Visions on the Horizon of Desire:

a painting
of
Henry VII & his Family
in the presence of St. George & the Dragon
reconsidered.

By

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ABSTRACT

Bloodthirsty spectacle and devotional introspection commune together in a curious panel painting presently located at Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh. In the foreground Henry VII and his entire family kneel in prayer seemingly oblivious to St. George and the dragon waging mortal combat directly above. In the immediate centre an iridescent angel confronts the viewer with his piercing eyes. This unique panel, commissioned by Henry VII in the final years of his reign between 1503-9, has proved an enigma. With its iconographic perversity (indiscriminate borrowing from disparate artistic traditions) and stylistic eccentricities (curiously flattened and spatially disjointed figures), the Holyrood panel pushes against the boundaries of earlier visual traditions whilst rejecting renaissance paradigms manifest on the continent at this time. The reign of Henry VII itself has been seen to straddle the unstable political and cultural terrain between the Medieval and the Early Modern era. Therefore this panel provides a unique opportunity to challenge established notions regarding the intersection between vision and politics within the early Tudor court. In this thesis then, I examine the visual peculiarities presented in the Holyrood panel in order to uncover alternative viewing frameworks operative within the English court at this time. I posit pilgrimage as the structuring frame for the image with allegory as its internal dynamic. Allegory is an interpretive mode impelled by desire, which recovers meaning through the assimilation of seemingly disjunctive forms. In order to explore these allegorical trajectories within the panel, I situate the unusual configuration of St. George within an historical symbolic field. I conclude that allegory is a viable mode of political persuasion, which interpolates a predetermined viewer (here the Garter lords and knights) into a contractual relationship. Commissioned by Henry VII at a time of dynastic uncertainty and immanent death, the Holyrood panel is a political strategy that attempts to secure Tudor succession.

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PROLOGUE

Stories told in the Mausoleums of Dead Kings

> The true image of the past flies by. The past can be seized only as an image
> which flashes up at the instant when it can be recognized and is never seen again.
> .... For every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its
> own concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably.
>
> Walter Benjamin[1]

On 21 of May 1471 "between eleven and twelve of the clock" Henry VI, the politically unfortunate and mentally deficient Lancastrian King was murdered in the Tower of London, reputedly by the hands of the Duke of Gloucester, but certainly under the explicit instruction of his Yorkist usurper, Edward IV.[2] The official excuse for Henry's sudden expiration stated that he had collapsed from excessive melancholy and sheer displeasure at his hopeless state of affairs.[3] But in contradiction to these fictions, and to Edward's embarrassment, Henry's rigid corpse began to bleed profusely while lying in state, first at St. Paul's Cathedral and then at Blackfriars, causing witnesses to speculate on other, more unsavoury explanations. As the harrowing tales accumulated around Henry's putrefying body, Edward ordered its hasty removal fifteen miles down the Thames by barge to Chertsey Abbey, where it was ignobly buried and left to rot in anonymity. Or at least that was the idea - for Henry's body continued to exhibit signs of irrepressible sanctity. Reports of miracles spread rapidly and images of the martyred king were erected in churches across the country where candles burned incessantly before them, forcing Edward into the awkward predicament of quelling the activities of one already dead.[4]

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[1] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, 1955 (New York: Schoken Books, 1969) 257.

[2] When Henry's body was exhumed in 1911 to ascertain the cause of death his skeleton was found in pieces and his skull crushed in. Alison Wier, Lancaster and York: The Wars of the Roses, 1955 (London: Pimlico, 1998) 414.

[3] The official records stated that having learned of his family's slaughter and that his cause was "utterly despaired of...with so great despite, ire and indignation that of pure displeasure and melancholy, [Henry VI] died." Weir 414.

[4] The posthumous activities of Henry VI and the cult activities that grew up around them are discussed in Weir, 418. See also G. W. Bernard, "Vitality and Vulnerability in the Late Medieval Church: Pilgrimage on the Eve of the

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Determined to silence this disruptive cadaver and the bad publicity his burgeoning cult

engendered, Edward issued prohibitions against the "going of Pilgrimage to King Henry."[5] This

only intensified his veneration and the seditious spread of devotional literature. 'Saint' Henry

was now invoked on behalf of England "to set the realm at rest."[6] Petitions for healing thus

slipped easily from the individual body to the kingdom corporeal, providing an opportune vehicle

for veiled political protest.

In 1483 Edward IV died unexpectedly and was swiftly followed by his son who was

prematurely put to rest by the machiavellian ambitions of his brother, Richard the Duke of

Gloucester. Once king, Richard III took a more outwardly conciliatory approach to the

'problem' brewing on the peripheries of his sovereign authority. Under the pretext of restitution,

Henry's body was disinterred from its remote location at Chertsey (his incorruptible body

emitting the anticipated odors of sanctity), and installed with all due reverence in St. George's

chapel, Windsor right next to the corpse of his mortal enemy Edward IV.[7] Here, conveniently

situated at the very epicentre of royal power, Henry's body could be kept under the watchful eye

of the sovereign.[8]

Break with Rome," The End of the Middle Ages? England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, ed. John L. Watts (Thrupp, Stroud and Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1998) 206-209 and Simon Walker, "Political Saints in Later Medieval England," The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society, ed. R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (Stroud: Allan Sutton Publishing, 1995) 85-6 and Brian Spencer, Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges, Medieval Finds from Excavations in London 7 (London: The Stationery Office, 1998) 189. The sheer number and geographical spread of pilgrim badges surviving in relation to Henry VI attest to its remarkable popularity. Walker 86 and Bernard 207.

[5] Spencer 189.

[6] This veneration is curiously not limited to Lancastrian sympathizers as evidence of pilgrim activity in York Minster was recorded in the mid 1470s. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley writes; "In every important church an image of the sainted Henry had been erected. Even in York Minster pilgrimages were made to his figure in the rood screen, which it required the whole authority of the northern Primate to suppress." Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1868) 159. The body of liturgical and devotional material characterized Henry as the suffering Lamb and later as peacemaker. Walker 95. Simon Walker notes that this phenomenon of invoking saints for the healing of a disheveled body politic burgeoned coinciding simultaneously with and functioned in opposition to the growing sacral claims of kingship.

[7] A brief summary of scholarly debate around Richard's motivation for the translation of Henry VI are summarised in Bernard 208-9.

[8] His personal effects were set up as relics over the burial spot alongside an iron alms box. Weir 418.

Two years later at Bosworth Field, Henry Tudor, aided by a defecting York army, defeated Richard III, restoring the throne irrevocably to the house of Lancaster. Under Henry VII cult activities were liberated from overtly repressive measures, but were subjected to the subtle manipulations in the myth manufacturing of the early Tudor regime.[9] This included massaging the new King's dubious ancestral connections to this saintly predecessor, uncle by way of his uterine brother (Appendix A), and fabricating a prophetic encounter which anticipated the young Tudor's ultimate dominion.[10] Henry VII thus bolstered his own legitimacy by virtue of both blood and divine orchestration. He cunningly inscribed his own body into the hagiographic discourse calcifying around the skeletal remains of Henry VI, and redirected devotional attentions onto his own person as the living monarch. Intending to solidify these discursive maneuvers, Henry pursued formal canonization for his uncle, and was granted a papal commission in 1494 for which 174 authentic miracles were officially documented as primary evidence.[11] Furthermore, in the same year, Henry poured money into the rebuilding of the Lady Chapel at Windsor, where he intended to house not only his uncle's body, but also his own.[12] Caught in the supernatural exchange reverberating around his uncle's shrine, his own soul's situation would be vastly enhanced.

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[9] Henry was otherwise occupied in suppressing the insurrection of a series of more militantly inclined revenants. The most serious threats being from Perkin Warbeck posing as Richard, duke of York, and Lambert Simnel as Edward, Earl of Warwick who was at that time imprisoned in the tower but executed shortly thereafter.

[10] In the alleged meeting between Henry VI and Henry Tudor arranged by Owen Tudor, Vergil writes that Henry VI prophesied "this truly is he unto whom both we and our adversaries must yield and give over the dominion." Wier 379. Henry primary claim was through his father Edmund Tudor, half-brother to Henry VI, and son of the Queen Dowager, Catherine de Valois' and Henry V's page, Owen Tudor. Alternatively, he could and did claim royal blood through his mother, Margaret Beaufort, the great granddaughter of John, Duke of Lancaster. See Appendix A.

[11] Bernard 206.

[12] The intent is recorded in the indenture of 1498 which states that according to "the singular affeccion and devocion that his grace hath to his Uncle of blessid memory King Henry the vjth he has lately begon to make and bilde of new the chapell of our Lady within the Collegeat church of Wyndesore entending to have translatid the body of his said Uncle in to the same and nygh unto him within the said chapell to have be buryed hymself." H. M. Colvin records 5,000 pounds directed towards this end in The History of the Kings Works vol.3 1485-1660 (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1975) 309.

These architectural dreams came to an abrupt halt, however, when a legal dispute erupted between Westminster Abbey, Windsor and Chertsey over the burial rights of this potentially lucrative corpse.[13] On March 5, 1498, after lengthy deliberations, possession of the holy remains was awarded to Westminster by the Star Chamber.[14] Henry VII prudently revised his own prospective burial location, immediately diverting money from the building at Windsor to the construction of a new Lady Chapel at the far east end of Westminster Abbey.[15] Here, in the centre of the new chapel, Henry arranged for the holy body to be enshrined in a 'perpetuall sepultre' and "in the same not ferre from his said uncle to be buryed hymself."[16] Pope Julius II obligingly granted the necessary license for the translation and rejoiced that Henry's miracles would now be lifted out of the "obscurity" in which his enemies had contrived to envelop them.[17]

Unfortunately, the translation never took place. When Henry Tudor died in 1509 of natural causes, his son Henry VIII assumed responsibility for the ambitious funerary undertakings at Westminster, albeit with a few modifications. Politically, the new monarch had little to gain from his remote miracle working ancestor of dubious political acclaim, but every advantage in monumentalizing his own lineal perfections. Therefore, Henry VIII, apparently unmoved by the purgatorial afflictions of his late father's soul and against the explicit instructions exhaustively laid out in his dying will, left Henry VI unembellished at Windsor, and had the bodies of Henry

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[13] Antiquarian histories of Westminster Abbey provide colorful and anecdotal histories of the politicking around Henry VI's burial spot and the Lady Chapel. See Stanley 156-69 and Edward Frederick Carpenter, House of Kings: The History of Westminster Abbey (London: Barker, 1966) 90-2.
[14] George Fascet, the Prior and John Islip, the Mark Bailiff, later Abbot, had convincingly demonstrated that Henry VI had himself marked out his own burial spot at Westminster. E. F. Carpenter 91.
[15] In 1498 all expenditure on the Lady Chapel at Windsor ceased and was not revived until after 1509 by Margaret Beaufort. Work on the new chapel at Westminster commenced in 1502. Colvin 310 and 211.
[16] Colvin 211.
[17] Stanley 161. In anticipation of this event, woodblock prints were churned out from presses of the abbey precincts, advertising the curative powers of Henry VI whose gargantuan body is seen towering over the prostrate suppliants. Anthony Goodman, "Henry VII and Christian renewal," Religion and Humanism: Papers Read at the Eighteenth Summer Meeting and the Nineteenth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society, ed. Keith Robbins (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981) 123.

VII and his queen duly installed into his vacated shrine in the Lady Chapel at Westminster instead. [18]

As it stands, the entire Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey is a breathtaking masterpiece of Tudor megalomania, a spectacular reliquary liberally embellished with Tudor devices of rose, fleur de lys and portcullis, canopied by rippling fan vaulting laced with silk drop spandrels and surrounded by a whole panoply of saintly intercessors colonizing every available niche (Figure 1).[19] At the locus of this swirling Tudor cosmos, enclosed within a gothic inspired bronze grill, the recumbent effigies of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York lie side by side, immortalized in conjugal harmony and perpetual prayer. They are a sculptural testament to the union of Henry Tudor, the last Lancastrian heir, and Elizabeth of York, the eldest daughter of Edward IV, whose sacramental vows had miraculously delivered England from the tumultuous chaos of the Wars of the Roses (Figure 2). The sacred origins of the Tudor dynasty are thus structurally enshrined as a political miracle of peace and the reigning sovereign its living incarnation as a genealogical marvel springing from their mingling loins.

This brief detour into the skeletal closets of English history and the discursive afterlife of deceased kings illustrates not only the political havoc caused by revolting corpses, but also the centrality of dead bodies to the political machinery and representational strategies of late medieval kings. This is hardly surprising for a political entity conceived as a corporeal totality. Crypt stories surface like resurrection bodies, animating the body politic in a carefully

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[18] Because of the highly unusual position of Henry VII's tomb behind the altar, reminiscent of the placement of shrines, scholars have concluded that this spot had been prepared for Henry VI. Colvin 218-9. It has been a pervasive assumption that that Henry VII was too miserly to pay the costs for canonization. It seems that Henry VI was in fact awarded canonization but the process was interrupted by the death of Henry VII. Under Henry VIII it appears the petition may have been renewed but was eventually dissolved along with the monastic foundations in the 30s. John N. King, Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in an Age of Religious Crisis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) 26-27. In his will, however, Henry VIII requested that the tombs of both Edward IV and Henry VI be made more princely, again stressing the equality of both strands of his lineal descent. Bernard 232.
[19] Vergil wrote that Henry VII's resting place was "one of the stateliest and daintiest monuments of Europe.... So that he dwelleth more richly dead, in the monument of his tomb, than he did alive in Richmond or any of his palaces."

choreographed dance of death and presenting an ideological gloss on the political present or

haunting the living as an inverted mirror of its spectral mortality. History, like hagiography, is

written and rewritten around obliging cadavers as persuasive fictions rehearsing the violent

beginnings and consequent identities of a social body. The sepulchres are never fully sealed and

the carcasses within patiently await future generations to spin their tales anew.

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Relentlessly they come. Day in and day out, constrained between velvet cords and

regulated by officiating prelates, a human convoy of modern day pilgrims wends its way in

irreverent wonder and noisy curiosity through the sepulchers of the dead at Westminster Abbey

in London. A low hum echoes between the lifeless stones as the sound of ghostly whispers

emanate from prosthetic audio guides simulating and stimulating the voices of the past.

Obediently, the dry bones stir from their shrouded sleep (as if anyone could sleep in such a

ruckus) to recount their histories in any language of choice. Attempting to bridge the impossible

gulf separating now and then, historical ventriloquists weave ghostly tales around dismembered

corpses, traversing the silent abyss of time's passage in an endless flow of authoritative words.

In time, these tales ossify into cumbersome monuments erected by utterance into treasured

national myths, effigial substitutes for their objects of desire.

Today as visitors parade past the tomb of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York in the

hallowed lady chapel at Westminster Abbey, they are educated on the finer details of the

exquisite sepulchre designed by the Florentine, Pietro Torrigiano in 1512. Pressing their faces

against the cold grill, the inquisitive peer in at the slumbering monarchs whose elegantly

Quoted by David Howarth, <u>Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance. 1465-1649</u> (London:

contoured features chiseled in gilt marble effect a chilling physiognomic presence. Infused with

naturalism, flanked on four corners by the requisite putti (though modestly clothed) and inscribed

below with a series of dialoguing saints enclosed in laurel wreath roundels, it is a stunning

monument materializing on the horizon of an artistic wasteland. It is as though the trumpeting

cherubs herald the long awaited advent of the (Italian) Renaissance in England.[20] The archival

bones of England's visual remains do not yield easily to these grand narratives enfleshing the

past, shamefully lagging behind the shining achievements of her continental counterparts, her

backward forms grating against more progressive innovations in religion, law and political

economy.[21] The reign of Henry VII has been seen as particularly bleak. Though situated at the

cusp of a new kind of monarchy, the arts seem to offer no visual correlative.[22] Consequently,

with the exception of Torrigiano's funerary cenotaph and the indefatigable efforts of scholars like

Gordon Kipling and Sydney Anglo, his reign has been abandoned for the charisma of later Tudor

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Macmillan Press, 1997) 157-8.

[20] According to David Howard: "The tomb of Henry VII was the most triumphant collaboration of the visual arts in the entire English Renaissance." Howarth 159.

[21] Colin Richmond laments the absence of taste and the failure of imagination exhibited in fifteenth century visual production in England. Richmond writes; "It was an Italian, Torrigiano, who brought to tomb effigies a vision large enough to make them moving." See his article "The Visual Culture of Fifteenth-Century England," The Wars of the Roses, ed. A. Pollard (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1995) 201. According to David Evett, the lack of royal guidance in matters of cultural aesthetics "contributed strongly to the static, even stagnant case of the visual arts in Tudor England." Literature and the Visual Arts in Tudor England (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1990) 109.

[22] In historical discourse the reign of Henry VII is Janus faced, teetering on the edge of two worlds, neither medieval nor fully renaissance. Although the simplicity of the 'New Monarchy' has come under attack in recent years, scholars all seem to agree that something new was happening. S. B. Chrimes in his exhaustive work Henry VII, 1972 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999) remains the last extensive treatment of his reign. Though refuting the claims for innovation in administration, nevertheless regards the stability of Henry VII's rule as an impetus for change. The debates have continued since over whether or not his reign marks a political revolution and a move towards more conciliar government as argued by John Watts in his article 'A New Ffundacion of is Crowne': Monarchy in the Age of Henry VII," The Reign of Henry VII: Proceedings of the 1993 Harlaxton Symposium, ed. Benjamin Thompson (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1995) 31-53) or a conservative entrenchment in medieval forms of control fueled by his own insecurities and fear of the nobility as Christine Carpenter does in "Henry VII and the English Polity," found in the same volume pages 11-30. For a summary of recent debates on these issues see John Watts, "Introduction: History, the Fifteenth Century and the Renaissance," The End of the Middle Ages? England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, ed. John Watt (Thrupp, Stroud and Goucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1998) 1-22 and Steven Gunn, "Sir Thomas Lovell c. 1449-1524: A New Man in a New Monarchy," in the same volume pages 117-154.

heavyweights.[23] Encased within a gothic grill and watched by a menagerie of heraldic beasts leering down from the rafters, this memorial aptly positions the reign of Henry VII at the threshold of a paradigm shift. It is an embryonic moment, capturing the emergence from a confining mediaevalism into the secular progressivism of the early modern era (Figure 3). Torrigiano's tomb is proclaimed a miracle of art, a national representative worthy of inclusion in Art History survey texts.[24] Henry VII's visage in death is transformed into a vision of rebirth through history's necrophilic excursions.

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[23] Roy Strong begins his collection of essays on Tudor and Stuart Painting, for example, with Henry VIII. Both Sydney Anglo and Gordon Kipling have recuperated the court of Henry VII from the lingering ethos of austerity and gravitas precipitated by Francis Bacon in his sixteenth century biography. Anglo has demonstrated the importance of political pageantry for the Tudor regime, suggesting that these spectacles reached their zenith under Henry VII. Sydney Anglo, Spectacle, Pageantry and Early Tudor Policy (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969). Kipling has been the most influential exponent of early Tudor visual production, persuasively arguing for a revival of artistic production under Henry VII, largely in an attempt to emulate the splendors of the Burgundian court. See Gordon Kipling, The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance (The Hague: Leiden University Press, 1977) and "Henry VII and the Origins of Tudor Patronage," Patronage in the Renaissance, ed. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) 117-164.

[24] Hugh Honor and John Flemming, The Visual Arts: A History, 5th ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2000) 465-466.

INTRODUCTION

Unruly Images on the Margins of Art History

In Scotland, banished to the royal collection's exhibitionary peripheries, the less exalted expressions of national history are to be found adorning the walls of Her Majesty's summer residence, at Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh. Here, relegated to the upper reaches of Mary Queen of Scots former bedchamber, and shrouded in gloomy silence, is a very different relic representative of this so-called 'New Monarchy' (Figure 4).[25] It is a large square panel painting (142.2 X 146.1cm and here referred to as the Holyrood panel) comprised of six boards and coated in a heavy lacquer. A little worse for wear, a dark seep of color has stained the seams, interrupting the painterly facade. Nevertheless, by simultaneously craning one's neck and negotiating the spotty glare cast by light straining through tiny stone slit windows, the image begins to emerge under the murky patina.

In the foreground, clustered under heraldic pavilions, Henry VII, Elizabeth of York and all the heirs of their bodies kneel together in pious uniformity. Fluttering ambiguously in the vacant space between them, an iridescent angel with flashing wings and an icy stare grasps the curtains of their protective canopy, shielding their vision from the bloodthirsty spectacle ensuing beyond. There framed against the smoldering embers of a fiery sky and a mysterious megalopolis, an intrepid St. George and an odious dragon wage mortal combat over a fair princess and her pert lamb, who anxiously await their fate in prayerful apprehension.

On closer inspection, however, the mild eccentricity of the scene gives way to more unsettling irregularities as the entire surface buckles under a teeming mass of bodies and beasts, pavilions and plumes that seem to breed on the surface, reflecting and refracting in signifying

obsession. The royal regiment certainly seems ill at ease. Despite the fact that five of the nine

are deceased, these royal clones seem to spontaneously replicate behind their parental prototypes,

their wandering eyes firing a battery of desperate looks which ricochet across the surface of the

picture plane. Fervent supplication seems justified in the circumstances. Though skewered

through the eye, the slimy winged monster is not dead but alarmingly enervated, his splayed

limbs dangling perilously above them. Smothered in the sticky hues of the apocalyptic sky, the

atmosphere is thick with palpable anxiety. The angelic sentinel guarding this disturbing sight

pierces the viewer with an ominous stare. Discretionary viewing is clearly advised. What could

have occasioned this unsettling painting? Was it the dementia of a court painter or the

devotional eccentricities of a Tudor king? The contents of Henry's delusional unconscious seem

to have emptied out and reassembled here in an interloping convention of mythic beasts,

legendary heroes, celestial apparitions and deceased relations. Perhaps St. George is harvesting

dragon's eyes as a cure for the unsettling effects of bad dreams.[26]

Although there is no direct reference to this painting in the historical archive, several

pertinent facts can be adduced.[27] The profusion of Tudor roses and portcullis and the lack of any

further heraldic devices locate it squarely within the immediate context of the early Tudor court

and strongly indicate the personal patronage of Henry Tudor. Its authorship has therefore been

provisionally attributed to Maynard Wewyck, a Flemish portrait painter employed at court as

early as 1501 and recorded in the Wardrobe accounts of the time as receiving an annual stipend.[28]

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[25] As will become apparent, the situation of this painting within the bedchamber of Mary Queen of Scots - unruly monarch threatening the English Crown - is rather ironic.

[26] In some Medieval medicinal concoctions dragons eyes boiled in wine and oil were used to ward off night terrors. In addition, dragon's blood was seen to cure blindness and dragon's fat, weak eyes. Samantha Riches, St. George: Hero, Martyr and Myth (Thrupp, Stroud and Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2000) 70-1 and 142.

[27] The reign of Henry VII is notorious for its poverty of documentary sources in contrast to previous reigns. Noted by James Gairdner in his compilation Memorials of King Henry VII (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts, 1858) vii.

[28] Kipling states that Maynard was initially employed as a royal artisan receiving the standard daily wage of one shilling, but was later promoted to a court retainer akin to the Royal Librarian, earning an annual salary of ten pounds. His own signature is recorded as 'Meynnart Wewych'. Kipling, "Origins" 136. Kipling identifies Maynard

Furthermore, as the painting includes all seven offspring of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York and

given the fact that Elizabeth died in February 1503 shortly after delivering her fourth daughter,

its date of commission can be confidently allocated between this event and Henry's own death in

April 1509.[29]

The art historical literature is almost as dismal as the archive. Considering this is the only

surviving painting of the period besides portrait busts, and despite the energy devoted to

lamenting the desecration of national treasures, the Holyrood panel has received surprisingly

little attention.[30] Granted, it offers few allures, as it stubbornly clings to mediaeval anachronism,

flatness and surface. Lack of mimetic realism excludes it from biographical utility and pictorial

incoherence disqualifies it from more progressive continental paradigms.[31] It betrays no

influence of secular humanism, no familiarity with the rudimentary concepts of perspective,

disegno or concietto, and no other 'scientifically' based, rational exploration of the visible

world.[32] Horace Walpole in his <u>Anecdotes of Painting in England</u> found its style so "ancient and

singular" that he relegated its description to the painting of the early fifteenth century.[33]

Therefore, despite Scharf's assertion that this painting is "one of the accepted landmarks of

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as a Flemish trained artist from Walloon. Helen Jeanette Dow, has argued for his origins in the North of France. For
discussion see, Helen Jeannette Dow <u>The Sculptural Decorations of the Henry VII Chapel, Westminster Abbey,</u>
(Edinburgh, Cambridge and Durham: British Museum Press Ltd., 1992) 37-8. Evidence suggests a familiarity with
Flemish style as the employment of paint rather than gold leaf to represent gold is consistent with Flemish
productions. George Scarf, "On a Votive Painting St. George and the Dragon, with kneeling Figures of Henry VII,
his Queen and Children, Formerly at Strawberry Hill and now in the Possession of Her Majesty the Queen,"
<u>Archaeologia</u> 49 (1993): 245-6.

[29] Elizabeth gave birth to eight children in total, however one son survived only a few hours. His unbaptised state
seems to disqualify him from inclusion here. Although it was not inconceivable that children were subsequently
added, close scrutiny of the panel has not revealed any trace of over painting. Scharf 203.

[30] For a litany of political and natural disasters assailing English Cultural heritage see Roy Strong, <u>Lost Treasures of
Britain,</u> (London: Viking, 1990).

[31] Strong writes; "A votive altarpiece in the Royal Collection depicting Henry and Elizabeth and their children
adoring St. George. This was probably painted circa 1505-9 but is too formalised to rely on for correct likeness."
<u>Tudor and Jacobean Portraits: National Portrait Gallery</u> Vol. 1 (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1998) 151.

[32] I am not suggesting that scholars have listed these objections to justify its exclusion within art historical narratives
nor that they are mistaken in doing so. Indeed its very peculiarity does not lend itself to such projects. I merely call
attention to the way in which our judgment of 'taste' is undeniably and unwittingly influenced by these founding
frameworks and our recuperative instincts latch onto the objects which best exhibit a reflective vision of these
projected origins.

historical painting in England" and Kipling's exclamation that it is "the most remarkable painting done under Henry VII's patronage," the Holyrood panel remains shrouded in obscurity.[34]

Following the initial prognosis of Horace Walpole who purchased the painting in 1773, it has been the unquestioned assumption by the majority of scholars that the Holyrood painting functioned as a typical altarpiece.[35] These terse but persistent accounts go on to surmise that it was commissioned to furnish a private chapel in Henry VII's newly constructed palace of Richmond or alternatively one of its adjoining monastic foundations.[36] Certainly, the aggressive devotional posturing of the royal family in the immediate foreground of the image in conjunction with a scene from sacred hagiography, albeit slightly unusual, seems to support this assertion. Or does it? After all, the history of the painting from its original whereabouts to its re-surfacing at the Arundelian estate auction in 1719 is hidden in complete obscurity.[37]

Let us briefly consider the visual evidence that warrants the ascriptive term 'altarpiece'.

