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Imagining Christian kingship in Sigismund II Augustus's "Genesis" tapestries at Wawel Castle (1553)

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Propositions

1. Sigismund II Augustus played a vital role in the commissioning of the *Genesis* tapestries.
2. Through the stories of the Old Testament patriarchs, the *Genesis* tapestries make an argument for the importance of faith: in God and in the King.
3. As *Genesis* shows, the tenets of Christian kingship were central in the creation of Sigismund's princely persona in the 1550s.
4. The style, materiality, narrative, and iconography of *Genesis* work in tandem to promote a cohesive didactic programme.
5. Renaissance tapestry is better understood as a convergent space of meaning-making between patron and audience (and artist), rather than as a form of visual propaganda.
6. Our study of the conception and reception of tapestry series would benefit from including more eyewitness accounts.
7. The incorporation of visual/material studies into Polish Reformation scholarship would offer new insight into the field.
8. A comprehensive reading of figural tapestries should include their historical/political context alongside examinations of their genre, narrative, iconography, style, and materiality.
9. As the turbulent history of *Genesis* until the present day demonstrates, European cultural institutions must continue the important work of art repatriation.
10. A three-year study of sixteenth-century textiles may occasionally lead even the most stalwart researcher to unravel.