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Thesis title Like Father Like Son? Henry III's Tomb at Westminster Abbey as a Case Study
in Late Thirteenth-Century English Kingship

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LIKE FATHER LIKE SON? HENRY III'S TOMB AT WESTMINSTER
ABBEY AS A CASE STUDY IN LATE THIRTEENTH-CENTURY
ENGLISH KINGSHIP

by

SUSAN A. RAICH

Prof. Peter Low, Advisor

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of the requirements for the
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ABBREVIATIONS

- Chron. Bury St. Edmunds* Gransden, Antonia, ed. and trans. *The Chronicle of Bury St Edmunds, 1212-1301*. London: Nelson, 1964.
- KW* Brown, R. Allen, H.M. Colvin, and A.J. Taylor. *The History of the King's Works*. Vol. 1. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1963.
- Matthew Paris's English History* Paris, Matthew. *Matthew Paris's English History*. Translated by J.A. Giles. 3 vols. London: H.G. Bohn, 1852.
- Political Songs* Wright, Thomas. *Thomas Wright's Political Songs of England: From the Reign of John to That of Edward II*. Edited by Peter R. Coss. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- RCHME* Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England. *Westminster Abbey*. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1924.
- Rishanger* Rishanger, Willelmi. *Chronica et Annales*. Edited by Henry T. Riley. London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1865.
- Trivet* Trivet, Nicholas. *Annales*. Edited by Thomas Hog. London: Sumptibus Societatis, Kraus Reprint, 1845, 1964.
- Westminster Flores* Westminster, Matthew of, and Roger of Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*. Or, *the Flowers of History, Especially Such as Relate to the Affairs of Britain, from the Beginning of the World to the Year 1307*. Translated and edited by C.D. Yonge. Vol. 2. London: H.G. Bohn, 1853. Reprint, New York, AMS Press 1968.

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INTRODUCTION: TWO KINGS AND A TOMB

As six centuries passed, a Plantagenet king lay undisturbed near the shrine to Saint Edward the Confessor in the church at Westminster Abbey, until November of 1871, when his tomb was opened.¹ For the purpose of cleaning the monument, a Society of Antiquaries led by the Dean of Westminster conducted a thorough study of the tomb's materials and assembly. First, the dean's party lifted away the heavy cast bronze effigy from the tomb's top. The investigators then examined the two marble chests stacked below, each of which retained the stone and glass mosaics which had lent the tomb opulence since its construction. The Very Reverend Arthur Penrhyn Stanley and his colleagues then proceeded to remove the lid of the upper tomb chest in order to see the coffin within, which contained the embalmed royal body. This action concluded the antiquarians' study; Stanley recalls, "A feeling was found to prevail that there did not seem, upon historical grounds, to be sufficient motive to warrant the opening of the coffin."² The sepulchral case was closed, but interest in the tomb among scholars of and visitors to the Abbey persists.

The tomb, with its colorful inlaid marble chests, gilt effigy, and towering height, is impressive (fig. 1). Who was this king, and who made this grand monument to him? An inscription around the edge of the upper tomb chest identifies its occupant as Henry III, the English king who died in 1272 after a reign of fifty-six years. A minor amount of historical reasoning leads to the conclusion that his son, who

¹ Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, "On an Examination of the Tombs of Richard II and Henry III in Westminster Abbey," *Archaeologia* 45 (1880): 317-22.

² *Ibid.*: 322.

succeeded his father as King Edward I and ruled until his death in 1307, commissioned the work.³ What, then, is known about these two kings?

From a look at mere dates, they lived amidst other great figures. Theirs was the age of Louis IX, the Capetian crusader king of France who was canonized in 1297. The wealthy of thirteenth-century Europe, whose societal values were based upon the Christian religion and the code of chivalry, oversaw the building of towering Gothic cathedrals and impregnable fortresses, many of which survive to this day. Men of letters further distinguished the age. Thomas Aquinas, the influential scholastic theologian, died in 1274, the year of Edward I's coronation in England, and the year after that king's death, Dante began writing his *Divine Comedy* in Italy. In the Middle East, the Christian kingdoms established by earlier crusaders were battling to maintain their strongholds, but in 1291, the last Latin outpost at Acre was overtaken by Mamluk forces. Further east in Anatolia, a new Muslim power was emerging. As an unwitting Edward I aged into his sixties, a warrior called Osman was leading successful raids along the fringes of Byzantium, beginning the success story of the Ottoman dynasty he was to found.⁴ These years remain riveting to twenty-first century audiences, as attested by the success of the 1995 Academy Award-winner *Braveheart*; the movie depicts the crudities of medieval warfare in its fight scenes between Edward I's troops and subjected Scots.

What did contemporaries have to say about Henry III and Edward I? Their reigns witnessed the apex of Benedictine monastic chronicle writing, a useful amount

³ To summarize the evidence that will be explored in greater detail below, the tomb was sufficiently grand and expensive to signal a royal patron, and a chronicler recorded that Edward himself collected stones for his father's tomb.

⁴ Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 5.

of which has been translated into English.⁵ Matthew Paris wrote at St. Albans nearly to his death in 1259, and his work was continued at Westminster into the fourteenth century, while monks maintained an independent chronicle at Bury St. Edmunds until 1301.⁶ By the time Edward wore the crown, other Church orders were contributing their annals to English historiography, including the Augustinians Walter of Guisborough and Thomas Wykes, as well as the London Dominican Nicholas Trivet. This last authority wrote his *Annales* some dozen years after Edward I's death, but still managed to compile eyewitness accounts of the events and personalities of both reigns.⁷ Needless to say, the assessments of kings as provided by relatively isolated monks with clear prejudices in favor of their own monasteries' interests must be relied upon with caution. These chronicles do, however, indicate which events were deemed to be notable by at least one subset of thirteenth and early fourteenth-century English society, and the pronouncements of the chroniclers reveal the values those individuals felt were worth recording.

Nicholas Trivet provides perhaps the most telling summary of the characters and appearances of Henry III and his son. Of the former he writes, "The king was considered to be as little prudent in secular affairs as he was great in devotion to the Lord...he was strong in build, but rash in behavior." Edward, in turn, he praises:

He was a man of tried prudence in affairs of state. He was devoted in adolescence to the practice of arms by which he acquired a widespread reputation for chivalry—his fame excelled every prince of his time throughout the Christian world. He was elegant in form, of commanding height, exceeding an ordinary man from the leg upwards.⁸

⁵ For a survey of all known chronicle sources for both reigns, see Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England: c. 550 to c. 1307*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1974), 356-517.

⁶ See Matthew Paris's *English History*. The continuation of Paris' *Flores Historiarum* that is published in English, Westminster *Flores*, is based on the royalist, "Merton" manuscript. *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds* is a rigorous and relatively recent English translation of that source.

⁷ Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 501-5. Trivet's chronicle has not been published in English, but Gransden translates some key passages.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 506.

Already from Trivet's time of writing around 1320, a historiographical interpretation of the two reigns was thus set, which diametrically opposed father and son: Henry III was admirably pious but inept at governance, while Edward was not only an effective ruler but a chivalric warrior as well.⁹ Henry was hopelessly peaceful, while Edward was a crusading and tournamenting knight-at-arms. Songs and poems written at this time by the middling knights and clergy, which complain of the vices of society and of the power of the church and state, add critiques to Edward's policies. Nevertheless, we shall see that in these sources too a lamentation of Henry III's military weakness and a praise of Edward's prowess are discernible.¹⁰

Modern historians have used such sources to deliver their own assessments and narratives of the two reigns. Maurice Powicke's work offers a launching point for further study, and his insights continue to provoke thought among later generations of historians.¹¹ Since the first publishing of his *King Henry III and the Lord Edward* in 1947, scholars have reevaluated and supplemented his claims with data-collecting and evaluations of their own.¹² They have made extensive use of administrative documents from the period, many of which survive from the prolific bureaucracy that operated under the thirteenth-century English crown.¹³ Historians

⁹ This characterization of Henry III was also characteristic of chronicles composed during his reign and upon his death. His reputation for poor political maneuvering seems to stem from the latter part of his reign, after 1263 and de Montfort's rise to power. See David Carpenter, "An Unknown Obituary of King Henry III from the Year 1263," in *The Reign of Henry III* (Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1996), 255-6, 59.

¹⁰ Many of these political verses are collected and translated into English: Thomas Wright, *Thomas Wright's Political Songs of England: From the Reign of John to That of Edward II*, ed. Peter R. Coss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹¹ F. M. Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward; the Community of the Realm in the Thirteenth Century*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1947).

¹² The bias of Powicke's romantic, narrative style, which lacks full citations and documentary support, is explored in M.T. Clanchy, "Inventing Thirteenth-Century England: Stubbs, Tout, Powicke--Now What?," in *Thirteenth-Century England V: Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference, 1993*, ed. P.R. Coss and S.D. Lloyd (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 1995).

¹³ The chancery's fifty-six rolls of royal fines from the reign of Henry III, for example, remain uninvestigated as a whole, and are currently in the process of being edited, translated, and published: The National Archives; King's College London. "Henry III Fine Rolls Project." <http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/cocoon/frh3/home.html> (accessed 30 March 2009).

trained in diplomatic and paleography have sifted through royal writs and letters, itineraries, court records, and governmental notations, most of which now reside in governmental archives, to provide more thorough investigations into each reign. These documents themselves are unavailable to the American undergraduate student of history, so the present study will rely on interpretations of them as provided by eminent historians David Carpenter, Michael Prestwich, and Marc Morris.¹⁴ This study will then build off these and other historians' work by examining the evidence provided by one unwritten source in particular, the tomb of Henry III.

Secondary scholarship of the two reigns has focused on certain themes. The salient occurrence of Henry III's reign, which absorbed thirteenth-century chroniclers' attentions as well, was the baronial revolt of 1258 and the resulting civil war from 1263-5, which featured Simon de Montfort as the leader of opposition to the king.¹⁵ This was no small uprising; rather, the movement addressed ills that deeply resonated with the English populace, and later monarchs responded to the reforms it demanded.¹⁶ As a result, historians have lent the reform period preeminence in Henry III's reign, which remains characterized by the king's political ineptitude. Edward I, in sharp contrast, is seen to have cooperated with the nobility, managed them well, and even earned considerable international prestige, particularly during the 1270s and 1280s. While Henry's rule was the catalyst that sparked a demand for good

¹⁴ See David Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III* (Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1996); Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Marc Morris, *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* (London: Hutchinson, 2008). The kingly focus of these sources is warranted by the nature of the tomb in question, which also provides a royal outlook.

¹⁵ A rigorous analyses of these times can be found in John Robert Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

¹⁶ Simon de Montfort's tomb, for example, attracted a cult following and was reputed to perform miracles into the 1270s. John Robert Maddicott, "Edward I and the Lessons of Baronial Reform: Local Government, 1258-80," in *Thirteenth-Century England I: Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference, 1985*, ed. P.R. Coss and S.D. Lloyd (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 1986), 4.

governance, Edward's worked to achieve it on the king's own terms.¹⁷ Both reigns, then, have been looked to as seminal in the march of constitutional history; it is here—first with the 1258 barons' demands to impose a council on the king, and later with Edward's dependence on taxes granted by his subjects—that the origins of parliament are sought.¹⁸ The other aspects of Edward I's reign that stand out in its reviews, usually to the detriment of his modern-day reputation, are the king's military exploits. He was the conqueror of Wales, and an epitaph added to his own tomb remembers him as the "Hammer of the Scots."¹⁹ What remains the picture of the royal father and son duo, then, is that Henry in meekness was ruled by others, while Edward subjected even non-English peoples to his lordship.

So how did Edward I, who at times displayed exasperation with his father's policies during Henry's rule and who followed different ones during his own reign, regard his father's example? Can a close look at a tomb, which was built by one king in honor of the other, provide further insight into the reigns of Henry III or Edward I? Even the most cursory glance at the tomb suggests that it might, especially because the medieval world, particularly in the setting of a ritual church, was charged with visually-projected symbolic meaning.²⁰ While textual accounts and subsequent analyses enunciate the differences between the two men and their styles of rule, the tomb conveys no sense of disjunction between the reigns of Henry and Edward.

¹⁷ Again, secondary scholarship emphasizes Henry's negative example: "It was not until [Edward's] reign that the gains of military victory were legitimized in twenty years of acceptable royal rule....Behind this achievement lay Edward's skill in learning from the mistakes of his father." Ibid., 1.

¹⁸ The summons issued to knights of the shire and burgesses by Simon de Montfort's regime in December of 1263, for example, have been noted as "a great step forward to the final formation of parliament." R. F. Treharne and I. J. Sanders, eds., *Documents of the Baronial Movement of Reform and Rebellion, 1258-1267* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 51.

¹⁹ In Latin capitals it reads, "EDWARDVS PRIMVS SCOTORVM MALLEVS HIC EST." J. Ayloffe, "An Account of the Body of King Edward the First, as it Appeared on Opening his Tomb in the Year 1774," *Archaeologia* 3 (1786): 379.

²⁰ For a compendium of essays on the topic of what can be learned from the study of Gothic art and architecture, see Virginia Chieffo Raguin, Kathryn Brush, and Peter Draper, eds., *Artistic Integration in Gothic Buildings* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

Work on the tomb continued into the 1290s, while its chests echo the motifs funded by Henry III himself in other parts of Westminster Abbey.²¹ Not only was it his duty as a son and Christian to look after the tomb of his father, but the construction of Henry III's monument offered Edward I a chance to characterize the late king in death. On one level, then, the purpose of this study is an exploration in methodology, to investigate the function of medieval art in the self-definition of thirteenth-century kingship, and to determine what the historian can learn through examining this art.

Strong precedent exists for using pieces of art as evidence to investigate historical matters. Several such cases will be reviewed as this thesis progresses, but presently attention should be drawn to two key examples. Paul Binski's study of Westminster Abbey offers a convincing and comprehensive outline of how its church, Henry III's pet project, trumpeted the virtues of the Plantagenet dynasty and traced its roots to the sainted King Edward the Confessor.²² As such, Binski's work serves as a foundation for this thesis, providing inspiration for a historical analysis—through its art—of Henry III's tomb, which is situated in the Abbey. Another prototype for the present study can be found in Edward I's memorials to his wife Eleanor of Castile, who died in 1290 and was subsequently honored with multiple tombs, effigies, and memorial crosses, including ones at Westminster. Historians have made special note of how these works of art both expressed Edward's grief and his royal outlook.²³ This study will investigate Henry III's tomb in a similar manner. What messages does it convey regarding Edward's attitude towards his father and his own regal estate?

²¹ The building in question should technically be referred to as the Abbey Church at Westminster. Common usage, as well as the functional obsolescence of the monastic house following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, allows for a shortening of the name to Westminster Abbey.

²² Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

²³ A conference and book, for example, focused on just such themes. See David Parsons, ed., *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990; Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of her Death: 28 November 1290* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1991). The monuments have received considerable scholarly attention; the authoritative account of royal patronage projects devotes just one paragraph to Henry III's tomb, which is followed by a seven-page discussion of the memorials to Eleanor of Castile: *KW*, 479-85.

Existing scholarly analyses of the tomb focus less on its historical setting and political meaning than on the formal features and potential meanings of its individual parts. The tomb's Italian-style chests feature in discussions of the other so-called Cosmati projects at Westminster, while the gilt bronze effigy atop is included in surveys of Gothic sculpture. Although the chests and effigy are of clearly different styles and traditions, there is no reason why the impact of the tomb as a unified whole should be ignored. The piecemeal approach to the tomb, however, finds merit in thirteenth-century historiography, as a result of Edward I's reputation as a patron of the arts. He preferred military to ecclesiastical building, it is argued (even despite the obvious example of the Eleanor memorials). While Edward discontinued his father's work on Westminster Abbey, he spent tens of thousands of pounds constructing new fortifications in Wales.²⁴ The very existence of Henry's tomb, however, suggests that Edward was attentive to his father's church. The tomb thus deserves scrutiny as a complete work of art, both when analyzing its formal features and in any attempt to decipher their significance. The oddities of the monument to Henry III must be examined within the context of the surrounding abbey church and the ideological and political climates in which it was constructed.

Even a basic assessment of the tomb's formal features, however, remains problematic. Close investigations of the tomb, beginning with nineteenth-century antiquarians' literal rummaging through the walls of Westminster Abbey, certainly assist the armchair scholar's attempts to appreciate this distant memorial.²⁵

²⁴ Edward's most recent biographer comments, "There can be little doubt that Edward loved building, and the regularity of bastides must have appealed to his orderly mind. But it was military architecture above all that gave him the greatest delight." From 1277-1304, over £78,000 were spent on castles in Wales, nearly double the cost of Henry III's Westminster Abbey. Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 370-1; KW, vol. 2, 1027.

²⁵ For descriptions of the tomb, see RCHME, 29; Paul Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," *Art Bulletin* 72, no. 1 (1990): 23-4; Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 101-2; Harold James Plenderleith and H. Maryon, "Royal Bronze Effigies in Westminster Abbey," *Antiquaries Journal* 39 (1959): 87-8; George Gilbert Scott and W. Burges,

Nevertheless, the monument is over seven centuries old, so while the spatial separation between scholar and subject can be breached, the temporal gap remains. Westminster Abbey has been expanded since Henry III was laid to rest there, and the layout of Edward the Confessor's chapel where his tomb is situated was modified over subsequent centuries as later kings arranged for burials.²⁶ As an object made with expensive materials, the tomb has been despoiled by robbers, and the destruction wrought by Reformation activists further defaced Henry III's monument and the church around it. Studies left by Victorian-era antiquarians like Stanley give an indication of the colors, paintings, sculptures, and architecture at Westminster prior to its later nineteenth and twentieth-century renovations and cleanings. As second-hand accounts, however, they can be relied upon only with caution. Overall, it is difficult for a twenty-first-century visitor, who sees Westminster in the splendor of its Tudor additions and amidst crowds of tourists, to imagine the abbey's monastic church in the late thirteenth century.

Rather than intimidate the historian, these limitations further justify a close investigation of the evidence about the tomb that does survive. The memorial remains a site to behold, and merits attention as one of the oldest in the Abbey's church; Henry III's burial clearly set a trend for later royal entombment there, showing its lasting significance and impression.²⁷ Furthermore, the written evidence of the tomb's construction, while sparse, provides tantalizing glimpses into the commission process and the motivations behind it. Meanwhile, a survey of similar commissions

Gleanings from Westminster Abbey, 2 ed. (Oxford, London: J. Henry and J. Parker, 1863), 147-50; Stanley, "On an Examination of the Tombs of Richard II and Henry III in Westminster Abbey," 317-22; Paul Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture, 1140-1300* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 214-7.
²⁶ Fig. 2 shows the layout of Edward the Confessor's Chapel with the tombs connected to Edward I's reign labeled. The many unmarked tombs visible in the plan are later additions.

²⁷ Henry III's rebuilding of Westminster Abbey resulted in the destruction of its former tombs. In addition to the Anglo-Saxons Sigebert (who was furnished with a new tomb in 1308) and Edward the Confessor, after Henry III thirteen crowned and anointed monarchs were entombed in the Abbey, plus Edward V, Mary Queen of Scots, and eleven queen consorts.

both in England and abroad can furnish models by which to interpret the tomb. Given the salient features of this monument, then, how did Edward I choose to portray his father in death? How was the kingly office displayed? Within the context of Edward's reign, what do these statements reveal about his attitudes towards his father, that king's rule, and his own?

This thesis, then, will combine historical and art historical methods to further understand two rulers and the world in which they governed. It will begin with a survey of Henry III's troubled later reign and Edward's initial—and often negative—responses to it. Chapter 2 will then examine Edward's memorial to his father, to reach the puzzling conclusion that its portrayal of Henry III shows a high regard for the former king, evoking continuity with his reign. The flatteringly regal qualities displayed on the tomb then prompt an investigation of the ideologies of kingship by which Henry aimed to rule. This effort will lead back in time to Henry's own reign, across the English Channel to continental Europe, and across academic disciplines as connections between other European kings' political acts and their artistic commissions are discovered. Chapter 4 will proceed to assess Henry's tomb given this climate of patronage in which it emerged, and with attention paid to the specific policies King Edward I followed as his father's tomb was being constructed. I will conclude that Edward lived by his father's example in his expression of royal ideology and even put this way of thinking into action, and that Henry III's tomb was an instrument by which Edward achieved both. The problematic paradigm established in Chapters 1 and 2—that Henry III's reign remains regarded as unsuccessful, yet his example was strongly evoked by his successor—will be explored as the mystery of Henry's tomb unfolds.

This study will focus less on who would have noticed the tomb's details and how their symbolic implications were perceived, in part because evidence of the tomb's intended and actual audience is scarce. Fortuitously, the purpose of this study renders this particular dearth of evidence less grave. As Edward I's commission, Henry III's tomb reveals the ideology of kingship the former wished to project; how it was received is less important to a study of Edward's ruling strategies than is an understanding of the thinking that underpinned them. Edward I's actions as king and the art he patronized will be treated as dynamic players within his conceptions of kingship. Henry III's tomb can be seen to reflect the achievements of the English monarchy, as well as to visualize and in this way create its ambitions. This case study will thus seek to yield a better understanding of English kingship in the later thirteenth century, a time when Henry III's challenged reign and Edward I's more aggressive one required a scrutiny and definition of the office. To what extent might a tomb have achieved that goal?

CHAPTER 1: KING AND HEIR

The period 1254 to 1274 is of particular interest to this study because it was during this time that both men closely connected to the tomb in question, Henry III and Edward I, coexisted and were forced to collaborate as politically active adults.¹ What do Edward's actions throughout these years reveal about his regard for his father's rule? The transition of authority between the two men that occurred over these decades remains a puzzle in the modern historiographic understanding of the two reigns. This chapter will aim to show that, taken together, Edward's outstanding acts as heir to the throne reveal his consistent readiness to distinguish his own command. I will argue that Edward's swift changes of stance during the baronial rebellions of his father's later reign, his subsequent hazardous crusade, and his tardied return to claim kingship over England after Henry's death, are evidence of his desire to disassociate himself with the ills of his father's governance.² Chapter 2 will then proceed to examine the image of Henry III as portrayed through his tomb, and will investigate if this piece of art can further inform an understanding of Edward's opinion of his father.

Admittedly, this era, though heavily commented on by contemporaries and later chroniclers, remains problematic for an investigation of the attitudes of the two men.³ Arguably, Henry III was the cipher of his councilors or the baronial reformers

¹ Such conditions of succession were unprecedented in recent memory. Henry III had acceded to the throne in 1216 at the tender age of nine. John, in turn, had succeeded his brother Richard.

² For rigorous modern accounts and analyses of Edward's political apprenticeship and the baronial wars, see Marc Morris, *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 20-69; Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 9-65; John Robert Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); John Carmi Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 15-33.

³ The number of chronicles composed during and immediately following this period suggests that its events inspired their writing. Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England: c. 550 to c. 1307*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1974), 407.

during these last years of his reign. Similarly, it is possible to make too much of Edward's actions during these same years. He was just fourteen years old at the start of 1254, and he matured considerably as he maneuvered his way through the politics, warfare, and other experiences of the 1250s and 1260s. Still, Henry III remained king, and he and Edward necessarily interacted as father and son, lord and vassal, and king and successor. Thus, during his impressionable years, Edward was very much exposed to whatever style of kingship it was that his father did or did not exercise. A closer look at this time period, then, will be necessary to understand both how Edward esteemed his father and what about his father's rule influenced his own formulation of kingship.

* * *

The young prince's political apprenticeship can be considered to have begun in 1254, when he was married to Eleanor, knighted by her brother the king of Castile, and granted an extensive appanage in which to develop his skills in the arts of medieval government. As the king's first-born son and the presumed heir to the throne, Edward emerged as a strong-willed individual, but was limited in his independence and scope of power. One major detriment to the prince's freedom of action was Henry III himself, who clung to his own rights as suzerain lord. As long as he lived, there could be just one king in name and deed, and Edward could only act as a high-ranking nobleman, subject like the rest to the king's will.⁴ Edward, however, seems to have been intent to assert his own independence of action, causing sometimes frustrated relations between the two.

⁴ Before becoming king, Edward was simply styled "*dominus Edwardus*." By convention, a definite article is added to the English translation of this title, the Lord Edward. The prince did not assume the titles attached to the lands over which he exercised lordship, such as that of earl. See J.R. Studd, "The Lord Edward's Lordship of Chester, 1254-72," *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 127 (1979): 10, 14; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 12n.

The appanage Henry allowed him, for example, was vast, including the lands of Gascony, Ireland, parts of conquered Wales and the Channel islands. These were officially his to manage, but not so in actual practice. Unable to appoint his own officials or reward his followers with grants of his own, Edward lacked the means to enforce his decisions in the lands over which he was lord.⁵ “[C]hafing at his restraints, anxious to play a more visible role, and to exercise greater power,” writes one modern biographer, Edward acted to promote his rights of jurisdiction in Gascony, to the ire of his father.⁶ In England, Henry and Queen Eleanor worked to curtail their son’s landholdings, largely in response to the prince’s profligacy and fragile political status during the baronial reform movement.⁷ Henry remained determined to reign in his son’s authority, even throughout his old age and up until his death; as late as 1272, he was counteracting Edward’s grants of fees in Chester and Richmond.⁸

Aside from this urge for independence recognized by most modern historians, the young Edward exhibited a differing approach to governance than his father. His landholdings in Wales were even less secure than his position in Gascony, because Llewelyn ap Gruffudd was emerging as the champion of a united Welsh front determined to retain independence from English oversight.⁹ Short of funds everywhere, Edward did not have the means to face the Welsh prince alone, but his petitions to the king to provide reinforcements and aid were refused. In the end, Edward’s inclination to use decisive force against the Welsh proved to have been

⁵ J.R. Studd, “The Lord Edward and King Henry III,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 1 (1977): 4-19.

⁶ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 23.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 52-3.

⁸ Studd, “The Lord Edward’s Lordship of Chester,” 13.

⁹ Llewelyn emerged as the sole leader of Gwynedd in June of 1255, and from that time began to receive the homage of other dissatisfied Welsh nobles. He is praised in recent scholarship as “a born leader of men” and “of forceful determination and single-mindedness.” R. R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 309-10, 17.

necessary to stabilize English rule in those territories. By 1256, the situation had escalated to a full-scale rebellion under the banner of Llewelyn. Henry had no choice but to intervene the next year, but his campaign achieved little effect.¹⁰ Even at this early stage, then, Henry's reputation as an ineffective peacenik, and Edward's as an eager knight and commander, emerges. From a look at Edward's governmental training alone, his own strong sense of right as a landlord, which was stymied by his father's tight grip on his freedom of action, is apparent.

* * *

Henry was likely preoccupied in his dealings with Edward and in Wales by the difficulties arising from his other leading magnates. Henry's rule, in short, was quickly becoming explosively unpopular. He had taken the cross in 1250 and, upon the assent of the papacy, had collected taxes in order to fund his crusading expedition east. By the mid-1250s, however, Henry's set deadline for departure was fast approaching. The king was exploring the possibility of instead diverting the crusading funds to support his son Edmund's invasion of Sicily, or Alphonso of Castile's campaign in northern Africa.¹¹ The English clergy and lay nobility were staunchly opposed to any military venture with a destination other than the Holy Land, particularly as the crown's hold upon closer territories, notably in France, Gascony, and Wales, was so fragile and ill-funded. Given the king's grand plans, not only in the Mediterranean but also on the building at Westminster Abbey, the state of the king's finances became a general cause of concern.¹²

¹⁰ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 32-4. Davies notes that Henry's 1257 expedition "did the king's military reputation no good." Davies, *Age of Conquest*, 310.

¹¹ A.J. Forey, "The Crusading Vows of the English King Henry III," *Durham University Journal* 65, no. 3 (1973): 230-45.

¹² Even though the king amassed sums of bullion, Carpenter concludes that "[Henry's] resources were tiny when set against his ambitions." David Carpenter, "The Gold Treasure of King Henry III," in *The Reign of Henry III* (Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1996), 123.

The king had also begun to show a disproportionate preference to his half-brothers by his mother's second marriage, Aymer and William de Valence and Guy de Lusignan, often collectively called the Lusignan brothers. They had entered England in 1247, and by the early 1250s their rapacious appetite for lands and offices, indulged by the king, aroused general alarm among the rest of the nobility.¹³ Henry's favor to them did not fail to escape the ears of the chronicler at St. Albans, Matthew Paris. Under the year 1247 he notes, "When Guy de Lusignan, the king's brother, took his departure from England, the king filled his saddle-bags with such a weight of money that he was obliged to increase the number of horses."¹⁴ By 1258, Henry's policies and the Lusignan brothers were unpopular enough to unite the other magnates in the formation of a council to rule in the king's stead.¹⁵ Maddicott summarizes,

Beginning as an attack on two specific consequences of royal policy, the dominance of the Lusignans at court and Henry's obligations to the papacy, the movement quickly led on to the effective baronial appropriation of the Crown's executive power and to the unleashing of social forces in the localities which turned a court coup into a national enterprise.¹⁶

Political wrangling and even civil war amongst the king, his councilors, his disaffected magnates, and the popular resistance they stirred up, marred England for much of the next decade.¹⁷

¹³ Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, ed., *The Song of Lewes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890), 74-5; H. W. Ridgeway, "Foreign Favourites and Henry III's Problems of Patronage, 1247-1258," *English Historical Review* 104, no. 412 (1989): 590-610.

¹⁴ Matthew Paris's *English History*, 247.

¹⁵ David Carpenter, "What Happened in 1258?," in *The Reign of Henry III*, 183-97.

¹⁶ Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 151.

¹⁷ Although the individual barons were acting in their own interests by checking the power of the king, their movement was guided and buttressed by professions of their intention to reform the governance, justice, and administration of the realm. A seminal document they issued was the 1258 Provisions of Oxford, which contains twenty-four clauses that required, among other stipulations: the election of a committee of twenty-four, by the king and barons, to decide upon a program of reform; the establishment of a council to guide the king's policy and appoint his chief officials; the appointment of local sheriffs to alleviate oppression in the shires; the holding of parliament three times per year; and, the transfer of the keepership of royal castles to council-appointed English officials. In sum, Henry's governance had been so unsatisfactory, it was taken out of his own hands. He and the Lord Edward were both compelled to swear to uphold these provisions. R. F. Treharne and I. J. Sanders, eds., *Documents of the Baronial Movement of Reform and Rebellion, 1258-1267* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 97-113.

Only the implications of Edward's involvement in this civil strife, which emerged with the storming of the October parliament in 1258 and continued intermittently until its culmination at the Battle of Evesham in 1265, will be summarized here. I will conclude that, amidst the debate over Henry III's freedom of action, what concerned Edward was his own independence, from both his father and those intent on limiting royal power. Contemporary commentators as well as modern historians note that during these years the prince showed inconsistency in his actions. According to one piece of propaganda issued by the reformers, Edward was brave but shift and unpredictable, a man not to be trusted.¹⁸ Modern historians tend to dismiss these qualities as characteristics of the prince's adolescence. Edward's waffling stance is certainly not surprising given the general political turmoil of the times and the limited nature of his own experience. Still, Edward's embroilment in the political intrigues of these years provides a puzzling contrast to the decisive steps he would take once he became king, so the history of the Lord Edward's side-switching deserves rehearsal.

At times, Edward supported those parties who resisted his father. For example, from 1259-60, he and Simon de Montfort, who had emerged as the leader of the anti-royalist coalition, were united in their ideals.¹⁹ Both opposed the negotiated Treaty of Paris, which would acknowledge King John's loss of territory to the French King. They concurred that the parliaments mandated by the Provisions of Oxford, passed by the council established in 1258, should be held whether the king was

¹⁸ Kingsford, ed., *The Song of Lewes*, 42. For explanations of the poem's reference to Edward as a leopard, see Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 75; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 24.

¹⁹ Edward signed an agreement to uphold de Montfort's interests even as they conflicted with the treaty process in France. The pledge also risked the possibility of inter-baronial warfare. See David Carpenter, "The Lord Edward's Oath to Aid and Counsel Simon de Montfort, 15 October 1259," in *The Reign of Henry III*, 248-9.

present or not, a thought at which Henry bristled.²⁰ By April of 1260, Henry was so concerned with the situation in England, he returned from negotiations in France to lead a muster against his son's forces, which were assembled with those of Simon de Montfort outside of London. It took the mediation of Richard of Cornwall and the Archbishop of Canterbury to reconcile father and son and spare the country civil war.²¹ The king and his heir, then, had clearly different approaches to political management, and Edward acted to defend his position along with the rebels against his father.

Despite his attraction to certain aspects of Simon de Montfort's manifesto, however, Edward could not embrace the earl's flagrant disregard for regal authority. By 1263, Simon de Montfort was stirring up outright rebellion among those opposed to Henry's rule, which the king had reasserted in 1261. By this time, Edward was fully mobilized in support of the Crown, and he went to France to assemble an army with which to assist his father. Back in England, however, the rebel barons could not be overcome, and following the decisive Battle of Lewes in 1263, Edward was the captive of de Montfort, his former ally. From then on he remained devoted to the royalist cause, in which he had a significant stake as the heir to the throne. Freed by a coordinated escape from captivity in Hereford in 1265, Edward collected his forces to meet those of the earl Simon, handily defeating him at the Battle of Evesham with the help of other royalist troops.

Edward had thus shifted, in a span of a few years, from a position of contention with the king, to that of being his most staunch source of support. What

²⁰ Trehearne and Sanders, eds., *Documents of the Baronial Movement*, 28-9, 169. Henry wrote to his officials in England as well as the Lord Edward, "Make no arrangements for a parliament and permit none to be held before our return to England...." A letter dated to March 1260 indicates that the king was again pleased with his son's pledged behavior, although Henry concludes by writing, "we shall send someone who has our confidence into England to see whether deeds match words." Ibid., 177.

²¹ Ibid., 31-2; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 42-4.

this focus on Edward's maneuvers shows, then, is his own sense of independence. He acted as he saw fit, whether this meant aligning with the king or with Henry's challengers. Edward always kept his own interests as a landholder and as the future king of England in mind. He was no Daddy's Boy.²²

* * *

Even when attached to the king's cause, Edward maintained separation from his father's court. It is true that he had his own business to attend to; his landholdings were on the fringes of the kingdom, perhaps necessitating his presence away from Henry's locus of government. Although he may have had little to interest him in the British Isles when the civil or Welsh rebellions were not raging, Edward's tendency to leave the country seems also to have been a solution to his political frustration. In 1260, Henry III was still pledged to abide by the 1258 Provisions of Oxford. Instead of propping up his father or working with the council imposed upon him, Edward spent his time traveling with his knightly cohorts and playing at tournaments around France. While the king was in such dire straits, his presumed successor conveniently made himself scarce. In 1261, too, Edward fled to the continent rather than be forced to affiliate himself with either the reformers under Montfort or his father's government, both of which were parties to whom he had once pledged loyalty.²³ Edward's French travels suggest a practical solution to what must have been his confused political status in England. He was a magnate with his own interests under a king who was sometimes in and sometimes out of power. Even though he was the

²² He was no Mommy's boy either, although he had been raised in Queen Eleanor of Provence's household with her Savoyard brothers as his mentors. Edward strongly resisted the yoke of their influence beginning in the mid-1250s, particularly with his attachment to the Lusignan brothers, the Savoyards' political rivals. See H. W. Ridgeway, "The Lord Edward and the Provisions of Oxford (1258): A Study in Faction," in *Thirteenth-Century England I: Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference, 1985*, ed. Peter R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (Wolfeboro, NH: Boydell Press, 1986), 89-99.

²³ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 24-5, 47-8, 50-1.

heir to the throne, Edward's unwillingness to associate himself unflinchingly with his father's regime is understandable.

The magnetism pulling Edward across the Channel also reveals his taste for adventure, which remains one of his defining characteristics within the historiographical tradition.²⁴ In France, Edward acquired further martial skills and became exposed to the arts of chivalry. Now in his twenties, he was a man of princely qualities and heroic proportions.²⁵ Henry III, in contrast, appears to have cared little for the martial arts, as evidenced even beyond his poor showing in Wales and his negotiation of peace with France. The papacy had condemned tournaments since 1130, and Henry III, unlike his French counterpart, enforced the ban.²⁶ It was to the Continent, then, that Edward turned as he pursued his training in chivalry.

The Lord Edward put these skills to practice with a commanding presence at Evesham. Thereafter, his own status as a chief member of the nobility was assured, while his previous record served as a reminder that he was not just the king's man, but his own. He had emerged as the champion of royalist England, a kingdom that by implication remained his father's. That Edward regarded himself as distinctly separate from Henry's government and affairs is evident not only in his independence of mind in the late 1250s and early 1260s, but in his actions after Evesham as well. Due to the royal government's initially harsh policy of disinheritance of the

²⁴In the most recent assessment of the king, for example, Morris writes, "Evidence of Edward's courage and prowess in arms is abundant across his entire career." In addition, he classifies Edward as the most well-traveled medieval English king. *Ibid.*, 364, 69.

²⁵Rishanger comments that Edward was "half an arm's length" taller than his peers (*qua humero et supra communi populo praeeminebat*): Rishanger, 76 (translation courtesy of Dr. Samuel Edgerton). For an English account of and gloss on Trivet's description of Edward, see F. M. Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward; the Community of the Realm in the Thirteenth Century*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1947), 686. The exhumation of Edward's tomb and measurement of his skeleton in 1774 revealed that he had stood six feet and two inches tall: J. Ayloffe, "An Account of the Body of King Edward the First, as it Appeared on Opening his Tomb in the Year 1774," *Archaeologia* 3 (1786): 385.

²⁶Noel Denholm-Young, "The Tournament in Medieval England," in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to Maurice Powicke*, ed. Hunt et al (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 240-68.

Montfortians, rebellions stemming from property disputes continued after that decisive battle, leaving the country in a continual state of uncertainty. By 1267, however, the last squabbles were settled, and Edward was set upon a new and distant pursuit, the Crusade.

* * *

Pope Urban IV had called for a new crusade in 1263, but the civil war in England had prevented any possibility of English participation.²⁷ A papal legate arrived in 1265 to sort out the aftermath of the Montfortian revolt, with the intention to heal the kingdom's rifts in order to free its nobility to go to the Holy Land. By 1267 this was a real possibility, and the crusade even presented a chance for the various factions from earlier in the decade to pursue a common cause. It was little expected, however, that the designated heir to the throne would depart. Crusading was a time-consuming, dangerous, indeed often deadly enterprise. The kingdom was in no state to be left to the aging King Henry. Edward, however, was determined to go, for a variety of reasons.²⁸ With the Welsh and civil uprisings over, he had little outlet for martial activity, which he could instead vent against infidels in the Holy Land; Edward's uncle, host while in France, and lord, Louis IX, was the leader of the expedition; and, Edward must have been genuinely convinced that a holy crusade was the most supreme and serviceable act of piety he could perform. It must be concluded, as do the historians of the period, that Edward's determination overrode any doubts he may have entertained about the perils he would encounter or the harm that might come to England in his absence.

²⁷ For what follows on Edward's crusade preparations, expedition, and return, see Simon Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade, 1270-2: Its Setting and Significance," in *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of J.O. Prestwich*, ed. John Gillingham and James Clarke Holt (Totowa, NJ: Boydell Press, 1984), 120-34; Forey, "The Crusading Vows of the English King Henry III," 229-47; Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 124-48; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 66-85; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 81-102.

²⁸ Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade, 1270-2: Its Setting and Significance," 123-4.

The king, the pope's legate Ottobuono, and the pope himself, however, were not so easily convinced. Urban IV rejected Edward's petition to take the cross, and only the prince's obstinacy convinced Henry and the legate to give their assent. At a great parliament specially convened for the occasion in 1268, Edward finally took the cross, as did his wife, his brother, and several other prominent members of the nobility. The high status of those involved induced hundreds of others to mark themselves as intended warriors in the Holy Land. Having formally pledged to be a crusader, Edward's next step was to gather funding for the enterprise.²⁹ This project, too, would have discouraged someone with less intense conviction than Edward. The kingdom's finances were in a weak state, as were Edward's. Up until his departure, then, Edward's determination to crusade was apparent, but so too was his disregard for the well-being of the kingdom he was one day to rule.³⁰

In the summer of 1270, Edward departed to join the crusading forces from across Europe on their journey east. The initial stages of the expedition did not go according to the plans so carefully laid during Edward's years of preparation. Louis IX had left France before the English could arrive, and he diverted his army to north Africa, where he died. Mourning the death of the venerated king and deprived of a clear leader, the crusaders proceeded eastward. While docking in Sicily, the fleets of the other crusade commanders were decimated in a storm. Edward's survived, so while the other troops went home, the English pushed onward, landing at the Christian stronghold of Acre in the spring of 1271. The arrival of fresh forces at first rallied the beleaguered city, but Edward's presence and military command over the next year accomplished little against the resolute Sultan Baybars. Edward's continued

²⁹ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 83-5.

³⁰ Tyerman calls Edward's departure "to say the least, risky," and other historians share in this general surprise. Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588*, 131; Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade, 1270-2: Its Setting and Significance," 122; Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward*, 583-4.

refusal to be deterred by bad fortune remained remarkable.³¹ In June, an assassin stabbed Edward with a poisoned dagger. Finally, after healing his wounds for a few months, he left the Holy Land.

Meanwhile, letters had been arriving from England acquainting Edward with the affairs of the kingdom. In 1271, he would have received news of his father's severe illness and subsequent recovery, reminding him that only the fragile life of his aging father separated him from the throne of England and all the responsibilities that went with it.³² Further bad omens must have preoccupied the prince. When much of the crusading fleet had been destroyed in the winter of 1270-1 and Edward decided to forge onward, he had sent his cousin Henry of Almain back to England, presumably to contribute to the cadre of individuals Edward had appointed to look after his affairs while he was away.³³ Henry, however, was shockingly murdered along his return journey, in a church outside of Rome.³⁴ Edward's cousin's demise deprived him of a trusted agent within the kingdom that he had left in such peril. Wintering in Sicily from 1272-3, Edward was aggrieved with even worse news. One of his sons had died, as had Henry III himself.

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³¹ His persistence amidst displeasure with the developments at Acre, for example, is evident in his refusal to sign a peace treaty with the sultan, an agreement to which all the other Christian leaders assented. Prestwich, *Edward I*, 73-4.

³² Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 103.

³³ *Ibid.*, 94.

³⁴ Based upon the long personal history between the two young men and the vengeance with which Edward was later to pursue his cousin's murderers, the prince was deeply upset by this development. The two boys had been raised together at Windsor and were comrades at tournaments. Henry, the son of the king's brother Richard of Cornwall, was slain by Guy de Montfort, who in a rash act of rage sought to avenge his father's death at Evesham. The event shocked Europe, and was particularly galling to Edward because Charles d'Anjou, Edward's host while in Sicily, was the patron of the exiled Montfort brothers. See *Ibid.*, 6, 105-6; Nicholas Vincent, "Henry of Almain," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 567-8.

To trust a fourteenth-century chronicler, Edward was truly saddened by the death of his father, whom, unlike a son, he could never replace.³⁵ His reaction might be expected to have been to rush home to pay his final respects to the late king and secure order in England. Simon de Montfort's regency during the previous decade, for example, had shown that the English government could not function without royal directive.³⁶ Instead of returning immediately, however, Edward lingered for nearly another two years on the Continent. As he left Sicily, crossed the Alps, and traveled through France, he was greeted and celebrated as a hero; it appears that his very status as a crusader, not necessarily what he accomplished in the Holy Land, marked him as a successful, chivalrous prince.³⁷ Aside from delays due to the frequent festivities, Edward may also have made slow progress due to illness or his still-festering dagger wounds.³⁸ Nevertheless, after arriving in Paris, paying homage to the new king of France, and receiving an entourage of Englishmen who expected to conduct him home, his next stop was instead Gascony. Edward's goal there appears to have been to subject the independent-minded Gascons to his lordship, a task which kept him occupied until 1274.³⁹

How can this tardy return to England be explained? Modern historians have tried. Edward had certainly not taken his embarkation on crusade lightly. Before he left, he fulfilled an earlier vow to found a Cistercian abbey in Chester, traveling to

³⁵ Rishanger, 78. For Edward's grief, also see Trivet, 284.

³⁶ De Montfort had used his position of power to enrich his family members just as Henry III had, and his patronage likewise caused factions among his supporters. Louis IX's settlement at Amiens in favor of the royalist party showed that the reformers' radical lack of respect for the regal estate would not be tolerated by the other rulers in Europe. Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, 308-12, 29, 52.

³⁷ One chronicler notes that he was met "by the pope and all the people with extraordinary and unheard-of honour." *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 54.

³⁸ Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward*, 612.

³⁹ For what is known of Edward's activities in Gascony during this time, see Jean Paul Trabut-Cussac, *L'administration Anglaise en Gascogne Sous Henry III et Édouard I de 1254 à 1307* (Genève: Droz, 1972), 41-8. The Gascon nobles paid homage to Edward, a parliament was held at Bordeaux, and Edward defended his jurisdictional rights as far as possible.

that county to make the necessary arrangements.⁴⁰ He drew up letters entrusting the care of his children to his uncle and other respected friends.⁴¹ With his uncle's mediation, he settled a long-standing dispute with the Earl of Gloucester, ensuring that his lands would not be threatened during his upcoming absence.⁴² It also appears that Edward made provisions to allow for an unprecedented occurrence: the prince would accede to the throne immediately upon Henry's death, should that occur while Edward was away.⁴³ Thus, despite the new monarch's absence in 1272, the transition of rule was relatively smooth. The councilors Edward had left behind, notably his eventual chancellor Robert Burnell, had the authority to issue the necessary business orders for running the country.⁴⁴ When Henry died, the posts of castle keepers were filled by Edward's men, regnal time began anew, and the new king's peace was declared.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, Edward's departure from England in 1270, and his tardy return from 1273-4, show a remarkable lack of practical concern for the running of the kingdom. Although settling his authority in Gascony was a scrupulous precaution to take, certainly by 1273 Edward was aware, through letters from his officials and

⁴⁰ Studd, "The Lord Edward's Lordship of Chester," 16-7.

⁴¹ Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward*, 583, 86.

⁴² Simon Lloyd, "Gilbert de Clare, Richard of Cornwall and the Lord Edward's Crusade," *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 30 (1986): 46-66.

⁴³ This is suggested most explicitly by Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 104.

⁴⁴ However, Richard of Cornwall, a dependable arbitrator on behalf of the monarchy, also died in 1272, depriving Edward of another councilman in England.

⁴⁵ The relative security of England from 1272-4 remains the subject of some historical debate. Powicke most boldly asserts the stability of the transition, while Maddicott provides an alternative view of a 1270s England bordering on lawlessness. Huscroft defends the regency government Edward left behind as having done the best it could: Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward*, 589; J.R. Maddicott, "Edward I and the Lessons of Baronial Reform: Local Government, 1258-80," in *Thirteenth-Century England I*, 1-9; Richard Huscroft, "Robert Burnell and the Government of England, 1270-4," in *Thirteenth Century England VIII: Proceedings of the Durham Conference, 1999*, ed. Michael Prestwich, R. H. Britnell, and Robin Frame (Woodbridge: Rochester, NY, 2001), 59-70. Also see Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 105.

delegations from England, of the lawlessness occurring while he was away.⁴⁶ During the high middle ages, a disjunction of rule accompanied any change in reign. Despite Edward's planning for all possible occurrences, his long absence heightened the sense of separation between his father's tenure and his own. The breakage in rule was apparent on a symbolic level. By longstanding Anglo-Norman tradition, an heir's presence at the deathbed or funeral of the king buttressed his own claim to rule.⁴⁷ It was also customary for a dead king's closest kinsmen to bear his funeral litter, an act in which Edward could not partake while still in the Holy Land.⁴⁸ Without the heir's physical presence, there could be no coronation, the ritual act that installed a new king. The lack of formalized regal authority from 1272-4 had severe practical consequences as well.⁴⁹ There was no royal power to enforce settlements and maintain order, and no supreme arbiter of justice at Westminster. Work on the abbey church there, the achievement of Henry III's devotion to saint Edward the Confessor, was halted with the nave left incomplete. Only a king could fund such a project, and in 1272, despite Edward's careful pre-Crusade arrangements, England had none.

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⁴⁶ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 111. Based on Edward's own letters sent from France, he did not seem to be very concerned with affairs in England. See Prestwich, *Edward I*, 85; Trabut-Cussac, *L'administration Anglaise en Gascogne*, 41-2n.

⁴⁷ Perhaps most famously, Earl Harold's conference with the dying Edward in 1066 allowed him to advance his own claim to the throne against that of William of Normandy. See Eric John, "Edward the Confessor and the Norman Succession," *English Historical Review* 94, no. 371 (1979): 262-3. Henry I rushed to London as soon as he learned of the death of his brother William Rufus in 1100, having himself crowned within three days. Edward's right of succession was never disputed, but the opportunity to tap into and continue the powers of the preceding king was missed. By 1316, Philip V of Poitiers found it necessary to hold a second funeral for his predecessor, to legitimate his kingship through his presence at the burial: see Elizabeth M. Hallam, "Royal Burial and the Cult of Kingship in France and England, 1060-1330," *Journal of Medieval History* 8, no. 4 (1982): 367; E.A. Brown, "The Ceremonial of Royal Succession in Capetian France: The Double Funeral of Louis X," *Traditio* 34 (1978): 227-71.

⁴⁸ Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *Le Roi est Mort: Étude sur les Funérailles, les Sépultures et les Tombeaux des Rois de France Jusqu'à la Fin du 13e Siècle* (Genève: Droz, 1975), 26.

⁴⁹ All that the provisional government could do was to maintain whatever order had existed prior to Edward's departure. The king was needed for governance to resume in full. See Huscroft, "Robert Burnell and the Government of England, 1270-4," 59-70.

When he finally did land at Dover in June of 1274, Edward's actions made it clear that a new, very different reign had begun. His coronation celebration at reconstructed Westminster was a truly grand occasion.⁵⁰ In keeping with the portion of his coronation oath vowing to maintain the rights of the crown, Edward immediately launched a series of investigations into the rights and privileges held by his subjects.⁵¹ The most intensive inquiry into the possessions and privileges of the English since William the Conqueror's Domesday survey, these *Quo Warranto* proceedings were recorded in what are now referred to as the Hundred Rolls. Their findings were incorporated into the landmark legislation of the reign. The Statute of Westminster of 1275, for example, contained articles designed to retain or regain the king's rights, particularly where they had been weakened or lost under Henry and John. Legislation under Edward also addressed grievances that had been aired during the baronial wars, such as royal officials' abuse of power in the localities.⁵² Edward, unlike his father, was not going to sit back and let his kingdom slip from his fingers, but asserted himself as an active ruler who was mindful of his royal charge.⁵³

Edward's actions during these early decades of his adult life cannot easily be assessed in a general manner, but it is clear that long before his coronation he possessed a strong independence of will. He was determined to act for himself, not according to Henry's example. He expressed no urge to associate himself with his father's rule, leaving the kingdom during Henry's final years, and not returning to establish his own kingship until two years after the previous one had ended. The

⁵⁰ For discussions of the festival's grandeur, see Prestwich, *Edward I*, 89-91; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 113-5. The coronation took place in the company of the Queen Mother, King Alexander of Scotland, the duke of Brittany, and many nobility of the realm: Trivet, 291-2.

⁵¹ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 92-8; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 118-22.

⁵² Maddicott, "Edward I and the Lessons of Baronial Reform: Local Government, 1258-80," 10-22.

⁵³ Modern scholars note that it was not Edward himself, but rather his officials, who devised and promoted the legislation of his reign. These statutes still bore the king's seal of approval, and survive in the historical record because, unlike his father, Edward had the authority and eagerness to enforce them. Michael Prestwich, *The Three Edwards: War and State in England, 1272-1377* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 21; Huscroft, "Robert Burnell and the Government of England, 1270-4," 69-70.

transition between the two reigns that Edward did ensure was conducted through the proxy of a council. With his triumphant return and coronation, the ills of the previous reign seemed finally ready to be dead and buried, along with the monarch who had brought them about.

CHAPTER 2: HENRY ENTOMBED

Henry III's death removed one of Edward's sources of complaint about his father, namely, his own stymied independence. What can be learned of Edward's stance towards his father once he himself experienced the freedoms—and pressures—of kingship? Conveniently for an analysis of the relationship between the two, Edward I left a lasting monument to his father, a fine tomb at Westminster Abbey. A major occupation of Henry III had been his building projects at Westminster, the town on the Thames just west of London. It was here that one of the king's chief residences was located. More important to Henry III, the sainted King Edward the Confessor, whom he held in especial veneration, was buried in the abbey church there.¹ The monks of Westminster had begun to furnish a new Lady Chapel for their church in 1220, but by the mid-1240s Henry had adopted its complete rebuilding as a royal venture. Up into 1272, Henry's funds poured into this project at Westminster Abbey, as a new apse, crossing, transept, and four bays of the nave were completed (fig. 3).² When Henry III died, building came to an abrupt halt; work orders could no longer be issued in his name, nor could salaries be paid from the royal coffers. When

¹ Edward, the last of the Anglo-Saxon kings, died childless in January of 1066, leaving the succession of the crown of England to be disputed between Earl Harold Godwinsson and Duke William of Normandy. By Henry III's time, Edward's reputation as a pious and peace-seeking king, who had spent his last days overseeing the rebuilding of the church at Westminster, was well-established. The legends behind the king's sanctity had been carefully crafted by monks at Westminster over the centuries. When his tomb there was opened in 1102, his body was found to be miraculously intact. In 1138 a monk at Westminster, Osbert de Clare, wrote a *Life* of the king which stressed his works of miracle, but it was not until the 1160s that Edward was canonized. It was upon this event and the new saint's translation (again) that Ailred of Rivaux wrote his *Vita santi Edwardi Regis*, which was the one known to Henry III. For the canonization process and the formation of St. Edward's cult, see Frank Barlow, *Edward the Confessor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 256-86; *The Life of King Edward, who Rests at Westminster. Attributed to a Monk of St. Bertin*, trans. and ed. Frank Barlow (London: Nelson, 1962), 112-33.

² Money and manpower were not spared on this royal project. In 1253, three hundred workmen were employed at a given time on the works. The total costs of the church have been reckoned to far exceed £40,000, or some two years' Crown income: KW, 141, 57. Other overviews of the rebuilding project can be found in Christopher Wilson, *Westminster Abbey* (London: Bell & Hyman, 1986), 22-31; Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 13-33.

he returned to England, Edward was not interested in taking up his father's grand, expensive venture, and he left the church unfinished.³

As king, however, Edward did continue the construction and aggrandizement of his father's tomb there. How was Henry III memorialized, and can his tomb shed light upon the last years of his reign and on the first of his son? To provide a conceptual lens through which to examine the monument, I will first explore the functions of tombs in the medieval world. I will then ask, what were the specific ways in which Henry III's tomb served these purposes? How does it differ from contemporary tombs? After pursuing these queries, an investigation into the unique features of the tomb will be possible.

* * *

As Henry III's son and as an executor of his will, it would have been Edward's duty to see to the fitting entombment of the late king.⁴ In the thirteenth century, tombs served the functional purpose of encasing those dead who were prestigious or wealthy enough to have one built. For medieval Christians, a rather more important benefit of a tomb was that it secured prayers on behalf of the soul of the deceased, thus expediting the usually lengthy passage through purgatory.⁵ Some tombs were etched with actual inscriptions soliciting prayers for their occupants, and in general the grander and more impressive a tomb, the more visitors it might attract and prayers it might elicit. By the thirteenth century, a nobleman or noblewoman with sufficient

³ Edward thus defied his father's will, which entrusted the Abbey's completion to his charge: John Nichols, *A Collection of All the Wills, Now Known to be Extant, of the Kings and Queens of England, Princes and Princesses of Wales, and Every Branch of the Blood Royal: From the Reign of William the Conqueror to That of Henry the Seventh Exclusive* (New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969), 15-6.

⁴ Some people in the middle ages made provisions for, and even constructed, their own tombs. Other times, the family of a deceased person would see to his or her entombment. Henry's case will be discussed below.

⁵ On the use of tombs across the ages, see Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1964). For an accessible overview of medieval attitudes towards death, including a focus on the religious, social, and cultural functions of tombs in medieval Europe, see Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

means might be interred at a monastic house he or she had patronized. The monks or nuns there, induced by the zeal of gratitude, would perform prayers for their benefactor with fervor and diligence. The desire to garner as much spiritual assistance as possible also accounted for the tendency among the nobility to entomb the heart separately from the body.⁶ Medieval life and death, then, were very much structured around a concern for the afterlife, attitudes towards which were tempered by both superstition and, increasingly over the thirteenth century, high Church theology. Tombs served the very important function of helping to secure the salvation of the soul.

In all these respects, Henry's entombment followed contemporary practice. Henry III had made known his wish to be buried at Westminster Abbey as early as 1246, when his project to rebuild the church of his beloved protector, Edward the Confessor, was already well underway. The new church was of Henry's own making, and the monks of Westminster respected him as their biggest patron. Furthermore, the tomb's proximity to Edward the Confessor's shrine and its relics promised extra intercessional clout on Henry's behalf. Not to neglect the Abbey of Fontevrault, where his Angevin forbearers were buried, Henry bequeathed his heart to that establishment.⁷

As Henry's attentions to Edward the Confessor's church indicate, the king took considerable interest in his own afterlife. He may even have played some part in

⁶ The remains of important personages could be entombed in three sections. The entrails, which were the refuse of the embalming process, were removed and laid to rest at the location of death. The rest of the body could then be transported to the designated place of burial. The heart could be entombed elsewhere at a later time. By the late thirteenth century, the papacy was increasingly discouraging of such division of remains. Nevertheless, the possession of any body part of an important personage such as a deceased monarch was held as a special privilege by monastic houses and churches. This could result in disputes over where royal bodies were to be buried. See Elizabeth M. Hallam, "Royal Burial and the Cult of Kingship in France and England, 1060-1330," *Journal of Medieval History* 8, no. 4 (1982): 359-80; Binski, *Medieval Death*, 63-7.

⁷ This wish was finally fulfilled in 1291, when the Abbess herself crossed the Channel to come collect the organ.

specifying the details of his own tomb design, although no records have survived to indicate that he did so. What is clear is that his tomb was not complete upon his death. In 1272, Henry was temporarily laid to rest in the former sepulcher of Edward the Confessor, and his remains were not translated to the tomb that is the subject of this study until 1290.⁸ Edward I, then, directed a significant amount of work on his father's tomb, not just completing it, as was his duty, but commissioning an expensive and showy monument. It is likely that genuine concern for his father's soul prompted Edward to carry out his father's expressed wishes in such a satisfactory manner. An elaborate tomb placed in the chapel of the saint to whom the king had been so devoted would be a prudent way to secure Henry's speedier passage into heaven.

While medieval tombs were designed to promote the salvation of the dead, their memorial role for the living was also significant.⁹ The tomb of Edward I's queen consort Eleanor of Castile, which was created in the early 1290s, serves as an illustrative example (fig. 4). The rows of heraldic shields carved into it celebrate her lineage and following.¹⁰ Henry III's tomb, which received an effigy at the same time as Eleanor's tomb was being erected in an adjacent church bay, was also undoubtedly intended to reflect upon the life of its occupant. What are its salient features, and can they inform an understanding of Edward's posture towards his predecessor?

Henry III's tomb rests along the northern ambulatory in the choir of Westminster Abbey, on the periphery of St. Edward's Chapel, the raised area behind the high altar of the church (figs. 2 and 5-7).¹¹ From the ambulatory, the monument

⁸ See below, p. 99.

⁹ Panofsky notes Greek tombs as the exemplars of such a practice, but it is one that has persisted since then. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 16.

¹⁰ John Carmi Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 207. For a survey of the commission and execution of the tomb in conjunction with the other memorials to Eleanor, see *KW*, 479-82.

¹¹ For descriptions of the tomb that have supplemented my own personal observations of it, see above, p. 8, n. 25.

appears to be a part of the architecture of the church, for it is squeezed between two of the columns that support the gothic vaulted ceiling. Its nearly seamless incorporation into the arcade allows it to act as a wall or a screen that blocks St. Edward's chapel from view. While restricting visual and physical access to the raised central platform, the tomb separates itself from visitors as well. Its base rests not on the ground level of the ambulatory, but on the raised platform of the choir alongside. The effect is to place visitors to the ambulatory in a space that feels almost underground, while the tomb of the king soars above, like the vaults of the surrounding church. The tomb's placement, then, ties it to the church's architecture while positioning it within the space of the Confessor's chapel and removing it from that occupied by humbled visitors below.

The platform of the choir on which the tomb rests acts as a primary base for the monument. The lowest story of the tomb consists of a chest made of Purbeck marble, which is framed by pilasters on each corner, a straight cornice running around the top, and a beveled molding around the bottom. The northern face of the chest is inscribed with three squares (fig. 7). Each is inlaid with a slab of green marble framed by a meandering carved double line. This pattern, called a quincunx, is recognizable from the shrine of St. Edward and the sanctuary pavement nearby (figs. 16 and 17). The southern side of the bottom chest, which faces the inner sanctuary, has three niches carved into it (fig. 6). The outer two niches are framed with trefoil arches, while the inner one is flanked by pilasters and a pediment in relief. A cross is carved inside each niche.¹² Metal grills would have covered the openings, but only the holes where they were attached remain.¹³

¹² RCHME, 29.

¹³ Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 102; George Gilbert Scott and W. Burges, *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*, 2 ed. (Oxford, London: J. Henry and J. Parker, 1863), 149-50.

This base chest is surmounted by a slightly smaller one, which contains the royal coffin and is capped with a carved cornice. The north and south sides of the chest are inlaid with large rectangular panels of red marble, and each corner of this upper tomb level was once supported by three twisting columns, some of which survive. Both tomb chests are inlaid with intricate and interweaving patterns of marble and glass. These tessellated spots of color lend the tomb visual splendor, as would have the inlaid jewels, of which only the sockets remain.

The top tomb chest is capped with a blanket of gilt bronze, which is etched with a diaper, or patterned motif, of leopards. Around the beveled edge of the blanket is the inscription, "*Ici gist henri jadis rey de engleterre seynure de hirlaunde educ de acquitayne lefiz lirey johan jadis rey de engleterre akideu face merci amen.*"¹⁴ Henry III's bronze-cast gilded effigy lies atop this blanket, facing east (figs. 8-10). Holes remain where braces would likely have attached one or more sculptured animals at his feet and an architectural canopy over his head, a conclusion based on still-extant specimens of these features on the similar effigy of Eleanor of Castile nearby (fig. 11). The diaper of the gilt blanket is effaced around the effigy's head, suggesting where the pointed canopy once rested.

The king's effigy lies horizontally, but in other ways appears to be standing, negotiating a balance between the recumbent and upright positions.¹⁵ Henry's effigy reclines on a diapered pillow with the feet splayed away from the body. Simultaneously, the architectural canopy implies the effigy is an upright sculptural

¹⁴ "Here lies Henry formerly king of England lord of Ireland and duke of Aquitaine the son of John formerly king of England on whom God have mercy amen."

¹⁵ For a discussion of this *gisant* posture, see Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 54-8; Binski, *Medieval Death*, 93. The effigies at St-Denis, carved in the 1260s, reveal the standing/resting dynamic of the funeral effigy to be in constant negotiation; one set was carved by a master trained in upright statuary, and his recumbent effigies are resultantly awkward, while the master for the Capetian effigies adapted the standing posture to portray recumbent figures in a more elegant manner. See Georgia Sommers Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," *Art Bulletin* 56, no. 2 (1974): 239-40.

figure occupying a niche in a church, the drapery of the effigy's robes reacts to gravity as if the king were standing upright, and Henry's eyes remain open, not asleep. The positioning of his hands also underscores the resting/standing duality of the king's posture. They are raised toward the sky, in contrast to the king's otherwise reposeful attitude. They stick outward with the fingers separated, protruding so far that in most pictures of the tomb taken from the ambulatory, the fingertips of the effigy are its only visible components (fig. 7). Whatever these hands were holding has been lost. It is reasonable to deduce that in his left hand, Henry bore a replica of the rod of virtue topped with a dove, one of the articles of regalia with which he was buried.¹⁶ The other hand may have held a scepter topped with a cross, similar to the one entombed with Edward I.¹⁷

The king's effigy is dressed in the finery of his office.¹⁸ He wears a crown crested with trefoils and fleurs-de-lys and rimmed along the forehead with a band of carved jewels. He is draped in a loose mantle that is clasped with a brooch over his right shoulder. Underneath his robe, a collared shirt is visible. His mantle, undershirt, and crown all have holes in which gems were once set. The king's shoes or slippers, in turn, are decorated with the same lions that appear on the pillows and blanket below him. These are the coronation vestments, all of which had symbolic meaning and a specific place in the coronation ritual, from which an elected prince of noble blood emerged as the anointed and crowned sovereign of the realm.¹⁹ On his

¹⁶ David Carpenter, "The Burial of King Henry III, the *Regalia* and Royal Ideology," in *The Reign of Henry III* (Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1996), 429-30.

¹⁷ The scepter with cross that Edward was buried with measured six feet two inches, and the rod and dove stretched over five feet. J. Ayloffe, "An Account of the Body of King Edward the First, as it Appeared on Opening his Tomb in the Year 1774," *Archaeologia* 3 (1786): 384.

¹⁸ Carpenter, "The Burial of King Henry III, the *Regalia* and Royal Ideology," 431; W.H. St. John Hope, "The King's Coronation Ornaments," *The Ancestor* 1 (1902): 140-1.

¹⁹ When Henry's effigy was forged, the only coronation in memory was that of Edward I in 1274; Henry's own ceremony at Westminster had taken place in 1220. For this reason, St. John Hope suggests that the effigy shows the regalia and royal vestments of the late thirteenth century, not Henry's own day. Still, the coronation ceremony is so infrequent and charged with meaning, it has changed

tomb Henry is no ordinary man, but a sacrosanct ruler. The lasting memorial to him recalls the elevated state of the office he filled.

The king's face is etched in fine detail.²⁰ Its representation is similar to contemporary English depictions of kings. An illustration attributed to the chronicler Matthew Paris, for example, portrays Henry III wrapped in a great mantle, wearing a trefoiled crown, and with jowl-length hair neatly curled on each side of his head (fig. 12). Both "portraits" present Henry III in graceful contours and closely etched lines. The king's curly beard, long moustache, and facial details imbue the effigy with a sense of dignified age and wisdom. On the effigy, the king's brow is furrowed, the only indication of his incomplete serenity.

* * *

Although it is worthy of interest in itself, how does Henry III's tomb compare to its contemporaries? One outstanding feature is the richness of its materials. If funds allowed, tombs for the English and French lay nobility and ecclesiastic authorities were topped with effigies, either etched into slabs of brass, or carved in marble and then painted.²¹ A sculpted effigy in gilt brass, however, was the preserve of the most important individuals, and it was with a double set of just this sort of sculpture that Edward memorialized his beloved queen consort, Eleanor of Castile, following her death in 1290. Henry's effigy was executed along with those for

little over the centuries. See Hope, "The King's Coronation Ornaments," 141; L. G. Wickham Legg, ed., *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: A. Constable & Co., 1901; reprint, 1975), 140-1.

²⁰ William Torel, the man commissioned to execute the effigy, was a goldsmith of London. Although detailed metalwork had long been a practiced craft in England, this was the first successful attempt in the country to apply it to a work of such monumental proportions.

²¹ King John's tomb at Worcester, the Angevin royalty at Fontevrault in Normandy, and most of the tombs commissioned at St-Denis in the 1260s, all featured painted marble effigies. Few brass effigies existed in England at this time, and only those of Henry and Eleanor at Westminster survive. Some French kings, such as Charles the Bald at St-Denis, were honored with tombs featuring metal effigies: Paul Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture, 1140-1300* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 214, 16; Binski, *Medieval Death*, 95; Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," 235; Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 110.