Private or votive altarpieces such as Jan Van Eyck's *Madonna of Canon van der Paele* all adhere to a basic visual protocol in which donors and their offspring kneel on the peripheries of the image in humble deference to the ultimate object of veneration located in the focal centre (Figure 5). Personal saints, such as St. George, act as intercessors by virtue of their gruesome

[33] Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of Painting in England with Some Account of the Principal Artists, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1876) 31-33.
[34] These adulations were drawn to my attention by Neil Beckett, "Henry VII and his Sheen Charterhouse," The Reign of Henry VII: Proceedings of the 1993 Harlaxton Symposium, ed. Benjamin Thompson (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1995) 313, quoting Scharf 243 and Kipling, Triumph 62.
[35] The painting is typically enlisted as supplemental evidence for more ambitious projects, isolating the iconographic particulars that support the larger argument. So for example, Beckett calls attention to the resemblance of the architectural backdrop to Sheen to support his argument for Henry VII's personal attachment to Sheen. Beckett 131. King focuses on the piety of the praying royals. King 38-40. Kipling explains the prominence of the Dragon in relation to the Burgundian chivalric ethos of 'facing adversity with equanimity." Kipling, Triumph 65.
[36] Walpole who purchased the painting in 1773 was the first to describe it. Though correctly assigning it to the reign of Henry VII misidentified the principle figures as Henry V and his brothers with his wife and her entourage. He writes; "It was an altar-piece at Shene, and in all probability painted by order of Henry VII, for the chapel in his palace there." Walpole 31. Scharf's lengthy article in 1883 while correctly identifying the devotional figures concurs with Walpole. "There can be no doubt that this picture was a votive altar-piece...with subsidiary figures of royal personages in the foreground below." Scharf 249. Other authors have reiterated the same position. Kipling, Triumph 62; Beckett 131; Christopher Lloyd and Simon Thurley, Henry VIII: Images of a Tudor King (London: Phaidon Press, 1990) 20; King 38 to name a few.

deaths and mediate the encounter between the supplicant and the divine through a gesture of

introduction. The mechanics of salvation are clearly articulated through a spatial hierarchy, at

once securing the donors eternal presence before God, facilitating the viewers own prayerful

meditation, and providing a visual focus for liturgical celebrations performed at the altar.[38]

Evidence for English conformity in this respect is fairly conclusive, despite the staggering

success of sixteenth century iconoclasts. The few surviving fragments indicate the predominance

of carved alabaster retables, a homespun variety prevalent in the fifteenth century and a

predilection for imported Flemish and Netherlandish painted altarpieces.[39] Exemplary of this

later category is the *Triptych of John Donne*, attributed to Hans Memling c.1480 (Figure 6). Sir

John Donne of Kidwelly, a knight for the House of York and his wife Elizabeth Hastings and

daughter are presented by St. Barbara and St. Catherine to the enthroned Virgin and child amused

by the musical interludes. St. John the Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist are depicted on the

triptych wings flanking the central scene.[40] The altarpiece is predictable in its articulation of a

hierarchical arrangement of bodies from the surface peripheries to the sacred recessed centre,

connected through meditative gesticulations. Prior to this continental trade in portable retables,

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[37] Scharf 248.

[38] Barbara G. Lane asserts that altarpieces functioned primarily as ecclesiastical objects providing a visual correlative for the sacramental rites performed at the altar. This theological interpretation centered primarily on the sacrificial body of Christ would have been evident to contemporaries. Barbara G. Lane, The Altar and the Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1984.

[39] For Alabaster altarpieces see Lynda Rollason, "English Alabasters in the Fifteenth Century" England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium, ed. Daniel Williams (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1987) 245-254. For a discussion on Netherlandish domination of English patronage in the later half of the fifteenth century and early sixteenth century see Christa Grössinger, North-European Panel Paintings: A catalogue of Netherlandish and German Paintings before 1600 in English Churches and Colleges, (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1992) 16-22. It should be noted that with few exceptions the fifteenth and sixteenth century altarpieces presently found in English churches are all nineteenth century acquisitions. The Ashwellthorpe Triptych is one of the few surviving altarpieces from this period. It is a Netherlandish production attributed to the Magdalen Master and falls into the standard pattern of donor portraits on the wings. The center panel is, however unusual, as it depicts the seven sorrows of Mary, providing multiple points of contemplation unified on a single landscape directing the viewer on a meditative pilgrimage through the image. Andrew Martindale, "The Ashwellthorpe Triptych," Early Tudor England: Proceedings of the 1987 Harlaxton Symposium, ed. Daniel Williams (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1989) 117-8.

[40] Dirk de Vos, Hans Memling, trans. Ted Alkins and Marcus Cumberlege (Bruges: Stedelijke Musea, 1994) 19.

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churches relied on wall frescos painted behind the altar.[41] It is from this category that we find the

best example of royal votive portraits in the murals painted above the altar at the east end of the

St. Stephen's chapel at Westminster.[42] The representational focus of the fresco is drawn from

sacred history and depicts the Adoration of the Magi and the Presentation at the Temple.

Underneath, overtly paralleled with the above scenes, Edward III, and Philippa of Hainault kneel

with their ten children in a series of gothic porticos. Linking hands, they are directed by St.

George to the Madonna and child enthroned above (Figure 7).

In the Holyrood panel, however, the much-desired chain of salvation is ill defined and the

intended focus for ocular contemplation is highly irregular. The royal penitents vie for our

viewing attentions with their pious ostentation, and the ultimate point of visibility is not an image

of the Passion or the Mother of God but a strange architectural conglomeration. St. George,

heeding the call of chivalric duty, is busy practicing an intercession of a different kind. The

celestial aid turns his back on the sacred scene, unveiling the royal bodies, and presenting them to

the viewer instead. Therefore, although Lloyd and Thurley assert the "extreme conventionality"

of the painting's vocabulary, namely "votive figures kneeling before their patron saint," the term

'altarpiece' seems to raise more questions than it answers.[43]

Since donor portraits can be seen as the latecomers encroaching on the space of sacred

representations their presence alone cannot provide the basis for a positive identification. Craig

Harbison has asserted the term 'altarpiece' was never distinguished in inventories from other

paintings and could have as easily furnished a domestic as a liturgical space.[44] Hans Belting has

[41]Hans Belting, Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994) 446.
[42] These murals in St. Stephens chapel were destroyed by fire in 1834, but are known from a watercolor copy made by Richard Smirke c. 1800. Strong, Lost Treasures 207.
[43] Lloyd and Thurley 20.
[44] Craig Harbison, "The Northern Altarpiece as Cultural Document," The Altarpiece in the Renaissance, ed. Peter Humfrey and Martin Kemp (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 54. For an argument against the restrictive consequences of applying the term altarpiece to a painting see Paul Hills, "The Renaissance

likewise pointed to the functional versatility of altarpieces, operating as the visible expression of a social body or even as an argument dressed in a liturgical frame. Therefore, we should not be overly zealous in our employment of anachronistic classifications. While the Holyrood panel deliberately quotes a certain devotional vocabulary, this may be intended as a reference for interpretation rather than indicating a functional necessity.

As we have seen, the Holyrood panel cannot easily be situated within conventional art historical paradigms. It has been described as an historical illustration of a jousting event held in the grounds at Sheen and been adopted by the National Portrait Gallery for official documentation. Consequently, we find it included, albeit begrudgingly, in Strong's definitive catalogue of Tudor and Jacobean Portraits.[45] These discrepancies are in themselves instructive and point to the way in which this image pushes against the boundaries of existing conventions as a site of iconographic transformation. I am not interested in embarking on a recuperative project that seeks to reconcile iconographic idiosyncrasies into a predetermined and potentially restrictive frame.[46] Rather, I wish to retain the singularity of the image, and pursue alternative viewing modalities utilized by the Holyrood panel. I will therefore bracket the term altarpiece for the present and attend to the way in which the image itself directs our viewing.

Like Torrigiano's Tudor tomb, the Holyrood panel is symptomatic of the shifts and instabilities under girding the changing political and cultural terrain in the early sixteenth century. However, it does not conform to the triumphal Tudor conceits of genealogical inevitability monumentalized as a fait accompli in the Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey.

Altarpiece: A valid Category?" The Altarpiece in the Renaissance, ed. Peter Humfrey and Martin Kemp (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 45.

[45] For his disparaging comment see footnote 31. Strong, Tudor and Jacobean Portraits 151. Interestingly, George Scharf, the only author to attempt a sustained analysis of the work was the Director of the National Portrait Gallery at the time.

[46] I am assuming the proscribed iconography of the panel, itemized in a contractual agreement between patron and painter. These contracts are described by Evett as "organized according to a program or prescription drawn up by a

Rather, and perhaps more intriguingly, the Holyrood panel participates in the formation of these Tudor mythologies and founding histories, and consequently the insecurities attending their birth. Stylistically, then, rather than embracing the streamlined forms of the Italianate mode epitomized in the tomb effigies of Henry VII and his Queen, the Holyrood panel evokes the congeries of heraldic beasts surrounding the recumbent pair and eerily watching from the peripheries.

Stylistically perverse, iconographically transgressive and utterly singular, the Holyrood panel stubbornly resists all attempts to delimit it. Like the disorderly body of Henry VI, the Holyrood panel is an unruly stiff, a haunting presence on the borders of art historical narratives and triumphant Tudor histories. Consigned to obscurity, both in its present location and in the historical archive, its dark brooding forms loom like shadowy apparitions performing history's violent erasures. This project is an attempt to give voice to these silent histories. Restored to its central location within the representational strategies of monarchical power, this image offers up exciting possibilities for rethinking not only the role of visual production in the early Tudor court, but also for resurrecting the unspoken anxieties and desires that compelled its production. These anxieties can be visually intimated but never uttered.[47] Representation as such is not illustrative but productive and actively participates in the operations of power. As Louis Marin has argued in his work on the absolutist monarchy of Louis XIV, power fueled by desire both impels the work of representation and is its chief effect, converting sheer force into symbolic potential in a dialectical escalation. Inspired by Marin, I am interested in the operational modalities of representation, and particularly the mechanisms, which interpolate the viewer into this reciprocal augmentation of power and desire.

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scholar in consultation with a patron, setting forth ideas of a proposed work, listing the ideas to which the artist to express them, imposing not only subject matter but often material, scale and overall style as well." Evett 78.

[47] I am indebted to Georges Didi-Huberman and his recent article "The Portrait, The Individual and the Singular," for these theoretical directions. His thought provoking observations on the Bargello Bust call attention to the strength a 'misfit' artifact can have in unsettling our historical assumptions. See The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance, ed. Nicholas Mann and Luke Syson (London: British Museum Press, 1998) 165-183.

Like the hagiographic literature erupting around the corpse of Henry VI, interpretive possibilities breed in the allegorical disorder that this image invites. Rather than recovering meaning through an additive process of iconographic accumulation, I want to investigate the way in which the image opens itself up to be seen. As the act of viewing is always already anticipated, this painting is not only subject to the ideologically spun histories of the present but also participates in the strategic work of history. In this thesis I will investigate these representational strategies, examining the coercive structures that direct the work of interpretation and also the anxieties that rupture its own frame. In the first chapter I will begin by situating the Holyrood panel within the viewing paradigms of the early Tudor court. In particular I will argue for a politics of vision, calling attention to the structuring frame of pilgrimage and the use of allegory as an integral interpretive mode. Here I will suggest that the Holyrood panel employs these strategies in order to effect a contractual exchange. In the second chapter I will attend to the iconographic particularities and peculiarities of St. George and his significance in relation to the English crown. By doing so, it will be possible to uncover some of the underlying anxieties that precipitated the production of the Holyrood panel as well as identify a prospective viewing audience. In the final chapter I will attend more specifically to the work of allegory, the way in which it participates in the work of history, and the beginnings and ends to which it tends. I will ultimately argue that this painting is an allegorical vision, unfolding in the face of dynastic annihilation. Driven by an insatiable lust for perpetuity, it is a political intervention, framed as a pilgrimage of eschatological desire, which intertwines Tudor history with sacred hagiography in an attempt to secure the continuity of the Tudor dynasty.

CHAPTER 1

Visionary Thresholds

> The whole of this fugitive life is divided into four parts;
> The period of erring, or wandering from the way;
> the period of renewal, or returning to the right way;
> the period of reconciliation and the period of pilgrimage....
> The period of Pilgrimage is that of our present life
> in which we wander as pilgrims amidst a thousand obstacles.
> <div style="text-align:right">The Golden Legend[48]</div>

> He has set eternity into the hearts of men yet they cannot
> fathom what he has done from beginning to end.
> <div style="text-align:right">Ecclesiastes 3:11</div>

While peering intently into the dusky shades of the Holyrood panel, one has the uncanny sensation of being watched. Cloaked in the cover of darkness, a myriad of beady eyes answer our look. Pious eyes, fearful eyes, determined eyes and wounded eyes flicker this way and that, dispersing like scattered light or strobes alighting on fragmentary forms. Silent and knowing, they witness our probing curiosity. We are caught in a visual trespass, arrested by the blistering stare of the angelic guardian glowing brightly against the gloomy ground as though illumined from within. He is the beginning and end of this viewing encounter, a marvelous magician confounding us with his flourishes, veiling and unveiling the enigmatic forms, taunting and deterring our inquiring eye.

These compelling looks have an urgency about them that insert the very act of viewing into the frame of vision. In order to recover the force of this imperative, I will attempt to place the Holyrood panel within a context of viewing, tracing out the contours of visionary experience in early sixteenth century England. Recognizing that looking is never innocent, I will construct

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[48] Granger Rya and Helmut Ripperger, trans. and ed., <u>The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voraigne</u> (New York, London and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1941) 1.

an ocular genealogy to estrange our historically situated eyes, and to recover in part some of the meaningful traces inflecting Tudor sight.[49]

Allegory is crucial to my approach as well as to the forms of viewing within which this panel was situated. I will thus briefly call attention to the theoretical basis underpinning my use of it here. In recent years, largely sparked by Craig Owens' influential essay in the 1980 issue of October, allegory has been rescued from its misapprehension and denigration inherited from nineteenth century classicists and rehabilitated as a viable vocabulary for postmodern critique.[50] Walter Benjamin preempted this in his work on German mourning plays, finding in baroque allegory a viable theoretical alternative to the modernist symbol.[51] For Benjamin, allegory is not mere illustration, but an expression characterized by an animated internal dialectic of sacred idea and profane form. Allegory is not the tidy equivalence of figure and corresponding idea as presumed in the nineteenth century. Rather, allegory glories in the polysemy of forms, which give rise to an unruly mass of meanings, signifying at once everything and nothing. Its exemplary forms are the ruin, the fragment and the corpse, figures that fuse nature and history in a glorious decay. Though celebrating allegory's heady nihilism, Benjamin admits that allegory tends towards persuasion and though flirting with the death of meaning, it is essentially resilient to it. Allegory is instinctively a recuperative mode, a form of resurrection, which rises up in the face of immanent destruction. In answer to this confrontation with loss Benjamin writes, "meaning is encountered as the reason for mournfulness." Joel Fineman, in his essay "The Structure of Allegorical Desire" argues that this ubiquity of expression is essentially structuralist,

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[49] One of the primary exponents of attending to viewing as a culturally conditioned act is Michael Baxandall, whose notion of the 'period eye' was first articulated in Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style 1972 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 40. Although Baxandall's critics have taken issue with the 'positivist' idea of fully recovering visual experiences of the past, I believe he is more interested in the process of estrangement which seeks to call attention to our present ideologically and culturally informed vantage point rather than erasing the distance between them.
[50] Owens 67-86.

operating within a predetermined frame which directs its unfolding.[52] For Fineman, this

structural drive which propels itself through time is motivated by a desire to recover the origins

which gave rise to it, an impossible project that will be endlessly deferred. It is my intention to

chart this impulse within the Holyrood panel, recognizing that as allegorical desire is the implicit

drive of all analysis, I myself am implicated in this same compulsion for resolution and recovery.

I am inclined to agree with Fineman in his assessment of the conservative ends to which allegory

tends, however, I am also interested in the way in which the unspoken anxieties, which give birth

to its expression, surface as a haunting reminder of its unacknowledged origins.

Having abandoned the category 'altarpiece' and attending to the interdisciplinary

character of the image itself, I will propose four alternative viewing modes drawing from

medieval visionary theory, apocalyptic visions, pilgrimage literature and court pageantry. These

accounts are by no means exhaustive but for the sake of brevity I will restrict my discussion to

the points most pertinent to the painting at hand.

I. Visionary Beginnings

The visionary sensibility that pervaded the later middle ages began with a rupture in the

concept of time.[53] Up until the thirteenth century, the prevailing theory followed the teachings of

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[51] Walter Benjamin, "Allegory and Trauerspiel," The Origin of German Tragic Drama, trans. John Osborne 1963 (London: NLB, 1977) 159-235. Benjamin argues that allegory had served as the constitutional outside against which the symbol might reign. Benjamin 163-165.

[52] Joel Fineman, "The Structure of Allegorical Desire," October 12 (1980) 47-66. Combining psychoanalysis and Jakobson's theory of diacriticality, Fineman argues that allegory is essentially a structural pursuit of a lost origin, which is mirrored in the replacement of the primary phonemic utterance with a secondary opposition. Allegory in literature occurs at the intersection of narrative and structure or metonymy and metaphor. The interruption of a primary movement, say pilgrimage, with a structural metaphor births the allegorical impulse that replicates this structure through time in a self propelled search for the lost origin that gave rise to the structure. For textual commentary, this is the promise of the withheld meaning of the text.

[53] The following discussion was largely informed by Frank Kermode, "World without Beginning or End", The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967) 67-89 and Ernst H. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957) 275-284.

St. Augustine.[54] This was essentially a dualist framework, juxtaposing two incommensurable

realms: time or nunc movens and eternity or nunc stans. Time was created, finite and

corruptible, and bound to the moral decrepitude of the material world. It had a definite beginning

in creation, and an ultimate end at the Last Judgment. By contrast, eternity was outside time, a

"now and ever standing still."[55] It was conceived as the mind of God, an ever-present

blessedness without quantifiable duration.

With the revival of Aristotelian philosophy in the thirteenth century, however, this

perceived wisdom was thrown into question. According to Aristotle, the world was not finite but

eternal, and without beginning or end. The world was perpetuated in an endless cycle of

corruption and regeneration through the immutable necessity of material forms. This rationale

promulgated by the Averroists - the prime exponents of Aristotelian thought - challenged

previously indisputable doctrines concerning the transience of the created world. Furthermore,

their insistence on one immaterial soul for all men threatened the immortality of the soul.[56]

Although the church council denounced the Averroist heresies in 1270, theologians like Thomas

Aquinas attempted to reconcile these perplexing contradictions to Christian doctrine.[57] The

result was the creation of a third order of time: Aevum. Aevum (or Aion in Greek) was an

intermediary dimension that accommodated both the durational momentum intrinsic to time and

the endlessness of eternity. Aevum was a realm inhabited by angels, who as celestial beings

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[54] Found in Book XI of <u>Saint Augustine Confessions,</u> trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin, 1961) 253-280.
[55] Kantorowicz 279.
[56] Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright eds., "Averroism," <u>New Dictionary of Theology,</u> (Downers Grove and Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 1988) 66-7. Based on Aristotle's theory of matter and immutable forms, the averroists believed that there was one immaterial soul for all man throwing into question the idea of free will, individual accountability, salvation and final judgement.
[57] It should be noted that these ideas had been posited long before the thirteenth century, but it was under the Averroists with the rediscovery of Aristotle's works, that these ideas were considered a serious threat.

were privy to the beatific vision of God in eternity, and as created beings participant in the affairs of men on earth.[58]

Aevum was thus a theological solution to the problem of perpetuity, an innovation preserving the immortality of the soul. In addition, Aevum had more practical applications. It offered a new field of investigation for the scholastic imagination - the discipline of Angelology - and opened up a visionary aperture for spiritual exploration. As a liminal zone mediating the material and the spiritual realms Aevum opened up a cosmic wormhole for time travel, a portal of escape from the bounded frailty and degradation of time's passage for a momentary glimpse of eternity in time. It promised a vantage point from which to apprehend the beginnings and ends of things from the position of one in the middle of their unfolding.[59] Correspondingly, at this time we find a veritable explosion of travel narratives or soul excursions into this new dimension. Whether accounts of mystical experiences or allegorical dreams, these stories all ultimately unfold as a quest for eternity perceived as a celestial city glittering on the horizon of desire. The primary instrument necessary for embarking on this journey was the eye.

Sight, in the later middle ages, was regarded as the highest form of sensory perception, the sense most receptive to the presence and experience of God and the basis for all knowledge and understanding.[60] According to medieval theories of vision, an object was an active agent in its own transmission, propagating itself through rays alternatively called 'lumen', 'likeness' or 'species' that penetrated the eye.[61] Passing through a series of sensory receptors or ventricles

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[58] Kantoriowicz 280.

[59] Kermode identifies this predicament of being in the middle as the primary motivation for apocalyptic stories and/or fictions. Kermode 7.

[60] Thomas Aquinas writes in *De anima* "The sense of sight has special dignity; it is more spiritual and more subtle than any other sense." Mary J. Carruthers, The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 54. For discussions on the primacy of vision in the later middle ages see Michael Camille, "New Ways of Seeing Gothic Art," Gothic Art Glorious Visions, (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1996) 9-21. Also Belting 410 ff. and Suzanne Lewis, Reading Images: Narrative Discourse and Reception in the Thirteenth Century Apocalypse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 6-10.

[61] There were several competing theories of vision. The extromission theory stated that the eye emitted capturing rays alighting on an image and illuminating it. This view attributed power to looking giving credence to ideas such

and terminating in memory, the 'species' would impress itself like a seal on the sensitive matter

of the soul (or sometimes the heart). Here, these imago or phantasms would be ordered and

stored as a kind of florilegium or anecdotal compendium of mental scenes.[62] As the rays of

intromission replicated not only the sensory form of the object but also its inner truth, viewing

was not only seen as a mechanistic and physical activity but also spiritually or morally impacting.

The movement of the species inward was a transformative process penetrating the deepest

recesses of the soul.[63]

In the twelfth century, Hugh of St. Victor systematized these ocular operations into a

hierarchical model of viewing levels corresponding to the exegetical mode of scriptural

interpretation. The eyes of the flesh perceive the material forms of the visible world that should

be sealed and ordered in memory. The eyes of the mind operate allegorically, scouring memory's

storehouse for similar impressions in order to contemplate the self and the world it mirrors.

Finally, the eyes of the heart, when illumined, contemplate God who is pure light and wisdom

itself.[64] Painting mental images onto the tissue of the soul was vital for the process of spiritual

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as the evil eye or the dangerous look of a menstruating woman. The Intromission theory, by contrast, attributed power solely to the object in the field of vision. Although the intromission theory was at this time most widely credited, Roger Bacon an English Franciscan of the early thirteenth century, attempted to synthesize both theories, suggesting that the eye itself emits species which, when seizing upon the species of an object, ennobles it, enabling it to continue its course and be apprehended by the eye. Asserting the importance of vision he wrote; " Every efficient cause acts through its own power, which it exercises on the adjacent matter, as the light (lux) of the sun exercises its power on the air.... And this power is called "likeness", "image" and "species" and is designated by many other names, and its is produced both by substance and by accident, spiritual and corporeal...This species produces every action in the world, for it acts on sense, on the intellect and on all matter of the world for the generation of things." David C. Lindberg, Theories of Vision form Al -Kindi to Kepler, 1976 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981) 113, 104-116. For a discussion on ventricles, see Camille 23 and Carruthers 16-32.

[62] Carruthers 56.

[63] Robert Grosseteste is credited with articulating the relationship between vision, cognition and the apprehension of spiritual truth. Lindberg 94-102.

[64] There are multiple versions of this process, which reach back at least as far as St. Augustine who articulated a threefold methodology of Scriptural interpretation - corporale, spirituale and intellectuale. Lewis 10. Cassin in the fourth century expanded this to a fourfold method of interpretation. Richard of St. Victor adapted this to four levels of vision: historical, allegorical, tropological and anagogical. Barbara Nolan, The Gothic Visionary Perspective (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) 36-37. Madeline Caviness elucidates how artists made use of these different interpretive levels in the twelfth century in "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," Gesta 22.2 (1983) 115. For Hugh's emphasis on placing images in memory see Daniel P. Terkla, "Impassioned Failure: Memory, Metaphor and the Drive Toward Intellection," Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays, ed. Jan Swango Emerson and Hugh Feiss (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000) 252-4 and 260 ff.

intellection, and the more emotive and bizarre the scenes the better.[65] In short: "The eye of the flesh is open, the eye of reason runs and the eye of contemplation is closed and blind."[66] This highest attainment of visual sensitivity sometimes called anagogy, approximated the euphoric experience of the "heavenly homeland" within the contemplative soul.[67] As the pursuit of knowledge was ultimately a pursuit of God, the discovery of both secular and sacred truths passed through the same mechanical operations of vision. Intellectual truths were not divorced from spiritual ones, but were ultimately bound on the same path to enlightenment, mirroring each other in the ascent towards the true speculum, or Christ himself.[68] Vision and knowledge thus become seamlessly intertwined in a journey of 'insight' and ocular purification; it was a progressive ascent from carnal imperfection towards spiritual enlightenment, the material to the immaterial, and the souls fusion with the divine.

II. Apocalyptic Journeys

This climate of visual ascendancy had enormous impact on religious practices, which became increasingly oriented around the stimulation of the eye. This was epitomized by the elevation of the host during mass when in the miracle of transubstantiation; the real corporeal presence of Christ was made visibly manifest to the celebrants.[69] Mystical encounters surpassed scriptural scholasticism as the highest measure of revealed truth, and visionary experiences

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[65] Carruthers 59.

[66] Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent (Berkely, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1997) 129.

[67] Noland 36.

[68] "As with Augustine, wisdom was for Hugh not something but someone. Wisdom in the Augustinian tradition is the second person of the trinity, Christ." Terkla 253.

[69] In 1287, the Bishop Quivil of Exeter writes "And the host is thus raised high so that it can be contemplated by all surrounding believers. And by this the devotion of believers is excited and an increase in their faith is effected." The elevation of the Mass was officially instituted by the synod of Paris in 1198 and 1203 under Bishop Odo of Sully and fully incorporated into liturgical missals throughout Christendom by the mid thirteenth century. Miri Rubin, Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 57, 49-63. The Feast of Corpus Christi was introduced in 1264. See Camille 109. It should be noted that altarpieces,

quickly replaced works of charity as the ideal expression of spiritual piety to which the devout aspired.[70] Devotional images played a crucial role in cultivating visions, providing meditative foci as well as pragmatic expletives for the would-be visionary apprentice. Suzanne Lewis has attributed this emphasis on visual prompts to a 'metaphorical drift' from 'imago' as analogy for mental perception to actual pictorial representation.[71] In an illumination from a fourteenth century French codex instructions for visionary success are clearly laid out step by step in the four architectural quadrants and demonstrate the central role of images in stimulating the internal eye (Figure 8). Of further interest is the presence of the celestial agent, perforating the space of the material world to facilitate these internal meditations.[72]

The paradigmatic visionary hero was St. John of the Apocalypse, whose prophetic visions were recorded in the book of Revelation. The proliferation of Apocalypse manuscripts produced in England during the thirteenth century with sumptuous illustrations is testament to his growing popularity and chic. As John's visionary role garnered more attention, his portrayal was transformed from passive recipient seen dozing on the margins of the vision, to an active gloss that provided a catalogue of gestural responses to the vision unfolding before him.[73] In one fifteenth century manuscript illumination, St John's vision shrinks into a distant nimbus while John himself becomes the subject of vision, dominating the foreground in an exemplary meditative posture (Figure 9).[74]

In addition to providing instructions on visionary protocol, the illustrated Apocalypse functioned as a simulated visionary experience in itself. Delving into the painted page, both John

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often equipped with curtains or opening wings participated in this multimedia sacred spectacle providing the visual backdrop for this sacramental rites, imaging the fleshy corporeality of Christ's body in paint.

