

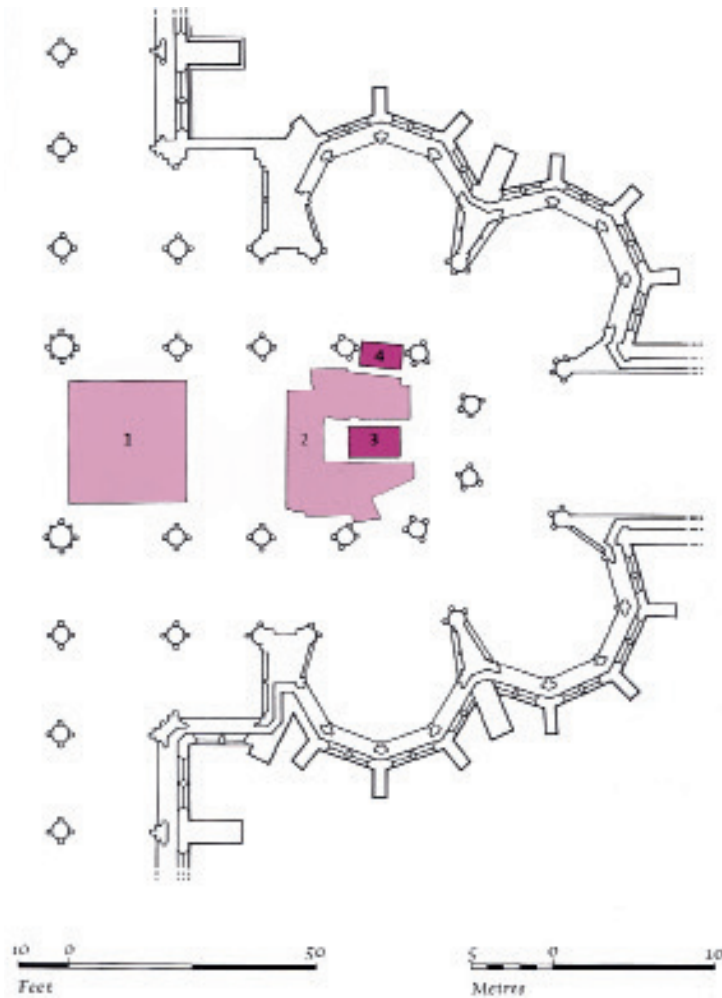
# The Cosmati Mosaics at Westminster. Art, Politics, and Exchanges with Rome in the Age of Gothic

## Abstract

This paper offers a radical reassessment of the thirteenth-century Cosmati mosaics in Westminster Abbey, commissioned during the reigns of Kings Henry III and Edward I. By offering the fullest yet account of the documentary sources, we seek to challenge the recent tendency to discount the international narrative of Roman and especially papal art in England and the omission of any account of the contemporary political situation which, we suggest, provided the context for these mosaics. As Henry III recovered from the damaging civil war of the 1260s in England, he received significant papal support in restabilizing his regime. Contrary to the tradition that the initiative came from Westminster, we argue that the major agent was the brilliantly successful legate in England Ottobuono Fieschi, later Adrian V. Ottobuono shaped the post-civil war settlement with the support of Clement IV. We argue that the first of the mosaics to be completed, the sanctuary pavement, was in effect provided via channels opened up by Ottobuono, and was intended to be a coronation pavement modelled on a hitherto neglected coronation pavement in Old St Peter's. Edward I was crowned on the Westminster pavement in 1274. The paper offers new in-depth readings of the various inscriptions on the Westminster mosaics which stress curial or Roman origin, in order to reassess the evidence they provide for date and patronage. A thorough re-examination of the archaeological and stylistic issues raised by the mosaics is put forward. This includes the signed and dated shrine base of St Edward the Confessor and the tomb of Henry III, which we maintain was commissioned from the circle of Arnolfo di Cambio with the support of Charles of Anjou. The paper also re-examines the identification of *Odericus* and *Petrus Romanus civis*, who signed the pavement and shrine respectively, in order to arrive at a reassessment of the impact of their movement not only from Rome to London, but also back to Viterbo and Rome. Only by taking a firmly internationalist position on the mosaics, seeing them in the wider context of European and especially Roman medieval art, can the increasingly localized debates about these monuments best be enlarged in such a way as to illuminate the situation in England and in Rome.



1 London, Westminster Abbey, east end, 1245–1269 (photo © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)



2 London, Westminster Abbey, east end, 1245–1269, plan showing Cosmati works: (1) sanctuary pavement (2) shrine pavement (3) shrine of Saint Edward the Confessor (4) tomb of Henry III, from Binski 1995

### Introduction (Paul Binski and Claudia Bolgia)

The last forty years have witnessed a striking new range of studies of the Roman Cosmati mosaic pavements and monuments in Westminster Abbey, executed by general consent towards the end of the reign of Henry III as king of England (1216–1272) and at the start of that of his son Edward I (1272–1307).<sup>1</sup> The rebuilding of the Abbey, which Henry III envisioned as a coronation and shrine church, and not least as a royal burial site next to the Palace of Westminster, began in 1245. After the east end and the transept (fig. 1) were completed in 1259, and subsequently furnished, the Abbey was consecrated in October 1269. Occupying the elevated presbytery, high altar, and shrine area, the Cosmati works (fig. 2) consist of a large mosaic pavement, measuring 7.8m square, in the westernmost bay of the elevated sanctuary created by Henry III before the high altar of the new abbey church (fig. 3). Behind the high altar survives the inlaid marble base with niches (fig. 4 foreground), where the metalwork feretory of Saint Edward the Confessor, the royal saint canonized in 1161, stood following its translation to the new building during the consecration in October 1269. The base still contains the relics of Saint Edward. To the shrine's north is the tomb of Henry III himself (fig. 4 background to left), furnished with magnificent porphyry veneers and a gilt bronze effigy of the king, added after the tomb was completed and Henry III was laid to rest in it in 1290. Around the shrine is a much-worn

inlaid pavement (fig. 5), which appears to have been set down after the shrine and the tomb of Henry III were erected.

No other Gothic great church in northern Europe was embellished with Cosmati mosaics in this way, which raises the question of why they should have been executed specifically at Westminster Abbey. This collaborative paper revisits the physical and documentary evidence to answer this and several other frequently debated questions: What models and motives underlay the construction of the sanctuary pavement as well as the shrine and tomb of Henry III? What more can be learned about their Roman context and antecedents, the unusual Latin inscriptions that completed these works, the artists involved, and what more can be said about the chronology of these works? Also, what formal ideas did the artists bring back to Italy after their return from London? The extensive literature on these and other relevant topics will be evaluated contextually, and for the sake of clarity, chronologically, starting with the political setting of Henry III's new abbey church, completed in the 1260s at a time of devastating political breakdown in England. We maintain that it was within the context of the political situation in England in these years that explanations can be found for the presence of the Cosmati mosaics at Westminster; and we also believe that only by taking a firmly

\* We wish to thank the Dean and Chapter of Westminster for permission to photograph in the Abbey, and particularly Vanessa Simeoni for her help; we are indebted to James Hillson for his drawings, and to Christine Reynolds for assistance with photography. We also acknowledge the suggestions of the anonymous reviewers of this paper with thanks.

<sup>1</sup> See especially Claussen 1987; Binski 1990, 1995 and 2002; Gardner 1990; Foster 1991; Carpenter 1996; Carpenter 2002; Rodwell and Neal 2019. The latter is the most fully illustrated and documented survey at the local level.

internationalist position on the mosaics, seeing them in the wider context of European and especially Roman medieval art, that the increasingly localized debates about these monuments can best be enlarged in such a way as to illuminate the situation both in England and in Rome.

### I. The Cosmati as a political statement: the 1260s in England (Paul Binski)

John Flete, the fifteenth-century monastic historian of Westminster Abbey, gives an account of Richard of Ware, abbot of Westminster (1259–1283), who had travelled to the *Curia Romana*, i.e., the papal court, to gain confirmation of his election as abbot in 1259. Flete states that “returning (to England), however, he brought back tradesmen and craftsmen, bringing with him porphyry and jasper stones and Thassos marble, which he bought at his own expense. From these stones, these workmen made a wonderful pavement before (*coram*) the high altar of Westminster.”<sup>2</sup> Flete’s account is the natural starting point in the study of the Abbey’s Cosmati mosaics, which adorn the sanctuary pavement, the base of the shrine of Saint Edward, the tomb of Henry III and related works (figs. 3–4), not least because it links Ware’s transaction with the papal oversight of Westminster Abbey as a “special daughter of Rome.”<sup>3</sup> The decision of the papal judges-delegate in 1222 to extricate the Abbey from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, so that it could be directly affiliated with the pope, garnered it a high-status exemption which mattered greatly in its institutional and symbolic self-understanding.<sup>4</sup>

Flete’s record that Abbot Ware had returned from his 1259 confirmation with materials and craftsmen, having himself borne the costs of the materials, is partly corroborated by several other sources.<sup>5</sup> However, that his account may neither be complete nor entirely accurate is suggested a decade later by a Patent Roll entry for 8 May 1269 noting the reimbursement of £50 that Richard of Ware had received from Henry III out of the temporalities of the Bishop of Worcester, since “the king is bound to the abbot in £50 as well as for the pavement which he brought with him from the court of Rome for the king’s use, to be put in the church of Westminster before (*coram*) the king’s great altar there, and for the service which he did for the king in the siege of the castle of Kenilworth.”<sup>6</sup> This entry would be comprehensible only if it concerned Ware’s return from a more recent trip to Rome connected to the events at Kenilworth in 1266 – to be recounted shortly in greater detail – and was acting as an emissary for the king. Ware had last been in Rome in 1261, and it is difficult to see why pavement mosaics brought back then or earlier, as implied by Flete, would have been

2 Flete, in Robinson 1909, p. 113: “Richardus de Wara post mortem praedicti Philippi electus est in abbatem Westmonasterii per via compromissi; transfretansque ad curiam Romanam confirmationem suam quam citius impetravit, et sic a papa inde recessit. Repatriando tamen adduxit mercatores et operarios, ducentes secum lapides illos porphyreticos, jaspides, et marmora de Thaso, quos sumptibus suis propriis emerat ibidem. ex quibus ipsi operarii coram magno altari Westmonasterii mirandi operis fecerunt pavementum: in cujus latere boreali dicto abbati sub opera praedicto decentissimam composuerunt ipso praecipiente sepulturam.”

3 Flete, in Robinson 1909, pp. 49–50: bull of Innocent III, 1199, regarding the Abbey “quae nostra est filia specialis.”

4 Discussed in Binski 1995, from p. 10.

5 The election and confirmation process may be followed in *CPR* 1258–1266 (15 December 1258), p. 7 (notification of election); see also *CPR* 1258–1266 (17 August 1259), p. 39 (confirmation of papal election). Ware, thus, visited Rome between the end of 1258 and August 1259). Ware returned to Rome in early 1260 and again in early 1261 (*CPR* 1258–1266, pp. 117, 135). His expenses in 1259 were covered by loans, Foster 1991, pp. 15–17. See below for his next documented trip to Rome in November 1266 (*CPR* 1266–1272, pp. 2–3).

6 *CPR* 1266–1272, p. 338, given in Latin in Wander 1978, p. 142 note 11: “Et nos praefato abbati teneamur in quinquaginta libris tam pro pavimento quod detulit secum a curia Romae ad opus nostrum ponendum in ecclesia nostra Westmonasterii coram magno altari nostro ibidem.”





3 London, Westminster Abbey, sanctuary pavement, east at top (photo © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)

assembled and accounted for up to a decade later. Furthermore, a payment to a Lincoln mason is listed by the sheriff of Nottingham as having been made in 1269 for white stone, probably alabaster, “ad pavimentum ecclesie Beati Edwardi Westmonsteriensis”, very probably that in the sanctuary.<sup>7</sup> As is well known, the pavement itself, spread out before the high altar of Westminster Abbey (fig. 3), bears the inscribed date of 1268. The chronology of the related works will become relevant at numerous points later in this study.

The Patent Roll entry linking the supply of the pavement mosaic with an earlier service performed in late 1266 by Abbot Ware at Kenilworth underlines the importance of the events at Kenilworth for another reason: the presence there

7 *The History of the King's Works* 1963, vol. 1, p. 147 note 2.



of England's most effective papal official, the legate Cardinal Ottobuono Fieschi, a prominent broker of peace in the Barons' War, in the course of his extended legation to England in 1265-1268.<sup>8</sup> Ottobuono, a distant relative by affinity of Henry III, a friend of Richard Earl of Cornwall, and himself later Pope Adrian V (1276), may hold the key to the story of the Cosmati.

After Henry III had regained ascendancy over the barons at the Battle of Evesham in August 1265, Ottobuono Fieschi arrived in England as legate under Pope Clement IV (1265-1268) at the end of October 1265, departing only in July 1268.<sup>9</sup> For nearly three years, his was the most sustained curial presence in England. In the following autumn, in 1266, Henry III, Ottobuono, and Abbot Ware found themselves at the centre of negotiations with the barons at Kenilworth after the defeat and death of Simon de Montfort, the leader of the baronial opposition to the king. The origins of the war can be attributed in part to the discontent with the generous grants of the kingdom's wealthy to the curialists who supported Henry III. Ottobuono played a vital role in the reconciliation and was charged with communicating the provisions of the Dictum of Kenilworth (31 October 1266), which reconciled the parties in question and restored royal authority, at the ecclesiastical council of Coventry on 1 November 1266. Three days later, on 4 November 1266, a writ of safe conduct with clause *volumus* was issued at Kenilworth in support of Richard of Ware's travel to the court of Rome and a further notice was given that the king had commanded the prior and convent of Westminster to borrow 200 marks from the merchants of Florence or Siena to give to Richard for the same purpose.<sup>10</sup> The works commissioned at Westminster were clearly on the king's mind then because a sum of £20 had been made available to Robert of Beverley and Adam of Stratton "ad operationes feretri Beati Edwardi apud Westmonasterium" only the previous day.<sup>11</sup> Preparations for Ware's visit to Rome to attend to "the king's affairs" would entail providing for a significant expense. The evidence suggests that it was the journey to Rome following the 4 November 1266 writ that led to the return of the pavement to Westminster. As we discuss below, allusions to paving work in the Abbey's east end in the so-called Pipe Roll summaries for the period 25 December 1266 to 29 September 1267 follow directly from this visit. Ware was in Rome again on 1 September 1267 as the king's emissary to the *Curia Romana*.<sup>12</sup> By this point, the construction of the great sanctuary pavement was indeed underway.



4 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base of Saint Edward the Confessor (right), tomb of Henry III (left background) (photo © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)

8 Powicke 1962, pp. 208-209 for Kenilworth and pp. 213-221; Bolgia 2017, pp. 251-255; for the legate's other activities, see also Lunt 1939, pp. 154, 291-298. On Ottobuono: Paravicini Bagliani 1972; Bolton 2004.

9 Powicke 1962, pp. 206-208; see also *CPR* 1258-1266, p. 465 for his safe conduct.

10 *CPR* 1266-1272, pp. 2-3; the importance of this writ is first noted in Bolgia 2017, pp. 252-253. This is perhaps the moment to mention the hypothesis that the so-called Ampleforth Leaf of the Oscott Psalter (see Morgan 1988, no. 151, and fig. 253) represents Ottobuono and that the Psalter was intended for him. The theory is weakened by the absence in the calendar of St Adrian, the titular saint of Ottobuono's cardinalate. However, it may be worth remarking in connection with Kenilworth that the calendar does contain two unusual entries, for SS. Modwenna and Edith of Polesworth, local to the Coventry-Kenilworth area.

11 *CCR* 1264-1268, p. 262, 3 November 1266.



5 London, Westminster Abbey, raised view of Saint Edward's shrine base from west showing shrine pavement (photo © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)

Another piece of evidence entirely overlooked by scholars testifies to the significance of the Kenilworth writ of November 1266. Not long after his arrival, in December 1265, Cardinal Ottobuono held a church council in London whose meeting was convened in the north transept of Westminster Abbey, which had been freed in 1259 once building work on the transept and crossing was completed and before the choir was continued: “*item dominus legatus celebravit quoddam concilium post festum s. Andreae Apostoli apud Westmonsterium in nova ecclesia ex parte boreali.*”<sup>13</sup> On this occasion the legate not only excommunicated the king's opponents but witnessed the completed but as yet unfurnished and undedicated sanctuary. Henry III was at Westminster for the entire duration along with the ascendant pro-royalist party as the papal clamp-down on its enemies began. It is highly relevant to our enquiry that Westminster Abbey's first documented major public event in the new building was a conspicuous exertion of papal authority. During his visit, Ottobuono may well have become personally acquainted with Henry III's hopes and ambitions for the church.

Eleven months later, discussions probably followed at Kenilworth to the effect that Pope Clement IV and his agents would help to supply mosaics for the Abbey's sanctuary as a symbol of support for Henry III's restabilized regime. Such mosaics, and the lapidary spolia from which they were composed, represented a significant papal art form at the time. The correlation between the events that transpired in 1265–1266 is both vital and undeniable: the legate's council held in the

north transept in December 1265; the presence of the legate, the king and the abbot at Kenilworth the following autumn; the writ of protection issued to the abbot immediately after the promulgation of the Dictum; and the first Pipe Roll accounting reference to the paving in the Abbey for the following months.

The practical character of Ottobuono's assistance is demonstrated by the fact that he acted as the custodian of the king's treasures and the items pawned and recovered from the shrine of Saint Edward at Westminster during 1267–1268, when Henry III faced serious financial difficulties. In March and April 1267, the prior of Westminster entrusted Ottobuono with the care of all the king's jewels and precious items, including the objects from the shrine of Saint Edward but not the regalia.<sup>14</sup> Ottobuono's role as the custodian of the shrine items (in the Tower of London) was not only relevant to the question of their manufacture. After Simon's death in 1265, his obligation to protect both the shrine and Saint Edward's special standing also entailed suppressing the ‘opposition’ cult of Simon de Montfort and “the vain and fatuous marvels which were said to be wrought at his tomb.”<sup>15</sup>

12 CCR 1264–1268, p. 332.

13 LB, no. 2805 (*Annales monasterii de Wintonia*); the reference to the north transept of the new church is very exact. It is corroborated by FH, vol. III, p. 9 “in ecclesia Westmonasteriensi congregato concilio.” The venue moved to the New Temple the following week, see Powicke and Cheney 1964, pp. 725–778 (failing to note the *Annales de Wintonia*), and p. 728 no. IV for the second venue. See also Powicke 1962, pp. 207–208. For the freeing of the transepts, CCR 1256–1259, p. 390 and *Building Accounts* 1971, p. 196.

14 CPR 1266–1272, p. 50 (28 March 1267), shrine mentioned at p. 52, see also pp. 61, 64–65, 69, 133, 241, 252, 280, 288, 324, 340, 347, 362 (down to 1269). Also LB, nos. 2810–2814. The observation in *Manners and Household Expenses* 1841, p. lxxx, that because Ottobuono had custody of the shrine he may have recommended the employment of an Italian to make its base, may not be so far from the mark.

15 Bolgia 2017, p. 255; for the cult, see Maddicott 1996.





6 London, Westminster Abbey, Cosmati tomb slab of Abbot Richard of Ware, 1283 (photo Paul Binski)

Ottobuono's role was, therefore, arguably far greater than has been acknowledged.<sup>16</sup> The order of events from 1266 is much more consistent with the implementation rather than the completion of the Cosmati mosaics at Westminster: if the construction of Saint Edward's shrine base and Henry III's tomb had already been underway or even completed *before* the pavement, as is occasionally claimed, Ware's subsequent trip to Rome to secure the pavement would require a different explanation as the necessary links to Rome would presumably already have been put in place.<sup>17</sup> The evidence, on the contrary, suggests that supply lines for which Ware was given credit did not exist before 1266, and that it was Ottobuono who had established them. It should be particularly emphasized that neither Ware nor Henry III had direct access to Roman assets without papal or legatine approval: while the arts at Westminster were their sole purview, in common with other northern European rulers they had no claim to the Roman marbles and spolia within the papal state. We suggest that their access to these assets calls for an explanation, to be found in the political circumstances of the 1260s. The entire narrative of the procuring of the mosaics has been significantly coloured by a longstanding, and perhaps slightly chauvinistic institutional belief, ingrained by John Flete's fifteenth-century narrative, that Abbot Ware, acting for the king as the ultimate arbiter of taste at Westminster, had been the main agent. Flete's attribution of the initiative to Abbot Ware was fully in line with the conventions of traditional Benedictine *pietas* which tended to attribute acts of patronage to abbots as heads of monastic houses.<sup>18</sup> It may have been reinforced by the heroic epitaph in brass letters formerly on the perimeter of Abbot Ware's tomb slab on the north side of the pavement (fig. 6): "Abbas Richardus de Wara qui resquiescit hic portat lapides quos huc portavit ab Urbe"; i.e., "Abbot Richard of Ware, who lies here, carries the stones which he brought here from Rome."<sup>19</sup>

Historians of patronage, as we suggest, have surprisingly not given due weight to the importance of papal initiative, fully apparent within the shores of England, demonstrating Rome's unequivocal support for the crown against its enemies. The connection between the Crown of England and the Church of Rome had never been stronger than under Henry III. No fewer than three future popes – Ottobuono Fieschi (later Adrian V), Tedaldo Visconti (Gregory X) and Benedetto Caetani (Boniface VIII) – had been sent as legates to England by Pope Clement IV in support of Henry III between 1265 and 1268, that is, during the

16 A point recognized by Gardner 1990, p. 208.

17 The case for a start on the base before 1266 is first made by Carpenter 1996 and is reiterated at length by Rodwell and Neal 2019.

18 Luxford 2005, pp. 51–82.

19 Flete, in Robinson 1909, p. 115. For the "heroic" mode of bringing stones from Rome or Byzantium to adorn northern European Benedictine churches, Binski 2002, pp. 120–123.

so-called Second Barons' War (1264–1267).<sup>20</sup> Even the then pope, Clement IV, had served as legate to England from 1263 on, without ever crossing the channel.

We therefore intend to argue that the sanctuary pavement constitutes a conscious diplomatic assertion of papal support for Henry III's regime in the aftermath of the Barons' War. According to the mandate Ottobuono received from Clement IV, the legation's chief object was to restore the king and his dynasty to their former glory and to calm the situation in the kingdom. As shown below, the pavement's form and cosmological inscriptions were themselves not just symbols of an unshakeable order, continuity, and stability; rather, they secured the idea that just as the cosmos had emerged from chaos, so, too, had the political order. In this *rappel à l'ordre*, the coronation was to play a central part. In 1269 Henry III had described the pavement as being "ad opus nostrum". It was to be the permanent site for the anointing and coronation of kings, one aspect of the royal *opus*.<sup>21</sup> As a depiction of the κόσμος, it represented both an 'ordering' of ritual and an 'adornment' by art of that ritual and of the Abbey.<sup>22</sup>

When the pavement was first set down in 1268, that part of its inscription giving its date of manufacture renders it certain that its lettering was laid after the death of Henry III in November 1272 but probably in time for the 1274 coronation of his son Edward, a point to which we return later.<sup>23</sup> Ottobuono Fieschi would have been well attuned to local plans for the coronation as he had been a canon and archdeacon of Reims Cathedral, the French coronation church, since 1250. That his family was very wealthy and well-connected is exemplified by the tomb of his cousin Guglielmo Fieschi (d. 1256) in San Lorenzo fuori le mura in Rome, the earliest cosmatesque monumental tomb of a cardinal in Rome.<sup>24</sup> Further evidence for his contacts with Henry III and with this art form in Rome will be discussed later. As one commentator remarked, "Ottobuono's legation was the last great political service that the papacy rendered to Henry III"<sup>25</sup> and analogously, the pavement is to be seen as a part of this same and specific 'political service'.

To understand this more fully, however, it is necessary to consider in depth the Roman antecedents for this type of pavement.

## II. The sanctuary pavement, the coronation, and Old Saint Peter's (Claudia Bolgia)

Discussions of the Westminster sanctuary pavement have overlooked two facts crucial to the narrative: the presence of a prominent *quincunx* in the pavement of Old Saint Peter's in Rome and its centrality in the coronation ceremony of emperors and monarchs.

Let us consider the *quincunx* first. Nicolaus Muffel of Nuremberg, visiting Rome in 1452 to carry the imperial insignia for the coronation of Emperor Frederick III, reports that "in front of the altar of Saint Maurice is the chair of Saint Peter on which the Apostle sat as the first pope; there, every emperor is anointed, and there are five marble disks on which he has to place his two feet and two hands and his heart and genuflect for unction."<sup>26</sup> That the *V sinbel marblestein*

20 Bolgia 2017, p. 252.

21 The case for this belief was first set out in Binski 1990, pp. 31–32. At that point the only scholar to have explored the 'iconology' of such pavements in relation to coronation ritual was Dorothy Glass, who, however, excluded the Westminster pavement as a derivative of 'true' Cosmatesque pavements, Glass 1980, pp. 48–54 and 55.

22 The related verb *kosmeo*, *kosmein*, to arrange or adorn, and the adjective *Cosmatus* may explain the family name *Cosmati*.

23 Binski 1990, pp. 10–11.

24 Gardner 1992, pp. 64–68.

25 *The English Church* 1999 (1965), p. 132.