Eleanor; his was to be no modest monument.²² Smelting large quantities of brass a difficult process, and gold was an expensive material with which to gild the statues, so the effigies attest to Edward's buying power.

In addition, the shiny metal signified regality, and was prized just as it is today. Henry III had been aware of gold's symbolic value. A 1245 letter indicated that he preferred the leopards on the throne he was commissioning to be made of metal instead of wood, as the finished product would be more impressive that way.²³ Moreover, Henry simply had a taste for gold, and acquired large sums of it for his treasury.²⁴ Gold, as well as the gems that would have been set into the tomb, also had religious connotations in the medieval mindset. A passage from the Book of Revelations provides a dazzling description of the City of Heavenly Jerusalem: "The wall is built of jasper, while the city is pure gold, clear as glass."²⁵ Medieval commentators and artists evoked this image in their own literary and visual depictions of Paradise.²⁶ By portraying Henry in these same biblical terms, his tomb thus displays him in heaven. Furthermore, physical beauty was an indicator of a pure character in the medieval mind, so the richness of the tomb's materials is an

²² As the surviving records of the payments indicate, the administration of the late queen's estates seems to have been closely connected to Edward's own finances. Her estate revenues even funded parts of work on Henry III's effigy. See Nicola Coldstream, "The Commissioning and Design of the Eleanor Crosses," in *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford, UK: Paul Watkins, 1991), 56.

²³ Francis Wormald, "The Throne of Solomon and St. Edward's Chair," in *De Artibus Opuscula 40; Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York: New York University, 1961), 537.

²⁴ David Carpenter, "The Gold Treasure of Henry III," in *The Reign of Henry III*, 107-36.

²⁵ Rev. 21:18 (New Revised Standard Version).

²⁶ In medieval times it was a common trope to emphasize the holiness of a space by gilding and bejeweling it. For example, Abbot Suger, writing in the 1140s of the recent remodeling of St-Denis, states, "we summoned the best painters I could find from different regions, and reverently caused these [walls] to be repaired and becomingly painted with gold and precious colors." Suger, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, trans. and ed. Erwin Panofsky (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1946), 43. For a discussion of the significance of the materials of a work of art to its medieval beholders, see Herbert L. Kessler, *Seeing Medieval Art* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004), 20-4. Dahl argues that portrayals of Ste. Foy at Conques in precious materials allowed her medieval viewers to imagine her in heaven: "In short, the vision of the celestial city is almost everywhere present in the medieval mind, and its materials, gold and precious stones, evoke anagogically the image of the city above." Ellert Dahl, "Heavenly Images: The Statue of St. Foy of Conques and the Signification of the Medieval 'Cult Image' in the West," *Acta et Artium Historiam Pertinentia* 8 (1978): 183.

indication of Henry's spiritual virtue. The grace of the effigy, with its fine and elegant lines, further indicates the moral probity of the king whom it represents. The precious materials in which Edward chose to have his wife and father depicted, then, assert the blessedness of the late queen consort and king.

Aside from their similar effigies and the proximity of their locations, the tombs of Eleanor of Castile and Henry III reflect important differences between their occupants. Eleanor's tomb is one story shorter than her father-in-law's, consisting of just one chest surmounted by the effigy, which is surrounded by an elaborate iron grate. As we have seen, the marble tomb chest is carved with heraldic crests. Raised at the court of Castile, Eleanor had been immersed in the world of chivalry, arms, and letters from an early age. Her possessions included fine knickknacks specially decorated with the coats of arms of her lineage. A queen devoted to her husband, the king of England, Eleanor remained proud of her own regal ancestry.²⁷ The arms on Eleanor's tomb celebrate this pride as well as that of her husband. They claim the nobility and even royalty of the former queen consort, declare her illustrious descent, and display the connections Edward's marriage brought to the English royal line.

Henry's tomb is of less pronounced, but nonetheless meaningful, heraldic significance. The effigy's slippers, and the bed and pillow on which it rests, are covered with a diapered cat motif. The distinction between the royal leopards of England and other heraldic lions was far from clear even in the thirteenth century, but the ones on Henry's tomb are not identical to those on Eleanor's, and her tomb is checkered with castles as well (figs. 13 and 14).²⁸ Care was taken, then, to preserve a

²⁷ Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile*, 9, 51-3, 64-5.

²⁸ Most noticeably, the cats on Henry's tomb are passant guardant with a frontal gaze, while those on Eleanor's are rampant, looking forward. None appear to have spots, which sometimes identified the English leopards, and it is difficult to discern from photographs whether or not either set has tufted tails. For a discussion of these and other distinguishing features of the heraldic leopards of England,

difference between the leopards of England and the lions of Castile, showing that each tomb was an individual tribute, carefully crafted to suit its honoree. On the two tombs, Eleanor's dynastic excellence distinguishes her, just as the English king is marked by the specific heraldry around him.

Instead of a carved tomb chest, Henry's is inlaid with colored marble and glass. Porphyry, and by extension colored marble, has long been associated with the funereal and also the regal.²⁹ The most immediate reference apparent through the marble work on Henry's tomb, however, is to the shrine of St. Edward the Confessor nearby. The shrine itself, the pavement surrounding it, and the flooring in front of the high altar all employ this inlaid stone technique (figs. 15-7).³⁰ These three commissions were constructed within a few years of each other, during Henry III's reign; the pavement in front of the Confessor's shrine dates to 1267, the inscription on the high altar pavement indicates its stones were laid by 1268, and Edward the Confessor was gloriously translated to his new shrine, whose construction must have been well underway, in 1269.³¹

and their easy confusion with other beasts, see Cyril Davenport, *British Heraldry* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1921), 200-4.

²⁹ Steven Wander outlines porphyry's sepulchral connotations in the context of medieval Europe. See Steven H. Wander, "The Westminster Abbey Sanctuary Pavement," *Traditio* 34 (1978): 154-5.

³⁰ The so-called Cosmati school at Westminster has been the subject of scholarly inquiry. See Paul Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," *Art Bulletin* 72, no. 1 (1990): 6-34; David Carpenter, "King Henry III and the Cosmati Work at Westminster Abbey," in *The Reign of Henry III*, 409-27; Julian Gardner, "The Cosmati at Westminster: Some Anglo-Italian Reflections," in *Skulptur Und Grabmal des Spätmittelalters in Rom Und Italien*, ed. Jörg Garms and Angiola Maria Romanini (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), 201-16.

³¹ Lethaby summarizes the records that indicate when the pavements at Westminster were installed. These show that in 1267-8 St. Edward's sanctuary pavement was under construction, in 1269 compensation was made for flooring before the high altar, and altar pavements were still being funded from 1271-2. See W. R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey Re-Examined* (New York: B. Blom, 1972), 224-5. Binski dates the construction of the Confessor's shrine and the pavement before it to the 1270s, but the cryptic inscription on the flooring makes dating with precision difficult. Given the construction of other tombs in Cosmati work at Westminster, of the Valence siblings and Richard de Ware, in the 1270s and 80s, it suffices to conclude that the style remained current, and in close association with Edward the Confessor's shrine, into those decades. See Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," 16-8.

The Cosmati mosaic, as a rare feature on English tombs and a prominent aspect of the thirteenth-century Westminster building program, requires detailed attention, and is a feature to which I will return in Chapters 3 and 4. Why was it found at Westminster in the 1260s, and why was it used again on Henry's tomb, which was constructed decades later? We will see that this meandering decoration so foreign to England, and the city of Rome which it evoked, came to have multiple meanings attached to it as it continued to be employed at Westminster. The first use of Cosmati work at the church there can be seen as a statement of the ecclesiastical status of the Abbey.³² As the head of a monastic house independent from the English ecclesiastical hierarchy, Abbot Richard de Ware was required to travel to Rome in order to have the pope invest him with the dignities of his office. During his multiple visits to the papal curia in the 1260s, he was evidently impressed by the great mosaic-adorned churches he visited, such as the church at Anagni, which has a cosmatesque pavement.³³ John Flete, a fifteenth-century monk of Westminster who was particularly interested in the deeds of his forbearers, records that when de Ware returned to England,

[H]e brought back dealers and workmen, bringing with them such stones as porphyry, jasper and Thasos marble, which he had purchased there by his own means; from which stones these same workmen made a pavement before Westminster's high altar with marvelous craftsmanship, beneath the northern side of which work they made a most becoming tomb for this abbot, he ordering it.³⁴

De Ware thus provided the actual means by which Italian marble workers and antique stones were brought to England.

³² See *Ibid.*, 28-9.

³³ David Carpenter, "King Henry III and the Cosmati Work at Westminster Abbey," in *The Reign of Henry III* (Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1996), 421.

³⁴ John Flete, *The History of Westminster Abbey*, ed. J. Armitage Robinson (Cambridge: University Press, 1909), 113. This translation from Flete's Latin can be found in Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 97.

As his prestigious burial at Westminster underscores, De Ware was an influential local figure who was interested in enriching the splendor of his church. Employing a technique and even craftsmen from Rome would have stressed Westminster's special relationship with the city and its resident pope. The rebuilding of the church corresponded to the newly earned jurisdictional independence of the Abbey from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, which was granted by the pope in 1222.³⁵ The evocation of a Roman connection further emphasized Westminster's dedication to St. Peter—the first bishop of Rome and the first pope—whose patronage the twelfth-century monks of Westminster had incorporated into the Abbey's history.³⁶ That the Cosmati project was in part an attempt to assert Westminster's prestige is suggested by the fact that Canterbury Cathedral, the home of the archbishop, also received an inlaid marble pavement sometime in the thirteenth century. That this form was employed at Westminster in distinctly Roman terms suggests that the Abbey there was nearly on par with Canterbury and that it communicated directly with the pope and St. Peter, just as had St. Edward.³⁷

De Ware and the proud advocates of Westminster Abbey were not solely responsible for the Cosmati work there, however. The abbot relied on the help of the king for its importation and installment. De Ware appears to have been in a position

³⁵ Dean and Chapter of Westminster, "Royals and the Abbey," Westminster Abbey, <http://www.westminster-abbey.org/our-history/royal> (accessed March 31, 2009). Also see Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 10.

³⁶ Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," 30. Osbert de Clare's *Life of King Edward* added adorned and fabricated legends to the list of miracles attributed to the monastery's royal patron. These included St. Peter's direction, through a hermit, to Edward to build a church on the site at Westminster. See Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, 273-4.

³⁷ Binski uses the Canterbury example to show that polychromed stone was an aesthetic feature already employed in English ecclesiastical architecture, so again Westminster's explicit use of Roman stones and methods was a deliberate innovation: Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," 7. The possible rivalry between Canterbury and Westminster should not be overemphasized, however; Henry and Edward visited both churches with reverence, and the will of Boniface of Savoy, Archbishop of Canterbury, left one hundred marks to Westminster to contribute to its rebuilding: *KW*, 135.

of influence over Henry III, and served as the treasurer of England until his own death.³⁸ Henry embraced the artistic program that de Ware introduced, and compensated him for it accordingly.³⁹ Indeed, the abbot, the king, and Rome are all recognized together by the inscription on the pavement before the high altar, which reads, “*In A.D. one thousand two hundred and twelve, with sixty minus four, King Henry the Third, the City, Odoricus and the Abbot joined together these porphyry stones.*”⁴⁰ As this inscription was made to attest, the ancient marbles with their Roman origins were noteworthy features of the sanctuary floor, not only to de Ware and the monks of Westminster, but to Henry III as well.

Henry III’s letters and the inscriptions at Westminster themselves give every indication that the king was a discerning and attentive patron of the arts.⁴¹ What significance the king saw in Roman Cosmati forms will be explored in the next chapter. First, how else did Henry use this style at Westminster? Aside from the sanctuary floor, his involvement in the commission of St. Edward’s shrine is apparent. The work consists of a tall marble tomb chest, decorated with inlaid marble meanders, and pierced by three niches, in which sick pilgrims would crouch to be healed (figs.

³⁸ The Abbot of Westminster was also elected by the king to serve on the committee of twenty-four that negotiated the 1258 Provisions of Oxford and the subsequent governmental reforms. R. F. Treharne and I. J. Sanders, eds., *Documents of the Baronial Movement of Reform and Rebellion, 1258-1267* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 101.

³⁹ A 1269 record from the king’s government indicates a payment made to de Ware for the stones “which he brought with him from the curia at Rome to be installed for our use in our church of Westminster, before our high altar there.” Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 97. For the original record in Latin, see *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office*, vol. 1266-1272 (London: H.M.S.O., 1913), 388.

⁴⁰ Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 97. This complicated method of reckoning the year yields an installment date of 1268, and is thought to reflect the fact that the inscription itself dates to after Henry’s death: $1212 + 60 = 1272$, the year of Henry’s death, and $1272 - 4 = 1268$, the year the pavement was completed. Here, “the City” refers to Rome; the papal curia’s role in the pavement’s commission is not known. Odoricus is the craftsman, the subject of scholarly dispute as to his relation to the “Petricus” named as the craftsman of Edward’s shrine nearby. On this, see Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 98.

⁴¹ For some other examples of Henry’s conscientious patronage, see Paul Hyams, “What Did Henry III of England Think in Bed and in French About Kingship and Anger?,” in *Anger’s Past; the Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 96-7.

17 and 18).⁴² This base was topped by an elaborate complex of metalwork, which held the coffin and relics of the Confessor. An inscription commemorating the construction of the shrine concludes, "O man, if you wish to know the cause, the king was Henry, the friend of the present saint."⁴³ Henry would not allow his devotion to St. Edward to be doubted.

The tomb of Henry III, too, employs the same Cosmati forms as the Confessor's shrine, and indeed a similar tomb chest design. Although there is no such convenient identification of its patron, parallel circumstances can be inferred between the commission of the two tombs. Because the Abbot's role in initiating the Cosmati work at Westminster in the 1260s is evident, it is quite possible that his activity could have extended to his participation in the design of Henry III's tomb.⁴⁴ Certainly, the possession of another deceased king would have attracted more visitors and added further prestige to the abbey church. Henry had been an exemplar patron of the monastery, so the abbot would have taken a keen interest in Henry's burial. Whoever arranged for the details of his memorial's construction, however, it had to have been done with the consent and funds of the new king.⁴⁵ Edward's involvement must be inferred, and art historians have concluded that he was invested enough in the tomb's execution to recall a Roman workshop to Westminster in order to have it built.⁴⁶ The

⁴² Scott and Burges, *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*, 128-9.

⁴³ A reliable annotator of Flete provides the inscription, which is now lost: Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 99. The metal feretory and tomb base were destroyed upon the Dissolution of the Monasteries. O'Neilly's work argues that, though the Marian reconstruction of the marble tomb chest was executed in haste and with inaccuracies to the original, an examination of the present-day shrine still allows one to determine the thirteenth-century features of the tomb. These did not include the wooden canopy now visible at Westminster, which was likely erected during the fifteenth century. That the Cosmati work was a key motif on the tomb remains evident. See J.G. O'Neilly, "The Shrine of St. Edward the Confessor," *Archaeologia* 100 (1966): 129-54.

⁴⁴ Richard de Ware died in 1283, likely well after the building of Henry III's tomb was undertaken. In a parallel case, when his mother died at Amesbury in 1291, she could not be buried until Edward returned from his travels in Scotland. Margaret Howell, *Eleanor of Provence: Queenship in Thirteenth-Century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1998), 310.

⁴⁶ Carpenter places this date to sometime in 1279: Carpenter, "King Henry III and the Cosmati Work at Westminster Abbey," 419.

question then becomes, what can be the significance of the Cosmati work on Henry's tomb?

One plausible explanation for the mosaics is that the resemblance of Henry III's tomb to the Confessor's shrine emphasizes Henry's fondness for his Anglo-Saxon predecessor. With its patterned exterior, its twisting columns, and even its crowning work of gilt metal, the tomb's visual continuity with the shrine is clear. From these similarities and the very proximity of the two monuments, salient features of the entombed King Henry emerge. An emphasis is placed on Henry's pious devotion to the Confessor and the efforts he took to glorify that saint. That Henry lies entombed within the church he built in honor of St. Edward, enwrapped in the same visual trappings, provides concrete testimony to his devotion. In life, Henry's actions made his piety apparent, and his tomb strengthens this image and ensures that it is not to be forgotten.

This stated continuity with Edward the Confessor establishes not just Henry's piousness and special regard for the saint, but his own worthiness of devotion and admiration as well. Although not large enough to accommodate crouching pilgrims hoping to be healed, the niches on Henry III's tomb are a noticeable quotation not only of Edward the Confessor's shrine, but of ecclesiastical tombs in general in England and on the Continent. Trefoiled niches had various connotations depending on the tomb, but the form does seem to indicate the holiness of the tomb occupant.⁴⁷ The purpose of smaller niches such as those on Henry's tomb was to allow for holy relics, which were usually associated with the figure entombed, to be stored on display.

⁴⁷ Stocker notes some half-dozen shrines of saints constructed during the mid-thirteenth century that used such a design. The tomb of Robert Grosseteste, he points out, also follows this form, and the bishop was posited for canonization in 1286: D.A. Stocker, "The Tomb and Shrine of Bishop Grosseteste in Lincoln Cathedral," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W.M. Ormrod (Dover, NH: Boydell Press, 1986), 143-7.

No evidence remains of the artifacts that would have been housed in the niches on Henry III's tomb, and their presence is not itself evidence that the king ever progressed far down the trajectory of becoming a saint.⁴⁸ The installment of the effigy, which was not typical of saintly shrines, is a further indication that whatever the initial intent of the tomb base's design, by the early 1290s Henry was no longer up for sainthood. What Henry III's tomb does express by using ecclesiastical tomb forms is the priestly, sanctified nature of his office.⁴⁹ The thirteenth-century Plantagenet kings were anointed with holy unction, practiced the King's Touch to heal scrofula, and linked their rule to that of Solomon on earth and Christ in heaven through the iconography of their commissions.⁵⁰ A 1245 letter to Robert Grosseteste indicates that Henry was curious about the extent to which his own office made him a priest.⁵¹ Although the bishop's reply stated emphatically that the king was not a member of the clergy, the office was invested with enough sacred function to require this disambiguation. The role of the king as Christ's officiating representative on earth is rendered visible by the scale and details of the tomb. Henry's devotion to and special protection under Edward the Confessor reinforced this statement, by casting him as worthy of that position.

It is clear from the previous discussion that Henry III, by means of his tomb, is glorified in death. This fact is not surprising given that his monument was meant to have a positive impact on his soul in the afterlife. We have also seen that Henry's tomb was no haphazard commission, but was charged with particular meaning within

⁴⁸ For a discussion of the evidence that suggests King Henry was initially posited for sainthood, a process that was given up certainly by 1290, see Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," 27-8; Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 103-4; Carpenter, "King Henry III and the Cosmati Work at Westminster Abbey," 423-4.

⁴⁹ For the formal links between Henry III's tomb and those of late thirteenth-century popes, notably Hadrian V at Viterbo, see Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," 24-5.

⁵⁰ Wormald, "The Throne of Solomon and St. Edward's Chair," 532-9.

⁵¹ Wilson, *Westminster Abbey*, 23-5.

the context of its location and given the status and life of its occupant. It was particularly opulent, as it was colored not by simple paint, but by hued stones and gems in patterns peculiar to Westminster Abbey. It featured a rare effigy in the finest material known. In addition, Edward saw to the completion of the tomb to an astounding height and splendor. He must have truly cared about his father's fate. While paying tribute to Henry's piety, the tomb therefore is also a testament to his son's.

Records give every indication that Edward was, if not as obsessive about religious practice as his father, quite properly pious for a medieval Christian prince.⁵² Michael Prestwich's study of the almonry accounts from the reign indicate, for example, that Edward fed even more paupers per week than did his father, and that he was particularly willing and able to heal the king's evil.⁵³ We have seen that, given the potentially unstable political situation in England in the late 1260s, genuine crusading conviction must have prompted Edward to take the cross, set out east, and persist with his plans to reach and defend Acre despite extreme setbacks. Henry's tomb serves as another indication that Edward was genuinely pious, in this case in his concern for his father. That Edward's piety also informed his decision-making as the heir to the throne and as the king of England is a likely possibility. His strongly-felt religious sentiments must be considered by the historian trying to make sense of his political acts.

Aside from these religious motivations, can Edward's attentions to his father's tomb have had further intentions? Edward's place behind the commission of the

⁵² Henry III is reported to have insisted on hearing three masses a day, and preferred attending mass to reading religious texts: Matthew Paris' *English History* v. 3, 382.

⁵³ Edward's feeding of paupers peaked at 1,066 per week by the end of the 1280s, a rise from 206 per week in the 1270s. In 1289-90, upon his return from a long stay in Gascony, he healed 1,736 scrofula sufferers. Michael Prestwich, "The Piety of Edward I," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W.M. Ormond (Dover, NH: Boydell Press, 1986), 120-1, 25-6.

monument would have been apparent. As we have seen for the works on Edward the Confessor's shrine and the rebuilt abbey church itself, only the king had the means to fund such expensive projects. The marble and gold on Henry's tomb further declared its commissioner to be of very high status, and with the king in residence at Westminster Palace next door, no one else could have presumed to have such a grand monument built. Edward's personal involvement in the sepulchral works at Westminster was also made clear with the entombment of Eleanor of Castile there, in the bay adjacent to the one occupied by Henry III's tomb. This was no chance placement; the queen had died at Lincoln, and a funeral procession lasting several days was necessary to convey her embalmed remains to Westminster. The monuments honoring the queen testify to Edward's grief upon her death, which must have been genuine.⁵⁴ Given their proximity and the two tombs' similar effigies, Edward's obvious affection for his wife extends to embrace his father as well.

Henry's tomb, then, evokes a filial connection and even regard for that man that is not evident from what we have seen of Edward's political actions or the pair's differing careers as king. In fact, the tomb's design affirms the very sort of authoritative kingship that Henry had failed to exercise. Is it, then, Edward's statement of what kingship should be, or does the traditional assessment of Henry III's rule require reevaluation? What about Henry, specifically, does the tomb appear to praise?

⁵⁴ Rishanger writes that when Eleanor died "The king broke his journey, returning with grief to escort her funeral procession to London. For the rest of his days he mourned for her, and offered unceasing prayers on her behalf to our gracious Lord Jesus." Despite the convention of these remarks, the sincerity of Edward's mourning is widely accepted among modern historians: Elizabeth M. Hallam, ed., *Chronicles of the Age of Chivalry* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1987), 132; Marc Morris, *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 231; Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile*, 50; F. M. Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward; the Community of the Realm in the Thirteenth Century*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), 733-4.

One source of the tomb's impressiveness is its incorporation into the building around it. As we have seen, its chests are squeezed between two of the church's columns, giving the monument the effect of being part of the church itself. Scholars of Westminster Abbey's architecture note that the restricted space available for the rebuilding project, given the existing monastic quarters to the south and new Lady Chapel at the east end, shaped the new designs. This plan resulted in a limited space available for burials within the chapel to St. Edward.⁵⁵ The resultant near-literal integration of the tomb into the church fabric, however, could have been more than a practical solution, because it was one that befitted the English king. The tomb's positioning hints at Henry's own lead behind the rebuilding of Westminster's abbey church. That is, it emphasizes his status as a literal and metaphorical pillar of the Church, as the anointed king and heavenly-appointed protector of the English. This metaphor likening holy persons to actual building blocks of the Church is of biblical origin, and the tradition of its enthusiastic representation in art in England can be traced as far back as the tenth-century monastic reform.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the concept remained current in thirteenth-century Europe; the tombs of selected bishops of Léon, for example, were worked into the new walls of the cathedral there.⁵⁷

Finally, one biblical passage that refers to Apostles as pillars of the Church would have had special relevance to Henry III's life:

...and when James and Cephas and John, who were acknowledged pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me [Paul], they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the

⁵⁵ Wilson, *Westminster Abbey*, 37-8.

⁵⁶ Deshman explores this theme with specific reference to the case of St. Swithun at Winchester: Robert Deshman, "The Imagery of the Living Ecclesia and the English Monastic Reform," in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach and Virginia Darrow Oggins, *Studies in Medieval Culture* 20 (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), 261-2, 72-7.

⁵⁷ Rocio Sanchez Ameijeiras, "Monumenta et Memoriae: The Thirteenth-Century Episcopal Pantheon of Leon Cathedral," in *Memory and the Medieval Tomb*, ed. Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo and Carol Stamatidis Pendergast (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000), 271-99.

Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.⁵⁸

Henry's tomb thus seems to capitalize on the king's real accomplishments—such as his peaceful commitment to projects of piety—in order to comment favorably but truthfully upon him, all while glorifying the office he occupied. Henry III's tomb renders the English king an inseparable part of the glorious church surroundings, characterizing him as an upholder of the Church and its values.⁵⁹

The monument's height further distinguishes the status of the English king. Submissive only to St. Edward's shrine, it is a full one level higher than the other tombs in the late thirteenth-century church. The chests stack so high, in fact, that the gold effigy is not even visible from the ambulatory, the angle from which most visitors would have viewed the tomb.⁶⁰ This may reflect the separate commission of the tomb parts, suggesting that the original tomb chests were not meant to serve as a base for an effigy. Regardless, the new effigy commissioned around 1291 was thought to be worth the expense. Though it was undoubtedly meant to glorify on high the king before God, Henry's effigy probably did reach an earthly audience as well. It is likely that, particularly on occasions such as weddings and feast days, the crowds in attendance would spill into the gallery balconies, from which vantage point the king's effigy would have glittered below.⁶¹ The eastward splaying of the feet, incongruous with the effigy's generally standing posture, exposes the king's buskins to an audience from above. The tomb, then, is so impressive in its height, it can only be

⁵⁸ Gal. 2:9 (New Revised Standard Version).

⁵⁹ Furthermore, with the architectural elements on Henry's tomb, the king is represented in death as a church, and thus becomes an embodiment of the Catholic Church. I thank Prof. Peter Low for sharing this observation.

⁶⁰ The monument is prominently located near the ceremonial north entrance to the church. For a sense of its scale, see fig. 7: The top tomb chest measures nearly eight feet long by two feet nine inches high. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, "On an Examination of the Tombs of Richard II and Henry III in Westminster Abbey," *Archaeologia* 45 (1880): 318, 21.

⁶¹ Scott notes that the triforium level of the church is particularly spacious, perhaps to accommodate crowds: Scott and Burges, *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*, 25. The chapels at the east end are also galleried, which was an uncommon feature in England at the time of building: *KW*, 154.

fully absorbed from multiple vantage points. It thus presents statement upon the exalted position of kingship within medieval English society. Henry III was not to be easily scrutinized.

Looking back to Henry III's reign, this understanding of the king as a person of authority is not immediately comprehensible. Henry was the victim of a political movement against him, which sought to articulate the ills of his rule and impose stringent guidelines on his conduct. Edward I, as king, was to adopt some of the very reforms suggested during this process. What the tomb accomplishes, then, is a movement beyond commentary upon its individual occupant, to a declaration of English royal might in general. It celebrates a connection between the two men and glorifies the old king both as an individual and as an officeholder.

With this conclusion, we have reached an impasse on the journey to discover more about Edward's attitude towards his father from this tomb. To what extent does the tomb actually praise the former king, or does it simply gild over his weaknesses? Does the image of kingship it presents state Edward's perception of the actual status of the English monarchy, or was it the new king's attempt to solidify his concept of what kingship should be in a work of gold and stone? Because the tomb comments upon the office Henry occupied, a more careful articulation of late thirteenth-century kingship is necessary. This cannot be done within the restricted realm of England, for its monarchy operated in a Europe composed of principalities in constant communication and competition with each other. England's place in European affairs thus created the environment in which Henry—and later Edward I—shaped and exercised his own brand of kingship. The next chapter will sketch the activities of Henry III in relation to his international peers. As prompted by his portrayal on his tomb, I will ask, what sort of figure did Henry III cut as a prince of Christendom?

CHAPTER 3: MAJESTY IN CONTEXT

This chapter will explore how Henry III articulated his duties and status as a king—and how he put these ideals into practice—specifically within the context of his artistic patronage.¹ My reasons for following such an approach are twofold, beyond the simple fact that the tomb that is the object of this study is also an artistic commission. First, visual expression was strategically employed by medieval monarchs because images enabled statements of regality to be made in a clear, forceful, and memorable manner. Furthermore, the survival of thirteenth-century art across Europe allows modern scholars to discern the models on which Henry's own works of patronage were based. Specifically, I will turn to Capetian France under Louis IX—and the exemplar of kingship that he used art to declare—as a source through which to interpret Henry's own commissions and royal behavior. Mid-thirteenth-century England was a realm that was in the process of being redefined within a changing political map of Europe. Given this setting, what tenets of kingship did Henry III feel the need to invoke? The next chapter will return to that king's tomb. Is the image it projects consistent with Henry's principles of rule, and what then can it reveal about Edward's?

* * *

Although it was the dynasty of the kings of the English, the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Plantagenet family was very much composed of Frenchmen and

¹ This study will not directly examine Henry's rule according to political theories of kingship. The treatment of Henry III's tomb as a case study allows, instead, for a bottom-up approach. I have begun with the details of one particular monument in order to determine, specifically with regard to that example, how kingship operated and was defined. It is my hope that what my findings lack in theoretical explanation, they make up for in direct applicability to late thirteenth-century England. Illuminating discussions of kingship around Europe and over a longer time period can instead be found in Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies; a Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957); Francis Oakley, *Kingship: The Politics of Enchantment* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 108-22.

women who maintained their territorial, familial, cultural, and diplomatic ties to the continent. Since William of Normandy's 1066 conquest of England, the kings of England also held in their possession lands across the English Channel, in what is modern-day France. Henry II's marriage to Eleanor in 1152 further expanded the continental landholdings of the English royal family, grafting the new queen's inheritance of the duchy of Aquitaine to the existing crown domain. By the reign of Henry III's father, King John, this pattern of territorial gain had turned to one of loss for the Plantagenet kings, and the 1214 Battle of Bouvines marked the irreversible cession of Normandy to the French king.² Henry III acceded two years later to a throne of England that included only stunted continental possessions, which by his later reign were mostly confined to Gascony, the remnant territory of the ancient duchy of Aquitaine. The new territorial status quo continued to be negotiated over the next few decades. It was finally in 1259 that the Treaty of Paris, which formally curtailed the English king's continental landholdings but also confirmed his standing as a duke of Aquitaine under the king of France, was concluded.

As the home territory of the conquering William the Bastard, Normandy had been the ancient seat of the Plantagenet kings' power. Deprived of the duchy, the English government under Henry III was now undoubtedly based in England itself. Without the extensive holdings in France his forbears had enjoyed, Henry needed in the meantime to find other lands with which to endow his offspring. As we have seen, the Lord Edward's appanage was settled upon by 1254, but Henry still had his son Edmund to provide for.³ Attempting to establish this younger son as the King of Sicily was the ambitious scheme that Henry settled upon. This policy coincided favorably with the agenda of the papacy, which was to oust the rival Hohenstaufen

² Irreversible, that is, until the conquests of the Hundred Years War under Edward III and Henry V.

³ Edmund, earl of Lancaster was born in 1245 and later earned the nickname "Crouchback."

dynasty from central Europe and the Mediterranean, all the while renewing the crusading efforts of the other European princes.⁴ By going along with the papal court, Henry would be able to expand the Plantagenet sphere of influence as well as participate in the Holy War.⁵

We have seen that the Cosmati workshop employed at Westminster in the early 1260s was, on one level, an attestation of the Abbey's direct answerability to the ecclesiastical hierarchy based in Rome. Given Henry's diplomatic exchange with Rome, and his own flaunted role in the Cosmati project, it is also a statement of the intimacy that Henry cultivated with the papal court. The king aimed to be the papacy's trusty helper, both as it intervened in the political affairs of central Europe, and as it mobilized the forces of Christendom to protect the Holy Land. In so doing, Henry could enlarge his family's dominions to include lands where Cosmati work was not exotic.

King John's losses thus severed the English crown from some of its traditional landholdings and forced Henry to negotiate for new ones elsewhere. Nevertheless, the English royal line remained thoroughly entrenched in the culture of its Norman forbearers and of its sometime adversaries, the Capetian kings of France. Noble blood from the continent ran through the veins of Henry III, as both his mother Isabella of Angoulême and his grandmother Eleanor of Aquitaine had been foreigners introduced to the English court. Henry spoke and read courtly Anglo-Norman, a dialect of French, in addition to the English he would have learned from his childhood nurses and the Latin he would have commanded for conducting the business of

⁴ For a distilled yet detailed version of these political maneuvers, see S. D. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 230-1.

⁵ For the alternative view that the "Sicilian business" allowed Henry's crusading vow to be commuted, see A.J. Forey, "The Crusading Vows of the English King Henry III," *Durham University Journal* 65, no. 3 (1973): 237-45.

government.⁶ While Henry lived steeped in the culture emanating from France, his ancestors, including Eleanor of Aquitaine, were buried there, as attested by their tombs at Fontevrault in Normandy. In the thirteenth-century present, as Duke of Gascony, the king of England technically served as vassal to the king of France.⁷ Henry's future was not to be divorced from the continent either, for he was married to Eleanor of Provence, one of the daughters of the Count of Savoy, and the sister of the queen consort of Louis IX of France. Henry negotiated the marriage of his son to a Castilian princess. Richard of Cornwall, Henry's brother, was King of the Romans, and was elected as a senator of Rome, a qualifying position for the imperial throne, in 1261.⁸ Henry thus counted himself among a figurative and literal brotherhood of European kings all engaged within the same cultural and political milieu.

* * *

The shared environment in which the European kings operated is apparent in the artwork with which they surrounded themselves. Just as France was a derivative source of Plantagenet identity and English noble culture in general, so too were French projects the trendsetters across Europe in much twelfth- and thirteenth-century art. The reconstruction of the choir of St-Denis outside Paris from 1140-1144, for example, is considered to have established a paradigm for a noticeably new architectural style. Many cathedrals, abbey and parish churches, and royal chapels built in Europe during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries adopted and further developed this so-called gothic construction, which allowed for the creation of

⁶ On England's linguistically "polyglot society" in the twelfth through fourteenth centuries, see *Political Songs*, liv-lvii.