[70] Hamburger 135 and Belting 411.

[71] Lewis 9.

[72] Belting 412.

[73] For a discussion on John's shifting role in relation to the illuminated Apocalypse see Lewis 19-39.

[74] Michael Camille, "Visionary Perception and Images of the Apocalypse," The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992) 287-8.

and the reader are enlightened by a celestial guide who unfurls his robes in revelation, disclosing the wondrous events that must transpire before the end of time and the establishment of the City of God (Figure 10 and 11). Occupying the liminal zone between time and eternity, the angel becomes an intercessory conduit for the spiritually sensitive reader. The vision unfolds diachronically propelled along by an eschatological impulse. As the pages turn, the reader is introduced to a panoply of mysterious forms, populating the visionary landscape as Christian knights, monstrous beasts, dragons, multi-orbed lambs, virgins and whores which materialize before her eyes. Internalizing these apparitions, the reader embarks on a secondary excursion, an allegorical rummaging through memory, probing the strange exterior forms apprehended by the carnal eye in search of deeper spiritual truths beneath.[75] With the activating power of sight, these adumbrated and versatile forms were animated by the viewer into present significance, sweeping the reader up into the cosmic drama, and positioning her on the threshold of the impending furor.[76] For this reason, the Apocalypse was employed as a polemic text, revived at opportune moments to present an emotionally gripping commentary on the political or ecclesiastical present.[77]

In thirteenth century England, the apocalyptic resurgence occurred in the wake of successive crusading disasters in the Holy land. With all hope of recovering Jerusalem extinguished, Christian Zealots turned inward, finding adequate expression and consolation for

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[75] According to St. Augustine, all scripture functioned as both veiled and unveiled revelation, which obfuscated the truth to all but the deserving mind, and whose discovery lead to a deeper understanding of the self. Allegory as such was useful for "exercising and sharpening the minds of the readers and of destroying fastidiousness and stimulating the desire to learn, concealing their intention in such a way that the minds of the impious are either converted to piety or excluded from the mysteries of the faith." Quoted by Ann W. Astell, Political Allegory in Late Medieval England (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999) 17.

[76] Suzanne Lewis in her work on the Illustrated Apocalypse discusses these visionary interactions, allegorical engagements and the interpolative effect of the images for the reader. For vision and cognition see pages 6-14.

[77] The interpretive shifts since the middle ages have been duly noted as alternately eschatological, or a symbolic transcription of immanent events, and ecclesiological, or a metaphorical allegory of the struggle of the church or the Christian soul against the onslaught of evil. Bernard McGinn, "Symbols of the Apocalypse in Medieval Culture," Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition (Hampshire: Variorum, 1994) 265-283. See also, Penn Szittya,

their frustrated ambitions in the pages of the illustrated apocalypse. The Apocalypse became a

spiritual quest, a surrogate crusade for the yearning soul, whose longing is for the presence of

God in the heavenly Jerusalem.[78] Like the chameleon forms littering the apocalyptic terrain,

Jerusalem was a fluid concept signifying an earthly city, a future paradise and a metaphorical

fusion of the soul with God.[79] Jerusalem, the multifaceted object of the soul's desiring, is the

destination of the pilgrim heart.

IV. Pilgrimage and Politics

Not only did the Apocalypse offer a blueprint for visionary mechanics and a surrogate

crusading experience, it also provided a literary framework for the Medieval dream quest, in as

diverse examples as Huon de Meri's *Tournoiement Antechrist* and Guillaume de Lorris's *Roman

de la Rose*.[80] Burgeoning in the thirteenth century, these allegorical narratives weave

ecclesiastical text with courtly romance and chivalric adventure with divine eschatology.[81] Cast

in the apocalyptic vein, these are allegorical stories of a tale within a tale. The poet, lapsing into

an altered state, embarks on a journey as in a dream and later transcribes his experience and the

strange and shadowy forms he encounters there. As the narrative unravels, the boundaries of

illusion rupture blurring the dream and real world till the reader becomes increasingly entangled

in the stories weave.[82] With attentive eyes the reader embarks on an interpretative foray,

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"Domesday Bokes: The Apocalypse in Medieval English Culture," The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992) 374.

[78] Lewis attributes the rise in apocalypse manuscripts during the thirteenth century to this new form of internal crusading, and explores the interaction of reader and book and the way in which the reader is interpolated into the structuring framework of the page. See her chapter "The Ideology of the Book: Referencing Contemporary Crisis within Spectacular Structures of Power," Lewis 205-224.

[79] "Jerusalem is every soul's longing for the vision of eternal peace in the presence of God." Lewis 224.

[80] Jean de Meun is of course the author of the second half of the poem. Literature on the Allegorical Dream Quest is profuse. The consulted most frequently for the following discussion include Nolan 124-155, J. Stephen Russell, The English Dream Vision: Anatomy of a Form (Columbia: Ohio State University Press, 1988) and Rosumund Tuve, Allegorical Imagery: Some Medieval Books and Their Posterity (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966)

[81] Nolan 128.

[82] According to Michael Zinc this literary genre becomes increasingly contemplative throughout the late medieval period, becoming a site for interior reflection, blurring the boundaries between the dream, the text and the real world. Michael Zink, "The Allegorical Poem as Interior Memoir," Yale French Studies 70 (1986): 100-126.

plunging in and out of the text to discover the deeper meanings cloaked in the material forms.

Sight becomes a primary metaphor as the eyes of both dreamer and reader are increasingly

clarified and enlightened.[83] The pleasure and the power of the allegory is thus in the

interpretation itself, where in the process of unraveling the enigma, the reader is shocked to find

herself in the tale.[84]

Like their eschatological predecessors, these narratives emerged in response to

contemporary crises, offering a cathartic vehicle for the management of anxiety.[85] Born out of

mourning, the mood of pilgrimage is longing. Pilgrim narratives are visionary tales with words

that traverse the existential separation of now and forever in a momentary contraction of time. It

is a mournful speech and a consolation for loss. These are desultory narratives spinning their

tales across the empty abyss towards the city in the distant view. Visionary tales are ultimately

soul stories traversing the landscape of the afterlife and culminating in a vision of the heavenly

Jerusalem shimmering on the distant shore.[86] Glimpsed but never realized, the vision dissipates

as the dreamer awakes. Though yearning is insatiated, the reader is nonetheless changed by her

psychological misadventure. Excess desire is redirected into new resolve to purge the erring soul

of the sins laid bare by the text. The literary aevum is thus an interactive site of recovery,

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[83] This is a well-discussed phenomenon particularly in relation to The Divine Comedy. See Terkla 278-288. See also a discussion of the plethora of visual accouterments carried by the pilgrim in Susan K. Hagen, <u>Allegorical Remembrance: A Study of the Pilgrimage of the Life of Man as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering</u> (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1990) 7ff. and Rosemarie Potz McGerr ed. <u>The Pilgrimage of the Soul: A Critical Edition of the Middle English Dream Vision</u> (New York and London: Garland Publishing, inc., 1990) xxx-xxxi.

[84] Astell 38.

[85] *Pearl* for example begins with the loss of a beloved daughter. The dream journey towards Jerusalem is thus a journey confirming her new residence and the immortality of the soul.

[86] Rosamund Tuve in her discussion of Christine Pisan's work on allegory notes allegories ultimate recourse to the mirror of the soul and its heavenly journey. See pages 40-45. Michael Zink writes, "Allegory is the privileged mode of expression for the relations of the individual soul with the principle of the universe and with God." Zink 104.

reaffirmation and transformation, effecting the re-incorporation of the wandering soul onto the

path of salvation.[87]

The profusion of works in England in the late 1300s - *Langland's Piers Plowman*,

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and Gower's *Pearl* - speak to disturbances on the religious front, -

Wycliff and the papal schism - as well as the political upheavals of the Ricardian regime.[88] The

resuscitation of Lollard teaching in the 1480's, for example, precipitated the translation of

Guillame Deguilleville's *Pelerinage de l'ame* in 1483 by William Caxton from his print shop

located within the precincts of Westminster Abbey. While tracing the progress of the Christian

soul from its departure at death through its preliminary judgement at the court of St. Michael, its

slow purgation, and its final approach to the heavenly Jerusalem, Caxton manipulates

Deguilleville's text to refute the Lollard attacks on Roman Catholic Doctrine and to reaffirm the

essential tenets of orthodox belief.[89] In these examples cultural trauma and fictional

despondency, individual spirituality and political instabilities are thus knit together in this

familiar path of assurance and restitution. [90]

Under Henry VII, pilgrimage provided the veneer for political treatises presented to the

King. In *Imaginacion de vraye noblesse*, the court librarian Quentin Poulet relays explicit

directives for princely rule and instructions for the revitalization of chivalric code passed on to

him by Imagination, whom he encounters while on route to pay homage at the Church of the

Glorious Virgin (Figure 12).[91] Though the allegorical subtleties are lacking, it is significant that

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[87]The spiritual dream quest hinges on the dynamic of sin and salvation leading the reader to a state of confession and penance. Nolan 136.
[88] Szittya 374.
[89] McGerr xxix. For Lollard threats at the turn of the century see Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953) 662-666.
[90] Nolan 131.
[91] Quinten Poulet, Imaginacion de Vraye Noblesse, 1496, London, British Library Royal MS 19C.viii. "La premiere partie doncques de ce petit traitie contient comment en alant en pelerinage a nostre dame de hals en la contre de traynaie Imaginacion en personage de une dame en moulle marvellous habit.... .et apres plusiers pareoles se noblement me regust que lui baulsisse faire long message aiy princes et chevalerie de la pristience." To cite another example, in the Pastime for pleasure first published in 1509, dedicated to Henry VII and written by Stephen Hawes,

pilgrimage provides the point of entry for a representational exchange between sovereign and subject. It is surely no coincidence that the only organized challenge to the religious innovations of Henry VIII in the thirties took the form of a Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536.[92] Under the Tudor regime, pilgrimage could function as a structural ground for theological restitution in the midst of religious controversy and a legitimate cover for more politically motivated polemics.

For late medieval men and women, life itself was a pilgrim story, a microcosmic version of the pilgrimage of man capital M, the master narrative that stretched back in time to Man's expulsion from Eden and forward to the end of time and the Day of Judgment. In the prologue to the *Prick of Conscience*, Richard Rolle's laborious poem on this topic (with particular attention to the torments awaiting the undeserving soul) writes:

> For we duelle here als aliens
> To travail, here in the way, our lyms,
> Til our countre-wards, als pilgryms,.....
> This world es the way and passage
> Thurgh whilk lyes our pilgrimage.[93]

As an indisputable foundation for exploring truth in the speculum of all things, pilgrimage provided an effective frame for corroborating other ideological persuasions. Desire is aroused with mounting anticipation along the well-worn path of the soul's extra-bodily sojourns. With the failure of representation to actualize this coveted end, these pent-up cravings are channeled into an exegetical recovery operating on multiple interpretive levels.[94] Pilgrimage thus provided a frame for political persuasion, a ruse perhaps obscuring the real work of allegory's engines, akin to the advertising decoys of today's automotive industry. I would therefore like to consider

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one of the grooms of his chamber presents the quest of Grand Amour to capture the hand of his ladylove la belle Pucelle. The text itself pays little attention to this romantic frame, offering a lengthy summation of the seven liberal arts gleaned from the Margarita Philosophica and offering a veiled commentary on the political present, particularly in regard to the avaricious desires consuming both grand amour and Henry VII at the end of his life. "My youthe was past and all my lustyness/ And ryght anone to us came palyzy/ With auaryce bryngynge grete ryches/ My hole leasure and delyte doubtles/ Was sette upon treasure insacyate/ It to beholde and for to agregate." 5370-5375.

[92] Bernard 232-233.

[93] Richard Rolle de Hample, "Hampole's Pricke of Conscience," The Philological Society's Early English Volume (London: Asher and Co., 1865) 38-9.

pilgrimage, in the visionary sense, as a legitimizing structure and operative frame for ocular persuasion.

Before moving to the fourth and final viewing modality, I will briefly summarize the argument thus far. With the revolutionizing of time in the thirteenth and fourteenth century in conjunction with the underlying anxieties about the perpetuity of the soul, Aevum emerges as a conceptual alternative, whose discursive explorations offer a representational trail to eternal bliss.[95] Visionary excursions, facilitated by image cues, erupt as the coveted aim of devotional practice and literary dream quests, modeled after the Apocalypse, proliferate as a pilgrimage of words, bridging the gap between present time and future eternity. The visionary aperture, prized open by longing, attempts to shrink the distance between promise and fulfillment. Its failure to realize its object of desire is redirected from narrative chronicity into an internal journey of transformation and insight, an interpretive foray into memory's holdings for the depths of meaning, or an allegorical pilgrimage of desire. Allegory is essentially a recuperative mode, which attempts to compensate for an untenable object of its desire. It is therefore both a method and a compulsion.[96] In practice it is the layering of texts reading one through another regardless of their seeming incompatibility in search of meaning. For medieval theoreticians, as we have seen, this process occurred in memory and required the accumulative assimilation of stored phantasmic forms until seemingly incongruous forms clashed in a shock of discovery. Allegory was understood as the intermediary step on the path to intellection, bridging the gap between the visible and the invisible world, exterior form and transcendent truth. It is in this gap that we encounter the allegorical impulse, which is desire.

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[94] Astell 38.

[95] It should be noted that the concept of purgatory also emerged as a concrete concept at this time, theologically anchoring the pilgrimage of the soul. I would like to thank Carol Knicely for drawing my attention to this point.

[96] Craig Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a Theory of Postmodernism," October 12 (1980) 68.

Returning now to the Holyrood panel it will be immediately apparent that the image explicitly utilizes the viewing paradigms outlined so far. The Tudors kneel collectively before prie dieus, practicing their visionary arts and stimulating the operations of their inner eye. In imitation of the celestial instructor of the illuminated Apocalypse, the angel hovers on the threshold of revelation acting as the intercessory conduit between the earthly and the spiritual realms, facilitating both their illumination and ours. Unlike the Apocalypse illustrations, however, the vision is not contained within the clean graphic edges segregating the sacred from the profane. Rather, like the medieval dream quest, it seeps over the entire panel in a diffuse glow of amber light, absorbing into its fabric the royal bodies who hover nervously on its edges, binding their fate to its unfolding. The bleak landscape is colonized by a host of characters vaguely reminiscent of the apocalyptic cast. (Sacrificial lamb, imperiled virgin and the air born clash of righteous knight and diabolical beast.) Curiously, the angel's contraposto stance and extended wing etch out the contours of a path, wending through barren and perilous terrain, along the edge of the broken lance, and alighting on an architectural vision of eschatological desire. The Holyrood panel can be seen as a synchronic site of visual pilgrimage framed between the angelic aperture at the outermost extrusion of the picture plane and the urban citadel positioned at the furthest point of illusory depth. It appears that the Tudors are embarking on a collective soul excursion, a moribund family vacation beyond time. Between them, the angel, as spiritual conductor, in both senses of the word, taunts our eyes with his ambiguous gestures, simultaneously veiling and unveiling the vision beyond, warning us against the deception of the carnal eye and the alerting us to the presence of deeper truths to be excavated by the eyes of the mind and contemplated in the recesses of the soul. In short, it calls attention to the presence of allegory.[97] The palpable anxiety evidenced by the devotional vigor of the supplicants in

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[97] Astell in her analysis of political allegory in thirteenth century England, argues that the hagiographic narrative

conjunction with this foreboding stare suggests the absolute criticality of this interpretive

decoding. Because of the overt consciousness of the viewing presence within the image it is now

necessary to situate these more directly within the representational politics and viewing

expectations of the Tudor court. For our final viewing paradigm then, we will therefore briefly

consider the spectacular policies of the early Tudor regime, their operational modalities and chief

effects.

IV. Tudor Vision

The primary aim of visual production within the Tudor court was to maintain the King's

Magnificence.[98] Under the office of the Great Wardrobe, poetic flatteries, liveries, books,

tapestries, paintings and pageants provided the ornamental dressage embellishing, reflecting and

augmenting the body of the king, indeed emanating from it. The importance attached to these

insulating adornments is evidenced by the exhausting descriptions of costumes and entourages

dominating the chronicles of the court.[99] Henry VII was well noted for his attentiveness to such

necessities. As Polydore Vergil remarked, "He well knew how to maintain his royal majesty and

all which appertains to kingship at every time and in every place."[100] Magnificence was

therefore, not superfluous luxury, but the radiating glory that befitted the King's royal estate and

secured his credibility. Magnificence was liquid power, an effusive overabundance flowing from

the royal person, a dizzying expenditure securing the obeisance of his subjects and the respect of

foreign legates. While scholarly attention to magnificence has underscored the necessity of

representation to the maintenance of power, it has also tended to subsume any political

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functioned to connect the literal story and political intent through allegory. Astell 138.

[98] Lloyd and Thurley, 13. David Loades, The Tudor Court, 1986 (London: Headstart History, 1992) 6.

[99] See Thomas Hearnii, ed., Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii de Reus Britnannicis Collectanea Vol. IV (London: Impensis GVL and Jo. Richarson, 1770) 185-309.

[100] Denys Hays, ed. The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil, Camden Series Vol. 74 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1858) 145.

specificity under a more general policy of ornamentation.[101] However, as Sydney Anglo and Gordon Kipling have demonstrated, Tudor spectacle was carefully crafted to communicate specific intent and produce material effects.[102]

The magnificence of the king was most apparent in the lavish spectacles that accompanied the momentous entries of state: births, marriages, diplomatic visits and the initial progress of the king about the realm. Like souls, visually describable at the moment of their departure from the body, the glory of the realm became visible at the threshold spaces of its body politic. These were incorporation rituals that ensured the continuity of the body politic by smothering the edges of dynastic power in a symbolic absorption. The best documented of these were the Royal Entries proper, elaborate multimedia presentations staged by a city for the king on his first progress. The city, lined with liveried guildsmen, tapestries and cloths of gold, was transformed into a vision of the celestial Jerusalem as if the heavenly and earthly kingdoms had fused through the bodily presence of the king.[103] The king, as both spectator and leading protagonist in the drama, journeyed through and activated a series of interactive tableau featuring a miscellany of biblical, historical or mythological personages. The spectacle was not mere flattery, but a cleverly choreographed contract, which established the terms of the future political relationship between the city and the king. It was a binding agreement ensuring the city's protection (and often forgiveness) in exchange for the abiding loyalty of its citizens.[104]

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[101] This is the case in John N. King's publication <u>Royal Tudor Iconography: Literature and Art in the Age of</u> <u>Religious Crisis</u> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977). King examines the religious significance of various multiple mythic and religious comparisons that tend to serve as flattery only, clustering around the body of each ruler like studded jewels.

[102] Sydney Anglo was the first to draw attention to the political intent of royal pageantry in his groundbreaking study <u>Spectacle, Pageantry and Early Tudor Policy</u> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969) 1-123. Gordon Kipling while attending to the political significance of the Civic Triumph phenomena throughout Western Europe is concerned with the artistic forms these take. <u>Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph</u> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) especially 1-47.

[103] Kipling 15 and 36.

[104] For a detailed example see C. E. McGee, "Politics and Platitudes: Sources of Civic Pageantry, 1486," <u>Renaissance Studies</u> 3.1 (1989) 29-34. In the Netherlands these pageants carried the force of law. Kipling 39.

I will briefly consider one such spectacle orchestrated at the behest of Henry VII for

Katherine of Aaragon in 1501 on her journey through London, on the occasion of her nuptials to

Prince Arthur, the heir apparent to the English throne. Like the marriage itself, this 'piece de

resistance' of royal magnificence was intended to be the culminating triumph of his reign and is

therefore, a perfect occasion to observe the internal operations and viewing effects intrinsic to the

visual politics of the Tudor court.[105] The pageant weaves together funerary liturgy and dream

vision in a Tudor inspired apocalyptic cosmology, casting Katherine as the pilgrim soul who

journeys after death to her native star in heaven. Making her way to St. Paul's cathedral, she

moved through six elaborate architectural tableau liberally decorated with Tudor devices, roses,

portcullis and "red dragons dredfull." As Katherine is absorbed into the visionary narrative, she

embarks on a virtual journey from the earthly realm through the starry cosmos to the celestial

court. As primary viewer and key participant Katherine initiates the dreams unfolding; inert

forms spring to life with her passing presence as castle grates rise, fountains gush forth and

astrolabes revolve and she is personally addressed by various angelic beings, saints, prophets,

philosophers and kings. Swathed in visual and verbal flatteries Katherine is transfigured from

Spanish princess to English consort molded by the prerogative of the Royal will. Compelled

forward through these mechanistic coercions Katherine accumulates cardinal and spiritual virtues

necessary for her ascent, instructed on her duties as a prospective queen ("the procreacion of

chyldr" and not for "censuall lust and apetyte"), and educated on the perfections of her

prospective bridegroom.[106] Arthur, envisioned as the Son of Justice seated on a golden throne at

the centre of a revolving stellar universe, is envisioned as the divine bridegroom, and Henry VII

as God the Father. Katherine is also advised of her inferior place in this Tudor cosmology, for

her astral soul dims in the powerful light of Arcturus, Arthur's star, who must assist this lesser

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[105] The king's printer published the details of this pageant in the form of a medieval romance. Kiplig, <u>Receyt</u> xiii-iv.

body to his exalted throne.[107] Seductive forms yield to more implicit truths in this Tudor

astrological conceit, as those familiar with the educational curriculum of the aristocratic network

and versed in the fourfold allegorical procedure are indoctrinated into these underlying political

truths, which visibly evidenced become sealed in memory and imprinted upon the soul.[108] This

royal entry is a coercive spectacle, an act of political digestion, blurring the boundaries between

play and politics and implicating both witnesses and participants in its insinuated prescriptions.

Katherine is ensnared by the tentacles of magnificence, which regulate the permeable borders of

the body politic, ingesting and reconstituting foreign bodies into the nutritional sustenance

necessary for its continuity.

To return once more to the allegorical operations of Tudor spectacle, it will be

immediately obvious that it utilizes the viewing paradigms we have already discussed in relation

to the Holyrood panel. Both painting and pageant utilize pilgrimage as a structuring framework

and a mirror for the process of internal intellection. It will also be evident that the Holyrood

panel participates in the same interdisciplinary mongering characterizing the Royal Entry,

combining devotional themes and political allusions. Finally, all are interactive visions in which

the viewer is both spectator and animator. It is *our* presence before the painting that causes the

angel to draw aside the pavilion curtains. These correlations are hardly surprising considering

that the term 'pageant' could be applied to either a two dimensional depiction or a dramatic

spectacle.[109]

Given these formal similarities, the Royal Entry provides insight into three further

operational features integral to the viewing expectations of the early Tudor court. Firstly, it is a

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[106] Anglo 71.

[107] Kipling, Enter the King 212-4.

[108] Kipling describes these as literally a triumphant procession, tropologically Katherine's search for a just ruler, allegorically, the alignment of England and Spain in marriage and anagogically the soul's ascent to heaven. Kipling, Enter the King 209.

singular event.[110] The Royal entry is a one time exclusive performance, uniquely tailored for a

specific viewer in order to effect an obligatory and knowing agreement between the pageant host

and the primary recipient.[111] Secondly, this visual performance is contractual, a politically

efficacious event which carries the weight of a legal document. And thirdly, it is a theatre of

political preservation, which emerges at a moment of dynastic realignment. These features have

intriguing implications for the Holyrood panel. Who are the viewers intended to embark on this

visionary venture? What kind of a relationship is being forged between them, and what

insecurities or crises loom on the borders of the body politic inspiring this dramatic tableau? In

order to answer these questions we must enter through the visionary portal offered up by the

angel and embark on a visual pilgrimage into the mystical landscape before us.

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[109] Sir Thomas More, "Pageant Verses," The History of King Richard III and Selections from the English and Latin Poems, ed. Richard Sylvester (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976) 114.

[110] Kipling, Enter the King 11.

[111] Anglo notes that only a select audience would have understood the underlying significance of the pageants. Anglo 94. Specifically tailoring the imagery of a painting in both iconography and mode of expression would have been a standard practice for artistic patronage within the court. These agreements would be drawn up as a verbal or written contract between the artist and patron, sometimes in consultation with a scholar. David Evett, Literature and the Visual Arts in Tudor England (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1990) 78.

CHAPTER 2

Dragon Slaying on the Borders of the Body Politic

> Seynt george, oure ladyes knight
> On whom alle englond hath beyleve,
> Shew us thy helpe to god almyght,
> And kepe oure kyng from all myscheve
> Thu art oure patronesse knight y-preve
> To defend wyth fyght oure ladyes fe,
> Seynt george, by oure helpe yn all oure greve,
> Saluum fac regem domine.[112]
>
> Anonymous, 15th century.

Plunging into the visionary landscape we are immediately confronted by a bloodthirsty contest featuring St. George and the dragon. While displaying the requisite graphic details of violent conflict, this depiction is unusually disjointed. In general, St. George is envisioned as victor, towering over the vanquished monster that is trampled under foot (or hoof) and mortally speared through the throat. In the fifteenth century, the iconographic core tends to be elastically stretched. St. George is found recoiling momentarily from the final thrust of the lance in a penultimate climax of suspended anticipation. In the Holyrood panel, however, the dueling pair are stretched to breaking point. Silhouetted against the bloody sky, they are petrified mid flight, in an endlessly agonizing suspense. Who is St. George? Why is he conjured up here for our viewing edification and what could have precipitated this strange depiction?

St. George cannot be seen as a stable figure whose significance can be ascertained through biographical retrieval. St. George is a mutable persona whose rather sketchy origins allowed for considerable invention and embellishment throughout his textual history. In the late Middle Ages, it was generally accepted that St. George was a third century eastern martyr who

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[112] From an anonymous fifteenth century song, "Speed our King on his Journey." Quoted by Samantha Riches, 112.

entered the hagiographic hall of fame by virtue of his grueling death at the hands of the pagan emperor Diocletian.[113] This event we are told, occurred no less than three times due to his miraculous resuscitations and was visually relished, complete with all the requisite litany of gratuitous tortures, (boiling, sawing, stretching, decapitation etc.) in countless retables in the twelfth and thirteenth century.[114] By the fourteenth century, George's protracted martyrdom was eclipsed by an apocryphal incursion into the standard biographies, which transformed George into a paragon of chivalric virtue.[115] The story as it appears in Jacob Voraigne's Golden Legend recounts how George, a crusading knight from Cappodocea, liberated the town of Lyddia from the clutches of a nefarious dragon. In order to curb the beast's voracious appetite, the citizens were in the habit of daily selecting a sacrificial offering. When the lot had fallen on the only child of the King and Queen, the inhabitants were no less democratic, and the doomed princess, arraigned in her wedding finery, was duly banished outside the walls of the city. George, happening upon the helpless girl, subdued the odious beast, saved the princess from certain consumption and converted the entire town to Christianity.[116] St. George the dragon slayer was thus the perfect embodiment of saintly virtue and romantic chivalry whose extirpation of evil is co-mingled with the promise of sexual conquest, lending sanctity to the medieval order of knighthood and sex appeal to traditional hagiography.

