MY CROWN IS IN MY HEART, NOT ON MY HEAD: HEART BURIAL IN
ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
FROM MEDIEVAL TIMES TO THE PRESENT

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Heart burial is a funerary practice that has been performed since the early medieval period. However, relatively little scholarship has been published on it in English. Heart burial began as a pragmatic way to preserve a body, but it became a meaningful tradition in Western Europe during the medieval and early modern periods. In an anthropological context, the ritual served the needs of elites and the societies they governed. Elites used heart burial not only to preserve their bodies, but to express devotion, stabilize the social order and advocate legitimacy, and even gain heaven. Heart burial assisted in the elite Christian, his or her family, and society pass through the liminal period of death. Over the centuries, heart burial evolved to remain relevant. The practice is extant to the present day, though the motivations behind it are very different from those of the medieval and early modern periods.
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A NOTE ON NAMES

Due to the use of sources from various languages, the names of locations are Anglicized. However, to reduce confusion among monarchs, their names remain in their original language. For example, Henry III of England, France, and the Holy Roman Empire is rendered as Henry III, Henri III, and Heinrich III, respectively. Spellings are based upon the person’s own signature when available.
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEMS INHERENT

Introduction

My crown is in my heart, not on my head;
Not decked with diamonds and Indian stones,
Nor to be seen: my crown is called content:
A crown it is that seldom kings enjoy.

King Henry VI, Part 3, Act 3, Scene 1
William Shakespeare, c. 1591

Heart burial is the separate interment of the heart from the body. During the ninth through eleventh centuries, elites employed heart burial to preserve the corpse during transport, a purely pragmatic venture. The heart and other organs were removed and stored in a leather bag for transport, enabling the outer shell of flesh to be better preserved. The biles and acids of the corpse contributed to and accelerated the natural progression of decay. However, over the course of the medieval and early modern eras, the practice bloomed into a ritual that conveyed political, sentimental, and deeply religious ideas. The House of Habsburg has interred three hearts within the last twenty-five years. The practice remains extant as of 2011. Despite the longevity of this ritual, a dearth of Anglophone scholarship exists. In particular, previous scholars have neglected the purposes of and motivations for heart burial; it has garnered a reputation as a novelty or an idiosyncrasy of the elite classes of medieval Europe rather than a highly complex ritual and expression of belief. While studies have appeared in other languages, heart burial studies in English remain underdeveloped.

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2 Item #12,” Royal Necropolis at Saint-Denis Official Tour, Basilica of Saint-Denis, Saint-Denis, France; also Henry de Mondeville, The Surgery of Master Henry de Mondeville, Surgeon of Philip the Fair, King of France, written from 1306 to 1320, translated from Latin by E. Nicaise, translated from French by Leord Rosenman, M.D. (XLibris Corporation, 2003), 739-740.
Four primary motivations exist for heart burial. These factors often intermingle and determine not only whether a person buries his heart, but where it is interred or to whom it is given. The first, now defunct motivation was practicality. If a person died away from home, evisceration and removal of organs were common solutions in the Middle Ages. The exterior of the corpse remained intact longer without innards and their various fluids. During the Crusades, it was much easier to transport a fist-sized organ in a sealed jar and bones in a separate box than an entire rotting cadaver; such was the case for Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, King Louis IX of France, and other crusaders.

Even when distance was not an issue, the removal of organs remained a popular mortuary option. As late as 1320, French royal physician Henri de Mondeville complained about the difficulty in preserving Philip the Fair and his son Louis the Quarreler for the duration of their month-long funerary rituals in 1314 and 1316, respectively. Over time, the actual need for heart burial became extinct because of the development of arterial embalming, cavity embalming, and other preservative tactics of the nineteenth century.

Another motivation for heart burial is to transmit a political message. Alexandré Bandé has written extensively about the use of heart burial by cadet lines of the Capetians. By spreading their parts around disputed territories, these houses made a claim that they had the right to rule the area. Danielle Westerhof explores this idea on a smaller scale among the nobles of England. She has determined that the aristocracy used heart burial to express their place on

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5 de Mondeville, *Surgery*, 739.
the social scale and their dominance over a region. In her work, *Death and the Noble Body in Medieval England*, she concludes that the heart also represented the noble’s virtues and individual loyalties to family, society, and churches.

The most salient motivation for heart burial is familial loyalty. People wanted to be close to their families in life and death by the early medieval period. Members of a given dynasty often chose the same church for the interment of their bodies. However, they sent their hearts to different churches that either held the remains of a relative or received money from the family. By ordering one’s heart to be buried with certain kin, the individual self-identifies with that branch of the family and asserts personal identity within the dynasty.

The final motivation dovetails neatly with both the political and sentimental motivations for heart burial. Despite Church laws, elites used their status and money to found churches and reserve prime burial spots under the church floor and in the church walls. Although the elites had different standards of burial, they shared many of the same fears and hopes as the common man. In the fourth and fifth centuries, Christian theologian St. Augustine of Hippo attempted to reassure Christians about the body at death. However, people still feared that any disturbance of their body would inhibit their resurrection, even into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Elites used churches to make political statements but also to keep their heart safe for the Final Resurrection.

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In the medieval mind, the Final Resurrection was understood as a literal event. People would rise from their graves and walk east to Jerusalem, together, as a family unit. As such, many were concerned about their final repose and the ability to reuse their bodies. People also wanted their souls to receive care from the priests. The resident religious offered prayers and masses for the release of noble souls from Purgatory. By splitting a body across several churches – one for body, one for heart, and perhaps one for viscera – the nobles multiplied the prayers they received, greatly expediting their stay in Purgatory.

Heart burial is a manifestation of identity when used to express familial loyalty, personal religious beliefs, and asserting socio-political status. During the medieval era, being able to afford evisceration, transportation, and inurnment of the heart signaled the wealth and potential power of a person. To the present day, the elaborate practice sets a person apart from the lower ranks of society. Heart burial ensconced elites in their place in the social order. By using heart burial to express family loyalties, individuals identify themselves with ancestors and their traditions. Although the bodies of a dynasty are interred in a specific location, each individual can express personal aspirations and preferences by where he or she orders the heart buried. Heart burial is a final statement of who a person was.

Historiography

The first book written on the topic of heart burial is a 451-page monograph entitled *Enshrined Hearts of Warriors and Illustrious People* by Emilia Sophia Hartshorne, published by Robert Hardwicke in 1861. Little is known about Hartshrone herself; her other works are a book on grave monuments and another on church altar cloth embroidery. This book takes the form of

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14 Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body*, 77.
several short thematic essays interspersed with profiles of historical figures that had heart burial performed on them. The essays themselves set the stage; their main topic is not heart burial, but rather the historic scene and religious climate at the time. Difficulties lie in the fact Hartshorne’s primary motive is to proselytize Christianity through heart burial. In part, this is due to her own belief that heart burial began because of the Crusades.

And thus it was that knights and squires became the bearers of these precious relics to the bereaved wife or child, to be by their loving hands deposited in some sacred spot enderead to the departed hero, there to remind them of his lingering presence til the time should come when this small portion of his mortal frame might finally rest with theirs at their own decease.

As well as hearts being sent home, Hartshorne also claims that many people sent their hearts to the Holy Land in support of the Crusaders. The tradition continued as a sign of Christian devotion. Hartshorne does not assign any secular, political, or pragmatic motives to heart burial, a major failing of the book. As described above, the historical record indicates that although these motivations did exist in some cases, they did not constitute the overwhelming majority of reasons for heart burial. Relatively few hearts travelled in and out of the Holy Land. Hartshorne imagines highly idealized, romanticized, and Christianized motives for heart burial. Her most detailed profiles deal in romantic tales of love and betrayal, but they are also her most inadequately sourced.

The second book in English on heart burial appeared seventy-two years later in 1933. Charles Angell Bradford’s Heart Burial mimics Hartshorne’s in form. The author includes one sixty-page thematic essay at the beginning of his text, but it still only comprises a quarter of the

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15 Emilia Sophia Hartshorne, Enshrined Hearts of Warriors and Illustrious People (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1861), 65-66, 86, et. al; her own interpretations of historic actions are frequent throughout the entire book.
16 Hartshorne, Enshrined Hearts, 36.
17 Ibid, 37.
18 Ibid, 45-48. The story of Ralph, Lord of Coucy, and his cuckolding wife also marks the earliest appearance of the eaten disgraced heart motif. Also 304.
book. The remainder contains brief profiles to identify and describe those who performed heart burial, much like Hartshorne. However, its length is significantly shorter, as Bradford elects to discuss only heart burial cases within Britain and France. Bradford theorizes that heart burial began in the parish churches rather than in the camps of the Crusades, a direct contradiction of Hartshorne.\(^\text{19}\) Because of the power, prestige, and money that heart-holding churches could gain, religious houses competed for royal and noble body parts.\(^\text{20}\)

Although his overall theory is valid in some cases, *Heart Burial* was released to lukewarm reviews at best. Egyptologist Warren R. Dawson attacked the book for its limited scope, but his most serious charge is aimed at Bradford’s beliefs regarding heart burial’s genesis:

> He is so far out of touch with Egyptological literature as to repeat the time-honoured fallacy that the Egyptians removed the heart from the body along with the viscera. *The heart, in fact, was not removed from the body, but was carefully left by embalmers in its place […]* which has been amply confirmed by later investigators.\(^\text{21}\)

Bradford spends significant time on the Egyptian connection, so Dawson’s critique is devastating. Again, Bradford covers far fewer hearts than Hartshorne, and while his attitude is more scholarly, many of the same flaws persist. According to another Egyptologist, Aidan Dodson of the University of Bristol, “this work is badly flawed by its author’s confusion heart burial *per se* with burial of the entire viscera, removed as part of embalming.”\(^\text{22}\)

These two monographs compose all the books dedicated solely to heart burial in its English historiography. Many general books on death, dying, and burial practices mention heart burial, but they rarely dedicate more than a few paragraphs to it, perhaps a page at most. For example, in Philippe Ariès’ large tomes on death, he spares a page-and-half in *The Hour of Our*  

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\(^{19}\) Charles Angell Bradford, *Heart Burial* (London: George Allen LTD, 1933), 45.  
\(^{20}\) Ibid, 47; 49-50.  
Death to describe heart burial and its practice among the elite. In his *Images of Man and Death*, Ariès spares three lines for the 1200-year-old practice. In addition, neither of these early publications offers any explanation or reason why people performed this ritual.

In books concerning royal ritual, the main corpse’s funeral, the royal effigy, and other courtly ritual surrounding the death of a monarch overshadow heart burial. Ralph Giesey’s authoritative work, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, informs the reader of the extensive rituals practiced by the French royal family during the mid-sixteenth century, particularly during the funeral of François I. Giesey uses the political theories developed in *The King’s Two Bodies*, authored by his mentor, Ernst Kantorowicz. Giesey sought to illustrate the French royal funeral in all its glory and its rich meaning. The body was kept on display for over seven weeks after death for the performance of the required rituals. When the body had decayed and the royal physician could do no more, an effigy replaced it. The ever-lengthening ceremonies spurred the need for the wooden stand-in in both England and France. Unlike Bradford, Giesey clearly delineates the separate burial of the heart and the separate burial of the viscera.

A definition of terms is required. As voiced by Aidan Dodson, it would be a gross error to conflate the burial of a heart with the burial of viscera or intestines. For the purposes of this thesis, I agree with Danielle Westerhof that the interment of the heart and entrails together constitute a viscera burial; the term “viscera” refers to the inner organs of the body, especially the intestines. It does not always include the heart, but it is possible that it does. Because the intestines (sometimes referred to as entrails) are deliberately interred in a special place by certain

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27 Ibid, 21.
28 Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body*, 82.
families, the use of the term “viscera” or “viscera burial” will indicate a separate burial of ambiguous organs; the exact organs included in this burial are unclear. If heart and intestines are interred together, it will be stated clearly.

However, I disagree with the definition of heart burial used by Estella Weiss-Krejci in her work, “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Central Europe.” She limits the hearts she examines in her article by defining a true heart burial as such: “the heart must be deposited without other inner organs and in a different physical location to the corpse.”

By this definition, almost all of the hearts in the royal necropoli of Europe are eliminated from assessment; if they are not within the same coffin, most of these hearts are in the same building or, in the case of the Habsburgs, within a five-block radius of the corpse and the entrails. A survey of heart burial cannot use this highly limiting definition. Heart burial evolved over the course of 1200 years. The increasing and decreasing distance between the burial of the heart and other parts reflects the widely varying circumstances and motives behind heart burial.

In the same year as The Royal Funeral Ceremony in France, the work of Robert Hertz, collected in Death and the Right Hand in 1960, was translated into English for the first time. Killed in the First World War, Hertz had been an anthropologist at the turn of the century who had proposed ideas concerning the “in-between” state that divided life and death. He observed among tribal societies

that death is not completed in one instantaneous act; it implies a lasting procedure, which at least in a great many instances, is considered terminated only when the dissolution of the body has ended. The second is that death is not a mere destruction but a transition: as it progresses so does the rebirth; while the old body falls to ruins, a new body takes

shape, with which the soul -- provided the necessary rites have been performed -- will enter another existence, often superior to the previous one.\textsuperscript{30} The practices of the French royal family are the inverse of this; the royal physicians worked to extend the period of decay for the king for the sake of the ritual rather than using ritual to expedite the transition of the king to the afterlife.

Shortly after the initial publication of Hertz’s work in 1907, Arnold Van Gennep coined the term “liminality” for Hertz’s “in-between.”\textsuperscript{31} In his 1909 book, \textit{The Rites of Passage}, Van Gennep offered the theory that, in the words of Richard Huntington and Peter Metcalf, “all rituals involving passage from one state to another share in a single tripartite structure defined by the necessary function of separation from one status and reincorporation into the new one, with a marginal or liminal period in between.”\textsuperscript{32} Both Hertz and Van Gennep were translated and republished in 1960, spurring anthropological research in funerary and mortuary rituals. The issues of putrefaction and the fate of the soul in various societies became a popular topic. Mary Douglas’s \textit{Purity and Danger} remains a vital monograph in understanding the concepts of cleanliness and pollution (or the lack thereof) caused by dead bodies.\textsuperscript{33} In 1979, Richard Huntington and Peter Metcalf released \textit{Celebrations of Death: The Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual}. Huntington and Metcalf offer a synthesis of anthropological theory and western European history, tying the works of Hertz, Van Gennep, and Douglas to those of Giesey, Ernst Kantorowicz (author of \textit{The King’s Two Bodies}, a key book in medieval and early modern royal political theory), and Marc Bloch (an early advocate of the marriage between anthropology and history).

\textsuperscript{31} Arnold Van Gennep, \textit{The Rites of Passage} (New York, Routledge, 2004 [1960; 1909]), 21.  
\textsuperscript{33} Mary Douglas, \textit{Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo} (New York: Routledge, 2002 [1966]), 2; 149.
It is arguable that the publication of *Celebrations of Death* spurred a resurgent interest in death among historians. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, publications about death and its connections to ritual became more frequent. Chief among them were Philippe Ariès’s aforementioned works in translation (*Hour* in 1981 and *Images* in 1985). Piero Camporesi latched onto the connections between putrefaction and Christian death in *The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutilation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore*. Most pertinent to the immediate topic at hand, Elizabeth A.R. Brown of Princeton University focused on the political circumstances surrounding the French royal family’s practice of heart burial in a series of three articles, “Death and the Human Body in the Later Middle Ages,” “The Ceremonial of Royal Succession in Capetian France,” and “Authority, the Family, and the Dead in Late Medieval France.” Carolyn Walker Bynum worked extensively with concepts of religion interlaced with the concept of the body in several articles and books. Paul Binski’s *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* offers a successful integration of history, art history, and anthropology.

However, aside from Brown’s articles, very few scholarly publications have been written in English concerning heart burial. One is the dissertation of Danielle Westerhof, published as *Death and the Noble Body in Medieval England* in 2008. Again, heart burial is not the focus of her work, but it is highly enlightening as to the social context of heart burial. Almost all other academic works published in recent years have been translations from Italian-, German-, and French-speaking scholars. Since 2005, Estella Weiss-Krejci of the University of Vienna has written several articles related to heart burial in English, including “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Central Europe,” and “Restless Corpses: ‘Secondary Burial’ in the Babenberg and Habsburg Dynasties.” Sergio Bertelli, while problematic at times, provoked discussion with his book *The King’s Body: Sacred Rituals of Power in Medieval and Early*
Modern Europe. More established and more cautious Agostino Paravicini Bagliani has had a limited amount of his work published in English, particularly the article “The Corpse in the Middle Ages: The Problem of the Division of the Body.” He and Brown often agree with each other, with certain caveats.34

Dissertations about royal death, including the practice of heart burial, are published almost yearly in German-speaking countries, including that of Brigitta Lauro from Austria and Dilba Carsten from Germany. Of significant note is the work of Dr. Armin Dietz, a retired cardiologist who has spent twenty years collecting heart burial information. As well as writing two books, Dr. Dietz assisted the town of Altötting in researching its hearts and helped this scholar personally, offering insight and perspectives that are simply not found in English assessments. His online searchable database of rumored and confirmed hearts is well-cited and offers a place to start for the new researcher.

In France, Alexandre Bandé and Murielle Gaude-Ferragu have consistently offered new ideas and theories concerning heart burial, but they focus on the French crown. In “Le Coeur ‘Couronne’: Tombeaux et Funérailles de Coeur en France a la Fin du Moyen Age,” Gaude-Ferragu illustrates the hazards of researching heart burial. Through close reading of the extant burial documentation, she ascertained the true disposition of remains.35 Bandé explores the concept of using heart burial to establish legitimacy in his 2009 book, Le Coeur du Roi, citing the specific cases of the Angevins, Valois, and the Bourbons royal houses. His work only covers the pivotal points in the French dynastic succession, such as the increasing political distance

34 Due to time and language constraints, I have sadly left the majority of Paravicini Bagliani’s opus for my dissertation.
between the English and French thrones and the succession to the main, defunct Capetian line. This work and others are not yet available in English, nor is there another scholarly English language equivalent. Recently, medical doctors and researchers such as Christian Regnier and Philippe Charlier have taken an interest in heart burial and other mortuary practices. These works have been published in English, but many of their own primary and secondary sources are exclusively in French.

_Le Coeur du Roi_ and other secondary sources focus predominantly on the French crown from the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries. However, heart burial only began to decline in the wake of the Enlightenment. George II was the last British monarch to practice heart burial in 1760. The French royals and elites practiced heart burial until the nineteenth century. This practice is still extant, as evidenced by the heart burial of Otto von Habsburg in July 2011. Despite the longevity and continued potential for research, heart burial remains understudied beyond the medieval period.

_The Problem of Sources_

Lies of commission and omission populate the primary documents relating to heart burial. Gaude-Ferragu’s “Le Coeur ‘Couronne’” article, which appeared in the 2003 volume of _Micrologus_, details the methods used by Gaude-Ferragu to debunk false reports written by Beurrier, a Celestine monk who sought recognition for his monastery. He claimed several royal hearts to raise the prestige of his house; having royal patrons was quite beneficial for monasteries and churches. The remains of kings and queens attracted pilgrims, much like saints’

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37 Dodson, “The King is Dead,” 82.
relics. Gaude-Ferragu also notices that discrepancies existed between what was written in a given person’s will and what was actually performed; Bandé remarks upon similar problems in *Le Coeur du Roi*.40

Bandé also points out, however, that while no mention of Charles VI’s heart was made, his funeral was as long as tradition dictated. As a result, because of how long the corpse was on display, it is highly probable that he was indeed eviscerated, with heart and bowels removed. Bandé indicates that perhaps because heart burial was so commonplace by this time, it was no longer considered necessary to mention it.41 Alternatively, perhaps the fashion at the time deemed heart burial to be a private matter rather than a public one, pushing mention of the practice out of the public testament.42 The regularity of French heart burial made it so common that it may not have been recorded. This combined with the issues of wills and false claims make the verification of a heart burial difficult without actually possessing the heart urn.43

Historical events have also conspired against those that wish to study heart burial. The archbishops of Wurzburg traditionally had their hearts buried at Ebrach Abbey. However, in 1525, the Peasant Revolt caused either the destruction of the hearts or the monks to hide the hearts and then forget where they placed them for safety; in either event, these hearts are no longer extant.44

The dissolution of the monasteries in England under the reign of Henry VIII resulted in the destruction of both Blackfriars and Greyfriars, Dominican and Franciscan friaries that housed the royal hearts of previous kings and queens of England. Only two heart monuments remain

42 Ibid., 155.
visible within Westminster Abbey, the third location of English hearts. One is that of Anna Sophia, daughter of the Comte de Beaumont, ambassador to the court of James I in 1605. The other heart within the abbey is that of Esme Stuart, the eleven-year-old Duke of Richmond. The monument was relocated to rest with his father south of the Henry VII chapel.

That said, heart place was extremely commonplace in England before Pope Boniface VIII’s bull De Sepulturis in 1299, which banned many funerary practices. The geographic area of England had the most number of heart burials in Europe during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. Because of its commonplace status among elites, the only document that refers to heart burial in Westminster Abbey’s library is a document dating from 1290 in which Edward I permitted the transfer of the heart of Henry III to Fontevraul Abbey. Its descriptor reads,

Royal guarantee that Walter de Wenlok, Abbot of Westminster, delivered by the King’s will and precept to the Abbess of Fontevraud the entire heart of the King’s father, Henry III, in Westminster church in the presence of Anthony de Bek, Bishop of Durham, and Robert Burnel, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Edmund, the king’s brother, William de Valence, the king’s uncle and very many other lieges on Monday, next before St Lucy’s feast day, 20th year of the reign of Edward I (10 December AD.1291), the said heart to be carried to Fontevraul Abbey and to be buried therein.

Again, commonplaceness creates a problem of documentation, except in cases when an uncommon circumstance arose. Normally, religious orders were quick to claim their inheritance. Henry III’s intended recipient did not make the claim for the heart until twenty years after his death in 1270.

46 Ibid.
47 Armin Dietz, email correspondence with author, 13 June 2012.
In the worst offense against the practice of heart burial, French Revolutionaries ransacked the basilica of Saint-Denis and the church of Val-de-Grace, disinterring and desecrating the royal remains, including the heart urn of Anne of Austria and many other royals. Other churches of royal patronage were also raided. Out of the one-hundred-fifty or more royal heart urns, only a handful still exist, and most are divided between Saint-Denis and the Louvre. Through the intercession of antiquarian and art enthusiast Alexandre Lenoir, some of the funerary monuments from Saint-Denis and other religious locations were preserved for the sake of art, despite their royal connections. However, the vast majority of urns, including those that were interred at Beurrier’s Celestine monastery, are lost.

The Second World War took its toll on various German churches and shrines, where the hearts of various noble families rested. Within Munich, the church of St. Bonifaz and the Hofkirche at the Residenz were severely damaged by strategic bombing missions of World War II. The destruction of the church’s interior caused the loss of hearts from the Wittelsbach line, although most are interred in Michaelskirche in Munich or in the Gnadenkapelle at Altötting. Likewise, the St. James Cathedral and the Jesuit Church of Innsbruck, Austria, had housed the hearts of Habsburgs, but bombing raids between 1943 and 1945 decimated the interiors. The only surviving heart in Innsbruck that can be seen today is that of Margaret of Saxony (d. 1858), wife of Karl Ludwig, brother of Emperor Franz Josef, within the Hofkapelle in the Hofburg complex.49

The Problems Alleviated

There are significant gaps in the English historiography. Again, only two books on heart burial have been published in English, both with issues of impartiality and factual soundness.

The majority of articles and books in heart burial’s historiography focus on the late medieval period, yet heart burial’s popularity actually peaked during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, well into the early modern period. As recently discovered by Gaude-Ferragu, the “primary sources” of heart burial may be suspect, whether through deliberate deception, simple omission, or outright destruction.

The primary purpose of this master’s thesis is to establish a modern baseline for future studies in heart burial in the English language. Long-term observation of an anthropological ritual practice reveals a great deal about the inner life of a given culture. Heart burial’s evolution through the centuries reflected the changing sentiments toward death in society. Though the living did not malign or alienate the dead, coping mechanisms for great gaps in society left by a king or noble changed. The burial of hearts became an outlet of individual identity in the great dynasties of Europe. The time between the death of the king and the accession of the heir represented a dangerous liminal period; society had no head or heart without the king. The king’s goodness had to be proved by his lack of putrefaction and his ability to get out of Purgatory and into heaven quickly; these ideas emphasized his goodness and legitimacy. Through ritual, the focus on the eternal elements of king and kingship mitigated the problems of transition. As kingdoms became modern states, heart funerals remained personal but ever more private. In contrast, the heart monuments became larger and more ostentatious.

Heart burial, in its modern rarity and perceived exoticness, provides the scholar with a 1200-year-old recurring, evolving ritual with which to assess those who practiced it and those who viewed it. However, it is an underused tool in Anglophone scholarship. By updating and providing a basic reference for future scholars, continued research is more viable.
Heart burial’s earliest scholar, Hartshorne projected her own motives onto the topic; heart burial began because of crusades and continued because of the romantic feelings inspired by those long pilgrimages for God. In contrast, Bradford’s pale mimic of Hartshorne’s work lacks a unifying theme. Both authors are concerned that the process happened, not why it happened.

To begin anew in this field, one must attempt to understand the medieval and early modern views of the fleshy heart, the eternal soul, and their joint connection to the Resurrection. Although anxieties about the state of the body (whether rotting, diseased, or dissected) were expressed, the love of the dead and a desire to be close to them did not wane. Heart burial was an expression of identity, framing the person in society and within his or her family. In the face of science, the motivations behind the heart burial ritual for some cultures evolved to survive. In other cases, despite scientific evidence otherwise, heart burial remained extant partially because of the confidence held in the ancient idea that the heart was the seat of the soul. This idea persisted to the modern era, whether as a theological belief, a family tradition, or something in between.
CHAPTER II
PRE-CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD DEATH AND THE BODY

Anthropological Context

When dealing with the study of ritual, the scholar must not attempt to demystify the beliefs and perceived functions of a given society. Mary Douglas laments this transgression in *Purity and Danger*, stating that it was “a pity to treat Moses as an enlightened public health administrator rather than as a spiritual leader” in the context of forbidding pork consumption.\(^5^0\)

In turn, the world in which early Christians lived was fraught with ritual purity and religious ideas of clean and unclean, particularly in relation to dead bodies. It was not because the body was filled with sickening, infectious bacteria that the deceased could occupy the same space as the living. Rather, it was because there was an indelible division between the quick and the dead. Many non-Western tribal societies worldwide use religious authority to cope with concerns about the rotting body as well.

For many cultures, decay is required for the person to be truly dead, especially in those that have not had contact with modern Christianity. Anthropologist Robert Hertz argued this concept. When a person died, he was laid in a temporary resting place. The society did not consider the person truly dead until the bones lay without flesh. When this occurred, the family could transport the remains to the final resting place for the needed rituals.\(^5^1\) Using several tribes from Madagascar and Borneo, Hertz demonstrated that this was not an isolated occurrence.\(^5^2\)

Hertz defined the decomposition of the body as an “in between” phase – not alive, yet not dead, commonly referred to as liminal. In a ritual, a person may begin with one status and end with another, but the time spent in-between the two stages is the liminal period. An example of this

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\(^{50}\) Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 37.

\(^{51}\) Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand*, 32.

\(^{52}\) Ibid, 41.
would be a wedding; once a man enters the church, he is no longer single, but he is not yet married until the conclusion of the rites.

Hertz observed that the natives of Borneo considered the period of putrefaction as a liminal period for the living as well. The soul was not at rest until the body disintegrated. Until the soul rested, the survivors were obliged to mourn and tend to the decaying body. They could not return to normal life immediately, thus they too were placed in a liminal phase with the body.\(^53\) The living feared the restless, homeless soul that could not move on until all of the fleshy body left this plane, reassembling itself in the land of the ancestors. As such, all of the body must be kept together, specifically during the putrefaction process.\(^54\)

In Richard Huntington and Peter Metcalf’s survey of death, they observed that the Bara tribe of Madagascar considered flesh to be the container of vitality and chaos in man, while the bone harbored stability and order.\(^55\) In order for society to return to normal after a death, only the orderly bone must remain without the unattached, fleshy chaos.\(^56\) Anything unpredictable or uniquely “him” departed. Huntington and Metcalf observed also that the deceased person’s burial proceedings were commensurate with their place in society while alive. The bigger the social hole left behind, the more extensive the funerary ceremonies.\(^57\) The changing of familial relationships due to the death was also reflected in the rituals. Lastly, the anthropologists noted that the tribes believed that the treatment of the body in death reflected state of the soul – a poor burial meant a tortured soul, a concept not alien to Plato and the Greeks.

\(^{54}\) Ibid.
\(^{55}\) Huntington and Metcalf, *Celebrations of Death*, 98
\(^{56}\) Ibid.
\(^{57}\) Ibid, 66.
Greek and Roman Perceptions of the Dead

In the fourth century BCE, the Greeks of Plato’s time believed that the soul lingered at the burial site after death, especially if the person lived an immoral life. The orphaned soul then tormented the living. Plato expressed this view most vividly in *Phaedo*. Through his version of Socrates, Plato argued that by being abstemious, the soul gained wisdom, drawing it closer to absolute good. What humans perceive on earth is not how things truly are. One must go within to find the truth. In *Phaedo*, Socrates stated that all people have all true knowledge; they have simply forgotten it. This knowledge existed within the soul before it had a body, and the soul acquired this knowledge from the observation of the ideal world of the Forms. Ignorance and struggle came from gaining a body, and one can only return to the absolute good by losing the body and freeing the eternal soul.

Plato used the example of a woman who enjoyed the physical pleasures in life while completely neglecting her spirit and inner knowledge. As such, when she died, her soul was tied to her rotting corpse:

…And this corporeal element, my friend, is heavy and weighty and earthy, and is that element of sight by which a soul is depressed and dragged down again into the visible world, because she is afraid of the invisible and of the world below – prowling about tombs and sepulchers, near which, as they tell us, are seen certain ghostly apparitions of souls which have not departed pure, but are cloyed with sight and therefore visible. [...] And these must be the souls not of the good, but of the evil, which are compelled to wander about such places in payment of the penalty of their former evil way of life.

If a person mistreated the soul by being materialistic, the soul was kept from moving out of the liminal phase and into the next life. At death, a person was released from the prison of the

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59 Ibid, 49.
60 Ibid, 57.
61 Ibid, 61.
62 Ibid, 67-68.
physical body and rejoined “the pure,” or the idealized forms from whence all things come.63 Plato emphasized that the soul was immortal, and the physical body would inevitably decay.

Plato’s student, Aristotle, echoed these thoughts in his De Anima, stating that the soul held the body together; once the soul left, the body decayed.64 Prior to the sixteenth century in Italy, Averroists believed that Aristotle’s De Anima agreed with Plato in that there was an immortal soul.65 Pietro Pomponazzi, a Renaissance thinker, was among the first to use the newly translated Aristotle and commentaries and dismantle the notion of Aristotle believing in an immortal soul.66 Rather, “knowing needs a body, but it does not take place in any localized part of the body […] Knowing takes place in the body as a whole, […] since intellect includes all the powers of the body.”67 When the body died, so did the intellectual capacity to “know” and to exist as a soul. However, when dealing with the thoughts behind heart burial, one must recall that at the practice’s inception, the soul was completely and indisputably immortal according to Christian and Greek thought.

Aristotle also formed the basis for scientific thought surrounding the heart in his advocacy of a cardiocentric system. In The Generation of Animals, Aristotle proposed that semen transmitted Soul into new life forms.68 semen was the external agent that spurred the process of formation and secondarily growth. Only one part could be formed at time, and the first part was the one that was most needed to nourish the other developing parts of the body.69

Later in this work, after observing chick embryos, Aristotle noted that the first organ to come

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63 Plato, Phaedo, 50.
64 Aristotle, De Anima/On the Soul, translated by J.A. Smith (Blackmask Online, 2001), 12.
69 Ibid, 155.
into existence was the heart.\textsuperscript{70} Thus, the immortal soul must rest in the heart during the life of the body, as the heart nourishes the rest of the body; it is the most important.\textsuperscript{71} Aristotle referred this as a “principle” throughout the rest of \textit{The Generation of Animals}.\textsuperscript{72}

The physician Galen agreed with Aristotelian thought as it concerned the heart. Galen called the heart “the hearthstone and source of the innate heat by which the animal is governed.”\textsuperscript{73} However, Galen also gave the brain and the liver proprietorship over certain elements of the soul. The brain held the rational soul, the ability to reason.\textsuperscript{74} The liver was the seat of the “nutritive soul” due to its function of transforming nutrients into blood.\textsuperscript{75} Thirteenth-century scholar Albertus Magnus, citing Avicenna, reasoned that clearly Galen was in error regarding a three-soul body or the tripartite division of one soul.

We will prove the words of the First Master [Aristotle] by setting forth the supposition that the soul is one power and of itself, from which flow all the powers of the members. Since it is organic, there will be necessarily be one member in which it is located and from which it causes all powers to flow. And just as it is the principle of the powers, so will that member necessarily be the point of origin of the organs. Now it is agreed that the soul, with respect to the act and the power of life is in the heart. It is therefore necessary that the heart be the point of origin of all the nerves and the veins through which the soul accomplishes its operations in the numbers.\textsuperscript{76}

With some modification from Avicenna and Albertus Magnus, Galen’s understanding of the human body remained dominant into the fifteenth century. Philosophers and scientists alike accepted the cardiocentric body and soul until the seventeenth-century philosopher Rene Descartes identified the brain (specifically the pineal gland) as the holder of being. The pineal

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid, 193.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid, 371.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid, 432.
\textsuperscript{75} Galen, \textit{On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body}, 228.
gland controlled the body-machine through the transmission of the soul throughout the body, not the heart. Cardiocentricism had a long reign, and people associated all virtues, both spiritual and practical, with the heart.

In the second century, the Roman custom of cremation declined in popularity while intact burial became the primary method of disposing of the dead. At first glance, the timing of this could be associated with the rise of Christianity. Valerie Hope posits that this is not so, stating the “the ancients themselves did not associate the change with religion, that many sarcophagi had little religious symbolism in their décor, and that cremation was not incompatible with the majority of new beliefs.” However, the Romans themselves still harbored similar death anxieties to that of the Greeks. While myths were the clearest demonstration of this, on rare occasions, Roman law treated the corpse as an active entity rather than an object. The Justinian Code, dated 290 BCE, stated, “It was long since forbidden that the remains of deceased persons should be buried inside a city, lest the sacred right of citizens might be defiled.” The civic authority barred the dead from interfering with the continued existence of the living, violating their “sacred rights.” Romans viewed the dead as being sources of pollution, but they also believed that the dead had to receive homage. As such, the cemeteries and necropoli were located outside of the city limits.

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77 Rene Descartes, *De Homine*, edited by Florentio Schuyl (Lugduni Batavorum with Petrum Lefen & Francisco Moyardum, 1662), 93-95.
Judaism and Liminality

Early Christians drew their beliefs about death and the corpse from Judaism as well as from Greco-Roman texts, though these were less concerned with the medical aspects of the body. From the time of the Pentateuch, Judaism required a whole body burial in the ground, preferably within twenty-four hours of the person’s demise and without preservation. Prior to the twentieth century, Jews went as far as to retrieve body parts that had been detached in accidents or removed for medical or judicial reasons. They then buried the person near their missing thumb or foot to ensure the body was complete.

To the present day, many Jews try to adhere to the Biblical ideal of “returning to dust” and burial in the earth. When laid out on a stone slab, the body does not return to dust or decay as quickly as it would if it was in the earth. The body is “in-between” this world and the next until it rots away, and the delay thrusts the soul into an extended liminal period. Jews have varying beliefs about the world beyond the liminal stage, but all hold the common belief that burial practices must maintain the dignity of the person and of the body. Artificially extending the in-between period for the soul violates that.

In modern Judaism, the entire process of death and mourning takes approximately a year. By custom, the family does not place a grave marker until between two and eleven months later. Debate surrounds the exact precedent for this tradition, but several sources indicate the

82 Modern Judaism is a highly diverse religion, containing a multitude of sects ranging from the most liberal Reformed to the most conservative Orthodox; very few universal tenets exist. Additionally, due to the long history of Judaism, what may have been applicable in the Biblical period or the first century CE may not be so currently. This section will state items in general, not necessarily specific to any one sect.
84 Genesis 3:19 DV.
86 Ibid, 38.
story of Saul and Samuel. In I Samuel, the Philistines besieged Israel and their king, Saul. In a panic, Saul visited a witch, who conjured the recently deceased Samuel’s soul. The narrator emphasized that this was indeed Samuel’s soul and not an apparition or a conjured demon. The verse’s gloss in the Douay-Rheims Bible argues that God permitted this so that Samuel himself could tell Saul how wayward and fallen he was. The Babylonian Talmud offers further clarification:

A certain Sadducee said to R. Abuha: “Ye say that the souls of the righteous are deposited underneath the throne of honor. How, then, could the woman of the familiar spirit whom King Saul consulted, bring up the soul of Samuel?” R. Abuha answered: “That happened during the first twelvemonth after the death of Samuel, as we have learned in a Boraitha, that during the first twelvemonth the souls of the deceased come up and down; but after that period the soul ascends to heaven and does not return.”

