EIGHT

Vows on Water: Ship Ex-Votos as Things, Metaphors, and Mediators of Communality

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Religion, Sentiment, and the Sea in 1880

A large canvas by the French artist Ulysse Butin—a lesser-known painter of the nineteenth century—strongly and sentimentally evokes a votive scenario.[1] The painting is dated 1880 and was exhibited at the Salon in Paris, where it was immediately bought by the French state for the Museum in Lille.[2] The artist, whose paintings were awarded a prize in the salons of 1875 and 1878, was made a member of the Légion d'honneur in 1881.[3] Ulysse Butin—who changed his first name from Louis-Auguste to Ulysse, after the legendary seafaring hero—died in 1883 at forty-five. His painting from 1880 will provide a starting point for a short, fragmentary history of Christian maritime ex-votos. Stretching back far before the nineteenth century, this history reflects the many powerful anxieties that arise from seafaring as a form of border-crossing—anxieties or fears that generate specific religious practices, beliefs, and aesthetics.[4] Maritime ex-votos, especially those in the form of ships, can be seen as the material counterparts of these anxieties and desires. This chapter will focus on the metaphoricity of ships as bodies and figures of transfer, on the "thingness" and seriality of votive vessels and their capacity for creating communality within Christian belief systems and aesthetic practices.[5]

The canvas in Lille shows an emotionally significant scene that mingles religion and sentiment:[6] situated on a soft cliff or rock, a group of peasants, fishermen and seamen, is entering a churchyard (fig. 1). The procession is headed by an old couple with bent heads and backs. Shown

Fig. 1. Ulysse Butin. *Ex-Voto*, 1880. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille. Photograph © Bridgeman Images / Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

only from behind, they are directing their path toward the entrance of a small church, made of the same gray stone as the ground. Fragments of an altar are discernible in the dark space through the open door of the church. The two old people are leading the way for a young woman, who is placed almost in the center of the composition. Isolated on both sides, this woman with her white bonnet and downcast eyes holds a model of a sailing boat in her arms. A male in black dress—most probably her husband, a seaman—walks one step behind her with a child in his arms and a young boy at his side. The boy is carrying a bouquet of white flowers wrapped in white paper, echoing the color of the bonnet and the light sails of the boat. More people are joining the pious procession from the left, among them a man with a thick dark cap on his head, large hands, and a weathered face. His physique evokes the harshness of the place and of life itself. Others are climbing up the rocky trail on the left, from which the scenery opens toward the gray sea with its stony cliffs and an unpleasant cloudy sky. In the far distance, several vessels animate the colorless gray waters.

Only evoked by very tiny strokes of color on the canvas, the sails remind us of the distinct levels of representation involved. The distant ships sailing in the background and the model held in the arms of the woman in the foreground stand for two different types of presence or

absence within the same image. Whereas in the first case the painted boats can be understood as pictorial signs representing vessels made for navigation, the referentiality is more complex in the case of the sailing boat carried by the woman, in which the strokes of color refer to a model of a ship, which in turn refers to something else, in the first place to a larger vessel but also to a vow and the hope—or gratitude—for a safe sea voyage. But what exactly does a votive ship refer to? Reading it simply as a sign might already be part of a profound misreading. Further, both types of painted ships stand for divergent kinds of transportation or transfer. Even though both are shifting or moving things from one realm to the other, they refer to different types of exchange. The sailing boats in the background relate to the transport of objects and people; the ex-voto ship model in the woman's arms is part of a transactional process between the physical and a divine world and is therefore intended as a vehicle for transfer from the profane to the sacred and vice versa.