In general, visual depictions of St. George in panels painting, manuscript illumination and retables are narrative embellishments wrapped around an iconic core common to most dragon

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[113]As Didi-Huberman notes, St. George is as mythic as the dragon he fights. Although various authors have tried to separate facts from fiction, the story, has since its birth been subject to endless transformation. Didi-Huberman, Saint Georges et le Dragon: Versions d'une Légende (Paris: A Brio, 1994) 29-31.
[114] This is well documented by Samantha Riches, who itemizes the range of tortures described in a variety of retables. Riches 36-67. See also Didi-Huberman 25-35.
[115] Jonathan Bengston attributes its incorporation to the crusading mania. "Saint George and the Formation of English Nationalism," Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies 27.2 (1997) 319.
[116] Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger, trans. and eds., The Golden Legend of Jacobus Voragine (New York, London and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1941) 232-8.

slaying saints occupying sculptural or painted architectural niches (Figure 13).[117] In Roger Van

der Weyden's panel from 1432-5 for example, though attended by petulant princess and anterior

urban sprawl, George dominates the picture plane, captured in a climactic moment of vindication

(Figure 14).[118] The subjugated reptile is done for, skewered into the lower corner, his head

lolling like a decapitated offering. This correlates with standard iconographic depictions of the

triumph of good over evil, which is made explicit by the alignment of the red cross on his shield

and the plunging lance.[119] Light and dark, civility and barbarity, inside and outside, death and

resurrection all mingle together in a dialectical augmentation around this central theme.

Despite the initial appearance of iconographic consistency in narrative depictions of the

dragon episode, the significance of its figural evocation cannot be reduced to an interpretive

inevitability. Visually, the dragon myth was full of cathartic potential, as Didi-Huberman has

clearly demonstrated. Monstrous hybridity breeding in subterranean chaos and formed in the

outer recesses of the feverish imagination could symbolically substitute for any unruly passion or

amorphous fear transgressing the 'natural' order of things. Freed from any factuality, St. George

and the dragon, operated as a protean iconography malleable to the surmounting anxieties (real or

imagined), lurking on the borders of any historically situated social or political body.[120] This

said, the Holyrood panel cannot be dismissed as simply an enduring expression of pious devotion

or the adulation of a chivalric ideal.[121] In order to draw out the specific motive behind his

invocation here, we must allow the visual peculiarities of this particular configuration to direct

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[117] Didi-Huberman has argued, in fact, that the dragon myth itself evolved from such stock pictorial motifs found in the historiated initials prefacing earlier texts. Didi-Huberman 42-47.
[118] It is worth noting at this juncture that although many images feature a courtly retinue peering over the distant castle ramparts to witness the gruesome spectacle, there are no examples, to my knowledge, and with good reason, that include 'donor' portraits.
[119] Didi-Huberman 74.
[120] Didi-Huberman argues that it is the place of figuration that allows this transformability. Didi-Huberman 107-116.
[121] Kipling has argued that this unusual configuration is a promotion of the Burgundian formula of chivalric virtue, which entails facing adversity with equanimity. Thus, St. George, his visor lifted, squarely confronts his enemy face to face in a truly terrifying encounter. Kipling, Triumph of Honour 64-5.

our investigation. In this chapter I will locate St. George within an historically situated symbolic field. I will begin with addressing two possible intents.

I. Exploring Possibilities

Gordon Kipling has suggested that the Holyrood panel is an essentially pietistic gesture intended by Henry VII as a visual prayer to St. George on behalf of the souls of his deceased family members.[122] This accords well with the viewing frames already discussed with regard to the pilgrimage of the soul as well as responding to the escalating cultural anxieties over purgatorial affliction promoted at this time. In this scenario, St. George is locked in mortal combat over the fate of the Tudor soul. Depending on the outcome, it will be consigned to the torments of hell or the equally excruciating but infinitely more preferable, tortures of purgatory. In the Holyrood panel, the royal family perch tremulously on the threshold of death. The officiating angel regulates their passage between this world and the next and St. George, staves off the threatening advances of the demonic foe in the intermediary planes beyond.

Although uncommon, St. George was certainly invoked to guard the passage of the soul after death. In the fourteenth century monumental brass of Sir Hugh Hastings of Elsing, for example, this intercessory role is inscribed in architectural clarity (Figure 15). St. George is located in a cosmic cartouche above the ascending soul, effortlessly squelching the demonic intruder under the feet of his horse, and impaling it with his lance.[123] Sir Hugh can rest in prayerful serenity as his soul levitates unhindered toward the Saviour and Virgin enthroned above. In the Holyrood panel, however, prayers take on an air of desperation. The dragon is wounded but not dead, lunging menacingly at George in a frenzied counterattack. George, by

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[122] "Above all the altarpiece stands as an act of personal piety: it represents Henry's visual prayer to St. George on behalf of the souls of those who kneel before him." Kipling, Triumph of Honour 62. Kipling does not explain why Henry should be singled out. In fact, what is striking about this image is his lack of visual preference.

contrast seems gravitationally disadvantaged, ponderous, defensive and a trifle worried. His

victory is certainly not assured. This seems unusually insecure for a personal familial memorial

eliciting the aid of St. George. Though it is conceivable that George's difficulty in this respect is

a ploy to spur the viewer to fervent prayer, it seems rather a risky move.

Certainly, Henry VII was excessively attentive to all manner of provisions for the souls of

his family and especially his own, making arrangements for over 10,000 masses to be said within

the fist month of his demise.[124] However, in his lengthy will, Henry does not elevate the

intercessory capacity of St. George over any of the myriad saints attending to his post mortem

administrations. In addition to entrusting his soul to the aid of the "Moost Blisssed Moder evir

Virgyne", Henry writes:

> I trust also to the singular mediacion and praiers of al the holie companie of Heven; that is to saye
> Aungels, Archaungleles, Patricarches, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martirs, Confessours, and
> Virgyns, and sp'ially to myne accustumed Avoures I calle and Crie, Saint Michaell, Saint John
> Baptist, Saint Johon Evuangelist, Saint George, Saint Anthony, Saint Edward, Saint Vincent, Saint
> Anne, Saint Marie Magdalene, and Saint Barbara.

As Henry makes clear, their aid is particularly desirous at the hour of his death to protect his soul

from the "auncient and ghostely enemye." The altarpiece intended to furnish his chantry chapel

in Westminster is no more preferential requesting that "In the mydds....bee made the Ymage of

the Crucifixe, Mary and John, in maner accustumed; and upon bothe sids of theim, be made as

many of the Ymagies of our said advousries, as the said table wol receive."[125] It is clear then, as

far as his soul is concerned, that quantity is to be preferred over dubious martial quality. It seems

strange then that Henry would have commissioned a painting like the Holyrood panel in view of

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[123] Architecturally streamlined, Hugh is also flanked by two columns of Garter Knights, who insure that masses are said for his soul.

[124] There have been several discussions of Henry's anxiety in this department. Beckett, 120.J.P. Cooper, "Henry VII's Last Years Reconsidered," The Historical Journal 2.2 (1959): 112ff. on the reasons provoking such anxiety. For a transcription of his enormous will see T. Astle, ed., The Will of Henry VII (London: T. Payne, 1775). In addition, Henry drew up detailed contracts between other religious houses, most notably, Westminster Abbey of the masses to be said by various prelates, lighting of candles and alms to be distributed in his name after his demise as long as the world shall endure. Muniments of Westminster Abbey 6637. For masses arranged with the Sheen charterhouse see Beckett 121-2.

his nonpartisan approach to salvation. These discrepancies should not concern us, but rather alert us to the presence of ulterior motivations. It is certainly clear that the Holyrood panel is framed by a soul pilgrimage, but as we have already established, pilgrimage provided a structure through which other more politically sensitive issues might be broached.

One distinct possibility is the crusading revival taking place across the continent at this time. Indeed, with the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the Siege of Rhodes in 1480 the threat of Muslim invasion precipitated numerous frescos and panel paintings of St. George across the Italian Peninsula. The large mural painting by Vittore Carpaccio, painted in 1502-7 for the Scuola di San Georgio degli Schivanova in Venice, is one such example. Carpaccio's massive fresco is a perfect vehicle for channeling mounting fears into a vehement manifesto for mustering crusade support (Figure 16). George is captured charging across a ravaged landscape strewn with skulls and dismembered body parts, driving his lance through the gaping throat of the cowering fiend. At this time, the conventional choreography of the dynamic duo was being drawn out and exploited for its maximum emotional potential. Righteous fury heightened by simmering fear is ignited and brought to a feverish pitch through the horizontal impulse and the vectorial force of the lance and unleashed in a violent thrust onto the surrogate foe, in a visual crescendo of vindication. Victory is almost palpable.

The Holyrood panel, though executed during this period of renewed crusading zeal, does not address the threat of Turkish invasion. A private panel would hardly be the forum for such promotions, particularly one that exacerbates anxiety rather than harness it. Victory is not imminent, it is not even assured. Instead the viewer is left dangling like the dragon in an eternal cliffhanger. Indeed, despite Henry VII's verbal enthusiasms, there is no evidence to suggest any intention to participate in the crusading enterprise. On the contrary, Henry VII, though

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[125] Astel 33.

financially supportive, levying a tax on its behalf in 1501-3, was not interested in embarking on a religious war.[126] Therefore, despite the explicit invitation of Pope Julius II to lead the campaign, and the entreaties of his Burgundian neighbours, he graciously declined.[127] Henry was, at this time, more concerned with protecting the edges of his own sovereign authority than defending the borders of Christendom.

The conjugal celebrations accompanying the marriage of Katherine and Arthur in 1501, impregnated with the hopes of dynastic continuity, were unfortunately short lived. Less than five months after these exultant festivities, Arthur contracted a virulent skin disease, suffering an excruciating death. The city of London received Arthur in procession once more, lying within a leaded coffin draped in a black velvet cloth, adorned with a spare white cross. This was a devastating blow to Henry, as the representational scaffolding he had lovingly nurtured around this future king came crashing down. The nightmare did not end there. Henry's dynastic designs suffered a further blow, when on February 11, 1503, his wife died in childbed after delivering her eighth child. Henry attended once more to the necessary funeral preparations. Elizabeth of York was processed in royal dignity to Westminster Abbey attendant with an effigy of her person, fully adorned in stately attire with orb and scepter and gracing the top of the hearse.[128]

Henry's dynastic dreams were in shambles. All his ambitions were now pinned on his only remaining son, Henry, at this time only twelve years old. With his own health declining Henry VII was confronted with the possibility of a minority rule, a highly dangerous proposition as attested to by the bloodthirsty machinations of the Wars of the Roses. More alarming still,

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[126] In 1501-3 Henry VII raised 12,000 pounds for the crusading effort through taxes. Maximillian received money from Henry VII for this purpose in 1504, though this had the ulterior motive of insuring his support should Edmund de la Pole, a pretender to the throne, try to garner his support. Christopher Tyerman, England and the Crusades 1095-1588 (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988) 318-9.

[127] Chrimes notes that Henry was able to carry on voluminous correspondences with the pope on the excellence of the cause while craftily avoiding any personal commitments. Chrimes 304. The King of Portugal also plied Henry VII with a "small book of instruction" containing advice on crusading tactics. Tyerman 306.

reports from Calais indicated that the nobles were already speculating about the likely succession should "hys grace hapned to depart." Distressingly, "some of them spake of my lode of Buckyngham.... other ther were that spake in lykwise of your traytor Edmond De la Pole, but none of them, he said, that spake of my lord prynce."[129] Edmund de la Pole, one of the lingering Yorkist claimants, had slipped away ironically during Arthur's wedding festivities and remained ominously at large.[130] In desperation, perhaps, Henry began to cast his eyes around for an eligible bride, sending his ambassadors to assess the goods, and may possibly have ruminated on the possibility of courting his son's recent widow.[131] His manner became wildly suspicious, increasingly irascible and notoriously avaricious, tightening his grip on the remaining nobility through heavy recognizances.[132] It is within this climate of death and dynastic fragility, tormented by personal demons and fearful of the myriad dragons prowling around his throne, that Henry VII commissioned the Holyrood panel. In order to comprehend how St. George could be invoked to assuage these insular fears, we must consider the symbolic relationship between St. George and the English Crown.

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[128] This event must have made an impression on contemporaries, for its description is far more documented than Henry's own funeral. In the records kept by the Garter King of Arms, an ink drawing of her procession accompanies a detailed description of the event. Add. MS 65137, folio 41v-42, British Library, London.

[129] James Gairdner, ed. Memorials of King Henry VII (London: Lonman, Brown, Green, Lngmans and Roberts, 1858) 243.

[130] For Henry VII Edmond's flight to the continent signaled the possibility of a military coup and a threat to the security of the throne. Hay 123-6.

[131] This was proposed by James Gairdner but is flatly denied by Chrimes 287. Transactions of the ambassadorial missions for prospective brides are transcribed in James Gairdner 328-368.

[132] These were financial obligations issued as proof of loyalty. The nature of Henry's last years has been hotly debated. Cooper, 103-129. J. R. Lander, "Bonds, coercion and fear: Henry VII and the Peerage," Crown and Nobility 1450-1509 (Edward Arnold, 1976) 267-300. G. W. Bernard, "Henry VII and the English Nobility," The Tudor Nobility (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1992) 49-91. Christine Carpenter, 16-19.

II. St. George for England

Though revered across the continent, St. George was held in particular or peculiar affection by the English as protector of their nation. [133] This phenomenon was widespread, as evidenced by the ninety plus wall paintings dedicated to St. George found in parish churches across the country and the numerous records of feast day celebrations and pageants in local communities. [134] The affinity between George and England was first established with the miraculous appearance of St. George to Richard the Lionheart during the third crusade, and cultivated thereafter as the official propaganda strategy of the English Crown. [135] The history of this symbiotic relationship between George and the Crown is well rehearsed both in the historical archive and recent scholarship. [136] The following discussion will therefore be restricted to the representational fertility of St. George as a monarchical strategy aiding and obfuscating the operations of power. This will serve to situate St. George historically within the viewing expectations of the early Tudor court and draw out some of the subtle undercurrents of meaning inflecting the Holyrood panel.

St. George was frequently employed in the interests of the Crown as a representational lubricant providing a glamorous front for the martial ambitions. [137] In the Milmemte Treaty of 1326-7, for example, George is depicted investing Edward III with the accouterments of war (Figure 17). This sacramental gesture justifies conquest as the hallowed duty of a Christian King, and draws a special bond between Edward and George as earthly and spiritual counterparts solemnly fulfilling their sacred obligation. English military ventures were further infused with

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[134] Many of these wall paintings date form early in the Tudor Period and include the arms of the monarch. Miriam Gill, "Noow help, St. George oure laady knight...to strengthe our Kyng and England ryght': Rare scenes of Saint George in a wall painting at Astbury, Cheshire," Transactions of the Lancastrian and Cheshire Antiquarian Society 91 (1997) 91-102. Muriel C. McClendon, "A Movable Feast: Saint George's Day Celebration and Religious Change in Early Modern England," Journal of British Studies 38 (1990): 1-27.
[135] Bengtson 320.

divine right when in 1388 Edward usurped the red cross banner, emblem of St. George and also carried by crusaders as a sign of the resurrection, as a national insignia. This was later reserved by decree under Henry V for the exclusive use of the English under pain of death. By the sixteenth century, the English troops were fully outfitted with red and white tunics, causing a George enthusiast in the sixteenth century to remark: "So that it is a seemly and magnificent thing to see the Armes of the English to sparkle like the rising sunne."[138] The red cross banner of St. George therefore united the English troops under a single sign overriding the usual heraldic miscellany, and also infused English military ventures with a crusading imperative through its symbolic migration. St. George functions as a representational buffer, appearing at the frontlines to protect the retractable borders of the body politic and justifying their expansion.

In the Holyrood panel St. George is without doubt English. Liberally festooned with national symbols, St. George is resplendent in red cross tunic and sprouting plume. The dragon that rails against him is decorated through with the broken tip of the red and white standard whose tendrils have pulled through the throaty flesh, dangling like blood and tracing the letter G against the glowing sky. St. George is emphatically aligned with the cause of England and the dragon, gruesomely impaled by the national insignia, is her treasonous adversary.

England was believed to be the dowry of the Virgin and St. George, by virtue of his chastity, the virgin's elected champion.[139] As the earthly protector of this sanctified geography, the king with the aid of St. George, is bound to preserve its untainted borders from unholy contamination. The logistics of this security network are delineated in the much-discussed Wilton Diptych. (Figure 18) On the left panel Richard II kneels in the company of Saint John the

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[136] Riches 101-139. Bengtson 320ff., and Rebecca Colman, "Saint George for England," Contemporary Review 270.1575 (1997): 170-173.

[137] Bengtson 321.

[138] Peter Heylyn, The History of the Most Famous Saint and Souldier of Christ Iesus; St. George of Cappadocia asserted from the fictions of the middle ages of the Church and opposition of the present (London: Thomas and Harper, 1633) 302.

Baptist, Saint Edmund and Saint Edward the Confessor, in reverence before the Virgin. On the

opposite panel, surrounded by an angelic host the Virgin presents Richard with the red cross

standard of the saint by way of an attending angel.[140] On the tip of the banner is a luminous orb

that contains within its polished sheen a tiny Island representative of England.[141] The King here

is entrusted with the safe keeping of this designated Holy Land and her chosen people nominated,

according to national lore, because of the speediness of their conversion and their subsequent

faithfulness. The misidentification of Anglorum with Angelorum was a celebrated conceit,

reputed to have originated with St. Augustine who "named these people for their fair countenans.

'Englesh' - 'aungels' by his furst nominacion."[142] As the dowry of the Virgin, England slipped

easily into the marital symbolism of St. John's Apocalypse as the bride of Christ conceived as

celestial city of righteous souls. These sacred associations simmered under the surface of the

English imagination, conjured up, like George, at moments of crisis. They were invoked in the

heat of battle to inflame the hearts of the English troops or were incorporated into the panegyric

of doomsday prophets to stimulate religious reform. [143]

Indeed, in the Holyrood panel, the multi-tiered edifice situated at the focal point of the

image and piercing the volatile space between our two assailants bears unmistakable resemblance

to standard depictions of Jerusalem (Figure 19). However, the spindly tracery and iridescent

glow transform an earthly form into an ethereal one, though strangely reminiscent of the Gothic

perpendicular style with its elegant flying buttresses or alternatively the dome like keep at

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[139] Riches 68-100.

[140] This gesture is disputed in Dillian Gordon, Lisa Monnas and Caroline Elam, eds., The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1997). Regardless of whether the standard is being donated or returned, the relationship between the players remains the same.

[141] Dillian Gordon, "The Wilton Diptych: An Introduction," The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych, eds. Dillian Gordon, Lisa Monnas and Caroline Elam (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1997) 22-3.

[142] Kipling, Receyt 2.

[143] Knighton, for example, in his chronicles of the French Wars had written in 1390-95 that although the pope had become French, Jesus was English. Tyerman 333. For discussion on battle speeches and God's partiality to England in war see Tyerman 332ff. On English eschatology see Szittya 374-397.

Windsor Castle (Figure 20).[144] Neil Beckett has suggested that the architectural features are a visual reference to Henry's newly constructed palaces of Richmond and Greenwich.[145] Tudor egotism aside, the image invites a comparison to contemporary English palatial forms without committing to a specific place. Rising on the horizon in splendid isolation its shimmering form slips in and out of focus, teasing the memory as fleeting shadows of recognition flicker across the imaginary facade. This transplanted 'new' Jerusalem is without doubt resurrected on English soil, the fantastic ball and turret propped on top like a spoil of war, glorying in its incongruity. In the Holyrood panel, England's apotheosis becomes a tantalizing mirage envisaged on the horizon of desire.

The very heart (quite literally) of the cult of St. George in England was in the chapel dedicated to St. George at Windsor Castle, and its high priests, members of the Order of the Garter, an exclusive chivalric brotherhood dedicated to the Virgin, the Trinity and of course, St. George (Figure 21). Although Edward III instituted the Order in 1346 as a ploy to garner support for his campaign against the French, the Order of the Garter and their annual ceremonials became a permanent fixture of monarchic symbolic ritual. Through devotion to St. George, the Order effectively interlaced the chivalric code of unswerving fealty to the king's person and latterly channeled the dwindling opportunity for martial excellence (the invention of gunpowder having eroded the opportunity for individual feats of arms) into tournament pageantry and ceremonial pomp.

The Order convened yearly on April 23rd, the Feast of St. George in Windsor Chapel. This was the official centre of Garter activities and residence to a variety of body parts relinquished by their patron, including a fragment of arm, two finger bones, a vial of blood, a

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[144] This dome like structure was originally designed to house the 'round table' of the Order of the Garter and in addition imitates the round temple structures of the Templars in England.
[145] Beckett 132.

skull fragment and the most prized possession of all, a relic of St. George's heart.[146] At each

annual convention the chapter attended to general constitutional sundries, the settling of disputes,

the election of new members and offered masses for the souls of departed brethren. The

remaining duties included attending the King in his private chambers, serving him at the evening

feast and accompanying him at daily prayers. The culminating ceremony of the entire feast day

celebration was the grand procession around the Castle courtyard in which all the Garter

members outfitted in their new mantles paraded in all solemnity with the heart of George. For

those not privy to the ghostly apparitions on the front lines of battle, to witness the heart of their

patron thus animated must have been a wondrous sight.[147] This annual procession is captured in

a broadsheet souvenir dating from the reign of Charles I (Figure 22). The depiction is largely

formulaic, but what is of particular significance is that the King, bringing up the rear and covered

by a baldachino, has usurped the position of the heart. Under Henry VII, the representational

fertility of the Order was exploited by using the yearly celebration as a platform for magnificence

through pageantry. In 1505, for example, he paraded a leg of St. George encased in a silver

reliquary, through the streets in solemn procession to St. Paul's cathedral.[148]

Steven Gunn has argued that while no direct correlation can be drawn between Garter

elections and specific political engagements, the Order successfully intertwined patronage with

politics and military assistance and could serve as a barometer for assessing and ensuring

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[146] Details on the gift of the heart from Sigismund in 1416 and other relics can be found in Hugh E. L. Collins, The Order of the Garter 1348-1461: Chivalry and Politics in Late Medieval England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000) 224-5. The chapel was further embellished with an enormous altarpiece (transported from Nottingham in ten pieces), a roodscreen depicting Edward the confessor and Saint George, an enormous gilt statue (shown in Figure 19 and 21) bench ends and narrative window glazes. Riches 89-93,108.

[147] For a detailed account of Garter proceedings on the Feast of St. George see Collins, 195-200.

[148] This spectacle was recorded in The Great Chronicle of London as follows; "Upon seynt georges evyn beyng the 21 day of apryll, the king wyth an honorabyll company of ladys spirituell and temporall cam ridyng thoruth the cyte from the towyr unto Paulys...and upon the morne yn the sme habyttes cam thidyr agayn and goodon processyon havying ban before hym in the handys of the Bysshop of Chesstyr a legg of Seynt George inclosid in sylvyr porcellis gylt, the which was newly sent unto the kyng's grace ffrom the kyng of the Romayns. At this procession were present many knights of the order of the garter." A. Thomas and L. D. Thornley, eds. The Great Chronicle of London (London: George W. James, 1938) 328.

loyalties.[149] Under Henry VII, many of those elected occupied key positions within the court.[150]

In addition, Henry used the Order as a forum for international relations, investing select foreign

dignitaries with membership.[151] As the Order was widely revered, such an honor was coveted.

Bound together under the sign of Saint George and the unbreakable knot of chivalry, the Order

was a ceremonial vice grip for forging allegiances between kings.

The centrality of the Garter cult in cultivating these diplomatic ties is evidenced in a now

lost manuscript illumination, surviving only as a copied engraving and dating from the end of the

fifteenth century (Figure 23). In this imaginary conceit Henry VII nourishes his own reputation

as a promoter of peace, possibly as Shaw suggests, inspired by Henry's instrumental role in

securing a treaty between Austria and France in 1492.[152] He is depicted alongside the German

Emperor, the King of Spain; the King of the Romans, the Archduke of Austria and the King of

France in adoration of an elevated image of St. George ceremoniously unveiled from a tented

pavilion. In this fictional scenario the Christian kings pay homage to St. George, and

inadvertently acknowledge the supremacy of the English crown. This image is a phenomenal

conceit and a flagrant assertion of imperial ambition. Indeed, Henry's adoption of the closed

crown as a symbol of his supreme temporal authority is undoubtedly a gesture in that direction,

and with its bold inscription in the mintage in conjunction with a new attention to profile

portraiture, Henry is posturing as a Roman Emperor (Figure 24).[153] By the time the Holyrood

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[149] Steven Gunn, "Chivalry and the Politics of the Early Tudor Court," Chivalry in the Renaissance, ed. Sydney Anglo (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1990) 111-116. In 1487 Henry used the feast as an opportunity to test the loyalties of members. Gunn 111.

[150] Sir Thomas Lovell, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Treasurer of the Household and Treasurer of the Chamber; Sir John Dynam, Lord Treasurer of England; Sir Richard Guilford and Sir Edward Pynings, Comptrollers of the Household; Sir William Stanley, Lord Chamberlain; John de Vere, Constable of the Tower and keeper of the lions and leopards; Sir Charles Somerset and Sir Edward Poynings, ambassadorial missions. See Appendix B.

[151] In order, Maximilian the First, Emperor of Germany, John, King of Denmark, Guido Ubaldo, Duke of Urbino, Philip, King of Castile and Charles, Arch-Duke of Austria, Prince of Spain and later Emperor of Germany.

[152] Henry Shaw, Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages Vol. 2 (London: William Pickering, 1843) 66.

[153] The profile portrait on the silver testoon and groat remarked for its verisimilitude was in circulation c. 1500-9. Chrimes 533-4. The closed imperial crown was adopted as early as 1487. In addition the terms 'Lord Sovereign" although used prior to Henry's reign were instituted as a necessary formality, and in 1489, Henry minted the first

panel was executed, however, these self-extensions so optimistically assembled were losing their confident lustre. Though still donning the imperial crown replicated insistently within the image, the longevity of his dynastic pretentious is threatened by the ravenous dragon skulking around the weakened borders of the body politic intent on consuming all hope of perpetuity.

III. Of Garter Knots

As we have seen, the protectorship of St. George was a powerful and persuasive fiction exploited by the English Crown. Typically, St. George is invoked for militaristic purposes to secure the borders of England's sacred geography. Could St. George appear on borders of the body politic to do battle with the formless demons lurking on the edges of Henry VII's suspicious mind in order to secure the dangerous threshold of dynastic succession?