26 Muffel (1452) 1999, p. 51.



recorded by Muffel formed a *quincunx* (a five-fold figure of circles arranged in a cross formation) seems incontestable.<sup>27</sup>

Second, to understand the actual function of the *quincunx* in the coronation ceremony, we need to turn to the *Ordines Coronationis*.<sup>28</sup> The possibility that the floor at Westminster had played a role in the coronation ceremony has been raised on the grounds that a large porphyry *rota* in the pavement of the nave of Old Saint Peter's is known to have been used for the imperial coronation ceremony.<sup>29</sup> Yet, the great *rota porphiretica* – described as *pulcherrima*, while still 'intact' in 1605, and extant in reduced size today<sup>30</sup> – marked only one step in a far more complex ritual, as attested by the Coronation Orders. Along the central axis of the nave of Old Saint Peter's were four *rotae*, discs or roundels, made of different materials: a porphyry *rota* just outside the main door; a veined Egyptian marble *rota* at the level of the third column; the great porphyry *rota* at the level of the sixth intercolumniation (between the altars of Saints Philip and James and of Saints Simon and Jude, respectively); and the fourth *rota*, likewise of veined Egyptian marble, at the level of the eleventh intercolumniation (e, f, g and h in fig. 7).<sup>31</sup> Of these, only the porphyry roundels featured in the imperial coronation ceremony: a first station was on the red roundel outside, in front of the silver door (*porta argentea*), where the cardinal bishop of Albano recited the first prayer.<sup>32</sup>

After passing the *rota* near the *porta argentea*, the future emperor would proceed to the great porphyry *rota* for the second station. According to the earliest complete *Ordo*, dating to the first half of the twelfth century (known as the *Ordo Cencius II*), this station entailed a so-called *scrutinium*, followed by the prayer of the cardinal bishop of Porto.<sup>33</sup> In effect, the pope and the emperor elect sat face to face on the red *rota*, where the monarch answered the pope's questions according to an established formulary. The *scrutinium* was generally part of the ritual for consecrating bishops and thus formed the spiritual component of the imperial coronation.<sup>34</sup> By ca. 1200, whereas the *scrutinium* had disappeared from the coronation ceremony, the second prayer (*Deus inenarrabilis*), led by the cardinal bishop of Porto, still took place on the *rota*. The *Ordines* of the second half of the twelfth century unequivocally identify the site as "in medio rota maioris."<sup>35</sup> This *rota* was also the place where the cardinals offered their *reverentia* to the pope in the ceremony of papal enthronement.<sup>36</sup>

What becomes clear from the *Ordines Coronationis*, and has been overlooked by scholars of Westminster Abbey, is that the area before the altar of Saint Maurice (that is, the area paved with a *quincunx*), played a crucial role in the ceremony. Over the centuries, its function transformed from being the place of corona-

27 De Blaauw 1994, II, p. 738; Claussen 2018, p. 216.

28 These are published in Elze 1960 (hereafter abbreviated as *OCI= Ordines Coronationis Imperialis*).

29 Binski 1990, p. 31.

30 Grimaldi 1972, p. 141. Andrieu has argued persuasively that the great porphyry *rota*, positioned since 1649 in the first bay of the nave of the new St Peter's is the original one: its diameter measures 2.63 m, but it was reduced in size as a result of a damage to its border during its re-setting in the new basilica: Andrieu 1954, 208–218; see also Claussen 2018, pp. 362–364.

31 For the first *rota*: de Blaauw 1994, II, pp. 734–735. The three *rotae* inside the basilica were described in the sixteenth century by Panvinio 1853, p. 370; de Blaauw 1994, II, pp. 635–636.

32 *OCI* XVI 2; de Blaauw 1994, II, pp. 734–735.

33 The *Cencius II* (*OCI* XIV, pp. 35–47) is so named as it was included by the *camerarius* Cencius (the future Pope Honorius III) in his compilation; reference to the station at pp. 11–14.

34 De Blaauw 1994, II, p. 735.

35 *OCI* XV 7, XVI 4.

36 De Blaauw 1994, II, pp. 679 and 754. In Byzantium, a *rota* is documented as marking a station along a specified route within the church from 945 onwards: Schreiner 1979, with sources. The marble disk was the place of ritual meetings: Strube 1973, *passim*.

tion to that of unction. The altar was situated in the south transept against the wall between the arches through which one entered the transept from the south aisles (no. 33 in fig. 7).<sup>37</sup> According to the *Ordo Cencius II* – the first source to mention the altar in the first half of the twelfth century – the emperor elect, following his anointing in front of the *confessio* at the high altar (no. 1 in fig. 7), moved to the altar of Saint Maurice for the actual coronation.<sup>38</sup> The same ritual is found in the *Ordo* composed in the early 1140s, and included in the *Liber Politicus* of Canon Benedict.<sup>39</sup> In the second half of the twelfth century, there seems to have been some uncertainty about the topography of the ritual, as the rubricist of that time states that, according to some, the coronation was required to take place not at the altar of Saint Maurice but at the high altar, with the altar of Saint Maurice as the location of unction.<sup>40</sup> At the end of the twelfth century, however, the ceremony in use still followed *Cencius II*, as attested to by the instructions for the coronation of Henry VI and Costanza of Altavilla on Easter Monday 1191 by Celestine III.<sup>41</sup> Following the unction at the *confessio*, the pope was to descend from his episcopal chair in the apse and, followed by the emperor elect and the queen, move to the altar of Saint Maurice. While the pope was to stand “super limen in introitu altaris”, that is, on the threshold of the altar precinct, the emperor elect had to stand in front of him “in medio rotae”; to the emperor’s right stood the queen, with six of the seven cardinal bishops of the Lateran Palace surrounding them “in rotis que ibi posite sunt”, the seventh bishop serving the pope in the office of the altar.<sup>42</sup>

Then the first and second almoners were to take the crowns of the emperor elect and the queen from the altar of Saint Peter and place them on the altar of Saint Maurice. Prior to the coronation, the pope was to hand over the ring and the sword, in that order, to the emperor elect to the chant of *Accipe annulum* and *Accipe hunc gladium*, respectively, followed by the prayer *Deus cuius est omnis potestas* and *Deus qui providentia* once the ring and the sword were consigned. Then the archdeacon was to take the crown from the altar of Saint Maurice and hand it over to the pope, who was to place it on the head of the emperor elect, reciting the prayer *Accipe signum Gloria*. In the coronation of the queen that followed, the seven cardinal bishops silently laid their hands on the queen while the pope placed the crown on her head and proclaimed aloud: *Accipe coronam regalis excellentiae, que licet ab indignis Episcoporum tamen manibus capiti tuo imponitur [...]*. Only then did the pope, reciting a related formula and prayer, grant the emperor a sceptre as a sign of royal power, after which he returned to the altar of Saint Peter with his ministers.<sup>43</sup>

From the late twelfth century on, this imperial coronation ritual became reasonably solidified in the ceremonial texts. From around 1200, as attested by the *Ordo Saufico*, the coronation moved to the high altar, or the altar of Saint Peter, while the altar of Saint Maurice became the dedicated place for unction, notwithstanding the continued use of the *rotae*: “valido anche più tardi a proposito dell’unzione.”<sup>44</sup>

37 For its location: *LC*, I, p. 4, note 1.

38 *OCI XIV*, II, 25–37.

39 *LC*, II, p. 169. Similarly, in Gervase of Tilbury (ca. 1211) 1855, p. 378: “[...] ad altare modicum in dextro latere basilice sancti Petri consecratur [...] et ad altare tantum sancti Petri unctio suscipiat.”

40 De Blaauw 1994, II, p. 737.

41 *Pontificum Romanorum Vitae* 1862, vol. 2, pp. 716–717.

42 *Pontificum Romanorum Vitae* 1862, vol. 2, pp. 716–717: “Et domino papa stante super limen in introitu altaris, electo stet ante eum in medio rotae; ad cuius dexteram stet regina cum six episcopis Palatii Lateranensis in rotis quae ibi positae sunt circumstantibus, septimo in officio altaris domino papae serviente.”

43 *Pontificum Romanorum Vitae* 1862, vol. 2, pp. 716–717.

44 De Blaauw 1994, II, p. 738.

Invoking the significance of these instructions, and more generally the content of the Orders, is far from an idle exercise. First, these sources reveal that the most important part of the coronation ceremony was originally held on the pavement, and that included the investment with full regalia, namely the ring, the sword, the crown, and the sceptre. The formulae recited during the coronation ceremony upon consigning the regalia demonstrate that divine recognition of the royal power could be conferred on the emperor only via the pope, while the formula and prayer uttered following the unction stressed that a just ruler would be guided (inspired) by the Holy Spirit that would inhabit him after being anointed with the exorcised oil imparted by the bishop. In other words, divine sanction of rulership was mediated by the Roman Church.

These sources additionally show, on the one hand, that various rituals in this liturgical ceremony were held on the *rotae* (indicating the existence of a *quincunx* since the first half of the twelfth century). On the other, they also suggest that the pavement in front of the altar of Saint Maurice accommodated not merely five but nine *rotae*: while the central *rota* was reserved for the emperor elect and the queen (to his right), the seven cardinal bishops surrounding the emperor and queen also stood on *rotae* at the moment of the laying on of hands and, although the pope is not explicitly recorded as standing on a *rota*, it would be surprising if he were the sole figure not performing on a marble disc, which implies the presence of nine *rotae*.<sup>45</sup> The pavement before the altar of Saint Maurice seems to bear incontrovertible resemblance to the sanctuary pavement at Westminster, given that both were most probably furnished with nine *rotae*. At Westminster, the *quincunx* is enclosed in a square, set diagonally within a larger square, whose spandrels accommodate four *rotae*. This pattern, with a central marble roundel surrounded by eight others, was deployed in other churches in Rome, such as San Crisogono and Santa Maria Nova (where they have been restored and possibly relocated to a different area), and outside Rome, including the cathedrals of Terracina and Anagni.

We are not aware of any other medieval cosmatesque pattern that contains a *quincunx* combined with four additional *rotae* for performing the coronation ceremony as prescribed in the *Ordines*. The pavement at Westminster additionally includes a framing border comprising rectangular panels and guilloches. It is possible that the pavement in front of the altar of Saint Maurice was also furnished with a framing border as the almoners had to place the crowns at the altar while the Archdeacon thereupon carried the imperial crown to the Pope, and such manoeuvres required space. We further note that the sanctuary pavement at Westminster measures 7.8 m square and the depth of the transept of Old Saint Peter's was 17.43 m, which would have easily accommodated a pavement of the same size as in Westminster, plus the altar of Saint Maurice (ca. 1.5/2 m if we include the steps), as well as Saint Peter's throne (opposite), presumably on a platform with steps (between ca. 2 m and 3 m), thus affording ca. 4 to 5 m for walking in between the holy chair and the coronation area. Yet, it is equally possible that the pavement at Saint Peter's was smaller, and Westminster was furnished with a more 'monumental' version.

Lacking conclusive evidence, the possibility that Westminster and Old Saint Peter's shared an almost identical pattern for their coronation pavements must remain a matter of conjecture, but the existence of the *quincunx* is beyond question. Muffel mentions five *rotae* explicitly. The subsequent statement indicating that the emperor had to place on these *rotae* "his two feet and two hands and his heart and genuflect for unction" seems puzzling at first. Since the thirteenth cen-

45 Only six *rotae* seem to have been needed in the previous format of the ceremony, as the seventh bishop was in the service of the altar – unless he stood on the *rota* closer to the altar, to the pope's side.

tury, the coronation ceremony required the emperor to prostrate on the floor face down, but that part was performed at the *confessio* of the high altar, just before moving towards the altar of Saint Maurice.<sup>46</sup> As Muffel was not an eyewitness to the coronation,<sup>47</sup> his description may have combined his viewing the altar and pavement when he visited Saint Peter's with hearsay accounts or with indirect knowledge of other royal coronations. Interestingly, the *Ordo* for the coronation of Roger II of Sicily in the Palatine chapel of Palermo prescribed that the designated king, after having placed his mantle and insignia in front of the choir, should be guided by the hands of the bishops from the choir to the steps of the altar, and subsequently, on the pavement there, humbly lie down, completely prostrate in the form of a cross ("pavimento [...] ibi humiliter totus in cruce prostratus iaceat"), while the bishops and presbyters sang the litany.<sup>48</sup> Considering that the pavement in front of the steps of the high altar in the Palatine chapel is, indeed, a cosmatesque *quincunx*, it is possible that it provided the material basis for the complete prostration 'in cruce', as prescribed by the Sicilian *Ordo*. The prostration 'in cruce' was presumably similar to the posture still adopted today in certain liturgical ceremonies, for instance the ordination of priests or the papal adoration of the Cross on Good Friday. Should this be performed on a *quincunx*, one should place both the head and heart on the larger central *rota*, and extended arms and legs on the other four *rotae* (or approximately on them, depending on the size of the *quincunx*). What Muffel 'describes' is different, but clearly reminiscent of the five wounds of Christ, and, hence, of the idea of the Cross. Inasmuch as the mantle of Roger II, with other Sicilian royal clothes, had arrived in Nuremberg in 1424 as part of the imperial coronation garments (refashioned as Carolingian 'relics'), we cannot exclude the possibility that Muffel – one of the elders of the communal council of Nuremberg and first commander of the army in charge of escorting those same imperial insignia to Rome for the coronation of Frederick III – was informed about Sicilian coronation ceremonies, and what seems a 'bizarre' observation, in fact, reflects such indirect knowledge.<sup>49</sup>

Particularly relevant to our discourse is the fact that a diagonally set *quincunx*, such as the one at Westminster, does indeed evoke the form of a cross, unlike a more 'traditional' *quincunx*, i.e., not set diagonally (such as in the chapel of Saint Sylvester at Santi Quattro Coronati or in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, to cite only two well-known examples). This suggests that the *quincunx* of the cosmatesque pavement in front of the altar of Saint Maurice in Old Saint Peter's was also diagonally set, reinforcing the hypothesis that it was very similar to the sanctuary pavement at Westminster.

In the thirteenth century, not only emperors but also monarchs were crowned in the Vatican Basilica in a ceremony that echoed the imperial coronation. In 1266, a date very close to the making of the Westminster pavement, Charles of Anjou – an important figure in our narrative – was crowned King of Sicily at Saint Peter's.<sup>50</sup> The coronation in 1297 of Jaime II of Aragon as King of Sardinia and Corsica by Boniface VIII closely adhered to the model of imperial

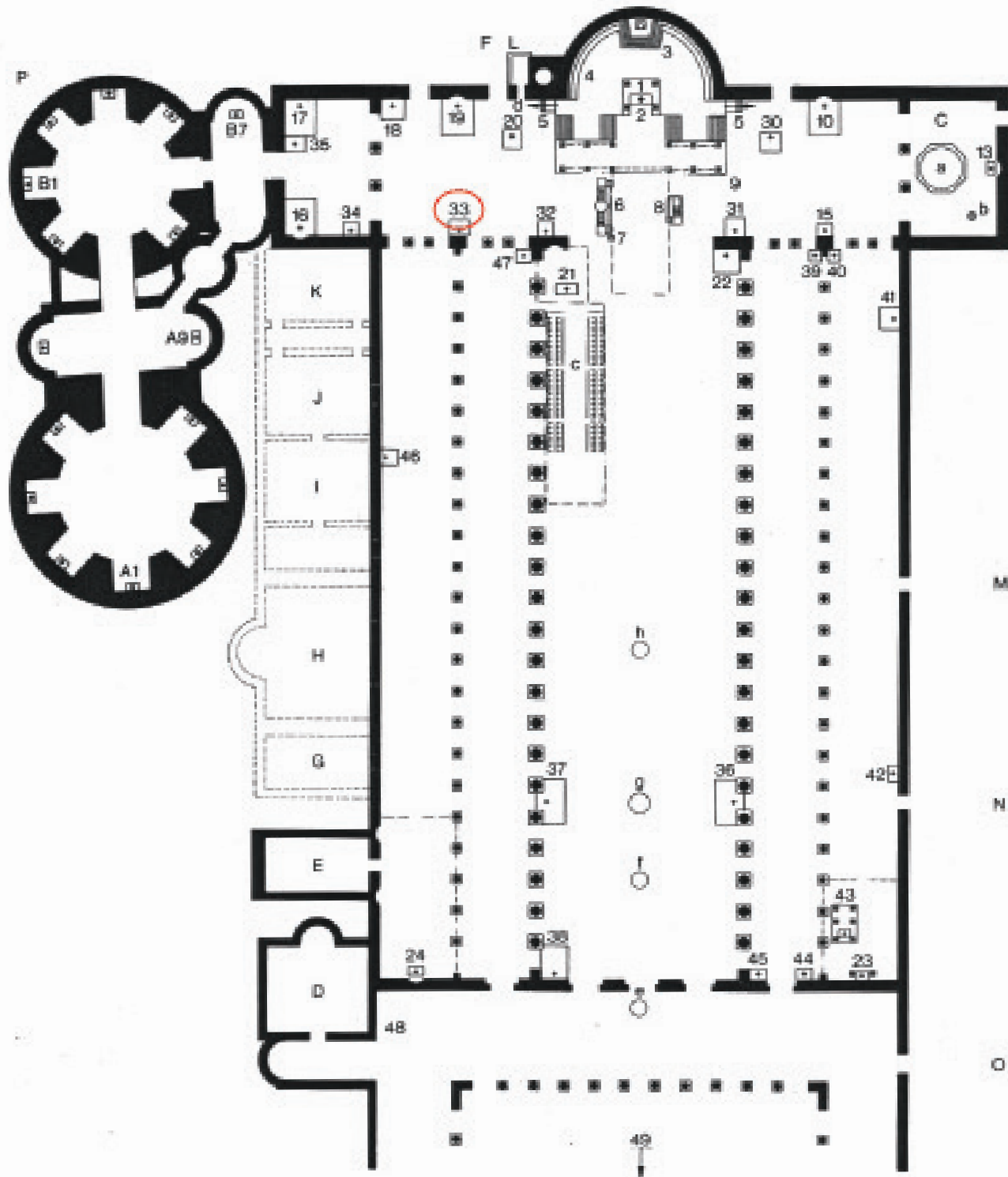
46 "Qui cum ad confessionem beati Petri pervenerit, prosternat se pronus in terram, et prior et diaconorum super eum faciat letaniam": *OCl*, for instance at p. 64 (*Ordo Saufico*, ca. 1200); p. 75 (*Ordo* of the beginning of the thirteenth century); p. 85 (half of the thirteenth century); p. 109 (Durandus 1290s).

47 He may have been present at the event but since he does not make any reference to it in his 'description' of the city of Rome, as noted by scholars: Muffel (1452) 1999, p. 20, he may not have been able to view the ceremony in the basilica.

48 For the text of the *Ordo*, see Elze 1990, p. 171.

49 For the transformation of the Norman and Hohestaufen Sicilian regalia into the *Reichskleinodien*, see Rice Mattison 2019, pp. 77–102; for the biography of Muffel, who was to become first mayor (*Losunger*) of Nuremberg in 1457, see Muffel (1452) 1999, p. 13.

50 De Blaauw 1994, II, p. 742.



7 Plan of Old Saint Peter's in the thirteenth century. (E, f, g, and h) ceremonial marble *rotae*; (1) high altar; (33) altar of Saint Maurice circled in red, from de Blaauw 1994, vol. 2, plate 26



coronations, both liturgically and topographically.<sup>51</sup> Interestingly, when a coronation could not be held at Saint Peter's for various reasons, the topographical features of the Vatican Basilica were reproduced as closely as possible in the new location. This was the case, for instance, at the 1530 coronation of Charles V in Bologna by Clement VII, when the nave of San Petronio was furnished with a drawing of a porphyry-coloured *rota*.<sup>52</sup>

As for the dating and idiom of the *quincunx*, there can be little doubt that it was a cosmatesque work. Portions of the Cosmati-style pavement at Saint Peter's were still visible in the sixteenth century, when Tiberio Alfarano described a “pavimentum autem magnis ac eximiis marmoribus rotundis ac quadratis, et variarum formarum erat stratum, et variis etiam coloribus albis porphireticis aegyptiacis granitis et deauratis erat vermiculatum atque exornatum.”<sup>53</sup> It is possible that the *quincunx* dated from the time of the installation of the altar of St Maurice, given the strict association of altar and pavement in the ceremony. But when was the altar installed? Its first mention can be found in the *Ordo* of the first half of the twelfth century, as we have seen,<sup>54</sup> which interestingly also recounts that, after the mass, the emperor was shod with the *calcaria sancti Mauricii*, the boots with spurs that were believed to have belonged to Saint Maurice.<sup>55</sup>

A passage in the *Liber Pontificalis* records that Pope Callixtus II (1119–1124) donated ‘pavements’ (*pavimenta*) to the basilica.<sup>56</sup> It has been reasonably argued by Peter Cornelius Claussen and Sible de Blaauw that these included a re-paving of the sanctuary area since various sources record that Callixtus covered the high altar with marble before consecrating it in 1123.<sup>57</sup> The pavement of the apsidal area in front of the papal throne (no. 3 in fig. 7) contained three *rotae* of grey granite, still visible in Grimaldi's time.<sup>58</sup> One may wonder whether the similar, smaller *rota* (*alia rota similis minor*) described by Grimaldi as “not far away [from the sanctuary]” (*illinc non longe*), may have been one of the *rotae* of the *quincunx* in front of the altar of Saint Maurice in the southern transept (no. 33 in fig. 7), which was, indeed, not far from the sanctuary. In any event, it is possible that the “pavements” mentioned in the Life of Callixtus II included the pavement in front of the altar of Saint Maurice, in addition to that in front of the high altar, and that the altar of St Maurice was installed at the same time. Indeed, the feast day commemorating the saint and his companions enters in the Roman calendar only in the twelfth century.<sup>59</sup>

Mary Stroll, unaware of the passage in the *Liber Pontificalis*, has also associated the altar of Saint Maurice with Callixtus II, primarily on the ground that

51 De Blaauw 1994, II, p. 742. It is worth noting that Charles of Anjou ‘dealt’ in porphyry tomb-tubs to provide an appropriate sepulchral monument to Pope Adrian V, and Jaime II had a porphyry tomb-tub transported from Sicily for the burial of his father at Santes Creus, the great Cistercian abbey near Barcelona. See also Gardner 1990, p. 214.

52 Andrieu 1954, pp. 204–206.

53 Alfarano (1589–1590) 1914, p. 14; see also Claussen 2018, pp. 352–353, note 10.

54 *OCI* XIV, I, Cencius II, in the title.

55 *OCI* XIV, 49 (and this is repeated in a later edition of *Ordines*).

56 *LP*, II, p. 323.

57 *Descriptio Vaticanae Basilicae* by Petrus Mallius in Valentini/Zucchetti 1940–1953, vol. 3, p. 435: “Callixtus papa II [...] altare beati Petri, quod nimia vetustate et lapidum percussionebus quodammodo violatum videbatur, optimis marmoribus vestivit et decoravit et in festo Annuntiationis beatae Mariae cum toto concilio lapidem altaris honorifice et devote consecravit”; for the consecration in 1123, see *Liber Anniversariorum della basilica Vaticana* in *Necrologi* 1908–1914, I, p. 286; Claussen 1987, pp. 10–12; de Blaauw 1994, II, p. 647; Claussen 2018.

58 Grimaldi (ca. 1609) 1972, p. 141: “Tres amplae et nobilissimae et integrae, quarum una fracta nunc est in novo pavimento ante sepulcrum Clementis VIII, visabantur ante solium Pontificis apsidae veteris [...] huiusmodi lapidis materia cinericius erat, orientale granitum vocant.”

59 Jounel 1977, p. 290; de Blaauw 1994, II, p. 737.

Callixtus had been archbishop of Vienne, whose archiepiscopal church was dedicated to Saint Maurice.<sup>60</sup> In her view, the altar “may have been constructed or, at least, come into prominence” during the pontificate of Callixtus.<sup>61</sup> In my view, the overlooked information in the papal biography concerning the *pavimenta*, coupled with the close connection between altar and pavement in the coronation ceremony and with the fact that St Maurice was dear to Callixtus II through his archiepiscopal church, points toward Callixtus as the patron of both the altar of Saint Maurice and the pavement in front of it. His pontificate also oversaw the reconstruction of San Crisogono, one of the very few Roman churches where a Cosmati floor is preserved with a *quincunx* enclosed within a square set diagonally within a larger square, with spandrels accommodating four *rotae* (fig. 8). This pattern is very similar to that at the Westminster sanctuary. Since the pavement was restored in modern times, the portion with the *quincunx* may no longer be in its original setting, but may have been conceived as a simplified version of the Petrine one, thus providing further evidence that the pavement at Westminster was indeed a ‘copy’ of the Petrine floor in the medieval sense of copying.<sup>62</sup> If only a coincidence, it is still worth mentioning that the central *rota* in one of the other *quincunxes* at San Crisogono is made of a veined marble, recalling the central *rota* of Westminster (fig. 27), the *globus/macrocosmus* of the inscription, to which we will shortly return. In any event, the *Ordines* attest that, by the mid-thirteenth century, there was a consolidated tradition of imperial anointing on the pavement before the altar of Saint Maurice and of coronation at the altar of Saint Peter.

It appears, therefore, that Henry III did not want merely a Cosmati pavement at Westminster. The floor had to closely resemble the pavement before the altar of Saint Maurice at Old Saint Peter’s, used by the popes for the anointing of emperors and kings, and had to be made of the same material (ancient Roman marbles). Westminster, as rebuilt by Henry III, thus, had both a *quincunx* pavement *and* a high altar dedicated to Saint Peter, closely resembling the sites of imperial coronation in the Vatican Basilica.