⁷ One of Edward's business agendas during his continental stay from 1272-74, for example, was to pay homage to the new king of France, Philip III.

⁸ Robert Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 124-5. Richard obtained these positions from the papacy and the electors in Germany because of his financial clout. Historians have tended to treat these titles as merely formal, but Weiler shows that Richard did exercise some kingly authority in Germany, even when he was involved in the baronial warfare of 1260s England. Bjorn Weiler, "Image and Reality in Richard of Cornwall's German Career," *English Historical Review* 113, no. 454 (1998): 1114-5, 21.

ordered, lively, and light-filled interiors.⁹ According to the model set by St-Denis and other new churches in France, pointed vaults and arches, thinned walls and supports, enlarged windows, and eastern ends with radiating chapels connected by an ambulatory, became the new international norm in ecclesiastical architecture.¹⁰ When Canterbury Cathedral was rebuilt beginning in 1174, the summoning of French architect William of Sens signaled the entrance of French gothic designs to English soil.¹¹

Beginning in the 1230s, the gothic style was further modified at specific sites in the Ile-de-France region.¹² These latest gothic churches were built with a greater emphasis on the verticality and unity of the structure, and with walls pierced by ever more and larger apertures to allow light to spill in. Bar tracery, or slim masonry used to provide support within windows, was a feature that had first appeared in the clerestory at the cathedral in Reims and became even more developed at Amiens after 1220.¹³ In the following decades, this tracery became a standard component of the illuminated, soaring holy spaces being built on the Ile-de-France. Following Paris' example, towering cathedrals in this vaulted "Rayonnant" style sprang up across the rest of Europe. This occurred perhaps most faithfully to the Paris originals at the

⁹ This was an age of church-building. One scholar counts that from 1180-1270, eighty cathedrals and five hundred abbeys were built in France alone. Whitney S. Stoddard, *Art and Architecture in Medieval France* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 169.

¹⁰ The project at St-Denis was instigated and documented by the Abbot Suger. A general survey of gothic architecture, which adds details and refinement to the generalizations presently made, can be found in Christopher Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral: The Architecture of the Great Church, 1130-1530* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1990). For a concise summary of Gothic features and the influence of Suger's project at St-Denis, also see James Snyder, *Medieval Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989), 350-6. For Suger's writings, see Suger, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, trans. and ed. Erwin Panofsky (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1946).

¹¹ Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral*, 85-6; Snyder, *Medieval Art*, 402.

¹² These include the rebuilding of the choir of St-Denis, mostly between 1231 and 1241; Notre Dame in Paris, rebuilt from the late 1240s through the 1260s, and the Sainte-Chapelle, from 1241-6.

¹³ Stoddard, *Art and Architecture in Medieval France*, 217.

cathedral in Cologne.¹⁴ Before and into the thirteenth century, then, it was in France that certain normative trends, here the tenor of artistic taste, originated. We shall see that this new French style was impressive—and adopted in other states of Europe—not only for its aesthetic qualities, but also because of the prestige it derived from its association with the Capetian monarchy.

The buildings that had the most influence on Henry's projects, and indeed the development of the High Gothic and Rayonnant styles in general, were constructed in France during the reign of Louis IX, who ruled contemporaneously with Henry, from 1226-1270. Louis—pious, just, virtuous, and chivalric—was an exemplary medieval prince. He was a tested crusader, and was canonized a mere twenty-seven years after his death. He also enjoyed status as a wealthy ruler of the prosperous and enlarged kingdom of France, which was newly consolidated under the centralized rule of the Capetians.¹⁵ A few churches with important royal connections, which were remodeled or newly built beginning in the 1230s-1240s, quite clearly enunciated the French king's corresponding spiritual status, as a representative and upholder of the faith. Reims, rebuilt from 1210 to 1241, was the official coronation cathedral. St-Denis outside Paris had asserted itself as the burial place of the kings of France. Mere association with the illustrious king of France was enough to popularize the sort of architecture these new churches employed.¹⁶

¹⁴ Cologne Cathedral was rebuilt beginning in 1248, and work continued into the fourteenth century. Wilson also notes that churches with Rayonnant quotations emerged in the Rhineland, Holland, Flanders, and Castile. See Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral*, 124-5.

¹⁵ King John of England was just one of many vassals to surrender land and authority to the kings of France in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. For a survey of the Capetian rise to power, see Elizabeth M. Hallam, *Capetian France, 987-1328* (London: Longman, 1985), 111-99.

¹⁶ For the most emphatic defense of this statement, see Robert Branner, *St. Louis and the Court Style in Gothic Architecture* (London: A. Zwemmer, 1965). Branner likely overstates the coherence of what he deemed the "French court style" under Louis IX, as well as the extent of its influence abroad, but the prestige of the French king and the exchange of artistic ideas in Europe in response to his example are noteworthy trends to be explored.

Furthermore, the iconographic programs still visible in these churches reveal their designers' conscious efforts to put kingship on display. For the twelfth-century rebuilding of St-Denis, Old Testament kings and prophets wearing crowns and bearing scepters acted as columnar figures on the north and west façade portals.¹⁷ The Capetian coat of arms adorned the interior fabric of the church.¹⁸ Even the cathedral at Amiens, which was not officially connected to Capetian kingship, features a "gallery of kings" on its grand western façade.¹⁹ This gallery comprises a whole row of sculptures of Old Testament rulers, all of whom wear trefoiled crowns and are encased within the architecture right below the elaborate rose window (fig. 19). In the clerestory of the cathedral at Reims are stained glass windows depicting kings supported by bishops. Inside this coronation church, further, the sculptural program on the interior of the west entrance culminates in Christ's baptism, signaling the holy and transformed state of Capetian kings crowned there.²⁰ In the sculpture of the tympanum, the baptism and coronation of Clovis, the first Christian king of the Franks, further emphasizes this theme.²¹

Louis IX himself was also keen to demonstrate his temporal leadership and sacrosanct status as an anointed ruler. In 1239 and 1241 he translated to Paris the relics of Christ's Passion, including part of the True Cross and the Crown of Thorns, which he had purchased from the Byzantine emperor.²² These were precious and coveted artifacts—the Crown of Thorns alone cost 135,000 *livres*, or over half of the

¹⁷ Georgia Sommers Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," *Art Bulletin* 56, no. 2 (1974): 228, 30; Paul Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture, 1140-1300* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 12; Snyder, *Medieval Art*, 352-3.

¹⁸ Branner, *St. Louis and the Court Style in Gothic Architecture*, 46; Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture, 1140-1300*, 12.

¹⁹ This work is tentatively dated to the 1230s and 1240s. Stephen Murray, *Notre-Dame, Cathedral of Amiens: The Power of Change in Gothic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 93-4.

²⁰ Donna L. Sadler, "Lessons Fit for a King: The Sculptural Program of the Verso of the West Facade of Reims Cathedral," *Arte Médiévale* 9 (1995): 49, 60-1.

²¹ Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture, 1140-1300*, 63.

²² This act brought considerable prestige to the French monarchy; see Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307*, 203-4.

French government's yearly budget—so their proper display became a priority of the French king. The Ste-Chapelle in Paris, or "Holy Chapel," was built in the 1240s to house them, serving as a reliquary chapel and private house of prayer for the king, his family, and his attendants at court.²³ The interior of the chapel is entirely decorated with stained glass, painting, and relief sculpture. The lavishness of the space transforms it into a representation of Heaven on earth with jewel-like light dancing across its walls. Far more decorated than other chapels, the entire upper interior of the Ste-Chapelle was made to look like a reliquary, stressing its function and the holiness of the treasures it displayed. The iconography of the decoration outlined the king's place in relation to these holy artifacts. In the stained glass windows, the scenes of Old Testament kings waging holy wars and warding off idolatry, tellingly dressed in Capetian garb, signaled that Louis was to be the champion of virtue for his people.²⁴ He had brought the holiest of relics to Paris, and by advertising this act claimed to rule over a new Jerusalem, the original site of the Holy of Holies. He would soon try to reclaim the Holy Land itself, for he departed on crusade in 1248, the year of the chapel's dedication.

According to Christian tradition, which traced its roots to King Solomon, the anointed king confirmed his divinely sanctioned status by building God's house on earth, in Solomon's case the Temple in Jerusalem. This convention was continued by Christian rulers, beginning with Constantine, and was adopted anew by Louis IX.²⁵

²³ The Ste-Chapelle cost 40,000 *livres*, and the reliquary chest itself, which was richly adorned, cost an additional 100,000 *livres*. Louis IX's Ste-Chapelle was badly damaged during the French Revolution, but has been quite faithfully restored, to the benefit of present-day visitors. See Daniel H. Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 16-7, 72, 34. What follows is heavily dependent on the scholarship in Daniel H. Weiss, "Architectural Symbolism and the Decoration of the Ste.-Chapelle," *Art Bulletin* 77, no. 2 (1995); Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis*.

²⁴ Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis*, 46-52.

²⁵ Other famous buildings which specifically emphasized this theme include Charlemagne's late eighth-century palace chapel at Aachen and Roger II's Capella Palatina in Palermo, built during the 1130s.

The Ste-Chapelle drew more specific connections between Louis IX and his Old Testament prototype, who was renowned for his wise and just rule. First, the setting in which the *grande châsse*, or golden reliquary chest, was displayed, replicates the stairs and portico of justice with which the Throne of Solomon was visualized in other forms of medieval art.²⁶ The stained glass windows in the upper chapel make Louis' self-association with Solomon all the more clear: they are depicted in windows right next to each other, performing similar acts of devotion.²⁷

The significance of invoking the Throne of Solomon in the context of a royal reliquary chapel, Weiss reasons convincingly, was more than to reiterate Louis' reputation as a just prince.²⁸ By storing the holy relics, which were reminders of Christ's reincarnation, in the seat of Solomon, Louis IX declared himself, as the builder of this new Temple, to be God's chosen ruler in the tradition of Solomon and Christ Himself.²⁹ Weiss writes, "In elevating their religious status, the kings of France furthered their goal by communicating the theme that loyalty to France was indistinguishable from loyalty to the Church."³⁰ For Louis IX religious power, through possession of the relics and their architectural encasement, became one with secular might.³¹ He was the new Solomon.

* * *

See Ibid., 19-24; William Tronzo, *The Cultures of his Kingdom: Roger II and the Cappella Palatina in Palermo* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

²⁶ A seventeenth-century drawing indicates that the *grande châsse* at the Ste-Chapelle sat upon a raised platform in front of a porticoed screen, while an actual throne sat above it within the architecture of a pillared canopy. The other known representations of this throne include a carving in the central portal of the west façade of Strasbourg Cathedral and on the Proverbs frontispiece of the ninth-century S. Paolo Bible. Weiss, "Architectural Symbolism and the Decoration of the Ste.-Chapelle," 310-4.

²⁷ Ibid.: 317.

²⁸ The Ste-Chapelle was built adjacent to the Palace of Justice.

²⁹ Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis*, 66.

³⁰ Ibid., 54.

³¹ Also see Joseph R. Strayer, "France: The Holy Land, the Chosen People, and the Most Christian King," in *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe*, ed. E. Harris Harbison, Theodore K. Rabb, and Jerrold E. Seigel (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 3-16.

As we have seen, Henry III was an English king with close connections to the French court. Moreover, a strong tradition of English dependence on French models in architecture already existed. In all likelihood, then, Henry III was fully conversant in the forms of targeted patronage that were being carried out to such a skillful degree by Louis IX. While in England, Henry III would have heard about them through the exchange of diplomats, courtiers, and workmen between the two realms. He would have seen the churches of the Ile-de-France on his own travels there in 1254. Henry must have considered these majestic new buildings with awe, for their aesthetic splendor, for the sense of spiritual exaltation they communicated, and for the dignity they lent to the royal office through their expression of the divine sanction of monarchical rule. He no doubt regarded Louis IX's patronage portfolio with envious admiration, evident in Henry's own commissions, which strove to emulate those of his lord and brother-in-law.

Westminster Abbey, for example, was begun in earnest under the king's special direction in the 1240s, just when the Ste-Chapelle was being constructed. Formally, Westminster owes many of its features to designs first employed across the Channel. Although creative in its details, it was disputably the first, and certainly the most prominent, church in England to employ the flying buttresses, rounded eastern end with radiating chapels, towering height, thinned walls, and traceried windows of the architecture that evolved in the Ile-de-France in the 1230s.³² The architect for Westminster from 1245-1253, Henry of Reyns, must have studied the new Gothic churches in France and Paris on an extended visit from 1243-5, possibly under the sponsorship of Henry III.³³

³² Peter H. Brieger, *English Art, 1216-1307*, vol. 4, *The Oxford History of English Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 110-8.

³³ His name, suspiciously similar to Reims, may indicate that he was either from that town, or went there to study its cathedral's architecture extensively. See Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the*

Binski catalogues the specific details Westminster mimics from Reims and other earlier prototypes in France.³⁴ Henry's church's north and south transepts featured glazed rose windows, as did the recent renovations of St-Denis, St-Germain-en-Laye (completed by 1238), Notre-Dame in Paris, and the Ste-Chapelle. Westminster's aisle and chapel windows adopted the bar tracery and double lancet-rose oculus layout of those at Ste-Chapelle, features which in turn had first been employed at Reims (compare figs. 20 and 21). On the exterior, Westminster Abbey's flying buttresses set it apart from its counterparts in England, and these supports enabled it to achieve the maximum height of any church in England.³⁵ The degree to which the architects of Westminster directly borrowed from the French prototypes cited here remains unclear, particularly because the building phases of each one are difficult to date with precision.³⁶ The fact remains, however, that the similarities between Westminster and the churches of Capetian France are too dramatic and divergent from English models to ignore. The architectural features of Rayonnant gothic, combined as they were in one grand, royally-funded project, lent the new Westminster Abbey a dazzling yet foreign flair.³⁷

This borrowing of motifs from the French churches of Louis IX's reign thus resulted in a Westminster Abbey radically new to Henry's England. As Branner states, "The unusual nature of Westminster among English buildings is certainly due

Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 35.

³⁴ For the "Frenchness" of Westminster Abbey, see *Ibid.*, 28-9, 33-43. Branner limits the influences on Westminster's design to Ile-de-France prototypes: Robert Branner, "Westminster Abbey and the French Court Style," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 23, no. 1 (1964): 10-13.

³⁵ Henry III's Westminster Abbey towered 103 feet high, compared to the seventy-four of contemporary Lincoln Cathedral. Snyder, *Medieval Art*, 409.

³⁶ In just one example, bar tracery was used at Binham Priory in Norfolk as early as 1240, before the construction of Henry III's Westminster. It is possible, however, that the king had encouraged the use of this feature in the Lady Chapel there, which was begun by the Westminster monks in 1220. Malcolm Thurlby, "The West Front of Binham Priory, Norfolk, and the Beginnings of Bar Tracery in England," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1989 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W.M. Ormond (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1991), 162, 64-5.

³⁷ It was perhaps another declaration of Westminster's ecclesiastical independence that it looked to France for design inspiration, just as the cathedral at Canterbury had done in the previous century.

in part to the quantity of foreign features that it embodies.”³⁸ Furthermore, the churches Westminster drew from for its design features were connected in some way to the French king, and functionally, too, Westminster filled the role of those churches constructed during the reign of Louis IX. Westminster was already well-established as the coronation church of the English kings. This tradition was authoritative enough by Henry’s reign to require a second coronation of the young king at Westminster in 1220, after his hasty one at Gloucester four years before. With the new shrine to Edward the Confessor, Westminster was on its way to asserting its status as the cult center of the patron saint of England. With Henry’s intended internment there, it was becoming a royal place of burial. Westminster Abbey thus already served the purposes of two of its design prototypes, Reims and St-Denis, and its remodeling assured its visual currency amongst France’s cadre of royal churches. In addition, Henry’s use of the prevailing architectural language of mid-thirteenth-century Europe enabled him to declare triumphantly the regality and sanctified status of Plantagenet kingship, particularly as an answer to similar Capetian claims.

Henry was also careful to ensure Westminster’s status as a reliquary *à la Ste-Chapelle*. In 1247 he obtained a phial of Christ’s blood shed on the cross, and on St. Edward’s feast day of that year he summoned the nobles and prelates of the realm to Westminster, so that they could witness its installment in the church under construction there. Matthew Paris records the events of the day in detail, and it bears transcribing at length, not least because Henry himself ordered Paris’ record to be made. On the eve of the festival, Henry fasted on bread and water and spent the night in prayer. On the morrow, he ordered all the prelates of London to convene at St. Paul’s, fully clad in their festival attire.

³⁸ Branner, "Westminster Abbey and the French Court Style," 6. Binski offers a similar pronouncement: Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 34.

Thither the king also went, and, receiving the vessel containing the aforesaid treasures with the greatest honour, reverence, and awe, he carried it above his head publicly, going on foot, and wearing an humble dress, consisting of a poor cloak without a hood, and preceded by the priests clad as aforesaid, proceeding without stopping to the church of Westminster...Nor should it be omitted to be mentioned, that he carried it with both hands when he came to any rugged or uneven part of the road, but always kept his eyes fixed on heaven or on the vessel itself... two assistants supported the king's arms, lest his strength should fail in such a great effort...[The church of Westminster] could scarcely hold them all, on account of the multitude assembled. The king, however, did not stop, but, unweariedly carrying the vessel as before, made the circuit of the church, the palace, and his own chambers. Finally, he presented and made an offer of it, as a priceless gift, and one which had made England illustrious, to God, the church of St. Peter at Westminster,³⁹ to his beloved Edward, and the holy brethren who at that place minister to God and his saints.⁴⁰

From Paris' eyewitness account, it is clear that Henry was deeply devoted to these relics and humble in his treatment of them. He also wished to make his possession of them very public knowledge, in the first instance by making their translation a sort of pageant, to which as many people as could fill the church at Westminster were invited. Henry then took the step to ensure the event was remembered even by those who were not able to attend. Paris states that the king said to him:

"I therefore beseech and order you to write a plain and full account of all these proceedings, and insert them in indelible characters in a book, that the recollection of them may not in any way be lost to posterity at any future ages."

Perhaps to ensure a favorable report, Henry then treated Matthew to a good breakfast.⁴¹

³⁹ We have seen that Westminster Abbey was consecrated to St. Peter, who was reported to have miraculously founded it. The church possessed no important relics of that saint, so those of St. Edward and Christ's passion were welcome additions.

⁴⁰ Matthew Paris's *English History*, v. 2, 240-1. King Louis IX and his brother bore the Passion relics to Paris in similar ceremonies, which were modeled after earlier translations of the holy relics by the Byzantines. For an English rendering of the thirteenth-century account of these rites, and a gloss on their significance to the Capetians, see Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis*, 14-5, 75-7.

⁴¹ Matthew Paris's *English History*, v. 2, 243.

Another point that Paris' account makes clear is that Henry's relic-gathering was a deliberate tilt at Louis IX: "And the king, as a most Christian prince, had obtained [the holy blood]...following the example of the then living French king, who was showing all honour, at Paris, to the cross of the same..."⁴² After the phial was installed at Westminster, the bishop of Norwich delivered a sermon upon the authenticity and virtues of the blood it contained, specifically in comparison to the True Cross possessed by Louis.⁴³ Westminster Abbey, where the Holy Blood was to be stored, directly responded to features of the Ste-Chapelle, whose special status as a royal reliquary had been announced by a 1244 papal bull.⁴⁴ Westminster was decorated as a reliquary like Louis' chapel, with walls adorned with intricate diaper that evoked the detailed etchings of metal-work.

This detailing also served to set Westminster apart from its other French models. Its interior surfaces were heavily carved, textured, and colored by the use of dark Purbeck marble columns (see fig. 3) and bright paints, while French cathedrals tended to leave the architecture bare (figs. 22-4).⁴⁵ This sort of decoration was a distinctly English feature, which is also visible at Canterbury Cathedral, whose carved rib vaults, dark capital stripes, and Purbeck marble column shafts add surface texture to the church's interior (figs. 25-6). Westminster was no mere appropriation of French forms, but its own, superior, English adaptation of their innovations. Furthermore, the detailed carving was extremely costly, showing Henry III's level of devotion to the project, and displaying his wealth as its commissioner. This was to be

⁴² Ibid., 240.

⁴³ Ibid., 241.

⁴⁴ Branner, *St. Louis and the Court Style in Gothic Architecture*, 125.

⁴⁵ The extravagance of the initial diaper-work is evident in the fact that financial constraints c.1253 resulted in the switch from a 15 cm diaper square to one that was 22 cm across. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 26-7, 47-8. On the interior paint in the church, which no longer survives, see Christopher Wilson, *Westminster Abbey* (London: Bell & Hyman, 1986), 67.

the English royalty's church to enshrine its holy relics, its patron saint, and, to a certain degree, itself.⁴⁶

What can be concluded from an investigation of the influences behind Westminster Abbey's features, then, is that here Henry III engaged with the Capetian king in an artistic dialogue familiar to both. Through his acts of patronage he asserted himself and his Anglo-Saxon and Norman forbearers as equals to the Capetians, to whom he was in the process of formally ceding large swathes of territory.⁴⁷ Westminster Abbey proclaimed Plantagenet authority under God, visualized in a manner that anyone who was familiar with the French court or indeed European ecclesiastical architecture could understand.

Building projects such as Westminster show that although questions of territory between England and France were underlying moderators of cross-Channel relationships, the competition between those states was even more about this status of each king. The drive of Louis IX, Henry III and their successors to prove their own authority and divine sanction to rule was not merely motivated by vain pride; the demonstrated worthiness of the ruler touched to the quick of popular concerns. Strayer has shown that in thirteenth-century France, the virtue of the king was thought to reflect upon that of his subjects.⁴⁸ According to Pope Gregory IX in 1239, "the kingdom of France is distinguished above all other peoples of the world by being singled out for honor and grace by the Lord."⁴⁹ A 1244 papal bull likened the Crown of Thorns to that of France; Louis was the holy ruler of a blessed people.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Branner makes explicit this answer to the Ste-Chapelle: "The idea of an enormous reliquary, a 'supershrine' for Edward the Confessor, and one to dwarf completely the chapel in Paris, must have appealed tremendously to King Henry." Branner, "Westminster Abbey and the French Court Style," 17.

⁴⁷ Recall that the Treaty of Paris was finally agreed upon in 1259.

⁴⁸ Strayer, "France: The Holy Land, the Chosen People, and the Most Christian King," 6.

⁴⁹ See Weiss, "Architectural Symbolism and the Decoration of the Ste.-Chapelle," 317.

⁵⁰ Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307*, 204n.

There can be no doubt that the English disputed such claims. By glorifying the Anglo-Saxon king Edward and presenting holy relics to his shrine, Henry III's rebuilding and adornment of Westminster responded to Louis IX, who was reputed to be the "most Christian king" over his French subjects, the Chosen Ones. In his synopsis of the bishop of Norwich's sermon upon the installment of the Holy Blood in 1247, Paris notes,

He also added that it was on account of the great reverence and holiness of the king of England, who was known to be the most Christian of all Christian princes, that this invaluable treasure had been sent by the patriarch of Jerusalem...for in England, as the world knows, faith and holiness flourished more than in any other country throughout the world.⁵¹

While attesting to Henry III's equally impressive piety, then, Westminster declared the English people also to be virtuous, which was no small flattery. That by the 1260s Westminster had become a building of national, not just royal, interest, is suggested by the payments made by the baronial council to continue work on the church's nave.⁵² In sum, Westminster Abbey asserted the piety and might of the English in visual and ideological terms comprehensible well beyond the isles on which they lived.

* * *

The ideas and forms of art immediately traceable to France were not the only models Henry looked to in enunciating his own kingship. One uniquely English feature of Henry III's Westminster Abbey was, of course, its most famous occupant. By adorning Edward the Confessor's shrine, Henry claimed a patron saint for himself and for all of England. He not only venerated Edward the Confessor, but explicitly modeled his own rule after that of the saint. By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,

⁵¹ Matthew Paris's *English History*, v. 2, 241.

⁵² David Carpenter, "Westminster Abbey in Politics, 1258-1269," in *Thirteenth Century England VIII : Proceedings of the Durham Conference, 1999*, ed. Michael Prestwich, R. H. Britnell, and Robin Frame (Woodbridge: Rochester, NY, 2001), 49-53.

Edward's reign had come to be regarded as a golden era of peace, which had been enabled by the Confessor's piety.⁵³ We have seen that Henry, too, was deeply religious; in the Confessor he found a predecessor he could aspire to emulate. Henry named his first-born son after the saint, breaking the string of Anglo-Norman names that had occupied the throne of England since the Conqueror. Henry had Edward's picture painted over the royal bedchamber at Westminster and in numerous other royal palaces around England.⁵⁴ The story of how Edward had given a ring to a lowly pilgrim—who was actually St. John in disguise, and would later assure the Saxon king of his passage into Heaven—was particularly resonant with Henry. The legend was likely depicted in sculpture under the rose window of Westminster Abbey, on Edward's shrine there (fig. 18), and on the tiles of the chapter house.⁵⁵ Edward was evidently to serve as Henry's constant, omnipresent role model. For Henry, this meant rebuilding Edward's church and, as we have seen in his 1250s policy in Wales, avoiding war.

These two themes of Henry's patronage and policy—engaging with the king of France in a sort of war of symbolism while exalting a distinctly English saint as his own mentor and friend—is evident outside of Westminster as well. The Treaty of Paris of 1259, which required Henry's formal renunciation of the lands lost under his father, induced the English king to drop from the royal style the title of Duke of

⁵³ An illustrated, French vernacular *Life* of the Confessor that dates to ca. 1250-60, was dedicated to Eleanor of Provence, and was likely later in the possession of Eleanor of Castile. It differs from the Latin *Vita Edwardi* in its emphasis on the Anglo-Saxon king's quiet religiosity: "Edward's kingship may not have been one of action but it is one of virtue and justice." Paul Binski, "Reflections on *La Estoire de Seint Aedward Le Rei*: Hagiography and Kingship in Thirteenth-Century England," *Journal of Medieval History* 16, no. 4 (1990): 333, 39-40, 44-6.

⁵⁴ For the proliferation of St. Edward's image around England and even in France, see Lawrence E. Tanner, "Some Representations of St. Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey and Elsewhere," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 15 (1952): 1-12. Not all the representations Tanner describes date to Henry III's reign.

⁵⁵ Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture, 1140-1300*, 262; George Gilbert Scott and W. Burges, *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*, 2 ed. (Oxford, London: J. Henry and J. Parker, 1863), 39.

Normandy.⁵⁶ A new royal seal was thus needed, and this one made a significant departure from Plantagenet seals past (figs. 27-8).⁵⁷ The reverse of the new seal continued to depict the king armed on horseback, with a crown over his helmet as on the previous seal. On the obverse, however, the sword of the enthroned king was replaced by a scepter topped with a dove, a symbol not seen on a royal seal since that of Edward the Confessor (fig. 29). At the same time, the throne became much more elaborate, with lions propping the feet of the king as well as the throne itself, which was ornately architected.

This new seal, then, glorified the king as a giver of peace with its reference to Edward the Confessor, and more explicitly with its insertion of a staff of peace instead of a sword of knightly valor.⁵⁸ It also trumpeted forth reference to Solomon, whose throne, according to the Book of Kings, had “two lions standing beside the arm rests.”⁵⁹ By picturing the English king bearing orb and scepter and flanked by regal cats, the new seal placed Henry III in the chair of Solomon just as the Ste-Chapelle did for Louis IX.

* * *

Set within the context of European political art, this pious competition with Louis IX through similar but distinctly English works of patronage is quite comprehensible. As a man versed in French cultural forms reigning over territories

⁵⁶ P. Chaplais, "The Making of the Treaty of Paris (1259) and the Royal Style," *English Historical Review* 67, no. 263 (1952): 248-50.

⁵⁷ Alfred Benjamin Wyon and Allan Wyon, *The Great Seals of England, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time, Arranged and Illustrated with Descriptive and Historical Notes* (London: E. Stock, 1887), 1-25.

⁵⁸ St. John Hope suggests that the sword on the king's seal specifically symbolized his title as the Duke of Normandy. Still, its replacement with Edward the Confessor's dove was a clear iconographic shift towards the peaceful. W.H. St. John Hope, "The King's Coronation Ornaments," *The Ancestor* 1 (1902): 159.

⁵⁹ 1 Kings 10:19 (New Revised Standard Version). Recall that Henry III had commissioned an actual throne for himself, with gold lions, in 1245: Francis Wormald, "The Throne of Solomon and St. Edward's Chair," in *De Artibus Opuscula 40; Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York: New York University, 1961), 537.

that were newly-mapped and ever-more English, Henry's works of patronage project an image of a king equal to his French brother-in-law but also under the protection and guidance of England's ancient Saxon line. The neatness of this assessment, however, is severely undermined given the actual domestic position of the English king.

In light of the events described in Chapter 1, it should be clear that, though it is reasonable to believe that the art commissioned under Henry III served a political function, it certainly did not reflect political reality.⁶⁰ Henry's seal exalts the king as one who promotes peace and sits enthroned above the rest. Peaceful withdrawal from France, however, was the result of an embarrassing string of military failures from earlier in the reign; the 1259 treaty was the neatest exit the English could make, not a consciously-implemented policy of pacifism.⁶¹ Given that medieval kings were supposed to be active knights, peace could be criticized as sloth on the part of the king. A troubadour song that likely dates to 1252-4 says as much:

The English king, I pray him to hear it,/ for he causes to fall/ his little glory by too much timidity/ for it does not please him to defend his own people,/ and thus he is so cowardly and so vile,/ that he seems to be asleep,/ while the French King takes from him with impunity/ Tours, and Angiers, and Normans, and Bretons.⁶²

Following the Confessor's peaceful example would not win back Normandy. A verse recorded in the chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, which was shown royal favor with numerous visits by both Henry and Edward, refers more specifically to the new seal:

Would that the treaty of 1259 had been a favourable one.
But Anjou, Poitou, Normandy and the English left behind
Are ceded, France, to you. The seals are changed,

⁶⁰ For a series of examples of contemporaries who remained unconvinced by visual statements of Henry's strong kingship, see David Carpenter, "The Burial of King Henry III, the *Regalia* and Royal Ideology," in *The Reign of Henry III* (Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1996), 454; Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 86.

⁶¹ In fact, the peace negotiations were forced upon the king by the baronial council. See Chaplais, "The Making of the Treaty of Paris (1259) and the Royal Style," 238-9.

⁶² *Political Songs*, xxi, 37.

The names removed, the scepter replaces the sword.⁶³

Though his seal proclaimed peace, such a policy did not necessarily reflect positively upon Henry. The seal's depiction of a boldly aloof kingship on par with Solomon reveals an equal level of disjointedness between iconographic statement and political practice. By this time Henry was not an impartial judge presiding over his subjects, but was the cipher of a baronial council determined to curb his favoritism towards the Lusignans. Like Henry III's tomb, the seal of 1259 seems to display ideals that smack in the face of the conventional historical understanding of this time.

Westminster Abbey's bold program is no less puzzling. The monastic chroniclers writing in the mid-thirteenth century were deeply xenophobic.⁶⁴ The demands of the baronial reformers resulted in a 1263 "statute" against alien officeholders in government, which aimed to oust the Italian clerics, Savoyard and Lusignan relatives, and foreign mercenaries that Henry III and the Lord Edward were employing.⁶⁵ Yet, as we have seen, Westminster Abbey's design was very much influenced by others that were fashionable in, and strongly associated with, foreign kingdoms. More specifically, English taxpayers were opposed to papal interference in ecclesiastical affairs and to Henry's imperial ambitions in the Mediterranean, and we have seen that Henry's Sicilian venture and the alignment with the papal agenda it required were contributing catalysts of the baronial revolt of 1258. Nevertheless, the king sought to clothe the Confessor's shrine in Italian mosaic forms into the 1260s.⁶⁶

⁶³ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 25.

⁶⁴ Gransden explains Matthew Paris' xenophobia as a product of his Benedictine outlook: "according to ancient tradition, a Benedictine abbey was autonomous in its relations with the outside world: Matthew thought that England should be similarly autonomous in its relations with the papacy (in temporal, not spiritual, matters)." Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England: c. 550 to c. 1307*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1974), 374. Westminster, too, was a Benedictine abbey.

⁶⁵ David Carpenter, "King Henry III's 'Statute' Against Aliens: July 1263," in *The Reign of Henry III*, 261-80.

⁶⁶ For an account of English opposition to papal-directed crusades whose destinations were not the Holy Land, see Christopher Tyerman, "Some English Evidence of Attitudes to Crusading in the Thirteenth Century," in *Thirteenth-Century England I: Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne*

Henry's importation of the Cosmati school thus shows that he entertained a flamboyant taste for the exotic that was not quelled even throughout the later, humbling years of his reign.⁶⁷ Furthermore, if Henry could not achieve actual political sway in the Mediterranean, Westminster Abbey provided a venue in which allowed him to proclaim this ideal through art.

Regarding the French king, Henry was deluding himself if he felt he could outdo the saintly Louis IX. Henry took the cross three times but never made a campaign to the Holy Land, and the relics he retrieved for Westminster could not surpass the holiness of the Crown of Thorns at the Ste-Chapelle.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Edward the Confessor did not enjoy a large cult following as did, for example, St. Denis, so Henry's devotion to his saintly predecessor and his aggrandizement of Edward's shrine and abbey were the king's—and the monastery's—forced initiatives.⁶⁹ That the French king also continued to wield far more diplomatic sway than Henry was apparent in 1263, when Louis IX was called on to arbitrate between Henry and his recalcitrant barons. Given this climate, Henry's adoption of the latest

Conference, 1985, ed. Peter R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 1986), 169-70. Tyerman argues that though this attitude is epitomized in the writings of Matthew Paris, it was widely shared by his fellow countrymen.