Again, the text indicates that human soul was in limbo while the body decayed. The person was not quite ready for the afterlife, yet he did not belong here on earth. While in the liminal state, the soul could become a hateful and vengeful spirit, similar to Plato’s shades, if the living neglected it. Alternatively, the living could disturb the soul during its rest, as seen in the story of Saul and Samuel. Once the soul passed through the liminal period, the living could no longer bother it; the living, in turn, could return to normal daily life.

Works in archaeology further develop historical and anthropological thought on Jewish burial practices during Biblical times. Eric M. Meyers concludes that the Israelites regularly practiced secondary burial with ossuaries, which are bone repositories. This was permissible by Judaic law because by the time the family moved the body to its final resting place, excarnation had occurred. Since all flesh had rotted away, the person was truly dead. Meyers

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87 I Samuel 28:6-20 DV.
88 I Samuel 28:14 DV.
also attempts to establish Biblical precedents for this occurrence, using II Samuel as an example.\textsuperscript{92} After the corpses of Saul, his son Jonathan, and Saul’s other sons rotted to bone, David moved their remains to Saul’s father’s tomb for final interment.\textsuperscript{93} Meyers suggests that the period of decay necessary to go from flesh to bone was eight months, based upon references to the harvest in the text.\textsuperscript{94} Saul’s concubine, Rizpeh, guarded the bodies as they rotted, indicating the need to preserve the body’s sanctity and dignity to ensure that a secondary burial could occur.\textsuperscript{95}

The dignity afforded to corpses, even disgraced ones, reflected the concept of \textit{nephesh}, whereby:

\begin{quote}
Man is seen as a solitary unit even in death, when the bones of a man possess at least a shadow of their strength in life. The body in the Israelite conception is merely the soul in its outward form while the bones of the dead man represent a manifestation of that soul in a weakened state.\textsuperscript{96}
\end{quote}

The bones held only a glimmer of former personal identity and power that once occupied it. However, they continued to be that person as if all the flesh remained too. The parts of the body not only represented the entire whole, but they also retained a reduced amount of the person’s essence and power that he had in life.\textsuperscript{97} The secondary burial in early Judaism occurred only after the putrefaction process was complete. When only the bones remained, the living moved the body to be with other deceased family members, because the soul had also moved on.\textsuperscript{98}

Early Judaism believed in intact burial with all the parts, an extended mourning period which reflected the length of decay and the social gap left behind by the deceased, and the belief

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{92} Meyers, “Secondary Burial in Palestine,” 11
\item \textsuperscript{93} II Samuel 21:13-14 DV.
\item \textsuperscript{94} Meyers, “Secondary Burial in Palestine,” 11
\item \textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{96} Ibid, 15-16.
\item \textsuperscript{97} Ibid, 16.
\item \textsuperscript{98} Ibid, 26; by the fourteenth century, Christian churches moved the bones of the dead to charnel houses to create space in their overcrowded graveyards.
\end{itemize}
that a person was only truly dead when he had decayed to bone. Hertz, Huntington, and Metcalf observed similar beliefs in several tribes. The shirking of duty to the corpse had perceived negative effects for both the person and society due to an extended liminal period. Both the person and the society were “in-between” until the mourning rituals were complete.

Pre-Christain societies tend to dictate death practices based upon the state of decay found in the corpse. They maintained a constant distance between the realm of the living and of the dead. The liminal, unstable states were dangerous not only for the soul of the dead, but also for the social world he left behind. Until the person was completely dead – the putrefaction ended and the body was “dry” – the equilibrium between the realms of the living and the dead was not stable. Neither the soul nor the survivors were secure. When the person was completely dead, the soul and the people were at peace. Until that moment arrived, the displaced soul threatened the living and was distinctly unwelcome in the world of the dead. It was the duty of the surviving family members to ensure that the soul was ushered over his personal river Styx; if the practices were not done or inadequately performed, both they and their dead remained in the liminal, dangerous phase.

New Attitudes Toward the Dead in Christianity

Many vestiges of Greek, Roman, and Jewish death remained in early Christian thought and persisted through the medieval period, but major shifts also occurred. Historian of science Katharine Park astutely remarks that the early Christian identity formed in opposition to that of its pagan Mediterranean contemporaries. Before theologians developed Christianity’s tenets and dogma, Christianity was a religion of “nots”: not polytheistic, not sacrificial, and, most important here, not afraid of the dead. Part of their godhead was a resurrected man who had

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conquered death. As such, rituals revolving around the sick and the dying soon developed. Christians did not necessarily separate these members from society for fear of contagion, in direct opposition to Greco-Roman thought and, to a lesser degree, Jewish thought.\textsuperscript{101}

Fourth- and fifth-century philosopher and theologian St. Augustine of Hippo heavily influenced medieval Christian thought about the body. A former pagan, he was well-versed in anti-Christian arguments, and much of his book, \textit{City of God}, was dedicated to arming his readers against such attacks. One of the major battles was the defense of Christian ideas surrounding Resurrection, death, and dying. Augustine himself struggled with this in Book 13, Book 20, and again in Book 22 of \textit{City of God}. In Book 13, Chapter 9, Augustine dissected the exact moment and liminality of death:

Therefore, a man who is dying must be living; for when he is in the last extremity, “giving up the ghost (that is the soul)” as we say, he is evidently still alive, because his soul has not yet left him. So he is at once dying and living; but he is approaching death and leaving life. He is still in life because the soul is still in his body; he is not yet in death because the soul has not yet departed. But when the soul has departed, he will not be \textit{in} death but after it. Then can anyone say precisely when one is \textit{in} death? No dying man can be, assuming that no one can be dying and living at the same time.\textsuperscript{102}

Augustine’s statement was significant in that it illustrated Christianity’s definition of death as a moment, rather than as a process or an extended period.

For the tribes from Madagascar and Borneo discussed by Hertz, Huntington and Metcalf, the death and grieving process lasted for an extended period. The body took up to a year to decay, and so the process of death and burial endured. Likewise, the various sects of Judaism tended to treat death as a long process. Both groups ascribed a liminal period for both the deceased and the survivors. The tribes, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews all held some belief that the deceased’s soul could be disturbed or interfered with during this period, causing

\textsuperscript{101} Binski, \textit{Medieval Death}, 30. Exceptions existed, such as in times of plague and the sin-disease of leprosy.
problems for the individual and the society. Thus, based upon Augustine’s description, Christianity broke from the common paradigm of death as a process with a liminal period. Life and death were as two books, pushed together on a shelf with no divider between them.

The activities and location of the deceased soul were unknown or perhaps nonexistent between death and resurrection at the last days. Though the Greeks, Romans, and Jews all had an “in-between” phase based upon the time it took for the body to deteriorate, Christians since Augustine had no such liminal period. The doctrinal establishment of Purgatory in the thirteenth century restored the liminal period, but during the eight hundred years between Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, the Latin Church lacked an official period of transition for the soul. That said, intercessory prayers for the dead were present in Christian history since the martyrdom of Perpetua in the third century; having experienced a vision of her predeceased brother, Perpetua prayed on his behalf.103 Clearly, he was in a place that was not hell (since he could receive prayers) but not heaven either (since he needed them). Tertullian (d. 225), Origen (d. 259), Augustine (d. 430), and other Christian thinkers all expressed belief in a state of activity between this life and the resurrection, but its duration, exact process, and other details remained nebulous.104

Purgatory did not exist yet in canon law. People said general prayers on behalf of the dead, but the Church did not codify the soul’s location or the words to be used in prayers. Likewise, except for the funeral and burial, the living had no designated rituals to perform for the deceased soul until the Church instituted official prayers and indulgences for those in Purgatory in the second half of the thirteenth century.

104 Ibid, 43; 46; 53.
Early Christians also held concerns as to the exact nature of the resurrected body after the return of Christ. In Book 22, Chapter 12, Augustine confronted the detractors of the Resurrection of Christ and of all Christians at the Judgment Day. Augustine’s critics pointed to Luke 21:18, which states, “Make no mistake, not one hair on your head will perish.”¹⁰⁵ Then they asked whether all the hair they ever had in their life would return in a tangled, lengthy mass. Augustine also found himself answering questions about cannibalism; if a man ate another, at the Resurrection, who kept the flesh? The man who originally owned it or the one who ate it and then had it become part of himself?¹⁰⁶ Augustine answered these questions and others that relate to the physical practicalities of a resurrection in Chapters 13 through 19. The hair quote referred to the number of hairs, not the length. Augustine also assured the reader that nothing added back at the Resurrection will be “disfiguring.”¹⁰⁷

In Chapter 20, Augustine finally answered the question of the fate of a divided body. In this, he also answered the question of cannibalism, which seemed to be an oddly pressing concern during this period. For Augustine, it was not possible for God to lack the ability to reassemble a body. At length:

> It is inconceivable that any nook or cranny of the natural world, though it may hold those bodies concealed from our detection, could elude the notice or evade the power of the Creator of all things. Cicero, the great pagan author, attempted to define God, as well as he could: and this is what he says: “A kind of Mind, free and unconstrained, remote from any materiality and mortality, conscious of all things, and moving all things, endowed with everlasting movement.” This is what Cicero found in the teaching of the great philosophers. And so, to speak in their terms, what can be hidden from one who knows everything? What can escape irrevocably from the power of one who moves the universe?¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Augustine, 1052.
¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 1054.
¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 1060.
¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 1062.
God will put all things back together as He meant them to be, even if the body putrefied. Augustine’s argument here ultimately provided the justification for burying a body in multiple places, whether by desire or by necessity. This likely addressed the concerns of those who could not retrieve their loved one’s remains from the Romans after persecution and execution. However, this also appeared to have sanctioned the separation of these holy martyr’s parts to spread Christianity and their holiness to new churches. Again, Christianity breaks from the traditions of Judaism, the Greeks, and the Romans by allowing for the possibility of non-intact, or multiple, burial. While this was permitted only for martyrs at first, the practice of bodily division soon took on its own life by the ninth century.

Saints, the Resurrection, and Shrinking Space

In the Catholic Church, the martyrs and saints are holy men and women virtuous enough to go to heaven directly rather than waiting with the rest of humanity. While they are in heaven spiritually, their body parts remain on earth, close to God’s people. As a result, since the death of the early martyr Polycarp in 155 CE, believers have kept the bodies or parts of martyrs and saints as foci of holiness. While the soul is in heaven, the body remains on earth, acting as a sort of celestial telephone line. Saints’ relics offer an exclusive connection to God, and through this link, God can act.

The belief in a potential power connection between God and holy remains first appeared in the Hebrew Bible. After the prophet Elisha died and turned to bone, another burial occurred nearby. When Moabites attacked the funeral party, the gravediggers hastily threw the corpse

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110 Binski, Medieval Death, 12.
111 II Kings 21:20-21 DV.
into Elisha’s grave, intending to return later. This proved to be unnecessary, as contact with Elisha’s bones immediately resurrected the man. Save for this exception, Jewish tradition suggests that one’s personal power declines with death.\(^\text{112}\)

In contrast, because of the very nature of a resurrected Messiah, Christians believe that power remains with the holy person or even increases after death. St. Martin of Tours died in the fourth century, and within a hundred years, his grave attracted thousands of pilgrims yearly. Both the resident monks and visitors attributed a wide range of miracles to the bones of St. Martin from the fifth century onward.\(^\text{113}\) In another paradigm break from its predecessors, popular Christianity preferred to keep the dead near the living, especially if the deceased was a saint. Rather than seeing a saint’s body as a threatening, polluting presence, medieval people believed that the saintly dead exuded holy power.\(^\text{114}\)

The oft-cited justification for keeping the remains of martyrs inside the Church comes from John’s Revelation: “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.”\(^\text{115}\) The gloss on the Douay-Rheims version of the Bible further emphasizes the “telephone” connection. It declares Christ as the spiritual altar that saints’ souls rest under, while the physical altar on earth is the final repository for the saints’ physical bodies.\(^\text{116}\) In the Middle Ages, relics and the nearness they afforded to holy people and God reduced anxieties about the dead and one’s own death. The saint’s body part represented his whole being and all of his power, not just a fragment of it, no matter how many divisions the body had undergone.\(^\text{117}\)

\(^{114}\) Park, Secrets of Women, 24.
\(^{115}\) Revelation 6:9 DV.
\(^{117}\) Binski, Medieval Death, 14.
Medieval Christians did not find the corpse completely abject, but they were anxious about the repose of their bodies until the Final Resurrection. If they had the wealth or power, Christians alleviated this stress by predetermining their burial location. Highly desirable locations were in a church, near the body of a saint, or near a relic. R.C. Finucane uses the term “holy radioactivity” to describe the blessed contagion of the relics. These relics protected and healed those in proximity, but they also diverted attackers and changed hearts, protecting those buried nearby from disturbance or desecration. The act of being in a saint’s vicinity could trigger spontaneous healing, conversion, and resolution of problems.

People desired the protection offered by the saints in the medieval era, due to the prevalence of war, disease, and fears of having one’s corpse disinterred. Even if no relics were in a given church, people still coveted a spot in the consecrated church sanctuary. Being disinterred disrupted the soul’s repose and its existence between death and resurrection. Christians did not have an exact idea of what occurred during the liminal phase, but they assumed that disturbing the body would have some sort of effect on the soul. However, being buried in earth to decay seemed to be a secondary concern compared to being close to the church building, a saint, or family members.

In practice, by the sixth century CE, Christians embraced a surprisingly thin space between the quick and the dead. Those who had money or power clamored for a grave under the church floor to be near the saints. Historian Philippe Ariès credits these sentiments for the establishment of cemeteries within the city limits. Though the church interior may have been out of reach, non-elites also desired burial near family rather than outside the city, as dictated by

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119 Binski, Medieval Death, 14.
120 Ibid, 55.
121 Ariès, Images of Man and Death, 15.
Roman law.\textsuperscript{122} Instead of feeling alienated from the dead, sixth-century Christians maintained the same affections for their friends and family after death.\textsuperscript{123} Cemeteries within the city limits became integral parts of the medieval geography.

Conclusion

The Greeks, Romans, and Jews believe in a clearly delineated space between the living and the dead. In parallel with tribal cultures observed by Hertz, Metcalf, and Huntington, the forerunners to Christianity were anxious about death itself. When a person died, the soul was cast into a liminal period. The deceased was no longer a part of the living, but because the body still existed on the plane of the living, the deceased was also not yet truly dead. To cross over into the next world, the body had to decay completely and reassemble. The disconnected body was dangerous to the society during the putrefaction process, and the disembodied soul threatened the living with dire consequences unless it was cared for. The loss of a society member, especially a powerful one, cast society itself into disorder; if the person was in the society’s upper hierarchy, then the death affected the society more adversely. In order to care for the dead as well as to repair the damage done to society by the death, the family and friends performed rituals. The acts commemorated the dead, rearranged the family structure to accommodate the absence, and formally transitioned the society, particularly if the dead person had been a ruler.

The performance of rituals continued until the body rotted away, meaning it had joined the soul in the next world. Body rot was integral to peace for both the dead person and the society. If the body did not decay, neither the soul nor the society could move on from the death. Often, if a ruler or head of house died, the body acted as a timer in which the people had a set

\textsuperscript{122} Scott, \textit{The Civil Law}. Book III, Title XLIV, Section 12.
\textsuperscript{123} Elizabeth A.R. Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 266.
amount of time until they were completely abandoned; the successor had to be in place, and the society had to be ready to return to regular life.

In terms of coping with death, Christianity was a paradigm shift. The center of their religion was a mortal man, resurrected from the dead. As a result, Christians did not find death completely abject or think that the dead were in opposition to the living. Rather, the anticipation of a resurrection and reunion with the dead dominated Christian ideology. Though they knew they would rise as Christ had, Christians were uncertain as to how it would work. The exact mechanics worried them. Though a time of purgation was theorized, the Church had no codified interim period between death and the Final Resurrection. The living prayed for the dead man in the hope that their supplications would help him, somehow.

The period of martyrdom influenced Christian thought on the resurrected body. Clearly, the martyrs deserved to resurrect intact, even if their bodies had been scattered with some parts unrecoverable. These saints had already gone to heaven, but they had left their bodies and parts on earth for the benefit of believers as a connection to God. Christians desired closeness to God through close physical proximity to saints, who had retained and increased their power since death. Christians believed their bodies were safest with the saints, within the church, as they were less likely to be desecrated, disinterred, and scattered. Though the official Church teachings stated that all should be buried in earth and not within the church itself, Christians clamored for a stone slab near a relic or saintly body. If this was not possible, then being buried with family assured and comforted the dying. They would surely meet again at the Resurrection. Being near a saint or a loved one trumped the thought of needing decay to transition to the next life. It is in this world that the first eviscerations took place.
CHAPTER III
HEARTS AND BURIALS, PRE-1117

The Usefulness of Heart Burial

In 877, Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Bald, son of Louis the Pious and grandson of Charlemagne, died while on campaign. Although his retainers attempted to carry his body back over the Alps to Gaul, the body became too unstable. They eviscerated Charles and attempted rudimentary embalming of the main body, but ultimately, the venture had to be abandoned.  

The evisceration of Charles the Bald marks the first documented deliberate division of a corpse aside from that of a saint. The motivation for it is clear, and it is the most common reason until the Renaissance. Because embalming was in its nascent stages, the best way to forestall the putrefaction of a body was to eviscerate it, removing the most volatile parts. This included the heart in the case of Charles the Bald. The need for separate burial was present due to the rapidly encroaching body rot. A similar procedure was performed on Holy Roman Emperor Otto I in 973, who also died while on campaign. These practices appear to be bereft of the symbolic meaning that they would later garner.

However, this early effort at embalming apparently did not go unnoticed by the deceased. According to Brown and Giesey, the ghost of Charles the Bald appeared to a monk seven years later in 884, demanding that all of his body parts finish their journey back to Gaul. Brown believes that this haunting reflected a popular sentiment that differed from the official Church stance. The teachings of Augustine, endorsed by the Church, stated that God would assemble all things at the Last Resurrection, but it appears that the dissatisfied ghost of Charles (and, in turn,

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125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
the tellers of the folktale) believed otherwise; the body had to be reunited and restored in its homeland.

The Elite Death

At the time of Charles’ death in 877, medieval Christianity expressed its desire to be near the dead. “The unquiet dead” stirred less fear in the hearts of the living, and being near graves was no longer abject. The deceased remained part of the community and in memory. However, this sentiment clashed with the written law of the Church. The Latin Church steadfastly adhered to the belief in separation between the living and the dead. The Council of Braga in 563 CE banned burials inside the church in response to popular practice, restricting the interment of corpses to the outside grounds of the church or even as close as the doorway. The body was not to be inside the church building proper.127 As dryly reported by Ariès, “We are less surprised by the lack of attention paid to the canonical instructions – that was not unusual – than by the persistence and tenacity with which the ecclesiastical authorities maintained for a thousand years a rule that was never observed.”128

Special burial spots near saints and relics were still in high demand. By the early tenth century, social elites separated their dead from the rest of the community. Those that could afford to pay for it or had the political influence to pressure the local abbot tended to succeed. Queen Consort Aelfgifu, wife of King Eadwig of England, died circa 975, and in her will that “she grants to the Old Minster [Winchester], where she intends her body to be buried, the estate at Risborough just as it stands.”129 By bartering her land for a final resting place in a cathedral, Aelfgifu exerted her power and social position to get her desired burial place. Thus, even as she

128 Ibid, 51.
lay dead in the grave, she retained her social position among her peers. Nobles competed for the choice burial spots in their local churches, but the smartest and richest ones soon devised an alternative route.

During the early medieval era, it became fashionable to establish churches.\textsuperscript{130} This entailed not only the construction of the building but also the maintenance and upkeep thereafter. The lord maintained ownership of the land and permitted the church to be built on it. More often than not, the patron financially supported the priests, monks, nuns, and other religious people that lived on the church grounds. In his survey of medieval archaeology, John Steane observes that when family members died, the churches were proportionately expanded to accommodate these new residents.\textsuperscript{131} Jews in the Bible believed that a body needed to be buried in earth and not rest on or within stone. Otherwise, the liminal period would be extended and the soul would suffer.\textsuperscript{132} In contrast, decaying properly did not seem to concern some medieval Christian elites. They eagerly clamored for interment within the church. The local clergy did not stop burials inside the church.

Despite descending from cultures that endorsed space between the living and the rotting body, Christianity (as it was practiced rather than as it was decreed) did not harbor these same reservations. From the early churches in North Africa to the Calvinist churches of the Reformation, men and women were buried within the church proper, their final repose marked by engraved stone slabs.\textsuperscript{133} However, one consistent trend was intact burial. Christians buried

\textsuperscript{130} Westerhof, \textit{Death and the Noble Body}, 65.
\textsuperscript{131} John Steane, \textit{The Archaeology of Medieval England and Wales} (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 70.
\textsuperscript{132} Alpert, “Grief and the Rituals Surrounding Death,” 32.
\textsuperscript{133} Ariès, \textit{The Hour of Our Death}, 48.
bodies whole in anticipation of the Final Resurrection. The living harbored the belief that they would need their dead bodies again.\textsuperscript{134}

Thirteenth-century books on lay piety, such as \textit{Lumiere as Lais}, described the common man’s desire for intact burial due to Resurrection. The layman worried about what would happen at the Resurrection if animals disturbed his body or if it had rotted away completely.\textsuperscript{135} According to the \textit{Lumiere}, God will use the decayed material to create the newly resurrected body. This is consistent with the Augustine’s own conclusions.\textsuperscript{136} Author T. S. R. Boase connects this response with the twelfth-century Byzantine mosaic at Torcello. The Torcello mosaic depicts angels that induce vomiting in dogs and sea monsters that had gobbled human remains. The remains emerge from the beasts as whole, undamaged body parts.\textsuperscript{137} Through God’s agents, these whole parts can easily be reassembled into a recognizable human body. The mosaic reassured its viewers of all that was possible through God, even if excessive fragmentation occurred.

\textbf{The Sentimental Last Act}

The elites of the eleventh century appeared to have a divided opinion about intact burial. Some elites elected to be divided and buried separately while others did not. It was not a consistent tradition. Despite the deaths of Charles the Bald and Otto I abroad, the custom of evisceration did not become a regular event for the Holy Roman Emperors. It recurrent in 1056, when Emperor Heinrich III died at the imperial hunting lodge of Bodfeld after a brief illness. He was not on campaign, and he had indeed left final requests as to the disposition of his remains, unlike Charles and Otto. Though he did order his body to be taken to Speyer to lie in his father’s

\textsuperscript{134} Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 266.
\textsuperscript{135} Boase \textit{Death in the Middle Ages}, 36.
\textsuperscript{136} Augustine, \textit{City of God}, 1062.
\textsuperscript{137} Boase, \textit{Death in the Middle Ages}, 36.
tomb, Heinrich III asked that his heart be buried at nearby Goslar to be near the remains of his only daughter, Mathilde.\textsuperscript{138} He had stated prior to his death that his heart was already with her.\textsuperscript{139} This is the popular rendering of the story.

Historian Agostino Paravicini Bagliani marks this heart burial as the first to have any specific meaning. Charles the Bald and Otto I had heart burials that may not have happened if the deaths had occurred at an ideal place. Heinrich’s, however, was deliberate per his request; this was not an improvised solution to an emergency. There are two problems with this heart burial and its endearing motive.

Chronologically, it was impossible, and essential facts in the popular narrative are incorrect. First, Heinrich III had one daughter by his first marriage and two by his second marriage that were older than Mathilde. He had one final daughter after Mathilde for a total of five daughters. Mathilde did not predecease her father; she died in 1060, after being kidnapped and married at the age of twelve. Brown, Bertelli, Paravicini Bagliani, and others reference a 1920 article by Dietrich Schafer, “Miteralterlicher Brauch bei der Uberfuhrung von Leichen” (“The medieval need for the transport of bodies”). The article offers an excellent outline of early Salian Holy Roman Emperors’ burial practices, particularly those of evisceration, separate burial, and later \textit{mos teutonicus}. Below is the problematic citation:

The emperor’s heart with praecordia near to his daughter (his daughter Mathilde lay there buried, at his favorite place) here in the church [or choir], but truly the remaining part of his body was deposited to be buried in Speyer.\textsuperscript{140}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{139} Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 227.
\textsuperscript{140} Translated by A.M. Duch, from Dietrich Schafer, “Miteralterlicher Brauch bei der Uberfuhrung von Leichen.” \textit{Sitzungsberichte Der Preussischen Akademie Der Wissenschaften}, 1920 (Berlin: Verlag Der Akademie Der Wissenschaften, 1920), 481. “Imperator cor suum cum precordiis apud filiam suam (sein Tochter Mathilde lag dort, an seinem Lieblingssitz, begraben) hic in choro, reliquam vero partem sui corporis in Spira disposuit tumulari (MS Deutsche Chroniken II 605).”
\end{footnotesize}
The reader should note that it is only in his commentary that Mathilde is identified as the deceased daughter.

Upon referring back to the “Chronik des Stiftes SS Simon und Judas” section within the manuscript cited, the full quote reads as follows:

The same emperor, in proof of true love for his virgin daughter Mathilde and afterwards in good faith and his surprise death, deposited his heart with praecordia near his daughter here in the church, but truly the remaining part of his body was deposited to be buried in Speyer. May these happy souls always live blessedly in infinity, forever and ever, amen.¹⁴¹

The full quote refers to the morte preoccupatus or the surprise death of Heinrich III. If Heinrich III did bury his heart to be near his daughter “in the choir” of St. Simon and St. Judas Church, then Mathilde was not the child in question, as she lived until 1060. A more likely candidate is his daughter Gisela. Gisela was born in 1047 and died in 1053, predeceasing Heinrich by three years. One reason why she might have been dear to her father was that he had named her after his mother, Gisela. Through the elder Gisela’s line, Heinrich claimed lineage to Charlemagne, a key aspect of his legitimacy.

The chronicler clearly made an error when making the original entry, but all scholars from Schaefer onward repeated this mistake. In a dissenting view, Armin Dietz offers the idea that the heart burial at Goslar merely had the guise of sentimentality. The heart burial in Goslar was a strike against the Saxons, who had still not come to heel after their conquest.¹⁴² This view deserves further exploration.

¹⁴¹Translated by A.M. Duch, from Der Gesellschaft für Ältere Deutsche Geschichtskunde, Deutsche Chroniken und Andere Geschichtsschreiber Des Mittelalters, Zweiter Band (Hannover: Hansche Buchhandlung, 1877), 605. “Idem quoque imperator in argumentum veri amoris filiam suam Mechthildim virginem et postea bona fide et morte preoccupatus cor suum cum precordiis apud filiam suam hic in choro, reliquam vero partem sui corporis in Spira disposuit tumulari. Quorum anime felices semper vivant beate per infinita secular seculum amen!”
¹⁴²Dietz, Ewige Herzen, 15.
Another trend that began to appear in the early twelfth century was the desire to be buried at a particular location. As described in Chapter II, the space between the quick and the dead rapidly dissipated during the early medieval period. By 600 CE, the deceased remained part of the community by being buried within the town and even within the church. Now, nobles began to be concerned as to the exact disposition of their bodies. The earliest shades of this appeared in 1108, when Philippe I of France elected to be buried at the abbey of Fleury instead of Saint-Denis, which was already developing a reputation as the Capetian royal necropolis.\textsuperscript{143} The deviation happened because, according to a contemporary, the prayers at Saint-Denis were divided among many kings. By being the only king buried at Fleury, Philippe was sure to garner the lion’s share of prayers. More prayers meant a shorter stay in Purgatory, and this request foreshadowed a major motivation for heart burial later in the century.

Saints and Rot

Despite the ambiguity surrounding Heinrich III’s heart burial, within sixty years, a heart burial with definitive sentimental intentions appeared. In 1117, Robert d’Arbrissel died. The bishop and founder of the nunnery and monastery of Fontevrault, d’Arbrissel died away from the main house, at a satellite priory in Orsan.\textsuperscript{144} The two locations are separated by nearly 500 miles. The nuns at Orsan asked for a part of their beloved spiritual leader, and they received his heart for their nunnery while the rest of his body was interred in the main church.\textsuperscript{145}

This is an unmistakable, deliberate burial of the heart separate from the intestines and other innards. According to Bradford, the heart received its own silver heart-shaped case.\textsuperscript{146}

\textsuperscript{144} Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 227.
\textsuperscript{145} Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 227; Bradford, Heart Burial, 41.
\textsuperscript{146} Bradford, Heart Burial, 41.
D'Arbrissel was both a religious elite (by his status of bishop) and a social elite (by his birth). The ongoing Investiture Controversy pitted secular authority versus the religious authority of the Holy See and would not be resolved for another five years. As a result, local authorities still controlled who was deemed a saint.\textsuperscript{147} This power would later be allocated to the Holy See, but for now, it rested with those who likely knew and loved the potential saint personally. One may interpret the nuns’ request as a sentimental one or one that anticipated d’Arbrissel’s canonization by local authorities. These motives are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

The case of Robert d’Arbrissel’s heart burial sat upon the social and religious nexus of the medieval period. His status in both the secular and sacred worlds provided near ideal circumstances for the ritual. Despite the hopes of his religious community, d’Arbrissel was never canonized, but his heart remained a valued and treasured item in the Fontevrault satellite community.

Older relics remained very important, but potential saints such as Robert d’Arbrissel offered opportunities for newer or less established churches to rise in status. A major sign of saintliness was a body that did not rot. In the medieval mind, putrefaction was a symptom of the innate corruption of humanity.\textsuperscript{148} The medieval West did not consider decay as a natural, inevitable process. Rather, it was an inherent malady that the body and soul fought against. Plato mentioned this in \textit{Phaedo} when discussing the woman bound to her rotting corpse; because she enjoyed an overly materialistic life, her soul suffered while her body decayed.\textsuperscript{149}

\textsuperscript{147} Daniel and Thompson, “Pagans and Christians,” 76.
\textsuperscript{148} Daniel and Thompson, “Pagans and Christians,” 78.
\textsuperscript{149} Plato, \textit{Phaedo}, 66-67.
Conversely, the people who prevailed against such flaws had incorrupt bodies at death, such as saints.\textsuperscript{150}

Eleventh-century reformer St. Peter Damian regaled his readers in *Instituto monialis* with the tale of the Doge of Venice’s wife, who, after eating luxuriously all her life, began to rot while still alive.\textsuperscript{151} The stench was so horrific that it kept all of the servants away, as well as anyone who could have helped the poor woman. Damian concluded that it was a happy day when she finally died. He quipped: “It could be said that human flesh, which now seems to be alive, does not in fact bring forth decay in itself after death, but only then declares itself openly to the rottenness which it has always been.”\textsuperscript{152} A later example is Rodrigo Borgia, known as Pope Alexander VI (d. 1503).\textsuperscript{153} Contemporaries believed that Borgia decayed rapidly due to his depraved lifestyle and unsuitability for the office. Holy people earned incorrupt corpses, while sinners revealed their rotten inner nature at death.

Piero Camporesi writes that the embalmed or incorrupt flesh on earth was a mirror of the now purified and freed soul that had gone on in its journey to Paradise. A world without stench and rot was Paradise to those suffering under sin, war, and plague. To have that happen while on earth was remarkable.\textsuperscript{154} This partially explains why the incorrupt bodies of saints supposedly have an “aura of sanctity” accompanying them.

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\textsuperscript{151} This tale is likely apocryphal; Peter Damian’s life does not easily correspond to any specific Doge’s wife’s death. However, it is likely an example that any person would understand. The Venetians, especially the Doges, were known for their conspicuous consumption.
\textsuperscript{152} Peter Damian, “Instituto monialis,” *Opera Omnia* (Venice: Bassano, 1783), Volume 3, column 779-780, quoted in Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Flesh*, 77-78.
\textsuperscript{154} Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Body*, 25.
Conclusion

The desire to be near home and loved ones was powerful. However, despite a lack of concern for the need to decay naturally, the division of the body bothered early medieval Christians. As evidenced by the folktale of Charles the Bald’s ghost, people did not like the idea of a divided body. The competing desires to be buried with loved ones and to be kept intact had to be negotiated. Heinrich III deliberately elected to separate out his parts so that he could be with both his father and daughter.

D’Arbrissel’s situation was complicated due to his dual status in the world. His followers were desperate to have some part of their dear father, whether it was because of their personal affections for him or for his own saintly potential. The possession of relics in Western Europe represented closeness to God, prestige, and legitimacy, particularly for newly formed orders. If he had been canonized, d’Arbrissel’s heart had the capacity to bring even greater benefits to the religious houses he founded.

The founding of religious houses offered the elites a way to secure their body against the elements and intruders. Typically, the abbot or priest granted them the privilege of burial within the church in return for their generous donations. Their choice of burial site also gave elites the opportunity to secure their place in society permanently in death. Though they passed away, family members’ status could be expressed in the prestigious locations of their corpses, close to the saints or the altar.

Being near a saint was highly desirable. Being seen as one was even more so. God spared the saints the ugliness of decay because they were pure within. Body and soul fought against corruption in life; unless the person was perfect and godly, the rot would take over the corpse. Those that were truly good did not stink or putrefy at death. Their body resembled their
ascended soul. Because the intact dead body was a sign of favor and power, elites wanted one. The saints obtained one naturally, and the rich had a bit of help. The art of embalming advanced through royal and noble patronage over the course of the medieval era. The noble showed off his money and power if he had a gifted undertaker or mortician refresh the body to resemble its freed soul.

The need for transport, the sentimental desire, and the religious devotion were all essential motivations for heart burial. During this period, it was not necessarily the deceased but rather those around him that advocated the split of the body. The division of the body benefited those that either had to carry it or wanted a piece. Heinrich III was an exception, as he planned his own heart burial to be near his predeceased daughter. The evisceration of Charles the Bald did not resemble the royal funerary ceremony that heart burial would evolve into. It was an expedient, one that would be repeated many times over during the Crusades. What divided heart burial from simple evisceration was the deliberate honor and laud given to the heart once it left the body.

What is a heart burial? Removal of the heart was common in evisceration. If it was disposed of with other organs in the same vessel and buried with little ceremony, then it was merely part of evisceration. Charles the Bald was eviscerated; he did not have his heart buried separately. If, on the other hand, it received some sort of comment or special consideration, as seen in the case of Heinrich III and d’Arbrissel, then it is a heart burial. All three men would have needed their hearts removed as part of their transport back home. Only two had a specific, purposeful heart burial, by their wishes or by others around them.
Politics and Purgatory: A Knotty Problem

Medieval England offers the historian the ideal, controlled case study of feudalism. From the king to the peasant, society was ordered in terms of both secular and religious hierarchies. Nobles desired to be buried near relics, but a competing desire was to be buried near family. During this period, the third and fourth motivations for heart burial came to the fore. The Crusades offered nobles new opportunities to establish or expand their domains. Others used the absence of their rivals to consolidate their holds on land in Europe. Burial sites became a statement of not only one’s family and status achieved by kin ties, but also political status through their own efforts. Politics here not only refers to the relationship between the noble and his social peers, but also the relationship between the secular ruler and the local religious. The Church wielded a great deal of influence and power during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, almost in opposition to temporal lords. The problem of politics and church connections was particularly evident in feudal England during this period, the epicenter of heart burials during the High Middle Ages.

Art historian Paul Binski observes that rituals, as theorized by sociologist Emile Durkheim, reinforce social controls and group coherence. The customs that accompany a given family’s interment of the dead “express pre-existing social arrangements and expectations.” Such displays illustrate the person’s role within a family and the gap left by his death, while others emphasize the person and his family’s position within a society. However, like Mary Douglas, Binski warns against the demystifying of religion in favor of fulfilling

155 Binski, Medieval Death, 75.
156 Binski, Medieval Death, 50.
157 Huntington and Metcalf, Celebrations of Death, 66.
sociological or anthropological functions and conversely, some actions taken in a religious context have had deliberate socio-political messages. "Neither religion nor society are pure categories in themselves; they intersect in a complex order of symbolism, and that symbolic order is expressed in ritual," concludes Binski.  

The practice of multiple burial among elites can be viewed in the light of religious advancement or of political dominance. After burial in a church, the person was beneficiary of the prayers said in the church and masses offered by the religious order. As seen in the case of Philippe I of France in 1108, some viewed these prayers as divided up among the resident bodies. In 1216, the Church permitted daily masses to be said for departed souls rather than only yearly. The more prayers, the more masses, the better for the deceased.

_Summa Theologica_, St. Thomas Aquinas’ masterwork, did not appear until the late 1270s. Thus, although thoughts and beliefs existed about a place similar to Purgatory, such a place was not eschatologically codified during the twelfth century and most of the thirteenth century. Both theology and popular belief indicated that the deceased benefited from these prayers, somehow. Throughout the thirteenth century, prayers and masses for the deceased’s soul became more prevalent and part of the regular orders of Mass. Innocent IV sent a letter to the Bishop of Tusculum in 1254 requesting that the Greeks accept the name of “purgatory” for the place in which they believed “the souls of those who do not perform a penance which they have received, or the souls of those who free from mortal sins but with even the slightest venial sins, are purified after death and can be helped by the prayers of the Church.” The doctrine of Purgatory was officially adopted in 1274 at the Council of Lyon. With the implementation of the

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158 Binski, _Medieval Death_, 51.  
160 Ibid, 16.  
doctrine of Purgatory in the last quarter of the century, the deceased Christians became the direct beneficiaries of prayers.