Since the high altar of Westminster was taken down in the sixteenth century, we cannot confirm it as a work of the *Oderisii* workshop made for the consecration in 1269, though that might be possible. If so, it would have been completed before the shrine base, which had just begun to be constructed in those years. A small Cosmati tomb, once wrongly identified as the shrine altar and now in the south ambulatory, offers valuable insights into the possible appearance of the high altar.<sup>63</sup> As noted by various scholars, it is remarkably similar to the tomb of Alfanus (d. 1123) in Santa Maria in Cosmedin, made of square panels marked by



8 Rome, Basilica di San Crisogono, nave *quincunx*, ca. 1140 (photo Paul Binski)

60 Stroll 1991, p. 81. Also see Claussen 2018, pp. 360–361, and note 39. Although a date is not proposed, a reference is made to Stroll for the use of the altar for imperial coronations probably starting under Calixtus II. According to Claussen, a *quincunx* with a central porphyry *rota* today in the Vatican Grottoes may have been designed as a *memoire* of the *quincunx* formerly in the transept.

61 Stroll 1991, p. 81.

62 See Lewis 1995, p. 130 for a description of the manner in which Westminster copied French Gothic models in its architecture: “The abbey’s French Gothic ‘models’ at Paris and Reims reveal a relation between original and ‘copy’ or quotation that is far from exact.”

flat pilasters virtually identical to those in the chest of Alfanus.<sup>64</sup> It is also similar to the high altars of San Crisogono and the Cistercian abbey of Tre Fontane, Rome, both dating to the time of Callixtus II.<sup>65</sup> The parallels are intriguing for their reference to the time of Callixtus II, which may further corroborate the hypothesis that the lost high altar of Westminster, too, recalled that period to invoke the high altar of the Vatican Basilica in Rome. If that were the case, it would be further evidence that what Henry III sought was more than a general analogy to Saint Peter's.

Whether or not the high altar of Westminster was materially similar to that of Saint Peter's, it is apparent that Westminster re-created both the most important *loci* of a coronation ceremony according to the Roman Church of the time. The Cosmati pavement was not a purely aesthetic choice, contrary to some scholars' views, nor was the pavement 'functionless,' as others have stated. Henry III, who had been crowned in May 1220 at Westminster, must have been aware by 1266, when he had reigned for almost half a century, that the coronation of his son Edward would take place in the not-too-distant future. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that he began to prepare an appropriate coronation setting for his son in his newly rebuilt abbey. Yet, his choice was motivated by 'function' only to a small extent, as the coronation of a new king was an infrequent occurrence. Political symbolism was key.

The appeal for Henry III may have lain in the immense symbolism of the pavement of Old Saint Peter's, which combined power, authority, and sacrality. The cosmatesque floors in front of the altar of Saint Maurice and the altar of Saint Peter were places where rulership, divinely sanctioned through the ritual performed by the pope, obtained the highest and most sacred recognition. It is often overlooked that Henry III had a 'sacral' conception of royal power based on the ancient notion of the king as 'God's vicar on earth.'<sup>66</sup> Informed by the ideas of Peter des Roches and the Savoyard canonist Hostiensis, Henry III's policies revolved around a sacramental, quasi-priestly understanding of kingship, according to which the king was obliged, by the sanctity of his office, to supervise ecclesiastical affairs.<sup>67</sup> As it has been observed, episcopal threats to sovereign 'rights' were at play in Henry III's commission of Westminster Abbey: "defined as protector and benefactor of the Church in the tradition established by William I, Henry countered the opposition of the bishops by building his own 'cathedral' at Westminster."<sup>68</sup> As the royal patron of a house affiliated *nullo mediante* to Rome since its exemption from episcopal authority in the 1220s, he established a spiritual headquarters under the protection of Saint Edward.<sup>69</sup> His cultivation of the royal consecration ritual was extraordinary, particularly with regard to the role of the crown, as revealed by his unfettered passion for crown-wearing and his extraordinarily frequent use of the *Laudes regiae*, the ancient hymns in praise of the ruler and the crown.<sup>70</sup> These *Laudes* constituted a public recognition of the king as the son crowned by the Lord and adopted by His Church.<sup>71</sup> Henry III saw the anointing and coronation ceremony as a way to be granted access as the monarch to a portion of sacred power.<sup>72</sup> The Cosmati pavement of Westminster

63 Tanner/O'Neilly 1966, pp. 129–154.

64 Tanner/O'Neilly 1966, pp. 129–154; Binski 1990, p. 22. On the tomb of Alfanus: Osborne 1983, pp. 240–247.

65 Herklotz 2001 (1985), pp. 226–229.

66 Prestwich 1990, pp. 14–15; Clanchy 1983, pp. 222–225.

67 Clanchy 1968, p. 212; Lewis 1995, p. 170; Carpenter 1996, pp. 427–461.

68 Lewis 1995, p. 171.

69 Lewis 1995, p. 171.

70 Kantorowicz 1958, pp. 96 and 175–177.

71 Kantorowicz 1958, pp. 96 and 175–177.

72 Lewis 1995, p. 171



Abbey expressed, both visually and materially, Henry III's belief in the political primacy of Westminster over all the churches of the realm on the grounds of its special, direct connection with Rome.

It is perhaps significant that the most remarkable case of 'export' of pattern (a *quincunx*), marbles, and artists (Ianni di Pietro Boccelate and Pietro di Ranuccio) from Rome before Westminster is found in the pavement of the crossing of Pisa Cathedral (ca. 1158), where it served to express an analogous special connection with papal Rome: notably, Pope Eugene III (1145–1153) was Pisan and Alexander III (1159–1181) had been an active canon in Pisa before his election.<sup>73</sup>

It is difficult to assess the extent to which the apparent *romanitas* of the Westminster pavement, altar, and shrine was perceived as such by those visiting Westminster at the time. Yet the fact that both the marbles and the artists came from Rome must have been well known. Importantly, at Westminster, which was also the setting for the parliament, both political and spiritual power coincided. As noted by historians, 1268 saw the start of a "period of intense parliamentary activity."<sup>74</sup> Parliaments were held at Westminster in October 1268, beginning on the confessor's feast day, and held again in January, April and July 1269, revolving around a tax on the laity needing to be levied in support of Edward's forthcoming crusade.<sup>75</sup> Thus, the request of support for the most important cause of the Roman Church at the time was being made in a very Romano-papal material context. The parliament was also summoned to meet at Westminster in October 1269, and as a prelude to the consecration of the Abbey and the transfer of the Confessor's body on 13 October, the king sought full attendance.<sup>76</sup>

Thus, the pavement had not been conceived merely for the infrequent occurrence of the coronation of a new king. Under Henry III, crown-wearing ceremonies at Westminster were numerous. One such event, the most spectacular under Henry's reign, was indeed the translation of Saint Edward,<sup>77</sup> and as the completion date (1268) in the inscription discussed below indicates, the pavement was ready for that occasion. Crown-wearing ceremonies find a parallel in Rome, where coronations of popes (including the procession from the Lateran to the Vatican and back) were re-enacted once a year for each year of their pontificates.<sup>78</sup> The popes also wore the tiara (the papal 'crown') for other special ceremonies.<sup>79</sup> Even the placement of Henry III's golden spurs, made for his coronation under the guardianship of the Westminster's prior, seems to echo how the golden spurs of Saint Maurice were preserved under the guardianship of the canons of Saint Peter's.<sup>80</sup>

The Westminster pavement expresses visually and materially the filiation with Saint Peter's, which also tallies perfectly with the fact that the Abbey had been dedicated to Saint Peter at its foundation, and its new high altar was to be dedicated to the Apostle on 13 October 1269. In this rediscovered 'Petrine' material context of the pavement, we can better understand contemporary court sources that highlighted an alleged original consecration of the Abbey by Saint Peter himself. An Anglo-Norman French verse on the life of Saint Edward dedicated to Henry III's queen, Eleanor of Provence (discussed later), celebrates the ancient history of Westminster, its foundation and – above all – its miraculous

73 The often-invoked parallels between Westminster and Canterbury are not compelling in my view. On the Pisan contract with the artists, see Settis 1986, p. 383; on the pavement: Tolaini 1991; *Il Duomo di Pisa* 1995, pp. 99–100, and 517–522, with excellent illustrations.

74 Maddicot 1987, pp. 92–105, with a list of parliaments at p. 117; Carpenter 2002, p. 44.

75 Maddicot 1987, pp. 92–105; Carpenter 2002, p. 44.

76 Maddicot 1987, pp. 92–105; Carpenter 2002, p. 44.

77 For Pentecost 1269: Lewis 1995, p. 165; Richardson 1960, p. 131.

78 Twyman 2002, 41–54.

79 On the papal tiara, see Paravicini Bagliani 2005 (1998).

80 For Westminster, Lewis 1995, p. 134; for St Peter's, de Blaauw 1994, II, p. 737.

Petrine consecration: “Saint Peter’s intervention in the affairs of Saint Edward and Westminster is felt throughout the poem’s text.”<sup>81</sup> The poem describes the Apostle’s consecratory marks, crosses, holy water, and alphabet clearly written twice on the pavement.

If we are correct in our argument that the Cosmati pavement of Westminster is an imitation of the pavement in the Petrine Basilica of Rome, the claim that this Westminster pavement had been ‘marked’ by Peter himself acquires a greater significance. Although the pavement alluded to in the poem pertained to the first abbey, in a conflation of time, Peter is believed to have marked the pavement with a permanent reminder of his intention to frequently visit the Abbey, and through his power of absolution from sins, open the gates of heaven.<sup>82</sup> And access to heaven was, of course, a major concern of the king, who was to be buried in a Cosmati tomb nearby, to which we will return. It is significant that Henry III had also commissioned a Cosmati shrine of Saint Edward. This was a unique creation, unparalleled in Roman art, but bespoke the same Roman language as the pavement (or perhaps, more appropriately, Romano-English, if we consider that all the works are in Purbeck, with insertions of Roman marbles and mosaic tesserae).<sup>83</sup> Thus, Saint Peter’s ‘intervention’ in the affairs of Saint Edward is ‘apparent’ in his shrine in the same way it is ‘felt’ in the poem.

### III. The Westminster inscriptions and artists (Claudia Bolgia)

What emerges from our discussion so far is that it is misleading to consider the sanctuary pavement – a work with a remarkable Roman pedigree – a supplement or an afterthought to the shrine base. On the contrary, the sacral role and standing of the pavement underscores its symbolic and chronological priority when understood in the context of the political situation in the mid-1260s. An analysis of the inscriptions on the mosaic works is now necessary to understand their production and date. Equally necessary is the identification of the artists, the reconstruction of their *œuvre*, and of their movements between London and the Patrimony of Saint Peter.

The inscriptions on the pavement and shrine, respectively, mention two artists, Odoricus (or Odericus) and Petrus *Romanus civis*. The first inscription on the pavement, which ran along the border of the main central square (fig. 9), today almost entirely lost, was transcribed by the Westminster monk Richard Sporley in 1450 as follows: “+ Christi milleno bis centeno duodeno / cum sexageno subductis quatuor anno / tercius Henricus rex Urbs Odericus et abbas / hos compegere porphireos lapides.”<sup>84</sup> The pavement displayed a second inscription, discussed below, while the shrine bore an inscription attributing its making to *Petrus, Romanus civis*, analyzed below in greater detail. For the moment, the question is: can the identity of these marblers be known? A *Petrus Oderisii* was recorded in the seven-

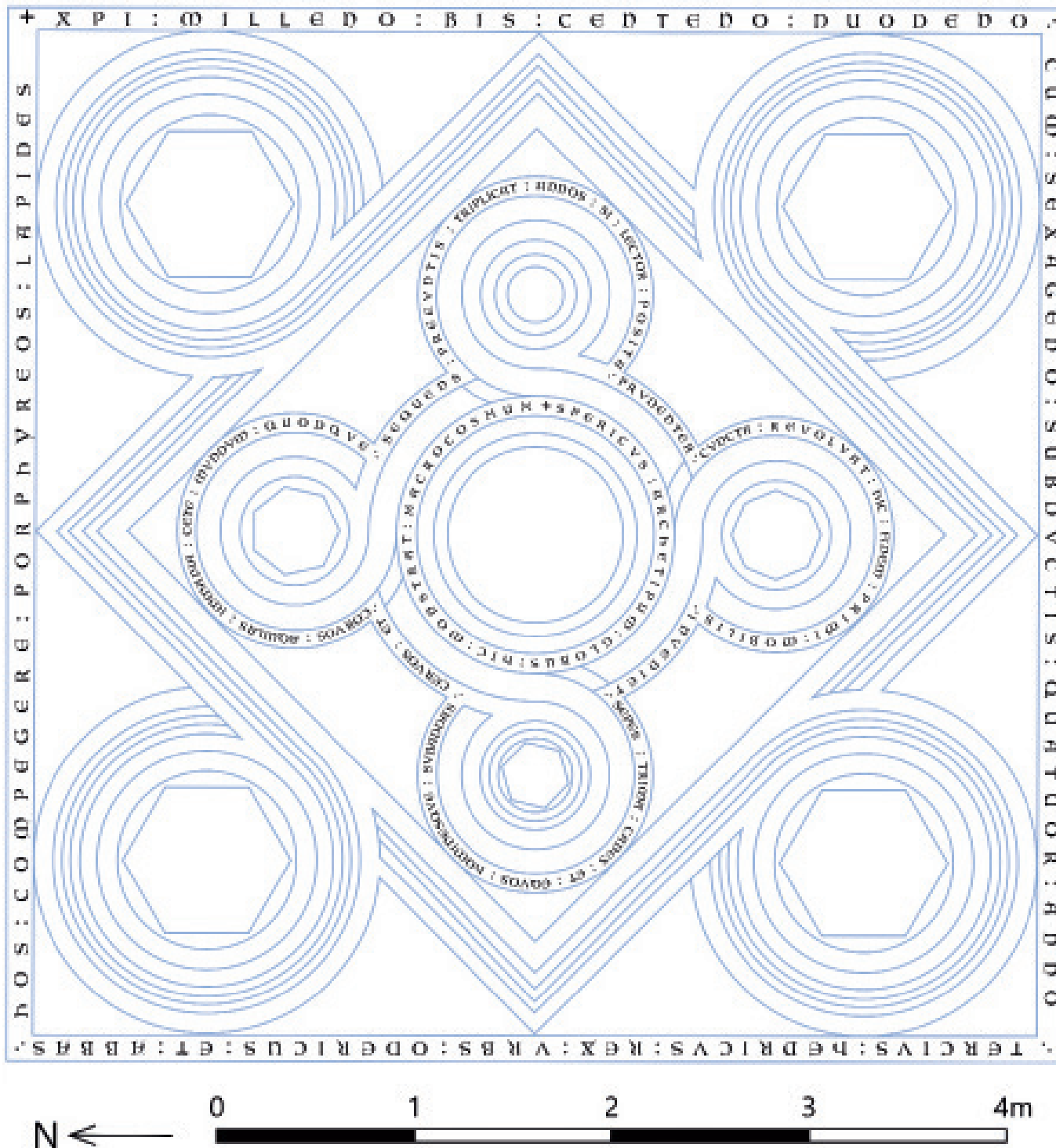
81 Binski 1990, p. 30.

82 Binski 1990, p. 30.

83 The fact that the main material of all monuments (pavements, shrine, tomb) is purbeck is worth stressing as it disproves a rather common statement, according to which parts of the Cosmati monuments may have been made in Rome and brought to Westminster ‘ready-made’: the idea was first propounded by Muñoz 1921, pp. 265–266, and is frequently repeated in scholarship (for instance, Toesca 1951, pp. 363–364, note 111).

84 The monk of Westminster John Flete, writing his *History of Westminster Abbey* in 1443, has the variants *Urbis* and *Odoricus*, but the extant text of Flete (Westminster Abbey Library Ms 29, fol. 42, published in Robinson 1909, p. 113) is a later copy (only few folios survive of the original manuscript, at Trinity College in Dublin, and do not include the part with the inscription); therefore the manuscript containing Sporley’s text (BL, Ms Cotton Claudius A. 8, fol. 59v) is considered more reliable. Even though Flete’s variant *Urbis* does not work on metrical grounds, it is taken for granted in Jordan 2009, p. 108. For full discussion of the greater reliability of Sporley’s manuscript, see Foster 1991, pp. 86–94; on the inscriptions, see also Howlett 2002, pp. 100–110.





teenth century on the now much-restored tomb of Clement IV (d. 1268) (fig. 10) then in Santa Maria in Gradi in Viterbo: *Petrus Oderisii sepulchri fecit hoc opus*.<sup>85</sup> Oderisii is the genitive form of Oderisius, and is used as a patronymic, which is standard practice in the Middle Ages; thus, the sepulchral monument of the pope was signed by a Petrus, *son* of Oderisius. Doubts have been raised, albeit

9 London, Westminster Abbey, sanctuary pavement, schematic plan of central area with inscriptions (drawing by James Hillson)

85 Papebroch 1685, pt. 2, pp. 54–55, transcribed the inscription, which he was unable to read in full; for the extensive literature on this tomb, see notably Rossi 1889; Frothingham 1891; Claussen 1987, pp. 199–205; Herklotz 2001 (1985), pp. 238–243; Gardner 1992, pp. 46–49; *Die mittelalterlichen Grabmäler* 1994, pp. 206–215; D’Achille 2000, pp. 123–147; Gardner 2013, pp. 120–123, all providing references to additional bibliography.



10 Viterbo, San Francesco alla Rocca, Pietro di Oderisio, tomb of Pope Clement IV, ca. 1271–1276 (photo Julian Gardner)

none of them conclusive, about the possibility that *Petrus Romanus civis* was indeed *Petrus Oderisii* (*Petrus* son of *Oderisius*). Yet, it is most probable that the Abbey’s pavement and shrine were raised by a father-son team, a possibility first given serious attention by William R. Lethaby, with Odericus producing the pavement and Petrus the shrine.<sup>86</sup> Proposed again by Claussen in more recent times, this hypothesis has generally found little support.<sup>87</sup> Even the publications focusing on *Petrus Oderisii* (henceforth Pietro di Oderisio in modern Italian) have not taken a position on the matter.<sup>88</sup> Yet we note from the inscriptions in

<sup>86</sup> Lethaby 1925, p. 227.

<sup>87</sup> Claussen 1987, pp. 174–205; id. 1990, pp. 173–200. Before Claussen, it was repeated, rather than argued, by Keller 1935, p. 239; Monferini 1969, p. 48; Negri Arnoldi 1972. But see new arguments in Bolgia 2017, pp. 250–252.

<sup>88</sup> D’Achille 2000, pp. 115–116, reports other scholars’ proposals, but does not take a position nor does she propose new arguments. *Ditto* for D’Ovidio 2015.



11 Rome, Sant’Agnese fuori le mura, *lapidarium*, fragment of inscription (photo Claudia Bolgia)

Italy how common father-son teams were, particularly in the case of the Cosmati, who, as Claussen demonstrates, operated as family clans.<sup>89</sup>

Further data presented here corroborate this hypothesis. First, the name *Odericius* or *Odoricus* – often considered non-Roman by scholars – appeared in Rome as early as the twelfth century, and, indeed, in interchangeable forms: *Oderisius* and *Odoricus/Odericus*.<sup>90</sup> Secondly, the name *Odericius Stephani* (*Odericius son of Stephanus*) appeared in an inscription as the maker (*fecit hoc opus*) of now-lost pavements with marble mosaic inlay in Sant’Agnese fuori le mura. This was documented by Panvinio in the sixteenth century and noted by Claussen, who first identified *Odericius/Odericus* as the father of the Petrus who worked in London.<sup>91</sup> This identification has either gone unnoticed or not been given serious consideration.<sup>92</sup> The inscription read “*Odericius Stephani fecit hoc / opus. Dom(i)na Jacoba devota sacrista*”<sup>93</sup> and a fragment (“... fecit hoc / ...ta sacrista”) still survives in the church *lapidarium* (fig. 11). Panvinio described the pavements with admiration, noting the *rotae* made of different marbles and observing their exquisite manufacture and elegance, particularly in the area around the high altar.<sup>94</sup> He also described a marble cathedra, a high altar on three porphyry steps under a ciborium on porphyry columns, two pulpits, and a choir precinct with colonettes and an architrave with mosaic inlay, amongst other things:<sup>95</sup> if these were all part of *Odericius Stephani*’s campaign, as generally assumed in the literature, it was doubtless a significant enterprise.

Several fragments of the liturgical furnishing survive in the *lapidarium* of Sant’Agnese and have been dated to ca. 1250–1260.<sup>96</sup> These include two large slabs, possibly from the choir precinct, showing two *quincunxes* each (figs. 12–13),

89 For more on the probably most famous case in medieval Italy, that of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, see Seidel 2012, with bibl. For the Cosmati, the reference work is Claussen 1987.

90 Savio 1999, under *Oderisius* = *Odericus*.

91 Claussen 1987, p. 172; Claussen 2002, pp. 61–62.

92 But see Romano 2008, p. 25; Romano 2012, p. 24; Bolgia 2017, p. 250, note 334; Bolgia 2021, pp. 130–131.

93 Panvinio states clearly that the inscription was on the pavement “*Dextra versus altare maius solum tessellatum cum hac inscriptione [the inscription follows]*”: BAV, Vat. Lat. 6780, fol. 278, cited by Claussen 2002, p. 61 from Pesarini’s transcription in BAV, Vat. Lat. 13127, fol. 454.

94 BAV, Vat. Lat. 6780, fol. 278: “*Pavimenta marmorea tessellata et porphyreticis orbibus ornata. Pavimentum totum factum ex elegantissimis maximisque quadris orbibusque marmoreis varii generis praesertim porphyreticis mirandis (mixtis) albis numidicis (thebaicis) et thasiis opere vermiculato alicubi. Arae maximae pavementum est lapis, totus marmoreus; porphyreticus quadra et rotunda elegantissima.*”

95 BAV, Vat. Lat. 6780, fol. 278; see also BAV, Barb. Lat. 2160 (*Compendio del Teatro*), fol. 129v; Claussen 2002, p. 64.

96 BAV, Vat. Lat. 6780, fol. 278; see also BAV, Barb. Lat. 2160 (*Compendio del Teatro*), fol. 129v; Claussen 2002, p. 64.





12 Rome, Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, Oderisio di Stefano (*Odericus Stefani*), marble slab with double *quincunx* and other Cosmati fragments, ca. 1250–1260 (photo Domenico Ventura)

13 Rome, Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, second marble slab with double *quincunx*, Oderisio di Stefano (*Odericus Stefani*), ca. 1250–1260 (photo Domenico Ventura)





a common design in Cosmati workshops, but one that also recurs at Westminster – *inter alia* – at the very centre of the pavement (fig. 3), on the east face of the shrine of Saint Edward (in the form of double *quincunx*, like Sant’Agnese, fig. 43) as well as on the rear of two niches (in the form of multiple or double *quincunxes*, figs. 14, 15), and on the tomb of Henry III (on the north side) (fig. 41). It seems most probable that the *Odericius*, who oversaw the significant cosmatesque campaign at Sant’Agnese, including a precious pavement which bore his name as the maker (and, thus, demonstrating strong experience in pavement-making), was the same *Odericus/Odoricus* who was subsequently given the prestigious task of making the sanctuary pavement of the royal Abbey at Westminster, for which the *porphyreos lapides* were imported from Rome. If the two marblers were one and the same, then he had a record in the production of precious marble-inlaid pavements of awe-inspiring elegance.<sup>97</sup>

Not only the ‘macro-design’ but also – and more cogently – the comparison of the ‘micro-designs’ supports the idea that both workshops were indeed one and the same: almost all the extant minute geometric patterns deployed at Sant’Agnese find exact matches at Westminster. Some patterns – based, as they

14 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base of Saint Edward, detail of niche on north side (photo Paul Binski)

15 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base of Saint Edward, detail of niche on south side (photo Paul Binski)

<sup>97</sup> It is worth noting, parenthetically, that despite the wording of the sanctuary inscription (clearly aimed at underlining the symbolic value of the stones), very little porphyry was deployed in the sanctuary pavement in comparison with Roman pavements. At Westminster, porphyry seems to have been primarily reserved for the tomb of King Henry (displaying a large rectangular slab secured by floriated iron clamps), in line with the imperial/royal connotations of the material.