⁶⁷ Binski notes, for example, that the sanctuary pavement contained an interpretive inscription unlike those in Italy, suggesting that the work was otherwise strange and inaccessible to an English audience. Paul Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," *Art Bulletin* 72, no. 1 (1990): 11.

⁶⁸ Lloyd writes, "The 1247 acquisition, compared to Louis's, was a poor showing." See Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307*, 204n. That the English were skeptical of the Holy Blood's authenticity is evident in the efforts made by the Bishop of Norwich and others to defend it.

⁶⁹ As just one indication of St. Denis' widespread popularity, by the mid thirteenth century his *Life* was clarified and translated into French, for the benefit of visitors to the church where he was entombed. A number of copies have survived, suggesting the degree of their dissemination. R. Bossuat, "Traditions Populaires Relatives au Martyre et à la Sepulture de Saint Denis," *Le Moyen Age* 11 (1956): 482-3; Gabrielle M. Spiegel, "The Cult of Saint Denis and Capetian Kingship," *Journal of Medieval History* 1, no. 1 (1975): 54. Edward the Confessor's popularity, in turn, seems to have been confined to locals of Westminster and the royal elite; he has been called a "third-rate saint." Julian Gardner, "The Cosmati at Westminster: Some Anglo-Italian Reflections," in *Skulptur Und Grabmal des Spätmittelalters in Rom Und Italien*, ed. Jörg Garms and Angiola Maria Romanini (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), 205. Also see Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 52-3.

artistic trends from Louis IX's center of government on the Ile-de-France can be seen as characteristic obsequiousness on the part of the English king.⁷⁰

A political song that survives from his reign indicates that at least some felt this way. The date of its composition is obscure, but its sentiments would have been current in the 1250s. After poking fun at Henry's futile ambitions in France and the repartee between his magnates, the poem continues to have Henry say, "By the five wounds of God! Paris is a very great city!/ There is a chapel, of which I am desirous;/ I will cause it to be carried in a rolling cart,/ straight to Saint Amont in London, just as it stands."⁷¹ Westminster Abbey was not the Ste-Chapelle rolled to London on a cart, but its French architecture was certainly a deliberate adaptation capable of eliciting ridicule. As a possible indication that there was a keen reaction to the Abbey's foreignness, the building under new architect Robert of Beverly from 1260-72 toned down the experimentations called for by Henry of Reyns' scheme for the church.⁷²

Historians and art historians have thus interpreted Henry III's works at Westminster and his patronage in general as evidence that he had a well-formulated notion of kingship that was entirely out of touch with, and perhaps even contributed to, the dismal realities and constraints of his rule. Wilson, for example, observes that Westminster's radical architecture was not fully adopted elsewhere in England, concluding that "Westminster's French High Gothic scheme had become tainted through association with Henry's unpalatable insistence on the sacral character of his

⁷⁰ Louis IX was to be canonized in 1297. The form of his now-lost tomb—a matter up for conjecture—with its possible inclusion of an unusual upright effigy, suggests that after his death in 1270 the king attracted a cult following: Georgia Sommers Wright, "The Tomb of Saint Louis," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 34 (1971): 73-5. Even if it had a recumbent effigy, the tomb chest does seem to have had spaces in which the sick could crouch: Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, "Le Tombeau de St. Louis," *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* (1970): 15. Louis, much more so than Henry, was regarded as a holy man.

⁷¹ *Political Songs*, xxv, 67.

⁷² Note, first of all, that Robert was from an English town. One change he made was to replace the octofoil tracery of the outer gallery windows with smaller cinquefoils, "thus diluting a bold motif by converting it into a simple pointed window head with tracery circlets:" Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 32, 31.

kingship and his supranatural political ambitions.”⁷³ In addition, the works at Westminster were ostentatiously costly—their point was to underscore the spiritual largesse of the monarchy—at a time when the king’s wasteful spending was under careful scrutiny. To assess Henry’s works at Westminster in monetary terms, as mere ideological statements, or as political tools that were ineffectual, however, would be to forget the obvious conviction with which they were carried out. The 1247 procession of relics into Westminster, for example, was a pageant with real religious fervor behind it, and to trust Matthew Paris, swells of important people other than the king participated.⁷⁴

Furthermore, the images Henry propagated did not simply reflect the precepts of kingship he held dear, but actually effected them—strived to make them come true—by visual means.⁷⁵ For example, the new seal of 1259 can be viewed as a corrective tool for a government gone awry. It employs imagery to dignify the English withdrawal from Normandy, while reaffirming the traditional relationship between ruler and subject. By celebrating his peaceful nature, the necessity of ceding Normandy is placed firmly under the will of the king. Amidst the nominal rule of the king but the actual decision-making of the baronial council, one needed only to glance at the seal on a charter, which showed the king majestically enthroned, to be sure that royal authority was behind it.

⁷³ Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral*, 183. A notable exception is Binski, who argues that Westminster’s eclecticism of styles attests to the borrowing power of the English monarchy. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 42.

⁷⁴In addition, Roberts shows that allusions to the holy blood that the king brought to Westminster were incorporated into the building’s very artistic scheme. Its tympanum sculpture depicting Christ pointing to his wounds was adopted at York Cathedral, suggesting the relic’s widespread veneration: M.E. Roberts, “The Relic of the Holy Blood and the Iconography of the Thirteenth-Century North Transept Portal of Westminster Abbey,” in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W.M. Ormrod (Dover, NH: Boydell Press, 1986), 141-2.

⁷⁵ Binski’s work has shown this to be the case for Westminster Abbey. For an explanation of his approach, which sees Henry’s project “not as a passive response or a kind of cultural genuflection, but as an active and fully prejudiced form of interpretation, and hence translation and representation,” see Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 7.

The most compelling reason to take Henry's patronage at Westminster as not just his own whim and fancy, but as an indication of larger values and enforced realities of thirteenth-century English kingship, is the perpetuation of its forms in settings closely associated with Henry himself. Though his importation of the Cosmati work and High Gothic carving to Westminster was possibly tactless and even more likely presumptuous on Henry's part, these motifs are restated on his tomb. In short, Edward I, who most historians agree was an adept ruler, found his father's patronage compelling enough to bear repeating. How, then, were these precepts of kingship that were established by Henry's artistic programs continued and adapted during his son's reign? Can a look to Henry's tomb given such an investigation illuminate the tricky balance Edward struck as he continued in the line of his forefathers yet established his own rule?

CHAPTER 4: MASTERY IN ACTION

We have seen that the tomb of Henry III, with its fine effigy on high and its clear connections to the shrine of Edward the Confessor nearby, invokes the piety of both Henry and his son. Announcing the king's virtue had an ultimate significance in helping to secure him a happy afterlife, but in the context of late thirteenth-century kingship, this declaration was also loaded with political implications. Through Henry's tomb, that king and his son are cast as individuals who resemble saints and blessed kings past—both biblical and otherwise—who are charged to act on earth under God's sanction, and who preside over the Holy Land and the Chosen People. These principles had existed before Henry's reign, were sharpened through art and ceremony during that time, and by Edward's accession were integral to the formation of the image of kingship. Edward was thus operating within a weighty tradition—which was already on display at Westminster Abbey itself—when he chose to memorialize his father in these terms of sanctified Christian rule.

We have also seen that Edward put a unique stamp on the tomb, which was personalized to suit Henry's tastes as well as Edward's own. Under what circumstances, then, was the monument made? Although Henry had died in 1272, no mention of his new tomb survives in chronicle or governmental records until 1280. Under his record for that year, the chronicler Rishanger notes that Edward fetched "precious stones of jasper" from Gascony for the monument.¹ Throughout the decade of the 1280s, the tomb chests were under construction, although it is unknown whether work was continuous over this time or not. Henry's embalmed body remained where it was deposited in 1272, namely the former shrine of Edward the

¹ Rishanger, 96. I would like to thank Prof. Edgerton for his translation of this passage. Trivet makes a similar mention of the occasion: Trivet, 301. The heir, then, was physically involved in his predecessor's entombment, at least in the chronicle tradition.

Confessor, until he was translated to the present tomb in 1290. In the two or three years following, and along with the erection of a tomb and effigy for Eleanor of Castile, the bronze effigy of Henry was forged and installed on top of the Cosmati chests.²

This chapter will investigate Edward I's reign and consider it in relation to these aspects of Henry's tomb's construction. I will argue that the new king did not simply accept the policies and ideologies as projected by his father and international peers, nor did he abandon them altogether. Rather, Edward transformed the ideals under which he was raised in order to achieve his own ends better. His articulation, through art, of the tempering force of continuity allowed him to set a sweepingly new tone to his rule and achieve these laid-out goals.

* * *

We have seen that the Cosmati school at Westminster blazoned Henry's international interests, particularly his ambitions to gain influence in the Mediterranean, embark on the crusade, and act as the papacy's trusty prince in both of these matters. While the importation of stones and craftsmen from Rome reveals strong logistical links between England and the papal lands, it is clear that as far as creating an English Plantagenet empire in the Mediterranean was concerned, Henry's aspiration was a pipe dream. By the time of the laying of the final marble cuts on the sanctuary pavement in 1268, Charles of Anjou, not Edmund of Lancaster, was poised to be the king of Sicily, and the English barons had made clear their objection to far-

² Some of the expenses for the commission of the effigy are listed in the account books for the administration of the late queen consort's estates. Through their investigation, Binski concludes that Henry's effigy was installed by 1292-3. Paul Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," *Art Bulletin* 72, no. 1 (1990): 21.

flung military ventures.³ Instead of his actual territorial clout in the Mediterranean, what the Cosmati program shows is Henry's continued devotion in theory to Plantagenet imperialism even despite these setbacks. Westminster Abbey's appropriation of art directly from Rome—the quintessential empire of antiquity past and the current home of its papal inheritors—proclaims this ideal in visual terms.⁴

While this dream of a Plantagenet empire did not materialize outside of Westminster during Henry's lifetime, it continued to entice his successor. It is first important to note that, in invoking the Cosmati motif on Henry's tomb, Edward was not the blind commissioner his father had been. He would have been familiar with the Cosmati work at Westminster, of course, but on his travels to and from the Holy Land, he would have come into direct contact with ancient Roman monuments, as well as with the medieval Italian Cosmati works that drew inspiration—and materials—from works of antiquity.⁵ Edward spent the winter of 1270-1 in Trapani, waiting for fair winds to take him east. In 1272, his return journey took him through Sicily. In February of 1273 he made a stop in Rome, before staying as the guest of Pope Gregory X at Orvieto.⁶ As a pious man and a Christian prince, it is inconceivable that he would not have visited the churches at each of these places.

While in Palermo, he could very well have visited the Capella Palatina of Roger II, the Norman King of Sicily who lived from 1095 to 1154. Here, the

³ Richard of Cornwall did continue to entertain hopes of his coronation as Emperor of the Romans, and was the accepted king of Germany, until his death in 1272. See Bjorn Weiler, "Image and Reality in Richard of Cornwall's German Career," *English Historical Review* 113, no. 454 (1998): 1116-7, 21.

⁴ For the historical evolution of the complex ideological and political implications of the surviving concept of a Roman Empire, with particular regard to the thirteenth century, see Robert Folz, *The Concept of Empire in Western Europe from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 3-12, 75-144.

⁵ Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," 22-3. For a list of surviving works attributed to the Cosmati style of craftsmanship, in Rome and without, see Edward Hutton, *The Cosmati: The Roman Marble Workers of the XIIth and XIIIth Centuries* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), 45-60.

⁶ This itinerary is collected in Julian Gardner, "The Cosmati at Westminster: Some Anglo-Italian Reflections," in *Skulptur Und Grabmal des Spätmittelalters in Rom Und Italien*, ed. Jörg Garms and Angiola Maria Romanini (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), 212.

interlacing quincunx arrangement of stones, which is found on the bottom chest of Henry's tomb, is a prevailing motif, both on the choir floor and on the domineering royal throne in the chapel's nave (figs. 31 and 32). This was a common pattern among Italian flooring pavements and indeed even the one at Westminster, but its use on the vertical surfaces of Roger's throne and Henry's tomb may suggest a telling connection between the two. Indeed, the quincunx can be found on twelfth and thirteenth-century ecclesiastical furnishings such as choir screens (Anagni), altars (S. Prassede, Rome), and pulpits (Orvieto), and, according to the inscription on the choir pavement at Westminster, the all-encompassing pattern signifies the Christian worldview of the cosmos.⁷ The adoption of this motif for the throne and tomb of secular rulers, then, deserves special comment.

Tronzo's work clarifies the political import of the Capella Palatina's art and layout. The theme of royalty, exemplified by the hulking physical presence of the ruler's quincunxed throne, permeated the chapel, which was designed so that the liturgy conducted there directed homage, in part, to the king—the ultimate expression of the prince's sovereignty as a representative of Christ.⁸ The tomb of Henry III, with its similar materials and motifs, may also have served to enthrone the English king as the divinely-ordained ruler of his realm.

While the Capella Palatina remains a speculative source of inspiration, Edward certainly visited the Cathedral at Palermo, where Roger II and his successors to the Sicilian throne were buried.⁹ The tombs there bear little structural resemblance to that of Henry III. For example, Roger II's tomb comprises a solid, austere

⁷ Hutton, *The Cosmati*, Plates 45B, 24A, 36; Steven H. Wander, "The Westminster Abbey Sanctuary Pavement," *Traditio* 34 (1978): 144-51.

⁸ William Tronzo, *The Cultures of his Kingdom: Roger II and the Cappella Palatina in Palermo* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 35-6, 100-4.

⁹ Elizabeth M. Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford, UK: Paul Watkins, 1991), 15.

sarcophagus of porphyry elevated by carved supports and surmounted by a canopy decorated with elaborate mosaics (fig. 33). Other parallels between Plantagenet Westminster and its counterparts in Norman Sicily can be detected, however. Though Henry III's tomb was topped by a painted wooden canopy, the same style of mosaic adornment from the canopies in Sicily covers the English king's very tomb chests. Second, Roger's intended burial church at Cefalù was supported by alternating columns of fake red and green porphyry, showing his preference for the material, and this color scheme dominates the Capella Palatina as well. Large panels of these same colored stones dignify Henry III's tomb chests (see fig. 1).

What was the significance of building with rare colored marble to the twelfth-century Sicilian king? Even in the previous century, porphyry, which was valued for its hardness and its deep color, had come to symbolize imperial sovereignty.¹⁰ These connotations seem to have remained current into thirteenth-century England. Since Arabs still controlled Egypt, the monuments of antiquity, many of which were in Rome, provided the only source for porphyry, so it remained a rare and coveted stone. The papal capital was the singular place at which to acquire it, as we have seen with Abbot de Ware's travels.¹¹ We have also seen that the inscription on the Westminster sanctuary pavement specifically identifies its stones "porphyry." Given this general significance of the colored stones used to construct Henry's tomb, Edward's acquaintance with compelling cases of their political use, and the monument's resemblances to these examples, Henry III's tomb can be read, in part, as an inspired

¹⁰Roger's choice of the stone for his own sarcophagus was a direct answer to pope Innocent II; this man, the king's political rival, had commandeered the porphyry sarcophagus of a Roman emperor for his own use in 1139. Roger's choice of entombment, then, was a way to claim temporal and spiritual independence from the adversary pope. József Deér, *The Dynastic Porphyry Tombs of the Norman Period in Sicily*, vol. V, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 135, 46-55.

¹¹The merits of Roman materials and art forms had long been appreciated in England. For example, between 1145 and 1153 the Bishop of Salisbury imported statues from antique Rome that elicited the written praise of their English viewers. *Ibid.*, 118, 42-3.

successor to Roger II's projects or ones like them.¹² Henry's tomb, then, was conceived not just within the context of Westminster Abbey and its enshrined saint, important as these associations were, but within an entire tradition of porphyry monuments, all of which projected the secular and spiritual authority of those rulers connected to them. Apparently Edward, like his father, entertained grand notions of the Plantagenet line's elite status abroad and as the upholders of Christian rule.

* * *

Edward did not seek lands along the Mediterranean as had his father, whose policy had gone so awry in the late 1250s. Rather, the new king shifted his focus to fronts closer to home, eventually gaining for himself a sort of empire in the British Isles.¹³ In this context, the Cosmati work on Henry's tomb takes on a new, fully resonant meaning, and the deceased king's ideals assume a more concrete form in the England of King Edward. This was particularly true for the case of Wales, which Edward's wars transformed from a loosely unified satellite principality into a territory—a colony even, as argued by R. Davies—managed directly by the king's men.¹⁴

We have seen that as heir to the throne, the Lord Edward had faced great difficulty in managing his estates in Wales. By Henry's reign, that land's position as a principality under English lordship was a difficult one both for the English kings to

¹² Unlike Roger II, Edward I was not on unfriendly terms with the papal court. Rather, his closeness to papal projects, epitomized by his crusade, allowed him to lay partial claim to the authority of the Roman Empire and Christian Church that the papacy represented. Folz, *The Concept of Empire*, 75-8.

¹³ Edward had no notion to actually restore the former Roman Empire, whose continued existence into the thirteenth century is discussed by Folz. Rather, Edward seems to have transplanted the Roman Empire's conceptual underpinnings, which considered the emperor/monarch to be sacred and universal in scope of power, to Britain. See *Ibid.*

¹⁴ R. R. Davies, "Colonial Wales," *Past and Present*, no. 65 (1974): 3-23. The following historical narrative of the conquest of Wales is based on the accounts and assessments found in Marc Morris, *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 131-93; R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 320-54; Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 170-218. Secondary historians who offer particular insight on the themes I explore will also be cited individually.

enforce and for the Welsh to tolerate. The Welsh, who spoke their own language, had their own form of law, and were ruled by their own princes, were a people apart from the English. Both groups recognized that the mighty King Arthur, the hero of Geoffrey of Monmouth's popular *History of the Kings of England*, had been a Briton—a Welshman.¹⁵ Yet the Welsh princes were vassals of the kings of England, and could in theory be summoned to the king's court at Westminster or called upon to provide knights for the king's military ventures. This claim to English jurisdiction and lordship came to be resisted, even in Henry's time, under the dynamic leadership of Llewelyn ap Gruffudd. Llewelyn appealed to the nationalist feelings of his compatriots in order to gain preeminence as the designated Prince of Wales and lead rebellions against English interference there. Henry's crippled government had been unable to cope with the uprising in full force, and in 1267 he signed a treaty granting concessions to the Welsh prince.¹⁶

Given Edward's assertion of strong domestic rule and his early experiences in the marches bordering England, once he became king he was determined to maintain Wales as a subjected vassal state. One of Edward's first acts following his coronation in 1274 was to summon Llewelyn to Westminster. Such a demand ensured that the Welsh prince would recognize Edward's authority in person, and would demonstrate the king's power by compelling the prince to make the long journey to England's capital. Llewelyn, however, was not so satisfied with the state of affairs in his homeland.¹⁷ He complained that the Marcher lords—those borderland English nobles who tended to govern their lands in a staunchly independent manner—were encroaching upon territories and loyalties vouchsafed for him by the 1267 treaty.

¹⁵ On the historicity of King Arthur, see Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 162-3.

¹⁶ For a full account of Llewelyn's achievements by this year, see Davies, *Age of Conquest*, 314-6.

¹⁷ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 133-5; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 174-6; Davies, *Age of Conquest*, 320-30.

Edward, he argued, had done nothing about it. As a further insult, the English king harbored the plotters of a 1274 attempt to take Llewelyn's life. Into 1276, the Prince of Wales repeatedly refused to meet Edward or to pay him homage, citing his dissatisfactions as reasons for withholding it. By Edward's interpretation, this classified him as a rebel, and in November of the latter year, Edward, in consultation with his councilors, decided to go to war.

Even apart from Wales' poverty in comparison to England, the Welsh people were not united enough behind Llewelyn's leadership to make any strong military showing. The resources of the mighty English overran the Crown's loosely-coordinated opponents, and a treaty concluded one year later put Llewelyn firmly under the authority and mercy of the English king. He had to cede the lands to which Edward laid claim, he was required to perform homage both at Rhuddlan and Westminster, and the insupportable fine of £50,000 was to be paid.¹⁸ The chronicler of Bury St. Edmunds describes these conditions in compelling terms:

After both sides had suffered considerable loss Llewelyn, prince of Wales, submitted unconditionally his life, limbs, worldly honours and everything else to the will and judgement of the king, who after a short consultation gave Llewelyn the kiss of peace...¹⁹

The settlement, then, firmly embarrassed the Welsh nobleman while establishing Edward as his magnanimous superior. The reconciled lord and vassal then spent Christmas together at Westminster, where the abbey church's awesome structure and targeted iconography would have impressed upon Llewelyn the supremacy of the English king's lordship all the more.

This, Edward's first Welsh war, showed the king's determination to uphold and augment when necessary the rights of the crown, in relation to the territories it

¹⁸ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 180-1.

¹⁹ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 64.

claimed and the vassals who owed it allegiance.²⁰ The second war from 1282-3 incorporated Wales into a new British empire.²¹ The fomenter of the revolt that brought about this new campaign's occurrence appears to have been Llewelyn's brother Dafydd, who, along with other rebelling Welsh magnates and lesser princes, felt poorly compensated for the aid he had provided Edward in the 1276-7 war. Nor had the kiss of peace between Edward and Llewelyn precluded future quarrel. There was an ongoing debate as to whether Welsh or English law should apply in the territories recently reconfigured and exchanged. By this time, the distinct law of the Welsh had become their banner of national identity.²² Edward, in turn, refused to allow Welsh law to be upheld without an inquiry into its justness. He set up a commission charged with this delicate task of sorting out the legal position of the Welsh territories under English control, but it had not yet reached a final decision when the 1282 rebellion broke out.²³

The resources Edward used to suppress the rising were considerable, and the strength of the English armies lay in their coordination, provision, and sheer size.²⁴ The Welsh were able to use guerilla tactics against the English cavalry, but by 1283 Llewelyn was dead and Dafydd was captured and scheduled for what would be a

²⁰ To muffle the Welsh spirit and dispel any rumors that King Arthur would return as his country's champion, Edward oversaw the reburial of Arthur and Guinevere, whose bodies had been found, miraculously, at Glastonbury Abbey in 1190. The 1278 translation of the royal pair is described in Glastonbury Abbey's chronicle, which notes that "the heads and knee-joints of both were kept out for the people's devotion"—or, as Morris suggests, as visual proof that the Briton king and queen were dead and not to save Wales. James P. Carley and David Townsend, eds., *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey: An Edition, Translation, and Study of John of Glastonbury's Cronica, Sive, Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1985), 245. For a modern commentary on the significance of event, see Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 162-6. Prestwich cautions against making too much of Edward's only mild interest in Arthurian legend: Prestwich, *Edward I*, 120.

²¹ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 188. Davies reads this attitude even into the 1276-7 conflict, stating that "Edward I's imperiousness, even imperial, concept of the nature of overlordship could not be squared with Llywelyn's concept of a native principality of Wales." Davies, *Age of Conquest*, 330.

²² R. R. Davies, "Law and National Identity in Thirteenth-Century Wales," in *Welsh Society and Nationhood*, ed. R.R. Davies, et al. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1984), 51-69.

²³ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 184-7.

²⁴ For the tactics and logistics employed to win this war, see *Ibid.*, 196-201.

capital trial in England.²⁵ Edward's subsequent actions emphatically articulated Wales' conquered status. The heads of the ap Gruffud brothers were prominently displayed on pikes in London. Edward assumed their lands as his own, made grants in full fee to his supporters, and instituted administrative reforms so that Wales could be governed like feudal England.²⁶ Most impressive and expensive was the series of castles he had built to defend the conquered territories. They also served as administrative and supply bases, which were to be supported by the English-populated towns within their walls.

The colonizing intent behind the castle program was declared in visual terms at Caernarvon (fig. 34), whose outer walls banded with dark stone resemble the polychrome interiors of English churches, which we have seen were distinct in their use of differently hued stones (figs. 3, 25-6).²⁷ The walls of the castle had an even more specific meaning in the contexts of its site and Wales' subjugation. Caernarvon was the seat of power for Gwynedd, and had served as a political center since Roman times; an antique fortress had stood there, and the town was reputedly stumbled upon and occupied by the emperor Magnus Maximus, a historicized figure who was considered to be Constantine's father. A. J. Taylor shows that Edward's Caernarvon conforms to the description of the fortress under Maximus as provided by a Welsh collection of mythology, the *Mabinogion*. As if this hearkening to an imperial tradition in Wales is not strong enough, the shapes of the castle towers and their bands of dark stone are even based upon the walls surrounding Constantinople, Rome's

²⁵ One chronicler notes that the Londoners received Llewelyn's head "with trumpets and horns, and conducted it through all the streets of London with a great din." *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 76. The Michaelmas parliament of 1283 sentenced Dafydd to be drawn, hung, disemboweled, and quartered for the multiple crimes he had committed: Prestwich, *Edward I*, 202.

²⁶ For the argument that Edward I was the first king actively to colonize Wales, see Davies, "Colonial Wales," 3-23.

²⁷ For what follows, see KW, 369-71. Additional commentary is provided by Prestwich, *Edward I*, 214; Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 105.

sister imperial city (fig. 35). At Caernarvon, then, distinctly English and evocatively imperial statements are pictured large on an impregnable fortress. The message to the Welsh was clear: their princes were dead or subdued, English law now ruled the land, and the English king was the imperial authority to which they were to answer.

The case of Caernarvon Castle also reveals Edward's commitment to forging an empire for the Plantagenet line, because here he explicitly involved his sons in Wales' subjugation. Eleanor of Castile, who bore Edward seventeen children, was accustomed to traveling and conducting business transactions during and immediately following her pregnancies.²⁸ The birth of the boy Edward in 1284 at the castle still underway at Caernarvon, however, was peculiar for the crude site at which it took place, and was perhaps planned to provide the English royal family with its own true Prince of Wales.²⁹ At Caernarvon, Edward used visual and symbolic means to claim lands in which he could install his Plantagenet progeny.³⁰

The English castles, while the chief means by which Wales was secured militarily, were just one facet of Edward's symbolic repression of Wales following the second war. While progressing around the conquered Welsh state in 1283,

²⁸ The precise names and dates of all of Eleanor and Edward's children are impossible to determine, but have been examined in some depth: John Carmi Parsons, "The Year of Eleanor of Castile's Birth and her Children by Edward I," *Medieval Studies* 46 (1984): 249-65. On Eleanor's hardness throughout her pregnancies, see John Carmi Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 33.

²⁹ For the birth of Edward of Caernarvon, see Prestwich, *Edward I*, 225-6; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 192. Prestwich doubts that the location of this birth signifies Edward's intention to allocate Wales to the oversight of this newest son, especially since his eldest son Alphonso, then eleven years old, was not yet provided for. We shall see, however, that the English settlement of Wales was closely entwined with Henry III's ambitions to create a family empire. Thus, this cannot have been far from Edward's mind as he completed the Welsh conquest.

³⁰ It is also worth noting that a daughter was born to Edward and Eleanor at Rhuddlan in August of 1282. The castle there had been the most ambitious fortification constructed after the first Welsh war, requiring the digging of a two-mile river cut and costing the king some £9500. In March of 1282, however, it had been besieged, possibly captured, and certainly heavily damaged, by Welsh rebels. Beginning in July, the king with his heavily pregnant wife chose the castle, which required considerable repairs, as his headquarters. Had the child born the next month been a male, the second in line to the throne could very well have been styled Edward of Rhuddlan. KW, 318-24; Parsons, "The Year of Eleanor of Castile's Birth and her Children by Edward I," 265. Morris makes a passing note of this circumstance: Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 192, 401 n84.

Edward received from his new subjects the *regalia* of the Llewelyn dynasty, including a portion of the True Cross. With King Arthur's crown and a chalice made from the seals of the conquered Llewelyn family, Edward could justify his claim to be the new king of Wales. The Cross of Neith added a famed and widely-venerated relic to the royal family's collection, again elevating Edward's prestige and authority as the earthly guardian of the holy treasures of Christ's passion. "And so, by the providence of God," concludes one chronicler, "the glory of the Wel[s]h, who were thus against their will subjected to the laws of the English, was transferred to the English."³¹ The colonizing attempts of the king, then, were recognized as such even by contemporaries. The next year, Edward's eldest son Alphonso presented Llewelyn's gold ornaments to Edward the Confessor's shrine at Westminster. Here again, Edward I was including the presumed heir to the throne in his imperial projects, which were proclaimed through art.

In an even more elaborate ceremony the following year, a great procession bore the Welsh relics Edward had acquired into the abbey church at Westminster. A monk there described the event in similar terms as Matthew Paris writing in 1247: Edward, attended by the bishops of the realm and

by a large company of nobles and members of religious bodies, and a great troop of the people of the country, conveyed a considerable portion of the cross of the Lord, adorned with gold and silver, and precious stones, which he had brought with him from Wales, to Westminster....³²

The chronicler then mentions that at the parliament summoned for the occasion, some of the sweeping legislation of the reign was issued. This event ensured that the great magnates and prelates of the realm would witness the translation of the relics. They would also be there to see the king's commitment to order and justice implemented.

³¹ Westminster *Flores*, 479.

³² *Ibid.*, 481.

Westminster Abbey's art impressed upon the parliamentary audience this theme of Edward's Christian emperorship. The continuing Cosmati projects, the presence of the Welsh relics, and the administrative and legalistic actions of the king all reinforced the ideals that Westminster's art already declared. The Plantagenet links to Rome, the imperial ambitions these references evoked, and the king's Christian rule, all of which were visualized in Henry III's program at Westminster, had become reality under his son. As can be seen at Caernarvon, this statement upon English kingship was even ready for export to conquered lands.

The timing of the construction of Henry's tomb remains to be examined in this context. Presumably, the tomb chests' design and Cosmati work were settled on by 1280, and, as we have seen, were inspired by—and intended to establish a dialogue with—the new shrine of the Confessor as well as the Italian monuments Edward had encountered on his own travels. The Cosmati work's imperial connotations, however, were not forgotten as work on the tomb carried on. As Edward was lording his supremacy over Wales, so too was it in the process of being declared at Westminster. The tomb's location there, within Henry's chapel to the Confessor, linked this imperial agenda to the precedent set by Edward's father. Given its setting, the tomb communicated that Edward was accomplishing his imperial goals by means of the same blessed rule epitomized by Saint Edward and even Henry III. No matter that Henry's challenged agenda had not allowed him to preside over an empire; by means of his tomb, in effect he did.

* * *

The Welsh conquest was not the sole occupation of Edward during the first decade and a half of his reign. While the Cosmati work on Henry's tomb evoked an English empire, so too did it declare the English king's service to the papacy and all

of Christendom, through his role in the crusade. Edward had returned to England for his coronation as a crusading hero, and this reputation survived with him as he established his kingship.³³ His renown drew followers from across Europe to serve in his household, from familiar Gascony, Savoy, and Scotland, and even Germany, Spain, and Genoa.³⁴ With Louis IX dead, Edward was now the most prominent crusading prince of Christendom.³⁵ He was turned to as the potential leader of another coordinated campaign east. The Latin Holy Land was crumbling; Acre would fall to the Saracens in 1291, as had Tripoli in 1289, and Edward had been the one invoked to save them even before his coronation.

The Latin principalities in the Holy Land, the Hospitallers, and even the Mongols continued to appeal to him to re-embark on crusade.³⁶ Record survives, for example, of the Mongol Khan's pleas for assistance in 1275, 1276, 1285, 1289, and 1290. Much more correspondence likely occurred, and if pleas from non-believers from afar did not heighten Edward's sense of leadership and importance, those from a string of popes, which he also received, would have.³⁷ Furthermore, diplomats from abroad came to England to solicit the king directly. Records survive of nine such embassies between 1276 and 1291, from parties including the Mongol Khan, the rulers of Armenia and Cyprus, and the Knights Templar at Acre.³⁸ Through an investigation of Henry's reign we have gained a sense of the European scope of the English court. Edward's even greater ability to attract suitors from faraway lands

³³ This renown was so strong that by 1338, a historian at Vale Royal Abbey could declare, "Edward was so keen a warrior that, for love of the Crucified, he had several times visited the Holy Land to exterminate the pagans:" a certain exaggeration. J. Brownbill, *The Ledger-Book of Vale Royal Abbey*, vol. 68, *Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire* (Edinburgh: Record Society, 1914), 2.

³⁴ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 151-2.

³⁵ S. D. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 232.

³⁶ For the research behind these facts and their helpful analysis, see *Ibid.*, 24-9, Appendix 1.

³⁷ The Mongols were not staunch adherents to the Roman Catholic faith. A prominent number among them were Nestorian Christians, and by 1300 the khan had converted to Islam. See Prestwich, *Edward I*, 332.

³⁸ Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307*, Appendix 2.

would have augmented the aura of his power, amidst his subjects at home and his peers around the medieval world. As we have seen, Edward must have upheld the ideals and goals of the crusade with true zeal, and he contemplated taking the cross as soon after his coronation as January of 1275.³⁹ The king did not formally renew his vow until 1287, and he never left for the Holy Land again, but his capability and eagerness to be a crusading leader continued to illuminate his reputation and reign.

Edward's rule, then, was characterized by the notion that he was an upholder of the faith, in the clearest military terms of crusading. As letters and embassies of appeal continued to arrive throughout the 1280s, a complementary image of the English king as a friend of the Church was being erected in the form of Henry's tomb. The virtuous rule it declared, on behalf of both Henry and his son, would have impressed the international solicitors at Edward's court. In representing Henry as a pious Christian prince, Edward was not being disingenuous; although Henry had been no warrior, he was devoted to the ideal of the crusade, took the cross three times, and showed his willingness to cooperate with the pope. By building a monument that enshrined the piety, regality, and even sanctity of the anointed prince, Edward demonstrated his active commitment to upholding these values.⁴⁰

He not only highly esteemed these ideals, but commanded them to come to fruition, in material form on the tomb and in practical form through his knightly pursuits and vigorous governance. The act of building the tomb thus reinforced the chivalric reputation Edward had gained as a warrior in the Holy Land, and kept alive the hope that he would return. The fact that it was a former king, and his father no less, who was memorialized in this new tomb showed, moreover, that the virtues

³⁹ Ibid., 233n.