As seen in saints’ relics, a part of the person represented the whole person and his or her power.\textsuperscript{162} This concept traces its roots back to Plato as well.\textsuperscript{163} In theory, and in connection with Augustine’s \textit{City of God}, a separated body with parts spread among various churches collected prayers faster than a whole body resting in one place. Thus, many elites adopted the belief that the division of the body was beneficial for the soul and expedited its stay in Purgatory. This occurrence long preceded Purgatory’s official codification by the Church.\textsuperscript{164}

By providing prayers to the nobles, the religious of the local area benefited from prestige but also the increased donations from pilgrims and visiting family members. Just as serious competition had ensued over the possession of saints’ bodies, so too did the race to the possession of the elite body.\textsuperscript{165} The pressures of various churches as well as family members to promise one’s body to a church made the choice difficult. If the person had been born in a given parish, if he or a relative had founded or refounded the church, if a spouse or relative was already buried there, or if the noble maintained residence in the local area for an extended period, then pressure could be exerted in order to ensure a burial at a given location.

Danielle Westerhof captures this in her case study on the earls of Cornwall of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The family of Richard, Earl of Cornwall (d. 1272), divided its bodies in order to reflect the many, varied loyalties each family member had.\textsuperscript{166} Richard was the second son of King John Lackland of England and a brother of Henry III. His

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\textsuperscript{165} Binski, \textit{Medieval Death}, 58; 74.
\textsuperscript{166} Westerhof, \textit{Death and the Noble Body}, 63.
\end{flushright}
first wife, Isabel, died in 1240. Previously, Isabel had been married to the Earl of Gloucester, and thus requested that she be interred at Tewkesbury with him. Richard, however, buried her at Beaulieu Abbey (founded by John Lackland) but sent her heart to Tewkesbury as a conciliatory gesture. This apparently satisfied the chronicler, as he commented that Tewkesbury had received, “the best part” of her.\textsuperscript{167} Six years later, in 1246, Richard himself founded Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire. When Richard’s son, Henry, was murdered by his cousins in 1271, his body was interred at Hailes Abbey and his heart was sent to the shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey as a personal expression of devotion.\textsuperscript{168} Richard himself died in 1272, with his body going to Hailes and his heart and entrails to the Franciscans at Oxford. His third wife and widow, Beatrice, died in 1277, and she interred her body with Richard’s heart and entrails at Oxford.\textsuperscript{169} Richard’s youngest son and successor, Edmund, founded his own church, the Ashridge Priory in Hertfordshire, and when he died in 1300, his heart and flesh were interred there.\textsuperscript{170} However, his bones returned to the church founded by his father, Hailes Abbey, for their final rest.

The founding of churches by the male head of the family (whether perceived as the head of the house or as the highest-ranking relative) was key in determining which church received the body and heart.\textsuperscript{171} Additionally, the entrails were removed and buried quickly with little ceremony, while the heart was afforded a more elaborate and time-consuming ceremony.\textsuperscript{172} The family placed a great deal of significance on the heart, as did the Tewkesbury chronicler, conforming to the cardiocentric system advocated by Aristotle, Avicenna, and Albertus Magnus.

\textsuperscript{167} Westerhof, \textit{Death and the Noble Body}, 61.
\textsuperscript{168} Ibid, 63.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{170} Westerhof, \textit{Death and the Noble Body}, 63. Although this heart burial falls after the issuance of the papal bull \textit{De Sepulturis}, no record of excommunication exists for this action, suggesting that there was a grace period in 1299-1300 for implementation of the bull.
\textsuperscript{171} Westerhof, \textit{Death and the Noble Body}, 63.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid, 64.
The heart was the seat of the soul and the most valued part of a person. Isabel’s heart was sent to her first husband, and Henry’s heart went to a saint; the “best parts” went to more personally connected churches. Their main bodies remained with the dynastic foundings of Beaulieu and Hailes. Although Edmund and Richard personally founded more than sufficient churches to cater to all of their organs, they both sent parts to churches that had different personal connections that they did not personally fund.

The Establishment of the Angevins

As Westerhof observes, the lord’s presence and perception in his local lands and church were exceedingly important in maintaining his position in society. Their local churches were also concerned with their own status; the possession of elite cadavers garnered esteem for the monasteries, and various orders competed for the privilege. This was not always so. In 1135, Henry I of England died near Rouen, France. His viscera (including his heart), eyes, and brain were buried at Rouen Cathedral. The monks at Rouen were said to be very displeased at their gift. His retainers attempted to transport his body to Reading Abbey in England, which Henry had founded “for the salvation of his soul.” However, the body decayed too rapidly and supposedly killed the surgeon in charge of eviscerating him. The rest of the trip to Reading was just as pleasant.

The multiple burial of Henry I fit into the same mold as Charles the Bald and Otto I: the king had died away from home and away from the desired location of burial, and to transport the corpse, evisceration was implemented to make the attempt. However, unlike the Holy Roman Emperors’, Henry I’s multiple burial began a trend in the royal house that persisted until 1299.

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173 Westerhof, Death and the Noble Body, 57.
174 Ibid, 58.
175 Boase, Death in the Middle Ages, 113.
176 Binski, Medieval Death, 63.
The kings of England and many feudal lords under them buried their parts separately on a regular basis.

As seen in the case study of the earls of Cornwall, the heart gained special significance early on by being “the best part” and having elaborate funerals for it separate from that of the body. Based upon Westerhof’s study, Estella Weiss-Krejci conjectures that because heart burial was perpetrated upon men, women, and even children, the practice spread far more rapidly in England than in Central Europe.\textsuperscript{177} The typical practitioner of heart burial in the medieval territory of the Holy Roman Empire was an unmarried, childless religious elite. The process did not become exponential through family ties as it did in the noble families of England until the early modern period.

The use of heart burial by the Angevins changed from a necessary funerary procedure to a clear political message over the sixty-four years between the death of Henry I and the death of Richard I Lionheart. The dukes of Normandy conquered England in 1066, and since that time, their realms straddled the English Channel. The addition of land from the marriages of Henry I’s daughter Matilda to Geoffrey V, Count of Anjou, as well as Richard I’s marriage to Berengaria of Navarre resulted in a domain that consisted of England, parts of Ireland, and approximately half of France.

The reign of Henry II was characterized by the strife within the House of Plantagenet. The sons of Henry II fought constantly with each other and their father. With the death of Henry the Younger and Geoffrey, Richard and John Lackland survived to feud. While Richard was on crusade, John revolted with the assistance of Philippe II Augustus, king of France. When Richard died in battle at Chalûs in 1199, his will ordered that this body be split into three

\textsuperscript{177} Weiss-Krejci, “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Central Europe,” 133.
parts. The Abbey of Fontevrault 116 miles to the north received his body, as it already possessed the body of his father, Henry II. His heart traveled a further 168 miles north to rest at Rouen, the resting place of William the Conqueror, Henry I, and Richard’s brother, Henry the Younger. His viscera rested where he died, at Chalûs in the southwestern quarter of France.

The gift of the entrails is debated among scholars. Contemporary Roger of Wendover suggests that the gift, much like that of Henry I, was not happily received. Rather, it was a deliberate insult. Binski believes Wendover’s spin to be an apocryphal tale. Sergio Bertelli appears to support Wendover’s view in his muddled account of a “Prince Charles of England” who died at “Chaluz” in “1189.” Using Speculum reviewer Samantha Kelly’s corrections, the passage becomes a clear supporter of Richard’s entrails as a negative gift. In contrast, Agostino Paravicini Bagliani refers to Chalûs as a “favored monastery.” Neither Giesey nor Brown attaches negative sentiments to the intestinal burial. The heart received greater importance, but the religious house received the entrails with equal care.

Perhaps most important to Richard, however, was the fact that his body parts created a front against Philippe II Augustus’ forces. The locations for his remains represented his family’s territorial acquisitions since the time of William the Conqueror. England itself had a built-in moat, but the rest of the Angevin territory remained susceptible to attacks from the French king. Rouen sat in Upper Normandy, was the traditional capital of Norman lands, and came from Richard’s ancestor, William the Conqueror. Fontevrault lay in the heart of Anjou, his father’s birthright. Lastly, Chalûs rested in the heart of Eleanor of Aquitaine’s domain, which he

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180 Bertelli, *The King’s Body*, 32.
181 Samantha Kelly, “Review: The King’s Body Sacred Rituals of Power in Medieval and Early Modern Europe,” *Speculum*, Vol 78, No 3 (July 2003): 837. Bertelli’s book is highly problematic from several angles and should be used carefully, if at all.
inherited from her as her favored son, regardless of his father or brothers. West of Aquitaine and buttressed against the Pyrenees were the lands acquired by Richard in his marriage to Berengaria of Navarre. Richard’s dispersed body parts made not only a statement of family values but also reasserted Richard I’s and the English Crown’s claim to its territories on the French side of the Channel. Richard I’s heart was packed into a silver box with an outer lead box for preservation purposes. The lead box measured 12.2 x 23 x 17 centimeters. His inner silver box bore a simple inscription, “Hic Jacet Cor Ricardi Regis Anglorum,” or “here lies the heart of Richard, King of England.”

The story of Richard’s heart does not end at Rouen in 1199. Rather, in late 2012, the dusty remains of the heart underwent analysis to discover how the heart was preserved and if a specific cause of death for Richard could be determined. The latter question could not be answered, but the study revealed new information about preservation techniques. Initial analysis found linen fibers as well as pollens indigenous to France in the late spring and early summer within the heart dust itself. Although many heavy metals such as lead were found on the heart, these likely came from the lead box in which it was stored. Evidence of lime, a commonly known disinfectant and desiccant, was present. The authors of the study also found mercury within the heart matter; mercury was a commonly used element in primitive, medieval embalming.

A far less practical ingredient for preservation was the fragrant frankincense. As observed by the team, “frankincense was a non-negligible part of all embalming process during medieval times, as this symbolic substance appeared at both extremities of the Christ life:

183 Bandé, Le Coeur du Roi, 53.
185 Ibid, 3.
presented by the Biblical Magi at His birth, and used during His external embalming after the
Passion.”186 Clearly, Richard’s embalmers sought the “odor of sanctity” and the saintly
preservation for the English king. They also needed his heart to endure in order to receive
prayers; “indeed, as stated by a 13th century bishop of Rochester, Richard the Lionheart spent 33
years in Purgatory as expiation for his sins, and ascended to Heaven only in March 1232.”187

In order for Richard’s immortal soul to achieve heaven, his heart must also be “immortal”
or at least not decayed until this goal is achieved. The heart had been preserved with more than
just a lead box to collect prayers effectively. Other hearts, including those of Anne of Bretagne
(d. 1514) and Charles VII of France (d. 1461), show evidence of similar preservation.188 The
well-preserved bodies of Italian and Spanish nobles used mixes of herbs and frankincense akin to
Richard’s in order to promote the sanctity and superiority of the nobles.189

The practice of heart burial and the interest in preserving elite corpses continued to rise in
popularity in the thirteenth century. The use of it by both nobles and royals reinforced the social
hierarchy and supported the feudal system. Only those that could afford evisceration, inurnment,
and transportation performed heart burial, restricting it to the most powerful families. These
activities soon spread to the royal family of France. However, Richard’s heart burial was
irregular in that he buried his entrails. Typically, the English nobles and royals only buried their
hearts separately from their bodies; the entrails were buried with or nearby the main body.190
The French, possibly as an effort to top the English, consistently performed burials for the body,
heart, and entrails.

187 Ibid, 5.
188 Ibid, 3.
189 Ibid, 5.
190 Weiss-Krejci, “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Central Europe,” 120.
The Crusades and French Heart Burial

Popular religious thought and expression reassured Christians that decay and rotting were not obstacles to resurrection. Although heart burial for sentimental reasons became more frequent, the practicality of transportation remained a dominant force in electing to divide one’s body. With the advent of the Crusades, more nobles and soldiers went far afield to seek glory for God, personal fortune, and adventure. However, pilgrimages were already a regular occurrence in the lives of medieval citizens. Whether it was to local shrines or to major holy sites, people of all classes attempted the journey. Some did not succeed in reaching their destination. If the person had money and was of sufficient social status, they could afford to have their body parts transported to their desired locations.

During this period, one of the processes for evisceration garnered the name *mos teutonicus*. Scholar Agostino Paravicini Bagliani traces the name to the work of Buoncompagno da Signa:

The Romans of olden days used to empty corpses of their entrails. They took out all the intestines. The rest of the body was softened in salt water. Thus bodies could be preserved for a very long time, as you can still see it today in ancient palaces and, near Naples, in certain caves. The Germans (*Teutonici*) by contrast, extracted the entrails from the corpses of men of high status who had died in foreign lands. They boiled the rest of the body for a long time in cauldrons until all the flesh, the nerves, and the sinews were separated from the bones and after that, the bones were preserved in aromatic wine, and covered in spices, and taken back to their fatherland.191

*Mos teutonicus*, referred to as the “Teutonic way” or as excarnation, was a popular method of noble or royal corpse preservation and transportation by the late twelfth century. It entailed the evisceration of the corpse (which including the removal of the heart, viscera, and any other organs the person wished to be dispersed) and the boiling of the flesh until it fell off the bones.192

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The person’s attendants packed the bones and the vital organs separately to be sent back to the family or desired resting place. The fleshy sluice was either sealed in a container and buried at the site of death or also sent back to the relatives.193 Mos teutonicus was predominantly a practical measure, but if the heart and viscera were given separate burial with a certain level of “notable pomp,” clearly these body parts had some sort of importance compared to the other remains.194 In addition, mos teutonicus disfigured the corpse beyond use in elaborate royal funerals, so its use was limited when the person died at home.

The reduction of the person to sluice, bones, and a few organ jars was not a preferred solution, but it was the most effective one during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Long royal funerals were not in fashion yet, so the elites did not patronize embalmers, nor was it a specialized position. Despite the aforementioned examples, kings that needed to travel far were still in the minority, thus embalming did not develop until later in the medieval period. Due to the Crusades, the need for transport over hundreds of miles outpaced the ability of primitive embalming of the twelfth century. As a result, those who died far from home and were desperate to have some part of them returned requested mos teutonicus.

Count Ekkebert of Puntten and Bishop Frederick of Cologne both died in 1158 in Italy. Both men were eviscerated and had their flesh detached from their bones. The entrails and flesh were buried locally, but the bones travelled back to their respective homes in Germany.195 When disease decimated his army, Frederick Barbarossa commanded that those who died on campaign with him in 1167 were to be subjected to mos teutonicus and have their bones sent back home.196

In 1190, Frederick Barbarossa himself died on the Third Crusade. He had taken a Crusader’s vow that threatened severe punishment for not completing it. As a result, in order to satisfy his vow, Barbarossa was disemboweled, boiled, and deboned. The bones were then carried to Tyre, which fulfilled Barbarossa’s vow to go to the Holy Land. In this case, the inverse occurred; instead of returning home, part of Barbarossa continued onward. The Crusades continued through the fifteenth century, and over time, the preferred organ to send to the Holy Land was the heart.

Although Germanic lands offered the earliest examples of separate interment of body parts, the specific practice of heart burial was not popular among rulers. However, religious elites often elected to have it performed on them. The prince-bishops of Wurzburg typically sent their body to Wurzburg Cathedral, their heart to Ebrach Abbey, and their intestines to the church at Marienburg. Unfortunately, Ebrach Abbey’s hearts were either destroyed during the Peasant Revolt of 1525, or the monks seeking to protect the hearts from the revolt hid them and then could not recall the hiding place. Additionally, the French and English believed that the heart was the only royal body part that could stand in place of the whole body, while Germanic people believed that like saints, any part could do the job, if necessary.

Burying one’s body in separate places was not reserved for noble men; as pointed out by Weiss-Krejci, women took part in this practice as well. The wives of Richard of Cornwall illustrate this. That said, the most well-documented cases are typically those of reigning kings or queens. In France, heart burial became particularly political. The first French king to be divided into parts was Louis VIII in 1226. He had died while returning from the Albigensian Crusade.

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198 Weiss-Krejci, “Heart Burial and Post-Medieval Central Europe,” 120.
199 Ibid, 132.
200 Bandé, Le Coeur du Roi, 59.
in the south of France, leaving his young son, Louis IX, as king and his formidable wife, Blanche of Castile, as regent. Blanche was a daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II of England. The English royal couple had not divided their bodies, but their reigning sons, Richard I and John, had. 201 Blanche was therefore familiar with the practice of multiple burial through her brothers. Because of the distance between Clermont and Paris, Louis VIII was eviscerated, and his heart and entrails were buried at the Abbey of Saint André. The rest of his body traveled back to Paris to be placed in Saint-Denis. 202

In 1228, Blanche and Louis IX founded the Royaumont Monastery for the Cistercian order in Melun, France. 203 This is notable because, previously, the French royal family had almost exclusively been associated with the Benedictine monks at Saint-Denis. Blanche later founded Maubuisson Abbey in 1236. The activities of the royal family with new mendicant orders threatened the dominance of the Benedictines at Saint-Denis. When various royals performed acts of patronage – particularly multiple burial – for the benefit of a new order, the Benedictines were quick to argue precedence and their rightful claim. 204 The enmity between the older, established orders of Benedictines and Augustinians and the new mendicant orders of Franciscans, Dominicans, and Celestines grew, especially as Louis IX’s own favor toward the Franciscans became more pronounced.

Therefore, it was no minor incident when Blanche of Castile died in 1252 and left her heart and body to the Celestines. Both recipient churches had been founded by Blanche. The main body was laid to rest at the religious house that Blanche had retired to in her advanced age,

201 There is some apocryphal evidence that Henry II’s heart was moved to Scotland at the beginning of the French Revolution, though this is highly unlikely.
203 Binski, Medieval Death, 58.
204 Ibid, 59.
Maubuisson. Her heart was sent to Notre Dame de Lys, near Royaumont Monastery. In the same fashion as her brothers, Blanche elected to send her heart out at her death in 1252. She also elected to have her parts interred at religious houses that she founded rather than the central royal necropolis, much like contemporary English nobles. Alexandre Bandé believes this choice to be a watershed moment in the history of heart burial, as Blanche’s own popularity fostered the development of the custom in France’s royal and noble families. Elizabeth A.R. Brown notes that nearly three months passed between Blanche’s death and the transfer of the heart to Lys; such hesitance in giving up the heart indicates the value of that organ alone.

One other point should be observed in this particular case. Both houses in this matter were Celestine. The delay in delivering the heart to a sister house suggests that the Celestine houses competed with each other as well as external houses for the royal favor. It is a matter of house against house rather than a more unified order against order in this competition for hearts. Gaude-Ferragu confirms that the Celestines were highly competitive by revealing numerous forgeries by the monk Beurrier. Not only did he “steal” hearts from other orders’ monasteries, he also claimed hearts possessed by other Celestine monasteries. The study of heart burial is handicapped by these false claims, as the disposition of the heart prior to the French Revolution has now been made uncertain. Just as the competition between the mendicant orders harmed their ability to serve the community, their records now may be more harmful than helpful in research.

Frederick Barbarossa and other monarchs who died far from the kingdom presented a problem for their homeland. As mentioned above, the Crusades continued to present both

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207 Brown, “Authority, the Family, and the Dead,” 810.
opportunity and danger for nobles to enhance their position. Pressure from both the Papacy and other participating rulers raised the stakes for a king to participate. However, Christian duty should not be underestimated as a motive. Louis IX of France went on Crusade twice, dying at Tunis in 1270. The loss of a king in a foreign land was a cause for crisis. Cognizant of this, Louis made provisions for his body in case he did die on crusade. Since he was in a non-Christian land, Louis’s troupe performed *mos teutonicus* on the king. Louis’ brother, Charles I of Anjou, requested that the heart and viscera remain separate from the rest of the innards.\(^\text{209}\)

Brown asserts that Louis IX’s consolidated the tradition of heart burial in France. His parents had done it, but his saintly life and deliberate choice cemented the tradition’s presence in French ritual.\(^\text{210}\) Likewise, at his death in 1285, Charles I of Anjou also willed that his heart be separated from his body.\(^\text{211}\) Gaude-Ferragu comments Charles likely requested this because he was the King of Sicily and Naples; although he was not a king of France, he was still king.\(^\text{212}\) The line of Anjou remained the rulers of Naples until 1435, when the line died out.

Binski observes that although the person is reduced from whole into parts and cooked down in the process of *mos teutonicus*, no power is lost. If anything, it is condensed.\(^\text{213}\) The urn of flesh, like the bones, heart, and entrails, was sent out as well. Much like a saint’s relic, the royal power remained; the king was still the king. Louis remained the king of France, even though his body no longer resembled a king. Giesey believes that later French kings did not use *mos teutonicus* because it deviated so far from intact burial.\(^\text{214}\) In addition, *mos teutonicus* presented the problem of what to focus on during the liminal period between kings. The king

\(^\text{210}\) Brown, “Authority, the Family, and the Dead,” 810.
\(^\text{211}\) Personal observation at Saint-Denis, 19 January 2013.
\(^\text{212}\) Gaude-Ferragu, ‘Le Coeur ‘Couronne,’” 254.
\(^\text{213}\) Binski, *Medieval Death*, 63.
\(^\text{214}\) Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, 21
was an urn, not a body. The “odor of sanctity” granted to the royal body by herbs and frankincense was impossible; the king’s virtue, power, and money could not be expressed. The question of how to resurrect from an urn probably crossed a few minds as well. Heart burial outlived *mos teutonicus* because the heart itself was set aside and given special significance. Removal of the heart was part of *mos teutonicus*, but the opening could be hidden; nothing could be done to improve the look of an urn. The heart’s role as the seat of the soul became more pronounced in thirteenth-century philosophical writings, as well as the increasingly large funerals and tombs for hearts.

**Fashionable Death**

During the Crusades, when hearts were most likely to be transported long distances, the separately interred heart typically was placed in a small metal box or form enclosed in a larger lead box for purposes of preservation. In France and England, gisant or recumbent tombs became fashionable in the eleventh century. This type of funerary art depicted the deceased royal or noble in a supine position, hands folded in prayer or holding the accoutrements of his or her station. While some figures appear to be sleeping, others were sculpted as if they were standing up, but placed horizontally upon the tomb. With the rise in separate burial during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, three gisant tombs became necessary for a given royal or noble. The disfiguring *mos teutonicus* was not enacted when the body lay close to home, but evisceration took place to preserve the body’s outer shell and to provide parts to express devotion to a religious house or church. During this process, the heart and entrails were put in separate leather bags.  

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216 *The Royal Necropolis at the Basilica of Saint-Denis*, tour item #12.
As heart burial and entrail burial became more common in France, the gisants for these body parts started to depict exactly what was in the tomb. Heart tombs and bowel tombs initially looked identical: the figure clutched a leather bag in their left hand. However, as the heart gained significance, the heart gisant depicted the person holding a heart in their left hand rather than the leather bowel bag. The heart went from a box that was compact and portable to a permanent grave and a funeral that was comparable in size to the ones rendered for the body.

In 1290, the abbess of Fontevrault appealed to Edward I of England for the heart of his predecessor, Henry III. She claimed that Henry III had willed his heart to the abbey in order to join his ancestors that rested there. Upon investigation, the nun’s claim was verified; the abbey of Fontevrault was owed a royal heart. Edward I issued a royal document that permitted the transfer of the heart from Westminster Abbey to France. It reads as follows:

The King, to all those whom it may concern, greeting. Whereas, we have understood for certain that our lord, Henry, of illustrious memory, formerly King of England, our father, when he was lately living at the Monastery of Fontevraud, promised his Heart to that same monastery after his decease, and the Abbess beloved to us in Christ, of the aforesaid monastery, lately coming to England, has sought that the Heart should be delivered to her in fulfillment of the aforesaid promise. Walter, beloved to us in Christ, Abbot of Westminster, in the presence of the reverend fathers the Bishops of Durham, of Bath, and Wells, one of our beloved and faithful adherents, Edmund our brother, and William de Valence our uncle, and many more of our faithful lieges, on the first Monday before the feast of the blessed Virgin, in the twentieth year of our reign, delivered the aforesaid Heart in an entire condition to the aforesaid Abbess in the Church of Westminster, according to our will and instruction, to be carried to the monastery of Fontevraud, and buried in the same. Witness, the King at London, the third day of December.

In assessing this case, Westerhof concludes that there is considerable flexibility when it came to the timing of heart burial. The bodies were all likely eviscerated for the sake of preservation, but the heart was not necessarily sent out to be buried right away at a separate location.

217 The Royal Necropolis at the Basilica of Saint-Denis, tour item #12.
219 Hartshorne, Enshrined Hearts, 111-112.
heart and entrails probably were in his crypt until the Abbess requested the heart. She waited twenty years for the prized heart, and it seemed to be easily retrieved from Henry III’s resting place at Westminster.

As the heart’s mystical qualities increased during the thirteenth century, so too did the pomp and ceremony that accompanied its interment separately from the body. Murielle Gaude-Ferragu believes that the prestige given to a noble or royal heart burial approached similar dimensions of the installation of a saint’s relic. This caused some stir among the religious of the period. Gaude-Ferragu is quick to point out, however, that the only time the royal or noble heart received such ceremony was at the first burial; any relocations of the royal remains were typically done in a far less extravagant fashion. In contrast, every time a saint’s body traveled, the same high standard of veneration and public celebration followed it. Despite these differences, the powers of holy saints and powerful kings appeared to be converging in the practice of separate burial.

This is particularly problematic in the cases of the English and French crowns. By the end of the thirteenth century, both dynasties claimed lineage to a saint. Edward the Confessor of England had a long-established shrine in Westminster. In 1297, Pope Boniface VIII declared Louis IX of France, who had died on Crusade, a saint. By tracing one’s descent through holy blood, the heirs of Edward the Confessor and Louis IX were legitimate and inherently powerful.

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223 Ibid.
Conclusion

Heart burial rose in popularity during the twelfth century due to its spiritual and temporal benefits. By electing to have her heart buried in one church and her body in another church, a noblewoman reaped the benefits of the prayers said in both places. The belief that the dead benefited from prayers and masses existed by the early twelfth century, as seen in the story of Philippe I of France. By the end of the thirteenth century, Purgatory was a codified state of being for the soul. Prayers and masses expedited the soul’s stay in Purgatory and released the person into heaven.

The recent study on Richard I’s heart suggests that medieval people believed that a body or part could only collect prayers properly if it had not rotted away. Richard’s embalmers wanted to guarantee that the king would make it to heaven. Preservation in a lead container was simply not enough. Returning to the King of Kings, they employed preservatives like frankincense to keep the king’s heart and body intact to collect prayers. The frankincense covered up any smells of rot, acting as the odor of sanctity for those who were rich or powerful, but not saintly. Gaude-Ferragu observes similarity in heart burials and relic translations, but she reminds us that the king’s heart only has such power once – his power passes on to his heir. A saint’s power is eternal.

The temporal benefits of heart burial affected not only the giver, but also the receiver. The giver of the heart may be seen as a devout person or one showing favor to a particular religious institution. Elites used heart burial to reinforce their own legitimacy; they had the power, status, and influence to do it. Likewise, the princes of the blood and the nobles closest to the throne utilized heart burial to cement their place at court and in the social order. New religious orders vied for the possession of royal hearts as a means of gaining legitimacy and
competing with the old orders. A royal heart was a sign of patronage and would attract pilgrims and other family members.

The funerary arts became more refined as the desire for a full body burial superseded the expedient *mos teutonicus*. By having the body of a saint – incorrupt and sweet-smelling – the king proved his suitability for the office, as well as the continued legitimacy of his line. In England, not only did the king use this political tool, but the feudal nobles under him also implemented their own tradition to preserve the social order. Although the royal and noble bodies became increasingly politicized, the desire for burial in a certain place as well as to be near family also remained motivations for multiple burial through the medieval period.

These concepts pervade the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as kings began to see themselves as bearing not only royal blood, but also holy blood. The Investiture Controversy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries divided the world into the two realms of secular power and religious power. This emergence of the royal cults of Edward the Confessor and Louis IX threatened to draw them back together again in the favor of royalty. The relations between the Papacy and France soured during the course of Philippe IV Le Bel’s reign during the late thirteenth century. The deterioration continued as the struggle over the Gallican church intensified and as Philippe’s claims through his relation to the new St. Louis exacerbated the situation. Before the height of the controversy in 1299, however, the death of Philippe IV’s father, Philippe III must be addressed.
CHAPTER V
DE SEPULTURIS AND HEART BURIAL, 1299-1351

Philippe III

It was not until the late Middle Ages in both France and England that primogeniture ensured the stable passage of a crown from father to son.\(^{225}\) Even when an heir was poised to take control and all was at peace, the Church still concerned itself with the treatment of the body. One of the heaviest political and philosophical matters during the 1280s was the treatment of the King of France’s body. Elizabeth A.R. Brown worked extensively with this case in her 1981 article, “Death and the Human Body in the Middle Ages,” but new scholarship has not yet been reconciled to this article.

In accordance with the royal custom, Philippe III willed his body to the Church of Saint-Denis. What was not ordinary was that he left no other instructions.\(^{226}\) At his death in 1285, Philippe III was away from Paris on the Aragonese Crusade with his son, the future Philippe IV. The new Philippe IV worked quickly in distributing his father’s remains. He gave his father’s flesh and blood to the Dominicans in Narbonne instead of taking the entire corpse to Saint-Denis. The new king promised to transport the bones to Saint-Denis, but he planned to give the heart to the Dominicans in Paris.

Controversy ensued because these actions violated Philippe III’s will. The last testament had not forbidden anything, but it named Saint-Denis as the sole recipient of Philippe III’s body. Second, it was the opinion of French cardinal John Cholet and others that Philippe IV deprived Saint-Denis of the heart, a cruel thing to do to such loyal and devout men. However, Philippe IV could not go back on his word to the Dominicans. Thus, Philippe IV buried Philippe III’s body

\(^{225}\) Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, 42.
parts as such. Elizabeth A.R. Brown postulates that the Dominicans had persuaded the young prince into making a series of hasty decisions that clearly favored them.

The initial objections of Cardinal Cholet and the clergy began the extensive canon law debate that quickly ensued in 1286. Along with arguing for the preservation of the father’s will and intent, thinkers of the time concerned themselves with the division of the corpse. Gervais of Mont-Saint-Eloi allowed for the burial of the entrails immediately, should attempting to transport the entire corpse become dangerous. He went to refute the idea that the division of the body was an effective method of curtailing time in Purgatory. In addition, he wondered if it was permissible to send out a part of the body if the location of the main burial remained at the family tomb.

Godfrey of Fontaines grudgingly agreed that sometimes a burial that disregarded the wishes of the deceased was necessary. However, Philippe IV did not say that his father changed his burial requests, nor did the king’s intimates suggest that Philippe III wanted his body in multiple pieces or anywhere else other than Saint-Denis. Due to a lack of evidence to suggest a change in Philippe III’s intent, Godfrey refused to identify the case as one that met these requirements. Instead of following the simple instructions, Philippe IV carved Philippe III up and dispersed the parts among the churches. Gervais had similar objections, stating that perhaps only the pope had the authority to change a person’s will.

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228 Ibid, 236.
230 Ibid.
The disregard of the will gave validation for many of the complaints, but the division of the king’s body also triggered a reaction of disgust. Both Gervais and Godfrey expressed extreme distaste for the separation of the body. Godfrey reassured his readers that God’s great power would reunite the body at the Resurrection. However, it was still not the preferred state of the body, going so far as to describe the division as a detestable abuse of savagery. Pope Boniface VIII later invoked this phrase in his papal bull regarding the separation and preservation of corpses, De Sepulturis.

The third participant, Henry of Ghent, saw the question in an entirely different light. Invoking Roman law, he treated the corpse as an object at the center of a custody battle between the religious houses. Henry also noted the heart was the highest valued part of the bequest, since it was the seat of the soul. By not giving it to the clerics at Saint-Denis, Philippe IV robbed them of their rightful inheritance. Although several members of the Capetian royal house had given their hearts to various houses, no king before Philippe III had had his heart sent away to an order.

Though he took a different tact than Gervais and Godfrey, Henry of Ghent’s arguments are the most significant to the understanding of heart burial during this period. For Henry, the heart was the most valuable part of the person, as it was the location of the soul. He took the argument further by asserting that the heart was the site of the resurrection. By 1285,
therefore, the heart had taken on a greater importance than the head for some scholars. Rather than bringing the heart back to the body at the Final Resurrection, God would bring the body to the heart. Because the body developed out of the heart in Aristotelian theory, so it would return to the heart at the Resurrection, creating a circle.

By accepting that the resurrection could occur at the heart’s location, new meaning comes to the various heart clusters in Europe. If the noble buried his body within a family crypt and his heart with other relatives’ hearts, he effectively hedged his bets as to where he would resurrect and with whom. Due to royal and noble intermarriage, it was not uncommon for the married woman’s body to remain with that of her husband and her heart to be sent back to her family, unless she requested otherwise. This custom remains extant through the early modern and modern periods. Habsburg Archduchess Maria Anna of Austria and Queen of Portugal had her heart returned to the Kaisergruft in Vienna at her death in 1754. Her body remained with her husband, King Juan V, in Lisbon.²³⁹ In 2011, after the death of Otto von Habsburg, his predeceased wife Regina’s body was moved to the Kaisergruft to rest with him, while her heart remained with her family in Heidelberg.²⁴⁰ By spreading their parts, these women identified not only with both their and their husbands’ families, they also left open the possibility to resurrect at either location.²⁴¹

Returning to King Philippe III’s body, scholar Alexandré Bandé observes three scenarios in which Philippe IV likely could have interred his father’s parts without the theological and scholarly uproar. If Philippe IV had invoked any of these reasons for the change in his father’s

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²³⁹ Personal observation, Habsburg Imperial Crypts, 9 January 2013.
²⁴¹ This is far less certain in the case of Regina von Habsburg; her children may have moved her body in an exercise of tradition rather than in an attempt to relieve their mother’s resurrection anxiety.
will, this controversy would have been mitigated. First, Philippe III may have changed his will orally or in writing that had been lost in the aftermath of his sudden death. A second scenario would be that Philippe III did not plan his death or see it as particularly important. The third, most likely scenario that Bandé presents is that the king considered his fate and simply wanted to be with his ancestors, whole or not. This gave his son, Philippe IV, a great deal of leeway - possibly too much for a seventeen-year-old to consider without the advice of the nearby Dominican friars. However, Philippe did not indicate that any of these scenarios had happened, leaving the Benedictine monks fuming at the supposed treachery of the Dominicans. The custody battle over Philippe III’s body was not the first or the last conflict between the established orders and the new mendicant orders.

Louis IX had ordered a reorganization of Saint-Denis before his death, and it had just been completed in the mid-1280s. This had been done for holding more royal remains, yet now the new king was taking body parts away from the church. Not only did Philippe move his father, he moved the hearts of Louis IX’s brother, Charles of Anjou, and two of his sons’ hearts to the same place as Philippe III’s heart. The resident Benedictines were furious at the loss.

Despite the controversy and the volumes of writing produced in response, Philippe IV Le Bel never faced any official consequences for his treatment of his father’s body or his will. Philippe remained opposed to the Church’s impositions upon his domain and power, which ultimately resulted in a feud with the Papacy itself. The case of Philippe III remained relevant in this conflict.

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242 Bandé, “Philippe le Bel, le Coeur, et le Sentiment Dynastique,” 271.
243 Ibid, 269.
244 Ibid, 272.
De Sepulturis

Pope Boniface VIII took office in 1294 after the resignation of Celestine V two years prior. In contrast to his predecessor, Boniface was a strong, forceful ruler who championed the superiority and sovereignty of the papacy.\footnote{245} He also was hot-tempered, impulsive, and not afraid of using his position to assist relatives.\footnote{246} In France, Philippe IV continued to be steadfast in carrying out his own wishes. As strongly as Boniface advocated the power of the papacy, Philippe equally insisted upon the recognition of his own power and sovereignty as king of France.

In February 1296, Boniface VIII intervened in the ongoing war between England and France. In times of war, the king exercised the power to tax the clergy with the pope’s permission, though this was rarely sought. In an attempt to break the cycle of war between the two nations, Boniface issued the papal bull *Clericos Laicos*. The bull condemned the taxation of the clergy, reprimanding both the clergy who bowed to the request without consulting the pope and the temporal rulers who dared to seize assets by force to fulfill the tax.\footnote{247} The penalty for acquiescing to these requests or enforcing them was excommunication. The bull did not sit well with either king, but Philippe took particular offense and responded in kind in August 1296. He issued a royal decree that France would no longer export valuable metals or currency, thus forbidding any revenues of French churches from being sent to Rome.\footnote{248}

The ultimate result of this squabble was that Boniface VIII crumbled to the French counter-interdict; he conceded to Philippe’s wishes in the papal bull *Etsi de Statu* in July 1297.