Gravestones and a crucifix are placed precisely in the center of the composition, located just behind the female figure, with the crucifix significantly rising up against the sky. They complete the suggestive setting in a decisive way. Death—in the form of the graves and the crucified body of Jesus of Nazareth—and the Christian promise of salvation, represented by both the cross and the church, are brought into opposition perhaps even too clearly. More than just formally, the sailing boat carried by the young woman is placed as a mediator between the contrasting realms of death and life or between the material world and the religious sphere. As an ex-voto, the ship in her arms figures as the material part of a vow made by the young woman. This vow could be considered as a linguistic act. Within the narrative of the painting, in the very next moment she will bring the small vessel into the church as a votive gift. In her arms and through her vow, the ship model in a certain sense takes the place of a dead body. It works as a substitute for an anticipated, feared death that did not occur.

While showing this scenario of a sacred transaction, the painting in an astonishing way genders a votive practice and inverts some of the spectator's expectations: the male carries the child; the boy, a bunch of flowers; the female, a model of a boat. We are invited to imagine that the woman's vow relates to seafaring—as shown in the background—and to the destiny of her husband, most likely a sailor. The two elderly people could be his parents, and the man walking behind the female protagonist might be her husband. But it is not entirely clear that her offering is to fulfill a vow after his salvation from a storm or shipwreck—that is, for

a grace already received. In fact, the standard formula found on many votive offerings within Christian cult practices emphasizes the fulfillment of a former vow, a donation given after receiving a "grace" by divine intervention. This sequence of events is indicated by the letters VFGA, "votum fecit, gratiam accipit," written on many Catholic ex-votos from the fifteenth century to the present.[7] There is also the possibility, however, of making an offering for a grace one is hoping for. Even if the first reading of the painting's narrative is the most likely one, it could well be that the woman's vow relates to future or ongoing travel by sea. Theoretically, we could even think of her as having been saved after a shipwreck. It is not possible, nor is it necessary, to be completely sure about every aspect of the narrative. Indeed, to understand the concept and the function of the ex-voto on a structural level, it might even be more helpful to accept the ambiguities the painting offers.

Among his few documented works, Ulysse Butin left several canvases depicting the life of the people of the Atlantic shore in Normandy. With the painting in Lille, he presents a religious topic that some twenty years earlier had achieved a certain success at the Salon. In 1860 the promising painter Alphonse Legros had also represented in a painting the impact of Catholic votive practices on the social life and behavior of the people. In his *Ex-Voto*, Legros shows a group of nine women kneeling and praying in front of a votive painting placed on the edge of a grove.[8] Despite the twenty-year gap, both Legros and Butin were presenting the religious life of peasants to an urban bourgeois public in Paris. As part of the votive scenarios, both painters stressed the social dimension of their subject, showing a community of believers acting together as a group, and both represented women as the main figures of votive practices. Legros, however, presented social and religious practices connected with a votive image, whereas Butin concentrated on the even more striking offering of a three-dimensional object or "thing"—the model of a sailing boat with two masts, held by the young woman. In his case, the presumably even more archaic practice is motivated by the geographical setting, the French coast of Normandy. By 1880, the year Butin presented the painting, the coast of Normandy had become a fashionable subject among artists producing paintings of seascapes, harbors, hotels, bathers, and vacationers mainly for an audience in Paris.[9] Places such as Le Havre, Sainte-Adresse, Étretat, and Trouville, more easily accessible with the newly built railroad, had become sites of leisure, vacation, and touristic attraction for Parisian society. Meanwhile, steamers were slowly replacing sailing boats, bringing

fundamental changes to the social and economic life of seaside popula-
tions.[10] By now, the specific scenery and geomorphology of Normandy's
coastline, with its cliffs as well as its harbors, small villages, and fishing
boats, became the object of the sometimes romantic, sometimes collec-
tive gaze of tourists and holiday-makers, gazes that were reflected and
produced by paintings of several of the most successful artists.[11] Paint-
ers such as Courbet, Manet, Morisot, and Monet (who was raised in Le
Havre) had worked at the seaside, whether Cherbourg, Étretat, Trouville,
Pourville, Dieppe, or elsewhere. They were looking for, if not partly creat-
ing, the modern Parisian beholder. All very different in their approaches,
they were interested in the play of colors of the sea, clouds, and sky, the
geological formations of the coast, the leisure pastimes of the vacation-
ers, the regattas, and sometimes also sea battles. Only rarely did their
paintings offer a closer look at the everyday life of the inhabitants of
the region. Butin specialized in this more realistic approach, but with
sentimental overtones. His Lille painting, with its emphasis on the old,
bent-over bodies and the weathered faces of the mariners, demonstrates
an interest in not only the social dimensions of the harshness and dangers
of the sea but also the pious, Christian response to those dangers.

"Re-Invented Tradition" or "*Longue Durée*"

Ulysse Butin's painting for the Salon reflects a votive or material practice
that had existed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries along
the coastlines of the European Atlantic and the Mediterranean world.
The material part of this practice is particularly well documented for
northern European countries such as Germany, Sweden, Finland, and
Denmark, where several hundred, if not thousands, of three-dimen-
sional ex-voto ships survive in the smaller and larger churches. Ex-voto
ships are still displayed as part of church decoration in places such as
Warnemünde and Dietenhagen in northern Germany and on the islands
of the Baltic Sea. Held by long chains, they hang down from the ceil-
ing into the interior of the church. Many of them, surprisingly, are to
be found in Protestant communities. Ship models can also be found in
several churches in France. Other examples survive in Italy, on the coast
of Dalmatia, and in the Christian churches of Istanbul—again, most of
them dating to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The majority of
ex-votos are sailing boats, but several steamers with or without paddles

are also preserved. Although there is a wide range of local documenta-
tion for this material, we are still missing any overall research on the
topic or any broader attempt at a more systematic approach.[12]

Eric Hobsbawm's research on the nineteenth century demonstrates
the strange need of modern societies not only to enhance but even to
create or invent traditions.[13] Therefore, we should not exclude the pos-
sibility that the display of ship models in churches along the coastlines
in the nineteenth century might be a part of this broader phenomenon
of invented, or better, reinvented traditions, as might be seen in votive
collections in nineteenth-century neomedieval churches such as Notre-
Dame-de-la-Garde in Marseille. At the same time, however, such ex-votos
are indeed the fragile documents of a much longer Mediterranean and
Atlantic history, a history of *longue durée*.[14] This would be a tacit history
of the worlds of fishermen and seafarers, with their specific forms of
religiosity and community, but nevertheless with significant changes and
breaks in this history. In any case, much more archival work would be
needed to substantiate this assumption of a complex interplay between
religiosity, *longue durée*, and the reinvention of tradition in the specific
communities of these peoples and groups.

In many of the documented cases, the offerings of the nineteenth
century were made directly not only by mariners, captains, and helms-
men but also by shipbuilders and ship carpenters. The main actors are
therefore male—in contrast to the women at the center of the French
Salon painting. In many cases the donors were the actual makers of the
ex-voto ship models. The skill and labor required to construct the mod-
els were a part of their donation. The models are a male form invested
with time, patience, and dedication. In the German sources at least, the
small ships—with their detailed imitation of the ship's architecture, in-
cluding its mast and tackle—were explicitly appreciated for the meticu-
lousness of their construction. We know, for example, that the seaman
Karl Bohn from Wieck on the Baltic Sea worked for ten years on a model
of a frigate donated to the church of Prerow in 1855.[15] Unless marked
by inscriptions, in most cases these little floating architectures cannot be
formally distinguished from those ship models mariners kept and con-
structed at home as a pastime and *bricolage* during their stay on land (fig.
2) or from so-called Admirality models.

Investing time and skill model-making might have been even more
common among Protestants, for whom the ships were not necessarily
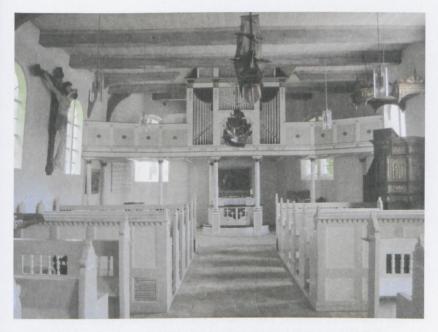part of a religious vow or objects negotiating between the profane and

Fig. 2. Interior view of the Protestant church in Arnis ("Schifferkirche") with votive ships. Arnis (Schleswig-Holstein). Photograph © Heike Benkmann.

the divine; more likely, they were objects that were kept in churches, as distinct from the votive offerings of Catholic belief and its cult practices, which Protestants viewed with disgust. Theologian and later professor of history G. L. Kosegarten, for instance, praised a ship model in a church on Hiddensee Island in 1804 as an element of "pure" church decoration that had nothing to do with the Catholic custom of creating church interiors crowded with votive "things" or offerings.[16]

Ships as Votive Things before the Nineteenth Century

A famous canvas sometimes attributed to Carpaccio, today kept in the Accademia in Venice, clearly proves that three-dimensional ex-voto ships have a long history.[17] The large but highly damaged painting shows the interior of the Church of San'Antonio in Castello and depicts Venetian Francesco Ottoboni's vision, after the plague, of the ten thousand martyrs of Mount
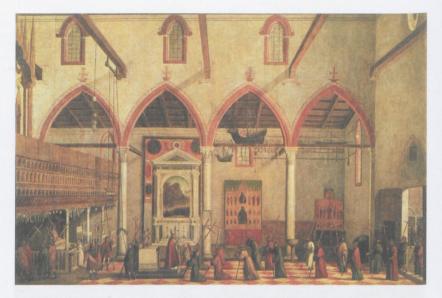
Fig. 3. Vittore Carpaccio (attributed to). Interior view of the Church of San'Antonio in Castello, 1495. Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. Photograph © Gallerie dell'Accademia Venezia / S. Nethersole, *Devotion by Design: Italian Altarpieces before 1500* (London: National Gallery London, 2011), 13, fig. 3.

Ararat entering the church (fig. 3). Dozens of ex-voto waxes are visible close to the altar of San'Antonio. On the right, in the aisle, three sailing boats hang from the ceiling of the church, presenting different types of ships. The canvas is visual evidence of a tradition of three-dimensional ex-voto ships in Venice in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Whereas the ex-voto waxes of legs and arms have disappeared from most Christian churches, in several places the practice of hanging ships was preserved until the nineteenth century and eventually even intensified.

Written documents attest to the existence of three-dimensional ex-voto ship models from the twelfth century onward and their use not only on the shores of the Mediterranean and Atlantic but also in several sanctuaries inland. By the first half of the twelfth century, they had already been documented in places such as Hildesheim in Lower Saxony; one century later, at St. Nicolas de Port in Lorena; and later again, in remote places such as Rocamadour in the Midi-Pyrénées. Like most of the other ex-votos of the time, the twelfth-century ship ex-voto documented for Hildesheim was made of wax. It was offered to the shrine of St. Bern-

ward—the patron saint of the church, who was sanctified at the end of the twelfth century—by some merchants coming from Bremen and sailing to England. During a violent storm and after several futile prayers, they addressed St. Bernward, at the time still a new saint. Only then, in this very moment, the waters became calm and the merchants were saved. After returning to Bremen, the grateful merchants sent two members of their group to Hildesheim with little ships made out of wax: "navicula cerea."[18] Some years later, after once more escaping a storm, the same merchants offered a silver anchor to Bernward.[19] By 1132, a small sailing boat made of silver had already been documented in the same basilica; this ex-voto was offered to St. Godehard and was once again given by a merchant saved from a shipwreck.[20] A medieval text describing the life and wonders of St. Godehard emphasized his effectiveness against shipwrecks by citing the many wax ships at his shrine in the basilica of Hildesheim.[21] Similarly, while returning from the Holy Land in 1254, the Capetian king Louis IX (who later became a saint) encountered a storm near Cyprus but was saved after his and his consort's prayers. His consort donated a ship made of silver to St. Nicola de Port, an important pilgrim-

Fig. 4. Catalan *não* model ("Mataró model"), early fifteenth century. Maritime Museum, Rotterdam. Photograph © Collection Maritime Museum, Rotterdam.

Fig. 5. Vascelluzzo, sixteenth century. Church of Santa Maria di Porto
Salvo dei Marinai, Messina. Photograph © *Il tesoro dell'isola: Capolavori
siciliani in argento e corallo dal XV al XVIII secolo*, ed. Salvatore Rizzo,
exhibition catalogue, Prague, 2004 (Catania: Maimone, 2008), 1:555,
plate 124.

Fig. 6. Procession of the Vascelluzzo in Messina, June 14, 2009. Photograph © Marco Grassi / digital photo gallery at www.isolainfesta.net.

age site on the mainland in Lorraine with a reliquary containing a relic of St. Nicolas of Myra, one of the main saints for the protection of navigation.[22] Around 1520 the Duke of Braunschweig and Lüneburg offered a silver votive ship to the miraculous image of Our Lady of Alt-Ötting in Bavaria after escaping a violent storm on his way back from a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.[23]

One of the oldest surviving models of Christian three-dimensional ex-voto ships made from wood may be a Catalan *não*, today in the Maritime Museum in Rotterdam, most probably made in the fifteenth century and originating from a chapel for St. Simon in Mataró, Catalonia (fig. 4).[24] The Vascelluzzo, a large reliquary shrine stored at the Cathedral of Messina and used in the Corpus Domini procession, most probably incorporates such an ex-voto (fig. 5). The carefully designed wooden model of a galleon from the sixteenth century must have been covered with a mass of precious silver plates in the middle of the seventeenth century, when the object was transformed into a Marian reliquary.[25] During processions, the heavy vessel, almost six feet long, was carried through the streets of Messina for hours (fig. 6). Ex-voto ships were most often

made of wood or wax, but another, slightly later spectacular object is made of crystal: a chandelier in a church in Vilnus shaped as a sailing boat, with its sail made of dozens of shimmering pieces of glass.[26]

In addition to three-dimensional ex-votos presenting or representing ships as votive gifts, there are countless painted votive images showing the miraculous moment of salvation, the apparition of a saint or the Virgin Mary, often presenting vessels that are very detailed and technically accurate, designed by specialized painters, mostly from the nineteenth century. Larger collections of such maritime votive paintings—often kept together with ex-voto ship models—can be found in various places on the coast of Liguria and in France, for example, at Camogli in the province of Genoa and in Sainte-Anne-d'Auray in Brittany.[27] In Malta, a large collection of maritime votive paintings includes several tablets from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a time of general Catholic reaffirmation of miraculous images and votive offerings, a development that started in the fifteenth century.[28] Iconographically, these paintings typically portray instances of divine intervention, often in standardized ways, with the vessel and the sea in the foreground and the saint or the Madonna in heaven. This common visual formula for ex-voto paintings first appeared in tablets of the early fifteenth century showing St. Nicholas miraculously interceding to prevent shipwrecks.

The collection of maritime ex-voto paintings of Our Lady of Grace in Zabbar, Malta, forms an important corpus for the history of ex-votos and of the island. Malta is situated in the center of the Mediterranean and was dominated by the Order of St. John from 1530 to 1565. Its strategic and symbolic position, which can be traced from the Bronze Age up to the Second World War, is featured in the account of St. Paul's salvation from a shipwreck on the island in Acts of the Apostles. This long maritime history seems to materialize in a further set of votives related to seafaring: ship graffiti.[29] We can find this even simpler form of popular maritime devotion on the island of Malta, as well as in many other places on the coasts of the Mediterranean, Atlantic, and northern seas, whether in South Anatolia, Brittany, Sardinia, the Venetian island of Lazzaretto Nuovo, on the façade of the cathedral in Ancona, or in the Church of San Michele in Foro in Lucca, with several graffiti placed at the entrance, in the right aisle, and in the left transept, dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.[30] They are scratched on rocks, slabs, or the brickwork; others are drawn on the walls, mostly with a single color. Many hold valuable technical information for the history of navigation.[31] These votives would often be made

before or during the voyage by those sailing on the vessels represented in the graffiti or after the successful and safe completion of the voyage. The oldest examples of this kind of apotropaic offering, thought to be effective in warding off distress at sea, date back to 1600 BCE and can be found on Malta, again not as single images but as groups of graffiti.[32] Like many of the votive offerings discussed in this chapter, they are part of a larger assemblage of maritime votives. This aspect of ex-votos—their seriality—has been neglected by most scholars, although it is of fundamental importance for an understanding of votive practices in general, including the status of the offerings as "things" and their effectiveness, social meaning, and capacity to create communities. These aspects will be addressed again in the following pages, especially at the end of the chapter.

More recently, scholars have stressed the organicity of the classical Greek, Latin, or Christian ex-voto as the elaboration of a desire related to the body.[33] In his study of ex-votos, Georges Didi-Huberman convincingly developed this reading but limited it to anatomical offerings. His approach may also be relevant for votive ships, particularly if we consider them not only as instruments related to the human body but also as organic units in themselves. In the following discussion, I will draw attention to votive practices in antiquity connected with the body of a ship. The ship should be understood as a unit or entity, a body and at the same time a sacred "thing." Furthermore, similar to the human body, single parts of the ship should be seen as parts of a fragmented body. Juxtaposing the unity of a ship and its fragmentation leads to a reconsideration of metaphors of unity, the concept of communality, and the motif of transfer and translation inherent to ships. In fact, I would like to emphasize the metaphorical potential of ships, especially their function as figures of communality and of transfer, together with their technical instrumentality. Both these dimensions—the metaphorical and the instrumental meaning—can be activated in votive practices that relate to seafaring. At the same time, I would like to stress the seriality of ex-votos in general. Their capacity to create communities of believers and of maritime travelers through their seriality has been underestimated in many studies.

The Vessel as a Body and the Community on the Boat

In *The Corrupting Sea*, Peregrine Horden and Nicolas Purcell stress the role of the sea in the religious systems of the Mediterranean. With a

focus on antiquity, they discuss Mediterranean "Territories of Grace" and an extremely rich maritime religious topography.[34] Within this antique and late antique thalassic topography, ex-voto ships and *euploia* (Gr., fair voyage) graffiti are among the most common practices of religious interaction with the maritime landscape.[35] In Greek and Roman times, several of the *euploia* inscriptions, carved into the rocks, must have been made from the boat on otherwise inaccessible cliffs in particularly dangerous or remote areas. But there may have been many others in more accessible places that were later covered by urban settlement or harbor construction. Because of the great ambivalence toward sea voyages and the many uncertainties related to them in the Greek and Roman Mediterranean, "nobody will set sail without a sacrifice, the invocation of the gods and votives," according to Epictetus.[36] Among the ancient "grammata" bays is the Punta della Zupa on the coast of Albania, with hundreds of inscriptions, most of them dedicated to the Dioscuroi. Other examples can be found on the island of Prote on the coast of Messenia, on Syros, and at Aliki on the south coast of Thasos.[37] The inscriptions name the travelers or the boat after invoking "EUPLOIA" and expressing hope that the journey will end well. The oldest ship graffiti can be found on the island of Malta, the earliest dating from ca. 1600 BCE (fig. 7).[38]

In all these cases, the graffiti and *euploia* inscriptions are usually not alone but in groups, sometimes accumulating over long periods of time.[39] We should therefore think of them not only in terms of seriality and repetition but also in terms of difference. Ex-votos generate other ex-votos, mutually increasing their effectiveness and that of the gods invoked.[40] Thus, they create communities, formed by those who believe in their effectiveness and power. As we have seen, seriality is an important aspect of many examples discussed previously, demonstrating the religious power of a specific saint or specific image through a series of individual votive acts and salvations. Votive offerings are powerful embodiments of communality, encapsulating a multiplicity of constantly increasing social energies.

As Dietrich Wachsmuth and others have argued, the body of the antique ship itself is at the center of several religious and votive rituals.[41] The sailing ship must be guided by a god, the *theos pompimos*, who takes over the *pompē* (ceremonial procession) or *tutela* (protection) of the vessel, very often in the form of a statue. In addition, the vessel itself was understood as an animated being. Ships were masked as a Cetus, a sea-monster—for example, the aphract (deckless) warships cruising on a plate in the Louvre from the second half of the sixth century,
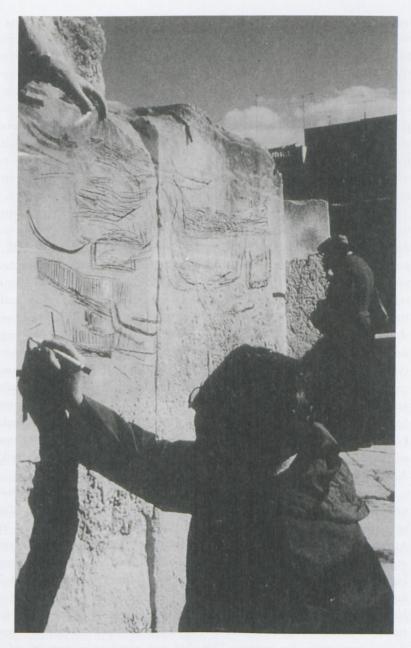
Fig. 7. Maritime graffiti at Tarxien, ca. 1600 BCE, Malta. Photograph © J. D. Evans, *The Prehistoric Antiquities of the Maltese Islands: A Survey* (London: Athlone, 1971), MLT.86.AA.1-27.

one among hundreds or possibly thousands of similar representations. Such features had apotropaic functions, meant to ward off evil or misfortune. Prows, for instance, were decorated with wide-open eyes, like those of a fish.[42] The vessels were also adorned with an *antiprosōpon* (figurehead) and an *aplasthon* (ornament on top of the sternpost). These decorations were often made of gilded bronze, a material with apotropaic qualities deriving from its capacity to reflect light. The ship was also protected by its name.[43] There were special offerings and rituals for leaving and entering a port. When it arrived in the harbor, the ship would be adorned with votive crowns—or such crowns might be thrown into the sea from the prow.[44]

The Torlonia relief, an ex-voto most likely dedicated by a Roman wine merchant to Liber, the god of viticulture and fertility, shows several of these elements (fig. 8). The marble relief was made ca. 200 CE, in the time of Septimus Severus. Its detailed and complex iconography includes a large protective eye and other significant features.[45] Two cargo vessels have entered the harbor of Rome at Portus, north of Ostia, and the one on the right is about to be tied up at the quay. The sails of the ship to the left bear two images of the Roman wolf (the *lupa*, suckling Romulus and Remus) and the letters *V* and *L*, perhaps for *votum libero* (vow delivered). On the roof of the cabin, at the rear, three figures surrounding a portable altar perform a sacrifice to give thanks for the safe journey. The *akrostolia* (stern ornaments) of both ships show the same *tutela navis*, the god to whom the protection of the vessel was consigned. Further figurative decoration is visible on all religiously significant parts of the ships, while a *genius*, or protective deity, is offering a votive crown. Again, it is the body of the ship that is sanctified.

The battering ram affixed to the bow of battleships might also function as part of the apotropaic ornamentation of the vessel. