishāq' and 'Ismāʿīl' are, of course, the Arabic equivalents of the Biblical names rendered in English as 'Isaac' and 'Ishmael'.

2 On this figure, and on the Yasavī Sufi tradition more broadly, see DeWeese 2013, and, with reference to his link to Ismāʿīl Ata and Ishāq Khwāja, DeWeese 2017.

tions, one bearing a title, *Ḥadiqat al-ʿarīfīn* ('The Garden of the Knowers [of God]'), and the other referring to itself simply as the 'treatise' (*risāla*) of Iṣḥāq Khwāja, represented in a total of eleven nearly complete manuscripts identified so far, all but two held in Tashkent.

The work of Iṣḥāq Khwāja is of great historical and religious value for reflecting the earliest phases of the Yasavī Sufi tradition, and is of special interest also as one of the earliest Sufi texts written in Central Asian Turkic. For present purposes, however, the presentation of Sufi teaching in Iṣḥāq Khwāja's work, and the hagiographical lore it includes about Aḥmad Yasavī, Ismāʿīl Ata, and other early Yasavī masters, are of less interest than is a short text, appended to the basic work, that underscores the important role played by genealogy in multiple dimensions of the Yasavī tradition, and in the development of Islam in Central Asia more broadly.

This short supplementary text, included in manuscripts of both redactions of Iṣḥāq Khwāja's work, presents a narrative of the Islamizing conquests in Central Asia led by three kinsmen – two brothers and their uncle – two of whom were identified, in the narrative, as the significant ancestors of Aḥmad Yasavī and of the author's father Ismāʿīl Ata, respectively; all three of them were further identified in the text as descendants (in the fifth and sixth generations) of an enormously important figure in early Islamic history known as Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya. This figure's significance is defined above all in genealogical terms: he was the son of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad who also became the fourth Caliph, i.e., the fourth successor to the Prophet as leader of the Islamic community. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya, however, was the son of 'Alī by a wife *other* than the Prophet's daughter Faṭīma. Descendants of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya by this other wife<sup>3</sup> were thus 'Alids – i.e., descendants of 'Alī – but were *not* descendants of the Prophet, known as *sayyids* – as were, by contrast, descendants of the two sons of 'Alī and Faṭīma, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (who were half-brothers of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya), including most prominently the lineage of the *imāms* of Shīʿī Islam, descended from Ḥusayn b. 'Alī.

The narrative presented in this short supplementary text, and the genealogical framework in which it was presented, were first discussed in print in 1990.<sup>4</sup> More recently, international collaboration involving scholars based in Kazakhstan,

<sup>3</sup> Early Islamic sources do not even tell us the name of this other wife – her name and a fuller purported biography are provided only in much later sources – but refer to her simply as a woman of the Ḥanafī Arab tribe, i.e. 'Ḥanafīya'; her son could have been referred to as 'b. 'Alī' ('the son of 'Alī'), but is instead identified with respect to his mother, as 'Muḥammad the son of the Ḥanafī woman', in order to set him apart from 'Alī's children by the Prophet's daughter.

<sup>4</sup> DeWeese 1990.

Uzbekistan, Russia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Japan, and the United States yielded a two-volume publication (from 2008 and 2013) exploring the multiple iterations of the story and its genealogical ramifications, as outlined below.<sup>5</sup> The narrative itself will also be discussed below, in synopsis, but it may be helpful first to note additional features of the genealogical material preserved in the work of Ishāq Khwāja, and what both the narrative and the genealogy reveal about the Sufi community to which he belonged, and about the environment in which he attached the supplementary text to his Sufi work. We can then consider those later iterations of the story, and the written forms in which they have come down to us, and assess the narrative in the context of yet *another* mode of celebrating the personalia of the genealogically-framed narrative.

The short supplementary text that presents the narrative of Islamization *affirms* the descent of Aḥmad Yasavī and Ismāʿīl Ata from two of the Islamizing warrior-saints, but does not actually provide the names of the genealogical links between the warrior-saints and the two Sufi saints. Those links *are* identified, however, in two *additional* supplementary texts, one tracing the lineage from one of the warrior-saints to Aḥmad Yasavī, and one tracing a separate lineage to Ismāʿīl Ata. These additional texts appear in most manuscripts, but not in all, of both redactions of Ishāq Khwāja's work, and include no narrative component, consisting instead merely of a list of names, linked by the repeated phrase 'and his son was', generation by generation.

In most manuscripts that do *not* contain these two genealogical texts, the reason for their absence is obvious: one or two folios from the end of the manuscripts have been lost. In the oldest known manuscript of either redaction, however, the situation is more complicated. There the *narrative* supplement appears in full at the end of the main work of Ishāq Khwāja, but only a heading appears for the genealogical supplement leading to Aḥmad Yasavī; the actual genealogy itself does not appear, though it seems that the copyist intended to transcribe it but failed to follow through (this oldest copy includes no trace of the genealogy leading to Ismāʿīl Ata). This suggests the possibility, but cannot prove conclusively, that the two additional genealogical supplements were formulated, and attached to the work of Ishāq Khwāja, somewhat later than the first supplementary text containing the narrative of Islamization.

Still other supplementary texts found in several manuscripts of the two redactions of Ishāq Khwāja's work provide additional genealogical material specific to

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5 DeWeese et al. 2013; Muminov et al. 2008. Thanks to the kindness of Kazuo Morimoto, the later volume incorporated his discovery of evocations of the genealogical framework surrounding Aḥmad Yasavī that were only slightly later than, and independent of, the accounts preserved in the work of Ishāq Khwāja.

Ismā'il Ata (lists of his wives, sons, and daughters), which would naturally have been of interest to one of his sons, Ishāq Khwāja. It cannot be confirmed with any certainty, however, that any or all of the *genealogical* texts appended to the basic work of Ishāq Khwāja were added by him; as for the narrative supplement, its language and style suggest that it *was* indeed the work of Ishāq Khwāja himself, though in this case the more important question is whether the narrative might have circulated in written form independently, earlier than the time of Ishāq Khwāja, to be adapted by him for attachment to his larger work. Unfortunately, this question remains impossible to answer. No independent copies of the narrative have been identified, and none of the other echoes of the narrative – discussed below – bears evidence of having been adapted from a version *other* than the narrative supplement attached to the work of Ishāq Khwāja. The latter version is, in short, our earliest written record of the narrative, and is thus the proper starting-place for tracing subsequent adaptations.

## 2 Genealogy and hereditary succession in Sufi communities

Before we turn to those adaptations, the genealogical focus of the various supplementary texts attached to the work of Ishāq Khwāja deserves further contextualization; even the first supplementary text, after all, distinguished by its primarily narrative character, *begins* with genealogy, tracing the lineage from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya down to the Islamizing warrior-saints who dominate the narrative. The genealogical focus of the materials attached to such an early literary product of the Yasavī Sufi tradition is in keeping with a key feature of that tradition, one that distinguishes it from what we often expect of Sufi traditions – even though that feature was in fact quite common during the early development of Sufi communities. We often think, that is, of the master-disciple relationship as central to the transmission of Sufi teaching and practice, but in many early Sufi communities, and in many periods in the history of the Yasavī tradition, transmission from father to son was often the key basis for the continuity of doctrine, ritual and devotional practice, and community leadership.

Father-to-son transmission, to be sure, might be understood and even explicitly framed – though quite often it was not – in terms of the father, as master, transmitting to the son, as disciple. In some phases and arenas of the development of Sufi communities, however, it appears to have been the norm for a Sufi master to be succeeded in that role by a son, and not by a disciple who was unrelated to him by biological kinship. In later phases, and different arenas, that expectation was

reversed, and we find noteworthy cases in which Sufi groups that favored purely hereditary succession were disparaged by rival groups that insisted on demonstrated spiritual merit as the key to Sufi leadership, rather than kinship ties with an earlier master. The rival groups often criticized hereditarily-based Sufi communities as spiritually inferior or even fraudulent, for merely keeping open an ancestor's enterprise, without real religious merit or authority. In other cases, the sons or later descendants of a prominent Sufi master were themselves the rivals who challenged a purely initiatic successor – i.e., one trained by the master, but not related to him by kinship – for leadership of the community.

Underlying such rivalries were the very considerable religious, social, economic, and sometimes political interests at stake in the leadership of a Sufi community. Through initiatic rites that made a Sufi adept part of a particular Sufi group with a distinct profile in doctrine and practice, and through doctrinal transmission and the inculcation of Sufi practices in a younger generation of Sufi seekers, the Sufi master effectively shaped his community in spiritual and moral terms, giving its adherents the status of brethren, and reinforcing a group's identity and cohesion. At the same time, leadership of a Sufi community also entailed managing its institutional infrastructure, which may have included a *khānaqāh* (Sufi 'convent'), a soup-kitchen, the shrine of a spiritual or natural ancestor<sup>6</sup> – a key institution for our present discussion, as outlined below – and various sorts of administrative and financial activities, e.g., handling donations and other means of generating revenues, staffing and funding key functions (feeding and clothing disciples, providing social services to the wider community of supporters), and negotiating benefits or privileges for the community with political authorities. In the latter regard, furthermore, Sufi leaders often wielded important influence over rulers and authorities at various levels, both through their

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6 Shrine culture in Muslim societies has a long history, and has been contested on multiple fronts, but the religious legitimacy of the pious visitation (*ziyarat*) of the shrines (*mazārs*) of saints was widely accepted in Central Asia since the eleventh century CE. The saints assumed to be buried in such shrines – or as otherwise present in them – range from pre-Islamic prophets to Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad to medieval Sufis (such as Aḥmad Yasavī) and Islamizing warrior-saints and martyrs. The shrines themselves range from modest domed structures to imposing edifices housing not only the sacred tomb, but kitchens and dining halls for pilgrims, libraries, and places for individual or collective prayer and contemplation. The buildings and functions associated with the tomb require maintenance and funding, and custody of a shrine generally meant control over the resources set aside, through the Muslim institution known as *waqf* ('pious endowment'), to generate revenues to support the shrine complex, its staff, and its ritual, devotional, and charitable functions. For an excellent overview of the functions of shrines in Central Asian history, see the introduction to McChesney 2021, 1–16.

religious and moral authority and ability to mobilize substantial constituencies, and through their control of the community's economic resources.

In short, the way in which the succession of leaders was managed in a Sufi community was an important issue, and although the norms of purely hereditary vs. purely initiatic succession were not the only alternatives in Sufi history, they often marked the major fault-line both between rival communities, and between factions within a single community. Within this context, the history of the Yasavī tradition reveals many lineages of transmission, and many periods, in which hereditary succession appears to have been the norm, but occasionally we find patterns, and proponents, of non-hereditary succession, i.e., an unrelated initiatic disciple succeeding his master. Our sources make it clear, however, that from the fourteenth century through at least the sixteenth (and probably much longer), the Sufi community traced back to Aḥmad Yasavī *through* Ismāʿīl Ata was overwhelmingly on the side of hereditary succession, and of keeping the leadership of the community inside the family of Ismāʿīl Ata.<sup>7</sup> Based on the treatise of Iṣḥāq Khwāja, we know that Ismāʿīl Ata was initiated into the Yasavī Sufi tradition by his own father – who was linked to Aḥmad Yasavī through two initiatic intermediaries – but also claimed to have received spiritual training by other figures, unrelated to him. Iṣḥāq Khwāja shows us those relationships in his treatise, and also mentions other disciples of his father, but he makes the case for hereditary transmission, and beginning with him, every single Sufi master linked with the legacy of Ismāʿīl Ata that we can trace in our sources was also a natural descendant of Ismāʿīl Ata.

It is thus not surprising that Iṣḥāq Khwāja attached to his treatise the short text that frames the sanctity and authority of both Ismāʿīl Ata and Aḥmad Yasavī in genealogical terms, linking them both with (1) a key figure in early Islamic history, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya, and (2) the Islamizing warrior-saints who fought to establish Islam in the regions where Ismāʿīl Ata and Aḥmad Yasavī lived. Both the claim of descent from the holy figure of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya, made for both Aḥmad Yasavī and Ismāʿīl Ata, and the identification of these two Sufis' intermediate genealogical links as those who 'opened the way'<sup>8</sup> for the establishment of Islam in Central Asia offer hints about the social and political context in which Iṣḥāq Khwāja, in the fourteenth century, included the genealogically-framed narrative at

7 On the hereditary profile of the Ismāʿīl Atāʾī communities, see DeWeese 1996, reprinted in DeWeese 2012.

8 At each stage in the narrative, as the warrior-saints are victorious in new regions, their accomplishment in conquering territory and establishing Islam there is described using some form of the verb *ach-*, meaning 'to open'; it is the Turkic equivalent of the Arabic verbal root *fataḥa*, meaning 'to open', from which the noun *fath* is derived, meaning 'conquest'.



the end of his larger Sufi work: the short text was included as part of a discourse of legitimation intended to establish the prestige, and prerogatives, of the hereditary Sufi communities linked with Aḥmad Yasavī and Ismāʿīl Ata in the context of the Islamization of the Mongols who had ruled in Central Asia since the early thirteenth century. The story of the Islamizing conquests of the ancestors of Aḥmad Yasavī and Ismāʿīl Ata, though set in the second century of the *hijra*, was thus intended to speak to an Islamizing Mongol elite of the fourteenth century dwelling, and ruling, in the territory that was shown in the narrative as earlier having been conquered, and ruled, by the ancestral kinsmen of the two Sufi *shaykhs*.

More broadly, the genealogically-framed story presented in this short supplementary text is an example of two quite common literary phenomena in Central Asia: first, the combination of a narrative of Islamizing conquests with accounts of the genealogical legacies, and prerogatives, of the Islamizing heroes; and second, a developmental pattern in which an early version of such a narrative is adapted to assert somewhat different prerogatives, for different groups, often over the course of many centuries. In the case of the specific narrative of interest here, for instance, perhaps its salient feature is that the same story of Islamizing conquests by three sacred ancestors – which may have circulated orally in some social circles well before its reduction to writing in the middle of the fourteenth century – continued to be transmitted in both oral and additional written formats down to the twentieth century.

### 3 Written formats and adaptations: Ishāq Khwāja's work, hagiographies, and genealogical charters for sacred families

Before turning to those additional written formats, a preliminary comment is in order in connection with the general characteristics of the manuscript versions of the genealogically-framed narrative first recorded in the work of Ishāq Khwāja. All the versions we know of – manuscripts of Ishāq Khwāja's work as well as of the hagiographies and *nasab-nāmas* ('genealogies') discussed below – take the form of a bound codex or a scroll – many of the *nasab-nāmas* are in scroll form – and the genealogies they include are given in textual form, rather than being represented graphically, with circles and lines or in some other format. Such graphic formats are often used for the representation of lines of Sufi initiatic transmission, known as *silsilas* ('chains'), in Central Asia, and sometimes for genealogies, but this is not the case with the many iterations of the narrative and genealogy explored here. In

these, rather, a textual presentation dominates overwhelmingly, with a name given for each generation in the lineage, followed by ‘and his son was...’, and so forth.

Whether this was in fact the most economical mode of presentation, or was perhaps shaped by the textual environment of the narrative itself – with the textual format used to tell the story simply being continued to recount the genealogy – is not clear, but the fact remains that the textual representation of the genealogical material has been remarkably stable, and quite similar, across the types of works in which this particular narrative and genealogy are recorded. The stability in format, across the full manuscript corpus comprising these texts – which spans an enormous geographical and chronological range, as we will see – is matched, in the end, by substantial stability in the *functions* the texts have served. This suggests in turn the long-term capability of texts asserting genealogically-mediated sanctity to provide religious meaning, social cohesion, and sometimes a basis for asserting claims to more tangible assets and resources, in dramatically different historical contexts, from the Mongol era to the present.

The specific written formats that preserve the narrative and genealogy of interest here begin with the extant copies of the two redactions of the fourteenth-century work of Ishāq Khwāja. The earliest manuscript preserving this work appears to date from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century;<sup>9</sup> the next oldest (the one I first identified in 1984) is from the late seventeenth century;<sup>10</sup> a copy of the titled redaction recently discovered in a museum in the town of Qoqan in Uzbekistan is of unspecified date;<sup>11</sup> and all the rest are from the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> The distribution of dates for the known extant manuscripts – more are undoubtedly still in private hands – suggests ongoing, and even increasing, interest in the textual and/or talismanic value of the work of Ishāq Khwāja as a whole, through the nineteenth century, but it is worth noting that having the entire work copied – and not just

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9 This is the Kabul manuscript, discussed in DeWeese et al. 2013, 63–65 (references here are to the English text); as noted there, the text of Ishāq Khwāja’s work is written in the margins of just under 80 folios of a copy of a famous Persian hagiographical work, the *Nafahāt al-uns* of Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī, completed in 883 AH / 1478–1479 CE, and bears orthographic evidence of having been copied from a manuscript produced in the fourteenth century.

10 Institute of Oriental Studies, fond 3, comprising manuscripts from the former Institute of Manuscripts [hereafter IVRUz-3], manuscript no. 252, dated 1103 AH / 1692 CE, uncatalogued; see DeWeese et al. 2013, 71–72.

11 Ghafur Ghulam Regional Museum of Literature, manuscript no. 698, 22b–79b, brought to light in Turdiāliev 2017. I am indebted to Ashirbek Muminov for this reference.

12 These include, from Institute of Oriental Studies, fond 1, the institute’s main collection [hereafter IVRUz-1], nos 3637, 3853, 11838, 11941, 12387, and 13074 (cf. DeWeese et al. 2013, 66–69), and from IVRUz-3, nos 2851 and 3004 (cf. DeWeese et al. 2013, 69–71).

the narrative of Islamization attached at the end – most likely signals a *kind* of interest that was quite different from that reflected in the much more widespread copying, and adaptation and supplementation, of the narrative alone. There was still a market, that is, for discussions of Sufi teaching and practice in the vernacular Turkic of nineteenth-century Central Asia, not merely for narrative and genealogical celebrations of family lore.

In addition to the manuscript legacy of Iṣḥāq Khwāja's work, two sorts of additional iterations of the genealogically-framed narrative of the Islamizing warrior-saints spilled outside the confines of that work, and it is these additional iterations that have carried the narrative far beyond the place in which it originated. First, the story was included in at least five Sufi hagiographies, all in Persian, compiled in India and in Central Asia from the early eighteenth century through the nineteenth.<sup>13</sup> In these venues, the story, and its genealogical framework, were both shortened substantially, in some cases, and were also altered in a more basic way, by being rendered in Persian rather than in the original Turkic. These hagiographical works retained the Sufi context of the original recording of the narrative by Iṣḥāq Khwāja, since they were produced by Sufis as collections of Sufi biographies, but they also continued, though in different ways, the *legitimizing* function of the original version: they carried on the tracing of the sacred lineage past the time of Iṣḥāq Khwāja's work, linking the early Islamizing saints, as well as Aḥmad Yasavī and/or Ismā'īl Ata, to much later Sufis, or, in one case, later state officials, of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. In some cases the later figures were legitimized through the familiar idiom of natural descent, but in other cases their legitimation was affirmed through a claim that sacred descent could in effect jump from the track of natural descent to the line of spiritual transmission.

In the case of these hagiographical iterations of the stories, finally, in some cases one can find a pattern of textual correspondences that suggests the compilers' direct or indirect access to the original text of the narrative as recorded in Iṣḥāq Khwāja's work, but in some cases it seems more likely that the stories, and genealogies, had passed into the realm of oral transmission at some point, and were drawn by the compilers of the hagiographies from unidentifiable oral sources. The five hagiographical works, it may be noted, were not themselves widely-copied texts; several are known from unique copies, while only one is preserved in as many as three manuscripts.

Second, the narrative was also included – generally in a form more closely matching the version found in the work of Iṣḥāq Khwāja, and mostly, though not

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13 For these works, and their accounts, see DeWeese et al. 2013, 344–470 (with Persian texts and both English and Russian translations and commentary).

always, in Turkic – in a host of texts known collectively simply as *nasab-nāmas* ('genealogies'), which were produced and handed down within particular families that claimed descent from the same Islamizing warrior-saints, and were regarded as *sacred* families because of such descent. The family genealogies preserved, transmitted, and adapted within these sacred descent groups essentially repeat the narrative and genealogical core known originally from the work of Ishāq Khwāja, but typically add at least two further elements: first, extended genealogical coverage, tracing lineages from the Islamizing heroes through Aḥmad Yasavī or Ismā'īl Ata and further down to the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries; and second, explicit claims of privileges and control over resources enjoyed by the Islamizing heroes' descendants by virtue of their ancestors' conquests. In some *nasab-nāmas*, additional hagiographical material is included as well, usually on the basis of identifiable Sufi hagiographies dating from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, but in some cases the material has been altered and adjusted to more clearly highlight the particular Sufi saint who appears in the family's ancestral lineage.

In many cases, but not all, the narrative and genealogical core is given in a form so close to that found in the supplementary text in the work of Ishāq Khwāja that direct consultation of a manuscript of the latter work by those who formulated these *nasab-nāmas* can be assumed at some point. That point, however, may well have been quite early, with the text of a particular *nasab-nāma* itself becoming the basis for later copies and adaptations, the compilers of which no longer needed to consult a manuscript of the work of Ishāq Khwāja directly. The extant versions of these *nasab-nāmas* were produced chiefly during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, though in one case, at least, a text of this sort was produced already in the first half of the eighteenth century, suggesting that *nasab-nāmas* of this sort, reflecting the lineages first celebrated in Ishāq Khwāja's work and the narrative first recorded there, were in all likelihood produced much earlier, but that most earlier copies did not survive – not only because of the simple ravages of time, but because such texts were *meant* to be updated, in order to trace later branchings of the family tree (and possibly to eliminate and in effect disown branches known from earlier iterations that had either died out or turned hostile), and to adjust, where necessary, the identities, prerogatives, or both, of the families that sponsored them.

The later iterations of the narrative and its genealogical framework, in these *nasab-nāmas*, were marked by three characteristics that are evident already in the earliest version of the narrative. First, the narrative continued to be found in literary venues shaped by the world of Sufism; specifically, Sufi terminology is used to refer to many of the individuals named in them, and the texts are replete with references to Sufi institutions and ritual practices. Second, the *nasab-nāmas* maintained, and in most cases further elaborated, the genealogical framework, tracing lines of descent from Aḥmad Yasavī or from Ismā'īl Ata or other figures down to

the eighteenth, nineteenth, or twentieth centuries. And third, the *nasab-nāmas* retained their legitimizing function, not simply in terms of asserting genealogical ties with the earliest generations of Muslims on behalf of Aḥmad Yasavī, Ismāʿīl Ata, and their natural or initiatic descendants, but in some cases also in terms of asserting specific claims to property, water-rights, or shrine custody *on the basis of* descent from the Islamizing conquerors.

The latter point is worth emphasizing, because both the narrative of Islamizing conquests and the genealogical framework in which it is presented are intimately linked, further, with the broader complex of sacred families, shrines, and the documentary justification of the claims of particular families to privileged status and, more concretely, to the custody of certain properties – including, usually, the shrine of the family's putative ancestor. Known in Central Asia mostly by the collective designation *khoja*,<sup>14</sup> sacred families were traditionally accorded high status in their societies, and their members often performed important religiously-charged functions, such as healing, officiating at various ritual and celebratory occasions, and social mediation. The sacred families also typically maintained the shrines of their sacred ancestors. Most *khoja* groups also maintained the documentary evidence of their right to high status and specific prerogatives in the form of their *nasab-nāmas*. It is in this context that the third phase of the iteration of the specific narrative first recorded in the work of Iṣḥāq Khwāja must be understood, alongside the specific lineages traced in that narrative from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiya down to the Islamizing warrior saints, on to Aḥmad Yasavī and Ismāʿīl Ata, and, in the later iterations, down to families of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. The genealogical component establishes who those families are, the narrative recounts what their holy ancestors did, and the *nasab-nāmas* are completed by stipulating the specific rights asserted on the basis of the holy ancestors' deeds.

Particular iterations of the *nasab-nāmas* formulated in this way were usually elicited at times of regime change, whether the nineteenth-century advent of Khoqandian rule in the middle Syr Darya valley, or the later Russian conquest, as families sought to justify their prerogatives and status to the new authorities.<sup>15</sup> The Soviet era naturally offered scant opportunities, or incentives, for formulating fresh iterations of such documents. With its official hostility to religion – and

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14 This term, used to refer to members of families claiming descent from early Islamic heroes, is clearly derived from the Persian title, often attached to medieval Sufi saints, that is here transcribed as Khwāja; the form *khoja* reflects the pronunciation in modern Uzbek, while the Qazaq form is *qozha*. For an overview of the *khoja* phenomenon, with further references, see DeWeese 2008.

15 On the 'document wars' among competing lineages claiming hereditary prerogatives on the basis of different versions of the relevant *nasab-nāmas* in the nineteenth century, see DeWeese 1999, with further references to publications on the *nasab-nāmas*.

especially to economic or social privilege based on religion – the Soviet regime was not simply unresponsive to claims of the sort made in the *nasab-nāmas*, but actively antagonistic toward them, and both the sacred descent groups who made the claims, and the texts they used to make them, were suppressed during the Soviet era. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, however, the phenomenon of families claiming descent from various saints and Islamizing heroes, maintaining and developing the shrines of their holy ancestors, and rediscovering – or, more often, reformulating – their familial histories in the documents surviving from earlier times has come to the fore again. The resurfacing of such sacred descent groups, and of their *nasab-nāmas*, has been especially important in Kazakhstan, where the texts now serve the broader purpose of framing group identity, potentially as a challenge to, but increasingly, it seems, in tandem with, government-sponsored narratives of Qazaq national identity.

As in the case of the genealogical texts maintained by these family groups, their ancestral shrine traditions were often suppressed in Soviet times. Some of the shrines that were formerly the subject of claims by particular families (in some cases multiple branches, with competing claims) were taken out of such circulation by state appropriation, but other sites have often emerged to take their place, as families refurbished surviving shrines, built new ones where earlier structures had been destroyed, and in some cases established new shrines where none are known to have stood in earlier times, all after the end of Soviet rule. All these phenomena, in turn – the genealogically-framed narratives of Islamization, the ancestral shrines, the families defined in terms of descent from Islamizing saints – reflect the broader process of the genealogical domestication of sainthood in Islamic societies, with examples known well beyond the frontiers of Central Asia.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, in framing the genealogical identity of a particular family, in recounting the exploits of its earlier members, and in asserting either specific prerogatives or simply special status and sacred prestige on the basis of the genealogy and narrative account, these *nasab-nāmas* serve as legitimizing genealogical charters for the families that claimed natural descent from the early Islamizing heroes. They thus continue the legitimizing functions at work in the case of the first two iterations of the narrative: as noted, the narrative was no doubt originally included in Iṣḥāq Khwāja's work in order to legitimize his hereditary Sufi community, while in the hagiographies that incorporate the narrative, it served to legitimize later Sufi communities. With the *nasab-nāmas*, the focus shifted to legitimizing particular descent groups, but without entirely abandoning, as noted, the Sufi environment.

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16 See the examples discussed in DeWeese 2008, 22 n. 17.

Another noteworthy feature of these three sorts of iterations of the narrative of the warrior-saints is their chronological and geographical reach: they have retained meaning, for various constituencies, over the course of seven centuries, and have been reproduced across a remarkably large swath of Asian territory, in a vast arc stretching from the Deccan through Central Asia to Western Siberia. The center-point of this arc, and the site of the most extensive production and preservation of manuscripts representing the multiple iterations of the narrative, may be located to the north of Tashkent, in the south of present-day Kazakhstan, where Ishāq Khwāja and his father lived and died, and where they envisioned their ancestral kinsmen pausing in their conquests to plan the next stages. We will return shortly to another mode of inscribing the narrative, and its characters, in this territory, one in many ways more potent than texts and writing.

## 4 The core narrative

First, however, let us introduce the main characters of the narrative, in its earliest known version, and summarize the course of the story. The account begins by tracing the lineage of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya down to the trio of Islamizing warrior-saints, namely Ishāq Bāb, his younger brother ‘Abd al-Jalīl, and their uncle, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm. Though not the senior figure, Ishāq Bāb is clearly the central player in the narrative, even if considerably more space is devoted to the lineage descending from the uncle, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm; we will come back to this issue. It is clear early on, in any case, that not only conquest and Islamization, but sacred ancestry, are key to the three saints’ legacies: we are told, before the rest of the narrative, that Ishāq Bāb and ‘Abd al-Jalīl were the ancestors, respectively, of Aḥmad Yasavī and Ismā‘īl Ata. In some early variants, but not all, we are also told that their uncle, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, was the ancestor of yet another important sacred descent group of historical prominence in Central Asia; we will also return to this group.

After identifying them in genealogical terms, the account notes that these three figures were rulers in lands far to the west of Central Asia, namely Yemen and Syria. When they came together at one point, for reasons unspecified, it was Ishāq Bāb who proposed that they lead forces to the east to complete the work of Islamization begun by earlier generations. They agreed, gave an accounting to each other of the troops they could muster, and set out, ostensibly in the year 150 of the Islamic *hijrī* calendar (767 CE), passing through Iran, into Khurasan, through Mawarannahr, and into the Farghana valley. There they fought their first battle, defeating a ‘Magian’ (*mugh*) ruler, before moving north to Chāch and Isbijāb – medieval designations for Tashkent and for Sayrām, and thus encompassing the region in which Ismā‘īl Ata

and Ishāq Khwāja would later dwell – where the three kinsmen parted ways, each leading troops in a different direction to continue the spread of Islam.

‘Abd al-Raḥīm’s conquests, and posterity, are followed first. He headed to the east, to Kāshghar, the original base of the historical Turkic dynasty known as the Qarakhanids. The Qarakhanids are famous as the first major Turkic dynasty to convert to Islam, in the tenth century, while based in Kāshghar, but they eventually expanded into the western part of Central Asia, dominating the region of Tashkent, the Farghāna valley, and the cities of Samarqand and Bukhara. What follows in the narrative reads like a garbled or caricatured account of the trajectory of Qarakhanid history.

In the narrative, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm and his descendants are assigned names that vaguely echo Qarakhanid titlature (including elements such as *tafghāch*, frequently encountered among the names and titles of Qarakhanid dynasts, and *bughrā*, ‘camel stallion’, reflecting the incorporation of animal names into Qarakhanid titlature, alongside the title Qarākhān itself). At the same time, the centers in which each descendant is said to rule shift in a grand counterclockwise arc from Kāshghar to the middle Syr Darya valley (again, near the place where Ismā‘īl Ata and Ishāq Khwāja would later live), passing through, in succession, the cities of Almalīq and Qayalīq (in the Ili valley), ‘Qūd-balīgh’ (masking the Mongol-era name for Balāsāghūn, in the Chu valley), Sarīgh-balīgh (also in the Chu valley), Ṭarāz, Sayrām, and Otrār. This arc corresponds quite closely to the course of conquests by the historical Qarakhanid dynasty as it moved from Kāshghar through the Ili and Chu valleys to the middle Syr Darya valley, though the process occurred over a much shorter time historically than is shown in the narrative of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm and his descendants.<sup>17</sup> In any event, descendants of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm are shown ruling from the town of Otrār for several generations, and the last one is said to have been killed, and the dynasty’s run ended, in circumstances that appear to match historical accounts of the elimination of the last Qarakhanid rulers during the early thirteenth century, in the years leading up to the Mongol conquest of Central Asia.

After thus following ‘Abd al-Raḥīm’s lineage to its end, the account turns to Ishāq Bāb, who moved north from Chāch/Tashkent and made war upon a Christian (*tarsā*) ruler of Sayrām. The Muslims were victorious, though at the cost of their standard-bearer, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, who was struck by Christian arrows in seventy places. The defeated leader of Sayrām fled to the north, but was defeated again, opening the way for the spread of Islam. The account notes that Ishāq Bāb built a three-storey fortress at a site called Qarghalīq, and ruled in that region for 54 years; it then turns to the final leader, ‘Abd al-Jalīl, before returning, by necessity, to Ishāq Bāb.

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<sup>17</sup> See the discussion of this part of the narrative in DeWeese et al. 2013, 309–327. For an overview of Qarakhanid history, see Golden 1990.



‘Abd al-Jalīl’s campaigning trajectory, from Tashkent, lay to the west, and specifically down the Syr Darya valley, toward the cities of Barchīnkent and Jand. ‘Abd al-Jalīl, however, was martyred in fighting the infidels of those regions, and it was left to his elder brother Ishāq Bāb to avenge his death. After he had done so, and had thereby eliminated the last non-Muslim rulers in Central Asia, Ishāq Bāb traveled to the Ka’ba in Mecca, measured it, and returned to Sayrām to erect a mosque with the dimensions of the Ka’ba, thus ritually re-iterating the holiest site of Islam in far-off Sayrām. The narrative ends with a list of five men of the generation of the ‘Followers of the Successors’ (*taba’ al-tābi’īn*) – the third of three generations of Muslims recognized as particularly close to, and representative of, the time of the Prophet himself – who had accompanied Ishāq Bāb and who were thus established in the territory he and his kinsmen conquered. These figures are presented in the account as teachers of Islam among the people of that territory, but three of them, at least, were also associated with specific shrines that marked these holy figures’ implantation in the newly Islamized area (the other two were no doubt also represented by shrine traditions that have since been forgotten).

Such is the core narrative that was first recorded in the work of Ishāq Khwāja, from the middle of the fourteenth century. Its details can bear substantial commentary,<sup>18</sup> but here just one of its notable features is worth highlighting, by way of framing how the narrative may have been in dialogue with other narrative and manuscript traditions. The account portrays ‘Abd al-Jalīl, the ancestor of Ismā’īl Ata and of his son Ishāq Khwāja, the author of the earliest recording of the narrative, as junior to the other two warrior-saints, and devotes the shortest part of the narrative to him, albeit in the course of identifying him as a martyr. His older brother Ishāq Bāb – the ancestor of Aḥmad Yasavī – is clearly the central character in the narrative, for initiating the entire enterprise of conquest, for conquering and ruling in the core territory, centered on Sayrām, for avenging his brother and in effect completing the conquest, and for establishing the institutional and intellectual foundations of Islam – the mosque and the teachers – in the territories he had conquered. Yet it is not Ishāq Bāb, the central character, or ‘Abd al-Jalīl, the author’s ancestor, to whom the most extensive coverage is devoted, but rather their uncle ‘Abd al-Raḥīm – whose legacy, as noted, is recounted in ways that echo the historical Qarakhanid dynasty, with its reputation for Islamization.

This fact would seem to justify the suspicion that traditions about ‘Abd al-Raḥīm and his descendants might have been the earliest portion of the narrative to be formulated, and perhaps to be written down, with the accounts of Ishāq Bāb and ‘Abd al-Jalīl devised later and grafted onto it. As plausible as this seems, however, there is

18 See DeWeese et al. 2013, 273–343.

no explicit evidence for this suspicion, since the earliest recording of the narrative already includes all three figures.

Nevertheless, the extensive attention devoted to 'Abd al-Raḥīm and his descendants in the narrative, and their story's evocation, in broad outline, of the history of the Islamizing dynasty of the Qarakhanids, raise two additional points worth noting here. One is the curious case of 'Abd al-Raḥīm himself, who is shown conquering Kāshghar, then moving on Almaliq and Qayaliq, and ending his days in 'Qūd-baligh' or Balāsāghūn. Quite a few generations of Qarakhanid dynasts are thus telescoped in this foundational figure himself, but of further interest, from the standpoint of this narrative, is what happens to his name in the new realms he conquers: the name 'Abd al-Raḥīm disappears, and we are told that he became known, in Kāshghar and later in Qūd-baligh, by two Turkic names or titles that both include the element 'Qarākhān' (the names may be reconstructed as 'Arighliḡh Tafghāch Bughrā Qarākhān' and 'Qilich Qarākhān').

The repetition of this title in the appellations of 'Abd al-Raḥīm and many of his descendants reinforces the connection between this part of the narrative and both a shrine and a descent group linked with the term 'Qarākhān'. The shrine, in Ṭarāz, is known as that of 'Awliyā Qarākhān',<sup>19</sup> which is indeed the name of the grandson of 'Abd al-Raḥīm who is shown in the narrative as the first in the lineage to rule from Ṭarāz. The descent group is likewise referred to, in Central Asian sources from the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, as the 'Awliyā'-i Qarākhān', i.e., 'the Qarākhān saints', and families claiming descent from this group, and from 'Abd al-Raḥīm, still live in southern Kazakhstan. It was because of this shrine's prominence in the town classically known as Ṭarāz that the town was known, at the time of the Russian conquest, as Awliyā Ata.

The second point to note is that some oral and written traditions about this lineage make a more direct equivalence with the Qarakhanid dynasty than does the earliest-known version of the narrative of interest here. These traditions – including some later iterations of the *nasab-nāmas* that present the same basic narrative – assert straightforwardly that 'Abd al-Raḥīm, ancestor of the 'Awliyā'-i Qarākhān', was none other than Satūq Bughrā Khān,<sup>20</sup> the figure who is acclaimed, in traditions circulated in Central Asia from the eleventh century down to the present, as the first Qarakhanid convert to Islam (the traditions date his conversion to the middle of the tenth century). This sort of assertion is of particular interest for sug-

<sup>19</sup> The element *awliyā* comes from the Arabic *awliyā'*, the plural of *walī*, the term most commonly used for a 'friend' of God, or 'saint'.

<sup>20</sup> Two written versions making this claim were in fact among the earliest examples of such *nasab-nāmas* to be published; see Kallaur 1897b; and Kallaur 1899.

gesting how multiple, and even divergent, narratives of Islamization might eventually be put into dialogue with one another by families and descent groups, or other types of communities, that invested their identities in one narrative or another, but came to learn of other stories, and took a more inclusive approach, seeking to reconcile them by using a mode of reclassification familiar from genealogical discourse – i.e., ‘your ancestor was also known by such-and-such other name’, allowing his recognition as also ‘our ancestor’ – instead of simply rejecting or contesting the other narrative.

Although the identification of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm with Satūq Bughrā Khān may be thought of as supplying an alternative story of Qarakhanid Islamization, counter to the narrative cycle surrounding Satūq Bughrā Khān himself, that narrative cycle – known in three broad iterations ranging from the eleventh century to the nineteenth – offers a clear parallel with the narrative of Iṣḥāq Bāb in terms of the stages of their development. The story of Iṣḥāq Bāb, that is, already has substantial genealogical ramifications in its earliest known iteration – in the work of Iṣḥāq Khwāja – and adds minimal additional genealogical material in the Sufi hagiographies that incorporate it for a second iteration, before its third iteration – in the *nasab-nāmas* – retains the narrative, adds some hagiographical material, stresses the practical prerogatives of the Islamizers’ descendants in the territories conquered and Islamized by the ancestral saints, and substantially expands the genealogical coverage. In the case of Satūq Bughrā Khān, the first iteration, preserved in the early fourteenth-century work of Jamāl Qarshī (but based on a source from the late eleventh century), includes only minimal genealogical material, on the Qarakhanid dynasty down to Satūq, who is legitimized not by sacred descent – his ancestors were not Muslims – but by conversion to Islam.<sup>21</sup> The second iteration – the narrative’s incorporation and expansion in a hagiographical source datable roughly to the sixteenth or seventeenth century – pays minimal attention to genealogy, and serves a distinctly Sufi constituency.<sup>22</sup> The third iteration, chiefly from the nineteenth century and paralleling the *nasab-nāmas*, retains the narrative but also traces a genealogy, of sorts, *from* Satūq, outlining the practical achievements of his heirs in the conquest and Islamization of particular territories.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See the discussion of these three iterations of the narrative of Satūq Bughrā Khān in DeWeese 1996, and the translation of the earliest version in Sela 2010.

<sup>22</sup> The second iteration has received much less scholarly attention. A text edition of the anonymous Persian hagiography that incorporated the expanded narrative has been published (see Munīr ‘Ālam 1998), but the Turkic versions, or translations, of the hagiography remain to be studied.

<sup>23</sup> The third iteration has been the best known. See the early French translation by Grenard 1900, the discussion of the complex manuscript corpus by Thum 2016, and the English translation in Eden 2018.

Despite the general developmental parallels between the narrative of Satūq Bughrā Khān and the account focused on Ishāq Bāb and his kinsmen, we cannot identify specific familial constituencies for the latest iteration of the former narrative as we can for the latest iteration of the story of Ishāq Bāb. The nineteenth-century versions of the narrative of Satūq seem to have served a wider constituency, namely the entire Muslim population of the region of Eastern Turkistān under Qing rule, and thus were not genealogical charters for specific families, but rather, as has been argued, proto-national charters that came to frame twentieth-century identities.<sup>24</sup> However, such familial constituencies are quite clear for an even larger body of genealogical charters known from the former Soviet-ruled parts of Central Asia, and from the wider *khoja* phenomenon, as noted above.

## 5 The Ürüng-qūylāqī *Nasab-nāmas*

Many of the *khoja* groups of Central Asia appeal to descent from still other saints, and thus do not incorporate the narrative explored here in their *nasab-nāmas*. There are nevertheless some genealogical texts, serving as charters for particular *khoja* groups, that *do* incorporate the narrative of Ishāq Bāb, but highlight somewhat different lines of descent. For instance, the Qorasan Ata *khojas* claim descent from ‘Abd al-Jalīl, and recount the narrative in most of their *nasab-nāmas*, but know nothing of Ismā‘īl Ata, the key descendant of ‘Abd al-Jalīl in the work of Ishāq Khwāja. Indeed, perhaps the most remarkable example of a family of *nasab-nāmas* that incorporate the narrative (in this case almost an exact replica), and adopt the same basic genealogical structure known already from the work of Ishāq Khwāja, represents family groups that claim descent from Ishāq Bāb, *not* through Aḥmad Yasavī – the key descendant of Ishāq Bāb in the work of Ishāq Khwāja – but through a *brother* of Aḥmad Yasavī. This family of texts – which in fact highlight a grandson of Aḥmad Yasavī’s brother referred to, in most versions, as Ṣafī al-Dīn Ürüng-qūylāqī – is of further interest for being represented not only in 19 copies used in 2008 volume,<sup>25</sup> but also in the oldest-known manuscript version of any of the *nasab-nāmas* that feature the narrative of Ishāq Bāb. This manuscript, now preserved in Moscow, was written down in 1740, in the town of Tobol’sk in Western Siberia, at the request of Gerhard Friedrich Müller, a prominent historian of Siberia

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<sup>24</sup> See Thum 2014.

<sup>25</sup> Muminov et al. 2008, 51–81.

and participant in the ‘Great Northern Expedition’ sent to explore and map Siberia between 1733 and 1743.<sup>26</sup>

The family of genealogical texts that highlight the Ürüṅ-qūylāqī lineage, as reflected in the Tobol’sk manuscript and many others, may stand as a good example of the ways in which the *nasab-nāmas* in general – representing that third iteration of the narrative’s use and adaptation – built upon the narrative originally recorded in the work of Ishāq Khwāja. This family of texts *begins* with a version of the narrative of Ishāq Bāb, as summarized above, that is somewhat abbreviated compared with the earliest known version. It then outlines the lineage from Ishāq Bāb down to Aḥmad Yasavī and Ṣafī al Dīn, which is shown exactly as it is in the work of Ishāq Khwāja, though, as noted, Ismā’il Ata is not mentioned.

The text then proceeds with a brief and disjointed account of Yasavī’s life, not found in Ishāq Khwāja’s work, but reflected, in less garbled forms, in several Sufi works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: it mentions Yasavī’s relationship with Khizr, his move to Yasi from Sayrām, and his habit of riding on a cloud each day to the Ka’ba in order to perform his prayers. The narrative, such as it is, then turns to Yasavī’s disciples, briefly discussing Ṣūfī Muḥammad Dānishmand and ‘Sulaymān Khwāja Ḥakīm’ – two figures well-known in Yasavī lore as his disciples – but paying more attention to Yasavī’s kinsman, Ṣafī al Dīn Ürüṅ-qūylāqī, insisting that *he*, and not the better-known disciples named before him, was designated by Yasavī as his successor. Cases of disputed succession are as familiar in the context of Sufi communities as in familial settings, and claims such as this – to be a prominent shaykh’s rightful successor, instead of other figures more widely regarded as such – are a familiar method of advancing the interests of particular sub-communities against more well-established groups. In the context of the Yasavī Sufi tradition, in particular, as noted above, the tension between hereditary succession, on the one hand, and initiatic or designated modes of succession, on the other, yielded ongoing rivalries between natural descendants and spiritual heirs, and those rivalries were quite often worked out in narrative and other literary frameworks in which they inevitably left traces.

The account in the Ürüṅ-qūylāqī texts briefly hints at conflict or rivalry between Ṣūfī Muḥammad Dānishmand and Ṣafī al Dīn – an element that may more likely signal conflict or rivalry between hereditary or initiatic communities that traced their origins to these figures – but then turns abruptly to an extended listing of the properties claimed, by Ṣafī al Dīn, to have belonged to Ishāq Bāb (and hence to his posterity) since the time of his Islamizing conquests. These properties, and the legal rights to them on the part of Ṣafī al Dīn and his descendants, are indeed

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26 For the Tobol’sk version, prepared by Alfrid Bustanov, see DeWeese et al. 2013, 496–533 (English and Turkic texts).

the focus of the rest of the *nasab-nāma*. The lands belong to Ṣafī al Dīn, the text insists, by virtue of the central role played by Ishāq Bāb – his ‘great ancestor’ (*ulugh atam*) – in their Islamization (through conquest and the establishment of mosques) and in their irrigation and revivification. The text insists that no one else may make claims on them so long as his descendants look after the needs of Sufis and other Muslims who come for hospitality. The account then concludes with a summary of Ṣafī al-Dīn’s genealogy, including a list of his descendants down through 17 generations, the latest of whom appears to be datable to the mid- to late-nineteenth century.<sup>27</sup>

The Ürüŋ-qūylāqī family of texts can be only partly representative of the larger body of *nasab-nāmas* explored by scholars so far; the second volume of *Islamizatsiia i sakral’nye rodoslovnye* (from 2008) included 35 examples – small codices or, more often, scrolls – of such texts, grouped into six families of texts overall. It nevertheless offers a good idea of the shared structure of most of the versions and families of texts: the narrative of Islamization is followed by hagiographical material – often in garbled form, if compared with other known recordings – and then by listings of lands and water rights (or, in some cases, shrines) claimed on a hereditary basis by the compilers of the documents, on the basis of their genealogical ties to the Islamizing heroes and/or other saints – or, one might say, simply on the basis of their sanctity as descendants of those heroes and warrior saints, though it is worth noting that a chain of custody, of sorts, is at least asserted in the texts, through the rehearsal of the genealogies themselves.

The final stage in that chain of custody usually concludes the *nasab-nāmas*, as the lineage is traced down – often with attention to multiple branchings – to the literary present, the time of the text’s copying. In some cases the multiple versions we have of particular textual families reflect merely the updating of the final genealogies, with texts representing various stages in the generational lives of the *khoja* groups. It is also important to note that additional versions of such texts, and whole new families of texts, have been brought to light since 2008: this is a body of texts that promises only to grow, as more and more families share their genealogical charters – concealed from the authorities in Soviet times – with researchers. Moreover, the increasing visibility of both *khoja* families and their documents has prompted other groups to claim *khoja* status despite their lack of corresponding *nasab-nāmas*, citing the pressures of the Soviet era to explain the purported loss of the genealogical charters they claim to have possessed in the past.<sup>28</sup> This should remind us of the power of literary and documentary culture to shape expectations

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27 See the earliest publication of this version, Safi ad Din Orīn Qoylaqī’s *Nasab-nama*, ed. in Muminov and Zhandarbekov 1992, and the comments in DeWeese 1999.

28 For examples of this phenomenon, see Bigozhin 2017.

about how genealogy, and social status, must be authenticated. At the same time, however, the appeal to the loss of family charters on the part of would-be *khojas*, as well as the broader remembrance, among many established *khoja* groups, of the pressures that led in some cases to the pre-emptive destruction of *nasab-nāmas*, may remind us that the *lack* of written documentation can likewise reinforce social cohesion, when the absence of documents is explained by evoking a shared communal experience of oppression and attempted cultural annihilation.

## 6 Conclusion: From text to shrine

At the same time, however, it would be misleading to stress only the written remains and reflections of the genealogically-framed narrative we have considered here, without noting also the inscription of the narrative, and its characters, in the territories that are shown in the narrative as having been liberated for Islam and then ruled by the ancestral warrior-saints, in the form of shrines. Their shrines, after all, may be considered the *other* major mode of recording the memories of the narrative's heroes, and they have been inextricably linked with the manuscripts in which the narrative is recorded, in all its iterations, with those who produced the manuscripts, and with those who preserved them.

Shrines associated with the Islamizing heroes of the narrative begin, in effect, with that center-point, noted earlier, along the arc, extending from the Deccan through the Syr Darya valley to Western Siberia, in which the narrative was recorded in various forms. Ground-zero for the narrative, and its earliest known recording, was a locality called, in the work of Ishāq Khwāja, Qazghird or Qazghirt, half-way between Tashkent and Sayram. This is where Ismā'īl Ata and his son Ishāq Khwāja dwelled, and though it is now called simply 'Turbat' because their shrines are located there (*turbat* is among many generic terms for 'shrine'), the earlier place-name, in a Turkified form, i.e., Qazıqurt, has been attached, at least since the latter nineteenth century, to a mountain near the town, famous locally as the place where Noah's ark came to rest.<sup>29</sup>

The same locality, and the shrines of the father-and-son Sufi shaykhs, stands at the center of a broader array of shrines associated with the narrative:

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<sup>29</sup> The legend was first noted in Divaev 1896; see also the recent discussion of Kozha and Baltabaeva 2020.

- The famous shrine of Aḥmad Yasavī, built at the end of the fourteenth century at the order of Timur, stands a bit further to the west, in the town now known as Turkistan, near the Syr Darya.<sup>30</sup>
- The shrine of one of the three Islamizing warrior saints, the martyred ‘Abd al-Jalīl, is found still further west, along the lower course of the same river, near the old site of Jand, and is known as that of ‘Qorasan Ata’.<sup>31</sup>
- The shrine of the chief Islamizing warrior saint, Ishāq Bāb, lies to the north, in the northern slopes of the Qaratau mountains in southern Kazakhstan, where a small village has grown up around the locality known as ‘Isqaq Bab’.<sup>32</sup>
- Closer to the north, in Sayrām, lies the shrine of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, one of the martyred companions of the Islamizing saints.<sup>33</sup>
- Various shrines associated with figures mentioned in the narrative are located in Sayrām and to the south, in Tashkent.
- And the shrine of ‘Awliyā Qarākhān’ associated with the third Islamizing warrior saint, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, lies to the east-northeast, in Ṭarāz.<sup>34</sup>

Each of these shrines in effect inscribes the narrative directly on the territory that is claimed – for present-day control, pride of past Islamization, or both – by descent groups linked to the shrines, and named in the narrative. This alternative, or more properly complementary, mode of inscribing the narrative marks an important counterpart to the narrower inscriptions of pen and paper in the genealogical manuscripts that are our focus here, and it has been, and continues to be, ‘read’ much more widely than written texts, not only among the descent groups themselves, but among a still broader constituency of pilgrims who come to perform the rites associated with *ziyārat* (‘visitation’) to the shrines, and who hear there the narrative explaining who it was that made each site sacred, and how.

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**30** There is extensive literature dealing with the shrine of Aḥmad Yasavī; for orientation, see Mas-son 1930; Man’kovskaia 1985; and, for extensive photographs, Nurmukhammedov 1980; Muminov, Mollaqaanaghatūli and Qorghanbek 2009, with text in Qazaq, Russian, English.

**31** ‘See Kallaur 1901; Kastan’e 1910, 200–202, 207–209; Sattarūli 2007.

**32** On this shrine, and the associated complex known as ‘Baba-ata’, see Castagné 1951, 64–65; Mustafina 1992, 81–82, 111.

**33** See Asylbekov, Akishev et al. 1994, 204. The ‘hundred thousand saints of Sayrām’ became proverbial, reflecting the sheer number of saints’ shrines there, as well as the narrative traditions surrounding many of them; on both facets of the hagiology of Sayrām, see DeWeese 2000, 278 on ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.

**34** See Castagné 1951, 58; Kallaur 1897a, 3.



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**East Asia**



Christopher S. Agnew

# Distinguishing Pearls from Fish Eyes: The Branch Lineage Genealogies of the Descendants of Confucius

**Abstract:** This paper examines the form and production of genealogies compiled by local branch-lineages of the descendants of Confucius, the Kongs. It highlights the way the Kongs in Qufu, the hometown of Confucius and the center of Kong power, exercised control over branch-lineage formation through the collection and approval of written genealogies. The paper pays particular attention to the crucial function of manuscripts in the compilation, drafting, and circulation of genealogical knowledge. Depending on the relationship between branch-lineages and the Kong ducal center, manuscript genealogies adopted different forms, either to align with norms established in Qufu, or to articulate alternative lineage identities not subservient to the Kong lineage hierarchy.

## 1 Introduction

In the preface to a genealogy compiled in 1622, Kong Yinzhi 孔胤植 (1592–1647), the 65th generation descendant of Kongzi (Confucius) and holder of the title of Yansheng Duke 衍聖公, complained that because in recent centuries the numbers of Kong descendants had grown so enormously, that it was difficult to distinguish real descendants from those opportunists who would claim kinship only for the status and the tax privileges granted by the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). By compiling this genealogy, names would be rectified, and ‘the fish eyes will not be confused for pearls and the *wufu* rock will not be able to pass falsely as jade’ 魚目或不亂珠硃硃不能冒玉.<sup>1</sup>

Kong Yinzhi’s preface is all that we have of the 1622 genealogy. This was a composite genealogy, a term used here to distinguish the genealogies produced under the auspices of the duke that incorporated genealogical information from Kong lineages throughout empire, from the branch genealogies (*zhipu* 支譜) that included only information relevant to a local lineage. The practice of compiling joint geneal-

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<sup>1</sup> Kong Shangren 1969, 37. Kong Yinzhi references here two common idioms, ‘to confuse fish eyes for pearls’, and ‘to pass *wufu* rock as jade’, both of which are used to describe the act of using the superficial similarity of the materials to pass off counterfeits of objects of precious value.

ogies for lineages not connected by locality or consanguinity was not uncommon,<sup>2</sup> but certainly the scope and scale of the Kong projects were unusual. The production of this composite genealogy required a census of the greater Kong lineage, the collection of genealogical records from various branches, and the organization of this information in a printed volume for widespread distribution. For this was already a world dominated by print, where printed genealogy held cultural authority and made it the preferred legal record for the duke. The form and process of genealogical production at the center of Kong lineage governance in Qufu, Confucius' hometown, shaped how lineage branches around the empire recorded, produced, and depicted their own connection to the sage. In this sense Kong branch genealogies had a character to them that distinguished them from many lineages. Affiliation with the greater lineage (and with the ducal center in Qufu), required an awareness of genealogical data from the greater lineage in order to generate and document genuine kinship claims locally. Authenticating these claims required a ducal seal of approval, which presupposed that branch genealogies needed to follow certain conventional forms. For Kong branch lineages with no interest in formal affiliation with Qufu, there was no need to follow these conventions.

Although imprints become the increasingly dominant mode of textual circulation by the late Ming dynasty and after, it is clear that this print culture continued to coexist in various ways with an active manuscript culture. Certain genres of writings – for example texts produced by popular religious organizations, medicinal manuals, and other texts with specialized contents meant to reach limited audiences –, continued to circulate predominantly in manuscript form throughout the Qing (1644–1911).<sup>3</sup> Manuscript remained practically central to the processed of record keeping, compilation, drafting, and circulation of genealogical texts, but for most kinship groups the printed genealogy held a cultural power that made it the preferred norm for genealogical publication.

The preference for printed genealogies has meant that very few of the extant Kong genealogies exist in manuscript form. According to the most comprehensive annotated bibliography of Kong sources available, out of seventy total extant branch genealogies from the Qing and Republican (1912–1937) eras located in libraries around the world, only nine are manuscripts.<sup>4</sup> Most of these are either draft copies produced in preparation for eventual print, or else handwritten copies of printed genealogies. An examination of the few manuscripts that do exist will help to reveal the way in which the production of the genealogical records of the

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<sup>2</sup> Zhang Zhenman 2001, 141.

<sup>3</sup> Brokaw 2005, 14–16; Dennis 2005, 90–93; Lin 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Zhou Hongcai 2015, vol. 1, 264–288.

descendants of the sage was always shaped, either through compliance or resistance, by the narrative agendas of the mainline descendants in Qufu.

#### Composite genealogical production

In order to better understand the structure and content of branch lineage genealogies, it is helpful to situate them in relation to the creation of composite genealogies by the Kongs of Qufu that spurred and shaped genealogical production around the empire. Like many lineages in China, compiling and printing lineage genealogies was seen by the Kongs as an important means of reinforcing kinship bonds and as a moral duty one must undertake to ensure lineage continuity for future generations. Their often-elaborate form points to the importance placed on their cultural power as both ritual objects (in so far as they were treated as such in ancestral temples), and as records, like county gazetteers, that might shape how future generations understand the lineage past. Yet these are not simply neutral records of kinship relations, but texts that act discursively to produce these very social connections. They can be read in this way as a 'blueprint for action', documenting potentially mobilizable social relations that may or may not be actualized.<sup>5</sup>

Print publication of genealogies had a cultural power in the Ming and Qing not because it facilitated widespread distribution, but precisely because the cost involved in producing these works made their production a statement of the economic power and prestige of the lineage. While printed genealogies may have been the end goal, handwriting was of course critical to record keeping, drafting, and copying genealogical information. Take for example the compilation of the main Kong genealogy. The 1684 imprint of the 'Genealogy of the Hereditary House of Confucius' (*Kongzi shijia pu* 孔子世家譜), compiled under the supervision of the noted poet and playwright Kong Shangren 孔尚任 (1648–1718), became a model for subsequent lineage genealogies. The genealogy included thousands of people organized under the sixty 'households' (hu 戶) that structured Kong lineage hierarchy in the late Ming. Included in the front matter to the genealogy was a list of twenty-eight 'Rules for Compiling the Genealogy' (*xiu pu tiaogui* 修譜條規), that both aimed to describe the process of compilation and to provide a model for future genealogists to follow.<sup>6</sup>

Given the enormous size of the Kong lineage, compilation required a system of information management more elaborate than in most other kinship groups. Each of the sixty households ranged from dozens to hundreds of active male members. The ducal line lists 675 active members alone, and the genealogy included over ten thousand in all. Establishing the evidentiary basis for this was a major part of the project. The 1684 genealogy describes the printing and distribution of registration books that

5 Pieke 2003.

6 Kong Shangren 1969, 67.

include blank forms to be filled in by hand by the heads of the sixty branches. Blanks on the form were provided for each individual's household, generation number (as measured in distance from Confucius), name, age, location of residence, and occupation, in addition to the names of one's great-grandfather, grandfather, father, and son. The forms point to data collection resembling an imperial census. 'Whether gentry or commoner' 不論紳士白身, the rules specify, 'everyone over fifteen years should fill out one of these papers'.<sup>7</sup> Genealogical compilation then involved managing, organizing, validating, and recording a large volume of such forms filled out by hand.

As Kong lineage branches around the empire sought to connect themselves genealogically to the ducal line in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, manuscript copies of branch genealogies came to serve as the evidentiary basis of genealogical inclusion. Once every sixty years, the entirety of the Kong lineage was supposed to produce a new composite genealogy, and thirty years in between these major projects branch lineages were asked to update their own genealogies. The timing for this followed the traditional calendrical cycle of sixty years, where the first year of the cycle (*jiazi* 甲子) marked the 'major revision' (*daxiu* 大修) and the thirtieth year in the cycle (*jiawu* 甲午) marked the 'lesser revisions' (*xiaoxiu* 小修). This meant that during the Qing dynasty, the major revision was scheduled to happen on the *jiazi* calendrical years of 1684, 1744, 1804, and 1864. In reality, the resource requirements for a universal Kong census grew so enormously that the effort to produce a comprehensive genealogy stopped in the nineteenth century. In lieu of individual census forms, branch lineages were to make handwritten copies of their genealogies and send them to Qufu. In an 1850 proclamation, the Kong duke remarked that:

查孔氏譜牒歷久未修，頭緒繁多清厘未易。倘有草率關係匪輕。前諭六十戶先繕草譜呈送族長舉事處。

I find that the genealogical records of the Kong clan have not been compiled for a long time. There have been a great many things to attend to and organizing everything is never easy. If one were to do this sloppily, the implications could be serious. I previously ordered the sixty households to first make copies of their handwritten genealogies and then submit them to the lineage elder and the office of the director.<sup>8</sup>

Handwritten copies of what were mostly printed genealogies were for the Kongs the form in which genealogical information from around the empire was circulated within the lineage. Efforts to compile composite genealogies spurred local lineages from around the empire to produce genealogies of their own in order for submission to and approval by the Kongs of Qufu.

<sup>7</sup> Kong Shangren 1969, 68.

<sup>8</sup> *Qufu Kong Fu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, series 3, vol. 1, 261.



## 2 Kong branch genealogies: Structure and form

Thus, Kong branch lineage genealogies were produced under conditions that were somewhat different than those facing other Chinese lineages organizations. It was certainly the case that efforts to create composite genealogies for any lineage could create tensions and conflict over contradicting historical narratives, as Guo Qitao has argued in reference to late Ming genealogies in Huizhou.<sup>9</sup> But in the case of the Kongs, there was much stronger center of power in Qufu that informed and shaped an empire-wide genealogical practice for Kong descendants. Every Kong lineage that grounded its identity on the notion of descent from Confucius would have to grapple with Qufu genealogical control. Whether or not each lineage would willingly subsume their own genealogical claims into the larger whole depended on the circumstances. Some local branches explicitly affiliated themselves with the higher-order lineages, while others, for various reasons, decided to remain unaffiliated with Qufu. Manuscripts from “affiliated” and “unaffiliated” lineages looked quite different in terms of form and content, and were produced in strikingly dissimilar ways.

Two of the surviving manuscripts from Kong-lineages come from affiliated lineages situated in very different parts of the empire. The shorter and simpler of these manuscripts was compiled in 1870 by a branch lineage in Ningyuan County, in what is today the province of Liaoning in northeast China. This ‘Genealogy of the Hereditary House of Confucius’ (*Kongzi shijia pu* 孔子世家譜), is an excellent example of a branch genealogy that clearly emphasizes the local kinship organization’s connections to the broader lineage and to ducal line in particular. The Ningyuan branch of the Kongs traced its origins to a Ming period ancestor by the name of Kong Hongtong 孔宏統 (dates unknown), a student in the local academy in Qufu, who on account of poverty migrated north with his family in search of work as a teacher. This nineteenth-century genealogy credits its production to the supervision of Kong Guangsheng 孔廣昇 (dates unknown), the lineage branch patriarch, and to the editing work of Kong Guangming 孔廣明 (dates unknown), described in the text only as ‘manager of household affairs.’ The prefatory matter makes reference to both scribes and print supervisors, suggesting that while the only extant version of this text is in manuscript form, it is probably a draft copy created with the eventual intent of publishing a printed version (whether this happened is unclear).<sup>10</sup>

Another “affiliated” genealogy, ‘The Family Records of the Kong Clan’ (*Kong shi jia sheng* 孔氏家乘), or what Kong Xiangkui 孔祥魁 (b. 1835) refers to in his preface

<sup>9</sup> Guo Qitao 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Kong Guangming and Kong Guangsheng 1870.

as ‘The Revised Genealogy of the Kongs of Luchengwan’ (*Kong shi Luchengwan chongxiu zongpu* 孔氏綠城灣重修宗譜), was produced in 1874 by a Kong branch lineage in Changzhou, Jiangsu Province. This branch lineage traced its origins back to the Song dynasty era when its founding ancestor and fifty-second generation descendant of Confucius, Kong Wanyou 孔萬有 (dates unknown), is said to have moved to the bucolic Luchengwan because he ‘disliked the clamor and dust of the city’ 不樂城市之囂塵.<sup>11</sup> There is no indication in the text that the genealogy was meant to be printed, so the manuscript seems to have been the intended final form.

Two unaffiliated lineage manuscripts come from a Kong branch lineage living in Yueqing County, Zhejiang, that traced its origins back to a generation of Kongs who fled from Qufu to south China during the wars and disorder of the Five Dynasties Era (907–960). The first of these, ‘Lineage Genealogy of the Kong Clan’ (*Kong shi zupu* 孔氏族譜), was compiled in 1788 by Shi Shizhong 施式中 (dates unknown), a student with no discernable connection to the Kongs who may have been working as hired genealogy master.<sup>12</sup> The second manuscript, published almost a century later in 1871, was compiled by Kong Chuanzeng 孔傳曾 (dates unknown) as an updated version of the earlier work.<sup>13</sup>

In what follows I will analyze the contents of the four manuscript genealogies with a particular focus on the structure of these texts and the ways in which they convey genealogical information to the reader. To be sure, whether imprints or manuscripts, Kong branch genealogies did not differ substantially in form from Chinese lineage genealogies in general. Even those produced solely as manuscripts often integrated printed elements – like page templates with printed margins and lines – and were shaped in form and content by the expectations of the genre of the genealogical imprint. Although there is some variety in form and content, they mostly follow the established conventional form of Ming and Qing period genealogies.

## 2.1 Front matter

Genealogies, whether in print or manuscript form, often include a variety of texts before the genealogical charts and biographies. Most commonly, this front matter included prefaces (*xu* 序), illustrations and charts (*tu* 圖), compilation guidelines (*xiupufanli* 修譜凡例), credits, and historical documents concerning lineage history, property, and privileges. These materials were sometimes collected together into a

<sup>11</sup> Kong Xiangkui 1874, third preface.

<sup>12</sup> Hiring genealogists to compile a genealogy was quite common in this period. See Xu 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Shi Shizhong 1788; Kong Chuanzeng 1871.

front *juan* (*juanshou* 卷首), or fascicle, that marked these materials as prefatory to the enumerated *juan*, but just as often included without label prior to the first *juan*. For smaller lineages with less genealogical data, the front matter could make up a significant portion of the overall length of the genealogy, pointing to its importance in the conventions and expectations of the genre.