\footnote{246} Ibid, 173.
\footnote{248} Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State*, 174.
We add to this our declaration that if some dangerous emergency should threaten the aforesaid king or his successors in connection with the general or particular defence of the realm, the above mentioned decree shall by no means extend to such a case of necessity. Rather, the same king and his successors may demand and receive from the said prelates and ecclesiastical persons a subsidy or contribution for such defence and the said prelates and persons can and must pay it to the oft-mentioned king and his successors [...] even when the Roman pontiff has not been consulted…

Brian Tierney indicates that Boniface capitulated in part due to external pressures. The troubles with Philippe were political, but within Italy, personal grudges began to mount against Boniface.

Boniface’s predecessor, Celestine, had resigned and retired to monastic life. He had been highly sympathetic toward the mendicant orders and supported their quest for reform. As such, the Spiritual Franciscans in particular were disappointed when Celestine V vacated the Holy See and Boniface, nepotistic and overly secular, was elected. Boniface’s worldly connections also caused him trouble in other quarters. Boniface was a Gaetani by birth, and his appointments of family members to choice positions within the Church did not escape the eye of the rival clan of Colonna, two members of which were cardinals. In the midst of the conflict with Philippe, in May 1296, the Colonna joined forces with the Franciscans to issue a series of manifestos against Boniface, accusing him of various crimes, including persuading the pious Celestine V to resign, nepotism, corruption, and heresy.

Boniface found himself under siege from Philippe from the outside and Italian clergymen from within Rome. In 1297, Boniface VIII canonized Philippe IV’s grandfather, Louis IX. This may have been a conciliatory measure on Boniface’s part. Likewise, Boniface gave Philippe a number of bequests and revenues, allowed Philippe to prohibit dissenting and potentially

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250 Tierney, The Crisis of Church and State, 174.
251 Ibid.
traitorous clerics from office, and ceded much power to the state of France to create clerical positions.253 Despite this, Philippe remained aloof; when the Pope negotiated a peace between Edward I of England and Philippe, he was forced to do so as private citizen Benedict Gaetani, not as Pope Boniface VIII.254 In turn, Boniface’s next actions were not conducive to peace between the pope and the French king.

In 1299, Pope Boniface VIII issued the papal bull, *De Sepulturis*, which barred the practice of *mos teutonicos*. Boniface insisted upon the “natural dissolution” of the corpse, hence arguing against the unnatural division or reduction of the corpse and its parts caused by man.255 However, because of the bull’s broadness, *De Sepulturis* arguably forbade any sort of preservation offered by embalming and multiple interment.256 In theory, this included evisceration and the removal of the heart for transportation. The French kings and their court had developed a consistent and well-known heart burial tradition by this point.

Scholars do not agree as to what specifically spurred Boniface to go after the French practice of separate burial. This was a politically imprudent move; he had just settled a peace treaty between Edward I of England and Philippe IV of France, and the Vatican states were in danger of invasion from the kings of Sicily and Naples.257 In addition, the history of enmity and tenuous peace between the French Crown and the Papacy should have dissuaded Boniface from interfering in private burial customs.

Elizabeth A.R. Brown suggests, and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani agrees, that the issuance of the bull was a deliberate slight against Philippe IV. The French monarchs practiced

multiple burial publicly and often. Though the peace between Edward I and Philippe was settled, Philippe IV and Boniface VIII continued to feud on several other fronts.\textsuperscript{258} It was probably not a coincidence that Boniface VIII also published the bull days before the funeral of Philippe’s confessor, Nicholas de Nonancour. The priest previously had announced his intent to send out his organs.\textsuperscript{259} Brown has hypothesized that the timing of \textit{De Sepulturis} was due to Nonancour’s stated intent to separate his heart from his body. Rather keep it in France, the priest had publicly planned to send his heart to Italy. The custom was unknown in Italy, and so it is possible that Boniface VIII attempted to limit its spread.\textsuperscript{260}

However, given the political difficulties between the papacy and France, the confessor of the king sending his heart to Italy may have been seen as a threat to the sovereignty of the Papal States. While Philippe himself did not send his heart to Italy, his agent attempted to. Richard I of England had laid his body parts across the English Crown’s territories on the continent a century before; the use of a heart as a claim to power was not long absent from memory. Nonancour, a French priest who was very close to the French monarch, attempted to send his heart to Boniface’s lands sans permission. Boniface may have seen this as an act of aggression by Philippe, both in terms of land and in terms of imposing his will.

Brown, Paravicini Bagliani, and others have also supposed that Boniface, a bit of a hypochondriac in private life, may have allowed his personal fears about his body to fuel this legislation.\textsuperscript{261} However, the use of the phrase “detestable abuse of savagery” in the opening lines of the bull indicates that he certainly recalled the 1286 debate over Philippe III’s remains. The problem lay in the fact that Boniface did not invoke specific arguments set forth by Gervais of

\textsuperscript{259} Paravicini Bagliani, “The Corpse in the Middle Ages,” 334.
\textsuperscript{260} Brown, “Authority, the Family, and the Dead,” 825.
\textsuperscript{261} Ibid, 807.
Mont-Saint-Eloi, Godfrey of Fontaines, or even Henry of Ghent to explain his position. Godfrey of Fontaines had argued that although God would reassemble the body, dismembering deliberately was excessive, a detestable abuse of savagery. Gervais of Mount-Saint-Eloi dismissed division as a way to speed up one’s time in Purgatory. Further, Gervais advocated the idea that only the pope had the authority to nullify a will. Boniface could have argued for papal supremacy in the matter and the virtue of intact burial if he had directly referenced these arguments. Instead, Boniface simply described the practice, denounced it, and prescribed penalties. This left De Sepulturis weak and unsubstantiated and caused it to appear as a punitive strike against Philippe, as observed by Binski. Boniface reissued this bull in February 1300 for the Jubilee Year to emphasize his seriousness about the topic, but with no changes.

De Sepulturis created more problems than it solved. Its ambiguous nature brought into question practices beyond mos teutonicus. Several scholars believe that due to the vague wording of De Sepulturis, concerns arose that that the practice of dividing holy bodies for relics was now forbidden. Boniface’s own actions belied this, as he made definitive efforts to separate the saints from the kings. In 1297, Boniface had canonized Philippe’s grandfather, Louis IX. Now France and England both had a royal saint. On 5 February 1300, not long before the second publication of De Sepulturis, the Pope permitted the translation of St. Louis’s head from Saint-Denis to Saint-Chapelle. While Brown attributes part of this inconsistent behavior

264 Ibid.
265 Digard, Volume II, 575-576; Brown, “Authority, the Family and the Dead,” 807.
266 Binski, Medieval Death, 67-68.
267 The bull’s proper name is De Sepulturis. Because it was reissued in 1300, some have classified this second publication as a decretal with the title of Detestande Feritatis. This is derived from the first sentence of the bull. The texts are identical, however.
268 Bandé, Le Coeur du Roi, 81. This would appear to contradict accounts that Louis IX was completely dissolved in the process of mos teutonicus. On the other hand, it could simply refer to his skull.
to Boniface’s own personality, it is plausible that this behavior was not inconsistent at all. Boniface permitted the translation because Louis was a saint, not merely a royal. Boniface and his successors were reluctant to permit the division and transport the bodies of the laity, but saints were a different matter entirely. Again, the royal saint presented a problem, but simply treating St. Louis as a saint – which he was – did not. The action did not cause the relationship between Philippe and the papacy to deteriorate any further than it already had; it might have improved tensions temporarily.

The bull began to show cracks early. In 1303, Guy of Harcourt requested permission to retrieve the corpse of his brother, Bishop John of Harcourt, from Siena. Boniface replied that as long as the body was unaltered for transport and had gone to dust, this was permissible. This is a concrete example of Boniface’s interest in allowing the body to decay naturally. Boniface believed that it was permissible to move the corpse after the flesh had fallen away and only bone remained. However, as pointed out by Brown, it is impossible that the body became desiccated dust a mere few months after burial, unless exposed to conditions far more extreme than a cleric’s tomb in Italy. Common interpretation agrees with Brown, believing that Boniface likely knew that the body had not decomposed. In spite of this, he gave consent for John’s transfer back home, as long as Guy did not attempt to preserve him or divide him into parts.

*De Sepulturis* extolls the virtue of natural decay and need to retain the dignity and the wholeness of the person, concepts that came to Christianity through the Greeks, Romans, and Jews. As proven in the work of anthropologist Robert Hertz, putrefaction is a major component of liminality in death and burial practices for many cultures, acting as the timer for such

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rituals. However, Boniface failed to invoke the philosophers of the 1286 controversy in the original bull and in the dispensation for Harcourt. Without mentioning any of these theological arguments, Boniface had made *De Sepulturis* a weak and ineffective document.

The phrasing in the dispensation for Guy of Harcourt indicates that if John had gone to dust, he was truly dead. Guy could not embalm John or preserve him to extend his liminality. The new doctrines of Purgatory are conspicuously absent in this bull, adding to the suspicion that Boniface had had a knee-jerk reaction in 1299. Because of its lack of specific reasons, Philippe IV and his descendants found loopholes through which to appeal against the prohibitions in *De Sepulturis*.

The issuance of *Ausculta Fili* in December 1301, the forged papal letters of 1302, and the issuance of *Unam Sanctam* in 1302 resulted in the complete breakdown of relations between Philippe and Boniface. The first States-General resulted in the universal support of Philippe by all three estates: nobles, the common people, and, most importantly, the clergy. In March 1303, Philippe arranged for his minister, Guillaume de Nogaret, to accuse Boniface of heresy, sodomy, and being an illegitimate pope. In specific, Boniface supposedly did

…not believe in the immortality or incorruptibility of the rational soul, but believes that the rational soul undergoes corruption with the body. He does not believe in an eternal life to come…and he was not ashamed to declared that he would rather be a dog or an ass or any brute animal than a Frenchman, which he would not have said if he believed that a Frenchman had an immortal soul.

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272 Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand*, 32.
In the fall of 1303, Philippe’s agent, Guillaume de Nogaret invaded Boniface’s vacationing spot in Anagni, arrested the pope, and shamed him. Boniface died in October of renal failure, collapsing under a heap of indignity.

Philippe IV was not done with Boniface yet, however. In 1310, seven years after his rival’s death, Philippe tried the dead pope on charges of heresy, sodomy, and other acts against the Church. Many of the accusations were reiterations of those presented in 1303. Again, Boniface’s supposed lack of belief in an immortal soul and eternal life in the hereafter was heavily emphasized. The charge of sodomy may have been part and parcel of the king’s accusations against rivals, but the weight placed on Boniface’s beliefs concerning the soul may point to Philippe’s true concerns. Brown notes that in the initial drafts of the 1303 charges had the immortality doubts at the eleventh position and the denial of eternal life at twenty-first. The final draft elevated these two charges to the first and second positions. These accusations remained the centerpiece of the 1310 trial, not sodomy or other shameful charges commonly used against political enemies.

Many scholars have attempted to construct the very complicated, almost anonymous character of Philippe IV. He did well in appointing able men to do his bidding, so much to the point that their personal choices and characters are better known to history than that of the king. To simply paint him as power-hungry or merely a thorn in the Papacy’s side would be to discredit his reign and his triumph of sovereignty. Alexandréal Bandé believes that the elevation of Louis IX to Saint Louis in 1297 began a process in which, by 1300, Philippe believed that all those who descended from such holy blood had innate power, “sanctity of the

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277 Brown, “Authority, the Family, and the Dead,” 829.
blood.” Brown notes that it is perhaps because of St. Louis’ separate burial that Philippe IV himself wanted one, whether or not his body was on pagan grounds; St. Louis stipulated that his division was only to occur if he died on pagan lands, which he did.

Robert Fawtier believes that Philippe’s firm belief in his power as king perhaps emanated not from St. Louis, but rather from his great-great-grandfather, Philippe II Augustus. Both Philippe II and Louis IX asserted that there should be “only one king in France.” As such, Fawtier describes Philippe IV as a man who

Faced with these pretensions [of Boniface] and imbued with the sanctity of his dynasty, a sanctity whose royal miracle (the ability to cure scrofula) he practiced himself and whose rites we see him revealing on his deathbed to his successor, he doubtless took these things as proof of his position; as a result, this grandson of St. Louis reacted violently, for he was a worships of that religion of monarchy that St. Louis had founded, and it appeared to him that the adversary of this monarchy, by establishing himself on dogmatic grounds, had become a heretic and was committing sacrilege.

The Royal Miracle, more commonly referred to as the Royal Touch, was the ability of the royal houses of England France to cure scrofula (known in modern times as mycobacterial cervical lymphadenitis). The religious sought to control its use by secular rulers, questioning the exact source of its power and attempting to restrict when and where a king could touch.

The blood of St. Louis, the Royal Touch, and the desire to separately bury the heart and other parts like St. Louis all added up to a problem for the religious establishment of late medieval Europe. Bandé believes that Boniface issued the bull to renew his power over Philippe, whose own personal history and theology were making it difficult for the pope to apply pressure. The convergence of the power of saints and kings also presented a solution to

279 Bandé, “Philippe le Bel, le Coeur, and the Sentiment Dynastique,” 275.
282 Ibid, 89.
284 Bandé, “Philippe le Bel, le Coeur, and the Sentiment Dynastique,” 276.
Philippe IV and ground from which to fight the incursions of the papacy on his sovereignty. By asserting his heritage and the right to bury his parts separately, Philippe resisted papal efforts to rein him in and demonstrated his dominance over his kingdom.285

Skirting the Bull

Even in the face of his ongoing enmity with the papacy, Philippe IV was undeterred from seeking a dispensation for the burial of his own body in multiple places. He immediately attempted to cajole Pope Benedict XI upon his accession after the death of Boniface. Benedict issued a dispensation for the division of flesh from bone in 1304, but it only went into effect if Philippe, his wife, or anyone within four degrees of consanguinity died far away from home. If the person died in Paris, the Church barred division. Additionally, the dispensation applied only to the flesh and the bones; no evisceration was to occur.286 Benedict’s papacy ended within a year of his election. The French king found Benedict’s successor, Clement V, much more malleable than his predecessors. Within six months of his election, Clement moved to Avignon and issued Philippe an indult (a pardon or permission rendered by Church authority) that gave him complete control over his burial arrangements. He could be eviscerated, boiled, cut, and embalmed as he saw fit.287 The only flaw in this dispensation was that it only applied to Philippe himself. Each member of the royal family had to apply on an individual basis. Despite the flaws of De Sepulturis, Boniface’s successors hesitated to contradict him on the topic of bodily division and separate burial.

285 Bandé, “Philippe le Bel, le Coeur, and the Sentiment Dynastique,” 277-278.
Aries writes in *In the Hour of Our Death* that the fifteenth century marked the transition from embalming for travel purposes to embalming for permanent preservation.\(^{288}\) This is doubtful; during the feud between the Philippe le Bel and the papacy, he was granted a dispensation in 1304 that permitted separate burial of his bones and flesh *only* if he was outside the city of Paris at the time of his death.\(^{289}\) Pope Benedict XI’s response greatly dissatisfied Philippe, as the French king doggedly pursued a full dispensation until he received it from Clement V in 1306.\(^{290}\) Despite not being far afield, Philippe still wanted his body interred in multiple places and embalmed, as did many of his successors well into the nineteenth century.

Philippe IV Le Bel finally died in 1314. He used his hard-fought indult to bury his heart and his entrails separately from his body. Giesey, who predates the work of Brown and Bandé, believed that Philippe IV set the trend for heart burial. While his first conclusion has been disproved, Giesey’s second assessment of Philippe’s funeral stands to this day: Philippe IV was the first of many French kings to put his body on display with the face exposure and in full regalia as part of the funerary ceremony.\(^{291}\)

The English kings had done this since the burial of Henry II in 1189. In both cases, the visual assertion of kingship was at the center of attention. Henry and Philippe wore crowns, held scepters, and were buried with other kingly accoutrements. Giesey does allow for Henry’s burial attire to be merely coincidental; Henry only laid on display for two days before being buried due to the heat. That said, much like heart burial, Henry II’s lying-in-state lacked the same meaning and motivations later attached to the practice by Philippe IV. Over time, the event acquired ritual significance and important in the court.

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\(^{288}\) Ariès, *In the Hour of Our Death*, 361.
The Decline and Death of *De Sepulturis*

After a two-year papal interregnum after the death of Clement V, Pope John XXII went straight to work on indults for the royal family in 1316. He issued dispensations for those who reigned as well as their family and consorts. Clementia of Hungary, widow of Louis X of France (son and heir of Philippe IV who had died during the papal interregnum and so was buried intact), Count Louis of Clermont (grandson of St. Louis), and Charles of La Marche (brother of Philippe V) all received indults that permitted separate burial, though not to the degree afforded to the king. John XXII also issued indults for Philippe V and his wife, Charles of France (Philippe V’s brother), Charles IV, and Philippe VI. When comparing the texts of the dispensations, it is evident that the pope had a form letter for the French royal family’s funerary dispensations. From Charles IV forward, the texts rarely deviate. John XXII did not retract *De Sepulturis*, but it was now expected and customary to bow to the French monarchy’s wishes. Bradford suggests that the papacy made a significant profit from issuing the many indults requested by the French royal family. John XXII was not known for his piety or his austerity, and the “sideline business” of managing the French royal family’s heart burials provided supplemental income. If the bull was dismantled or nullified, the papal coffers would suffer a loss. Eventually, the bull was voided. On 20 April 1351, Pope Clement VI issued a series of thirty dispensations to French king Jean II and the royal family. These ranged in subject from the selection of their own confessors to ‘no longer feeling obliged’ to maintain oaths and

293 Tardif, *Privileges Accordes A La Couronne de France*, 141-142; 155-156; 164-165; 190.
294 Ibid. 164-165.
The nineteenth indult granted John, his wife Joanna, and all of their descendants and relatives perpetual permission to dispose of their bodies in any way they deemed fit.\(^{297}\) This included *mos teutonicos*, heart burial, and the transport of the body to their desired resting places.

Clement VI effectively negated *De Sepulturis* in its entirety. The bull itself was partially at fault. Boniface had done such a poor job explaining the theological objections to division of the body as demonstrated in the 1286 controversy. Boniface could have argued the unnecessary division of the body, supposedly for prayers. As demonstrated by the 1303 dispensation for Guy de Harcourt, Boniface approved of the removal of the body, but only on the condition that it was “dust.” It was impossible that John of Harcourt’s body had gone to dust in such a short period. Boniface permitted the transport because the body was still past the point of preservation and division; it was not done decaying yet, but it would soon be. Thus, Guy could not interfere with the putrefaction process. However, none of these arguments appeared in Boniface’s issuances. Lack of substantiation led to later rulers and popes to find the bull arbitrary. The relationship between the papacy and the French crown also led to *De Sepulturis*’s ineffectiveness.

Embalmment: Genesis

Developments in the mortuary arts reduced anxieties about a rotting corpse, even though the theological message officially promoted by the Church did not change. As royal funeral ceremonies grew lengthier during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the royal embalmer developed methods of preserving the corpse for longer periods.\(^{298}\) The ever-lengthening funerals provided a distraction during the liminal period between the death of the king and the coronation of his heir. The ceremonies gave people at all levels something to focus on instead of

\(^{296}\) Tardiff, *Privileges Accordes A La Couronne de France*, 223-261. Dispensations 251 to 281 were all issued to John II on 20 April 1351.

\(^{297}\) Ibid, 245-246.

\(^{298}\) Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 365.
contemplating a gap in power. In 1320, royal physician Henry de Mondeville described his methods in preserving the bodies of Philippe IV and Louis X for as long as a month, with mixed success.\textsuperscript{299} The nobles imitated the royals to emphasize their place on the social scale; though their funerary rituals never outlasted the royals, they were more extensive than those of the common people.\textsuperscript{300} Embalming became a standard part of burial preparation over time.

One must note that during the medieval period, the purpose of embalming was not to completely prevent decay. The embalming technology during this period was insufficient for that task, and doctors and priests alike were cognizant of this fact. De Mondeville wrote notes on embalming that indicated the common length for which a body could be preserved – or at least kept from reeking – was about a month. In his Surgery, he writes:

\begin{quote}
There are three categories [of embalming]: one requires that you do very little, as when you need to keep the body of a pauper or some more wealthy person until it is interred within three days after death in summer time or four days in winters. Another way is needed to preserve the body of a prosperous person for a longer time; a mid-level nobleman (i.e., a baron) or an upper-rank military man, for a month or longer. A third case is the body of a king or queen or a ruling pope or a high-ranking prelate that will lie in state with its face exposed for a long time.\textsuperscript{301}
\end{quote}

The principle difference between the preservation of mid-level noble and a king is that the king will normally have all of his viscera removed. De Mondeville warns the reader that a Papal dispensation must be acquired before doing this.\textsuperscript{302}

Because the king would lie in state with the face and sometimes hands and feet exposed, the ability to keep the decay under wraps was a challenge; mid-level nobles were often wrapped head to foot, in a fashion similar to mummies, and sealed in an airtight coffin, keeping the stench and appearance of putrefaction to a minimum. The more air the corpse was exposed to, the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[299] de Mondeville, Surgery, 739.
\item[300] Westerhof, Death and the Noble Body, 77.
\item[301] de Mondeville, Surgery, 736.
\item[302] Ibid, 739.
\end{footnotes}
quicker it would naturally decay. As a result, when preparing a corpse for display, a balm would be applied to the exposed face, and all of the abdominal viscera “to the anus” would be removed.\textsuperscript{303} Even then, the methods were not foolproof, much to de Mondeville’s irritation; he noted that the balm did nothing to help either French king he embalmed. De Mondeville recommended a silver or lead jar and a great deal of preservative power for containing the viscera.\textsuperscript{304} While not directly mentioning the removal and preservation of the heart, one can assume he did perform this service.

With the technology at hand, it was impossible to preserve a body forever, and the medieval elite and their physicians knew it.\textsuperscript{305} Church teachings continued to emphasize Resurrection theology and the need for decay in the ground, not inside of a church. After the body had decayed completely, it would reassemble and rise in full glory at the Final Resurrection. Multiple burials, desecration of graves, and embalming presented challenges to this concept, despite Augustine’s arguments in \textit{City of God} and popular practice that reassured that such things did not affect the ability to resurrect. By Church law, deviation from intact burial ran contrary to orderliness in death and raised questions regarding the mechanics of the Resurrection. However, even the papacy itself would eventually ignore the need for putrefaction and embrace the ability to separate one’s body. The Church of St. Vincenzo and Anastasio in Rome houses twenty-two papal hearts dating from 1590 to 1903.\textsuperscript{306}

Despite these gaps between theory and practice, the Church did not alter its statements regarding intact burial until 1957. Pope Pius XII, while speaking to a group of anesthesiologists, indicated the permissibility of corneal transplants and other medical procedures that preserved

\textsuperscript{303} de Mondeville, \textit{Surgery}, 739; this is also indicated by Guillaume Baldrich, funeral witness, cited by Giesey, \textit{The Royal Funeral Ceremony}, 24.
\textsuperscript{304} de Mondeville, \textit{Surgery}, 740.
\textsuperscript{305} Camporesi, \textit{The Incorruptible Flesh}, 25.
\textsuperscript{306} Personal observation at SS Vincenzo e Anastasio, Rome, Italy, 14 January 2013.
the life of others. In this fashion, Catholics could go to the grave without all of their parts in the context of organ donation. In 1963, Pope Paul VI permitted cremation as an alternative to burial, as long as the deceased did not deny belief in the Final Resurrection.

Conclusion

After decades of being ignored, the Church opposition to anything but intact burial reemerged in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. Philippe IV had changed his father’s burial plans with only consultation from the new order of Dominicans. Jurists emphasized the virtue of an intact and naturally decaying corpse, not to mention the gross offense of violating the deceased king’s will. The established monastic order of the Benedictines was enraged at the “theft” of multiple kings’ parts from Saint-Denis by the order. The young Philippe IV, influenced by the Dominicans, never explained his decision to change his father’s will. The royal privilege of choice superseded the tradition.

Philippe IV’s relationship with the Church in Rome deteriorated. Philippe IV opposed interference from the Holy See on the grounds that he was a sovereign of his own lands. Boniface VIII had the opportunity to tie together the philosophical discussion of contemporary jurists and the Church’s authority over death. Gervais of Mont-Saint-Eloi, Godfrey of Fontaines, and Henry of Ghent presented arguments that supported intact burial and the pope’s sole authority to alter a person’s will. Boniface failed to utilize these elements to their fullest, whether it was because Boniface’s personal horror interfered with his ability to make an argument, or because the bull was indeed a purely punitive effort. Philippe once again argued that he was a sovereign king and that his ancestor St. Louis IX had had his body dismembered and boiled as well. The tradition was his right as a king but also a descendent of a saint.


Although it would take fifty years for *De Sepulturis* to be annulled, Philippe achieved his objectives: to regain his right to burial as he saw fit and to assert the Crown’s supremacy.

Outside of this conflict, burial practices during the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries continued to evolve. In particular, as the royal funeral became increasingly lavish and ritualized, nobles and kings patronized embalmers. De Mondeville spared several pages in his medical book on the topic, detailing what kind of embalming should be used for the varying levels of society. Though embalming the poor was rare and typically not profitable, Mondeville made mention of the process. Heart burial remained an element of the royals, but also of the secular and religious elites. The elites mimicked royalty in order to preserve their place on the social ladder. Their show of money for a good embalmer and the gift of a heart to a religious house identified where in the hierarchy they were.

The continued practice of French royal heart burial and the papacy’s willingness to pardon them for a price reflect the weakness of the bull and of the Holy See in regards to all things French. Although the bull was ineffective in France, it was far more effective in other regions, particularly in England. The practice of heart burial nearly went extinct, and those that did opt to perform it were excommunicated. France had secured not only a victory of sovereignty but also a political victory as well.
CHAPTER VI
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERES IN HEART BURIAL, 1300-1517

Heart Burial Despite *De Sepulturis*, 1300-1351

Heart burial in Western Europe recovered after the 1351 dispensation of Clement VI, which effectively negated the papal bull *De Sepulturis*. Guy de Chauliac, a French surgeon, discussed embalming in his 1363 medical treatise without mentioning the need for a dispensation or the bull at all.\(^ {309} \) *De Sepulturis* had caused the English practice to nearly go extinct. Although it never regained its former popularity in England, heart burials continued to occur within the royal and noble houses until the early twentieth century.\(^ {310} \) In contrast, the French practice began a consistent rise.\(^ {311} \) This even included illegitimate children; because they were descendants of St. Louis, the line of Orleans-Longueville practiced heart burial despite being illegitimate and was permitted to be buried in Saint-Denis.\(^ {312} \) Though the practice declined after the seventeenth century, it took three centuries to fall completely out of use. Germanic and Austrian heart burials began to rise in the fifteenth century before peaking in the eighteenth century.\(^ {313} \) The history of heart burial stands only at its chronological halfway point.

Westerhof expresses some confusion as to how the English kings, specifically Edward I (d. 1307) and Edward II (d. 1327), managed to begin to bury their body parts separately again, despite not benefiting from the same dispensation as the French.\(^ {314} \) The case of Edward I’s heart burial is significant for two reasons. First, he was the English king who stood in opposition to Philippe IV, Boniface VIII’s main rival. Although the English king disregarded the 1297 bull

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\(^ {309} \) Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body*, 90.
\(^ {310} \) Armin Dietz, email correspondence with the author, 13 June 2012.
\(^ {311} \) Ibid.
\(^ {312} \) Gaude-Ferragu, “Le Coeur ‘Couronne,’” 255.
\(^ {313} \) Ibid.
\(^ {314} \) Ibid.
*Clericos Laicos*, just as Philippe had, Edward I did not question or fight the pope’s claims as openly as the French king had. When reading scholarly literature on the events of Boniface’s reign, Edward fades into the background as the conflict between Boniface and Philippe takes center stage. By being quiet, Edward likely did not stir the Pope’s ire as his French counterpart did.

Edward I died in 1307 on campaign against Scotland’s Robert the Bruce. Edward I commanded that his heart be taken to the Holy Land, where he had gone on Crusade forty years before. By fulfilling a crusading vow once, the penitent received a remission of sins, meaning no time in Purgatory. Edward I may have wanted his heart to fulfill the vow again to free his soul sooner. Two items are unclear – first, whether Edward I’s wishes were actually carried out by his son and heir, Edward II; second, whether the heart, if it was removed, managed to reach the Holy Land. To the first item, by 1307, the papal bull was in full effect, yet Rome did not excommunicate Edward’s relatives for removing his heart. As noted by Gaude-Ferragu, even when a person specifically requested heart burial, the executors of the will may or may not abide by those wishes. If Edward II was initially unwilling to do this for his father, the papal bull provided additional support for his position.

If the heart was indeed removed, Edward II did not make any recorded attempt to take the heart to the Holy Land. Some legends contend that after Edward II died, many failed attempts were made on Edward I’s behalf to take the heart to the Holy Land until the twentieth century. One point to consider is that Edward I’s rival, Robert the Bruce of Scotland, did have his heart removed and sent to the Holy Land in 1330. Those that attempted to transport the heart

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318 Dietz, *Ewige Herzen*, 82.
were excommunicated. Westerhof notes that the executors of John of Brabanzon’s will also suffered excommunication for the deed in 1317. John de Merriet removed the heart of his wife for separate burial in 1314, and he too was excommunicated for his efforts. However, all parties were eventually reinstated. Evidence points to the conclusion that Edward I’s heart was never removed in the first place; an excommunication likely would have taken place.

As to the other English kings, an explanation lies in the wording of the dispensation itself. Clement directed the dispensation toward Jean II the Good and his wife, Jeanne of Auvergne, and their successors, the kings and queens of France. Clearly, unless the French royal house resorted to Egyptian tactics of marriage among siblings, only one of their children could rule or be co-ruler at a time. However, each child had the potential to be king, queen, or consort, no matter how unlikely. That birthright remained, whether or not the crown passed to them personally; indeed, the progenitors of the Houses of Valois and Bourbon were long dead before their line replaced the dying line of their predecessors, the mainline Capetians. Their wives and husbands thus also had the potential to be a king, queen, or consort. Because it was common practice for monarchs to marry their children into other royal families for alliances, the dispensation propagated exponentially; within fifty years, most of Europe’s royalty and nobles could have their hearts buried by virtue of having some connection to the king or queen of France.

For example, Edward II married Isabella of France, the youngest child of Philippe IV. Isabella did not die until 1358, well after the death of both her husband in 1327 and the bull *De Sepulturis* in 1351. Despite the tumultuous relationship she had with her husband, Isabella

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319 Westerhof, *Death and the Noble Body* 90.
321 Tardiff, *Privileges Accordes a la couronne de France*, 245.
requested that Edward II’s heart be buried with her, and this was done. Edward II had died in 1327 at Berkeley Castle as a dethroned king, usurped by his son and Isabella. Much secrecy and speculation surrounds his last days, including how he died and even if he had escaped to die elsewhere many years later. The outrageous stories and enduring mystery likely overshadowed the actual removal of the heart that occurred shortly post-mortem. However, much like Henry III in 1290, Edward II’s heart probably was not moved from his coffin until Isabella died. Since Isabella herself was a child of the king of France and, if her elder siblings had all died, she could claim the French throne, it follows that it was ultimately permissible by the 1351 dispensation for her and her spouse – even if he had predeceased her – to have their hearts buried separately.

The connections between England and France would eventually cause a moratorium on heart burial in England during the Hundred Years’ War. The War of the Roses followed, and the instability of the country made it difficult for the ritual to be attempted. Edward II’s heart burial would be the last explicit mention of the practice until that of Henry V’s supposed heart burial in 1422. Henry V’s body was interred at Westminster Abbey, but his viscera were sent to St. Maur-des-Fosses, as he was in France at the time of his death. It is unclear whether his heart was included in this burial. The practice of heart burial among the crowned monarchs of England lapsed until the rise of the Tudors in the late fifteenth century at the termination of the War of the Roses. However, heart burial continued among the nobles of England, keeping the practice alive

322 Binski, Medieval Death, 64.
323 An entertaining article which examines the various conspiracy theories is Ian Mortimer, “The Death of Edward II in Berkeley Castle,” The English Historical Review, Volume 120, no. 499 (December 2005), 1175-1214. However, W. M. Ormrod doubts Edward II’s survival in his authoritative Edward III (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 68-69.
324 Armin Dietz, “Datenbanksuche: Herzbestattungen Weltweit,” Herzsymbol & Herzbestattung: Eine Kulturgeschichte des menschlichen Herzens, www.herzbestattung.de/herzbestattung.html (last accessed 15 March 2013). Dr. Dietz constructed a searchable database of over 1200 rumored heart burials and indicated whether these heart burial could or could not be confirmed. He also provides sourcing for each entry in the database. In this case, Henry’s is not confirmed; see Bradford, 125-126.
through the turbulent fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Although the head of the realm was in dispute, the nobles maintained their place in society throughout this period.

Public and Private Spheres of Death

The popularity of multiple burial slowly regained its footing after 1351. The mendicant orders – Franciscans, Dominicans, Celestines, and others – apparently resumed their quest for royal and noble remains with enthusiasm. Brown cites one chronicler who described separate burial as “a custom or abuse which the religious of the orders of poverty [promoted].” The distaste for this habit also reflected a rising sentiment of disgust toward the human body itself. Throughout the second half of the fourteenth century, the Black Death besieged Europe. The horrifying deaths experienced by plague victims psychologically scarred their surviving peers. David Stannard of the University of Hawaii believes that the widespread devastation led to the late medieval fascination with death and dying.

With a newfound horror at physical death, focus on the afterlife became immediately important to all classes. Stannard believes that these stressors were expressed in the extensive use of the danse macabre and the ars moriendi motifs. The danse macabre motif reminded the people that all people – regardless of status or wealth – would all be reduced to the same in death: a skeleton with putrefying flesh hanging off it. The ars moriendi – the art of dying – forced people to think ahead to their last moments alive. However, Stannard points out that Purgatory and the opportunities for redemption it presented lessened fears about the afterlife;

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325 Brown, “Authority, the Family, and the Dead,” 812.
327 Ibid, 21.
rather, the dominant “bogeyman” of the medieval period was distressing, pathetic death and the deterioration of the body.\textsuperscript{328}

The disgust at the body and the open display of such disdain presented a problem for scholars for many years. Questions as to whether dissection and embalming were socially acceptable plagued the fields of funerary history and medical history. Ariès notes that by the mid-1300s, the Church remained staunch in its stance that the living and the dead should be separated. However, practice differed from theory, excepting times of disease. “The conciliar decrees […] prolonged, in a world that no longer understood it, the traditional reluctance to defile the sanctity of the temple by the corruption of the dead. Contact with the dead no longer caused either profanation or pollution.”\textsuperscript{329} If there was no overt risk of infection, people still cared for their dead. The presence of the Black Plague illustrated the exceptions, not the social norms, for interaction with the dead during the medieval period. Although anxieties about death increased, these fears did not inhibit devotion to a deceased loved one when it was possible.

Using anthropologist Mary Douglas’ reasoning, however, it is possible that instead of the dead being abominable, it is abominable to disturb them or partition them.\textsuperscript{330} Alternatively, it is abominable to make the separation a circus. The public and private spheres of life suddenly became very important with the appearance of embalming, dissection, and the first autopsies in the early fourteenth century. To the tribes of Madagascar and Borneo, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews, specific objects or items were considered “clean” or “unclean” in a relatively simple binary system. With Christianity, the intent behind the action performed upon objects

\textsuperscript{328} Stannard, The Puritan Way of Death, 22.
\textsuperscript{329} Ariès, The Hour of Our Death, 51.
\textsuperscript{330} Douglas, Purity and Danger, xv.
became more important in determining socially acceptable and unacceptable behavior.\textsuperscript{331} As such, the reasons for dissecting a person made the activity licit or illicit.

One licit purpose for dissection was in the name of criminal investigation. Innocent III (d. 1216) consulted two physicians and a surgeon on several cases brought before him. In 1206, Father Larry had been gardening outside the church when he saw a thief run off with holy books.\textsuperscript{332} Seeing the chase, the townspeople joined with the pursuing priest. The townspeople armed themselves with clubs and swords. At some point in the chaos, the thief was struck in the head and later died. Innocent III called in the physicians to determine whether the blow to the head was the cause of death, and if so, whether a gardening spade was the murder weapon. If it was, the evidence implicated the priest, and he had to face church discipline.\textsuperscript{333} The purpose of the autopsy was to find the truth, and it was performed in private. This made it socially acceptable. The ultimate verdict regarding Father Larry is not immediately clear in the documentation.

In her work on the history of dissection, Katharine Park pinpoints location as the deciding factor between a socially acceptable dissection and a condemned violation of human dignity.\textsuperscript{334} Burial embalming, division of saints’ parts, Caesarian sections, and autopsies to determine a cause of death were valid explorations of the bodies. These activities took place in private, at the request of a family, the Church, or secular authority. In most cases, the incisions could be concealed. In contrast, university professors performed academic dissections in quasi-public or fully public demonstrations, which attracted much criticism.\textsuperscript{335} The corpse, unnamed and without kin ties, was physically and socially naked, stripped of dignity. A salient aspect of

\textsuperscript{331} Douglas, Purity and Danger, 27.
\textsuperscript{332} Innocent III, Opera Omnia, Edited by J.P. Migne (Paris: Bibliotæcae Cleri Universæ, 1855), columns 64-66.
\textsuperscript{333} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{334} Park, Secrets of Women, 15.
\textsuperscript{335} Ibid.
Christian burial – intact or not – was the integrity of the person’s identity both as an individual and as a holder of a certain position in the society. Witnesses drew parallels to the gruesome public dismemberments and executions of criminals.