16 Rome, Sant’Agnese fuori le mura, detail of fig. 12 (photo Domenico Ventura)

17 London, Westminster Abbey, sanctuary pavement, south side, detail (photo Paul Binski)

18 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base of Saint Edward, detail of column at north-west angle (photo Paul Binski)

are, on varied combinations of square and triangular tesserae – are rather common, but others are more distinctive. Take, for instance, the motif decorating one of the small pilasters at Sant’Agnese (figs. 12, 16): it recurs both in the pavement (in various sections of the composition and in a combination of different colours, fig. 17), and on the shrine of Saint Edward, on a flute of the north-west spiral colonnette (fig. 18). The latter comparison is more striking for the use of glass tesserae instead of marble, and for the same combination of colours (red, gold, white, and dark blue), even if in inverted terms: while at Westminster, gold is dominant and used for the fillets in the grid and for the square at the centre, these same areas are red at Sant’Agnese, where gold is deployed more sparingly. Not surprisingly, we might add, since at Westminster we are confronted with a saint’s shrine and a royal enterprise, and at Sant’Agnese with a liturgical furnishing and a Benedictine, probably female, commission.<sup>98</sup>

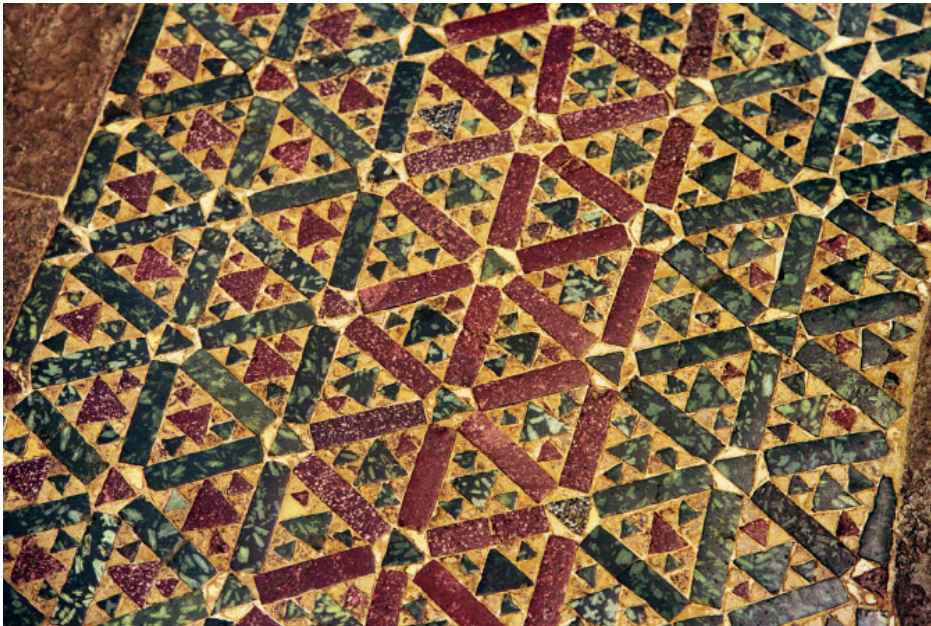
Another pattern shared by both the Westminster and Roman fragments is the design in the areas between the *quincunxes* in both slabs at Sant’Agnese: a grid of fillet-defined triangles, which form intersecting hexagons with tiny white hexagons at the intersections (fig. 19). This motif also appears in the Westminster pavement, in a more intricate version including the tiniest green triangles in tiny white hexagons (fig. 20). Another shared pattern is the decoration of a fragment of what originally seems to have been an entablature (fig. 21), consisting of six-lozenge stars inserted in hexagons defined by fillets, with tiny triangles at the intersections. Here gold is used both for the stars and the fillets, while the background is alternately red or dark blue. At Westminster, the same design is found on the shrine of Saint Edward, on a flute of the north-west colonnette-shaft (fig. 22), with an almost identical combination of colours (only the background is of a paler blue hue) and, in a slightly more elaborate version (with additional tiny triangles in the interstices), on the top frame of the lower chest on the north side of Henry III’s tomb (fig. 23). This pattern – like those aforementioned – is by no means exclusively found at Sant’Agnese and Westminster but also appears in the front of the *Presepe* altar at Santa Maria Maggiore (which is significant, as we shall see) (fig. 33), on a step in the presbytery area at Saint John Lateran, and

<sup>98</sup> On female patronage at Sant’Agnese, Claussen 2002, p. 55; Romano 2008, pp. 24–25; Romano 2012, pp. 23–25.





19 Rome, Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, detail of fig. 13 (photo Domenico Ventura)



20 London, Westminster Abbey, sanctuary pavement, detail (photo Paul Binski)

elsewhere. A more sophisticated taxonomic study of Cosmati patterns is now required, for the descriptive overview offered in Pajares Ayuela's book does not attempt to identify patterns with respect to family workshops.<sup>99</sup> But that would go well beyond the scope of the present study. Our intention here was only to show that almost all patterns, often in the same combination of colours, are shared by both the Roman fragments and the Westminster ones.

The consecration of three altars at Sant'Agnese in 1256 (recorded by an extant inscription) must have been the opportunity for the Pope and the cardinals present at the ceremony to appreciate the work of Odericus. It is, therefore, thrilling to discover that, amongst the most eminent prelates on the list, is the cardinal-deacon of Sant'Adriano 'Octobonus', that is, Ottobuono Fieschi.<sup>100</sup> Thus, Ottobuono may have advised Henry III not only to furnish Westminster with a pavement like the imperial coronation pavement of Old Saint Peter's

<sup>99</sup> Pajares Ayuela 2002.

<sup>100</sup> He had been made cardinal-deacon of Sant'Adriano in 1252: Paravicini Bagliani 1972, p. 363; on the inscription, Romano 2008, pp. 24–25.



21 Rome, Sant'Agnes fuori le mura, detail of fig. 13 (photo Domenico Ventura)

22 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base of Saint Edward, detail of column at north-west angle (photo Paul Binski)

23 London, Westminster Abbey, tomb of Henry III, north side, top frame of lower tier (see fig. 41), detail (photo Paul Binski)

but also to employ Odericus for such a magnificent enterprise. Ottobuono was very close to Henry III. Before his legation of 1265–1268, he had probably visited England twice: firstly in 1237–1241, as part of the entourage of cardinal legate Otto of Tonengo, if scholars are correct in identifying him as the cardinal-cleric ‘Octobonus’ who was the recipient of the prebends of the church of Saint Nicholas at Durham.<sup>101</sup> The second visit, made between late 1253 and early 1254, involved a secret mission concerning negotiations with Henry III over the throne of Sicily.<sup>102</sup>

Henry III became so close to Ottobuono that the latter even placed the king before his own parents in his last will of 28 September 1275. Indeed, Ottobuono established a perpetual chaplain in the church of San Salvatore at Lavagna (where he wished to be buried), whose task was to celebrate a daily mass “pro animabus mea, domini Enrici olim regis Angliae, patris et matris [meorum], et aliorum de domo mea.”<sup>103</sup> The cardinal left additional money for the solemn anniversary masses commemorating him and the king. Two-thirds were intended for distribution amongst canons and clerics attending the mass for the king, while only the remaining one-third was for those attending the mass for his own soul.<sup>104</sup> Ottobuono’s personal effects included a precious jewel belonging to the English Crown.<sup>105</sup> Such a special relationship reinforces our hypothesis that Ottobuono was the principal advisor in Westminster’s monumental enterprise.

Returning to Odericus/Oderisius, an inscription on the now-lost marble architrave on the portal of the church of San Nicola dei Prefetti (entirely remodelled in the Baroque period) refers to a *Stephanus Oderisii*, who had made the pavements, the altar and a ciborium above the altar in 1250: “+ Anni bis sexcentum et quinquaginta simul effluxi, octava indict(i)o Chr(ist)i vera(m) regeneration(n)e(m) s(em)p(er) doce(n)t. Andreas purus archipr(esbiter) tuus, o Nicolae,

101 Paravicini Bagliani 1972, p. 359.

102 Paravicini Bagliani 1972, p. 363.

103 Paravicini Bagliani 1980, pp. 142–163, at p. 144, nos. 10–11.

104 Paravicini Bagliani 1980, p. 144, no 1; also noted by Gardner 2018, p. 29, who reads it as a sign of Ottobuono’s affection for England. Nevertheless, it is clear from the previous clause that the cardinal’s special affection was specifically directed towards Henry III. Gardner’s suggestion (Gardner 2018, p. 29) that Ottobuono acquired his seal matrix in England during his second legateship is convincing, in that the seal appears much closer to contemporary English seal design than to Italian examples.

105 Bolton 2004.





24 Viterbo, San Francesco alla Rocca, Pietro di Oderisio (attr.), tomb of Pietro di Vico, formerly in Santa Maria in Gradi (photo Brogi)

vere cultor Dei, p(er) Stephanu(m) Oderisii, lapidicinu(m) mag(ist)ror(um), pavime(n)ta tua, altare, ciburiu(m) eius fulcimento proprio fecit. Deo gratias.”<sup>106</sup> Presumably the said Stephanus was another son of *Odericus/Oderisius*, and indeed the first-born, if he was given the same name as his grandfather. Interestingly, the inscription referring to the ‘qualification’ of Stephanus [henceforth Stefano in modern Italian] as *lapidicinum magistrorum*, that is, of the *magistri* of the stones, uses the date-form “twice six hundred and fifty fused together”, recalling the Westminster practice. We are not suggesting that Stefano too was active at Westminster but, rather, noting that members of the *Oderisii* workshop, reported to be working in Rome ca. 1250–1260, were recognized as having the *status* of *magistri* of the stones.

The third reason of interest is that San Nicola *dei Prefetti* derives its appellation from the fact that it was the church of the Di Vico (or De Vico) family, known as Prefetti Di Vico since their members held office almost as ‘hereditary’ prefects of the city, indeed uninterruptedly from 1297 until 1485.<sup>107</sup> It is, therefore, particularly significant that one of the works attributed to Pietro di Oderisio

106 Claussen 1987, pp. 173ff.; Yorck von Wartenburg 2020, pp. 629–631. The inscription is recorded by Gualdi, and its location on a door architrave is peculiar, given its reference to the sanctuary area. It seems more probable that it was originally set in the sanctuary area (on the ciborium or elsewhere) and reused as doorframe only in a later re-arrangement.

107 Calisse 1887–1888, pp. 1–136 and 353–594; Berardozzi 2013, with bibliography.



25 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base of Saint Edward, south side (photo Paul Binski)

26 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base of Saint Edward, chevron detailing in niche, south side (photo Paul Binski)

sio is the tomb of Pietro Di Vico (d. 1268) (fig. 24), formerly in Santa Maria in Gradi at Viterbo, where he had requested to be buried.<sup>108</sup> This suggests that the Prefetti di Vico family, acquainted with the work of Stefano and his team in their ‘family’ church (in close proximity to their palace), had commissioned the *Oderisii* marblers for the tomb of an illustrious family member in Santa Maria in Gradi, the recently built Dominican church that attracted numerous burials of illustrious prelates and laymen.<sup>109</sup> If Pietro di Oderisio had indeed worked at Westminster by then, he had gained international reputation, which may have been an additional reason for his appointment.

Pietro di Vico died in December 1268, only few days after Pope Clement IV. He was buried in a sepulchral monument with a basement articulated by six trefoil pointed lancets, including single drive-belt motives decorated by cosmatesque mosaics (the upper socle with the family coats of arms is from a later date and not pertinent to the original sepulchre) (fig. 24). This monument was already attributed to Pietro di Oderisio in seventeenth-century sources, on the basis of the nearly identical basement of the tomb of Pope Clement IV (d. 1268) (fig. 10), signed by *Petrus Oderisii*, as already indicated.<sup>110</sup> The pavement and shrine at Westminster share identical motifs with the tomb of Clement IV, including the drive-belt motif (fig. 25), the inverted chevron motif (fig. 26) and unusual inlay patterns.<sup>111</sup> Thus, it is highly probable that Pietro di Oderisio had multiple commissions in Viterbo, the second papal seat in Italy, where the college of cardinals gathered in the long period of *sede vacante* to elect the new pope. Pietro must have been summoned back to Italy by Clement’s executor,

108 The monument has had a modern history of movements similar to that of the tomb of Clement IV, i. e., it was first moved within Santa Maria in Gradi in 1738 (in the Old Church, the so-called chapel of San Domenico), then transferred to San Francesco alla Rocca in 1885, when Santa Maria in Gradi was turned into a prison. On this tomb, see notably Claussen 1987, pp. 199ff; Gardner 1992, pp. 48–49; *Die mittelalterlichen Grabmäler* 1994, pp. 217–221; D’Achille 2000, pp. 118–119, 134–135. See below for the sepulchral monument of Clement IV.

109 On the importance of Santa Maria in Gradi, Gardner 2013, p. 121.

110 Papebroch 1685, pt. 2, p. 55. Rome, Archivio Generale Domenicano, XIV, Lib. C, parte 1, fol. 276; Bussi 1742.

111 Lethaby 1925, p. 229 for the chevron pattern; Claussen 1990, p. 176 for the drive-belt motif; Foster 1991, pp. 24–25 for the unusual pattern.



Pierre de Montbrun (*papal camerarius*, and from 1272, Archbishop of Narbonne) shortly after the pope's death.<sup>112</sup> How soon he, and possibly his father (of whom we have lost trace), were able to leave Westminster for Viterbo is another question, which is highly relevant to one of the most vexed questions in Italian medieval art history, namely that of the construction of Clement IV's tomb.

Since Clement IV's sepulchral monument was highly original for including a Gothic trefoiled pointed canopy and a recumbent effigy of the deceased, both long considered the first occurrence in Italian tomb sculpture, it has received a great deal of attention. In 1985, Ingo Herklotz argued that both canopy and *gisant* had already featured on the tomb of Bishop Paolo di Pafo (who had died at least six months before Clement IV) in Santa Maria in Gradi in Viterbo, thus diminishing the presumed novelty.<sup>113</sup> The argument is based on a sketch of the tomb prior to its demolition, preserved in the Biblioteca Capitolare of Viterbo, which may – however – show the monument in an already altered condition, and there is evidence to suggest that the effigy may have been incised or in low-relief rather than consisting of a three-dimensional *gisant* proper.<sup>114</sup> Suffice it to say that the tomb was innovative, if not groundbreakingly revolutionary, in the Italian panorama of sepulchral monuments. Here we aim to reconstruct its debated chronology – which varies from “1271, perhaps as early as 1270” and 1278 or later<sup>115</sup> – in turn, to establish the movements of Pietro di Oderisio and the date of his signed shrine at Westminster, and of the tomb of Henry III, which have been much debated.

A re-examination of the existing evidence on the tomb of Clement IV has shown that a dispute had arisen between the prior and friars of Santa Maria in Gradi on the one hand, and the Archipresbyter and Chapter of Viterbo on the other, as the latter had wrongfully appropriated the body of Clement IV (who had died in odour of sanctity) and refused to return it to the brethren. Work on the papal monument may have started before November 1271, but it had not been completed before the resolution of the dispute in favour of the friars (7–15 February 1276).<sup>116</sup>

Several observations must be brought forth at this point. First, the Archipresbyter and Chapter of Viterbo may have managed to ‘steal’ the body of Clement IV precisely because the craftsman (or craftsmen) commissioned to build the tomb was (were) not readily at hand in Italy, perhaps being held up at Westminster by Henry III, who, as scholars have noted, was determined to have the shrine completed, or almost completed, by 13 October 1269. While 13 October is easily explicable as Edward's feast day, the date of his first translation in 1163, the year 1269 is less obvious. It is probable, as Carpenter has argued, that the king chose that year for its calendrical correspondence with 1163.<sup>117</sup> If Pietro was called back to Italy following the death of Clement IV and Pietro di Vico, it is then also reasonable to assume that Henry III was under additional pressure to complete the

112 We learn that Pierre de Montbrun was responsible for the construction of the tomb from a papal bull of 1.10.1274, edited in Ripoll 1729, vol. 1, p. 525, no XXX. See also, Gardner 2013, pp. 120–121.

113 Herklotz 1985, pp. 169–170 (2001 pp. 243–248); but see Claussen 1987, p. 185, n. 1039, who considers this tomb an imitation of the papal monument. The tomb of Paolo di Pafo was destroyed in the eighteenth-century renovation of Santa Maria in Gradi.

114 Rome, Archivio Generale Domenicano, XIV, Lib. C, parte 1 (1706), fol. 287; *Die mittelalterlichen Grabmäler* 1994, pp. 242–243, D'Achille 2000, p. 159.

115 Foster 1991, p. 23.

116 D'Achille 2000, pp. 123–130. Despite identifying some inaccuracies in D'Achille's argument, I established that the conclusion is correct after a careful re-examination of all relevant documents. We ought at least to note here that there is only one bull of 1.10.1274: the presumed ‘second’ one, cited in the works of D'Achille and others (which has complicated things considerably), is in fact a copy of the ‘first’.

117 Carpenter 2002, p. 42; and further discussion in section IV below.



shrine because he was concerned that the artists might depart, leaving it unfinished. This is ultimately what happened, as attested by the evidence discussed below and the inscription bearing the date 1279.

The delayed completion of the work on Clement IV's tomb strongly suggests that Pietro di Oderisio, having been summoned to Italy at the end of 1268 or early in 1269, was then detained well into the 1270s by the projects at Viterbo. If this was indeed the case, his return to Westminster in the late 1270s to complete the works becomes comprehensible, as does the date 1279 on the shrine. Clarification of the chronology, of the significance of the mosaics, and of the role of patrons and artists comes from a re-reading of the inscriptions on the mosaics, on both the shrine and pavement, to which we now turn. The shrine inscription (fig. 30), as recorded in 1450 by Richard Sporley, differs significantly in the manufacturing technique from that on the pavement, which has a separately inlaid, English-style latten Lombardic text, certainly of London manufacture, set into the Purbeck matrix. In contrast, the shrine (fig. 30) bore a text in gold lettering on a blue glass ground in Roman fashion, contrary to common assertions in the literature.<sup>118</sup> Flete is clear on this matter: “scriptura versuum in literis lapideis et deauratis per circuitum feretri sancti Edwardi seorsum talis est [followed by the text].”<sup>119</sup> A technical account from the eighteenth century specifies that the letters were set with “calcined glass, yellow like gold”, much of which had been picked out by 1741, thus confirming Flete’s observation, in that ‘lapideum’ was, in fact, calcined glass.<sup>120</sup> At the beginning of the twentieth century, Lethaby could still observe that “at the southwest corner, one upright stroke remains formed of pieces of dark blue glass”, perhaps in reference to a tiny portion of the blue background.<sup>121</sup> The fact that the inscription was in gold *tesserae* with a luminous effect against a dark blue background is important as it falls squarely within the epigraphic culture of Roman mosaics since early Christianity. From the hexameter composition in Santa Sabina’s counterfaçade (422–432) through the *tituli* under the apsidal conches throughout the medieval period down to the two verse panels of Nicholas IV (1288–1292) at the Lateran, these encomiastic inscriptions, usually in hexameters, celebrated the building, the donor, or the patron saint, or all three together, combining material and colours that afforded sacred status to the written word.<sup>122</sup> Flete’s account indicates that the inscription ran around the base and it was possible to walk around it.

The text on the sanctuary pavement, reliably recorded by Sporley, combined elegiac couplets and hexameters.<sup>123</sup> The first inscription, mentioned above (“Christi milleno [...] porphireos lapides”), consisted of two hexameters and one elegiac couplet (a hexameter plus a pentameter). A second inscription, set around the circles of the central *quincunx* (fig. 9), as documented by John Flete and Richard Sporley, read: “Si lector posita prudenter cuncta revolvat, / hic finem primi mobilis inveniet; / sepes trima, canes et equos hominesque subaddas, / cervos et corvos, aquilas, immania cete / mundum quodque sequens preuntis

118 Lethaby, 1906, pp. 321–322: “The inscription was formed of bars of blue glass set in gold mosaic”, including a reconstruction drawing (fig. 111) with dark letters against a bright background; Perkins 1940, p. 50; *The History of the King’s Works* 1963, vol. 1, p. 149; D’Achille 2000, p. 115. Rodwell and Neal 2019, pp. 386–389, note the blue background and provide some historical technical analyses, but offer a reconstruction drawing of the inscription (p. 386), in which the background is shown as pale turquoise, not blue, thus missing the Roman connection and its broader implications.

119 Flete, in Robinson 1909, p. 114.

120 Vertue 1779, p. 32.

121 Lethaby 1906, pp. 321–322.

122 On S. Sabina: Thunø 2007, pp. 19–41; on the Lateran inscriptions: Salvi 1990, pp. 191–199; Claussen 2008, pp. 137–140.

123 Howlett 2002, p. 108.

triplicat annos / spericus archetipum globus hic monstrat macrocosmum” (If the reader wisely considers all that is set down, he will find here the end of the *primum mobile*. The hedge lives three years; add dogs and horses and men, stags and ravens, eagles, huge whales, the world: whatever follows triples the years of the foregoing. This spherical globe shows the archetypal macrocosm).<sup>124</sup> The inscription, thus, consisted of one elegiac couplet followed by four hexameters, with the last hexameter (referring to the globe as the archetypal macrocosm) appropriately running around the central concentric roundels (fig. 27).

Although the content of the second inscription is set firmly in the literary rather than the monumental tradition, there are no grounds – from a metric point of view – to date it differently than the first inscription, which gives the date 1268 thus: “Christi milleno bis centeno duodeno cum sexageno subductis quatuor anno”, that is,  $1000+200+12+60-4 = 1268$ , which yields two subtractions:  $1272-4 = 1268$  and  $60-4 = 56$ . There can be no question that the final result of the calculation (1268) indicates the date of the pavement: but to find Henry’s year of death (1272) combined with the length of his reign, namely 56 years (1216–1272), via the second deduction,  $60-4 = 56$ , is so remarkable as to be beyond coincidence.<sup>125</sup> This implies that the verses were added after the King’s death, and their manner of dating the pavement was conceived to include a commemoration of his reign.

As for the second inscription on the pavement, beginning with the studies of Lethaby, scholars have generally concurred that its calculation by the triplication of the ages of natural things and creatures in order to yield the duration and the ‘end’ of the cosmos is closely related to a specifically Irish poetic tradition, dating at least from the ninth century and known via a late-fifteenth-century compilation, the so-called *Book of Lismore*.<sup>126</sup> In his edition and translation of this *Book*, Whitley Stokes gave the following translation of the ninth-century poem:

“A year for the stake. Three years for the field. Three lifetimes of the field for the hound. Three lifetimes of the hound for the horse. Three lifetimes of the horse for the human being. Three lifetimes of the human being for the stag. Three lifetimes of the stag for the ousel. Three lifetimes of the ousel for the eagle. Three lifetimes of the eagle for the salmon. Three lifetimes of the salmon for the yew. Three lifetimes of the yew for the world from its beginning to its end, *ut dixit poeta*.”<sup>127</sup>

Stokes also mentioned two other Irish manuscripts containing similar poems and a parallel example of Welsh tradition.<sup>128</sup> The tradition is thus usually considered to be of Celtic origin. What has been overlooked, however, is that Stokes also noted *en passant* that this literary motif of multiple lifespans to calculate the duration of the life of creatures can be traced back to the work of the Greek poet Hesiod.<sup>129</sup> This is significant because Hesiod’s riddle, transmitted by Plutarch (*def. orac.* 415 c8–d1), was known both to Pliny the Elder and Ausonio,<sup>130</sup> whose works circulated largely in the Middle Ages and formed the basis for further elaboration. The eclogue by Ausonio (known as *De aetatibus animantium Hesiodion*) is particularly significant in our discourse as it reinterpreted the riddle in

124 Westminster Abbey Library Ms 29, fol. 42, published in Flete (Robinson 1909, p. 113), and BL, Ms Cotton Claudius A. 8, fol. 59v, respectively. The only difference between Flete and Sporley is the verb ‘subaddas’, which is given by Sporley as ‘superaddas’: the latter, however, does not scan metrically: Foster 1991, p. 100. They also give ‘trina’, but it has been persuasively argued that the original form was ‘trima’: Foster 1991, p. 100.

125 Binski 1990, pp. 10–11.

126 *Lives of Saints* 1890, pp. xli–xlii.

127 *Lives of Saints* 1890, pp. xli–xlii.

128 *Lives of Saints* 1890, pp. xli–xlii.

129 *Lives of Saints* 1890, pp. xli–xlii.

27 London, Westminster Abbey, sanctuary pavement, central alabaster roundel with inscriptions (photo Paul Binski)



a philosophical perspective via the addition of two introductory and two conclusive verses concerning, respectively, the life of men and God as *arbiter secreti aevi*:

*De aetatibus animantium Hesiodon*

Ter binos deciesque novem super exit in annos  
iusta senescentum quos implet vita virorum.  
Hos novies superat vivendo garrula cornix  
et quater egreditur cornicis saecula cervus.  
Alipedem cervum ter vincit corvus, et illum  
multiplicat novies Phoenix, reparabilis ales.  
Quem nos perpetuo decies praevertimus aevo,  
Nymphae Hamadryades, quarum longissima vita est.  
Haec cohibet finis vivacia fata animantum.  
Cetera secreti novit deus arbiter aevi.<sup>131</sup>

Furthermore, Ausonio's eclogue was often transmitted as a single work along with the following one, concerning the rotation of the planets.<sup>132</sup> Taken together, the two eclogues (which, according to some scholars, were, in fact, one single composition)<sup>133</sup> thus had a strong cosmological dimension. Other eclogues by Ausonio were also about the cosmic order.<sup>134</sup> Since the writings by Ausonio were

130 Green 1991, Ecl. 22; Nocchi 2016, pp. 362–368. I am indebted to Claudio Giammona for reference to these works and for his assistance on this point. Nocchi (p. 363) notes that each of the animals, according to a long-standing tradition, was a paradigmatic example of longevity. Both *cervus* and *corvus* also feature in the Westminster inscription.

131 Green 1991, Ecl. 22–23.

132 Nocchi 2016, p. 365.

133 *Opere di Decimo Magno Ausonio* 1971, pp. 286–287.

134 For instance, “On the nature of the pound or balance”, in Ansonius 1919, vol. 1, pp. 174–176: “Whoso you are who wonder that the vast heavenly bodies still endure, hung round about the lofty circle of the firmament, and that no decay creeps in upon their mighty mass, hearken, that you may wonder yet the more [...] Hence comes it that their strength and power endure, and that these motions are not overcome by any lapse of time. We may compare things human with divine.”





largely re-elaborated throughout the Middle Ages,<sup>135</sup> it would be misleading to read the tradition as merely Irish or Celtic, for it was found throughout medieval Europe. For example, the *De aetatibus animantium Hesiodion* (with the only variant of *aripedem* instead of *alipedem*, and simply titled *De aetatibus*) is included in a collection of *Carmina* believed to be the work of Bede.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, popular nursery rhymes on the duration of the life of plants, animals, and men very similar to Hesiod’s fragment “are still common, for instance, in the folklore of southern Italy.”<sup>137</sup>

We may also notice that the *Book of Lismore* did not transmit exclusively Irish texts. When editing the manuscript, Stokes noted that he “could not find” four pieces cited by O’Curry (*Lectures*, p. 200) as contained in the *Book of Lismore*, namely: “The story of Petronilla, St Peter’s daughter; the discovery of a Sybilline oracle in a stone coffin at Rome; an account of some modifications of the minor ceremonies of the Mass; an account of the correspondence between Archbishop Lanfranc and the clergy of Rome.” Thus, at least three, if not all four, pieces had a connection with Rome; the first even had a strong ‘Vatican’ connection since Petronilla was venerated in a rotunda just outside the southern transept of Old Saint Peter’s, where her relics had been translated by Pope Paul I (757–767).<sup>138</sup> Quite apart from the missing pieces, the manuscript does contain an account of the translation of Petronilla’s relics (on fol. 74b1), which had been relevant in the eighth-century history of papal-Frankish alliance.<sup>139</sup> Thus, we cannot exclude the possibility that the ninth-century poem, too, had a Roman connection (might it have been a translation of a Roman text?), rendering a specific Irish origin of the formula used in the inscription even less likely.

Perhaps more importantly, a thirteenth-century manuscript from Reading Abbey (Lambeth Palace, Ms 371), which has hitherto been missing from the discussion of the Westminster pavement – as far as we are aware – offers the same calculation of the age of the world in three different forms (fig. 28, second column):

- i. “Sepe triane, tri sepe cane, tri cane caballe, tri caballe home, tri home corve, tri corve cerva, tri cerva aquila, tri aquila cete, tri cete munde [with figures above]”;
- ii. “Da sepem subiunge canes et equos homines et / corvos, cervos et aquilas dehinc grandia cete / et mundum, sepis tres durat vita per annos. / Quodque sequens propius precedens triplet in annis, / et si trecentos septemque decemque rescindas / durabit mundus viginti mille per annos”;
- iii. “Sepes trima, ter hanc canis, hunc ter equus ter equum vir.”<sup>140</sup>

135 For Ausonius’s influence from Gallia to Africa, to the Italian peninsula and Spain, see Green 1991, pp. xxxiii–xl, esp. xxxvii.

136 *PL* vol. 94, col. 0637B: Uncertain author (Bede?), *Carmina dubia*, Hymnus II. *De aetatibus*.

137 *Plutarco* 1968, p. 2652, note 19.

138 Osborne 2020, p. 182.

139 On the role of the relics, Goodson 2015, pp. 159–184.

140 *A Descriptive Catalogue* 1932 pp. 505–506. The transcription is integrated by the present author (the editor only transcribes the first and last lines of the second inscription). The editor notes the parallel with the Westminster inscription on p. 506, with no discussion. The manuscript also includes a calculation of the total:

Comparative ages of men etc.

3 (red)                      19683

(sepes) ————— mundus

xx

III (blue)                XIXdc IIII.iiij

The manuscript is a miscellany, including chronicles and other calculations: interestingly, the aforementioned calculations are immediately preceded (fig. 28, first column, five lines from the bottom) by that of the number of years from Adam to Christ according to Bede (“Anni milleni ter quingenti duodeni / et quadrageni decies bis septuageni / ad Christum vere a primo genitore fuere”) and Orosius (“Bis decies deni centum quinquages anni / a patre primevo sunt ad Christum minus uno”). As opposed to the two known manuscripts that transcribe either the full Westminster inscription or just the exact formula for calculating the duration of the world,<sup>141</sup> this manuscript does not repeat verbatim the Westminster verses but, rather, seems to attest to an English tradition of calculating the duration of the world by triplication of the same natural things and creatures mentioned in the Westminster pavement. It may be worth noting that the second computation is in hexameters.

While it is difficult to establish the relationship between the manuscript (catalogued simply as ‘thirteenth century’) and the pavement inscription, including their relative chronology, it may be relevant to note that the manuscript came from Reading Abbey, a place beloved by Henry III, one that he frequently visited and where he often resided. The manuscript includes a diagram of the world held by the Lord (on fol. 9v) and a full-page labyrinth (circular, very neatly drawn in red and green, on fol. 34v), which resonate with the ideas of universal history expressed both visually and in verse on the Westminster pavement. I am not only referring to the riddle, but also – for instance – to the use of the verb *revolvere*, literally meaning to cover a route by returning to its beginning or to cover a nonlinear route (with an idea of circularity), which evokes an image of a labyrinth. Perhaps even more interestingly, the manuscript also includes two regnal lists: the first – on fol. 33v – by a single hand up to the coronation of Henry III (at which the scribe records the presence of the papal legate Guala [Bicchieri]), continued by a second hand which specifies the length of the reign of Henry III (“et regnavit quinquag. sex annis”), together with the accession and coronation of Edward I.<sup>142</sup> The second list ends on fol. 45v, again with the coronation of Henry III, and, in a later hand, follow lines about Edward I, Edward II and Edward III.<sup>143</sup> English history is clearly seen as part of a broader universal history. The change of hands precisely at the coronation of Henry III suggests a date between 1216 (coronation) and 1272 (death of the King) for part of the manuscript, while the drawing of the world displayed by the Lord can be dated not much earlier than 1240, but not much later than 1260, and can be ascribed to a southern English *scriptorium*.<sup>144</sup> These data strongly suggest that at least part of Ms 371 was produced at the time of the reconstruction of Westminster under Henry III, and by a local *scriptorium* at Reading. It is, therefore, possible that the three different forms of the same riddle in the manuscript reflect some reasoning about the duration of the world at the time of Henry III in an abbey close to the King.

In any event, the verses in the pavement and the texts in the manuscript (whether connected or not) seemingly drew on a common tradition: a riddle or way of saying circulating in England at that time. It was probably part of the same tradition, going back to Hesiod, via Pliny, Ausonius, and Pseudo-Bede (amongst others), to which the poems in the Irish and Welsh manuscripts be-

141 The manuscripts are: three folia appended to the *Rishanger Chronicle* (BL, Ms Cotton Claudius D. 6, fol. 191v) written in 1310 by William of Rishanger, a monk of St Albans, and a collection of works ascribed to John of Everisden, a monk of St Edmund at Bury, dated between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century (College of Arms, Ms Arundel 30, fol. 9r). The existence of both was first noted by Lethaby 1906, p. 111; see also the discussion in Foster 1991, pp. 98–100.

142 *A Descriptive Catalogue* 1932, p. 509.

143 *A Descriptive Catalogue* 1932, p. 509.

144 I am grateful to Paul Binski for this dating of the drawing.



29 Otranto (Lecce), Duomo, mosaic pavement by presbyter Pantaleone, right aisle, detail of Atlas holding up the universe, 1163–1165 (photo Claudia Bolgia)



longed, and which must have evolved in myriad variants. The extraordinary pavement text of Westminster thus belonged to a vastly older tradition of cosmological speculation known in the Middle Ages, which was transmitted, possibly via Reading Abbey, at Westminster.

The repeated use of the number three in the Westminster inscription was probably a compliment to the *tertius rex Henricus*, the ‘third King Henry’, as noted by David Howlett.<sup>145</sup> The inscription includes nine steps of calculation to reach the end of the *primum mobile*, as in the Reading manuscript, whereas Lismore has ten steps. Thus, the method of calculation which played with the number three was also presumably chosen to honour Henry III.

It has also hitherto escaped scholars’ attention that the use of a marble *rota* to signify the macrocosm, that is, the universe, was part of a pre-existing tradition. An impressive visual evidence of this is found in the mosaic pavement (1163–1165) of Otranto cathedral, in Norman Apulia, where, out of ca. 650 square metres of mosaic pavement in small stone tesserae, the only part made of inlaid marble is the universe bore by Atlas (fig. 29).<sup>146</sup>

In the Westminster inscription, the deployment of the word *macrocosmus*, a Latin transliteration from the Greek μακρόκοσμος, to indicate the *maior mundus* (the creation, the universe) is significant. A search for *macrocosmus* in the *Corpus Corporum*, the most complete database of Latin texts from Antiquity to the seventeenth century, reveals that this word was the rarest. Of all the medieval texts in the database (including the full *Patrologia Latina*), it occurs only in two works by Pope Innocent III (1198–1216): *De contemptu mundi* (1216) and *De miseria humanae conditionis*, and in both cases in conjunction with *microcosmus*

145 Howlett 2002.

146 On this pavement, see Gianfreda 2002 and, most recently, Rabioso 2021.



or *minor mundus* (the man), to express the idea of *senectus mundi* (senescence of the world).<sup>147</sup> This Roman connection takes us back to the papal and curial culture that we have identified as crucial for the understanding of the Cosmati monuments at Westminster.

As suggested earlier, we ought not to see the resemblance of the Westminster coronation pavement to that of Saint Peter's as being at odds with the cosmological content of the inscription. At Westminster, the institution of divinely sanctioned power through anointing and coronation may well have been connected with the pavement's embodiment of the form of the cosmos and duration of the world, as rendered in the verses. Royal political power was, after all, part of this cosmic order. And this may have required reiteration following a long period during which the Crown of England had been violently shaken by political disorder. Was the inscription added in time for the 1274 coronation to reinforce the connection between crowning, anointing, and the cosmic order whose duration it spells out and whose form the pavement could be seen to embody?

The first part of the inscription mentioned not only the marbler but also the date of manufacture, King Henry III, the abbot (Richard of Ware) and Rome (*Urbs*): "Christi milleno bis centeno duodeno / cum sexageno subductis quatuor anno / tercius Henricus rex Urbs Odericus et abbas / hos compegere porphireos lapides." It is perplexing that the City is in the nominative case (like King Henry, Odericus, and the abbot), and thus is the subject of the sentence alongside the three human agents. We might consider the possibility that the inscription originally read *Urbe* (motion ablative) instead of *Urbs*, for in such case the text would translate as: "In the year of Christ one-thousandth and twice one-hundredth together with six and subtracted four to twelve, the third King Henry, Odoricus and the abbot have joined together these porphyry stones [brought] from Rome." Given the complexity of this type of verses, the placement of an ablative amongst the nominatives would not pose a problem, and the transformation of *Urbe* to *Urbs* could be easily explained as a banalization of Sporley (who would have inserted a fourth nominative amongst the three). Furthermore, in Lombardic lettering, the characters *s* and *e* are alike and, by the fifteenth century, some letters may have already disappeared, leaving only the cavities in which they were originally set.

Sporley, however, is usually considered a reliable source, and as a Westminster monk, he had easy access to the inscription on the pavement.<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, he adds a sort of gloss, specifying that the complex calculation of year meant '1268' and that *Urbs* meant 'Roma': "Anno Domini Millesimo Duecentesimo Sexagesimo Octavo, Rex Henricus Tercius, Urbs Roma, Odoricus ..." Therefore, un-

30 London, Westminster Abbey, detail of surviving letter matrices of shrine inscription, east face [DUXI]T IN ACTVM ROMANVS CIVIS HO[MO] (photo Paul Binski)

147 This idea, widespread in the medieval period, was already present in Augustan literature. The passages of Innocent III are as follows: *De Contemptu Mundi*, book 1, ch. 28 "Senuit jam mundus uterque, scilicet macrocosmus, et microcosmus, id est major mundus et minor mundus. Et quanto prolixius utriusque senectus producitur, tanto deterius utriusque natura perturbatur"; *De miseria humanae conditionis*, book 1, ch. 26, 2: "Senuit iam mundus uterque, macrocosmus et microcosmus, et quanto prolixius utriusque senectus producitur, tanto deterius utriusque natura turbatur."

148 Foster 1991, p. 87.

less the final letter of *Urb* was worn away or lost, the hypothesis that the inscription read *Urbs* and that ‘Roma’ was thus the fourth subject of the inscription must be taken into equally serious consideration.

Our historical analysis has shown that the *Curia Romana* – in particular, Ottobuono Fieschi, but also Clement IV and the other papal legates – played a far greater role in the Cosmati campaign at Westminster than has hitherto been suggested. If *Urbs*, in reference to Rome, signified the Curia as a fourth ‘human agent’, then we would have an indelible ‘written-in-stone’ acknowledgment of the role the legates played in the enterprise and a corroboration of the hypothesis that some of the marbles may have been a gift from the Curia. But was *Urbs/Roma* ever used in medieval inscriptions to mean the Roman Curia? Rome as a personification was commonly used in medieval inscriptions, a tradition going back to ancient times; one needs only to mention the epitaph of Pope Nicholas III (d. 1280), in which Rome is said to have shone (*risit*) under his pontificate, to cite only one example.<sup>149</sup> The fact that on the sanctuary pavement at Westminster *Urbs* is used instead of *Roma* per se is not a problem: *Urbs* and *Roma* were used interchangeably, and *Urbs* unmistakably refers to Rome in the later inscription on the sepulchral slab of Abbot Ware (in the same sanctuary pavement), celebrating his role in the transportation of the marbles.

But did *Roma* ever mean the *Curia Romana* in thirteenth-century inscriptions? An unambiguously positive answer is found in the lost verse epitaph of cardinal Peter of Piacenza (d. 1208), recorded by erudite seventeenth-century scholars in the centre of the pavement of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, which read “to him, most venerable because of his many merits, *Roma* conferred the title of Santa Cecilia and a sepulchre there.”<sup>150</sup> Here *Roma* means undoubtedly the Pope and the Curia, the only authority that could confer the title of cardinal titular. Thus, it seems probable that in the Westminster sanctuary pavement, too, *Urbs* indicated the Pope and the Curia – perhaps particularly Ottobuono, who had been instrumental in supporting the king during the civil war.

The shrine inscription, in contrast to that of the pavement, was very similar in its stock phraseology to those composed by the Cosmati craftsmen in central Italy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Although only some letter matrices survive (fig. 30, 43), it was in Leonine hexameters, as rendered by Sporley: “Anno milleno domini cum septuageno / et bis centeno cum completo quasi deno / hoc opus est factum quod Petrus duxit in actum / Romanus civis Homo causam noscere si vis / Rex fuit Henricus sancti presentis amicus” (In the year of the Lord one-thousandth, with seventieth and twice-hundredth and tenth nearly complete, this work was made which Petrus, citizen of Rome, brought into being; man, if you wish to know the cause, it was King Henry, friend of the present saint.<sup>151</sup>

Its way of giving the date (1279), the stress on the words *factum*, *Romanus civis*, and the emphasis on the causes of the work, the patron (*Henricus Rex*) and the artist (*Petrus*) are common in the works of the Cosmati.<sup>152</sup> Interestingly, and, as far as I am aware, hitherto unnoticed, the expression “hoc opus est factum quod Petrus duxit in actum”, used to indicate the role of the artist, is an adaptation of a Christian dating formula “hoc opus est factum post partum Virginis actum [followed by the year]”, attested in Italy as early as the beginning of the twelfth century in the apse mosaic of the Cathedral of Ravenna (1112) and on a monumental statue redeployed near the City Gate of Pisa (1124), but also during

149 Guardo 2008, pp. 76–85.

150 Guardo 2008, pp. 27–32 “[...] tot meritis late venerando Roma beatae Ceciliae titulum contulit et tumulum [...]”; Bolgia 2021, p. 124.

151 BL, Ms Cotton Claudius A. 8, fol. 59v.

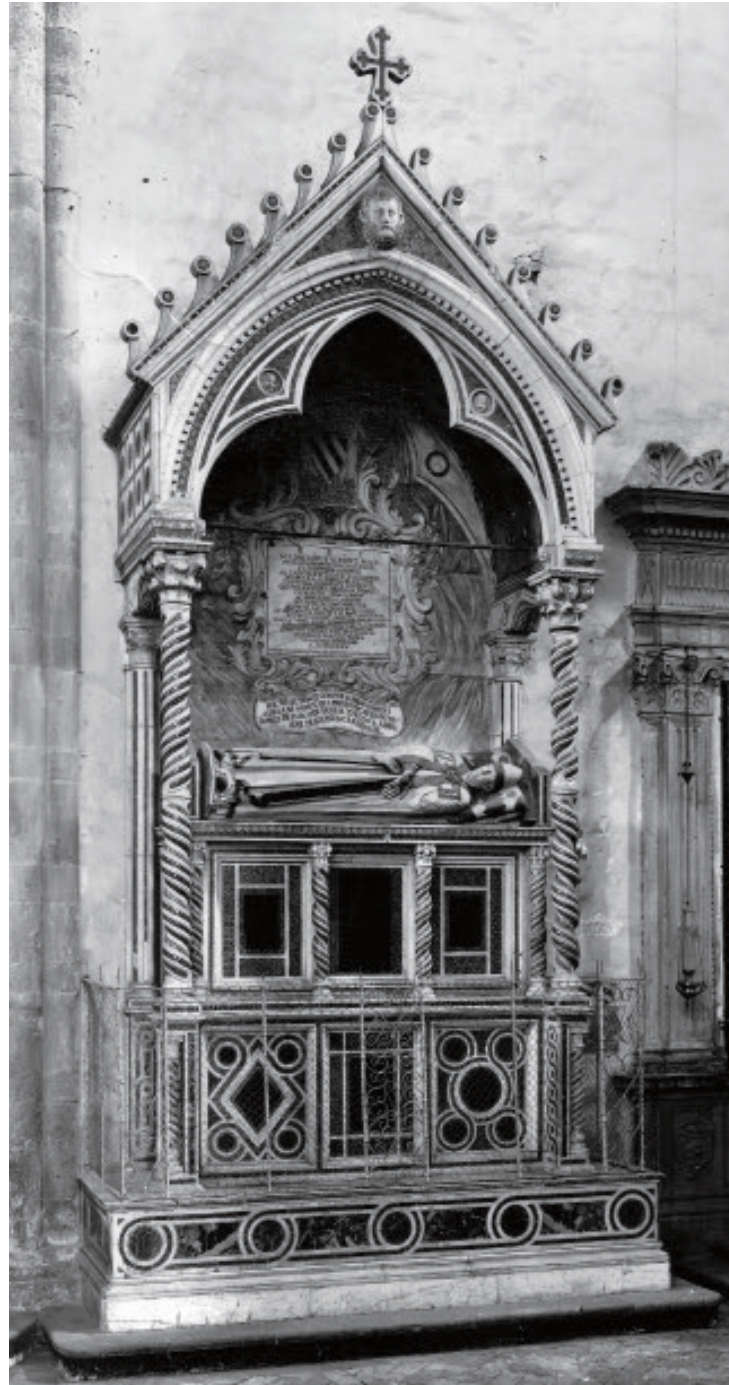
152 For reference, Claussen 1987; Dietl 2009, for the use of *civis* and *magister* in artist’s inscriptions in the Italian peninsula, and pp. 166–170 for *Romanus civis* in particular.



the years of the Westminster campaign on the façade of San Pietro at Assisi (1268).<sup>153</sup> The formula was always followed by a precise date, often including the indiction, and sometimes reinforced by other dating references, such as the names of the reigning pope, emperor and the local ecclesiastic, as in the inscription on the façade of San Piero in Bosco at Galeata (Forlì), which mentions not only the names of Pope Celestine III, Emperor Henry VI, and Abbot Ilarius, but also the great earthquakes that hit the area that year (1194).<sup>154</sup> In other words, the formula was always used to mark the completion date of a building or artwork. *Factum* and *actum* were clearly chosen to rhyme, *duxit* being chosen to show Petrus's authorship of the work. The modification of the formula to put the accent on the artist's name, Petrus, underlines the role of the marbler, and is perfectly in line with the placement of his name, strikingly at the numerical centre of the composition, starting the second group of seventeen words, its six letters framed by eighty-two letters on both sides.<sup>155</sup>

The shrine inscription also invokes the beholder in the form *homo*, found in other sepulchral inscriptions (for instance, in the chapel of Cardinal Gerardo Bianchi, d. 1302, in Saint John Lateran), while the pavement uses the term *lector* ("Si lector prudenter revolvat [...]"), a form of address which recurs, perhaps significantly, in another work attributed to Pietro di Oderisio, namely, the tomb of Clement IV: "Lector, fige pedes, admirans quam brevis aedes [...]"<sup>156</sup> Importantly, the formula "hoc opus est factum [...] actum" is reminiscent of the custom in Italy to commemorate the work's completion date (*opus factum est*) in such inscriptions, and not any circumstantial dates that might or might not have pertained to it. Thus the shrine was completed in 1279.

If our relative chronology is correct, after February 1276, Pietro was in Viterbo, completing the tomb of not only Clement IV but also the anglophile Adrian V (the former legate Ottobuono), who had succeeded In-



31 Viterbo, San Francesco alla Rocca, tomb of Pope Adrian V (photo Julian Gardner)

153 For Ravenna: Novara 1997; for the inscription in Pisa: Scalia 1972, pp. 791–843; and Scalia 2017 pp. 11–12, note 36–37; for San Pietro at Assisi: Sensi 1981, pp. 27–50.

154 "Hoc opus est actum post partum Virginis factum anno milleno centeno quarto cum nonageno indictione duodecima, tempore Celestini pape III et Enrici imperatoris et suavis sancti Illari abbatis et eodem anno terremotus magni fuerunt in partibus istis."

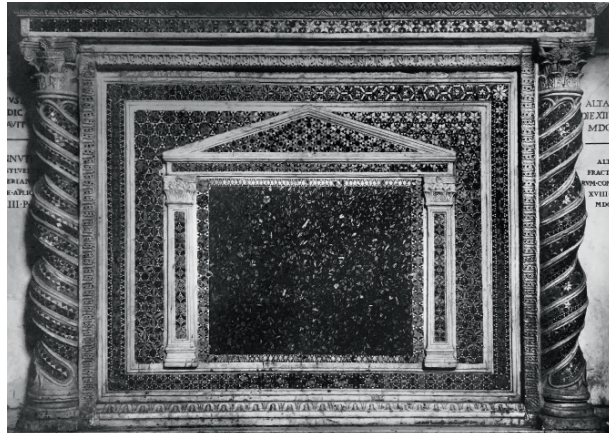
155 Noted by Binski 1995, from Howlett; this fashion was known to Latin poetry: see Howlett 2008.

156 But, again, also in the inscriptions associated with the burial of Cardinal Gerardo Bianchi (d. 1302) at St John Lateran: "Quisquis ad altare venies hoc sacrificare / qui vel adorare, vis, Gerardi memorare [...]" (beginning of inscription 1); "hoc atte(n)dat homo p(er) funus quid sibi promo [...]" (beginning of inscription 2); "per te concreseat, lector devote, p(re)camen [...]" (end of inscription 2). For these inscriptions, see Guardo 2008, pp. 150–166. The parallel with the inscription at Mileto, suggested by several scholars, is not significant, as 'qui legis' or 'perlegis' is very common: in Rome, for instance, it is also found in the sepulchral epitaphs of Cardinal Ancher de Troyes and the *Mercator* of the Apostolic Chamber Niccolò Bonsignori, for which see Guardo 2008, pp. 86–91 and 135–145.





32 London, Westminster Abbey, tomb of Henry III, south side (photo Paul Binski)



33 Rome, Santa Maria Maggiore, altar of Presepe, detail (photo Claudia Bolgia)



34 Rome, Basilica di Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Capocci chapel, *piscina*, ca. 1285–1297 (photo Claudia Bolgia)

nocent V on 11 July 1276 and died before being consecrated, on 16 August. Adrian V's tomb (fig. 31) in the Franciscan church of Viterbo is very similar to that of Clement IV (fig. 10), in that it replicates the basement with trefoiled niches decorated with drive-belt motives in mosaic, has a *gisant* effigy and is crowned by a pointed Gothic canopy. Scholars have been cautious in discussing its authorship, because it presents several incongruities associated with many (not always documented) restoration interventions.<sup>157</sup> What seems certain, however, is that the central 'nucleus' of the tomb, i.e., the basement and bier, are basically original.<sup>158</sup> Claussen, cautiously but convincingly, ascribes it to Pietro di

157 Iazeolla 1990. On this tomb, dismantled and remounted after the bombing of 1944, see at least Claussen 1987, p. 205; Gardner 1992, pp. 72ff; *Die mittelalterlichen Grabmäler* 1994, pp. 221–229; Gardner 2013, pp. 136–137.

158 Iazeolla 1990, p. 155.

Oderisio, who may have carried out the work in collaboration with Arnolfo di Cambio.<sup>159</sup> As discussed below, records show that Richard of Ware was again in Italy, on royal business, in the summer of 1276.<sup>160</sup> Was this coincidental or was his visit intended to ensure the return of Pietro di Oderisio to Westminster, which ultimately resulted in the completion of the shrine in 1279?

The proposed revised chronology dates the sepulchral monument of Henry III between the end of the 1270s and the early 1280s (and, thus, not immediately after his death in 1272), which would better explain the similarity – noted by several scholars – of the central niche on the south side of the basement (fig. 32) with the pedimented pseudo-niche of the high altar of the *Presepe* Chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, attributed to Arnolfo di Cambio, ca. 1290 (fig. 33).<sup>161</sup> It would also explain the appearance of a trefoil-headed niche identical to those flanking the central one on the basement of Henry’s tomb (fig. 32) in the piscina of the Capocci Chapel in Santa Maria in Aracoeli (fig. 34), constructed between 1285 and 1297.<sup>162</sup> The hypothesis that Pietro di Oderisio returned to Rome and worked at the Aracoeli at some point in the second half of the 1280s or in the 1290s is further corroborated by the appearance, in the very same church, of the traces of an incised architectural drawing reproducing a tracery very similar to that found in the internal gallery of Westminster Abbey, dating to the 1250s.<sup>163</sup> The drawing appears on a Pavonazzetto marble slab reused as an altar-front at an early date, and remounted in the incongruous re-assembly of the south pulpit in the 1570s (fig. 35).<sup>164</sup> The drawing (fig. 36) shows a two-light window with trefoil-headed lancets and a sexfoil tracery in the head; the foils are pointed, with trilobed terminations. The tracery of the Westminster tribune gallery (fig. 37) similarly shows two-light openings with trefoil-headed lancets surmounted by a foiled oculus with trilobed terminations. The differences lie only in the number and shape of the foils (five and round at Westminster; six and pointed at the Aracoeli). This suggests that the author of the Aracoeli drawing was playing and experimenting with the tracery designs that had appeared at Westminster few decades earlier.<sup>165</sup> The pointed shape of the Aracoeli exafoil seems evidence of the impression that the pointed arch had on the marbler: may it be possible that the Aracoeli drawing was never turned into an actual tracery exactly because of its anti-classical, markedly accentuated, experimental Gothic appearance?

The parallels with the Aracoeli piscina and the incised drawing make an important point: scholars have long since noted – if only *en passant* – that the rears of the niches of the base of St. Edward’s shrine display two-light blind windows with an exafoil in the head (combined with Cosmati designs, (figs. 14, 15), which



35 Rome, Santa Maria in Aracoeli, south side pulpit, remounted in the 1570s with different Cosmati pieces, including the slab with incised tracery design (mounted upside down) (photo Claudia Bolgia)

159 Claussen 1987, p. 205; the attribution to Pietro di Oderisio is also in White 1993, p. 57. Claussen 1990, pp. 182–184 for the Westminster connection.

160 Cal. Close Rolls 1272–1279, p. 349.

161 Claussen 1987, pp. 144, 183, 204; Claussen 1990, pp. 182–185; Binski 1990, pp. 23–26; Gardner 1990, p. 212.

162 Bolgia 2017, pp. 246–248; Bolgia 2021, pp. 128–129.

163 Bolgia 2003, pp. 436–447; Bolgia 2017, pp. 240–251.

164 For full details, see Bolgia 2003.

165 Significantly, a highly original experiment with an exafoil is also found in the sanctuary pavement at Westminster: Bolgia 2021, p. 198, fig. 9.





36 Reconstruction drawing of incised tracery design at Santa Maria in Aracoeli, from Bolgia 2003

37 London, Westminster Abbey, tribune gallery (photo © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)

38 London, Westminster Abbey, apsidal chapel 1245–1269, blind tracery (photo Paul Binski)

are miniature reproductions of the traceries of the apsidal chapels at Westminster (fig. 38), dating to the late 1240s or early 1250s.<sup>166</sup> These identical patterns have been recently explained with the conjecture that after local artists began to construct the shrine in the 1250s, there was a change of plan, and “the decision was taken to embrace cosmatesque work at Westminster.”<sup>167</sup> In other words, Rodwell and Neal surmise that the Gothic blind windows and the basic Gothic form of the shrine has nothing to do with the Roman marblers, whose work they see as limited to “heavily overlaying the structure with cosmatesque mosaic.”<sup>168</sup> Yet, if we look closely (fig. 14), it is clear that the traceries in the back of the niches go *over* the Cosmati patterns, and not vice versa. Furthermore, the mouldings are ultra-thin, and the lancets are less pointed or cusped than those in the actual traceries of the Abbey. All these details indicate that the traceries at the rear of the niches could have not been conceived by local Gothic masons and were instead the work of the Roman marblers. The incised tracery at the Aracoeli, which draws remarkably on the window patterns found in the royal abbey church from the 1250s and 1260s, indicates that the Roman artists (presumably Pietro himself) returned to Rome from Westminster, bringing with them the most updated and ‘fashionable’ Gothic designs. And it also indicates that it was Pietro who played with Gothic tracery forms in the niches of the shrine – confirming what the inscription states clearly: that he was the sole author of the shrine. This is a key point: to suggest that Pietro had simply overlaid the structure with cosmatesque mosaic is not simply to diminish the role of the Roman artist but is also to deny the fertile cross-cultural exchange that took place at Westminster. What is particularly striking is the impact that Gothic forms had on Italian artists, their appropriation of such forms and integration into their own ‘cosmatesque’ language at Westminster, as well as their introduction of new Gothic ideas to Italy (at Viterbo, and in Rome, at the Aracoeli). In broader terms, the presumption that the cosmatesque mosaic was simply overlaid dismisses a line of research which, in the last thirty years, has identified and discussed the Anglo-Italian exchanges and reflections associated with the Westminster enterprise, in favour of a more localized, narrow, and nationalistic reading of the London Cosmati monuments.<sup>169</sup>

166 Binski 1990, p. 18; Gardner 1990, p. 210.

167 Rodwell/Neal 2019, p. 390.

168 Rodwell/Neal 2019, p. 390.

169 For a more ‘European’ interpretation of the Cosmati monuments at Westminster, see Claussen 1987, pp. 176–185; Claussen 1990; Binski 1990; Gardner 1990; Binski 2002; Bolgia 2017, pp. 240–259; Bolgia 2021, pp. 123–139.



39 Rome, Basilica di San Paolo fuori le mura, Arnolfo di Cambio and Pietro di Oderisio, high-altar ciborium, bearing inscription HOC OPVS / FECIT ARNOLFVS // CVM SVO SOCI/O PETRO, 1285 (photo Paul Binski)

As for the parallel with Arnolfo di Cambio's work, it leads us to the controversial issue of the signature on the ciborium of the Benedictine Abbey of San Paolo fuori le mura (1285), reading "Hoc opus /fecit Arnolfus // cum suo soci/o Petro" (fig. 39). This was the first time that a Gothic canopy was placed above the high altar of an early Cristian basilica.<sup>170</sup> The hypothesis that the *socius* Pietro was indeed Pietro di Oderisio was first very tentatively propounded by Rossi (1889), and more firmly by Muñoz (1921), on the grounds of the massive presence of cosmatesque decoration on the canopy, while the hypothesis was also not excluded by Claussen and D'Achille in more recent times.<sup>171</sup> Further evidence that Pietro di Oderisio was Arnolfo's *socius* may be found in the highly Gothic aspect of the canopy with sharply profiled pointed trefoiled arches and multiple lofty pinnacles, which finds an intriguing parallel in an architectural representation in an English Apocalypse manuscript, executed at or near Westminster in the 1260s or 1270s, but not later.<sup>172</sup> It is perhaps not coincidental that the strongly Gothic character of the canopy almost vanishes in the later ciborium of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere (1293), which shows a decidedly more classicizing architectural vocabulary, and is the work of Arnolfo alone.

Objections to the possibility that the *socius* Pietro and Pietro di Oderisio were the same person have been raised on the grounds of the interpretation of the word *socius* as indicating a subordinate, and thus a member of Arnolfo's workshop.<sup>173</sup> An analysis of the word *socius* in the medieval period, however, has shown that when it was used to refer to friends or colleagues or to members of an association or institutional group (be this juridical or not), it indicated a position of equality.<sup>174</sup> This is confirmed by our analysis of the small corpus of signatures including a *socius* or *socii* identified by Dietl in his monumental five-volume work on the signatures of Italian medieval artists: only nine signatures overall include a reference to an associate or more associates of the *magister* or *faber* who signs the work, and these all suggest different workshops and a nearly equal *status*.<sup>175</sup> The pre-eminence given to Arnolfo by the inscription on the San Paolo ciborium has also prevented scholars from identifying the *socius* Pietro as the Pietro *Romanus civis* who had gained an international reputation at Westminster.<sup>176</sup> Yet, the seemingly primary role accorded to Arnolfo in the inscription may be explained by the fact that it was he who had taken on the commission from the abbot of San Paolo, and thus was ultimately responsible for the work. Arnolfo may have then decided to involve Pietro in the enterprise for his recent experience in a grand Gothic workshop abroad as well as his expertise in marble mosaic inlay. And – it may be worth stressing – the *Oderisii* had previous experience in altar-ciboria, as attested by the case of San Nicola dei Prefetti, while the same cannot be said of Arnolfo. It is probable that Pietro brought the innovative Gothic forms from Westminster and applied them to a familiar piece of liturgical furnishing, combining such forms with the geometric mosaic patterns of the Cosmati tradition, thus contributing to the creation of an extraordinarily innovative work, whose figural sculpture and capitals were all unquestionably Arnol-

170 Gardner 2018, p. 140. Bibliography on this ciborium is extensive, see namely de Blaauw 2009, and Gardner 2018, p. 140 for further bibliographical references.

171 Rossi 1889, p. 59, *en-passant* in footnote 2: "The companion Pietro [...] must be sought amongst the Roman marblers, perhaps Pietro Vassalletto, or more probably, Pietro d'Oderisio, younger than the former"; Muñoz 1921, pp. 265–267; Claussen 1987, p. 204; D'Achille 2000, p. 117.

172 Binski 1990, p. 25, and fig. 25 on p. 27 (Paris, Bibl. Nat. Ms Lat. 10474, fol. 4).

173 Gardner 1990, p. 211; id. 2018, p. 143.

174 D'Achille 2000, pp. 117–118.

175 My analysis is based on Dietl 2009, vol. 1, p. 320, table 5.5.

176 D'Achille 2000, p. 117.



fo's work.<sup>177</sup> Therefore, there is no serious obstacle to the identification of Pietro *Romanus civis* as the *socius* Pietro who worked in the Roman Benedictine abbey with Arnolfo; in fact, all the clues point in that direction.

#### IV. Date implications for the pavement and shrine:

##### the local evidence (Paul Binski)

The earliest evidence from within the royal administration for paving activity at the east end of the Abbey church including the shrine area is found in what Howard Colvin called the “highly condensed” Pipe Roll summaries of 1266–1267 and 1267–1269 drawn up by the exchequer from the much more detailed, but lost, accounts of weekly “particulars” specifying wages and materials.<sup>178</sup> These accounts, for the periods 25 December 1266 to 29 September 1267 and 29 September 1267 to 25 December 1269, punctually follow Abbot Ware's trip to Rome late in 1266 following the Dictum of Kenilworth. The aggregate summaries allude twice to the wages of “certain masons, paviours working before the shrine (*ante feretrum*) of St Edward”: *Et in stipendiis quorundam cementariorum pavatorum antepheretrum* (*feretrum* in the second version) *Sancti Edwardi*.<sup>179</sup> The enrolling exchequer clerks had simply carried over the relevant phrase verbatim from the first to the second accounting period: the expression “pavatorum ante feretrum” was probably formulated for the period 1266 to 1267, then reused. Flete, we recall, had referred to the pavement as being *coram*, “before” the high altar, as did Henry III in May 1269, so the expression *ante feretrum* is puzzling at first sight. Quite possibly the formulaic nature of these two Pipe Roll summaries smoothed over a more complex, and quite possibly developing, reality including the sanctuary pavement further west and, perhaps, the start of work on the shrine base.

The completion and de-scaffolding of the Abbey's east end in 1259 (fig. 1) was followed by the laying down of Purbeck marble paving in formalized patterns in the ambulatory of the church and across the shrine area, before any mosaic inlays were contemplated for the shrine space itself, since these inlays were subsequently cut into the new Purbeck substrate.<sup>180</sup> Any such work in the circuit of the shrine platform could theoretically, and on a point of caution, be designated *ante feretrum*. But how are we to understand the term *feretrum* itself? A *feretrum* was a coffin or portable chest, usually of precious metal, which derived from the ancient ceremonial litter for carrying trophies. In English records of the period, overwhelmingly the most common meaning of *feretrum* was a precious reliquary made of gold or silver plate with jewels, cameos, enamels, crests and figurines, which either functioned as a portable ceremonial container for the actual coffin or lay on a raised stone base in which, as was the case at Westminster (figs. 4, 5, 25, 43), the coffin was placed. In not a single thirteenth-century case was the term used unambiguously to designate a stone supporting base, however. Such bases were variously called *machina cementaria*, *opus lapideum*, *tabulatum marmoreum* and so on.<sup>181</sup> Thus the 1267 to 1269 Westmin-

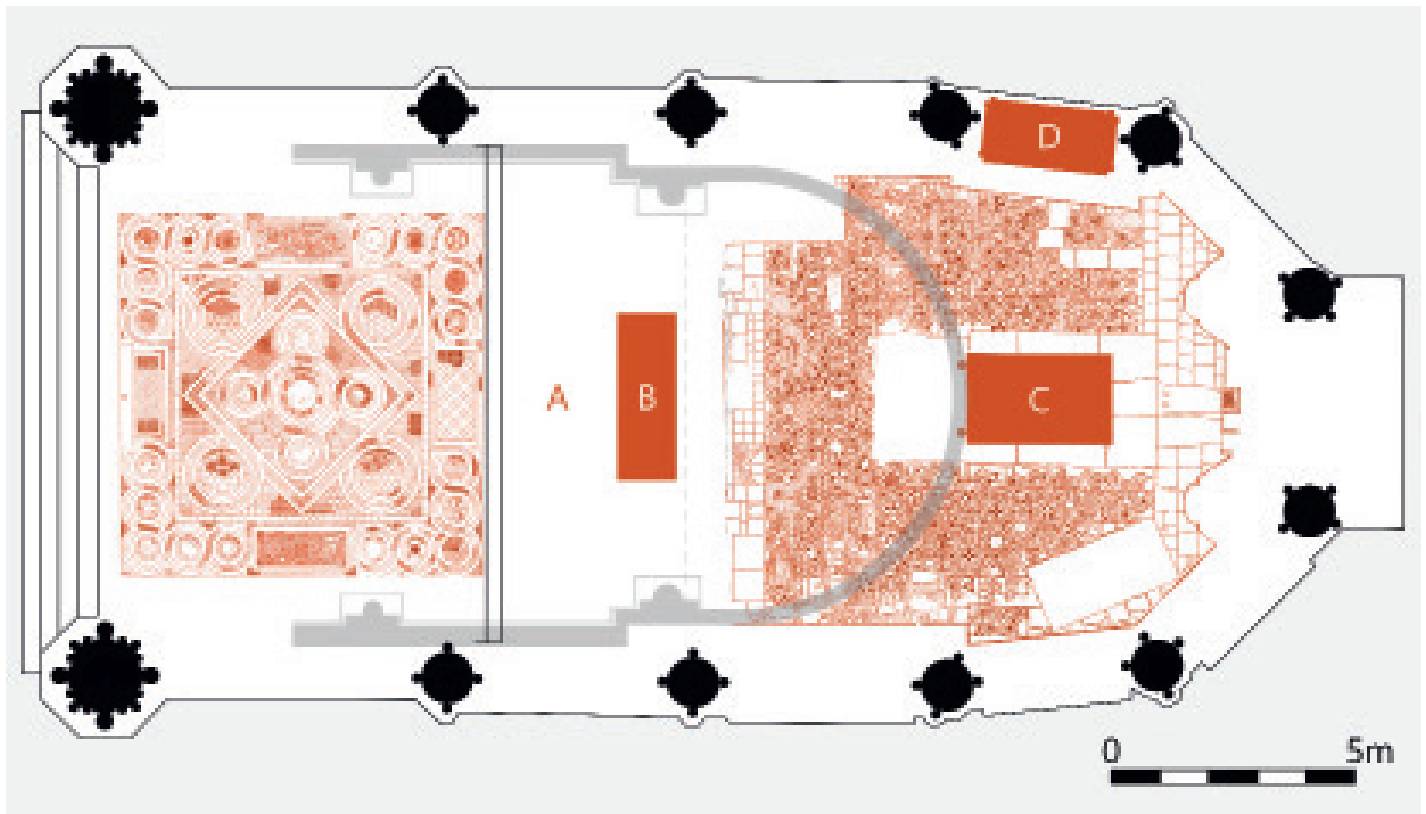
177 Gardner 1990, p. 211, convincingly noted that the capitals of the ciborium do not compare with any of the capitals at Westminster.

178 *Building Accounts* 1971, p. 3.

179 *Building Accounts* 1971, pp. 420–427, especially pp. 422, 426.

180 For the ambulatory paving, Lethaby 1906, pp. 28–29 and fig. 9; Rodwell/Neal 2019, p. 222, fig. 230.

181 That this was a common use of the term in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries may be ascertained from the 190-odd references to the word *feretrum* in Lehmann-Brockhaus's *Lateinische schriftquellen* (LB under ‘feretrum’: see, for example, nos. 531 (Bury St Edmunds: *machina cementaria*), 869 (St Augustine's Canterbury: *opus lapideum*), 945 (Canterbury Cathedral: *opus lapideum*), 1196–1197 (Crowland: *tabulatum marmoreum*), 3988). See also DMLBS under ‘feretrum’.



40 London, Westminster Abbey, schematic plan of raised area at centre of east end showing sanctuary and shrine pavements, likely site of first burial of Henry III in 1272 (A), high altar (B), shrine (C), tomb of Henry III (D) (drawing by James Hillson)

Westminster Abbey accounts are careful to distinguish work by four goldsmiths on the “new feretory of the blessed Edward” (*circa novum feretrum beati Edwardi*), the precious reliquary, from the work by masons “ante feretrum” specified later in the record. Because there is no evidence that in 1266 the new precious metal shrine of Saint Edward was as yet positioned within the Abbey’s east end, still a worksite, there are no grounds for believing that the term “ante feretrum” was intended to refer specifically to a metal reliquary and, as indicated, common usage does not immediately pinpoint the marble base either. There is a third and strong possibility: the term *feretrum* was deployed prospectively and non-technically by the exchequer clerks to indicate the general position of the shrine-to-be and its immediate surroundings. In his account of the burial of Abbot Wenlok in 1307 to the south of the high altar by the southern door of the high altar screen, Sporley states that he was buried “extra hostium australi feretri Sancti Edwardi,” “feretrum” here referring unambiguously to the shrine chapel behind the screen, as at Benedictine Durham.<sup>182</sup> The *feretrum* was thus as likely a place as a thing: the place where a shrine was found or to be located. If so, the reference to paving “ante feretrum” could perfectly well allude to the sanctuary pavement to the west of the feretory site (figs. 2, 3, 40), especially in a period before we can be certain that the high altar itself had been raised, as was certainly the case by 1269, by which time the pavement was described by Henry III as *coram* (in the presence of) the high altar, as noted earlier.<sup>183</sup> It follows that the suggestion that the marble shrine base was actually complete before the pavement was started in 1266–1267, simply because the work was described as *ante feretrum*, has no real

182 Flete, in Robinson 1909, p. 119 note; *Rites of Durham* (1593) 1903, pp. 3–7; *William Claxton* 2020, pp. 100–107.

183 Changes to the width of the high altarpiece, the Westminster Retable, while in manufacture in these years may indicate that the high altar’s width, and possible appearance, were continuing issues at this time, see *The Westminster Retable* 2009, p. 24.

foundation.<sup>184</sup> However, the likelihood that the sanctuary pavement was understood within the remit of these condensed accounts is high, given the epigraphic evidence for its date in the midst of their accounting period; and it is possible that the shrine base was also begun during this period.

It has already been shown that the epigraphic evidence is of fundamental importance to any assessment of the subtlety of thought apparent in the Westminster mosaics. Numerically and hierarchically, the sanctuary pavement inscription compliments both Henry III and the *Curia Romana*. And, as noted earlier, such inscriptions usually pinpoint not the date of commencement of a work, but its completion.<sup>185</sup> The choices made on the shrine inscription are thus quite clear. Though the shrine somewhat elliptically mentions “the present saint”, it does not refer to the translation of the saint in 1269 but to the shrine’s completion (“hoc opus est factum”) in 1279. Though much emphasis has been placed on the supposed incongruity of the recorded date (1279) not matching the translation date (1269), the circumstantial translation date was not relevant to Cosmati epigraphic practice, which pinpointed the date of actual manufacture.<sup>186</sup> The recorded version raises the possibility, thoroughly explored in the literature, that the shrine base was either begun “late” or, given that Henry III’s agency is stressed in the inscription as its ‘cause’, more probably before 1269, but completed and signed off a decade after the translation.

With one exception, there are no unambiguous documentary references to the base’s manufacture and the object itself cannot be, and never has been, used to arrive at a secure stylistic dating. The documentary exception is a late record in 1290–1291 of a payment by King Edward’s treasurer of 46s. 8d. to a Westminster monk, Reymond of Wenlok, for making three marble columns, which the king ordered “around the shrine of St Edward.”<sup>187</sup> Whether these columns were contiguous with the base or were freestanding cannot be known. That aside, it is not surprising that the inscription, which carries the *onus probandi*, or the burden of proof, has seriously challenged the opinion that the shrine, along with the other mosaic works, had been completed tidily and punctually by October 1269. There can be no doubt that the year 1279 is the date indicated in the inscription, expressed by adding distributive numerals (i.e., “in the one-thousandth with the seventieth and the twice two-hundredth year with a tenth almost complete”). Sporley’s is the only existing complete version of the original, and there is no serious reason to believe that the inscription had totally faded from sight as early as the mid-fifteenth century: such inscriptions were anyway probably recorded in separate *tabulae* or memoranda of the type we know preserved epigraphic information at Westminster and elsewhere.<sup>188</sup>

As such inscriptions usually denote the completion date of an artefact, there is no easy explanation for how a shrine base that had hypothetically begun in the period 1266–1269, or even earlier, as argued by some authorities, could possibly have been completed only in 1279, unless something had significantly interrupted its manufacture. Since the eighteenth century, some authorities have either disregarded the date 1279 on what they deem to be common-sense grounds (asserting it ‘should’ have documented the translation date as 1269) or proposed

184 As argued by Carpenter 1996, pp. 410–411, as “by far the most likely candidate for the feretory mentioned in the accounts.”

185 An important point misunderstood by Rodwell/Neal 2019, p. 534, who argue that the sanctuary pavement “undertaken in 1268, according to the Latin inscription [...] was probably not finished until the following year.”

186 For responses to this suppositious ‘problem’, see *The History of the King’s Works* 1963, p. 149 note 4; Claussen 1987, p. 177 note 993.

187 Scott 1863, pp. 136 note, after TNA E403/1256.

188 Luxford 2010.



that the inscription had been recorded incorrectly, and that the word *septuageno* should be replaced by *sexageno* or some other variant.<sup>189</sup> Recent attempts to discredit Sporley's transcription and claim that the text had originally read "1269" have been unconvincing.<sup>190</sup> Given that Sporley's transcription of the shrine pavement was grammatically more reliable than Flete's, and that he had provided an intelligent Latin gloss on it, which the visible fragment of shrine inscription confirms (fig. 30), this argument does not hold. In fact, there is no *prima facie* case against Sporley because his supposed inaccuracies are not specified but merely assumed.

Those defending the idea that the relevant part of the shrine inscription was in some way lost or mistranscribed also argue that Sporley's text lacked evidence from the shrine itself: their suspicion is that Sporley, hunting around for a text to 'fill' the missing date, had simply lifted a date phrase found in Westminster Abbey's *Flores Historiarum*. This takes the form of an unusual transcription of an epitaph known to have accompanied a painting in Viterbo of the murder there of Henry of Almain, nephew of Henry III and son of Richard Earl of Cornwall, slaughtered in San Silvestro by Simon de Montfort's sons in a revenge killing in March 1270.<sup>191</sup>

There are major obstacles to this proposal, even setting aside the fact that the date is not expressed identically in the two sources: *Anno milleno Domini cum septuageno atque ducento* in the *Flores*' record of the Viterbo epitaph (mixing distributive and cardinal numbers) and *Anno milleno Domini cum septuageno et bis centeno* at Westminster (all distributive), a variation which rules out absolute textual dependence. The first obstacle is logical. As a Westminster monk familiar with the *Flores*, Sporley must have known that the actual date of the translation was 1269; why then did he knowingly 'borrow' a date from the *Flores* that in light of the final phrase, *cum completo quasi deno*, committed him to a further calculation that pointed to a date for the shrine in the 1270s and not the 1260s?<sup>192</sup> Second, the idea overlooks the possibility that the similarity of phrase in the Viterbo epitaph could have arisen because the shrine's maker, Pietro di Oderisio, had been employed in Viterbo in 1270, at exactly the time of the murder of Henry of Cornwall, to work on the tombs of Clement IV and Peter di Vico in the church of Santa Maria in Gradi. An inscription on an Italian tomb recorded fully in a Westminster chronicle is decidedly unusual and suggests special means of transmission. Given the formulaic nature of such inscriptions, there is every reason to believe that they had been authored by the artisans themselves: we note again that "Petrus" is the central word in the shrine inscription. Either the text found its way back to Westminster because Pietro had composed it in Viterbo and communicated it to Westminster on a return journey to complete the shrine, or, since Henry of Almain's heart was translated from Viterbo and displayed by the shrine at Westminster, it may have been sent along with the heart. In short, the resemblance between the two date inscriptions, in the *Flores* and the shrine, might in theory point to a common author. Finally, it should be noted that this argument, as first published, was also accompanied by a deliberate rewriting of the inscription by its authors with a date that read "60" and not "70" to 'fit' an *a priori*

189 This interventionist habit began with the Abbey's librarian, Richard Widmore, in Widmore 1751, pp. 74–75, replacing *septuageno* with *sexageno*, even though, by his own admission, the relevant part of the inscription had been covered over in the sixteenth century. Vertue 1779, pp. 32–33, reporting the state of affairs in 1741, was guided by Sporley's version to use *septuageno*, stating that then as now "no more than the text *Petrus-civis*" survived, but perversely then went on to translate the date as '1270'.

190 Rodwell and Payne 2017, Rodwell and Payne 2018.

191 Rodwell and Payne 2017, p. 198, after *FH*, vol. III, pp. 21–22. In an echo of Becket imagery, Henry of Almain was shown in the painting attending mass when murdered by swords.

192 Indeed, specified in the *Flores* a few pages earlier, *FH*, vol. III, pp. 18–19.

assumption about the archaeology. This is an unacceptable methodology, rendered worse by the authors' overlooking that the text is in hexameters, by their including the ordinal form of 60, 'sexagesima' in the context of distributives (compare 'sexageno' on the pavement), that their suggested alternative did not scan, and that Sporley's version is numerically more subtle.<sup>193</sup> It is difficult to see why Sporley's text should have been 'improved' in this unsatisfactory way without ascertaining beyond reasonable doubt that he was an unreliable source.

The fact is that Sporley's record cannot so readily be set aside and remains the single most important, even if inconvenient, evidence for the shrine's completion date. That the construction of the present base may have been underway in the years 1266–1269 to the point where it could be used in the translation is perfectly possible; but the inscription suggests a delay in completion. Central to this problem is the false assumption that the shrine could not be completed 'late' and that to suppose so in some way means undermining Henry III. Indeed, the most important part of the shrine was demonstrably not finished in October 1269. The London annals, a local and so presumably well-informed source, note rather unusually that "despite the fact that the shrine, fittingly decorated with gold gems and precious stones, was not completely finished" (*feretro ... nondum tamen complete parato*) the 1269 translation had gone ahead notwithstanding.<sup>194</sup> The reason for this, almost certainly, was that Henry III had chosen October 1269 as the translation date because it coincided calendrically with the first translation date in 1163: in opting for the 1269 date Henry had no choice but to proceed anyway, the exact state of completion of the works notwithstanding.<sup>195</sup> The shrine indulgence granted in January 1270 by Hugh of Taghmon, who had consecrated the new east end, also mentions donations towards the actual making (*reparacione*) of the feretory, and work was still going on in August 1272.<sup>196</sup>

The fact that the London annals mention the incompleteness of the feretory metalwork, without alluding to the marble base, precisely pinpoints the chronological issue at stake: not everything was necessarily in order in October 1269. It is very unclear why Henry III would have poured resources into the construction and completion of the ancillary marble base while the more important precious feretory languished incomplete. It is also an error to identify the painted and enamelled *capsa* in the accounts for 1269–1271 *in qua reponitur corpus beati Edwardi* ("in which the body of the blessed Edward is laid") as a suspended cover provided for the completed shrine.<sup>197</sup> The expression *in qua reponitur* surely cannot be taken to mean that Saint Edward was put to rest in a lid. Indeed, a 1267 document refers to the *casse sive feretro in quo corpus beatissimi Edwardi regis disposuimus collocari*, making it clear that the term *capsa* was coterminous with "feretory."<sup>198</sup> The *capsa* in question was certainly the new coffin made for the public procession of the body of Edward at the 1269 translation, subsequently installed in the shrine base beneath the feretory.<sup>199</sup> The completed shrine probably had some sort of lid, but this is not the evidence needed.<sup>200</sup>

193 Payne and Rodwell 2017, subsequently but only partially retracted in Payne and Rodwell 2018. Rodwell and Neale 2019, p. 389, yet further weaken their case against Sporley by unjustly describing his perfect conventional and strictly observed Latin contractions of the inscription as 'cavalier'.

194 *LB*, no. 2819.

195 Carpenter 2002, pp. 42–43.

196 *WAM* Book II, Domesday, fols. 391, 394–394v; for further work *CPR* 1266–1272, pp. 404, 437; *CCR* 1268–1272, p. 177; *CLR* 1267–1272, pp. 66, 94, 97, 171, 225.

197 Building Accounts 1971, pp. 428–429: "Et in auro in folio & admallis diversis coloribus & aliis necessariis ad picturas capse in qua reponitur corpus beati Edwardi"; Rodwell and Neale 2019, p. 393 for confusing this with a shrine lid.

198 *LB*, no. 2810, after *CPR* 1266–1272, pp. 64–65; Since the relative pronoun is in the singular, we may assume that one, not two, objects are referred to here.

We know from the Pipe Roll entries and the May 1269 reimbursement to Abbot Ware that the sanctuary pavement had by then been completed, and throughout 1269, the work on the metal shrine, including recovering the images pawned from it under Ottobuono's custodianship, as noted earlier, was pressing deep into the summer. Odericus and Petrus were probably the 'pope's men,' whom Clement IV, persuaded by Ottobuono, had loaned to Abbot Ware and Henry III for that duration. Ottobuono left England in July 1268, when just the pavement had been completed, and Clement IV died on 29 November, and his death was followed, shortly afterwards, by Peter di Vico's in December. After Clement's death, the cardinals failed to elect another pope until Gregory X (the former legate to England with Ottobuono) in December 1271. This meant that the bulk of the years until then (1269–1271) saw a hiatus in papal patronage, which could well have stalled or terminated any papally sponsored or protected projects at Westminster. One aim of the present discussion is to suggest that the degree of papal initiative in these mosaics has been seriously underestimated. This consideration works both ways: what the popes gave, they could take away. The departure of Ottobuono and death of Clement IV in 1268, at one stroke, removed the principal Roman agents carrying out and protecting the project at Westminster. The deaths of Clement IV and Peter di Vico also raised the question of the manufacture of their tombs raised in the following years in Viterbo (figs. 10, 24). Clement IV's tomb was signed by Pietro, and the fact that the Oderisii clan had already been associated with San Nicola dei Prefetti in Rome, a 'Vico' church, further substantiates the connection. An examination of the arcading on the tomb chests of Clement IV and Di Vico (figs. 10, 24) shows the same vertical use of the signature 'drive-belt' motif in the arcading and the same careful alignment of the top curve of each drive-belt with the trefoil cusping. Several small but significant details of the Cosmati inlays, including chevron motifs (figs. 10, 26), connect the Viterbo tombs, particularly Clement IV's, to the shrine of Saint Edward and the sanctuary pavement.<sup>201</sup> Despite tiny differences of detail, these are certainly the products of the same workshop. Since, on formal grounds, Petrus/Pietro was almost certainly involved in the manufacture of both tombs, the possibility that he was eventually recalled to Westminster explicitly for that purpose is also real: two closely related and magnificent canopied tombs in Viterbo represented a substantial and time-consuming commission. *Petrus Romanus civis* was thus almost certainly Pietro di Oderisio. He must, therefore, have been summoned first at the behest of Clement IV's executor, Pierre de Montbrun, the *papal camerarius* and, from 1272, the Archbishop of Narbonne.<sup>202</sup> In all probability, Clement IV's tomb had not been completed until the mid 1270s, when the dispute about the location of Clement IV's body was at last resolved.

The effective withdrawal of papal patronage by 1269, and Odericus' and Pietro di Oderisio's return to Italy, offers an explanation for a possible hiatus in the works between then and the later 1270s, a time when the royal patronage of the Abbey also saw a steep decline, even more so after the death of Henry III. Realistically, Petrus/Pietro could not have returned to London until 1277, when his Viterbese commissions were completed, or even later – a key period, as we will note below, in the commissioning of Henry III's tomb and the related Cosmati

199 For the procession of Saint Edward's relics, *LB*, no. 2821; the term *capsa* is also used to denote the container for the processed body of St William of York at his 1284 translation in the presence of Edward I: *LB*, no. 5051. See also *LB*, nos. 2902, 3692.

200 Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 393 and 619 for later references.

201 These include the inverted chevron motif used on the (restored) canopy shafts of Clement IV (Lethaby 1925, pp. 228–229) and specific inlays, Foster 1991, pp. 23–24; see also Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 357, 600–601.

202 Gardner 1990, pp. 209–210.



works in its vicinity. The base may well have been largely set up to house the saint for the 1269 translation, for certainly the shrine's altar was in place. However, its carving or inlay decoration was left incomplete by mosaicists, who had departed. The possibility that the same mosaicists may eventually have returned to complete and sign the work on the shrine and raise the tomb of Henry III in the period 1279–1280 will be explored shortly.

But the complex issue of the tomb of Henry III and the cult of Saint Edward cannot be fully explored or understood without first considering, more deeply, the question of the burials of Saint Edward and Henry.<sup>203</sup>

## V. The burials of Saints Edward and Henry III (Paul Binski)

Henry III, who died on 16 November 1272, is stated by locally compiled sources to have been buried first before (*ante*) or 'in the presence of' (*coram*) the high altar (fig. 40 at A, B). Fitzthedmar's London chronicle of the mayors and sheriffs notes that Henry III was buried *ante magnum altare*, as does the notice of his death in *Foedera*.<sup>204</sup> Another local source is the chronicle of Thomas Wykes, an Augustinian based at Osney but residing in London during that period,<sup>205</sup> who provides the fullest account of Henry's funeral.<sup>206</sup> Echoing the splendour of the 1269 translation of Saint Edward, Henry's body, dressed in exceptionally fine garb, was carried to his tomb in a receptacle (*locellus*) by duly appointed nobles. Strikingly, Wykes then reveals that, in view of his devotion to the saint, he was buried in the place (*locus*) where Saint Edward had been buried for many years prior to his translation to the shrine. Unlike Fitzthedmar and the *Flores*, Wykes does not divulge the exact *locus*, and his use of two terms, *locellus* (casket) and *locus* (place) may rule out one possible reading of this passage, to the effect that Henry III was buried in the Confessor's old coffin, which had, in fact, been replaced by the newly painted *capsa* at the 1269 translation.<sup>207</sup> Nor is it quite clear to which translation Wykes is referring (1163 or 1269?), for before the 1163 translation, the Confessor had been buried in a tomb of an unknown type. This action was clearly devotional, however. For Henry III, Saint Edward and Saint Peter together offered special protection: in the illustrated *Life* commissioned for Eleanor of Provence and Henry III in 1236–1239, *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (Cambridge University Library MS Ee.3.59), Saint Peter himself, who is shown consecrating the church, declares that he will have frequent resort to the high altar of the Abbey to open the gates of heaven.<sup>208</sup> In the adjoining palace, Henry III's state bed was graced by a large image of the Coronation of Saint Edward.<sup>209</sup>

203 For receipts at the shrine altar, *Building Accounts* 1971, pp. 424–425.

204 Stapleton 1846, p. 153; *FH*, vol. III, p. 28; *Foedera* 1816, p. 497: corpus suum in ecclesia Westmonast' ante magnum altare traditum fuerat sepulturae."

205 Denholm-Young 1946, pp. 157–179, at 176.

206 *LB*, no. 2832: Henry was buried "sane corpus ipsius pretiosissimis indumentis iudicio, cum a nobilioribus regni ad hoc officium praelectis in locello portatili deferretur ad tumulum, ampliore splendore decoris effulgebat mortuum quam prius dum vixerat appareret; siquidem eventu miro sed notabili contigit quod in eodem loco quo beatissimus rex et confessor Edwardus sepultus et annis plurimis, priusquam ipsius reliquae translatae fuissent in scrinium, requievit corpus regis Henrici qui eundem s. Edwardum dum vixit prae cunctis sanctis diligere consuevit et ampliori devotione venerari non ignobiliter collocatum, humanae traditum est sepulturae."

207 A theory first advanced by Stanley 1869, p. 137. For an excellent account of the burials of Henry, see Carpenter 1996, pp. 427–459. Henry was probably supplied with a robust new coffin when he was finally translated to his Cosmati tomb in 1290: Stanley, 1880, pp. 319–320.

208 For various explorations of this theme, see Binski 1990, Binski 1995, pp. 63–66 and Carpenter 1996, pp. 427–459.

209 See most recently Binski 2021, pp. 10–15.

The fact that Wykes was struck by the singularity of this *eventus mirus*, as he calls it, may reflect a perception of the rarity of laymen being buried in places formerly occupied by saints, as opposed to near to them, *ad sanctum*. The subtext may have been that Henry III might himself possess sanctity. Oddly, however, this obviously devotional act is not noted in Westminster Abbey's own chronicle, the *Flores Historiarum*, in which Henry is not only reported as being buried before the high altar but also as performing miracles.<sup>210</sup>

As three local sources, Fitzthedmar, *Foedera*, and the *Flores Historiarum*, nevertheless consistently locate the burial *before* the high altar, we must assume that this was Wyke's belief too. However, Wykes's account needs closer examination in the light of the recent claim that a void under the pavement of the shrine platform, *behind* the high altar but in front of the shrine itself (fig. 40, C), marks the burial place of Saint Edward and hence of Henry III's first burial.<sup>211</sup> The claim that Henry, and Saint Edward before him, were interred *behind* the site of the thirteenth-century high altar, notwithstanding the eye-witness accounts to the contrary, has given rise to a revision of the entire liturgical east end of the Abbey that is more ambitious yet highly questionable; and because this question bears directly on the chronology and development of the mosaics, it must now be interrogated further.

The question of how and where Saint Edward (d. January 1066) was buried must be understood within the largely hypothetical spatial constraints of the east end of the eleventh-century abbey church with an apsidal termination (fig. 40, shown in grey) and perhaps an ambulatory, the existence of which cannot be conclusively proven.<sup>212</sup> The layout of the key area, the presbytery, and the apse, is established in general terms. Sulcard, a late eleventh-century Westminster monk, states that "it would seem" (*ut videtur*) that Edward was buried "before the altar of the first of the Apostles" (*ante altare principis apostolorum*).<sup>213</sup> As Barlow notes, it is curious that a witness such as Sulcard, who was on site, was not more exact.<sup>214</sup> The expression *ante altare* could be synecdochal, meaning that Edward was buried "in Saint Peter's church" as represented by his altar. Thus, the coronation ceremony was also described as taking place *ante altare sancti Petri Apostoli*, without necessarily meaning in immediate proximity to the altar itself.<sup>215</sup> On the other hand, those seeking sanctuary might find it at the *altare sancti Petri [...] et corpus regis Edwardi*, which could imply the same location for both.<sup>216</sup> It should also be recalled that Saint Edward's queen, Edith (d. 1075), and after her, Matilda of Scotland (d. 1118), were buried near Saint Edward on the north and south sides of the presbytery, respectively, suggesting burials not in the apse but in the first presbytery bay to the apse's west.<sup>217</sup>

Sometime before ca. 1138, Prior Osbert, also a local witness, had stated in his *Life* of Edward that he was buried *secus altare beati Petri*, which is to say, next to, against or by the high altar.<sup>218</sup> In his account of the miracle of Saint Wulfstan's staff, Osbert refers to the tomb's upper stone (*superioris lapidis*), which is open to interpretation, for it could refer to a flat gravestone over a sunk burial or the

210 *FH*, vol. III, p. 28.

211 Rodwell and Neale 2019.

212 Robinson 1910 and Blockley 2004 for the archaeology of the Confessor's church in relation to Henry III's; for a recent assessment and summary of the literature on the ambulatory question to date, see Woodman 2015.

213 Robinson 1910, pp. 92–93; Scholz 1964, p. 91.

214 Barlow 1970, pp. 254, 263–264.

215 Scholz 1961, p. 46.

216 Scholz 1961, p. 52 note 69.

217 Robinson 1910, p. 93 provides sources suggesting that Edith was buried 'near' Edward, including William of Malmesbury, who states she was "prope conjugem locata"; an early possibly spurious charter alludes to "tumbam ejus et reginae juxta eum positae."

218 Bloch 1923, at p. 112 (cap. 24).

coped lid of a sarcophagus.<sup>219</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, in his canonization *Life*, says that Edward was duly buried as he elected to be, in Saint Peter's church.<sup>220</sup> By the time of the second opening in 1161, as part of the canonization, Richard of Cirencester also refers to a sarcophagus.<sup>221</sup> Yet there is no evidence that a free-standing sarcophagus of any type survived the 1163 translation.

As such references, bar Sulcard, are not devoid of the formulaic language of hagiography, they cannot be trusted as fully reliable sources. Although virtually nothing is known about the exact liturgical layout of the east end, in 1163, Saint Edward was moved to a shrine, probably elevated behind the high altar, on the model of Saints Cuthbert, Swithun, and others.<sup>222</sup>

The evidence for the actual character and location of Edward's burial is therefore inconclusive. But by combining the local witness accounts of Henry III's burial presented in Fitzthedmar, the *Flores*, and Wykes, it appears that whatever the real situation was between 1066 and 1163, the understanding by 1272, the key period for the reconfiguration of the church, was that Edward had been buried before the high altar as it then was (fig. 40 at A). Whether any physical evidence had survived in 1272 testifying to the exact form and location of the Confessor's original burial is unlikely. There is certainly no evidence that Edward was buried behind the present high altar, nor that the Abbey's high altar had changed position when the church was being rebuilt, from 1245 on. The traditional belief at Westminster that the high altar had been dedicated by Saint Peter himself, rendering it both a relic of the apostle and a potent and enduring symbol of the Abbey's apostolic authority, making Westminster a *filia specialis* of Rome herself, stresses the possible role of this devotional dimension in respecting its ancient position. By almost every comparable standard, the high altar of such an eminent Romanesque church would have stood prominently on or near the chord of the apse, and not at the far east end.<sup>223</sup> The new high altar of 1269 indeed lay over the site of the chord of the former apse, in front of the apse space, evidence that its former location had been respected (fig. 40, at B). Elevated shrines of the type we assume existed at Westminster after 1163, behind the high altar, were placed (as at Durham in the twelfth century) not at the rear but in the middle of the apse, to facilitate access, movement, and censing. That in turn requires that the high altars in question were further still to the west.

The approximate level of the original floor in 1066 can be established from the position of the bases in the apse: According to Lethaby, the Confessor's presbytery floor was 4' 6" (1.37m) below the high altar of the new church, with its foundation 5' 8" (1.73m) deep; Blockley also shows that the eleventh-century masonry was over 1 m below the high altar and the shrine platform of the Goth-

219 Bloch 1923, p. 118 (cap. 29), and cf. also p. 121 (cap. 30).

220 *PL* vol. 195, cols. 774C, 776B (cf. also col. 780A). This later tradition does not support the groundless contention in Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 159, 305, that Edward had selected, indeed constructed, his own burial place as a 'burial chamber.'

221 *LB*, no. 2598.

222 Aelred of Rievaulx's 1163 sermon for the translation cites the imagery of Luke 11:3, implying an elevated setting, Barlow 1970, pp. 281–213; also, *LB*, no. 2599.

223 This argument implicitly rejects the logic of Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 159–160, 305–306, 551–562, and especially the hypothetical plan at p. 553, fig. 531, in which the shrine is implausibly rammed through the perimeter wall of the apse. They present no evidence for this conclusion, Rodwell having already admitted in an earlier publication that there are "spatial difficulties" in coordinating the evidence for a chamber just west of the shrine with the pre-Gothic archaeology: Rodwell 2009, pp. 151–167. Rodwell's and Neale's proposal does not accord with the evidence for the location of high altars on the chord of the apse in other twelfth-century great churches, see Crook 2000, pp. 192–206 (Bury, Durham, St Albans), and Fernie 2000, pp. 247–248, because only that arrangement would permit space for the elevation of a major shrine behind the high altar. For the relation of Westminster's apse with the high altar, Robinson 1910, p. 88 and pls. XIII and XIV.



ic church.<sup>224</sup> This arose because in 1245–1246, all the relics in the east end were removed, the church cleared and demolished, and the floor levels of the central vessel raised to create a new platform (fig. 40), from the crossing eastwards up to the high altar and the shrine platform behind it, bringing the crossing and ambulatory closer to the floor levels of the old church. Given that all the soil and rubble beneath the high altar and shrine platform were from Henry III's era, any subterranean or partly submerged burial before the high altar before 1245, or 1066, would have occurred between at least 1m and 2m below the platform's surface. It follows that voids that were opened in this platform after 1245 may very well have been unrelated to the deeper burials in the church before 1163. And, as we have seen, the idea that the Confessor, and Henry III after him, was buried in a void *behind* the high altar has no basis in the evidence found and is contradicted by eyewitnesses.

There is a further issue: Saint Edward's cult was at least as significant as most of the post-canonization English cults, which featured both a vacated tomb and a new shrine, thereby creating two sites of pilgrimage and devotional activity. Such tomb cults existed at Canterbury, York, Lincoln, Beverley, Glasgow, and Oxford, and probably also at Winchester, Durham, and Worcester. In none of these instances was a layperson of some significance ever buried in the vacated tomb: this is probably what occasioned Wykes's remark about Henry III's burial in the *locus* of Saint Edward. The absence of any reference whatsoever to a cult of the former tomb of Saint Edward at Westminster throughout the entire period in question – particularly odd given the developments at Canterbury after 1220, which made Saint Thomas's tomb in the lower church an unprecedentedly major focus as well as the shrine above – also surely indicates that no such 'tomb' existed, even as a substantive object of veneration. No indulgences were granted to it, and there is no allusion to it in Ware's *Customary*, or later in Flete.<sup>225</sup> The even more ambitious proposal that the east end of the church was reconfigured in 1245 to create a Roman-style *confessio* quasi-crypt with access from the west to a burial chamber before the shrine, is unconvincing, and proceeds from an unwarranted reliance on ground-penetrating radar investigation (non-invasive archaeology) of an undated void between the high altar and shrine, which was far too shallow to accommodate the space a tomb-cult would demand in practice.<sup>226</sup> Westminster is very obviously a crypt-less church and cannot remotely have rivalled Canterbury Cathedral. Though the historian Eadmer alludes to the eleventh-century crypt and the east-end arrangement of Canterbury as being "what the Romans call a *confessio*" on the model of that in Old Saint Peter's, the arrangement hypothesized for Westminster was otherwise unknown in England in the thirteenth century.<sup>227</sup> It was also out of line with the Roman practice: no Roman *confessio* was ever found behind a high altar because, typically, the Roman arrangement located the high altar over, and not in front of, the *confessio* and, as stated, it is implausible that so elaborate a provision would not have

224 Robinson 1910, p. 99; Blockley 2004, p. 230. Rodwell and Neale 2019, p. 552 propose that the eleventh-century floor levels were 1.10 and 1.70m below the thirteenth-century sanctuary and shrine floor levels, respectively.

225 A marginal note to the episcopal indulgence granted between 1237 and 1267 to those entering a chapel constructed (but, in fact, not completed) under the chapel of St Edward (Rodwell and Neale 2019, p. 608 no. 56) indicates "de capella sub capella S(ancti) E(dwardi) non comparet", i.e., it was unknown, not built. The indulgence does not specify a location in the Abbey; one alternative referent could be the chapel mandated somewhere at Westminster in 1252 for the shrine workshop, decorated with images of Saint Edward, CCR 1251–1253, p. 290. The omission of such a chapel in the indulgences of 1287 must be read against the arguments of Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 563–564 and pp. 617–618, nos. 163–164.

226 Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 309–310, 555–559.

227 *LB*, no. 658.

gained indulgences for pilgrims, to say nothing of income, and entirely missing record to that effect. It is also unclear why such a striking feature should have been abandoned and built over, as this must have occurred by, or at the time of the installation of the extant high altar screen in 1441. It is highly probable that the theory of a lost tomb of the Confessor behind the high altar – indeed anywhere – is a mirage.

It is also possible that the remark in Wykes, the witness who conflates the burial place of Saint Edward with Henry III's burial, and in effect connects them to the high altar, was moved quite as much by the local knowledge of the Abbey's traditions or written sources as by actual physical evidence. These would include Sulcard, who was the first to state that the saint was buried in front of the high altar. This belief needed no demonstrable surviving physical evidence: its character was historical and textual, not scientific. We also recall the term *secus*, by or against the high altar, used by Osbert. A reading of Osbert alone could have justified a burial close to the high altar itself.

Thus, it is curious that one substantive piece of physical evidence has been discounted in recent discussions of the problem. In 1866, Scharf published the new finding of a very substantial 7' (2.13 m) trapezoidal Purbeck marble coffin with a head-hole, of a type typical of the period 1150–1250, at a depth of 1' (0.3 m), lying east-west before the centre of the altar with its foot just beneath it, its head extending westwards no further than the topmost or the second high altar step.<sup>228</sup> This position, in effect, below the feet of the celebrant, was remarkably privileged. The coffin contained a monastic burial with crosier and patten, possibly of a prior of the church because no confirmed abbot of Westminster was buried in this position. Unfortunately, the much-rebuilt area of the steps and the high altar has not been subject to physical archaeological investigation.<sup>229</sup> There is no reason whatsoever to associate this coffin and its contents, probably relocated here in the later Middle Ages, with a king. The point is that this finding proves that, from 1272 to 1290, a coffin of the type needed for the body of Henry III could have been buried exactly in this position both beneath and before the high altar.<sup>230</sup> This position is perfectly consistent with the 1272 eyewitness accounts. In the most intimate way, it would have guaranteed the protection of both Saint Peter and Saint Edward, and in its proximity to the main altar, the position of the officiating priest would have been ideally suited for a king who had tested the extent of the sacramental powers of kings and certainly had a sacral conception of his kingship.<sup>231</sup> Henry was translated in 1290 from the first burial place. There is no reason to believe that it was ever occupied by a monarch again, the statement that Eleanor of Castile's body followed later that year clearly being in error.<sup>232</sup>

228 Scharf 1866–1867, pp. 354–857; the coffin is drawn in Society of Antiquaries, Westminster Abbey Red Portfolio, p. 5.

229 The coffin's discovery and subsequent and highly inconclusive ground radar investigation of the high altar step area are reported in Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 44–45, 250–252, but not fully discussed. The ground-penetrating radar investigation was evidently directed (p. 250) to look for “a substantial tomb chamber” appropriate to the burial of the king’ and, not surprisingly, found none because Henry's temporary burial in this position in 1272 would not have required such a chamber. The coffin is almost certainly a later-medieval intrusion, but the determination of the absence of the void by the ground-penetrating radar casts doubt on the reliability of such imaging.

230 Henry III's oak coffin was 6' 1 ½” (1.87 m) long: Stanley 1880, p. 321.

231 For a discussion, see Binski 1995, pp. 144–145, and Vincent 2001, pp. 186–201.

232 This error begins with Parsons 1994, pp. 60 and 279 note 203, following the Dunstable Annals, *LB*, no. 2869: “corpus eius [...] in sepulchro Henrici regis est humatum.” The contrary statement in the local London annals that Eleanor was buried *ad pedes monumenti domini Henrici regis*, *LB*, no. 2870 confirms the entry in the *Flores Historiarum*, *FH*, vol. III, pp. 71–72.

## VI. The tomb of Henry III (Paul Binski)

Henry III's tomb (figs. 41, 42) was by far the grandest erected by a king of England to date and was formally appropriate for the church's greatest benefactor after Saint Edward. Henry had very probably marked out the position to the north of the shrine for his intended tomb in 1246, when his plan for burial shifted to the Abbey from the London Temple.<sup>233</sup> But that would not be evidence that it was begun, let alone completed, before his death.<sup>234</sup> There was no tradition at this time of English kings commissioning their tombs before their deaths, and the fact that Henry III's body was moved from the first burial site to the tomb eighteen years later in 1290 is itself *prima facie* evidence that at his death there was no new tomb in which to bury him. Had it been completed by his death in 1272, there is every reason to believe he would have been buried in it, not least because the occupation of a shrine-like tomb near an actual shrine, namely that of Saint Edward, would have best supported any ambition to promote his sanctity. Actual tombs, preferably as sites of miracles, were part of the dossier of sanctity. But the idea that he himself commissioned his tomb as his own shrine, in effect promoting his own sanctity, contradicts the widely documented nature and processes of medieval canonization.<sup>235</sup>

However, the supposition that after 1272 Henry might have been regarded by some – possibly even Wykes – as a candidate for canonization is not in itself unreasonable. There were sporadic reports of miracles at the king's tomb in the period 1272–1275, about which Edward I expressed actual scepticism.<sup>236</sup> But it is inherently unlikely that Henry would have set himself up in rivalry to the Confessor, and there is no evidence that he was regarded as being in any way saintly before his death.<sup>237</sup> After the 1270s, evidence that he performed miracles is also absent, and this must be a consideration in assessing the design of the tomb as a potential shrine. Nor is it inherently likely that he would have diverted resources away from his pet projects, the Abbey itself and the shrine of Saint Edward, to his own tomb. A further key consideration in these years must have been the movement under Charles of Anjou for the canonization of his brother Louis IX (Henry's brother-in-law) launched in 1271–1272 by Gregory X: this was a family affair.<sup>238</sup>

The formal evidence of the tomb, sited to the north of the Confessor's shrine, supports a date after 1272. Its highly unusual south-facing elevation (fig. 42) with a low broad base with triple *foramina* echoing not only the main shrine (fig. 43) but also the tomb of Christ, with a veneered chest above, is based visually on Roman altar *confessio* arrangements (as at San Giorgio in Velabro in Rome where the central niche has an inlaid cross at its back) but is unknown in any two-tier Roman tomb of the period. The front of the lowest stage was protected by a strong iron grill of some form preventing physical entry. It certainly has a sacral, shrine-like, dimension; but if so, it could not have been conceived in this form before 1272.

The shrine of Saint Edward and the tomb of Henry III were produced under the administration of the royal master mason Robert of Beverley (d. 1285) who will have had oversight of the delivery of the Purbeck marble for the main structures of the Cosmati pavements and monuments at Westminster. Under such circumstances some level of cooperation between the English and Italian work forc-

233 For Henry's policy on the Temple and Westminster, see Stewart 2019.

234 Rodwell and Neale 2019, p. 588–591, argue that the tomb was completed before 1272 as a shrine for Henry.

235 See Vauchez 1997.

236 *FH*, vol. III, p. 28 for miracles following the 1272 burial. Gardner 1990, p. 213; Carpenter 2005, pp. 28–29.

237 Rodwell and Neale 2019, p. 526, however, state explicitly that Henry's tomb may be seen as “even rivalling the Confessor's.”

238 Vauchez 1997, pp. 181–182.





41 London, Westminster Abbey, tomb of Henry III, north side (photo © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)

es will have been necessary. Typologically, as has long been recognized, the shrine base with its foramina or ‘squeezing places’ (fig. 43) is familiar from contemporary instances in medieval England and will certainly have been specified in outline by the English authorities, not least because they were independently preparing the metalwork feretory. However, the flat, shallow treatment of the shrine’s main elevations, and especially the absence of elaborate mouldings around the base’s trefoil-headed arcading, *de rigueur* in a church such as Westminster Abbey displaying a spectacular range of template forms in its arcading (figs. 1, 37), suggests that the detailing was Roman *ab initio*.<sup>239</sup> Henry III’s tomb is even more purely Roman, bar some details. The lower tier with *foramina* is not the only unusual aspect of the tomb, because before the 1270s not a single precedent existed in England or Italy for tiered tomb construction of any type. The earliest instances in Italy are the tombs of Clement IV and Peter di Vico in Viterbo, both not datable before the 1270s; these are followed by the tomb of Adrian V, also at Viterbo (figs. 10, 24, 31), not executed before 1276.<sup>240</sup> The detailing, too, is significantly similar to Roman works of the last quarter of the century from the immediate circle of Arnolfo di Cambio, including the pilastered and pedimented detailing of the altar of the *praesepe* in Santa Maria Maggiore of ca. 1290 (figs. 32, 33) and the lunette-ended pilasters which occur on a masterpiece of this circle, the tomb of Cardinal de Bray (d. 1282) at Orvieto.<sup>241</sup> As noted already, a compelling analogy already noted is supplied by the trefoil-headed piscina, with the same frame

239 Since the shallowness of the surface elevations is a fundamental aspect of the base’s manufacture, the suggestion in Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 327, 390–392, that the present base was begun as an ‘English’ work but converted into a ‘Roman’ work during manufacture, an argument designed to secure the shrine base’s early dating, and thus its priority, is unlikely to be correct.

240 For the tomb of Clement IV in its unrestored state see Frothingham 1891, pl. IX, and the discussion here in Part III.

241 The role of Arnolfo and his circle in the tomb of Henry is first observed by Claussen 1987, at pp. 144, 183, 204 and is accepted and developed by Binski 1990, pp. 23–26 and Gardner 1990, p. 212; for the tomb of Cardinal de Bray see Gardner 1992, fig. 85. Rodwell and Neal 2019, p. 582 are, therefore, incorrect to suggest that lunette-ended pilasters were by then out of date.



42 London, Westminster Abbey, tomb of Henry III, south side (photo © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)

43 London, Westminster Abbey, shrine base from northeast (photo Paul Binski)

moulding as the side arches on Henry’s tomb pedestal, in the Capocci chapel of Santa Maria in Aracoeli in Rome, datable 1285–1298 (figs. 32, 34).<sup>242</sup> The more general resemblance to the two-tier tomb of Ottobuono as Pope Adrian V (fig. 31) is also notable. It is extremely difficult to see how or why the modern, later thirteenth-century Roman detailing of this type, especially that associated with Arnolfo and his circle including Pietro di Oderisio, could or would have been developed first at Westminster in the 1260s.<sup>243</sup>

Both the tomb and the shrine omit features often found in freestanding Cosmati works, such as projecting acanthus frames for panels of mosaic and porphyry, so the relief detailing is simpler and flatter, and in places less classical (fig. 44). There is no evidence that the tomb originally bore a canopy supported on shafts.<sup>244</sup> The single ranks of plain, smooth spatulate leaves on the capitals of the columns and pilasters of the upper tier of the tomb (fig. 45), however, resemble some capitals in the arcading of the gallery of the Sancta Sanctorum in Rome, erected under Nicholas III (1277–1280), one of the few Roman works with true Gothic trefoil-headed arches like those on the shrine, but with more elaborate mouldings.<sup>245</sup>

242 Bolgia 2017, pp. 246–248, fig. 3.79.

243 This fundamental issue is not fully examined by Rodwell and Neal 2019.

244 The contrary is argued by Rodwell and Neal 2019, pp. 584–585, but there is no physical evidence that column supports were ever pinned or attached to the plinth, and it is unclear why any canopy – probably avoided in order not to overshadow the main shrine – should have been taken down.

245 *Sancta Sanctorum* 1995, pp. 203–204.





44 London, Westminster Abbey, tomb of Henry III, capitals from southeast corner, first stage (photo Paul Binski)

As to patronage, Edward I had learned of his father's death while in southern Italy, having been accompanied on the journey by Charles of Anjou, a key agent in this matter: Edward's letter to the mayor of London concerning the king's death is dated 19 January 1273, and he was in Rome by February.<sup>246</sup> Abbot Ware was also in Rome on the king's business in 1273, in 1276, and again in 1276–1277.<sup>247</sup> He was certainly in Rome between no later than 22 June and 24 July 1276 pursuing what the Patent Roll calls the king's (unspecified) "principal affair", as he missed Charles of Anjou, who had unexpectedly left Rome, but was able to report the death of Innocent V (22 June), news of which had reached London by 24 July. He was therefore obliged to return to Rome (or remain there) between Michaelmas 1276 and Michaelmas 1277, presumably on the same business. Charles of Anjou (d. 1285), who had offered Edward I protection while in Sicily during the recent crusade, was on friendly terms with Ottobuono Fieschi and, most notably, in 1277 was employing Arnolfo di Cambio in Rome precisely during the period of Ware's visits.<sup>248</sup>

The timing is, therefore, exceptionally interesting. We note that Richard of Ware was in Rome at around the time that Pietro di Oderisio probably became available after the resolution of the controversy about Clement IV's burial at Viterbo. Charles of Anjou had influenced the 1276 election of Ottobuono (d. August 1276) as Adrian V and was involved in the canonization proceedings of his own brother Louis IX. He had also taken the equally short-lived Pope Innocent V under his protection, and on his death in June 1276 (which Ware reported from Rome), had written on 27 August to his vicar in Rome to supply a tomb for Innocent, either in the French style or a Roman porphyry tub ("conca porfidis").<sup>249</sup> A discerning and well-documented patron of tomb sculpture, Charles had close relations with the former papal legate in England, 'dealt' in porphyry tomb materials, and – significant for Westminster – employed

246 Powicke 1947, vol. 2, p. 606; Gough 1900, vol. 1, p. 20 (Edward in Rome from 5 February).

247 For Ware's activity overseas and in Rome, see *CPR* 1272–1281, p. 3 (1273) (the Abbot going beyond the seas on the king's affairs, 20 January); *CCR* 1272–1279, pp. 349, 417 (1276); *CPR* 1272–1281, p. 159 (1276); *CPR* 1272–1281, pp. 171, 231 (1276, 1277).

248 Gardner 1992, pp. 95–96.

249 Gardner 1972, p. 141 Appendix; Gardner 1992, pp. 203, 214.





45 London, Westminster Abbey, tomb of Henry III, capitals from southeast corner, second stage (photo Paul Binski)

Arnolfo di Cambio. As already noted, he was on good terms with Edward I and encouraged the canonization of Louis IX. It is to the relationship between Charles, Edward I and Richard of Ware that we should look for an account of the commissioning and salient features of Henry's tomb.

We can be certain that, while the Purbeck marble for the actual structure of Henry's tomb was supplied by the king's works, the inlays must have been sourced from elsewhere. This must have been true of the exceptionally large red porphyry veneers which adorn the upper chest (figs. 41, 42). The chronicler Nicholas Trivet alludes to the return in 1280 of Edward I *de partibus Gallicanis* with "jasper" stones for the *reparacio* (making or repairing) of Henry's tomb, thus affirming their use with a stronger expression than Rishanger's record of the same event, which presented the stones as having "most honoured" it.<sup>250</sup> The mention of this action in two chronicles of the time suggests some degree of importance entailing high diplomacy. The only sojourn Trivet could have meant, in the light of Edward's fully documented itinerary, was that made by his court to Picardy for the negotiation between France and England of the treaty of Amiens in May-June 1279, a moment of cultural exchange because the Arthurian text *Escanor* was dedicated to Eleanor of Castile at that time.<sup>251</sup> Strikingly, Charles of Anjou's son and King Edward's cousin, Charles the Prince of Salerno, with whom Edward was also on good terms, was in the royal party in France: it must have been on this occasion that the porphyry veneers, and perhaps other stones, were handed to Edward I by the prince, but at the behest of Charles of Anjou, for Henry's tomb.<sup>252</sup>

If so, Charles may have been ultimately responsible not only for the design but also the ornamentation of the tomb. Until the end of 1278, when Charles had been a senator of Rome, he had direct access to its spolia.<sup>253</sup> The tomb was clearly then in manufacture, and its mosaic stones sourced abroad, presumably in Rome, with Charles's agency, using English Purbeck marble supplied through the royal works and cut by Roman artists or, given some curiosities of detailing, by English hands but under Roman instruction. Since no other tomb-type would accommodate such veneers, it can be safely assumed that by 1280 a decision had been made in favour of a cosmatesque tomb.

We note the striking coincidence between the inscription date of the shrine and the date of Edward I's meeting in Picardy, both in 1279, and Trivet's '*repara-*

250 Trivet (1135–1307) 1845, p. 301: "Edwardus hoc anno [1280] reversus de partibus Gallicanis de lapidibus jaspidem quos secum attulerate paternam fecit *reparari* sepulcrum"; cf. William Rishanger's version (*Willelmi Rishanger* 1865, p. 96, also *LB*, no. 2843): "[...] lapidibus pretiosis jaspidum quos secum attulerate de partibus Gallicanis, paternam sepulcrum apud Westmonasterium fecit plurimum *honorari*." Here Jasper should be taken to indicate any red-speckled stone, like porphyry, the term being chosen because of its Apocalyptic connotation (see Revelation 4:3 and 21:18–19). Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 576–577 argue implausibly that these entries show that Edward I had precious stones affixed to the porphyry veneers on the sides of the upper chest and that they had nothing to do with the tomb's construction, an idea hard to reconcile with the use of the strong term '*reparare*' by Trivet, which points to manufacture, and by the inclusion of so trivial an act in two significant chronicle entries.

251 Gough 1900, vol. 1, pp. 95–96.

252 Murray 1996, p. 143; Binski 2002, pp. 130–131; for Charles, Powicke 1962, pp. 234, 248.

253 Gardner 1992, p. 96.



46 London, Westminster Abbey, detail of shrine pavement (photo Paul Binski)

*cio*' notice the following year. It is conceivable that Richard of Ware's visit to Rome in 1276–1277 was also when Henry III's tomb was commissioned from the workshop of Arnolfo with Charles of Anjou's direct support, and the stones supplied via Charles' son in 1279. Henry III's tomb was thus in manufacture by 1279–1280. That the completion and signing-off of the shrine in 1279 coincided with the manufacture of the tomb suggests that both works may be ascribed to Pietro, the shrine having been commissioned, designed, and begun over a decade earlier. It follows that the distinctive Cosmati mosaic pavement around the shrine (figs. 5, 40, 46), its pattern breaking off at the base of the tomb of Henry III, was set down not in the 1260s campaign but rather in the later 1270s or early 1280s once the major monuments were complete.<sup>254</sup> It is unlikely to have been executed before the completion of the shrine itself.

Edward I's court was seldom at Westminster between 1281 and early 1290, not least because of the arduous campaigns in Wales.<sup>255</sup> These absences had a palpable impact on royal patronage at Westminster. However, around 1289–1290, there was a marked increase in the sacral activity of touching for the king's evil (scrofula) by Edward I.<sup>256</sup> Henry was then translated "suddenly and unexpectedly" by night on the eve of Ascension day, 10 May 1290, Edward being at Westminster; his coffin was opened and the body, with a long beard, revealed, and his heart passed to the abbess of Fontevrault in 1291.<sup>257</sup> Henry's bronze effigy was cast and gilded in the first half of 1292 in tandem with the effigies of Eleanor of Castile, also made by William Torel. Installed in 1293, it was provided with a painted *coperculum* or cover.<sup>258</sup>

254 Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 221–225, 562, 585 note that the shrine pavement can only have been installed after the shrine and Henry III's tomb. Until the occupants of the child's Cosmati tomb in the south ambulatory can be identified, the date of this small monument, resembling the tomb chest of Alfanus in Santa Maria in Cosmedin (Binski 1990, p. 22 and fig. 16), must remain uncertain: see Rodwell and Neale 2019, pp. 481–503.

255 See the itinerary in Gough 1900, vols. 1 and 2.

256 Prestwich 1985, pp. 124–126.

257 *LB*, no. 2866: "Dominus rex regem, patrem suum, apud Westmonasterium intumulatum, nocte Dominicae Ascensionis, subito et inopinate amoveri fecit, et in loco excelsiore, iuxta S. Eadwardum collocari"; date and detail of Henry III's corpse confirmed by the *Annales Londonienses* in Stubbs 1882, p. 98; for his heart, *CPR* 1281–1292, p. 463; Carpenter 1996, p. 428. It was presumably on this occasion that the body was placed into a new coffin.



### Conclusions (Paul Binski and Claudia Bolgia)

Two central aims of this paper have been to restore to the discussion of the Cosmati mosaics at Westminster a proper consideration of the national and international political circumstances which shaped them against the complex background of such mosaic commissioning within Italy and Rome especially. We have also shown that the inscriptions on these works deserve fuller literary consideration than they have hitherto received and that, in reviewing in depth the documentary and physical evidence of the sanctuary and shrine area at Westminster Abbey, we have cause to doubt the more ambitious claims of a recent close study based on ground-penetrating radar findings.

In arguing that closer attention to the dynamics of exchange between the English court, Westminster Abbey, and the papal curia is required to understand how this most unusual episode occurred at all, we have identified the papal legate Cardinal Ottobuono Fieschi as a much more important figure in the negotiation of the arrival of the mosaics at Westminster than has hitherto been believed, beginning with his holding a council in the north transept of Westminster Abbey in order to assert papal support of Henry III's troubled political regime. We have also shown that Ottobuono was not only very close to Henry III but, through a circumstantial association with the Basilica of Sant'Agnese in Rome, was also directly familiar with the work of the *Oderisii* family of mosaicists prior to his legation, which might explain the presence of Odericus at Westminster a decade later. This reinforces our argument that without legatine and curial backing at the highest level, neither Henry III nor Richard of Ware could or would have been able to bring such mosaics to London. The fact of Westminster Abbey's exemption from diocesan control, gained in the 1220s, placing it directly under the authority of Rome as its *filia specialis*, also seems to us critical in understanding the political, religious, and cultural weight of these mosaics for Westminster itself as the church of Saint Peter.

To underpin this, we focussed next on the unexpected link between Westminster Abbey's role as a coronation church and the same role of Old Saint Peter's itself, since close reading of the sources shows that Old Saint Peter's *quincunx*-type mosaic pavement, used for its imperial and royal coronations, could have served as the specific model for the Westminster pavement. Only high-level curial connections of the sort established under Clement IV could have ensured such transmission, alluded to in the language of *Urbs* in the Westminster pavement inscription itself. This extraordinary text can now be shown to belong to a vastly older tradition of cosmological speculation apparent in the work of Hesiod, and transmitted by Pliny, Ausonius, Pseudo-Bede, and many others, which may have reached Westminster via Reading Abbey. Such speculation, we suggest, was a metaphor for the political order restored by legatine authority and especially by the coronation of Edward I on this pavement in 1274. For this reason, we consider that the pavement will have enjoyed clear priority in the chronology of these mosaics and that the links established for its manufacture subsequently developed into a wider, more ambitious scheme. The Cosmati mosaics began as a fundamentally political act, to which the pavement, as the site of the inauguration of Plantagenet kingship, was central.

258 The accounts for these effigies and related work may be followed in *Manners and Household Expenses* 1841, pp. 95–139, especially pp. 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 122, 123, 124, 125 for Henry III's effigy made between the first half of 1292 and 1293; see also *The History of the King's Works* 1963, vol. 1, pp. 479–482.

259 We, therefore, reject the fundamental conclusions arrived at by Rodwell and Neal 2019, pp. 525–601.



We, therefore, regard the wider political and cultural domain as being of far greater value and interest than the essentially localized and far from conclusive evidence of recent archaeology based on ground-penetrating radar. Until the areas immediately before and behind the high altar of Westminster Abbey are physically excavated, and produce conclusive results, serious doubts must remain about the possibility that the Confessor, and so Henry III, were buried anywhere other than in front of the high altar, and that the Abbey was provided with a Roman *confessio*: there is no evidence for a subterranean chapel of Saint Edward that might justify this extraordinary reworking of the Abbey's sanctuary, and such voids as there are, require an alternative explanation.<sup>259</sup>

In assessing the epigraphic evidence, we see no need either to reject the authority of Richard Sporley's record of the pavement and shrine inscriptions, which indicate that the work on the mosaics, begun in the mid 1260s, did not fully reach completion until the later 1270s, as the 'project' had expanded. In effect, we agree with the solutions posited by Lethaby and Claussen, that the Cosmati mosaics were set down in two separable campaigns in the 1260s and later towards 1280, the latter period seeing the completion of the shrine base of Saint Edward and the erection of the tomb of Henry III. We differ from Claussen in our finding that the shrine base was not completed in 1269, despite being functional at the translation that year, and that work on it had straddled the two campaigns. In arriving at this chronology, we also presented new arguments to support the strong likelihood that *Odericus* and *Petrus Romanus civis* were related as a father-son team and that *Petrus* was, in fact, both Pietro di Oderisio and the *Petrus socius* of Arnolfo di Cambio. We think it significant that the sanctuary pavement, which we consider to be the primary Cosmati work in date and importance, was executed by *Odericus*, the senior figure and presumably workshop head, and the shrine by *Petrus*, his son, the junior figure. While the figure of Pietro di Oderisio remains enigmatic in some respects, our re-examination of his activity leads us to concur with Claussen in recognizing that he was one of the most important Roman artists of the thirteenth century. However, more than seeing his oeuvre as the expression of a radical transformation of the *opus Romanum* into *opus Francigenum*, we argue that Westminster Abbey, as rebuilt by Henry III (and, thus, the *opus Anglicanum* – which in turn re-interpreted the *opus Francigenum*), had played a far greater role in the introduction of Gothic forms into Italy than has ever been acknowledged.

In the course of re-examining the role of the artists, we have also demonstrated that the extraordinary novelty of Saint Edward the Confessor's shrine can only be fully understood in the light of the artist's receptivity to the stimuli he received in the Gothic workshop of Westminster, where he was surrounded by the most fashionable tracery designs. Having explored not only the exportations, of marbles, artists, and techniques, to Westminster, but also the consequent importations of Gothic formal ideas to the Patrimony of Saint Peter, we have reconstructed how monuments in London, Viterbo, and Rome were the innovative result of a dynamic and fertile cross-cultural encounter.

In agreeing with Claussen and others that the tomb of Henry III reveals close contacts with the circle of Arnolfo di Cambio, we also identify Charles of Anjou, a patron of Arnolfo, as a vital agent in the work of the 1270s at Westminster. The shrine base was essentially ancillary, while the tomb of Henry III reflected the engagement of Charles of Anjou, and so the wider domain of Mediterranean politics under Edward I. The main aim of this paper has, therefore, been to explore the role that the papacy itself may have taken in furnishing these mosaics, thus shining a light on their international context, their chronology, authorship, and the agency which brought them into being in the church that was the 'special daughter' of Rome.

## Abbreviations

### BAV

Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City

### BL

British Library

### CCR

Calendar of the Close Rolls, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London

### CLR

Calendar of the Liberate Rolls, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London

### CPR

Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London

### DBI

*Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, ed. Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, Rome 1960 ff

### DMLBS

*Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, online, 2012 ff.

### FH

*Flores Historiarum*, ed. Henry Richard Luard, Rolls Series 95, London 1890

### LB

*Lateinische Schriftquellen zur Kunst in England, Wales und Schottland vom Jahre 901 bis zum Jahre 1307*, 5 vols., ed. Otto Lehmann Brockhaus, Munich, 1955–1960

### LC

*Le Liber Censuum de l'Église romaine*, ed. Paul Fabre and Louis Duchesne, 2 vols., Paris 1910–1952

### LP

*Le Liber Pontificalis. Texte, introduction et commentaire*, ed. Louis Duchesne, 2 vols., Paris 1886–1892; additions et corrections, ed. Cyrille Vogel, Paris 1957 (rist. 3 vols., Paris 1981)

### MGH

*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*

### OCI

*Ordo Coronationis Imperialis*: Elze 1960

### PL

*Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne, Paris 1844–1855

### TNA

The National Archive, London

### WAM

Westminster Abbey Muniment

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BAV, Barb. Lat. 2160

BAV, Vat. Lat 6780

BL, Ms Cotton Claudius A. 8

BL, Ms Cotton Claudius D. 6

Lambeth Palace Library, London, Ms 371

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