### 2.1.1 The preface

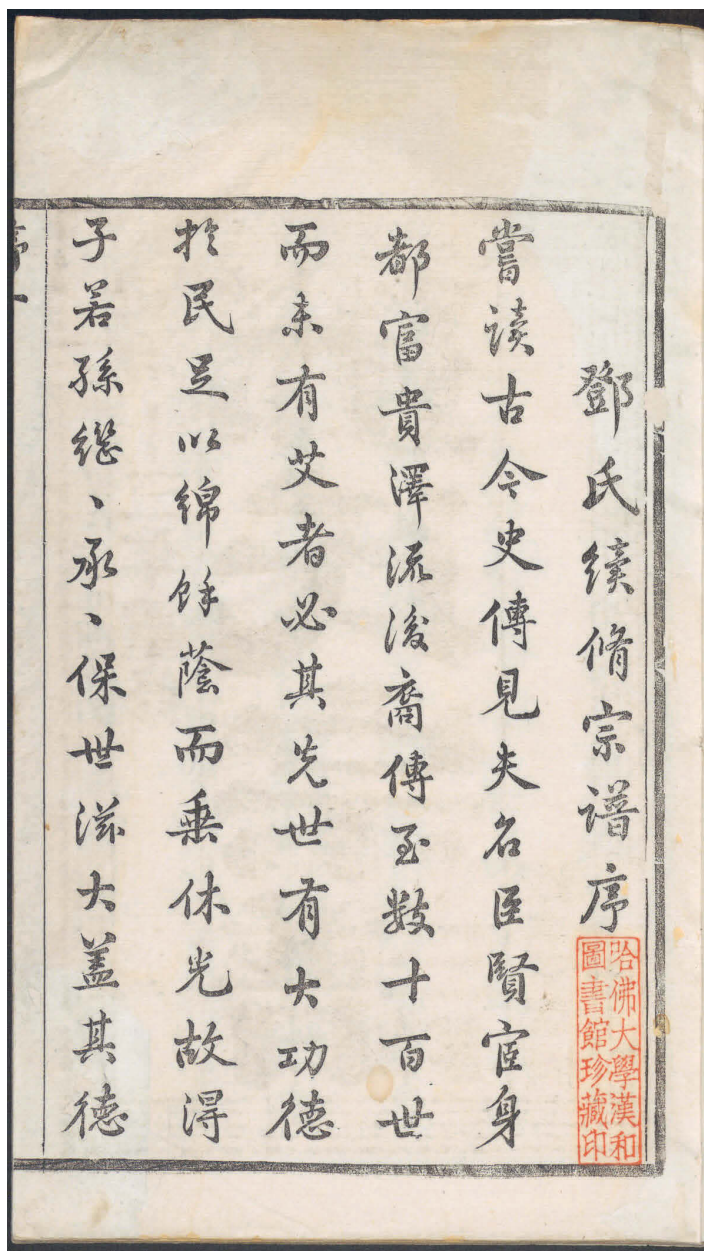
The first common element of most genealogies are the prefaces. Prefaces were often written by lineage notables and those involved in the writing of the genealogy. In cases of a lineage with a longer history, the prefaces from earlier editions were also often included. For branch lineages genealogies, the inclusion of a preface by a Kong duke was a clear means of documenting an affiliation with Kongs of Qufu. Prefaces were supposed to have a certain literary merit in and of themselves, and as such were also often reprinted in other works like local gazetteers and collectanea. This made them one of the only elements of most genealogies that could be widely shared outside of the lineage. Prefaces were often visually demarcated with more ornate calligraphic scripts, particularly in printed editions. This set apart the preface visually from the square and functionalist print typical to late imperial woodblocks and points to the cultural value placed on text that simulates handwritten calligraphy (see Fig. 1). Even in manuscripts, particularly important prefaces were often visually distinguished. The Luchengwan manuscript begins with a preface written with characters twice the size of the rest of the text (see Fig. 2).

Just as important as the visual style of the preface was the author. For Kong lineage branches that sought broader social and political recognition of their claims of descent from Confucius, the single most important signifier of this connection was the inclusion of a preface by the Kong duke in the genealogy. Both the Ningyuan and Luchengwan manuscripts include the same identical preface by Duke Kong Xiangke. The message was simple and generic:

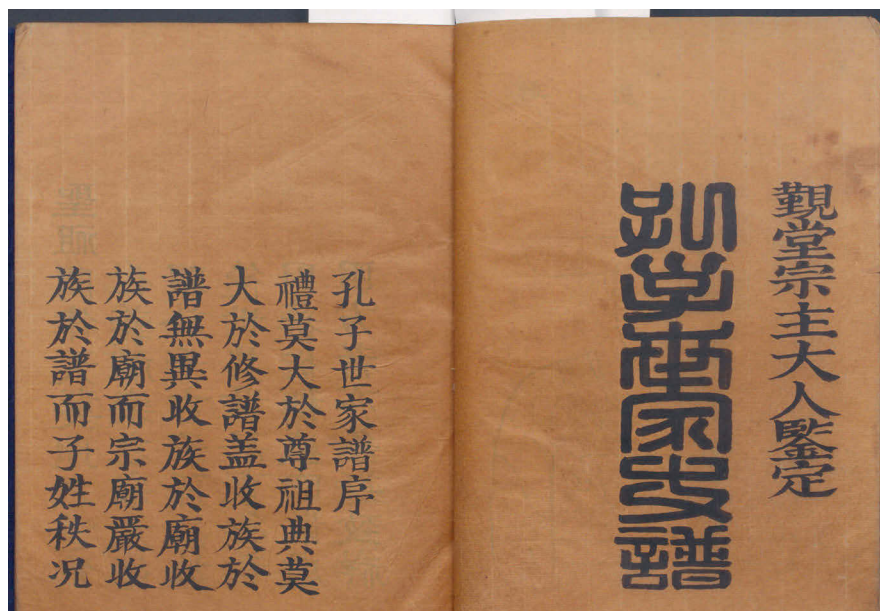
禮莫大於尊祖,典莫大於修譜。蓋收族於譜無異收族於廟。收族於廟而宗廟嚴。收族於譜而子姓秩。

There is no more important a ritual than revering the ancestors, and no more important ceremonial practice than compiling the genealogy. This is because accepting kinsmen into the genealogy is no different than allowing them into the shrine. When admitting kinsmen into the shrine, the ancestral shrine must be severely restrictive. When admitting kinsmen into the genealogy, their names must be carefully put in order.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Kong Xiangkui 1874, first preface.



**Fig. 1:** Preface from a printed genealogy of the Deng lineage of Wuxi County, Jiangsu. Printed genealogies often used calligraphic scripts to visually distinguish prefaces. Deng Yuanchang (1874).  
© Harvard-Yenching Library.



**Fig. 2:** Preface by Duke Kong Xiangke in *The Revised Genealogy of the Kongs of Luchengwan*, a branch lineage manuscript from Changzhou Prefecture, Jiangsu. The ducal preface is visually distinguished in the manuscript with a larger script. On the right, the text reads, 'Authenticated by our Illustrious Lineage Patriarch Jintang (Kong Xiangke): A Branch Genealogy of the Hereditary House of Confucius'. Kong Xiangkui (1874). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Inclusion of a preface from Qufu assumed that the genealogy had been copied and submitted to Qufu for review and approval.

In contrast, neither of the two unaffiliated manuscripts from Yueqing County includes ducal prefaces, and the prefaces themselves highlight not their Qufu origins, but the founding ancestor of their branch lineages in the south. Shi Shizong, the genealogy master of the 1788 genealogy, writes that the history of the Yueqing County branch could be traced to Kong Yanji who fled the north in 935 CE because of military conflict under the rule of the Later Jin (936–946). Details are scant, and the genealogical connection to Qufu is not made clear: 'Although the genealogical record cannot be as detailed as those of previous generations', writes Shi, 'the thirteenth-generation descendants [of Kong Yanji], Yongkui and Yongjin, fortunately still had in storage an old genealogy. It was on the basis of this old genealogy that I compiled this one.'<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Shi Shizhong 1788, colophon.

### 2.1.2 Illustrations

Chinese printed genealogies often include woodblock print illustrations of a variety of types. Diagrams of ancestral shrines, maps and illustrations of ancestral tombs, and portraits of notable ancestors all abound.<sup>16</sup> Two of the four manuscripts examined here include hand-drawn portraits of significant ancestors, though they each differ in which ancestors are singled out for visual representation.

In the case of the Luchengwan branch genealogy, the manuscript opens with twelve full-page portraits of Kong ancestors, beginning with Confucius, ‘King for the Propagation of Culture’, and including all but two of the first thirteen generations of his descendants (see Fig. 3). The portraits reinforce the defining element of Kong particularity – descent from the sage – and establish up front a visual connection between a small kinship organization located in the northern frontier, and this illustrious lineage rooted in distant antiquity.

In contrast, in the eighteenth-century manuscript compiled from Yueqing County, Zhejiang, the choice of three portraits reinforces the separationist message implicit in the prefaces, namely, that although kinship with Confucius was of course central, this lineage felt a distance from the Kongs of Qufu. Like the first example, the text begins with a portrait of Confucius, not labeled as such but clearly identifiable by the long, curved scepter he is holding.<sup>17</sup> The other two portraits are included later in the text. The first follows a brief description of the founding ancestor of the branch who migrated south to this region in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, and the second is included on the first page of the generational charts.<sup>18</sup> Neither portrait is labelled, but their placement in the text suggests they are representations of the founding ancestors of the branch line. Owing perhaps to the branch lineage’s unaffiliated status, the illustrations decenter the Kongs of Qufu and instead emphasize the connections between Confucius, the twelfth century, and the contemporary eighteenth-century kinship organization.

### 2.1.3 Guidelines and lineage rules

Many genealogies include a significant amount of detail on the process that led to the compilation of the genealogy itself. In large genealogies, this meant credits for all those people who participated in the process – supervisors, editors, writers, calligraphers, and (for imprints) the craftsmen.

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<sup>16</sup> Bussotti 2021.

<sup>17</sup> For other examples see Murray 1992.

<sup>18</sup> Shi Shizhong 1788, 1a, 16b, 17b.



**Fig. 3:** Portraits of ancestors in the Luchengwan manuscript. Three of the total of twelve ancestral portraits included in the genealogy. From left to right: Confucius, Kong Zhong 孔忠, and Kong Teng 孔騰. Kong Xiangkui (1874). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

In addition, most genealogies include in their front matter a set of guidelines that describe and inform the production and handling of the genealogy. These ‘guidelines for compiling the genealogy’ (*xiupu fanli* 修譜凡例) or ‘genealogical principles’ (*zupu tiaoli* 族譜條例) typically included a description of the process of compilation. The guidelines provide a valuable source on genealogical methodology, and also reinforce the explicit message that genealogies were not simply descriptive of kin relations, but productive of them. The guidelines for the Luchengwan branch lineage specify that the genealogy be completely revised every sixty years, and that a minor revision occur every thirty. And while the text recognizes that, ‘kinsmen who have migrated to other places should all create genealogies for their lesser patriline’ 子孫流寓他處者各以小宗立譜, that in all of these cases, ‘when a genealogy is completed it must be taken to Queli (in Qufu) to request the seal of our lineage patriarch’ 凡譜成必詣闕里請鈐宗主之印.<sup>19</sup> For formal recognition as genuine descendants of the sage, branch lineage genealogies required the review and approval of the Kong duke in Qufu.

Guidelines about when and how to compile genealogies usually also included rules about who was to be excluded from the genealogical record. The Luchengwan manuscript, for example, explicitly excludes from the genealogy the children of

<sup>19</sup> Kong Xiangkui 1874, ‘*xiupu fanli*’.

concubines, men in uxorilocal marriages, children of remarried widows, criminals, followers of heterodox religions, and any who ‘would deign to serve in a debased occupation’ 甘認充賤役.<sup>20</sup> This list of exclusions is almost identically reproduced in the Ningyuan branch lineage manuscript, and similar lists are commonly found in many printed branch genealogies as well. Both manuscripts from the Yueqing County branch lineage include similar sections, but also provide more details on rites in the ancestral temple, lineage-owned properties, and social obligations.

Genealogy guidelines made clear that genealogical compilation was a moral project, and record keeping was the responsibility of the righteous. For as the 1871 manuscript from the Yueqing branch lineage noted, ‘it is the unfilial sons and grandsons who see genealogical records as nothing more than old papers’ 不孝子孫見譜如故紙.<sup>21</sup> Genealogies in their physical form should be protected and amended carefully out of reference for the importance of kinship. Only a lineage member with moral integrity should be selected to shoulder the responsibility of keeping the genealogy in a sealed container, ‘such that it not be harmed by insects, rodents, the elements, or thieves’ 勿與虫鼠風雨水火盜賊等弊毀.<sup>22</sup> The genealogy could be physically removed and examined for only a couple of reasons, for instance when it was discovered that someone had used their wealth to insinuate themselves into the Kong lineage illicitly. Once discovered, their names should be crossed out of the genealogy in order to expunge these individuals from the records. Genealogies had to be handled with care in any case: were friends or family of worth to visit and ask to see the genealogy, they were permitted to examine it on a cleaned table with covered hands, in order to ensure it was not marked in any way. Itinerant scholars and wastrels (*sushi langzi* 俗士浪子) were never allowed to see the text.<sup>23</sup>

## 2.1.4 Reference documentation

Genealogies generally included materials like historical documents, descriptions of landholdings, and literary works. These records provided cultural and legal references for future generations.

In the case of the Kong branch lineage genealogies, most affiliated lineages included materials documenting the legal provisions of Kong lineage tax and labor exemptions in the Qing dynasty. Clearly one of the most material benefits of official Kong

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<sup>20</sup> Kong Xiangkui 1874, ‘xiupu fanli’.

<sup>21</sup> Kong Chuanzeng 1871, ‘zupu tiaoli’.

<sup>22</sup> Kong Chuanzeng 1871, ‘zupu tiaoli’.

<sup>23</sup> Kong Chuanzeng 1871, ‘zupu tiaoli’.



lineage affiliation for many kinship groups around China was the ability to claim exemption from state labor drafts and fees exacted by local officials.<sup>24</sup> Both manuscripts from the Ningyuan and Luchengwan branches include nearly identical sections on the history of privileges and tax exemptions granted to the Kongs from antiquity through the Qing. They also both include a copy of an inscription from the 'Exemption Stele' 蠲免碑 which was erected in the Confucian Temple in Qufu in 1817.<sup>25</sup> Although these claims were recognized by the Qing state, it is also clearly the case that this exemption was not widely understood or accepted at the local administrative level by many county magistrates throughout the empire.<sup>26</sup> Genealogies then served as an important record of Kong legal privileges that could be presented to county magistrates if necessary.<sup>27</sup>

Another element common to most genealogies is the list of generational characters that were to be used as a component in the personal name of every male descendant. The use of a generational component in one's personal name was a clear signifier of Kong descent and clearly distinguished generational hierarchies that were critical to both interpersonal relations and ritual practices. Unlike in many other lineages, these generational components were determined by the emperor in the Kongs' case, not by the lineage, and as the Ningyuan manuscript states explicitly, 'those who are casually named and do not follow this generational sequence are not permitted inclusion in the genealogy' 有不欽依世次隨意妄呼者不准入譜. Both affiliated lineages include an identical list of generational components for given names that begins with the fifty-sixth generation (roughly the generation corresponding to the early Ming dynasty) and ends with the eighty-fifth generation (the distant future).<sup>28</sup>

The unaffiliated Yueqing branch lineage manuscripts differ in several ways. In the case of Shi Shizhong's eighteenth-century 'Lineage Genealogy of the Kong Clan', the text includes a chart that begins in the upper right with the 'first generation' to have moved to the south from Qufu. The generational numbering system does not begin with Confucius, but with the branch founder's generation.<sup>29</sup> Also, in both the eighteenth and nineteenth century manuscripts, the text continues to use the character *yin* 胤 for the generational component of 65th generation descendants,

24 Agnew 2019, 5–7.

25 Kong Xiangkui 1874, 'li chao you mian'; Kong Guangming and Kong Guangsheng 1870, 5b.

26 Agnew 2019, 72–101.

27 Michael Szonyi's work on military households in Ming dynasty south China also argues that family genealogies were often compiled with an awareness that they may need to be presented to a judicial official at some point: Szonyi 2017, 6.

28 Kong Guangming and Kong Guangsheng 1870, 8a–8b.

29 Shi Shizhong 1788, 17b.

whereas the affiliated texts follow the Qing imperial convention by changing this character to *yan* 衍 because of the taboo of using the same character as in the personal name of the Yongle emperor.<sup>30</sup> A minor difference, but one that points to the core principle – that the Yueqing branches had no interest in formal affiliation with the Kongs of Qufu, and while maintaining generational naming practices, did not accede to state-mandated alterations of these practices.

## 2.2 Genealogical charts and tables

Like the prefatory materials, most genealogies followed strong conventions in the presentation and documentation of genealogical information. Most extant works featured patrilineal tree diagrams, genealogical tables, and/or biographies ordered by generation. In some cases, ‘genealogical lines’ (*puxi* 譜系), the diagrammatic representation of patrilineal relationships, were clearly distinguished from ‘genealogical records’ (*pudie* 譜牒), the textual biographies of each individual. For example, an eighteenth-century printed genealogy from a Kong lineage branch in Hunan province contains tree diagrams that begin with founding ancestors of each of the local lineage subbranches and show only the personal names of all male descendants, but also includes a separate and equally comprehensive table which presents individual biographies.<sup>31</sup> The branch lineage manuscripts present both tree diagrams and tables, though each serve a slightly different function. In the first case, diagrams emphasized descent and the connections between contemporaries and their ancestors. In the second case, biographies were organized by generation, which emphasized instead the lateral connections between brothers and cousins.

In shorter genealogies, tree diagrams, if they appear at all, tend not to depict the living members of the local branch lineage. Most of them present patrilineal descent lines in the distant past, many hundreds of years removed from the branch lines that are the focus of the work. Which generations and what information was mentioned in the tree diagrams depended on the narrative agenda of the rest of the work.

There are only two tree diagrams included in the Luchengwan branch lineage manuscript, and their focus is interestingly not Confucius, but rather the descent lines of Kong Renyu 孔任玉 (fl. tenth century), the ‘Ancestor of Revival’ 中興祖 (Figs 4 and 5). The received tradition of Kong lineage history held that in the tenth century the descendants of Confucius were nearly exterminated in a mass-murder by a villain by the name of Kong Mo 孔末 who falsely claimed kinship and took

<sup>30</sup> Shi Shizhong 1788, 17a; Kong Chuanzeng 1871, film #100897198, image 25.

<sup>31</sup> Kong Jishan 1795.

over Qufu. Only by chance was Kong Renyu, a child at the time, able to escape the slaughter and later return to power. In the late Yuan and early Ming, Kong Renyu became a particularly important part of the ancestral cult patronized by the ducal line in Qufu. As the sole survivor of the massacre, Renyu was now the common ancestor of all ‘genuine’ descendants of Confucius.<sup>32</sup> The tree diagram begins at the top and includes the personal names of the males in each generation, identified by bureaucratic rank where relevant, and ends with the Ming-era founding ancestors of the twenty major ‘divisions’ (*pai* 派), and sixty ‘households’ (*hu* 戶). These are the only tree diagrams in the work, and they make no explicit connection to the local kinship organization in Luchengwan. In fact, in an essay introducing the diagrams, the authors note that, ‘it is the case that all of these descendants of the Ancestor of Revival live in Shandong, but this does not account for all of the descendants of the Ultimate Sage’ 凡此皆中興祖之後而居魯者也若概論至聖之裔則不僅此云.<sup>33</sup> The message here is that the branch lineage understood that there was a much larger extended kinship hierarchy centered on Qufu, and that for legitimate kinship claims to be recognized, the Luchengwan branch lineage would need to accept this structure and their own marginalization in it.

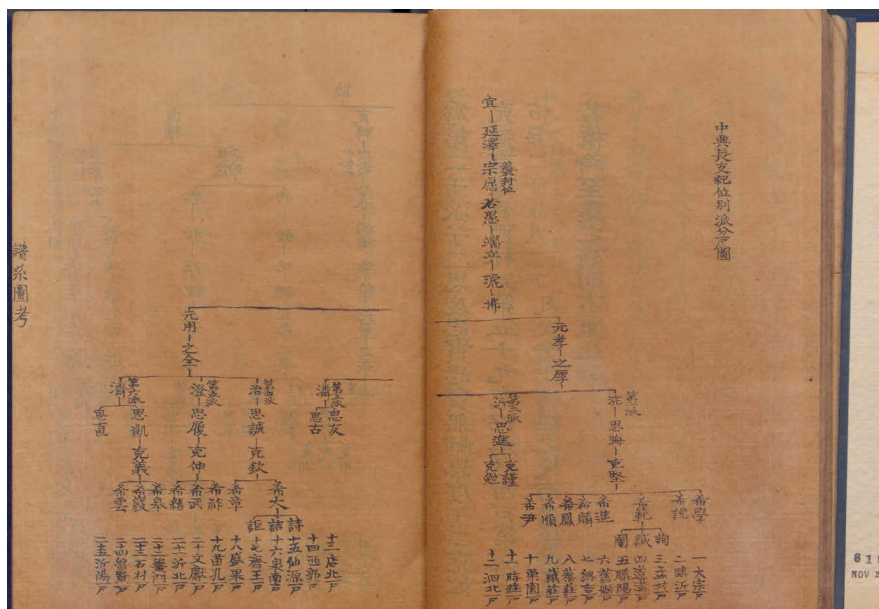
Neither of the Yueqing branch lineage manuscripts include a similar tree diagram in their extant versions, but they do have ‘A Brief Description of the Comprehensive Diagram’ (*zongtu xiaoxu* 總圖小叙), that may refer to a diagram that was a part of an earlier (or non-extant) edition. Based on the description, the diagram included the patriline of Confucius’ own ancestors in order to illustrate the origins of the Kong surname, and continued until the founding ancestors of the migrant branch lines of Yueqing County and the surrounding region. Unlike in the affiliated lineage genealogies, no mention is made of the ducal line, of Kong Renyu, or of the divisions and households that characterized the lineage hierarchy of the Kongs of Qufu.<sup>34</sup>

Most biographical information in Kong genealogies will be found not in the tree diagrams but in either genealogical tables or biographical annals. Both the Luchengwan and Ningyuan branch manuscript genealogies follow a similar form. The Ningyuan manuscript begins in the first fascicle with a year-by-year account of Confucius’ life, and continues, generation-by-generation, with biographies of his primary male descendants ending with the 42nd generation. The second fascicle begins with Kong Renyu, the ‘Ancestor of Revival’, and includes entries for every generation through the 86<sup>th</sup> generation (many generations into the future), with an almost exclusive focus on the heirs to the ducal title in Qufu. From the seventy-sixth

<sup>32</sup> Agnew 2019, 102–115.

<sup>33</sup> Kong Xiangkui 1874, ‘puxi tu kao’.

<sup>34</sup> Kong Chuanzeng 1871, ‘zong tu xiaoshu’.

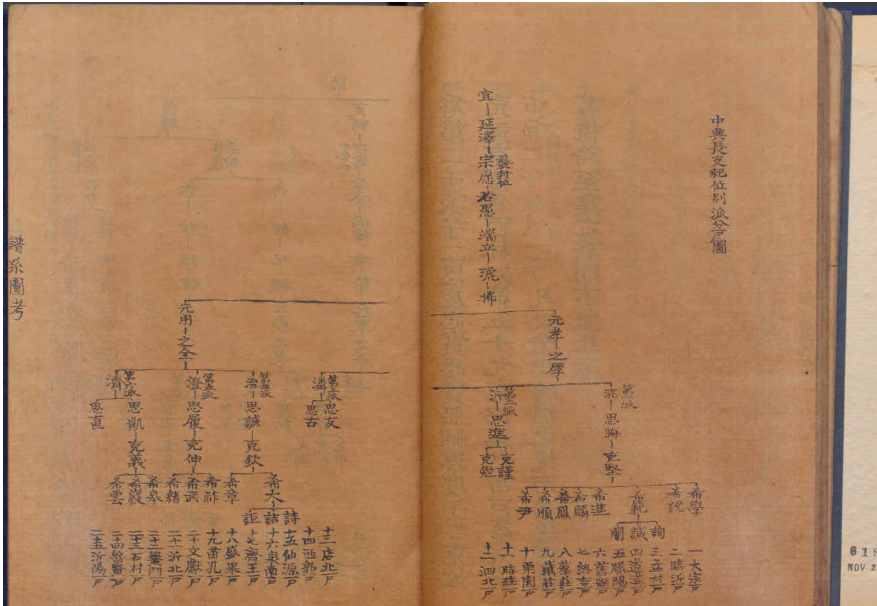


**Fig. 4:** 'A Diagram of Ranks, Divisions, and Households of the Mainline following the Revival'. A patrilineal tree diagram from the *Luchengwan* manuscript. The lines connect the eldest son of Kong Renyu, the Ancestor of Revival, at the top, with his male descendants. At the bottom are the numbered households that structured Qufu's lineage hierarchy in the Ming period and after. Kong Xiangkui (1874). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

generation onwards, there are no people listed, only the generational components of the names of the unborn ducal line. Only after the biographies of the main ducal patriline are completed does the genealogy turn to the biographies of the Ningyuan lineage itself, beginning with its 61<sup>st</sup> generation founder, Kong Hongtong. In comparison with the length and detail of many of the biographies in the ducal line, the biographies of the Ningyuan lineage provide almost no information besides the personal names of lineage members and the number and names of their sons.<sup>35</sup>

Similarly, the *Luchengwan* branch lineage manuscript begins with a detailed biography of Confucius, and then proceeds by generation with individual biographies of his principal descendants. Under each generation, biographies are organized by family unit so that all brothers are grouped together under their father's name. Unlike the above example, this manuscript makes no organizational distinc-

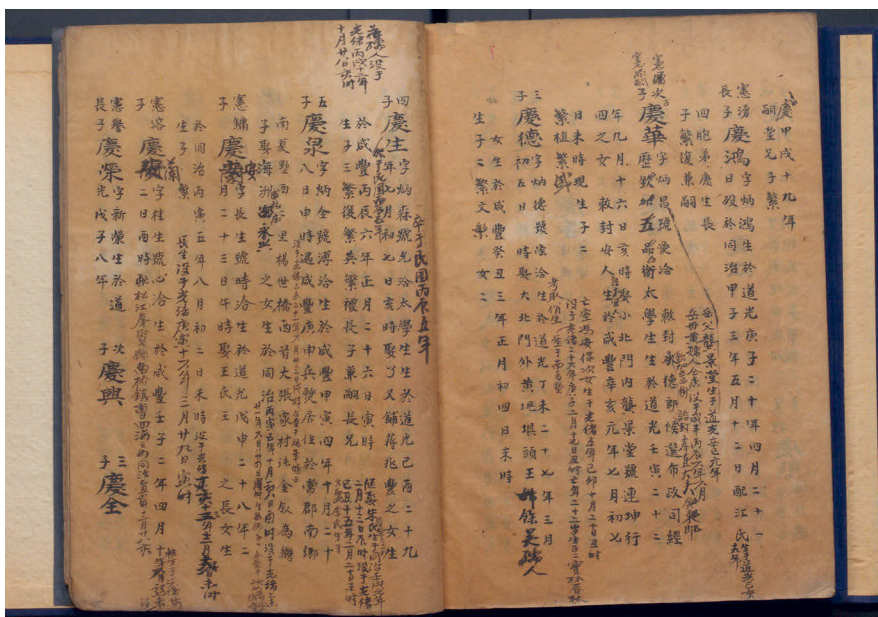
35 The only exceptions are those with official titles and founding ancestors. See Kong Guangming and Kong Guangsheng 1870, 51a–55b.



**Fig. 5:** 'A Diagram of Ranks, Divisions, and Households of the Four Branch Lines following the Revival'. A patrilineal tree diagram from the *Luchengwan* manuscript. The lines connect the second son of Kong Renyu, at the top, with his male descendants. Kong Xiangkui (1874). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

tion between the biographies of the ducal patriline and those of the local lineage, effectively making the case that their own patriline is inextricably connected to their more illustrious kin. Each entry includes personal names (*ming* 名), courtesy names (*zi* 字), dates of birth and death (if known), official position if any, and male offspring (Fig. 6). Biographies of individuals from the late nineteenth century also occasionally mention wives and daughters, an inclusion not typical of Kong genealogies before this period. It is clear that this manuscript also served as a living record, as biographical entries have been added and amended over time.

Both of the Yueqing branch lineage manuscripts combine tables with lines connecting the names to indicate descent in the same manner as a patrilineal tree diagram. The tables are arranged in horizontal rows of five per page, one row for each generation, with the senior generations at the top. Five generations per page were used to reference the five grades of mourning. Unlike the genealogies of the affiliated lineages, the genealogical tables begin with the first ancestor to flee north China. There are no biographies of early descendants and no mention of Kongs associated with the ducal line. The generational numbers also begin with the migrating ancestor, and then a few pages later they begin again with his grandson, the first to move to the lineage hometown in Yueqing County. The numbering practice is unusual



**Fig. 6:** Biographical annals in *Luchengwan* manuscript. Note how the biographical entries have been amended and updated over time. Kong Xiangkui (1874). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

for Kong genealogies as most are structured according to generation of descent from Confucius. Next to the personal name of each entry is a short biographical note containing courtesy names, surnames of wives, birth and death dates if known, and the location of their burial site. In some cases, the number of daughters is mentioned, though their names are not. Lines connect fathers to sons, and each page begins at the top with the person or persons in the bottom row of the previous page. Each page in the table thus visually resembles a smaller tree diagram in five generational rows.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to the tables, the first Yueqing branch lineage manuscript also includes biographical annals organized by generations. In general, the biographies in the annals provide more details on individual lineage members, their wives, and their children. In some places, additional details have been written in a smaller script at a later date, pointing to the way the text was used as a living record for the lineage. In terms of communicative function, the annals also clarified the generational hierarchy by identifying each individual generation and individual by 'goose rank' (*yan hang* 鴈行) and number. The term connotes the physical positioning of

<sup>36</sup> Shi Shizhong 1788, 17b–20b.

lineage members in a ritual context. Just as geese fly in triangular formation, so too do lineages have a proper form of assembly on ceremonial occasions. All persons listed under the fourteenth generation preceded by the descriptive ‘goose rank’ of ‘Great Plenty’ (*dayou* 大有) followed by a number that indicates their seniority in the lineage. Here is an example:

第十四世

大有二十五 尚達公諱世明禎球公長子也配楊氏章氏生二子長胤魁次胤元葬磊石山。

Generation number 14:

Great Plenty 25: Shangda, courtesy name of Shiming was the eldest son of Zhenqiu. Married to lady Yang and lady Zhang. He had two children. The eldest was Yinkui and the second was Yinyuan. Buried at Leishi Mountain.<sup>37</sup>

According to 1871 genealogy, ‘the goose rank is the proper way with which to assemble the elder and younger brothers of the lineage’ 夫鴈行者排合族兄弟之義也。<sup>38</sup> When assembled for a ritual occasion in the ancestral hall, for example, all members of a single generation were to stand together in a row, the more senior generations in front.

The differences in what genealogical information was included and how it was presented seems to be significantly influenced by how Kong lineages positioned themselves in relationship to the ducal center in Qufu. Those lineages who sought legitimation from and association with the main center in Qufu crafted genealogies that sought to visibly subsume their own local lineage identity within a larger Kong network that was empire-wide in scope, while those without that agenda created genealogies that strengthened local kinship bonds built centered on notions of descent from local founding ancestors.

### 3 Investigating branch genealogies

Whether in print or manuscript form, Kong lineages that sought official recognition of their status as descendants of Confucius needed formal approval by the Kong dukes in Qufu. What was involved in this process of review and approval? The genealogies themselves provide few details on this, but documents from the Kong ducal archives shed light on the process of investigating and verifying the claims of branch lineage organizations around China.

<sup>37</sup> Shi Shizhong 1788, 31a.

<sup>38</sup> Kong Chuanzeng 1871, ‘Yan hang xiaoshu’.

The Kong dukes routinely assigned investigators to travel around China to investigate and validate Kong branch lineage claims. In his preface to the Luchengwan manuscript genealogy, Kong Xiangkui described the process:

先師之裔我宗主衍聖公亦念及九族不忘枝葉即委我七品執事官鐸公往江南下臨各處稽考支源搜查後裔各支南渡羅列寰區一遷再遷實通曲阜上下樞紐血脈貫通凡我子孫合之大宗宗譜支派相符者急宜續而修之。

The Yansheng Duke, our lineage patriarch and descendant of the first teacher, when thinking about the entirety of his kinsmen through the ninth degree, did not want forgotten the distant branches. So he appointed his honor Duo, our 7th rank Attendant of Affairs, and sent him to Jiangnan to visit each place and investigate the origins of the branches in order to discover descendants. Each branch that moved to the south spread out around the region as they migrated from place to place. Those that are genuinely connected to Qufu will have a nexus of blood lines that are connected from top to bottom. For our kin to be brought together, they must hasten to compile and update genealogies that bring the branches in conformity with the composite genealogy of the greater lineage.<sup>39</sup>

The Kong dukes in Qufu were actively involved in the process of genealogical documentation and production. Ducal agents, like the Duo mentioned in this preface, acted both as investigators and facilitators, sometimes actually supporting the production of a new genealogy. This activism also occasionally created problems.

Several cases that involved genealogical investigations in the eighteenth century came to the attention of the court and earned the duke imperial censure. In 1766, the duke sent Kong Jigun 孔繼袞, described as a former Erudite in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*taichang si boshi* 太常寺博士), to the Jiangnan region ‘to investigate lineage genealogies’ (*qingcha zupu* 清查族譜). In order to fund his trip, the duke provided him with a number of blank certificates of appointment for ritual sinecures in Qufu which he was in the process of selling to interested Kongs in the south. At some point, he had a woodblock carved of the certificates in order to print them as needed. When a local magistrate arrested him, he found that Kong Jigun also had forged seals, fake appointment letters, and six volumes of Kong branch lineage genealogies that he had either collected or produced. Clearly, verifying Kong genealogies presented opportunities for other transactions. After the case came to the attention of the Jiangsu governor, he ordered Kong Jigun and others involved in the scheme flogged and sentenced to three years of labor service. For his role in the affair Duke Kong Zhaohuan 孔昭煥 (1735–1782) was censured and demoted three ranks.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Kong Xiangkui 1874, third preface.

<sup>40</sup> *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 3, 84–88.



Less than a year later, the governor of Jiangxi province reported to the capital that two men working for the duke had been arrested for the extortion of Kong branch lineages in the area. According to the report, Kong Xinggui 孔興珪 and Kong Xinggong 孔興珙, both holders of ritual positions in the Qufu region, were sent by the duke to Ganzhou prefecture 贛州府 in Jiangxi also ‘to investigate lineage genealogies’.<sup>41</sup> Like in the previous case, verifying the genealogical claims of Kongs around the empire created the conditions for ducal agents to abuse their power. The ducal agents were accused of insisting on payment in silver for each individual’s inclusion in the genealogy.<sup>42</sup> Although these particular cases involved criminal activity, they also document something that was routine throughout the Qing – genealogical investigation and verification of Kong genealogies. Branch lineages with aspirations of official recognition of their status as descendants of Confucius would have had similar encounters with genealogical investigators sent from the ducal office in Qufu.

For Kongs on the margins of society, producing a genealogy and seeking formal affiliation with Qufu could be a potentially dangerous act. In 1834, a Kong branch lineage organization in Mukden, Manchuria, sought to compile a branch genealogy with ducal support that would grant them formal recognition. To this end they sent several representatives to travel to Qufu and make the request in person. The duke sent Kong Yujue 孔毓爵, a ritual attendant, as his agent to investigate the branch lineage claims by collecting witness statements (*ganjie* 甘結) from kin and neighbors that would testify to the upstanding character of the community. Once they all returned to Mukden, the Kong branch lineage members would eventually pay Kong Yujue over 224 *liang* of silver ‘to support his travel fees and for the costs of compiling the genealogy’ 做為路費至修冊譜之用.<sup>43</sup> According to one of these Mukden Kongs, after eventually receiving the ducal seal on the genealogy, ‘those friends and kinsmen from all over who came to see it all expressed their deep admiration when it was held before them’ 族四方親友觀光者為之舉目而稱羨.<sup>44</sup>

The problem was that the Kongs in question, living deep in Manchuria, were farming the estates of an imperial prince and were registered as ‘soldiers’ (壯丁 *zhuangding*) in his household. When the office of the Mukden military commander heard about this, he had everyone arrested for making false claims, and seized a copy of the genealogy and a set of woodblocks. A full investigation followed in which it was made clear that the implication of being recognized as a descendant

41 *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 3, 89.

42 *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 3, 89–90.

43 *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 1, 410.

44 *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 1, 412.

of Confucius would problematize the legal obligations in labor and tax these household had to the estates of a Manchu prince.

The Mukden Kongs plea to the duke reveals how genealogies could operate in legal contexts. They noted that one official asked in the course of the investigation, 'What evidence is there to determining the truth or falsity of the claims' 稽查虛實有何可憑?<sup>45</sup> They replied by presenting their genealogy. The managers of the prince's estate had no register on hand, but 'the next day they schemed to forge a Kangxi era [1661–1722] register. Inside was a line about the Kongs submitting themselves as the prince's laborers. This was completely incongruent with what was in the lineage genealogy' 次日詭計捏造康熙年間原冊一本內有孔姓投充王差一條與族世譜先後不符.<sup>46</sup> Forged or not, the old register apparently trumped the recently produced genealogy. In the end, Kong Yujue was sent back to Qufu and the troublesome farmers were punished. Even worse, the genealogy was seized. 'If the genealogy is not released to our kinsmen', they wrote to the duke, 'we fear that in the future we will truly become soldiers of the prince's estate. The hearts of our kinsmen would find this truly unbearable' 倘世譜不發交族人恐將來真成王府壯丁族等心實不甘.<sup>47</sup> What was clear to the authors of this plea was that without possession of the genealogy itself, their branch members would have no way to substantiate a legal defense in any bureaucratic context.

More than an interesting controversy, the case reveals the strategic relevance and potentially subversive power of genealogical claims and the texts which substantiated them. Kong ducal agents, in the process of verifying genealogical claims – a process that is not often described so explicitly in Kong branch lineage manuscripts or imprints – brought with them the power to destabilize local social orders.

While most branch lineage genealogies were not born from such controversial circumstances, these cases do help provide a context that is missing from most of the texts themselves. They point to the role of the Kong dukes in not simply investigating and validating genealogical claims, but actively promoting genealogical research and production in the name of building an empire-wide network of Kong descendants.

45 *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 1, 412.

46 *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 1, 412.

47 *Qufu Kongfu dang'an shiliao xuanbian* 1985, vol. 1, 412.

## 4 Conclusion

The Kong branch lineage manuscripts examined in this paper certainly conform to many expectations of the genealogy genre, but they also illustrate certain tensions in form and content that emerged from the peculiar dynamics of power that shaped the kinship networks of the descendants of Confucius. For affiliated lineages, the front matter of a genealogy might include prefaces by Kong dukes or other notables that emphasize the connection between the local lineage and the Kongs of Qufu. The concerns of unaffiliated lineages, in contrast, understandably focus on the figures and practices central to the collective identity of the local kinship organization. This difference in focus is also evident in the ways in which the genealogies record and depict genealogical relationships and biographical details. Affiliated branch lineage genealogies might include more material on the lives of the main line descendants of Confucius than on the members of the branch lineage itself. That agents of the Kong duke were often directly involved in the compilation and writing of these works certainly contributed to the subsumption of branch lineage history into a larger Qufu-centered narrative. It is in this sense that genealogy was a type of political project that could be contested and resisted. To return to image that began this chapter, whether something was a pearl or a fish eye often depended less on the object itself than on the discernor.

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Michela Bussotti

# Chinese Genealogies and Tables of Generations: A Few Examples from Huizhou

**Abstract:** Southern Anhui Province is an important locality for the production of Chinese genealogies, and a number from the middle of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) are conserved. These bear witness to the compilation practices of private individuals and ‘ordinary people’ during the late imperial and Republican periods. While not claiming to be exhaustive, this text aims to indicate the richness and complexity of these documents through a description of the different sections of the genealogies and an analysis of the contents of the tables of generations, which preserve stories and information about the social life of extended kinships in rural China.

## 1 General remarks on genealogies: Supports and formats

The general catalogue of Chinese genealogies (*Zhongguo jiapu zongmu* 中國家譜總目), edited by Shanghai Library around fifteen years ago, includes over 50,000 entries.<sup>1</sup> This is an indication of the number of extant titles, some of them existing in only one copy (a manuscript or a printed copy) and others in a few, normally printed, exemplars. The catalogue is not exhaustive: many genealogies, especially those of relatively recent date and with the most modest and incomplete features, and those held by private individuals or minor institutional collections, were left out. However, in addition to its practical usefulness and in spite of its incompleteness, the catalogue is still emblematic of the importance of this production in traditional China. Moreover, genealogies themselves are just one part of the documentation related to lineage affairs still conserved today: in most cases these documents are manuscripts; they include other categories of private compilations, covering information about the history and organisation of the families, such as tomb gazetteers, books on rites,<sup>2</sup> and land tenure registers.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Shanghai Library 2008. More precisely, 52,401 titles for 608 family names: Liang Bian 2013.

2 For example, the ‘Register of Sacrifices of the Dai family’ (*Daishi jisi bu* 戴氏祭祀簿), an incomplete manuscript produced in Yi 黟 district, in the south of Anhui Province, and dated to c. 1923 reproduced in Liu Boshan 2018, series I, vol. 1.

3 ‘The Family Agreements of Lord Doushan’ (*Doushan gong jiayi* 寶山公家議) of the sixteenth century concern the collective property of the Cheng 程 lineage of Shanhe 善和在 Qimen 祁門 district,

The compilation of genealogies among families of officials – and then among ordinary people – began at the beginning of the second millennium CE.<sup>4</sup> This corresponds to a dynastic change and the period of the Song dynasty (960–1279) development of the administrative system of literati civil servants. Famous literati, such as Su Xun 蘇洵 (1009–1066) and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), drew up the first tables of generations, of their near families, to have been transmitted to us in later versions.<sup>5</sup>

Opinions differ as to the number of original genealogies preserved from the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), but they can be counted on the fingers of one hand.<sup>6</sup> The *Xin'an Wangshi qingyuan zongpu* 新安汪氏慶源宗譜<sup>7</sup> is one of them: considered to have been compiled by Wang Yao 汪堯 around 1328, the manuscript, with a squarish shape (46 × 40 cm), includes introductory texts dating from 1133 to 1430 and tables of generations. Traced lines on the pages to delimit columns (*hang* 行) are not evident and the writing is free, but the number of columns of the textual section are quite regular (about seventeen per page); however, the number of rows in the table of generations varies from one page to another. Strokes in red ink connect information about members of different generations of the family; the 'punctuation' marks are also in red. This red and black bicolour of 'Chinese books' is common to all manuscript production and some high-quality printed editions. This chromatic effect is reinforced by the stamps of seals that, in this case, are not only complementary to the signatures of authors (or the traces left by authoritative owners or readers):<sup>8</sup> the Wang family seal (*Wangshi zhi yin* 汪氏之印) overlaps the junction of succes-

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also in Anhui. This is well-known because a critical edition was published by Zhou Shaoquan and Zhao Yaguang in 1993, it has been the object of numerous studies, see McDermott 2015, 215–221.

4 This is in contrast to earlier times when genealogies, rarely preserved, were considered a prerogative of powerful and dominant families, beginning with the first and most famous example of the genealogical tables of rulers and hereditary houses in the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Scribe) by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (c. 145–86 BCE).

5 The literature on the subject is plethoric, see, among others, Clark 2004 and 2007.

6 Bussotti 2015, 246–248; Zhao 1999: in the case of Huizhou, of the fifteen titles he enumerates, six are manuscripts, but, in fact, only one of these is from the Yuan dynasty (see note below), and the others are later.

7 This genealogy is held in Beijing at the National Library of China, Rare and Special Collections (hereafter abbreviated to NLC), see the database on Huizhou genealogies on the website of EFEO by Michela Bussotti and Bao Guoqiang; on this database (hereafter abbreviated DHG) see below, note 42. The NLC 14836 is a genealogy (not divided into chapters) of the lineage from Qingyuan (a village in today's Wuyuan 婺源 District, Jiangxi province) of the Wang family of Xin'an.

8 This type of seal of ownership, a sign made by the connoisseur which validates a work and gives it value, is not normally expected to be stamped onto genealogies, but it can be found in some of them, especially in the most elaborate or oldest ones which have ended up becoming collectors' items, as mentioned below, note 41. This is not the case for this manuscript.

sive pages as a proof of the integrity of the object and its contents.<sup>9</sup> Due to the scarce number of original genealogies of the same period, academic research on the first centuries of the second millennium is based on genealogical textual sources (often prefaces) scattered in later literary collections, and texts developed in the central and coastal regions of Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Anhui and Fujian. Genealogical inscriptions on other supports than paper, i.e. stone, exist in other parts of China.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the greater part of the genealogies preserved until the present day were compiled in central and southern China, from the middle of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644)<sup>11</sup> up to recent times, during a period when compilers could be ordinary people, in most cases family members, not necessarily officials. The tables of generations and the family stories in these genealogies are inclusive of all male descendants from a founding ancestor, and sometimes of many lines of descendants, in the form of a document to which legitimate family members might have access and could keep a copy for themselves. Genealogies would be enriched with new sections over time, including texts and pictures, on different aspects of family history and affairs.<sup>12</sup>

Few examples of old scrolls alternating images and texts, some of which include sections with genealogical tables,<sup>13</sup> exist. These are conserved in museums

9 See a page of the genealogical table: <https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/20131112203326.jpg>. This link and others links to images in the DHG mentioned in the following notes were accessed on 21 June 2023, unless another access date is specified.

10 Regarding the genealogical steles of Northern China during the twelfth to fourteenth centuries see Iiyama 2016 and 2023.

11 The enlarged lineages, with a unique Prime Ancestor, were taking form in parallel to the government's authorisation of the construction of ancestral halls (1536) and the diffusion of genealogy compilations by commoners. Not all opinions agree on the degree of importance of their role in Chinese society across the country. However, in some regions of the empire, during the last two dynasties, lineages imposed rules of life, regulated land and collected taxes, performed common rites for ancestors with the consent of state authority (Faure 2007). A family was a fundamental cluster of social organisation, especially in the countryside of southern China. See also below note 44.

12 We use the generic term genealogy in this text because the use of many specific terms would increase the complexity of the presentation, without providing any essential information on the topic under discussion in these pages. The generic term employed for genealogy in Chinese is *jia pu* 家譜 ('family register'), but this, in fact, does not appear in most of the ancient titles, where we find [*tong*] *zong* [*shi*] *pu* [統]宗[世]譜, *zupu* 族譜, *zhipu* 支譜... ('[comprehensive] genealogies of the clan/lineage/branch of the family'). The character *pu* 譜 ('register; table; chart; book') can also be substituted by or associated with other characters (e.g. *puji* 簿籍, *jiasheng* 家乘, *pu die* 譜牒 or *die* 牒).

13 See two scrolls on the website of the Metropolitan Museum: a Ming dynasty copy of the 'Portrait of a Member and Record of the Wang Family' (*Xin'an Wangshi putie juan* 新安汪氏譜牒卷) and the 'Two Ancestors of the Mao Family' (*Maoshi jiaye* 冒氏家葉), of Ming or Qing dynasty, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/51704> and <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/51728>. Two scrolls are in the National Museum of Asian Art at the Smithsonian Institution

and often catalogued as paintings.<sup>14</sup> This has led to a split in the transmission and study of these documents, but they deserve, at least, to be mentioned here because these scrolls were certainly kept with other material in family libraries: what is now classified as a painting with genealogical texts was in the past an illustrated genealogy, stored together with other documents or books by family members.

Other formats, also related to traditional paintings, provide little space for handwritten tables of generations, for example, the portraits of ancestors on large vertical scrolls, which present the table inside the painting.<sup>15</sup> Another example is the so-called [*zhi*] *jiatang* 紙家堂 ('[paper] family hall'), imprints on vertical scrolls: inside a large drawing of a temple, completed with colourful and auspicious motifs, an empty grid is traced, to be filled by handwriting concerning generational information. These were produced until recently in Shandong Province,<sup>16</sup> and exposed at home, for example, during New Year's celebrations. These last kinds of genealogical artefacts are typical of places where there are few or no 'ancestral halls', i.e. family temples built specifically for ancestor worship.<sup>17</sup>

However, in Central and South China, where temples of ancestors were built in great number and large genealogies compiled, the latter took the form of one or more traditional fascicles. The tables of generations adapt their disposition and layout to the fascicle pages: the sheet can be blank or with border lines (*bianlan* 邊欄), which are sometimes printed. When lines between the columns are present, these are often traced by hand, but, in a few cases, all elements that delineate the

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in Washington: 'Portraits and Documents of the Gong family' (*Gongshi citang lizhao mingji* 龔氏祠堂歷朝名蹟, <https://asia.si.edu/object/F1909.208/>) and 'Genealogy and portraits of the Li family' (*Li[shi] jiapu* 李□家譜 <https://asia.si.edu/object/F1911.236/>); both are classified as paintings, but the first is on silk and the second on paper. The first and last scrolls (*Xin'an Wangshi pudie juan* and *Li[shi] jiapu*) present sections on genealogical information for five rows/generations, written in black and with red lines to join the different entries, as in the case of NLC 14836, or, as we will see, in some of the genealogies presented below. Access to the museums websites on 12 May 2022.

14 Regarding the first scroll mentioned in the note above (for the Wang 汪 family of Xin'an 新安, the old name for Huizhou), attention focuses on the portrait in the opening section, but the *Xin'an Wangshi pudie juan* includes many texts written on sheets of paper which seem to have different dimensions, some of them being large rectangular sheets with decorated (printed?) borders on all sides; only the genealogical section shows a continuity in the text and the support, so the horizontal scroll we see today probably gathers elements which were independent previously and with different formats.

15 For paintings of ancestors, sometimes including genealogical tables, see Stuart and Rawski 2001.

16 For many examples of the prints or paintings produced in Gaomi 高密 (Shandong 山东) which reserve an empty grid for the handwritten compilation of the names of the family members, see Feng Jicai 2009.

17 Flath 2004, 49–50.



spaces of the page in the area on which to write are printed. Leaves are wrapped back and, thus, split into two half-leaves, placed on top of each other. Folded pages and soft covers are stitched by thread (*xianzhuang* 綫裝) or with paper strips (*maozhuang* 毛裝), and fascicles are sometimes conserved in a rigid protective cover, similar to traditional thread-stitched books. Meanwhile, genealogies can be deposited in locked boxes, following precise rules for conservation and consultation. Reading is not the primary use of genealogies: instead, they must be conserved in a safe place in the ancestral hall and the recipients' home,<sup>18</sup> and their good preservation may be the object of periodic verification.<sup>19</sup> But, besides this particular storage, there is no distinctive exterior aspect in the format of a genealogy that might allow us to distinguish it from a work of another nature, nor any specificity to the manuscripts in comparison with the traditional printed genealogies, except for the fact that older handwritten genealogies can be relatively large and 'square'; but this format has been employed for other contemporary books, i.e. geographic (printed) atlases at the end of the Ming dynasty.<sup>20</sup>

## 2 Manuscript and other traditional media

In addition to information on the history of lineages and local society in China, genealogies sometimes preserve data on their compilation, editing (and printing) practices that can be used for research on the genealogies themselves, or the history of the Chinese book – as materials, media and formats are similar.<sup>21</sup> This is partially due to the traditional Chinese printing process, xylography, which did not introduce a definitive break in the organisation of contents between the handwritten

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**18** Not only lists of people receiving volumes exist, but for genealogies enclosed in boxes, notes about the holders of the boxes' keys were compiled: Chen Qi and Hu Xiaoyan 2006, 79–78. These kinds of archives are normally handwritten.

**19** A copy of a genealogy of the Ye family of Yi district (*Yixian Nanping Yeshi zupu* 黟縣南屏葉氏族譜 2:22907) is held in Anhui Provincial Library; revised in 1812, it includes a page of red stamps with the word 'verification' (查對 *chadui*) and the sexagesimal characters of the years; the stamps seem to have been regularly apposed on the volume for about 80 years. It is sometimes said that the moment of verification of the genealogies' conservation overlaps with that of the ancestral graveside offerings (Qingming 清明 Festival) in the Spring.

**20** A famous example is the atlas of China and near countries *Guangyu tu* 廣輿圖 (Enlarged Terrestrial Atlas) with a 'square' format in the first editions (until 1579). An early copy of this atlas (printed around 1555–1558) is held in Leiden, see <https://historiek.net/boek-van-de-maand-de-chinese-atlas/51017/> (accessed on 18 May 2023).

**21** Bussotti 2015.

and the printed page. Traditional typography with wooden movable type, which does not require the use of presses, was also commonly used in the late imperial and Republican periods for genealogies,<sup>22</sup> and genealogies printed with movable type often include painted images (portraits of ancestors, Fig. 1) or pages printed by woodblocks: these were, for example, prefatory texts, reproductions of calligraphic inscriptions, and maps of the village or of ancestors' graves.<sup>23</sup> Not only do the first steps of the traditional print process imply preparatory work not much different to the elaboration of a manuscript, but each handwritten page is also potentially transferable to the woodblock in state – the page is pasted written side down onto the woodblock, where it is engraved.<sup>24</sup> The appreciation of calligraphic quality and the will to reproduce brush strokes persists to the point that these effects are still sought even in a production, such as a genealogy, where function and value should be independent of graphic aesthetics.

The important role of handwriting is confirmed by many introductory texts which retrace the history of genealogies, and mention the (repeated) work of compilation or revision but not the outcome of the project and the final printing. This can have different reasons (lack of time and 'strength'; death of the person in charge of compiling/revising the genealogy or abandonment of the task; work not sufficiently well done to be printed), but more often than not the reasons are not made explicit. Regarding the most famous lineage of Chinese wood engravers working in book manufacture in East-Central China in the Ming and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties, the Huang 黄 of Qiucun 虬村 (She 歙 district, Anhui), for example, only one genealogy, printed in the 1830s, is preserved. Earlier, during the last two dynasties, this Huang lineage undertook six revisions of its genealogy (only one of which was printed and lost).<sup>25</sup> This indicates not only that many genealogical manuscripts have now

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22 Tables of generations, with their repetitive information, are very suitable for reproduction by movable type, as the same characters (i.e. father, son, and so on) are reused many times. Moreover, the process of printing, limited to the use of brushes for inking and rubbing the back of the paper page, means that all its related activities were 'movable'. This was particularly suitable for genealogies, which have often been produced at home or in the village of the people who were editing the history of their own family. The existence of itinerant craftsmen is documented; for the Shaoxing 紹興 district in Northern Zhejiang, see Zhang Xiumin and Han Qi 2006, 600. For a contract from the end of the nineteenth century with a team of itinerant craftsmen, see Bussotti 2015, 248.

23 I visited Dongyuan 東源 in Zhejiang 浙江 province in 2018, a village inscribed in the intangible cultural heritage lists of China and of UNESCO for its genealogies printed by movable type. The local 'depository' of this traditional production, Wang Zhaohui 王超辉, who was still active at that time, showed me a genealogy of the Zhuge 諸葛 family of Puzhou 蒲州 he had made which included, beside the pages printed by blocks or type, portraits made by local painters [Fig. 1].

24 Tsien Tsuen-hsuei 1984, 18–20.

25 Bussotti 2015, 281.

disappeared (five in this case), but also that members of the family who could have done the job of engraving wood-blocks without additional labour costs did not do so. Perhaps, even though famous, the Huang remained artisans or peasants – their genealogy reveals very few members educated with official recognition – and printing their genealogy remained expensive because it was a time-consuming task; in any case, the media employed was not that important to them.

That engravers of the blocks employed for books, such as the members of the Huang family, also engraved genealogies for other families can be explained by the fact that specific tasks for the material production of the genealogy could be assigned to ‘outsider craftsmen’, especially for high-level compilations. Meanwhile, the work of collecting and compiling was normally carried out by family members; the calligraphy and designs could also be done by family members.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, ‘professionals of compilation’ or ‘extra-family people’ named as ‘compilers’ are very few, especially in Huizhou during the Ming dynasty,<sup>27</sup> although their number and role tend to increase over time. Later, the so-called ‘masters of genealogies’ *pushi* 譜師 take on different tasks, including assembling information and then (re)organising it into genealogical tables; they sometimes worked together with itinerant ‘genealogy artisans’ *pujiang* 譜匠.<sup>28</sup>

Regardless of the reasons that favoured the printing of genealogies in some regions, it can be assumed that as an act with practical and prestige implications,<sup>29</sup>

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26 This is deduced by looking at the names that appear within the genealogies themselves. Specific documents or sections, especially in older genealogies, are rare, but the genealogy of the Chen family (*Chenshi dacheng zongpu* 陳氏大成宗譜) from the sixteenth century (c. 1537) conserves a list of the names of people involved: none of the scribes, woodcutters, printers or bookbinders has the name of Chen; instead, the Chens themselves carried out all the work of editing and collating the contents. Cf. ‘Shenghuiyin’ 勝會引 is the original kept in NLC, see DHG, 14335, slides 6 a–c.

27 Regarding 300 titles of South-Anhui genealogies made during the Ming dynasty, very few names of ‘compilers’ exterior to the family have been identified: Bussotti 2015, 264–265. Moreover, a different name is significant of a non-agnatic relation, but this does not exclude a cognatic family relation, or a ‘literary friendship’. The situation seems to evolve over time and the increase of external compilers is perhaps connected with the growing demand by families unable to prepare genealogies for themselves.

28 As in the case of Wang Zhaohui mentioned above, in note 23.

29 If revision of one’s own family genealogy was an obligatory act of respect for the ancestors, and in theory, had to be done at least ‘every three generations’, the choice of media was not prescribed. In some regions of China, genealogies in the form of fascicles were produced in multiple copies destined for different members of the family and this may have favoured the choice of the printing. But due to the large diffusion of traditional printing and private publishing in the same places, we can also argue that these practices influenced the local production of genealogies. Finally, printing made the process of reproduction longer and more expensive, and this could have been appreciated, as a prestigious symbol for the lineage engaging forces and means in the genealogical project.

printing was also a method of control, since destroying woodblocks or removing movable type from the composition plate impeded easy (and perhaps unauthorised) reproduction of the genealogy.<sup>30</sup>

It is necessary to reflect on the multiple functions of handwritten genealogies for those places where various forms of reproduction of genealogies coexisted. A manuscript is sometimes a high-quality document because it is handwritten in a very refined way and, therefore, intended for someone important or a collector.<sup>31</sup> It may also be a compilation which needs to be preserved but favouring a restricted and selective transmission. If unique, the genealogy is significant for all the community, and confers a special status on the owner or person who ensures its custody, who, thereby, becomes superior to the other members of the community. But this could also indicate that the person is external to the group. The handwritten genealogy is the transcription of existing text(s) or of oral information not only for the needs of compilation, preservation or transmission, but also for appropriation or study. Even if – at first – a genealogy was certainly handwritten, an extant manuscript does not necessarily precede the printed copies.<sup>32</sup> This eventuality must be considered, even when there is no date evident within the handwritten genealogy to affirm it. Incidentally, the rareness of precise dates of production (e.g. in paratextual information) is one of the reasons that manuscripts are so difficult to date and study.

### 3 A place, a *corpus*: The example of Huizhou

The genealogies mentioned in the previous pages were, in part, produced in the old prefecture of Huizhou 徽州. This mountainous region (corresponding to the

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<sup>30</sup> Bussotti 2015, 248.

<sup>31</sup> See the manuscript of genealogy of the Sun family from Xin'an of the Kangxi period (1662–1722) reproducing an older printed copy (probably of the fifteenth century): *Xin'an Sunshi chongxu zongpu* 新安孫氏重續宗譜, NLC 14229.

<sup>32</sup> This is the case for the *Wushiben zongpu* (休寧縣市吳氏本宗譜十卷, genealogy of the Wu lineage of Xiuning district town, in ten chapters) printed in c. 1528, and the manuscript of *Xin'an Wushi zupu bufen juan* (新安吳氏族譜不分卷, genealogy of the Wu lineage of Xin'an) regarded as being produced during the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, probably in Shexian 歙縣, based on a previous model of the Ming dynasty. Both genealogies include a portrait of Jizha 季札, one of the sons of the King of Wu 吳 (sixth century BCE), with a common model. There is an inscription in front of the image reading 'Yanling Jizi xiangzan' (延陵季子像讚 Portrait with eulogies of Yanling Jizi, title of Jizha) attributed to Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101). The choice of personalities represented in the portraits reveals the authors privileging of classical antiquity, rather than local historical ancestors. These two genealogies are both kept in NLC: see DHG, 13838, slide 8; 12684, slide 1c [Fig. 2].

south of Anhui Province 安徽 and the north-east of Jiangxi Province 江西 today) is situated within the inner border of the region called Jiangnan 江南, south of the lower course of the Yangzi river. This area was the most economically and culturally developed part of the Empire during the second millennium, although with alternating phases and with certain differences from one place to another. Huizhou studies have been well-established in East Asia for almost a century, and a considerable literature now also exists in the West.<sup>33</sup> Regarding this literature, we invite the reader to bear in mind the fact that lineage organisation was strongly developed in this region, and that this was the homeland of many famous scholars, officials and merchants of the Empire; and, after the aristocratic families, officials were the first to be allowed to compile genealogies.

Moreover, hundreds of thousands of archives (private or from local administrations) have been preserved in Huizhou:<sup>34</sup> most of them were compiled at the end of the Qing dynasty or during the Republican period (1911–1949), but the oldest ones date from the thirteenth century. In addition to these, there is a large quantity of genealogical documents.<sup>35</sup> All this has fed the research work of a large number of Chinese historians specialising in the two last dynasties or the Republican period. Although much of this ongoing work may, at the moment, seem limited, because it focuses on local and very specific issues, recent trends in research have focused on these new sources, transforming Chinese historiography, which was previously essentially based on official sources.

Chinese genealogies have still not garnered the unanimous appreciation of historians, who are sometimes, especially in Europe, not familiar with this type of source. Moreover, their content is selective (negative examples are excluded) and compilers are – legitimately – suspected of inventing a positive prosopography, anticipating the origin of the family, and straining to find links to important figures (scholars and officials) who lived centuries earlier or mythical figures. Genealogies were ‘marginalised’ for political reasons after 1949 in mainland China, and

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<sup>33</sup> Asian scholars’ attention regarding Huizhou documents began during the 1930s–1940s; therefore, providing an exhaustive bibliography of the actual state of production would be impossible – just to quote a recent title in English, see McDermott 2013 and 2020; see also Zurndorfer 1989.

<sup>34</sup> The estimates increase year by year: they were estimated at 300,000 fifteen years ago and their number has passed a million, according to recent publications: Wang Zhenzhong 2022, 37.

<sup>35</sup> Genealogies are not really regarded as local archives (which are first-hand documents, such as contracts), because they are the result of elaboration and editing processes; this nourishes endless discussions on the categories that include, or exclude, genealogies. Moreover, in Chinese there are two terms, both translated as ‘documents’: *wenshu* 文書 and *wenxian* 文獻; normally genealogies are classed as *wenxian*, which has a broader meaning, and, therefore, includes *wenshu* and genealogies.

seen as a direct product of the rural and patriarchal society.<sup>36</sup> They have recently been re-evaluated by cultural and governmental institutions<sup>37</sup> and some scholars,<sup>38</sup> who, in the case of Huizhou, may combine this information with that from other archives for their studies on local society.

It is possible to identify around 1300 titles, handwritten and printed, produced in Huizhou over time and extant today in the general catalogue of Chinese genealogies *Zhongguo jiapu zongmu* mentioned in the opening page of this text.<sup>39</sup> This number is reached by considering the genealogies as a whole, without distinguishing between those produced for the entire lineage of several districts or for a particular branch of the family.<sup>40</sup> Genealogies of the Ming dynasty account for about a quarter of this number.<sup>41</sup>

The Ming genealogies also form the majority of those included in the online database on Chinese genealogies co-created by the EFEO and the National Library of China.<sup>42</sup> This database is based on the direct analysis of around three hundred genealogies held by the library. This corresponds to 207 different titles (as a printed genealogy can be preserved in two or three copies); and includes forty-eight manuscripts. This corpus includes 183 genealogies from the Ming dynasty (but none from

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36 This was what drew my attention to these documents. Working on the illustrated book in Huizhou, whose production flourished at the end of the sixteenth century (Bussotti 2001), I observed that similar illustrations were already present, a century earlier, in genealogies (Bussotti 2011), but Chinese works of this topic published in the last century never (or rarely) mention them: genealogies were not accessible to the authors or it was not prudent to speak about them.

37 See note 23 on the inclusion of Dongyuan in the lists of intangible cultural heritage.

38 See the works on the Jin 金 family of Xiuning 休寧: A Feng and Zhang Guowang 2015.

39 Shanghai Library (ed.) 2008.

40 See above, note 12.

41 The number of Huizhou documents that 'appear' in private or public collections is constantly growing. However, for the oldest genealogies, the change of the score should not be, in my opinion, so significant. Private individuals have been increasing the market for years, and the 'discovery' of originals of the Ming dynasty is becoming increasingly difficult. Antique genealogies are not really an exception once they change their status from items preserved for the family with a ritual value to items for collectors of books and antiquities.