Criminals’ executions were not merely for sensationalism and public amusement; the exact punishments reflected the nature of crimes and made a statement as to the illicitness of certain behaviors. Medieval chronicler Froissart graphically describes the sentencing and execution of Hugh Despenser the Younger in 1326. Accused of treason (and of being Edward II’s lover), Despenser found himself sentenced by Queen Isabella to die. Each of the injuries inflicted were symbolic of his deeds in life.

And so he was then judged by plain sentence, first to be drawn on an hurdle with trumps and trumpets through all the city of Hereford, and after to be brought into the marketplace, whereas all the people were assembled, and there to be tied on high upon a ladder that every man might see him; and in the same place there to be made a great fire, and there his privy members cut from him, because they reputed him as an heretic and so deemed, and so to be brent in the fire before his face; and then his heart to be drawn out of his body and cast into the fire, because he was a false traitor of heart, and that by his traitor’s counsel and exhortation the king had shamed his realm and brought it to great mischief.336

In this case, dismemberment had an entirely different meaning and context compared to the division of saintly or kingly parts. The removal and destruction of Despenser’s genitals denoted not only his heretical ways but also the accusations of sodomy surrounding him and Edward II. The desecration of the heart was also a two-fold action. First, he had led the heart of the kingdom – the king – astray from his kingdom. Secondly, he had also destroyed the family life of Edward and Isabella. Not only had he been the instigating factor of the marriage’s collapse, he had also taken custody of all the royal children from their mother Isabella, save for the eldest, the future Edward III. Despenser the Younger corrupted the social hierarchy and the family structure of the English royal family during the 1320s, and his public shaming and execution

sought to correct the violation. Unlike in royal burial or family-requested autopsies, the innards were clearly on display.

Royal and noble funerals concealed the dead body. The heart and entrails received their own urns, while the body was eviscerated and embalmed in order to maintain its lifelike presence as long as possible. However, by the fourteenth century, the rituals and traditions took increasingly longer to carry out, often outstripping the embalmer’s ability to keep the corpse intact for the duration. As a result, the English royal family began to use lifelike dummies, known as effigies, to replace the king or queen at the funeral.

Kingly Anthropology

Thus far in this discussion of heart burial, anthropological concepts of body and soul have taken a dominant role. However, in the aftermath of Philippe IV of France’s triumph of sovereignty, thoughts about the king and the institution of monarchy diversified beyond the conflict between secular and religious control over people. Philippe himself began to develop a well-articulated concept of French kingship but also maintained his personal identity of Philippe IV le Bel. He also was Philippe, grandson of St. Louis, son of Philippe III the Strong, and father of Louis X the Quarreler and Philippe V the Tall. The king and the kingship were united but separated and of two natures, and the king at his death would become a permanent memory within the kingship. Ernst Kantorowicz’s 1957 book, The King’s Two Bodies, stands as a crucial work in understanding medieval English concepts of king and kingship. The “two bodies” in the title are the mortal king’s physical body -- his Body Natural -- and the immortal kingship -- the Body Politic.

337 Camporesi, The Incorruptible Flesh, 25; de Mondeville, Surgery, 739.
When a man becomes king, his Body Natural joins with the Body Politic. Kantorowicz aptly uses the illustration of early Christology to explain this.\textsuperscript{338} During the early years of Christianity, questions arose regarding “how human” and “how God” Jesus Christ was. Arians, Nestorians, Gnostics, and other heretics debated whether he was a human imbued by God’s will, a god that appeared as man but was not, and other varied theories. The Church’s ultimate stance was that Jesus was both God and Man, having twin natures; He would always be God, even if the physical body died, as it did in all humans.

In the same manner, the king is dually faceted. The kingship exists before and after him, but while he holds the office, the Body Politic consumes the man.\textsuperscript{339} Even after the king’s mortal death, he is still considered a king; though Elizabeth II sits on the throne, her father George VI and grandfather George V are still kings of the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{340} The Body Politic outlived the individual king. The theory of the king’s two bodies began to appear in English funerals as early as 1327, when Edward II died.

The most visually stunning example of the king’s two bodies theory was the use of an effigy. The practical aspect of the effigy was that it allowed for a lengthier funerary ceremony with more elaborate rituals. However, it also served a legal purpose. By displaying the dead king, the royal family provided evidence that the crown could be passed on to the deceased’s heir.\textsuperscript{341} Anthropologically speaking, the effigy offered a way to continue to focus attention on the dead king for as long as it took for the liminal period between kings to pass. Such was the case for Edward II and Edward III of England. Edward II had surrendered his throne to his son in early 1327. He died 27 October 1327 under house arrest in Berkeley Castle. Edward III had

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\textsuperscript{338} Ernst Kantorowicz, \textit{The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997 [1957]), 16.
\textsuperscript{339} Ibid, 9.
\textsuperscript{340} Kantorowicz, \textit{The King’s Two Bodies}, 11.
\textsuperscript{341} Huntington and Metcalf, \textit{Celebrations of Death}, 163.
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to travel great distances in order to pay his final respects to his father, so several months passed before Edward II was buried. Obviously, the body did not keep for that extended period. A wooden effigy was put on display as a substitute for a real body. Despite the absence of a living king, a king remained visible to the public until Edward III arrived.

Huntington and Metcalf note that the practical and political motives for the effigy’s use existed long before any ritual or theological significance was granted to the effigy itself.\textsuperscript{342} The royal effigy and heart burial were not consistently employed during the next century-and-a-half, likely due to the tumultuous Hundred Years’ War and the War of the Roses. Richard II, Henry VI, Edward V, and Richard III (whose bones were lost under a car park until late 2012) did not have effigies or heart burials.\textsuperscript{343}

The French monarchy did not begin to employ the effigy until the fifteenth century, but the phenomenon of the kingship still being alive despite the death of the king first appeared at the death of Louis X the Quarreler France in 1316.\textsuperscript{344} One of the court officials finished his account of the king’s reign on the day “when the king died,” but this was actually the day Louis X had been buried. He had died two days before, but he was not considered “dead” until he was in the ground. Likewise, his brother, Philippe V, had candles burnt for his own repose as if he was a living king from his death on 3 January 1322 to 6 January 1322, the date of his interment. Additional candles were burnt for Philippe V for two weeks thereafter.\textsuperscript{345}

Funerary customs, no matter how entrenched they had been formerly, tended to fall to the wayside during times of political instability. When it was employed, the royal effigy indicated

\textsuperscript{342} Huntington and Metcalf, \textit{Celebrations of Death}, 163.
\textsuperscript{343} Ibid, 164.
\textsuperscript{344} Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 287.
\textsuperscript{345} Ibid.
that the royal dignity of the king – that is, the kingship – did not die.\footnote{Kantorowicz, \textit{The King’s Two Bodies}, 423.} While the corpse was sequestered away, the effigy went on parade to remind the people and the social order that despite one man’s death, the monarchy lived on. Although the society was cast into a liminal period, the use of ceremony and effigy mitigated the instability that normally accompanied such gaps in power.\footnote{Van Gennep, \textit{The Rites of Passage}, 147.}

\section*{Queenly Changes and Hiding Heirs}

In the late fourteenth century, particularly in France, the extravagant medieval funerals and burials seemed to become tamer and were executed with less showmanship.\footnote{Brown, \textit{“Death and the Human Body,”}} Elizabeth A.R. Brown provides an assessment of the “curious” funerary preparations made by Jeanne of Evreux, widow of Charles IV (d. 1328) of France. “The details of her testamentary dispositions and of her funeral reveal the complexity and confusion of her feelings regarding the fate of her body and the relationship between earthly ceremonial and the eternal welfare of her soul.”\footnote{Ibid.} In August 1343, Jeanne made several generous donations to Saint-Denis, having recently decided that she wished for her body to be buried there. She also stated that her heart was to go to the Franciscan church in Paris to rest with her husband, and her entrails were to go to Maubuisson, where Charles IV’s entrails were as well.\footnote{Ibid.}

For the better part of the next three decades, Jeanne supervised the construction of her body, heart, and intestinal tombs until her death in 1371. For some reason, Jeanne seemed to have had a sudden attack of frugality by setting a limit on how many candles should be used at
her funeral -- “which thus seemed so niggardly that Charles V held an additional well-lit service in her honor the day after her burial in 1371.”\textsuperscript{351}

Jeanne Evreux began to plan for her death in a time when opulent burials were the norm, but she died in an era where more chaste and reserved ceremonies for elite women were popular. Her successors as queen consort, Blanche of Navarre (d. 1398, wife of Philippe VI) and Isabeau (d. 1435, wife of Charles VI), took her last-minute effort at plainness and extended it throughout their funeral and burial ceremonies. As the customs surrounding the transition of power from one king to another became weighed down with political and symbolic significance, the widowed queen’s funeral remained stately and typically included multiple burial, but demonstrated a far quieter demeanor.\textsuperscript{352} These changes reflected popular trends of religious austerity during this period, though they did not reach too far into the French royal funeral ceremony.

In 1337, the conflict known as the Hundred Years’ War began. Some pin the blame on a young Jeanne of Evreux, as she was Charles IV’s third wife. Because she did not bear a surviving male heir, the direct line of Capetians ended with the death of her husband. The two claimants to the throne were Philippe of Valois, Charles IV’s cousin, and Edward III of England, Charles’s nephew through his sister, Isabella. Although the relationship between the two men was initially cordial, the rivalry combined with a series of slights between the two kings ultimately triggered a long war.

French king Jean II died as a prisoner of England in 1364, and scholars disagree as to whether he was able to use his long-awaited papal dispensation for heart burial.\textsuperscript{353} His son,  

\textsuperscript{351} Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 262.  
\textsuperscript{352} Bandé, \textit{Le Coeur du Roi}, 156.  
\textsuperscript{353} Gaude-Ferragu, “Le Coeur ‘Cournon,”’ 244; Bandé, \textit{Le Coeur du Roi}, 20. Jean II’s heart burial is one of those claimed by Beurrier, the mischievous monk. Lack of contemporary sources vouching for the existence of multiple
Charles V, succeeded him on the throne. One of his crowning achievements was the acquisition of all lands in France, save for Calais and Aquitaine. The English still held these territories, but the pendulum had swung toward France in the seemingly never-ending conflict.

Charles V’s reign saw several major changes in the royal funeral ceremony. Because his predecessors left behind significantly younger widows, several queens of France existed alongside his wife, Jeanne of Bourbon. Charles V dutifully attended the funeral of Jeanne of Evreux. In 1378, Queen Jeanne of Bourbon died in childbirth. Grief-stricken, Charles did not attend her body’s funeral. According to Bandé, this funeral set a precedent for future French kings; much like that of heart burial and burial in regalia, this custom started by accident. Hereafter, the French king did not attend the funeral of his predecessor, wife, or princes of the blood.354

When Charles V died in 1380, he ordered his heart buried at Rouen. Gaude-Ferragu points to this as a clear indicator for heart burial use in territorial politics.355 Charles V was the Duke of Normandy as well as king. He deposited his heart at Rouen to rest with that of Richard I and Richard’s father, Henry II of England, both former dukes of Normandy. In counter-point to Richard’s spreading of his parts in 1199, Charles “reclaimed” Rouen as a French domain by burying his heart there. Charles’ heart burial was particularly politically motivated as he did this in the midst of the Hundred Years’ War between France and England, the most hotly contested territory being that of Normandy. The usurping power of the heart in Rouen became a Capetian tradition.356

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The “Lost” Hearts

Historian Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, in her research on heart burial, detected a sudden decline in documented royal heart burial from Charles V in 1380 until Charles VIII in 1498.\textsuperscript{357} This gap in practice cannot be attributed to \textit{De Sepulturis}, as it had been negated in 1351, nor completely to the plainer funerals or squeamishness of the court. Heart burials were important political events, and their sudden halt meant something significant; exactly what was the puzzle.\textsuperscript{358}

The French royals chose where their hearts and entrails were buried, but their bodies only had one destination: Saint-Denis.\textsuperscript{359} As such, members of the monarchy used their hearts and entrails to reunite with those who they could not rest with otherwise. Louis XI (d.1483) was a maverick in that he refused to be buried at Saint-Denis, preferring Notre Dame de Clery.\textsuperscript{360} Because he had no other way to be with his father, Charles VIII (d. 1498) sent his heart there while he sent his body to the dynastically correct location of Saint-Denis. According to contemporary sources, Charles VIII elected to have his heart buried before his body and to have the religious celebrations of a funeral on that day rather than on the day of his body funeral.\textsuperscript{361}

Citing Jean le Fevre’s journal, Gaude-Ferragu states that during the fifteenth century, the funeral of the heart was more important than any other mortuary practice, such as \textit{mos teutonicus}, burial of the entrails, and the transport of the bones or body. By this period, the heart had become the substitute for the body in many circumstances, particularly if the rest of the body had been lost.\textsuperscript{362} In 1384, Louis I of Anjou died in southern Italy. Since the time of Charles I of

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\textsuperscript{357} Gaude-Ferragu, “Le Coeur ‘Couronne,’” 249.
\textsuperscript{358} Ibid, 251.
\textsuperscript{359} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{360} Ibid, 252.
\textsuperscript{361} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{362} Ibid, 259.
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Anjou (d. 1285), the kings of Naples buried their hearts. Though they were merely princes of the blood in France, they stood as kings in Naples. Louis I’s heart burial was replete with processions and convoys. Additionally, his seven-year-old son and heir, Louis II, attended this funeral in France and was proclaimed the new king of Naples. Because the heart was equivalent to body at this ceremony, Louis II’s succession as king was possible and effective.

The House of Anjou continued this custom, with Rene the Good (d. 1480) requesting a heart funeral as big and as grand as his body funeral in his 1474 will. Gaude-Ferragu compares the use of the heart in its urn to the use of the funeral effigy; when the body could not withstand time, the heart was used. Sealed in a jar, filled with preservatives, the heart could not fester in front of the funeral guests.

If heart burial or entrail burial was not explicitly mentioned in the will, it did not mean that it did not exist. Rather, it possibly point to the fact that heart burial may have been common. Because kings were always embalmed due to their public appearances post mortem, it is implied that, as part of the embalming, they were eviscerated. Gaude-Ferragu suggests that because the kings successfully established themselves and their line as rulers of a given area, the need for an over-the-top heart burial was unnecessary. Another possibility exists in that the heart burial slowly became a more private, family ceremony. Alexandré Bandé does not necessarily agree that heart burial became less opulent, but he does believe that it became more common. More families of royal blood, direct line or not, took part in heart burial to assert their social identity and conform to what Bandé calls “the model aristocratique.”

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364 Ibid, 260.
365 Ibid, 262.
366 Ibid, 264.
367 Ibid.
368 Bandé, Le Coeur du Roi, 172.
burial may have become such a widely practiced act among the elite that it was no longer something newsworthy.

Transi Tombs and Changes in Heart Urns

Rather than depicting the desired, perfectly, saintly resurrected body, tombs moved toward a truer picture of death. Elites and nobles used gisant tombs well into the 1500s, but the transi tombs soon overtook the gisant. Transi tombs depict the dead person as he or she was: decaying and rotting. In contrast, the gisants typically show the person in an idealized state or merely sleeping.\(^{369}\)

One of the most famed examples is that of Anne of Bretagne (d. 1514) and her husband, Louis XII (d. 1515). Although their shared tomb in Saint-Denis has a “roof” that depicts the queen and king in prayerful life, the topper to the coffin is far more graphic. Carved from stone, representations of the two monarchs are stripped naked, their bellies marred by hastily sewn incisions left by the embalmer.\(^{370}\) This grotesqueness reflects the sentiment that innately, humans are rotten on the inside, and it is only in death, when the soul departs, that the body shows its true nature.\(^{371}\) Paul Binski notes that the transi tombs flourished within the clerical community, but also in areas that typically concealed the body at death; transi tombs were not as popular in locations where the body was on display.\(^{372}\) It appears that the French, for a certain period, did employ both the display of the dead king and the effigy as well as the transi tomb.

As the gisant fell out of favor for the body, the use of it for the heart and entrails also waned. In lieu of a gisant, two new trends began to appear in the storage of the heart. The royal family either placed the heart into a casket made of valuable metals or they constructed a carved,

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\(^{369}\) Binski, *Medieval Death*, 139.

\(^{370}\) Personal observation at the Basilica of Saint-Denis, 19 January 2013.


\(^{372}\) Binski, *Medieval Death*, 140.
intricate sculpture into which the heart was installed. It appears that the choice depended on whether or not the heart would be transported far from the site of death. Louis XII elected to have his viscera interred in a jar within his main coffin, though it is unclear whether his heart was included.\(^{373}\) In contrast, his wife, Anne of Bretagne, the last independent duchess of Brittany, sent her heart to the tomb of her parents, François II of Bretagne and Marguerite de Foix, in a golden heart urn.\(^{374}\) She had an extensive procession and heart funeral to accompany her heart to its final resting place.

**Conclusion**

The heart burials of the late medieval period were expressions of power and wealth. As medieval feudal territories transformed into early modern nation states, heart burial consolidated and confirmed territorial claims. In the case of Charles V, he reclaimed Normandy from the kings of England. Over time, heart burial became a common practice for members of the ruling family. It stood as a reminder of that family’s dominance. However, as the fifteenth century began to wind down, calls for a more plain death seemed to affect the style of some royal burials, but it did not deter the practice of multiple burial of the heart. In contrast, due to civil wars in England, royal heart burial was only utilized in times of political stability. In a fashion more akin to French nobles, English nobles continued their heart burial traditions in the face of political instability.

Feelings toward the opening of the body for embalming or dissection varied based upon the purpose and place of the opening. If it was for a judicial or medical investigation, as long as it was done in private, the dissection was permissible. Elite women paid for their own post-

\(^{373}\) Gaude-Ferragu, “Le Coeur ‘Couronne,’” 264.
\(^{374}\) Ibid, 252.
mortems in advance so that the physician could advise their children about health issues.\textsuperscript{375}

While not as overt or long-standing as an elaborate coffin, the rising expenditures on medical doctors in the late Middle Ages was a show of money and status.

In contrast, the opening and dismemberment of the body was a sign of shame. The graphic torture and death of Despenser illustrated this adequately, but the medical dissection of a poor person or convict stirred feelings of disgust for both the dissected and the dissector. Revealing in public what was typically covered was a violation of the sphere of privacy. In the same fashion, the overwhelming number of dead left by the plague had shattered the ability to have a death in private. The question of plague and the indelible scenes of bodies in the streets made a private, quiet death impossible.

Because of increasing gruesome, public deaths, funerary art moved on from the gisant, the sleeping tomb topper. The transi tomb replaced it. The transi tombs depicted rotting, diseased corpses. Death was no longer idealized in art, but instead presented as it actually was, right down to the embalmer’s sutures on the abdomens of Louis XII and Anne of Bretagne.

The royal death and the momentary lapse in control between the king and the heir was mitigated by the use of the royal effigy in order to ensure that before the king rotted away, the heir could arrive. Despite his own personal death, the kingship lived on, as seen in the theory of the king’s two bodies.

French royalty and elites became increasingly entrenched in a single location as the world stabilized around them in the fifteenth century. The English would not experience this phenomenon for another hundred years until the reign of the Tudors. During this period of stability in France, heart burial changed. First, heart burial became so common that it was not always recorded. As the various noble families solidified their territorial claims and rose in

\textsuperscript{375} Park, \textit{Secrets of Women}, 19.
status, their hearts either no longer needed to act as a loud political statement. Alternatively, the process for the next century’s private nighttime heart burial may have already started. Secondly, heart burial urns changed from the plain stone gisant either to a permanent, freestanding monument or to a smaller heart box made of increasingly valuable metals. Both of these forms had the capacity to be customized based upon the desires of the individual. Heart burial now expressed the person’s desire not in where it was but in what it was housed.

According to Ariès, by the fifteenth century, embalming evolved to the point where preservation of a king could be achieved rather than just staving off stench. “The king did not die,” he states in *The Hour of Our Death.*\(^376\) This simply was not so. The use of effigies lasted in England and France until the eighteenth century and seventeenth centuries, respectively, partially because embalming could not and did not halt the process of putrefaction. The king always “died” due to the inevitable decay that occurred over the course of the nearly two months it took to perform the royal funerary rituals. However, the use of the effigy and, later, the development of rituals that used the effigy more extensively solved this problem.

\(^{376}\) Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death,* 361.
CHAPTER VII
THE IMPACT OF THE REFORMATION AND COUNTER REFORMATION IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE, 1517-1625

The Protestant Reformation: Drawing the Lines of Battle

The ideas behind the Protestant Reformation had percolated since the mid-fourteenth century in the form of the philosophy John Wycliffe. His writings and those of Jan Hus profoundly moved the monk Martin Luther as he taught theology at the University of Wittenberg. Luther had already become concerned with the sale of indulgences, used by the Church to create income and dispense forgiveness of sins. Just as the French royal family had paid for its privilege of heart burial for over fifty years, so too did the common man pay for his privilege of heaven. Buying one’s way into Paradise did not sit well with the Augustinian monk. Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the cathedral, triggering a religious revolution.

The challenge to the Church’s undisputed authority offered not only a new spiritual outlet but also a new weapon in the struggle between sacred and secular influences. Princes throughout the Germanic lands realized that seceding from the Roman Church meant that they no longer had to pay tithes or submit to unfavorable papal policies. Heart burial began to appear in Germany as part of the Counter Reformation and at the urging of mendicant and other new orders such as the Capuchins and Jesuits. In contrast, both France and England continued the tradition of heart burial, though their rulers may not have been Catholic. Heart burial became a Catholic tradition predominantly, but Lutherans and Anglicans continued the practice. The stricter Protestant sects abhorred the extravagant funeral and mortuary customs and tended to eschew anything beyond the plainest ceremonies.

Heart Burial in Great Britain

Religious and political thoughts surrounding the kingships of Europe changed in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation initially clashed with crown of England. Henry VIII earned his title “Defender of the Faith” from Pope Leo X for his book, *In Defence of the Seven Sacraments* in 1521, which criticized and condemned the works of Martin Luther. However, the pressing problem of the succession to the English throne as well as other external difficulties with Rome resulted in the excommunication of Henry from the Catholic Church and the formation of the Church of England by 1534. Henry instated himself as the supreme head of the new “Anglican” church, and all ecclesiastical sees submitted to him under threat of excommunication.

Henry also used his new power to dissolve religious institutions in the kingdom in order to produce revenue for the Crown. The destruction of these churches led to the loss of many of the royal hearts interred prior to the Tudor dynasty. Despite the stripping of the altars and destroying old hearts, Henry did not seem to object to heart burial for himself, nor did his courtiers. A factor in this may have been the heart burials of his father Henry VII (d. 1509), his mother Elizabeth of York (d. 1503), and his brother Arthur (d. 1502). The heart urns of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York appear to have been lost, as they were not found in excavations of Westminster Abbey in 1867. Arthur’s heart was laid to rest at St. Laurence’s Church at Ludlow, near his place of death, Ludlow Castle. A plaque commemorates the event, though it is unclear where exactly the heart is in the building.

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378 Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster. *Supplement to the Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey* (London: John Murray, 1869), 153. Instead, Stanley found James I, the giant Scotsman, sandwiched between the comparatively diminutive Tudors in Henry VII’s crypt.
The Tudors were a new dynasty at the turn of the sixteenth century, thus they may have used heart burial as a political tool to establish and confirm their legitimacy. The custom of heart burial had not been regularly practiced consistently in England for nearly two hundred years due to the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) and the War of the Roses (1455-1485). After the Tudors restarted the tradition, almost every monarch of England and Great Britain had his or her heart buried separately until 1760. The reestablishment and consistency of the tradition illustrate the relative stability of the Tudor, Stuart, and Hanoverian periods.

Henry VIII’s wives also took part in the royal tradition, whether they were in his favor or not. Katharine of Aragon died in 1536, triggering an outpouring of scorn for her usurper, Anne Boleyn. At the time, the Spanish ambassador, Eustace Chapuys, circulated a rumor that Anne had poisoned her predecessor.\(^{380}\) This was due to the presence of a black object attached to the former queen’s heart, discovered during her embalming. Katharine’s heart was apparently kept with the body, as she was interred only in Peterborough Cathedral. In 1865, Dr. Norman Moore posited in *The British Medical Journal* that Katharine had likely died from melanotic sarcoma, cancer of the heart.\(^{381}\) More romantically, she had indeed died of a broken heart. Moore stated that the candler, who moonlighted as an embalmer, had reported the discoloration of the heart but also that the rest of her organs had been in near perfect condition. Comparing the embalmer’s description to a heart known to have melanotic sarcoma at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, Moore concluded that the uneducated candler had, in the terms he was able to use, described Katharine’s medical condition and ultimate cause of death. Most modern scholars agree with this assessment, though some continue to believe in the conspiracy theory.

\(^{381}\) “History and Diagnosis,” *The British Medical Journal*, Volume 1, No 1260 (21 February 1885), 393.
Anne Boleyn miscarried a son on the day of Katharine’s funeral, boding ill for the young queen’s future. She was executed 19 May 1536 at the Tower of London. Despite her fall from grace, several sources report that her heart was separated from her body. She had been a crowned queen, thus it is not out of the question, though unlikely. Hartshorne recounts these rumors in *Enshrined Hearts of Warriors and Illustrious People*, stating that some believe that the heart was placed in St. Peter ad Vincula, the church within the Tower of London complex, but separated from her body.\(^ {382}\) The other rumor, which remains popular in Anne’s home town of Horndon Hill in Essex, conveys the idea that Anne’s uncle, Sir Philip Parker, retrieved the heart and brought it back to her home church. Other towns in the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk have made claim to having Anne’s heart or even her head. Much like the mendicant monks and their saintly or royal relics, people clamored for a piece of the former queen. Likewise, pilgrims and tourists continue to visit these hamlets, seeking Anne and spending their money in these towns.

The other wives of Henry VIII have much less complicated heart burial tales. Jane Seymour’s heart is thought to rest at Hampton Court, where she died after giving birth to Henry VIII’s long awaited son, Edward VI, in 1537. Henry VIII supposedly decreed that her heart was to be buried underneath the main altar.\(^ {383}\) The records state that she was “embowelled” -- a pre-modern term for disemboweled -- as part of her preparation for burial. If this is so, she likely did have a heart or viscera container.\(^ {384}\) The chapel currently has a sign indicating that the

\(^{382}\) Hartshorne, *Enshrined Hearts*, 237.


possibility exists, though it would take removing and digging up the altar to confirm the long-standing report.  

Henry VIII annulled his marriage to Anne of Cleves after finding her less aesthetically pleasing than anticipated, but he did allow her to remain in England as his sister. Retaining her royal status may have allowed her to bury her heart near her home in Chelsea, though this is unconfirmed due to the church being “almost completely destroyed” during the Second World War.  

Kathryn Howard was executed, but never crowned; she only would have been crowned if she had conceived, just as Anne Boleyn had been and Jane Seymour would have been if the plague had not struck London. No report of her heart being buried separately has surfaced. Kateryn Parr went on to remarry and died in childbirth in 1548; the remarriage and the rule of the ultra-Protestant council of Edward VI may have discouraged the burial of her heart.

Henry VIII died in 1547, leaving the crown to his nine-year-old son, Edward VI. Accordingly, the king was readied for burial, including the emboweling. His “bowel box” was buried within the Chapel of Whitehall in London, while his body went on to Windsor to lie with the body of Jane Seymour, his favorite wife. Jane and Henry both had their hearts and bowels interred in the same place, but it is unclear whether these items were in a shared casket; it is suggested that Jane’s heart was separated from her bowels, but Henry’s funerary accounts are more ambiguous.

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385 Personal observation, Hampton Court Chapel Royal, April 2007.
388 Ibid.
By 1545, plans had been in place to dissolve the chantries, chapels, which specialized in saying mass and prayers for the deceased.\footnote{Philip Morgan, “Of Worms and War, 1380-1558,” in Death in England: An Illustrated History, edited by Peter Jupp and Clare Gittings (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1999), 142.} Chantries first appeared in England at the end of the thirteenth century and, as described by scholar Chase Machen, “were the physical representation of a doorway between the world of the quick and the realm of the dead.”\footnote{Machen, The Concept of Purgatory, 128.} Again, the existence of chapels specifically created for the living to pray for the dead suggests affection for the dead rather than abjection. The specific targeting of chantries by the Crown suggests their wealth and thus extensive patronage; many people invested in these chantries for their loved ones and for themselves. Beyond death, chantry priests also tended to be involved with community education and other local concerns.\footnote{Ibid, 131-132.} Chantries were vital elements in English towns for both the living and the dead.

Henry VIII’s death in 1547 delayed the dissolution plans, but only slightly. By 1548, Edward had gone forward with his father’s plans to dissolve all the chantries, denying the existence of Purgatory as a Protestant and lining the kingdom’s coffers as a monarch.\footnote{Ibid, 142.} Edward’s council and his own education led to increasingly Protestant characteristics infiltrating the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Within Edward’s short six-year reign, two new editions of the Book were issued in 1549 and 1552. Both stated, in the words of historian Philip Morgan, “the order for burial no longer elicited intercession or imagined a community of the living and the dead. Physical death was to become final and the funeral to serve only as solace for the living.”\footnote{Morgan, “Of Worms and War, 1380-1558,” 141.} However, despite these proclamations, resistance in popular religion extended the life of intercessory prayers in England, even without chantries. The chantries’ function splintered
into smaller, more private events run by the laity. Again, what was decreed was not always practiced.  

Edward VI’s death triggered a near civil war for the throne between his cousin Jane Grey, his named Protestant successor, and his Catholic half-sister Mary. The ensuing tumult, which lasted nearly a month, resulted in a significant delay in the child-king’s burial services. Edward died 6 July 1553 at Greenwich Palace, but he was not buried until 8 August 1553. While the delay may still have allowed the heart to be buried in winter, the humid London summer likely did no favors for his body. Bradford cited a few sources that suggest Edward’s heart was buried at Greenwich, but even he had his doubts about the veracity of these claims. Bradford also expressed suspicion as to the supposed autopsy on 7 August after a month of no preservation.  

Edward was a Protestant of a more severe cut, compared to his father Henry VIII, half-sister, Elizabeth I, and the Stuart successors. Due to his age, his religious beliefs, and the unfortunate season of his death, it is doubtful that Edward VI’s heart was buried separately.  

Mary I died three years later in 1556. Mary accepted heart burial gracefully, as Queen of England and as a Catholic. Her heart was placed in an urn and interred separately from her main body tomb in Westminster. Nearly fifty years later, her successor and half-sister, Elizabeth, lay dying in Richmond Palace at Surrey. Her courtiers pressured her to submit to heart burial, but Elizabeth resisted.  

In the years after Elizabeth’s accession to the English Crown, she pursued “the middle path” between Catholicism and extreme Protestantism. The codified, Catholic concept of Purgatory was illicit, the chantries had been shut down, and limits were placed on public services for the dead. After death, loved ones could not be saved from hell by the living, their fates

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396 Ibid, 151; primary source evidence linking Mary’s heart burial to Elizabeth I’s provided below.
sealed. Because of this, the heart of a royal could not be used to solicit prayers for the queen, nor did Elizabeth herself believe these prayers could help her.

However, in Protestant ideology, ambiguity still existed as to whether or not there was a liminal place between death and heaven or hell. The Final Resurrection marked the ascent or descent of souls, but in the interim, Protestant theologians were uncertain as to where the soul resided. Some, like Luther, advocated soul sleep. As a result, the dead received care from their relatives, though the funeral services became shorter, increasingly plain, and bereft of religious meaning. The dead were only wrapped in a sheet, unpreserved, before being interred. The funeral became a social gathering of mourners around a husk, and it was held for the benefit of the bereaved living rather than for the soul of the dead. Physical mementos of the dead as well as the prayers they solicited finally waned in popularity, nearly a century after the dissolution of the chantries. By 1644, an Anglican priest was no longer required to preside over the funeral ceremonies, as it was not a religious event.

What Protestant theologians dictated and what ministers preached from their pulpits differed from what was actually practiced. Wakes were a sign of protest against the Puritan movements that endorsed a plainer funeral; the very nature of the wake suggested that the person could still see and hear those around him. Clare Gittings analyzed the case of Sir Henry Unton, the ambassador to France who died in 1596. Having died abroad, Henry wished to be brought home to England to be buried. This required embalming and evisceration for the long

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398 Ibid, 152
399 Gittings, “Sacred and Secular, 1558-1660,” 153
400 Stannard, The Puritan Way of Death, 100.
402 Ibid.
journey, triggering controversy. The epic painting commissioned by his wife, Dorothy Wroughton, encapsulated Unton’s entire life, from cradle to grave. Of note is that the viewer can easily see Unton’s coffin beneath an altar, and alongside the coffin stands his viscera chest. Likely, his heart and entrails rest in his main tomb. The now “excessive” or “tasteless” practices of evisceration, embalming, transport, and memorial art survived in Tudor England.

Not all nobles continued their traditions of heart burial or evisceration. Much like in France during the prior century, noble and royal women tended to settle for a more subtle funeral. In her 1572 will, Mary, countess of Northumberland wrote “I have not loved to be very bold afore women, much more would I be loath to come into the hands of any living man, be he physician or surgeon.” The Church of England, much like its Catholic forebear, also advocated a curious separation of the living from the dead. In 1583, Bishop Middleton of St. Davis’ Church barred parishioners “except those of the best sort of the parish” from burying their bodies in the church building, “for that by their general burying there great infection doth ensue.”

Two years prior in 1581, the Council of Rouen of the Catholic Church met and issued the following guidelines about burial in the church building, stating that three types of people were entitled burial within the church walls:

1. Those who have dedicated their lives to God, especially the men [nuns only in cases of necessity], because their bodies have been chosen as temples of Christ and of the Holy Spirit.
2. Those who have received honors and dignities in the church [ordained clergymen] or in the world [the rich and powerful], because they are the ministers of god and the instruments of the Holy spirit’ and finally

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403 Gittings, “Sacred and Secular, 1558-1660,” 156.
404 Ibid.
405 Ibid. 156-157.
406 Ibid, 157-158.
Those who by their nobility, their actions, and their merits have distinguished themselves in the service of God and of the common good.\textsuperscript{407}

The proclamation did not differ substantially from the decrees of the medieval Church or from the statement of the Anglican bishop two years later. The various church institutions, Protestant or Catholic, continued to advocate space between the living and the dead, but popular religious practices contravened these rulings at every turn. Even if disease was cited, people remained undeterred from mingling with their dead, except in times of plague or extreme duress; such events were the deviation, not the rule. Bodies continued to be interred under the stone floor inside both Protestant and Catholic churches.\textsuperscript{408}

Elizabeth had not desired a separate burial of her heart or even embalming. However, she was the Queen of England and the last of the Tudor dynasty. John Manningham’s diary stated that Elizabeth “was not emboweled, but wrapt up in cere cloth, and that very il to, through the covetousnes of them that defrauded hir of the allowance of cloth was given them for that purpose.”\textsuperscript{409} However, Clapham relates, “The Queen’s body [was] left in a manner alone a day or two after her death, and meane persons had access to it.”\textsuperscript{410} Royal biographer Olivia Bland believes that Clapham had referred to the morticians that prepared Elizabeth’s body for burial, but specifically for heart burial. Although Manningham tells the reader that the Queen’s wishes were respected (that she was not to be embalmed or eviscerated), one of Elizabeth’s ladies-in-waiting, Elizabeth Southwell, stated that William Cecil, Elizabeth’s chief advisor, demanded it be done anyway.\textsuperscript{411} However, it is possible that only the heart was removed, and the bowels remained within; Elizabeth by all accounts was placed in a lead coffin promptly after her death.

\textsuperscript{407} Mansi Conciliorum, Volume 34, Column 648, quoted in Ariès, The Hour of Our Death, 47.
\textsuperscript{408} Ariès, The Hour of Our Death, 48.
\textsuperscript{409} John Manningham, The Diary of John Manningham of the Middle Temple, And of Bradbourne, Kent, Barrister-at-Law, 1602-1603, edited by John Bruce (Westminster: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1868) 159.
\textsuperscript{410} Olivia Bland, The Royal Way of Death (London: Constable, 1986) 26
\textsuperscript{411} Ibid, 27.
and her effigy, not her Body Natural, was seen at the funeral. As a result, no precautions needed to be taken in order to make the body presentable. The separate burial of the heart signified her royalty, and Cecil may have taken the middle path between Elizabeth’s own desires and the desire for continuity within the Tudor dynasty.

The answer to the uncertainty became apparent in 1977, when fragments of a previously unpublished manuscript from 1700 appeared in History Today. In 1670, a royal vault was opened to public viewing. William Taswell, who was eighteen at the time, confessed to a certain deed in his memoirs that confirmed the existence of heart urns for the reigning Tudor queens.