⁴⁰ Again, the Cosmati work specifically evoked the pope and Church in Rome, on whose behalf crusaders fought. The mosaic tomb could thus reference the English king's crusading spirit—and his spiritual worthiness of the role of leadership he exercised—as well as his territorial ambitions.

Edward displayed as a king were long-lasting family traits. Here at Westminster was based a dynasty that could lead the world both temporally and before God, a declaration that Henry's tomb there forced visitors from near and far to acknowledge.

* * *

Far Easterners in need of military aid were not the only appellants at King Edward's court.⁴¹ Justice was another virtue of the medieval Christian prince, as we have seen in some art commissions of Louis IX and Henry III, which evoke the imagery of the wise and just King Solomon. In the earlier part of the thirteenth century, the Capetian kingship of Louis IX had been the international court of justice sought by disputants, including Henry III and Simon de Montfort in late 1263. During Edward's reign, it was the English Plantagenet king himself who became the international arbiter. This situation was partly the result of Edward's crusading reputation, and also of his acquaintance through family ties to many of the other members of European royalty who, due to the changed political dynamics on the continent, were now squabbling with each other. Credit must also be given to Edward as a man with a strongly expressed sense of judicial duty. We have seen that reforming the justice system through inquests and legislation was a chief project of Edward's reign from his return to England in 1274, and that the new king's obligation to uphold just laws enabled him to assert jurisdictional and political authority over Wales.⁴²

Perhaps above all, the visual imagery of kingship, which was inherited from Henry III, left no doubt what the proper position of the English king should be. This role had been declared on the 1259 royal seal, which Edward adopted in near identical form (fig. 30). The Throne of Solomon with its flanking lions was later to be depicted

⁴¹ As just one example, ambassadors from the King of France attended the great Candlemas parliament at Westminster in 1286. *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 86.

⁴² Davies, "Law and National Identity in Thirteenth-Century Wales," 66.

on the new throne at Westminster.⁴³ The idea that the English king ruled on earth with God's wisdom was always in clear view. Just as Henry's qualifications as supreme judge were in doubt amongst his contemporaries, however, so too can Edward's relish as judge and arbiter be put into question. His mediation of the dispute between the rulers of France, Castile, and Aragon beginning in 1285, for example, only resulted in frustration and a postponement of Edward's plans to embark on another crusade, which was his ultimate ambition.⁴⁴ In domestic affairs, the king was committed to serving justice, but also to furthering his own ends.⁴⁵ Edward's ambivalent reputation as a king of justice is also evident in the primary sources from the reign. The Bury St. Edmunds chronicle, though generally showing a good opinion of the king, remarks sardonically of Edward's reaction to a 1284 riot in London:

The king of England was not a little perturbed about this; he ordered that some who were less guilty but least able to pay should be torn asunder by horses and then hanged with a rope, and those who were more guilty, but richer, should be punished with a fine.⁴⁶

Clearly, Edward's commitment to justice varied according to the circumstance.⁴⁷

What Henry's tomb shows, then, by presenting a king—who was censored for his partiality—as a heavenly-appointed, unimpeachable figure, is the power of this ideal in the projection of late thirteenth-century kingship. Whether or not his father

⁴³ Edward commissioned the chair to hold the Stone of Scone, the coronation rock Edward looted during his Scottish campaigns in 1296: Francis Wormald, "The Throne of Solomon and St. Edward's Chair," in *De Artibus Opuscula 40; Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York: New York University, 1961), 538-9; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 290.

⁴⁴ A contemporary chronicler noted that as early as 1276, Edward was "mightily perplexed" by his position in the affair, because he owed loyalties to all the parties involved. Prestwich explains that Edward would have preferred the pope to arbitrate. According to Morris' account of the conflict, resolution between the fickle kings of Europe was impossible no matter how skilled the counselor. Westminster Flores, 471; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 319-20; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 205-7.

⁴⁵ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 366-7. Prestwich provides three cases in which Edward did take a personal interest in seeing justice carried out: Prestwich, *Edward I*, 294-5.

⁴⁶ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 82.

⁴⁷ Brand further points out that the trials of corrupt judges upon Edward's return from Gascony in 1289 were a significant source of revenue, arguing that Edward's motivations for reform were financial in nature: Paul A. Brand, "Edward I and the Judges: The 'State Trials' of 1289-93," in *Thirteenth-Century England I: Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference, 1985*, ed. P.R. Coss and S.D. Lloyd (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 1986), 31-40.

had actually exercised justice and whether or not he himself fully upheld it, Edward declared the virtue of his rule to be its keystone, through his father's elevated entombment.⁴⁸ The tomb's location at Westminster, where solicitors at court were received and the courts of law conducted their business, ensured that Edward was continually perceived, in art and act, in light of this pledge to uphold the rule of Solomon.

* * *

In the years 1290-1, the ideals of kingship expressed by the artistic commissions of the English court, and Edward's embodiment of those values, came to be most closely aligned and intertwined. We have seen that by this time Edward was an imperially-minded ruler as well as an esteemed arbiter. The Scottish succession crisis that emerged during these years allowed him to fill both these roles simultaneously.⁴⁹ The kings of Scotland had long performed homage to their English superiors, but otherwise ruled independently, with their own regal traditions. By 1290, Edward was clearly anxious to oversee the peace there more directly, because he was active in promoting the marriage of Margaret of Norway, the only clear heir to the Scottish throne, to his own designated successor, Edward of Caernarvon.⁵⁰ By the summer of that year, he had even appointed an official to supervise Scotland's administration under the authority of the betrothed, and very young, couple.⁵¹ In the fall of 1290, the Maid of Norway died and there was no other obvious candidate for the succession of the throne, so Edward's position of oversight was transformed

⁴⁸ Edward is portrayed as akin to Solomon in other forms of art from the reign. For example, a psalter likely commissioned by a member of the king's court contains a flourished letter E amidst symbols of holy wisdom: Adelaide Bennett, "The Windmill Psalter: The Historiated Letter E of Psalm One," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 43 (1980): 52-67.

⁴⁹ For the accounts on which the following summary is based, see Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 233-61; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 356-75.

⁵⁰ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 360-2. Alphonso had died in 1284, shortly after he had presented the Llewelyn spoils at Westminster Abbey.

⁵¹ Margaret and Edward were both seven years old in 1290.

again. The earls of Scotland appealed to him to decide upon the rightful king from among the many claimants, and Edward insisted that he was entitled to do so as the overlord of the Scots.⁵² The situation was unprecedented—Edward claimed possession of Scotland as the succession was being settled—but consistent with the international and self-perception of Edward’s kingship. He was turned to as a wise arbiter, and acted as an emperor. His insistence on the Scottish subjugation to his lordship would lead to a bitter war that occupied the rest of his reign.⁵³

Meanwhile, the year 1290 was a pivotal one in Edward’s fashioning of Westminster Abbey. According to the chronicle kept at Bury St. Edmunds, at the first parliament of the year, which was held at the palace, several of the king’s judges were dismissed, ostensibly for their failure to carry out justice.⁵⁴ In April of that year at Westminster, the king’s eldest daughter Joan of Acre was married to Edward’s erstwhile enemy but now reconciled magnate, Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester. Less than a fortnight later, Henry III’s embalmed body was transferred from the old shrine of St. Edward to the new double tomb chests that Edward I had ordered constructed. Two months later, the heir to the Dukedom of Brabant married another of Edward’s daughters, Margaret, again at Westminster. At the parliament which followed, Edward banished the Jews from England, securing the assiduous grant of a tax from both ecclesiastical and lay representatives.⁵⁵ As these events show, Edward was keen to show himself as committed to ruling in concordance to the wishes of the (English Christian) polity, to his own benefit. He was particularly adept—and

⁵² Prestwich, *Edward I*, 363-6.

⁵³ Edward’s treatment of Scotland continues to furnish opportunities for reproach of the English king, for example in the movie *Braveheart*, but also among historians. Morris interprets Edward’s Scottish wars as the one fully unexpected, royally-willed outcome of the reign: Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 373-4.

⁵⁴ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 93-5.

⁵⁵ The tax yield was an astounding £116,000, the biggest yet in English history, and enough to pay for two to three Westminster Abbeys. On the 1290 parliaments, see Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 227-8; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 342-3.

certainly lordly—in his dealings with his subjects at large, the English nobility, and his potential allies abroad.

These acts' setting at Westminster further enforced this reality. As state events, the weddings of the king's sisters attracted crowds of notables from English and European society; the Bury chronicler writes that Margaret's ceremony occurred "in the presence of [John Duke of Brabant] and a gathering of innumerable nobles."⁵⁶ Henry's translation to the new glorifying monument shows that Edward was indeed careful about the impression the abbey church made on this illustrious audience. As Margaret's wedding attendees entered the ceremonial north doorway of the abbey church, they would have confronted Henry's new Cosmati tomb, glimmering with color, and evocative of the piety, justice, and empire brought to life by Plantagenet kingship. Congregated within the splendor of the church of Henry III, Edward the Confessor, and St. Peter, with all its connotative artistic content, the wedding guests could not have helped but confront the sacred power of the English king.

The year 1290 continued to be a formative one in Edward's life and kingship. In November of that year, as Edward was heading to Scotland to mediate the succession of its crown, Eleanor of Castile, his beloved wife of thirty-six years, died. The king was overcome with grief, canceled his trip, and instead accompanied Eleanor's funeral cortège back to London. At every stage of the journey, he ordered a large stone cross to be erected, each bearing four carved images of the queen (figs. 36-7). Over the next two years, her tomb was completed at the foot of Henry's at Westminster, and the fine gilt effigies were added to the tops of both. It is in this

⁵⁶ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 95.

form, of an effigy atop a double set of tomb chests, that the monument remains today. So ends the story of the construction of Henry's tomb.⁵⁷

* * *

Two points about these final touches on Henry's tomb require closer analysis. The first is Westminster Abbey's relationship to the church at St-Denis near Paris, which had by this time firmly established itself as the exclusive mausoleum of the kings of France. Eleanor's inclusion in the Chapel of St. Edward turned the tomb complex into a family affair; was such an arrangement of French inspiration? We have seen that a new phase of work had begun on the church at St-Denis in 1231, and although it was not consecrated until 1281, major construction would likely have been complete some time before then.⁵⁸ The church of St-Denis, with its unconventionally wide transept arms and crossings, could well have been designed to accommodate the grand array of tombs that was added beginning in 1263 or 1264.⁵⁹ This tomb program, which placed the Capetian kings' effigies amidst those of their Merovingian and Carolingian predecessors, declared the legitimacy of Capetian kingship while establishing the church as the royal necropolis of France.

Given the monastery's closeness to the French royalty, what statement did the church at St-Denis make upon it? The relationship between the monastery's occupants and the Capetian kings was one of symbiosis. By the twelfth century, the monks had asserted St. Denis as the patron saint of France.⁶⁰ The king was a servant of the saint

⁵⁷ Henry's tomb continued to be incorporated into ceremonies at Westminster. Twenty-four candles, each weighing sixteen pounds were, according to one chronicler, burnt before the late king's tomb upon an anniversary of the death of Eleanor of Castile. Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile*, 214.

⁵⁸ Caroline Astrid Bruzelius, *The Thirteenth-Century Church at St-Denis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 3-4, 135.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁶⁰ St. Denis was the first bishop of Paris, and was martyred by decapitation on Montmartre. By the ninth century, he had come to be equated with the mystic early Christian writer Dionysius the Areopagite. A rigorous historiographical campaign undertaken by the monks of St-Denis, which established their patron saint as the special protector of the French people and monarchy, was well underway by the late twelfth century. Their efforts earned St. Denis and his monastery national status;

and paid homage at his altar in acknowledgement of this status.⁶¹ In turn, he could go to battle under the *oriflamme*, the reputed banner of Charlemagne that was guarded at the abbey.⁶² The figure of St. Denis was, then, a popular cult hero around whom the Capetians could rally national sentiment in favor of the monarchy. At the church where St. Denis was laid to rest, the showcase of monuments to royalty past, combined with the sculptural depictions of biblical kings on the church's portals, buttressed the authority of the French kings, all while further enhancing the prestige of St-Denis as their place of burial and as a monastic foundation of consequence.⁶³

Several factors make it reasonable to conjecture that the tomb program at St-Denis was a prototype for Henry III's tomb at Westminster.⁶⁴ We have seen that the reconstructed parts of St-Denis influenced the architectural design of the English church. With the last Anglo-Saxon king and the burial of royal children there since the 1250s, Westminster Abbey was well-poised to serve as a replacement for Fontevrault in Normandy, where the Angevin kings were entombed and which

by the early fourteenth century, French translations of his hagiography were in wide circulation. See Gabrielle M. Spiegel, "The Cult of Saint Denis and Capetian Kingship," *Journal of Medieval History* 1, no. 1 (1975): 43-69. Also see R. Bossuat, "Traditions Populaires Relatives au Martyre et à la Sepulture de Saint Denis," *Le Moyen Age* 11 (1956): 479-509.

⁶¹ Georgia Sommers Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," *Art Bulletin* 56, no. 2 (1974): 226.

⁶² Louis IX did so in 1259, for example, at the Battle of Damietta. Spiegel, "The Cult of Saint Denis and Capetian Kingship," 58-9.

⁶³ The initiative for the rebuilding campaign and tomb scheme seems to have come from the monks and their abbots, not Louis IX. No records survive of royal payments to support the project, and the wealthy monastery could have funded it with its own revenues. Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," 224. Bruzelius suggests that after returning from his first crusade in 1254, Louis withdrew from worldly matters and took little interest in building commissions. Bruzelius, *The Thirteenth-Century Church at St-Denis*, 163-5.

⁶⁴ The Capetian and Plantagenet tomb projects may themselves have both been inspired by the same source. Some scholars have suggested that St-Denis' rebuilding as a necropolis was foreshadowed by the Castilian royal mausoleum at Burgos: Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," 231; Robert Branner, *St. Louis and the Court Style in Gothic Architecture* (London: A. Zwemmer, 1965), 33. Edward I had been married at Burgos in 1254, and it is possible that the concept of the royal mausoleum he encountered there made a lasting impression upon him. Las Huelgas had further connections to the English court because it was founded by a daughter of Henry II. Tolley suggests that the Castilian necropolis was an influence on Henry III's Westminster, but Binski has shown that it is unlikely the latter building was planned as a royal mausoleum. That Las Huelgas made an impression on Edward's plans for Westminster Abbey is more likely, since he actually visited. Thomas Tolley, "Eleanor of Castile and the 'Spanish' Style in England," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1989 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W.M. Ormond (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1991), 186-7.

Edward visited in the fall of 1286.⁶⁵ The addition of Eleanor of Castile's heraldic tomb after her death in 1290 and the new pair of effigies of Eleanor and Henry early in that same decade seems to have secured the Abbey as the Plantagenet royal mausoleum.

In visual terms, the similarities between the effigies at St-Denis and Henry III's at Westminster are striking. Since the effigies at St-Denis were all retrospective, they provide general depictions of kings in the stylized terms of late thirteenth-century France. The effigy of the Carolingian King Pepin, for example, though depicting a man who died in 768, offers an informative comparison to Torel's effigy of Henry III (figs. 38-9). Pepin, slipper-shod and wearing a simpler cope and mantle than Henry, grasps his robe to his stomach with his right gloved hand, and bears a scepter with his left; Henry's extended hands would each have borne a royal staff. The heads of Pepin and Henry are portrayed with the same refined grace, and indeed nearly identical features. Their mouths rest peacefully closed, each has a wavy mid-length beard and moustache, and their hair rests in the same neat coils at the sides of their heads. Pepin wears a crown adorned with fleurs-de-lys, and although it is more elaborately carved than Henry's, the same trefoil shape is prominent. Henry's effigy, however, is of a finer material than Pepin's—gold—and his crown would have been inlaid with real (or convincingly fake) gems, not just carved representations of them. This visual continuity between the St-Denis effigies and those at Westminster makes it clear that Henry's tomb was made to operate within, and at the same time outdo, the French tradition of representing kingship.

Several other important differences between the two tomb projects add further evidence that Henry's monument was designed to be a unique statement within this

⁶⁵ Jean Paul Trabut-Cussac, "Itinéraire d'Edouard I en France, 1286-1289," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 25 (1952): 168.

shared language of necropolitan royal representation. As memorials to kings long dead, the St-Denis effigies make no attempt to treat the kings entombed as individuals, and there is no indication that prayers were solicited on their behalf. Wright concludes that these monuments functioned as works made to legitimize Capetian rule under the patronage of St. Denis, not to protect or celebrate the souls of the memorialized: "the lively effigies emphasized the power of these illustrious ancestors rather than their piety."⁶⁶ We have seen that Henry's tomb, in contrast, speaks directly to the piety and virtue of the king. The inscription around its edges begs for God's grace on Henry's behalf. The tomb's art links it to its unique surroundings, the abbey church that Henry built, further identifying him as one worthy of prayers.

There is also a great difference in height between the French and English tombs. Visitors to St-Denis look down upon the effigies in the church transept, while, as we have seen, Henry's is barely scrutable because it is positioned so high off the ground. Finally, while the church of St-Denis appears to have been particularly planned as a royal mausoleum, Westminster Abbey, with its cramped quarters, was not.⁶⁷ In all these respects, the unique nature of Henry III's tomb emerges more clearly. Rather than be placed in full view of the visitor, it appears to be worked into the walls of the church itself. Through his tomb, Henry, and the kingship he represents, becomes a permanent fixture of the church that served not just a monastery, but also an entire nation. The gold effigy, though hardly visible from the

⁶⁶ The inscriptions on the tomb bases were genealogical guides, not appeals for prayer. Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," 224, 38. Wright makes her argument based upon the fact that the St-Denis effigies rest their feet on carved pieces of earth, not heraldic beasts like the lions that still remain on Eleanor of Castile's effigy (compare fig. 38a to fig. 11). Although the earthworks under each king's feet require further explanation, the conclusion remains fundamentally valid.

⁶⁷ For St-Denis, see Bruzelius, *The Thirteenth-Century Church at St-Denis*, 135. For the argument against Westminster's indebtedness to St-Denis as a royal mausoleum prototype, see Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 92-3.

ground, was no extraneous afterthought. It updates Henry's elaborate chest memorial to maintain currency with, and surpass in grandeur, the effigy-topped counterparts in rival churches, particularly those at St-Denis. It is also possible that the French gothic effigy tempered the exoticism of the Cosmati-adorned tomb chests, reminding its viewers that though the former English king had, and the current one did, enjoy international status, both were fully entrenched in the Anglo-Norman culture now familiar to Englishmen and women.

It is clear, then, that although Edward's treatment of Henry's tomb falls within the conventional terms established by the commissions of other European courts, the final product became a grand statement of specifically English ascendancy.⁶⁸ By combining forms from France and the Mediterranean, as well as those homegrown at Westminster, Edward created an image of an English king who is master of the ideals touted in all these realms. One curious feature of this commission remains to be analyzed, and that is the nature of Henry's translation into the new tomb. According to the chronicler of Bury St. Edmunds, one of the few contemporary writers to take note of the event, this occurred quite secretly. He writes under the year 1290, "The king had his father's tomb at Westminster Abbey suddenly and unexpectedly moved on the night of the feast of the Ascension and put in a higher place next to the tomb of Saint Edward."⁶⁹ Elaborate burials not only dignified a deceased personage, but transferred his authority to the burier. Furthermore, it is strange that Edward did not want his role in the translation, and hence in the grand new tomb's completion, made known to the general public by means of a dignified ceremony.

One possible explanation is that Edward doubted his father's sanctity. During medieval exhumations, if a body had not yet decomposed when it was transferred to a

⁶⁸ Binski makes a similar case for the varied features of Henry III's Westminster Abbey: Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 7, 43-4.

⁶⁹ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 94.

different tomb, its holiness was apparent. If a disentombed body stank, however, any bad reputation associated with its person was proven to be true. A story told about a 1223 event at St-Denis, whether it was confused hearsay or not, reveals the medieval penchant to associate rotten flesh with a corrupt spirit. When disentombed, so this account goes, Charles the Bald's bones were clearly charred, "evidence that Charles had been burned in Hell for tithing the Church."⁷⁰ It is possible that Edward feared an unpleasant outcome such as this if a public translation were to occur.⁷¹ Whatever the case, the presence of the effigy over Henry's tomb has been taken as evidence that by the time of its installation, he was no longer considered to be a candidate for sainthood. It is possible, then, that Edward did not feel that a translation ceremony to celebrate the king's holy person was appropriate.

Looking at the tomb itself as well as Edward's relationship with his father, the clandestine nature of Henry's removal there becomes even more understandable. We have seen that the monument's claims were carefully crafted, allowing it to make its own statements about the pious, wise, and imperial rule of the English king. To focus on Henry's translation—by bringing the actual person of the king back into the story of his death—might have elicited thoughts about the former king that went unmediated by the tomb's program. On Henry's tomb, Edward could declare continuity with the principles of the past reign that he approved of, adopting them to fashion his own royal agenda. Too close of an examination of Henry, however, would risk unearthing the ills of that king's governance that Edward had striven so hard to patch. With Henry's tomb, Edward created a selective memory of English

⁷⁰ Wright, "A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis," 230-1.

⁷¹ This worry proved to be unfounded: a London annalist noted that Henry's body was intact, with a white beard. Margaret Howell, *Eleanor of Provence: Queenship in Thirteenth-Century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1998), 306.

kingship that bolstered his own projects but neatly avoided the criticisms of his predecessor.⁷²

* * *

Three important points emerge from this close study of what turns out to be a seven-hundred-year-old and masterful composition of marble and bronze. First, the tomb's confident posture indicates that the English king is untouchable in his supremacy, showing Edward's unflinching belief in the resiliency of the monarchy. The 1250s and 1260s, with the failed experiment of baronial rule and Edward's triumphant victory alongside the royalist forces at Evesham, may have even strengthened and legitimated Edward's sense of the authority of the crown. Such conviction on Edward's part informs the apparent lack of hesitation with which he left a troubled England to go on crusade in 1270. Similarly, his continued absence from England from 1272-4 becomes more understandable given the exalted notion of the kingly office that is exhibited by Henry's tomb. Edward felt his position at the helm of the realm of England to be quite secure.

By displaying a successor who is at once confident in the supremacy and power of the English monarchy, interested in maintaining justice and order in the realm, and devoutly religious, Henry's tomb thus adds material support to what has been concluded of Edward I from other sources. An analysis of the tomb, however, lends certain extraordinary aspects of the reign even further clarity. Edward's legislation, conquests, judicial purges, and international dealings were not simply carried out through his own force of will. These feats were prompted, facilitated, and buttressed by the art that confronted him and his suitors time and again, most notably at Westminster. The works there created an image of kingship that Edward was then

⁷² The same can be said about Eleanor of Castile, whose reputation in life has been difficult to disentangle from the images left by the tombs and crosses erected in her honor. See Chapter 4, "Legend and Reality," in Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile*, 205-53.

challenged to uphold.⁷³ Henry's tomb, while forcefully restating these values, could then serve as a message to Edward's own successors.

If Henry's tomb and its inherent traditions were inspirations for Edward's actions, they also enforced both kings' ideals as reality. The ceremonies at Westminster Abbey and Palace, be they the homage performed by a reconciled vassal, the regular meetings of parliament, the king's dispensation of justice, the presentation of the relics of conquest, the reception of notables from England and abroad, or the celebration of Plantagenet dynastic alliances through marriages, were the means by which the king interacted with his polity and established his own regality. All these occasions took place within an environment which visualized this power of the king, lending emphatic and memorable force to the events. In this way, Edward's commission of art at Westminster Abbey allowed him to establish his own reputation and make it credible.

Finally, a close examination of the tomb also leads to a reevaluation of Henry III's legacy. Carpenter's scholarship has lent an appreciation to Henry's reign as one that was committed in practice and in visual terms to promoting peace, concluding that "The great strength of [Henry's] rule was its ideological integrity."⁷⁴ Such a commitment did not end with Henry's death. No matter how seemingly divergent their successes at personal rule, we have seen, by way of the tomb, that the ideals Henry lived by and immortalized at Westminster Abbey remained guiding principles of his successor. This thesis thus lends support to Clanchy's unelaborated view of Edward I: "He was more like his father than has generally been recognized; he

⁷³ In this respect, Henry's tomb serves as a sort of "Mirror for Princes," much like the interior sculpture on the entryway to Reims, which is explored in Donna L. Sadler, "Lessons Fit for a King: The Sculptural Program of the Verso of the West Facade of Reims Cathedral," *Arte Médiévale* 9 (1995): 49-68.

⁷⁴ David Carpenter, "The Burial of King Henry III, the *Regalia* and Royal Ideology," in *The Reign of Henry III* (Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1996), 457.

certainly pursued similar objectives.”⁷⁵ Because Henry’s reign is invoked by the tomb, it cannot have been as disastrous as a mere examination of the baronial revolt movement, troubled policies of Henry’s later years, or relationship with the Lord Edward would imply. Above all, Henry maintained an aloofness as a supreme ruler that alienated his own subjects, but remained a compelling image for his son to adopt. Along with Henry’s strong sense of regality, Edward seems to have inherited his father’s yearning for peace in Christendom: a renewed crusade remained, after all, his greatest ambition, and in the late 1270s and 1280s Edward ruled in general accordance with his English subjects. The resulting irony from Henry’s dual legacy was that, battling to assert his authority in Wales, Scotland, and later Gascony, Edward oversaw turmoil in the British Isles and the former Anglo-Norman realm, not peace in Europe.

Edward ruled as King of England for long after Henry’s tomb was completed, until his death in 1307. These later years of the reign are beyond the scope of this thesis, as the monumental features of Henry’s tomb had by this time been set. Furthermore, the early 1290s are historiographically regarded as a turning point in Edward’s reign, the second part of which is thought to have been characterized by the king’s deteriorating finances, the wars in which he became embroiled in Scotland and France, and the resulting disaffection of the English magnates and prelates.⁷⁶ Keeping in mind the statements made by Henry’s tomb, however, can inform an understanding of Edward’s decisions in this second, less successful, part of Edward’s rule. Just as Henry had insisted on the royal rights, prerogatives, and utmost authority of the English king, so too did Edward.

⁷⁵ M. T. Clanchy, *England and Its Rulers, 1066-1307*, 3rd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 211.

⁷⁶ Prestwich’s biography, for example, is divided into three parts, “The Heir to the Throne,” “The King in his Prime,” and “The Later Years,” the last of which begins in the early 1290s. Prestwich, *Edward I*.

Edward's treatment of Scotland, and his heavy taxation of his own subjects' resources in so doing, continues to provide fodder for historians to assess. His actions do, however, remain fully aligned with the characterization of kingship declared by Henry's tomb: Edward viewed himself as a lord who rightly and justly ruled an empire. The image entrenched at Westminster Abbey, of a temporal ruler whose blessedness and authority uphold the virtues of the everlasting Church, can never have been far from Edward's mind as he made the sweeping decisions of his rule. At the same time, the sense of regality Edward felt strongly enough to export was not only of his own making, but was part of a tradition that established the Plantagenet kings as supreme earthly rulers. Given the artistic evocations of strong medieval kingship at Westminster, it is no surprise that the aged Edward acted with stubborn force when faced with independent-minded Scots to the north and wary subjects in England itself. Just as Henry's tomb could enforce the ideals it proclaimed, so too could it create the problems associated with pushing such claims too far.

CONCLUSION: TOMB IN CONTEXT

Thirteenth-century Westminster Abbey, while continuing to operate as a Benedictine monastery, was regal through and through. It served as the venue of the king's coronation, the repository for the royal relics and regalia, and, particularly after Edward I's addenda, as a royal mausoleum. Even aside from these extraordinary functions, by Henry's time the day-to-day business of the realm had also come to be carried out in the palace and monastery complex at Westminster. With the loss of Normandy, the English king's government became rooted in England, and the increasing volume of bureaucratic work made its centralization at a single site convenient.¹ The location of Edward the Confessor's shrine at Westminster lent prestige to the abbey there, which claimed to have received royal grants of liberties since the time of Offa.² It was both fitting and practical, then, to base the royal administration in this town one mile from commercial London. In Edward's time the palace continued to be adorned, and Westminster hosted grand parliaments, royal marriages, and the king's courts of law and culture.³

During the reigns of Henry III and Edward I, Westminster also assumed responsibility for the very historiography of England. Matthew Paris, who compiled and kept chronicles at St. Albans until shortly before his death in 1259, can be seen as a transitional figure in this development of thirteenth-century royal historiography. The monk became increasingly circumspect about keeping his works suitable for a

¹ Binski roughly outlines this development. Henry II had moved the office of the exchequer to Westminster, John the treasury, and by Henry's time, "It is not too much to say that Westminster was becoming something like a political capital of the realm." Henry's burial there, Binski concludes, was "an acknowledgement of the political centralization of the kingdom." Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 4-5. The two abbots of Westminster during Edward I's reign, Richard de Ware and Walter de Wenlock, officiated as treasurers of England.

² Christopher Wilson, *Westminster Abbey* (London: Bell & Hyman, 1986), 9-10.

³ From Henry III's time, the chapter-house adjacent to the abbey church served as a meeting-place for assemblies of clergy and, later, the common attendees of parliaments. *KW*, 142.

wide readership, as shown by his censored criticisms of the king and papacy in the later years of his life.⁴ Matthew's *Flores Historiarum* was then continued at Westminster from the year 1265, and there it assumed an outright royalist tone. The "Merton" version, in particular, must have been commissioned upon Edward II's coronation as an "official" account of the reign of Edward I.⁵ It celebrates Edward I's prowess and rule, and also stresses Westminster as a place of national import. During Edward's kingship and through its self-made historiography, then, Westminster transformed itself into the locus of royal power.⁶

Physically, too, thirteenth-century Westminster's ties to the royal family were apparent, even aside from the tombs of Henry III and Eleanor of Castile. Beginning with Henry III's beloved daughter Katherine in 1254, the royal progeny who died near enough to Westminster were buried in its abbey church. Edward's children Katherine (d. 1264), Joan (d. 1265), John (d. 1271), Henry (d. 1274) and Alphonso (d. 1284) were interred there.⁷ In fact, it has been suggested that their collective tomb, the Cosmati chest now in the wall of the south ambulatory of Westminster Abbey, is the altar that originally stood before Edward the Confessor's shrine (fig. 40).⁸ The dearest Plantagenet children, then, lay close by the protection of the saint. Other acquaintances of the royal family were also incorporated into the tomb works at Westminster. Margaret and John de Valence, who died in 1276 and 1277

⁴ Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England: c. 550 to c. 1307*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1974), 370-1. Gransden also notes that actually meeting the king, as we saw from his 1247 account of the relic translations, may have tempered Matthew's view of Henry. Antonia Gransden, "The Continuations of the *Flores Historiarum* from 1265 to 1327," *Medieval Studies* 36 (1974): 490.

⁵ Gransden, "The Continuations of the *Flores Historiarum* from 1265 to 1327," 481, 75, 87.

⁶ Like at St-Denis, this served the interests, and could have been initiated by, both the monks of Westminster and the king. It has been widely noted that Edward I himself was aware of chronicles' capacities to be treated as authoritative source materials. It was to the monastic chronicles of the realm, and the historical precedents that they reported, that he appealed when determining his right to adjudicate the Scottish succession. See *Ibid.*: 491.

⁷ John Carmi Parsons, "The Year of Eleanor of Castile's Birth and her Children by Edward I," *Medieval Studies* 46 (1984): 258-61; Joan D. Tanner, "Tombs of Royal Babies in Westminster Abbey," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 16 (1953): 25-31.

⁸ The altar/tomb was moved during Richard II's renovations. See J.G. O'Neill, "The Shrine of St. Edward the Confessor," *Archaeologia* 100 (1966): 148-50.

respectively, and were Edward's niece and nephew, still lie under a mosaic tomb slab near to St. Edward's shrine.⁹ Late thirteenth-century Westminster, then, was becoming the choice place of burial for those intimately connected to the English royal family. As shown through the incorporation of the mosaic motif associated with St. Edward into the children's tombs, their noble parents perceived that saint at Westminster as a powerful protector.

While textual and physical evidence substantiates Westminster's purported centrality in thirteenth-century English government and politics, indications of the contrary remain to be examined. Even in Edward's day, Westminster Abbey was not intended to be the exclusive royal mausoleum.¹⁰ Magnates, like the de Valence siblings in the 1270s, were allowed to be buried there, whereas Louis IX had not even allowed his own son and heir to be interred within the confines of royal St-Denis.¹¹ Furthermore, not all royalty of England ended up at Westminster. Eleanor of Provence, though devoted to her husband, was not buried beside him and the Confessor as she had wished in 1246, but instead at Amesbury, the convent at which she had become a nun. The matter of the location of her burial in 1291 was certainly up for debate, and was settled by the king: Edward was in Scotland when his mother passed away, and all that Eleanor's sisters at Amesbury could do was embalm her body to preserve it for the king's return. Not even Edmund of Lancaster knew where his mother would be buried until Edward arrived with his final decision.¹² Given that

⁹ Tanner, "Tombs of Royal Babies in Westminster Abbey," 31-32.

¹⁰ Statements such as Hallam's, to take just one example, must be tempered: "After Eleanor's death, Edward arranged for the Confessor's chapel to be turned into a large-scale royal mausoleum like that at St-Denis..." Elizabeth M. Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," in *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990; Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of her Death: 28 November 1290*, ed. David Parsons (Stamford, UK: Paul Watkins, 1991), 15.

¹¹ Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *Le Roi est Mort: Étude sur les Funérailles, les Sépultures et les Tombeaux des Rois de France Jusqu'à la Fin du 13e Siècle* (Genève: Droz, 1975), 25.

¹² Eleanor's taking of the veil at Amesbury, and not Fontevrault, its mother institution in France, again shows the degree to which the English royalty was now more firmly entrenched on English soil.

