SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THE IMAGE PROJECTED BY EUROPEAN ROYAL FAMILIES

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Monarchy Royal house Europe Image Social networks Design Photography	*In Europe, ten states are characterised by conventional monarchies, whose royal families serve as an enduring symbol of national unity and a repository of historical traditions, underscoring their role as representatives of their countries. This research examines the image projected by European royal houses through digital platforms. The objective is to ascertain the graphic resources, visuals and descriptions employed by them in the biography section of their Facebook, X and Instagram accounts. The results of the content analysis demonstrate a proclivity towards the utilisation of institutional resources, coupled with the preponderance of symbolic elements such as coats of arms, flags and national heritage.*

1. Introduction

In the present era, one in five countries worldwide adheres to a monarchical system (Crespo-MacLennan, 2023). In Europe, ten states are characterised by conventional monarchies. The term monarchy, which is defined in the Diccionario de la Lengua Española (Real Academia Española, 2023a) as "an organisation of the state in which the supreme leadership and representation is exercised by a person in the title of king or queen", has its etymological roots in Greek. Consequently, it is used to describe a state that is ruled by a sovereign. Given the strong legal and political connotations associated with the term, it is common practice in academic research to gather its meanings as a political category, institution, narrative of historicist legitimisation and symbolic evocation, among others (Cerdà Serrano, 2022). The monarchy is presented as "the embodiment of the continuity of the political, social and historical order", and the monarch is charged with the fundamental mission of preserving and increasing it (Pérez Samper, 2011, p. 105). In some European countries, such as the United Kingdom and Spain, the monarchy is parliamentary. This means that the executive power is derived from the legislature, which is elected by the citizens. Consequently, the monarch serves as the head of state and representative in diplomatic matters, a position that is inherited through the monarch's blood lineage. Consequently, the monarch exercises a reigning function, yet a ruling function is effectively precluded by the constraints imposed by the other branches of government.

In contrast, in constitutional monarchies, the monarch serves as the head of state, retains executive power, and is responsible for appointing the government (Aragón Reyes, 2004). This is exemplified by the constitutional monarchy of Monaco. In addition to the absolutist monarchy typology, which encompasses a monarch with absolute power, there are three principal forms of monarchy (Pérez Alonso, 2016). Irrespective of the typology of monarchy under consideration, the royal family, defined in the Diccionario panhispánico del español jurídico (Real Academia Española, 2023b) as a family group comprising the holder of the Crown, their consort, their first-degree ascendants, their descendants and heir to the throne, serves as an emblem of national unity and a repository of historical traditions. In their capacity as representatives of their respective countries at the global level, they discharge a protocolary role. These European royal houses are "internationally recognised brands", and their duties include representing their country, engaging in foreign policy work and undertaking international projection. The Crown is a significant asset in this regard (Crespo-MacLennan, 2023). In order to project a solid image of the institution, the concepts of protocol, etiquette and ceremonial converge around the organisation of events as public relations strategies of royal houses (García-Fernández, 2014), forming synergies with what is classified as royal protocol relating to the highest institutions (Fuente Lafuente et al., 2015).

In light of the aforementioned considerations and the institutional and social significance attributed to the concept of image, it can be posited that the communication strategy of various royal houses is predicated upon this notion. Indeed, pioneering research in this field has reached the conclusion that, in response to the question "What is the King?", the answer is "The King is his image" (Lisón Tolosana, 1992). The image of monarchs and their families is characterised by a complex intermingling of variables, including their relationship with the government, their status as political subjects, and their humanity, encompassing passions, interests, and subjectivities (Anta Félez, 2021). Consequently, the image "is not merely a physical representation; it is also a political and symbolic one" (Pérez Samper, 2011, p. 107).