42 The DGH was part of the research programme 'Social and cultural history of printing and publishing in Huizhou' (sponsored by the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange). On the same occasion, the genealogies of the Academy of Social Sciences were analysed by A. Feng, and this data is also available in open access on the EFEO website. Another part of the programme, concerning Anhui Provincial Library, is not online; a few materials were collected in the Museum of Huangshan 黄山 at Tunxi 屯溪, but are not exploited because they are incomplete. In mainland China, another important group of old genealogies from Huizhou that I could not include in the project is preserved in Anhui Provincial Museum. The collection of the Shanghai Library is also important but for a slightly later period.

the beginning of the dynasty), only twenty-one from the Qing dynasty and earlier genealogies are extremely rare.<sup>43</sup> Few volumes remain to the present day from the second quarter of the fifteenth century; the number increases a century later,<sup>44</sup> so the information collected essentially concerns the period 1500–1700. We paid particular attention to four topics in this database: the material characteristics of these genealogies, their contents and, in some cases, their evolution (this data will provide information for the next section); the work done to produce them; the iconographic material, such as portraits (Figs 1–2, 16) and maps (Figs 3–4, 18); and the quantitative data on editing practices.<sup>45</sup> Even if the last set of data is generally incomplete,<sup>46</sup> these figures are still very interesting for the Chinese book and other handwritten or printed productions of the imperial period, as quantitative data of this kind is extremely scarce.<sup>47</sup>

## 4 Contents of Chinese genealogies

What content can one find by browsing through a genealogy? The answer will certainly not always be the same, depending on the place (in these pages we base our

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43 Three genealogies are considered as predating the Ming dynasty; for the last dynasty, the genealogies included in the DHG match the criteria of the ancient Department of Rare and Special Collections: rare volumes of high quality dated no later than the eighteenth century. Therefore, to get a larger view of Huizhou genealogies, it is useful to consult publications reproducing more recent and popular manuscripts, which are still preserved *in situ*, such as the collection assembled in two series by Liu Boshan 2018.

44 This is related to imperial approval for relaxing the prerequisites for the construction of ancestral halls: in 1536, families who could provide proof of having ascendants, even very distant, numbering high officials, were permitted to build temples for their ancestors. This practice became increasingly widespread, see Faure 2006, 1301. See also above note 11.

45 This last category of information is not abundant for the Ming dynasty, but becomes a little richer in the later genealogies: for a pioneering study on the editing and publishing practices of Chinese genealogies in other localities of central China during the Qing dynasty and the Republican period, see Xu Xiaoman 2005.

46 In order to preserve the traceability of the copies made and their distribution, and to keep count of the donations and the expenses, genealogies sometimes report these figures. But the fact that figures for donations by members of the family may be noted but not the destination of the funds, or vice versa, impels us to be cautious in using these figures.

47 In general, 'private contracts' for land are preserved, but not those contracted with artisans or workshops, and this is no different for genealogies. The scarcity of contracts for punctual activities suggest that they may have existed, but once the work was done people did not feel any need to keep them. Moreover, the fact that many activities were familiar restricted the need for agreements concluded between a master and an external apprentice. For two late examples of familial agreements with artisans for genealogy production by movable type, in 1897 and 1918, respectively, see Bussotti 2012, 220–331.

presentation on the Huizhou corpus mentioned above), the era, and the extent of the genealogical project and the means and efforts used to carry it out. In the case of manuscripts (genealogies and works of other kinds), the quality of the product is also reflected in the terminology used to designate them: if a *chaoben* 抄本 or *shouchaoben* 手抄本 is an (ordinary) handwritten copy, the term *gaoben* 稿本 indicates a first version or a manuscript prior to printing but is often also used to classify manuscripts of high quality. All this refers to the characteristics of the manuscript, independently of the number of chapters and fascicles. Genealogies can be rather elaborate documents, with many additions beside the genealogical tables, in many fascicles or in just one; chapters (*juan* 卷) may be numerous or not, and sometimes chapters are not indicated and materials follow directly on each other (*bufen juan* 不分卷). Based on the corpus studied, a trend towards increased content emerges with the passage of time, and this seems to go hand in hand with the development of lineage structures and activities.<sup>48</sup> This also probably explains why the Yuan dynasty manuscript of the Wang 汪 family mentioned above includes a limited variety of content (a few introductory texts and tables of generations) in only one fascicle and without chapter divisions.

## 4.1 Opening pages: Title and introductions

Genealogies may preserve a so-called frontispiece or title page(s) (*feiye* 扉頁, *tingmye* 提名頁): around 15 % of the items examined, but this low rate may be partly the effect of poor conservation, as the first and last pages of volumes are easily damaged. The title transcribed in the opening pages is often abbreviated.<sup>49</sup> large characters in regular calligraphy (*kaishu* 楷書) or seal style (*zhuan shu* 篆書), a few to each page,<sup>50</sup> or only one.<sup>51</sup> In this case, the similarity with the titles

48 Zhai Tunjian 1999; Zhao Hua fu 1999.

49 The standard title of a traditional book is written on the first line of the first page of the text, even if this page is not the first page of the volume. Similarly, the title in genealogies is written in the first column of the first page of the genealogical tables: this standard title, in most cases, is much longer and more detailed than the title inscribed elsewhere in the volume. On the same page, after the full title, there are the names, for example, of the authors, collators and compilers.

50 'Genealogy of the clan Tang of Xin'an' (*Xin'an Tangshi zongpu* 新安唐氏宗譜二卷附錄一卷), revised by Tang Shi 唐仕 in 1544, NLC 13285; DHG, slides 1 a–b. Three stamps are on this frontispiece.

51 See the incomplete Ming dynasty manuscript of the Ba family (*Bashi zupu bufen juan* 巴氏族譜不分卷) NLC 14293; DHG, slides 1a–b: <https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/201311691528.jpg>. In a traditional Chinese fascicle, a single page after binding corresponds to two halves of the page, or the recto and the verso.



in the opening of horizontal scrolls<sup>52</sup> is evident (and intentional). The calligraphic effect may be even more emphasized by the presence of seals and, eventually, by the name or surname of the author/calligrapher himself, and by attribution to great personalities.<sup>53</sup> The fact that these calligraphic titles appear in printed copies reflects the importance attached to writing and the quality of the strokes, and the point of pursuing a handwritten appearance despite the media used. This aptitude for imitating handwriting characteristics and varieties is, moreover, one of the recognised reasons why xylography, and later lithography, were favoured over typography. On the contrary, some manuscripts may reproduce the layout of the title page of a xylographic printed book, as we will describe later.<sup>54</sup>

As has already been mentioned, genealogies may include a table of contents (*mulu* 目錄), placed at the beginning of the volume or after the prefatory texts, which may be numerous. These prefatory texts correspond to two categories: introductions to the compilation itself, specially written for the occasion, and whose information is completed by the contemporary postfaces, which are placed at the end of the volume; or the 'old prefaces' *jiuxu* 舊序 copied from previous genealogies. The number of 'old prefaces' can be extremely high, for example, the manuscript of the *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzongpu* 新安左田黃氏正宗譜,<sup>55</sup> dating from around 1628, includes four contemporary and eighty-three ancient prefatory texts; about half of them are dated to the sixteenth century and the rest to earlier centuries, starting from the year 922. The authenticity of similar paratextual contents, very ancient or attributed to famous people, is often the object of doubt or discussion, and fakes certainly exist. However, given that almost all the genealogies of the corpus at the end of Ming and later contain ancient paratexts, it is difficult to imagine that these were all later inventions. Furthermore, in some cases the authorship is documented: the local scholar Cheng Minzheng 程敏政 (1445–1499) was invited to write introductions for

52 See the examples mentioned above, notes 13 and 14.

53 In the 'Genealogy of the Xu family of the East town of the ancient She' (*Gushe chengdong Xushi shipu* 古歙城東許氏世譜) of 1635 (NLC 13841 and NLC 16524), an inscription says: 'To be responsible facing great difficulties and plead for the good [things, written by the] imperial pencil' (*Yubi Zenan chenshan* 御筆責難陳善), see a copy kept in Beijing Capital Library, Chap. 1, 51–53.

54 See the manuscript genealogy of the Sun family branch (*Sunshi zhipu* 孫氏支譜六卷), NLC 5930B slide 2: <https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/20131110101638.jpg>.

55 The genealogy of the Huang family of Zuotian 左田 presents the name of the 'first editor' (*yu-anzuanxiu* 原纂修) Huang Jiyu (黃稹瑜, 1506–1573, Fig. 16) who produced a printed edition in 1567–1573; later, this version was adapted by Huang Boyong (黃伯湧 born in 1533) who 'continued the revision' (*xuxiu* 續修) and finally Huang Xuande 黃玄德, born in 1566, wrote this copy choosing the contents related to the members of his branch Gaocang (高倉派) from Xiuning. Two genealogies with the same title are kept in NLC, see DHG, 14281 (manuscript) and 11579 (printed).

numerous genealogies in Huizhou, and twenty-five of these texts were also included in his own compilations.<sup>56</sup> It is often possible to deduce the number of revisions that occurred in earlier centuries from the common dates and contents of these texts, as in the case of the Huang family from Qiucun mentioned above. The prefaces can also provide some concrete information – who was engaged in the editing work, how long it took, who sponsored the genealogy – but often propose repetitive narrations of the story of the family, praise of the ancestors and concern about the obligation of keeping the genealogical tables in order by revision.

## 4.2 Paratexts and images in the opening section

Among the other content included in the opening sections of the Huizhou genealogies are lists of the participants in the various activities of the work on the genealogy, sometimes with the precise tasks of each.<sup>57</sup> These lists occasionally transcribe the names of the participants in the compiling/editing work of previous versions: participants are generally all family members and the dates or the names reported in these lists can potentially be cross-referenced with the information in the old prefaces to confirm the existence of previous compilations.<sup>58</sup>

The ‘rules of the lineage’ *zugui* 族規 (e.g. general rules of organisation for ancestral and religious rites, common lands of the clan, gender regulation) are relatively rare.<sup>59</sup> Instead ‘editorial notes’ (*fanli* 凡例, also translated as ‘notes to the readers’ or ‘editorial guide’) are present in most cases; the number of items they count differ: in our corpus, this ranges from four to thirty-six.<sup>60</sup> These notes, explaining the contents of the genealogy, are useful tools for readers: some notes can repeat things already said in the introductions, but most are entries related to

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<sup>56</sup> Cheng’s career had its ups and downs, but his academic skills and historical knowledge were never questioned; for his biography, see McGee 2005, 36–46. He included his prefatory texts for genealogies in the ‘Collected works of Huangdun’ (*Huangdun wenji* 篁墩文集), Huangdun being one of his ‘style names’, and transcribed genealogical texts of other authors in another compilation, the ‘Monography of Xin’an documents’ (*Xin’an wenxian zhi* 新安文献志), Xu Bin 2017, 210–212.

<sup>57</sup> As in the *Chenshi dacheng zongpu*, c. 1537 quoted in note 26.

<sup>58</sup> For example, the list ‘Names of correctors in successive dynasties’ (*Lidai xiupu mingshi* 歷代修譜名氏) including more than nineteen names, referred to about thirty compilations, in the manuscript NLC 14281; DHG, slides 5a–e; see note 55 above and Bussotti 2015, 274–277.

<sup>59</sup> See Chang Jianhua 2008, 52 and 54; Guo Qitao 2015, 40.

<sup>60</sup> Only four entries in a ‘genealogy of Cheng 程 family from Xin’an’ of 1563 (NLC 11577; DHG, slides 2 a–b) and thirty-six in the genealogy of the Huang from Tandu, edited in 1731 but compiled two centuries before (NLC 14343 & 14291, slides 2 a–g). This last genealogy is discussed below note 75 and Fig. 11.

content that may or may not be included in the genealogy, and how to present it.<sup>61</sup> Once again, taking Cheng Minzheng as an example: when he compiled the ‘Comprehensive Genealogy’<sup>62</sup> of the Cheng of Xin’an’ (*Xin’an Chengshi tongzong shipu* 新安程氏統宗世譜) c. 1482, he wrote ten ‘editorial notes’, whose contents correspond to establishing the criteria for the inclusion of the family members in the genealogy; determining what content is to be included or not; clarifying how the content is listed and presented; describing the different and new sections of his genealogy.<sup>63</sup>

Another type of list, which is quite rare in our examples but becomes more common in later genealogies and other corpus, is composed of the so-called ‘characters of generations’: one of the characters of the given name was the same for all the males of the same generation of the extended family; the succession of these characters normally makes sense. This type of list could be memorised, and it makes identifying the generations to which people belonged easier based on the characters employed in their names or not.

Portraits of ancestors and maps were visual elements very often included in Huizhou genealogies; in most cases, these ‘illustrated’ sections precede the tables of generations, but they can also be found after. The portraits (Figs 1, 2 and 16) are usually accompanied by a short praising text. The maps represent different spaces of the family history and life.<sup>64</sup> Some are considered as typical of genealogical production, such as maps of tombs with geomantic connotations (Fig. 3), the ancestral halls or the villages where the lineage settled. Other maps are rarer, for example, those representing the lineage implantation in the district, the prefecture or even in the whole empire (Fig. 4): these are related to the positions occupied by the family members who became officials, since they could not be assigned to a position in their native place. This kind of map is significant not only in terms of population migrations but also as an expression of willingness to integrate one’s family history into the history of the Empire – which is not surprising in a context where achieving a high position in government administration was the ultimate goal of all educated people<sup>65</sup> and all those possessing a (small) family fortune.

<sup>61</sup> For example, if the names of adopted son or family members have settled elsewhere are included or excluded, see Xu Bin 2017, 76.

<sup>62</sup> This genealogy is called ‘comprehensive’ or ‘general’ because it includes information of all branches of the family, not only those in Huizhou but also those in some districts of Jiangxi Province.

<sup>63</sup> Chang Jianhua 2005.

<sup>64</sup> Bussotti 2017.

<sup>65</sup> This was also the condition for building ancestral temples; see above note 44.

### 4.3 The tables of generations

The original records of Su Xun and Ouyang Xu no longer exist, but their ‘grids’ are known, and are cited as models for tables of generations in the paratexts of almost all subsequent genealogies. Other names are linked with them locally: Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), Chen Li 陳櫟 (1252–1334) or Cheng Minzheng,<sup>66</sup> who, in the ‘editorial notes’ of his genealogy, theorised a new kind of table in which previous models were combined: the page presents five rows, corresponding to five generations; some biographical information had to be transcribed inside the grids, following a precise order; writing in large or small characters and in different colours (black or red) is proposed by Cheng in order to differentiate the entries.

Cheng’s model was widely employed, at least theoretically: in local genealogies, his name often ended up appearing in the paratexts alongside those of his famous predecessors Ouyang and Su. But theory and reality are not always unanimous. The choice of using red for writing characters, for example, is relatively rare (Fig. 5), but common for lines linking names and generations (Figs 6–7), this being easier in manuscripts where the page background is often white, without lines for columns and rows.<sup>67</sup> The red-black effect is also used for adding ‘punctuation’ (Fig. 8), ‘attention notes’, and so on, to manuscript or printed genealogies, but this is also done in a second time, without connection to the compilation process.

There are various types of ‘grids’ for generation tables. Different layouts, at least, are possible even within the category of five rows/generations tables: five rows per page can be filled with information, for example, of generations 1–5, 6–10, 11–15. But to make it easier to read the succession of generations, the information in the last row at the bottom of the page can be repeated in the first row of the following page, so that the layout of generations, for example, becomes 1–5, 5–9, 9–13, or 1–5, 5–10, 10–15. This is a useful reminder, because as the generations increase, so do the numbers of descendants, and, thus, the gap in pages can make it difficult to make the connection, for example, between a father of the fifteenth generation and his sixteenth generation progeny.

<sup>66</sup> Xu Bin 2017, 187–220.

<sup>67</sup> I have not come across tables of generations printed in two colours in old genealogies. One handwritten copy of the comprehensive genealogy by Cheng Minzheng incorporates the use of red for the names of places/branches of the family and for the generations’ numbers: is this the manuscript prototype of the printed genealogy of Cheng or a later handwritten copy (Fig. 5)? This manuscript [NLC 13170] indicates that at least ninety copies of the genealogies were distributed, including forty-four for the Beiguo fang 陪郭房; the copy n° 30 of this second list was the author’s own copy; see DHG 13170, slides 10a-c: <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/2013117223646.jpg>>. Two other copies (printed in black) are preserved in NLC: 14417, 14356.

Other tables exist with a higher number of generations per page, in old or recent genealogies. Nine rows/generations are used in a manuscript genealogy of the Shexian's Xu family, the *Xin'an Gaoyang Xushi zongpu* 新安高陽許氏宗譜 which was compiled in the early sixteenth century and revised a century later: one of its 'editorial notes' states explicitly that the number of generations was based on the tables of an older genealogy (依舊譜抄祿釘以九世畫圖).<sup>68</sup> The number of rows sometimes varies from one page to another in the same volume, as in the *Xin'an Wangshi qingyuan zongpu* of the Yuan dynasty, mentioned above,<sup>69</sup> or in much later compilations preserved up to recent times in the rural countryside, i.e. a genealogy of the Hu 胡 family dated to the beginning of eighteenth century with pages presenting six and seven generations (Fig. 9).<sup>70</sup> Some other manuscripts of quite late manufacture show many different layouts: some of them are evidently the copy of a scroll in a fascicle, without obvious adaptations,<sup>71</sup> others are limited to a list of names of men and their wives, or pile up many generations in small notebooks with delimited sections, as in a genealogy of the Hong 洪 family from around a century ago, also from Shexian (Fig. 10).<sup>72</sup> This suggests a greater freedom of format in recent manuscripts than those preserved in the NLC. In this regard, we can propose multiple explanations: over time, the model was followed less faithfully and the processes of 'contamination' between formal presentations multiplied; the production of genealogies by ordinary families, who did not perpetuate standards, because they did not have not the necessary skills, or the human and economic means to do so; migrations and circulation, which concretely influenced the production of genealogies, with the introduction of layouts used elsewhere; a larger number of manuscripts extant from the last two centuries, which, therefore, seem richer and more varied simply because the older preserved handwritten documents are less numerous, at least for Huizhou.

68 NLC 14838 (Genealogy of the Xu family of Gaoyang, Xin'an): see the 'editorial notes', end of entry no 2, DHG, slide 2b; see also below, note 83. The highest number of lines (that I have seen in the manuscripts of the corpus) is eleven in a manuscript undated but attributed to the beginning of the Ming dynasty: the *Qingyuan Zhanzhi zupu bufen juan* 慶源詹氏族譜不分卷 NLC 14226 slide 4a.

69 NLC 14836 (Genealogy of the lineage from Qingyuan, Wang family of Xin'an): DHG, slides 2–3.

70 Liu Boshan 2018, series I, vol. 3.

71 This is the case for the manuscript of the Wu family of Changxi – Taihu 昌溪太湖 settled in She District, where tables continue onto subsequent pages; the manuscript was 'respectfully written with pure hands by Wu Ren' (*Wu Ren mushou jingshu* 吳仁 沐手敬書), during the month *la* (*layue* 臘月, sacrifice after the winter solstice, so the twelfth lunar month) of the first year *xianfeng* era, at the end of 1851 – beginning of 1852. Liu Boshan 2018, series II, vol. 8.

72 Manuscript from the end of Qing dynasty – beginning of the Republican period, of the Hong family of Zhongcun, in the South of the She district, *Shinan Zhongcun Hongshi jia sheng* 歙南中村洪氏家乘: Liu Boshan 2018, series I, vol. 2.

The calligraphy is accurate in some manuscripts, and the arrangement of the contents is regular; this is perhaps the work of professionals, or the work of a family member who applied themselves to precise and careful writing, as in the two chapters of the Ming dynasty 'Genealogy of the Wang lineage' (*Wangshi zupu* 汪氏族譜二卷, undated). Inside this volume, at the beginning of the first chapter (Fig. 6), are inscribed the names of the compiler (*bianci* 編次) Wang Yifeng 儀鳳 (*Zishao* 子韶) and the corrector (*jiaozheng* 校正) Wang Zhuan 顥 (*Shiliang* 士良), who were both members of the seventy-fifth generation, and that of Wang Hui 惠 (*Gurun* 谷潤), a member of the seventy-sixth generation, who copied it (*tenglu* 謄錄).<sup>73</sup> The reproduced images of this manuscript include two types of tables that are often simultaneously present in the Huizhou genealogies: the table of generations we have just discussed, which, in this case, shows nine generations per page, including the name of the compiler Wang Yifeng and his closest relatives (Fig. 7); this is preceded by a synthetic table where the names of mythical and ancient people are 'condensed' into only one page. In this case (Fig. 6), the succession begins with the Yellow emperor and ends with the sons of Heigong, Duke Cheng [of Lu 魯] 成公黑肱: his first son and successor, Duke Xiang 襄公 (personal name Wu 午, 575–542 BCE), and his second son, Wang Marquis of Yingchuan 潁川侯汪,<sup>74</sup> Wang was subsequently taken as the family name of his offspring.

Other tables of generations are rarer: in a genealogy of the Huang lineage of Tandu, a locality in She District, diagrammatic representation of the entire kinship is proposed in addition to the textual information. This compilation from the Ming dynasty was only printed during the Qing dynasty (1731), and its layout may be faithful to that of the earlier manuscript. This seems particularly evident in the case of the 'ancient table of generations of the Huang of Tandu' (*Tandu Huangshi shixi gutu* 潭渡黃氏世系古圖) (Fig. 11), included in the first chapter of the genealogy. This table is synthetic but not about mythical figures or people from Antiquity; it presents local Huang members over twenty-three generations, corresponding to around seven centuries of family history. Written in very small characters, it compresses the vertical (and diachronic) dimension into a height of less than 28 cm, corresponding to the height of the fascicle. This table covers almost six half pages, with the numbers of the generations inscribed on its right side, that is to say on the right border of the first page, and with the name of the first ancestor written at the top of the third page. From here the 'family tree' radiates downwards and sideways, and splits into several branches: the members of the twenty-second and twenty-third generations are written at the bottom of the pages. We can find dates and further information in

<sup>73</sup> NLC, 14227: DHG, slides 2a, 3, 5b.

<sup>74</sup> Dai Tingming and Cheng Shangkuan 2004, 182; some texts explain that he was so named because he was born with the strokes corresponding to the character Wang 汪 on his hands.

the following sections of the genealogy for some of them, for others, only the names are preserved.<sup>75</sup> We might think that a vertical format, perhaps a scroll, would be more apt for representing such a high number of generations, but considering the context and what has already been said above, we should rather posit the existence of an earlier horizontal scroll, whose contents were now reported onto a fascicular format. Thus, the ‘reader’ of this genealogical table is obliged to move between the names of the members of the family on different pages, while he could have adapted the roll, opening and scrolling more easily according to his needs. Tables of this kind may reflect the sentence ‘a tree has its root, a stream has its source’ (*muben shuiyuan* 木本水源): a classical citation sometimes written above the doors of ancestral halls in Huizhou. Looking at the ‘ancient table of generations of the Huang of Tandu’ we visualise the Huang kinship as a flow of water spreading in endless streams from a common source. But, despite the undeniable aesthetic qualities of this presentation, one can understand the need to develop standard layouts for the tables of generations to make their transmission in the form of fascicles easier, and hence the choice of limiting the number of generations and rows per page.

Texts explaining practical procedures for compiling genealogies are rare, but by examining the tables of generations themselves, some compilation and correction practices appear. Perhaps in view of a revision, strips of paper with supplements are glued onto the first page of the generations tables of the genealogy of the Xu family of Xu village 許村 in She district, printed at the end of the sixteenth century<sup>76</sup> (Fig. 12). Elsewhere, documents reveal corrections inscribed directly onto the pages of a volume, sometimes in the upper margin, called the ‘heavenly head’ *tiantou* 天頭 or ‘book eyebrow’ *shumei* 書眉, and which is normally empty.<sup>77</sup>

75 The first compilations on the Huang of Tandu were realised during the fifteenth century; the *Tandu Huangshi zupu* 潭渡黃氏族譜 was compiled in c. 1567, but not printed until 1730–1731; see note 60. One copy of this genealogy is online on the Mormon website ‘Family Search’, views no 234–237: <<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9SQ-7D8V?wc=3X2N-MJ9%3A1022017801%2C1021934502%2C1021939302%2C1021983401%2C1023907001&cc=1787988>> (accessed on 13 April 2020).

76 The complete title is ‘Amended and completed genealogy of the East Branch of the Xu family of Xu village in the North of She, Xin’an’ (*Xuxiu Xin’an She bei Xucun Xushi dongzhi shipu* 續修新安歙北許村許氏東支世譜) c. 1569: Anhui provincial library, 2:003654. Other notes on pasted paper are visible in the *Huangshi jiapu* 黃氏家譜 of 1721, NLC 02415, DHG, slide 8, <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/201311980453.jpg>>.

77 See the genealogy of the Wu, titled *Wushi jiyuanlu* 吳氏紀原錄, printed in 1533, with later handwritten notes on the first page of the table of generations: Anhui Provincial Library, 2:003678.

#### 4.4 Genealogy final sections

Texts of different kinds are assembled together in the final sections: titles and awards, brief ‘biographies’ written by relatives, friends, or acquaintances of deceased people (*xingzhuang* 行狀), texts on lineage rites and land, but also transcripts of titles and awards received for merits by ancestors (often false) and literary texts. These texts may be written by family members or acquaintances on topics related to the history and life of the family: here, we sometimes find collections of poetic compositions, including ones extolling the beauty of the places where members of the family lived, which may complete the visual representation of the maps, which, in a few cases, are inspired by pictorial styles.<sup>78</sup>

In addition to postfaces and colophons (*houxu* 後序, *houji* 後記 or *ba* 跋), a few other elements are quite often reserved for the final pages, including the list of donors and recipients of volumes:<sup>79</sup> this gives a fairly precise idea of the number of copies made for each genealogy, independently of the media. The names of compilers, donors and recipients of the genealogy often overlap, but not completely, and the amount of money varies from one donor to another. The use of the money differs: donations are used to produce the genealogy (e.g. to pay artisans or buy paper), and for the related collective rites and activities. It was sometimes probably possible to make more than one copy with the amount donated by one person, at other times, several people or branches of a lineage had to join together to be able to afford one copy. These lists exist for printed and handwritten genealogies; the longest lists I have seen are in the printed genealogies and exceed 200 entries. They are generally absent or shorter in manuscripts: dozens of equal handwritten copies of multi-fascicle compilations are improbable.<sup>80</sup> It would be misleading, however, to think that printing necessarily implied a high number of copies; some genealogies were printed in very few copies.<sup>81</sup> From a double page of

<sup>78</sup> Bussotti 2011.

<sup>79</sup> These are called a ‘list of received copies’ *lingbudan* 領譜單 or a ‘number of received copies’ *lingbushu* 領部數. They are normally at the end of the volume, but this is not a constant rule.

<sup>80</sup> During the workshop ‘Genealogical Manuscripts A Cross-cultural Perspective’, I mentioned two similar lists of keepers in handwritten genealogies: one is a quite early copy (between 1595 and 1604), the ‘genealogy of Wu family of Shaoyun, Xiuning’ (*Xiuning Shaoyun Wushi zupu* 休寧梢雲吳氏族譜) for a total of eight copies; the last copy was made during the Qingming Festival, by a person of the ninety-fifth generation of the Wu family: NLC 14282; DHG, slides 4b-c. The second example, from three centuries later, is a copy of the ‘genealogy of the Hong family from Xishan’ (*Xishan Hongshi jiazheng* 西山洪氏家乘) of 1901 in which the numeration of each copy is done using the ten characters of the celestial stems (Fig. 13): Liu Boshan 2018, series I, vol. 2.

<sup>81</sup> This becomes particularly evident in the genealogies of ordinary families printed by movable type in relatively recent times, such as the genealogies conserved in the traditional books department of the NLC: only sixteen copies of the ‘genealogy of the Chen family of Taoyuan at the



the manuscript of the Hong 洪 family of Shexian from the end of the imperial period (Fig. 13), we learn that ten copies were prepared, or intended to be, but the last ones had not been attributed to family members as the names of the recipients are missing; one name is repeated twice, so this person should have received (and sponsored?) two copies. On this page, we also see a concrete example of use of the ‘characters of generations’ mentioned above: of a total of seven recipients, five have a name beginning with the same character *cheng* 承 signalling that they were members of the same generation. On the next page, before the inscription that provides the date, the twenty-seventh year of Guangxu reign (1901), a rectangular stamp has been placed and the engraved/stamped characters mean ‘the copy numbered X is received by Y’. The empty space in this specific manuscript copy has been filled by writing three characters, and so we read that ‘this copy numbered *jia* is received by (Hong) Chengji’, which matches to the first entry in the list of the previous page. Inscriptions that remind family members of the obligation to preserve the genealogy with care, thereby avoiding public shame, punishment and fines, often appear in these same pages.

## 5 Manuscript genealogies from Huizhou: Format, layout and colours

We have just described the elements that are found in a genealogy, with a minimal set constituted by genealogical tables accompanied by a few introductory texts. In this regard, we have mentioned the *Xin'an Wangshi qingyuan zongpu* of the Yuan dynasty,<sup>82</sup> one of the oldest extant manuscripts of a Chinese genealogy, from Huizhou or elsewhere. It is representative of a group of these documents which have quite large dimensions and use almost square formats: a total of about ten manuscripts from the Ming dynasty in our corpus. In this and other similar manuscripts, a varying number of generations is represented on each sheet; lines, more often red (sometimes black), serve to make links between generations and members’ names (Figs 6–7), this being helpful when there are no regular grid lines on the pages to help to link the names of people of different generations (as explained above in the discussion of the table of Huang of Tandu, Fig. 11). The lines seem to have been drawn after the characters were written, and their function is even more pronounced when the table occupies several

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West of Qi(men)’ (*Qixi Taoyuan Chenshi tonggong jiapu* 祁西桃源陳氏通公家譜) were produced in 1862 (JP2841), and eighteen copies of the ‘genealogy of the Chen family of Changxi in Jingchuan’ (*Jingchuan Changxi Chenshi jiasheng* 旌川昌溪陳氏家乘) in 1938 (JP2987).

82 See above, notes 7–9 and <https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/20131112203304.jpg>.

pages, for example, in the double-page table of the founding ancestor [Xu] Bin 許賓 [賓] and his descendants in Ningtai xiang 寧泰鄉, which is included in a manuscript genealogy of the Xu 許 of Shexian (c. 1502).<sup>83</sup>

On the other hand, the format – almost square or rectangular – does not seem to have any influence on whether or not to draw a ‘frame’ on the four borders of the page. Borders, absent in our oldest example and also in another ‘square’ genealogy of the Wang family,<sup>84</sup> are, however, present in more than half of the manuscripts of the corpus. The black border has been printed in almost all cases. The frame is sometimes simply composed of single or double lines (Figs 5 and 8), but it occasionally incorporates elements which are common in the Chinese book page, as we can see along the left side of Fig. 6: the black band at the top and bottom, and the triangular elements just above the title – called *xiangbi* (象鼻 elephant trunk) and *yuwei* (魚尾 fish tail) – are always present in a traditional (printed) Chinese book with folded pages (they indicate the place to fold). This entire section is called the ‘heart of the block’ (*banxin* 版心), even when referring to manuscripts. It is used to write the (abbreviated) title<sup>85</sup> or, in some cases, section titles, as well as the chapter or/and the page number. In most cases, lines dividing the vertical columns in the pages reserved for linear text have, if present, been drawn by hand even when the borders are printed; the same occurs in the case of lines drawn to structure the tables of generations.

In a few cases (five manuscripts with rectangular format, of a total of forty-eight), the frame has been printed or traced in blue, a colour often said to be characteristically in use during the Ming dynasty.<sup>86</sup> But this *cliché* is partially contradicted by the fact that only three manuscripts are from the Ming dynasty. The oldest one, probably completed in 1567, shows a quite rare trichromatic realisation, with blue borders,

<sup>83</sup> See NLC 14838, slide 6 a-b. The place is now known as the village of the Xus (*Xucun zhen* 許村鎮). The table (始祖賓[賓]公世系總圖遷居歙北寧泰鄉東西二派之祖也) is part of the *Xin'an Gaoyang Xushi zongpu yu qingji bufen juan* 新安高陽許氏宗譜餘慶集不分卷 (53 × 48.5 cm each page); see note 68. Based on the contents of the genealogy itself, Xu Quan 許銓 revised (*xuxiu* 續脩) the preceding version of the genealogy at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

<sup>84</sup> See *Fangtang Wangshi siben lu bufen juan* 方塘汪氏思本錄不分卷 of Xiuning; NLC 14406, first compiled around 1412, but revised in the Wanli period (1572–1620), 33 × 33 cm.

<sup>85</sup> In this case, the title is the same *Wangshi zupu* 汪氏族譜 (see above notes 73–74; NLC 14227) everywhere, but in some cases, the complete title, often situated at the beginning of the first chapter, is much longer, and the one on the cover page or in the borders of the pages is an abridged one.

<sup>86</sup> Regarding the use of grids in colours (red, blue or green), see the online presentation by Chen Xianxing 陳先行, quoting Sun Congtian (孫從添 1769–1840), *Summary of the Book Collection* [Cangshu jiyao 藏書紀要, 1810]: Chen Xianxing 陳先行, *Guji gaochao ben jian ding* 古籍稿抄本鑑定 [Appraisal of Ancient Manuscript Books], on the website [https://www.sohu.com/a/546436380\\_121124720](https://www.sohu.com/a/546436380_121124720) (accessed on 23 June 2024).

black characters and red lines to connect the entries of the table of generations.<sup>87</sup> Next is an incomplete manuscript from 1605, the preparation of which was begun ten years previously; eight manuscript copies were made: we read on the last page that a member of the ninety-fifth generation (Wu Rong 吳榮) copied seven identical genealogies (in the page just before a list of them is given), and that the last one, i.e. the one preserved which we are discussing here, was made at the time of the Qingming Festival (Tomb Sweeping Day).<sup>88</sup> The genealogy of the Wang family of Meixi (*Meixi Wangshi zongpu* 梅溪汪氏宗譜十二卷) is a manuscript dated to the Chongzhen reign (1611–1644), but completed during the Kangxi reign (1661–1720) of the following dynasty.<sup>89</sup> The other two manuscripts with blue borders are of the Qing dynasty: the *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (新安程氏諸譜會通十四卷) in fourteen chapters presents Ming dynasty contents but was copied in the following dynasty.<sup>90</sup> The *Jiangshi zongpu* 江氏宗譜<sup>91</sup> is a handwritten copy of a genealogy of the Jiang family that was originally printed in 1542 in thirteen copies: this manuscript is remarkable for the regularity of the writing, in combination with grids that, in this case, are completely printed in blue, including the lines to separate columns or sections in the genealogical table, which is organised in five rows (Fig. 14).

A genealogy of the Li 李 family from a locality in Wuyuan district, compiled during the Wanli reign (1572–1620), is a very special example of the use of a red grid, unique in the corpus. The manuscript is composed of five fascicles and fifteen chapters, of which eleven are for genealogical tables, one about tombs, one of collected texts, and the others for paratextual contents.<sup>92</sup> The printed grid is not only distinctive

87 See the *Zhengshi zupu bufen juan* 鄭氏族譜不分卷 (32.5 × 25.5 cm), genealogy of the Zheng lineage, completed no earlier than 1567 (it includes a text dated 1566), NLC 14299, see DHG, slide 4: <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/2013115221734.jpg>> (accessed on 28 May 2022).

88 See the incomplete *Shaoyun Wushi zupu shiyijuan* 梢雲吳氏族譜十一卷 (34 × 18 cm), genealogy of the Wu lineage, NLC 14282, slide 4c: 九十五世孫世策頓首拜書壹樣七部, 各門領訖。此系本家清明錄者, <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/201311690822.jpg>> (accessed on 28 May 2022).

89 NLC 14374: *Meixi Wangshi zongpu* 梅溪汪氏宗譜十二卷, twelve chapters in four fascicles of quite large dimensions: the borders of the frame delimit a page of 36.3 × 25.2 cm, without lines between the columns; the leaf paper is 42.8 × 28.4 cm. This genealogy is discussed below, see also notes 98–100.

90 This is based on the printed blue frame, where the upper ‘elephant trunk’ bears the engraved characters *Yiben tang* 彝本堂 (in hollow, which determines that they are white on the coloured frame), as in another manuscript genealogy dated to the Qing dynasty: see NLC 14298 in the DHG, Bao Guoqiang’s additional note n° 5.

91 The full title of NLC 14834 is *Jingxi Jin'ao Jiangshi zongpu* [genealogy of the Jiangs of Jin'ao in Western Jing] in six chapters and an opening chapter plus a collection of texts not divided into chapters (旌西金鰲江氏宗譜六卷首一卷文集不分卷) which indicates that it was compiled in Jingde 旌德, a neighbouring district to the prefecture of Huizhou, on its western limits.

92 The *Litian Lishi shipu* (理田李氏世譜十五卷) NLC 14268 is composed of fascicles of 31.7 × 23.4 cm,

in colour, but was specially made for this manuscript, as the title of the genealogy is engraved in the ‘heart of the block’ (*banxin*); below it, the abridged description of contents and the number of chapter and pages have been handwritten in each page. On both sides of this *banxin*, a white column adorned with a useless ‘fish tail’ *yuwei* is reserved for stamps, which are also applied to other parts of the page.<sup>93</sup> The grid of the texts’ sections (eight columns of twenty characters) is not the same for the genealogical tables, which follow the rule of five generations preceded by references: so the space is arranged in six superposing sections, with each section arranged in twenty columns of six characters each, except one at the top of the page composed of twenty columns of only three characters (Fig. 15). This kind of manuscript with an elaborated red grid is, at least in my experience, quite rare: the only similar example I can cite is a later manuscript in two volumes, kept in France, containing two ‘multilingual dictionaries’, where different but complete red grids are printed in two volumes to provide a frame for the handwritten transcriptions of Chinese characters.<sup>94</sup> We can also wonder if the scarcity of these examples can be explained by the fact that such paper ‘aids writing’, and, therefore, was useless and ‘awkward’ for copies made by people assumed to have mastered the techniques of writing and calligraphy: until recent times, red grid paper was used for notebooks reserved for learning Chinese characters.

Another manuscript from the Qing dynasty, which also has borders and grids, of a different nature but still the result of scribal practices which were not completely dissociated from printing practices, is monochrome: the genealogy of a branch of the Chen family (*Chenshi zhi pu sanjuan* 陳氏支譜三卷) of Shexian, with a prefatory text of 1671, shows the use of wooden seals to join comments in the tables of generations, as ‘missing biography’, ‘adult’ or ‘early death’.<sup>95</sup> This is quite a special case: more often the stamps (in red) are circles used to surround and,

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but the handwritten part of the page is restricted to a frame of 25.3 × 18.8 cm.

<sup>93</sup> These are normally located in the middle of the page for the folding, so have no real function here. Stamps present sentences of seven characters: sometimes only one is employed, sometimes two or three sentences are stamped all together.

<sup>94</sup> These are titled *Dictionnaire chinois-français par ordre alphabétique* and *Ébauche d'un dictionnaire chinois* in the old and unpublished catalogue of the National Library of France; the volumes include sentences of four Chinese characters with translation in French: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, chinois 9270 and 9271.

<sup>95</sup> NLC 1118: for example, the stamps (engraved in concave, and so written in white on a black surface) appear on a table of generations where the information is absent: in the second row, after the name of a member whose ‘biography is missing’ (*wuzhuan* 無傳), in the fourth row, after the name of another member who died too young (*zaoshi* 蚤世). On the same page, stamps are used to indicate daughters who reached the age of marriage (*dainian* 待年): <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/2013111092924.jpg>> (accessed on 23 May 2022).

thereby, mark certain characters with the text, in genealogies<sup>96</sup> as in books of other natures. All these examples are consistent with the widespread use of seals and with practices of engraving and printing on woodblocks that did not require specific technical competencies or materials, and that could be practiced in the scribe's studio (or in those spaces specifically allocated to genealogical work).

In these pages, we have already evoked two important aspects of genealogy production, the red-black dichromatic aesthetic and the visual representations in the form of 'maps' or portraits. A few specific cases emerge from the corpus, i.e. maps drawn in black, but with overlaps in red for elements which have disappeared.<sup>97</sup> A 1638 manuscript of the Wang family of Meixi (Xiuning) includes drawings with black tomb steles with inscriptions in red characters, and of the temple dedicated to Yueguo gong 越國公 in black but with a few central elements in red: a screen and a tablet with the name Yueguo gong.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, the map of the 'six districts of the prefecture where the Wang family is settled' shows the fluvial system drawn in red.<sup>99</sup> On another page, there are three large stamps in red, two imitated in pencil and one real but stamped on a different piece of paper, which has been pasted with the others.<sup>100</sup> These are obviously small details, but since we do not have an objective description of the writing practices of manuscript genealogies, we must deduce them by observing the characteristics of the objects themselves. They force us to

96 See NLC 12775 *Qinghua Hushi liugong pai jiotupu* 清華胡氏六公派舊圖譜, a 1679 genealogy of the Hu family from Wuyuan: the pages of the tables of generations have a black border, red hand-drawn lines and red circular stamps.

97 See the Ming dynasty NLC 14289 Cheng family genealogy, probably compiled and revised between 1608 and 1623 (*Chengshi qingyuan jiasheng yaobao bufen juan* 程氏慶源家乘要抄不分卷 manuscript not divided in chapters), slide 10 of the DHG: 四宜人石墳與原葬侵葬互見圖. The same drawing is included in another manuscript of 1608 on the designs of the maps of the Cheng family's tombs, NLC 11562: *Chengshi zuying jiangli tu bufen juan* 程氏祖塋疆理圖不分卷, slide 7: see <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/2013116212726.jpg>> (accessed on 28 May 2022).

98 The genealogy NLC 14374 is mentioned above, note 89; Yueguo gong is the local hero Wang Hua 汪華 (586–649): see the maps of his Yueguo tomb at Yunlan shan, near Shexian (*Yunlan shan Yueguo gong motu* 雲嵐山越國公墓圖, slides 16 a-b: <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/20131112161236.jpg>> and <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/20131112161300.jpg>> (accessed on 23 May 2022), and the map of Yueguo gong's temple (*Yueguo gong miaotu* 越國公廟圖, slide 13: <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/20131112161115.jpg>>, accessed on 23 May 2022). For a later and polychrome map of the tombs, see Fig. 3.

99 NLC 14374, slides 10a-b: *Xin'an liuyi Wangshi suo ju zhitu* 新安六邑汪氏所居之圖. This map is very similar to the one included in the *Xin'an Wangshi chongji yuanyuan pu bajuan* 新安汪氏重輯淵源譜八卷, printed copy of 1465, NLC 12687 slides 4a-b.

100 The stamp is the same (持節總管歙宣杭睦婺饒六州諸軍事記), but written variously in seal script or in regular script. See NLC 14374 slide 11: <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLSBP/20131112161026.jpg>> (accessed on 23 May 2022).

reconsider the relationship between handwriting and xylography, at least in this region of China where printing was commonly employed at the time of manuscript production, and also to entertain the possibility that paper formats may have influenced the formats and layouts of genealogies, and vice versa, although the absence of data on this point does not allow one to develop any conclusions.

Another example of a manuscript that has not been finished or has been prepared for further editorial work is found in an undated volume of the Cheng family (*Chengshi zongpu bufen juan* 程氏宗譜不分卷), where small pieces of paper are pasted onto the refined and polychrome portraits of the ancestors with an ‘eulogy’ (*zan* 贊) of the ancestor<sup>101</sup> which would normally be inscribed on another page (the following half-leaf), as well as at the bottom or the top of the portrait page. The text at the top of the image is visible in a portrait of Huang Jiyu 黃積瑜 (Fig. 16). Huang Jiyu (born in 1506) revised the version of the genealogy version preserved in a manuscript written before 1628.<sup>102</sup> This portrait of someone who worked on the genealogy itself is quite rare, as only ancestors from earlier generations are usually portrayed.

Finally, we must mention the existence of some handwritten genealogies that exactly reproduce the features of a printed book; in these cases we can suppose that the manuscript is the model produced before publication or an identical copy made to replace the original printed one for some reason that we do not know, even if this substitution contradicts the rule of good preservation of a genealogy. This is the case for the genealogy of the Xie 謝 family of Qimen 祁門.<sup>103</sup> This incomplete manuscript seems to have been elaborated during the sixteenth century: first compiled around 1501, then revised in 1530 and 1539 (based on the information and dates of the prefaces), but it contains handwritten records up to 1600. The format of the fascicle and the printed frame of the pages correspond to those of a printed book; all sections – texts, tables of generations (Fig. 17) and maps (Fig. 18) – are written completely in black ink, except for three red seals stamped at the end of a preface.

**101** NLC 11561 *Chengshi zongpu bufen juan* 程氏宗譜不分卷: see the portrait of Zhongzhuang gong 忠壯公 (Cheng Linxian 程靈洗, 514–568), slide 6: <<https://huizhou.efeo.fr/base/photos/CNLS-BP/2013116211540.jpg>> (accessed on 28 May 2022).

**102** NLC 14281 *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu bufen juan* 新安左田黃氏正宗譜不分卷, not divided in chapters, compiled by Huang Jiyu, revised by Huang Boyong 黃伯湧 (born in 1553); passages extracted (? *zhailu* 摘錄) by Huang Xuande 黃玄德 (1566).

**103** NLC 17419 *Zhongshan Xieshi jiapu jiujuan* 中山謝氏家譜九卷, nine chapters, one fascicle of 17.6 × 28.4 cm, written page of 14.6 × 20.7 cm.

## 6 Concluding observations

In these pages we have discussed Chinese manuscript genealogies produced in the late imperial period, representing enlarged kinships, eventually segmented into various branches. This presentation focused on a corpus of originals from the mountainous prefecture of Huizhou, partially held in the National Library of China. The contents and layouts were described, explaining the organisation of data within the genealogies themselves and within the genealogical tables. Through examining a few specific examples, we have seen that elements may vary, although the manuscripts were produced in the same place, and how some genealogies resemble, more than others, the books commonly disseminated in Jiangnan. In this conclusion, a few notes will deal with the traditional technical means used to produce and reproduce genealogies in Huizhou.

The general catalogue of Chinese genealogies, mentioned already, certainly does not contain all the existing genealogies, but at least it offers an idea of their abundance and inventories an important, though not entirely exhaustive, sample.<sup>104</sup> About 1279 titles produced in the region of the former prefecture of Huizhou are included in this catalogue, around 484 are imprints from wooden blocks, 362 imprints made by wooden movable type, and forty were printed using techniques introduced from abroad since the end of the nineteenth century (e.g. Western metal typography, lithography); 393 are manuscripts.<sup>105</sup>

Unsurprisingly, most of them were made in She or Xiuning, the wealthiest districts of Huizhou (the city of She was the capital of the district and of the whole prefecture):<sup>106</sup> the total is around 760 titles, of which more than a third are manuscripts.

Therefore, around 400 handwritten genealogies are mentioned in the catalogue, but it can be assumed that these were, in fact, more numerous: often existing only in a single copy, such titles have probably disappeared more frequently than the printed versions, whose multiple copies guaranteed a higher rate of survival. Moreover, some of those handwritten genealogies that do survive – the most recent or popular, such as few-page booklets of poor quality – may have been overlooked in the official catalogues and eluded the attention of librarians and collectors. But

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**104** Quantitative studies in the history of the book are often criticised because the elements are often incomplete and fluctuate over time: McKitterick 2015. However, rather than opposing the qualitative to the quantitative, we can try to mediate and draw provisional conclusions that can be improved when more data become available.

**105** This tally is of the titles preserved, not the copies (in that case, the number of items would have to be multiplied by twice or more).

**106** In addition to the genealogies, which include a precise indication of She and Xiu, genealogies that mention the prefecture (Huizhou or Xin'an) and Huangshan 黄山 have been taken into account.

this situation, which could be interpreted as a simple lack of interest due to the presumed preferences of bibliophiles and scholars, is also due to the concrete difficulties mentioned above, not only in determining the nature of the manuscripts (are they definitive versions, preparatory ones, or copies made a posteriori?), but also in dating a significant part of them. Even if the dates of the introductions and postfaces should be used with caution in the Chinese context (old texts are appreciated and, therefore, often reproduced in later works), a complete absence of them is also problematic for studying genealogies, as the contents are repetitive and the layouts show a great continuity over time, making estimations difficult.<sup>107</sup>

Huizhou Prefecture was in ‘recession’ in the late Qing dynasty and during the Republican Period, because members of the wealthiest families tended to settle away from their mountainous prefecture for their careers or businesses. At the same time, wooden block-printed genealogies became scarcer and those printed with traditional movable wooden-type increased: Chinese traditional wooden typography was spreading in the central and southern provinces through the work of itinerant craftsmen; their skills were accessible even to families more modest than those who had promoted the compilation and publication of genealogies in previous eras. However, the production of manuscripts shows a rather constant trend, which is seemingly independent from the success of other media, and proves that the practice was widespread and well-established. A comparable situation can be hypothesized at least for the eastern provinces of south-central China: these are the regions already mentioned in discussing the development of the first genealogical compilations by ordinary people, and which also correspond to the places where there was active publishing and printing activity led by private individuals, regardless of the commercialisation of the books produced or of their use for (auto) promotional and conservation purposes.

## Abbreviations

EFEO = École française d'Extrême-Orient

NLC = National Library of China, Rare and Special Collections

DHG = Database of Huizhou Genealogies in the National Library of China (Beijing), Ancient Department of the Rare and Special Collections, by Michela Bussotti and Bao Guoqiang 鮑國強, <[www.efeo.fr/base.php?code=815](http://www.efeo.fr/base.php?code=815)> (accessed on 24 August 2024 ).

NB: Chinese publications on the web are instable and some may have disappeared since they were last accessed.

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<sup>107</sup> Looking at Huizhou's global production in the same catalogue, only half of the manuscripts are dated precisely or with a good approximation.



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**Fig. 1:** Painted portrait of an ancestor: page included in a contemporary genealogy, printed by movable type; Dongyuan, Zhejiang October 2018, photograph by Michela Bussotti.



**Fig. 2:** Portrait from the 'Genealogy of Wu lineage of Xin'an' (*Xi'an Wushi zupu* 新安吳氏族譜), beginning of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), manuscript by an unknown author, NLC 12684; courtesy of National Library of China.



**Fig. 3:** Maps of the Tombs of the ancestors of the Wang family (Wang Shuju 汪叔舉 [fifth century] and Yueguo gong 越國公, alias Wang Hua 汪華 [586–649]), from an undated manuscript produced in Shexian (late Qing – Republican period?) formerly held by the Museum of Huangshan shi (2491: *Qianchuan zhongshi Wangshi zuxian xiangzan bufen juan* 潛川中市王氏祖先像贊不分卷); the pages of the genealogy are assembled in the form of an album; photograph provided by Ni Qinghua.





**Fig. 4:** Map of the Empire on the Cheng 程 settlements, Yongzheng period (1722–1735), manuscript of the *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu hui tong* 新安程氏諸譜會通, first version attributed to a compiler of the fifteenth century, NLC 12677; courtesy of National Library of China.

新安程氏統宗世譜卷之二				
譜圖二				
三十七世	池州派一之一	俊卿	建康派	安卿
三十八世	顯忠	宣忠	子材	必貴
三十九世	宣誼	宣明	子材	必貴
四十世	禴	禴	子材	必貴
四十一世				

立本 宋明道書院  
 偃孫 宋明道書院  
 寺後山見山長  
 同憲合所撰書院  
 以繼偃孫為堂

**Fig. 5:** One page from the manuscript copy of the 'Comprehensive Genealogy of the Cheng of Xin'an' (*Xin'an Chengshi tongzong shipu* 新安程氏統宗世譜 c. 1482 ?), the numbers of the generations (rows correspond to generations 37–41, but the last row is empty), and the names of places and branches of the family in red, NLC 13170; courtesy of National Library of China.



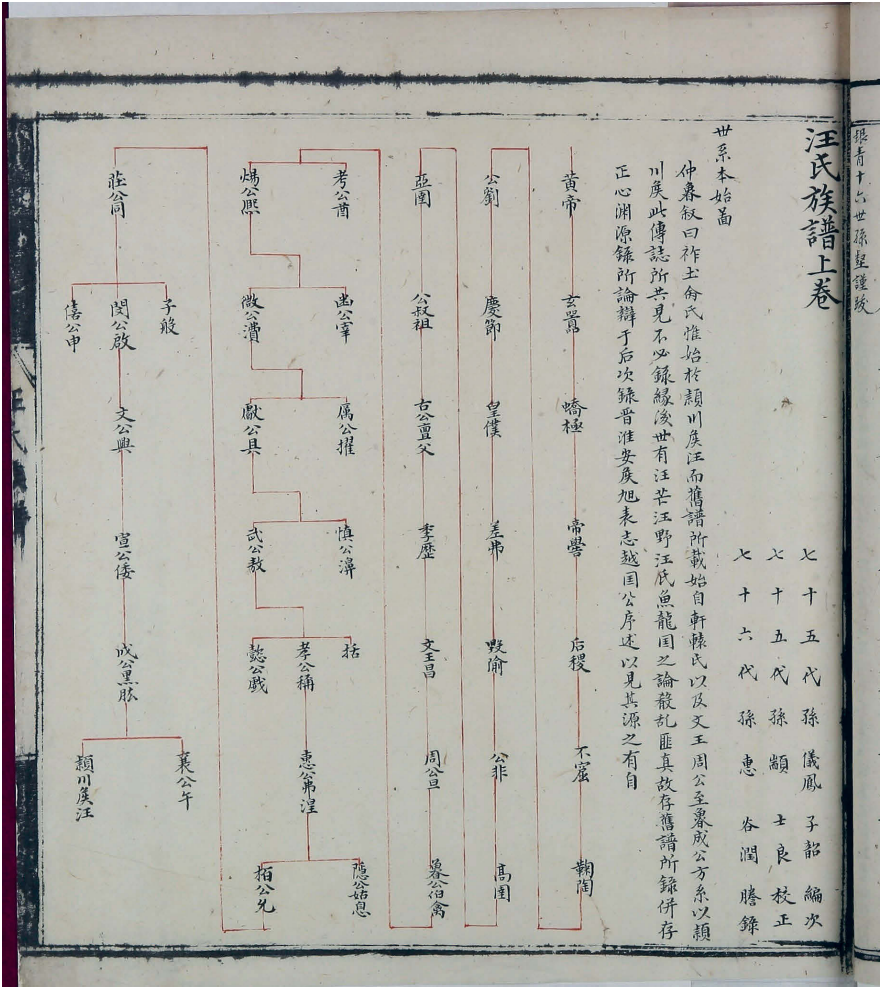
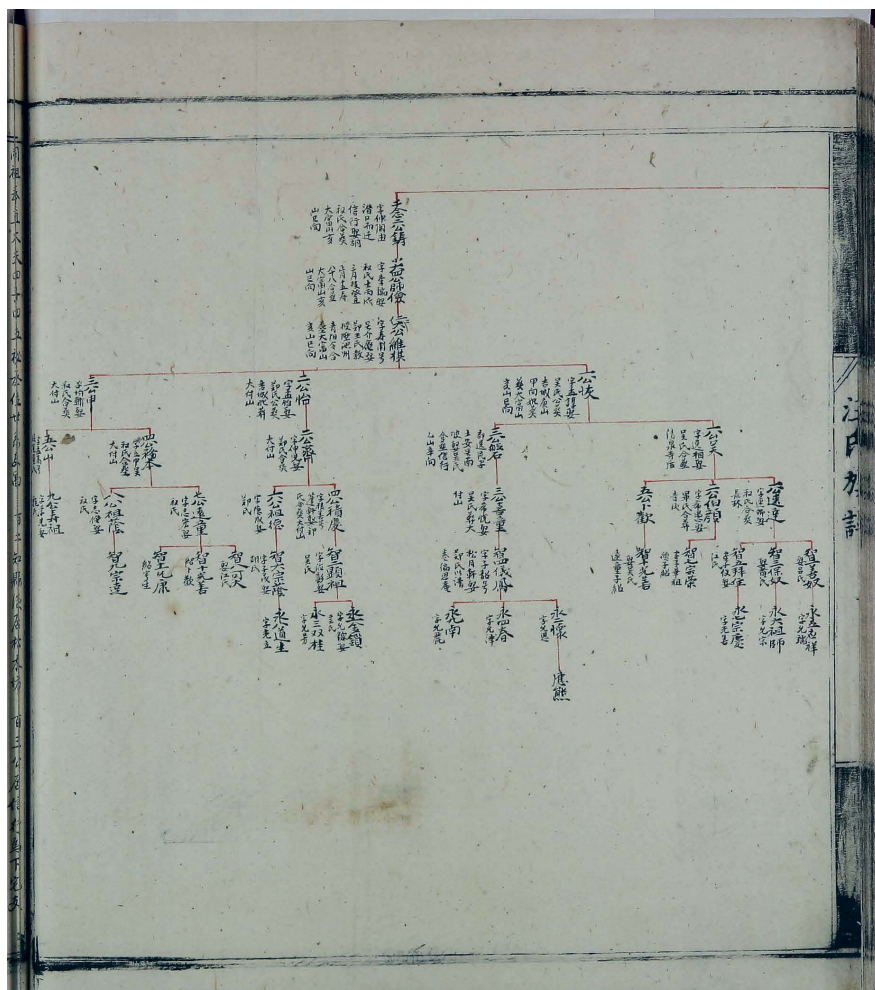


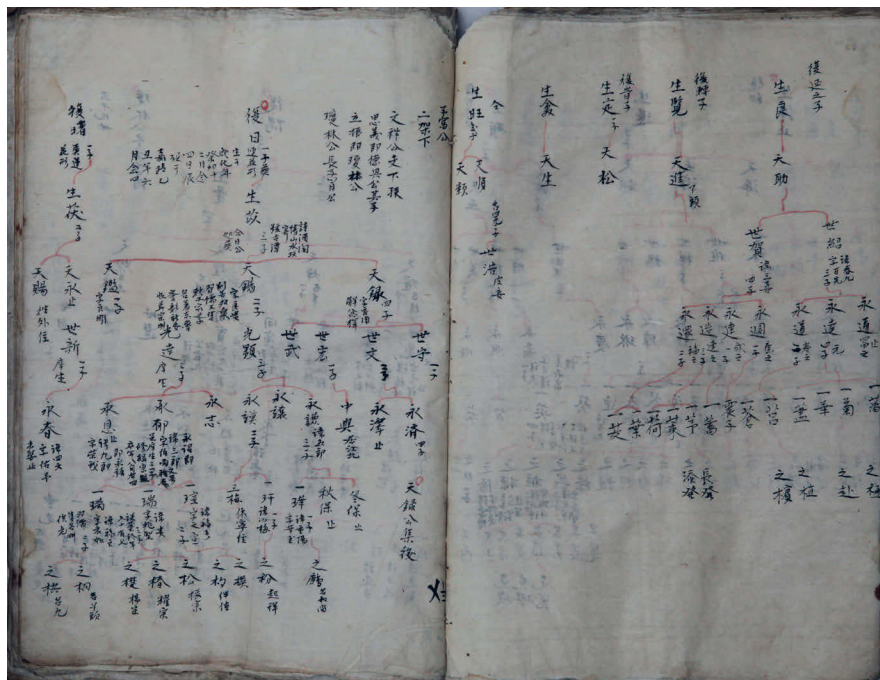
Fig. 6: Beginning of the tables of generations (synthetic table) with the names of compiler, reviser and calligrapher from the 'Genealogy of the Wang family' (Wangshi zupu 汪氏族譜) of Shexian, Ming dynasty manuscript, NLC 14227; courtesy of National Library of China.



**Fig. 7:** Page of tables of generations (nine generations on this page) including the name of the compiler Wang Yifeng 汪儀鳳 (seventh row, sixth entry from right to left), from the 'Genealogy of the Wang family' (Wangshi zupu 汪氏族譜) of Shexian, Ming dynasty manuscript, NLC 14227; courtesy of National Library of China.







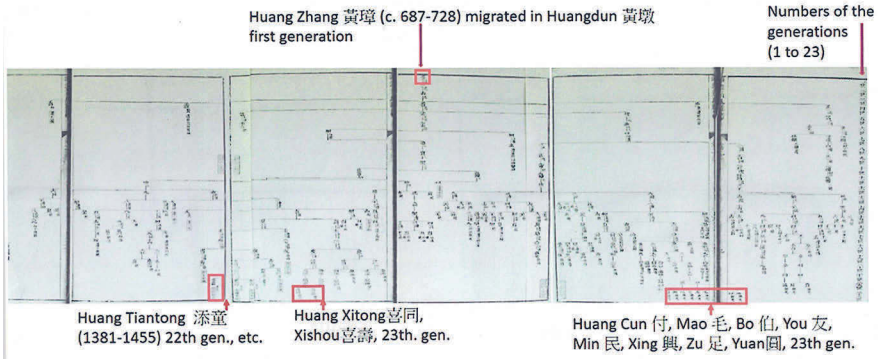
**Fig. 9:** 'Branch of the Hu family in Zhongshan' (*Zhongshan Hushi zhipai* 鍾山胡氏支派), from Tankou 潭口 in Yi 黟 district, undated manuscript (beginning of eighteenth century?), with many generations on each page and an irregular layout; courtesy of Liu Boshan (Anhui University).



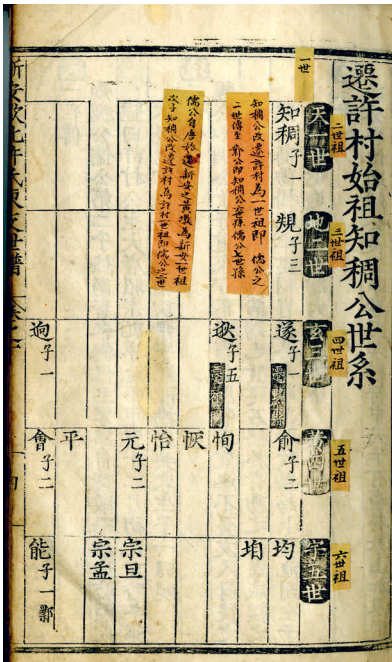
世三卅	世三卅	世三卅	世三卅	世三卅	世三卅	世三卅	世三卅	世三卅	世三卅
文塿府君	文域府君	文圻府君	文均府君	文坊府君	文垣府君	汝翔府君	汝鳴府君	汝鸞府君	汝鵬府君
						生一子鍾洪	榮備農右都帝柯王漢氏葉高村八墓形 程氏葉府花園生二子曰鍾立鍾孟	榮王干司羅漢祿將儒令下 全兩全子鍾靈鍾昌鍾恒	生四子曰鍾韜鍾偉 鍾楨鍾財
孺人汪氏	孺人汪鄭氏	孺人吳氏	孺人鄭鄭氏	孺人汪氏	孺人黃氏	孺人章氏	孺人柯凌 王程氏	孺人吳氏	孺人吳氏

**Fig. 10b:** ‘History of the Hong family of Zhongcun, South of She’ *Shinan Zhongcun Hongshi jiasheng*  
歙南中村洪氏家乘, manuscript genealogy of the beginning of twentieth century (?): a table of names  
of men and their wives; courtesy of Pr. Liu Boshan (Anhui University).





**Fig. 11:** Old table of the generations of the Huang family of Tandu (*Tandu Huangshi shixi gutu* 潭渡黃氏世系古圖) in the ‘Genealogy of the Huang of Tandu’ (*Tandu Huangshi zupu* 潭渡黃氏族譜) Chap. 1, pp. 9–12, Ming dynasty version printed in 1731, with the names of some members from the first to the twenty-second and twenty-third generations; image assembled and completed by Michela Bussotti.



**Fig. 12:** Table of generations with notes about the first ancestor pasted on strips of paper, after 1569, from a genealogy of the East Branch of the Xu family (*Xuxiu Xin'an She bei Xucun Xushi dongzhi shipu* 續修新安歙北許村許氏東支世譜), 2:003654; © Anhui Provincial Library.

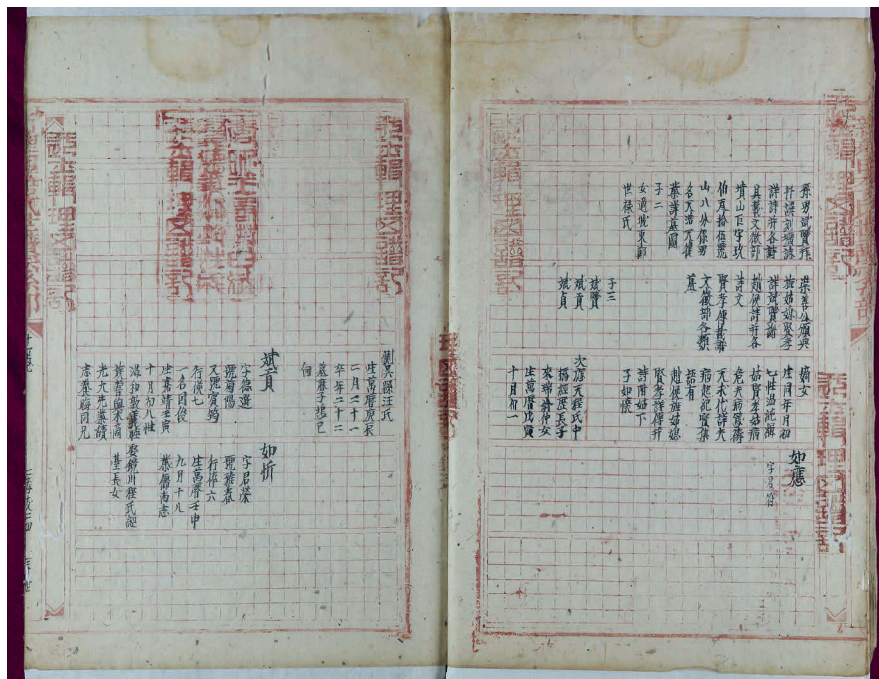


**Fig. 13:** List of copies of the ‘genealogy of the Hong family of Xishan’ (*Xishan Hongshi jia sheng* 西山洪氏家乘, c. 1901): the text explains that this is the first (*jia* 甲) volume, attributed to [Hong] Chengji [洪]承吉; courtesy of Liu Boshan (Anhui University); image assembled and completed by Michela Bussotti.

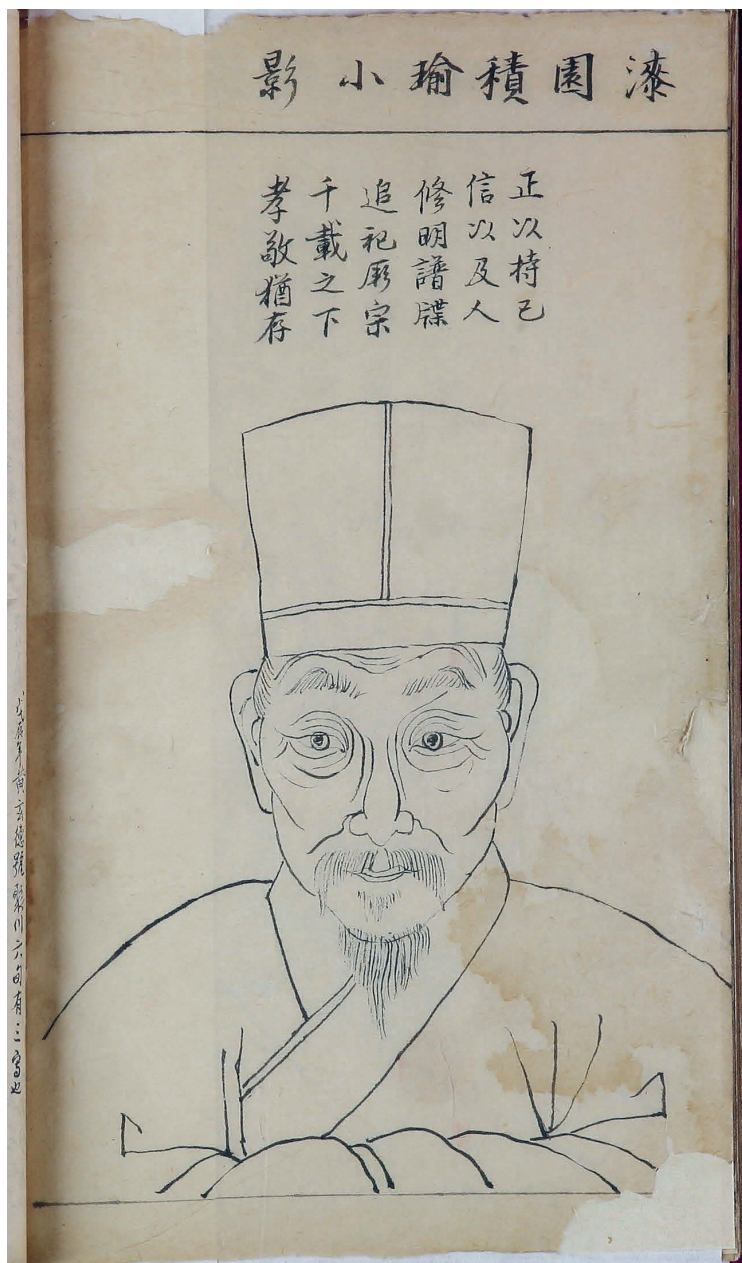
文敏 府生公二									
元寶 字國寶 號廷誥 字以介 生									
德已巳十月十一日 玉泉生 號廷誥 字以介 生									
四治 號廷誥 字以介 生									
唐生 天寶 號廷誥 字以介 生									
家學 淵博 號廷誥 字以介 生									
關士 聖下 洪萬 號廷誥 字以介 生									
氏 順 號廷誥 字以介 生									
號廷誥 字以介 生									
四月廿二 號廷誥 字以介 生									
空 白									
空 白									
元寶 字國寶 號廷誥 字以介 生									
二月十九 號廷誥 字以介 生									
元寶 字國寶 號廷誥 字以介 生									
十二月廿七 號廷誥 字以介 生									
何村呂氏 號廷誥 字以介 生									

**Fig. 14:** Page with blue printed frame in the genealogy of the Jiang family of Jin'ao in eastern Jingde (*Jingxi Jin'ao Jiangshi zongpu* 旌西金鰲江氏宗譜) NLC 14834; courtesy of National Library of China.





**Fig. 15:** Pages with red printed frame and stamps in the genealogy of the Li from Litian in fifteen chapters (*Litian Lishi shipu* 理田李氏世譜十五卷) NLC 14268; courtesy of National Library of China.



**Fig. 16:** Portrait of Huang Jiyu 黃積瑜, compiler of the genealogy Huang (*Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* 新安左田黃氏正宗譜不分卷), not divided in chapters, first half of the sixteenth century; revised and copied c. 1628, NLC 14281; courtesy of National Library of China.

中山謝氏家譜卷之一

世次圖系

一世	續	典農中郎	將
二世	衡	陳國陽夏	人以儒素
三世	鯤	字幼興豫	章太守謚
四世	尚	字仁祖鎮	西將軍卒
五世	康	早卒弟靖	以子肅嗣

哀

奕

泉

謝驥傳

子容酒見

顯仕至國

康子尚

簡無子從

弟奕以子

康襲爵

續

Fig. 17: Table of generations in five rows, Chap. 1, p. 1 from the 'Genealogy of the Xie of Zhongshan' (Zhongshan Xieshi jiapu jiujuan 中山謝氏家譜九卷, nine chapters), NLC 17419; courtesy of National Library of China.





**Fig. 18:** Hall of and tomb of the ancestor, general Xie, from the 'Genealogy of the Xie of Zhongshan' (*Zhongshan Xieshi jiapu jiujuan* 中山謝氏家譜九卷, nine chapters), NLC 17419; courtesy of National Library of China.

Xin Yu

# Copying Is Editing: Handwritten Copies of Printed Genealogies in Late Imperial China, 1450–1900

**Abstract:** From the sixteenth century onwards, an increasing number of Chinese families began printing their genealogies. While genealogists touted the enhanced authority of printed versions, printed genealogies were accessible to only a select few. This paved the way for the continued popularity of handwritten genealogies, particularly those known as *chaoben* 抄本, or handwritten copies of printed genealogies. They diverged significantly from their printed sources, tailored to the specific needs and interests of the copyists and owners. They blended faithfully reproduced sections with personalized modifications and even entirely new material. This widespread practice of copying transcended mere replication, revealing a process of editorial engagement. Far from passively reproducing content, individuals actively reshaped printed narratives to prioritize their perspectives.

## 1 Introduction

In 1509, while performing his mourning duties at home in southern China, an official named Bi Jichuan 畢濟川 compiled a comprehensive genealogy for his kinsmen, cut woodblocks for it, and printed 147 copies for the seven lineages bearing the surname Bi.<sup>1</sup> This was a milestone for all seven lineages because, for the first time in history, they had genealogies in print form, despite their longstanding tradition of keeping manuscript genealogies.<sup>2</sup> Like the Bis 畢, the leaders of many lineages in Huizhou 徽州 – a prefecture renowned for its significant number of surviving genealogies from the Ming 明 (1368–1644) – started collecting existing manuscript genealogies and consolidated them into standardized printed versions.<sup>3</sup> Printing also transformed genealogies from family documents into books used beyond the immediate family circle, as the printing process incorporated textual, paratextual, visual, and material elements created by external preface writers, book craftsmen,

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1 Bi 1509, *yin*: 1a–4a, *zihao*: 1a–4b.

2 The genealogy prefaces reveal that most of the Bi lineages had started compiling genealogies in the Southern Song 南宋 (1127–1279) and Yuan 元 (1279–1368). See Bi 1509, *jiuxu*: 1a–22a.

3 For more examples, see Cheng 1501; Yu 1508; Wang and Wang 1515.

and artists. Printed genealogies, due to their various advantages, overshadowed old manuscripts, which seemed to signal the genealogy genre's departure from its association with manuscript culture.<sup>4</sup> However, the rise of print as the preferred form for genealogies did not mean the end of manuscript culture; new manuscripts – especially handwritten copies of printed genealogies – continued to surface. According to Michela Bussotti's calculation, about one-third (382 out of 1,224) of extant Huizhou genealogies are manuscripts.<sup>5</sup> Most manuscript genealogies are in fact handwritten copies of printed genealogies.<sup>6</sup> The popularity of manuscript genealogies suggests that there were specific qualities or inherent characteristics that made them appealing, even when competing against printed alternatives.

Chinese manuscripts in general – not just manuscript genealogies – retained a continuous appeal long after the widespread adoption of printing in the sixteenth century.<sup>7</sup> According to Joseph McDermott, 'no sharp or absolute distinction can be drawn between manuscript and imprint in late imperial Chinese book culture'; rather, manuscripts could effectively complement imprints. Book collectors copied books as a viable alternative when they could not obtain printed copies; publishers and scribes alike made books in their own ways for selling; and bookstores sold manuscripts and imprints side by side. As a result, the prosperity of the printing industry did not bring manuscript culture to an end, but instead expanded the manuscript tradition.<sup>8</sup> McDermott's analysis captures how the interchangeability of manuscripts and imprints made copying favourable when imprints were unavailable, but it overlooks how the differences between imprints and manuscripts might account for their coexistence. As the case of genealogies shows, even though makers of handwritten copies drew their texts from print genealogies, depending on their needs, they had great agency in determining how and how much their hand copies resembled print copies. The power over various aspects of books that manuscript producers gained in the act of copying, I argue, is what made copying stand out as a distinctive, popular, and irreplaceable method of bookmaking.

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4 For instance, the editor of one genealogy claimed that his printed genealogy would be the only authentic version in his lineage. This made all existing manuscript genealogies inauthentic. See Ge 1565, *zupu kaoyi*: 1a–2b.

5 Bussotti 2015, 231.

6 According to the catalogue compiled by the Shanghai Municipal Library, 146 of the 174 extant genealogy manuscripts produced between 1368 and 1644 are handwritten copies of printed genealogies; only 28 are original manuscripts. See *Chinese Genealogy Knowledge Service Platform* <<https://jiapu.library.sh.cn/#/>> (accessed on 19 January 2021).

7 McDermott 2006, 49.

8 McDermott 2006, 76–77.

This article selects a sample from the many genealogies produced in Huizhou prefecture in southern China, a place renowned for its publishing industry, elaborate kinship organization, and genealogical culture, all three of which started to flourish in the sixteenth century.<sup>9</sup> It compares genealogy imprints and their handwritten copies, focusing particularly on their differences in production, structure, content, and visuality. The comparison reveals genealogy manuscripts' advantages in accessibility, flexibility, updatability, and practicality, attributes that helped manuscripts establish their irreplaceable status in Chinese book culture. The comparison also illuminates the agency of manuscript makers – as they could determine their approaches and even change the texts as they wished. In this sense, copying was editing rather than duplicating.

## 2 Copying as accessing

When people started to print genealogies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the dominant technology was xylography, defined as 'printing by making impressions on paper from a carved wooden block'.<sup>10</sup> Its greatest advantage was that once the woodblocks were made (the most costly part of book production), the owners of the blocks could make a great number of copies at a relatively low cost.<sup>11</sup> Hence, when an extended family or a larger lineage completed carving blocks for a genealogy book, it could produce many copies. People could even store the blocks away after they had made enough copies, and take them out to make new copies later on.<sup>12</sup> For example, when a local scholar wanted to reprint an early fourteenth-century genealogy in 1518, he found that half of the original blocks, carved two centuries earlier, were still usable.<sup>13</sup> Xylographic genealogy books were easily reproducible. Yet genealogy editors from the sixteenth century onwards wanted to put an end to this reproducibility, as excessive copies would leak clandestine genealogical knowledge to individuals or groups who wanted to forge their ancestral information based on these copies.<sup>14</sup> In order to prevent unauthorized individuals or groups from gaining

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9 On the publishing industry, lineage organisation, and genealogical culture of Huizhou, see Bussotti 2005; Guo 2010; McDermott 2013; McDermott 2020; Guo 2022.

10 See Brokaw 2005, 8. According to Michela Bussotti, 246 of the 334 extant Ming era (1368–1644) genealogies produced in Huizhou prefecture were made with xylography (Bussotti 2015, 231).

11 Brokaw 2005, 9.

12 McDermott 2006, 46.

13 Wang 1518, *ba*.

14 Typical printing runs of Ming era genealogies ranged from dozens to hundreds, which were quite small in comparison to commercial publications.

access to valuable genealogical information, many lineages burned the wooden blocks once a fixed number of genealogy copies were made.<sup>15</sup> They did this to make sure that no additional, unidentifiable copies were in circulation, as the publicity of genealogies should be strictly contained within the 'orthodox' branches. For the same reason, starting in the mid-fifteenth century, genealogy editors gave each print copy an identification character, which was listed alongside the name of that copy's holder on the distribution page of every copy of the genealogy.<sup>16</sup> Some distribution pages had hundreds of entries, specifying the holders' names, addresses, and identification characters.<sup>17</sup> In so doing, the editors made each copy trackable, which, in essence, helped them establish a monopoly over at least the printed copies, which they hoped would help protect their genealogical information.

Although lineage leaders attempted to impose a monopoly over printed versions of genealogies, they had less control over handwritten copies. When lineage leaders received their print copies, other lineage members could borrow them and then make handwritten copies (despite many lineages prohibiting this). Copying more frequently tended to happen decades or even centuries after a genealogy was printed. For instance, of the five handwritten copies of a genealogy printed in 1454, one was made within two centuries, while the other four were made after 1723.<sup>18</sup> The continuous emergence of handwritten copies after printing suggests that although genealogy editors held strict control over print copies of genealogies at the moment of initial distribution, their descendants were more lenient in sharing genealogical knowledge with others. The wide circulation of handwritten copies indicates that copying expanded the accessibility and influence of genealogical knowledge even further, to those whose ancestors were unable to obtain print copies.

The other reason for the popularity of handwritten copies was that once woodblocks were gone, copying was much easier and cheaper than cutting a new set of woodblocks and then printing. Woodcutting was the most expensive and time-consuming procedure in woodblock printing.<sup>19</sup> The steps – procuring wood, recruiting artisans, and providing food and lodging for them – were arduous and costly. This also

15 Examples abound. See Wang 1527, *fulu*: 21a; Wu 1528, *fulu*: 24a.

16 The earliest instance of this practice was a genealogy printed in 1439. The practice became standard in the sixteenth century. See Wang 1439; Cheng 1454.

17 The standard format goes as follows: 'One copy, number one of the Tian group, held by Yandao of the Chengbei branch 天字號城北房一號岩道一部'. See Wu 1528, *fulu*: 24b.

18 For a copy of the original printed genealogy, see Cheng 1454. For the manuscripts, see *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, National Library of China, 12677); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 14298); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, Shanghai Municipal Library, 002421); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002422); and another copy at Nanjing Library.

19 Chia 2002, 39; Brokaw 2007, 97.



holds true for genealogies printed with woodblocks – that is, the majority of genealogies printed in the Ming era (1368–1644) and many later genealogies. For instance, a genealogy printed in 1454 records that the project managers hired one proofreader, one scribe, two wood choppers, one cook, and ten character carvers, who spent 133 days cutting woodblocks for the 300,000 characters.<sup>20</sup> It does not record the expenses for paper, binding, or impressing, suggesting that other procedures were less important or costly.<sup>21</sup> More complicated than other books, however, drafting a genealogy for printing involved substantial expenditures for travel and research. While making a handwritten genealogy also involved research, preparing a genealogy for printing often required much deeper research, as the editors of printed genealogies aimed at connecting as many qualified branches as possible. For instance, to complete the 1454 project, the chief editor Cheng Meng 程孟 spent years travelling to twenty-four villages across six counties and consulting eighteen genealogies along the way; he travelled so extensively that he even made a map of all the Cheng-surnamed 程 villages that he visited.<sup>22</sup> Another scholar, Huang Yunsu 黃雲蘇, travelled through the six counties in his home prefecture and to other provinces.<sup>23</sup> These major expenses – woodcutting and travel expenses – minus donations from wealthy lineage members, were usually defrayed by subscribers.<sup>24</sup> In theory, genealogy compilers could have lowered the cost of each copy by printing more copies, but due to the restrictions on circulation they intended to impose, they kept the price of printed genealogies high, often too high for modest lineage members.<sup>25</sup>

For individuals who could not obtain a printed genealogy, copying was cheaper and more convenient than starting a new printing project. To copy a printed genealogy, one needed to obtain access to it, procure ink and paper, and in some cases pay for scribes' labour; he could spare the fees for researching and woodcutting – the

20 *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677).

21 The title of this section – *kanzi* 刊字 ('carving characters') – is evidence that carving was the most important part of genealogy production; see *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677).

22 'Huipu yi gechu 會譜詣各處' (Places visited while amassing genealogies), 'Huitong pu 會通譜' (Genealogies consulted), and 'Xin'an liuyi Chengshi suoju zhitu 新安六邑程氏所居之圖' (Map of Cheng-surnamed villages in the six counties of Xin'an), in *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677).

23 Cheng 1501, xu: 9a–b.

24 For instance, each holder of the Cheng genealogy needed to pay 0.5 taels of silver, a high price considering the average price for one acre of land in Huizhou at the time was 2.16 taels (Peng 1988, 60).

25 The high cost led to the uneven distribution of genealogy copies among different branches. For example, the 147 copies of the Bi lineages' genealogy were unevenly distributed among its seven member lineages: the Changgai 長陔 lineage (8 copies); the Minchuan 閔川 lineage (51); the Shangbeijie 上北街 lineage (23); the Shuangxi 雙溪 lineage (14); the Huangdun 篁墩 lineage (14); the Jiatian 嘉田 lineage (6); and the Guixi-Yiyang 貴溪-弋陽 lineage (30). The wealthiest Minchuan lineage held over one-third (51/147) of the copies. See Bi 1509, *zihao*: 1a–4a.

most onerous parts of doing genealogy. Therefore, copying not only extended the availability of genealogical knowledge to people who were ineligible to own print copies, but also gave the economically disadvantaged groups opportunities to have their own ways of accessing and obtaining genealogical knowledge. In other words, copying – as opposed to printing – was the means for breaking the social barriers that had been intensified by printing. If printing was used to establish restrictions on genealogy distribution, then copying helped ease the restrictions.<sup>26</sup>

Copying thus became a viable alternative means of accessing genealogical knowledge, but the knowledge thus reproduced was beyond the intended distribution system; in other words, unlike print copies, handwritten copies could not obtain authorization from the printing entity, the type of authorization that identification characters would help print copies to achieve. How did makers of handwritten copies grapple with the issue of identification characters? One approach was to inherit the identification character assigned to the print copy that the copyist drew from, declaring that the handwritten copy was an offshoot of that specific print copy.<sup>27</sup> The underlying logic was that because the print copy was an authorized copy, its authority passed down to its offshoots. Another approach was to abandon the identification character of the parent copy. All four extant handwritten copies of the Cheng genealogy printed in 1454 keep the distribution pages, but do not copy the identification characters of their parent copies.<sup>28</sup> In so doing, the copyists erased the link between their handwritten copies and the specific parent copies; instead, they established their copies as descendants of the original genealogy, not a specific copy. In other words, they ignored the distribution system established by the lineage authority in the genealogy's initial printing. In any case, however, the two different approaches suggest that copyists had enough agency in determining whether they would like to acknowledge or disregard the distribution system, determining what to choose as the source of authority (a specific print copy or a genealogy in its purest form), and determining what to keep and what to abandon.

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<sup>26</sup> Genealogies belong to what Joseph McDermott calls 'privately issued non-commercial publications', whose publishing served to limit their circulation instead of expanding it (McDermott 2015, 213).

<sup>27</sup> For instance, compare Chen 1507 and *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Beijing, NLC, 14287); compare also Luo 1507 and *Xin'an Chengkan Luoshi zongpu* (Shanghai, SML, 006713).

<sup>28</sup> *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 14298); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002422).

### 3 Copying as cherry-picking

Copying was not duplicating. Firstly, most makers of handwritten copies of printed genealogies did not intend to make facsimile copies. As mentioned above, copyists copied genealogies as a cheaper, private alternative to accessing genealogical knowledge, so they were strategic about what to retain and what to abandon. Generally speaking, they tended to focus on reproducing textual content over visual and paratextual elements.<sup>29</sup> Secondly, even in rare cases, when copyists did aim for facsimile copies, technical and economic conditions often restrained their efforts.<sup>30</sup> Hence, every handwritten copy of a printed genealogy was the product of choices, deliberations, and calculations on the part of the copyist. To analyse how different copyists dealt with the same book, then, is a productive exercise that will illuminate a range of possibilities and constraints that genealogy copyists faced. Thus, this part focuses on the case of the comprehensive genealogy of the Cheng lineages in Huizhou, a genealogy that was printed in 157 copies in 1454 and had an unknown number of handwritten copies. As the first printed genealogy in the history of many of the participant lineages, it had great impacts on both its participant lineages and the local Huizhou society in general, heralding a wave of genealogy printing from the late fifteenth century onwards.<sup>31</sup> Two printed copies and five handwritten copies survive to this day.<sup>32</sup> A comparison of the five available copies, especially their differences, reveals what the copyists considered indispensable and what they saw as inconsequential.<sup>33</sup>

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29 It was common for copyists to omit decorative visual elements surrounding texts. For example, compare the distribution pages at the end of the print copy and the handwritten copy of the Chen genealogy. See Chen 1507; *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Beijing, NLC, 14287).

30 *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421).

31 The genealogy set up a precedent for the lineages that participated in the genealogy project. Decades later, Cheng Minzheng 程敏政 followed Cheng Meng's footsteps and printed a new comprehensive genealogy, which then provided a model for lineages of other surnames in Huizhou to follow. In addition, Cheng Meng's attempt to draw a prefectural map and include it in his genealogy provided direct inspiration for leaders of other surnames. See Cheng 1454; Cheng 1482. For the maps, see 'Xin'an liuyi Wangshi suoju zhitu 新安六邑汪氏所居之圖', in Cheng 1465; 'Xin'an Huangshi suoju zhitu 新安黃氏所居之圖', in Cheng 1501.

32 According to *Zhongguo guji zongmu* (Comprehensive catalogue of ancient Chinese books), the seven copies are now held at the Shanghai Municipal Library, the National Library of China, the Nanjing Library, the Anhui Provincial Museum, and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. See Fu 2009, *shibu* vol. 5, 2666–2667. Another catalogue also lists seven extant copies, but differs on the places where they are held. See Wang 2009, vol. 6, 3425.

33 The five copies analysed here are held at the Shanghai Municipal Library (no. 002421, 002422) and the National Library of China (no. 14240, 12677, and 14298). I have not been able to access the other two copies, held at the Anhui Provincial Museum and the Nanjing Library, but the five copies here suffice to reveal the copyists' understandings of the genealogies.

In terms of content, the copyists of all four handwritten copies derived their texts from the original printed genealogy. With the identification characters blank, we cannot tell which specific print copies they drew from. Except for substituting some characters with their own variations, which changed the language register, the copyists did not add new content or revise old content.<sup>34</sup> Yet they restructured the genealogy nonetheless: they hand-picked some parts over others and reordered the content they selected. The original genealogy had four sections: front matter (including prefaces, a table of contents, and editorial principles), a genealogy chart inherited from an old (possibly printed) genealogy produced in the Song 宋 (960–1279), a genealogical chart that connected the founding ancestors of all the involved lineages, and a section that included genealogical charts of each branch.<sup>35</sup> The copyists remained largely faithful to the original genealogy when they copied the first three sections.<sup>36</sup> But their approaches varied greatly when it came to the fourth section, a section where different lineages are put next to one another in parallel. One copyist omitted this section altogether;<sup>37</sup> the others kept the section but culled from the original genealogy only the content that they deemed worthy. Further, the copyists changed the order of the branches that they selected to keep in their copies (see Table 1). Since all the contents stemmed from the original genealogy, the copyists could of course claim that they were loyal to the original, but depending on their own understanding, they had autonomy in determining the content and structure of their own copies.

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34 For example, one copyist replaced the simplified character 宝 with the more formal character 寶. Both are variations of the same character with the same meaning. Compare ‘Shi Dongjin putu 仕東晉譜圖’ in Cheng 1454 and in *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677).

35 This is unanimous among different copies in the tables of contents. See ‘mulu 目錄’, in *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677), in *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421), and in *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu* (Shanghai, SML, 002422).

36 Yet minor differences are widespread. For example, for the prefaces included in the first section, the NLC 12677 copy only has the titles, while the SML 002421 and SML 002422 copies have full texts.

37 *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu* (Shanghai, SML, 002422).

**Table 1:** The Order of Different Branches in Section Four of Different Copies of the Cheng Genealogy.

	She 歙	Jixi 績溪	Xiuning 休寧	Qimen 祁門	Wuyuan 婺源	Jingde 旌德	Fuliang 浮梁	Others 外譜
<b>TOC</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>SML 002422</b>	4	N	N	1	3	N	2	5
<b>NLC 12677</b>	1	N	4	2	3	5	6	7
<b>SML 002421</b>	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	1

Source: *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu* (Shanghai, SML, 002422). TOC = The order of the content as listed in the table of contents. N = Content that does not exist in the copy.

This cherry-picking process is understandable, because the original printed genealogy contained too much information about other lineages that did not concern the manuscript makers. There was a disparity between the practical intentions of common lineage members – that is, using genealogies as an act of keeping records for a small branch – and the lineage leaders' grand vision of using genealogies as a networking device to connect leaders from different branches. The tension could easily be resolved through making handwritten selections of print genealogies. Consider the Huang 黃 lineage of Gaocang 高倉, a lineage that started to have print genealogies in 1566, when a prefectural leader named Huang Jiyu 黃積瑜 published a comprehensive genealogy of all Huang-surnamed lineages in Huizhou.<sup>38</sup> The comprehensive genealogy has nineteen *juan* 卷 ('chapters') and over nine hundred leaves, and covers information about ninety participant lineages from twenty-two administrative units, which was too voluminous for any copyist to copy easily.<sup>39</sup> So, when an early seventeenth-century scholar named Huang Xuande 黃玄德 was about to make a handwritten selection of the genealogy on behalf of his subbranch, he copied only the prefaces from the 1570 genealogy and culled the genealogical information relevant to his own branch.<sup>40</sup> Because his son had no heir, Huang Xuande passed his handwritten selection to his nephew, Huang Hengyuan 黃亨元, who appended new content to this manuscript in 1686. Hengyuan passed on the manuscript with his updates to his son, which became the source for his son's new

<sup>38</sup> Huang 1570; 'Gaocang Huangshi jiacheng xu 高倉黃氏家乘序', in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu*, Beijing, NLC, 14281.

<sup>39</sup> Huang 1570.

<sup>40</sup> *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281).

manuscript, made in 1709.<sup>41</sup> The life trajectory of this genealogy illuminates how printing and copying operated on different levels: when the genealogy was printed in 1566, it was the common property of all ninety participant lineages, but when Huang Xuande made a handwritten selection of the genealogy, his copy became a document for his own branch (a branch consisting of dozens of households); this branch-specific manuscript then became the source of another manuscript that Huang Hengyuan's son made for his own household. In addition to breaking the monopoly of printed genealogy copies, hand-copying enabled modest lineage members to make their own genealogies. The right to access, make, and keep genealogies broadened from prefecture-wide leaders, through lineage leaders, to sons of modest lineage members.

The changes to the original genealogies – the breakdown of the structure and the shrinkage in length – are even more prominent in the ways genealogy copyists grappled with paratextual elements, especially prefaces. It was common practice for genealogy editors to solicit prefaces from knowledgeable family members and external figures when a genealogy project was about to be completed. Prefaces served as records of networking: an internal preface was a demonstration of the unity of different branches in accomplishing a collective project; an external preface was a record of wider social connections with powerful and influential circles.<sup>42</sup> Since printing did not happen *ex nihilo*, in preparation for genealogy printing, lineage leaders strove to amass all the prefaces in existing genealogies and put them together with new prefaces. For example, leaders of the Li 李 lineages in Huizhou included fifty-six prefaces in the genealogy they printed.<sup>43</sup> These prefaces not only bespoke the lineages' long history of genealogy compilation, but also demonstrated that their members were able to socialize in important circles of scholar-officials – the most prestigious elite group in late imperial China. Most of the prefaces in this genealogy, however, were abandoned in a handwritten copy made by an educated man from the Qukou 渠口 lineage, one of the dozens of lineages involved in the printing project. He kept only four prefaces: one written for the 1614 printing project, one detailing the history of the surname, and the other two about his own Qukou lineage.<sup>44</sup> It is understandable that the copyist selected the most relevant prefaces, but his omission of all other

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41 For information on Huang Xuande and Huang Hengyuan, see the genealogical table in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281). The life history of the manuscript was recorded on a bookmark originally placed in the book. For more information on the bookmark, see *Huizhou shanben jiapu*, 'Record 14281' <<http://read.nlc.cn/OutOpenBook/OpenObjectPic?aid=952&bid=125.0&lid=2108541&did=14281>> (accessed on 23 June 2024).

42 On the networking function of prefaces, see Chow 2004, 110–115.

43 Li 1614, xu: 1a–77b.

44 *Santian Lishi tongzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14280).

prefaces reveals that he did not care about the cultural meanings of the abandoned prefaces. He had no intention of preserving these texts, which mainly aimed at celebrating inter-lineage unity and extra-lineage sociability; instead, he narrowed the focus of his copy to his own lineage, making his copy largely a document for internal kinship bonding. This copyist's approach suggests his indifference to the large-scale union of lineages, or what Maurice Freedman calls a 'higher-order lineage'.<sup>45</sup> If the 1614 printing project represented the trend of merging smaller lineages into giant unions, then the copyist's copying was an act of dismantling these large-scale social communities, an act that redirected the focus of genealogy from inter-lineage/extra-lineage networking to intra-lineage bonding.

Copying represented a countercurrent to the increasing association between the genealogy genre and printing technology after around 1450. Famous scholars like Cheng Minzheng 程敏政 were intent on printing large genealogies as a way to build their leadership over communities larger than their immediate lineage. Therefore, they used printing to transform genealogies from internal documents into books with an outward perspective. They added new meanings to genealogies by incorporating visual, material, and paratextual elements in the process of printing. Once records of family members, genealogies became emblems of status, wealth, and sociability. This new development, however, was somewhat balanced out by the act of copying. Scholars copying genealogies on behalf of their own branches were not as passionate about inter-lineage or extra-lineage networks as leaders of lineage unions were; they were more intent on their own branches, and tended to omit other elements that were added to their genealogies in the process of printing. In summary, if the adoption of printing complicated the meanings of genealogies, then the popular act of copying reversed genealogies back to what they had been before – records of intra-lineage relations.

## 4 Copying as updating

When people wrote genealogies to store ancestral and biographical information, they expected their genealogies to be updatable, and manuscripts could effectively provide this updatability. People could update their genealogy manuscripts simply by adding new content and pages. Before the fifteenth century, most Huizhou lineages kept manuscript genealogies. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some of the new Huizhou elite decided to print their genealogies. In order to claim their gene-

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<sup>45</sup> Freedman 1966, 20–21.

alogies' authority, they took measures to ensure that they produced identical copies and that no one would modify the genealogies they made. For example, editors of a printed genealogy recorded the number of columns per page and the number of characters per column, so that they could spot any modifications to the imprints they made and punish those who made the changes.<sup>46</sup> Editors of another genealogy recorded the number of names in each genealogical chart for the same purpose.<sup>47</sup> Another printed genealogy includes admonitions that 'do not write over, scoop away, change, or insert anything; do not sell genealogy copies to others due to greed; do not insert new printed pages of genealogical tables to disarray lineages' 不許塗抹改補及貪財轉售他人添刊世系紊亂宗族.<sup>48</sup> In so doing, the editors protected the 'purity' of their genealogies, but they did this at the expense of updatability. The fact that genealogy editors had to rely on book craftsmen for woodcutting also meant that making substantial changes to woodblock-printed genealogies was unrealistic.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, the adoption of printing meant that the new genealogies had limited updatability.

Put in this context, making handwritten copies of printed genealogies could be understood as an effort to keep the same genealogies authoritative and updatable at the same time. The updatability of genealogy manuscripts is evident in the manuscript produced by the Qukou Li lineage in the 1680s based on a 1614 imprint.<sup>50</sup> The maker of the manuscript did not simply copy the text; he incorporated information about figures who were born between 1614 and the 1680s.<sup>51</sup> Nor did his descendants view this 1680s manuscript as a finished genealogy, as a different hand appended information about later individuals (the youngest was born around 1800) to the genealogical charts, suggesting that the generations after the copyist continued to insert information until as late as the nineteenth century.<sup>52</sup> Although other prominent lineage leaders placed greater value on printed genealogies, these less prominent individuals were still committed to the ongoing practice of making manuscripts.<sup>53</sup> While printing reduced genealogies' updatability, handwritten copies of printed genealogies played an important role in compensating this limitation.

46 Cheng 1541, *fanli*: 2b.

47 Wang 1560, *fanli*: 4a, *fenqian zongtu*: 8a.

48 Bi 1509, *zihao*: 4b.

49 There were exceptions. For example, two new printed pages were added to the end of a genealogy three years after the completion of the printing project. See 'Zhengshi jiagui 鄭氏家規' in Zheng 1584.

50 Compare Li 1614 and *Santian Lishi tongzong pu*, Beijing, NLC, 14280.

51 See Li Shizhen 李世蓁 (born 1683). *Santian Lishi tongzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14280), 48b.

52 This later content was written in a different calligraphic style; see *Santian Lishi tongzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14280), 59b–60a.

53 On the appearance of genealogy manuscripts before 1450, see Wang (Beijing, NLC, 14836).



The loop from imprint back to manuscript is even more prominent in the history of the genealogies of the aforementioned Huang lineage of Gaocang. The founding ancestor established his residence at Gaocang village in 1343/4, and his great-grandson compiled the first genealogy in 1453.<sup>54</sup> Since the lineage was still small (less than twenty males) and humble and the editors did not invite celebrities to write prefaces, the genealogy was likely a manuscript.<sup>55</sup> In 1566, the Gaocang lineage compiled another genealogy. Judging from the much larger size of the lineage (there were 112 male members in the eighth generation) and the preface written by the famous scholar You Zhende 游震得, the genealogy was probably an imprint.<sup>56</sup> Thus, this might have been the first time the Gaocang branch printed its genealogy. Despite the comprehensiveness of the genealogy, members of the lineage did not cease to make new genealogy manuscripts (see Table 2). In 1628/9, Huang Xuande hand-copied the genealogy and, due to the lack of inheritors, passed his copy on to his nephew Huang Hengyuan, who continued to add information to the genealogical chart in 1686/7, including the names of himself and his three brothers.<sup>57</sup> In 1700/1, Huang Hengyuan's son Huang Maozhen 黃懋振 followed his father's orders to make another manuscript based on Hengyuan's.<sup>58</sup> The loop from manuscript to imprint and then back to manuscript reveals the enduring functionality of the manuscript form, especially the advantage of its updatability.

Later members of the Huang lineage continued to make genealogy manuscripts. One extant late eighteenth-century manuscript includes more names compared to Huang Xuande's, but presents the genealogical tables in a different way to reduce the number of leaves from thirty-one to eight.<sup>59</sup> Further, the manuscript maker reduced the number of prefaces from eighty-three to twelve while adding two new prefaces that Huang Xuande did not include.<sup>60</sup> That two copies descending from

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54 For information about the founding ancestor, see Huang Zheng 黃政 (34th generation) in the genealogical table in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281). For information about the lineage, see 'Gaocang Huangshi zhixi xu 高倉黃氏支系序', in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281).

55 See the thirty-seventh generation of the genealogical table in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281).

56 See 'Gaocang Huangshi zhengtong tongpu xu 高倉黃氏正宗統譜序' and the forty-first generation of the genealogical table in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281).

57 See Huang Xuande (41st generation) and Huang Hengyuan (42nd generation) in the genealogical table of *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281).

58 See the bookmark in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281).

59 Compare the genealogical tables in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281) and *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi shipu* (Salt Lake City, FamilySearch, DGS105420217).

60 Compare the prefaces in *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281) and *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi shipu* (Salt Lake City, FamilySearch, DGS105420217).

the same printed genealogy could differ to such a great extent reveals the plurality of paths a genealogy could take even after attempts at standardizing were undertaken through printing. While printing had gained favour among many prominent figures, individuals of lesser prominence continued to prefer manuscripts. This was because manuscripts had the two most important traits that imprints could not match: updatability and customizability.

**Table 2:** A History of Genealogies Circulated in the Huang Lineage of Gaocang.

Time	Generation (number of males)	Name	Event	Form
1343/4	1st (1)	Huang Zheng (1306/7–1392/3)	Relocated to Gaocang and founded the Huang lineage of Gaocang	
1453	4th (12)	Huang Lan (1406/7–1496/7)	Compiled a genealogy	Manuscript
1566	7th (67)	Huang Yongsheng (1513/4–?)	Combined the compre- hensive genealogy of the Huang surname; printed the genealogy	Imprint
1628/9	8th (111)	Huang Xuande (1566/7–?)	Hand-copied the genea- logy	Manuscript
1686/7	9th (122)	Huang Hengyuan (?–?)	Updated the handwrit- ten copy	Manuscript
1709	10th (109)	Huang Maozhen (1643/4–?)	Hand-copied the genealogy based on Huang Xuande's copy and Huang Hengyuan's updates	Manuscript
Late 18th century	unknown	Unknown	Another handwritten copy based on the 1566 genealogy and other unknown materials (pos- sibly including Huang Xuande's genealogy)	Manuscript

## 5 Between replication and modification: Copying as editing

One can observe noticeable differences when comparing two handwritten copies of the 1454 Cheng genealogy. In one copy, the title page replicates the format of the original printed genealogy, featuring eight large characters and one seal, precisely positioned within the nine cells of the grid framing the page<sup>61</sup> (see Fig. 1a). In the other copy, the title and table of contents are combined, with the eight characters of the title appearing in the first line. Following the characters is a descriptive note in an even smaller type: ‘The eight characters in large type are distributed over three lines, with the remaining cell filled in by the calligrapher’s mark consisting of four smaller characters, “yu tang qing xia” 八字作三行大字，空一字處以“玉堂清暇”四小字為圖記.’<sup>62</sup> The copyists adopted two different approaches to copying. While the copyist of the first copy highlighted the visual features of the printed genealogy, the copyist of the second copy believed it unnecessary to replicate the visual presentation. Their differing attitudes toward the visibility of genealogy books draw attention to the role of the visual dimension of genealogical texts.

First of all, the visibility of genealogies extended beyond mere appearance and played a crucial role in their structural composition. Duplicating the title page helped the manuscript copy preserve the genealogy’s bookish quality. The large characters, the grid, and the mark reminded readers of the most prevalent practices for creating title pages in printed books at that time<sup>63</sup> (see Fig. 1a). When these features of the print’s layout were translated into descriptive language, however, only the basic information was retained, resulting in the loss of structural clarity typically associated with a standard title page<sup>64</sup> (see Fig. 1b). Visual attributes thus had implications for the structural composition.

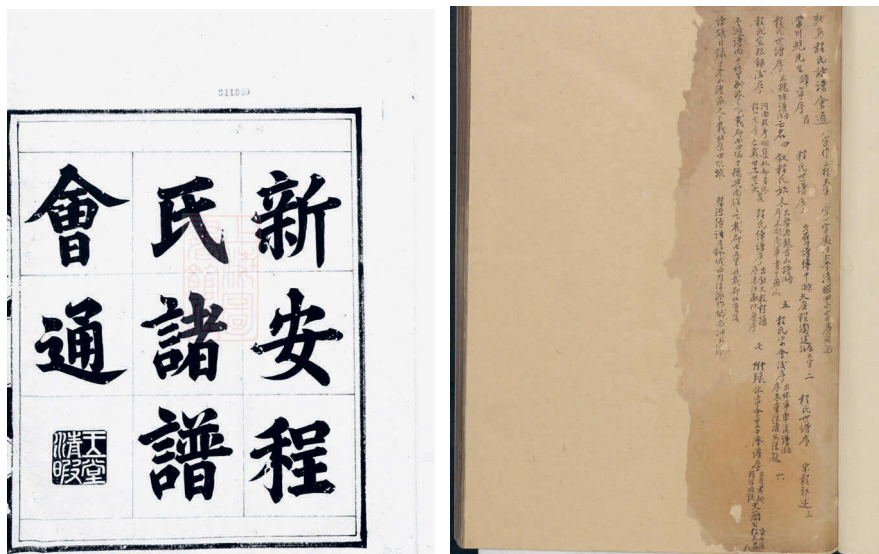
Makers of manuscript copies of printed genealogies adopted diverse approaches to replicating the visual characteristics of the original genealogy depending on their specific needs and constraints. One example is how manuscript makers represented characters carved in intaglio (white on black, or *yinke* 陰刻) in the original printed genealogy. In Chinese woodblock-printed books, characters carved in intaglio often served as section names or as labels, differing from characters carved in relief (black

61 *Xin’an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421).

62 Yutang and qingxia mean ‘studio’ and ‘collectables’, respectively, and thus signify the identity of the calligrapher as a scholar with a keen interest in collecting valuable items; see *Xin’an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677).

63 *Xin’an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421).

64 *Xin’an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677).



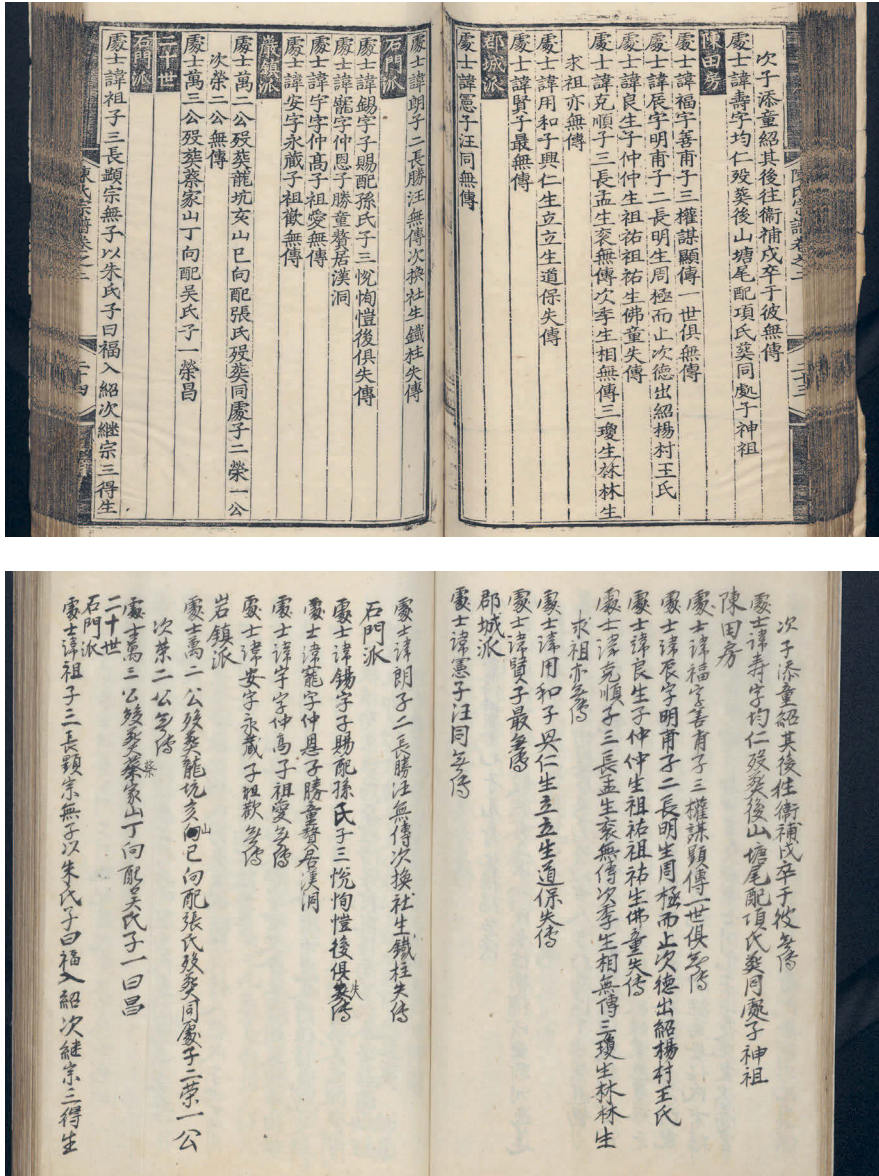
**Figs 1a and 1b:** Title pages of two handwritten copies of the same genealogy. Note how one copyist attempted to retain the layout of the original (a, left) and the other copyist (b, right) used only texts to describe the page layout. See (a) *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421); (b) *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677). Courtesy of the Shanghai Municipal Library; National Library of China.

on white, or *yangke* 陽刻) for body texts.<sup>65</sup> For manuscript makers, characters carved in intaglio were harder to replicate with ink and brushes because they had to fill the space around the strokes of characters with ink, instead of tracing the strokes. Replicating characters carved in intaglio was more akin to painting and required more skill and care. Hence, some copyists chose not to replicate characters in intaglio in the process of copying. For example, the copyist of the Chen 陳 genealogy did not differentiate the characters in relief (body texts, such as names and biographies) and the characters in intaglio (the branches to which the following names belonged) in his copy<sup>66</sup> (see Fig. 2). As a consequence, the hierarchy of texts became blurred. The copyist also did not replicate the original's visual markers differentiating the branch names (carved in intaglio as section titles in the original) from the body text; readers might therefore think the branch names were complementary to the names – in other words, lower in the textual hierarchy than the names<sup>67</sup> (compare Figs 2a and 2b).

<sup>65</sup> For the distinction between characters carved in intaglio and in relief, see Chia 2002, 31; Tsien 2004, 92.

<sup>66</sup> *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Beijing, NLC, 14287), *juan* 1 and 2.

<sup>67</sup> *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Beijing, NLC, 14287), *juan* 2.



**Figs 2a and 2b:** The same page from an imprint and a manuscript. Note that the characters carved in intaglio in the printed version (a, left) serve as section headers. In the hand-copy (b, right), however, the copyist did not distinguish the headers from the body text, making the textual hierarchy unclear. See Chen 1507, 2:34a; *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Beijing, NLC, 14287). Courtesy of the National Library of China.

By levelling the difference between characters in relief and characters in intaglio, the copyist omitted the visual signposts of the original texts, and risked confusing the reader. Again, visibility was closely tied to clarity.

Even more revealing is a comparison of three handwritten copies of the Cheng genealogy. When copying a list of lineages, makers of all three copies kept faithful to the text, documenting each lineage's genealogies, prominent figures, significant buildings, and literary works. Yet, they presented the categories of 'Genealogies', 'Prominent Figures', 'Significant Buildings', and 'Literary Works' differently. One copyist (Fig. 3a) mimicked the original copy and used ink to fill the space around the brushstrokes, as if the characters were carved in intaglio.<sup>68</sup> Another copyist (Fig. 3b) did not differentiate the labels from the text in either size or calligraphic style.<sup>69</sup> Like the copyist of the Chen genealogy, the copyist made the labels indistinguishable from the body text, creating an unpleasant reading experience. The third copyist (Fig. 3c) did not represent the characters in intaglio either, but he used a somewhat creative way to mark the difference between the labels and the body texts: he wrote the labels in red ink and the body texts in black ink.<sup>70</sup> Here, the three attitudes at work reflect three understandings of the nature of copying. The first copyist attempted to duplicate the visuality of the printed genealogy as much as he could, and probably thought the act of copying entailed reproducing everything that was on the original pages, including form and content; the second copyist disregarded visuality altogether, and likely believed that copying meant reproducing everything content-wise that was on the original pages; and the third copyist declined to reproduce the visual attributes, but came up with his own ways to offset the loss of clarity, and in this sense, he viewed copying as improving the original genealogy. Only the first copyist strove to duplicate the original genealogy; the makers of the other two manuscripts either ignored the visual elements or used more easily manageable technical tools to recreate the advantages of these elements.

The variations in approach to visual representation during the copying process are particularly evident in the reproduction of illustrations. Illustrations had proliferated in genealogies and become increasingly crucial from the late fifteenth century onwards.<sup>71</sup> Copying an illustration such as an ancestor portrait, a landscape, or a map required meticulous tracing of the brush strokes. Note that not all well-educated men had the skill set for painting, although in theory, Confucian scholars were expected to

<sup>68</sup> *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Shanghai, SML, 002421).

<sup>69</sup> *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Shanghai, SML, 002422).

<sup>70</sup> *Xin'an Chenshi zongpu* (Beijing, NLC, 14287).

<sup>71</sup> One of the earliest extant genealogies, printed in 1501, contains six maps and seventy-seven ancestor portraits (Cheng 1501, *jingtu*: 1b–3b, *mutu*: 4a–5a, *zuxiangtu*: 1a–28b).

be extraordinarily versatile. Skilful copyists – like Huang Xuande, who had made the beautiful copy of the Huang genealogy – were able to largely replicate illustrations, keeping as many details as possible (compare Figs 4a and 4b). Yet, more commonly, copyists tended to simply omit illustrations. For example, a later copy of the same Huang genealogy omitted all the ancestor portraits;<sup>72</sup> another copyist of the genealogy of the Li surname omitted a scenic map that depicted the twelve sites in the village where his own branch resided, while keeping the poems praising the sites.<sup>73</sup> Copyists made illustrations according to their capacities and needs. For example, when it came to the two illustrations in the 1454 Cheng genealogy – a national map and a local map – copyists employed different methods. While two copies included both maps,<sup>74</sup> another copy featured solely the national map, omitting the local map.<sup>75</sup> Since the local map is much more detailed than the national map, the decision to prioritize reproducing the sketchier national map over the local one could be seen as an attempt to avoid more challenging tasks. Yet even the national map that the copyist decided to include was very different from the national map in the original genealogy.<sup>76</sup> There is good reason to surmise that he replaced the national map with a more accurate one. In other words, the copyist faced not only the decision of what to retain and what to omit, but also whether the maps should be altered.

Here, a different understanding of the purpose of copying was at work: copying was not just reproducing; copying was editing. Depending on the extent of editing involved, the act of copying can be positioned on a continuum between replication and entirely new creation. If we focus on the page layout, we would probably put the SML002421 copy at the ‘replicating’ extreme, the NLC12677 copy at the ‘updating’ extreme, and the SML002422 copy in between (compare Figs 3a, 3b, and 3c). The copyists’ understandings of copying seem to align with how much their products resembled the original printed genealogy. In other cases, however, copyists might have had a more flexible and fluid understanding of copying. The mixed attitude toward visuality on the part of the copyist of the Huang genealogy demonstrates this fluidity. In terms of page layout, the copyist abandoned the lines and frames when he copied the eighty-nine prefaces, which occupied about half of his copy, showing that he was more interested in replicating the content than the form.

<sup>72</sup> *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi shipu* (Salt Lake City, FamilySearch, DGS105420217).

<sup>73</sup> ‘Lantian shier jingshi 藍田十二景詩’, in *Santian Lishi tongzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14280).

<sup>74</sup> *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002422).

<sup>75</sup> *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677).

<sup>76</sup> Compare ‘Gujin junguo Chengshi suoju zhitu 古今郡國程氏所居之圖’ in *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677) with that in *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421) and *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002422).





**Figs 3a, 3b and 3c:** Comparison of the same page of three handwritten copies of a printed genealogy. One copyist (a, left) mimicked the original and used intaglio characters for the section headers; the second copyist (b, middle) omitted the differences between the headers and body text; the third copyist replaced the intaglio characters with characters in red. Further, the copyists took different approaches to reproducing the page layout. The first copyist put the text in framed columns, as if the text were printed; the second copyist did not draw the frames, but still made the text roughly line with the original; and the third copyist shrank the text to squeeze more characters onto a page. *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002421); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Shanghai, SML, 002422); *Xin'an Chengshi zhupu huitong* (Beijing, NLC, 12677). Courtesy of the Shanghai Municipal Library; National Library of China.



But he also emphasized the importance of visual components in other parts: he replicated and added fifty-six ancestor portraits and ten gravesite maps to the best of his ability.<sup>77</sup> In other words, one copyist could be perfectionistic in dealing with some parts, while at the same time being more lenient about others. Where he chose to adhere to the printed version and where he did not can reveal the copyist's agenda and emphasis. If exact duplication was the ideal, then in reality, each copyist could find their own leeway. At times, copyists could also change the content, format, and structure of the original. In a certain sense, copying was a form of editing.

## 6 Genealogical writing and manuscript culture

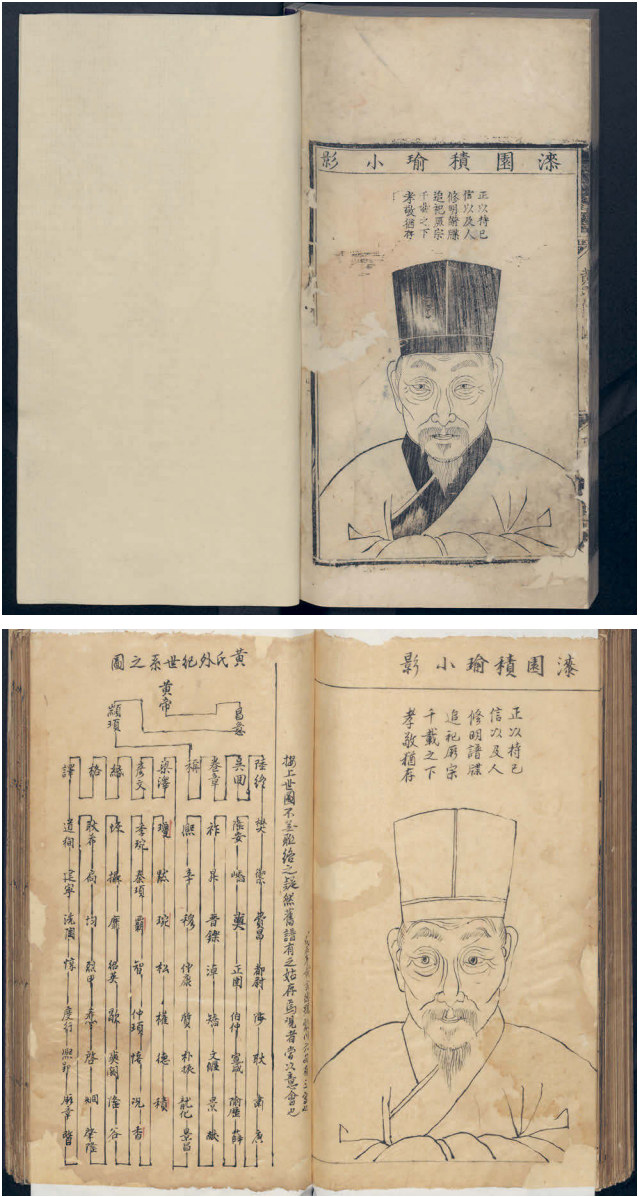
Upon closer examination of the disparities between printed genealogies and their handwritten offshoots, it becomes evident why genealogy manuscripts continued to be popular despite the growing prevalence of printed genealogies. First of all, manuscripts had the advantages of accessibility, elasticity, updatability, and editability, none of which were available with printed publications. Copying therefore remained popular as a way to maintain these attributes that were so essential to genealogical knowledge. Secondly, copying afforded less prestigious members of kin groups a chance to make genealogies on their own, without paying the large expenses of genealogy printing. The autonomy that they gained in accessing, evaluating, and producing genealogical knowledge made copying a consistently attractive option. In short, due to its many advantages, especially its updatability, manuscripts remained an apt medium for genealogical writing, a type of writing that was necessarily open-ended and in constant need of expansion.

However, despite the drawbacks of genealogy imprints, there was a strong inclination among genealogy editors, including those who produced hand copies, to publish their genealogies in print when favourable conditions arose. Due to the high cost of printing, many kin groups had to wait decades or even centuries before their genealogies could be reprinted with all the updated information, but many leaders of kin groups still believed that genealogies should be printed and reprinted, regardless of the significant time gaps in between.<sup>78</sup> For them, the imprint was the ideal medium. Given the coexistence of genealogy imprints and manuscripts, however, it might be more fruitful to regard printing and copying as two technologies that operated on different levels. Printing was used for authority and uniformity, while copying was

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<sup>77</sup> *Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu* (Beijing, NLC, 14281).

<sup>78</sup> For a gap of 126 years, see Wang 1527; Wang 1653.



**Figs 4a and 4b:** Portraits of the same figure in a genealogy imprint and in a manuscript copy of this imprint. The manuscript copy (b, right) inherited the caption, the inscription, and the portrait from the print copy (a, left). Except for the differences in the eyes, the hat, and the collar, the copyist was largely loyal to the original image. Huang 1570, Huangshi xianshi yixiang: 28b; 'Qiyuan Jiyu xiaoying 漆園積瑜小影', in Xin'an Zuotian Huangshi zhengzong pu (Beijing, NLC, 14281). Courtesy of the National Library of China.

for keeping records of biographical information. Genealogy editors' flexibility in choosing between manuscript and imprint, just like manuscript makers' flexibility in choosing how to reproduce printed genealogies, was the key to the prosperity of genealogies in late imperial China.

## Abbreviations

NLC = National Library of China

SML = Shanghai Municipal Library

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Steffen Döll

# Genealogical Diagrams in Chan/Zen Buddhism: Sources, Production, and Functions

**Abstract:** Genealogy is of paramount significance in Chan or Zen Buddhism. The transmission lineage connecting any practitioner to the Buddha Śākyamuni, via unambiguously identifiable generations of masters and disciples, has been commonly rendered in diagrammatic format – as a table of spiritual ancestry, so to speak. This paper focuses on early specimens of these so-called *shūhazu* 宗派圖 (‘diagrams of the buddhas and patriarchs’), both manuscripts and printed works, from the thirteenth century, and traces their reception in early modern Japanese epigonal materials. It argues for a twofold typology of Zen Buddhist genealogical diagrams: one reductive in nature, as it typically represents a unilineal transmission and certifies the authenticity of its specific members; the other inclusive, in that it systematically collects chains of transmission in their multilineal complexity, which at times also includes critical reflections on established representations of claims to orthodoxy.

## 1 Introduction

Genealogy plays a defining role in the self-imagination of Chan/Zen 禪 Buddhism.<sup>1</sup> It claims that one may become heir to the Buddha himself – not by relying on scripture, but by way of a certain type of meditative insight<sup>2</sup> that is acknowledged by a legitimate master of the tradition. When this occurs, the Chan/Zen adept becomes a master themselves and is able to authenticate spiritual successors. Conversely – and more importantly, for what follows – the master who confers this acknowledgement must previously have been authenticated by a master before them. The

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<sup>1</sup> *Chan/zen* 禪 is an abbreviation of *channa/zenna* 禪那, which transliterates Sanskrit *dhyāna* (‘meditation’). For formal choices in the representation of terminology throughout this paper, see the ‘Note on Formal Matters’ after the ‘Conclusion’.

<sup>2</sup> It was primarily Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō 鈴木大拙貞太郎 (1870–1966) who popularized the so-called ‘four axioms’ (*siju/shiku* 四句) as a concise description of the nature of Chan/Zen Buddhism: ‘A special transmission outside the scriptures/No dependence upon words and letters/Direct pointing to the soul of man/Seeing into one’s nature and the attainment of Buddhahood’; see Suzuki 1961, 20.

resulting lineage not only extends forwards in time but, according to Chan/Zen imagination, must be traced back to the Buddha and, with him, the first instance of legitimation. The nucleus of a master-disciple relationship is thus the crucial element in the construction of a Chan/Zen lineage that claims to originate with the founder of the Buddhist tradition as a whole, and from him has continued to the present day without interruptions, lacunae, anastomoses or contaminations.<sup>3</sup>

Chan/Zen's imagination of an unambiguous genealogy – one defined not by birth or status, but by the authentication of spiritual awakening as confirmed by the authority of the master – takes the form of a lineage diagram<sup>4</sup> not only in self-representations, but also in the appendices and apparatus of biographies, histories, encyclopaedias and scholarly writings.<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere, I have tried to outline the conceptual implications of a genealogical model in the telling of Buddhist history.<sup>6</sup> Here, my aim is to introduce, contextualize, and typologize Zen Buddhist diagrammatic genealogies in order to examine their background and function within the frameworks peculiar to the tradition. This paper accordingly first reviews common Chan/Zen Buddhist transmission narratives (Section 2.1), recapitulates structural elements of the result-

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3 Other schools of East Asian Buddhism certainly employ genealogical models as well, for the relation between master and student is equally paramount there. Such is the case, for example, of the 'bloodlines' (*xuema/kechimyaku* 血脈) in esoteric traditions or the lineage of 'patriarchs' (*zu/so* 祖) in the Pure Land traditions. It must be noted, however, that these genealogies typically do not represent lineages by listing personal master-disciple relations over the course of several dozens of generations. Much less do they claim to account for every instance of intergenerational transmission by providing biographies that pretend to be historical in nature. Rather, it is part and parcel of esoteric and Pure Land lineages that they include links in their chains that are not conceptualized to be historical (or biographical, for that matter, as in the esoteric case of the Great Sun Buddha, Mahāvairocana) at all, or which relate to one another over extensions of time and space (as when, for instance, the sixth patriarch of the Pure Land schools, the Japanese monk Genshin 源信, 942–1017, follows the fifth, the Chinese monk Shandao/Zendō 善導, 613–681). A detailed comparison of Buddhist genealogical models, at this point, remains a desideratum.

4 Structurally speaking, such diagrams rely on what John McRae has dubbed the 'genealogical' or 'lineage paradigm', for which he singles out the following characteristic elements: (1) combining Indian and Chinese concepts of ancestor worship; (2) employing mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion analogous to family relations; (3) reducing complex biographies to mythical tropes; (4) devaluing the content of transmission vis-à-vis transmission as a device for authentication; (5) equating becoming a member of the lineage with having the self-same spiritual insight as the Buddha; (6) necessitating magisterial legitimation, and (7) subscribing to male-centeredness; see McRae 2003, 4–9.

5 Good examples are the monumental fifty-page diagrammatic 'Dharma genealogy of the Chan/Zen school' (*Zenshū hōkeifu* 禪宗法系譜) in vol. 3 of the standard encyclopaedia of Chan/Zen studies, *Zengaku daijiten* 禪學大辭典 (see Zengaku daijiten hensanjo 1978, vol. 3, 1–50), or the painstaking, decade-long compilation of lineages from a multitude of sources in Tamamura 1985.

6 See Döll 2017.

ing textual genealogies and their historical development (Section 2.2), and describes concrete diagrammatic materials – both manuscripts and printed works – from the thirteenth century, as well as their reception into the early Edo period (1603–1868). Given the sheer volume of names and lineages mentioned in these diagrammatic materials, an analysis of their respective content must remain beyond this paper's scope. The following rather addresses discrepancies in witnesses and representation strategies, prefaces and postscripts, and circumstances of production. It will become clear that diagrammatic representations of the spiritual genealogies of Chan/Zen Buddhism are of two kinds: one generalized, aimed at including as many lineages as possible (Section 3); and one reductive, intending to emphasize a specific line of transmission and its claims to authenticity (Section 4).

## 2 On the history of Chan/Zen Buddhist concepts of lineage

### 2.1 Transmission lineage in narrative

In order to provide the reader with a summary overview of well-established, traditionalist imaginations of the spiritual genealogy of Chan/Zen Buddhism, a rehearsal of its most common narrative elements is in order.<sup>7</sup> The religious tradition, in its own self-understanding, originates from the historical Buddha, Śākyamuni.<sup>8</sup> While naturally all types of Buddhism see themselves indebted in one way or the other to the founder of Buddhism, the claims of Chan/Zen to his heritage are specific: apart from the plurality of teachings – as laid out in the literature of the *sūtras* and of the *vinaya*, i.e. the corpus of monastic rules – the Buddha transmitted truth directly (read: without mediation).<sup>9</sup> This wordless transmission proceeded from

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7 It bears emphasizing that Chan/Zen Buddhism is almost entirely a product of East Asian imaginations and has no immediate counterparts in the spectrum of South and Central Asian traditions.

8 The problem of dating the life of the Buddha is notorious. While a 'relative consensus' (Tournier/Strong 2019, 18b) exists that dates the Buddha's demise to roughly 400 BCE, the vastness of the problem is best illustrated by the three massive volumes of Bechert 1991–1997. In sophisticated versions of the lineage paradigm, it should be noted that transmission goes even further back to time immemorial: the so-called 'buddhas of the past' (*guoqu qifo/kako shichibutsu* 過去七佛), six before Śākyamuni, are included as well.

9 For a highly instructive reflection on the problem of transmission in general and its Japanese inflections in particular, see Rüttermann 1999.

the mind of Śākyamuni directly to the mind of Mahākāśyapa,<sup>10</sup> who then effected transmission to Ānanda, from whom Sāṇavāsī received the transmission, and so on, through a total of twenty-eight generations of so-called ‘patriarchs’ (*zu/so* 祖) in India. The final member of this Indian part of the tradition, Bodhidharma (*Putidamo/Bodaidaruma* 菩提達摩), travelled east and became the first Chinese patriarch. Unilineal transmission continued on to the sixth (and nominally final) patriarch, Huineng/Enō 慧能 (638–713).<sup>11</sup>

Huineng, then, had several disciples, which led to a multilineal structure of the tradition<sup>12</sup> and the proliferation of the Five Houses (*wujia/goke* 五家),<sup>13</sup> the Seven Schools (*qizong/shichishū* 七宗),<sup>14</sup> and a multitude of reputable Chan masters. Japanese monks studied under some of these masters and brought the transmission to their home country, where Zen Buddhism established monasteries and institutions modelled after their Chinese predecessors according to the so-called ‘Five Mountains’ (*wushan/gozan* 五山) hierarchy,<sup>15</sup> and while the Chan/Zen tradition all but vanished from China over time, it flourished in Japan, where its ‘twenty-four flows’ (*nijūshiryū* 二十四流)<sup>16</sup> have preserved the Buddha’s transmission – allegedly authentic and unchanged – up to the present day.

10 See Welter 2000. The phrase ‘transmit mind by way of mind’ (*yxin chuanxin/ishin denshin* 以心傳心) may be traced as far back as the ‘Preface to the various collections of Chan/Zen sources’ (*Chanyuan zhuquanji duxu/Zengen shozenshū tojo* 禪源諸詮集都序) by Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 (780–841). The text is edited in Takakusu and Watanabe 1924–1932, text no. 2015, vol. 48, 397b–413c (henceforth quoted as T 2015:48.397b–413c). See also the English translation in Broughton 2009, 101–179.

11 The most comprehensive study on Huineng is Jorgensen 2005. The patriarchs between Bodhidharma and Huineng are Huike/Eka 慧可 (487–593), Sengcan/Sōsan 僧璨 (d. 606), Daoxin/Dōshin 道信 (580–651), and Hongren/Kōnin 弘忍 (601–674).

12 See Morrison 2010, 79–80. After the sixth patriarch, Shenxiu/Jinshū 神秀 (605–706) and his gradualist ‘Northern School’ (*beizong* 北宗) laid illegitimate claim to the heritage of Chan/Zen Buddhism, but were defeated by Shenhui/Jinne 神會 (670–762) and the – henceforth orthodox – subitist ‘Southern School’ (*nanzong/nanshū* 南宗); see McRae 1986 and Faure 1997.

13 The Five Houses are those of the Guiyang/Igyō 潁仰 (founded by Guishan Lingyou/Izan Reiyū 潁山靈祐, 771–853, and Yangshan Huiji/Gyōzan Ejaku 仰山慧寂, 807–883), Linji (founded by Linji Yixuan/Rinzai Gigen 臨濟義玄, d. 866), Caodong/Sōtō 曹洞 (founded by Dongshan Liangjie/Tōzan Ryōkai 洞山良价, 807–869, and Caoshan Benji/Sōzan Honjaku 曹山本寂, 840–901), Yunmen (founded by Yunmen Wenyan/Unmon Bun’en 雲門文偃, 864–949), and Fayen (Fayen Wenyi/Hōgen Moneki 法眼文益, 885–958) schools.

14 The Seven Schools comprise the Five Houses and, in addition, the factions of Yangqi (founded by Yangqi Fanghui/Yōgi Hōe 楊岐方會, 992–1049) and Huanglong (founded by Huanglong Huinan/Ōryū E’nan 黃龍慧南, 1002–1069).

15 See Colcutt 1981 and Döll 2010.

16 For a full list of the twenty-four flows, see below, Appendix 1.



## 2.2 Structure and history of narratives of transmission lineages

None of the elements of this traditionalist narrative hold up to historiographic analysis or the critical assessment of sources. Nor is the core idea of a lineage of Zen masters going back to the Buddha Śākyamuni – without interruption, diversion or third-party mediation, but rather through an immediate mind-to mind transmission from master to disciple – immutable within the tradition itself. Rather, it is easily exposed as the product of certain historical situations, with specific imaginations and representations, factional interests and negotiations of contradictory claims to authority. Its components develop over time and take decades, even centuries, to establish themselves as defining factors.<sup>17</sup>

While the historicity of many of the patriarchs of Chan/Zen Buddhism is dubitable, the central figure of Bodhidharma must be considered semi-historical. Hagiographic literature reports an encounter between the Indian monk and Emperor Wu 武 (464–549, r. 502–549) of the Liang 梁 dynasty (502–557), suggesting the middle of the sixth century for the earliest beginnings of Chinese Chan. Bodhidharma makes an appearance in even earlier, non-Chan/Zen sources as well, and in these he is not featured as an antinomian eccentric with a tendency towards spectacular rhetoric or inordinately long periods of meditation, as Chan/Zen would have the reader expect; rather, he is portrayed, for example, as a run-of-the-mill pilgrim to the Chinese capital, mainly involved in pious practices such as chanting. And while a number of relevant texts are indeed likely to date back to that period,<sup>18</sup> they are neither connected content-wise to the imagination of a patriarchal lineage, nor are they attributable to its putative members.

Historically speaking, the idea of a coherent *dharma*<sup>19</sup> transmission seems to become tangible only from the late seventh century onwards by way of a gradual and protracted process. In this regard, it is mainly an epitaph inscription dating to 689 that has made it possible to pinpoint the first preforms of the later lineage paradigm.<sup>20</sup> The inscription commemorates the monk Faru 法如 (c. 637–689) by retelling his biography (as is customary in the genre of epitaphs in general) and

<sup>17</sup> See Schlütter 2008 and Robson 2011.

<sup>18</sup> See Broughton 1999.

<sup>19</sup> While the semantics of the term are notoriously complex (classically discussed in Stcherbatsky 1923), for our context, an interpretation as ‘Buddhist truth’ or ‘ultimate realization’ suffices.

<sup>20</sup> The text is titled ‘The biography of Chan master Faru of the Shā[kyamuni clan], the *śramaṇa* from the Middle [Mountain] Peak of the Tang [dynasty]’ (*Tang Zhongyue shamen Shi Faru chanshi xingzhuang* 唐中嶽沙門釋法如禪師行狀). For the sake of easy reference, a translation of the first third of the text is included below as Appendix 2.

spelling out the context of transmission (a novel and very Chan/Zen thing to do). The epitaph obviously intends to establish Faru as *dharma* heir to Hongren who, in turn, is claimed to have received the authentic transmission of Bodhidharma through the masters before him and is therefore the legitimate fifth patriarch. This patriarchal transmission is contextualized with reference to an Indian transmission presumed to originate with Ānanda.<sup>21</sup> The two transmissions – one Chinese, one Indian – however, are, explicitly disconnected: the three-part transmission from Ānanda to Śāṇavāsa was discontinued while, much later, Bodhidharma seized the opportunity to found a lineage. Structurally speaking, the Chinese model of transmission is certainly informed by the Indian antecedent, since their content likewise transcends linguistic formulation, but their agents are clearly identifiable – and must be in order to guarantee the perpetuation of the resulting lineage.

Evidence for the lineage paradigm in Faru's epitaph is fragmentary, but already indicates a shift in perspective: while medieval Chinese Buddhism, following South and Central Asian precedent, was in general informed by a discourse that ran along the lines drawn by the transmission of canonical texts and commentarial traditions, Chan represented itself differently. Transmission was personalized in that it presupposed an immediate relation and interaction (silent though it may have been) between teacher and student, and it was dematerialized in that texts were devalued both as vehicles of content and as material objects. The question of what the transmission actually contained has remained unanswered; typically, the only information that is offered is that words are essentially unable to convey the true nature of transmission. By the same token, the overpowering importance of who effected transmission to whom is emphasized.<sup>22</sup>

By the middle of the eighth century – only slightly later than the epitaph's timid references to an imagined Indian situation – the first attempts were made to close the gaps and formulate a direct link between the Buddha's first transmission and the contemporary situation in China.<sup>23</sup> In his project to establish his own line of transmission as orthodox as opposed to the alleged heterodox gradualism of Shenxiu and his successors, Shenhui laid claim to the sixth patriarch's – i.e. Huineng's – heritage, and through him established his connection to Bodhidharma. However, the reconstruction of his lineage did not stop there, but continued back through

21 It is worth noting that later versions would have Mahākāśyapa receive the first transmission and relegate Ānanda to being the second Indian patriarch.

22 Textual witnesses such as the 'Record of teachers and students of the *Laṅka(avatārasūtra)*' (*Leng-qie shizi ji* 楞伽師資記, 713–716) by Jingjue 淨覺 (683–750?) and, more pointedly, the 'Chronicle of the transmission of the *dharma* jewel' (*Chuan fabao ji* 傳法寶記, 716–730) by Du Fei 杜朮 (fl. early eighth century) follow in these footsteps. Both texts are studied and edited in Bingenheimer/Chang 2018.

23 See Morrison 2010, chapter two: 'The Emergence of Chan Lineage', 51–87.

thirteen Indian patriarchs to the Buddha. Shenhui reiterated the stock arguments of Chan/Zen's distinctiveness versus other dogmatic, doctrinal and praxeological positions. Such assertions of a line of identifiable Indian patriarchs were elaborated further, integrating revered figures also from other Buddhist schools, until, in the early ninth century, the 'Transmissions of the Treasure Groves' (*Baolin zhuan* 寶林傳, 801),<sup>24</sup> attributed to the monk Zhiju 智炬 (no date), advocated the henceforth obligatory enumeration of twenty-eight Indian patriarchs, with Bodhidharma simultaneously being the last Indian and first Chinese patriarch. In a strategic move designed to corroborate the claims of a main lineage from Bodhidharma to Huike and his successors, it also downplayed side lineages.<sup>25</sup>

In this way, within little more than a century after originating in the Buddhist scene of medieval China, Chan had managed to position itself as the most authentic school of Buddhism. It did so by self-identifying as the institutionalized continuation of a genealogy dating back to the Buddha himself – one that relied not on acquired knowledge, but on immediate spiritual succession. Especially in the wake of the political crisis the Tang 唐 empire (618–907) faced during the rebellion of An Lushan 安祿山 (755–763), Chan Buddhism rose to popularity in the provinces,<sup>26</sup> and quite naturally, the transmission lines became more numerous. The model of a one-dimensional patriarchal lineage thus no longer seemed feasible. For instance, even if one was to disregard alleged heterodoxies such as the Northern or the Ox-Head schools, per convention it was undeniable that the sixth patriarch had had more than one disciple. Multiple disciples meant multiple transmissions, and these demanded a rationalization of how each one related to the others. The result was an increasing complexity of transmission lines, and this multiplication of lineages was to have a profound influence on Chan/Zen Buddhist self-representation in text, images and objects. As Albert Welter puts it: '[I]n Chan records compiled during the Tang dynasty [...], transmission was predicated on a unilineal basis from a master to a single disciple [...]. The profusion of Chan lineages depended on a new, decentralized model.'<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Accessibly edited in Tanaka 2003. 'Treasure Groves' refers to Baolin monastery, where Huineng is supposed to have dwelled for a couple of years.

<sup>25</sup> This strategy is ubiquitous also in diagrams – as shall be seen below – and typically relies on the reduction of complexity. In the case of the patriarchal lineage, Bodhidharma's other students besides Huike may be expelled from the narrative; similarly, the 'Ox-Head' (Niutou 牛頭) and 'Northern' schools (i.e. the Sichuan 四川 and Baotang 保唐 factions), respectively branching off the patriarchal line from under the fourth and fifth patriarchs, may be omitted.

<sup>26</sup> See Poceski 2007.

<sup>27</sup> Welter 2004, 141–142.

Reacting to these novel demands, the ‘multilineal model’<sup>28</sup> of Chan/Zen transmission lineages was developed and expanded upon throughout the tenth to thirteenth centuries in vast collections of hagiographic materials.<sup>29</sup> While the collections grew more and more inclusive in order to reflect the ever-growing number and complexity of the genealogies of transmission, they also mirrored specific, if not always overtly sectarian interests in their championing one master over another. Their advocacy of teacher-to-student transmission as the medium through which the true *dharma* travelled through time and space thus implied a cult of personality. The hagiographies of Buddhist masters did not merely afford glimpses into times past or eulogize extraordinary individuals, as the ‘lives of eminent monks’ (*gaosengzhuan/kōsōden* 高僧傳) genres had done (and continued to do); rather, Chan/Zen transmission narratives emphasize that the patriarchs and their disciples embody awakening, and that their life stories exemplify how the eternal truth of Buddhism becomes manifest. It was for the purpose of examining such tales as blueprints for one’s own liberation that, especially after the patriarchal line had begun to self-differentiate and develop sidelines as well as dead ends, biographies were anthologized in extensive, sometimes state-sponsored collections.

The genre of texts typical of such endeavours is the ‘records of the transmission of the lamp’ (*chuandenglū/dentōroku* 傳燈錄),<sup>30</sup> and its anthologies duly reflect the description in this label: they are predicated on an understanding of the lamp, symbol of the true *dharma*, as something with which to illuminate darkness, but more importantly as something that, while its appearance and fuel may differ from one lamp to another, is predicated on an essentially unchanging flame within. Generally, the *chuandeng* collections drew on and rearranged pre-existing narratives.<sup>31</sup> This vast and varied corpus of hagiographic literature provided the basis for the project of editing and systematizing lineages in diagrammatic format, as in the materials to which we now turn.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Welter 2004, 142.

<sup>29</sup> The ‘Collection of the patriarchs’ hall’ (*Zutang jī/Sodōshū* 祖堂集, 952) was collected by Jing 靜 (no date) and Yun/Jun 筠 (no date); the ‘Record of the mirrors of our school’ (*Zongjing lū/Sugyōroku* 宗鏡錄, 960), by Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904–975). Both are studied in-depth in Welter 2004 and 2011.

<sup>30</sup> The five collections grouped under this category are the *Jingde chuandeng lū/Keitoku dentō roku* 景德傳燈錄 (1004) by Yong’an Daoyuan 永安道原 (no date); the *Tiansheng guangdeng lū/Tenshō kōtō roku* 天聖廣燈錄 (1029–1036) by Li Zunxu 李遵勗 (988–1038); the *Jianzhong jingguo xudeng lū* 建中靖國續燈錄 (1101–1103) by Foguo Weibai 佛國惟白 (d.u.); the *Zongmen liandeng huiyao* 宗門聯燈會要 (1183) by Huiweng Wuming 晦翁悟明 (d.u.); and the *Jiatai pudeng lū* 嘉泰普燈錄 (1204) by Leian Zhengshou 雷庵正受 (1146–1208). See Foulk 2015.

<sup>31</sup> These were anthologized themselves in summary collections such as the massive *Wudeng huiyuan/Gotō egen* 五燈會元 (1253) by Dachuan Puji 大川普濟 (1179–1253).

<sup>32</sup> Beyond these, the typical Chan/Zen genres of literature, particularly the ‘public announcements’ (*gong’an/kōan* 公案, see Sharf 2007) and ‘recorded sayings’ (*yulū/goroku* 語錄, see Wittern 1998), are likewise based on the ‘transmission of the lamp’ texts.

### 3 Genealogical diagrams

The first suggestions of diagrammatic representations of the lineage model may have appeared very early in Chan/Zen Buddhist history. No specimens are extant, and as far as can be ascertained, due to homonyms and questions of nomenclature, these works apparently do not even involve diagrams at all: the well-known ‘Diagrams of master–disciple succession in the Chan tradition, by which the basis of the mind is transmitted in China’ (*Zhonghua chuanxindi chanmen shizicheng xitu* 中華傳心地禪門師資承襲圖) by Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 (780–841), for example, may at first glance give the impression of referring to diagrams. The title, however, is apocryphal, and the content fails to bear out this reference. Zongmi’s ‘diagrams’ have accordingly been characterized as ‘written letter’ (*shojō* 書狀), with which he may have been responding to a request by Pei Xiu 裴休 (791–864) for an overview of the main Chan traditions.<sup>33</sup> The case is similar for the ‘Chart establishing the patriarchs of *dharma* transmission of the true lineage’ (*Chuanfa zhengzong dingzu tu* 傳法正宗定祖圖), by the Song 宋 dynasty (960–1279) monk Mingjiao Qisong 明教契嵩 (1007–1072): the oldest text witnesses are manuscript copies, only one of which reproduces not only the text but also the accompanying images.<sup>34</sup> If this copy has remained truthful to its source, Qisong’s *Chart* was by no means a diagram, but a series of short biographies and characterizations of the twenty-eight Indian and six Chinese patriarchs, accompanied by stereotypical illustrations of each intergenerational transmission event. The nomenclature of *tu/zū* 圖 in the context of Chan/Zen, it turns out, does not necessarily indicate a diagrammatic representation of master–disciple relations, but frequently refers to a variety of textual and pictorial genres.

Thus, the existence of Chan diagrams prior to the mid-Song have been difficult to ascertain. Queries in catalogues and text databases likewise produce results in sources from the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279) onwards, and indeed, it is only through recent efforts that the earliest textual witnesses for lineage diagrams – dating from the mid-thirteenth century – have become (relatively) widely available. The following will introduce these materials and describe their context, while the

<sup>33</sup> Kamata 1971, 374.

<sup>34</sup> The manuscript copy was produced from a stele rubbing, in all probability made by Jōjin 成尋 (1011–1081) during his 1072/1073 visit to Song China (see Uchida 2015 and Watanabe 1934). It is dated to the thirteenth day of the seventh month of the fourth year of the Ninpei 仁平 (alt. Ninpyō) era (1151–1154), i.e. 1154, signed with the name Jōen 定圓, and was preserved in the archives of Kanchiin 觀智院 at Tōji 東寺 in Kyoto before entering the archives of the MOA Museum of Art (MOA bijutsukan 美術館), Atami, Shizuoka prefecture. It is reproduced in *T zuzōbu* 圖像部 vol. 10, 1309–1334, and digitally available at SAT Taishōzō Image DB <<https://dzkings.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SATi/images.php?vol=10>> (accessed on 18 March 2024). See also Morrison 2010, 138.

concluding discussion will evaluate their factional significance and historiographic explanatory power. As may be obvious from the initial observations regarding the role of transmission in Chan/Zen Buddhist self-understanding, any genealogy must be a *Stammtafel*, i.e. a chart of progeny. By the convention of the genre of said genealogical diagrams, a master may have more than one disciple, but no disciple may lay claim to more than one lineage. Hence, an *Ahnentafel*, i.e. a chart of ancestry, is an impossibility. In other words: the totality of Chan/Zen Buddhist genealogies becomes increasingly complex over time.

### 3.1 Ruda's *Fozu zongpai zongtu*

#### 3.1.1 Internal structure and production contexts

The oldest physically surviving Chan/Zen lineage diagrams seem to date from the late 1230s. The so-called 'Summary diagrams of the schools and factions of the buddhas and patriarchs' (*Fozu zongpai zongtu*/Busso shūha sōzu 佛祖宗派總圖, henceforth *Summary diagrams* or *FZZ*) is one such example, as a printed work datable to 1238 (see no. 5 below), and is transmitted in Japanese archives in multiple specimens. All of these specimens come in leporello-style booklets of some 38 sheets folded vertically in half (making for a total of 72 leporello pages).<sup>35</sup> The front and back covers consist of multi-layered coloured paper and, in some instances, brocade. The quality of the print and paper varies, suggesting different circumstances of production. The seals and signatures of ownership are diverse, indicating at least some circulation of the materials in the Japanese context. The *FZZ* typically includes the following contents:<sup>36</sup>

1. The first five lines of p. 1a open with a diagram of the royal genealogy of Śākyamuni in ten generations, listing 26 names, among them Ānanda, who is supposed to have been the Buddha's cousin (title: 'Schools and factions of Śākyamuni', 釋迦宗派).

<sup>35</sup> Shiina 2015 refers to the source's pages (= *FZZ D1*) as *recto* (*omote* 表, abbr. *o* ㊦) or *verso* (*ura* 裏, abbr. *u* ㊧). In light of the leporello format being unfolded for reproduction purposes, this is misleading. Hence, this paper maintains the use of 'a' for the first half of a page and 'b' for its second in their proper reading order.

<sup>36</sup> For reasons discussed below, the order of contents and the page numbers given reflect the structure of the print archived at Tōfukuji monastery in Kyoto.

2. On pp. 1a to 3a, a diagram of the main lines of transmission states the number of successors in each lineage, listing 712 names (title: 'Summary compilation of the number of individuals of *dharma* succession', 總編嗣法人數目錄).
3. On pp. 3a to 4b, a diagram of the seven buddhas of the past, including Śākyamuni, along with the 28 Indian and six Chinese patriarchs (40 names) and four sidelines (26 names), specifies their respective geographical, social and familial origins and quotes their famous sayings (the section is headed by a caveat that indicates the limited nature of biographical information: 'As for the province, district and monastery in each case, what could not properly be determined was revised by extracting [the information] from records according to the time at which [each individual] became a teacher of our school or was appointed abbot', 州府并寺各更改不定但 宗師住持時錄出).
4. On pp. 4b to 33a, the eponymous main 'Summary diagrams' of transmission lineages start with Bodhidharma positioned in the centre (p. 17a) of the horizontally organized structure; eight cases include a discussion of lineage issues, listing 4,773 names over a maximum of 24 generations in six columns, each printed name being connected to its precursor and successors by hand-drawn straight lines.
5. On pp. 33b to 35a, a diagram of cosmogony and dynasties from the 'original chaos' (*hun dun/konton* 混沌) to the second year of the Jiayi 嘉熙 era (1238) includes calculations of historic time and the biographic lifespans of the buddhas and patriarchs, Laozi and Confucius (title: 'The years and epochs of the emergence and flourishing of the three teachings, and the transformation [i.e. demise] of the buddhas and patriarchs', 三教出興佛祖遷化年代).
6. Pages 35b to 36a list 110 famous Chan adepts who were not included as links in the chain of transmission in the summary diagrams, providing details of whom they studied with (title: 'Names and times of the adepts of the Chan tradition', 禪門達者有名於時).
7. Page 36a lists 33 monastics whose lineage could not be ascertained (title: 'Dharma successors for whom it is as yet unclear when they appeared in the world', 出世未詳法嗣).
8. From the last line of p. 36a through the second line on p. 36b, there is an untitled postscript by the author, Ruda 如達 (no date).
9. From pp. 36b to 37b, there is an untitled postscript by the Chan master Wuzhun Shifan/Bujun Shibān 無準師範 (1177–1249).<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> A retelling of Wuzhun's biography is available in *Daisō Keizan Bukkan Mujun zenji* 1950. He occupies a central position in the endeavours of Japanese monks to acquire the Chan tradition and transfer it into their native context. A scholarly study is long overdue.

10. Pages 37b to 38a contain an untitled guide to the pronunciation of 106 Chinese characters, given according to the so-called *fan qie/hansetsu* 反切 system.
11. Page 38a<sup>38</sup> lists the fourteen donors enabling the publication, also specifying the sums of their respective donations (title: 'The fragrant honours of the *dānapatis* and patrons inscribing [their names on donation] boards', 檀越捨官會鏤板芳御).

It is obvious that the materials collected in FZZ, first and foremost those of no. 4, are massive. They are also coherent in that they enable the reader to quickly gain an overview of the transmission lineages to which Chan/Zen Buddhism lays claim (nos 1 through 3), but also to study in depth the relation between the increasingly complex successions of houses, schools, and factions of Chan (nos 4 through 6). In structure and content, the diagrams display an immense erudition that approximates a historiographical approach to Chan genealogy. As such, their outlook may be termed encyclopaedic: it is their intent to list, with as much accuracy and detail as possible, the totality of the Chan/Zen tradition through the lens of its spiritual genealogy.<sup>39</sup>

In order to better understand the purpose of the FZZ and the intentions behind its production, the postscripts and list of donors merit attention.<sup>40</sup> Ruda, the diagrams' author, includes detailed records of the individuals who provided financial support for the production of his *Summary diagrams*. Five lay persons (four female and one male) are listed beside nine monastics (one nun and eight monks). While no further information about any of these individuals seems to be available, their hometowns are specified, suggesting the geography in which the author must have moved: most of the donations came from Zhejiang 浙江 province, others from Jiangxi 江西 and Fujian 福建, and one from as far as Guangdong 廣東. According to the single line of text after the list of donors, the printing itself was done in the city of Jian'an 建安 (also in present-day Fujian province). This data suggests a geographical centre in Fujian and southern Zhejiang, but also a surprisingly extensive network of patrons from which Ruda procured donations.

Prior to the work's finalization, namely in the year 1234, the FZZ's author visited the reputable Chan master Wuzhun Shifan at Xingsheng wanshou/Kōshō manju 興聖萬壽 monastery on Mount Jing/Kin 徑 (near Hangzhou 杭州, present-day Zhejiang province). Apparently, he requested a postscript – certainly in order to prove spiritual authenticity, but possibly also in the hopes that the master's reputation

<sup>38</sup> Page 38b in the Tōfukuji print is the inside back cover, and includes a handwritten note of donation.

<sup>39</sup> The focus clearly lies with the Chinese lineages, although Japanese *dharma* heirs are also mentioned: for instance, Kakua *shōnin* 覺阿上人 (b. 1142) on p. 5b, column 4.

<sup>40</sup> For the list of donors, see Yanagida/Shiina 1999 (= FZZ Tj), 610–611. The list is absent in FZZ D1. For the postscripts, see Yanagida/Shiina 1999, 609–610, and Shiina 2015 (= FZZ D1), 165–168.



may serve to solicit donations. Ruda himself provides the following information in the form of a postscript, i.e. in three undated lines that are presumed to reproduce his autograph in print (no. 8 above):

During my days of leisure, [I.] Ruda, perused the five records of the lamp 燈錄<sup>41</sup> and the [recorded] sayings of the houses 家語 [of Chan]. Relying upon stele inscriptions 碑刻 and biographical writings 傳記, I pondered their commonalities and discrepancies, then collated these into [the preceding] diagrams. It is my hope that the seeds of luminous brilliance may burn before [the reader's] eyes and illuminatingly reflect the thousands of ancient [forebears]. It is my fear that I may have reproduced shortcomings and doubts without correction. For now, I shall bide my time until the worthy ones have further emended [my work]. [I.] Ruda, bow my head and respectfully write this.<sup>42</sup>

The diagrams' author takes pains to name his sources – hagiographic collections and epigraphic materials – with some precision, and to point out his labours to carefully compare these and come to a reliable conclusion. It must be noted that the 'five records of the lamp' were by no means readily available to thirteenth-century readers; Ruda must have spent significant amounts of time in the libraries and archives of large monasteries in the eastern regions of the Southern Song empire.<sup>43</sup> For the present purpose, it is equally important that no pre-existing lineage diagrams are mentioned, so it may be safely assumed that either these were unavailable to the author or that Ruda's project – in going above and beyond a mere ordered listing of names – was in itself a novel effort. Finally, he emphasizes that his work is not merely historiographic in nature, but bears the intention of facilitating the soteriological ambitions of its audience.

It comes as no surprise that his work meets with Wuzhun's – somewhat manneristic – approval, as the master's postscript informs us (no. 9 above, again presumed to be the replica of an autograph):

During the three years I have dwelled on this mountain, my duties have seldom allowed for leisure. When [the last] winter came to an end and the [rays of the] sun slanted [over the horizon], I exposed my back [to its light] under the western window that was still frosted over, and entered the *samādhi* of an afternoon slumber 瞌. At that time, the venerable Ruda from the south of [the province of] Quan 泉 appeared before me, a booklet 梵夾 in his hand, and said: '[I.] Ruda, have emended the abundance of unsophistication where [those before me] had not taken sufficient care, and I have put together this singular diagram of the schools and faction

<sup>41</sup> See note 31 above.

<sup>42</sup> Page 36a–b, as reproduced in Yanagida/Shiina 1999 (= *FZZ Tf*), 609, and Shiina 2015 (= *FZZ D1*), 165–166. The translation of this and the subsequent passage given here improves upon my previous attempt in Döll 2017, 163.

<sup>43</sup> See Shiina 2015, 707.

of the buddhas and patriarchs. There are a few differences [compared] with its sources, and I desire to print it and make it public to the world. So I ask to obtain from you a single word as proof [of its correctness]. I rubbed the slumber from my eyes and drowsily inquired: 'Who are these buddhas supposed to be? And who are these patriarchs supposed to be? And what schools and factions is this about?' [Ru]da unfolded the diagram, pointed with his finger, and said: 'From Vipāśyin [i.e. the first buddha of the past] to golden-faced Gautama – these are the buddhas. From Kāśyapa to the individual from Caoxi 曹溪 whose [proper] name remains unknown 不識字漢 [i.e. Huineng] – these are the patriarchs. After him, two schools separate and five factions are listed. In the East as in the West, one followed the other without fail, and we have no way of knowing how many [individuals there were in total]. Only those whose personal and family names I could ascertain are included in these diagrams, and I therefore call them the "Diagrams of the schools and factions of the buddhas and patriarchs". I desire that those who henceforth peruse [these diagrams] may study with the knowledgeable [masters] without having to take a single step and without taking more than a single mind-moment, and that I may let them know the ways of each of [those masters]. The head of an axe must invariably be made of iron 斧頭元是鐵,<sup>44</sup> and I have accordingly given expression to my ignorant sincerity with these [diagrams]. Master, what is your opinion?' When I heard his words, there was not so much as a hair that I would have added or taken away. All that was left for me to do was to set down my brush to the left [of his postscript] and quickly write after him. In the first year after the proclamation of the Duanping 端平 [era, 1234–1236], on the day of the Buddha's perfection of awakening, post-scripted by Shifan, the elder Wuzhun, dwelling at Mount Jing.<sup>45</sup>

Wuzhun gives Ruda the opportunity to explain his project in detail and indicates his unreserved approval. He seems to have indeed endorsed the *Summary diagrams*: based on their encyclopaedic data, the construction of extended lineages focussed on Wuzhun became possible (see 4.2 below). At least one of these acquired significance as a certificate attesting to the spiritual legitimacy of its recipient, the Japanese monk Enni Ben'en 圓爾辯圓 (1202–1280).<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, as a material artefact, the printed FZZ, and possibly also the woodblocks it was printed from, come to play a role in the transmission contexts unfolding between Wuzhun and Enni.

<sup>44</sup> Parallel passages (*futou shi tie* 斧頭是鐵) may be found in the pre-texts of X 1571, from which they also were quoted in X 1585, T 2547, T 2566 and other Chan/Zen texts. The phrase indicates that in order for an axe to be put to good use, it must be made of iron. Its usefulness, however, may only be judged by putting it to the test. Here, the metaphor apparently means that Ruda intends to have Wuzhun's authority test the practicability of the *Summary diagrams*.

<sup>45</sup> Pages 36b–37b, as reproduced in Yanagida/Shiina 1999 (= FZZ Tj), 609–610, and 37b–38b, as reproduced in Shiina 2015 (= FZZ D1), 167–168.

<sup>46</sup> Again, while there are translations of Enni's texts (e.g. Cleary 1978) and biographical introductions (McDaniel 2013), a scholarly study of this figure remains a desideratum. Here, a few biographical notes for the sake of orientation must suffice: after his return from China, Enni resided in the Hakata 博多 area (jōtenji 承天寺, Sūfukuji 崇福寺, and Manjuji 萬壽寺) in Kyūshū 九州. He was installed at Kyoto's Fumon'in 普門院 in 1245 and at Tōfukuji in 1255, and in 1312 posthumously awarded the title of 'National teacher' (*kokushi* 國師) Shōichi 聖一.

### 3.1.2 Introduction to and textual witnesses in Japan

Enni Ben'en visited China for seven years, from 1235 to 1241, spending most of his time with Wuzhun Shifan. Among the possessions he took back to Japan with him are the oldest lineage diagrams (to which we will turn below) and, in all probability, the *FZZ*. While neither Wuzhun's nor Enni's biographic materials provide conclusive evidence for the latter, there is a relevant entry in the register of texts and objects archived at the monastery of Fumon'in 普門院 in Kyoto, where Enni had been installed as abbot upon returning from China, prior to becoming the first abbot of Tōfukuji 東福寺. This 'Register of *sūtras* and treatises, commentaries and subcommentaries, recorded sayings, and Confucian writings at Fumon'in' (*Fumon'in kyōron shōsho goroku jushotō mokuroku* 普門院經論章疏語錄儒書等目錄, henceforth *Fumon'in register*)<sup>47</sup> is organized according to the order of characters in the 'Text in one thousand characters' (*Qianziwen/Senjimon* 千字文),<sup>48</sup> with Buddhist *sūtras* and commentaries in the first thirteen sections (*ten* 天 to *shin* 辰), specifically Chan/Zen Buddhist texts in the next fourteen (*shuku* 宿 to *sei* 成), and a final twenty-seven sections (*sai* 歲 to *ya* 夜) with monastic biographies, Buddhist miscellanea, and texts from the Chinese (i.e. Confucian and Daoist) traditions. Further sections follow but are written in a different hand, suggesting that additional materials had been catalogued at a later point in time. If the more extensive, earlier part of the *Fumon'in register* indeed primarily records Enni's belongings, the following entry is all the more relevant to the present context: 'Diagrams of schools and factions, two volumes, large and small' (*Shūhazu nisatsu daishō* 宗派圖 二冊 大小).<sup>49</sup> This entry appears in section 16 (*chō* 張), among other published works of a Chan/Zen Buddhist nature; more specifically, it appears between works of the 'transmission of the lamp' genre and the 'Common origin of the five lamps' (*Wudeng huiyuan* 五燈會元), i.e. precisely among the materials on which Ruda had based his work. Given this context, it seems safe to assume that the entry is indeed referring to copies of the *Summary diagrams*, even more so as the *Fumon'in register* uses the counter *-satsu* 冊 for printed books and booklets, in opposition to *-kan* 卷 for manuscript scrolls. In light of this entry, we may deduce with some reliability that Enni had brought at least two prints of Ruda's *Summary diagrams* with him. Today, only one of these booklets survives in the archives of Tōfuku monastery,

47 The dating of the *Fumon'in register* is debatable; in all probability, it was compiled after 1353, several decades after Enni's death, at the hands of multiple authors. See Xu 2006.

48 See Paar 1963, available online, e.g. at HathiTrust <<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.32106001625141&view=1up&seq=5>> (accessed 18 March 2024).

49 *T bekkan* 別卷: *Sōmokuroku* 總目錄, text no. 71, vol. 3, p. 969b.

Kyoto (henceforth, *FZZ Tf*).<sup>50</sup> The other copy has been lost, but the 1999 facsimile of the extant copy supports the above inference: it has the vermilion seal *Fumon'in* imprinted on p. 36b, above Ruda's postscript, substantiating the hypothesis that it was included in the *Fumon'in* archives along with the other texts Enni had returned to Japan with.

### 3.1.3 Comparison of witnesses

To further corroborate this conclusion, the comparison of the *FZZ Tf* with other witnesses reveals surprising differences. The following observations are based on the two *FZZ* copies (henceforth *FZZ D1* and *FZZ D2*) archived at Daitōkyū ki'nen bunko 大東急記念文庫, part of the Gotō bijutsukan 五島美術館 in Tokyo.<sup>51</sup>

*FZZ Tf* measures 35.5 cm in height and 15.5 cm in width when the leporello is closed, whereas the measurements of *FZZ D1* and *D2* are 32.3 cm by 14.9 cm. While the ink and paper of the *D* copies are not identical, their preservation status seems somewhat better than that of *FZZ Tf*: there is scant damage from bookworms or humidity. As for the typical elements of *FZZ*, the donors' list (no. 11 above) is omitted in both copies, and order is changed: *D1* has Ruda's postscript (no. 8) on pp. 36a and 36b; half a page of blank space; the list of characters with pronunciation (no. 10) on pp. 36b and 37a; another two half-pages of blank space; and finally, Wuzhun's postscript (no. 9) on pp. 37b to 38b. The same altered order is also found in *D2*, but the distribution of blank spaces differs by half a page. Nos. 9 and 10 are clearly distinguishable, as paper strips were cut and glued on carrier paper to connect them with the preceding pages in both *FZZ D1* and *D2*, and indeed, previous examinations have attested that both copies were repaired presumably sometime in the Edo period.

Further noteworthy details pertain to the content and layout of the main diagram in Ruda's work. For one, the 'Summary diagrams', is introduced by the following announcement:

Those with a ○ [i.e. a circular mark] above are the heads of the schools and factions of the Five Houses from which the lineages diverge. Those with a △ [i.e. a triangular mark] above are where the factions diverge after Linji. All of those with a dot . [i.e. a period mark] below had the opportunity and [favourable] conditions 機縁 [i.e. their own hagiographic records]

<sup>50</sup> A facsimile edition of *FZZ Tf* is available in Yanagida/Shiina 1999, 585–611.

<sup>51</sup> The materials were initially introduced in Kawase 1956, 155b, and Kawase 1970, 440b. A facsimile edition of *FZZ D1* is available in Shiina 2015, 129–168. *FZZ D2*, pp. 35a–36b, are reproduced in Kawase 1970, 154. I gratefully acknowledge the opportunity to inspect both *FZZ D* copies *in situ* on 5 March 2020.

to do so, but did not establish productive conditions for a clan and family [i.e. their line of transmission at some point failed to perpetuate].<sup>52</sup>

Indeed, both *FZZ Tf* and the *D* versions have all of these markers precisely where they belong according to the orthodox construction of the transmission lineages: circles are found above the names of Guishan Lingyou/Izan Reiyū 漚山靈祐 (771–853; p. 14b, column 2), Dongshan Liangjie/Tōzan Ryōkai 洞山良价 (807–869; p. 19b, column 2), Linji Yixuan/Rinzai Gigen 臨濟義玄 (d. 866; p. 14a, column 3), Yunmen Wenyan/Unmon Bun'en 雲門文偃 (864–949; p. 24b, column 1), and Fayen Wenyi/Hōgen Mon'eki 法眼文益 (885–958; p. 24b, column 2). Triangles can be ascertained above the names of Yangqi Fanghui/Yōgi Hōe 楊岐方會 (992–1049) and Huanglong Huinan/Ōryū E'nan 黃龍慧南 (1002–1069; both p. 9b, column 1, directly next to one another). Dots below names appear throughout. In addition, black rectangles, fitted neatly between names, apparently mark where a lineage reaches roughly the generation of the author; Ruda. Wuzhun's teacher, Poan Zuxian/Haan Sosen 破庵祖先 (1136–1211), for example, is properly integrated into the diagram, but without a line of transmission originating with him; instead, a black square next to his name indicates that the present time has been reached.

Insofar as the listed names as well as the markings are consistent among all textual witnesses, it seems reasonable to assume that the versions were all printed from the same block. There are, however, apparent discrepancies in how lineages are represented by means of lines drawn between names.<sup>53</sup> One obvious example is the connection between master Yangqi Fanghui and his numerous disciples – first and foremost among them, Baiyun Shouduan/Hakuun Shutan 白雲守端 (1025–1072). In *FZZ Tf*, the line originating with Yangqi in column 1, p. 9b, angles downwards and branches into a bracket containing Baiyun and eleven other disciples in column 1, p. 8b (see Fig. 1a), and the line originating with Baiyun similarly leads to Wuzu Fayen/Goso Hōen 五祖法演 (1024?–1104), among others, in column 1, p. 8a. This properly reflects orthodox representations of transmission within Yangqi's faction. The line between Yangqi and Baiyun in *FZZ D2*, however, fails to angle and instead comes to a dead end. In *FZZ D1*, again, the Yangqi line continues down the page, leading directly to Wuzu and his generation, while the line originating with Baiyun stops dead (see Fig. 1b). Additionally, in both *D* copies, lines crossing paper creases are no longer straight in many instances, but bend in order to connect the straight lines on different pages of the print. Clearly, then, the lines between printed names were inserted by hand, and in the process of drawing them on the printed pages, mistakes were made.

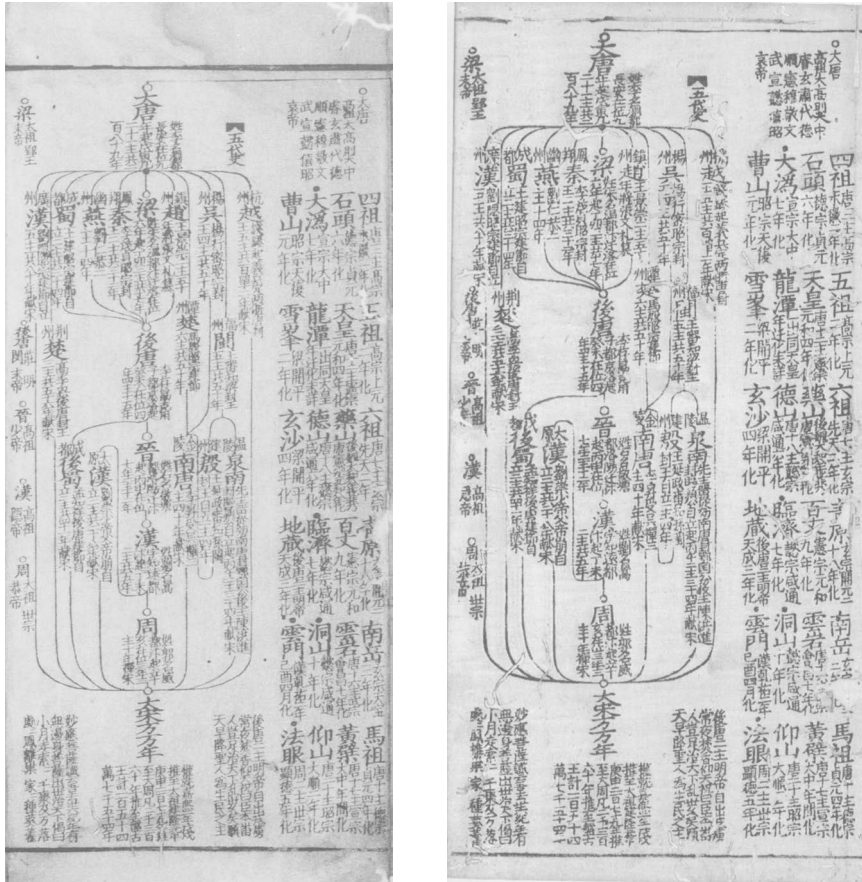
<sup>52</sup> Page 4b as reproduced in Yanagida/Shiina 1999 (= *FZZ Tf*), 588, and Shiina 2015 (= *FZZ D1*), 134.

<sup>53</sup> See Tamamura 1971, 406–409.



**Figs 1a and 1b:** Summary diagrams, p. 8b, from the print of (a) *FZZ Tf* (left, reproduced from Yanagida/Shiina 1999, 591) and (b) *FZZ D1* (right, reproduced from Shiina 2015, 138). Note the different transmission lines above column 1.

Furthermore, when directly comparing the characters in *FZZ D1* and *D2* with *FZZ Tf*, it is apparent that the *D* prints tend to be bolder. Especially in the case of the occasionally minute insertions of additional information and commentary (e.g., the number of disciples in no. 2 or chronological calculations in no. 5), the *D* prints seem less defined, at times even blotted. This may be explained through the use of different inks and papers, but there are identifiable differences in the way some characters are written. Compare, for instance, the character *ba* 馬 on p. 34a: *Tf* has a precise rendering of the four dots 灬 below (see Fig. 2a); *D1*, however, fuses these into a vertical one-stroke 一 (see Fig. 2b).



**Figs 2a and 2b:** Summary diagrams, p. 35a, from the prints of (a) *FZZ Tj* (left, reproduced from Yanagida/Shiina 1999, 608) and (b) *FZZ D1* (right, reproduced from Shiina 2015, 164). Note the difference in the writing of the character *ma/ba* 馬 in the first line of the lower-right column on the page.

In the light of these findings, it hardly seems possible for the *Tj* and the *D* copies to have been printed from the same block and finalized by the same scribes. While a more thorough comparison of witnesses would require additional data – and preferably also access to *FZZ Tj*, as well as further witnesses that are currently unavailable<sup>54</sup> – the following hypothetical scenario can account for all of the above-mentioned issues:

<sup>54</sup> Tamamura 1971, 402–403, reports the inspection of an *FZZ* copy in the archive of Ishii Mitsuo 石井光雄 (1881–1966), the Sekisuiken bunko 積翠軒文庫, before its collection was disassembled

Enni had come into possession of two copies of Ruda's *Summary diagrams* after its publication in 1238 or later (one of which was *FZZ Tf*). This happened either when he was in China, or after he had returned to Japan in 1241. Given the fact that Enni was in regular correspondence with his master Wuzhun, and that this communication also involved the exchange of objects – especially written artefacts (see below) – the latter cannot be ruled out. In any case, two prints of the *Summary diagrams* were available to Enni's lineage by the time the *Fumon'in register* was written. Enni – or, in all likelihood, persons connected to him by his transmission lineage – had the printing block reproduced. The Japanese copy was well done, but did not match the Chinese model exactly. Several prints were made (*FZZ D1* and *D2*) from this reproduced block, and while the scribe or scribes in charge of drawing the lines of transmission between names performed their work diligently, they introduced errors and inaccuracies into the Japanese versions of the *Summary diagrams*. The *FZZ* was then circulated beyond the walls of Tōfuku monastery. At some point in the Edo period, restoration work was performed on the *FZZ D* reprints. In the course of this work, the order of the content was altered and the donors' list omitted, perhaps because it was deemed relevant only for the original work, and misleading in the context of the Japanese reprints.

### 3.1.4 Usage and transmission of *FZZ* in Japan

*FZZ D2* is of significantly lower material quality than *D1*: the dark blue book cover made of paper is less elaborate than *D1*'s gold and light blue brocade binding with floral ornamentation. The paper seems coarse and flimsy by comparison, the ink blots more easily, and the damage to the pages is more extensive. It seems probable that *D2* had been in more active use than its counterpart, and indeed, readers have left note-

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and the whereabouts of the print became unclear. Michael Kinadeter, in personal communication, has identified the Sekisuiken bunko copy to recently have come into the possession of the Tsz Shan Monastery Buddhist Art Museum (Cishan si fojiao yishu bowu guan 慈山寺佛教藝術博物館), Hong Kong. Low-quality digital reproductions are available via the museum's website <<https://www.tszsh-museum.org/cn/collection/item/佛祖宗派图/97>> (accessed 18 March 2024). The sketch of provenance describes the Sekisuiken bunko copy in the subsequent possession of journalist Obama Toshie 小汀利得 (1889–1972); the affixed vermilion seals attest to the fact. Tamamura loc. cit. suggests this copy is a Song dynasty print; the artefact's attached label and the inscription on the lid of its wooden container corroborate this. However, since the order of the content differs significantly from that of *FZZ Tf*, the existence not only of multiple prints from the same block but also of multiple prints from different blocks cannot be ruled out. *In situ* analysis of the artefact is necessary in order to evaluate the possibility of post-print restructurings. It is noteworthy that the issue of the faulty representation of Yangqi's lineage is apparently absent from the Sekisuiken bunko/Tsz Shan Monastery copy.



worthy traces on the artefact. Two lineages have been marked with red circles above their names. One starts with Nanyue Huairang/Nangaku Ejō 南嶽懷讓 (677–744) and leads through eighteen further generations to Poan Zuxian, the teacher of Wuzhun and Enni's 'dharma grandfather'. Another comprises twelve generations in total and starts from Dongshan Liangjie, continues through Tiantong Zhongjue/Tendō Sōkaku 天童宗珏 (1091–1162), and closes with Xuedou Zhijian/Setchō Chikan 雪竇智鑑 (1105–1192). Xuedou's *dharma* heirs, almost being Ruda's contemporaries, are not listed in *FZZ*, but this is precisely the lineage that, in the denominational understanding, leads first to Tiantong Rujing/Tendō Nyojō 天童如淨 (1162–1228) and then to the Japanese monk Dōgen Kigen 道元希玄 (1200–1253). We may therefore state that whoever used *FZZ D2* for their studies specifically marked the Chinese pedigree of Enni Ben'en's lineage, as well as that of the Japanese Sōtō school of which Dōgen is considered to be the founder. As will become clear further below, this is hardly a coincidence; rather, the fact reflects the pronounced sectarian consciousness that was prevalent in these two traditions of Japanese Zen.

### 3.2 Keihō's *Seigo Busso shōden shūhazu*

In spite of Ruda's erudition, the summary nature of his diagrams, their apparent impartiality and their availability in Zen circles, references to the *FZZ* are surprisingly sparse. The first direct mention in a similar project is made only in a source from the mid-17th century, 'Correcting mistakes regarding the diagrams of the schools and factions of the buddhas' and patriarchs' orthodox transmission' (*Seigo Busso shōden shūhazu* 正誤佛祖正傳宗派圖, henceforth *Correcting mistakes*).<sup>55</sup> These voluminous diagrams are the one premodern Japanese compilation that comes closest to Ruda's monumental project. In almost 150 double-layered pages, the author Keihō Zenkyū 桂芳全久 (d.u.) synthesizes and intends to correct the information provided by previous diagrams of Chinese origin, as well as adding the Japanese lines of transmission. His postscript dates from 1648 and includes the following passage:

The sharp-witted, knowledgeable masters and students of the great Song [dynasty] wanted to let people have the genealogies of the buddhas' and patriarchs' transmission in the palm of their hand, and thus they resolved to produce diagrams of the schools and factions. These they published and circulated. In our dynasty, as well, they were certainly available, and the diagrams that these individuals shared have been handed down until the present day.

<sup>55</sup> Digital copy available via Kyoto University Main Library <<https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/item/rb00009467>> (accessed 18 March 2024). The imprint on the final page of volume two dates the copy to the year of 1668.

While this is indeed the case, the main flows [of transmission] have diverged into branches, which have intermingled and diverged in turn, and one cannot capture every single one of them in writing. Even so, mistakes in the [representation of the] ancients' transmissions persist. Here and now, the Zen monk Keihō [Zen]kyū from the Daitō 大燈 faction has untiringly made use of his powers in the service of his school. For the reason [given above], he has spent years and devoted all his ambition to rectifying the errors and misunderstandings of the past and present day, producing this diagram anew. Moreover, he has updated the records to reflect the present generations of this dynasty. [In his representation,] the factions and lineages of the Zen groves are connected like jewels on a string.<sup>56</sup>

Keihō's claim of going beyond pre-existing diagrammatic renditions of lineage simply by including Japanese *dharma* transmission is something of an understatement. Not only does he present the orthodox lineages organized into the diagrammatic sections of the Five Houses, Seven Schools, their subordinate factions both Chinese and Japanese, and the abbots' successions of the great Japanese monasteries, but also such details as lineages in other Buddhist traditions – those of Tiantai/ Tendai 天台, Lü/Ritsu 律, Faxiang/Hossō 法相, Huayan/Kegon 華嚴, and Zhenyan/Shingon 真言 – as well as practicalities such as overviews and abridged diagrams for the reader's convenience.

The most important aspect of the project is certainly the idea of correcting established representations of lineages. The section 'The essential schools of the buddhas' and patriarchs' schools and factions' (*Busso shūha kōshū* 佛祖宗派綱宗, pp. 6a–8b; hereafter *Essential schools*) casts a spotlight on this: Chan/Zen Buddhist orthodoxy has Nanyue Huairang and Qingyuan Xingsi/Seigen Gyōshi 青原行思 (660–720) as the sixth patriarch's main disciples, with the houses of Linji/Rinzai 臨濟 and Guiyang/Igyō 滙仰 originating with Nanyue, and those of Caodong/Sōtō 曹洞, Yunmen/Unmon 雲門, and Fayen/Hōgen 法眼 with Qingyuan. Keihō omits Qingyuan completely from his *Essential schools* and reduces the origins of the Five Houses to just one, namely Nanyue. This move will be addressed further below, for while radical, it is not without precedent.

This point is likewise taken up by the well-known scholar Matsunaga Shakugo 松永尺五 (1592–1657), sobriquet Shōsan 昌三, who made Confucian learning his profession, but dabbled in commentaries on Buddhist texts as well. He had contributed a preface (likewise dated 1648) to Keihō's diagrams, and his discussion of the background and intention behind the production of lineage diagrams bears quoting at some length:

Now, it is of utmost significance for these our times that the clan of the Sun-Seed [Sanskrit *sūrya-vamśa*, i.e. one of the surnames of Śākyamuni] gradually moved east into the regions

56 *Correcting mistakes* (= *Seigo Busso shōden shūhazu*), vol. 2, 137a–137b.

of the sun[’s origin, i.e. Japan]. From the august Licchavis [i.e. representatives of the warrior caste] to the lowly *sūdras* [i.e. those of lowest standing within the caste system], there was no one who did not read the *sūtras* or adhere to the *vinaya* [i.e. the rules of the Buddhist order]. All of them said: ‘The seeds of the Buddha [i.e. the early order] are the buds, the Great Vehicle is the root, and the opportunities and [favourable] conditions [created by Chan/Zen Buddhism] are the soil in which they mature.’

This is why Bodhidharma transformed and travelled to Kataoka in Japan.<sup>57</sup> He attempted to make his favourable conditions known far and wide, and reveal the broad basis [that allowed for the exposition] of all frauds. However, reacting to the [unfavourable] circumstances of that time, he put on a sour and starving face and then left. More than 570 years later, the great Zen adept [?] Myōan Ei[sai] 明菴栄[西, 1141–1215] from the Eastern Mountain 東山<sup>58</sup> proclaimed the cornerstones of the Zen [tradition]. After him, with [En]ni on [Mount] E’nichi 慧日 [i.e. Tōfukujī] and [Lanxi Dao]long [蘭溪道]隆 [1213–1278]<sup>59</sup> on [Mount] Kyōfuku 巨福,<sup>60</sup> the School of [the Buddha’s] Mind 心宗 prospered according to imperial decree, and the ways of the patriarchs flourished and were disseminated. Emperors inaugurated [Zen institutions] in the [regions of Kin]ki [近]畿 [i.e. Kyoto] and [Kan]tō [關]東 [i.e. Kamakura]: they had five groves 五叢林 [i.e. monasteries] built in these locales and established ten temple complexes 十剎境 there. With vast regulations and glorious grandeur, their robes mantled the whole realm – how far did they surpass the other schools [of Buddhism]!

Therefore, as to the diagrams of the schools and factions of the buddhas’ and patriarchs’ orthodox transmission, I used the wealth of my family as well as my own savings to purchase one such booklet and bring it within my own four walls. Every morning I would roll it up and every evening unfold it; I would peer closely at it, stooping down, and look it over, raising my eyes. As for the [diagram] that is known in our times, it is the one that was edited by the venerable Ruda, a disciple of the Chan master Fojian/Bukkan 佛鑑 [i.e. Wuzhun’s posthumous title of honour]. Then again, [Shū]jin Kōten [周]印古篆 [i.e. Kōten Shūin], *dharma* progeny of national master 國師 Tenryū 天龍<sup>61</sup> of our dynasty, also produced one such diagram, and it was widely circulated during his times. They all take the ‘transmission of the lamp’ [genre] as their main [material]. Afterwards, Saihoku 濟北 Kokan 虎関<sup>62</sup> from Mount E’nichi pondered the texts of the ancients and commented upon them: ‘It is not the case that Yaoshan 藥山 descended from Qingyuan, for Tianhuang 天皇 is descended from Qing[yuan], but Tianwang 天王 is descended from [Ma]zu 馬祖. Therefore, the Five Houses all originate with Mazu, and separate only afterwards.’ In explicating the lineages of the five houses, he reigned in errors and improved the diagrams. As soon as he had provided this turtle mirror 龜鑑 [i.e. had revealed the truth] for us later generations, the doubts and ossifications of then and now

57 For the Bodhidharma/Shōtoku *taishi* 聖德太子 legend, see Nishimura 1985 and Faure 2011.

58 That is the monastery called Kenninji 建仁寺, founded by Eisai in 1202.

59 On Lanxi, see Döll 2023.

60 That is the monastery called Kenchōji 建長寺 in Kamakura, where Lanxi Daolong was installed as the founding abbot.

61 That is the monk Musō Soseki 夢窓疎石 (1275–1351). See Vallor 2019.

62 That is the monk Kokan Shiren 虎関師鍊 (1278–1347), pen name Saihoku. See Pollack 1984 and Licha 2018.

dispersed as if having melted into water, and all things were in harmony according to proper relations and orderliness 理順.<sup>63</sup>

Several passages of this first part of the preface warrant a closer look. First, in the general outline, an atypical simile is introduced: the initial disciples of the Buddha were usually likened to a root that over time grew into the trunk of the Mahāyāna ('Great Vehicle', *dacheng/daijō* 大乘) traditions, which in turn brought forth the blossoming of Chan/Zen. Contrary to this diachronic view, Matsunaga employs a systematic or, more precisely, teleological vision: Chan/Zen is not an offshoot or specialized formation within the larger Buddhist tradition; rather, it is the Buddha's original intention – hence the appellation 'School of the Buddha's Mind', as quoted later – as well as its sole authentic vehicle of preservation, out of which the entirety of Buddhism develops. The history of Buddhism must therefore be seen not as an ongoing differentiation of schools of equal status, but as a revelation that is perfected in the proliferation of the Chan/Zen Buddhist traditions. Such rhetoric is expressly sectarian, and while it is by no means ubiquitous in Chan/Zen Buddhism, it has counterparts even in contemporary self-representations.

Second, a brief outline of common narratives about Zen Buddhism in Japan – from Bodhidharma's encounter with Shōtoku *taishi* 聖徳太子 on Mount Kataoka 片岡 to Eisai's travels to China and the establishment of the Five Mountains hierarchy – ties its lineages to a common Japanese cultural vocabulary. Knowledge of the world, as Matsunaga points out, must include acquaintance with the different schools and factions of Zen Buddhism, which is enabled through diagrammatic representations.

Third, such diagrams are not produced spontaneously, but are the product of scholarship and critical thinking. The model that was emulated to achieve this is that of Kokan Shiren 虎關師鍊 (1278–1347), known as Japan's first general Buddhist historiographer, and his claim that the lineages of the Five Houses had hitherto been miscalculated. This idea also informs the work for which Matsunaga writes his preface. While he implies the existence of a diagram by the hand of Kokan, no such materials are known, let alone extant. There is, however, a concise discussion in which Kokan's points are summarized.<sup>64</sup> What is pertinent to the issue under dis-

<sup>63</sup> *Correcting mistakes* (= *Seigo Busso shōden shūhazu*), vol. 1, 1a–1b. The second part of Matsunaga's preface introduces and advertises the following diagrams as the most reliable and helpful ones available.

<sup>64</sup> In a small essay titled 'Explicating the Five Houses' (*Gokeben* 五家辨), Kokan formulates the argument that the editors of 'transmission of the lamp' collections misjudged the relation between the two main lineages of the Chan tradition after the sixth patriarch. They did so because they were either unaware of certain epitaph inscriptions, or disregarded them for reasons of partiality. In any case, their representation of lineage is erroneous, for they did not carefully weigh the available historical evidence – in short, because they were lacking in scholarship. Homonymic names (one Daoyu/Dōgo

cussion here is that while Kokan's redraft never gained wide currency,<sup>65</sup> *Correcting mistakes* subscribes to his hypothesis: in his diagrams, Keihō follows Kokan's argument. Clearly, Chan/Zen Buddhist lineage was not as unambiguous as the narratives and diagrams that reified the genealogical model make believe. Rather, it was a product of abiding discussion and reconstruction. Lineage needed to be continuously negotiated, for while the *Summary diagrams* made a wealth of data available, they held no position of singular authority.

### 3.3 Kōten Shūin's *Busso shūha kōyō*

Some observations on the 'Essentials of the schools and factions of the buddhas and patriarchs' (*Busso shūha kōyō* 佛祖宗派綱要, henceforth *Essentials*) by Kōten Shūin 古篆周印, which Matsunaga refers to above, will allow for a clearer idea as to the parameters by which the diagram authors chose to include or exclude members of the lineages. While Matsunaga's preface mentions the *Essentials* and its author, hardly any biographical information is available: Kōten is understood to have been a student of Shun'oku Myōha 春屋妙葩 (1311–1388), who is considered *dharma* heir to Musō Soseki 夢窓疎石 (see fn. 65). His *Essentials*, according to the author's postscript, are to be dated to the year 1418.<sup>66</sup> The structure of the work clearly indicates that it was meant as an aid and orientation for students of Zen transmission lineages: the first section (pp. 1a to 3a) is eponymous (*Busso shūha kōyō*) and presents the essentials of Chan/Zen Buddhist lineages. It begins with the seven buddhas of the past, continues through twenty-eight Indian and six Chinese patriarchs, introduces the 'orthodox' differentiation between Qingyuan and Nanyue, and ends with a special emphasis on Chinese monks emigrating to Japan and/or Japanese monks introducing Chan lines

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道悟 from Tianhuang/Tennō 天皇 monastery, another from Tianwang/Tennō 天王 monastery) and geographical proximity led, in Kokan's interpretation, to a grave misunderstanding of the order of transmission lineages: Orthodox calculations are wrong in having the houses of Guiyang and Linji emerging from the Nanyue transmission, and listing Dongshan, Yunmen, and Fazang as *dharma* successors to Qingyuan. Kokan aims at redressing these shortcomings, as can be seen from the translation of the relevant parts of the *Gokeben* that is included below as Appendix 3. His ideal of taking into account all available sources is made explicit when he closes his treatise on a forceful note: 'I have perused the different epitaph inscriptions and sacred texts, and these cannot possibly be mistaken 不虛焉耳!'

<sup>65</sup> Wu 2011, 239–242, shows that his idea was surprisingly well received in Qing dynasty China, where the 'two-Daowu theory' was discussed in some depth.

<sup>66</sup> Kōten's *Essentials* are introduced in Kawase 1970, 439b–440a. A digital copy of an Edo period print (1634) is available at the Union Catalogue Database of Japanese Texts <<https://kokusho.nijl.ac.jp/biblio/200010144>> (accessed on 18 March 2024).

of transmission to Japan. Lineages are abridged in this part and make mention only of the most important members of the schools and factions. A second section (pp. 3b) lists the Five Mountains of India (*Tenjiku gozan* 天竺五山), i.e. the monasteries in which Śākyamuni had been active, and those of China (*Shitan gozan* 震旦五山). The following main part (pp. 4a to 70b) is titled *Busso shūhazu* 佛祖宗派圖; it is subdivided into the ‘seven buddhas’ (*shichibutsu* 七佛, p. 4a), the ‘patriarchs and masters below the heavens in the West’ (*saiten soshi* 西天祖師, p. 4a to 4b), and the ‘patriarchs and masters in the lands of the East’ (*tōdo soshi* 東土祖師 p. 4b to 70b). Here, members of the particular lineages are mentioned at greater length, with the Five Houses and their subdivisions being outsourced to additional diagrams. Japanese successors have been completely integrated into this lineage.

Koten aims at transparency when it comes to his sources and the criteria he uses for including individuals in his diagrams. His postscript (p. 71a) – which concludes the work (apart from a pronunciation guide, ‘distinctions of sounds’, *ongi* 音義, on p. 71b) – reads:

These diagrams mainly rely on the five ‘transmission of the lamp’ [collections] and the *Wudeng huiyuan*, and [their content] is reproduced and listed here. Now, those [masters who have benefited] from opportunity and [favourable] conditions and had their words and phrases [transmitted] have been fully integrated into these [diagrams]. There were exceedingly many for whom we have a name but no [hagiographic] texts. Among these, we have restricted ourselves to picking no more than some tens of them for now. We have reproduced most of these from among the masters of our schools since the end of the Song [dynasty] who have had reputation and standing, status and success. In our dynasty, we have sought out those who, from among the elders with standing, have advanced into the Five Mountains, and have listed them here.

I have disregarded my own ignorance and dim-wittedness, and have carelessly put together these diagrams. I fear that as for faults and errors, there will be not only one. Henceforward, if the worthy ones were to restore and correct those – would that not be something to take comfort in? I only wish that among the multitude of factions and the multitude of differentiations, the vital arteries of the patriarchs, one succeeding the other, continues to flow, and that among the interfering fragrances and the interfering leaves, the lantern of wisdom of the ancient wise is transmitted uninterruptedly.<sup>67</sup>

Koten, by his own account, relies on orthodox hagiographic literature for the compilation of his diagrams. From these, he does not extract wholesale, but imposes restrictions as to the specific master’s productivity; a mere mention in the literature would not prompt him to include a name. After the eras covered by the ‘transmission of the lamp’ collections, a master’s success is crucial: one’s standing inside the tradition and the number and productivity of one’s students would decide the

<sup>67</sup> *Essentials* (= *Busso shūha kōyō*), 71a.

issue of inclusion vs. non-recognition. The same principle holds true for the Japanese context, but here, the parameter of institutional affiliation is introduced: it is – with a few additions – the Five Mountains lineages that warrant having one's name recorded in the diagrams, while a small provincial monastery, for example, would not merit mention.

## 4 Lineage diagrams as proofs of authenticity

The inclusive nature of the diagrammatic compilations so far discussed suggests that these projects were largely devoid of factionalism within the Chan/Zen tradition. They aimed at a source-based, hagiographically accurate, and more or less impartial representation of transmission relations within the schools of Chan/Zen Buddhism (and in some instances, even beyond). There is a second type of lineage diagrams, however, that is just as old, and perhaps even more important, but decidedly sectarian in nature. Such diagrams are the topic of the following discussion.

### 4.1 Lineage diagrams prior to the 1230s

In light of the fact that the traditionalist legitimacy of any Chan/Zen adept's claim to being part of the lineage depends entirely upon their being recognized by their master's authority, the master's certification of a *dharmā* transmission having taken place is of paramount significance. And since the master's legitimacy, in turn, is dependent upon their own master's authority, such certificates frequently took the shape of diagrammatic representations of individual transmission lineages. For a long time, the oldest specimen of such lineage diagrams *cum* transmission certificates was identified not within the Chan/Zen schools proper, but within the Japanese Tendai school. Saichō 最澄 (767–822), the school's founding figure, was believed to have produced a manuscript scroll in the year 819 by the title 'Bloodline register of how the *buddhadharma* of internal realization has been serially transmitted' (*Naishō buppō sōjō kechimyakufu* 内證佛法相承血脈譜, henceforth *Register*).<sup>68</sup> Indeed, Saichō makes reference to a 'bloodline register' in other texts of his, and if that reference were in fact to the *Register* proper, we would have a genealogical diagram of unsurpassed

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<sup>68</sup> Digitally available at e-Museum: National Treasures & Important Cultural Properties of National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Japan, <[https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=ja&webView=null&content\\_base\\_id=100356&content\\_part\\_id=001&content\\_pict\\_id=001&x=9685&y=-14&s=1](https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=ja&webView=null&content_base_id=100356&content_part_id=001&content_pict_id=001&x=9685&y=-14&s=1)> (accessed on 18 March 2024).

age and preservation status. Recent scholarship, however, has suggested that Saichō is referring to a text that is no longer extant but – only after his demise, in all probability – was integrated into a more elaborate text that came to be known as the *Register*.<sup>69</sup> The production of the *Register* as we know it was an ongoing process involving disciples of Saichō's, such as Kōjō 光定 (779–858) and others.<sup>70</sup> In its present form, it includes a diagram not only of Saichō's claim to a Chan/Zen transmission heritage, but of four others: two in the Tiantai/Tendai tradition, and another two in the mandalic (= esoteric) tradition.<sup>71</sup> Despite the multiplicity of transmission lineages represented in this diagram, they all are more or less unambiguous: clearly it is their intent to document the precise lineage to which Saichō lays claim; none of them inhabits the encyclopaedic perspective of the *FZZ* or its epigonal genealogies. Finally, the oldest copy of the *Register* dates from the late Heian 平安 (794–1192) period, i.e. the twelfth century. This dating moves the *Register* into the close historical vicinity of the Chan/Zen genealogical diagrams as attestations of transmission events.<sup>72</sup> Two of them shall be discussed in the remainder of this paper: Dōgens 'Transmission certificate diagram' (*shishozu* 嗣書圖), sketched only in outline here, and Enni's diagrams, the object of the final section of this paper.