Eleanor of Provence had committed herself to the convent, it is not entirely surprising that she was ultimately buried at Amesbury, but this act nonetheless reveals that Edward's intentions at Westminster did not include creating a complete family mausoleum.

Furthermore, a focus on the royal patronage of Edward the Confessor's cult misrepresents the devotional tendencies of Henry III and Edward I. Although they showed favor to Edward the Confessor's shrine, so too did they to other English saints, notably Thomas Becket, and even to French and Spanish ones.¹³ The chronicle kept at Bury St. Edmunds records that Edward visited its abbey some fifteen times, and even conducted the business of government there, such as the holdings of parliament.¹⁴ In 1276 the king was in attendance at Chichester Cathedral as its former bishop Richard, whose tomb had performed miracles, was translated.¹⁵ In his building projects, too, even aside from the Welsh castles, Edward showed that his interests stretched far beyond Westminster. His greatest work of religious patronage was the abbey he had founded prior to leaving for the Holy Land. Vale Royal was intended to be the largest Cistercian house in England, and its name itself suggests Edward's invested connection to it. He presented the silver chalice made from the Llewelyn family seals to this new abbey, not the traditional Benedictine Westminster.¹⁶ Edward too, although less so than his wife Eleanor of Castile, was a

Margaret Howell, *Eleanor of Provence: Queenship in Thirteenth-Century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1998), 309-10, 03-5.

¹³ Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 112-3.

¹⁴ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, xxi, xxix.

¹⁵ *Westminster Flores*, 470.

¹⁶ KW, 248-51. For the story behind its foundation, see J. Brownbill, *The Ledger-Book of Vale Royal Abbey*, vol. 68, *Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire* (Edinburgh: Record Society, 1914), 3. On the silver chalice, see Marc Morris, *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* (London: Hutchinson, 2008), 195. Funds assigned to the building of Vale Royal Abbey were soon to be diverted to Welsh castles and the war effort. Edward's final abandonment of the project in 1290 has been used by historians as evidence of his preference for military ventures to works of piety, and as proof of Westminster Abbey's preeminence as a site of royal patronage.

patron of the Dominican and other orders.¹⁷ Thus, although St. Edward at Westminster provided a royal example for Henry III and Edward I to invoke and emulate—in deed and through art—he was not the sole protector of or model for these two kings.

Finally, the medieval government of England, no matter where its administrative offices were based, was ultimately located wherever the king was. Edward I, more peripatetic like the Angevin kings than his father had been, constantly traveled and was frequently absent from England.¹⁸ His curious absence for the nearly four years prior to his coronation has already been noted. The births of two of his children in Wales in the early 1280s show that when at war, the king needed to base himself closer to the centers of command on the front.¹⁹ Upon his return to England in August of 1283 after these Welsh campaigns, the king had been absent for over a year.²⁰ While he was in the country, Edward did not spend much time in England's fledgling capital. When he arrived at Westminster in the spring of 1285 in preparation for the upcoming parliament, for example, he had not been in Middlesex since December of 1281.²¹ Edward spent the years 1286-9 in Gascony, and after 1290 was often in the north of England to oversee the Scottish succession crisis and wars. In addition, studies of the finances of the reign show that while the treasury was ostensibly based at Westminster, Edward spent from his traveling wardrobe account, before records were sent to the exchequer for enrollment, and regardless of whether

¹⁷ John Carmi Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 57.

¹⁸ He was eulogized upon his death for the degree to which he had explored the wider world. Morris lists the places Edward I visited, from Spain to the Holy Land, concluding that he "was the most widely traveled English monarch until well into the modern age." Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 369.

¹⁹ Eleanor of Castile is unique among English queen consorts for accompanying her husband nearly continually. For a list of the few times when they were apart, see Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile*, 43.

²⁰ Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 186.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 199; E. W. Safford, *Itinerary of Edward I*, vol. 103, *List & Index Society* (London: Swift, 1974), 151, 207.

there were sufficient funds in the treasury to pay back the debts.²² In fact, Edward's wars were funded through the management of Italian banking families and loans, so one suspects that the treasury was, for the most part, empty.²³ While the clerics at Westminster were actively involved in upholding the administration and bureaucracy of the king's government, then, it was Edward's presence alone that exercised the ultimate authority in the kingdom. As much attention as he paid to Westminster, his thoughts were occupied elsewhere as well.

Given this reassessment of Westminster's central role in the processes of late thirteenth-century English kingship, Henry's tomb's location there requires even further analysis. We have seen that what the tomb at Westminster portrays is a commanding kingship that continues to be upheld by the actions, and in the person, of the present monarch. Paradoxically, King Edward was largely absent. A similar effect is made by the twelve Eleanor Crosses that punctuate the road that the queen's funeral cortège took from Lincoln to London, so it is to them that I will turn in order to further examine Henry's tomb (figs. 36-7).²⁴ It has been shown that this series of architectural spires with their sculptural representations of the late queen were unique monuments, even beyond their contribution to the development of the gothic style of architecture in England.²⁵ They clearly and publicly expressed Edward's grief, which

²² Prestwich, *Edward I*, 136-7. Between 1298 and 1307, Edward's unfunded war expenditures caused the enrollment system based at Westminster to collapse entirely. The exchequer was left with hundreds of thousands of pounds of debt: W.M. Ormond, "State-Building and State Finance under Edward I," in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1989 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W.M. Ormond (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1991), 27-8.

²³ Notably, the Riccardi family of Lucca funded the first Welsh war and eighty percent of the second, collecting Crown revenues in return. R.W. Kaeuper, "The Role of Italian Financiers in the Edwardian Conquest of Wales," *Welsh History Review* 6 (1972-3): 392-94.

²⁴ Crosses were erected between 1291 and 1294 at Lincoln, Grantham, Stamford, Geddington, Northampton, Stony Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, St Albans, Waltham, and at West Cheap and Charing Mews in London. Together, they cost some £2000. Only the Waltham, Hardingstone, and Geddington crosses survive. Nicola Coldstream, "The Commissioning and Design of the Eleanor Crosses," in *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990*, 55-6; *KW*, 483-5.

²⁵ The concept of commemorative crosses in itself was not novel, and had been most recently employed in France. A series of *montjoies*, or crosses, were erected in memory of Louis IX as his body was conveyed back from the diverted 1270 crusade. For a succinct summary of this and other precedents,

we have seen was heartfelt. Furthermore, Lindley notes that the Eleanor Crosses caused the queen's image to be proliferated across the country, concluding that wherever and whenever they elicited prayers on her behalf, the divine sanction under which the English royalty ruled was reinforced. "By the multiplication and geographical distribution of images of Queen Eleanor," he writes, "Edward influenced the public view of her, distancing the idealized figure from the unpleasantly acquisitive, land-hungry historical reality."²⁶ We have seen that, like Eleanor's crosses and effigy, the tomb of Henry III conditions the late king's image to be perceived from a distance and favorably.

Perhaps this multiplication of royal images accomplished a further goal. Like a series of Foucauldian panopticons, the Eleanor Crosses impressed Plantagenet authority and piety on a far-flung audience, who might have only heard rumor of Eleanor's funeral cortège, her husband's grief, or his own regal qualities.²⁷ The Crosses thus perpetuated a selective memory of the queen consort and king, and in this way actively affirmed royal power in places the couple visited only fleetingly. The same effect would have been achieved at Westminster. With Henry III's grand tomb, the authority of Edward I, as derived from his father and buttressed by his own activity, remained in constant visibility regardless of where the king actually happened to be. The tomb thus reveals the circumstances of late thirteenth-century governance in England. The realm's bureaucracy and political events of grand

see Hallam, "The Eleanor Crosses and Royal Burial Customs," 18; Coldstream, "The Commissioning and Design of the Eleanor Crosses," 60.

²⁶ Philip Lindley, "Romanticizing Reality: The Sculptural Memorials of Queen Eleanor and Their Context," in *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990*, 83. Parsons concurs that the idealization of the queen's features on her memorials distances her from scrutiny: Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile*, 212. For a reassessment of the image Eleanor of Castile as established by the memorials to her and retained over the centuries, see John Carmi Parsons, "Eleanor of Castile (1241-1290): Legend and Reality through Seven Centuries," in *Eleanor of Castile 1290-1990*, 23-54.

²⁷ Binski describes the effect nicely: "[T]he queen's gaze is rendered universal and panoptical, as a sign of her power over her territory; and her image is inescapable to the faculties of sight and memory of the onlookers, but protected and elevated by height." Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 110.

moment, both domestic and international, had come to be situated at Westminster, while the duties of the king as a warrior and inquisitor continued to call him away from the realm's core. With a flattering and imposing image of the English king omnipresent at the site of the royal court and administration, Edward's authority remained an assertive force that presided over the nation's affairs even in his absence.

Edward I seems to have made no provision for his own burial.²⁸ What is clear is that, even if he wished it, Edward did not annunciate his intention to be buried at Westminster. He was occupied by warfare with the Scots up until his death, and one chronicler states that Edward had willed for his bones to be boiled and carried against his neighbors to the north until they were subdued.²⁹ Another elegy lamenting Edward's passage continues his crusading reputation by avowing that the dying king willed for his heart to be sent to the Holy Land, in the company of fourscore knights.³⁰ Whatever his expressed burial wishes, Edward's body ended up at his father's rebuilt church, in a massive marble sarcophagus that is today austere in its lack of carving and detail.³¹ Perhaps this circumstance is the most telling evidence of how Westminster Abbey was transformed over the course of Edward's kingship. By the reign's close, the church there was automatically considered to be the burial place of great kings, even without their directive.

²⁸ The only extant will to have survived is from 1272, which was drawn up while he was in Acre. It is reproduced in John Nichols, *A Collection of All the Wills, Now Known to be Extant, of the Kings and Queens of England, Princes and Princesses of Wales, and Every Branch of the Blood Royal: From the Reign of William the Conqueror to That of Henry the Seventh Exclusive* (New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969), 18-21.

²⁹ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 557.

³⁰ *Political Songs*, 247.

³¹ It is possible that the coffin was originally covered with a richly embroidered cloth. Some scholars suggest that it was meant to resemble the porphyry sarcophagi Edward would have seen in Sicily. Morris theorizes that it is like that of King Arthur, whose entombment Edward had overseen in 1278. Tight finances on the part of Edward II can also be suspected. Paul Binski, "The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style," *Art Bulletin* 72, no. 1 (1990): 23; Morris, *A Great and Terrible King*, 378.

That the tomb of Henry III functioned as it did, as a symbol of royalty that actively promoted the power of the office it represented, reveals the basic outlook with which Edward regarded his own kingship. The English monarch was an upholder of the Christian faith, unimpeachable in his piety and justice, imperial in his scope of power, and beyond the criticism of his subjects. The tomb is an image of confidence, and that Edward left central England as often as he did—beginning even with his puzzling crusade as heir to the throne—shows that he felt secure in his position there. Instead, it was the crown's peripheral territories, of Gascony and later Wales and Scotland, which preoccupied him the most, and which Edward envisioned as part of his rightful Plantagenet empire. With the connections Henry III's tomb draws to the surrounding art of the abbey, it can be concluded that this certainty on Edward's part had not been tempered by the challenges his father's rule had faced. Rather, that Edward operated within traditions embodied and ideals articulated by Henry III lent his own projects further commendation.

Henry III's tomb also shows that his son had a supreme confidence in the power of commissioned art. The work enabled Edward to depict the ideals of kingship that he felt deserved enunciation in a showy monument that displayed his own wealth and power, all the while brazenly disallowing any criticism of his predecessor. The proclaimed divine sanction and preeminent, wise rule of the English king was then bolstered through the tomb's incorporation into the ceremonies of the surrounding church and palace complex. While the king was away, however, the more mundane governance of the realm continued to operate. It was this image of Henry III that Edward trusted to preside in his stead at Westminster. Through invoking this positive image of his father, Edward perpetuated his own renown. Writing of the new King Edward II, a eulogist could cite his predecessor as a positive

model, as few had done a generation ago: “[H]is father was a worthy man.”³² Even beyond that, Edward I could be celebrated as a king “energetic, generous, and triumphant, like another Solomon.”³³

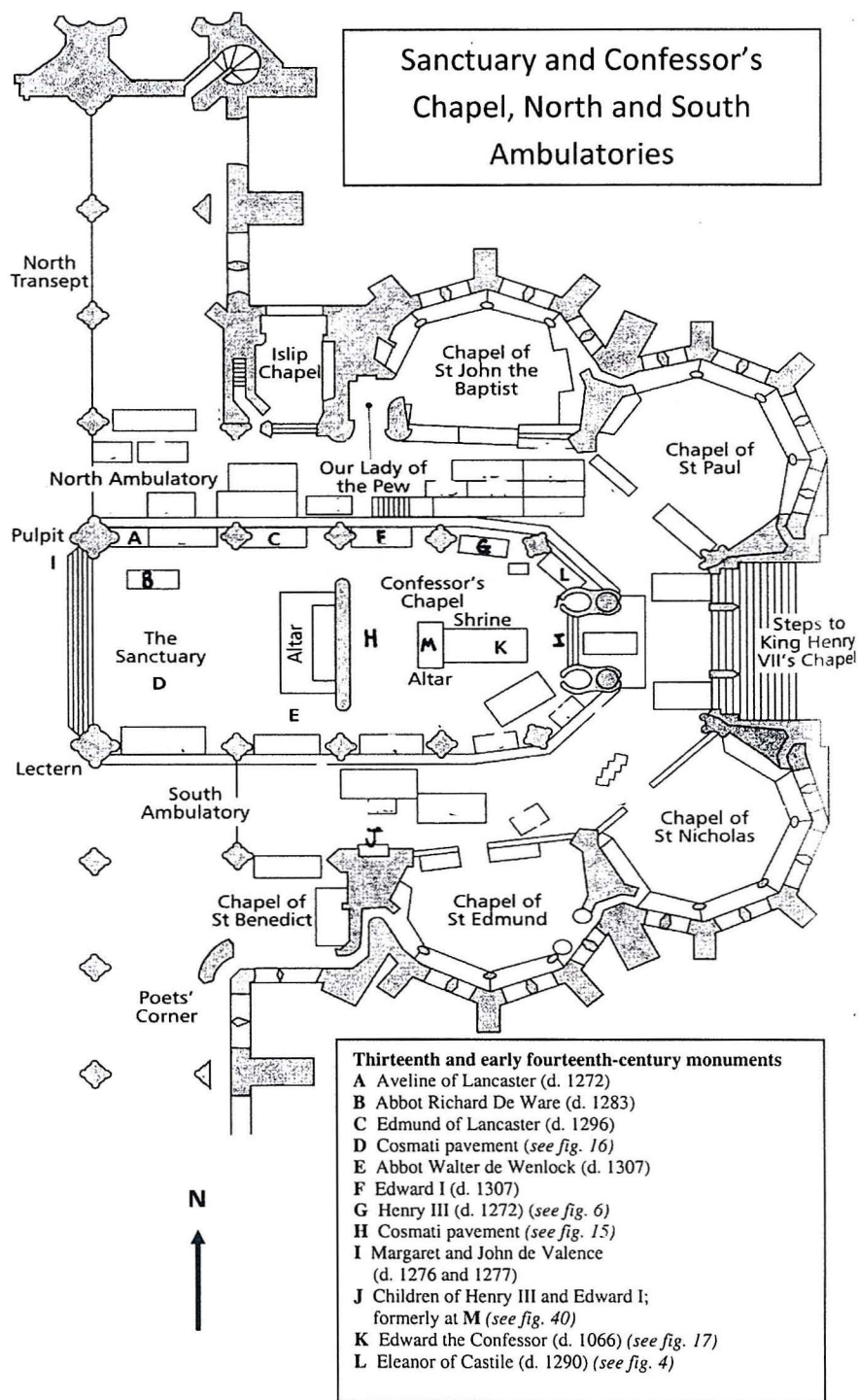
³² *Political Songs*, 245.

³³ *Chron. Bury St. Edmunds*, 118.

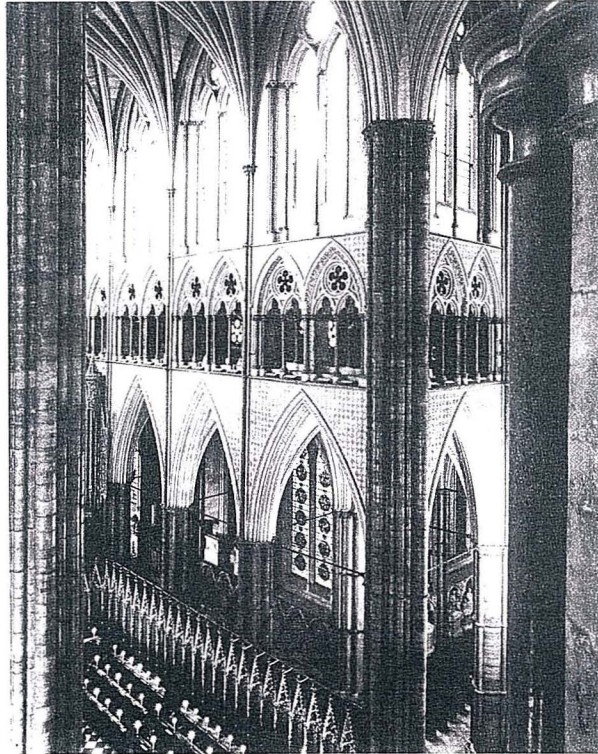
IMAGES



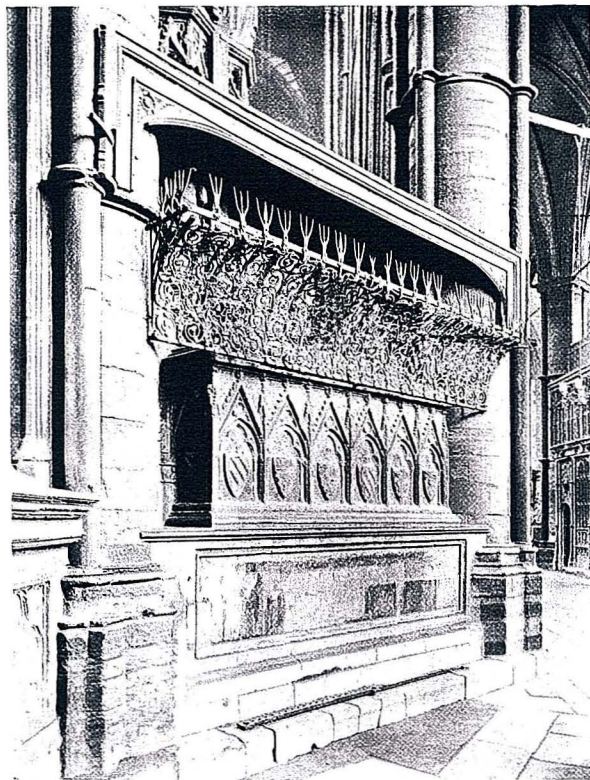
1 Profile of Henry III's tomb, north face (from RCHME, frontispiece)



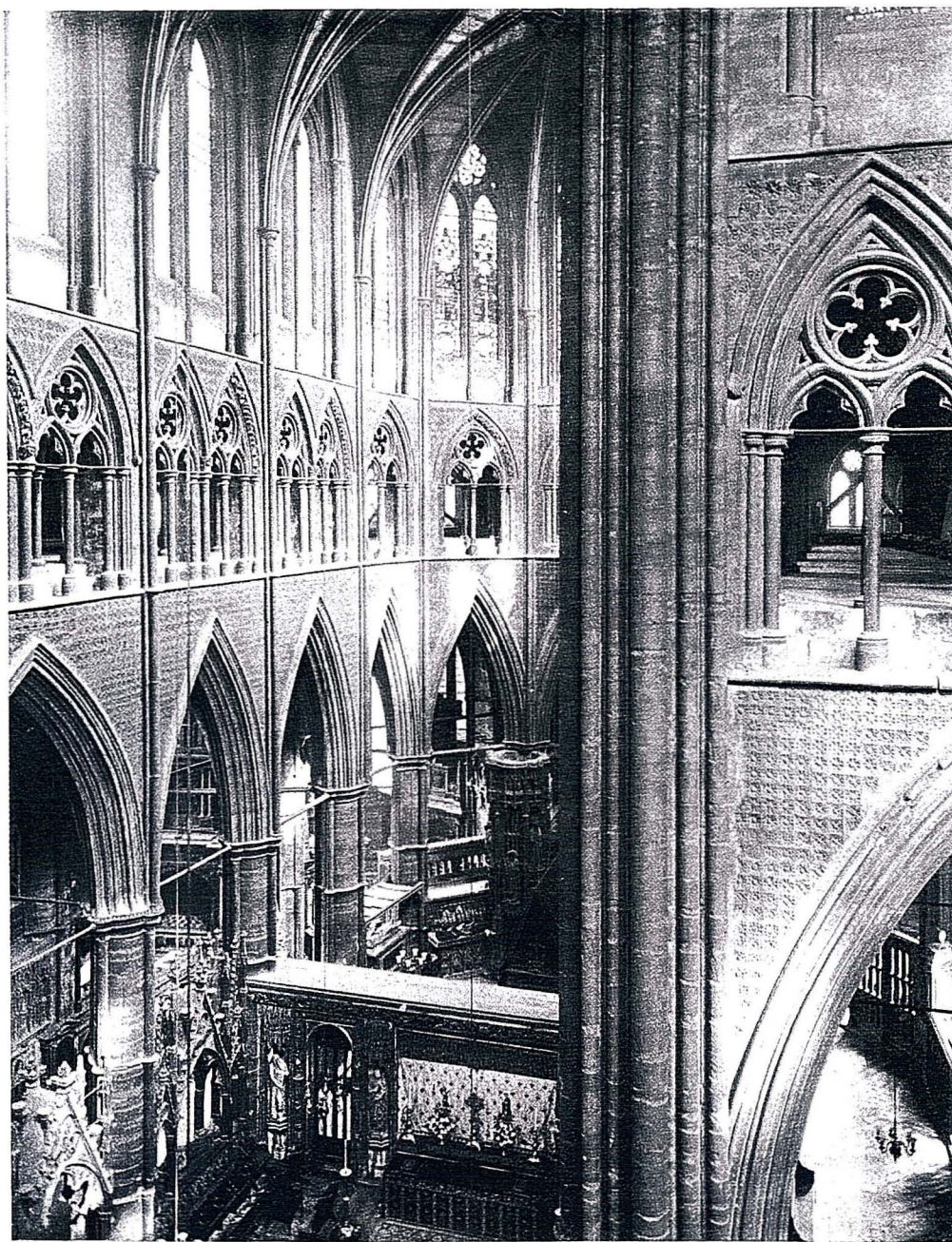
2 Plan of east end, Westminster Abbey (after Dean and Chapter of Westminster 2005, 36.)



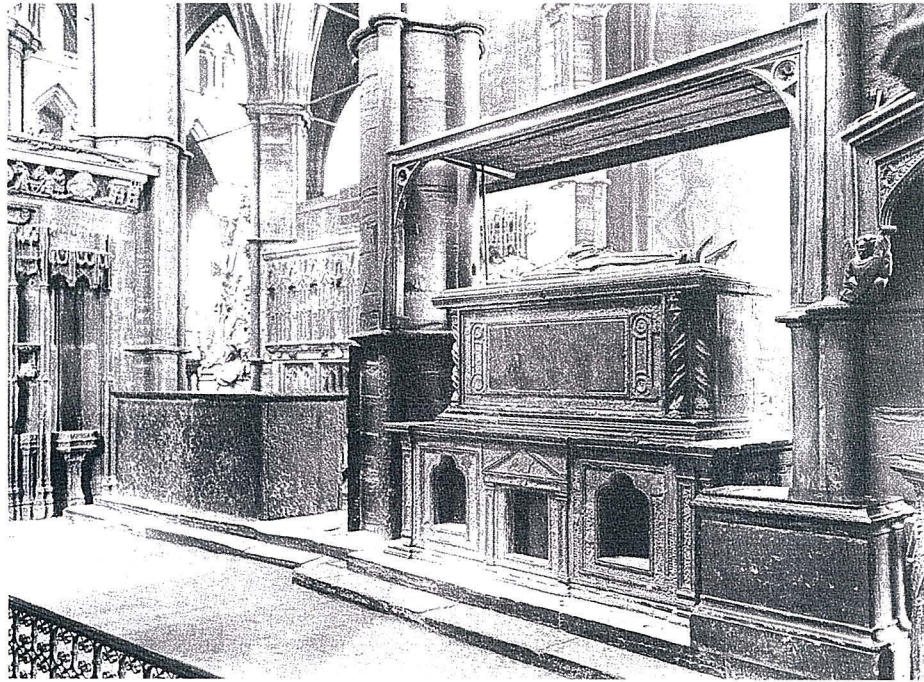
3 Westminster Abbey's thirteenth-century interior: north side of choir (from Binski 1995, fig. 34)



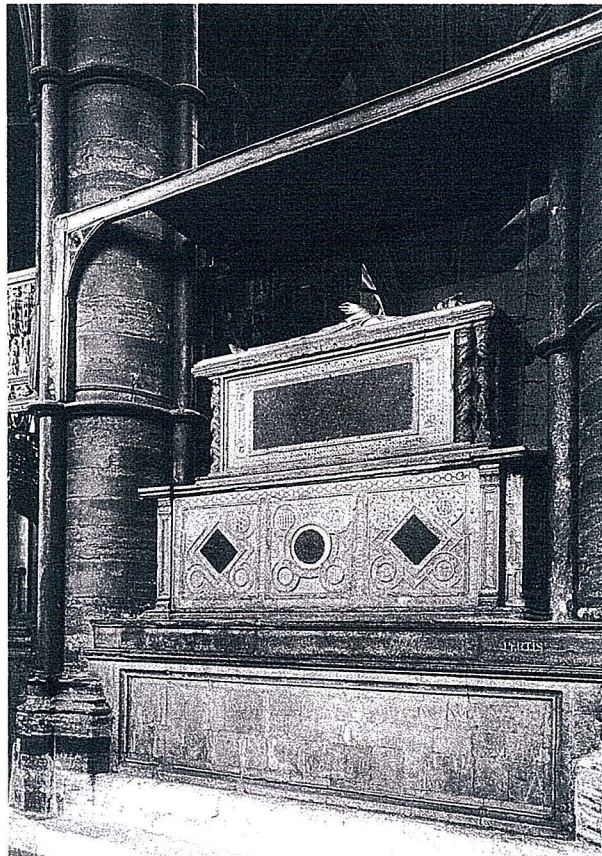
4 Tomb of Eleanor of Castile (from RCHME, plate 50)



5 St. Edward's chapel. Henry III's tomb is visible under the fourth aisle arch from the left. (from RCHME, plate 30)



6 Tomb of Henry III, south face from St. Edward's Chapel (from RCHME, plate 48)



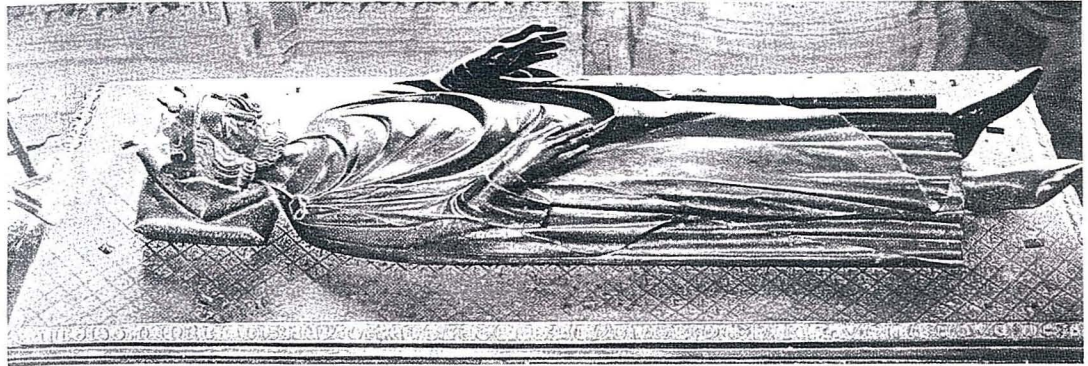
7 Tomb of Henry III, north face from the ambulatory (from RCHME, plate 49)



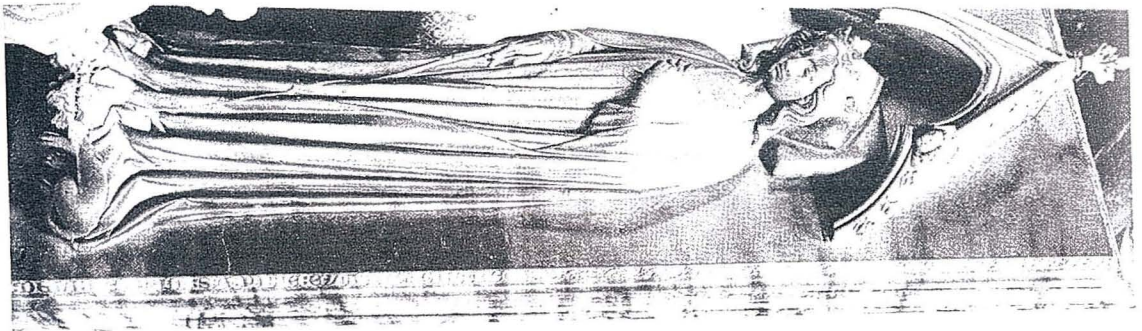
8 Effigy of Henry III, face detail (Dean and Chapter of Westminster. From Binski 1995, fig. 148.)



9 Effigy of Henry III, half-body (from *KW*, plate 34)



10 Effigy of Henry III, full-length (from RCHME, plate 185)



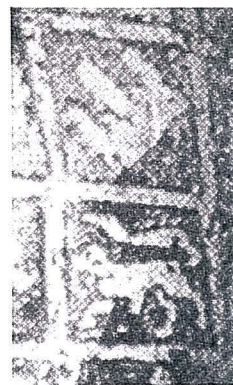
11 Effigy of Eleanor of Castile, full-length (from RCHME, plate 186)



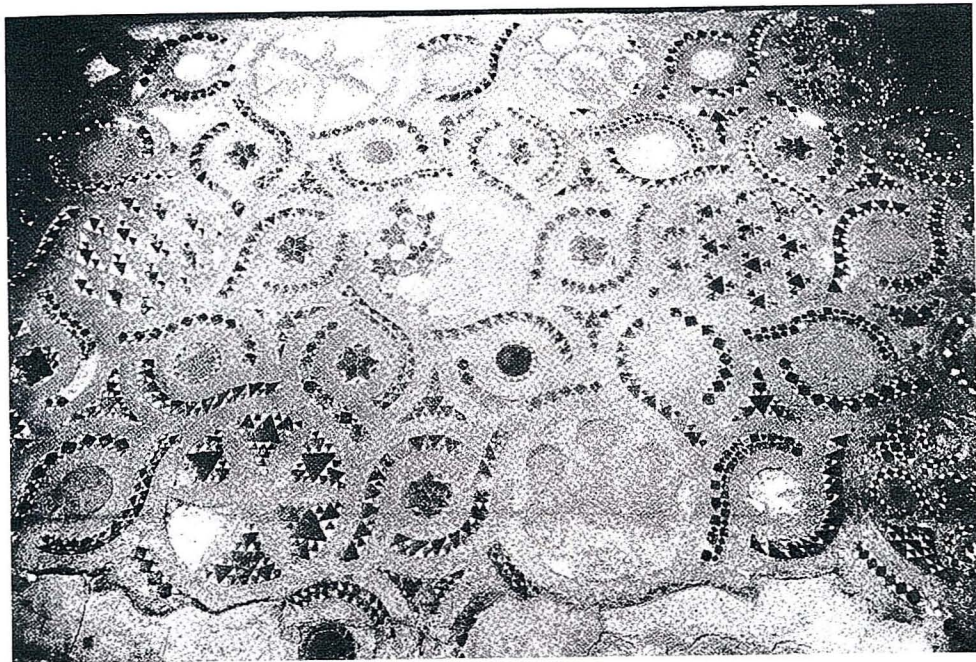
12 Drawing by Matthew Paris: Henry III instructing a craftsman (British Museum, Cotton MS Nero D.I, folio 23v. From *KW*, plate 1)



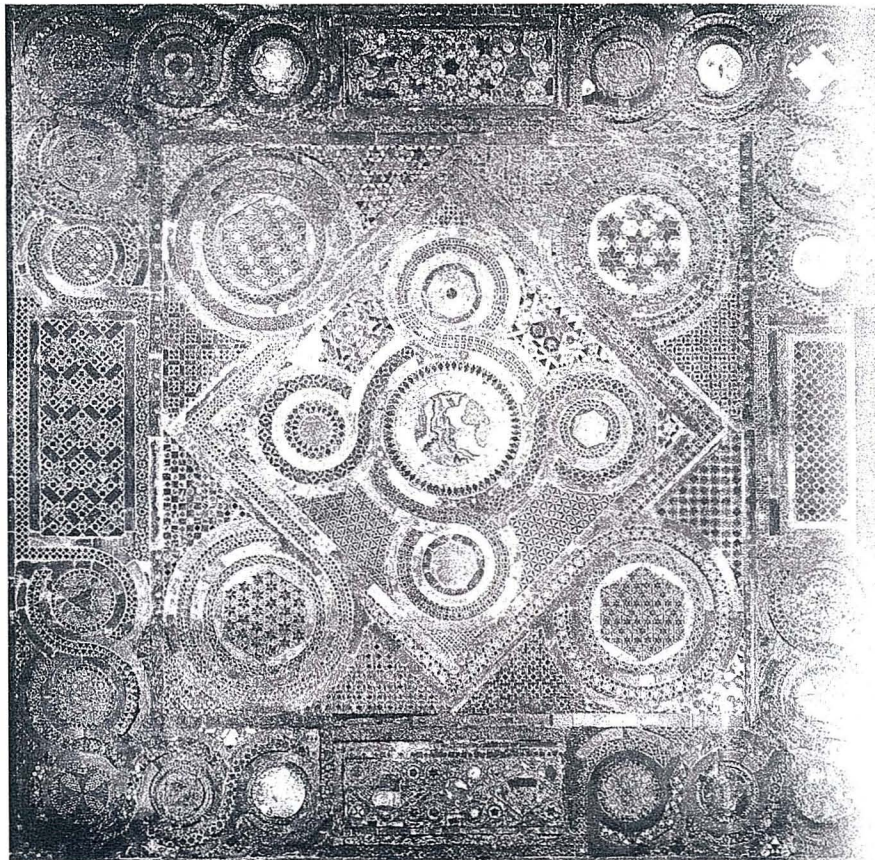
13 Detail of diaper from Henry III's tomb (Dean and Chapter of Westminster. From Binski 1995, fig. 148)



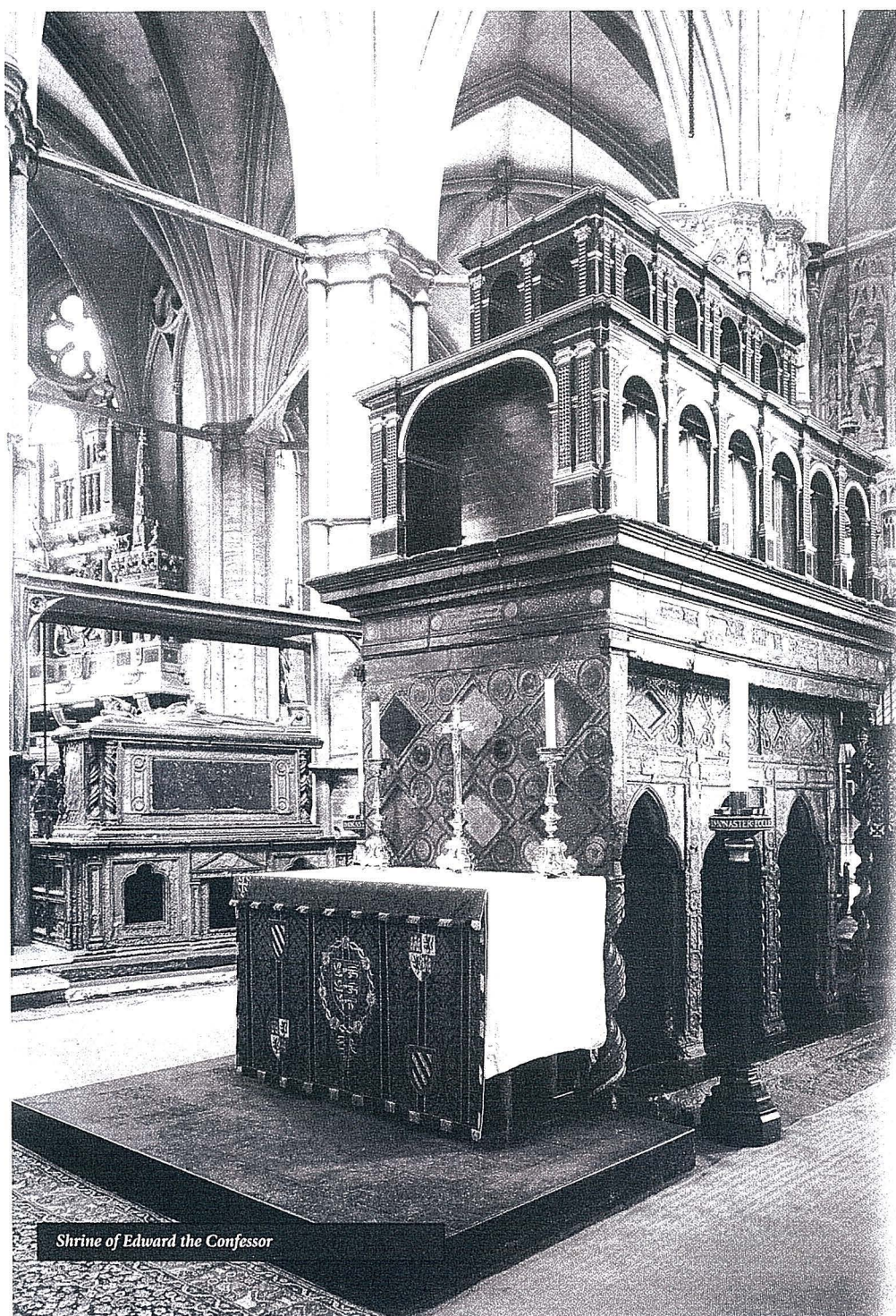
14 Detail of diaper from Eleanor of Castile's tomb (Dean and Chapter of Westminster. From Binski 1995, fig. 147)



15 Pavement before Edward the Confessor's shrine (RCHME, plate 57)

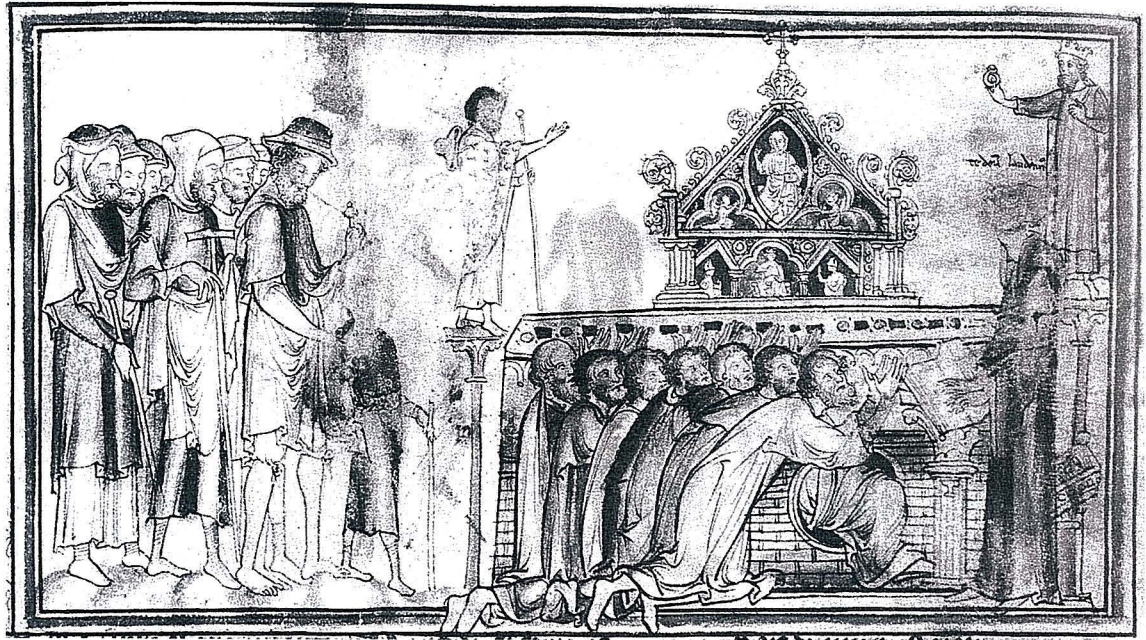


16 Sanctuary Pavement at Westminster Abbey (BBC. From Binski 1995, fig. 133)

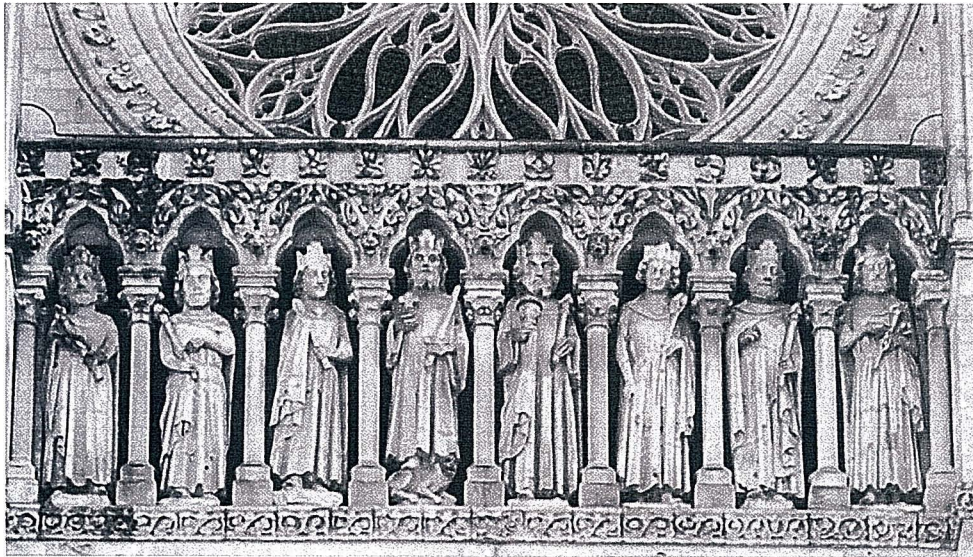


Shrine of Edward the Confessor

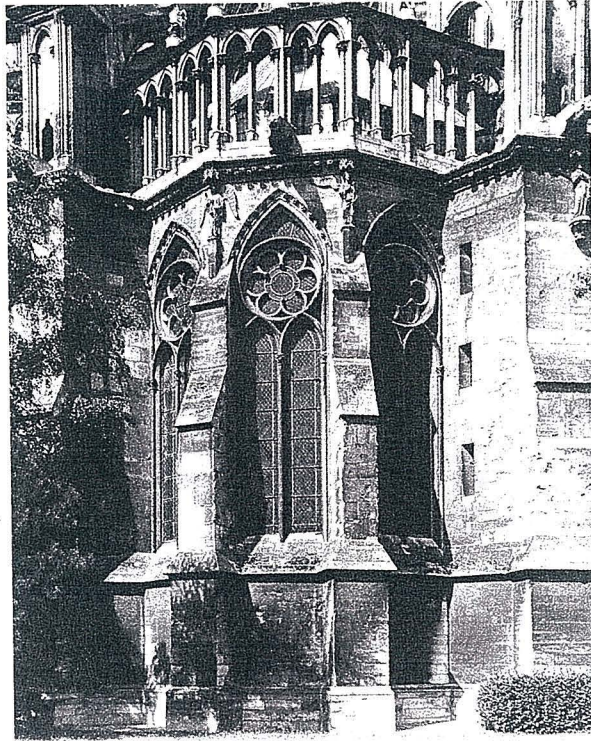
17 Shrine of Edward the Confessor. The wooden canopy on top is a fifteenth-century addition. Henry III's tomb is visible behind. (from Dean and Chapter of Westminster 2005, 42)



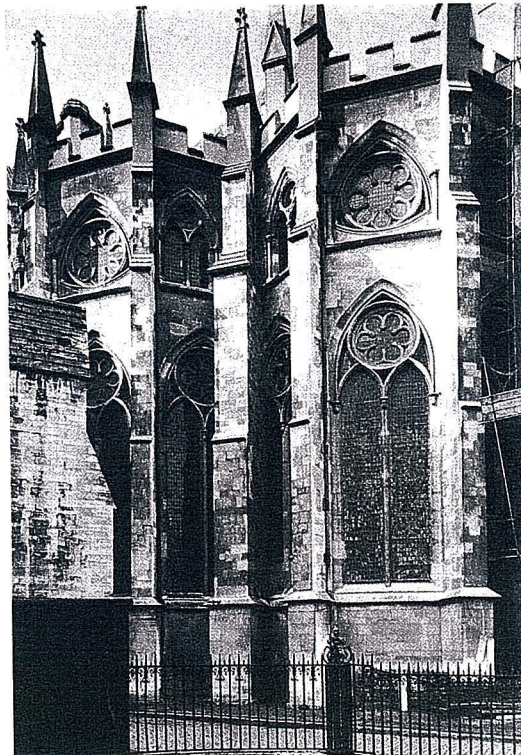
18 Mid-thirteenth-century manuscript illustration of pilgrims crouching before the shrine of Edward the Confessor (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.3.59, folio 30. From Binski 1995, fig. 77)



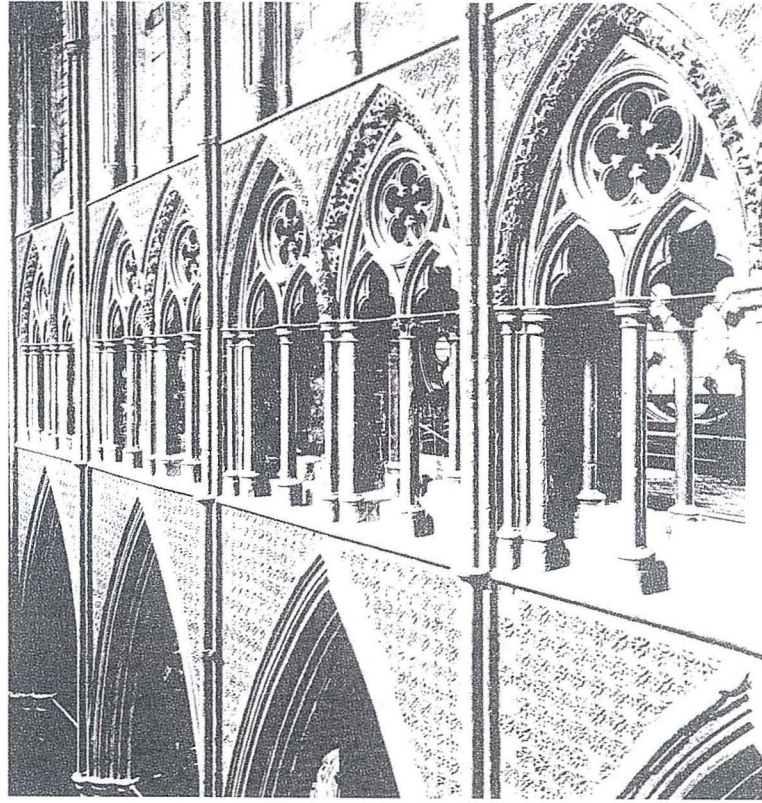
19 Gallery of Kings, Amiens (photo: courtesy of Peter Low)



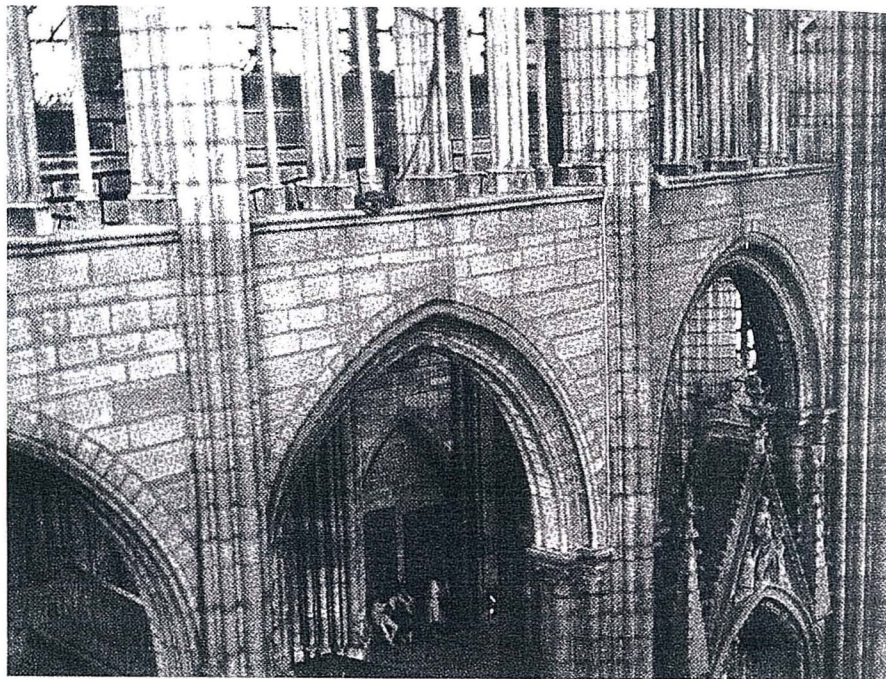
20 Exterior of south apsidal chapel, Reims (James Austin. From Binski 1995, fig. 46)



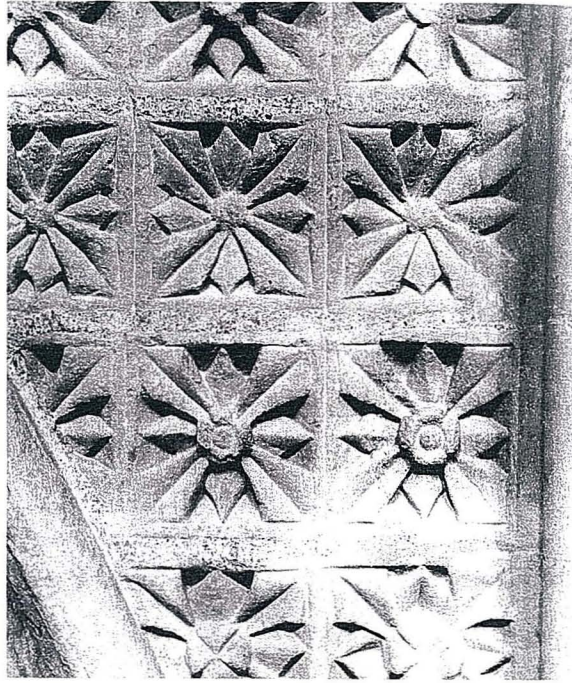
21 Exterior of south apsidal chapel, Westminster Abbey (from Binski 1995, fig. 48)



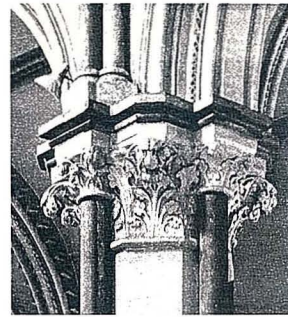
22 Diapered interior, Westminster Abbey (RCHME. From Binski 1995, fig. 23)



23 Bare masonry of interior, St-Denis (from Bruzelius 1985, plate 57)



24 Detail of diaper, Westminster Abbey (Dean and Chapter of Westminster. From Binski 1995, fig. 26)



25 (left) Canterbury Cathedral choir (from Cook 1949, fig. 9)
26 (right) Detail of dark Purbeck marble capital stripe, Canterbury (from Cook 1949, fig. 14)



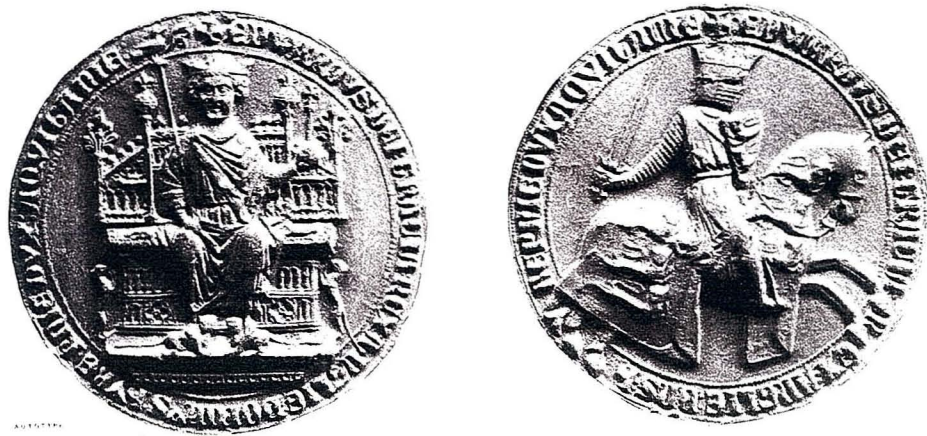
27 First Great Seal of Henry III (from Wyon 1887, plate 6)



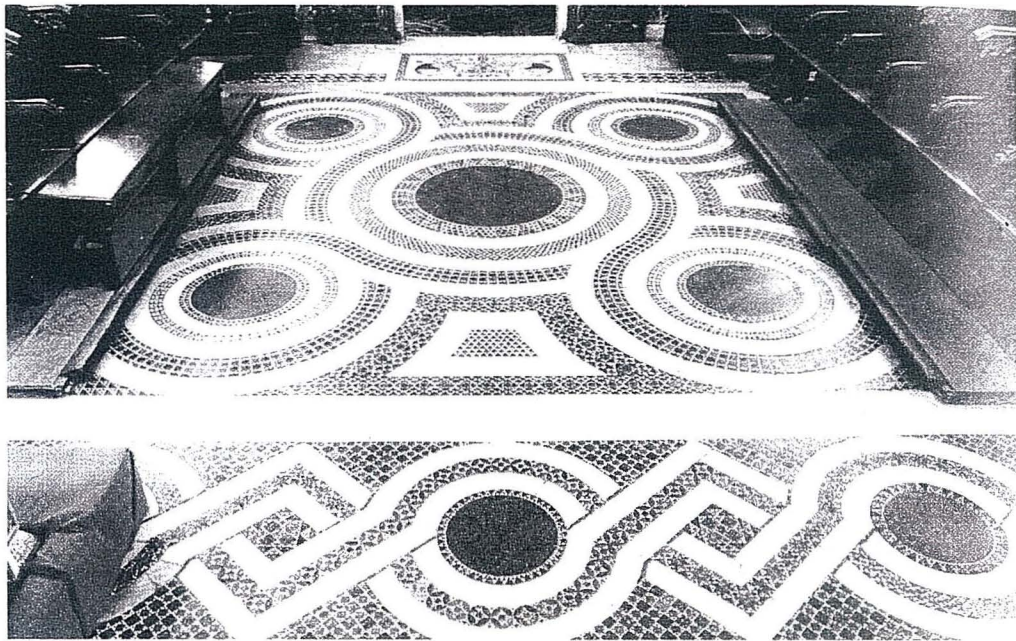
28 Second Great Seal of Henry III (from Wyon 1887, plate 7)



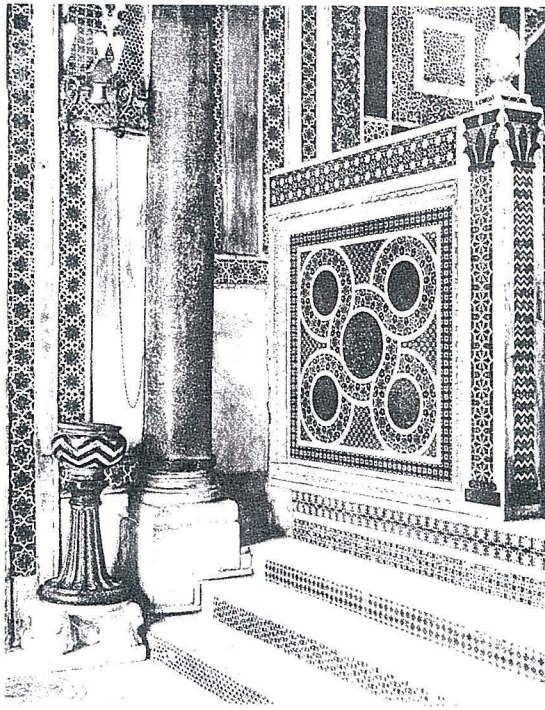
29 First Great Seal of Edward the Confessor (from Wyon 1887, plate 1)



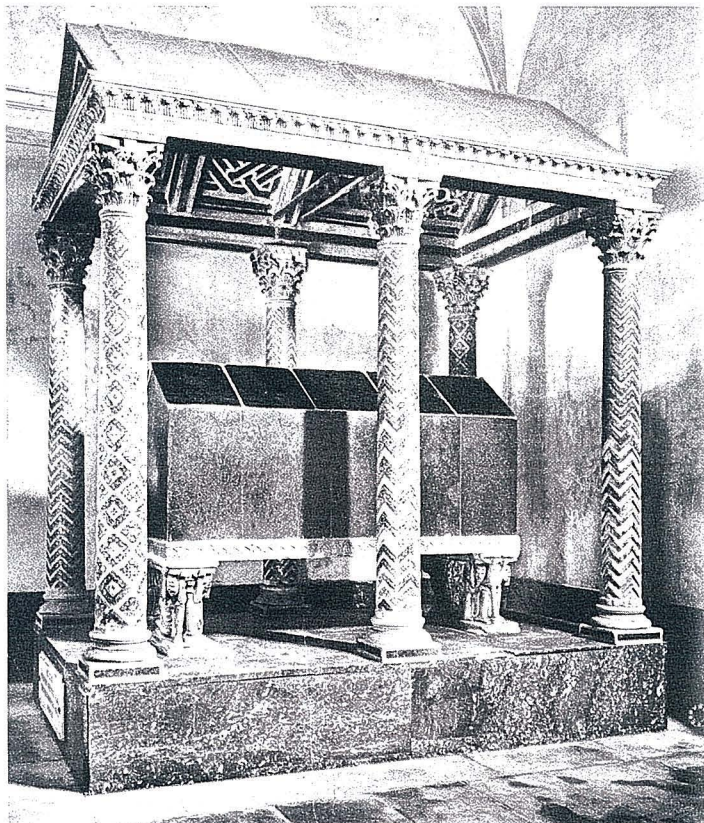
30 Great Seal of Edward I (from Wyon 1887, plate 7)



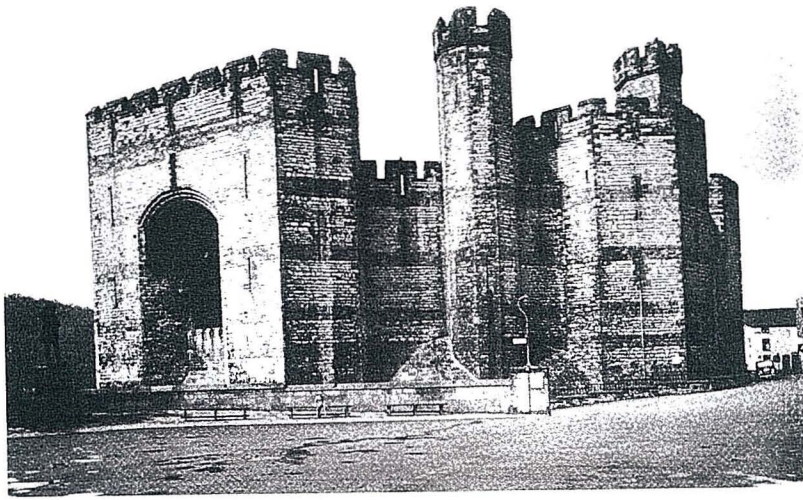
31 Inlaid pavement, Capella Palatina, Palermo (photo: Chester Brummel. From Tronzo 1997, fig. 18)



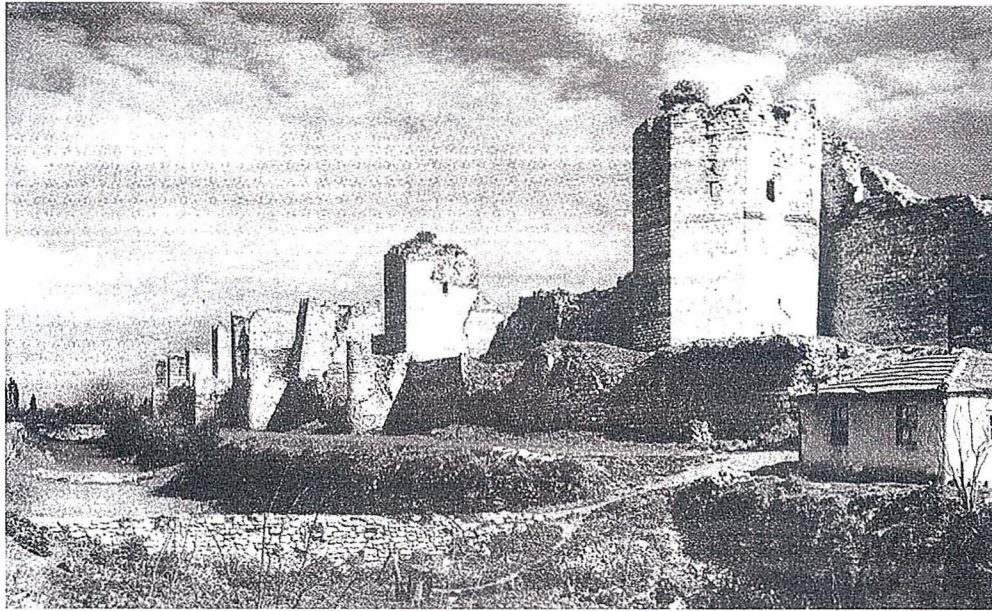
32 Royal throne, Capella Palatina (photo: Fratelli Alinari/Art, Resource, New York. From Tronzo 1997, fig 51)



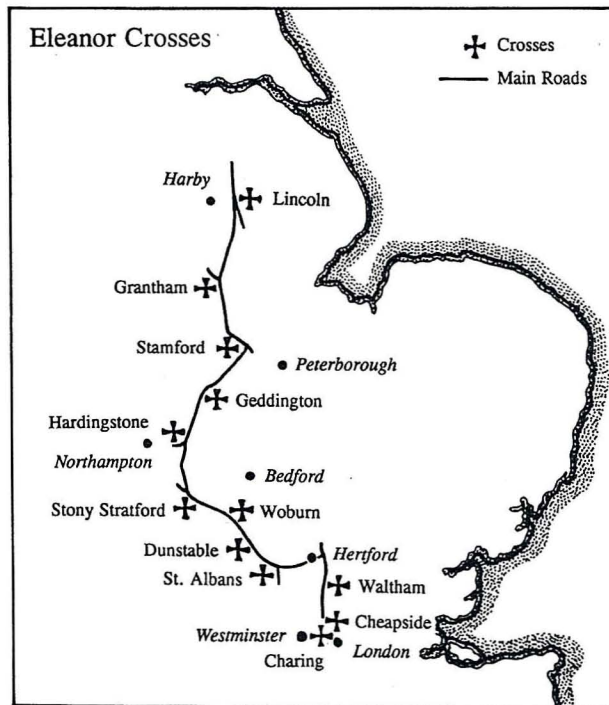
33 Tomb of Roger II, Cathedral at Palermo (from Déer 1959, fig. 127)



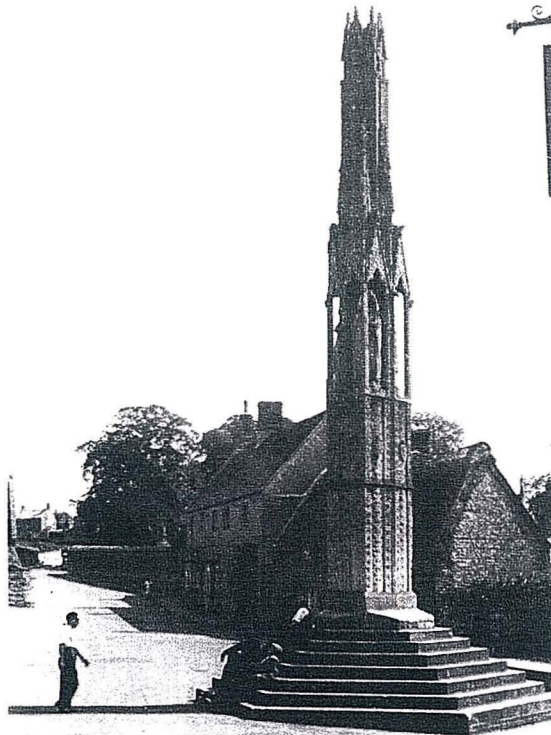
34 Caernarvon Castle (National Buildings Record. From *KW*, plate 17a)



35 City wall, Constantinople (from *KW*, plate 15b)



38 Map of Eleanor Crosses (Martin Smith. From Parsons (ed.) 1991, 68)



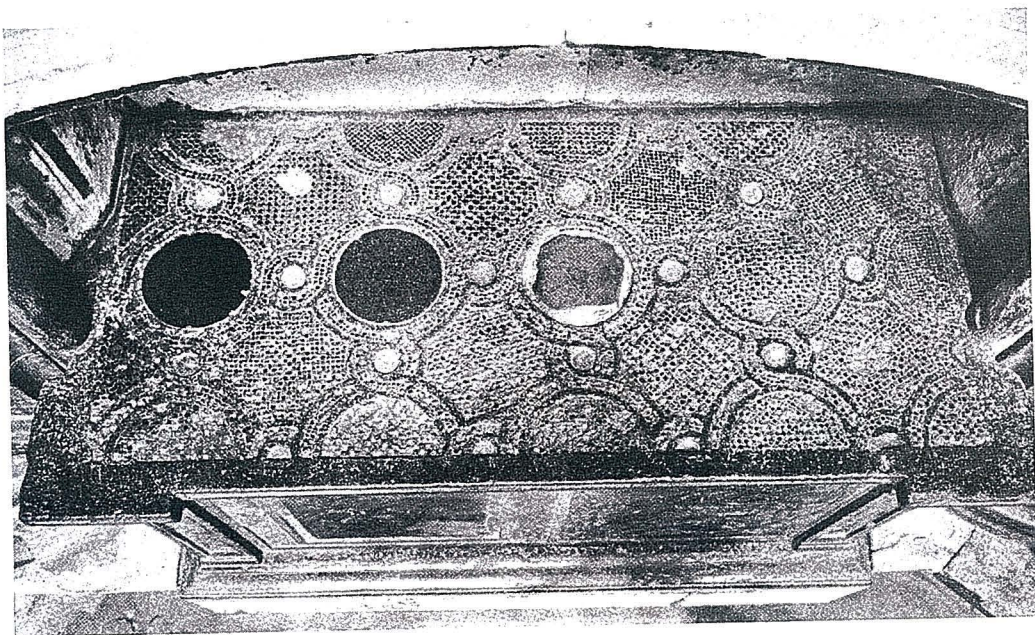
39 Eleanor Cross, Geddington (copyright Courtauld Institute of Art. From Parsons (ed.) 1991, plate 4)



38 a, b Tomb of Pepin, St-Denis (photos: courtesy of Peter Low)



39 Effigy of Henry III (Dean and Chapter of Westminster. From Binski 1995, fig. 148)



40 Slab over tomb of Henry III and Edward I's children; the altarpiece for Edward the Confessor's shrine (from RCHME, plate 5)

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