2. The Media, Image and Reputation of Royal Houses

The role of the media in projecting the image of royal houses is of significant consequence. The principal media outlets employ personnel whose remit is to report on the ceremonial activities of these institutions, as such matters constitute a specific area of journalistic enquiry (García González, 2016). These media outlets play a significant role in shaping public opinion by influencing the generation and dissemination of ideas (Alonso del Barrio, 2016). They often approach the treatment and coverage of the monarchy from an ideological perspective, positioning themselves and influencing the projection of specific image qualities in relation to the object of study investigated in this paper (Veloz, 2019). In their capacity as agents capable of shaping social reality, and irrespective of the editorial stance, it is evident that traditional media outlets exhibit a tendency

towards shielding and opacity in their coverage of the royal houses and their figures (Lava Santos and Pardo de Pedro, 2022). Consequently, the relationship between the press and the monarchy is occasionally contentious with regard to the demarcation of the boundaries between freedom of expression and the prerogatives of the monarchical institution. There are discernible discrepancies in the conduct of the press, the demands it makes and the manner in which it treats the various European royal houses.

Furthermore, in the context of the current digitalised social and cultural environment, digital media have transformed existing models of diplomacy (Bonfanti Gris, 2020) as well as the representation accorded to royal families and their members. To illustrate, while the conventional media have traditionally accorded the Spanish Royal Family a "high degree of respect, positive regard, and acquiescence" (López García and Valera Ordaz, 2013, p. 65), the findings of the study indicate that digital media coverage is increasingly critical, encompassing both personal criticism of individual members and scrutiny of the monarchical institution as a whole. The heiresses of the various European royal houses occupy a significant position in the media, as they symbolise the future of European monarchies. Their participation in a multitude of events serves as an indication of both courtesy and geopolitical strategy (Alcázar Barcelona, 2023). Such individuals tend to occupy space in the so-called celebrity or celebrity press due to their attractiveness, charisma and aspirational nature, while simultaneously generating a genuine fan phenomenon (Llach, 2023).

In addition to the media discourse in the digital sphere, there has been a proliferation of audiovisual productions focusing on the lives of European royal houses, which have an influence on their notoriety and reputation. This is exemplified by feature fi lms, docuseries and other formats that facilitate a more accessible and relatable portrayal of these institutional figures, particularly to younger audiences. These portrayals offer insights into their more human facets and have had a significant impact on the image of the monarchy (Coughlan & Rosney, 2022).

2.1. The Utilisation of Social Networks as a Conduit for Institutional Communication

The findings of González Gómez's (2015) study on the analysis of the monarchy's online communication strategy indicate that "the content published by the institution and by cybermedia do not adhere to a uniform narrative" (p. 2).

Currently, the monarchy's method of communication, which is perceived as a historical and conservative entity, is compelled to adapt to the contemporary information society (Hasan Flores, 2022), which is characterised by the advent and high penetration of information and communication technologies (ICTS) (IAB Spain, 2023). As instruments that facilitate more efficient communication and the broadcasting, access and processing of information, they enable new spaces for the exchange of information, which can be understood as fields where relationships between human beings are generated, regenerated, grow and are transformed (Bernete García, 2010).

In this context, websites serve as a platform for royal houses to communicate with a diverse range of audiences, including active and inactive audiences, stakeholders, and opinion leaders (García-Fernández, 2014). Furthermore, in 2012, 70% of European royal houses had already established a profile on a social network, with the objective of enhancing their image and associating themselves with the values of transparency, credibility and reputation (Europa Press, 2012). As institutional communication tools, the different European royal houses transmit different images through social networks. In this regard, and as an example of this diversity of approaches, protocol experts have highlighted a discrepancy between the Royal Family's face-to-face interactions with the public and their digital presence, which is perceived as lacking in proximity and naturalness, particularly in comparison to other monarchies such as the Belgian or British ones (Cuevas, 2023). The current royal families portray themselves through their official social media accounts. An examination of the British Royal Family's Instagram posts over two years provides a comprehensive insight into how the family works to maintain its image and the pre-eminence of specific themes around honouring the past and the work of the royals (Parmelee & Grerr, 2023).