Returning to the legend as told by Jacobus Voraigne, it is of note that the entire dragon episode centers on the problem of dynastic continuity (in addition to the annihilating tendencies of the democratic process). There is certainly no public angst over the devouring of any other of the city's inhabitants. The King and Queen have only one issue, a daughter, in whom all their longings are bound. They are thus doubly threatened: by the lusty appetite of a ferocious beast and the inevitable devouring of the bloodline through a marriage. The two threats are not unrelated since the virgin princess approaches the ravenous monster adorned as if on her wedding day. St. George's heroic intervention is similarly twofold, removing the first threat by subduing the wild animal (impaling it to death in visual depictions), and deferring the second by obeying his oath of chastity and refusing the offer of the virgin's hand. St. George secures the borders of the body politic whose protective walls are conceived in terms of sexual purity, expiated through

gold coin, a sovereign. Richard Britnell, <u>The Closing of the Middle Ages? England 1471-1529</u> (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1997) 54-5.

a monstrous surrogation. George keeps the specters of mortality at bay, preserving the fictions of dynastic continuity.

St. George's role in protecting the dynasty was visually appropriated in a manuscript illumination from the Bedford Hours, c. 1424 (Figure 25).[154] John of Lancaster, the Duke of Bedford and regent to the young Henry VI, is depicted on the left engrossed in prayer. Materializing before the spiritually aroused eyes of the pious Duke, the deceased King Henry V appears before his brother in the guise of St. George, or vice versa, draped in the sovereign's mantle of the Order of the Garter and attended by a squire carrying his sword and standard.[155] Considering that the Duke's patron saint was St. John the Evangelist, this unexpected visitation is significant. Pointing to the garter knot embroidered on his ermine lined robe, Henry/George reminds John of his binding oath to guard the regency for his son Henry VI until he is of age to rule England and France himself. George, appearing in the vacuous zone of the interregnum, is an ever present witness to the Duke's oath of loyalty, an all seeing eye of accountability perpetually revisited on the manuscript page. Supplementing the central miniature on the borders of the page are detailed vignettes of the excruciating tortures endured by the saint. Encircling these tiny illustrations and prolifically littering the margins are decapitated tree trunks, a reference to the Duke's personal insignia of the golden root. In conjunction with the central scene, however, these dismembered bodies take on new significance, their unearthed roots dangling like dripping blood, providing an unsavoury backdrop to the English arms. These decaying trunks draw on the rejuvenating powers of the resurrected saint to resuscitate the severed genealogical tree. In the Bedford Hours, deceased kings and patron saints haunt the living, interloping in the fissures of royal authority, securing the interregnum.

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[154] Janet Backhouse has argued that because the manuscript illuminations contained a political subtext, that the hours were not intended for the Duchess as a wedding gift, but rather the Duke himself. Janet Backhouse, " A Reappraisal of the Bedford Hours," British Library Journal London 7.1 (1981) 63-4.

I find this invocation of St. George particularly instructive, not only in his ambiguous attire, blurring the boundaries between patron saint and garter king, but also in his role as witness. It is my contention that St. George is similarly invoked in the Holyrood panel to secure the Tudor succession and that the Garter Knights were intended as the viewing audience. Attending the king in his person during the yearly festivities, the Garter knights would have ample opportunity to observe such an image adorning the wall of his privy chamber or alternatively his chapel, if it served in a more liturgical setting. While praying for the souls of deceased members, including Henry's wife and son Arthur, the Garter members could be simultaneously reminded of their abiding oath of fealty to honor Arthur's replacement, Henry, the Duke of York.[156] The Garter lords and knights would have been well versed in the covert operations of Tudor vision and particularly attune to the nuanced significance of St. George's invocation and more importantly could and did influence the course of events if the need arose. That several possible rival claimants were amongst the membership is cause enough. But the fact that by 1503 an alarming number of these loyal members had fallen from grace, including the king's own chamberlain (lately executed), and the infamous Edmund de la Pole, suggests a breakdown in the symbolic cohesion of the order and the need for such a prompt.[157]

The spatial arrangements at Windsor chapel certainly provided visual confirmation for the process of dynastic transfer. The twenty-four Garter knights and lords were divided between the running stalls along the North and South walls facing each other like two tournament teams.[158] The king and his heir apparent occupied the two returning stalls at the West end of the chapel

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[155] Riches, 111.

[156] Significantly, in his will, Henry bequeathed a large statue of the saint encrusted with jewels from the royal coffers to adorn the Garter Chapel: "Also we geve and bequethe to Almighty God, our Lady his blessed Moder and Saint George, within oure College of Windsore....a grete Ymage of Saint George, of gold, peysing ccxL unces, garnished with rubies, perles, saphires, diamonds and other stones, the which Ymage is nowe in our Juell house." Astle 36.

[157] It is worth noting that during the reign of Henry VII the garter surrounded the names of the Garter members inscribed above their designated stalls. For unruly members see Appendix B.

[158] Riches 108.

opposite the altar, in a revolving continuum. More conclusively however, the following incident confirms Henry's utilization of the Order in securing the succession. In 1508 a furious storm forced the vessel carrying King Philip of Castille and his Queen Joanna to make an emergency landing onto English shores. As the historical chronicles record, the King took advantage of this fortuitous misadventure by cajoling the marooned dignitaries to stay for a time at his expense. It is well noted that after wining and dining Philip and wooing him with sporting matches and jousting events, Henry was able to pluck the delinquent Edmond de La Pole from Philip's custody into his own hands for disciplinary measures. However, in an ingenious manoeuver of diplomatic agility Henry VII engineered a chivalric swap. Hastily assembling the garter members at Windsor, Philip was inducted into the Order of the Garter, and his son Henry, the new Prince of Wales into the Order of the Golden Fleece.[159] Signing an "amnity of peace...sealed with the great seal and privy seals," Philip was bound in an oath of honor and allegiance to this vulnerable King in training.[160]

The Holyrood panel emerges as a visual solution to the problem of dynastic perpetuity. The desire for self-extension is transformed into a dramatic tableau depicting the pilgrimage of the Tudor soul. It is a political strategy disguised under the sacred aura of devotional piety, which attempts to coerce its attentive viewers into a contractual agreement to preserve the continuity of the Tudor bloodline. Plunging through the visionary aperture, the viewer encounters a vision of an English Jerusalem, an emblem of eternity, shimmering on the horizon. So near and yet so far, this tantalizing apparition of sacred national eschatology is blocked by an almighty struggle waged outside its pearly gates. St. George, decked out in his national finery brandishes his sword against the heinous dragon whose lustful eyes spy a genealogical dinner in

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[159] This spur of the moment orchestration is noted by the herald chronicler: "And as I suppose few or none that were there that ever saw castle or other lodging in all things so well and richly appointed and the great continual fair open

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the trembling Tudor soul. Unfortunately the contest is undecided. Curiously stilted and almost gracefully levitated, George and the Dragon are locked in a stalemate. The promise of eternity tantalizingly offered in the illusory distance is forever deferred by this unresolved conflict. Desire is churned up in expectation only to be thrown back to the surface. Accumulating in the pregnant space between St. George and his foe, desire spills out into allegory, weaving its connective trails around the fragmentary forms pressed up against the surface.

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household so many noblemen so well appointed and with so short warning heretofore as I think hath not been seen."
Campbell 300.
[160] Campbell 297.

CHAPTER 3

Allegorical Visions on the Horizon of Desire

> Allegory becomes for literature as for theology, a vivifying archaeology of occulted origins and a promissory eschatology of postponed ends...an essentially pietistic cosmology devoted to the corroboration of divinely ordered space and time.
>
> Joel Fineman[161]

> The accumulation of signs is none other than an accumulation of force reflected, represented, and reserved in power in proportion to the infinite desire of domination that is its essence.
>
> Louis Marin[162]

> [The Pilgrim] does not know how because it was forgotten, he is unable because even if he had remembered and could retain the content [of his vision], the word would be lacking. For we see many things with the intellect for which there are no verbal signs.
>
> Dante Aligheri[163]

Silhouetted and contoured against the lowering sky, St. George and the Dragon levitate in meditative isolation, each carving out a distinctive spatial niche. The royal clones, though equally constrained in their shallow frontality are conceived as a unit, like a visual stutter resonating to the edges of the picture plane. Pressed up against the surface of the picture plane, these forms are compressed like specimens under a microscopic lens creating an unsettling tension or push and pull between surface and spatial depth. Though seemingly haphazard, each element is carefully placed for our maximum viewing inspection, vying equally for focal attention. Ambiguously unfettered by geographical stability, these flattened forms seem to come alive, reverberating to the rhythm of our angel friend who swishes the curtains back and forth hypnotically. His wings create a criss cross effect, impelling the forms to resonate diagonally, colliding together in startling similarity.[164] Underneath these oscillating figures, identities

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[161] Fineman 49.
[162] Marin 28.
[163] In his 'Letter to Con Grande" quoted by Terkla 237.
[164] Astell 38.

proliferate, oozing out from their contoured confinement, copulating together in allegorical abandon.

In the membrane of forms on the Holyrood panel surface, as in the liminal dimension of Aevum, the sacred and the profane consort together in transcendence of both space and time. Flickering in and out of the mind's eye, phantasmal recollections are retrieved from memory as fleeting but insistent correspondences. Allegory plunges across the landscape of time, scouring memories residue in an insatiable quest for its reflective beginnings and chimerical ends, weaving her connective histories around these recollected ruins. According to Benjamin: "Allegory establish[es] itself most permanently where transitoriness and eternity confront each other most closely."[165] In this chapter we will investigate the way in which allegory generates its recuperative histories and the beginnings and ends to which they tend. In the course of this exploration we will discover startling imaginary resemblances certainly circulating within the symbolic reservoir of the nobility at court and more particularly the Garter knights. By tracing allegory's trajectories we from Tudor history to divine eschatology, we will observe the way in which the image blurs the distinction between the sacred and the secular, mythic time and real time, intertwining history and identity through the structure of allegorical desire.

I. Painted Identities

The constricted illusory depth of the Holyrood panel and its curiously sequestered forms are, in fact, characteristic of much of sixteenth century painting in England. Though seen as retrograde by later historians, these stylistic 'idiosyncrasies' carried a political expediency lacking in the naturalistic modes utilized across the channel. Kipling's invaluable work on Tudor patronage has unfortunately focused exclusively on the derivative nature of artistic endeavors at

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[165] Benjamin 224.

court, and by his account, the emulation of Burgundian style.[166] The problem with this approach is that it fails to account for the 'transformation' inherent in any adoption. A style or mode of expression cannot be seen as a disinterested aesthetic but a politically and culturally embedded signifying practice. Therefore what is perhaps more intriguing than patterns of adoption is the way in which the English visual repertoire is resistant to stylistic developments elsewhere. Although trained in the Flemish style, Maynard Wewyck, the principal candidate for the Holyrood panel's authorship would have been expected to conform not only to the viewing tastes of the English nobility but also to the relative proficiency of contemporary viewing strategies.[167] In order to understand the political and social significance of such sylistic distinctions within the Holyrood panel, let us briefly consider the formal role of painting within the Early Tudor Court.

Under Henry VII the Great Wardrobe retained two court painters whose areas of expertise encompassed portraiture and heraldic decoration respectively. According to Gordon Kipling, the employment of a portraitist was prompted by the visit of the Flemish ambassadors in 1496 who presented Henry VII with commemorative portraits of their sovereigns, Philip the Fair and Joanna of Castile. As Henry was unable to reciprocate this gracious gesture, Maynard Wewyck was appointed shortly thereafter to avoid any future embarrassments.[168] Portraiture, it will be well known, functioned as a form of flattery and diplomacy, an assurance of loyalty and even a presence by proxy.[169] Most importantly, however, portraiture was instrumental in constructing

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[166] Kipling, "Introduction," The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance (The Hague: Leiden University Press, 1977) 1-9.
[167] It is clear by the extant portraits by Maynard that mimetic accuracy was a primary concern under certain conditions. A good indication of Henry VII's attentiveness to the importance of exactness are found in the amusing and itemized instructions given to Francis Marsin to obtain a detailed and accurate portrayal of the Queen of Naples and if it be not accurate to have it fixed by a greater master. See Campbell, 223 ff.
[168] Kipling, Triumph of Honour 52.
[169] Sir Thomas Lovell one of Henry VII's most favored subjects and garter knight possessed only one painting, a portrait of Henry VII. Gunn, "Sir Thomas Lovell" 122.

and stabilizing identity, fusing a physiognomic facade with an exemplary ideal.[170] The second

painter at court was John Serle whose primary duties pertained to heraldic work and included

designing armorial banners and tabards for funerals, weddings and court spectacles.[171] Though

Serle has elicited little enthusiasm from Kipling, heraldry was fundamental to artistic practices

for the English nobility. As portraiture was a new venture in painting for the English court, it

was functionally integrated into and stylistically adapted to accommodate the heraldic state of

mind. It has been noted that no less a master than Holbein conformed to these stylistic

requirements while under the employment of Henry VIII, severely reducing the illusion and

spatial depth of his portraits. Both Henry VII and Henry VIII have been remarked for their

excessive attention to the display of heraldic devices.[172] Heraldry is certainly ubiquitous in the

Holyrood panel, encrusting pavilions, horse reigns and cloths of gold. In addition to these

descriptive references, Heraldry is present as a mode of expression.

By the sixteenth century, heraldry had developed into an erudite science, a lineal

cartography systematizing and regulating the genealogical records of the English nobility. Coats

of Arms denoted not only one's aristocratic status but also one's lineal history. They were visual

records of blood.[173] The anxieties around these symbols of identification were manifold and

disputes over unlawful possession of arms or ancestral rights to a particular emblazon were

sometimes settled through the Court.[174] In the reign of Henry VII and more concertedly under

his son, heralds were utilized as enforcement officers, charged with making regular visitations to

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[170] See Joanna Woodall, "Introduction: Facing the Subject," Portraiture: Facing the Subject, ed. Joanna Woodall (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997. 1-28.
[171] Serle excites little enthusiasm from Kipling because of his native origins in England. Kipling, "Origins of Tudor Patronage" 134-5.
[172] Britnell 58.
[173] Interestingly, heraldic marks originated as wax seals or marks of guarantee appended to contracts Anthony Wagner, Heraldry in England (London and New York: Penguin, 1946) 1-3.
[174] Wagner cites the three notorious cases of Lovel vs. Morley, 1386, Scrope vs. Grosvenor, 1389 and Grey Vs. Hastings, 1410. Wagner 14.

insure legitimate tenureship and often doubling as surveillance officers and diplomatic spies.[175]

Such vigilance is understandable. Power was legitimized through the fictions of blood, that

evanescent substance pulsating down through generations, that genealogical soul preserved

through the procreation of sons. With the breakdown of feudal society and increasing upward

mobility at court, the clamp down on lineal identification calls attention to the erosion of these

representational strategies.

At the same time that heraldry was becoming increasingly institutionalized, its

emblematic forms crossed over from official documentation into more imaginative and recondite

allegorical play. Tournament impresa shields, for example, were sites for inventing fictional

identities cryptically inscribed in paint on the exterior surface, in an emblematic play of vibrant

forms for the decoding amusement of the courtly ensemble (Figure 26). On a more personal

level, 'canting arms' used name punning or symbols denoting particular virtues within

emblazons. In addition, the constituent parts of coats of arms, colours and symbols, provided a

visual springboard for reminiscence and could be used to tell stories of crusading adventures or

family history.[176] This association of erudition and wit with heraldry has clear associations with

the emblem whose prodigality burgeoned in the later sixteenth century England.[177] Emblems

were aggregate designs that incorporated an eclectic mixture of visual signs or symbols into a

single surface.[178] In emblems, the assortment of seemingly incompatible forms is resolved in the

mind of the viewer, or as in courtly spectacles, the body of the king.[179] In the words of David

Evett: "The work is not a complete image of the idea, but a set of materials for constructing such

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[175] Gunn "Chivalry" 119.
[176] Heraldry was frequently used as such in romance tales. Maurice Keen, Chivalry (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984) 130ff.
[177] Michael Leslie has discussed the way in which portraiture in the sixteenth century can be closely associated with the emblem. "The Dialogue Between Bodies and Souls: Pictures and Poesy in the English Renaissance," Word and Image 1 (1985): 16-30.
[178] Evett 79.

an idea."[180] Interestingly, emblems were employed in the architectural apertures that adorned the frontispieces of books. Allegory here retains a residual association with visionary experience calling attention to its absent ecclesiastical roots. It is configured as a transformative gateway introducing the Aevum of the text (Figure 27). Though the Holyrood panel is not an emblem in the strict sense, its confluence with regards to discordant surface play calls attention to the allegorical operations called up by formal designation.

While the tapestries and cloths of Arras adorning the walls of the royal residences depicted mythological subjects, historic battles, courtly romance and the leisurely pursuits of the aristocracy, painting within the early Tudor court was strictly associated with the work of identification.[181] Portraiture grafted a noble ideal onto the external body while heraldry was intent on authenticating that nobility by documenting the ancestry of the blood. Encompassing both portraiture and heraldry, painting delineated body and soul, outside and inside, visage and blood. In the Holyrood panel, both painterly modes are present. In the Holyrood panel, heraldic insignia are blended with corporeal presence in an unstable construction of a Tudor identity. In addition to the heraldic insignia embedded in the tournament props and costumes, the delineated contours of St. George and the Dragon compressed against the surface of the panel are reminiscent of heraldic emblazonment. More intriguingly, they recall the standards ceremoniously presented by Henry VII at St. Paul's after his victory at Bosworth Field: the red dragon of Wales, the Red Cross of Saint George, and the Dun Cow.[182] In this evocation of heraldry, the Holyrood panel calls attention to its function as purveyor of a lineal history. The

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[179] Evett refers here to the triumphal pageants produced under Elizabeth I. It is evident, however, that this same kind of resolution within the body of the monarch was already operating in the civic triumphs staged for Henry VII and even earlier.

[180] Evett 97.

[181] For an inventory of subject matter on tapestries in royal residences in the early sixteenth century see W. G. Thomson, A History of Tapestry: From the Earliest Times until the Present Day (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906) 263-274.

Holyrood panel can therefore be seen as a genealogical strategy employing allegory to trace out a legitimating history in blood.

To further demonstrate the fluidity between portraiture and heraldry in the English court, consider the genealogical paintings in the Great Hall at Richmond. Demonstrating a legitimate bloodline was crucial to sustaining the crown and a virtual obsession with Henry, whose rather dubious royal pretensions stemmed from his mother Margaret Beaufort (a lineal claim absolutely prohibited in Fortesucue's text on English governance). [183] Cognisant of this, Henry took great pains in researching or manipulating his ancient ancestry, tracing his forebears back to Brutus, Arthur and Cadwalader, the last of the Britons. Henry thus inscribes his own body at the apex of a line of pure English stock. [184] In 1506, Polydore Vergil was employed by Henry VII to inscribe these connections to the ancient Britons into official history.[185] These genealogical recoveries evidently pleased Henry who delighted in having them recited out loud (repeatedly) at mealtimes.[186] For the Great Hall at Richmond, Henry commissioned Maynard to flesh out these ancestral selections in paint. In the Hall were hung a series of portraits running the length of the long galley and flanking either side. These depicted "the noble kings of this realm… [including Brutus, and Arthur]...visaged and appearing like bold and valiant knights. And so their deeds

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[182] DeLloyd J. Guth has identified this heraldic device with the House of Warwick, a faction of the House of York. "Richard III, Henry VII and the City: London Politics and the 'Dun Cowe,' Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages: A Tribute to Charles Ross, ed. Ralph A. Griffiths and James Sherborne (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1986) 197.

[183] Fortescue writes "For the law of England adjudges that the issue never to follow the condition of the mother, but always that of the father." Sir John Fortescue, "In praise of the Laws of England," On the Laws and Governance of England, ed. Shelley Lockwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 60. For Henry's ancestral claims see footnote 10 and Appendix A.

[184] Campbell ix. One of these genealogical charts tracing the ancestry of Henry VII back to Cadwalader and aligning it with the lineage of Christ is found in British Library, MS Kings 395. These conceits are further advertised through the naming of his first-born Arthur. On Arthur's creation as the Prince of Wales the monk at Westminster duly supplied him with a genealogy. For a discussion see Mary E. Griffin, "Cadwalader, Arthur and Brutus in the Wigmore Manuscript," Speculum 16 (1941) 100ff.

[185] According to Vergil, Cadwalader was visited by an apparition, which prophesied to him that his descendent (Henry) would recover the land. Hays 5. Gabrielle M. Spiegel has argued for genealogy as a structuring frame for medieval historiography.

[186] Campbell lx and 9-11.

and acts in the chronicles are right evidently both shown and declared."[187] At the apogee of this

noble line, placed above the throne was appropriately "the seemly picture and personage of our

most excellent and high sovereign now reigning upon us his leige people."[188] The great hall is

transformed into a memory chamber, a visual compendium of reflected similitudes, and a

florilegium of heroic kings reverberating through time, finding their ultimate mirror in the living

corpus of the reigning monarch. The great hall performs the work of allegorical recovery for

those failing to draw out these obvious comparisons. These genealogical conceits were exhibited

to captive audiences like the Spanish entourage present at the wedding celebrations for Katherine

and Arthur.[189] We can see here how portraiture is conformed to this paratactic mode of

allegorical accumulation and assimilated forms.

II. Bloody Histories

Despite these visual and verbal recitations, blood remained a niggling thorn in the side of

the Tudor rose. Henry's wife Elizabeth of York, as the eldest surviving daughter of Edward IV,

had a far superior claim to the throne, and was more instrumental to Henry's accession than he

would care to admit. Before Bosworth, after an abortive attempt to land in Wales in 1483 to

amass an army against Richard III, Henry Tudor was forced to regroup in Brittany. Here Henry

rephrased his entitlement to royal power through the rhetoric of chivalric rescue and

consequently ensured the support of his troops. Having enumerated Richard's treacherous

activities, Henry pledged:

> Yea, a tyrant more than Nero, for he hath not only murdered his nephew, being his king and
> sovereign lord, bastarded his noble brethren, and defamed his virtuous and womanly mother, but
> also compassed all the means and ways that he could invent how to stuprate his own niece under

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[187] Kipling, Receyt 72

[188] Kipling, Receyt 72.

[189] The use of painting to educate foreign dignitaries on the preeminence of the King was a tactic employed by Henry VIII. Glenn Richardson, "Entertainments for the French ambassadors at the court of Henry VIII," The Society for Renaissance Studies (1995): 404-415.

the pretense of a cloaked matrimony; which lady I have sworn and promised to take to my mate and wife, as you all know and believe. If this cause be not just, and this quarrel godly, let God, the Giver of Victory, judge and determine.[190]

After his victory at Bosworth Field, however, this knight in shining armour seemed far less attentive to the fair virgin that had justified his cause, and only after his own coronation, and the insistence of parliament did Henry uphold his oath.[191] This matrimonial gesture proved to be, in the representational politics of rule, Henry's most valuable asset, far outweighing the merits of martial victory and the technicalities of blood right. Even the papal proclamation declaring Henry's legitimacy as ruler addressed the peaceful accord brought about by the union of the warring factions of Lancaster and York, before substantiating Henry's personal claim.[192]

The lust for absolute power fueled by narcissism abides no reflected glory. Desiring his own body to be the beginning and end of all historical panegyric, Henry commissioned two tapestries to record his glorious deeds, and in the process subjected Elizabeth to virtual erasure. These tapestries can be seen as corrective lenses or structural moulds visually clarifying the way in which his reign should be comprehended and memorized. In addition, as will become clear, they have an uncanny resonance with the Holyrood panel. The first tapestry represents Henry's conquest at Bosworth and is recorded in an inventory as follows: "Item, one pece of Arras of the comyng into Englonde ofking henrye viith taking with thone hand the crowne from king Richard the thurde usurper of the same, & with thother hand holding a roose crownde."[193] Considering that Henry had earlier purchased a detailed series on the Destruction of Troy, this theme aligns

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[190] A. F. Pollard, The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources Vol. 1 (London: Longmont, Green and Co., 1913) 8. Chrimes writes that upon hearing Henry's intentions to marry Elizabeth, "the assembled company swore homage to him as if he were king already." Chrimes 27.
[191] For a transcription of the request put forth by Sir Thomas Lovell see Nicholas Harris Nicolas, The Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York: Wardrobe Accounts of Edward the Fourth with a Memoir of Elizabeth of York and Notes (London: William Pickering, 1830) ixiii.
[192] Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, Tudor Royal Proclamations Volume 1: The Early Tudors (1485-1553) (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964) 5-6. With successive rebellions erupting in the years following, the proclamation was reprinted as a reminder of this in 1494, 1495 and 1497. Anglo 19.
[193] Kipling, "Origins" 144.

this victorious act of Henry VII with this great myth of urban foundation.[194] The second

commission depicted the wedding of Arthur and Katherine. Although the first is no longer extant,

and the second survives only as fragments, the central design follows the standard iconographic

formula as shown in the woodcut churned out by the Westminster Printing Press to promote the

event (Figure 28 and 29).[195] Significantly, in the wedding tapestry Henry VII, elevated on the

throne in the centre, has usurped the position usually reserved for the officiating priest. In both

tapestries, then, Henry's body is the beginning and end of visibility, the sacred centre from which

these marvelous deeds spring forth. Tudor history is encapsulated by these two exultant

moments: the foundation of the dynasty and its promise of continuity. Henry's peerless victories

in battle are celebrated in the miraculous emancipation of England, sans damsel of course, and

his incomparable sagacity in matters of diplomacy are declared in the symbolic union of

marriage, though not his own. This dialectic of war and marriage is uncannily recalled in the

Holyrood panel, though with significant alterations. Before addressing these, let us consider this

dialectic and its visual provocation at the court of Henry VII.

While under the reign of Edward IV, the nation languished in times of peace, demanding

war as a sign of the security of the realm and praising the crushing of his enemies in gory

details.[196] In contrast, Henry cultivated a reputation for diplomatic agility and his shrewd and

novel policies of peace were lauded by biographers and historiographers as exemplary.[197]

Marriage was the supreme expression of peaceful accord, symbolically binding potentially

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[194] For details on the purchase of the tapestries see Thomson, 128. Henry VII claimed to be descended from Brutus, the grandson of Aeneus who first settled in Britain. Geoffrey of Monmouth, History of the Kings of Britain, trans. Sebastian Evans, rev. Charles W. Dunn (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1958) 6ff. Griffin 109.

[195] Considering that English use of the printing press for propaganda was fairly late, the importance of this event to Henry's power politics is evident. The only other woodcut from his reign is one depicting the towering figure of Henry VI presiding over his own shrine in Windsor chapel, probably distributed on site for pilgrims. Edward Hodnett, English Woodcuts: 1480-1535 (1935). For backwardness in use of printing press, see Richmond, 192.

[196] The Book of Noblesse written to Edward IV to entice him into a War against the French is an example of this warring mentality. John Gough Nichols, ed., The Boke of Noblesse Addressed to King Edward the Fourth on his Invasion of France in 1475 (New York: Burt Franklin, 1972).

incalcitrant nations in wedded unity. In the prologue to <u>The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne</u>, the published account of the famous royal wedding, the chronicler condemns the ruinous designs of choleric princes who think that "great praise and magnificence of theym to be in effusion of bloded, stryfe and batelles." Henry VII, on the other hand, is adulated for his sagacity in pursuing "unity and peace" through marital alliance.[198] However, as Georges Duby has astutely pointed out, the arts of courtly love and the arts of war were in fact more intimately related.[199]

Despite the chroniclers' earlier moralizing on matrimonial peace, his description of the interior of Saint Paul's Cathedral, where the sacramental rites of Arthur and Katherine took place, presents a different view. The walls were magnificently wardrobed in rich clothes of Arras representing "the noble and valient actes, stories and gestes that for the moost partie poetes and oratours writt and remembre in their commentes, bokes and scripture, as well in the besegyng of noble cities as othir batalles and turneis."[200] For anyone who missed this symbolic coupling of sexual union and urban conquest, the disguisings following the event made it abundantly clear. In a variation on the theme of the castle of love, eight "Goodly and fresshe ladies" ensconced in a fortress prop resist the seductive entreaties and verbal advances of the Spanish armies. The Knights of the Mount of Love however, with "moch males and curragyous myend" charged the castle "which they frothwith assaultid so and in such wise that the ladies, yelding themselvys, descendid from the seid castell and submittid them to the pouer, grace and will of thoes noble knightes."[201] Having wrested submission, the knights proceeded to lead the conquered ladies in a

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[197] Vergil wrote "He was most successful in war, although by nature he preferred peace to war." Hay 147. Bernard Andre, the blind poet of Toulouse, exalted the pursuit of peace above all other virtues. Campbell xx.

[198] "The most noble and prudent kynges in the world as well our excellent sufrayng and Prince of England, kyng Henry the VII as the worthy and famous Prince, Fardinand, by provysion of God, King of Espayn, in likewise have allowid the sentence of unite and peac to be moost expedient. To thaccomplishment wherof, they have propond everych to tother ther worthy and goodly issue...to be cowplid by the loyng bonde and sacrament of wedlock." Kipling, <u>Receyt</u> 3

[199] Georges Duby, "On Courtly Love," <u>Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages</u>, trans., Jane Dunnett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994) 57.

[200] Kipling, <u>Recyt</u> 40

[201] Kipling 57.

rousing dance. Following these dramatic interludes, the tournament events gave full expression to the violence underlying these revelries. Uncannily the published descriptions of the trappings of the lavish spectacle seem to resonate with the pageant paraphernalia depicted in the Holyrood panel. I am not suggesting that the Holyrood panel is a nostalgic retrospective of the jousting tournaments held at Richmond, rather, that these similarities carry residual meanings inflecting the Holyrood ensemble with latent significance.

Leading off the sporting events, the Duke of Buckingham, the chief challenger entered the field enclosed in a covered 'chapell' or pavilion "hangid or arteynyd abouth wyth white and grene satyn palid, brauderid righth goodly upon every side and ende wyth 4 grete rede rosis.....drawyn on lowe whelys." This description is clearly reminiscent of the Holyrood panel and foregrounds the explicit referencing of tournament events within the painting. More interestingly, when the pavilion "came ffore the kyngis Tent" the Duke "issuyd out" of the pavilion "armyd wyth an excedyng bush of Ostrich ffedyrs upon his helmet and his hors." These plumes were obviously the latest in sexy tournament apparel, though unlike St. George in the Holyrood panel, were removed before the fighting began.[202] As the presence of the king effects the opening of the pavillion tents, so in the Holyrood panel the eyes of the viewer provokes the angel to draw aside the curtains. The defenders entered the in pantomime, drawing from a standard repertoire of chivalric themes. The Earl of Essex, for example, entered the tilt in a mountain, holding a tree in his hand. Perched on top of the mountain was a virgin with a unicorn resting on her lap. This extravagant stage set was wheeled in by a "rede dragunnys", attached by a green and white string fastened around his neck.[203] These romantic trappings provided a veneer of chivalric romance to these violent sports, allowing the courtly spectators to weave an

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[202] "The sayd Duke causid the said bush of ffedyrs to be taken ffrom his hede pese and to be preentyd unto the kyngis tent." Thomas Chronicle of London 312

[203] Thomas 313.

allegorical narrative around the sport of the jousting combatants. In addition to the echoing of tournament paraphernalia in the Holyrood panel, the unusual mirroring of St. George and the Dragon pitted against each other as equal assailants recalls the familiar images of jousting matches depicted in manuscript illuminations (Figure 30).

Formerly used as military lessons for training knights in the arts of war, by the fifteenth century tournaments had metamorphosed into a theatre for royal spectacle.[204] Though visually engaging, featuring costumed combatants, pageant floats and an elaborate chivalric tree, tournaments were lessons in royal supremacy, impressing upon attentive spectators the full potential of sovereign power unleashed. In the case of Arthur's nuptial festivities, this included the Spanish entourage and the Scottish ambassadors who were present at the event to negotiate a match between James V and Margaret Tudor. Tournaments, the requisite entertainment at a regal wedding, slipped from the simulated performance of war to a surrogate drama of sexual conquest, from the shedding of blood to its preservation in an endless flow pulsating forward into time.[205] This genealogical subtext is most apparent in the chivalric tree, generally erected prior to the event to attract contestants for the competition, on which would be hung, the "skuchons, shields and thronys" of the lords and knights participating in the jousts.[206] During the tournament proper this doubled as a programme and tally board with the royal Heralds appointed to keep score.[207] Accordingly, the chronicler of the Tudor royal wedding describes a chivalric tree "empayntid with plesaunt levys, floures and frute" positioned in prominent view at one end of the tilt. Again, these performative fictions blur the lines between the real and the imaginary, and

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[204] Kipling writes: "Just as the disguisings allegorized the marriage as an example of ideal love, so the tournaments defined that love as a theme of hour worthy of knightly combat." Kipling xxix. I believe there are more sinister inter-relations.

[205] Richard Barber and Juliet Barker, Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages (New York: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989) 169.

[206] Kipling, Receyt 52.

[207] Richard Marks and Ann Payne, eds., British Heraldry from its Origins to c.1800, (London: British Museum Press, 1978) .43-44.

fabricated personas mask the acerbic realities of blood bound identity, and the cruciality of defending its vulnerable borders. Chivalric trees and genealogical trees record these bloody histories of conquest, leaving a gruesome trail of casualties symbolically reenacted in the severing of bodies and the quartering of Arms (Figure 31).

Battle and marriage are visually woven together in the Tudor imagination and intimately conjoined in Henry's tapestry histories. These illustrated myths of dynastic beginnings are self-aggrandisements, narcissistic mirrors of royal identity reflecting and augmenting the body of the king. However, these glorious fictions were fraught by a libidinal imperative, for with the death of Arthur and Elizabeth the following year these imaginary facades were fast unraveling. The Holyrood panel can be seen as a defensive manoeuver, covering up Henry's threadbare histories. Strangely reminiscent of earlier fictions, the Holyrood panel is an uncanny double, an echo resounding back in time. Under the guise of sacred narrative, Henry reinvents the drama of his own succession at Bosworth Field and reverts to the prior act of conjugal amity in his marriage to Elizabeth of York, effectively inserting Tudor history into national hagiography.

As the unstable forms reverberate back and forth on the surface of the Holyrood panel, colliding in unexpected resemblance, St George and the Dragon begin to take on a distinctly Tudor air. St. George and his horse, dressaged in national insignia and Tudor emblems, positively vibrate with the coordinated pavilions below. As the Tudor liveries were green and white, this alignment with St. George is significant. George is Henry performing his chivalric heroics at Bosworth field. The trembling damsel dressed in Tudor garb is Elizabeth fending off the incestuous advances of her detestable uncle, Richard III, who is transformed into a diabolical monster, and disfigured by his infernal desires. Much is made of Richard's lechery in later Tudor histories. His portraits were modified to expose a monstrous hump allegedly caused by the

concupiscent misdemeanors of his mother.[208] Like the dragon, Richard's body became the

malleable ground for projected enmity, providing the requisite night against which the Tudor

light might shine. Edward Hall, transcribing these histories in salacious detail for the young

Edward VI, frames Henry's conquest in terms of these sexual intrigues which threaten not only to

contaminate the royal stock but national security as well. Elizabeth shrinking in horror at

Richard's insinuations, did not only "disagree and repudiate that matrimony but abhorred and

detested greatly his abominable desire" at which "most importunate and detestable

concupiscence" the common people did also protest. Henry Tudor by God's design did preserve

"that verteous and immaculate virgin from that lascivious and sacinerous acte" and taking her as

his own wife allowed, if we are to believe Henry's genealogical schemes, the royal veins to flow

once more with the untainted blood of the ancient Britons.[209]

Significantly it is with the loss of his wife's legitimizing presence, that Henry

commissions the Holyrood panel, revisiting this miraculous act of restitution noticeably absent

from his earlier historical schemes but reiterated ad nauseum in later celebrations of the Tudor

Foundation. At which holy union, writes Hall, "peace was thought to have descended out of

heaven into England." In the lower register of the panel, drawn together towards the centre in

stringent symmetry, Henry and Elizabeth revisit these sacramental rites of marriage, presided

over by an officiating angelic presence and calling up the yoking of family lines on a

genealogical tree. In typical representations of the Dragon myth, the courtly retinue appears in

the recesses of the image, peering over the castle ramparts to witness the gruesome spectacle of

their daughter's disemboweling as if it were a tournament joust (Figure 30). In the Holyrood

panel however, the royal ensemble have left the safety of their walled enclosure and become

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[208] King 22-3.

[209] Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England During the Reign of Henry the Fourth and the Succeeding Monarchs, to the end of the Reign of Henry the Eighth 1809 (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1965) 492.

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instead a spectacle for our consumption. With the overabundance of progeny aggressively

asserted in the Holyrood panel, royal concupiscence thus becomes a barometer for the nation's

prosperity, sustained by the purity of its royal bloodline and the promise of lineal plenitude – or

at least the assertion of it.

The Holyrood panel is therefore a performance of origins staged on the borders of the

body politic. Saint George becomes the structuring frame for these historical assertions,

transforming the Tudor idea into national myth. Interestingly, Rebecca Colman has argued that

St. George took hold in England because it filled an absence in English history, their story of the

first settlement of the Britons.[210] The dragon myth is after all, a story of urban liberation and as

we have seen, it is not so unusual for the king and the saint to cross dress. Oscillating back and

forth in a mutual augmentation, the hagiographic scene slips in and out of Tudor history in a

fleeting instance of recognition, flickering phantasms hovering deceptively in the mind's eye.

St. George becomes the iconographic ground for these allegorical extrapolations, a feeding

ground for the parasitic appetites of kings, who draw their legitimating sustenance from his

imaginary body. Through its allegorical impulse, the Holyrood panel inserts the Tudor accession

as the founding moment of England's true heritage and her future prosperity.[211] Notably, in

contradistinction to the tapestries this painting recalls, Henry VII has relinquished his position at

the apex of visibility. He is no longer the efficient cause of histories unfolding. Instead, the

mass of forms part in a swirling void, and culminate in a vision of national desire. England's

apotheosis at this moment seems perilously in danger of dissipating forever.

The Holyrood panel is a deflective shield covering up the bloody wounds of dynastic

perpetuity. It is an unstable surface for the play of heraldic identities, which attempt to protect

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[210] According to Colman, the Norman Conquest wiped out any history of the Briton settlement. Colman 172-3.

the body through an assertion of an authenticated Tudor identity and a sacred genealogical history declaring the nobility of its blood. The tremulous royal bodies emerge from shrouded seclusion dripping with heraldic over-determination. Meaning piles up on the surface hiding naked vulnerability in an over determined furor of symbolic assertion. Their invincibility thus threatened they are layered in prophylactic garb, robes of estate and cloths of gold sheathed around their vulnerable bodies in vestmented necessity. Progeny embellish the bodies of the king and queen with unfettered prolificacy, coating them in procreative magnificence. Swathed in crimson, the Royal bodies are dressed in the velvety colour of blood. Like the protective layers of kingly magnificence, the Holyrood panel participates in the Tudor wardrobing instinct. It is a 'coat-ing' of Arms, and a deflective shield always diverting the eye elsewhere. St George is an emblem of chastity masking the libidinal imperative of kings, endlessly rehearsing and deferring the threat of dynastic termination. Chastity and martial victory sit uneasily together performing a rather disturbing surrogation. The shield of St. George, momentarily withheld from the viewing eye, is reconfigured as the entire painting. As an allegorical Tudor tournament Impresa, it is powerful insignia of resurrection staving off the infernal beast of dynastic oblivion.

As allegory moves relentlessly in and out of the image, weaving its assimilative tales around the constituent parts, expanding in ever widening spheres, Henry is caught in a web of destabilizing tales disturbingly conjured up in the mind's eye. And the unacknowledged anxieties, which birthed these earlier subjectivities, return to the surface as the uncanny double. Elizabeth reappears on the scene (noticeably without the scepter of state) calling attention to her instrumentality in the stability of Henry's rule. The loathsome beast skewered in the sky recalls the red dragon of Cadwalader, one of Henry's celebrated identities. This monstrous resemblance

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[211] We can estimate the circulation of these conceits in the popular imagination as one legend dating from the 16th century identifies George as a son of a noble English family of royal blood marked at birth with a bloody red cross on his right hand, a golden garter on his left leg; and a red dragon on his breast.

is not inconsistent with popular disillusionment due to his later policies of rule, nor is it far from

his own incestual activities, marrying within the prohibited four degrees of affinity. Henry had

obtained no less than three papal dispensations to assuage these fears. The royal contingent is

nervously lined up like tournament escutcheons on a chivalric tree. Emerging from their

protective pavilions, these vulnerable bodies appear like contestants preparing to defend their

honour in a feat of arms. Though initially calling attention to lineal fortitude, this over-exuberant

protestation, draws attention to the royal family's diminishing ranks. Royal presence replicated

as an assertion of procreative strength mutates into a declaration of immanent death through

allegory's indiscriminate retrievals.

III. Apocalyptic Ends

As allegory twists its sinuous stories around the congeries of forms on the surface of the

Holyrood panel, the Tudors are intertwined into an ever-expanding interpretive universe.

Impelled by allegory's narcissistic desire, the Tudors and George are locked together in a figural

structure, which hurtles backwards and forwards through time, scouring memory for its reflected

beginnings and intimated ends. Under the momentum of this relentless imperialism, surface

gives way to spatial depth and returns to surface again. Allegory extends its colonizing influence

across the visionary expanse stretching from the flowery meadow at the threshold of vision to the

shimmering city at its outermost reaches. The Tudors are caught up in this relentless journey, not

only incorporated into sacred national mythology, but also situated within a master narrative of

eschatological desire.

Our visionary excursion began with an angelic apparition fluttering in the caesura

between eternity and time. This agent of divine revelation unveils a vision of the soul's desiring:

the promise of perpetuity envisaged as an eternal dwelling place glimmering in the distant view.

Though cloaked in the self-assured conceits of the English imagination, this national apotheosis is forever denied. Suspended in the gap between hope and its fulfillment is an infernal dragon, hovering ambiguously between defeat and renewed retaliation. Our visionary journey therefore ends with the beast of oblivion, whose gaping genitalia serve as an aperture of death recalling the cavernous mouth of hell. Winged creatures patrol Aevum's borders as accessories of the divine plan, propelling its narrative unfolding from the birth of time in the creation of the world to its climactic closure at the Last Judgement. Flickering in and out of the mind's eye, angels and their fallen counterparts buttress time, beating their wings at the outermost extremities of history's imagining, from the herbaceous border at the fore of the image to the urban sprawl on its illusory horizon. The Tudors and England are inserted through allegory into this sacred master plan, from the Garden of Eden to the city of Jerusalem in an eschatological pilgrimage through time.

The dragon unmasked in bestiary texts is an evolutionary form of the pestilent serpent. According to Bartholemew the Englishman, writing in the thirteenth century, this reptilian fiend is a "full thyrsty beaste" whose noxious breath corrupts the air with fiery emissions and infects the world with evil. His natural habitats are the murky rivers and the subterranean caverns of the earth. He is equipped with sharp teeth and a sinuous tail for biting and stinging victims and most intriguingly is endowed with "ryghte sharpe syght".[212] The most famous performance of this winged reptile was in the Garden of Eden as Satan the tempter, whose cunning deceptions ushered death into the world. In this infamous guise, Satan tempts Eve to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil enticing her with the promise of perpetuity. "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it our eyes will be opened and you will be like God knowing good and evil."[213] And so she and Adam ate and saw that they were naked. At the Fall, death enters the world with an attendant longing for lost eternity. In some depictions of this

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[212] Rodney Dennys, The Heraldic Imagination (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1975) 188.

origin story, as in this illustration from a fifteenth century manuscript, the female serpent

sprouting scaly wings coils around the central tree, making explicit the association between

dragons and serpents and their assumed gender (Figure 32).[214]

The conflation of sex and original sin, female seduction and consequent death was

commonplace in the medieval period and reformation.[215] Interestingly, in Alexander Barclay's

The Life of St. George published by Richard Pynson in 1515, the dragon is cast as female. Her

notorious appetite is driven by the passions of her insatiable womb, which infects the ground's

fertility, transforming lush verdure into a barren wasteland.[216] Female lust is incarnated as

monstrous animality. We should recall here that it was the unnatural passions of Richard III's

mother that affected his deformity.[217] In the Holyrood panel the dragon spreads her legs,

exposing cavernous genitalia as if emitting one last noxious stench onto the royal entourage

below. The womb is both the creator of life and the cause of its extinction. For kings, it is a

specter of impotence threatening to devour all hope of perpetuity. When Arthur succumbed to a

virulent skin disease, Henry's anxieties around his own incestual transgressions must have been

revived, despite the multiple papal dispensations. John of Salisbury had, after all, identified

leprous children as one of the punishments for unlawful consanguinity.[218] As exogamous

marriage resulted in the diffusion of blood, incest loomed as a temptation on the horizon of

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[213] Genesis 3 v.4, New Revised Standard Version.

[214] Riches 146.

[215] See Joseph Leo Koerner, The Moment of Self Portraiture in German Renaissance Art (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) 254ff.

[216] "Whan this deedly monstre lothely of figure had wastyd the bestes about on every syde her wombe insaciate no hunger coude endure." Alexander Barclay, The Life of St. George, ed. William Nelson (London: Oxford University Press, 1955) 30.

[217] More 8-9. Richard's expose of his mother's promiscuity as relayed by More, are interpreted by Peter Rudnytsky as a psychological referral of his anxieties over his deformity. Peter L. Rudyntsky, "More's History of King Richard III as an Uncanny Text," Contending Kingdoms: Historical, Psychological and Feminist Approaches to the Literature of Sixteenth-Century England and France, ed. Marie-Rose Logan and Peter L. Rudnytsky (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991) 157-8. .

[218] Georges Duby, The Knight, the Lady and the Priest: The Making of Modern Marriage in Medieval France, trans., Barbara Bray, 1981(New York: Random House, Inc., 1983) 202.

monarchical desire for absolute power.[219] Having eaten the forbidden fruits from the

genealogical tree, Henry and Elizabeth have forfeited Paradise.

As allegory probes the furthest extremities of history's visual imaginings, the enigmatic

angel who first appeared as a visionary accomplice flickers in and out of focus, metamorphosing

from the celestial sentinel guarding the gates of Eden into a chilling harbinger of doom.

Centrally commanding with fiery wings and piercing eyes, this heavenly emissary masquerades

as St. Michael, who weighs all souls on Judgement Day (Figure 33). Ominously, the uncanny

symmetry of the scene evokes the precarious equilibrium of judicial scales, wavering before

making its final plunge. Flanking either side, the penitential royals collectively await their

moment of reckoning. Like the remnant bodies spewed up by the mouths of animals at the last

days, every royal zygote has been gathered together for quality inspection. Imperiled souls

tremble on the edge of the abyss, fervently praying for merciful intervention. Caught up in the

menacing sky, the battle between St. George and the Dragon takes on cosmic significance as the

diabolical master of mutable form metamorphoses from seducing serpent to apocalyptic beast

(Figure 34). Perhaps St. George is St. Michael subduing the Antichrist, perhaps he is the

prophesied Christian king raised up in the last days to defeat the infidel forces and usher in a

reign of peace.[220] Regardless, this impending furor is strictly an English affair, an antecedent to

the attainment of the New Jerusalem and eternal blessedness for the righteous soul. The problem

of perpetuity that began in the garden comes to its climactic head in the apocalyptic furor at the

end of time. From Eden's gates to Jerusalem's appearance, the Tudor dynasty is sutured into this

divine eschatology through an allegorical pilgrimage of desire.

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[219] Marin 138-165. In reality, incest was a highly useful concept that could be used to annul unfruitful unions. For incest as a political tool see, Bruce Thomas Boehrer, Monarchy and Incest in Renaissance England (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992) 1-5.
[220] Curtis V. Bostick, The Antichrist and the Lollards: Apocalypticism in Late Medieval and Reformation England (Leiden, Boston and Koln: Brill, 1998) 22-29.

On the brink of dynastic annihilation, the Holyrood panel weaves its painted trail across the widening caesura as a pilgrimage through time. Pilgrimage as we have seen is an enunciative frame, which parallels the progress of the soul. The promise of perpetuity appears across the desolate planes as a glorious citadel quickening the soul with yearning. Promised, but never realized, eternity is always perceived from afar. Pictorial visions conjured up by desire are transcendental fictions, two-dimensional deceptions giving way to the cold hard facts of painted materiality. Always on this side, standing at the edge looking in, our unsatiated desires are sent right back to the surface, finding release in an allegorical excursion, weaving pilgrim stories around fragmentary forms, in search for truth and meaning. Like the prodigality of the Tudors replicating on the vision's edge, stories beget stories, winding around the flattened forms, engulfing the viewer in its twists and turns.

Though ultimately framed and allegorized as a pilgrimage of the soul, the evocation of St. George and the insistent and indeed obsessive attention to national regalia in the Holyrood panel draws out the underlying anxiety of the Tudor succession. The revered body of St. George provides a nodal point for the allegorical embellishment of the body of the king and his noble line. National hagiography and Tudor history are threaded together through allegory's typological desires. Structured within these legitimizing frames of saintly virtue and divine eschatology the legitimacy of the Tudor dynasty is corroborated as a reflected vision of these divine truths. Reflected in the light of this ultimate speculum, the Tudor dynasty is inserted as a vital link in the chain of final salvation. Hagiography bolsters history as a legitimating ground for Tudor allegory, which generates sacred stories of dynastic origins and salvific mythologies of urban liberation, n

Nourishing English apocalypticism, the Holyrood panel provides a tantalizing vision of national desire while St. George and Henry become mirrored prefigurations of the ultimate battle of good against evil waged in the last days.

Scouring memory for its narcissistic reflections, the work of allegory moves back and forth across time, assimilating the recollected phantasms accumulated in memory until seemingly discordant forms collide in a shock of discovery. This flash of revelation is a fleeting encounter momentarily perceived by the mind's eye only to congeal once more into the painterly facade. Again and again, allegory spins its desultory narratives as a compensatory substitute for its unattainable object of desire. These relentless excursions are doomed to failure, always frustrated by the unresolved conflict waged across the pinnacle of eternity envisaged but endlessly deferred.

As the vision dissipates, the dreamer awakes nonetheless transfigured by this extra-textual meandering. Though seemingly undirected, these allegorical excursions are impelled along by their own structural momentum framed at its outer extremities by the pilgrimage of Man. However, there are stories and then there are stories. There are the stories that can be spoken and those that can only be seen. These are stories that can be glimpsed but never heard; silent histories, fleetingly conjured up in the mind's eye, and forming a haunting suggestion impressed into memory, more insistent because of its undeclared presence. Transformation occurs in this space between sight and introspection. Frustrated by the ineffectual efforts of St. George and separated from the promise of what could be, allegory's unquenched desires accumulate in this fissure in time, and are thrown back onto the viewer as burden. Confronted by the gallery of imploring looks witnessing this viewing exchange, and pinned by the knowing eye of the celestial emissary, the viewer is compelled to act on the revelations of his own devising. In the early Tudor court, in a climate rife with political subterfuge, these silent and stealthy

transactions would be most expedient. For the Garter lords and knights attending the King's person on the feast Day of St. George, and sworn in loyal fealty by a knot of chivalric honor, this burden takes on political effect. Trapped in the coercive allegorical operations of Tudor vision, the Garter knights are contractually bound. The Holyrood panel is thus a political intervention painted on the edge of dynastic abyss, which brushes into its imaginary strokes the resurrecting power of St. George.

IV. Dynastic Denouements

Interpretive analysis, like history, is an allegorical enterprise, weaving recuperative tales around the textual remnants littering the landscape of times passing. Interpretation as such is retrospective pilgrimage, a nostalgic journey back through time.[221] Failure looms large on the horizon of desire, mocking these attempted excursions. But still these corpses impel our allegorical quest, rattling their bones across the ruins of time, enticing our desiring eye with the promise of discovery.

On April 21, 1509 Henry VII expired. However, his departure from this life was kept secret, even from Henry, now Prince of Wales, to allow the "substance of the Lords" to assemble.[222] The unorthodoxy of this delay suggests a political coup to secure the Tudor succession. These lords, according to Steven Gunn, were the Garter lords and knights who would be gathering in the city for their annual celebrations. St. George, it seems was protecting the perilous regions of dynastic transfer, staving off the beast of oblivion and ensuring the

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[221] Griffin has argued that Saint George was for the English this irretrievable origin. Georgone in Old English meant by gone days. Griffin 172.

[222] Shrewsbury, Herbert and Surrey and probably Lovell and Poynings. Gunn, "Chivalry" 127. See also S. J. Gunn, "The Accession of Henry VIII," Historical Research 64.155 (1991) 282.

continuity of the Tudor line. Henry VIII ascended to the throne on April 23, which is St.

George's Day.[223]

Ernst Kantorowicz has called attention to the way Aevum not only provided a solution to

preserve the immortality of the soul but also a political solution for the death of kings.[224] In

addition to his material and corruptible natural body, the king was also seen to possess a second

body, his body politic.[225] This body politic, modeled after the angels was a persona ficta, an

immutable and immaterial corporation, endlessly perpetuated through time. The king's second

body thus emerges in the caesura between time, propelled by the desire for perpetuity. This

immortal body politic is preserved in part by the fiction of sacred blood pulsating down through

its genealogical veins. Apocalyptic stories, as Kermode has argued, give way to the tragedies of

kings, micro-catastrophes rehearsed again and again in the relentless cycle of dynastic renewal,

rising like the phoenix from the ashes of the deceased king, compelled to perpetuate the fiction of

dynastic continuity.[226]

Though immaterial, this persona ficta was momentarily visible at the succession in the

effigy of the dead King. In the funeral observances for Henry VII the mortuary rituals of

perpetuity were practiced in England for the first time.[227] Covered with black velvet the King's

body was overlaid with an effigy of his person affixed above it and processed through the streets

of London. The effigy was arraigned in robes of estate with "crown on his head, and scepter and

ball in the hands, laid on cushion of gold and envisioned with banners of arms of all his

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[223] Interestingly, as Arthur's funeral took place on April 23, 1502, Henry succeeded his brother as well as his father exactly seven years later. It should also be noted that Henry VIII married Arthur's widow Katherine of Aaragon, shortly after his father's death. These correlations are food for thought indeed.

[224] Kantorowicz 273ff.

[225].Kantorowicz 7-16.

[226] Kermode 30.

[227] Stanley 168. Although the Duke of Bedford used this phrase at the accession of Henry VI, Kantorowicz explains that this unusual observance was occurred in order to preempt the rival claims of the Dauphin Charles to the English dominion in France. Kantorowicz provides no specific date for the emergence of this political theory given that he intends to trace its evolutionary developments. The theory clearly gained momentum in the later half of the sixteenth

dominions, titles and genealogies."[228] Henry's corpse was not deposited in a raised tomb as per

tradition, but in a subterranean vault beside his Queen. When the vault was closed "the Heralds

stripped off their tabards, and hung them on the rails of the hearse, exclaiming in French, 'The

noble King Henry VII is dead!' And then immediately put them on again and cried 'Vive le noble

Roy Henry VIII.'"[229]

century, but the first references to this double identity in law, are dated from the reign of Henry VII. Kantorowicz 410-412.

[228] Astle 71.

[229] Stanley 169.

POSTSCRIPT

Battling the Beast of Oblivion: The Tudor Legacy

> If you find pleasure in seeing fair pictures of heroes
> Look at these! None greater was ever portrayed.
> Fierce is the struggle and hot the disputing; the question
> Does father, does son - or do both - the pre-eminence win?
> One ever withstood his foes and his country's destruction
> Finally giving his people the blessing of peace;
> But, born to things greater, the son drove out of his councils
> His ministers worthless, and ever supported the just.
> And in truth, to this steadfastness papal arrogance yielded
> When the sceptre of power was wielded by Henry the Eighth
> Under whose reign the true faith was restored to the nation
> and the doctrines of God began to be revered with awe.[230]
>
> Whitehall Mural

In the famous Whitehall mural, which furnished the privy chamber of Henry VIII, father, son and their respective brides provide a corporeal frame for a monumental stone tablet unveiled in the centre of the canvas (Figure 35).[231] Henry VII is positioned in the shallow recess and imbued with ashen severity, appears as a ghostly shadow of the present monarch, cradling the tomb like plinth. Etched into the marble surface, is a Latin inscription (transcribed above) comparing the respective heroics of the Tudor kings; "Does father, does son - or do both - the pre-eminence win?" Text and image reverberate back and forth in mutual augmentation. Words embellish the bodies of the monarchs as the portraits of these mighty men provoke this eulogizing speech. While in the Holyrood panel, St. George provided the figural ground for allegorical histories, in the Whitehall mural the very bodies of the monarchs fuel allegory's wardrobing adornments. Royal corporeality, or rather, as the text declares, Henry VIII, "the preeminence won" is the measure for moral authority. Historical biography replaces sacred hagiography as the legitimating frame for expounding truth, which finds its ultimate expression

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[230] The Whitehall mural text translation is taken from Lloyd and Thurley 29.

[231] The mural is no longer extant due to fire, but is known through a watercolor copy made by Remigus van Leemput in the seventeenth century.

in Shakespeare's theatre of kings. However, the tension we find between battle and marriage in the Holyrood panel, with the aggressive posturing of the royal family competing with the chivalric activities of George, is also played out in the Whitehall mural.[232] The ever-present anxiety over perpetuity undercuts the confident posturing of Tudor bravado. While the chivalric deeds of great men are openly declared in monumental verse and the cocksure straddle of the hulking king monopolizes our vision, the swelling bellies of their other halves bespeak alternative histories or anxious sub-texts. These silent partners, and their regenerative fertility, are the unspoken foundation of the security of the body politic, whose perpetuity hinges on the procreation of kings. For Edward Hall, historian and Tudor enthusiast, it is the work of the history that keeps the "deadly beast of oblivion" at bay, setting forth the deeds of noble men in literature "that all though they be dead by mortall deathe, yet they by writing and fame lyve and be continually present."[233] But in the Whitehall chapel mural, the empty panegyric of text is a cover up for the dynastic insecurity that under girds this painting. Like the Holyrood panel, the Whitehall mural calls attention to the difference between seeing and saying. Mute histories in paint reveal the persistent anxieties of dynastic perpetuity that can be visually acknowledged but never declared.

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[232] It should be noted that in a manuscript illumination, after Pope Leo X gave Henry VIII the title defender of the faith in 1521, Henry is seen depicted as an embodiment of St. George, debating against Charles V in the audience hall of the Pope. Henry's verbal refutations and have skewered the dragon, representing heresy, writhing in its death throws in the foreground of the image. King 44-46.

[233] "So every nation was desirous to enhance lady fame and to suppress the deadly beast of oblivion. For what diversitie is between a noble prince and a pore begger a reasonable man and a brute beast if after their death there be lefte of them no remembrance or token...So that evidently it appereth that fame is the triumph of glory and memory by literature is the way governors and noble menne, bound to them which have so lyvely set forth the lives and acts of their parents, that all though they be dead by mortall deathe, yet they by writing and fame lyve and be continually present." Hall 1.

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FIGURES

Figure 1. *The Lady Chapel*, 1503-1509, Robert and William Vertue (Westminster Abbey, London)

Figure 2.   *Tomb of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York*, 1512, ,Peitro Torrigiano (The Lady Chapel, Westminister Abbey, London).
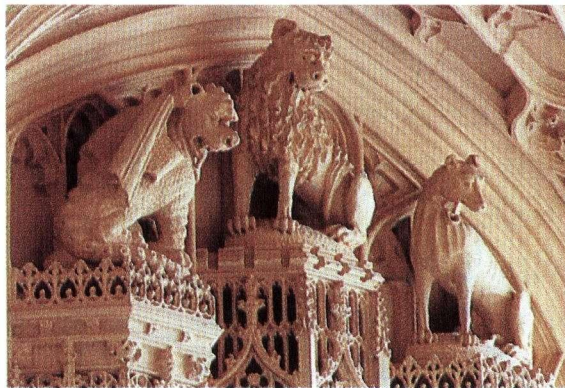
Figure 3.   *Heraldic Beasts*, 1503-1509 (The Lady Chapel, Westminster Abbey, London)
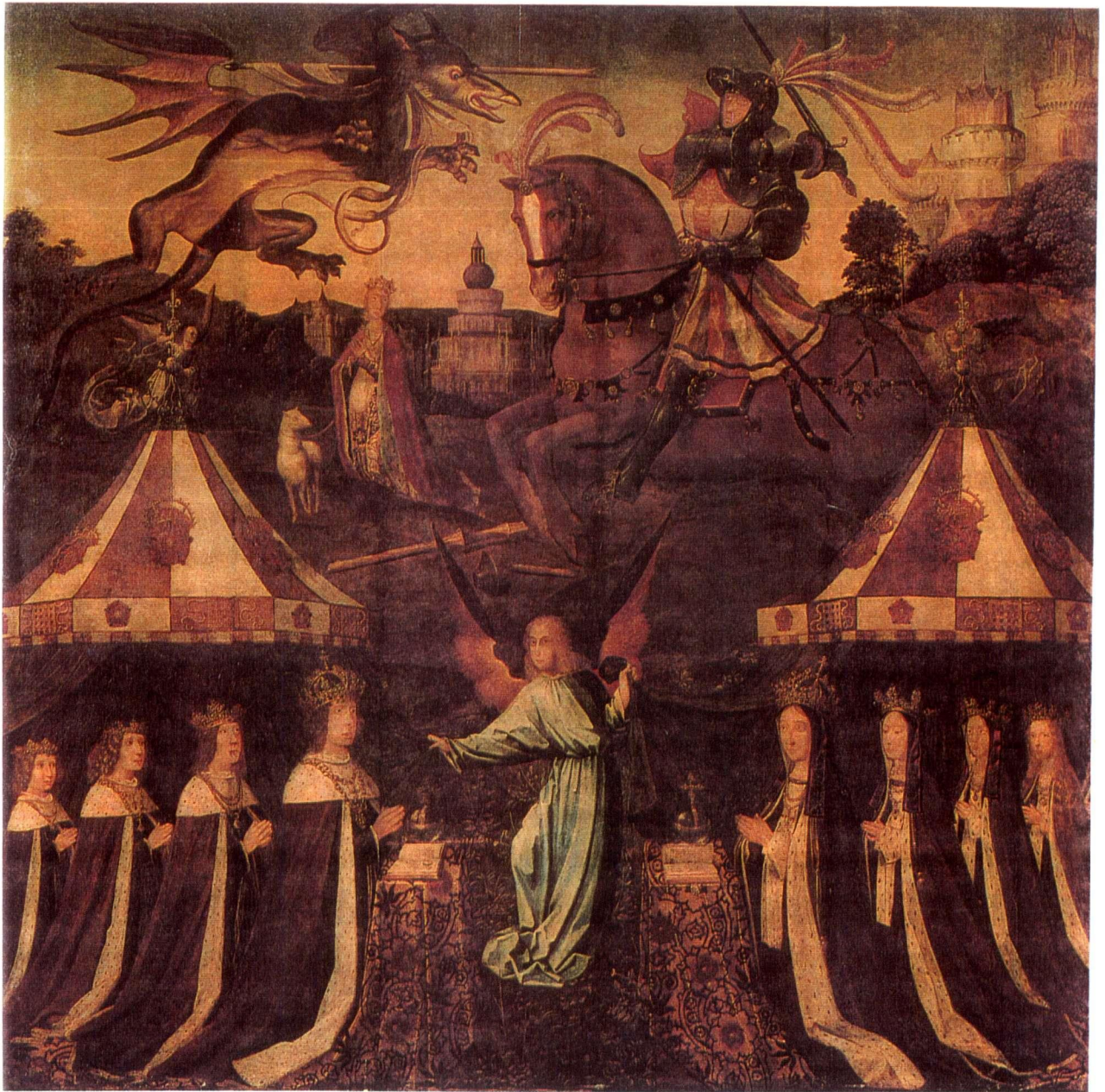
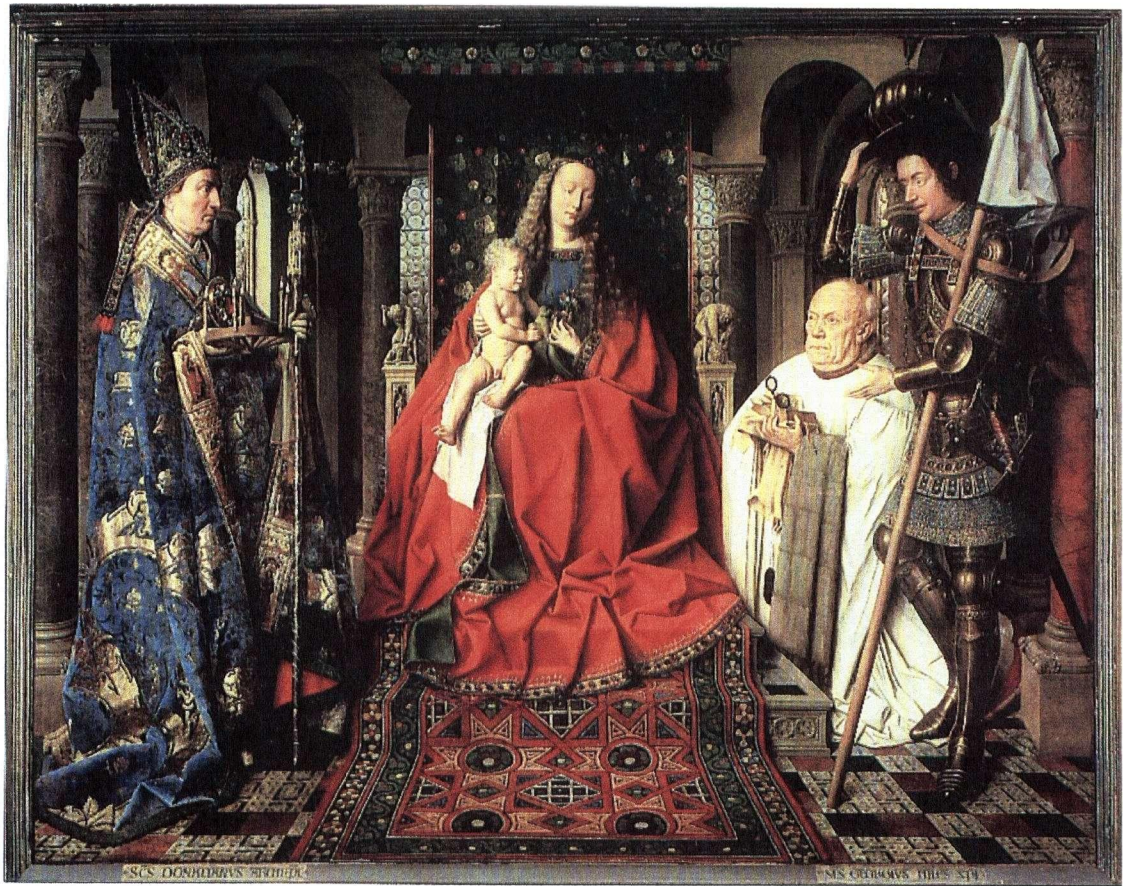**Figure 4.** *The Family of Henry VII with St. George and the Dragon,* 1503-1509, Attributed to Maynard Wewyck (Royal Collection, Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh).

Figure 5. *The Madonna of Cannon van der Peale*, 1436, Jan Van Eyck, (Groeningemuseum, Bruges).

Fig. 16 Hans Memling, Triptych of John Donne,
c.1480, London, National Gallery

Figure 6. *Triptych of John Donne*, c.1480, Hans Memling (National Gallery, London) 95
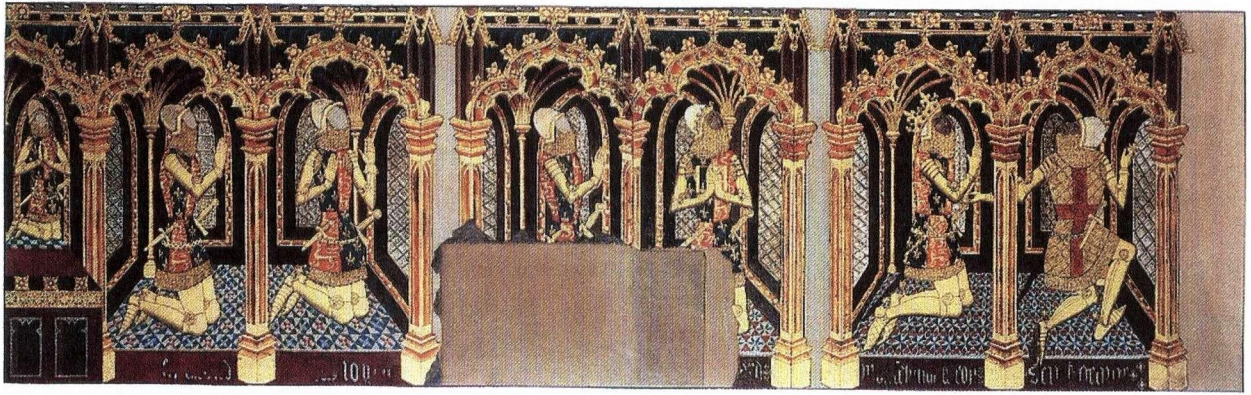
Figure 7. *St. George with Edward III and Family*, c 1355-63. Watercolour reproduction, Robert Smirke, c. 1800 (Society of Antiquaries, London).
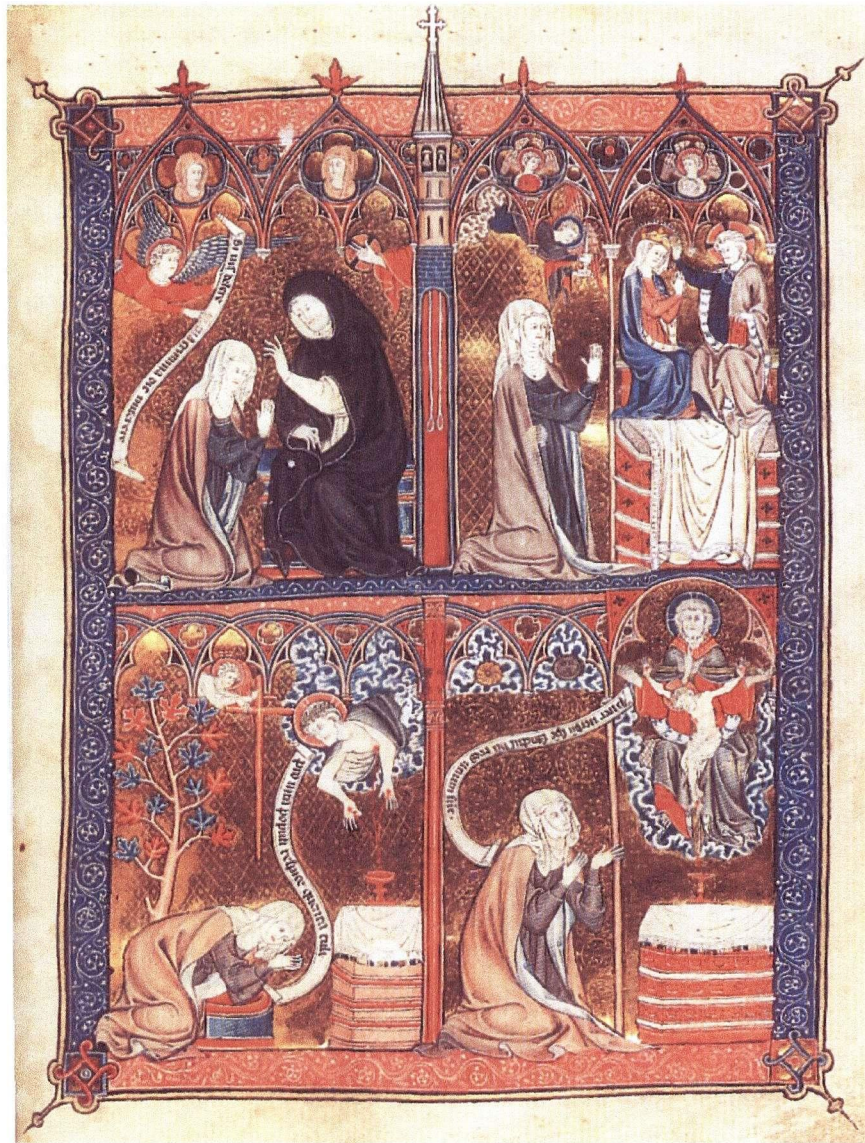
Figure 8. *French Tract for Nuns,* c.1300, Add. MS 39843, folio 28 (British Library, London).

Figure 9.   St. John's Vision on the Island of Patmos, c.1488-96, Add MS 18851, folio 309v. (British Library, London)

Figure 10.   *The Angel shows St. John the Heavenly Jerusalem,* English Apocalypse, c. 1250 MS 324, folio 21r. (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York)
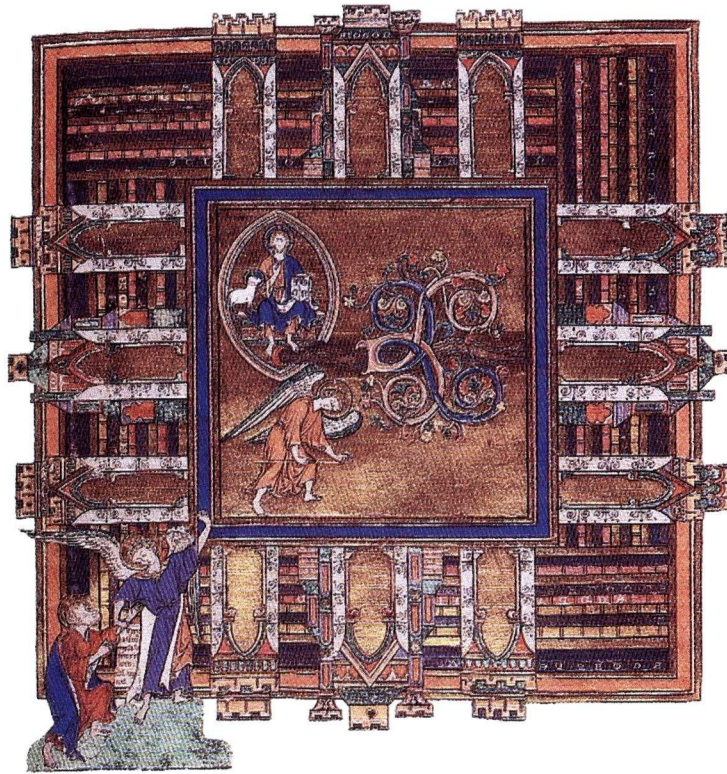
Figure 11. *Trinity College Apocalypse* c.1255 (Trinity College, Cambridge)
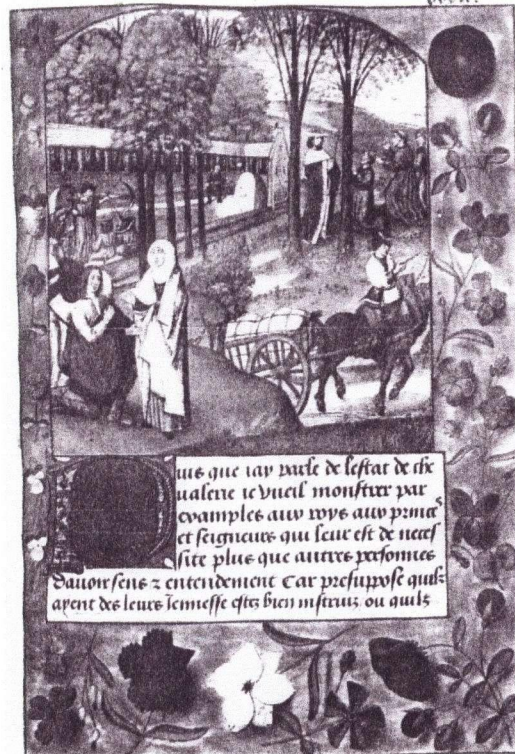
Figure 12. *Imaginacion de vraye noblesse*, 1496, Quentin Poulet Royal MS 19.c.viii., folio 41r. (British Library, London).

Figure 14. *St. George and the Dragon*, 1432-1435, Rogier Van der Weyden (National Gallery of Art, Washington).

Figure 13. *St. George*, Moreel Triptych, right wing reverse, 1484, Hans Memling (Groeningemuseum, Bruges)

Figure 15. *Monumental Brass of Sir Hugh Hastings of Elsing*, 1347, (Elsing Church, Norfolk)
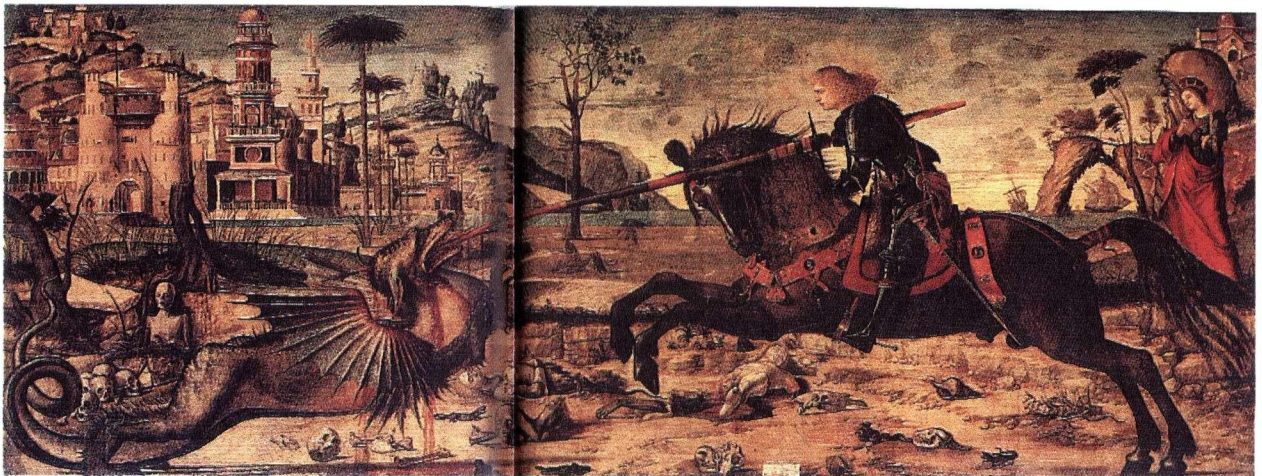
Figure 16. *St. George and the Dragon,* 1502-1507, Vittore Carpaccio (Scula di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice).

Figure 17. *St. George Arming Edward III,* 1326-27, Milemete Treatise, MS 92, folio 3r., (Christ Church, Oxford)

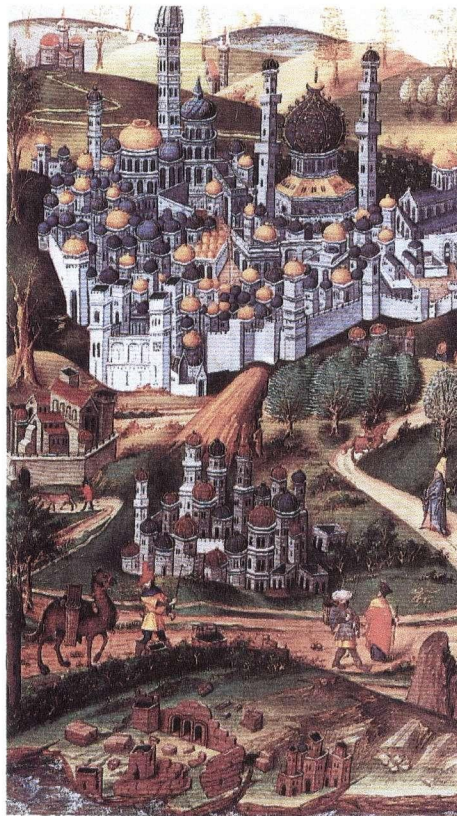**Figure 18.** *Wilton Dyptych,* after 1395 (National Gallery, London).

Figure 19. *Jerusalem,* from the Desriptio Terrae Sanctae, 1455, Burchard of Mount Sion, commissioned by Philip of Burgundy (British Museum).
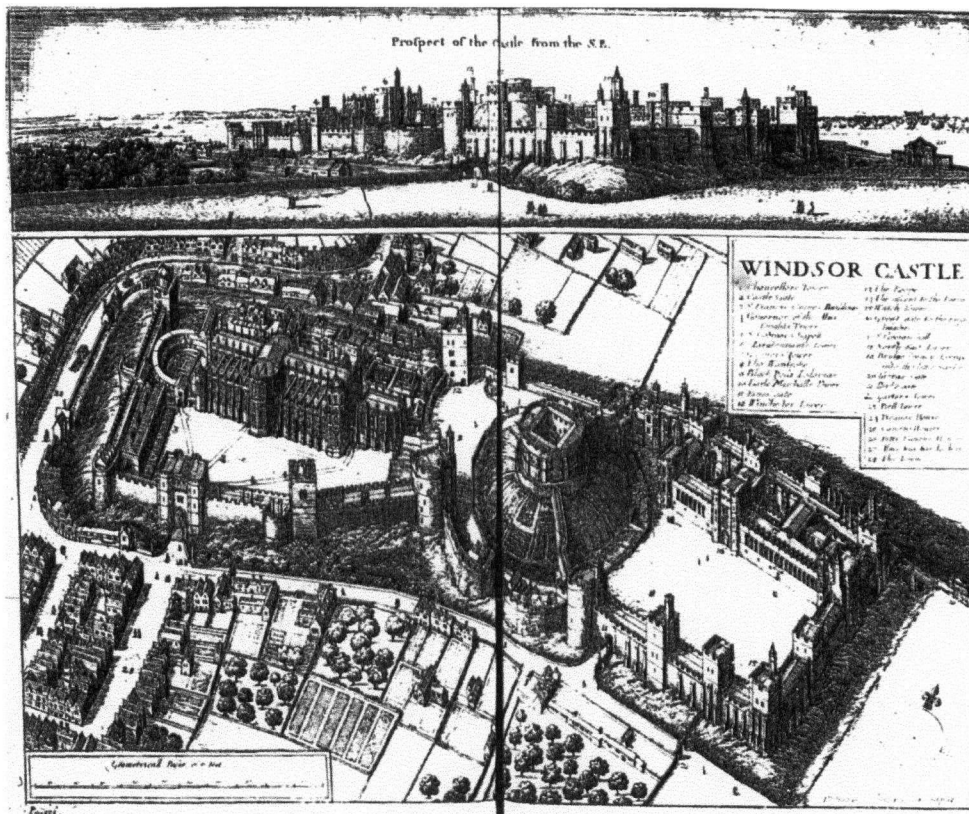
Figure 20. *Windsor Castle,* 17th century engraving. *l*

Figure 21. *Henry VI and the Knights of the Garter*, MS royal 15E VI, folio 439 (British Library, London).
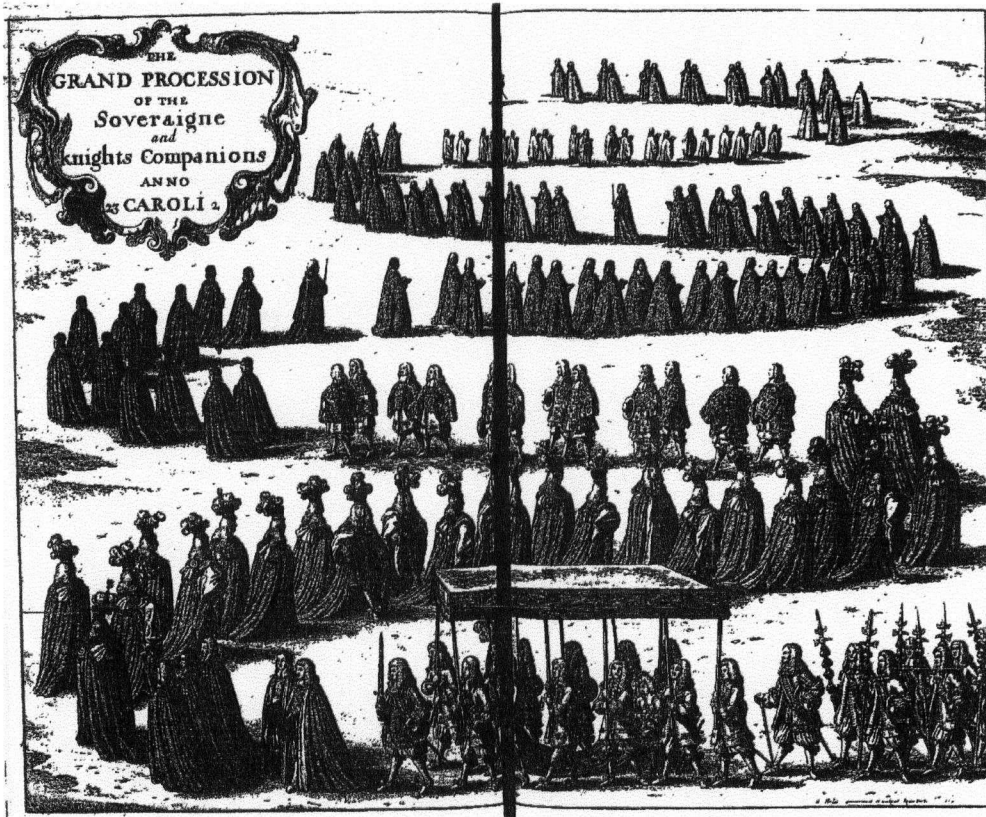
Figure 22. *The Grand Procession of the Sovereign and the Knights Companion* c 1600, engraving.
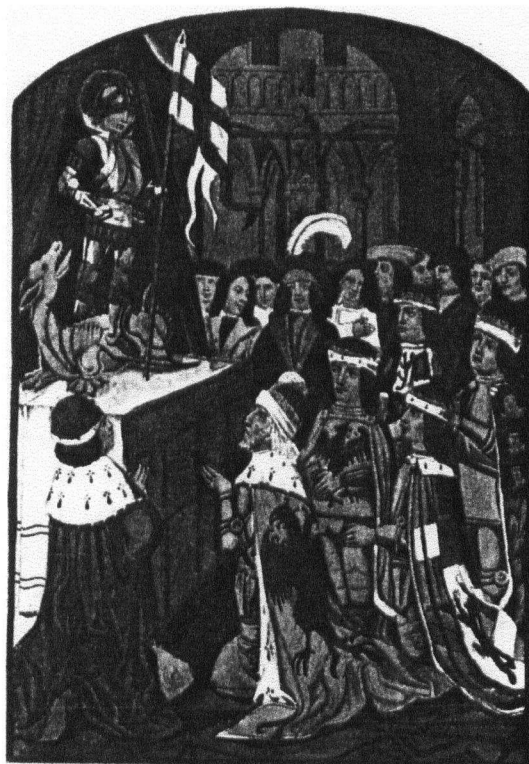

Figure 23. *The Soveriegns of Europe Worshipping St. George*

Figure 24. *Silver Testoon* (left) and *Silver Groat* (right) c. 1500.

Figure 25. *John, Duke of Bedford before St. George,* The Bedford Hours, 1423 , Add. MS 18850, folio 256v. (British Library, London).
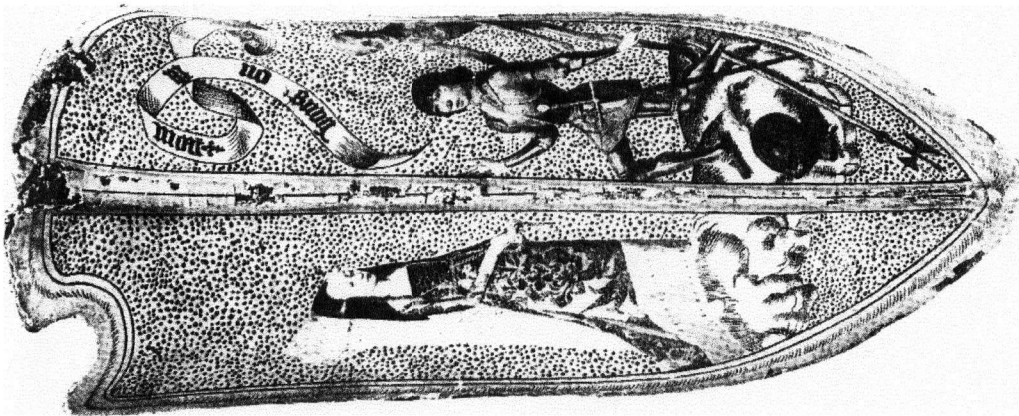
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Figure 27. *The Whole Work of Homer*, title page, 1616, George Chapman (Huntington Library, San Marino, California)

Figure 26. *Impresa Shield*, late 15th century, Flemish.

Figure 28. *The Marriage Tapestry of Arthur Tudor and Katherine of Aaragon,* c. 1501, attributed to Piers Enghein (Magdalen College, Oxford)

Figure 29. *Mariage of the Princesse (Katherine),* 1501, woodcut, R. Pynson, no.1623
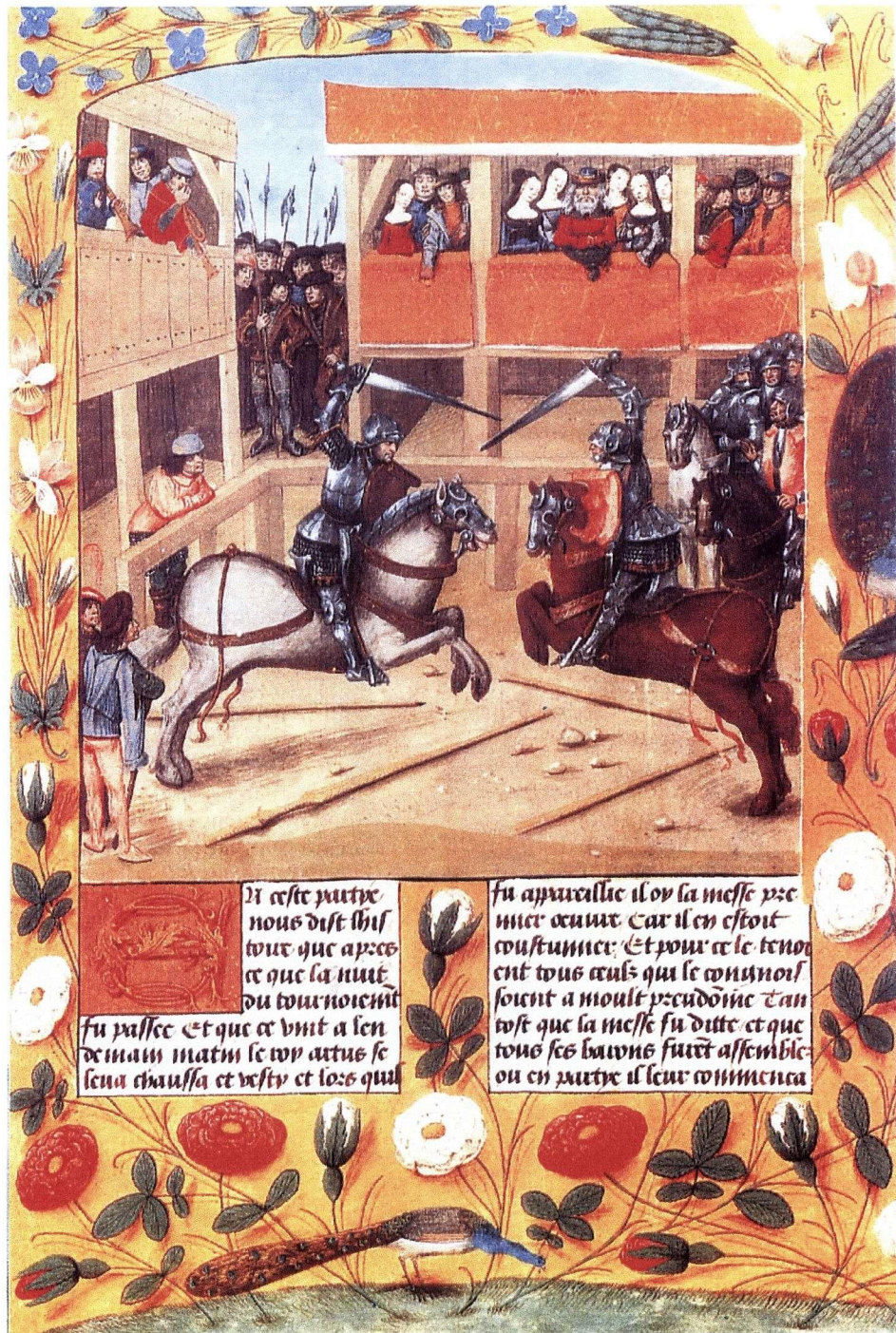
Figure 30. *Tournament before King Arthur,* MS Douce 383, folio 16 (Bodleian, Library, Oxford) .
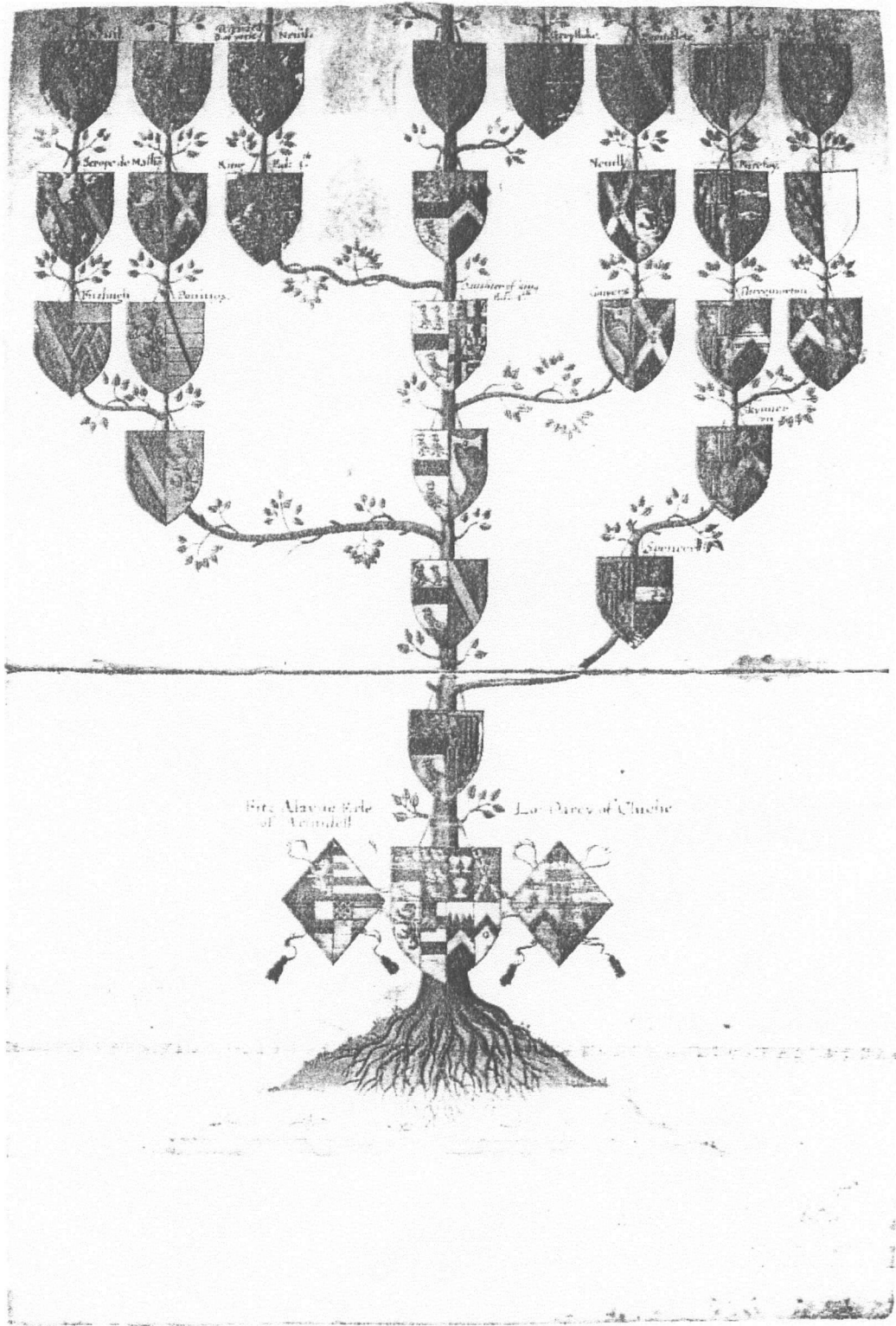
Figure 31. *Ancestry of John, Lord Lumley*, 1590, Lumley Inventory no. 346.

Figure 32. *Temptation in the Garden*, 15th century, MS 139 (Rare Books Collection, Library of Congress)

Figure 33. *Christ and St. Michael* and *Entry into Jerusalem*, Beaune Altarpiece, centre and farleft panels, 1450, Rogier van der Weyden (Musée Hôtel-Dieu, Beaune)

Figure 34. *Apocalyptic Battle over Mont St. Michel*, Les Très Riches Hueres du Duc du Berry, 1409-15, The Limbourg Brothers, MS 65/1284 (Musée Conde, Chantilly)
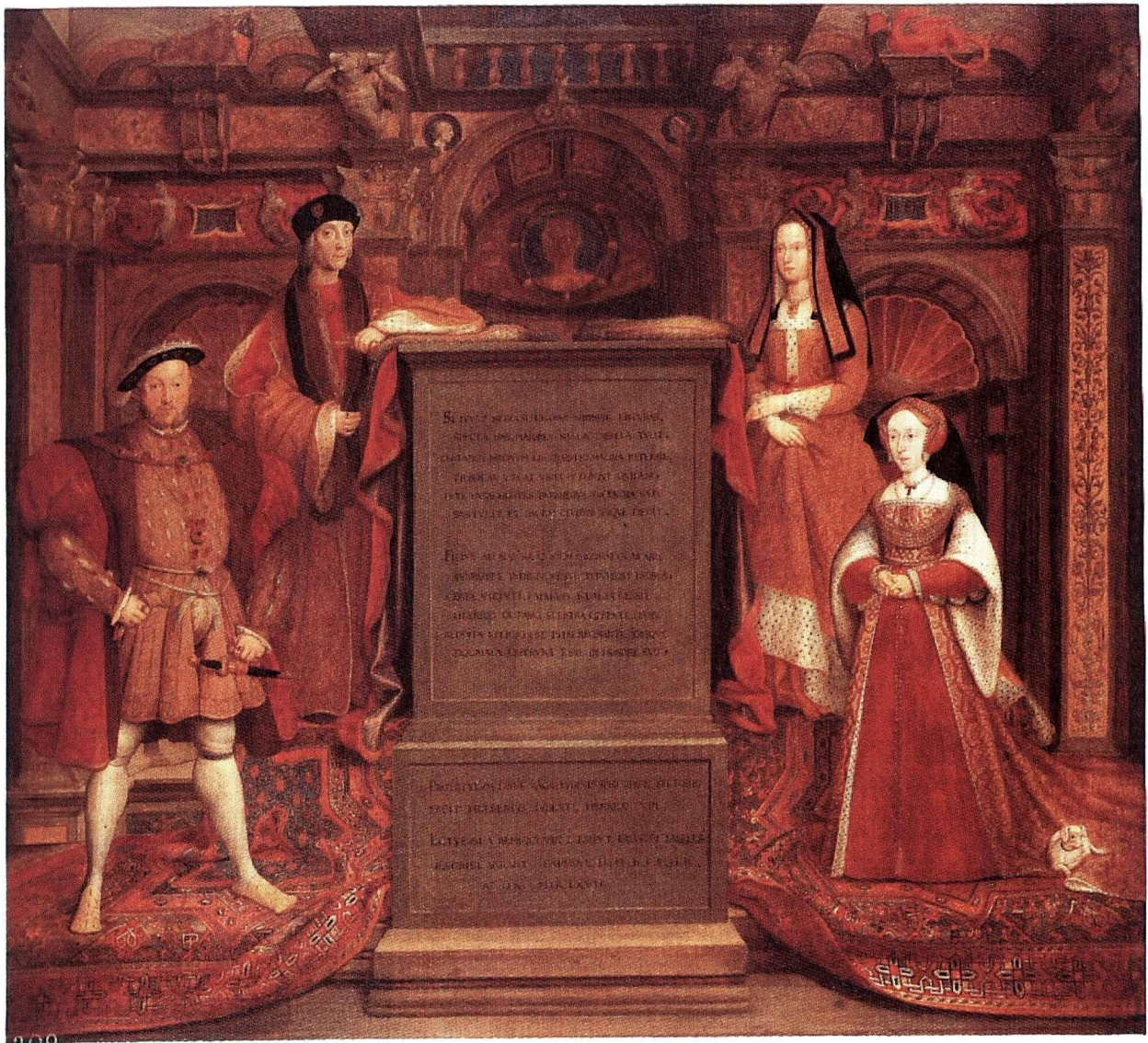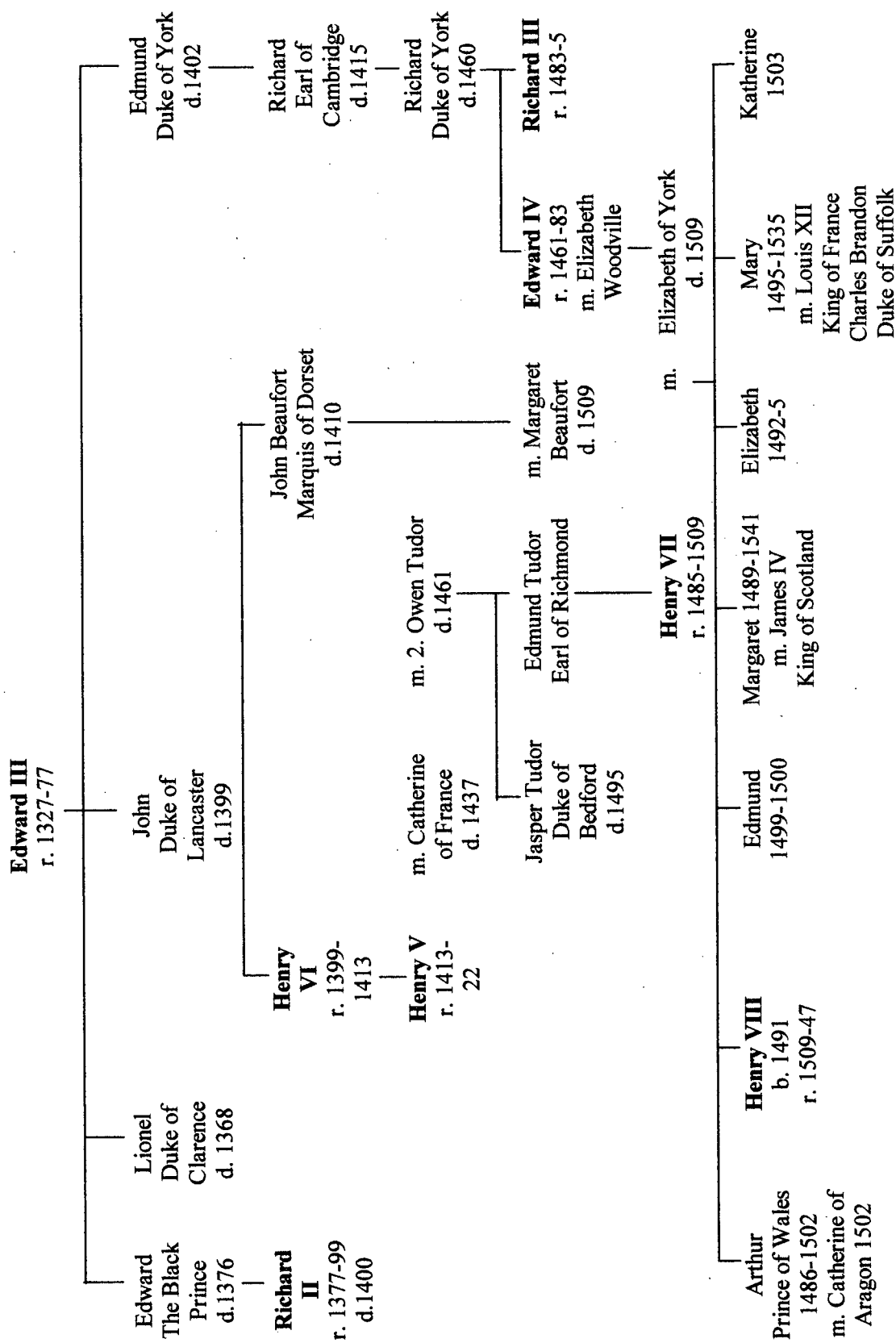
Figure 35. *Whitehall Mural*, 1667, Copy by Remigius van Leemput after Hans Holbein the Younger, cat. 14 (Royal Collection, London).

Tudor Genealogy

Edward III
r. 1327-77

John
Duke of
Lancaster
d.1399

Edmund
Duke of York
d.1402

Lionel
Duke of
Clarence
d. 1368

Edward
The Black
Prince
d.1376

**Richard
II**
r. 1377-99
d.1400

Richard
Earl of
Cambridge
d.1415

Richard
Duke of York
d.1460

John Beaufort
Marquis of Dorset
d.1410

**Henry
VI**
r. 1399-
1413

Henry V
r. 1413-
22

m. Catherine
of France
d. 1437

m. 2. Owen Tudor
d.1461

m. Margaret
Beaufort
d. 1509

Edmund Tudor
Earl of Richmond

Jasper Tudor
Duke of
Bedford
d.1495

Edward IV
r. 1461-83
m. Elizabeth
Woodville

Richard III
r. 1483-5

Elizabeth of York
d. 1509

m.

Henry VII
r. 1485-1509

Margaret 1489-1541
m. James IV
King of Scotland

Elizabeth
1492-5

Mary
1495-1535
m. Louis XII
King of France
Charles Brandon
Duke of Suffolk

Katherine
1503

Edmund
1499-1500

Henry VIII
b. 1491
r. 1509-47

Arthur
Prince of Wales
1486-1502
m. Catherine of
Aragon 1502

APPENDIX B

Garter Knights under Henry VII

John Vere, Earl of Oxford	(Transcriber of the will)
Sir Giles Daubeny, Knight	(Lord Chamberlain)
Thomas Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel	
George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury	(Lord Steward)
John Wells, Viscout Wells	
George Stanley, Lord Strange	
Sir Edward Wydevil, Kinght Baneret	
John Dynham	(Lord Treasurer of England)
Maximilian the First, Emperor of Germany	
Sir John Savage, Knight	
Sir William Stanley, Knight	(Lord Chamberlain, executed 1495)
Sir John Cheney, Knight Baneret	
Alphonsus, Duke of Calabria	
Arthur, Prince of Wales	
Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset	(Imprisoned in Calais from 1506)
Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland	
Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex	
Sir Charles Somerset, Knight Baneret, -	(Lord Chamberlain, Ambassador)
Robert Willoughby, Lord Brook	
Sir Edward Poynings, Knight	(Comptroller of the Household, Ambassador)
Sir Gilbert Talbot, Knight Baneret	
Sir Richard Pole, Knight -	(In exile with brother Edmund from 1501)
Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham	(possible claimant to the throne)
Henry, Duke of York, later Henry VIII	
Edward Courtney, Earl of Devonshire	
Sir Richard Guilford, Knight Baneret	(Comptroller of the Household)
Edmund de La Pole, Earl of Suffolk	(In exile from 1501, imprisoned in tower 1505)
Sir Thomas Lovel, Knight	(Executor of the Will, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Treasurer of the Household, Treasurer of the Chamber)
Sir Reginald Bray, Knight	
John, King of Denmark	
Guido Ubaldo, Duke of Urbino	
Gerald FitzGerald, Earl of Kildare	
Henry Stafford	
Richard Crecy, Earl of Kent	
Sir Rys Thomas	
Philip, King of Castile	
Sir Thomas Brandon, Knight Baneret	
Charles, Arch-Duke of Austria, Prince of Spain, and later Emperor of Germany	