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Re-sourcing History

The Court of Henry VIII

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Source 1: Becoming a king

Firste the Kinges Crowne of golde the border garnished with vj Ballaces v sapphires five pointed Dyamountes Twentie Rubies Nyneteene perles and one of the crosses of the same Crowne garnished with a greate Saphire an Emerade crased iiij ballaces and nyne perles nott all of one sorte and three Saphires. Item vppon the left side of the same crosse a flower de luce sett with an Image of a king with a great ballace hole and a lesse ballas a pointed diamonte twoo perles a Collett with a saphire and a Crampion with a peerle and with xxx smale perles. Item next that one other crosse with a course Saphire iiij course ballaces a fayer lile Emerade A Lozenged Dyamounte like a harte a Rubie and ix perles. Item next that one other flower de luce sett with a Sainte George twoo ballaces A pointed Diamounte three perles a Collett with a Saphire and xxv perles. Item next that one other crosse with a Large rounde Saphire foure ballaces nyne perles A Collett with a Saphire. Item next that one other flower / de luce sett with an Image of our ladie and her children twooe ballaces a pointed Dyamounte three perles and a Saphire and xxv perles. Item next that one other crosse sett with twoo Saphires iiij ballaces nyne perles. Item next that one other flower de luce sett with an Image of a king ij ballaces a Saphire a pointed Dyamounte three perles and with xx perles. Item next that one other crosse sett with a course Saphire iiij ballaces ix perles and a sapphire loope. Item next that an other flower de luce sett with an Image of a king with twoo ballaces a small pointed Dyamounte three perles and a Saphire with xxij perles. Item on the Dyademe above xij pointed Diamountes some better then other three triangle Diamountes one table Dyamounte and xxxij perles twoo in a troche with a Capp of purple vellat lyned with blacke satten weying togethers iiij^{xx} xviij ounces.

> Source: Society of Antiquaries MS 129, f. 7r; The Firste Parte of the Inventory of the Juelles plate Stuff Ordenaunce Munition and other goodes belonging to our late Souerayne lorde king Henry theight, published as D. R. Starkey ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII: volume 1: The Transcript*, (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1998), inventory entry no. 1, p. 4.

Commentary:

The monarch's crown was symbolic of their legitimate right to rule, and it was first officially placed on their head during the coronation. That said, it is important to note that there were two sets of regalia. This crown formed the Tudors' personal regalia that was stored at the Tower of London, while Edward the Confessor's regalia was kept at Westminster Abbey. The importance of the Tudor's personal regalia is stressed by the crown being the first item listed in the inventory taken of the king's moveable goods on Henry VIII's death. The crown was an imperial, closed arch crown that symbolised the idea that England was an empire, a theory that would play a key role in justifying Henry VIII's Break with Rome.

This crown was part of the monarch's regalia, along with a pair of bracelets, a sceptre, a rod and an orb. It was echoed by the separate set of regalia for the queen consort that was used to crown Catherine of Aragon in 1509 and Anne Boleyn in 1533. This consisted of the queen's crown, a sceptre and a circlet. Both sets of regalia were used in 1509 for the joint coronation of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon that took place on 24 April. This spectacular event was reminiscent of the joint coronation of the last Yorkist king, Richard III, and his wife Anne Neville that was celebrated on 6 July 1483.

The richness and quantity of the precious stones decorating the crown were both a comment on England's wealth while also conveying ideas about the qualities required of a sovereign – rubies symbolised power, while diamonds represented constancy and virtue. The types of stones used – diamonds, pearls, sapphires, rubies, balaces (a rose-coloured spinel) and emeralds – were also exotic, expensive and evidence of the wide reaching sixteenth century trade in gemstones.

The crown was worn with a cap of maintenance that served to protect the wearer's head from the weight of the crown, while the purple colour was a further reminder of the monarch's royal status. While the coronation was the most important occasion when the crown was worn, the monarch also wore their personal crown on other occasions such as the 'crown wearing' days such as Christmas day.