It is therefore evident that visual elements play an important role in conveying the image of royal houses. The preliminary research conducted in Spain on the utilisation of digital platforms by royal houses has primarily focused on comparative studies examining the specific analysis of protocolary acts between two monarchies (Hasan Flores, 2022) or, once again, studies that solely compare the

practices of two royal houses (Rodríguez Hernández et al., 2021). These analyses emphasise how, through social networks, these organisations disseminate institutional messages and enhance the visibility of their diplomatic actions, while simultaneously functioning as a conduit for laudatory discourse about the institutions in question. From the European perspective of scientific production, manuscripts tend to focus on case studies of a specific European royal house or one of its members and media relations. For example, the British Royal Family and figures such as Meghan Markle (Pramaggiore & Kerrigan, 2022) or Kate Middleton (Finneman & Thomas, 2023) have been the subject of such studies. Other studies have concentrated on historical research (Sorg, 2020) and diplomatic issues (Neal, 2020). Therefore, the primary contribution of this research is to provide a comprehensive examination of the official profiles of all European royal houses on their respective social media platforms, with a particular focus on the visual representation they present through their profile photographs, headers, and descriptions.

3. Methodology

3.1. Objectives, Hypotheses and Units of Analysis

In accordance with the conclusions set forth in the introduction and theoretical framework, an analysis of the social networks of the ten constitutional or parliamentary monarchies currently reigning in Europe is presented: Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Norway, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Sweden.

The study of the image forms the basis of this research, which aims to identify the types of graphic and visual resources (profile and header photographs) used by European monarchies on their X, Facebook and Instagram accounts, as well as the descriptions provided in their biographies. In particular, the objective is to identify general trends and to make comparisons between the main graphic, visual, compositional, stylistic and semiotic attributes, among others.

The following research hypotheses are proposed as a starting point:

- H1. The profile pictures on the social networks under analysis are intended to be photographs of the royal couple.
- H2. The header is employed to introduce elements that serve to identify the Crown with the national sentiment of the country in which they reign.
- H3. The biographical sketch included on the profile incorporates biographical elements pertaining to the royal house in question.

The fieldwork and content analysis were conducted between 3 and 10 February 2024. In order to ascertain the official status of the accounts in question, a search was conducted via search engines (Google and Bing). This information was then cross-referenced with the social networks linked to the official websites. Furthermore, an analysis was undertaken of the followers and profiles followed by the different accounts.

As previously stated, this study considers the ten European royal houses whose model is parliamentary or constitutional. Of the ten royal houses under consideration, it has not been possible to identify official accounts for Liechtenstein. The search was conducted using the aforementioned search engines and the official website of the Royal House of Liechtenstein. Furthermore, an unsuccessful search was conducted among the followers and followings of the various European royal houses and the profiles associated with the Liechtenstein government. It is also noteworthy to mention the cases of the royal houses of Norway and Sweden. With regard to the Norwegian royal house, although it is stated in X that content is shared by the crown princes, this has been included as a unit of analysis in the present study since no other unit associated with the royal family could be identified (the same technique was employed as that described for the case of Liechtenstein). Furthermore, on the website of the Norwegian royal house, a link is provided in X only to that account, thereby designating the account of the crown princes as the representative of their house in X. With regard to the Royal House of Sweden, the X profile has been excluded from the study on the grounds that it has never published any posts. Despite having a profile on this social network since 2009, the profile in question is not linked to the official website and does not follow

any social network. Furthermore, there are no followers among the followers of the profile, and no European royal house is among them.

Table 1. Presence of the European royal houses in social networks

	Social media	No. of followers	Links to the accounts
Spain	X only	1.160.278	https://twitter.com/CasaReal
Belgium	X Facebook Instagram	141.653 113.000 155.000	https://twitter.com/MonarchieBe https://www.facebook.com/BeMonarchie https://www.instagram.com/belgianroyalpalace/
Denmark	Facebook Instagram	1.000.000 399.000	https://www.facebook.com/detdanskekongehus/about https://www.instagram.com/detdanskekongehus/?img_index=1
The Netherlands	X Facebook Instagram	371.212 346.000 932.368	https://twitter.com/koninklijkhuis?lang=es https://www.facebook.com/HetKoninklijkHuis https://www.instagram.com/koninklijkhuis/
Liechtenstein	None	NA	NA
Luxembourg	X Facebook Instagram	34.762 40.000 72.300	https://twitter.com/CourGrandDucale https://fr-fr.facebook.com/courgrandducale/ https://www.instagram.com/courgrandducale/?hl=fr
Monaco	X Facebook Instagram	10.901 294.000 72.100	https://twitter.com/palaismc https://www.facebook.com/palaismonaco/ https://www.instagram.com/palaisprincierdemonaco/
Norway	X Facebook Instagram	83.399 288.000 351.000	https://twitter.com/Kronprinsparet https://www.facebook.com/Kongehuset https://www.instagram.com/detnorskekongehus/
United Kingdom	X Facebook Instagram	5.703.168 6.600.000 13.375.624	https://twitter.com/RoyalFamily https://www.facebook.com/TheBritishMonarchy https://www.instagram.com/theroyalfamily/
Sweden	Facebook Instagram	516.000 624.063	https://www.facebook.com/Kungahuset https://www.instagram.com/kungahuset/

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

3.2. Instrument and Variables

The research is descriptive in nature, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches through a content analysis that presents a coding system comprising a number of variables, all of which are focused on the objective of the work. As a research technique "that can be used to analyse any media communication product" (Igartua Perosanz, 2012, p. 181), content analysis allows for the examination of the content, the delineation of its dimensions, and the creation of a categorical system that incorporates the various parts of the message into the corresponding category (Boronat Mundina, 2005). In the context of multimedia research typical of the digital age, traditional content analysis is transformed into digital content analysis, taking into account the hypertextuality, multimediality, interactivity and frequency of updating of the content in question (Chaves-Montero et al., 2018, p. 9).

In order to conduct this research, we have developed our own content analysis sheet, taking into account previous research on the analysis of web pages, specifically photographs of social network profiles and headers (López-Marcos and Vicente-Fernández, 2023; Tarazona Belenguer et al., 2020).

The content analysis template comprised eight blocks of variables, which were applied to the information extracted between 3 and 10 February 2024 from the profiles under study. The first block of variables pertains to the general identification of the royal house (1, inductive and open), the second to international projection (2, pre-coded and closed), the third to a descriptive account of each profile (3, pre-coded and closed), the fourth to photographic attributes in each profile photo and each header

(4, pre-coded and closed), the fifth block of variables pertains to the photographic composition in each profile photo and each header (5, pre-coded and closed), the sixth block concerns the photographic content in each profile picture and each header (6, inductive and open), the seventh block addresses the style of the character(s) in each profile picture and each header (7, inductive and open). Finally, the eighth block is concerned with semiotics in each profile picture and each header (8, inductive and open).

4. Results

The results of the study are presented in the following sections, which correspond to the blocks of variables described in the methodology.

As a result of the initial identification of the units of analysis, it can be stated that there is an unequal representation of European royal houses on social networks, as illustrated in Graph 1.

Graph 1. Percentage calculation of the presence of European royal houses on digital platforms
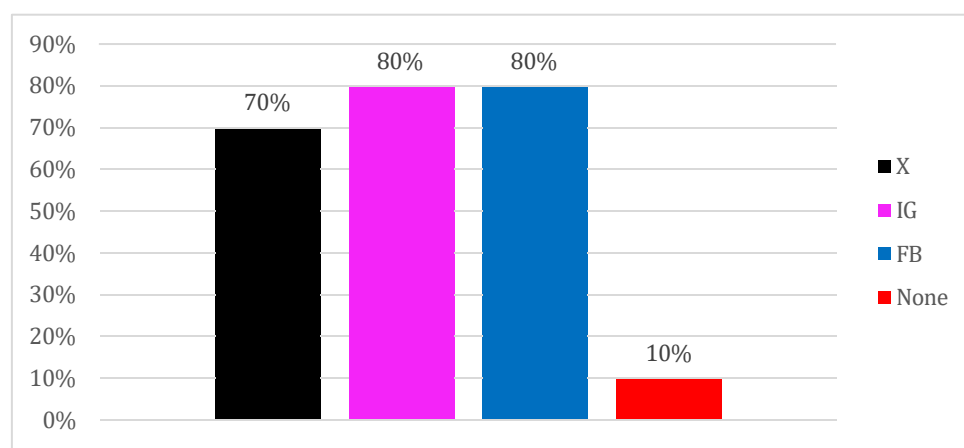
Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

Following the preliminary identification, the results are presented in accordance with the information content of each profile. With regard to the international projection of the accounts, the findings indicate that 44.44% of the European royal houses utilise a language other than the official or co-official language of the country in the description, in addition to presenting themselves in the official language of the country. The most prevalent approach (50%) is the use of a dual language system, in addition to the official or co-official language, on the social media platform Instagram. It is notable that X and Facebook also compute cases, albeit with lower percentages (25% in each case).

With regard to the descriptive content of each profile, an analysis of the reference to a website in the biographical information revealed that the URL of the official website of each real house was present in all profiles. This is not the case when measuring the number of profiles that provide contact information. A minority of cases (25%) provide direct contact details, which are exclusively available on Facebook (100%). Nevertheless, when the physical address of the monarchs' official residence is provided (which is typically the royal palace), this figure rises considerably (44.44%). Once more, all the royal houses that make this information available do so on Facebook (100%) and, in addition, some also make it available on Instagram (25%).

The majority of profiles include a reflection on which member of the royal family the account represents (66.67%). In this instance, Instagram (83.33%) is the most prevalent social media platform utilized for the provision of such clarifications, followed by X (66.67%) and Facebook (50%). It is noteworthy that, despite the existence of profiles for other members of the royal houses, such as crown princes or princesses, none of the analysed houses include links to these profiles. However, they do so to indicate their presence on other social networks (33.33%), and those royal houses that do so employ only Facebook (100%).

A smaller proportion of users indicate in their biographical profiles which hashtags they employ in relation to content pertaining to the royal family (22.22%), and they do so in a somewhat indistinct manner on Facebook and Instagram (50% of cases on each network). Additionally, on a limited number

of instances, users are provided with guidelines or rules of conduct pertaining to published posts (3%). When such directives are present, they are documented on Facebook (66.67%) and X (33.33%).

With regard to the inclusion of welcoming messages on profiles, slightly more than half of the royal houses analysed (55.56%) incorporate such messages. The highest number of welcomes are on the social network Facebook (60%), with an equivalent number on X (20%) and Instagram (20%).

In considering the photographic attributes selected, it is important to distinguish between the images utilized in the profile (a characteristic applicable to the three digital platforms under analysis) and those employed in the headers (only applicable to X and FB, given that Instagram does not have a header). The image most frequently employed as a profile picture is the coat of arms of the royal house or the silhouette of the royal palace (88.89%), with an image of the royal couple being used to a lesser extent. The utilisation of the coat of arms is the most prevalent resource on Facebook (87.5%), followed by Instagram (75%) and X (62.5%). It is noteworthy that the image of the royal couple has been registered in all the Instagram profiles of those royal houses that utilise this resource. In contrast, X (50%) and Facebook (50%) register a lower percentage in the use of this type of image as a profile picture. This resource lends a more personal and relatable quality to the royal houses, although it is typically accompanied by photos that have been digitally edited to appear more natural.

**Figure 1.** Screenshot of the Norwegian Royal Household's X-account

Source: X, 2024.

In the context of social media, it is notable that the European royal houses tend to utilise images of the royal family in their official communications on the social network Facebook. This is evidenced by the data presented in the graph below, which illustrates that 66.66% of the royal houses' Facebook posts feature images of the royal family. However, it should be noted that not all images feature the entire royal family (44.44%); on occasion, although in a minority, only the King and Queen appear in the photograph (22.22%), thereby emphasising their prominence as the highest representatives of the institution. With the exception of the Norwegian Royal Family, the same image is used for both headers. X and Facebook. It is noteworthy that in the Norwegian case, where the royal family is present only on X and Instagram, the space for the X header is not utilised. Instead, a grey box is visible (see Figure 1). For this reason, it has not been included in the analysis. The following graph provides a summary of the photographic attributes of the headers, presented in descending order of size for each of the digital platforms under investigation.

Graph 2. Photographic attributes in the headers by social network
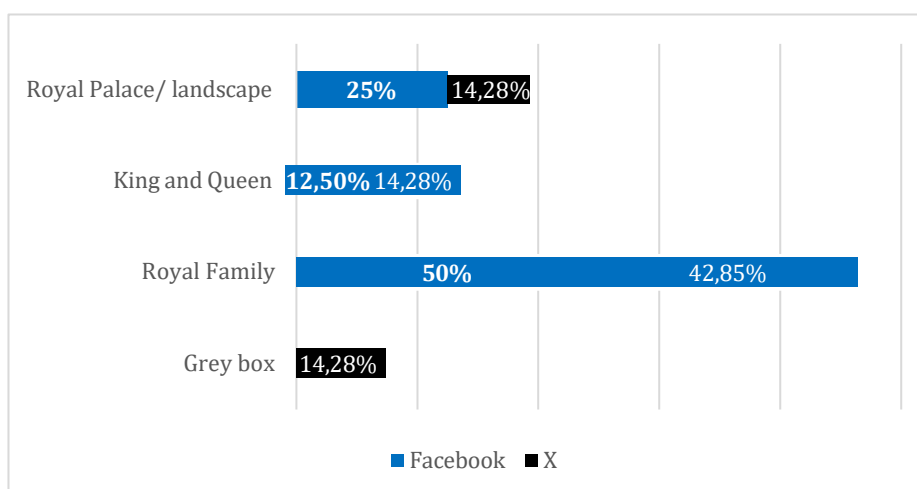
Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

In the analysis of the photographic composition of each profile picture, only those images that correspond to landscapes or people are considered. Consequently, coats of arms and images of royal palaces are excluded from the study. In this variable, it is observed that all the images are in colour and, with regard to the type of plan, the American plan is the only one employed (100%). With regard to angulation, the images are divided betweenlow angle shot (50%) and flat angle (50%). The inverted image is employed exclusively on Instagram, whereas the oblique image is utilised across all three social networks. In the header, all the images are in colour. The most common type of shot is the general (60%), followed by the American (20%) and medium (20%) types. With regard to angulation, the neutral shot is the most common (46.67%), followed by the low angle (26.67%) and the flat angle

Graph 3. Type of angulation in the headers by social network
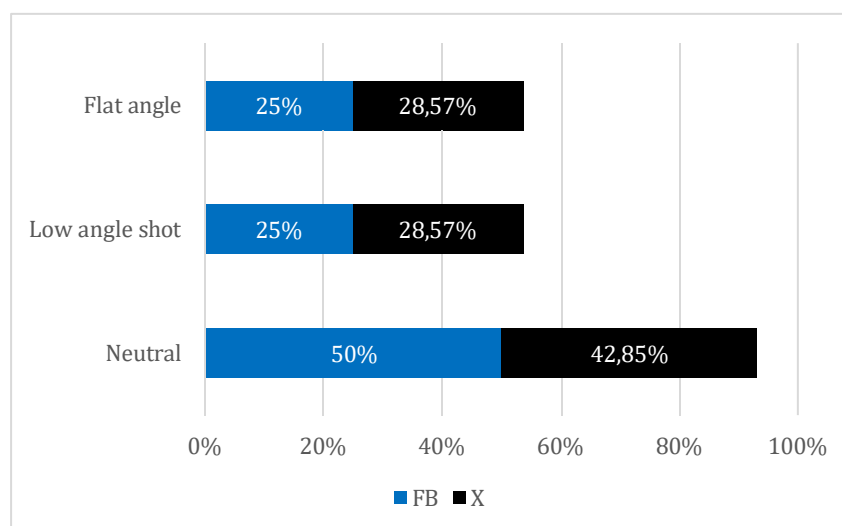
Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

The study is conducted from the perspective of the particularities of the content of the images under study, with a focus on the location and bodily communication and facial expression of the royal figures. It should be noted that profile pictures of royal coats of arms or drawings of royal palaces are not included in this variable. With regard to the location, it can be observed that all the profile pictures are taken outdoors and that they establish a connection with the royal palace or official residence of the kings, as well as with historical elements related to the monarchy.

It is evident that images lacking a subject are excluded from the study of variables pertaining to body communication. In the photographs featuring subjects in the profiles (22.22%), we observed two distinct poses: one with the subjects facing the camera and their backs to the photo, waving and facing the public (50%), and another with a tilted posture, intertwined and not looking directly at the camera (50%).

In addition, the headlines are predominantly set in outdoor locations (73.33%), with a smaller proportion featuring indoor settings (13.33%) or textual and photographic compositions where the location is not clearly discernible (13.33%) (see Figure 2).

In those headers where the variable on body communication and facial expression can be applied, the subjects analysed appear with a smiling face in all cases and show their teeth in a high percentage (75%). They pose mainly standing up (75%) and less frequently in a frontal or tilted position (25%). These variables demonstrate a consistent trend across both X and Facebook.

Figure 2. Screenshot of the Monegasque Royal Household's X-account

Source: X, 2024.

In the profile pictures where the style of the person in the photograph could be analysed, a split preference was found for formal wear (50%) and evening wear (50%). The data indicates that formal wear is represented equally on all three social networks, while formal wear alone is present on Instagram. Furthermore, it can be posited that in 100% of these instances, the subjects are wearing makeup. A similar trend is observed in the headers, with formal dress (60%) and formal attire (40%) being the most common. Furthermore, the subjects are depicted with applied cosmetics.

Graph 4. Clothing style in the headlines by social network
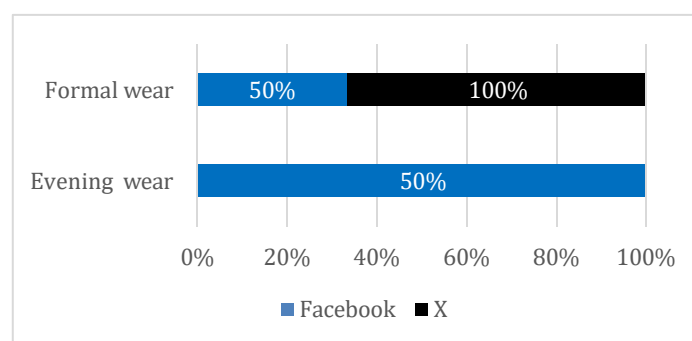
Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

Finally, the study includes an analysis of the semiotic elements present in the images. In the case of the profiles, all the royal houses make some reference to their coat of arms or the emblem of their royal palace. This is done in one way or another, either directly or indirectly. Only a small proportion of profiles include some form of patriotic reference, such as the flag of the country in which they reign (11.11%). This is illustrated in Figure 3, which shows the incorporation of the flag of Belgium by the Royal House of Belgium.

Figure 3. Screenshot of the Belgian Royal Household's X-account

Source: X, 2024.

In the headers that meet the requisite criteria for analysis (with the exception of landscapes, drawings, and monochrome stripes), a similar phenomenon occurs as observed in profile pictures: in one way or another, all the images make reference to emblems of the royal house (images of crowns, flags of the royal house, or royal coats of arms). Furthermore, in 44.44% of cases, these elements are intermingled with references to the country in which they reign, primarily flags or elements with colours of the national flag (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Screenshot of the British Royal Family's Facebook-account

Source: Facebook, 2024.