69 See Chen 1998. Recently, Ibuki 2022 has come to more favourable conclusions as to the *Register*'s context and date of production.

70 See Minowa 1990.

71 More precisely, the first Tendai transmission is concerned with the lineage of the 'Lotus school' (*rengeshū* 蓮花宗), originating with the Buddha Prabhūtaratna (*Duobao/Tahō* 多寶, lit. 'abundant treasures'), as implied by the eleventh 'Jewelled Pagoda Chapter' (*Jian baotuo pin/Ken hōtō bon* 見寶塔品) of the *Lotus Sutra*; the second, with the 'bodhisattva precepts of the perfect teachings' (*enkyō bosatsukai* 圓教菩薩戒) known from the 'Brahmā's Net Sutra' (*Fanwang jing/Bonmōkyō* 梵網經); the first esoteric transmission, with the 'two *maṇḍalas* of the womb and diamond' (*taizō kongō ryō mandara* 胎藏金剛兩曼荼羅) realms as described in the 'Sutra of the Great Vairocana's mysterious transformations, support and empowerment in becoming a buddha' (*Dai Birushana jōbutsu jinben kaji kyō* 大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經); and the second esoteric transmission, with 'miscellaneous *maṇḍalas*' (*zatsu mandara* 雜曼荼羅), referencing the 'Sutra of the venerable and victorious *dhāraṇī* of the Buddha's corona' (*Butchō sonshō darani kyō* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經). See Naba 2015. A detailed study of how these different transmission lineages relate to one another cannot be addressed within the scope of the present contribution, but shall be treated in a follow-up study in the near future.

72 An exploration of the historical context, including the question of why genealogical materials seem to gain prominence precisely from the eleventh to the thirteenth century, depends on a widening of the analytical scope, and hence must be postponed to a future occasion. At present, it may suffice to point to the more general developments – the 'system of ruling elites' (*kenmon taisei* 権門体制), the proliferation of transmission lineages, the esotericization and aristocratization of religious institutions – as explained in Stone 1999, 97–152.

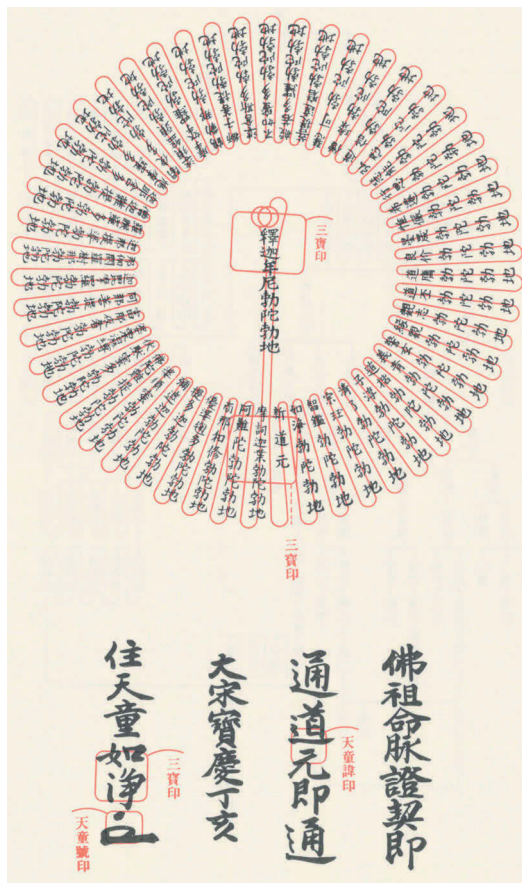


In the archives of Eiheiiji 永平寺, we find an untitled diagrammatic transmission certificate that Dōgen<sup>73</sup> is said to have received from his master Rujing, an abbot at Jingde/Keitoku 景德 monastery on Mount Tiantong/Tendō 天童, immediately preceding his return to Japan (transcribed in Fig. 3).<sup>74</sup> The written artefact is comprised of an upper diagram, circular in structure, tying 52 names together into a transmission lineage, and an inscription of 24 characters in four lines in the lower part. Five seals are imprinted: one that says *san bao yin/sanbōin* 三寶印 ('seal of the three treasures', i.e. the Buddha, the *dharma* or Buddhist teachings, and the *sangha* or Buddhist order), twice on the diagram and once on line four; and another one, which is understood to be Rujing's personal verification (*Rujing hui yin/Nyojō i'in* 如靜諱印, 'seal in the canonical name of Rujing'), on lines two and four, i.e. over the name of Dōgen and Rujing's own signature. The inscription in the lower part, thus authenticated by three seal stamps, states: 'The certificate of authenticity of the realization in the life vein of the buddhas and patriarchs has now penetrated Dōgen, and from him shall penetrate further on. In the [year of] fire and pig [i.e. the twenty-fourth year of the sexagenary cycle] of the Baoqing [era, 1225–1227], under the great Song [dynasty, i.e. 1227], Rujing, who lives at [Mount] Tiantong. [Signature]' (*Fozu xuemai zhengqi ji/Busso kechimyaku shōkai soku* 佛祖命脈證契即 / *tong Daoyuan ji tong/tsū Dōgen soku tsū* 通道元即通 / *Da Song Baoqing dinghai/Daisō Hōkyō teigai* 大宋寶慶丁亥 / *zhu Tiantong Rujing/jū Tendō Nyojō* 住天童如淨口); this includes Dōgen as part of the 'life vein' of Rujing's transmission lineage. The inclusion is made manifest even more effectively in the diagram: 51 names are arranged in a circle, to be read starting from six o'clock, as it were, in a clockwise direction. Each individual's name is written in one line, to be read centrifugally from near-centre to periphery. The centre of the circular structure features the name of Śākyamuni *buddhabodhi* (Shijiamouni *botuo bodi*/Shakamuni *boda bochi* 釋迦牟尼勃陀勃地).<sup>75</sup> Above the first character, *shi/shaku* 釋, there is a circle from which a red line originates, running through the Buddha's name and on through Mahākāśyapa's. After the first Indian patriarch's last character, the line curves clockwise, running centripetally between the first and the second patriarchs' names, then curves again to run through Ānanda's name. This pattern repeats fifty times, until the line reaches Dōgen and runs through his name as well. It does not stop there, however, but continues into the centre, running through Śākyamuni's name

73 For a short but reliable Dōgen biography and scholarly bibliography, see Bowring 2019.

74 The transcription is reproduced from Ōkubo 1989, 287. See also Ōkubo's 'Explanatory notes' (*kaidai* 解題), in Ōkubo 1989, 532. A low-quality image of the original *shishozu* can be seen in the frontispiece of Kawamura et al. 1989, vol. 6. See also Nakaseko 2001, 104–106, and Azuma 1976.

75 The honorific *buddhabodhi* may be explained as identifying Gautama as the one who has awakened (*buddha*), and at the same as the one who is the object to which his successor must yet awaken (*bodhi*); see Zengaku daijiten hensanjo 1978, vol. 2, 1152c.



**Fig. 3:** The transcript of Dōgen’s 1227 transmission certificate, sealed by his master Rujiing (reproduced from Ōkubo 1989, 287). The original manuscript is archived at Eihei-ji and was designated a ‘National Treasure’ (*kokuho* 國寶). Its status subsequently changed to that of Important Cultural Property (*jūyō bunkazai* 重要文化財), and it is currently inaccessible at the Eihei-ji archives; see Ōkubo 1989, 532.

again – this time, from bottom to top – and stops only in a circle next to the line’s point of origin.

Three observations must be noted:

1. The red line continuing through the names in the transmission lineage is the metaphorical ‘life vein’ the passage below the diagram clearly identifies.
2. Typically, the lines in Chan/Zen genealogies are meant to visually connect two names: the line begins after one name and stops before another. In this instance, however, the line quite literally ‘penetrates’ (*ji tong/sokutsū* 即通) the names.

3. Dōgen's diagram is quasi-historical – or, more precisely, generational – up to his inclusion in the lineage. Then, however, his name is connected back to the very beginning, that is the Buddha in the centre. At last, the diagram comes full circle, and the transmission ends just as it had begun – with buddhahood. In a highly symbolic manner – the Buddha as the eternal origin and constant centre – the diagram indicates that being part of the lineage means being one among many buddhas.

In short, neither Saichō's *Register* nor Dōgen's *Diagram* holds any stake in representing any other lineage than those of immediate relevance to their own spiritual authority. Clearly their project is different from that of the *FZZ*, the *Correcting mistakes* or the *Essentials*. Their specific outlook will become even more pronounced in the case of the Tōfukuji diagrams connected with the biography of Enni Ben'en, as will be discussed below.

## 4.2 The Tōfukuji diagrams

As mentioned above, the Japanese monk Enni Ben'en spent several years under the tutelage of Wuzhun Shifan. He was accepted as a member of the congregation in 1235, foretold as the master's *dharma* heir in 1240, and received recognition as such in 1241, shortly before he was to return to Japan. The steps of his monastic career at Mount Jing were accompanied by the transfer of written artefacts from the master to his disciple: a written *dharma* talk (*fayu/hōgo* 法語), i.e. a homily, in 1235; an inscribed portrait (*dīngxiang/chinzō* 頂相) in 1238; and, in 1241, a biography of Wuzhun,<sup>76</sup> plaques (*e/gaku* 額) for monastic buildings, and a certificate (*yinke zhuang/inkajō*

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<sup>76</sup> See the narrative in the 'Biography of the Chan master Buddha-Mirror, [a name] especially bestowed [upon Wuzhun by the emperor], and abbot of the Chan monastery for promoting holiness during ten thousand lifetimes at Mount Jing in the prefecture of Lin'an in the lands of the Great Song [dynasty]' (大宋國臨安府徑山興聖萬壽禪寺住持特賜佛鑑禪師行狀): 'The honourable Enni from Japan admired the master's [i.e. Wuzhun's] reputation. He had crossed the oceans and traversed the deserts, and now relied upon [his teachings] and studied with the master. Dutifully, he interacted with him. [En] ni wished to know a report about his life and origins, and to be supplied with what he had asked when he returned to his home country. The attendant Deru had served the master for the longest time, and he roughly knew about the by and large of his life, and therefore he made a record in his likeness. – At the time of [the era] Jiaxi, in [the year of] earth and boar, one morning in the eighth month, respectfully annotated. – In the first year of the era Chunyou 淳祐 [1241–1252], on the twenty-third day of the first month, specifically donated by [the master] of perfect illumination 圓照 [i.e. again Wuzhun]'. Quoted in Shiraishi 1979, 30b; see the corresponding passage in 'Biographies of eminent monks of the Great Ming [dynasty]' (*Daming gaosengzhuan/Daimin kōsōden* 大明高僧傳), vol. 8, edited in T 2062:50.932b.

印可狀), along with a *dharma* robe. All of these were autographed at least in part by Wuzhun and served as documentation of transmission. Lineage diagrams obviously fulfilled the exact same role, as can be gathered from the (admittedly later) ‘Chronicle of national master Shōichi [i.e. Enni], founding abbot of Tōfuku [monastery]’ (*Tōfuku kaisan Shōichi kokushi nenpu* 東福開山聖一國師年譜, henceforth *Chronicle*), which was written by a disciple of Enni’s, Tetsugyū Enshin 鉄牛圓心 (1254–1326).<sup>77</sup> For the first day of the third month of the year 1241, the *Chronicle* records:

At three beats of the drum [around midnight], Fojian summoned the two attendants Qi 圻 and Er 余 [i.e. Enni]. He burned incense, inquired [about their well-being], and then proclaimed: ‘This night, the dragon king 龍王 of these extensive marshes (the lands of Mount Jing) has declared that the time has come for the two of you to transform and instruct [sentient beings]. And certainly, the dragon king would never eat his words! Yin, within a few days you will receive a special messenger, and you will not be able to decline to take your leave. Er, you will soon return to your home country, and there preach the way of the patriarchs.’

He himself then drew a diagram of the schools and factions. In the diagram, he inscribed a figure [of the Buddha] holding a blossom in his hand at the top; to the left and right of him, the four-times-seven [patriarchs] from under the Western skies and the two-times-three [patriarchs] from the lands of the Tang; and below that, the fifty-four generations from Nanyue to Wuzhun. He does not include side branches 橫枝, and unmistakably one received [the transmission] from another. At the end, the lineage indicates: ‘Chan master Er from Kunō 久能 [i.e. the Japanese region Enni came from]’. He held this to be evidence 信 that he had transmitted the *dharma* 傳法. He also consigned the *dharma* robe of Mian 密庵 [Xianjie 咸傑, 1118–1186; i.e. Wuzhun’s *dharma* grandfather] and his bamboo staff [to Enni]. Furthermore, he inscribed eight large characters: ‘Chan monastery of the blessings of veneration throughout ten thousand years, bestowed by imperial decree’ 勅賜萬年崇福禪寺 and directed: ‘When you first become an abbot, you shall hang this plaque [above the main gate of the monastery]’.<sup>78</sup>

Although we have no further details of his colleague Qi, Enni is indeed believed to have hung the plaque at Sūfukuji 崇福寺 in Hakata 博多 which, for a short time after his return, he presided over. Further, the description of the transmission diagrams precisely matches an artefact that is archived at Tōfukuji.<sup>79</sup> A sheet of silk, 52 cm wide and 98 cm

<sup>77</sup> A digital copy is available at the Union Catalogue Database of Japanese Texts <<https://kokusho.nijl.ac.jp/biblio/200007570/>> (accessed on 18 March 2024).

<sup>78</sup> *Chronicle* (= *Tōfuku kaisan Shōichi kokushi nenpu*), 10b–11a; also quoted in Shiraishi 1979, 31a–b.

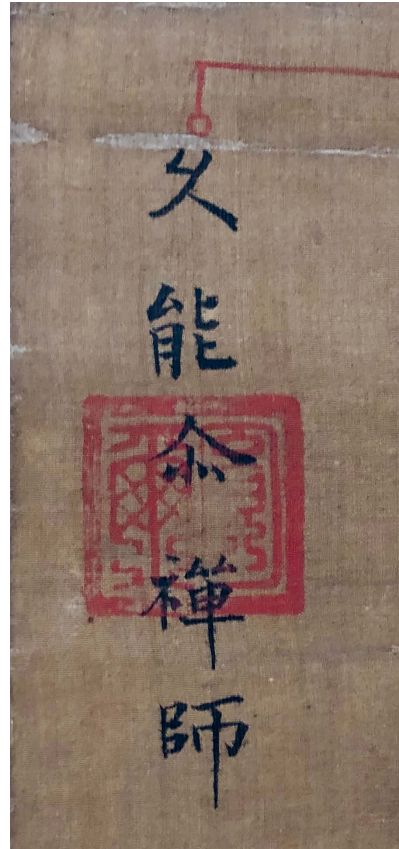
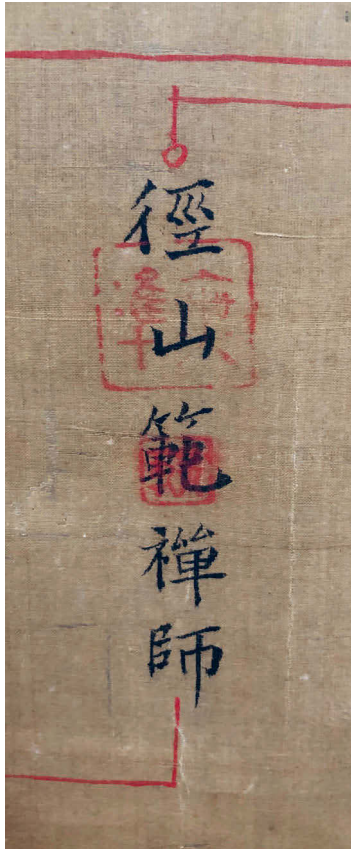
<sup>79</sup> Both Wuzhun’s *Diagram* and Enni’s copy are transcribed in *Tōfukuji monjo* 東福寺文書 (Tōkyō daigaku Shiryō hensanjo 1956), vol. 1, 16–17 and 17–18, respectively. I gratefully acknowledge the opportunity to inspect the original *Diagram* and its copy, as well as the *Great diagram* (see below), at Tōfukuji on 2 February 2020. The Tōfukuji shiryō kenkyūjo 東福寺資料研究所 and its director, Nagai Keishū 永井慶洲, as well as Tōfukuji’s public relations officer, Akashi Hekishū 明石碧洲, extended their kind hospitality to me and granted their permission to reproduce parts of the materials here as Figs 4a and 4b, as well as Fig. 5.

high, is mounted on a framed layer of red and gold brocade, then on a blue-green and beige brocade background. The silk is inscribed in black and red ink, with Wuzhun's vermilion seal affixed to the master's name. The scroll portrays the *dharma* lineage of Enni as Wuzhun's successor through 54 generations in 24 positions. It is written in four columns, to wit from above: three, nine, nine and again three positions per column. Names are inscribed in black ink and state the sobriquet in full, with the first two characters followed by the second character of the ordination name (e.g. Nanyue [Huai]rang 南嶽[懷]讓), concluding with the status indication of Chan/Zen master (*chanshi/zenji* 禪師). The lines linking these names are drawn in red, ending in a small circle before the respective successor's name. They run from right to left and top to bottom, with the exception of the top column, which is to be read centre, right and left.

Below the main title, 'Diagram of schools and factions' (*Shūhazu* 宗派圖, henceforth *Diagram*), an image of the Buddha is painted in a bright-coloured varnish. He sits with his legs folded on a lotus flower, holding a five-petalled blossom in his right hand, while his left hand remains inert in his lap. The image is enclosed in a red-and-black circle, from which a red line connects to the twenty-eight Indian patriarchs, and onwards through the six Chinese patriarchs to Wuzhun's lineage proper.<sup>80</sup>

The sheet of silk was carefully copied, and the exact copy is likewise well preserved in the self-same location. The colours are transparent and less luminous. Wuzhun's seal is missing, but the characters for 'vermillion seal' (*shuin* 朱印), inscribed in red ink, mark its precise location in the original diagram (see Fig. 4a). Instead, the copy has Enni's seal over his name (see Fig. 4b), suggesting that the copy was made by Enni himself after he had returned to Japan. Both the original and the copy are mounted on the same robust, gorgeous materials, reflecting their status as documents of Enni's legitimacy as successor to Wuzhun's line of transmission.

<sup>80</sup> The names given are: (1) Nanyue Huairang/Nangaku Ejō 南嶽懷讓 (677–744); (2) Mazu Daoyi/Baso Dōitsu 馬祖道一 (709–788); (3) Baizhang Huaihai/Hyakujō Ekai 百丈懷海 (720–814); (4) Huangbo Xiyun/Ōbaku Kiun 黃檗希運 (d. 850); (5) Linji Yixuan/Rinzai Gigen 臨濟義玄 (d. 866); (6) Xinghua Cunjiang/Kōke Shonshō 興化存獎 (830–888); (7) Nanyuan Huiyong/Nan'in Egyō 南院慧顒 (860–930); (8) Fengxue Yanzhao/Fuketsu Enshō 風穴延沼 (896–973); (9) Shoushan Xingnian/Shuzan Shōnen 首山省念 (926–993); (10) Fenyang Shanzhao/Bunyō Zenshō 汾陽善昭 (942–1024); (11) Shishuang Chuyuan/Sekisō Soen 石霜楚圓 (987–1040), here as Ciming/Jimyō 慈明; (12) Yangqi Fanghui/Yōgi Hōe 楊岐方會 (992–1049); (13) Baiyun Shouduan/Hakuun Shutan 白雲守端 (1025–1072); (14) Wuzu Fayun/Goso Hōen 五祖法演 (1024?–1104); (15) Yuanwu Keqin/Engo Kokugon 圓悟克勤 (1063–1135); (16) Huqiu Shaolong/Kokyū Shōryū 虎丘紹隆 (1077–1136); (17) Ying'an Tanhua/Sōan Donge 應庵曇華 (1103–1163); (18) Mian Xianjie/Mittan Kanketsu 密庵咸傑 (1118–1186); (19) Poan Xuxian/Haan Sosen 破庵祖先 (1136–1211); (20) Wuzhun Shifan/Bujun Shibān 無準師範 (1177–1249), here as Jingshan/Kinzan 徑山; and (21) Enni Ben'en 圓爾辯圓 (1202–1280), here as Kunō Ni 久能允.



**Figs 4a and 4b:** (a) Wuzhun Shifan's name with vermilion seals in the original *Diagram* (left); (b) Enni Ben'en's name with vermilion seal in the *Diagram*'s copy (right). Photograph taken by the author, reproduced with the kind permission of the Tōfukuji archive.

The Tōfukuji archives house yet another diagram, known as the 'Great diagram of schools and factions' (*Da zongpai tu/Daishūhazu* 大宗派圖, henceforth *Great diagram*).<sup>81</sup> It is a rectangular sheet of paper, 248 cm by 35 cm, mounted horizontally on a middle layer and background. The title of the artefact, *Zongpai tu/Shūhazu* 宗派圖, is inscribed in black ink before the diagram proper begins, with a date inscribed in red below the title line: 'abridged and excerpted<sup>82</sup> in the second year (in the [year of] earth and dog [i.e. the thirty-fifth year

<sup>81</sup> The *Great diagram* is transcribed in *Tōfukuji monjo* 東福寺文書 (Tōkyō daigaku Shiryō hensanjo 1956), vol. 1, 9–16, and discussed in Tamamura 1979, 393–397.

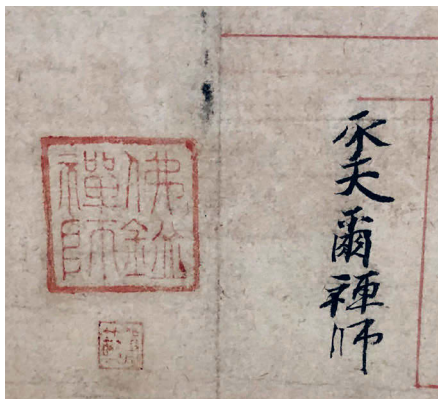
<sup>82</sup> From the *FZZ*, we may assume, in light of the contexts presented above.

of the sexagenary cycle) of the Jiayi [era, 1237–1240] of the great Song [dynasty]' (*Dasong Jiayi ernian (wuxu) lüechu/Daisō Kaki ninen (bojutsu) ryakushutsu* 大宋嘉熙貳年<sub>戊戌</sub>略出), i.e. 1238.<sup>83</sup> The diagram contains three columns with 82 names in the top column, 85 in the middle one, and 89 in the lower one; together with an emendation of three names below the middle column at about one third of the scroll's length these make for a total of 259 names included. Names are written in black ink, and the connecting lines drawn in red. Important nodes in the system have a red circle above them. The genealogy starts with Śākyamuni, the 28 Indian patriarchs and the six Chinese ones, continuing through 54 generations in total until it comes to a close with Wuzhun and Enni, who is listed here as Jōten Ni 承天爾. But unlike the transmission document discussed above, this diagram is multilineal in structure: apart from the abbots included in the representations discussed so far, common 'monks' (*hesheng/oshō* 和尚), 'masters of hermitages' (*anzhu/anju* 菴主), 'grand masters' (*dashi/daishi* 大師, i.e. teachers not strictly of the Chan/Zen denomination), lay persons (*jushi/koji* 居士), and ministers (*xiangguo/shōkoku* 相國) make an appearance, as well.

Enni is believed to have authored the diagram with only his own name, concluding the genealogy, inserted by Wuzhun. Palaeographic evidence seems somewhat inconclusive, but the two vermilion seals stating *Fojian chanshi/Bukkan zenji* 佛鑑禪師 and *Shifan/Shiban* 師範 next to Enni's name solidly support the hypothesis (see Fig. 5). Also present are two Fumon'in seals, one below the title and above the date, the other towards the end of the scroll, allowing for the assumption that the *Great diagram* had been in Enni's possession when he took up residence in Kyoto.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> The paper retains vertical creases (23 of them) at regular intervals. The date inscribed at the beginning of the diagram is found to the left of one such crease, and the red ink of the writing has blotted onto the material that was folded on top, leaving a mirror-inverted image. The same phenomenon can be observed in the case of two red circles above the title and the name of the Buddha. Clearly, then, the *Great diagram* was folded in leporello format before being mounted as a scroll.

<sup>84</sup> Tamamura Takeji 玉村竹二 (1911–2003) has commented on the discrepancy of Enni's ordination names – Kunō vs. Jōten – in the Tōfukuji diagrams, and advanced the hypothesis that Wuzhun must have inscribed Enni's name only after the latter had reported his success in establishing his own monastery in Japan. This was the institution of Jōtenji 承天寺 in the Hakata area in 1241, and the name of the Zen monastery explains the change in ordination name. Given the dating of 1238, Enni must have written the *Great diagram* as part of his training under Wuzhun who – after 1241, but before his death in 1249 – inscribed Enni's name and had it sent to his Japanese *dharma* heir; see Tamamura 1979, 394–396. If such was indeed the case, the *Great diagram* would constitute an extended transmission document – one that did not warrant Enni's spiritual maturity, but his ability to perpetuate Wuzhun's line of transmission by way of institutional independence and the propensity to be expected therefrom. Given the fact that in Chan/Zen self-understanding, it is imperative to not let the *dharma* transmission wither and die, this explanation seems all the more convincing.



**Fig. 5:** Enni Ben'en's name in the *Great diagram* with Wuzhun Shifan's vermillion seals. Photograph taken by the author, reproduced with the kind permission of the Tōfukuji archive.

## 5 Conclusion

In the discussion of lineage diagrams on the preceding pages, this paper has introduced a variety of documents from the middle of the thirteenth century. The backgrounds of their production, their role in the construction and negotiation of Chan/Zen Buddhist genealogies, and their materiality and traces of usage received special attention. The documents gravitate around the figures of Wuzhun Shifan and Enni Ben'en, and in this regard justify the source-critical and biography-centred perspectives employed above.

As has become apparent, genealogical materials in traditionalist contexts may be grouped according to a twofold typology: documentations of transmission and systematizations of multilineality.

1. The first type of genealogical diagram authenticates transmission and confirms claims to *dharma* succession. While the points at which such materials were made available to the student have varied, their purpose and general direction are the same: they radically reduce the complexity of Chan/Zen genealogies in order to highlight the legitimacy of a single member of a single lineage by virtue of being the recognized *dharma* heir of a particular master. These diagrams do not generalize, but specify.

The purposes of documenting lineage membership in such reductionist genealogical diagrams are obvious. They authenticate transmission and secure access to religious institutions that were regulated to be administered exclusively by members of a specific lineage. This may at least partially explain why it was the particular institution of Tōfukuji and the tradition originating with its found-



ing abbot, Enni Ben'en, that seems to have produced genealogical diagrams with such frequency and verve. Tōfukuji was classed as a so-called 'temple of students [one had personally] released [from karma and rebirth]' (*tsuchien* 度弟院): while on the Chinese continent, all state-sponsored Five Mountains and Ten Temples were required to choose their abbots from a pool of applicants by lottery in the process of 'assuming office from all ten directions' (*shifang zhuchi/jippō jūji* 十方住持), certain top-echelon monasteries on the Japanese archipelago were allowed to institutionalize hereditary succession based on lineage (Tōfukuji as well as later on, e.g., Musō's Tenryūji 天龍寺). Yet others – Dōgen's Eiheiji 永平寺, as well as Daitokuji 大徳寺 and Myōshinji 妙心寺 – advanced to positions of power from outside the Five Mountains system by emphasizing lineage. In these cases, laying claim to a specific heritage by proving one's genealogy was key to securing religious authority, possibly even the office of the abbot. It bears mentioning that in this sense, one's spiritual pedigree translated into cultural prestige and socioeconomic resources.

2. The other type of genealogical diagram presents critical reflections on hagiographic literature and aims at systematizing Chan/Zen's multilineality in general, or at least significant parts of it. One way or another, later compilations built on Ruda's *Summary diagrams*, either by simply reiterating their content (as in the Japanese reprints), supplementing lineages (as in Koten's *Essentials*), or additionally correcting what was taken to be mistakes in the construction of lineages (as in Keihō's *Correcting mistakes*). While all of these inclusive genealogical diagrams are the products of individuals who were by no means untouched by the sectarian imaginations of their own traditions, their projects go beyond this: their reconstructive, at times critical efforts are meant to facilitate orientation in an imbroglio of lineages and enable a trans-factional kind of scholarship.

Defining the religious function of such generalized diagrams is not without its difficulties. It is necessary to keep their doctrinal context in mind, for it would be a misunderstanding to see Chan/Zen genealogies as representing the transmission of specifiable content from one generation to another. In fact, the tradition is adamant that there is really nothing at all that may be said to have been transmitted, since transmission refuses linguistic formulation. At the same time, the tradition claims the significance of intergenerational transmission events and the superlative importance of perpetuating lineage. Becoming part of the lineage by magisterial recognition must be complemented by bequeathing the lineage to one's own student, thereby preserving its existence. It is no overstatement to say that in the unfailing reiteration of this module of transmission lies all that there is to the tradition, and that transmission is

its own purpose. It is not so much that the Buddha's truth is contained in his transmission to Mahākāśyapa; rather, transmission itself is truth. Knowledge about and orientation within the multitude of lineages, then, is none other than knowledge of this truth. To discern lineage is part and parcel of the soteriological project, and this may be where the primary importance of transactional, generalized diagrams lies.

## Note on Formal Matters

Throughout the paper, I treat Chan/Zen Buddhism as a general phenomenon of the East Asian Sinosphere and employ the double appellation in Chinese and Japanese. When a term is obviously relevant primarily for either the Chinese or Japanese context, only the corresponding pronunciation will be given. Insofar as the figures and materials addressed in this paper are considered in a framework directly relating the Japanese archipelago to the Chinese mainland, discussion of Korean Sŏn Buddhism must be postponed. Terms and texts from these East Asian languages are transliterated in the order Chinese pronunciation/Japanese pronunciation according to the Pinyin and Modified Hepburn systems. I retain traditional characters (*jiuzuti/kyūjitai* 舊字體) throughout, except for those cases in which the transcribed texts use simplified version. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

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## Abbreviations

FZZ = *Fozo zongpai zongtu/Busso shūha sōzu* 佛祖宗派總圖 ('Summary diagrams of the schools and factions of the buddhas and patriarchs')

T = *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 ('Buddhist canon, newly compiled during the Taishō [era]'), see Takakusu and Watanabe 1924–1932, available online via <[https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index\\_en.html](https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index_en.html)> (accessed on 17 March 2024).

X = *Xu zang jing* 續藏經 ('Buddhist canon, continued'), based on reprints of Maeda Eun 前田慧雲 and Nakano Tatsue 中野達慧 (eds) (1905–1912), *Dai Nihon zoku zōkyō* 大日本續藏經 ('Japanese Buddhist canon, continued'), 750 vols, Kyoto: Zōkyō shoin, available online via <<https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/>> (accessed on 17 March 2024).

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: The ‘twenty-four flows’ (*nijūshiryū* 二十四流)

The ‘twenty-four flows’ comprise the following factions (with their respective founders given in brackets):

1. Senkōha 千光派 (Myōan Eisai 明庵榮西, i.e. Senkō *kokushi* 千光國師, 1141–1215)
2. Dōgenha 道元派 (Dōgen Kigen 道元希玄, 1200–1253)
3. Shōichiha 聖一派 (Enni Ben'en 圓爾辯圓, i.e. Shōichi *kokushi* 聖一國師, 1202–1280)
4. Hottōha 法燈派 (Shinchi Kakushin 心地覺心, 1207–1298, i.e. Hottō *kokushi* 法燈國師)
5. Daikakuha 大覺派 (Lanxi Daolong/Rankei Dōryū 蘭溪道隆, 1213–1278, i.e. Daikaku *zenji* 大覺禪師)
6. Gottaŋha 兀菴派 (Wuan Puning/Gottaŋ Funei 兀庵普寧, 1197–1276)
7. Daikyūha 大休派 (Daxiu Zhengnian/Daikyū Shōnen 大休正念, 1215–1289)
8. Hokkaiha 法海派 (Muzō Jōshō 無象靜照, i.e. Hokkai *zenji* 法海禪師, 1234–1306)
9. Bukkōha 佛光派 (Wuxue Zuyuan/Mugaku Sogen 無學祖元, i.e. Bukkō *kokushi* 佛光國師, 1226–1286)
10. Issanha 一山派 (Yishan Yining/Issan Ichinei 一山一寧, 1247–1317)
11. Daiōha 大應派 (Nanpo Jōmyō or Jōmin 南浦紹明, i.e. Daiō *kokushi* 大應國師, 1235–1309)
12. Seikanha 西磻派 (Sijian Zitan/Seikan Shidon 西磻子曇, 1249–1306)
13. Kyōdōha 鏡堂派 (Jingtang Jueyuan/Shōdō Kakuen 鏡堂覺圓, i.e. Daien *zenji* 大圓禪師, 1244–1306)
14. Butsueha 佛慧派 (Lingshan Daoyin/Ryōzen Dōin 靈山道隱, i.e. Butsue *zenji* 佛慧禪師, 1255–1325)
15. Tōmyōha 東明派 (Dongming Huiji/Tōmin Enichi 東明慧日, 1272–1340)
16. Seisetsuha 清拙派 or Daikanha 大鑑派 (Qingzhuo Zhengcheng/Seisetsu Shōchō 清拙正澄, i.e. Daikan *zenji* 大鑑禪師, 1274–1339)
17. Minkiha 明極派 (Mingji Chujun/Minki Soshun 明極楚俊, 1262–1336)
18. Guchūha 愚中派 (Guchū Shūkyū 愚中周及, 1323–1409)
19. Jikusenha 竺仙派 (Zhuxian Fanxian/Jikusen Bonsen 竺仙梵僊, 1292–1348)
20. Betsudenha 別傳派 (Biechuan Miaoyin/Betsuden Myōin 別傳妙胤, d. 1348)
21. Kosenha 古先派 (Kosen Ingen 古先印元, 1295–1374)
22. Daisetsuha 大拙派 (Daisetsu Sonō 大拙祖能, 1313–1377)
23. Chūganha 中巖派 (Chūgan Engetsu 中巖圓月, 1300–1375)
24. Tōryōha 東陵派 (Dongling Yongyu/Tōryō Eiyo 東陵永璵, 1285–1365)

## Appendix 2: Partial translation of the Faru epitaph inscription

At nineteen years of age, [Faru] left his house [i.e. took ordination], for he wished to obtain the great teachings [of the Buddha]. [His teacher] Ming 明 concealed within himself the wisdom of *dhyaṇa*, and when he met people and saw they were suitable, he would say: ‘The Chan master [Hong]ren [i.e. the fifth patriarch] in the province of Qin 蘄 practices *samādhi* [i.e. meditative absorption]. It is appropriate for you to go there, consult with him, and receive [instruction].’ [Faru] said: ‘Respectfully, I shall acknowledge your advice.’ Afterwards, when he had reached [Hongren’s] congregation and the examination of his request was finalized, the patriarch and master silently explained their prior opportunities [for interaction] 先機<sup>85</sup> and thus transmitted his way<sup>86</sup> [to Faru]. When [the latter] had thus disclosed the secret intention of the buddhas 佛密意, he suddenly entered into the One Vehicle 頓入一乘.<sup>87</sup> [That which is the product] of a multitude of conditions 數緣, as well as that which does not relate to conditions at all 非緣<sup>88</sup> – both their seeds were exhausted.<sup>89</sup> He had reached the lake of clarity and coolness and had entered into the hermit’s cell of emptiness and serenity. We may state that he was one who, even without having moved, [reached] the apex of truth 真際<sup>90</sup> and realized the ten thousand phenomena.

In India, transmission took place without words or characters [i.e. without reliance on the spoken or written word], and for those who had entered through this gate, [it was only the] mind 意 [that] was transmitted. It is for this reason that the *dharma* master [Hui]yuan [慧遠 334–416] of Mount Lu 廬 states in his preface to the *Dhyānasūtra* 禪經:<sup>91</sup> ‘Therefore, Ānanda was miserly in passing on [the Buddha’s transmission] and voicing his pronunciations. The ones he met were not the [right] persons, and he con-

<sup>85</sup> Their interactions in former lifetimes now constitute a karmic connection – i.e. a solid basis – upon which transmission may be built.

<sup>86</sup> *Dao/dō* 道 may also render ‘awakening’ (Sanskrit *bodhi*); the passage would then read ‘transmitted his awakening to Faru’.

<sup>87</sup> The unmediated access to supreme truth invokes the subitist position of the ‘Southern school’. The term ‘one vehicle’ (Sanskrit *ekayāna*) is scholastic in nature and claims the underlying unity of all Buddhist teachings. This unity, however, may only be realized by those of superior capacities and is dogmatically formulated in canonical texts such as the *Lotus* and *Nīrvāṇa sūtras*.

<sup>88</sup> To put it simply: that which is conditioned comprises all kinds of phenomena, both physical and consciousness-related, while that which is unconditioned is the state of liberation and extinction (commonly known as *nīrvāṇa*).

<sup>89</sup> i.e. Faru transcended karmic productivity and entered the quiescent state of extinction.

<sup>90</sup> See Sharf 2001, 194 and 229–238.

<sup>91</sup> Huiyuan’s preface precedes the ‘*Dhyāna sūtra* [translated by] Dharmatrāta’ (*Damoduoluo chan-jing* 達摩多羅禪經, T 618:15.300c–325c).



cealed the offices of his spirit 靈府 by necessity; he obscured the passage [leading to them] and did not open it [to such people]; and he scarcely let anyone take a glance inside his garden. The *nirvāṇa* of the Thus Come One [i.e. the Buddha] was not yet long past when Ānanda effected transmission to Madhyantika, and Madhyantika then effected transmission to Śāṇavāsa. These three were in perfect accord with the truth 應真, and had an opaque congruence 冥契 with the ancients. Their merits lay beyond words and were not explicated in canonical writings. They felt compelled to secretly 必暗 [step into] the footsteps [of the] original craftsman, and since they were circumspect, there was no deviance. [...] <sup>92</sup> They realized the right time and excelled in [the art of] transformation, and wherever they made their appearance, they were without limits 無際. They obscured their names and left only traces; and they had neither listeners nor did they teach anyone. These individuals could not be categorized by their names, [and that is why] there is a separate [origin of Faru's] school 別有宗矣.<sup>93</sup>

As for this wise person, it was the *dharma* master of the three storehouses 三藏<sup>94</sup> from India, Bodhidharma, who perpetuated this school when he came to [Emperor] Wu in the kingdoms of the Eastern regions. His biography states:<sup>95</sup> transforming through spiritual powers and obscuring his traces, he entered [the country of] Wei 魏<sup>96</sup> and effected transmission to [Hui]ke. [Hui]ke then effected transmission to [Seng]can, [Seng]can to [Dao]xin, [Dao]xin to [Hong]ren, and [Hong]ren to [Fa]ru. While this transmission is indeed something that cannot be spoken about, if one did not indicate the persons involved, how could there have been any transmission at all?<sup>97</sup>

<sup>92</sup> At this point, the epitaph omits Huiyuan's discussion of the three initial transmitters' relation to the 'five groups' (*wubu* 五部), i.e. schools of the Buddhist order, and canonical scriptures.

<sup>93</sup> The passage rather freely quotes Huiyuan's preface, T 618:15.301a. Cole 2009, 100–101, misleadingly reducing Huiyuan's quotation to the passage up to '...glance inside his garden', is correct in pointing out that the *Dhyānasūtra* preface has nothing to do with Bodhidharma. Rather, Huiyuan is concerned with authenticating the pedigree of the elusive translator Dharmatrāta.

<sup>94</sup> These are the canonical scriptures or *sūtras* (*jing/kyō* 經), the commentarial corpus or *śāstras* (*lun/ron* 論), and the rules of the Buddhist order or *vinaya* (*lǚ/ritsu* 律).

<sup>95</sup> The source of this quote so far remains elusive.

<sup>96</sup> I.e. after his failed attempts at establishing the Chan school with Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty.

<sup>97</sup> The inscription is edited in *Tangwen shiyi* 唐文拾遺, vol. 67, nos. 66–69, here no. 67, available at Chinese Text Project <<https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=820050>> (accessed 18 March 2024). Partial translations and discussions are available in Cole 2009, 96–114, as well as in McRae 1986, 85–86. A parallel telling of the tale can be found in the 'Record on the transmission of the *dharma* jewel, along with a preface' (*Chuan fabao ji bing xu* 傳法寶記并序) by Du Fei 杜朏 (fl. early eighth century); see T 2838:85.1291a–c.

### Appendix 3: Translation of Kokan Shiren's *Gokeben* 五家辨 ('Explicating the Five Houses')

After Bodhidharma had come from the West and until [the era of] the third patriarch, the school was undifferentiated and had not yet split apart. The fourth patriarch spawned Niutou, and the sixth, Qingyuan. From that time, schools and factions emerged. Those who have compiled the 'transmission of the lamp' [collections] have failed to discuss [this issue] in essence. In Nanyue and Qingyuan, they have two schools: from [Nan]yue, two houses sprung forth, and from [Qing]yuan, three. But this is not the case.

The different individuals from the times of the Song dynasty – Daguan [Tan] ying 達觀[曇]穎 [989–1060], Jue[fan] Huihong 覺[範]范洪 [1071–1128], Meng Tangjue 夢堂覺<sup>98</sup> – had their intentions set according to them being part of the Five Houses, so how could one rely on them? I have pondered the ancients' writings extensively, and all the Five Houses sprung forth from [Nan]yue. From [Qing]yuan, there really is not a single [offshoot].

Now, one transmission from Nanyue was to Mazu. Mazu's subsequent [read: next but one] transmission was to Guishan 潯山. This is the Guiyang school. Again, three transmissions from Mazu were to the school of Linji. These are the two houses springing from [Nan]yue, and this is no different from the 'transmission of the lamp' [collections]. Again, one transmission from Mazu was to Yaoshan. Yaoshan's subsequent transmission was to Dongshan. This is the Caodong school.

The 'transmission of the lamp' [collections], however, see Yaoshan as a student of Shitou 石頭 [Xiqian 希遷, 700–790], and therefore place Caodong under the lineage of [Qing]yuan. That none of the noble [commentators] address this [issue] is due to the fact that they have not taken Yaoshan's epitaph inscription into account. This epitaph inscription was edited by the famous Tang Shen 唐伸 [no date] of the Tang [dynasty], and it says: 'The grand master was born in the Xinfeng 信丰 district of Nankang 南康, and in his time, Nanyue had his transformation 遷, Jiangxi 江西 had his extinction 寂, and Zhongyue 中嶽<sup>99</sup> had his dissolution 洪. All of them had insight into the intimacies of the mind 心契 and their knowledge was of excellent quality'<sup>100</sup> [...]

The one who, as the epitaph inscription says, had his transformation was Shitou, and the one who had his extinction, Mazu. [In the case of] Shitou, [the

<sup>98</sup> The three were known as eminent scholars and literary giants in Chan/Zen Buddhist circles. On Juefan Huihong in particular, see Keyworth 2001 and Protass 2021.

<sup>99</sup> That is Faru; see Section 2 above.

<sup>100</sup> The epitaph is edited in *Quantangwen* 全唐文, text no. 536, available at Wikisource <<https://zh.wikisource.org/zh-hant/澧州藥山故惟儼大師碑銘（並序）>> (accessed on 18 March 2024).

epitaph] uses his canonical name 諱, but [in the case of] Mazu, his sobriquet 號. Persons one pays obeisance to are not called by their canonical names, and [that is why the epitaph] states [Mazu's] sobriquet. By the same token, [the epitaph] venerates the offshoot of [Mazu's] tradition.

Again, yet another transmission from Mazu was to Tianwang. And the third transmission from Tianwang was to Xuefeng 雪峯. And one transmission from Xuefeng was to the Yunmen school. Again, the third transmission from Xuefeng was to the Fayuan school. Therefore, all of the Five Houses emerge from Mazu.

That the 'transmission of the lamp' [collections] see Tianwang as a successor of Shitou is due to [the fact that] personal names may be the same and place names may be alike. In this instance, there were two [persons named] Daoyu 道悟 at the same time. One dwelled at the Tianwang monastery to the west of the city of Jingnan. The other dwelled at the Tianhuang monastery to the east of the city of Jingnan. Thus, those two persons were of the same name, [and lived at] the same time. Their two monasteries were located in the same city and their names pronounced alike. This is why this mistake arose. But their two epitaphs inscribed in stone do not allow for any doubts.<sup>101</sup>

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**101** The text is compiled in *Saihokushū* 濟北集 and edited in vol. 1 of *Gozan bungaku zenshū* 五山文學全集, quoted according to Okimoto 2003, vol. 1, 195–197.





**Europe and Americas**



Vitus Huber

# The Fabrication of Lineage: Genealogical Manuscripts and the Administration of the Spanish Empire (Fifteenth–Eighteenth Century)

**Abstract:** This article uses an important type of handwritten artefact from Spanish Latin America, the so-called *informaciones de méritos y servicios*, to investigate practices of lineage-building in the newly established European American colonies. Through these documents, early conquistadores showcased their family ties in reply to complex administrative rules. A careful study of the production process of these documents and their genealogical content helps us to see how narratives and topoi were deployed to establish genealogical filiations. One case study, the *información* of Jorge de Alvarado, will be used to investigate the process of fabricating a genealogy in depth. Additionally, the relevance of these procedures for indigenous inhabitants of the Americas will be addressed.

## 1 Introduction

Lineage played an important role in the early modern Iberian world. This holds especially true amid the establishment of the Spanish empire, where the newly arrived colonialists and local indigenous elites endeavoured to claim and defend certain privileges. Spanish conquistadors wrote reports of their achievements, so-called *informaciones de méritos y servicios*, to ask the Spanish Crown for royal favours in return for their efforts. Later, both Spanish heirs and descendants of indigenous allies alike addressed the Crown with such ‘reports of merits and services’, trying to benefit from their ancestors’ deeds. More than 3,000 of these *informaciones* produced from the sixteenth to eighteenth century are stored in the Archivo General de Indias in Seville alone. Producing these documents followed a specific protocol that required proving familial filiations. Although their main aim was not the production of a genealogy, these reports still became a means to claim or corroborate one’s lineage in the colonial context.

Around the year 1970, a few historians pointed to the potential of these *informaciones* for Latin American history, but the sources began receiving greater atten-

tion only three to four decades later.<sup>1</sup> Most studies so far have concentrated on prosopographical data in the *informaciones*.<sup>2</sup> Regarding genealogy, however, Carolina Jurado has diligently scrutinized the construction and presentation of lineages in sources on indigenous (*kuraka*) descendants of the Inca in Charcas.<sup>3</sup> Literary scholar Robert Folger has shown that these reports suit Claude Lévi-Strauss's concept of *bricolage*. Accordingly, the 'authors' of these texts explored self-fashioning techniques and styled themselves as royal subjects through these petitions.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, both Rolena Adorno and Roberto González Echevarría have analysed chronicles and *informaciones de méritos y servicios*, exploring the production of authority by the writing subject and the influence of colonial archival texts on shaping narratives in Latin American literature.<sup>5</sup> Historians, too, have pointed at the integral factor of self-promotion in the *informaciones*.<sup>6</sup> Consistent with this, I have argued elsewhere that the Iberian system of favours that generated these documents even helped to establish and maintain the Spanish colonial empire in the Americas.<sup>7</sup> While this has highlighted the political and economic significance of these sources, their role in the production of lineage and in broader Iberian genealogical culture has yet to be studied more broadly.<sup>8</sup>

In this article, I analyse the genealogical dimensions of the *informaciones de méritos y servicios* to highlight the connection of family ties with the emergence of a colonial society in Spanish America. Paying special attention to the administrative as well as the semantic level not only gives insight into the production process, but also helps us to see how narratives and topoi were deployed to generate and present genealogical filiations. Additionally, I ask about the cultural and political factors that supported or even requested the drawing up or writing down of genealogical manuscripts. Finally, I am interested in the adaptations of these Iberian precursors in the Americas, both by the Spanish and indigenous people.

To this end, I will first outline the genealogical cultures of the Iberian Peninsula and the Spanish Empire in the late medieval and early modern periods. In the second step, I will describe the process of producing the *informaciones*, including practices of compiling and the impact of material features. I then turn to a case

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1 Hassiotis 1969; Hanke 1979; Chuchiak 2002; Córdoba Ochoa 2013; Nakashima and Oliveto 2014.

2 Cf. for example, Grunberg 1993; Centenero de Arce 2009; Kania 2009; Ruiz Guadalajara 2009.

3 Jurado 2014.

4 Folger 2011. Considering the writing subject, see Valcarcel 1997.

5 Adorno 2007; Adorno and Pautz 1999, vol. 3; González Echevarría 1998.

6 Macleod 1998; Gregori Roig 2007.

7 Huber 2018.

8 Current research emphasizes the importance of (also personal) archives for the Spanish empire as well. See Cañizares-Esguerra and Masters 2021.



study, the *información* of Jorge de Alvarado, and scrutinize how he used and recycled the deeds and other documents available to him in the process of fabricating a genealogy. In a fourth and final step, I will discuss some of the peculiarities of genealogical manuscripts from indigenous inhabitants of the Americas. This allows us to observe ethnically and culturally hybrid genealogies. It also permits a limited but richer overview of the role that genealogical information played in the administration of the Spanish empire.

## 2 The cultural and political setting of Iberian genealogy

Until recently, scholars have credited two famous institutions with the rise of a culture of genealogical manuscripts in Spain: the idea of purity (*limpieza*) – later mainly known as ‘purity of blood’ (*limpieza de sangre*) – and the inquisition (1478–1834).<sup>9</sup> The latter recorded so-called *discursos de la vida* or *trazas*: formalized statements about the lives and ancestors of the accused that the latter delivered during trial.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, its persecution of heresy apparently invigorated the concept of *limpieza de sangre* – though this is hard to prove. Following the forced conversions of Muslim and Jewish inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula during and after the so-called Reconquista, powerful Christians suspected converted Muslims (*moriscos*) and Jews (*conversos*) of committing apostasy, especially in the form of alleged crypto-Jews practising Judaism. Between the mid-fifteenth and late nineteenth century, a number of *Estatutos de limpieza* were released to marginalize those who failed to demonstrate absolute ‘purity of blood’, meaning to have solely Christian ancestors.

However, the content and implementation of these charters changed and varied greatly over time and space. There was no judicial homogeneity, as the Iberian Peninsula knew multiple jurisdictions.<sup>11</sup> One of the earliest such statutes was formulated in the *Sentencia-Estatuto* by Pero Sarmiento and promulgated by the city council of Toledo on 5 June 1449. It helped the ‘Old Christians’ to maintain their power and exclude ‘New Christians’, meaning converts and their descendants, from important privileges. For example, the *Sentencia-Estatuto* denied – in theory – ‘New Christians’ any civil or clerical offices or benefits from the city of

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<sup>9</sup> See e.g. Martínez 2008, 1; Molinié-Bertrand, Carrasco and Pérez 2011. For a more critical assessment of the Spanish Inquisition, see Kamen 2014; on the *limpieza de sangre*, Gebke 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Amelang 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Kamen 2014, 831–875.

Toledo.<sup>12</sup> During this period, if someone applied to enter an order, office, or a university college (*colegio mayor*) in Castile, three factors had to be examined: 'purity of blood', 'legitimate lineage', and 'moral integrity'. Family trees contained in the reports drawn up to demonstrate *limpieza de sangre* should document compliance with the first two criteria. Hence, particularly people from the middle and upper echelons of society, who frequented these institutions, had pedigrees produced for themselves and their families.<sup>13</sup>

Prevailing concepts of nobility (*nobleza* or *hidalguía*) formed another and arguably even more important factor encouraging the production of genealogies.<sup>14</sup> Belonging to the aristocracy entailed various material, social, and judicial privileges. For example, nobles (*hidalgos*) were exempt from paying taxes and tributes like the commoners. It was nevertheless not always clear who belonged to the nobility.<sup>15</sup> Centralized lists or records of noble members of a city or village, if they existed, were often incomplete. Defining who could call oneself an aristocrat was habitually subject to negotiation between the community and the aspirant. Means to fashion oneself as a *hidalgo* included riding a horse, carrying arms, being a member of a noble fraternity or patron of a chapel, publicly displaying one's coat of arms, being exempt from manual labour, holding certain offices, or owning land, among others. In order to convince a community, one had to provide proof of the right to such privileges. Having one's noble lineage readily available in an impressively produced pedigree would come in handy. What mattered most in these processes was one's reputation and – borrowing from Pierre Bourdieu's terminology – social capital.<sup>16</sup> Did the community recognize you as a *hidalgo* and an honourable person? Here, concepts of honour also appear to have been important. Similarly, it helped to be regarded as a person of quality or of merit. The following pages will investigate the degree to which plausible genealogical narratives helped to create social capital, often in association with other factors.

The royal economy of favours and the concept of distributive justice were two more phenomena that created an environment favourable to the production of genealogical manuscripts. Since the Late Middle Ages, the Castilian Crown prac-

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<sup>12</sup> Ruano 2001, 23–25.

<sup>13</sup> On access to colleges, see Cuart Moner 1997; on the emergence of genealogical mentalities, Nirenberg 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Soria Mesa 2004.

<sup>15</sup> The *Siete Partidas*, an eminent code of law from the mid-thirteenth century, defined nobility as arising from lineage, implicitly excluding other ways of claiming such status – though this was a prescriptive definition that did not match the historical reality. See *Partidas* 2, título 21, ley 3.

<sup>16</sup> Bourdieu 1983.

tised an economy of favours.<sup>17</sup> In the royal effort to centralize the power of feudal lords under the Crown, the king tried to increase the vassals' loyalty by rewarding them with royal favours following the principle of distributive justice. It foresaw that those members of a community who were of higher status or who had contributed more to the common good should receive a larger remuneration. Vassals could therefore expect to be granted titles, offices, or privileges according to their personal merit and services to the Crown. Reciprocally strengthening the king's power and the subjects' services and loyalties consolidated the Crown's hegemony. This mechanism became fundamental to the emerging Spanish empire.

As most Spanish conquistadors were commoners, their social status did not count as a merit per se.<sup>18</sup> Instead, they called themselves 'old' or 'first conquistadors and settlers' (*antiguos or primeros conquistadores y pobladores*), or kinsmen of such.<sup>19</sup> Hence, from the earliest phases of the Conquista onwards, the participants in this endeavour promoted an alternative social hierarchy. The new category of 'old' or 'first conquistadors' or settlers valued seniority in the Americas; it theoretically challenged the existing social hierarchy and the idea of nobility. In reality, it simply offered the vast majority of non-noble Spaniards in the Americas a new opportunity to claim privileges and improve their social status.<sup>20</sup> The traditional idea of nobility, however, stayed important in the Americas as well. Many supplicants aimed at social ascent and asked for aristocratic privileges. In their attempts to achieve this goal, petitioners referred to their claimed meritorious status as a first conquistador and the services rendered as such.<sup>21</sup> The descendants of the conquistadors, on the contrary, could normally not boast of their own deeds, given they had not participated in the Conquista personally. Therefore, in order to present themselves as worthy of royal rewards, they quickly resorted to the argument of merit: either pointing to their noble lineage or their family ties to an eligible conquistador.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, the narratives of merit and service could be based upon the quality of one's *deeds* or the quality of one's *blood*, or both. This holds true for the time of the Conquista, while before and afterwards, the factor of lineage seems

<sup>17</sup> See Sandoval Parra 2014; Brendecke 2016, 39–41.

<sup>18</sup> Among the conquistadors of Tenochtitlan, only roughly six per cent belonged to the gentry (Grunberg 2004, 97).

<sup>19</sup> '[F]ue de los primeros conquistadores y pobladores', Sevilla, Archivo General de Indias (henceforth 'AGI'), México 95, no. 6, fol. 65r; *información de méritos y servicios* of Diego de Porras, 1525.

<sup>20</sup> In the agreement on the discovery of Florida, the Crown instructed Juan Ponce de León to provide the 'first discoverers' with Indios before anyone else (AGI, Indiferente 415, L. 1, fols 9r–11v, *Capitulación* for Juan Ponce de León, 1512).

<sup>21</sup> See note 19.

<sup>22</sup> See below on the case of Jorge de Alvarado's heirs.

to have been valued higher. To inform the king about one's merits and services, subjects from both sides of the Atlantic Ocean addressed him with reports called *informaciones de méritos y servicios*.<sup>23</sup>

### 3 The production of *informaciones de méritos y servicios*

The drawing up of an *información de méritos y servicios* followed a multistage bureaucratic procedure.<sup>24</sup> It began with a petition (*demanda or petición*), with which the petitioner who aspired for royal favours, in our case Jorge de Alvarado, asked the Audiencia to open the proceedings. The Audiencia was the regional tribunal and administration office, usually consisting of four judges and a president.<sup>25</sup> If it was impossible for the claimant to visit the Audiencia in person, he was allowed to send a representative (*procurador*). The petition contained a half- to one-page summary report (*relación*) of the 'merits and services' of the supplicant. It closed with either a concrete request for granting certain royal favours or with a vague plea to do them justice. Sometimes a questionnaire (*interrogatorio*) was distributed, and at some point during the proceedings, a list of possible witnesses as well. To start the drafting of an *información*, the petitioner had to pay the clerks a small fee.<sup>26</sup> If the Audiencia evaluated the petition positively, the witnesses were invited to individually testify under oath by a jurist (*relator*) on the basis of the questionnaire. An official clerk

23 In 1639, Fernando Pizarro y Orellana reminded the king of his duty to reward his vassals. See Pizarro y Orellana 1639; Huber 2018, 26–32, 295–357.

24 Scholars have used *informaciones de méritos y servicios* synonymously with *probanzas* or *relaciones de méritos y servicios*. However, this is misleading, as these terms are not interchangeable. The latter terms – *probanza* and *relación* – can indeed be found in the sources and in some archival catalogues. Nonetheless, they only describe specific parts of the document. The correct denomination referring to the whole report is *información*.

25 In the first few years, before the first Audiencia arrived in New Spain in December 1528, Crown officials accepted the petitions in the presence of an official clerk. After 1553, this was allowed again, with the exception of the years 1587 to 1590. Cf. Real Cédula 17 April 1553 (1586, 1590, 1596 and 1631 renewed), edited in Recopilación 1, libro 2, título 33, ley 18; Real Cédula 29 May and 28 September 1587, Recopilación 1, libro 2, título 33, ley 10. This section is based on my archival research at the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City, the Archivo General de Simancas, the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid, and the Real Biblioteca del Monasterio El Escorial, and draws substantially from my book (Huber 2018, 306–320). The procedure has also been described in Folger 2011, 29–35 and Parry 1968, 154–160.

26 See e.g. AGI, Patronato 54, no. 8, r. 3, fol. 2v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Nuño Pinto, 1532.

recorded the answers of the witnesses in a document called a *probanza*. This part also contained whatever written documentation the applicant brought forward as proof in order to support his claims. If the witnesses could write, they signed their own statements or placed their initials (*rúbrica* or *señal*); otherwise, two attendants signed on their behalf.<sup>27</sup> At the end of the document, an authentication formula and the clerk's signature and initials completed the reports. If the supplicant asked for a copy, a notary or scribe authenticated the duplicated documents with a brief additional attestation.<sup>28</sup> In general, the documents of all the different parts (*petición* or *relación*, *interrogatorio*, presentation of the witnesses, and *probanza*) were copied in a clean version by a scribe. This report constituted the *información de méritos y servicios* and was sent by the petitioner, or by the Audiencia, to the Council of the Indies.<sup>29</sup>

The Council of the Indies (*Real y Supremo Consejo de las Indias*) was an advisory council at the Spanish court responsible for administrative, judicial, and ecclesiastical matters relating to the overseas territories in the Americas, and later also the Philippines.<sup>30</sup> Supported by several assistant clerks, the council dealt with the *informaciones de méritos y servicios*, among many other responsibilities. Considering it difficult to judge from afar, the council feared unjustified claims. Therefore, it demanded that the Audiencia attach to the *información* a written opinion based on the Audiencia's own examination as an advisory statement (*parecer*).<sup>31</sup> Later, the Audiencia even had to make secret interrogations and draw up a complementary report (*de oficio*) in addition to the one by the petitioner (*de parte*). At the Spanish court, the Council of the Indies discussed each case orally and composed a consultation (*consulta*), which was presented to the king. He replied to the proposal with marginal notes. From these, the council determined their decision or instructions for action. Finally, the decision returned to the Americas in the form of a *real cédula*, or royal decree. As all *informaciones* resulted from the same bureaucratic process, they show a striking similarity in form and terminology despite the changes in procedural details over the sixteenth century.

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27 We lack reliable data on the degree of literacy among the conquistadors and early Spanish settlers of the Americas. From the sources, a considerable number of them appear literate enough at least to know how to sign their name. Bernard Grunberg has counted an extraordinarily high number of literate conquistadors from New Spain, at 84.2 per cent (432 out of a sample of 513) (Grunberg 1993, 40).

28 Cf. e.g. AGI, Patronato 54, no. 8, r. 4, (2) fol. 39r; *información de méritos y servicios* of Juan de Vargas, 1532; and AGI, Patronato 55, no. 1, r. 6, fol. 9r; *información de méritos y servicios* of Rodrigo Gómez Dávila, 1534.

29 See e.g. AGI, México 203, no. 5, *información de méritos y servicios* of Martín Vázquez, 1525.

30 The classical study on the council is Schaefer 2003; see furthermore Brendecke 2016, 93–102.

31 Real Cédula 5 June 1528, in de Encinas 1945, 2:175.

As for the form, the role of the clerks and their training played a key factor. The scribes followed a common practice for petitions, which they had learned either during their formal education or practical training. Numerous manuals described the structure and appearance of the documents in detail.<sup>32</sup> Continuing well-known traditions of writing *probanzas* and petitions in Castile led to a standardized form of composing the *informaciones de méritos y servicios*. Not only were the different parts of the reports broadly identical in composition; the mise en page followed strict guidelines too. From the number of lines per page – at least 35 – to the size of the margins, a remarkable uniformity emerged.<sup>33</sup> Formal consistency was enhanced through transcribing clean copies of the reports. This led to a homogenous handwriting and use of ink within each document. The *informaciones* are sources based almost exclusively on text, and the materials in use were ink and paper.<sup>34</sup>

Regarding language, one finds remarkable homogeneity among the many *informaciones* as well. Set phrases, recurring terminology, and prominent narratives characterize the reports. The reasons for this are as follows: first of all, the reports were largely based on oral statements dictated to and written down by clerks. These scribes accordingly influenced the language and content.<sup>35</sup> Following the habits and guidelines of their office, the scribes deployed legal and administrative idioms and formal set phrases. Consciously or not, they translated the oral statements from the petitioner or witnesses into juridical jargon.<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, in the *informaciones*, the petitioners recounted their services to the king and sometimes to God in a fashion that mirrored the economy of favours. Terminology highlighting ‘service’ and ‘nobility’ thus abounds in the documents. In particular, applicants highlighted the risks taken and the losses endured in the Con-

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<sup>32</sup> For instance, Gabriel Monterroso y Alvarado’s *Practica civil y criminal e instruction de scrivanos* from 1563 found wide circulation in the Americas. The manual is available online from the Biblioteca Nacional de España (hereafter BNE), R/38944; *Real cédula* of 5 February 1569; Jurado 2014, 394.

<sup>33</sup> See the instructions in chapter 7 of the Pragmática de Alcalá de Henares from 1503. On scribes in the Americas, see further Gómez Gómez 2012.

<sup>34</sup> Only very few examples contain visual material, for instance when the petitioner asked for the granting of a coat of arms. In such a case, a sketch illustrating how the suggested *escudo de armas* should look was often added. See e.g. AGI, Mapas y Planes–Escudos 23, Escudo de armas de Rodrigo Gómez Davila, 1534.

<sup>35</sup> Monterroso y Alvarado’s manual, for example, included details about what information should be asked for and recorded in the reports (BNE, R/38944, fols 105r–110v).

<sup>36</sup> The scribes’ linguistic involvement was possibly even greater when the statements stemmed from petitioners or witnesses who were not native speakers. Here we face a two-stage interpretation: they first had to be translated into Spanish, then rephrased according to Castilian legal logic. See Jurado 2014, 396–398.

quista.<sup>37</sup> Their alleged bravery in participating in certain looting or conquering expeditions (*entradas*) contributed to their service to the Crown. Similarly, suffering privation and hardship was a sign of outstanding loyalty to the king. At the same time, this indicated that the king had failed to guarantee his subject protection and provision to live in accordance with their status. It pressured the Crown to adequately reward the vassal with royal favours.<sup>38</sup> In addition to services, the supplicants stressed their merits. Traditionally, these included belonging to a noble lineage.<sup>39</sup>

From the perspective of genealogy, it is striking that at least a few conquistadors boldly stated that their lineage started with themselves.<sup>40</sup> Many more conquistadors, being more defensive about their family situation, simply remained silent about any kinship that did not promise to increase one's merit. Therefore, they implicitly suggested that their lineage began with themselves in the Americas.<sup>41</sup> If the supplicants were not conquistadors themselves, in the initial petition, they mentioned what their filiation to the conquistador was.<sup>42</sup> What is important, however, is the fact that simply claiming certain kinship did not suffice to establish it. Witnesses would have to confirm it in a second step, and the production of the *informaciones* and a positive answer by the Crown authorized the claims of lineage.<sup>43</sup> In the questionnaire for the witnesses, the first question was always whether the witness knew the petitioner and the other persons mentioned in the summary

37 See e.g. the lost investments of Juan de Espinosa: AGI, México 95, no. 44, fol. 322r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Juan de Espinosa, 1540.

38 '[P]ladeçiendo muchos trabajos y neçessidades', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 2, r. 2, fol. 2r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Alonso Gómez Hidalgo, 1535; 'segud la calidad de su persona tiene poco y padesçe nesçesidad siendo como es vna de las mas prinçipales personas que mas [h]an seruido en esta d[ic]ha nueba españa y que mas trabaxos ayan pasado', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fols 11v–12r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado, 1536.

39 From the late fifteenth to the seventeenth century, a whole number of treatises identified nobility with ideas of 'blood', 'lineage', 'honor', 'legitimacy', 'masculinity', and 'reputation'. Cf. Mexía 1492, also known as 'Nobiliario vero'; Arce de Otalora 1553; Arce de Otalora 1559; de Saavedra 1557; Moreno de Vargas, 1622. See further Soria Mesa 2007.

40 On constructing one's lineage based on military experience, see Jiménez Estrella 2012.

41 See e.g. AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fol. 1r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado, 1536.

42 See below on the case of Jorge de Alvarado's heirs.

43 See e.g. how a witness confirmed the question regarding Francisco de Labes's claim to be the legitimate son of his parents, stating that he has seen the married couple treat him accordingly: 'sabe e a bisto q[ue] los d[ic]hos melchior de alabes e maria de salas durante su matrimonio hubieron e p[r]locrearon por su hijo legitimo al d[ic]ho fran[çis]co dalabes e como tal lo an criado tratado e nonbrado llamandolo hijo y el a ellos padres y en [e]sta posesion es abido e tenido e este testigo por tal lo tiene', AGI, México 207, no. 4, fol. 4v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Francisco de Labes, hijo de Melchior de Labes y Maria de Salas, 1563.

and what connection they had to them. Admittedly, no witness is recorded to have denied knowing the main persons, as he or she would thus obviously lack the criteria for being a valid witness. Before the second question, the witness had to answer the so-called ‘general questions’ (*preguntas generales*). These included the age of the witness and whether he or she was a relative of the supplicant or in any other way prejudiced. Here we confront the same scenario: answering the latter with ‘yes’ would probably have excluded one from serving as a witness. Hence, one finds only negative answers to the question of being biased. To sum this up, the denial of family connections by the witnesses is one of three different dimensions of genealogy traceable in those reports. The other two are 1) the self-positioning of the conquistadors and 2) the fabrication of lineage by their heirs. For these latter two, Jorge de Alvarado and his family serve as a case in point.

## 4 Genealogy and Jorge de Alvarado’s *informaciones de méritos y servicios*

In his study on families in Renaissance Veneto, James Grubb warned his fellow historians not to analyse kinship exclusively along vertical patrilineal lines. The web of family ties extends in a more complex way than surnames might lead us to believe.<sup>44</sup> This advice holds true for the case of Jorge de Alvarado (c. 1480–1541) as well. Scrutinizing the Alvarado family’s handling of genealogy, we see the exemplary way in which he and his family members used and reused the conquistador’s ‘merits and services’ in various *informaciones de méritos y servicios*. Beyond that, the case study not only exemplifies the value of lineage in the early modern Spanish empire, but also how complex and malleable genealogies could be in this context.

Jorge de Alvarado is commonly known for being the brother of Pedro de Alvarado. They originated from a noble family from Badajoz. After reaching Hispaniola around the year 1510, they continued to Cuba. There, they participated in Juan de Grijalva’s expedition to the coast of Yucatán in 1518. Together with three of their brothers, they then joined Cortés’s *entrada*. This campaign evolved into what today is known as the Conquista of Tenochtitlan-Mexico (1519–1521).<sup>45</sup> Pedro acted as one of Cortés’s infamous first eleven captains. The Crown made him their *adelantado* and first governor of Guatemala after he had led a Spanish-Tlaxcaltecan campaign

<sup>44</sup> Grubb 1996, 26–28.

<sup>45</sup> AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fol. 1r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado, 1536.



to this region to (partially) conquer it.<sup>46</sup> Jorge served under his brother and as captain in further *entradas* in the evolving New Spain. In 1527, he spearheaded a large army of Quauhquecholteca and other Central Mexican allies in continuing the Conquista of Guatemala and El Salvador. While his contemporaries already conceived of and recalled Pedro as the conqueror of Guatemala, recent scholarship has rated Jorge's contribution as more decisive.<sup>47</sup> Beyond this vital campaign, he held important offices in New Spain and Guatemala from March 1527 to August 1529, and again from June 1533 to June 1535. In return for his services, Jorge de Alvarado received several *encomiendas* in New Spain and Guatemala.<sup>48</sup>

To build and perpetuate their privileges and inheritance over generations, he and his family initiated a number of *informaciones de méritos y servicios*. The first such report in regard to Alvarado's merits and deeds was sent to the Crown in 1536.<sup>49</sup> In it, Jorge de Alvarado introduced himself as 'one of the old conquistadors and settlers of these lands'<sup>50</sup> of New Spain and asked for restitution of the *encomienda* of Soconusco. He said he had received the pueblo of Soconusco with its subjects as a tributary district from the governor of New Spain, Alonso de Estrada, in 1527 for his services to the Crown. According to Alvarado's report, in 1530, after the members of the First Audiencia took power in Tenochtitlan-Mexico, they deprived him of Soconusco while he was serving in Guatemala. They accused him of having received this sinecure only because of nepotism, since he eventually married Luisa de Estrada, the daughter of Alonso de Estrada, who had given him the *encomienda* as a reward.<sup>51</sup>

While this family bond does not necessarily prove the accusation of favouritism, Jorge de Alvarado still refrained from alluding to his wife's name in the genealogical information in his report – despite the fact that Luisa de Estrada had originated from an aristocratic family too. Jorge only states that he is a *hidalgo* and married, and that he maintains his home in Tenochtitlan-Mexico. These factors marked his status and the fulfilment of his duties as a citizen, justifying his claim for sinecures.<sup>52</sup> Jorge also omits mention of his father, Gómez de Alvarado y Mexía

46 For details of his actions and the accusations against him, see AGI, Justicia 295, Juicio de residencia of Pedro de Alvarado, 1537, edited in Vallejo García-Hevia and Martín Blasco 2008.

47 Asselbergs 2008, 81–121; Lovell, Lutz and Kramer 2020, 63–69.

48 Thomas 2000, 5 and passim; see further Kramer 1994.

49 AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fols 1r–49v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado, 1536.

50 '[V]no de los antiguos conquistadores e pobladores desta tierra', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fol. 1r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado, 1536.

51 AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fol. 1r–v and fols 10v–11v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado, 1536.

52 '[J]orge de aluarado es persona cauallero hijodalgo y casado y tiene su casa en esta çibdad de

de Sandoval, a member of the extremely prestigious Order of Santiago.<sup>53</sup> One explanation for the omission could be that Gómez had stayed in Spain instead of earning a laudable reputation in the Americas, unlike Jorge's oldest brother, Pedro. Still, Jorge does not even mention him, nor his other brothers and sisters – the latter barely ever being touched upon in the sources. Except for the case of Pedro, this is of little surprise.

In the *informaciones*, in general, conquistadors rarely put anybody else on record but the captain they accompanied. This focuses the attention on their individual achievements rather than dividing them among a group.<sup>54</sup> Alluding to collateral relatives could stoke potential rivalries in regard to rewards or inheritances. Even though Pedro could have appeared in the petition – because he had been the captain under whom Jorge had served in Guatemala – he does not. Overall, Jorge primarily presents his personal service to the Spanish Crown, more so than his merit in terms of lineage. This is remarkable insofar as he is not basing his plea for remuneration on a legal concept of inheritance; rather than deducing his claims from an aristocratic standpoint, he supports his case with meritocratic reasoning.

After Jorge de Alvarado's death, his wife Luisa de Estrada initiated two more *informaciones*, one in 1542 and the other in 1566. Curiously enough, the references to family members and the terminology she uses to forge these filiations differ between the two reports. In the first, she states that she had been Jorge de Alvarado's spouse and that he had been 'one of the first conquistadors who came to New Spain and one of those who served Your Majesty the most [...] especially in the province of Guatemala'.<sup>55</sup> In addition to her husband's outstanding services to the Crown, Luisa de Estrada emphasizes the legitimacy of their marriage and their offspring. She presents an official confirmation by Jorge de Alvarado recognizing her as legal guardian of their children and his goods. She comments that 'she was legitimately married to her husband Jorge de Alvarado following the rules of the

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mexico sosteniendola con mucha honrra como tal caballero theniendo sus armas cauallos y criados y gente con mucha costa', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fol. 11v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado, 1536.

53 De Rújula y Ochotorena and del Solar y Taboada 1934–1936, 105–109, 257–294; Lovell, Lutz and Kramer 2020, xi and *passim*.

54 Huber 2018, 339 and *passim*.

55 '[J]orge de albarado fue vno de los primeros conquistadores q[ue] binieron y pasaron en esta nueba españa y fue vno de los q[ue] mas sirvieron a vuestra magestad en ella y en las demas probinçias que se ganaron e conquistaron espeçialmente en la probinçia de guatimala donde siendo el teniente de gobernador e capitan e conquistador gano y conquisto y paçifico la di[ch]a prov[in]cia y la puso en la corona rreal', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (2), fol. 1v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1542.

Holy Church and that during marriage they had had, as legitimate children, Pedro de Alvarado, Leonor, and Isabel de Alvarado'.<sup>56</sup>

In her report from 1566, Luisa de Estrada draws a picture of an even more deserving family. She introduces herself as the widow of Jorge de Alvarado, whom she now calls not only 'one of the first conquistadores' but also 'one of the first captains and discoverer and conqueror of New Spain'.<sup>57</sup> This time she indirectly takes credit for being Pedro de Alvarado's sister-in-law: she points out that Jorge was the legitimate brother of the famous *adelantado* of Guatemala and that they were well-known *hidalgos* from Badajoz.<sup>58</sup> To complete the dynamic presence of the Alvarados, she mentions Jorge and Pedro's brothers Gonzalo and Gómez, too, who had all served in many *entradas* in New Spain.<sup>59</sup> Matching her husband's distinguished lineage, she includes her own renowned parents, indicating that she is Alonso de Estrada's and Marina de la Caballería's oldest legitimate daughter.<sup>60</sup> Besides Jorge's many services to the Crown, Luisa praises her father's efforts as well: he was the first treasurer sent by the Crown and former governor of New Spain. Additionally, he had served as a conquistador and settler in Guatemala and in a number of towns.<sup>61</sup>

Just as Luisa de Estrada describes her parents' marriage as legitimate, she emphasizes the lawfulness of her own marriage with Jorge de Alvarado. She consistently stresses that their children were likewise legitimate sons and daughters. Due to Jorge's death while asking for royal favours for his services in Castile around 1541,

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56 '[B]iuda muger q[ue] fue de jorje de albarado diffu[n]to [...] dixo q[ue] por quanto como al d[ic] ho señor al[ca]lde es notorio ella fue casada ligitimam[en]te segud horden de la santa madre yglesia con el d[ic]ho jorje de albarado su marido e que durante el matrimonio entre ellos avian abido por sus hijos ligitimos a pedro de albarado e leonor e ysabel de albarado', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (2), fols 5v–6r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1542.

57 '[B]iuda muger de jorje de albarado ya difunto vno de los primeros capitanes descubridores y conquistadores desta nueua españa', AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 3r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

58 '[J]orje de albarado hera hermano legitimo del adelantado don pedro de albarado [...] y heran cavalleros hijosdalgos notorios naturales de la çibdad de vadajoz de los rreynos de castilla', AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 4v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

59 AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 6r–v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

60 AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 5v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

61 '[A]lonso de estrada fue el primero thesorero general de la rreal hazienda que huuo en esta nueva españa y ansimysmo fue governador della çiertos años y hizo muchos y muy señalados seruiçios a la corona rreal todo el tiempo que biuio como fue a conquistar y poblar la provincia de guatimala y la villa de sanct luys de chiapa y la çibdad de antequera de guaxaca y la villa de sanct ylefonso y otros pueblos', AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 5r–v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

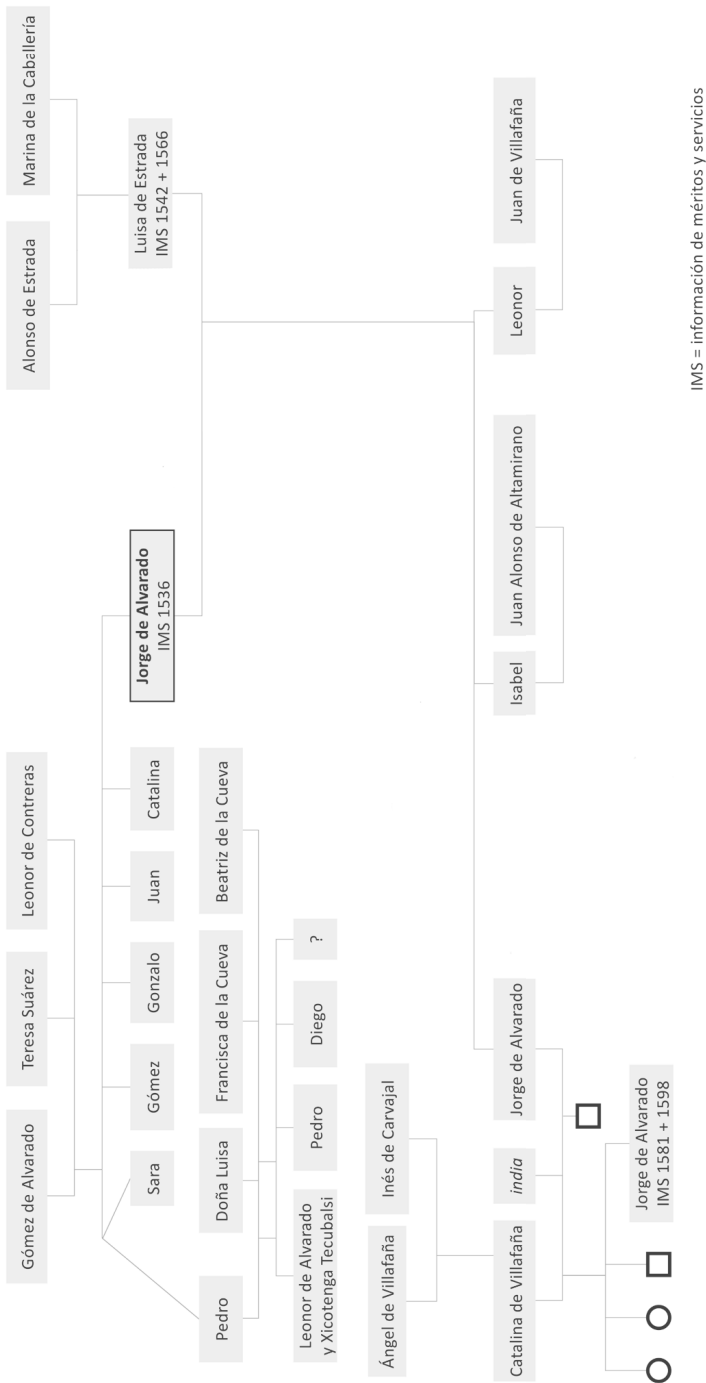


Fig. 1: Selected pedigree of Jorge de Alvarado.

in Luisa's eyes, her children lived in poor conditions.<sup>62</sup> Her son Pedro, whose name seems to have been changed to Jorge, had passed away around 1563, some three years before this petition was initiated. He had left four legitimate children in need, two sons and two daughters, plus a son he had had with an indigenous woman. It is only later that we learn the identity of the legitimate children's mother, while we lack any details about the latter woman.<sup>63</sup> Luisa's remaining children were both married to noble Spaniards: Isabel to Juan Alonso de Altamirano and Leonor to Juan de Villafañá. According to Luisa, she had given her daughters all her fortune to make their dowries adequate to their status. This left her badly off, and since her sons-in-law lacked any *encomiendas*, they lived indigently by the standards of their noble lineage.<sup>64</sup> Considering the idea of distributive justice explained above, the poverty that Luisa portrays in her report should have put the king under pressure to reward his deserving vassals. All in all, Luisa de Estrada gives a more nuanced picture of her family here (see Fig. 1), including more relatives of noble descent and with a mounting sum of merits and services to the Crown. At the same time, these additions strengthened her plea for royal favours, as her illustrious family allegedly lived below their dignity.

In the grandson's petition of 1581, one can see how the 'merits and services' of his ancestors were recycled and how familial filiations became a more important subject. Claiming an illustrious genealogy, Jorge de Alvarado introduced himself as the legitimate son of don Jorge de Alvarado, grandson of Jorge de Alvarado and Ángel de Villafañá, and great-grandson of the governor and treasurer Alonso de Estrada [...] high-ranking persons of great quality who have rendered distinguished service to Your Royal Crown, as did the *adelantado* don Pedro de Alvarado, my uncle [sic], and the chief officer, Juan de Samano, my father-in-law.<sup>65</sup>

62 AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 5v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

63 AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 6r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

64 '[N]o tienen encomiendas de yndios algunas y bien ellos y las d[ic]has sus mugeres nesçesitadas siendo como son personas nobles y de mucha calidad', AGI, Patronato 67, r. 2, fol. 6r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Luisa de Estrada, 1566.

65 '[H]ijo legitimo de don jorge de aluarado y nieto de jorge de aluarado y angel de villafañe y biznieto del gobernador y thesorero alonso destrada digo q[ue] biendo los d[ic]hos mis padre y abuelos personas de muy grandes calidades muy principales q[ue] han echo ynsignes seruicios a v[uest]ra rreal corona ellos y el adelantado don p[edr]o de aluarado mi tio [sic] y el alguazil mayor joan de samano mi suegro', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fol. 1r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581.

The homonyms might be a bit confusing, and he erroneously calls *adelantado* Pedro de Alvarado his uncle instead of his grand-uncle. Presumably he did the latter intentionally to increase the degree of relatedness, especially since Pedro left only *mestizo* children who were not recognized as legitimate heirs.<sup>66</sup> Of greater interest for our topic is the manner in which Jorge de Alvarado established his lineage and how he used it to corroborate his claims. In the questionnaire, the supplicating Jorge de Alvarado first has the witnesses confirm their knowledge of the mentioned persons. On this occasion, he adds his grandmother Luisa de Estrada to the list of witnesses. Rather than alluding to her contribution to settling in the conquered lands – women's achievements were mostly ignored in the *informaciones* – Luisa only appears as a link to her father.

In the second question, Alvarado asks the witnesses to approve the legitimacy of his lineage from his great-grandfather down to himself. Luisa de Estrada was Alonso de Estrada and Marina de la Caballería's legitimate daughter. Luisa and the supplicant's grandfather, Jorge de Alvarado, had a lawful son of the same name who had already passed away, as mentioned above. The petitioner omits his two aunts, Isabel and Leonor, as he presents solely the line of ancestors that leads to him, with the conspicuous exception of Pedro de Alvarado. Otherwise, he would have brought more heirs to the table, with whom he would have had to share his ancestors' prestige and potentially their heritage. His deceased father had been married to Catalina de Villafañá y Carvajal, the legitimate daughter of Ángel de Villafañá, an old settler in New Spain and captain in Florida. Their lawful firstborn son was now the one producing this *información*.<sup>67</sup> Consistent with the reports by his ancestors, he starts his lineage in the Americas: on the patrilineal side, he includes his grandmother's father, Alonso de Estrada, who had held top-ranking offices in New Spain. In contrast, he leaves his grandfather's father unmentioned despite him being a renowned member of the elite: Gómez de Alvarado y Mexía de Sandoval had stayed in Castile. The matrilineal side begins with his grandfather, who had come to New Spain during the Conquista.

In questions 3 to 6, he asks about the service his namesake grandfather had rendered to the Crown and what rewards he had received for it in terms of *encomiendas*.

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<sup>66</sup> In question 11, he explicitly tries to delegitimize Pedro de Alvarado's daughter Leonor, and with this, her and her husband's claim to Pedro's heritage. AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fol. 5v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581. Leonor was indeed a *mestiza*, and her full name was Leonor de Alvarado y Xicotenga Tecubalsi. Her second husband, Francisco de la Cueva, tried to cover this up in an interesting case: AGI, Patronato 171, no. 1, r. 12, fols 1r–2v, *relación del enterramiento* of Pedro de Alvarado, 1568.

<sup>67</sup> AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fols 5v–6r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581.

Question 7 suggests that the supplicant is the legitimate and oldest male heir of his father and grandfather. As pointed out in question 8, the *encomiendas* that his grandfather had earned had gone back to the Crown.<sup>68</sup> This should clearly mark an unjust situation for the Spanish, as in many cases, *encomiendas* were passed down to the conquistador's descendants. In the questionnaire, the petitioner then repeats the same pattern of a) naming the 'merits and services' of one of his relatives; b) claiming to be his legitimate heir; and c) marking the status quo as unjust by stating that he had not received the deserved rewards and heritage. First Alonso de Estrada, then Pedro de Alvarado, then Ángel de Villafañá and Juan de Samano are individually praised for their service.<sup>69</sup> The only individuals that have not been introduced to us in earlier *informaciones* by the Alvarado family are the supplicant's wife, Brianda de Quiñones, their (anonymous) son, and father-in-law Juan de Samano, who acted as chief officer in Tenochtitlan-Mexico.<sup>70</sup> In question 15, Jorge de Alvarado records his personal deeds: he had offered his services staving off English ships and a planned rebellion in New Spain. In the sixteenth and final question, he asks if he is one of the most important people in Tenochtitlan-Mexico and publicly perceived as a nobleman possessing his own lot of land. Moreover, he suggestively inquires if he has sufficient revenue and enough *encomiendas* to easily maintain himself 'according to his status and the merits of his parents'.<sup>71</sup> He and most witnesses believed otherwise. The Audiencia backed his plea and, in 1588, the Crown decided to award him a monthly salary.<sup>72</sup> Here again, the supplicant's needy situation

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68 '[S]i saben q[ue] el d[ic]ho jorge de alvarado conetnidos [sic] p[or] los p[ro]çesos de la pregunta antes desta es el abuelo legitimo del d[ic]ho don jorge q[ue] haze esta ynformaçion padre de su padre y q[ue] al tienpo de su fin y muerte no dexo otro hijo baron mas q[ue] al d[ic]ho don jorge de alvarado defunto cuyo hijo leg[it]imo y el mayor es el q[ue] haze este d[ic]ho pedimiento e ynformaçion digan', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fols 4v–5v, quote fol. 5r–v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581.

69 AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fols 5v–6r, (for Alonso de Estrada fol. 5v, Pedro de Alvarado fol. 5v, Ángel de Villafañá fols 5v–6r, Juan de Samano fol. 6r), *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581.

70 AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fol. 6r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581.

71 '[S]i saben etc. que el d[ic]ho don jorge de alvarado si es de los principales desta d[ic]ha çudad de mex[ic]o y rreino y sy es tenido por cauallero y persona de suerte y si tiene comodamente con q[ue] sustentarse conforme a su calidad y q[ue] hazienda tiene y q[ue] si los yndios de su encomienda de guacachula y tepapayeca q[ue] rrenta q[ue] dellos tiene sy se puede sustentar comodamente conforme a su calidad y meritos de sus pasados', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fol. 27v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581.

72 The Audiencia supported his request, remunerating him with *encomiendas* that yielded up to 13,000 pesos per year. In 1588, Philipp II granted him a monthly stipend of ten *escudos* on top of his salary in the royal army under the Duque of Parma and Palencia (AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fols 55r–59r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1581).

as depicted in the report supported his case for receiving royal favours in the context of distributive justice. To mount a robust argument, he bolstered his rather average personal deeds by drawing on the major ‘merits and services’ of his ancestors.

The case of Jorge de Alvarado’s grandson shows that petitioners often recycled their ancestors’ reports. The *información* of 1581 is 290 folios long. The text produced at the grandson’s initiative comprises 118 folios, thus less than half of the total document. It further includes the above-mentioned *informaciones* issued by his grandfather Jorge de Alvarado in 1536 and by his grandmother Luisa de Estrada in 1542. The former spans 98 folios and the latter 69, with some blank folios between them.<sup>73</sup> In this sense, he not only built his line of argument, but even his written evidence on his ancestors’ deeds. Their achievements for the Crown became *his* ‘merits’, since he was a descendant of conquistadors, and their administrative petitions were integrated into *his información*. Still, this was not the final act of this petition.

Petitions by conquistadors’ heirs for rewards for their ancestors’ ‘merits and services’ continued throughout the entire colonial period. At the same time, litigations about lawful possessions and successions were pursued by real and alleged descendants. Jorge de Alvarado’s grandson’s report was used again in 1594 by a soldier called Agustín Gómez.<sup>74</sup> Above all, Alvarado even produced another petition himself in 1598. By then he had become governor of Honduras. From there, he informed the Crown that even though the king had granted him a yearly pension of 3,000 pesos per year, he would only receive 2,016 pesos at that point. Consequently, he asked the Crown to make the Audiencia award him the promised *encomiendas*.<sup>75</sup> As the demands rose due to the higher number of settlers and heirs, the procedure to prove one’s legitimacy became more sophisticated too.

Suplicants later began to have their *informaciones* printed, especially the part called *relación de méritos y servicios*.<sup>76</sup> While the choice for printed over handwritten reports probably promoted reproducibility and dissemination, the details of this shift require further research. In regard to conquistador Jorge de Alvarado’s legacy, we find some of the above-mentioned *informaciones* printed in reports from

73 Cf. AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1, fols 1r–49v; AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (2), fols 1r–34v; AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fols 1r–59r.

74 Cf. AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3), fol. 61r–v, Petition of Agustín Gómez, 1594.

75 AGI, Patronato 82, no. 1, r. 1, *información de méritos y servicios* of Jorge de Alvarado by Jorge de Alvarado nieto, 1598. Two more *informaciones* are included here: one by Alonso Álvarez de Vega, whose wife claimed to be the granddaughter of conquistadors like Jorge de Alvarado (fols 98r–158r); the other by Alonso de Contreras Guevara, who opposed the granting of *encomiendas* to other petitioners before him (fols 159r–212r).

76 See e.g. AGI, Patronato 74, no. 4, r. 1, *méritos y servicios* of Francisco de Orduña and Pedro de Solís by Mathias de Solís y Ulloa, 1576.



the seventeenth and eighteenth century: in 1628, his great-grandson, Juan de Alvarado, had three witnesses testify and three scribes confirm in a printed memorial that he was the legitimate son of Jorge de Alvarado and his second wife, Juana de Benavides.<sup>77</sup> Later, the printed memorial was again integrated, together with a series of older *informaciones* from the Alvarado family, into an extensive petition from 1776. A monk called Pedro de Alvarado y Guzmán claimed that he and his three brothers were the legitimate sons of Manuel de Alvarado y Guzmán, a descendant of Pedro de Alvarado. Here the proof of the petitioners' genealogies was examined by three different clerks and was increasingly based upon written instead of oral evidence.<sup>78</sup>

This ostentation of lineage was closely linked with establishing and maintaining the system of exploiting local resources and lower echelons of indigenous society. In conclusion, proving to the Crown one's legitimate descent from a conquistador granted one a privileged position and the right to perpetuate the Spanish claim to colonial hegemony in the Americas.<sup>79</sup>

## 5 Genealogy and the limited indigenous presence

The malleability of genealogical constellations becomes visible when we take a look at yet another *información*. This one, produced by Francisco Girón in 1549, is quite revealing. Girón was a settler in Guatemala and the husband of Francisca de Alvarado. Prior to their liaison, his wife had been married to Pedro de Garro. As one of the first conquistadors and captains of Guatemala, Pedro de Garro had received half of the *encomienda* of Ycalco, in the city of Santiago in Guatemala, in reward for his service. After his death, Francisca married Francisco Girón. Now the latter was asking the Spanish Crown to acknowledge him as the legitimate heir of his spouse's former husband's *encomienda*. He wished to receive it in perpetuity in order to give his children and descendants a reason to maintain the settlement and continue to serve the Crown. In order to strengthen his case, Girón pointed to the fact that Francisca de Alvarado was the daughter of a first conquistador, namely Jorge de Alvarado.<sup>80</sup> Then who was his mother-in-law, according to the genealogy illustrated above? Astonishingly, it was not Luisa de Estrada.

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77 Memorial of Juan de Alvarado, edited in *Boletín del Archivo General del Gobierno* 1/2 (1936), 100–103.

78 Real Cédula of 7 May 1776, edited in *Boletín del Archivo General del Gobierno* 1/2 (1936), 79–121.

79 For details, see Huber 2018, 295–357.

80 AGI, Patronato 59, no. 1, r. 2, fols 1r–2v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Francisco Girón, 1549.

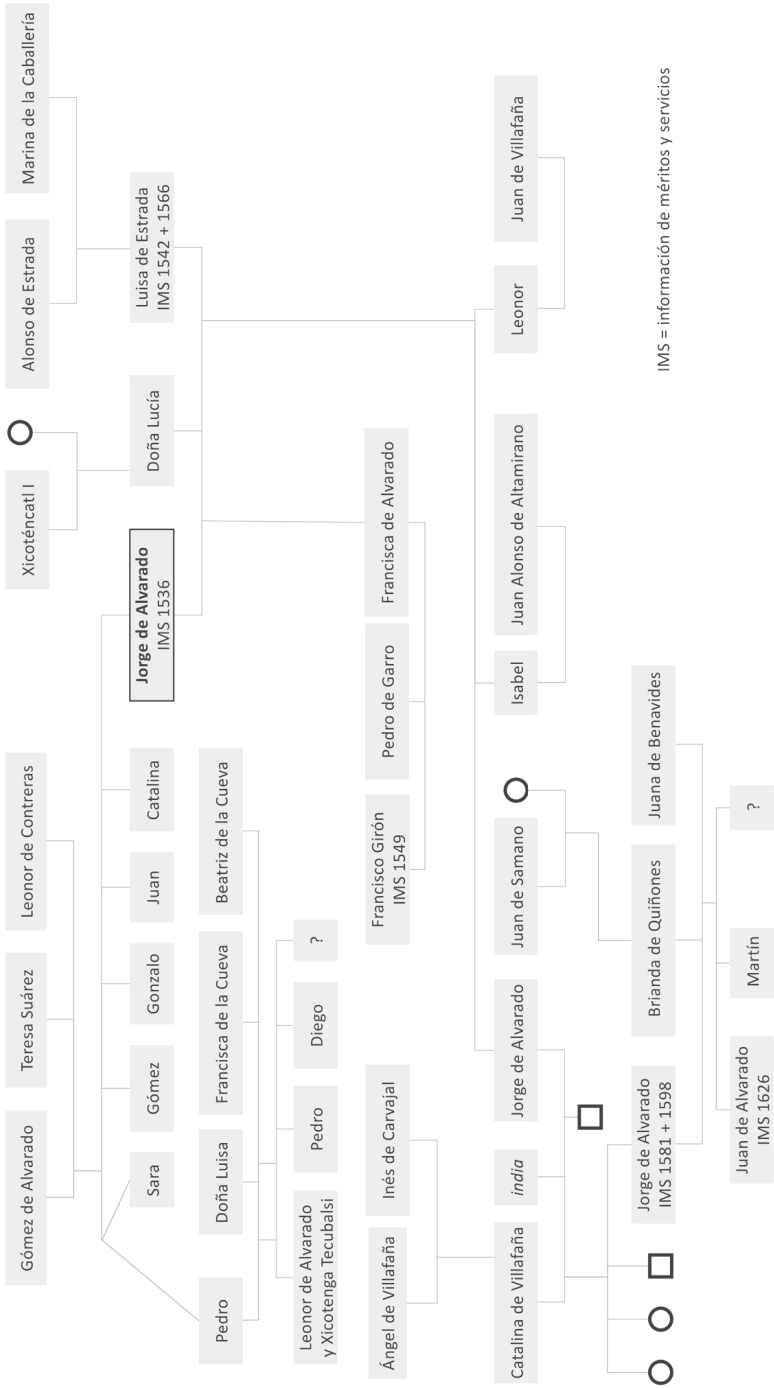


Fig. 2: Extended pedigree of Jorge de Alvarado.

In fact, Girón does not make any mention of his mother-in-law, who bore the (baptismal) name Doña Lucía – perhaps because she was a daughter of Xicotencatl the Elder (†1522) (see Fig. 2). Xicotencatl was the ruler of Tizatlan in Tlaxcala and responsible for the crucial alliance between the Tlaxcalans and the Spaniards. Strengthening the bond of the two allies, the Tlaxcalan leaders gave their daughters to Cortés.<sup>81</sup> He paired them up with the Spanish captains. Therefore, Jorge de Alvarado's first wife was Doña Lucía, an indigenous princess. Their daughter, Francisca de Alvarado, was thus a *mestiza*, born from a Spanish-Amerindian couple.<sup>82</sup> The omission of her 'ethnic' background and her descentance from the highest Tlaxcalan elite was nothing unusual. One can only speculate whether Francisco Girón feared the truth to be detrimental to his petition; certainly, he at least did not think it would help his cause. Unsurprisingly, the above-presented supplicants descending from Jorge de Alvarado's marriage with his last wife, Luisa de Estrada, completely omitted the existence of an earlier spouse and the corresponding offspring. From a broader perspective, this makes the challenges of this type of source apparent: they are profoundly partial. Nonetheless, these are rich sources and scholars can productively mine them. However, as Robert Folger or Murdo Macleod have shown, the sources contain a substantial degree of self-fashioning.<sup>83</sup>

Another archival vagary, as this last example reveals, is the underrepresentation of indigenous voices. The cooperation of some indigenous elites enabled the Spanish conquistadors to prevail over local dynasties. In the case of the *Conquista* of Tenochtitlan, for instance, we have already touched upon the support of Cortés's campaign by the Tlaxcalans. After the official authority over the division of lands, sinecures, and further privileges had shifted to the Spanish court, indigenous allies adapted to this colonial economy of favours. They quickly learned how to present

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81 The scene is depicted in the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* (c.1528), archived in the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas Library. The closest textual sources are the heavily biased chronicles. Cf. Díaz del Castillo 1975, chapter 30–51, 71–110; Cortés 1985, 55–60; López de Gómara 1988, 2:109–116; Muñoz Camargo 1998, 192–206. See further Velasco 2003 and Herrera 2007.

82 In their recommendation to the Council of the Indies, the Audiencia stated as an aside that Francisca de Alvarado descended from an indigenous parent: 'es natural'. Nonetheless, the Audiencia supported Girón's plea. AGI, Patronato 59, no. 1, r. 2, fol. 31r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Francisco Girón, 1549; In another *información* from Girón, fourteen years later and shortly after Francisca's death, she is regarded as the daughter of Jorge de Alvarado without any allusion to her indigenous blood. AGI, Guatemala 111, no. 32, fols 1r–5v, *informaciones* of Francisco Girón, 1563.

83 See Macleod 1998; Folger 2011.

their petitions and to litigate for their causes.<sup>84</sup> By the turn of the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, they had not only started to produce *informaciones*, but also to narrate their own view on the *Conquista* in chronicles and to draw genealogies in European style.<sup>85</sup> However, this did not evolve in a one-way acculturation; especially in regard to the chronicles and genealogies, one finds strong features of hybridization.<sup>86</sup> We know for example, how Nahuas adapted to European heraldry;<sup>87</sup> on the other hand, we can trace Amerindian symbols and iconography in Spanish coats of arms in the Americas.<sup>88</sup>

The general use of *informaciones* by native inhabitants of the Americas has gained more attention lately.<sup>89</sup> The most famous cases stem from the efforts of descendants of the Tlaxcalan elites, who claimed privileges that Cortés had presumably promised their ancestors for allying with him.<sup>90</sup> As for the connection between *informaciones* and genealogy, the above-mentioned study on Peru has shown that indigenous petitioners adopted many European concepts regarding family, blood, honour, etc. What is more, Jurado detected a comprehensive homogeneity within her set of reports

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84 For an early case, see e.g. AGI, México 95, no. 24, fols 209r–210v, *información de méritos y servicios* of Indios principales of Tenochtitlan-Mexico, 1532. Nancy van Deusen has thoroughly analysed how *indios* engaged in legal processes to claim their rights (van Deusen 2015), while de la Puente Luna 2018 applies Van Deusen's approach to petitioners from the Andean region. Cunill 2014 shows how Mayas, Chontales, and Mexicah in sixteenth-century Yucatán used *informaciones*.

85 See e.g. AGI, Mapas y Planos-México 48, Pedigree of the descentance of emperor Moteuczoma II by Pedro de Toledo Moctezuma, 1596. Earlier versions can be found in AGI, Mapas y Planos-Escudos 211–213, 1574 and 1594; later, more sophisticated versions in AGI, Mapas y Planos-Escudos 197, Pedigree of the Moteuczoma family, 1817; AGI, Mapas y Planos-Escudos 189, Pedigree of the family García Xicontecalpopoca Chichimecal, 1748; or a late pedigree going back to the conquistador Pedro Pizarro: AGI, Mapas y Planos-Escudos 285, Pedigree of Manuel de Samaniego y Pizarro, 1776. For chronicles by indigenous or *mestizo* authors, see e.g. de Alva Ixtlilxochitl 1975; Guaman Poma de Ayala 1980; Muñoz Camargo 1998; de Alvarado Tezozomoc 2001. Important studies have been rendered by Adorno 2000; Schroeder 2010; Richter 2015.

86 On the influence of prehispanic Inca genealogy on colonial historiography, see e.g. Julien 2000; on the hybrid genealogy of Mexicah princes, Caso 1958.

87 See Gutiérrez 2015.

88 AGI, Mapas y Planos-Escudos 179, *escudo de armas* of Diego Tehuetzquititzin indio principal de y gobernador de los indígenas de México, 1546; AGI, Mapas y Planos-Escudos 168, *escudo de armas* of Tzintzuntzan, 1595; AGI, Planos y dibujos, no desglosados 86, *escudo de armas* of Luis Antonio Chimalpopocal Montesuma, indio, cacique y caballero de Tlaxcala, 1772.

89 See e.g. Matthew and Oudijk 2007; Oudijk and Restall 2013.

90 See. e.g. Ciudad de Tlaxcala, Ynforme de los méritos de la Ciudad de Tlaxcala. De cuyo Archivo sacó Boturini el Original de ésta Copia. Año de 1740, transcribed by Felix Hinz <<http://www.motecuhzoma.de/Meritos-Tlaxcala.htm>> (accessed on 4 February 2021). See further Hicks 2009; Hinz 2013.

from indigenous petitioners both on the formal level as well as regarding content.<sup>91</sup> While this can be explained by the standardizing factors of the procedure described earlier, some particularities of indigenous petitions are traceable.

In 1536, the same year that Jorge de Alvarado wrote his first report, Juan Indio started his *información*.<sup>92</sup> He presented himself as lord of Coyoacan, a fairly large town on the south-western coast of Lake Texcoco. He narrated how his father had supported the 'Christians'. As a captain of Moteuczoma, his father had allegedly led the Spaniards on a safe path to Tenochtitlan, accompanying and helping them. Furthermore, he had told them to flee the city when the Tenochca, the residents of Tenochtitlan, had made plans to kill the invaders. Amid his assistance to the Spaniards, he and many of his men died. Juan's brother later joined Cortés on the expedition to Honduras and was killed there. This left Juan to become the new lord of Coyoacan. He claimed to have rendered the 'Christians' no smaller services than his 'ancestors' (*antepasados*), relieving the Spaniards of much work, adversity, and need. Cortés appropriated Coyoacan as his *encomienda*, treating its people like slaves. They were whipped, beaten, imprisoned, and shackled like captives. Juan Indio complained that his people were faithful Christians but had fled for the mountains due to excessive tributes and harsh treatment. Finally, he begged the Crown to consider their services and free them from 'such big captivity and tyranny'.<sup>93</sup>

His general reasoning for royal favours differed from Spanish petitions in only three points:

1. He stressed the factor of religion, praising their successful evangelization.
2. He urged the Crown to protect them from violent treatment.
3. He offered the king his and his people's children and wives, as well as the 'blood of our own arms'.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Jurado 2014, 404.

<sup>92</sup> AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 4, *información de méritos y servicios* of Juan Indio and father, 1536.

<sup>93</sup> '[E]mpago [sic] de los muchos y grandes servicios q[ue] yo y mis antepasados avimos hecho nos trata como a esclavos el y todos sus mayordomos y calpiques y todos los demas suyos a causa q[ue] como este el pueblo tan cerca haze nos servir mas que ni[n]gun otro pueblo sirue y somos mas mal tratados q[ue] quantos naturales ay destas partes dandonos muchos açotes palos y cocos y teniendonos en carceles cepos y cadenas como a los mayores captiuos del mu[n]do sie[n]do como somos xpianos y confesando como confesamos el sancto nombre de j[es]hu xpo y son los tributos tan excesiuos q[ue] los mas de mis vasallos asi por ellos como por los grandes malos tratamientos q[ue] a mi y a ellos se nos hacen se me van por los mo[n]tes por los quales mueren [...] q[ue] nos quisiere sacar de tan gran captiuero y tirania', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 4, fols 1r–2r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Juan Indio and father, 1536.

<sup>94</sup> '[N]osotros q[ue]remos ser de v[uest]ra m[a]g[es]t[ad] y no de otro ningun señor y darle n[uest]ros hijos y mugeres y la sangre de n[uest]ros braços', AGI, Patronato 55, no. 3, r. 4, fol. 2r, *información de méritos y servicios* of Juan Indio and father, 1536.

The latter recalls the practice of interdynastic marriage and bonding through the exchange of princesses, as discussed above in the case of Jorge de Alvarado and Doña Lucía. The concepts of blood and blood sacrifice famously played a vital role in Mesoamerican understandings of loyalty and service.<sup>95</sup> Offering one's blood to the Crown was presumably the strongest sign of obedience Juan could have made.

In regard to establishing familial filiations in the *información*, Juan proceeded in the same way as Spanish petitioners did. In the second question of his *interrogatorio*, witnesses were asked whether they knew him as the legitimate son of his father and as brother of his predecessor. Similar to the heirs of Spanish conquistadors, Juan grounded part of his plea on the services of his 'ancestors'. On a semantic level, it is interesting to note that while he did not specify whom he was referring to, he most probably meant his brother; though it was perhaps a matter of translation, since his brother had been his predecessor in the position of lord of Coyoacan, calling him his 'ancestor' made sense. As for Juan's claim, it resembled the case of Jorge de Alvarado's heirs. Luisa de Estrada and her descendants took credit for Jorge de Alvarado's brother Pedro and his deeds too. Overall, petitions from indigenous inhabitants of the Americas often differed only in minor points from those of 'pure' Spaniards. The procedure was the same, however, as was the formal way of legitimizing kinship. The indigenous petitioners widely related to the logic of the economy of favours. They conformed to the Spanish view that understood family filiations as linked to ideas of legal rights to inherit.

Broadly speaking, genealogies are, in the first place, claims of family filiations on paper. They have the potential to transform into socially and/or legally accepted and approved claims. They do not necessarily represent connections by blood or marriage. Rather, they are *locus* and *modus* of adaptation, manipulation, obliteration, or creation of kinship. Finally, producing genealogies entails remembering and forgetting as two sides of the same coin.

## 6 Conclusion

The case of Jorge de Alvarado's *informaciones de méritos y servicios* has shown that these reports not only contained genealogical information, but even constituted lineages. The final goal of these sources was not to present genealogical ties, however. Presumably, whenever aristocratic cultures trumped over meritocratic ones, the production of genealogical manuscripts was not an end in itself. It rather aimed at

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<sup>95</sup> See Schüren and Gabbert 2020.

manifesting a certain claim via the display of family inheritance or the quality of one's lineage. The same holds true here, where the colonial setting offered a new window of opportunity for social mobility. In the context of the economy of favours, mainly non-aristocratic subjects of the Spanish Crown in the Americas requested the granting or approval of certain privileges. If the petitioners were not conquistadors themselves, they had to emphasize their merits instead of their services. The former consisted primarily in being a descendant of a conquistador or other meritorious people. The 'merits and services' of the ancestors built the foundation for the status of the supplicants. Hence, for the heirs, genealogy became increasingly important, and the *informaciones* were a means to demonstrate the required family filiations.

On the administrative level, these *informaciones* transmitted, established, and/or corroborated genealogical information through a uniform procedure. Whether the information was genealogically correct or not played a secondary role to the Spanish Crown. The familial filiations and individual status claimed by the petitioners were established and officially authorized through acknowledgement by the witnesses and officials. In that sense, the logic of the *informaciones* functioned in a way that Niklas Luhmann would describe as 'legitimation by procedure'.<sup>96</sup> In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the examinations became more rigid. More written proof and more official acknowledgement by an increasing number of notaries and clerks were demanded. As new – and more accessible – methods and writing reforms were disseminated across the Spanish empire, the petitions changed in appearance. Printed reports gained popularity. Some added coloured pedigrees. Nevertheless, the degree of homogeneity in form remains impressive – and is replicated on the semantic level. Oral statements from petitioners and witnesses underwent different forms of linguistic, cultural, and professional translation. The protocol for the procedure paved the way with standard questions, supported by trained notaries and scribes leading and recording the procedure in a standardized way. Knowing the 'buzzwords', the correct terminology and decisive content to qualify for the economy of favours interdependently created a number of typical topoi and narratives. By recycling older reports, applicable knowledge was passed down to later generations, both genealogical knowledge as well as know-how in regard to petitioning.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, the cultural and political implications of the *informaciones* were twofold: on the one hand, the practice of these petitions helped stimulate the building of institutions. Though on a moderate scale, the reports occupied a whole

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<sup>96</sup> See Luhmann 2008.

<sup>97</sup> Regarding the particular role of knowledge in producing genealogies in the European context, see Eickmeyer, Friedrich and Bauer 2019.

number of officials, judges, councillors, notaries, clerks, scribes, and messengers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. On the other hand, and more effectively, the *informaciones* were the central medium for negotiating the ‘economy of favours’ and distributive justice. By granting the petitioners *encomiendas* and other rights, the Crown perpetuated the Spanish presence in the Americas and appeased the indigenous elites.

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Fiona Vicent

# Data Organisation in two Bourgeois Genealogies from Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century Basel

**Abstract:** This article focuses on the genealogical practices of two genealogists of the Swiss bourgeoisie: Lucas Sarasin-Werthemann (1730–1802) and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt (1798–1873). It examines how they gathered, managed, and presented their data, including the designing of genealogical diagrams and the structuring of genealogical texts. The two cases demonstrate how designating descendants and relatives with special identification codes provided a useful means for referring to these individuals in different types of inscriptions and presenting the relationships between them. Another technique that both genealogists relied on was the production of alphabetic registers featuring families who were related by marriage. These served as overviews of the relationships established within the dense endogamic network of Basel's elite families.

## 1 Introduction

In the 1760s, Lucas Sarasin (1730–1802), a merchant from Basel, travelled together with his cousin, Hans Bernhard Sarasin (1731–1822), to the French region of Lorraine, the home of his ancestors, to gather information for a genealogical project:<sup>1</sup> he intended to produce a family tree of the Sarasin family and an accompanying book detailing the family's history and the biographies of all those mentioned in the family tree. In the following century, Johann Rudolf Burckhardt (1798–1873), a lawyer, also conducted genealogical undertakings, one of which focused on tracing his own descent. The projects of these two genealogists, both descending from elite Basel families, serve here as an example of the European urban elite's interest in genealogy.<sup>2</sup>

In this article, I follow Markus Friedrich's suggestion that genealogy should be integrated into the study of historical knowledge production.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, I shall analyse doing genealogy as a 'research activity'<sup>4</sup> that generated a considerable

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1 Joneli 1928, 4.

2 On genealogical projects of the Swiss elite, see also Gantet and Broillet 2019.

3 Friedrich 2019.

4 Friedrich 2019, 3.

quantity of notes on family history and family member biographies, as well as sketches of genealogical diagrams with different layouts.

My analysis focuses on the work Lucas Sarasin and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt carried out *on* and *with* paper:<sup>5</sup> how did they organize and manage genealogical data – not only the names of family members, but also their dates of birth, marriage and death as well as further biographical information – and how did they visualize who is related to whom?

The focus on such genealogical practices reveals that different genealogical documents often referred to one another: even though each text had its specific functions, the inscriptions and thus the manuscripts themselves, or parts of them, were ‘combinable’.<sup>6</sup> The present analysis of Lucas Sarasin’s and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt’s genealogical practices starts with a look at the structuring of genealogical narratives and diagrams through the use of identification codes. These codes were a crucial element in the combination of different genealogical manuscripts or parts of them. In the second part of this paper, the use of alphabetical registers of names will be examined. These registers reveal a general interest in illustrating how Basel’s urban elite were related by marriage.

Genealogical diagrams were a prominent feature of Lucas Sarasin’s and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt’s projects. The two genealogists drew different diagrams with different layouts and functions. In the European context, the family tree is among the most popular such diagrams.<sup>7</sup> The family tree layout that remains in common use today dates back to early modern times. In the Middle Ages, arboreal terms had already been introduced in diagrams dealing with aspects of kinship. One of them was the *arbor juris*, used to determine successions; another was the *arbor consanguinitatis*, used to avoid incest.<sup>8</sup> Applications of naturalistic arboreal imagery to genealogical diagrams, however – in addition to simply applying arboreal concepts metaphorically – emerged through a protracted process.<sup>9</sup> Medieval genealogical diagrams usually placed the founding ancestor at the top of the chart, with the descendants following towards the bottom. It was only in the fifteenth century that family trees began to acquire ‘their canonical form [...] when the founding ancestor of a given lineage was normally ensconced in the roots or trunk of a tree, with its descendants scattered among branches reaching to the sky’,<sup>10</sup> as Christiane Kla-

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<sup>5</sup> Hoffmann 2013, 282.

<sup>6</sup> Latour 1990, 26.

<sup>7</sup> Klapisch-Zuber 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Klapisch-Zuber 2009, 435.

<sup>9</sup> Klapisch Zuber 1991 and Klapisch-Zuber 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Klapisch-Zuber 1991, 105.

pisch-Zuber explains. This new, reversed layout was heavily inspired by the Tree of Jesse, which depicted Christ's ancestors and was meant to be read from bottom to top, where Christ was positioned.<sup>11</sup> Other biblical images, such as the tree in the crucifixion of Christ or the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil might also have influenced the imagery of the genealogical family tree.<sup>12</sup>

Another widespread type of genealogical diagram was the so-called *Ahnentafel* ('pedigrees' or 'ancestry charts'). Its most widespread use was as a proof of nobility, which was needed for admission to religious chapters or for higher offices and was also used for 'status display'.<sup>13</sup> This type of diagram, which acquired its characteristic form by the end of the sixteenth century and especially during the seventeenth century,<sup>14</sup> started at the bottom with the *ego* under consideration, and depicted both his or her parents, all four grandparents and so forth.<sup>15</sup> *Stammtafeln* ('descendant charts'), on the other hand, showed an *ego*'s descendants, similar to family trees. In contrast to family trees, these diagrams were usually read from left to right.<sup>16</sup>

## 2 Basel's bourgeois genealogists

Lucas Sarasin is considered the first Sarasin in Basel to deeply immerse himself in his family's history.<sup>17</sup> In his manuscripts, Lucas Sarasin assumed that Reinhold Sarasin I (1505–1555), who lived most of his life in Pont-à-Mousson,<sup>18</sup> was the earliest identifiable ancestor, but later works on the family's history looked even further into the past and identified earlier forebears.<sup>19</sup> The Sarasin family originally resided in the French region of Lorraine, but one of the grandchildren of Reinhold Sarasin I, the textile merchant Gedeon Sarasin (1573–1636), was exiled, due to his Protestant faith, from Lorraine via Alsace to Basel,<sup>20</sup> which had belonged to the Swiss Confederation since 1501, where he received citizenship in 1628.<sup>21</sup>

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11 Klapisch-Zuber 1991, 120–122.

12 Bouquet 1996, 43.

13 Harding 2019, 130.

14 Bauer 2013, 60.

15 Bauer 2013, 60.

16 Bauer 2012, 43–44.

17 Joneli 1928, 4.

18 Wackernagel 1914, 11.

19 Wackernagel 1914, 7–11.

20 Wackernagel 1914, 16–20.

21 Wackernagel 1914, 20.

Gedeon's descendants became some of the city's leading manufacturers of textiles such as woven silk ribbons. One of them was Lucas Sarasin who, together with his brother Jakob (1742–1802), continued the business they had inherited from their father.<sup>22</sup> In addition to his commercial activities, Lucas was also a member of the city council. With a keen interest in music and physics, he organized concerts and events where he impressed the audience with optical illusions.<sup>23</sup> Besides these pursuits, he was deeply engaged in his family's affairs. Once per week, he held a family gathering,<sup>24</sup> and he invested immense effort into his genealogical projects. An extensive collection of his genealogical notes and diagrammatic sketches as well as final versions of the drafts are kept at Basel's public records office. In this paper, I wish to focus mainly on four types of Lucas Sarasin's genealogical manuscripts, whose inscriptions are often combinable with one another. Among them are family books, a large-scale family tree, various other diagrams, and alphabetical registers (Fig. 1).

Lucas Sarasin's documents reveal how much work he invested into his genealogical projects. Investigating familial ties and making them visible and comprehensible to others was time-consuming and required tremendous stamina, since genealogical projects were long-term and, in a way, never-ending, as families kept growing.<sup>25</sup> A later manuscript on the family history by the genealogist Felix Sarasin (1771–1839), Lucas Sarasin's nephew, acknowledges the efforts his uncle invested in these projects and praises the results of his labour.<sup>26</sup>

Besides his expeditions to Lorraine, where he spent time investigating the family's past, Lucas Sarasin collected genealogical information from various sources: his own diary entries, which often reported the births and deaths of family members;<sup>27</sup> printed eulogies, letters and diagrams he obtained from a certain Mr. Mallot, who is yet to be more precisely identified, and other informants in France;<sup>28</sup> and presumably the *Journal Sarasin* – a paper manuscript measuring 19.5 cm x 30.5 cm and bearing, on the front page, the French title 'Journal Sarasin commencé le 27 Avril 1561 par Sarasin à Pont a Mousson puis à Metz et continué par ses descendants jusqu' au 24 Julliet 1691.'<sup>29</sup>

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22 Schaub 1914b, 78.

23 Schaub 1914b, 89–91.

24 Schaub 1914b, 92.

25 Friedrich 2019, 5, 7.

26 StaBS PA 212a C 17, Entwurf zur Geschichte der Familie Sarasin, unpaginated.

27 StaBS PA 212a G 1.2, Tagebuch von Lucas Sarasin.

28 StaBS PA 212a C 3.9, Mitteilungen des Herrn Mallot in Paris.

29 StaBS PA 212a E 1.



StaBS PA 212a C 6

**'Family Tree of the Sarasin Families in Lorraine and Basel'** / 'Stammbaum der Familien Sarasin in Lothringen und Basel'

StaBS PA 212a C 3.1

**'Family Tree of the Sarasin Family in Basel'** / 'Stammbaum des Sarasinischen Geschlechts in Basel'

StaBS PA 212a C 3.2

**'Ancestry Charts of In-Laws'** / 'Ahnentafel angeheirateter Männer und Frauen'

StaBS PA 212a C 3.3

**'Register for Book Papers A, B, C, and D'** / 'Register z.d. Buch papieren A B C D'

StaBS PA 212a C 3.3

**'Register for the Sarasin Family Book, Into Which It Has Already Been Integrated'** / 'Register zum Sarasinischen Stammbuch, so aber in dasselbe Selbsten eingetragen worden'

StaBS PA 212a C 3.11

**Descendant Chart, in 'Additional Information and Notes'** / 'Übrige Angaben und Notizen'

StaBS PA 212a C 3.11

**Diagram Sketches and the 'Arrangement for the New Family Tree', in 'Additional Information and Notes'** / 'Übrige Angaben und Notizen'

A large-format family tree illustrating the 208 descendants of Reinhold Sarasin I.

Four bound family books reporting the male and female descendants of Reinhold Sarasin I, a textual appendix to the family tree. The different copies have been compiled at different times: the earliest one lists 206 people, the second one was ripped apart and ends with 131 individuals, the third one contains 210 people and the last one, 224.

These ancestry charts of in-laws are sometimes called 'Papers A, B, C, and D'.

This alphabetical register of names refers both to the genealogical charts that list the ancestors of the in-laws (the so-called 'Papers A, B, C, and D') and to the second family book.

This alphabetical register of names must have been integrated into a book that has not been found yet.

Lucas Sarasin's descendant chart, inspired by an early diagram produced by his grand-uncle Philipp Sarasin.

Diagram sketches and calculations made for the configuration of the family tree.

**Fig. 1:** Manuscripts produced by Lucas Sarasin during the course of his genealogical projects.

This manuscript – consisting of eight folios from an account book, and similar to Florentine *ricordanze*<sup>30</sup> in terms of content – was commenced by Reinhold Sarasin II (1533–1575), the son of Reinhold I and father of Gedeon, presumably a merchant<sup>31</sup> from Pont-à-Mousson, with an entry for his wedding day on 27 April 1561.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> As Ciappelli explains, private *ricordanze*, which were transmitted from father to son, could deal with manifold subjects, including not only births, deaths and marriages, but also the political engagement of family members, the author's own noteworthy experiences and even advice to his descendants. See Ciappelli 2000, 28.

<sup>31</sup> Wackernagel 1914, 11.

<sup>32</sup> Reinhard and Enz 1971, 2. Found in StaBS PA 212a D 12.

However, Reinhold Sarasin II was not the one who added the title to the manuscript, as his handwriting differs from that of the title, which must have been added later. According to one of Reinhold's early entries, like his brother Nicholas one year prior, he was elected member of the city council in 1564.<sup>33</sup> In the same year, as Reinhold's entries recount, he proclaimed his belief in the Protestant faith before the governor, who subsequently banished him from Pont-à-Mousson. Reinhold was exiled to Metz.<sup>34</sup> The following entries, written in the first person, focus mainly on births, deaths and marriages.<sup>35</sup> The journal was continued (sometimes sporadically) by Reinhold's son Gedeon, followed by Gedeon's son Peter Sarasin I (1608–1662) and from 1662 onwards, in German, by Peter's oldest son Peter Sarasin II (1640–1719), whose last entry noted the death of his wife in 1691. The *Journal Sarasin* had thus been handed down several generations. It is very probable that Lucas Sarasin also had possession of it. Even later generations were still interested in it: in 1888, for example, Jakob Sarasin-Schlumberger (1851–1928) produced a handwritten copy, and in 1971, it was photographically reproduced, transcribed and commented on by the Romanist Toni Reinhard and the librarian Hans Rudolf Enz, who called it 'the oldest and most valuable document' of the Sarasin family.<sup>36</sup>

Another very important source of information was a genealogical diagram on vellum from 1698,<sup>37</sup> probably produced by Philipp Sarasin (1651–1704),<sup>38</sup> Lucas Sarasin's grand-uncle. (Fig. 2) There are two copies available; these differ slightly in size (one measuring 34 cm x 48 cm, the other 35 cm x 50.5 cm), in the depiction of the family weapon and in the syntax and word choice. The smaller copy bears additional inscriptions made by Lucas Sarasin, who must have used this copy as his source. Meant to be read from left to right, it starts with Regnaud (otherwise referred to as Reinhold) Sarasin I and then traces his descendants through six generations.

At the top of the page, a quotation from the Bible reads 'Go from your country, to the land I will show you',<sup>39</sup> in analogy to the Protestant family members' exile from Pont-à-Mousson and later emigration to Basel. This heading might explain why one of the early family members, the Catholic Claude Sarasin (1532–1590), was not integrated into this early diagram, as he did not emigrate from France. He is,

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<sup>33</sup> Reinhard and Enz 1971, 20–21 (fol. 440).

<sup>34</sup> Reinhard and Enz 1971, 20–21 (fol. 440).

<sup>35</sup> Reinhard and Enz 1971, 2.

<sup>36</sup> Reinhard and Enz 1971, 2.

<sup>37</sup> StABS PA 212a C 2, *Sarasinisches Stammregister*. Even though this manuscript's heading is 'register', the document resembles a descendant chart.

<sup>38</sup> Joneli 1928, 4.

<sup>39</sup> Genesis 12:1. (Original quote in German: 'Gehe aus deinem Vaterland, in ein Land, das ich dir zeigen will').

however, featured in Lucas Sarasin's work. The papers of the Sarasin family archive indicate that Lucas Sarasin tried to find out more about Claude's descendants and wanted to integrate them into his family tree.

In the following century, Johann Rudolf Burckhardt also developed a keen interest in his family's genealogy. The Burckhardt family had originally emigrated from the Black Forest and possessed Basel citizenship since the first half of the sixteenth century. Numerous family members were politicians, merchants or scholars; one of the most famous among them was the historian Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897).<sup>40</sup>

Johann Rudolf Burckhardt engaged with information relevant to genealogical projects not only privately, but also occupationally. Besides his work as a lawyer (he was known as the *Fiskal*, an office that was similar to the position of a prosecutor) and as a member of the city council, he had a keen interest in history: he was a member of cantonal and national historical societies (such as the Historische Gesellschaft zu Basel and the Allgemeine Geschichtsforschende Gesellschaft der Schweiz), and published historical articles covering such diverse topics as the early population in the Swiss Alpine regions,<sup>41</sup> Basel's press system before 1831<sup>42</sup> and the Cardinal Joseph Faesch, a well-known figure and relative of Napoleon Bonaparte and the Faesch family of Basel.<sup>43</sup>

In the 1850s and 1860s, he supervised the reproduction of parish registers for the process of establishing Basel's civil registry.<sup>44</sup> This public involvement in registration might have provided him with genealogical information about his own ancestors, with whom he was engaged in his spare time. Another useful source for him was probably a printed work on the Burckhardt family by Zacharias Hemminger from 1715, which reported the family's history in textual form.<sup>45</sup> This book included both a copper engraving of a Burckhardt family tree and a lengthy (more than 130 pages) and detailed textual explication of the descendants of Christoph Burckhardt, the designated progenitor of the family.

The genealogical manuscripts by Johann Rudolf Burckhardt that will be analysed in this article must have served as the basis for a family tree that was produced and published in 1893, almost three years after roughly 250 family members had celebrated a large family reunion.<sup>46</sup> According to the title of the family tree, it was conceptualized by Ludwig Säuberlin (1864–1932, an employee of Basel's state archive), who

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<sup>40</sup> Burckhardt 2005.

<sup>41</sup> Burckhardt 1846a.

<sup>42</sup> Burckhardt 1875.

<sup>43</sup> Burckhardt 1846b.

<sup>44</sup> Duthaler 2017, 31–33.

<sup>45</sup> Hemminger 1715.

<sup>46</sup> For a discussion of the Burckhardt family reunion in 1890, see Vicent 2023.





based it on the work of Johann Rudolf Burckhardt.<sup>47</sup> Lucas Sarasin and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt belonged to two of Basel's leading bourgeois families, who had obtained Basel citizenship in the early modern period and held political and economic power that they consolidated through strategies of social endogamy, meaning that these families usually intermarried.<sup>48</sup> This is also evident in the case of the Sarasins and the Burckhardts, for whom a combination of surnames like Sarasin-Burckhardt or Burckhardt-Sarasin is rather common. The alliances between the two families stretch back to the seventeenth century. In 1637, soon after the first Sarasin, Gedeon (1573–1636), had settled in Basel, his son Peter I (1608–1662) wed Sara Burckhardt (1619–1698).<sup>49</sup> This marriage indicates that early after their settlement in Basel, the members of the Sarasin family tried to connect with Basel's older elite families,<sup>50</sup> just as the founding father of the Burckhardt family, Christoph, had done a century earlier when he married the daughter of the future mayor, Gertrud Brand, in 1539.<sup>51</sup> Their elite self-consciousness thus combined elaborate marriage practices with equally purposive genealogical activities. Caring for and representing familial identity and power was a key concern of Basel's elite, including the Sarasins and Burckhardts.

### 3 Techniques of arranging and visualizing information with identification codes

The aforementioned descendant chart from 1698 provided the basis for Lucas Sarasin's project. He copied the chart and expanded it by adding further information from his own genealogical research: he updated the diagram to include not only six, but eight generations of the descendants of Reinhold Sarasin I.<sup>52</sup> Expanding on the original diagram, Lucas Sarasin assigned a number to each person mentioned in the diagram: the number 1 was assigned to Reinhold I, while his children received numbers of 2 to 5, and the offspring of Nicolas (2) was represented by numbers 6 to 9. The total number of people mentioned in the diagram reached 113, ending with Peter Sarasin, born in 1765. Lucas Sarasin must have produced the chart around that time, as his later manuscripts include more descendants, probably due to additional research.

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<sup>47</sup> Säuberlin 1893.

<sup>48</sup> Sarasin 1997.

<sup>49</sup> Schaub 1914a, 49.

<sup>50</sup> Schaub 1914a, 49.

<sup>51</sup> Burckhardt 2005.

<sup>52</sup> StaBS PA 212a C 3.11, Descendant chart by Lucas Sarasin.

This diagram must have been one of Lucas Sarasin's earliest manuscripts. Later, he inscribed additional information about the descendants of Reinhold I in bound family books.<sup>53</sup> In the same way that he had assigned a number to each descendant in his chart, he also applied this technique in his family books. So far, four copies of these books have been found. Each book reports the male and female descendants of Reinhold I and provides biographical information about them. These entries may contain simple genealogical data like dates of birth, marriage and death, but they can also recount further details about a person, such as the offices or ranks the person held. Wherever possible, Lucas Sarasin also included the offspring of the respective marriages. Two books, presumably the earliest ones, feature the handwriting of Lucas Sarasin; the other two contain neater handwriting, probably serving as a fair copy. The earliest one with Lucas Sarasin's handwriting provides information about 206 descendants;<sup>54</sup> his second one was ripped apart and ends with 131 descendants. The rest of the manuscript is missing. The two copies with neater handwriting contain narratives of 210 and 224 descendants, respectively; the last-mentioned Sarasin was born in 1802, the year Lucas Sarasin died. These family books thus were constantly updated during his life.

Unlike his grand-uncle Philipp, Lucas Sarasin integrated Claude Sarasin, the Catholic, into his family books. Claude, according to Lucas Sarasin's nephew Felix, was 'the founding father of the Lorraine branch',<sup>55</sup> the direct descendant of Reinhold I and brother of the exiled Reinhold II. The number that Lucas Sarasin first assigned to Claude in his earliest family book was 116, based on the decision to cover the Lorraine branch separately from the Basel one later on in the narrative, but he ultimately assigned Claude the number 3 when he chose to present both branches simultaneously. This adjustment provoked a new enumeration, indicated by the emendations in red ink (Fig. 3). By assigning a number to each person, Lucas Sarasin could more accurately refer to specific family members, for example by making it possible to easily distinguish between individuals with the same first names.<sup>56</sup>

This practice facilitated the drawing of genealogical diagrams, as the numbers required less writing surface and were easier to handle. In the preliminary sketches Lucas Sarasin drew for his family tree, he relied on numbers only and omitted the names of the respective family members.<sup>57</sup> Working with numbers apparently facilitated the act of thinking diagrammatically and drawing the illustration.

53 StaBS PA 212a C 3.1, Stammbaum der Familien Sarasin in Lothringen und Basel.

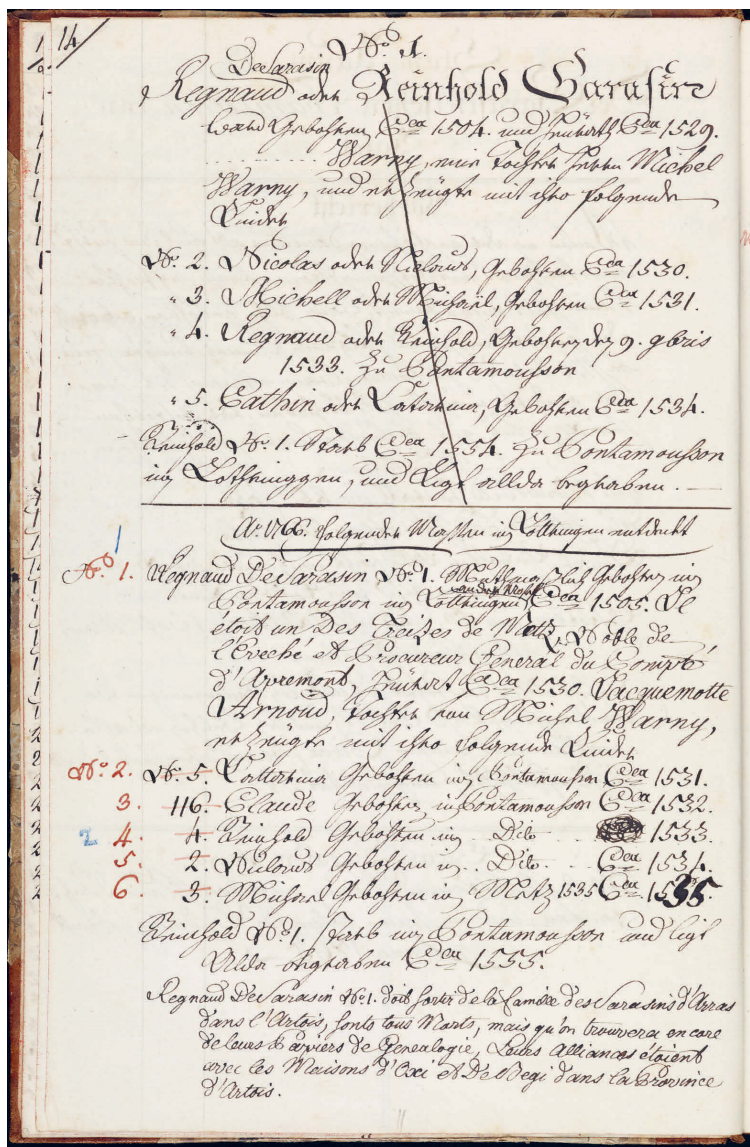
54 This must be the earliest one, as it contains corrections that have been implemented in the second copy.

55 StaBS PA 212a C 17, Entwurf zur Geschichte der Familie Sarasin. (Original quote in German: 'Stammvater der Branche in Lotharingen'.)

56 Studies have explored the way numbers have been used for the identification of vehicles, houses and hospital beds from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries onwards; see Tantner 2014 and Tantner 2018.

57 StaBS PA 212a C 3.11, sketch for the new family tree, in *Übrige Angaben und Notizen*.





**Fig. 3:** Entry featuring Reinhold Sarasin (c. 1505–1555) in Lucas Sarasin's earliest family book, illustrating the numeration of family members / Basel / 1765 / StaBS PA 212a C 3.1.



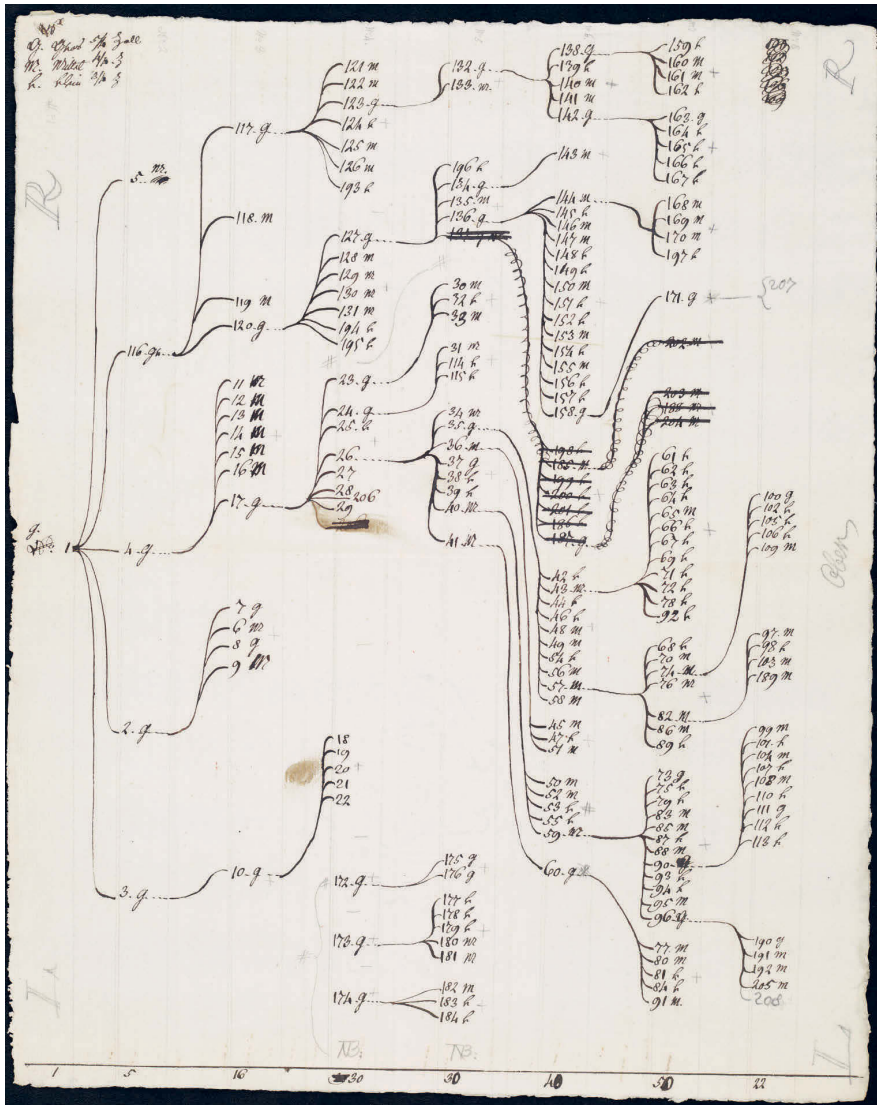


Fig. 4: Lucas Sarasin's diagram sketch for the Sarasin family tree / Basel / sine dato, second half of the eighteenth century / StaBS PA 212a C 3.11.

(Fig. 4) This sketch resembles the outline of Philipp Sarasin's diagram from 1698, as it can be read as a *Stammtafel* ('descendant chart') from left to right (with the *Stammvater* on the left and his descendants spreading out to the right), but the term *oben* (designating the top of the page) in the right margin suggests that the piece of paper should be turned 90 degrees counterclockwise. The diagram then resembles a family tree, with the 'first' progenitor at the bottom and lines branching out from him to his descendants through eight generations towards the top of the page. This double layout is possible because descendant charts and family trees both illustrate a progenitor's descendants through the male line, but they differ insofar as the intended reading direction is not identical: descendant charts are usually read from left to right, and family trees from the bottom to the top of the page.<sup>58</sup>

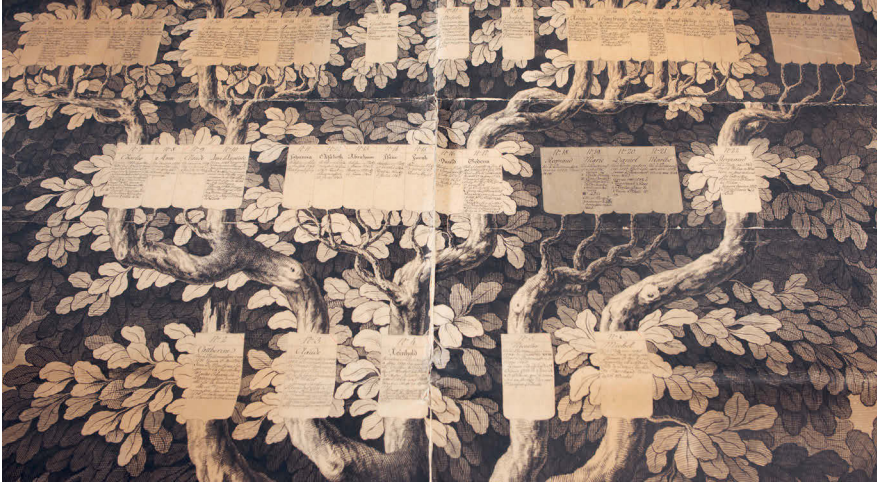
In addition to laying out the generational order in diagrammatic fashion, this sheet also contains information about the intended size of the graphic elements, namely the medallions that carry the name and additional biographical details of each subject. A closer look at the rough diagram reveals that a letter (*g*, *m* or *k*) has been added to each number representing a person. A key in the top left corner of the page explains that the letter *g* means 'big', the letter *m* 'medium' and the letter *k* 'small'. It also states that the largest size is equivalent to 5/4 inches, the medium one to 4/4 inches and the small one to 3/4 inches. On another piece of paper, these sizes are directly linked to the design of the family tree's medallions.

Such considerations of how to use the available writing surface were a crucial aspect of sketching a genealogical diagram. One of Lucas Sarasin's manuscripts, entitled 'Arrangement for the New Family Tree',<sup>59</sup> makes it possible to infer how these calculations were made. Lucas Sarasin tried to figure out the size of each graphic element based on the number of people included per generation. He treated every generation as a single column, and he had to work with eight columns in total, each of which had a length of 58 inches. To calculate the amount of space the graphic elements required, he had to make various measurements. For this, he produced his own measuring instrument: he used the back of a playing card to mark off units, allowing him to make measurements for his sketches.<sup>60</sup> He also tried out different designs for his diagrams, drawing both rounded and more angular shapes; the latter were used for the larger-sized family tree (Fig. 5). Making aesthetic arrangements were thus important steps in Lucas Sarasin's workflow.

<sup>58</sup> On the four common types of genealogical tableaux (Stammlisten, Stammtafeln, Stammbäume, Ahnentafeln), see Bauer 2012.

<sup>59</sup> StaBS PA 212a C 3.11, Eintheilung zum neuen Stammbaum, in Übrige Angaben und Notizen.

<sup>60</sup> StaBS PA 212a C 3.11, playing card, in Übrige Angaben und Notizen.



**Fig. 5:** Image detail of the Sarasin family tree, illustrating the descendants of the founding father Reinhold Sarasin I (c. 1505–1555) through the male line / Basel / sine dato, around 1780–1800 / StaBS PA 212a C 6.

This family tree featured the descendants of the founding ancestor, Reinhold I, up to number 208, Charlotta Sarasin, born in 1778. The numeration of the diagram is based on the new enumeration system, in which Claude the Catholic is number 3. As the identifying numbers are given both in the family tree diagram and in the family books, Lucas Sarasin's genealogical diagram is able to refer to works outside of itself, that is, to the biographical entries in the books: adding the numbers to the diagram's medallions made it possible to look up the corresponding entry on the specific person in the Sarasin family book. Taking Margreth Sarasin (1634–1659) as an example, her identification number (62) in the diagram leads us to her entry in the family book, which provides more information not only about her, but also about her husband Johann Rudolf Burckhardt (not to be confused with the genealogist Johann Rudolf Burckhardt). The text states that he married a second time, and even provides information about his new wife and her parents. The account then ends by mentioning who Johann Rudolph's parents were and when he died.<sup>61</sup> The numbers in the diagram thus serve as links connecting the family tree with the family book: the detailed entries in the family book expand on the diagrammatically illustrated relations and the short biographical information provided in the family tree's medallions (usually dates of birth, marriage and death, sometimes including additional information such as the political offices held by that person).

<sup>61</sup> StaBS PA 212a C 3.1, Stammbaum des Sarasinischen Geschlechts in Basel.

We can observe similar techniques of numerating individuals in Johann Rudolf Burckhardt's work. But unlike Lucas Sarasin, he applied two different codes in his two manuscripts, entitled 'Genealogical Notes'. These notes consisted of paper sheets that were folded in such a way that they formed an unbound booklet. The first booklet, entitled 'My Relatives', contained chapters on the descendants of his grandparents, his grand-uncles and their wives, as well as his great-grandparents.<sup>62</sup> The second booklet was called 'My Ancestors in Chronological and Alphabetical Order'.<sup>63</sup> The chapters in this manuscript include ancestry charts of his grandparents, a written history of his ancestors through the agnatic line and alphabetical registers of all the families mentioned in the ancestry charts.

In his first booklet, he applied an identification system based on numbers and letters. The text in this manuscript concerning his relatives resembles a *Stammliste*<sup>64</sup> that, content-wise, resembles Lucas Sarasin's entries in the family book. To structure his text, Johann Rudolf Burckhardt applied visual elements such as indents; to the beginning of the resulting paragraphs, he added letters and numbers. These graphic tools helped to explain who descended from whom. In the chapter on the descendants of his grandfather Peter Burckhardt (1742–1817), the entry on Peter's daughter Helena Burckhardt (Johann Rudolf Burckhardt's aunt) (Fig. 6) illustrates how the system worked: the capital *A* represents Helena's father Peter, while the Roman numeral *II* stands for Helena. Together with her husband, J. J. Bachofen, Helena had one daughter, Anna Maria Bachofen, who is represented by the Arabic numeral 1. Anna Maria was married to Rudolf Forcart and had a son called Rudolf Forcart, who is encoded as the lower-case letter *a*. Rudolf Forcart was married to Valeria Sofia Hofmann, with whom he had four children. They are represented with the double lower-case letters *aa*, *bb*, *cc* and *dd*.<sup>65</sup> This means that Emil Forcart, as the son of Rudolf and Valeria Sofia, could be identified with the code *A II 1 a dd*. Johann Rudolf Burckhardt applied this combination of letters and numbers to denote descendants within several generations, that is from the starting point of Peter Burckhardt to the end point of Emil Forcart. The system was accurate enough to allow for specific references to family members and also enabled cross-referencing. For example, the entry on Rudolf Forcart explains that he was married to Valeria Sofia, a sister of Emanuel Hoffmann, and indicates that more information

<sup>62</sup> StaBS PA 594a A3, Meine Verwandten.

<sup>63</sup> StaBS PA 594a A3, Meine Vorfahren sowohl in chronologischer als alphabetischer Ordnung.

<sup>64</sup> *Stammlisten* are texts that focus only on the agnatic line and can contain both short entries and longer accounts. They are based on linearity and allow only for simple data presentations, which makes it difficult to illustrate synchronous relations; see Bauer 2012, 43.

<sup>65</sup> StaBS PA 594a A3, Genealogische Notizen, Nachkommen von Bürgermeister Peter Burckhardt und Anna Forcart.

A. II. Helena Burckhardt geb 19 März 1765 + 27 März 1840  
 verheiratet mit <sup>1788</sup> 15 Jahre alt 4 X 6 1780  
 mit JJ Burckhofen (Sohn von Martin Burckhofen und  
 Margaretha Heir, geb 1755 14 Jul + 1828 27 März)  
 Kinder 1. a Maria Burckhofen geb 13 Dec 1781 + 14 Mai 1801  
 verh. 8 Mai 1799 mit Rudolf Forcart (S.  
 Kinder a. Rudolf Forcart geb 25 Okt 1800, Rittm.  
 d. Cav. nachher Schultheißen, verheir.  
 10 Febr. 1823 mit Valeria Sofia  
 Hofman, abstammend von O. M. Dietrich (S.  
 Sophie, von Emanuel Hofman (C. II. 2. a)  
 28 Febr. 1803)  
 Kinder a. 7 Rudolf Jan 1825 Grünthum in  
 16. Juni 1841  
 16. Juni 1839  
 d. d. Emil 1833

† 18. Jan 1828  
 Burckhofen + 19. Jan 1831

2. Margaretha Burckhofen geb 14 Jan 1784 + 12 Jun 1812  
 verheiratet 2 Aug 1802 mit Gedeon Burckhardt (geb  
 7 März 1774, Sohn von Rudolf Burckhardt, Oberr.  
 im Kirchgarten), welcher sich nach ihrem Tode 1812  
 verheiratete mit a Maria Frey geb 1781 24 Jan + 3 Sept 1867  
 aus welcher Ehe aber keine Kinder vorhanden sind.  
 Er war Mitglied des 16. Rathes und Deputations-Mitglieds.  
 Kinder a. Alfred 1805 8 März  
 b. Emma 2. Mai 1804 Juni 1816  
 c. Sophia 20 Sept 1807 18 Febr 1808

3. Helena Burckhofen geb 1786 31 Okt, verh. 31  
 3 Okt 1804 mit Christof Burckhardt (geb 1783 16 Juli  
 Sohn von Stadthalter Christof D. und Charlotte Louise  
 Burckhofen; + 31 Okt 1841) ihrem Vater.  
 Kinder a. Carl Burckhardt geb 29 Sept 1805, ward Feldweb.  
 1830, verh. 23 Okt 1830 mit Margr Heister  
 (geb 1812)

Fig. 6: Paragraph on Helena Burckhardt, taken from Johann Rudolf Burckhardt's (1798–1873) genealogical notes, illustrating how letters and numbers were applied to structure the genealogical narrative / Basel / sine dato, nineteenth century / StaBS PA 594a A 3.

about this Emanuel can be found under *C II 2 a*. There, the text states that Emanuel Hoffmann was the ‘brother of *A II 1 a*’, thus referring to the entry on Rudolf Forcart, in which Valeria Sofia is mentioned.<sup>66</sup>

Thus, letters and numbers serve as identification codes to distinguish individuals in Johann Rudolf Burckhardt’s genealogical notes, similar to Lucas Sarasin’s technique. The difference is that in the Burckhardt case, the identification code entails relational information about the denoted individual, as it also represents his or her parentage, while the identification numbers in Lucas Sarasin’s family book do not express any relations per se: only via explanations such as ‘No. 2 de No. 1’ in the text or by consulting the family tree do the relations become visible.

In his second booklet concerning his ancestors, Johann Rudolf Burckhardt not only presents genealogical information through textual accounts, he also visualizes it in diagrammatic form. For this visualization, he worked with a simpler identification code, based on numbers only. The diagrams he drew in his genealogical notes differ from the ones produced by Lucas Sarasin in both content and structure. Burckhardt’s booklet contains several diagrams. Most of them are ancestry charts that start with an *ego* at the bottom of the page; above the *ego* are his or her parents, and above them, the parent’s parents and so forth. Compared to the Sarasin family tree, these diagrams thus do not prioritize the male lineage, but instead consider both sexes equally. This type of genealogical diagram is characterized by a standardized form;<sup>67</sup> as such diagrams proceed from the descendants to the ancestors of a family, they are usually labelled *Ahnentafeln*.<sup>68</sup> However, Johann Rudolf Burckhardt called his own drawings ‘Stammtafeln’, which implies a focus on descent instead of ancestry. He might have chosen this title because he wanted to emphasise his interest in his own descent.

One of them, titled ‘*All of my grandfather Peter Burckhardt’s ancestors that I could find with adequate certainty*’,<sup>69</sup> starts with Johann Rudolf Burckhardt’s grandfather Peter (1742–1817) at the bottom of the page and then moves backward to both of Peter’s parents, his grandparents, and so forth. (Fig. 7). This specific diagram encompasses 264 people, but all the manuscript’s pedigrees together mention almost 600 individuals. On both sides of the chart, Roman numerals count the 18 generations (of which Johann Rudolf Burckhardt represents the third one). The names of Peter’s ancestors are not written in the diagram itself; instead, the chart

<sup>66</sup> StABS PA 594a A3, Genealogische Notizen, Nachkommen von Gressoheim Rathschreiber Isac Iselin im Schildhof.

<sup>67</sup> Bauer 2012, 43, 53.

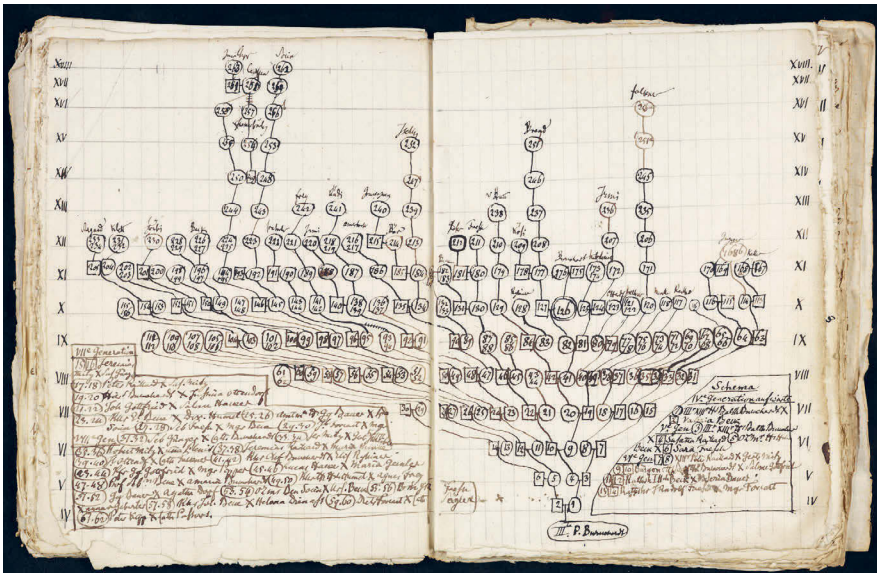
<sup>68</sup> Bauer 2012, 42.

<sup>69</sup> StABS PA 594a A3, Sämmtliche Vorfahren meines Grossvaters Peter Burckhardt, so viel man deren mit gehöriger Gewissheit hat auffinden können, in Genealogische Notizen.



contains Arabic numerals that are enclosed either in rectangular shapes, identifying females, or in circles, identifying males. From the ninth generation onwards, two numbers are usually enclosed together in one shape, probably to save space.<sup>70</sup>

In total, the chart has a triangular shape, because more and more pairs of parents are represented as the generational depth increases. On both sides of the illustration, a key (titled *Schema*) relates each number to a name and is organized by generation. This key requires so much space that it had to be continued on the following pages. The fact that the diagram relies on a special key listing people's names again shows that genealogical diagrams were easier to draw if the names were replaced by numbers.

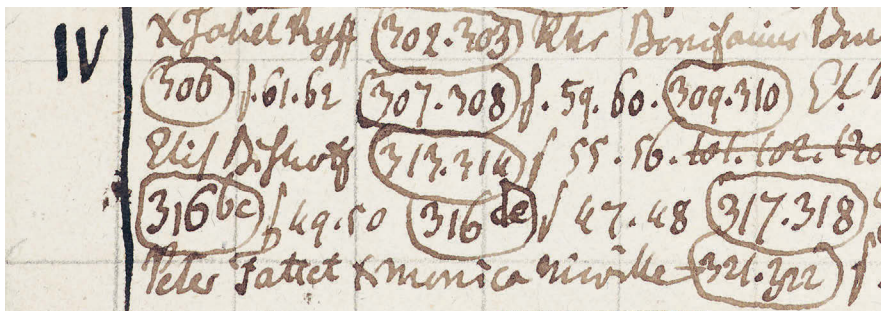


**Fig. 7:** Ancestry chart (*Ahnentafel*) of Johann Rudolf Burckhardt's grandfather Peter Burckhardt (1742–1817) / Basel / sine dato, nineteenth century / StaBS PA 594a A 3.

Some of the approximately 600 ancestors that Johann Rudolf Burckhardt incorporated into his genealogical tableaux appear in more than one diagram. This occurs, for example, when the daughter and brother of one family marry the brother and daughter of another family, because then their parents appear more than once

<sup>70</sup> Applying numbers to ancestry charts had already been suggested by the theologian and genealogist Philipp Jacob Spener in the seventeenth century; see Bauer 2013, 60–61.

within a diagram or even in different diagrams. To solve this problem of duplicate data entries, Johann Rudolf Burckhardt applied a system of cross-referencing. The pedigree of his grandmother Anna Forcart (1743–1808) indicates how it works: the numbers in the key are not equated with names, but instead with numbers already mentioned in the pedigree of Peter Burckhardt.<sup>71</sup> (Fig. 8) This suggests that the different diagrams were not to be consulted alone, but rather together as a large, interacting database.



**Fig. 8:** The numbers in the key to the *Ahnentafel* of Johann Rudolf Burckhardt's grandmother Anna Forcart (1743–1808) refer to numbers that were already mentioned in a preceding diagram / Basel / sine dato, nineteenth century / StaBS PA 594a A 3.

The application of identificatory codes was a useful technique to facilitate the handling and representation of genealogical information, but developing such a system was apparently not that easy, as Lucas Sarasin's revision of the first numeration system indicates. Once this system was fully established, it had to be applied as faithfully as possible to hundreds of family members.

Such codes enabled the combination of different genealogical manuscripts or parts of them. However, each of these manuscripts also fulfilled a certain function: a family tree, as Christiane Klapisch-Zuber explains, emphasizes 'a joyful proliferation: it admirably expresses the vital energy of a lineage';<sup>72</sup> therefore, Lucas Sarasin's diagram illustrated the growth of the Sarasin family, beginning with Reinhold I. His textual accounts in the family book, on the other hand, provided the space to present individual family members and their biographies in great detail and to recount the family's history. In comparison to Lucas Sarasin's work, Johann Rudolf

<sup>71</sup> StaBS PA 594a A 3, Ahnentafel Anna Forcart, in *Genealogische Notizen*.

<sup>72</sup> Klapisch-Zuber 1991, 108.



Burckhardt's manuscripts focused not on the family Burckhardt per se, but instead centred on his own descent and his relatedness to other people: he situated himself within the family. His genealogical charts traced his ancestors: he proved from whom he descended, while his textual accounts, focusing on the descendants of his grandparents and grand-uncles, enabled him to illustrate the relations of various Burckhardt family members and to present their biographies.

## 4 Registering families alphabetically

Besides the application of codes in their genealogical projects and the visualization of information in diagrams, Lucas Sarasin's and Johann Rudolph Burckhardt's projects both relied on alphabetical registers of names. In Lucas Sarasin's case, these registers were either independent manuscripts or they were integrated into his family book, while in the case of Johann Rudolf Burckhardt, the register was integrated towards the end of his genealogical notes.

The registers Lucas Sarasin used to manage his genealogical information consisted of handwritten booklets with tabs that corresponded to the letters of the alphabet to facilitate the lookup. The entries were organized alphabetically by family name. Not only were the people born with the name Sarasin registered, but also those who had married into the family; the registers neatly recorded the families related by marriage, illustrating the dense network of relationships among Basel's leading bourgeois families.

Each folio contains columns for the names of family members, their identification numbers, their birthdates, dates of marriage and death and, for the purpose of indexing, a folio number that indicates where further information about the person can be found. One register that was integrated into the earliest Sarasin family book has a column with folio numbers pointing to the page of the relevant genealogical account in that book. The other registers, two bound books, consist only of the registered names and refer to separately available documents. One of them is cryptically titled 'Register for Book Papers A, B, C, and D'<sup>73</sup> and refers both to genealogical charts listing the ancestors of in-laws (the so-called 'Papers A, B, C, and D')<sup>74</sup> and to the second copy of the Sarasin family book. According to a note at the beginning of the register, it was considered an appendix to the family tree and should have been copied and integrated at the end of the family book once it was finished. The other

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<sup>73</sup> StaBS PA 212a 3.3 Register z. d. Buch Papieren ABCD.

<sup>74</sup> StaBS PA 212a C 3.2, Ahnentafel angeheirateter Männer und Frauen.

register book was described as a ‘register for the Sarasin family book, in which it has already been integrated’.<sup>75</sup> Its folio references do not match any of the available family book copies. There must have been another copy of the family book available, into which this register was later integrated. These two registers were probably provisional ones and essentially reflect Lucas Sarasin’s working process.

The various registers not only refer to different manuscripts, but also differ in the number of Sarasin family members they mention, from 207 to 209 and 210 people born with the name Sarasin – an increase resulting from additional births. Thus, the different versions of the registers indicate that they must have been compiled at different times.

While Lucas Sarasin’s registers had an indexical function, their main function was to record all the families with whom the Sarasin family was related by marriage and to make their lookup as easy as possible. Mentioning the related families was a general concern of Lucas Sarasin’s work: in his family tree, he named the husbands of Sarasin daughters, even though such information is not necessary for the configuration of agnatically structured family trees. However, an alphabetical register of family names, with its clear structure, was much more appropriate for presenting this sort of information than a diagram.

Johann Rudolf Burckhardt likewise registered, in alphabetical order, the names of those families who were related to the Burckhardt family by marriage. In his genealogical notes, he includes an ‘alphabetical directory of all those families from whom I descend through female succession’.<sup>76</sup> This directory differs from the ones produced by Lucas Sarasin: there are no tabs to facilitate the lookup, but instead, the alphabetically arranged family names are underlined for easier recognition. Next to each family name, a short text follows, and Roman and Arabic numbers are listed in the left margin. As Johann Rudolf Burckhardt notes, the Roman numbers denote the generational sequence, starting with him, while the Arabic numbers refer to the numbers mentioned in his genealogical charts. The numbers thus represent people who are already mentioned in his diagrams and are described in greater detail under the heading of their family name. The directory is thus combinable with these diagrams. A close look at Johann Rudolf Burckhardt’s chart (Fig. 7) reveals that he even added the various family names to the diagram itself, enhancing the ability to combine these diagrams with other texts.

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<sup>75</sup> StaBS PA 212a C 3.3, Register zum Sarasinischen Stammbuch, so aber in dasselbe selbst ein-  
getragen worden.

<sup>76</sup> StaBS PA 594 A3, Alphabetisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Geschlechter, von denen ich durch  
weibliche Nachfolge abstamme.

Johann Rudolf Burckhardt produced alphabetical registers of names not only for his own project, but also for the city administration. He became an expert in the production of alphabetical registers, so to say, when he supervised the reproduction of the parish registers in alphabetical order. This project was not concerned with specific families, but dealt instead with all the people recorded as having been baptized, married or buried in Basel's churches.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the city officials decided that the parish records should no longer be kept only by clerics, but that the city authorities should keep a copy of them as well, so from 1826 onwards, two copies of the parish registers were produced. Additionally, the old parish registers dating back to the Reformation era were also reproduced: the baptism registers were copied twice, while the marriage and death registers were copied only once.<sup>77</sup>

These copying projects were conducted without Johann Rudolf Burckhardt's assistance. But when the city officials decided that alphabetical registers of names should be compiled from the baptism, marriage and death records kept since the Reformation, he was responsible for the correct execution of this laborious task. The projects were based on working with paper slips; such pieces of paper could be easily arranged and rearranged.<sup>78</sup> For the first type of alphabetical register of names, one copy of the baptism records was cut into paper slips with one person per line, which were then alphabetically ordered and glued into new register books. For alphabetic registers of marriages and deaths, on the other hand, the record copies were cut into paper slips, alphabetically arranged and, instead of being glued, were then transcribed into new registers.<sup>79</sup> The original parish records were thus not destroyed, but remained intact, while the copies were cut and rearranged, serving as a tool to compile registers in alphabetical order. These alphabetical registers were quite detailed. The death registers, for example, contained eight rows in which the deceased's name, parents or marriage partners, occupation, date of death, funeral date, the church where the funeral was held and other remarks could be inserted.<sup>80</sup> These registers were the last ones that Johann Rudolf Burckhardt and his team finished, in the year 1867.<sup>81</sup> A few years later, after the establishment of Basel's civil-status office, these compiled registers of names served as the basis for the production of official family registers.<sup>82</sup> Alphabetical registers

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<sup>77</sup> Duthaler 2017, 26–27 and Hofer 1907, 13.

<sup>78</sup> Krajewski 2011, 23.

<sup>79</sup> Duthaler 2017, 26–33.

<sup>80</sup> StaBS JD-REG 6e 3 2, Bestattungen 1701–1869.

<sup>81</sup> Kiefer 1953, 47.

<sup>82</sup> See the entry on StaBS JD-REG 6e in the 'Digitaler Lesesaal' of the 'Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt': <<https://dls.staatsarchiv.bs.ch/>> (accessed on 25 June 2024).

of names thus served as tools for state administrative work in Basel, and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt played a crucial role in the process of their compilation.

The popularity of alphabetical registers of names emerges not only from the genealogical projects of Lucas Sarasin and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt and the practices of the emerging civil-status office, but echoes much broader developments. In the early nineteenth century, printed works that alphabetically listed the families who had received Basel citizenship either recently or long ago were published: for example, a catalogue produced by Johann Heinrich Weiss (1779–1842),<sup>83</sup> or the ‘Bürger-Buch’<sup>84</sup> composed by theologian Markus Lutz (1772–1835). Lutz argued that many citizens in Basel were uninformed about the origin of their family or the time when their family received citizenship. This ignorance would lead to false claims and unjustified ancestral pride; this is why, according to Lutz, he wanted to inform his readers about the background of Basel’s bourgeois families. The increase in citizenships granted and the need to differentiate between long-established families and newer ones were further reasons for his book, he explained.<sup>85</sup> The work thus arranged 502 bourgeois families in alphabetical order and, for each entry, minimally included the year the first male family member had received Basel citizenship, the name of that person, his place of origin and his profession. Usually, the entries on long-established families were several pages long and narrated the family’s history. The entry on the Burckhardt family,<sup>86</sup> for example, was nine pages long, while the entries on more recently accepted families consisted only of one sentence. The book thus clearly differentiated between Basel’s ‘important’ families and those who were almost negligible, at least in 1819.

The work of Lucas Sarasin and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt, as well as Weiss’s and Lutz’s books, suggest that the organization of family names in alphabetical order in both handwritten and printed works was characteristic of genealogical and state administrative projects concerning Basel from the eighteenth century onwards. Further research on the production of such registers needs to be conducted in order to determine whether this technique was popular among other genealogists and in other cities as well, or if there existed earlier forerunners.

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<sup>83</sup> Weiss 1822. See also Duthaler 2017, 62–63.

<sup>84</sup> Lutz 1819.

<sup>85</sup> Lutz 1819, i–iv.

<sup>86</sup> Lutz 1819, 74–83.

## 5 Conclusion

The focus of this paper has been to examine what happens on and with paper in genealogical projects – projects dealing with the kinship relations of hundreds of people and their family's history. The work of Lucas Sarasin and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt indicates that applying identification codes to individuals was a useful technique in structuring textual accounts and visualizing genealogical information in diagrams. Such codes enabled the combination of different types of inscriptions, such as family trees and ancestry charts with longer texts, to present not only relations of descent, but also other information, such as detailed biographical information and family histories.

Lucas Sarasin's and Johann Rudolf Burckhardt's projects relied not only on the application of codes, but also on the production of alphabetical registers of names, which brought together the families related by marriage who were mentioned in the diagrams and textual accounts. These registers illustrated the endogamic marriage practices of Basel's elite families, which constituted this urban society – a society deeply concerned with ancestors and descendants.

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# Indices

Two indices are provided: (I) an index of people; (II) an index of manuscripts. Too common names like Ba, Li, Qi, or Xu were not indexed. Arabic names with particle al- are alphabetised under 'al-'.

Alexander Scheumann, in collaboration with Caroline Macé, Jost Gippert and Luca Farina

## Index of people

- Aaron 70, 86–87  
'Abd al-'Azīz 47, 48, 110, 118  
'Abd al-Haris 66, 69  
'Abd al-Jalīl 109–111, 114, 118  
'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Ḥayyān 37, 53  
'Abd al-Mun'im b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm  
Gharībān 35–36, 39, 53  
'Abd al-Muṭṭalib 34, 51, 72  
'Abd al-Raḥīm 109–113, 118  
Abel 66, 68–69  
Abraham 46, 71, 76, 78–79, 83–84  
Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ja'far ibn Ḥayyān  
al-Iṣfahānī 37  
Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb ibn Yūsuf  
al-Akhram 37  
Abū Aḥmad al-Mūsaw 53  
Abū 'Alī Ḥāmid ibn Muḥammad al-Rafā Al-Harawī  
37  
Abū 'Alī Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Zabbāra 37  
Abū Bakr ibn al-Faql 49, 50  
Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazali 89, 90  
Abu Hanifa 72  
Abū Ishāq al-Tha'labī 54  
Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn  
Yahyā al-'Alawī 37  
Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas'ūd  
al-Baghawī 54  
Abū Muḥammad Yahyā ibn Muḥammad al-'Alawī  
37  
Abu Muslim al-Khorasani 72  
Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan 73  
Abū Ṭālib 34  
Abu Talib Isfahani 65  
Abū'l-'Abbās Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb al-Aṣamm  
37  
Abū'l-Ḥasan al-'Umarī 55  
Abū'l-Haytham Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Adī al-Numayrī al-Baṣrī  
al-Dhārī 56  
Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Khiraqī 37  
'Ad 46, 52, 55–56, 70–72  
Adam 19, 34, 42, 44, 46, 48, 51–52, 56, 63–66,  
68–69, 78, 89–90  
'Adnān 46, 52, 71  
Afrasiyab 70, 74  
Afridun 69–71  
Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad Mādarānī 55  
Akbar 19  
al-'Abbās 50  
Alan Qo'a 73  
Alexander the Great 71–72, 79  
al-Ḥasan 37, 40, 44, 46–47, 53  
al-Ḥusayn 46, 54, 56–57  
'Alī al-Rida 72  
'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib 34, 40, 44, 53  
al-Khalīl 15  
al-Maqrīzī 17–18  
al-Musta'ṣim bi-Allāh 50, 90  
al-Qādir bi-Allāh 50  
al-Rabghuzi 84–86  
al-Shafī'i 72  
al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā 54  
al-Sharīf al-Raḍī 54  
al-Tabari 66, 68, 83–85  
al-Ṭā'i' li-Allāh 49–50  
Altamirano, Juan Alonso de 283  
Alvarado 269, 271, 273–274, 276–292  
Álvarez de Vega, Alonso 286  
An Lushan 安祿山 225  
Ānanda 222, 224, 228, 247, 262–263  
Anushirvan 72, 90  
Aristotle 71  
Arphaxad 68

- Ashraf al-Ḥusaynī 57  
 Āyat Allāh Mar'ashī 32  
 Ayub *see* Job
- Bachofen, Anna Maria 314  
 Bahman 70  
 Baiyun Shouduan/Hakuun Shutan 白雲守端 235, 251  
 Baizhang Huaihai/Hyakujō Ekai 百丈懷海 251  
 Bartan Bahadur 73  
 Bashar 70, 74  
 Bayezid II 77  
 Baytemür 70  
 Beiguo fang 162  
 Benavides, Juana de 287  
 Bi Jichuan 畢濟川 195  
 Biechuan Miaoyin/Betsuden Myōin 別傳妙胤 261  
 Bodhidharma *see* Buddha  
 Bodonchar 73  
 Bonaparte, Napoleon 305  
 Brand, Gertrud 308  
 Buddha 219–225, 228–229, 232, 240–242, 244, 246–247, 249–251, 253, 256, 262–264  
 Bukkō *kokushi* 佛光國師 *see* Wuxue  
 Zuyuan/Mugaku Sogen 無學祖元  
 Bulcas 78  
 Burckhardt (family) 299–300, 305, 308, 313–322  
 Butsue *zenji* 佛慧禪師 *see* Lingshan  
 Daoyin/Ryōzen Dōin 靈山道隱
- Caballería, Marina de la 281, 284  
 Cain 66, 68  
 Cainan 66, 68, 69, 90  
 Caoshan Benji/Sōzan Honjaku 曹山本寂 222  
 Cem Sultan 74, 77  
 Ch'oe Howŏn 7  
 Chen Li 陳櫟 162  
 Cheng Linxian 程靈洗 *see* Zhongzhuang gong  
 Cheng Meng 程孟 199, 201  
 Cheng Minzheng 程敏政 159, 161, 162, 201, 205  
 Chimalpopocal Montesuma, Luis Antonio 290  
 Chinggis Khan 73  
 Christ *see* Jesus  
 Chūgan Engetsu 中巖圓月 261
- Chün-ch'ī 16  
 Confucius 11, 123–129, 131–133, 135–138, 140–141, 143–145, 229  
 Contreras Guevara, Alonso de 286  
 Cortés, Juan 278, 289–291
- Dachuan Puji 大川普濟 226  
 Daghfal ibn Ḥanzala al-Sadūsī 56  
 Daguan Tanying 達觀曇穎 264  
 Daien *zenji* 大圓禪師 *see* Jingtang  
 Jueyuan/Shōdō Kakuen 鏡堂覺圓  
 Daikaku *zenji* 大覺禪師 *see* Lanxi Daolong/Rankei  
 Dōryū 蘭溪道隆  
 Daikan *zenji* 大鑑禪師 *see* Qingzhuo  
 Zhengcheng/Seisetsu Shōchō 清拙正澄  
 Daiō *kokushi* 大應國師 *see* Nanpo Jōmyō (or Jōmin) 南浦紹明  
 Daisetsu Sonō 大拙祖能 261  
 Daitō 大燈 234, 240, 256  
 Daniel 87–88  
 Daoxin/Dōshin 道信 222  
 Daoyu/Dōgo 道悟 226, 242, 247, 265  
 David 71  
 Daxiu Zhengnian/Daikyū Shōnen 大休正念 261  
 Deng Yuanchang 130  
 Deru 249  
 Derviş Mehmed b. Ramazan 65  
 Dhu al-Kifl 70  
 Dhu al-Qarnayn 79  
 Dōgen Kigen 道元希玄 239, 261  
 Dongling Yongyu/Tōryō Eiyo 東陵永瑛 261  
 Dongming Huiji/Tōmin Enichi 東明慧日 261  
 Dongshan Liangjie/Tōzan Ryōkai 洞山良价 222, 235, 239  
 Du Fei 杜船 224, 263  
 Duo 142  
 Dutum Menen 73
- Ebu'l-Hayr-i Rumi 74  
 Ebu's-Su'ud Efendi 13  
 Eisai 241, 242, 261  
 Elijah 72  
 Enni Ben'en 圓爾辯圓 232–234, 238–239, 246, 249–255, 261  
 Enoch 52, 68  
 Enosh 66, 68  
 Ertuğrul 78

- Esau 63, 70–71, 74, 76–87  
 Espinosa, Juan de 277  
 Estrada 279–281, 283, 284–287, 289, 292  
 Eve 66, 69, 90  
 Ezekiel 87
- Faesch 305  
 Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh 32  
 Fakhr-i Mudabbir 32, 55–56  
 Faru 法如 223, 224, 262, 263, 264  
 Fāṭima 34, 46, 98  
 Faxiang/Hossō 法相 240  
 Fayān Wenyi/Hōgen Mon'eki 法眼文益 222, 235, 240  
 Fazang 243  
 Fengxue Yanzhao/Fuketsu Enshō 風穴延沼 251  
 Fenyang Shanzhao/Bunyō Zenshō 汾陽善昭 251  
 Foguo Weibai 佛國惟白 226  
 Fojian/Bukkan 佛鑑 see Wuzhun Shifan/Bujun Shibān 無準師範  
 Forcart (family) 314, 316, 318
- Gaocang 高倉 159, 203, 207–208  
 Garro, Pedro de 287  
 Gautama see Buddha  
 Genshin 源信 220  
 Gharībān see 'Abd al-Mun'im b. Muḥammad  
 Ghazan Khan 73  
 Girón, Francisco 287, 289  
 Gog 69, 70  
 Gök Alp (*also* Gökalp) 77–78  
 Grijalva, Juan de 278  
 Gua Guan 17  
 Guchū Shūkyū 愚中周及 261  
 Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 222, 227  
 Guishan Lingyou/Izan Reiyū 潯山靈祐 222, 235  
 Guiyang/Igyō 滙仰 222, 240, 243, 264  
 Gutenberg, Johannes 4
- Habsburg see Maximilian I  
 Ham 69–70  
 Ḥārūn al-Rashīd 50  
 Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Qumī 55  
 Hasan Hüsnü Paşa 64  
 Hemminger, Zacharias 305  
 Hoffmann, Emanuel 314, 316
- Hofmann, Valeria Sofia 314  
 Hokkai *zenji* 法海禪師 see Muzō Jōshō 無象靜照  
 Hongren/Kōnin 弘忍 222, 224  
 Hottō *kokushi* 法燈國師 see Shinchi Kakushin 心地覺心  
 Huang Boyong 黃伯湧 159, 172  
 Huang Hengyuan 黃亨元 203, 204, 207–208  
 Huang Jiyu 黃積瑜 159, 172, 192, 203  
 Huang Lan 208  
 Huang Maozhen 黃懋振 207  
 Huang Xuande 黃玄德 159, 172, 203–204, 207–208, 213  
 Huang Yongsheng 208  
 Huang Yunsu 黃雲蘇 199  
 Huang Zheng 黃政 207  
 Huangbo Xiyun/Ōbaku Kiun 黃檗希運 251  
 Huanglong Huinan/Ōryū E'nan 黃龍慧南 222, 235  
 Hud 68, 70  
 Huike/Eka 慧可 222, 225  
 Huineng/Enō 慧能 222, 224–225, 232  
 Huiweng Wuming 晦翁悟明 226  
 Huiyuan 慧遠 262, 263  
 Hūlegū 73  
 Huqiu Shaolong/Kokyū Shōryū 虎丘紹隆 251  
 Husayn 72  
 Hüseyn al-Musavvir al-Istanbuli 63, 65  
 Hushang 69
- Ibn 'Adī al-Dhārī' 55  
 Ibn al-Muntāb al-Tha'labī 37  
 Ibn al-Murtaḍā 52, 54, 58  
 Ibn al-Tiqṭaqā 35, 47–48, 51–52, 58  
 Ibn 'Amīd al-Dīn al-Najafī 47  
 Ibn 'Inaba 53, 54, 56  
 Ibn Jamīl 47  
 Ibn Kemal 78  
 Ibn Khaldūn 57  
 Ibn Khallikān 15  
 Ibn Muḥannā al-'Ubaydalī 47  
 Idris see Enoch  
 Idris-i Bidlisi 77–79, 83, 86, 91  
 Iraj 69, 71  
 Isaac 63, 70–71, 74, 76–81, 83–86, 97  
 Iselin, Isaac 316  
 Ishāq Bāb 109–111, 113–116, 118

- Ishāq Khwāja 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, 117  
 Ishmael 46, 97  
 Isma'il 71  
 Ismā'il Ata 97–99, 102, 103, 105–107, 109–111, 114–115, 117  
  
 Jacob 63, 70–71, 77, 80–81, 83–86, 305  
 Jamāl Qarshī 113  
 Jamshid 69  
 Japhet 47, 63, 69–72, 74, 77–80, 82, 87, 91  
 Jared 68  
 Jayumart 84  
 Jesus Christ 11, 301  
 Jiangxi 江西 17, 143, 148, 149, 155, 161, 230, 264  
 Jingjue 淨覺 224  
 Jingtang Jueyuan/Shōdō Kakuen 鏡堂覺圓 261  
 Jizha 季札 154  
 Job 70, 74  
 Jōen 定圓 227  
 Jōjin 成尋 227  
 Joseph 70  
 Joshua 70  
 Juefan Huihong 覺範范洪 264  
  
 Kangxi 144, 154, 169  
 Kara Oĝlan Khan 70  
 Kāśyapa 232  
 Katib Çelebi 65  
 Kayı (Qayı) Khan 77–78  
 Kayumars 47, 66, 69, 89–90, 92  
 Kaz Khan 77  
 Keihō Zenkyū 桂芳全久 239  
 Khiṣr 115  
 Khwāja Aḥmad Yasavī 97  
 Kızıl Buĝa Khan 73  
 Kōjō 光定 246  
 Kokan Shiren 虎關師鍊 241, 242, 264  
 Kong Chuanzeng 孔傳曾 128, 134, 136–137, 141  
 Kong Guangming 孔廣明 127, 135, 138  
 Kong Guangsheng 孔廣昇 127, 135, 138  
 Kong Hongtong 孔宏統 127, 138  
 Kong Jigun 孔繼袞 142  
 Kong Mo 孔末 136  
 Kong Renyu 孔任玉 136, 137–139  
 Kong Shangren 孔尚任 123, 125, 126  
  
 Kong Teng 孔騰 133  
 Kong Wanyou 孔萬有 128  
 Kong Xiangke 129, 131  
 Kong Xiangkui 孔祥魁 127–129, 131, 133–135, 137–140, 142  
 Kong Xingcong 孔興琬 143  
 Kong Xinggui 孔興珪 143  
 Kong Yanji 131  
 Kong Yinzhi 孔胤植 123  
 Kong Yujue 孔毓爵 143–144  
 Kong Zhaoxuan 孔昭煥 142  
 Kong Zhong 孔忠 133  
 Kosen Ingen 古先印元 261  
 Kōten Shūin 古篆周印 241, 243  
 Koy Kahn 70, 74, 77, 86–87  
 Kurcul Kahn 70  
 Kurluĝa Kahn 70  
 Kwōn (family) 7, 8, 14, 18  
  
 Labe, Francisco de 277  
 Lamech 68  
 Lanxi Daolong/Rankei Dōryū 蘭溪道隆 241, 261  
 Laozi 229  
 Leian Zhengshou 雷庵正受 226  
 Li Hua 16  
 Li Zunxu 李遵勗 226  
 Lingshan Daoyin/Ryōzen Dōin 靈山道隱 261  
 Linji Yixuan/Rinzai Gigen 臨濟義玄 222, 235, 251  
 Liu Minzhong 17  
 Louis XIV, King of France 12  
 Lu Fu 16  
 Lutz, Markus 322  
  
 Machin 70  
 Madhyantika 263  
 Magog 69, 70  
 Mahākāśyapa 222, 256  
 Mahalaleel 68  
 Mahāvairocana *see* Buddha  
 Ma'jūj *see* Magog  
 Marwan 89  
 Matsunaga Shakugo 松永尺五 (Shōsan 昌三) 240  
 Maximilian I of Habsburg 18  
 Mazu Daoyi/Baso Dōitsu 馬祖道一 251  
 Mehmed II 74

- Mehmed III 64  
 Mehmed IV 63, 65, 73, 79, 90  
 Meng Tangjue 夢堂覺 264  
 Methuselah 68  
 Mian Xianjie/Mittan Kanketsu 密庵咸傑 251  
 Mingji Chujun/Minki Soshun 明極楚俊 261  
 Mingjiao Qisong 明教契嵩 227  
 Moses 70, 86–87  
 Moteuczoma 290, 291  
 Muḍar 52  
 Muhammad 11, 19, 31, 33–35, 37, 46, 52, 53,  
 69, 71, 72, 79, 84, 87, 89, 98, 101  
 Muḥammad ibn 'Abda al-'Abdī 55  
 Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya 98, 100, 102, 107,  
 109  
 Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Aḥmad 40, 44  
 Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abd Allāh b. Mūsā  
 al-Jawn b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan  
 b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib 53  
 Müller, Gerhard Friedrich 114  
 Munjōng 18  
 Munt'an 18  
 Musavvir Hüseyin see Hüseyin al-Musavvir  
 al-Istanbuli  
 Musō Soseki 夢窓疎石 241, 243  
 Mustafa 'Alī 79, 86  
 Mu'tazilī 39  
 Muzō Jōshō 無象靜照 261  
 Myōan Eisai 明庵榮西 261  
  
 Nanpo Jōmyō (or Jōmin) 南浦紹明 261  
 Nanyuan Huiyong/Nan'in Egyō 南院慧顒 251  
 Nanyue Huairang/Nangaku Ejō 南嶽懷讓  
 239, 240, 251  
 Narid see Jared  
 Neşri 78–79  
 Nizam al-Mulk 89  
 Noah 46, 63, 68–69, 77–78, 117  
 Numish Khan 70, 71, 74  
 Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī 104  
  
 Oghuz (Oğuz) Khan 63, 74, 77, 78, 79, 80  
 Orduña, Francisco de 286  
 'Osman I ('Osman Gazi) 73–74, 76–77, 86,  
 90–91  
 Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 3, 4, 10, 16, 148  
 Owake-no-omi 3  
  
 Pak Wōnch'ang 7  
 Pei Xiu 裴休 227  
 Philipp II, King of Spain 285  
 Pizarro y Orellana, Fernando 274  
 Pizarro, Pedro 290  
 Poan Zuxian/Haan Sosen 破庵祖先 235, 239,  
 251  
 Ponce de León, Juan 273  
 Prabhūtaratna 246  
 Ptolemy 71  
  
 Qabul Khan 73  
 Qaḥṭān 52  
 Qaidu Khan 73, 90  
 Qayı Khan see Kayı Khan  
 Qīlīch Qarākhān 112  
 Qingyuan Xingsi/Seigen Gyōshi 青原行思 240  
 Qingzhuo Zhengcheng/Seisetsu Shōchō  
 清拙正澄 261  
 Quauhquecholtec 279  
 Quiñones, Brianda de 285  
 Qutula Qa'an 73  
  
 Rashīd al-Dīn 57–58, 72–73  
 Rebecca 80–81, 84–85  
 Ruda 如達 228–235, 238–239, 241, 255  
 Ruhi 77, 86  
 Rumaytha ibn Abī Numayy 53  
 Rustam 70  
  
 Sadar 68  
 Saichō 最澄 245, 246, 249  
 Śākyamuni see Buddha  
 Salah al-Dīn 15  
 Salaman see Solomon  
 Sam 70  
 Samaniego y Pizarro, Manuel de 290  
 Samano, Juan de 283, 285  
 Samuel 87–88  
 Sānavāsī 222  
 Sarasin 299–306, 308, 309–314, 316, 318–320, 322  
 Sarı Saltuk 74, 76  
 Sarmiento, Pedro 271  
 Satan 66  
 Satūq Bughrā Khān 112, 113, 114  
 Säuberlin, Ludwig 305, 308  
 Sayyid Baraka 53

- Selman Shah 77  
 Sengcan/Sōsan 僧璨 222  
 Senkō *kokushi* 千光國師 *see* Myōan Eisai  
   明庵榮西  
 Seth 66, 68–69, 89–90, 92  
 Seyyid Lokman *see* Shiming  
 Shandao/Zendō 善導 220  
 Shangda 141  
 Sharif-i Shafi'i 65  
 Shayikh 68  
 Shaykh al-Sharaf al-'Ubaydalī 37–38  
 Shem 68–70, 74, 77–78  
 Shenhui/Jinne 神會 222, 224–225  
 Shenxiu/Jinshū 神秀 222, 224  
 Shi Shizhong 施式中 128, 131–132, 135–136,  
   140–141  
 Shiming 141  
 Shinchi Kakushin 心地覺心 261  
 Shishuang Chuyuan/Sekisō Soen 石霜楚圓,  
   *here as* Ciming/Jim'yō 慈明 251  
 Shitou 石頭 (*also* Xiqian 希遷) 264–265  
 Shōichi *kokushi* 聖一國師 *see* Enni Ben'en  
   圓爾辯圓  
 Shōtoku taishi 聖德太子 241–242  
 Shoushan Xingnian/Shuzan Shōnen  
   首山省念 251  
 Shun'oku Myōha 春屋妙葩 243  
 Sijian Zitan/Seikan Shidon 西磻子曇 261  
 Sima Qian 司馬遷 148  
 Siyamak 69  
 Siyavush 70  
 Sō Kōjōng 8–9  
 Solís y Ulloa, Mathias de 286  
 Solís, Pedro de 286  
 Solomon 71, 82, 87  
 Spener, Philipp Jacob 317  
 Su Shi 蘇軾 154  
 Su Xun 蘇洵 148, 162  
 Süleyman 65, 70, 78  
 Sun Congtian 孫從添 168  
 Sunthaim, Ladislaus 4  
 Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō 鈴木大拙貞太郎 219  
 Tahmurath 69  
 Taizong 16  
 Ṭalḥa 50  
 Tamerlane *see* Timur  
 Tang Shen 唐伸 264  
 Tang Shi 唐仕 158  
 Tehuetzquititzin, Diego 290  
 Temüjin *see* Chinggis Khan  
 Tenno Ingyō 12  
 Tenochca 291  
 Tetsugyū Enshin 鉄牛圓心 250  
 Tianhuang 天皇 241, 243, 265  
 Tiantong Rujing/Tendō Nyojō 天童如淨 239, 247  
 Tiantong Zhongjue/Tendō Sōkaku 天童宗珙 239  
 Tianwang 天王 241, 243, 265  
 Timur 10, 53, 80, 91, 118  
 Tolui Khan 73  
 Tōmyōha 261  
 Toq Buqa 85  
 Tūmbine Khan 73  
 Vani Mehmed Efendi 79  
 Vargas, Juan de 275, 277  
 Villafaña 283–285  
 Vipaśyin 232  
 Wang Hui 惠 164  
 Wang Shuju 汪叔舉 180  
 Wang Yao 汪垚 148  
 Wang Yifeng 儀鳳 164, 184  
 Wang Zhaohui 王超輝 152, 153  
 Wang Zhuan 顓 164  
 Weiss, Johann Heinrich 322  
 Wu Ren 吳仁 163  
 Wu Rong 吳榮 169  
 Wuan Puning/Gottan Funei 兀庵普寧 261  
 Wuxue Zuyuan/Mugaku Sogen 無學祖元 261  
 Wuzhun Shifan/Bujun Shibān 無準師範  
   (*also* Fojian/Bukkan 佛鑑) 229–230, 233,  
   241, 249, 250–252, 254  
 Wuzu Fayān/Goso Hōen 五祖法演 235, 251  
 Xicontecalpopoca Chichimecal, García 290  
 Xicotencatl the Elder 289  
 Xinghua Cunjiang/Kōke Shonshō 興化存獎  
   251  
 Xu Quan 許銓 168  
 Xua Duo 16  
 Xuedou Zhijian/Setchō Chikan 雪竇智鑑 239  
 Xuefeng 雪峰 265  
 Yahya *see* Elijah



- Ya'juj *see* Gog  
 Yang Shiqi 17  
 Yangqi Fanghui/Yōgi Hōe  
     楊岐方會 222, 235, 251  
 Yangshan Huiji/Gyōzan Ejaku 仰山慧寂 222  
 Yaoshan 藥山 241, 264  
 Yarid *see* Jared  
 Yazdgird III 47  
 Yesügei Bahadur 73  
 Ying'an Tanhua/Sōan Donge 應庵曇華 251  
 Yinkui 141  
 Yinyuan 141  
 Yishan Yining/Issan Ichinei 一山一寧 261  
 Yong'an Daoyuan 永安道原 226  
 Yongjin 131  
 Yongkui 131  
 Yongle 136  
 Yongming Yanshou 永明延寿 226  
 You Zhende 游震得 207  
 Yu Qin 17  
 Yuanwu Keqin/Enko Kokugon 圓悟克勤 251  
 Yueguo gong 越國公 (*also* Wang Hua 汪華) 171, 180  
 Yunmen Wenyan/Unmon Bun'en 雲門文偈 222, 235, 240  
 Yusha' 87  
 Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Latif 65  
 Zacharias (Zakariyya) 72, 84, 305  
 Zal 70  
 Zhang 124, 141, 152, 156  
 Zhao Mingheng 4  
 Zheng Jingyue 17  
 Zhenqiu 141  
 Zhiju 智炬 225  
 Zhongyue 中嶽 223, 264  
 Zhongzhuang gong 忠壯公 172  
 Zhu Xi 朱熹 162  
 Zhuxian Fanxian/Jikusen Bonsen 竺仙梵僊 261  
 Zib Takoy 78

## Index of manuscripts

- Ankara, Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü  
 – 1872 65, 94  
 Ankara, Ethnography Museum  
 – 8457 64, 93  
 Basel, Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt  
 – JD-REG 6e 3 2 321, 324  
 – PA 212a C 2 304, 306, 323  
 – PA 212a C 3.1 303, 309–310, 313, 323  
 – PA 212a C 3.11 303, 308–309, 311–312, 323  
 – PA 212a C 3.2 303, 319, 323  
 – PA 212a C 3.3 303, 320, 323  
 – PA 212a C 3.9 302, 323  
 – PA 212a C 6 303, 313, 323  
 – PA 212a C 17 302, 309, 323  
 – PA 212a D 12 303  
 – PA 212a E 1 302, 323  
 – PA 212a G 1.2 302, 323  
 – PA 594a A 1 323  
 – PA 594a A 3 315, 317–318, 323–324  
 Beijing, National Library of China, Rare and Special Collections  
 – 1118 170  
 – 2415 165  
 – 5930B 159  
 – 11561 172  
 – 11562 171  
 – 12677 181, 198–203, 209–211, 213–214  
 – 12684 154, 179  
 – 12687 171  
 – 12775 171  
 – 13170 162, 182  
 – 13285 158  
 – 13838 154  
 – 13841 159  
 – 14226 163  
 – 14227 163, 168, 183–184  
 – 14229 154  
 – 14240 201  
 – 14243 185  
 – 14268 170, 191

- 14280 204, 207, 213
- 14281 159–160, 172, 192, 203–204, 207, 215–216
- 14282 167, 169
- 14287 200–201, 210–212
- 14289 171
- 14291 160
- 14293 158
- 14298 169, 198, 200–201
- 14299 169
- 14335 153
- 14343 160
- 14356 162
- 14374 169–171
- 14406 168
- 14417 162
- 14834 169, 190
- 14836 148, 150, 163, 205
- 14838 163, 168
- 17419 172, 193–194
  
- Beijing, National Library of China, Traditional Books Department
  - JP2841 167
  - JP2987 167
  
- Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin
  - or. quart. 821 77, 86, 93
  
- Cairo, Dār al-Kutub wa'l-Wathā'iq al-Qawmiyya, al-Khizāna al-Taymūriyya
  - *ta'rīkh* 930 47
  
- Dublin, Chester Beatty Library
  - 364 32, 57, 59
  - T. 423 65, 91, 93
  
- Hefei, Anhui Provincial Library
  - 2:003654 165, 189
  - 2:003678 165
  - 2:22907 151
  
- Huangshan City, Museum of Huangshan shi (*olīm*)
  - 2491 180
  
- Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library
  - Ayasofya 3259 65, 92
  - Ayasofya 3541 78, 86, 93
  - Bağdatlı Vehbi Efendi, 1305 31–32, 34–40, 43–49, 51, 53–56, 58
  - Hasan Hüsnü Paşa 1289-2 64, 92
  - Lala İsmail 347 64, 92
  - Yeni Cami 100 79, 93
  
- Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library
  - Ahmed III, 2937 58
  - Ahmed III, 3599 64, 92
  
- London, British Library
  - Or. 1406 26, 57, 60–61
  
- Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España
  - R/38944 276
  
- Mashhad, Āstān-i Quds-i Raḡawī
  - 3626 47
  
- Medina, Majma' al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz, Maktabat al-Şāfi
  - 136 47
  
- Najaf, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' Library
  - 1999 (or 76 or 23118) 35
  
- Najaf, Mu'assasat Kāshif al-Ghiṭā'
  - 498 47
  
- New Haven, Yale University Library
  - Landberg MSS, 118 47–48, 59
  
- Oxford, Bodleian Library
  - Marsh 313 95
  
- Philadelphia, Free Library of Philadelphia
  - Lewis Collection, O 37 64, 93
  
- Qom, Kitābkhāna-'i Takhaşşuṣ-i Tārīkh-i Islām wa Īrān
  - *ansāb wa khāndānhā* 1-6-32 47
  
- Qom, Markaz-i İhyā'-i Mīrāth-i Islāmī
  - 341/1 47, 59

Salt Lake City, FamilySearch  
– DGS105420217 207, 213

Sevilla, Archivo General de Indias  
Guatemala  
– 111, no. 32 289

Indiferente  
– 415, L. 1 273

Justicia  
– 295 279

Mapas y Planes–Escudos  
– 23 276  
– 168 290  
– 179 290  
– 189 290  
– 197 290  
– 211–213 290  
– 285 290

Mapas y Planos–México  
– 48 290

México  
– 95, no. 6 273  
– 95, no. 24 290  
– 95, no. 44 277  
– 203, no. 5 275  
– 207, no. 4 277

Patronato  
– 54, no. 8, r. 3 274  
– 54, no. 8, r. 4 (2) 275  
– 171, no. 1, r. 12 284  
– 55, no. 1, r. 6 275  
– 55, no. 2, r. 2 277  
– 55, no. 3, r. 1 277–280, 286  
– 55, no. 3, r. 1 (2) 280–281, 286  
– 55, no. 3, r. 1 (3) 283–286  
– 55, no. 3, r. 4 291  
– 59, no. 1, r. 2 287, 289  
– 67, r. 2 281, 283  
– 74, no. 4, r. 1 286  
– 82, no. 1, r. 1 286

Planos y dibujos, no desglosados  
– 86 290

Shanghai, Shanghai Municipal Library  
– 002421 198, 200–203, 209–210, 212–214  
– 002422 198, 201–203, 212–214  
– 006713 200

Tashkent, Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies  
– fond 1, no. 11838 104  
– fond 1, no. 11941 104  
– fond 1, no. 12387 104  
– fond 1, no. 13074 104  
– fond 1, no. 3637 104  
– fond 1, no. 3853 104  
– fond 3, no. 252 104  
– fond 3, no. 2851 104  
– fond 3, no. 3004 104

Tashkent, Ghafur Ghulam Regional Museum of  
Literature  
– 698 104

Tehran, Kitābkhāna-ʾi Majlis-i shūrā-yi islāmī  
– 4459 47

Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek  
– A.F. 50 63, 65–67, 75–76, 87–88, 93  
– H. O. 11 65, 93  
– Mxt 487 65, 93