Source 2: The royal household

Source: Hans Holbein the Younger, *Portrait of a Man in a Red Cap*, 1532–35, oil and gold on parchment, laid down on linden, overall, with frame, diameter 12.7 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Mary Stillman Harkness, 1950, 50.145.24 [open access image]

Commentary:

Miniatures by Nicholas Hilliard and Isaac Oliver were very important in the context of the Elizabethan court but it is important to remember that miniatures were used to great effect at the court of Henry VIII. Exchanged as gifts between Francis I and Henry VIII, and used to record the various members of the royal family, the use of miniatures gradually spread out into Tudor society. This example was painted by Hans Holbein the younger, (c.1497-1543). An exceptionally gifted painter from Augsburg, Holbein spent much of his adult life working in England. He painted this miniature in c.1532-35, so it dates from the second phase of Holbein's time in England. While he is best known for his full sized portraits, Holbein also painted a number of miniatures like this example. Unlike the Horenbout, who only painted miniatures of the royal family, Holbein painted a wider social circle including Margaret Roper, c.1535-36, the eldest daughter of Sir Thomas More, and Jane Small, c.1540, the wife of the London cloth merchant, Nicholas Small. Prized for their jewel-like qualities, miniatures were often decorative mounts. This miniature is in its original frame and the reverse is painted black and decorated

with engraved circles. It is quite modest compared with the fancy, turned ivory box enclosing Holbein's miniature of Anne of Cleves, 1539.

In spite of his reputation as an artist, a number of Holbein's sitters remain unidentified, including this young man. However, his clothing reveal that he was a member of Henry VIII's household. He is dressed in the king's livery: a scarlet wool gown with HR in embroidered black on the chest (and probably on the back too) for *Henricus Rex*. Gowns like this were issued to a number of royal craftsmen including the king's carpenter, the king's plumber and the king's master mason. These gowns marked the wearers as royal servants. However, they were also able to work for others, so wearing a gown like this stressed their place within an elite group of London-based craftsmen. In this instance, the gown is worn over a black doublet, probably silk, and a white linen shirt that is embroidered in black. Like all men, he wears a bonnet that he would have used to acknowledge his social superiors when he met them by raising or doffing it.

This young man is a member of the royal household, a large group of individuals who cared for the king's needs. In addition to livery, or their clothing, which most received on an annual basis, they also received a salary, accommodation and food. The size of the royal household, and the quality of the livery that they received was a symbol of Henry VIII's wealth and magnificence.

Source 3: Gift giving

Newyeres giftes geuen by the kinges heighnes To these persones whose names hereafter doo ensue The Furst day of January the ye abouesaide / videlicet

Henry RR

To the lorde Prince grace A gilte glasse with a couer Morgan weing xxviij oz di di quarter. Item a paire of gilte pottes Cornelis weing lxxiiij oz quarter di / And a gilte bason and an ewer gilt Morgan poiz Cvj oz Summa in oz CCix oz.

To the lady Maries grace A gilte Salte with a couer Cornelis weing xiiij oz iij quarters di. Item a gilte Cuppe with a couer Cornelis weing xx oz iij quarters di. And three gilte boolles with a couer Cornelis weing iiij^{xx} vij vnces iij quarters di. Summa in vnces Cxxiij oz di di quarter.

To the lady Elizabeth grace A gilte Salte with a couer Cornelys weing xvij vnces di quarter / Item a gilte Cuppe with a couer Morgan weing xxiiij vnces di quarter / Item a gilte Cruse with a couer Morgan weing xiiij vnces di di quarter. And a gilte Boolle with a couer Morgan weing xxxiiij oz di quarter. Summa in vnces iiij^{xx} x oz di.

To the lady Margret Doughtles a gilte cup with a couer Morgan poiz xxiiij oz iij quarters di.

Source: Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC, MS Z.d.11, published as Maria Hayward, 'Gift giving at the court of Henry VIII: the 1539 New Year's gift roll', *Antiquaries Journal*, 85, 2005, pp. 125-75.

Commentary:

Gift giving played an important part in Henrician court culture. It was based on the concept of reciprocity – that the giver of a gift would expect something in return. That might be another gift or it might be a favour. The most important occasion when gifts were exchanged was on New Year's day or 1 January. This day of gift giving formed a key part of the Christmas celebrations that continued until Twelfth Night. The gifts given to, and by, the king were recorded on a roll. The individuals were listed according to their place in the social hierarchical, starting with the king's immediate family and then moving down through the secular and ecclesiastical elites. The king usually gave plate, ranging from gold to silver gilt to silver or white plate that was made by the royal goldsmiths. The size, or rather the weight, of the gift reflected the importance of the recipient. This roll also records the names of goldsmiths who made the plate and in 1539 this was Morgan Wolf and Cornelis Hayes.

Cups, with or without covers, were popular gifts, as the examples listed above indicate. The entries do not provide much information about how the cups were decorated.

However, an indication of this can be gleaned from the design Holbein produced for a cup that Henry VIII ordered for Jane Seymour in c. 1536. The cup was decorated with her motto 'Bound to obey and serve', along with Hs and Js, love-knots and two putti on the top. Some gifts, such as the clock salt that Sir Anthony Denny gave to Henry VIII in c.1543, provide an insight into the scientific knowledge of the period. The clock-salt incorporated a sundial, an hourglass and a compass and written comments on the drawing suggest the involvement of Nicholas Kratzer, the king's astronomer and astrologer (c.1487-1550).

The list reveals the hierarchy of the king's children according to their gender and age. Edward (1537-53), the king's precious son and heir, was first on the list, and he received 209 oz of plate. Mary (1516-58), the king's eldest daughter was given 123⅝ oz, while Elizabeth (1533-1603) had a modest 90½ oz. While acknowledged as a blood relative, the king's niece, Lady Margaret Douglas (1515-78) received only 24⅞ oz. Margaret was the daughter of Henry VIII's older sister Margaret and her second husband, Archibald Douglas, 6th earl of Angus. While the evidence is more fragmentary, other members of the Tudor royal family also exchanged gifts in the same way as the king.

Source 4: A queen's wardrobe

Certen acquitaunces Billes papers and other writinges concerning the late Quene Katherin

Item an acquitaunce of Cxx^{li} paid to Guillam the Embroderer.

Item paymentes made by the Quene amounting to the somme of M^{l}CCviij^{li} The same is a paper Boke conteineng certen paimentes whiche amounte unto M^{l}DCviij^{li} v^{s} ij^{d}.

Item an Acquitaunce of iiij^{xx} ^{li} paied by sir Anthonie Coope knight to mestres Shakerley the quenes silkewoman in parte of paimente of Cxxxvj^{li} iij^{s} ob The same is no acquitaunce but is a debenter subscribed withe thande of the quenes Audiour.

Item an Acquitaunce of William Smithe borderer for C^{li} receaued of Sir Anthonie Coope knight to the behalfe of Gillam Braibot the Emborderer.

Item another acquitaunce of John Corverte seruaunte to Rowlande Shakerley mercer of iiij^{xx} ^{li} Receaued of sir Anthonie Cope knight to thuse of his mercer [master?] in parte of paimente of a more Somme dated the xxixth of Aprell anno domini 1547.

Item an acquietaunce by Richarde Bainam yoman sadler to the Quene for recepte of Cviij^{li} xvj^{s} v^{d} in parte of paymente of a more some.

Source: British Library Harley MS 1419, ff. 559r-560r; The Seconde parte of the Inventorye of our Late Soueraigne Lorde King Henry theight, published as D. R. Starkey ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII: volume 1: The Transcript*, (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1998), inventory entry nos. 17752, 17756, 17758, 17760, 17761, 17763, p. 437.

Commentary:

Catherine Parr (1512-48) was Henry VIII's sixth and last wife who he married on 12 July 1543. After her death Catherine's papers, along with a number of her possessions, were delivered by Sir Antony Cope to James Rufforth, the under-keeper of the palace of Whitehall on 31 May 1549. Sir Antony Cope of Hanwell (1496-1551) was chamberlain to Catherine Parr and he remained in her household until her death in 1548. He was a protestant, like his mistress, and he was knighted by Edward VI in November 1547.

While queen consort, Catherine had her own household (run on similar lines to that of the king but smaller) and income, and these documents provide some indication of what she spent her money on. While Catherine was a wealthy woman, she made use of

credit, like many member of the Tudor elite. The bills reveal that she usually paid in instalments, as in the case of the £80 she gave Rowland which was 'in parte of paimente of a more Somme'. The scale of her expenditure is evident from the 'paper Boke' that recorded payments of £1,208.

As her portraiture suggests, Catherine Parr loved fine clothes and she made full use of royal colours (purple, crimson) and royal fabrics (cloth of tissue, cloth of gold) to assert her position as Henry's queen. Her style of dress is shown off to great effect in the full-length portrait of her attributed to Master John, c.1545. She bought large quantities of fabrics, probably silks, from Rowland Shakerley, a mercer who specialised in the sale of these materials. Her gowns and other garments were then embellished with embroidery and trimmings such as buttons, fringe and passementerie or braid. While most of the queen's suppliers were men, the position of silk woman was a lucrative one. The accounts also reveal that there were opportunities for married couples with complimentary trades to do well at the royal court as in the case of Rowland Shakerley (c.1520-65) and his wife Ann (1525-71).

Source 5: Chivalry and diplomacy

Source: *Armor Garniture, Probably of King Henry VIII of England*, dated 1527, steel, gold, leather, copper alloys, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Armor: Purchase, William H. Riggs Gift and Rogers Fund, 1919; mail brayette: Gift of Prince Albrecht Radziwill, 1927, 19.131.1a–r, t–w, .2a–c; 27.183.16 [open access image]

Commentary:

This suit of armour was made at the royal workshops at Greenwich that were established by Henry VIII in 1515 to make armour of the highest quality for him and his courtiers. It dates to 1527 and Henry VIII gave it to the French ambassador François de La Tour d'Auvergne, viscount of Turenne. The viscount led a diplomatic mission to London in that year as part of the celebrations held to mark peace between England and France.

In May 1527 there were banquets, jousts and disguisings held at Greenwich. This was followed in November of that year by Henry and Francis exchanging their national orders of chivalry. Henry was installed as a knight of the order of St Michael and Francis became a knight of the Garter. Ideas of chivalry were central in the displays of peace and friendship between the two monarchs in 1527, as they had been at the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520.

This suit of armour is the earliest surviving Greenwich garniture, that is, an armour made with a series of exchange and reinforcing pieces. Depending on which pieces were selected, the armour could be adapted for use in battle and in different types of tournament. In addition to being technically superb, the armour was decorated all over with etching and gilding. The renaissance style designs have been attributed to Hans Holbein the Younger, so providing another example of how European craftsmen worked together at Henry's court to provide the king with fashionable, modern possessions that marked him out as being at the forefront of European society.

Source 6: Demonstrating royal authority

Source: Half sovereign of Henry VIII, gold, 1547–50, Diameter: 3.2 cm), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Assunta Sommella Peluso, Ada Peluso, and Romano I. Peluso, in memory of Ignazio Peluso, 2004, 2004.535.2 [open access image]

Inscription: Obverse: (in margin) HENRIC [illegible] D G AGL FRA ET HIB REX.

Commentary:

Henry VIII is depicted seated on his throne, wearing his crown, dressed in his robes of state and holding the orb and sceptre on the front of this half sovereign. This was the traditional representation of royal authority, stressing the monarch's role in providing justice. It is comparable to the way that the king was depicted on the front of the Great Seal and how Henry VIII was depicted in the miniatures used to decorate official documents. The regalia has been discussed in source no. 1, above, while the king's robes were probably his parliament robes that consisted of a mantle, hood, cap, tabard and kirtle of crimson silk velvet furred with ermine and miniver. When the king's

clothes were inventoried in 1521, this set of robes was valued at £200, as were his purple velvet coronation robes. The king wore his parliament robes as he processed to the opening of each new session of parliament and during the 1530s and 1540s, as the king looked to pass the legislation bringing about the Break with Rome, the robes served to stress his authority and the legitimacy of his parliaments.

For many of Henry VIII's subjects, the closest that they came to seeing the king was by looking at his image on the coinage. This is a half-sovereign, a high value coin that only the wealthy would have seen. However, similar images of king appeared on the penny that circulated much more widely. A full sovereign was worth 20 shillings or £1, so a half sovereign was worth 10 shillings. First minted in 1489, Henry VIII produced several half sovereign, with coins being issued in 1544-45, 1545-46, 1546-51, and 1549-50. As the date ranges indicate, Henry VIII's image continued to be used on these coins after his death, possibly to stress continuity between the reigns of father and son. These coins also provide evidence of Henry VIII's debasement of the coinage, otherwise known as 'the great debasement' which took place between 1544 and 1551. Some of the gold was removed from the coins and replaced with copper, a process that brought the king more money in the short term but the drop in the gold standard meant that people lost confidence in the currency and Edward VI ended the policy in 1551.

Source 7: The royal court

Why come ye nat to court?
To whyche court?
To the kynges courte?
Or to Hampton Court?
Nay to the kynges courte!
The kynges courte
Shulde have the excellence;
But Hampton Court
Hath the preemynence!
And Yorkes Place,
With, 'My lordes grace'
To whose magnificence
Is all the conflewence,
Sutys, and supplycacyons,
Embassades of all nacyons.

Source: John Skelton, 'Why come ye nat to court?' from John Skelton, *The Complete English Poems*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).

Commentary:

In this short extract from John Skelton's satirical poem, *Why come ye nat to courte*?, he compares the opulence of Cardinal Wolsey's palaces with those of Henry VIII, and the king is found wanting. Skelton (1463-1529) was a poet and a tutor to the young Henry VIII and he often used poetry as a means of criticising and mocking contemporary society and Wolsey (1473-1530) was a popular target during the 1520s. There was plenty about the Cardinal's opulent lifestyle that made him vulnerable to growing levels of anti-clericalism in the country. Skelton also attacked Wolsey in *Colyn Clout* and *Speke Parrot* and he went into sanctuary at Westminster Abbey to avoid punishment.

The criticisms Skelton levels at Wolsey – that his wealth and grandeur were rivalling that of the king – explains in part why Wolsey was accused of being an 'alter rex' or another king. Here Skelton singles out Wolsey's great houses as clear examples of how he lived more richly than the king, thereby attracting visiting ambassadors to his court. Hampton Court is the property most famously associated with Wolsey and his building work here began in 1515. He wanted a country house that was grand enough to entertain the king, while also reflecting Wolsey's own standing as an archbishop and a cardinal. As Simon Thurley has noted, Wolsey was very interested in architecture and he saw it as a key way to stress his place in society. Indeed, Jonathan Foyle has suggested that Wolsey's building plans were influenced by ideas presented in *De Cardinalatu* by Paolo Cortese. This was essentially a guide on how to behave and succeed as a cardinal, another example of an etiquette book like Castiglione's *The*

Courtier. York Place, was the London home of the archbishops of York, and Wolsey's other main residence, and in tandem with Hampton Court, made the king's palaces of Greenwich and Richmond look rather modest.

While the primary focus is on the royal court, Skelton was also alluding to Wolsey's use of the courts of Star Chamber and the Court of Chancery to combat the influence of the aristocracy and gentry. This was very unpopular and it would have ensured that there was a ready audience who found this poem amusing. Skelton was not the only writer to criticise court life. Thomas Wyatt described Henry VIII's court was a place 'where truth shall but offend'. .

Source 8: Fellow rulers, rivals and Henry VIII's image as a godly king

Item stayned clothe <with> the picture of Charles themperor.
Item a stayned clothe with the picture of the prince of Orrenge.
Item a stayned clothe with thistorye of Judithe.
Item a stayned cloth with the picture of Solymaname the turque beinge his whoole stature.
Item Thistorye of kynge Asa of the breakinge and castine downe of the aulters with the Idolles stayned vppon tike.
Item Thistorye of David strykinge of Goliathes headed painted vppon tike and nailed vppon a frame of woode.

Source: British Library Harley MS 1419, ff. 131v-132r. The Seconde parte of the Inventorye of our Late Soueraigne Lorde King Henry theight, published as D. R. Starkey ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII: volume 1: The Transcript*, (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1998), inventory entry nos. 10722, 10723, 10727, 10728, 10729, 10731, p. 240.

Commentary:

Tudor views of society placed the king at the top of the social order, with everyone else in England below him, so his only equals were his fellow monarchs. This is why Henry and Francis I, king of France, in 1520, for example, described each other as 'friend and brother' when they met at the Field of Cloth of Gold. In order to surround himself with his fellow monarch, Henry had portraits, painted on panel, of the other European rulers. He also had a selection of stained clothes – painted on a twill woven linen cloth, or tike, as it was described in the entries. The subjects of the stained clothes can be grouped into several types, two of which are of interest in this context. The first were some of Henry VIII's fellow rulers. Of these, the Prince of Orange is the hardest to interpret because it could be either Prince René (1519-44), who died with Charles V at his side when he was wounded at the siege of St Dizier, or Prince William I (1533-84) who came to power aged 11. Next was Charles V, nephew of Henry VIII's first wife, Catherine of Aragon. He met Henry twice - in 1520 and 1522 - and Henry VIII was his rival during the election for the new Holy Roman Emperor in 1519. Most interesting and most powerful was Suleiman the magnificent (1520-66), also known as Suleiman I and Suleiman the lawgiver, who ruled the Ottoman empire during its Golden Age. Of all three, his was a full length portrait, 'beinge his whoole stature' and his nationality and by implication his relgion is convey in the term 'the turque'. His inclusion demonstrates just how far Suleiman the magnificent's reputation had spread.

The second were figures from the Old Testament who were used to stress different aspects of Henry VIII's kingship during and after the Break with Rome. The first depicted a young David killing Goliath, the Philistine giant, in single combat, a role that

should have been taken by Saul. As Pamela Tudor-Craig noted, Henry often presented himself as David, as part of his campaign to assert the royal supremacy. The king was often compared with David and depicted as him in his psalter. The illustrations, produced by Jean Mallard, included an image of Henry as David with Goliath (Psalm 26). Moving to Asa, he was the third king of the kingdom of Judah, and the fifth king of the house of David. He, like Jehu and Hezekiah, were Old Testament kings who were admired for their devout worship of God and in their determination to remove idolatry from Judah. As such Asa fits with Henry VIII's campaign against images. The last example, that of Judith, a widow, who beheaded Holofernes, an Assyrian general is at first glance more surprising. Henry VIII's daughters Mary and Elizabeth were both compared to Judith and this example indicates that their father had also appreciated her strength.

Source 9: The king and his court at war

Banners and standards with the king's arms and various other sorts, delivered to the King from the Great Wardrobe

First a great, rich banner of crimson and blue satin with the king's arms embroidered richly with cutwork of cloth of gold
Item six banners of blue and crimson damask with the king's arms painted in gold and oil
Item four banners with the king's arms painted on double sarsenet in oil and gold
Item four banners with the cross of St. George of white and crimson sarsenet
Item one standard with the lion of England with a crown imperial upon the king's arms painted on double sarsenet in oil and gold
Item three banners of the Holy Trinity of crimson and blue damask likewise painted
Item three banners of the Holy Mary Virgin of crimson and blue damask likewise painted
Item a banner of St. George of crimson and blue damask likewise painted

Source: Particulars of the account of Sir Ralph Sadler, knight, keeper of the Great Wardrobe of King Henry VIII, from the feast of St Michael 35 Hen. VIII [1543] to the same feast 36 Hen. VIII [1544], The National Archive, E101/423/10, f. 92r

Commentary:

Henry VIII's wish for military glory, like that of Henry V, was one of the factors behind his campaign in 1544 on French soil. He ordered a new red and yellow livery for the royal household when they went to France. In addition, the king ordered a set of new banners for his army from the Great Wardrobe, the section of the royal household that bought textiles in bulk and oversaw the making of the king's clothes, royal furnishings and the livery. His banners were made using two different techniques. The first, a 'great, rich banner' was embroidered, using appliqué or as the clerk described it as 'embroidered richly with cutwork of cloth of gold'. The rest were painted on silk using a combination of coloured pigments and gilding. The banners expressed two key ideas about the king's army. The first, drawing on Tudor heraldry displayed the royal arms. Henry placed his coat of arm on important furnishings, such as clothes of estate, and on his palaces, his horses and his hounds. The second stressed the king's piety. St George was the patron saint of England, and the patron saint of the Order of the Garter, the English order of chivalry. The others - dedicated to the Trinity and the Virgin Mary – were indicative of Henry VIII's religious orthodoxy. There are parallels between Henry VIII's choices for his banners and the devotional figures in his chapel. When he died in 1547, his inventory of gold plate listed an image of St George, and two of Our Lady, along with one of St Christopher and one of St Peter. His silver gilt images also included figures of St George and Our Lady.

Source 10: The move towards tyranny?

Source: Cornelis Massys/ Massijs, *Henry VIII*, ca. 1547, engraving, 17.6 × 13.2 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Rogers Fund, 1922, 22.42.6 [open access image]

Commentary:

Cornelis Massys/ Massijs (1508-56), was a Flemish painter, who produced landscapes but who is best known now for his engravings and prints. These included examples of Renaissance designs, such as the Moresque interlace patterns decorating the king's sleeves, as well as a few portraits including this example of Henry VIII. Thought to have been engraved in 1544 and printed in 1548, this portrait is seen as evidence that Massys/ Massijs spent some time in England, as did a number of other European

artists, including Hans Holbein the younger. This half length portrait of Henry VIII, presents a full face view, and he is wearing a bonnet, shirt, doublet and gown, and he holds a pair of gloves in his left hand. In many respects, the basic composition is similar to that used approximately seven years earlier by Holbein in c.1537. However, the king is noticeably older in this image – his face is fuller and his hair has receded. At 17.6 x 13.2 cm, the print was not much smaller than Holbein's portrait that was 28 x 20 cm but it would have been much cheaper. So, while Holbein's portrait was a unique example on panel, Massys/ Massijs' version would have had a wider circulation as a print on paper thereby demonstrating the value of the printing press as a means of dissemination.

Further reading

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Lucy Wooding, *Henry VIII*, (London: Routledge, 2009)