5. Conclusions and Discussion of Results

The objective of this research was to examine the graphic, visual and descriptive resources employed by the European royal houses in their official profiles on X, Facebook and Instagram. The findings indicate that images play a significant role in both profile photographs and the headers of the social networks of the monarchies in Europe. The profile photograph is the inaugural visual representation presented to the public, and it is of paramount importance that there is a discernible connection between the image and the corresponding royal house, as well as the image projected to the public. This quality can be observed in the prevalence of royal coats of arms or images of royal palaces in profile photographs. In this manner, the account in question is evidently identified as an official profile, or at the very least, as such. The initial hypothesis of the study, which proposed that profile pictures on social networks would feature photographs of the royal couple, is therefore refuted. Coats of arms are, together with flags, symbols of the state. As such, the visual language of heraldry (García-Mercadal, 2011) as well as the national historical heritage, as exemplified by the majesty of royal palaces, are vindicated at the level of the image (García-Mercadal, 2011). It can therefore be seen that the exhibition of the symbolic forms part of the formal and conceptual universe of the Crown, which is of great importance since, as Marcos Pardo and Cortina Riu (2020, p. 31) observe, "the monarchy is based on the intangible and, at the same time, it needs to be externalised through symbols".

In order to portray the Crown as a symbol of stability, unalterable permanence and standard of national unity, the general trend observed indicates that the headers of the digital platforms analysed predominantly feature images of the royal family (either the royal couple alone or the entire family) of the corresponding royal house. This endeavour to forge an emotional bond between tradition and a national symbol that endures across generations is reinforced by the incorporation of elements clearly associated with the royal house and even with national identity (flags, the country's colours). Given the larger space afforded by the headers, it is logical that this graphic resource is associated with this location and not with the profile image, which is smaller and of proportions that make it difficult to

appreciate interesting semiotic details. Thus, the second hypothesis is confirmed, which associates the header image with the incorporation of elements that make it possible to identify the Crown with the country where it reigns, once again placing emphasis on national symbolism (Marshall, 2021).

Conversely, there are no notable discrepancies in the graphical utilisation of the biographical elements of social network profiles, whether in the header or the profile image. It is, however, noteworthy that two minor particularities emerge when the data from Facebook and Instagram are considered separately. With regard to Facebook, the analysis revealed that this social network includes the most comprehensive information in its description, including contact details, links to other social networks, usage policy, and so forth. This is likely due to the fact that it provides more space for descriptions than other platforms. In contrast, Instagram is a social network where visual content is of greater importance. This may explain why monarchies that select an image of the royal couple as their profile picture tend to use it on Instagram. Furthermore, Instagram does not permit the use of headers. Consequently, if a monarchic house elects to utilise an image of the royal couple or the royal palace as their profile picture, there is a possibility that it may not be readily identifiable with the relevant royal house.

In regard to the third hypothesis, the findings indicate that none of the royal houses include any biographical information in their profile descriptions. This may be attributed to the restricted space available for including information and the assumption that it will be addressed through the official link provided by all the houses on their respective social media platforms. It can therefore be concluded that the third hypothesis regarding the inclusion of biographical elements in the profile of each social network is not confirmed. With regard to the profile descriptions, it can be concluded that, given the minority use of a second language other than the official or co-official language, there is no evidence of a majority international projection of the image of the European royal houses beyond that of their own country. This finding is of interest, given the assumption that they perform an institutional role of an ambassadorial and representational nature (Panizo Alonso, 2017). The case of the Royal House of Liechtenstein is particularly noteworthy. It has a notable absence on social media, which is contrary to the policy of transparency that European monarchies typically display. It is also noteworthy that the Spanish Royal House has a limited presence on social media, with only a few social networks. This is in contrast to the wider trend among European royal houses, which have a more ambitious digital presence. It is noteworthy that 60% of the royal houses have a presence on X, Facebook and Instagram, and 80% on at least two of the three networks analysed. Consequently, the Spanish Royal Household is the sole entity with a presence on social networks that has only one such account. During the course of this research, a number of unofficial or even fictitious accounts were identified, particularly in instances where the royal houses in question lacked official accounts. It would be beneficial for future research to analyse these cases and their influence on image projection.

As a potential limitation of this study, the research focuses on an analysis of the design and descriptive resources of the social networks. Future research could include an analysis of a sample of the messages launched on social networks with the aim of expanding this research. Furthermore, an additional and supplementary analysis could be conducted on the profiles of the crown princes in instances where they do possess one. Similarly, the dates of the most recent updates to the various accounts could be included as a potential element of analysis.

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