About the beginning of the year 1670, the funeral obsequies of General Monk were celebrated; previous to which a Royal vault was opened in which were two urns; one appropriated to Queen Mary, the other to Queen Elizabeth. I dipped my hand into each; I took out of each a kind of glutinous red substance somewhat resembling mortar. That of Mary only contained less moisture. Likely, after this point, the heart urns of Mary and Elizabeth were probably moved to rest within their shared body tomb. It was the custom of the Stuarts to bury the heart within the main crypt with the coffin, as the fashion of transporting the heart in England had long since waned and space was running low within Westminster; Mary and Elizabeth’s hearts were relocated so as to free up space, in all likelihood. Although the Westminster Abbey staff calls the heart urns of Elizabeth and Mary “bowel boxes,” these urns likely contained only their hearts. However, with the start of the Stuart dynasty, the merged heart and intestine caskets used by nobles, such as Henry Unton, became popular with the royal family.

Elizabeth’s chief advisor, Cecil, had also managed the negotiations with James VI of Scotland. James became heir apparent not through formal and public proclamations or war, but through the backroom politics of Tudor England. James I Stuart came to the throne as the

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413 Conversation with Christine Reynolds, Assistant Keeper of the Muniments, Westminster Abbey, 2 January 2013.
Protestant-raised son of the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots. He continued the tradition of heart burial, but he ordered his heart and his bowels interred together in one casket in 1625. Arthur Stanley, dean of Westminster, searched for the missing body of James I in 1866-1867, as it was the only body without a marker within the Abbey. James I’s body was found in the tomb of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York in the Lady Chapel of Westminster Abbey. He may have been placed there as a political statement. The founder of the Stuart dynasty rested eternally with the founder of the Tudor dynasty. The gesture demanded the acknowledgement of James’ legitimacy, though the effect was somewhat lost when Charles I failed to mark his father’s grave. Stanley noted that “no urns were in the vault, although they are known to have been buried with due solemnity soon after death.”

The English way of heart burial survived the termination of the country’s links to Rome and transition to Protestantism. Because Anglicanism was formed as “the middle path,” certain traditions were permitted to stand while others fell to the wayside. Heart burial never recovered from De Sepulturis’s issuance in 1299. It only remained popular with the upper echelons of English society – generally the king’s immediate family and the high-ranking courtiers. With the merger of the English and Scottish crowns in James I, the founder of the new dynasty had to assert his legitimacy and continuity by burying his heart in a similar fashion to his predecessors. Heart burial was not a stagnant ritual, as the exact methods and patterns in dispersal changed.

The French Royal Funeral Ceremony

After the disappearance of heart burial from wills during the fifteenth century, heart burial reappeared in the French historical record around the year 1500. It remained well-

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414 Stanley, Supplement to the Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey, 121.
415 Ibid, 153.
documented through the seventeenth century. French funerary practices began to mimic the English ones beginning in the early 1400s. Although the French adopted practices (such as the use of effigy) that emphasized the concept of the king’s two bodies, the French jurists and royals never openly advocated the theory. The French utilized the ceremonies of the English without fully adopting the thoughts behind it, instead preferring the divine rights of kings theory, which was codified by Jean Bodin the mid-sixteenth century.

The work of Ralph Giesey remains a key element in understand the political, religious, and logistical elements of the French royal funerary ceremony. The evolution of the ceremony into its fifteenth century form resulted from attempts to integrate two contradictory political theories. One train of thought advocated the notion that the king was not truly king until his coronation, while the other stated that the new king became king immediately upon the death of his predecessor. Giesey believes that a compromise was reached. Instead of death or coronation, the king became king after the corpse (and effigy) was out of sight. The dead king had to undergo funerary rituals in public in order to be declared dead by the public and for his successor to take control.

By the mid-1500s, the deceased king was a magnet for attention, and deliberately so. In the early days of the Capetian dynasty, male primogeniture was not an assured path of ascension to the throne. Because of this, the heir was required to be present at the funeral of the old king to make a political statement – the throne would pass to him. It also conjures the primitive concept offered by Frazier in The Golden Bough. When the god-king was killed, the circumstances were very controlled, to ensure that his royal soul could not escape them, leaving

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416 Bandé, Le Coeur du Roi, 172.
417 Giesey, The Royal Funeral Ceremony, i.
418 Ibid, 41.
them leaderless.\textsuperscript{419} This belief did not exist in medieval European society, but the political urgency spurred by the death of a king made it important for the heir to be close by.

However, as described by Giesey, by the time Philippe II Augustus died in 1229, his heir did not need to be present at the funeral; the succession was secure.\textsuperscript{420} Although hardline Catholics perceived a threat from Protestantism, most French people rested in the knowledge that their king, François I and his heir Henri II were active in persecuting heretics. Heart burial continued to be performed throughout the early stages of the Reformation. However, by this time, public attention remained on the king’s body rather than the heart until he was placed in the ground. In Giesey’s study, François I (d. 1547) was the focus of ritual activity until his body became too unstable to do so. One the physicians could do no more to preserve the body, an effigy was substituted for the rotting corpse, because the requirements of the royal funerary practices now outstripped the body’s solidity. The king could not appear to be rotting, as this indicated a lack of favor from God and sent the political message that the kingship itself was threatened.\textsuperscript{421}

The heir apparent used the time created by the effigy to set up his inner bureaucracy. The extension of the liminal period between monarchs permitted a smoother transition on a practical level. On the day of the funeral, once the effigy was then out of sight and the real body interred, the new king, Henri II, reemerged to succeed his father as the ritual center of royalty, the new government already organized. There could not be two kings of France at any given moment. Either François I (or his effigy) was visible as the king, or Henri II was; there could not be

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Sir James George Frazer, \textit{The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion, Volume II} (London: Macmillan and Company, 1900), 6.}
\footnote{Giesey \textit{The Royal Funeral Ceremony}, 42.}
\footnote{Huntington and Metcalf, \textit{Celebrations of Death}, 154.}
\end{footnotes}
two. Kantorowicz notes that Henri II did not visit the corpse of his father, but rather the effigy; the body had already been enclosed in the coffin by the time Henri arrived. Giesey clearly draws his own conclusion from Herz’s statement, which he cites in The Royal Funeral Ceremony of France:

So long as the decomposition is not sufficiently advanced, one is not really finished with the deceased, and his authority cannot be transmitted to his successor: the hand of the deceased can no longer hold the scepter, but it has not yet let go. One must wait for the King to be entirely dead before one can cry: Long Live the King. The behind-the-scenes work for the power transition was completed during the ritual funerary customs and out of the sight of the common people; the new king was immediately ready to function as an effective ruler. No time was wasted.

The burial of the heart was a separate performance from that of the main funeral. François had died on 31 March 1547. His body was not interred until 22 May 1547, due in part for Henri II’s desire to inter together the bodies of his father François I and his brothers, the former dauphin François (d. 1536) and the former Duc d’Orleans Charles (d. 1545). This clearly illustrated that Henri II was the only one left to take the throne; there was no question in the line of succession. In contrast to the drawn out funerary rituals for the body, the heart and entrails, in separate urns, were interred on 6 April 1547, a week after François’ death. There is no suggestion in the records, however, that Henri attended this procession and ceremony; despite not being the whole of the king, the parts were still the king. Just as a relic represented a saint in his entirety with all due power, so too did the scattered remains of a king. Thus, Henri could not

422 Giesey, The Royal Funeral Ceremony, 7; Kantorowicz, The King’s Two Bodies, 28.
423 Kantorowicz, The King’s Two Bodies, 28.
424 Hertz, Death and The Right Hand, 49.
425 Giesey, The Royal Funeral Ceremony, 8.
426 Ibid, 3.
be seen with the heart or the entrails, or else the same problems incurred by a funeral appearance would arise.

Like Anne of Bretagne and Louis XII earlier in the sixteenth century, François’ body and that of his wife, Claude, lie in a transi tomb, depicting the royal couple both in their regal glory on the top layer and in their naked, eviscerated death upon the coffin itself. Henri II installed his father François’s heart in a standing heart effigy, carved from marble and meant to be a permanent fixture in Saint-Denis. Unlike many of his royal relatives, François’ heart urn remains in Saint-Denis, undamaged despite the French Revolution. Extensive inscriptions cover the urn’s base on all four sides. François’ urn marks the transition of the French heart urns from small, portable containers to permanent, freestanding monuments.

François’s cousin and predecessor, Louis XII, had concealed his viscera urn within his coffin. However, since Louis had died, the Protestant Reformation had swept across Europe. Phillip Morgan stated that the “modest and anonymous” funeral advocated by Protestants, especially in England, “represented a socially corrosive individualism in the face of the more common and gregarious gatherings.” As such, French burials and specifically heart burial regained their former pomp and ceremony and went beyond former standards. From François’ heart burial through Louis XIII’s in 1643, the heart monuments became increasingly tall and inscribed, detailing the great deeds and characteristics of the person within. The heart represented the person and his virtues where the body was absent. The urn becomes a monument. Henri II (d. 1559)’s heart urn is elevated by three Muses, with inscriptions on three sides. Likewise, the urn of Anne of Montmorency (d.1567), the constable of France of France

427 Personal observation at the Basilica of Saint-Denis, 19 January 2013.
428 Personal observation, Basilica of Saint-Denis, Saint-Denis, France, 19 January 2013.
429 Morgan, “Of Worms and War, 1380-1558,” 140.
430 Personal observation, Musée Louvre, 19 January 2013.
who died in battle after serving three kings, is equally huge an elaborate, with inscriptions on three sides in French and in Latin. Anne’s heart is described as “a heart full of courage,” having “the hearts of three French kings and all of France,” “a heart of valiance,” and possessing the favor of heaven.

The sons of Henri II all had their hearts buried, but they also shared the problem of dying young and being unable to produce heirs. In the case of François II, he died a mere year after taking the throne in 1560, at age sixteen. The actual ceremonies surrounding the heart became private affairs at night.431 The heart was placed into a reliquary of lead and carried by a six-horse carriage with a twelve-rider escort. The heart perched on a black taffeta cushion in the lap of the king’s father confessor. The young king’s heart and body were treated with quick efficiency rather than the high pomp and ceremony that had been afforded to his ancestors.432 The escort and interment of the heart were performed at night, with no arranged public ceremonies for François II. The courtiers and the queen mother, Catherine de Medici, emphasized the enthronement of young Charles IX rather than the funeral of the young king. Despite the lack of ceremony, François II’s heart monument is every bit as elaborate as his father’s and his brother Henri III’s heart monuments.433 Having two royal funerals so close together may have been seen as instability, so preparations for François II’s may have been abandoned. Instead of focusing on the second dead king within a year, all focus was placed on Charles IX to reassure the public. However, this did not affect the solemnity and honor granted to François II’s heart in sepulture.

432 Ibid.
433 Personal observation at the Royal Necropolis at the Basilica of Saint-Denis, Saint-Denis, France, 19 January 2013.
François II had been married since 1558 to Mary, Queen of Scots, who was only two years his senior. Mary’s mother, Marie de Guise, had been married to the king of Scotland, James V. James V died only six days after his daughter’s birth, leaving the infant girl Queen of Scots. Although she only possessed her full power as queen of Scotland and queen of France for a brief period during her life, Mary had still been a queen by blood, a queen by marriage, and a queen by law until she abdicated in 1567 in favor of her own one-year-old son, James VI of Scotland, later James I of England. As such, despite being executed in 1587, Mary received separate burial of the heart from the body, just as any queen of France would. She also may have requested this in the knowledge that her son would be the founder of a dynasty. After James became king of England, he ordered that her body be transferred to Westminster Abbey to be buried as a queen in 1612. The entire funeral ceremony for Queen Mary was done under the cover of night, permitting James himself to be the chief mourner. Heraldic funerals during the day had rules pertaining to who could and who could not appear in public mourning at a funeral. Having the ceremonies at night alleviated such strictures in England and in France. Thus, James was able to mourn for his mother at night, while during the day, a stranger likely would have been appointed.

Ten-year-old Charles IX took the throne after his brother, François II, but he reigned for only fourteen years. He suffered from weak mental and physical health before dying of tuberculosis at age twenty-four. During the reigns of François II and Charles IX, France found itself ruled by the queen mother, Catherine de Medici and wracked by the French Wars of Religion. As described by Richard Bonney, “the progress of Calvinism was aided both by a weak monarchy and the royal bankruptcy of 1559 […] Some local Calvinist communities may

actually have bribed nobles to become their ‘protectors’ at the precise moment that hardline Catholic governors felt their authority to be undermined by the regency government’s policy of limited toleration.”

In 1562, the Loire region became Huguenot territory, with the Prince de Condé taking Orleans, the location of François II’s inurned heart. According to several sources, the mob flipped the tomb of Louis XI (who had been the sole French king to be buried away from Saint-Denis) at Notre Dame de Clery, just outside of Orleans. They then proceeded to disinter the heart of François II and burn it in a bonfire. Somehow, the monument itself survived and was moved to Saint-Denis after the Revolution.

Charles IX died in 1574. His heart urn was claimed by the monk Beurrier as resting in the Celestine monastery near the monument of his father, Henri II. However, unlike the heart monument of his brothers and father, Charles IX’s has not been found after the French Revolution. Thus, it is either lost with its monument destroyed or, given the unreliable source for the monument, non-existent. The popularity and consistency of the performance of heart burial in France during this period suggests that Charles IX did have his heart burial. Like his brother François, it may have been done at night for privacy. The monument likely was lost in the tumult of the Revolution, like the majority of the holdings of the Celestine church of Paris; though Beurrier may be unreliable, the existence of Charles’ heart burial and monument is plausible given his historical context.

The two consecutive child kings had weakened the power of the throne. Henri III, the third son of Henri II to reign, was unable to produce an heir. With the death of Henri’s last brother, François, duke of Anjou, the succession of the French crown was poised to fall to Henri of Navarre, a Protestant. The years 1587 to 1589 included the execution of Mary, Queen of

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Scots (a Guise by blood), the failure of Catholic Spain to invade Protestant England, the attempt by Henri III to disinherit Henri of Navarre, and the War of the Three Henrys. Henri III found himself under siege by Henri, Duc de Guise, leader of the Catholic League, and Henri of Navarre, leader of the Huguenots. Unlike Elizabeth, Henri was not given the luxury of taking a middle path.

By war’s end, the king’s guards had assassinated Henri of Guise, while Jacques Clement, a Dominican lay brother, had assassinated Henri III himself after allying himself again to Henri of Navarre.\textsuperscript{438} Now Henri IV, the restored Calvinist heir and founder of the House of Bourbon, ruled Catholic France but not without objections from the Catholic League. The French Wars of Religion continued.

Historian Paul Kleber Monod points to the assassination of Henri III as the end of the support for the king’s sacral position in France. Before this assassination, the king of France claimed holy blood through St. Louis. France never adopted the concept of the king’s two bodies; the king and the kingship were not interconnected parts of stately function as they were in England. The king in France was the kingship, for he represented the blood lineage and the continuity of secular rule. If the king was unfit, he represented the entire state in his unfitness; a just, Godly nation had to have a just, Godly king. The Catholic League considered Henri III a traitor to the Catholic cause for naming a Protestant his heir when there was a perfectly good Catholic candidate available. They believed that his body was no longer sacred. Thus, Clement took up the call and killed the unfit king.\textsuperscript{439} If the king died, a crisis typically ensued if no suitable heir was immediately apparent or if the heir was objectionable. This was the case in the event of Henri III’s murder and the ascension of Henri IV.

\textsuperscript{438} Bonney, \textit{The European Dynastic States}, 175-176.
The first matter at hand in the aftermath of Henri III’s assassination, however, was the burial of the former king. During this period, the Catholic League held Saint-Denis, and Henri III’s choice to make Henri the Protestant his heir made his body unwelcome in the basilica.\textsuperscript{440} The Catholic League faction no longer saw Henri III as the king, nor did the Protestant faction; only Henri’s allies, the royalist faction, argued that Henri III was king until his body was in the ground and his effigy was out of sight, just as it had been for his predecessors. As a result, Henri IV arranged for Henri III’s body to quickly be eviscerated and embalmed, with his body going to Compiegne and his heart remaining near the place of assassination, St. Cloud.\textsuperscript{441}

Henri IV supposedly stated, “Paris is well worth a mass,” in 1593 when he renounced Protestantism in favor of Catholicism for the second time. While his private life may have been quite different, Henri IV’s public religious life changed to reflect his public conversion. François Ravaillac assassinated Henri IV in 1610 in the streets of Paris. By the time the king was carried back to the palace, he had bled out. According to the autopsy report, the knife entered between the fifth and sixth rib, punctured the lung, and severed the aortic arch.\textsuperscript{442} Within twenty-four hours of his death – long before his funeral took place – Henri IV’s eight-year-old son and heir Louis XIII called a \textit{lit de justice} in order to immediately be enthroned and his mother, Marie de Medici, installed as regent.\textsuperscript{443}

\textit{A lit de justice} was a highly formal session of the \textit{Parlement} of Paris, which was composed of the three estates (clergy, nobility, and the common people). The king called for the session and would attend for the purposing of ratifying royal decrees. Similar events had

\textsuperscript{440} Monod, \textit{The Power of Kings}, 35
\textsuperscript{441} Ibid.
unfolded in 1568 at Charles IX’s attainment of majority and ability to rule sans regent. In Louis XIII’s case, this *lit de justice*, not the burial of his father, marked the beginning of his reign as the active monarch in France. No longer did the old king have to be out of sight before the new king reigned. Two kings were never present in France because the dead corpse was no longer considered to still hold power, ceremonial or otherwise. What was a tacit truth in pre-1610 French royal funerary ceremonies became an overt one as King Louis XIII sat in his father’s chair at the *lit de justice* while his father’s body lay in state: the new king held the power.444

Ralph Giesey points out that the use of the *lit de justice* thus rendered the need for funeral of the old king and the coronation of the new king effectively moot.445 The power had already been transferred to Louis XIII as the visible, living king. In order for these customs to survive, they had to evolve and change to suit the new patterns of succession. Henri IV’s funeral was the last to make use of the effigy in France and even then, contemporaries saw it as unnecessary; having Louis XIII himself at the *lit de justice* was adequate for contemporary jurists.446 No longer needing a royal effigy stand-in, Louis XIII immediately took power at the death of his father, with no ceremony to focus attention upon his dead father or the hiding heir, as seen in the case of François I’s funeral and Henri II’s reemergence.

Heart burial, since François II’s death in 1560, had already taken on a more secretive and familial nature. Since it was no longer a public ceremony, the chief mourners and participants could be family members who would otherwise not be permitted to be seen in mourning garb in public. However, the procession became longer, thus resulting in crowds gathering on the main road in order to bid the heart well and pay respects to Henri IV as if he were still alive and taking

445 Ibid.
446 Ibid.
a carriage ride through the country.\footnote{Regnier, “The Heart of the Kings of France: ‘Cordial Immortality,” 433.} After being on display in the Jesuit Saint-Louis Church for three days, Henri IV’s heart traveled to La Fleche. Along the way, commoners kissed the taffeta pillow while nobles kissed the heart casket itself.

Father Cotton, the king’s Jesuit confessor, carried the heart in his lap the entire way, and at La Fleche, he carried out the ritual ceremonies of interring the heart.

Where then Sirs, will this divine heart take its rest? Below ground in some gloomy cavern which makes us shudder? No, no, Sirs, he needs a living and breathing tomb: and as long as only one of this company remains on earth, he will rest, he will live in our court, he will be lodged in our memory.\footnote{Regnier, “The Heart of the Kings of France: ‘Cordial Immortality,” 434.}

The heart was interred with a request for prayers for the king’s soul repeated three times, and the ceremony ended with the proclamation of Louis XIII as king and a celebration. The anniversary of the heart burial was also supposedly celebrated for some years after the event.\footnote{Michel, “Herzbestattungen und der Herzkult des 17 Jahrhunderts,” 124.} Although the heart monument of Henri IV still exists at Saint-Thomas at La Fleche, the hearts of Henri and his queen, Marie de Medici (d. 1643), were taken out and burned by revolutionaries in 1793.\footnote{Regnier, “The Heart of the Kings of France: ‘Cordial Immorality,’” 434. See illustration X.} Some reports indicate that royalists collected the ashes and replaced them in the urn, but this is disputed.

Conclusion

The sacrality of the king’s body in France and the political fiction of the king’s two bodies in England began to be questioned by not only Protestant inhabitants of the kingdom, but also in the ideas that filtered into Catholicism during the Counter Reformation. Both these political tools demanded high ceremony, extravagance, and the elevation of the king to something more than a man, but less than a god. In the face of the more reserved and personal reactions to death, piety trumped ceremony. As a result, the ways kingly power transferred from
monarch to monarch changed. It could not be by virtue of the king or the blood alone. It became a legal process through the *lit de justice* in France and through the political machine in England.

Royal funerals took a turn for the more private and personal, but heart burial became downright secretive in France. The funerals of François II were pushed aside in favor of immediately moving on to the next king, Charles IX. The deaths of Henri II and François II in such close proximity did little to engender confidence in the Crown. The focus went to the boy king, not the dead king’s corpse or effigy. Although royal funerals returned to opulence, heart burial remained a tradition carried out at night by those closest to the king and his father confessor, typically Jesuit.

Heart burial had left behind its religious connections to Purgatory or they had been mitigated by this stage. Heart burial now represented the privileges of society’s elites. It also remained to be a sign of legitimacy and establishment, as the new Tudor, Stuart, and Bourbon dynasties all used it to assert their authority. Among Henry VIII’s wives, only the three that had been crowned or he had intended to crown (Katharine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, and Jane Seymour) had their hearts buried; Anne of Cleves became Henry’s “sister” and garnered the privilege that way. Heart burial cannot be classified as a strictly Catholic practice because of its use as a political tool after the Reformation. Rather, the rampant heart destruction in the French Revolution overtly targeted kings’ and queens’ remains, not saints’ relics.

Religious orders in France continued to support the burial of hearts and eagerly anticipated their gift as a sign of patronage. The Jesuits encouraged heart burial in the territories of the Holy Roman Empire as well. Heart burials did occur sporadically among the elites, but most practitioners were bishops in the model of the archbishops of Wurzburg. Weiss-Krejci, “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Central Europe,” 123.
only consistently adopted the practice in the face of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation beginning in the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{452}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{452} Weiss-Krejci, “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Central Europe,” 132.
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CHAPTER VIII
DYNASTIC HEART BURIAL, 1625-1715

The debates over heart burial’s theological and political implications died down by the seventeenth century. The use of heart burial slowly became a signifier of social status. In England, Weiss-Krejci classifies it as a fashion.453 The religious connection between elite heart burial and the Church did not die out, however. In fact, the Counter Reformation’s newly formed orders such as the Capuchins and Jesuits, much like the Dominicans and other mendicants before them, promoted heart burial and accepted hearts in order to increase their own prestige. This has already been seen in the case of Henri IV of France; his father confessor was a Jesuit. Along with religious orders, dynasties also continued to use heart burial as a tool of establishment and legitimacy. No controversies about heart burial or other funerary practices ensued even as the number of heart burials rose.

The theological and political theories of separate interment were established and accepted. The scientific world questioned the location of the soul but did not deter occurrences of heart burial. Prior to the sixteenth century, the German-speaking lands of the Holy Roman Empire did not utilize heart burial consistently. Hereafter, the Holy Roman Empire and its territories outpaced all other dynasties in their use of heart burial.

The Jesuits and the Propagation of Heart Burial

The transnational house of Nassau (composed of German, Dutch, and Luxembourger nobility) sporadically participated in heart burial during the seventeenth century, but these amounted to five or fewer occurrences. All of these, however, had connections to the Jesuits.454 The Society of Jesus in Germany concerned itself with the connection of their order to the imagery of the Sacred Heart. By emphasizing the value of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and

supporting the heart burial of nobles, the Jesuits benefited from the pre-existing Germany fascination with the heart, as noted in a study by Walter Michel.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was rooted in the early beliefs surrounding his side wound. According to the Gospel of John, as Jesus hung on the cross, a soldier pierced his side with a spear, likely puncturing the pericardium, the sac of fluid surrounding the heart.\footnote{John 19:34 DV.} When the risen Christ supposedly appeared to his apostles and later Thomas the Doubter, he possessed five wounds: two in the feet, two in the hands, and one in the side.\footnote{Luke 20:39-40; John 20:27 DV.}

The gospel of John is the outlier in the traditional New Testament gospels. The synoptic books of Mark, Matthew, and Luke share a great deal of information and attempt to construct a history of Jesus’ life and ministry. In contrast, John remains focused upon the spiritual matter of Christ and his miracles, deriving little from the other three. The detailed account of Luke emphasizes the presence of nail marks in the hands and feet of the Resurrected Christ. Matthew and Mark do not mention the wounds after Christ’s resurrection. John’s gospel emphasizes the hands and the side wound in the story of Thomas. After Thomas doubted his resurrection, Jesus appeared to him and told him to touch the side wound, the pain in his heart he had suffered on behalf of humanity.

The early ideas surrounding the Sacred Heart emphasized the pain Christ carried out of love for mankind in his heart, figuratively. The Franciscans espoused particular devotion to the actual wounds of the physical Christ, as it reminded people of his humanity, humility, and suffering. At some point, these two ideas converged into a cult that gained popularity rapidly in the early seventeenth century. However, the cult of the Immaculate Heart of Mary outpaced that of her son; Mary had borne the Savior of the world but also the loss of his life. Luke twice
mentions all the things Mary kept “in her heart,” particularly as it concerns the early life of Christ.\footnote{457} John goes a step further and places her directly under the cross, making her a witness to the piercing of Christ’s heart soon thereafter.\footnote{458} Mary’s emotional suffering and burdens are only outweighed by her devotion to her son and to God; her heart belonged to them her entire life. The two Sacred Hearts represent not just suffering, but the ability of love to bear it.

Much like Purgatory, the cults of the Sacred Heart had been around for many years before a mass and set of prayers were set for them in the mid-1600s. The devotion to the Sacred Hearts peaked in the eighteenth century, as did heart burial in German-speaking lands.\footnote{459} This was not coincidence. Walter Michel bases his study of Germanic heart burial in the seventeenth century on the sermons and writings of two Jesuit preachers, Dutchman Maximilian van der Sandt and the supposed Matthias Kalcoven. The one problem with Michel’s use of Kalcoven is that “Matthias Kalcoven” does not actually exist. “Kalckhoven” was the name of a publisher that may or may not have written the works published by his house, and it is unclear whether there is a direct relationship with Jost Kalckhoven, the Counter Reformation bookseller and publisher.\footnote{460} As such, one may count Kalcoven’s contributions to this article as doubtful. However, van der Sandt existed and attended the heart burial of an archbishop of Wurzburg, Julius Echter.

Echter died in 1617. By this point, the archbishops of Wurzburg had taken to interring their hearts within Wurzburg rather than Ebrach. Van der Sandt delivered the sermon at Echter’s funeral. Michel identifies the three themes of the Jesuit’s sermon: the reemergence of stoic philosophy; the special position of the heart in the Holy Scripture; and the significance of the

\footnote{457} Luke 2:19 and 2:51, DV. 
\footnote{459} Ariès, Images of Man and Death, 128. 
\footnote{460} J. Holder Bennett, conversation, 12 March 2013. 

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heart in Roman antiquity and its literature.\textsuperscript{461} Van der Sandt compared the centrality of the heart in the body to the centrality of the sun in solar system, invoking the popular image of Jesus’ wounded heart.\textsuperscript{462}

Although the wounded heart of Christ appeared in earlier art representing the side wound of Christ, it was with the promotion of the Jesuits that the Sacred Heart cults took off in the seventeenth century. Popular devotional practice often invoked the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary, but it was not until 1648 and 1670 that St. Jean Eudes composed the Masses and Orders of Office for the Sacred Heart of Mary and of Jesus, respectively. The adoration of hearts existed long before it was codified; again, popular religion outpaced the written regulations and orders of the Church.

Michel also cites the art of Albert Dürer to note the importance of the heart in German art and culture as far back as the fifteenth century. Dürer created an engraving of Maximilian I of Habsburg, stating, “In the hand of God, the heart of the king is,” and “Like the sun in sky, here on earth is Caesar.”\textsuperscript{463} The medieval symbolism of the heart thrived in post-medieval central Europe. The Aristotelian cardiocentrality and the representative power of relics remained an active part of seventeenth-century German perceptions of the heart. The influence of the Counter Reformation combined with the pre-existing religious custom among German bishops to create an opportunity for the new order of the Society of Jesus.

The Jesuits manipulated heart burial and the perception of the heart in Germany to gain support for their order. Although Germany was part of Europe, the Jesuits considered it a mission field due to the region’s overwhelming response to Protestantism in the sixteenth century. By capitalizing on the German interest in the heart, the Jesuits may have triggered the

\textsuperscript{462} Ibid, 126-127.
\textsuperscript{463} Ibid, 127.
sudden surge in heart burial seen during the seventeenth century in German-speaking lands. Scholar Walter Michel also notes that many of the German participants of heart burial buried their entrails separately, but the heart was given far more prominence in contrast to the tripartite divisions of the French.464

The Habsburgs and Heart Burial

In the lands of the Holy Roman Empire, the practice of burying the heart predominantly existed among bishops and archbishops until the fifteenth century. Starting in 1400, secular rulers and their wives began to bury their hearts sporadically throughout the German-speaking regions of the Holy Roman Empire.465 No consistent pattern appeared until the deaths of brothers Ernest the Iron of Tyrol (d. 1406), Frederick IV of Tyrol (d. 1439), and Frederick’s wives, Elizabeth of the Palatinate (d. 1408) and Anne of Brunswick-Göttingen (d. 1432). Ernest and Frederick were members of the House of Habsburg. They elected to bury their hearts at Innsbruck, Austria.466

The tradition continued in Frederick’s son by Anne, Sigismund (d. 1496), and his wife, Eleanor of Scotland (d. 1480). The Scots, like the Austrians, had a few crusading rulers who either sent their hearts to the Holy Land or back home. However, heart burial was still more commonly practiced among the bishops and archbishops in these regions rather than by secular rulers until the Reformation. The Scots did not practice heart burial consistently until James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603. Until the Scottish kings became the English kings, heart burial was not a family tradition. James’ mother Mary, Queen of Scots, did have her

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466 Extensive bombing during the Second World War destroyed the interior of St. Jacobkirche, wherein the hearts were stored. The bodies in the crypt were spared. Personal observation at St. Jacobskirche, Innsbruck, Austria. 16 January 2013.
heart buried separately from her body after her execution in 1587, but she had already been
deposed by Elizabeth I’s agents and replaced by the infant James.\(^{467}\)

The Tyroleans and their spouses foreshadowed the prolific use of heart burial by the Holy
Roman emperors. Save for Karl VII Albrecht (reigned 1742-1745), all Holy Roman Emperors
from 1437 to 1806 were Habsburgs. Karl VII Albrecht was from the House of Wittelsbach,
which had its own tradition of heart burial beginning in the mid-seventeenth century. The son of
Ernest the Iron, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III died in 1496, and he sent his heart to Linz,
Austria, while his body lay in St. Stephan’s Cathedral in Vienna.\(^{468}\) Frederick’s son, Maximilian
I, expanded heart burial, employing it on first wife Maria (d. 1482), his son Philip I of Spain (d.
1506), his sons, wives, and asking for it at his own death in 1519. Maximilian’s heart resides
with that of his first wife, supposedly in Bruges, though the hearts have been long since lost.
Holy Roman Emperor Karl V did not choose to divide his body at his death in 1558, but his
successor and brother, Ferdinand I did in 1564.

To this time, only the Holy Roman emperors and their wives exercised the option for
heart burial; relatives and non-reigning children typically did not, unless the child predeceased
his or her imperial father. However, Maximilian II’s children single-handedly changed this; out
of his sixteen progeny, two (Rudolf II [d. 1612] and Matthias [d. 1619]) became Holy Roman
emperors and two (Ernest [d. 1595] and Albert VII [d. 1621]) became Netherlands Staatholders.
These four men, along with their cousins who ruled Tyrol, all buried their hearts separately from
their bodies, as did their wives. Although Ernest and Albert VII never became emperors, they
did become Kaisers or kings in their own right, much like the men of the House of Anjou in

\(^{467}\) The heart was destroyed during the demolition of Fotheringay Castle in the mid-seventeenth century.
\(^{468}\) Weiss-Krejci, “Heart Burial in Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Central Europe,” 120.
Because of the infamous pattern of intermarriage within the House of Habsburg, heart burial soon became common in all branches of the family, whether due to marriage into the direct imperial line or into the Tyrolean line.

The Austrian Habsburg way of death became a defining characteristic of the dynasty. Emperor Matthias had married Anna of Tyrol, and she believed that the Habsburg imperial dynasty should have a central resting place. Considering that she was of the Tyrolean branch, which had used the Innsbruck Jacobskirche for centuries, it is not surprising that she was the source for both inspiration and funding in this matter; her will left money for the project after her death in 1618.

Anna’s grandson, Ferdinand IV, King of the Romans, ordered his heart sent to the Augustinerkirche and his viscera to Stephansdom at his death in 1654. The Augustinian monks ascribe Ferdinand’s last wishes for his heart to his devotion to Mary, Mother of God. On their website, they cite his will, stating that Ferdinand desired, “that his heart, after his death, was to be placed at the feet of the Mother of God.”

The Herzgruft was thus installed in the Lorettokapelle. A Lorettokapelle or Loreto chapel was a popular sixteenth-century German style of chapel, which drew influence from the Santa Casa pilgrimage site in Loreto, Italy. According to local legend, four angels brought the house of Mary, Mother of God, from the Holy Land to Loreto. Many Marian shrines in Germany attempt to emulate the Santa Casa, including the Gnadenkapelle in Altötting and the

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Augustinerkirche in Vienna. Both locations house the hearts of the ruling families of Bavaria and Austria, respectively.

Once again, much like the separate burial of Henry I of England, Blanche of Castile’s heart donation to Lys, and even the use of effigy by the court of Edward II, a simple act founded the long-term customs of a dynasty. Through Ferdinand IV’s last wishes, both the Herzgruft and the Herzogsgruft came into existence. Vienna became a true necropolis – a city of the dead. The Habsburgs typically buried their bodies in the Kaisergruft at the Kapuzinerkirche, their hearts in the Herzgruft at the Augustinerkirche, and their intestines in the Herzogsgruft at Stephansdom. Emperor Ferdinand III, son of Matthias) A few other churches in Vienna, such as the Dominikanerkirche, hold the bodies of Habsburgs that desired a quieter resting place such as Empress Claudia Felicitas (d.1676). These churches are within a five-minute walk of each other. Between 1654 and 1711, twelve Habsburg hearts were laid to rest in the Herzgruft, including two belonging to children under the age of eighteen and four adult women. In a shift from the medieval practice, children and women took part in the previously male-only tradition in Germany.

Heart Burial Among the Wittelsbachs, 1632-1715

Heart burial was not completely monopolized by the Habsburgs in German-speaking lands. The Bavarian rulers from the House of Wittelsbach also practiced heart burial. Several family members participated in this custom prior to 1600, but much like the Habsburgs, only after the Counter Reformation did the pattern become distinct and constant. The Bavarian branch of the House of Wittelsbach deposited their hearts in a central location, the Altötting Gnadenkapelle. Since the late fifteenth century, the chapel has been a popular Marian shrine

among pilgrims due to the supposed resurrection of a child through the intercession of Mary in 1489. The Black Madonna housed within the chapel began to receive visits from all over the Christian world.

Believers in a Marian shrine’s power often send *ex votos* or small devotional offerings to the chapel to either request help from or give thanks to the Virgin Mary. In earlier times, before the Counter Reformation, the *ex votos* were only for thanking the Virgin, not to make a request. ⁴⁷³ These typically took the form of a miniature model of the body part healed or an item representing that matter helped. However, after the Counter Reformation, the *ex votos* took the form of a silver heart ornament, issued in varying sizes. Some ascribe this visual change to the influence of the cult of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary, propagated by the Jesuits. ⁴⁷⁴

The earliest heart housed in Altötting belongs to field marshal Johannes Tserclas Tilly, who died in 1632. In similar language used by Habsburger King Ferdinand IV, Tilly requested to rest eternally in the presence of the Holy Mother. ⁴⁷⁵ His urn is unseen, buried in either the floor or the wall in front of the Black Madonna altar. During the seventeenth century, four hearts joined his in the Gnadenkapelle: Bavarian elector Maximilian I (d. 1651) and his first wife Elizabeth Renata of Lorraine (d. 1635), Cardinal Franz Wilhelm of Wartenberg (d. 1661), and Duke Albrecht Sigismund, Bishop of Freising (d. 1685). ⁴⁷⁶ Both men of the cloth were Wittelsbachs by birth. In 1700, the countess of Sternberg, Maria Violante, joined the Wittelsbach urns. Having married into the House of Habsburg and having been of minor

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⁴⁷⁴ Ibid, 83.
Bavarian noble blood via the Preysing house, Maria Violante exercised her dual privilege to heart burial, though very little is known about her otherwise.

The Emergence of Divine Right

In England and in France, the concepts of absolutism began to germinate in the early seventeenth century. In 1597, James VI of Scotland (later I of England) wrote about the rights of kings in his treatise, *The True Lawe of Free Monarchies*, drawing heavily from French jurist Jean Bodin’s concepts of sovereignty. For the first time, a king wrote his own political theories and directed toward the subjects of the realm. Citing the Bible, James dictated the duties of a true monarch:

To minister justice and judgement to the people, as the same David saith; To advance the good, and punish the evill, as he likewise saith; to establish good laws to his people, and procure obedience to the same, as divers good Kings of Judah did; to procure the peace of the people, as the same David saith; to decide all controversies that can arise among them, as Solomon did; to bee the Minister of God for the weale of him that doeth well, as as the minister of God, to take vengeance upon them that doe evill, as S. Paule saith. And finally, as a good Pasteur, to goe out and in before his people, as is said in the first of Samuel; that through the Princes prosperitie the peoples peace may be procured, as Jeremie saith.

James saw himself as “God’s lieutenant” and the embodiment of God’s power and justice on earth. Likewise, the king was the father to all, dispensing rewards and punishment as a parent would. James observed that when the Israelites asked Samuel for a king, God warned the people that the king would rule over them and could not be gotten rid of so easily; he received the best of their labors. Only God could depose the king and pick the replacement. To usurp the throne or to murder the king would be sacrilege.

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479 Ibid, B3-B4.
481 Ibid, B8-C1.
James put emphasis on legitimate blood both in the office of the king and of those who would inherit feudal lands. Through that section, James implicitly urged Elizabeth to pass the crown to him, the nearest blood relative. Perhaps the comments of legitimate blood were also a swipe at Elizabeth’s formerly disgraced status as the “bastard” daughter. James VI made two innovations: first, the monarch’s immunity from earthly blame, and the explicit requirement of legitimate blood. Prior to this, the illegitimate sons of both French and English kings enjoyed royal privileges such as heart burial and some (such as Henry VIII’s Henry Fitzroy) were considered for the crown.

James’ son, Charles I, attempted to practice the written theories of his father, arguing he had no earthly authority to answer to, only God. Parliament disagreed. Charles I, much like Louis XVI a century-and-a-half later, did not have his heart buried separately due to his deposition and execution. His wife, Henrietta Maria, did have her heart buried at her death in 1669. Despite the restoration of her son Charles II to the English throne, Henrietta Maria chose to retire to Paris in 1665 and have her body buried with her family at Saint-Denis, as she was the daughter of Henri IV of France. Her heart was sent out to the Cloister of Chaillot, which she had founded.

Dean Arthur Stanley cited both the Westminster Abbey registers and the excavations of the Abbey in the late 1860s in his observation that Charles II, Mary II, William II, George of Denmark (Anne’s consort), and Anne all had “bowel boxes” resting at the foot of their tombs. While Charles II’s heart and viscera chest had an average length inscription, Stanley was struck by the remarkably plain accoutrements of Mary II and William III. “The barest initials were

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483 Ibid, D.
484 Personal observation at the Royal Necropolis at Saint-Denis, 19 January 2013.
485 Stanley, Supplement to the Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey, 122.
486 Stanley, Supplements, 125.
deemed sufficient to indicate the grandest titles, and to contrast this with the elaborate details concerning the insignificant consort of Queen Anne.” Indeed; below is the entire inscription of Mary II’s urn:

Depositum
Reginae Mariae II
Uxor
Guilielmi III487

Compare to Charles’ coffin plate

Depositum
Agustissi et Serenissimi Principis
Carolus Secundi
Angliae, Scotiae, Franciae, et Hiberniae Regis
Fidei Defensoris & C
Oblit sext die Feb anno Dni 1684
Aetatis suae quinquagesimoquinto
Regnique sui tricesmo septimo488

In extreme contrast, George of Denmark’s inscription is several paragraphs long and, if cited in full, would take up the entirety of this page. According to several sources, Mary II did not wish to be eviscerated or embalmed, but unfortunately, the statement indicating such a desire was not read until the deed was already done.489

Anne Stuart marked the end of the legitimate Stuart dynasty. Her only child to survive infancy died at age ten and with him the hopes of a continued dynasty.490 With Parliament unwilling to hand the throne to the Catholic exiles, the Act of Settlement of 1701 dictated the English and Irish (and later Scottish) thrones would pass to Sophia of Hanover, a granddaughter of James I, and her line. In contrast to her sister Mary, her spartan brother-in-law William, and

487 Stanley, Supplements, 125.
488 Ibid.
489 Dietz, Ewige Herzen, 84; Bradford, 209. Bradford cites contemporary diarist John Evelyn on the matter of Mary’s desire to be left intact.
490 William of Gloucester, though only age ten at his death, had his heart buried separately in a viscera chest, exactly like his parents and other adult Stuart relatives.
her eventual successors the Hanoverians, Anne embraced the pageantry and the glamor that accompanied the office of queen. As such, she buried her heart in a less plain urn. She was the second-to-last monarch of Britain to bury her heart separately and the last British monarch to utilize the royal touch. 491

The decline of both the royal touch and heart burial indicate the decline of mysticism in connection to the British throne. The Tudors and Stuarts through James II all practiced both rituals. 492 However, with the deposition of James II, the English political scene transitioned from the divine right of kings to the good wind of Providence, which blew in Mary, James’ Protestant daughter, and Calvinist husband William. Despite James I’s skepticism about the royal touch, he still performed the royal rite. According to his courtiers, it helped prove his legitimacy. 493 William outright refused. 494 Anne, the last of the reigning Stuarts, resumed touching the sick until her death in 1714. Thereafter, the Hanoverian dynasty did not touch for scrofula, with one apocryphal story claiming that George I told a distressed father to go find James III on the continent if he wanted the touch. 495 The Hanoverians also did not employ heart burial consistently nor effigies.

The exiled Stuarts in France never ceased in their claims to legitimacy to the English throne. As such, they also continued to practice both heart burial and the royal touch, though more in the vein of their French hosts. The English monarchs, starting with the death of Mary Tudor, buried their hearts in increasingly close proximity to their bodies. Instead of a day’s ride like her father Henry VIII, Mary had her heart buried in Westminster Abbey, not far from the body. The Stuarts in England continued this trend, moving the heart into the main burial

491 Bloch, *The Royal Touch*, 220.
495 Ibid, 220.
chamber with the coffin. In contrast, the Stuarts of France reverted to the pre-Tudor, Catholic tradition of having distance between the heart and the body as well as separate caskets.

Perhaps Henrietta Maria set the trend for the exiled Catholic Stuart line of the eighteenth century. The Stuarts in exile adopted the practices of the French court, which included interring the hearts a distance away from the body. James II’s casket and urn are noticeably absent from the Westminster crypt. James had fled England in 1688 and died in unofficial exile in 1701 near Paris. Though reports suggest that James did have his heart, bowels, and brain interred separately, follow-up reports indicate that James’s body was among those royal remains disinterred and desecrated during the French Revolution.\footnote{496 The separate burial of the brain was not common, but it occurred sporadically since the days of mos teutonicus. James II’s urns are also likely lost, as are the urns of his mother Henrietta Maria (d. 1669), wife Maria of Modena (d. 1718), and daughter Louise Marie (d. 1712); they were all lodged in the Cloister of Chaillot, which was dissolved in 1810.}

Even after the loss of the throne in England, the Stuarts in exile still styled themselves as royals through the continued practice of heart burial and the royal touch. However, their use of these two ancient rites became almost entirely French in style and in longevity.

Heart Burial in France

The assassination of Henri III and Henri IV in France transformed the French monarchy. Beginning with the lit de justice, Louis XIII’s reign gathered more and more power to the crown, especially with the help of the first minister, Cardinal Richelieu. Heart burial continued among the noble classes and among the royal family during this period, but due to disease, the heart burials of France were curtailed. Quick burial to avoid the spread of smallpox became common in the house of Bourbon. In addition, as seen in the dramatic case of Louis XIV, the increasing
longevity of the monarch resulted in fewer heart burials. While some kings only ruled for ten to twenty years, Louis reigned for seventy-two, from the age of four to his death at age seventy-six; the Stuart monarchs had five heart burials of crowned heads of states during his reign: Charles II, James II (in exile), Mary II, William III, and Anne.

Louis XIII reigned for thirty-three years and died at age forty-one. His heart was interred at the most elaborate heart monument of the period. Rather than a single column, Louis XIII’s heart memorial was created as an entire doorway and niche. Louis XIII had founded the Jesuit church of Saint-Louis, and so his widow, Anne of Austria, ordered his heart interred there. Carved by Sarazin, the arcade was made of white marble slabs with contrasting marble inlay. Attached were contrasting white discs of marble, supported by cherubs, depicting the seven cardinal virtues.497 Two silver angels topped the monument, holding a silver urn with the king’s heart. Apparently, this monument survived the Revolution, only to be sacked by Napoleon I when he melted the angels down to give the metal to the sculptor Chaudet for the statue, Païx. Fortunately for Louis XIII, unlike many of his royal relatives, Napoleon had enough thought for the dead monarch to inter the heart in Saint-Denis rather than disposing of it.498

Anne of Austria founded Val-de-Grace as a sign of thanks for the safe delivery of her child, Louis XIV. She also founded it, seemingly, as a heart burial ground for her family in the same line of thought as the Herzgruft in Vienna. Although the church was not completed until 1667, it began to receive the hearts of minor nobles soon after the first stone was laid in 1645. However, Anne’s descendants soon dominated the crypt’s population. Louis XIV and his wife, Marie Thérèse, had six children, but only one, Louis le Grand Dauphin, survived to adulthood. The hearts of Anne Elisabeth (d. 1662) and Marie Anne (d. 1664) preceded their grandmother to

498 Personal observation, the Royal Necropolis at the Basilica of Saint-Denis, 19 January 2013.
The death of Louis XIV’s first daughter, Anne Elisabeth, so upset Anne of Austria that she personally took the heart to Val-de-Grace. She presented it the abbess, saying, “Mother, behold I have brought you a heart, soon to be followed by my own.”

Anne would see the death of another granddaughter by Louis and a grandchild by her second son Philippe before dying of breast cancer in early 1666. The devastated Louis XIV obeyed her request to bury her heart at Val-de-Grace. Her body was interred with Louis XIII in Saint-Denis, as she was queen of France. Anne had intended for her sons’ hearts and those of their children to join her at Val-de-Grace. It is unclear whether Anne believed that a centralized heart burial site would enable them to resurrect together or if she simply wanted to create a monument to her miracle; having become a mother at age thirty-seven, a heart crypt for all of her descendants would be a final strike against her critics. In either event, the French matriarch’s heart rested with the hearts of Louis’s children: Anne Elisabeth (d. 1662), Marie Anne (d. 1664), Philippe of France (d. 1671), Marie-Therese of France (d. 1672), Louis-François (d.1672), Marie Anne of Bourbon (d. 1681); the hearts of Philippe’s children: an unnamed girl (d. 1665), Philippe Charles (d. 1666), Alexander-Louis (d. 1676); Philippe’s first wife, Henrietta Anne Stuart (d. 1670); Louis’ first wife Marie Theresa (d. 1683); the first wife of Louis le Grand Dauphin, Marie Anne Christine Victoire of Bavaria; and Anne’s own son, Philippe, Duc de Orleans (d. 1701).

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500 Hartshorne, Enshrined Hearts, 316; “Ma Mère, voilà, un Coeur, que je vous apport, pour le joindre bien tot au mien.”
501 Dietz, Ewige Herzen, 74.
502 Dietz, “Datasuchen.” Dietz’s references for this section come from the multi-volume set by Magny Pierre Thomas Nicholas Hurtau, Dictionnair historique de la ville de Paris et de ses environs (Paris, 1779).
The high infant mortality rate of the House of Bourbon alarmed some, but the situation became increasingly acute in 1711 when either smallpox or measles besieged the family. Louis XIV’s immediate heir, Louis the Grand Dauphin, died first. Louis, Duc de Burgundy and the Petite Dauphin, now was first in line to his grandfather’s throne. However, within the year, the younger Louis and his wife, Marie Adelaide, both contracted smallpox/measles, died within a week of each other, and left their two small children battling the disease as well. The elder, Louis, Duc de Bretagne, also perished. His heart and those of his parents and grandfather all went to rest at Val-de-Grace.

Refusing to let her youngest charge be bled like his brother, the royal tutor Madame de Ventadour effectively kidnapped the boy and locked herself into his nursery with him until the royal doctors left. The boy lived. At his great-grandfather’s death in 1715, the young Louis XV, another miracle child, took the throne with Louis XIV’s nephew, Philippe, Duc de Orleans, as regent. Louis XV inherited the great machine of state from his great-grandfather with perhaps no natural talent for running it.

Louis XIV had continued the policy of his father and the first ministers Richelieu and Mazarin in consolidating his hold on the aristocracy of France. He constructed an elaborate court system that made him the center of all life at Versailles. Because he kept the nobles occupied, Louis XIV was able to use his own energies to grab power and center it upon himself: he was the Sun King, around whom all life revolved. Such a complex system had taken a lifetime to master.

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504 Dietz, “Datasuren.”
506 Bonney, The European Dynastic States, 1494-1660, 485.
The flashy, brilliant life, however, contrasted with his death. Having outlived all of his children, all but one of his grandchildren (who was king of Spain and thus indisposed), and all but one of his great-grandchildren, le Roi Soleil died a lonely man, save for his second wife, Madame de Maintenon. Louis’s body was interred at Saint-Denis and thus was lost with most of the other royal remains at the Revolution. No effigy came to roost at Versailles; its use had ceased with the crowning of Louis XIII. It was now an unneeded dinosaur in the age of absolutism.\textsuperscript{507} Louis XIV’s lengthy reign as well as the formation of the absolute monarchy eliminated the need for the French crown to express the medieval and Renaissance beliefs that bolstered legitimacy and power.

Yet, Louis’s heart and entrails were removed and sent out to be buried separately. He declined to join his mother at Val-de-Grace. As king, he elected to be buried with his father, Louis XIII, at the Jesuit church of Saint-Louis in Paris.\textsuperscript{508} The intent was to make Louis XIII’s heart monument home to his son’s heart as well. What happened next is unclear. According to the Musée Louvre, Louis XIII’s heart monument remained intact until Napoleon elected to melt it down in 1806.\textsuperscript{509} Other reports indicate that the Revolutionaries got their hands on the heart monument, melted it down, and used the royal hearts, along with that of Marie Therese and/or Anne of Austria, to make a special type of red-brown paint.\textsuperscript{510} Some variations have Louis’s heart near his mother’s when both are taken for paint-making. Other sources, including Regnier, regale the reader with the tale of Louis XIV’s heart being eaten by an eccentric British doctor who bought it from a collector.\textsuperscript{511}

\textsuperscript{507} Huntington and Metcalf, \textit{Celebrations of Death}, 166.
\textsuperscript{508} Regnier, \textit{“The Heart of the Kings of France: ‘Cordial Immortality,’”} 435.
\textsuperscript{510} Regnier, \textit{“The Heart of the Kings of France: ‘Cordial Immortality,’”} 435;
\textsuperscript{511} Regnier, \textit{“The Heart of the Kings of France: ‘Cordial Immortality,’”} 435; also see Edwin Murphy, \textit{After the Funeral: The Posthumous Adventures of Famous Corpses} (New York: Citadel Press, 1995), 63-64.
If one visits Saint-Denis, all fears concerning the royal heart of Louis XIV are assuaged. Louis XIV’s heart rests in the central niche on the wall in the Prince’s Tomb at the Royal Necropolis. It has its own small metal box. Diagonally from his heart is a box labeled “parcelle de corps de Louis XIV.” Too small to contain the entirety of the intestines, the urn could house whatever decayed remains survived the Revolution or part of his brain or eyes. To the immediate left of Louis XIV’s heart is that of his father. Evidence suggests that the two Louis’s hearts were indeed together at Saint-Louis, and when Napoleon ‘liberated’ the metal from the memorial, he reinterred both hearts at Saint-Denis. Thus, both hearts survived the Revolution.

Conclusion

The year 1715 marked great change for Europe. The Sun King was dead, and another miracle child had taken the throne. During his lifetime, Louis XIV saw many of his descendants and those of his mother go to Val-de-Grace, the “Herzgruft” of Paris. Their urns were plainer than his father’s arcade, which Louis XIV would eventually share. Anne of Austria had centralized the heart burials of the royal family in her church. Magnificent in its day, all the hearts of Val-de-Grace were lost to the Revolution.

In 1715, Britain’s monarchy had changed paths entirely. Although the Stuarts had reduced heart burial to the viscera chest alongside the coffin, Anne of Great Britain performed the last royal touch on the Isles and the second-to-last heart burial. Beyond the mystical, Anne was also the last monarch to exercise her parliamentary veto on the Scottish Militia Bill of 1708. The constitution limited the monarch, but now more implicit strictures restrained the monarchy. The Hanoverians remained close to their allies in northern Germany and lived under the threat of the Stuarts in exile.
The Habsburgs, Wittelsbachs, and other Germanic noble families found a renewed enthusiasm for Catholicism and its customs, daring to put themselves on the same level as the great powers of Western Europe. The Jesuit, Capuchin, and other Counter Reformation orders urged patronage and heart burial, just as the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Celestines had in France prior to the seventeenth century. In the case of the Habsburgs, it rapidly became a statement of devotion to Mary and, secondarily, identity. The idea of a centralized heart burial place had come from Anna, the Tyrolean wife of Holy Roman Emperor Matthias, and was soon taken up by her descendants, who connected their hearts to that of the Virgin Mary. The religious sentimental would fall to the wayside over the course of the next one-hundred-fifty years; the Habsburg identity, supported by the central necropolis, became the overriding reason for a heart burial in the imperial house.

As these dynasties ascended, however, the elements of modern statehood crept in. The use of heart burial in Germanic lands bred a competition between families; though the Habsburgs remained supreme, other noble houses became concerned with their sovereignty and aspired to break away from the growing monopoly of Habsburger lands. In Great Britain and France, heart burial transitioned into a sign of sovereignty and status, slowly withdrawing from religious elements. Concepts of absolutism infiltrated the political thought of both Great Britain and France, with disastrous results for the former and, for the time being, ideal results for the latter. As Enlightenment approached, the mystical elements of kingship experienced increasing scrutiny and disfavor. Western Europe sat at the crossroads – all was stable and yet unstable.
CHAPTER IX

HEART BURIAL: THE ENLIGHTENMENT to PRESENT DAY

The End of British Heart Burial

The Enlightenment, beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, triggered an increase in skepticism concerning the absolute power of monarchs and of religion. Heart burial, seated upon the nexus of church and state, declined during and after the Enlightenment. Despite these challenges, it survived. The increasing Protestantism and changing political thought toward the British crown triggered the permanent decline of heart burial in that nation-state.

Heart burial peaked in the seventeenth century in France, slightly declined during the eighteenth century, and finally dropped out of favor entirely after the first Bourbon monarch of the Restoration died in 1824. By 1750, heart burial had lost much of its religious significance. Due to the Protestant Reformation, physical mementos of the dead as well as the prayers they solicited had waned in popularity. Science cast doubt on the heart’s claims to the soul. Philosophers cooled to the idea of the soul being in the heart. They agreed with seventeenth-century philosopher Descartes that the brain housed the essence of being. Despite these challenges, European dynasties continued to enact heart burial with some effect.

Across Europe, heart burial peaked in the eighteenth century, because the German-speaking noble and imperial families used it as a dynastic signifier. Though they started late, the Habsburgs, Wittelsbachs, and other noble families of the Holy Roman Empire and its former holdings made up for their tardiness with enthusiasm for the custom.

512 Much of this chapter first appeared in a conference paper, “Enlightened Monarchs? Heart Burial and the Ruling Dynasties of Europe,” presented at the Consortium for the Revolutionary Era, February 2013 in Fort Worth, TX.
513 Stannard, The Puritan Way of Death, 100.
The End of Heart Burial in the House of Hanover

The Hanoverians of Great Britain sought to consolidate their holds and establish their sovereignty over their new nation. In 1714, Queen Anne of England died, leaving the British Crown to Hanoverian George I. George did not speak English well and struggled throughout his reign to gain favor with the public and the court. One of the things he failed to do was bury his heart separately. He was buried intact in 1727 in Hanover, where he had been vacationing before he died. He did not bother to send his heart back to England. All the British monarchs since the Tudors had had their hearts separated from their bodies in death, save for the child-king Edward VI and the executed Charles I.514

George I’s heir, George II, did bury his heart separately in 1760, and he was the last king of Great Britain to do so.515 This heart burial may have been a maneuver on George’s part to secure his dynasty where his father had failed. Like the Stuarts before him, George II's heart was placed in a separate urn that was then enclosed within the main crypt next to the coffin. His wife Caroline (d. 1737), firstborn son Frederick, Prince of Wales (d. 1751), and several of his daughters had the traditional viscera chest within the Georgian crypt at Westminster Abbey.516 Aidan Dodson points out that the Frederick’s wife, Augusta (d. 1772), did not request a heart burial for herself. She had the right, as her son George III had been crowned in 1760, making her the queen mother. The demand for heart burial seemed to have waned by the second half of the eighteenth century. Despite his use of heart burial, George II did not attempt to bring the royal touch back; that tradition died with Anne Stuart.

514Stanley, Supplement to the Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey, 121-122; personal observation 2 January 2013 at Westminster Abbey, London, United Kingdom.
516Dodson, “The King Is Dead,” 82.
George III’s extended reign lasted into the nineteenth century. Paired with his patriotism and self-identification as British king, his longevity consolidated the Hanoverian grasp upon Great Britain. Heart burial was no longer necessary or in fashion; he was only wrapped in cerecloth and entombed in a plain coffin at his death in 1820.\textsuperscript{517} However, other members of the royal family and the British nobility buried their hearts separately from their body. One famous case is that of Princess Charlotte in 1817. Daughter of the future George IV, Charlotte died in childbirth. The death wrought unprecedented mourning from the British public at the time; although she was merely a daughter of the heir apparent and a Princess of Wales, she was also the only legitimate granddaughter of George III at that time. The British public feared another succession crisis. Princess Charlotte’s body and heart coffins were covered with crimson fabric from London.\textsuperscript{518} According to historian Olivia Bland, “these enclosed the inner lead coffins, and the mahogany outer ones were highly ornamented in silver gilt for the princess and silver for the baby.”\textsuperscript{519}

Upon arriving at St. George’s in Windsor, the stillborn son was immediately interred without ceremony, as the dead child had no soul and thus no need for prayers.\textsuperscript{520} Charlotte received a royal funeral. She was the popular topic of much poetry and prose during the year of her death. Charlotte’s heart received much more attention from the public than the typical viscera chest that the Hanoverians had adopted from the Stuarts. Other than to stem the massive outpouring of grief, it is unclear what prompted the family to choose such an elaborate variation of the heart burial custom, given its decline in recent years.

Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn, was the fourth son of George III. He was second in line to the throne at the death of Charlotte, following his brother, the future William IV. He

\textsuperscript{517} Dodson, “The King Is Dead,” 82.
\textsuperscript{518} Bland, The Royal Way of Death, 114.
\textsuperscript{519} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{520} Ibid, 115.
too received a special heart burial at St. George’s at Windsor, but again, it is unclear why.\textsuperscript{521} His brother William would reign for another seventeen years, so it was impossible to say with any certainty that his infant daughter, Alexandria Victoria, would take the throne as queen. He could not have been considered father to the queen of Great Britain at the time of his death. Save for these two anomalies, the royal house of Hanover either had simple heart with viscera burials or none at all.

The Stuarts in Exile and the Popes

The exiled branch of the House of Stuart suffered the blow of the failed Jacobite uprising of 1715 with James Francis Edward Stuart, also known as the Old Pretender in some circles and James III in others.\textsuperscript{522} His son, Charles Edward Stuart, earned his place in history by leading the 1745 Jacobite uprising. Known affectionately as Bonnie Prince Charlie, the prince reconquered most of Scotland with a mere seven companions as the Hanoverian government floundered.\textsuperscript{523} Despite recruiting 8,000 men, Bonnie Prince Charlie could only march to Derby and no further; the promised help from France never showed.\textsuperscript{524} He escaped with his life and his legend, but the Young Pretender never ceased in his efforts to regain the throne. He obsessively pursued these ends well into 1759, but this point, the French crown saw open alliance and support of his claim to the British throne as political suicide.\textsuperscript{525} Drunk and dissolute, Bonnie Prince Charlie was a hothead, estranged from his father James (who would become king first), and reckless in whom he associated with. It was suspected that some of his sympathizers and mistresses were British spies.\textsuperscript{526}

James the Old Pretender had long since retired to Rome. A devout Catholic to his end, he did not opt for heart burial at his death in 1766. The appeal of the tradition as well as his hopes

\textsuperscript{521}Dodson, “The King Is Dead,” 82.
\textsuperscript{523}Ibid, 76.
\textsuperscript{524}Ibid, 81.
\textsuperscript{525}Ibid, 243.
\textsuperscript{526}Ibid, 78.
of regaining the throne had died. Bonnie Prince Charlie was buried all in one place at the Cathedral of Frascati in 1788, where his younger brother, Henry Benedict Stuart, was bishop. Often, the public referred to Henry as Bishop York, referring to his theoretical title as the Duke of York if his father was restored. At Henry’s death in 1807, the legitimate, Jacobite Stuart line was at its end. All of the bodies of the Stuarts were moved to St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, where their coffins can be viewed to this day. However, it appears that Bonnie Prince Charlie left his heart in Frascati; his praecordia – the heart and the flesh lying over top of it – remained at the Frascati cathedral. The removal must have been done at his death in 1788.

The burying of praecordia is a variation of heart burial that appears to have been popular among the religious of Italy. In the Church of Saints Vincenzo e Anastasio near the Trevi Fountain in Rome, twenty-two praecordia rest eternally in the crypt. The oldest praecordia belongs to Sixtus V (d. 1590). Out of the next thirty popes, twenty-one of them would follow his lead and send their hearts with praecordia to SS Vincenzo e Anastasio without fail. The last pope to do so, Leo XIII died in 1903, meaning that the tradition had lasted for over three hundred years. An element of personal choice in this matter appears to exist, as not all popes did it. The start of organ removal for popes occurred relatively late in embalming history when one considers its use and successes at royal funerals in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

According to the Vatican, Pope Pius X, who died in 1914, banned the removal and donation of organs from popes. Papal secretary Monsignor Georg Gänswein cited three main reasons for termination of the tradition. First, embalming had evolved to the point where removal of organs was unnecessary. Second, the pope’s body belonged to the Church the

527 Personal observation at SS Vincenzo e Anastasio, Rome, Italy, 14 January 2013.
528 Personal observation at SS Vincenzo e Anastasio, Rome, Italy, 14 January 2013.
moment he became pope; it could not be divvied up by the pope’s personal will. Thirdly, if a person received the donated organs from a pope, they had the potential to become relics if that pope became a saint. That would present a theologically conundrum, not to mention a moral quandary as to how and when to retrieve them.

Pius X likely reacted to his predecessor Leo XIII’s use of heart burial when he banned the practice for himself and all his successors. The question of why papal heart burial ended has been answered. The questions of why it started and why a British pretender had his heart burial like an Italian pope remain unaddressed.530

The French Revolution, The Empire, and the Restoration

All French monarchs buried their hearts except in times of civil unrest or papal interregnum, as was the case for Louis X.531 The decline of the French absolute monarchy under Louis XV ran parallel to the end of heart burial in the eighteenth century. As in Great Britain, the custom declined within the royal house itself, but, also like Great Britain, a trickle-down effect occurred. The nobility were keen to use heart burial. As a result, as the number of royal heart burials began to decline, the number of heart burials went up among the nobility. Families that were not close to the throne implemented their use.

That said, heart burial after the death of Louis XIV remained common practice for the House of Bourbon and princes of the blood. No fewer than seventeenth direct descendants of Anne of Austria through her sons Louis XIV and Philippe had their hearts buried in Val-de-Grace between 1715 and 1789.532 Other princes and princesses of the blood had appropriately married into the privilege be buried in Val-de-Grace. In total, an estimated fifty hearts were

530 It should be noted that the answer potentially lines in the Italian works of Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, but again, time and language constraints prevent their inclusion.
531 Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 261
532 Dietz, “Datasuchen.”
interred at Val-de-Grace before its desecration at the French Revolution in 1793. Again, the scholar is faced with the problem of being unable to verify records and claims of the church in question. It is plausible that the hearts of Anne of Austria’s descendants were consolidated in one location. Val-de-Grace thus worked in parallel with Saint-Denis’ possession of the royal bodies, but with a more personal twist considering Anne of Austria’s difficulties in bearing children. The hearts at Val-de-Grace expressed the personal, dynastic, and French characteristics of the kingship. However, since the urns have been lost in their entirety, these ideas cannot be confirmed.

Because of the long reign of both Louis XIV and Louis XV, the royal house’s heart burials were predominantly non-reigning sons and daughters of monarch, amounting to nearly fifty. Louis XV’s wishes for his own burial in 1774 had to be abandoned. He died of smallpox and was hastily buried in fear of spreading the disease. His grandson and successor, Louis XVI, ordered one final heart to be buried. His son, Louis, Dauphin of France, died at age eight in 1789. Three short years later, Louis XVI witnessed the National Assembly terminate the monarchy and any regal funerary privileges in September 1792. The same day brought the execution of the “royal person” Louis XVI. Now called “Citizen Louis Capet,” the former king was executed in January 1793. Huntington and Metcalf note that the kingship in France, despite being restored twice thereafter, was ultimately unable to survive the death of Louis XVI. They attribute this to the French never adopting the political fiction of the king’s two bodies. Britain’s monarchy survived because only a man was executed; he was meant to be partible from the kingship. In contrast, French kings were the kingship by blood. Huntington and Metcalf’s conclusions are questionable, as the National Assembly had made it a point to execute first the monarchy, then the man – a double death.

533 Huntington and Metcalf, Celebrations of Death, 166.
Louis XVII, the unfortunate boy-king, died in prison, and the doctor performing the autopsy stole his heart. Various parties kept it until 2004, when Saint-Denis finally accepted it. Testing of mitochondrial DNA confirmed a genetic relation to Queen Marie Antoinette; the size and estimated age of the heart provided sufficient evidence to link it to Louis XVII. Louis XVIII ordered his own heart buried in Saint-Denis upon his death in 1824. Though other minor family members continued this practice until the mid-nineteenth century, no ruler of France buried his heart after Louis XVIII.

The last monarch in the West to both lead troops in battle and have his heart buried separately was Emperor Napoleon I of France. In 1821, the Emperor died in exile on the island of St. Helena. He had requested that this heart be removed and sent to Marie Louise, his estranged wife. Napoleon engineered an escape from his first exile on Elba, resulting in the far-flung destination of St. Helena for his second. There was no coming back from this. He was no longer a monarch, and the British likely would have thwarted any attempt to use the heart as a political message.

While a Catholic, Napoleon did not attach any religious thought to his heart; he ordered it sent to his wife, not to Saint-Denis or a church in Corsica. (Again, if he had chosen Saint-Denis, both Louis XVIII and the British would have denied the request; the last thing they wanted was a cult of St. Napoleon!) Marie Louise, if she had received the heart, likely would have kept it in her private residence at Colorno or at Sala, away from the public eye. In contrast, Napoleon’s will was meant to be seen by the public. By sending his heart to a person rather than a public place or a church, Napoleon intended to set his heart in the private sphere. The world could have his will, but his heart was his wife’s. Thus, it was purely for sentimental reasons that Napoleon

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attempted to send his heart to the woman for whom he “[retained] to [his] last moment the most tender sentiments.”

Due to time needed to relay the request, Napoleon’s heart was placed in a silver urn with an imperial eagle on it and set between the Emperor’s feet as he lay in his coffin. The British buried Napoleon’s coffin, heart and all, intending to retrieve the urn from the coffin if necessary. Burying the heart with the body until final arrangements were made was not uncommon.

By this point, the former empress had returned to her father, Emperor Francis I of Austria, and taken up residence with a new lover in Parma. In a letter written to her father, Marie Louise plaintively asked him to keep her out of the matter of “the poor man departed” man’s heart. She wanted both the heart and the body to be left in peace. When the issue arose again, she made the case that bringing the heart to Parma would create a pilgrimage site. Marie Louise rejected her husband’s heart. The heart likely remains in Napoleon’s coffin to this day.

Several members of the House of Bonaparte, including Pauline’s husband Charles LeClerc d’Ostin, also buried their hearts separately. Whether this was a personal request or one in line with a concept of dynasty is unclear. Multiple Napoleonic-period heart burials have not yet been confirmed, including those of Napoleon’s brother-in-law Joachim Murat and his

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540 Diezt, “Datsuchen.”
nephew Napoleon Louis Charles. Eugene Beauharnais, Napoleon’s stepson, did have his heart buried, but not for the sake of the House of Bonaparte.

The House of Wittelsbach and Heart Burial

In 1806, at the end of the war of the Third Coalition, Emperor Napoleon I of France elevated Bavarian elector Maximilian IV Joseph to king. To finalize the alliance, the new King Maximilian I Joseph agreed to the marriage of Eugene to his daughter, Auguste Amalia.\textsuperscript{541} Maximilian gave Eugene the title of the Duke of Leuchtenberg. Auguste Amalia was a member the House of Wittelsbach, which had a strong history of heart burial. After the French Empire was defunct, Eugene retained the titles bestowed upon him by his father-in-law. He died in 1824. No part of Eugene lies in Paris or even France. In the nave of St. Michael’s Church in Munich, the grieving Auguste Amalia erected a huge memorial for her husband.\textsuperscript{542} Her body rests with his in the crypt of St. Michael’s.\textsuperscript{543} Nearby is their shared heart urn, which also houses the hearts of their children. Although she could have chosen to bury Eugene elsewhere or to have herself interred at a different dynastic church, Auguste Amalia consciously chose not to be parted from her husband. The evidence suggests that Eugene’s wife loved him, thus his body and heart rest with her and her regal relatives.

The majority of the Bavarian and later the Palatinate-Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld branches of the House of Wittelsbach inurned their hearts at the Altötting Gnadenkapelle, which is the site of the Shrine of the Black Madonna. Until 1744, all of the hearts were buried under the floor of the chapel. Prior to 1777, the only visible heart urn was the double urn containing the hearts of Holy Roman Emperor Karl VII Albrecht, who died in 1745, and his wife Amalia Maria, who

\textsuperscript{541} Frederick C. Schneid, \textit{Napoleon’s Conquest of Europe: The War of the Third Coalition} (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 142.
\textsuperscript{542} Personal observation at St. Michael’s Jesuit Church, Munich, 9 January 2013.
\textsuperscript{543} Personal observation at St. Michael’s Jesuit Church, Munich, 9 January 2013.
died in 1756. Rather than resting in the floor, the urn sits in a niche that overlooks the Black Madonna, elevated from the rest of the chapel. The superior rank of emperor granted Karl VII this privilege over his humble elector ancestors.

Urn[s continued to be buried in the floor until Elector Maximilian III Joseph died in 1777. He had his urn displayed in a niche similar to that of Emperor Karl and his wife. Duchess Maria Anna and Electress Maria Anna Sophia, wife of Maximilian III Joseph, had their urns buried in the floor in 1790 and 1797, respectively. Elector Karl Theodor Joseph, who died in 1799, displayed his heart urn. Although the practice was slowly evolving, the process accelerated in the early nineteenth century. Because of Napoleon Bonaparte and his connections, the habits of the family changed in 1806.

After Napoleon’s elevation of the Bavarian electors to kings, the open display of heart urns in the Gnadenkapelle became a tradition. Maximilian I Joseph, Eugene Beauharnais’s father-in-law, died in 1824, and his heart urn was put on display in an elevated niche. All of his successors, including Ludwig III in 1921, also have their heart urns on display in the chapel, across from and over the Black Madonna. Instead of privately placing their urns in the unmarked floor, the Bavarian kings called attention to themselves by publicly displaying their urns in a holy shrine. Because of their new position in the European hierarchy, the Bavarian kings changed their heart burial practice to confirm their new status. The public expression of this was significant, because their elevation put them on a similar level to their neighbors and rivals, the Habsburgs.

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544 Strauss, “Herzbestattungen in der Gnadenkapelle von Altötting.”
545 Ibid.
Heart Burial and the Habsburgs

The Habsburgs did not begin to bury their hearts until the fifteenth century, but they are the only dynasty to continue this practice. Maria Theresa of Austria was devout in her beliefs and sincere in what actions she took to express them. As such, her own Catholic funeral was extravagant and planned out years before her death in 1780. Her coffin stands in the Kapuzinerkirche’s Imperial Crypt, unmistakable for anyone else’s. It is elaborately cast and decorated. In contrast, her son Joseph has a remarkably plain coffin. A diametric opposite to his thoroughly Catholic mother, Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II embraced Enlightenment ideals of toleration and skepticism. As such, he did not bury his heart at his death in 1790. He also did not bury his entrails.

Joseph clearly felt no compunction about being less religious after the death of his mother. His reasoned objections to burial traditions did not last long in the House of Habsburg. His brother and successor, Leopold II, returned to the separate burial of the heart and the entrails. However, Joseph set a new trend in Habsburg burial. After 1790, the Habsburgs styled their coffins after Joseph’s plain, functional design. This austerity was already present in their heart urns and ducal urns. In an exception that proves the rule, family members used heart burial to reinforce the group identity of Habsburg rather than personal identity; not even Maria Theresa’s urns are distinguishable at first glance from those of her kin. Such a sprawling dynasty needed to have one allied front within the family, and that front was their way of death and use of multiple burial.

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546 Dietz, Ewige Herzen, 96.
547 Personal observation of the Habsburg crypts, 10 January 2013.
548 Personal observation of the Habsburg crypts, 10 January 2013.
549 Personal observation of the Habsburg crypts, 10 January 2013.
By the mid-1800s, the British and French royal houses had ceased their practice of heart burial. The popes continued to bury their hearts until 1903. The Wittelsbachs continued to bury their kingly hearts in an elevated niche at a holy shrine, somewhat akin to the queen’s box at the theatre: elevated to see and to be seen. However, the Wittelsbachs remained linear in their heart burials at Altötting; only rulers and their consorts had their hearts buried there between 1824 and 1921. In contrast, the Habsburgs permitted the interment of most members of the imperial house, regardless of proximity to the Austrian emperor. The Habsburgs had lost the Holy Roman Empire at the hands of Napoleon I of France, but they retained Austria and added Hungary in 1867. The Austro-Hungarian Empire or simply Austria-Hungary lasted until the end of the First World War.

The union of the family remained important to the Habsburgs throughout this period. In 1858, Archduke Karl Ludwig lost his wife Margaret of Saxony to typhoid at age 18 after two years of marriage. Karl was the governor of Tyrol, so he had her heart placed in an urn and installed in the palace chapel wall at Innsbruck. Not only did he want to keep her close to him, he also believed that the heart was the seat of the soul, a very old medieval belief.\(^550\) Despite science and revolutions, the Habsburgs adhered to the ancient thoughts surrounding the heart in the nineteenth century. It is unknown whether the Habsburgs of the twenty-first century still harbor this belief. Despite the advanced age of this thought, the belief in the heart as the seat of the soul and the self-identity of the Habsburgs were very different motives compared to the territorial and theological implications attached to heart burial in the medieval period.

The last heart to be laid to rest in the Herzgruft at the Augustinerkirche in Vienna was Archduke Franz Karl at his death in 1878.\(^551\) He was the second son of Holy Roman Emperor

\(^{551}\) Personal observation at Habsburg crypts, Vienna, Austria, 10 January 2013.
Franz II, who was later known as Austrian Emperor Franz I, as well as brother to Marie Louise, Napoleon’s empress consort. His great contributions to the Habsburg line were the emperors Franz Joseph I of Austria-Hungary (d. 1916) and Maximilian of Mexico (d. 1867). Neither of his sons received the option of heart burial. Revolutionaries had overthrown Maximilian by coupe and executed him, and Franz Joseph died in the middle of the First World War in 1916 at Schonbrunn Palace just outside of Vienna. The grimness of the period likely deterred the Habsburgs from attempting such a ceremony.

It ultimately did not matter; at the end of the war in 1918, Austria-Hungary was dissolved, each territory leaving the empire piece by piece. Habsburg Archduke Franz Ferdinand’s assassination and Austria’s refusal to let the event pass caused the war. Thus, the imperial family received the lion’s share of the blame. Karl I, Franz Joseph’s successor, attempted to preserve the potential for his return as emperor, but he also acknowledged the people’s right to rule. Due to rising tensions, he fled the country with his young family. In a situation parallel to that of England in 1688, Austria found itself with a monarch who had departed the country without abdicating.

The young republic then issued a punitive law directed against the Habsburg family. The Law Concerning the Expulsion and the Takeover of the Assets of the House Habsburg-Lorraine, also known as the Habsburg Law, expelled all Habsburgs from Austria, took their property within Austria, and demanded that they give up any right of sovereignty or claim to Austria they may have had before reentering the country. The law had far-reaching consequences for Habsburg heart burial. Because they were unable to have their bodies buried in Austria, the family of Karl I began work on a new family crypt in Muri, Switzerland, their home during the initial part of their exile.
It would be simple to declare that the First World War finally killed off the practice of heart burial. Due to the ugly war between the interrelated royal houses of Europe, the glamor of dynastic connections had lost their appeal. But they had not. Heart burial survived the First World War, but it had long been in decline, even among the Habsburgs. Between 1878 and 1914, no Habsburg elected to have their hearts placed in the Herzgruft or intestines in the Stephansdom. Habsburgs certainly died during this period, as evidenced by the coffins and plaques in the Kaisergruft.\textsuperscript{552} The Herzgruft has three spots still open; they did not run out of room. The intervals between heart burials range from mere months to eight years, even during heart burial’s peak in Austria in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Only three years separated Archduke Franz Karl from his brother, Emperor Ferdinand I (d. 1875). Heart burial came to an abrupt stop in 1878 and did not resume at the Herzgruft. The next Habsburg to bury her heart separately was Archduchess Maria Theresa (d. 1919), who had married Ludwig III of Bavaria; she may have done it to satisfy the Bavarian side of the family rather than the Austrian. The stoppage of Habsburg hearts in 1878 is unexplained.

The remains of the Habsburgs that rested in the Kapuzinerkirche, the Augustinerkirche, and Stephansdom became property of the state. To this day, the only element of the Habsburg law not repealed is the seizure of property clause. The government holds the sole key to the grated entrance to the Herzgruft.\textsuperscript{553} Despite being permitted back in the country, the family no longer visits the crypts, nor do they have proprietary access to the crypts.\textsuperscript{554} If one wished to examine a heart urn closely, the state would grant permission, not the deceased’s descendants. After 1918, the Habsburgs stored their hearts elsewhere, particularly Muri. What remains within the family’s possession are the personal testaments of the deceased. Neither the government nor

\textsuperscript{552} Personal observation at Habsburg crypts, Vienna, Austria, 10 January 2013.
\textsuperscript{553} Father Albin Scheuch, conversation with author, 10 January 2013.
\textsuperscript{554} Ibid.
the general public were meant to see these sealed documents. They are for family members only.\textsuperscript{555} Likely, these testaments included private messages and requests as to burial, though nothing legally binding.

Trends in Heart Burial

Outside of the dynastic lines, heart burial enjoyed popularity among soldiers, authors, and artists during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of the most frequent practitioners were military men, particularly during the Crusades. Kings on campaign such as Louis IX of France employed it, as did their subordinates. Several knights and military commanders are only known to history because of their heart urns. For example, John Peck’s heart urn was recently discovered and given to the Ryedale Folk Museum in England. His name is clearly inscribed on the urn alongside a St. John’s or Maltese Cross. This is the only information known about this man, save for the fact that the urn itself dates from the Tudor era.\textsuperscript{556}

Participants in the English Civil War, the Thirty Years War, and Napoleonic wars elected to bury their hearts separately from their bodies. French Marshal François-Christophe Kellerman’s heart lies under the battle marker at Valmy, and his peers Emmanuel de Grouchy and, supposedly, Joachim Murat had their hearts interred at the Invalides in Paris. Between 1800 and 1835, Dr. Armin Dietz estimates that twenty soldiers from the French and Coalition sides of the Napoleonic wars had their hearts buried separately.\textsuperscript{557} This does not include Napoleon I or his immediate family. The cluster of heart burials in the wake of the Napoleonic wars was a last gasp of sorts for the tradition, as military science stood on the brink of modernity.

\textsuperscript{555} Father Albin Scheuch, conversation with author, 10 January 2013.
\textsuperscript{556} “Tudor Heart Burial Urn,” \textit{A History of the World via BBC}. http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/DseHxIqS2C0MH01a9YsiQ (Accessed 5 February 2013).
\textsuperscript{557} Dietz, “Datensuchen.”
In the following one-hundred years, artists such as Jacques-Louis David (d.1825), composers Frederic Chopin (d. 1849) and Johann Carl Gottfried Loewe (d. 1869), and writers Percy Shelley (d. 1822), Lord Byron (d. 1824), and Thomas Hardy (d. 1928) elected to bury their hearts. No one else in their immediate families did so. For these men (and most independent hearts burials are male), heart burial signified love of a person, place, or country. Byron expressed his love for Greece by requesting that his heart remain there, though his family later overrode that decision. Shelley sent his heart to his wife Mary, who used it as a bookmark until it disintegrated. The hearts of Byron and Shelley are not confirmed; they may have been invented stories to parody their Romantic style and topic matter.

In Chopin’s case, his home country of Poland loved him and had his heart inurned in Holy Cross Church in Krakow. However, love does not always conquer all. In 2005, at the death of Pope John Paul II, Poland requested the papal heart be returned to its homeland to be interred alongside the Polish kings and national saints at Wawel Cathedral in Krakow. Due to the ruling of Pius X, the Holy See did not oblige this request.

Heart burial as used by soldiers has always been present through the history of the ritual, given the military’s highly mobile tendencies and the desire to get some piece of the man home to his family. As the tradition declined even among these men, lower nobles occasionally indulged in it. Unlike violating sumptuary laws, heart burial by a lower-class person was not prosecuted (as far as we know). Due to the longer lifespan of dynastic family members as well as the decline in their prestige, particularly after the First World War, the twentieth century saw less than twenty heart burials; soldiers alone composed more than that in the nineteenth century.

558 Murphy, After the Funeral, 47-50.
559 Ibid, 39-47.
not to mention the many the artists, writers, nobility, and royal family members who continued
the tradition.  

Heart Burial in the Twenty-First Century

Otto von Habsburg’s heart burial in July 2011 is the most recent occurrence of the 1200-
year-old custom. The son of Karl I and the last Crown Prince of Austria-Hungary, Otto spent his
life as an opponent to Nazism and socialism and as an advocate for a unified Europe. After his
death on 4 July 2011, Otto’s body was interred in the Imperial Crypt at the Kapuzinerkirche in
Vienna on 16 July 2011. On 17 July 2011, the family of Otto von Habsburg buried his heart in
the Benedictine Pannonhalma Archabbey in Hungary. The day of his heart burial, BBC’s
Bethany Bell noted that this was a “Habsburg family tradition.”

If that were simply it, then Otto would have joined the majority of the House of Habsburg
in the Augustinerkirche in Vienna or in the Lorettokapelle in Muri, Switzerland to rest with his
parents, Karl I (d. 1922) and Zita (d. 1989). Because of the expulsion of the Habsburgs from
Austria after the First World War, the dynasty started a second burial vault in the Swiss
mountains. Otto’s heart was not simply a case of dynastic burial. The monks of Pannonhalma
promised to care for the heart, but Otto’s religious life did not take center stage as the reason for
the separate interment; he was a practicing Catholic. Nor was the Catholic Church’s 2004
elevation of his father to Karl the Blessed at the center of attention.

Bell revealed during her newscast that, “As a young boy [Otto] was sent here [to
Pannonhalma] to learn Hungarian when he was crown prince. Later, monks from the abbey

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561 Armin Dietz, email correspondence with the author, 12 June 2012.
February 2013).
followed him into exile to teach him Hungarian literature.” As an adult, Otto had supported Hungarian efforts to break free of communism and to join the European Union. According to one of the monks, the heart burial was a sign of Otto’s love for Hungary.\textsuperscript{564} That love was reciprocated; according to Father Albin of the Benedictines, “Hungary never expelled him personally, and he wanted to be buried in a country which still loves him.”\textsuperscript{565}

After all other reasons became defunct, this remained. As the powers of dynastic monarchies became subject to new ideas and restrictions, the high rituals that these families employed fell out of favor and out of common practice. The power of one monarch was delegated to constituencies and the will of the people. The heart lost its spiritual, Church-sanctioned magic as people assigned it to the realm of science. It did not lose its status as a symbol of devotion, loyalty, and love. Otto’s body belongs to his family, but his choices for heart burial preserve his individuality and his life after Austria-Hungary.

Otto is the penultimate person to be placed in the Imperial Crypt at the Kapuzinerkirche; there is only room for one more person.\textsuperscript{566} Otto rests with his wife Regina (d. 2011; her heart remains with her family in Heidelberg, Lorraine) as well as his mother Zita (d. 1989; her heart rests with his father’s at Muri) and his brother Karl (d. 2007; no heart burial). Otto’s motivations for his body burial and his heart burial are ones that still resonate with us in the modern era: the love of family and personal identity. While it is now an oddity rather than a regularity, heart burial remains extant. The future of this custom is uncertain, but its continued survival is not out of the question, given its temerity over the last 1200 years.

\textsuperscript{566} Personal observation of the Habsburg crypts, 10 January 2013.
Conclusion

By the end of the reigns of Louis XIV in France and George III in England, people may have lived and died only knowing one king. Heart burial was no longer needed to consolidate holds on territory as the world transitioned from kingdoms to nation-states to countries. However, when a new dynasty attempted to establish itself, heart burial was still a valuable tool, as seen in the House of Hanover and the House of Bonaparte. Regardless of the current monarch, nobles in Great Britain and France continued to perform heart burial, but this petered out by the mid-nineteenth century.

The House of Bourbon, both before and after its Restorations, experienced a decline in heart burial among the crowned heads due to their longevity. However, until the Revolution, the tradition was robust among their children and courtiers. The French Revolution resulted in the death of the French monarchy, past and present. Not only was the current monarch executed, the royal tombs across France were desecrated, melted down, and destroyed. What the Louvre and Saint-Denis now possess survived through the patronage of Alexandré Lenoir, who argued for their significance as pieces of art. After Louis XVIII’s death and heart burial in 1824, no monarch of France buried his heart. The political instability and the loss of the monarchy spelled the end of heart burial in France. The Bourbon Restoration only lasted until 1830, when another revolution put the July Monarchy on the throne. This too was relatively short-lived; eighteen years later, the Second Republic rose up.

In Great Britain, George II was politically astute enough to attempt to curry some kind of favor with the public through the continuation of heart burial from the Stuarts. However, the tradition did not continue, nor were other elements of the monarchy reintroduced, such as the royal touch. The long reign of George III passed through the rest of the eighteenth century and
into the nineteenth. Great Britain became the United Kingdom, and the Patriot King was a fixture. He had no need to assert dominance via heart burial. However, the public’s reaction to the death of Princess Charlotte prompted an unprecedented heart burial for the Princess Royal. Instead of intact burial or even a Stuart-style viscera chest, Charlotte received a heart urn, something not seen in the royal house since the last of the Tudors. For a moment, heart burial returned to popularity in order to help the royal house satisfy the public’s need for ceremony and devotion to a particular family member. Perhaps this is why the royal house performed a heart burial for the Duke of Kent three years later in 1820. The royal family planned to do it because they thought the public would call for it, but it does not appear that the public mourned him as they did Charlotte. The custom never became relevant again; it was one moment in time for one princess that brought heart burial back in Great Britain.

The House of Bonaparte, during its brief lifespan, saw heart burial performed by relatives and marshals under Napoleon I. The military tradition of heart burial was consistent, though not common, throughout the centuries. Although the number of Bonapartes performing heart burial was small, the youth of the dynasty must be considered. However, Napoleon’s relatives had engaged in dynastic marriages; it is not clear whether they buried their hearts for the House of Bonaparte or the house they married into. The Emperor’s own heart burial, however, was not dynastic by nature. It was, and had to be, a personal gesture to his wife. Likewise, his stepson Eugene experienced the honor due to the love of his wife. Though he had been ennobled, it had been a wedding gift from his father-in-law, Maximilian I of Bavaria.

The Wittelsbachs in nearby Bavaria consciously competed with the neighboring Tyrolean Habsburgs and their imperial cousins. The Wittelsbachs still had considerable religious connection to their hearts beyond the belief that the heart was the seat of the soul, as they buried
their hearts at a Marian shrine. Initially, they elected to inurn their hearts and bury them the floor at the foot of the Black Madonna. After their elevation in 1806 by Napoleon, the Bavarian kings changed their heart burial patterns to be less humble and to be in a visible location across from the Black Madonna shrine itself. Prior to this, very few Bavarian electors had visible urns, one notable exception being Karl VII Albrecht, who had briefly become Holy Roman Emperor. The last heart burial by a member of the Bavarian noble families was in 1955. Crown Prince Rupprecht, son of the last king Ludwig III, elected to bury his heart there. His heart soon had company due to the transfer of the heart of his predeceased wife, Antonia.

Joseph’s efforts to modernize the imperial house of Habsburg failed due to the tradition of heart burial being an integral element of Habsburg identity. The Habsburg family had grown so vast that their one point of gathering and unity was with their necropolis. In the aftermath of the First World War, the Habsburgs created a second necropolis to replace what they had lost in Vienna; the tradition had to continue. Otto von Habsburg’s heart burial in 2011, however, differed from that of his parents and his ancestors. He elected to use his heart not as a unifying statement of the House of Habsburg, but rather his life after the expulsion from Austria. His body fulfilled his dynastic requirement at the Kaisergruft, but Otto followed the French tradition of sending his heart to a church with personal connections.

Enlightenment skepticism toward mystical traditions such as the royal touch and the power of heart burial affected its use by royalty. Using the divided body to solicit prayers for the soul in Purgatory was no longer the central feature of heart burial. Nor was any church founded “for the salvation of the king’s soul,” as Henry I did at Reading prior to his death in 1135. Because heart burial had already started to be used as a political and social designation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, by the nineteenth century, it was a dinosaur. Monarchies
and states had changed in function and structure. Embalming evolved to near modern standards with arterial and cavity embalming. Only one motivation out of four for heart burial survived: sentimentality. However, the overarching concept of heart burial was identity. Louis XIV used his heart to identify himself as a Catholic king and son of Louis XIII. Maria Theresa identified herself as a Habsburg. George II asserted his identity as king of Great Britain. Otto too identified himself, but instead of identifying himself by station or by his family, he identified himself by his own achievements in Hungary as a European statesman and as a friend to those who had taken care of him as a child. In a post-dynastic Europe, the identity of the individual succeeded the trend of identification with dynasties, religious orders, and claims of kingship.
CHAPTER X
CONCLUSION

Heart burial had four major functions before the early modern period. It made transport of kings from far afield possible. It was an expression of political dominance and legitimacy. It was a religious tool in order to garner prayers for Purgatory, especially since it held the soul. It expressed personal beliefs and loyalties. At times, this meant gathering the family’s hearts into one place as a uniform place of resurrection. As the world shifted to become more secular with established territorial borders, heart burial slowed down, but it never stopped.

Heart burial evolved to survive the changing traditions surrounding death. However, all changes within death tradition are ultimately cosmetic. Elizabeth A.R. Brown begins the final stage of her article, “Death and the Human Body in the Later Middle Ages” by stating,

Attitudes [towards death] have never been permanent, and they have seldom existed in isolation from others, competing and contradictory sentiments. In the first quarter of the fourteenth century, when these feelings reached their full development, other sentiments intruded. Then it was that a sense of the unbridgeable gulf between the living and the dead manifested itself in the occasional veiling of the corpse’s face during the funeral procession and the first use of the effigy or representation to replace the corpse at a funeral ceremony.\footnote{Brown, “Death and the Human Body,” 267.}

The evidence presented in this thesis, whether in the fourteenth century or another, suggests otherwise. In a religion where resurrection and a new life in the hereafter exist, death was not an indomitable barrier between the living and the dead. Rather, the living strived to remain close to their loved ones. The phenomena of family crypts and the technically illicit burials of bodies in churches reveal the true sentiments of families.

The diseased body and the dissected corpse caused anxiety during the medieval and early modern periods. To this day, people are unnerved by hospitals or being in the same room as a strange corpse. That does not necessarily mean the same person would be unable to attend a
funeral of a loved one. In the fourteenth century, both the plague and dissection broke the barrier between the public and private sphere, causing much distress; it was not that a person died, but rather how they died and how the body was treated. When bodies were loaded like firewood into wagons, it dehumanized the person. When they were dissected in public, it evoked the image of the convicted criminal, and indeed, many of these corpses were.\textsuperscript{568} Even in royal courts where the plague did not reach, similar anxieties were expressed about being divided and buried separately; several English and French queens wrote wills indicating they did not wish to be divided. Death in Christianity is not a problem, but perceived loss of identity and personhood was, whether through disease, rot, or division. Because the key figure in their religion had conquered death, Christians were less inclined to fear death itself. They feared a bad death or an ugly death, because they would resurrect with the body they had in life.\textsuperscript{569} Although Augustine reassured the reader that nothing would be “disfiguring” and all that would be put to right, Christians worried whether all their parts would be returned and what state they would be in.\textsuperscript{570}

Another concern was the exact process of transition between life and death for both the dying person and for those around him or her. At death, the person entered a stage between the living and the dead. In many cultures, the person did not truly “die” until all the flesh had rotted away.\textsuperscript{571} Huntington and Metcalf observed in the Bara tribe of Madagascar that the elaborateness and extensiveness of funerary ceremonies were directly proportionate to the importance of the person in society.\textsuperscript{572} When an important person died, he was not the only one cast into a space between living and the dead – liminality.\textsuperscript{573} Those that survived him also went

\textsuperscript{568} Sawday, \textit{The Body Emblazoned}, 54-55; Park, \textit{Secrets of Women}, 15.  
\textsuperscript{569} Augustine, \textit{City of God}, 1060.  
\textsuperscript{570} Augustine, \textit{City of God}, 1062.  
\textsuperscript{571} Hertz, \textit{Death and the Right Hand}, 48.  
\textsuperscript{572} Huntington and Metcalf, \textit{Celebrations of Death}, 66.  
\textsuperscript{573} Hertz, \textit{Death and the Right Hand}, 48.
through a period of transition in order to reorder not only the immediate family, but also society itself.\(^{574}\)

No official doctrine concerning the liminal period between death and resurrection existed until the thirteenth century. During that century, the Church tightened its laws concerning the sacraments such as marriage and matters concerning the nature of the soul. The concept of Purgatory existed long before it was codified during this period. As early as the third century, Christians said prayers for the dead in the hope they would benefit the deceased.\(^{575}\) The dead existed somewhere between this world and the moment of the Final Resurrection and journey to heaven. Prayers by the living would somehow help them. Popular religious practice of this concept existed before Purgatory was set into doctrine, and, as seen in seventeenth-century England, after it was deemed illicit by the state church.\(^{576}\) Purgatory was a time of purification and a remedy for the slightly imperfect soul, a place between this world and heaven. The Christian soul was in its liminal period. Back in life, the soul’s family and community attempted to assist their loved one and process the death.

In pre-Christian cultures, natural decay and putrefaction were deemed necessary for the living to consider the dead truly dead.\(^ {577}\) The Church attempted to uphold this ideal by forbidding burial within a church, encased in stone, for centuries. From the Council of Braga in 563 well through the Protestant Reformation, churches barred the practice. One loud cry for permitting the natural dissolution of the body came from Pope Boniface VIII in *De Sepulturis* in 1299, which barred several forms of bodily reduction and preservation.\(^ {578}\) However, elite practices such as heart burial, art like the Torcello Mosaic, and even the saints’ incorrupt bodies

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\(^{574}\) Hertz, *Death and the Right Hand*, 54; Huntington and Metcalf, 66.  
\(^{575}\) Machen, *The Concept of Purgatory in England*, 37-38; 43; 46; 53.  
\(^{578}\) Digard, *Volume II*, 576.
and odor of sanctity expressed the popular Christian view that a good death did not necessarily have to involve rot.

In fact, the rich and the powerful avoided the appearance of rot and putrefaction at all costs. Peter Damian described decay as something innate within the human body; only the soul prevented people from rotting alive. Even then, those who were particularly dissolute could have that happen to them; a rapidly decaying corpse was viewed as a sign of disfavor. Only those who were truly good within received God’s privilege of a lovely corpse. When paired with political theory, the holy king appeared to wield power both in the secular and spiritual realms.

However, there are limits to such readings of “heart burial as relic.” Gaude-Ferragu notes that the French royal family treated the heart funeral and burial with the same veneration as a saint’s relic at the first installation. Thereafter, the comparisons between the royals and the saints stopped, because the deceased, at that moment of interment, never had that same power again. The power was transferred to the next king. In contrast, saints retain their power no matter how many times they are moved. Dead kings do not perform miracles like dead saints do, unless they are Edward the Confessor or Louis IX, both saints of royal blood. The holy power of a saint to act on earth outlived a monarch’s power.

Secular kings and rulers emphasized their suitability and the suitability of their dynasty by ensuring their corpses did not reek at death. The chemical analysis of the heart of Richard I the Lionheart of England in 2012 punctuates this notion. His body was likely treated similarly to

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579 Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Flesh*, 77-78.
580 Ibid, 25.
his heart, wherein the body parts were preserved, made fragrant, and sent out to multiple churches to curtail his time in Purgatory.\textsuperscript{582}

Hertz stated that putrefaction acted as a timer for ceremonies for the dead and the living; once the body had rotted, the soul had moved on, and the society was freed of its obligation to serve the dead.\textsuperscript{583} As stated in the article,

In the case of the controversial life of Richard I, it is equally possible that the post-mortem treatment of the organs (and particularly the heart), inspired by biblical spices, was necessary in order to accelerate his religious apotheosis. Indeed, as stated by a 13\textsuperscript{th} century bishop of Rochester, Richard the Lionheart spent 33 years in Purgatory as expiation for his sins, and ascended to Heaven only in 1232.\textsuperscript{584}

The implication is unnerving: once the flesh rotted away, the liminal period was up. Richard could not collect prayers as efficiently when he did not exist on earth. Though the caskets remained and people still offered prayers, the preservation of organs suggested that their continued physical existence was also important. Having body parts on earth increased effectiveness. The article implies that if Richard’s body rotted away, Richard’s soul would be condemned to more centuries in Purgatory, something unsuitable for a good Christian king (or at least one who wished to project the image).

The timer function of putrefaction was not isolated to Richard I. Judaism in particular marks specific time for the soul to move on to heaven in the Bible and in Talmud, about eight months to a year.\textsuperscript{585} The body’s deterioration to dust was important for secondary burial in Palestine during the biblical period.\textsuperscript{586} In 1303, Boniface VIII issued a statement that as long as the body of John de Harcourt was dust, he could be transported.\textsuperscript{587} Although decay would take

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{582} Charlier, et al., “The Embalmed Heart of Richard the Lionheart,” 5.
\textsuperscript{583} Hertz, \textit{Death and the Right Hand}, 32.
\textsuperscript{584} Charlier, et. al., “The Embalmed Heart of Richard the Lionheart,” 5.
\textsuperscript{585} Rodkinson and Wise, editors, \textit{Babylonian Talmud}, 360; II Samuel 21:13-14.
\textsuperscript{587} Digard, \textit{Les Registres de Boniface VIII: Recueil Des Bulles de Ce Pape, Vol III}, 376
\end{footnotes}
far longer in a stone tomb, John de Harcourt’s brother brought him home less than a year in the grave. For Boniface, it did not matter that the man was not fully decomposed. Rather, Harcourt was sufficiently dead long enough for Boniface to believe he would not be harmed. The body was not fully dust, but it was decomposed enough that his body could not be divided.

The division of the body garnered prayers, but that was not its sole function. Heart, viscera, and entrail burials ensured that some part of the king’s body remained in this life to collect the prayers. A body tomb might be robbed or an entrail tomb burnt, but as long as one body part survived, the prayers of the faithful benefited the corpse. Multiple burial was not necessarily a fast way out of Purgatory; it merely increased the odds that time in Purgatory would be curtailed, no matter how slight. Giving the heart to family during the medieval period was potentially dangerous, as the line could die out. Giving the heart to a religious order ensured that prayers would be said for the soul for many years; one monk may die, but another would soon take his place.

The other implication of heart burial was evident before the analysis of Richard’s heart. If the king had not rotted away, then he was still in this world, not the next. Heart burial preserved the heart due to the use of a lead or silver container and various herbs, spices, and other preservatives. Due to its compact size and its muscular nature, the heart was probably easier to preserve than the rest of the corpse or the entrails. Though the king died and another succeeded him on the throne, the preservation of the heart kept him “alive.” His privilege of a king kept him alive within the kingship.

In England, the king’s two bodies were his Body Natural, which died and decayed, and his Body Politic, which was eternally part of his identity; at his death, he remained part of the

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588 Brown, “Death and the Human Body,”
kingship, though the kingship was no longer bound to him.589 The heart in England was the Body Politic. All that remains of Richard’s heart is dust, but though it is “dry,” it still has matter and weight – his heart still exists. Richard lives, and he remains a king of England. The heart as a signal for kingship or queenship lasted through the Protestant Reformation and into the eighteenth century before being reduced to a novelty for the nobles or poets.

For France, which lacked the theory of the king’s two bodies, similar weight was placed upon the heart burial due to its historical and theological connections to St. Louis. The kingship was not the Body Politic. Rather, it was, as Bandé calls it, “the sanctity of the blood,” the ability to trace one’s heritage directly to St. Louis.590 As a saint, Louis possessed holy blood that transmitted down to his progeny; Philippe IV famously used the idea to contest his supremacy and sovereignty in his battles against Pope Boniface VIII. St. Louis as a saint was divided into relics; the source material suggests that though he was subjected to mos teutonicus, his heart and his skull were separated from the rest of the eviscerated parts and the urn of flesh. Multiple burial was a reenactment of St. Louis’ dissolution of the body and a reminder of the source of the Capetian legitimacy. Until the monarchy itself went extinct, all French kings who could bury their hearts separately from their body did; Charles X, successor to Louis XVIII, was overthrown by the July Revolution and escaped into exile in 1830. He died in 1836 in Slovenia with no heart burial. His brother had successfully had his heart buried at Saint-Denis, where it rests to this day.591

The Habsburg heart burial tradition was innately different from that of England or France. It started far later, and it was not motivated by political theory. Rather the belief that the heart was the seat of the soul was most enduring in this dynasty – at least until 1858. Looking at

589 Kanttorowicz, The King’s Two Bodies, 9; 11.
590 Bandé, “Philippe le Bel, le Coeur, and the Sentiment Dynastique,” 275.
591 Personal observation at the Royal Necropolis at the Basilica of Saint-Denis, Saint-Denis, Paris, 19 January 2013.
its beginnings, the branch in Tyrol always buried its heart in one set place (St. Jacobskirche in Innsbruck) and its bodies in another (the Cistercian Cloister at Stams). Over time, the dynasty’s lands grew and peaked under the reign of Charles V (r. 1519-1556). Half of Europe belonged to the Habsburgs, as did a significant portion of the New World. Though the Habsburgs lost Spain, their hold on central Western Europe was unbroken until the First World War. After Empress Anna of Tyrol’s desire to have a necropolis was brought to reality in the early 1600s, the precedent for heart and viscera burial was set by her grandson, King Ferdinand IV of the Romans. The family remained large and spread-out; the Habsburgs had always preferred matchmaking to war. As a result, a multinational identity appeared. The need for family unity and group coherency led to the use of Ferdinand’s Herzgruft in the Augustinerkirche as a central place for hearts and the Herzogsgruft in Stephansdom as a central place for the entrails to refocus the dynasty.

In the beginning of this thesis, heart burial was described as necessary for the transportation and preservation of elite bodies and spiritual advancement. This remains accurate. However, heart burial fulfilled other needs. Heart burial served society during the liminal period incurred by the death of an important person.

When a king died, the heir or his representatives sprang into action not only for the benefit of the next monarch, but for the people as well. As seen in the funeral of François I, Henri II used the liminal period between his father’s death and his father’s final interment to put his ministers in order and prepare to take full control of the state with no delay. During this period, the royals of England and France used the effigy to distract the populace and lengthen the time for the transfer of power. François’ burial occurred seven weeks after his death; Henri II

592 The family motto is, “Leave the waging of wars to others! But you, happy Austria, marry; for the realms which Mars awards to others, Venus transfers to you.”
593 Giesey, The Royal Funeral Ceremony, 7.
had far more time to form his government compared to, say Richard I of England, whose father only lay in state for a few days.\textsuperscript{594}

Instability within a kingdom changed which rituals were performed and how. The Hundred Years’ War and the War of the Roses completely disrupted the use of effigies and heart burials in royal funerals for centuries in England. The rapid accession of Charles IX in 1560 occurred because of the deaths of two monarchs in rapid succession; attention needed to be focused on the new king immediately. Thus, François II’s heart burial became a private affair. Though this new way of performing heart burial still resulted in attention from the public during the nighttime procession, the ceremony itself was privatized.\textsuperscript{595}

In contrast, the heart burial of Princess Charlotte of Great Britain appears to be an effort by the royal family to stem public distress at her death.\textsuperscript{596} Part of this distress was created by a lack of a clear line of succession after the current heir apparent. The succession was key to keeping order, and keeping order was key to having a successful succession.

The practice of heart burial maintained and expressed order in society.\textsuperscript{597} Directly below the king and in his closest circles were the nobles. When they died, they too created a gap in society, though not as large as the king’s did. A noble death had the potential to destabilize the hierarchy of the court. To be more accurate, a noble death was a broken rung in the ladder to the king; although one or two broken rungs does not ruin the ladder, enough damage will prevent the king from getting any work done, and it might delude the lower classes into thinking they can patch the ladder with themselves. Heart burial was a social indicator. The cost of the removal, inurnment, and transport of the heart to the desired location limited its practice to only the richest

\textsuperscript{594} Ibid, 21. 
\textsuperscript{596} Bland, The Royal Way of Death, 114.
\textsuperscript{597} Binski, Medieval Death, 50.
or the most powerful. Coffins, even in the modern era, are costly. To request urns for hearts, intestines, brains, eyes, or blood increased the price exponentially. As a result, heart burial was reserved for the rich or those with secular or religious power. A dynastic family such as the Habsburgs used heart burial to identity their members, particularly after almost all the other ruling houses of Europe ceased in the practice.

By nature, heart burial grants the historian a reading of history from the top of society. This does not prevent the historian from understanding the lower social strata of the same period. Rather, the funerals of elites emphasize and dramatize the concerns and values of their time. All public funerals were meant to please the public. Bodies generally went to a family necropolis, but where and how the heart was interred was the royal’s only choice in the matter, as seen in the French monarchy and the nobles of England. This became even more pronounced when royal heart burials became private affairs in the seventeenth century. A latter day example is Otto von Habsburg’s dual funerals in 2011. The body belonged to the state and to the family, but his heart was his own.

As the nature of kingship changed, so too did the rituals of death. In examining the book series by John Strype about early to mid-Tudor period memorials, when a king or queen died, the author described the expiration of the monarch as “the departure” of the king or queen; royalty never died. The case of Louis XIII’s succession in 1610 illustrated the changes wrought by time and the twin assassinations of Henri III and Henri IV. The moment of succession changed from the interment to the actual moment of death, making formalities around the old dead king superfluous. It no longer mattered whether the king rotted or not; he was no longer king.

Yet, heart burial still occurred. Because the practice was a fixture in royal ritual as well as a sign of conspicuous consumption, the heart had the ability to transmit messages about the

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monarch. Even after the evolution of embalming to near modern standards, the sending out of hearts remained important in Catholic monarchies as a way to earn prayers for Purgatory but more significantly as an increasingly personal gift to a favored religious order. The event of the heart funeral became private. The heart burials of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries became increasingly personalized; hearts were given to specific people and places due to the deceased’s love for those people and those places, nothing more.

As time went on, heart burial lost its religious associations, political statements, and its need both in terms of transport and in terms of stabilizing society. What remained, as seen in the heart burials of the twenty-first century, was the expression of love and of personal identity. Otto von Habsburg’s choice to bury his heart in Hungary was not an attempt to reclaim the throne. It was not stated in any official reports or in his organization’s press release whether he believed his heart would collect prayers and speed up his time in Purgatory. His family emphasized his personal connections to the Pannonhalma monks and his life of service in European Parliament, particularly in matters relating to Hungary.

In a similar vein, in 1938, Baron Pierre de Coubertin requested that his heart be buried at Olympia, Greece. Coubertin was the founder of the modern Olympics in 1896, having spent most of his life dedicated to the resurrection of the ancient tradition. It was what Coubertin did and what he loved, not his status as a baron, that inspired his heart burial. Just as Hungary did for Otto, Greece “enthusiastically accepted [his] decision.” The heart remained relevant due to its personal association with individual identity, rather than that of a dynasty or political stake.

Before the high-profile funerals of Otto von Habsburg in 2011, heart burial had not completely disappeared. The country of Poland caused a stir when it requested the heart of Pope

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600 Ibid, 9.
John Paul II in 2005. Within the six months preceding the presentation of this thesis, the archaeological discoveries of Richard III’s body, a plague pit near London, and the grave of a knight in Scotland stirred interest in the medieval ways of death. The analysis of Richard I’s heart has been a welcome addition to the comparatively thin academic work on heart burial in English. Fascination with how people died, particularly during the medieval era, is on the rise.

This thesis has attempted to create an overview concerning heart burial, its motivations, and its value in Western European societies. Despite its obscurity, its importance in the context of European political, religious, and social history should no longer be underestimated. The custom appears to be at its end. All current dynasties and dynastic pretenders ceased heart burial by the 1950s including the Wittelsbachs of Bavaria in 1955. The Habsburgs themselves had no heart burials between the death of Otto’s father Karl in 1922 and the death of Otto’s mother Zita in 1989. The future of heart burial is unclear; Otto von Habsburg was, in many ways, the last of his kind. This work is the first of its kind for many years. It is suitable that the work inspired by the man also ends with him.
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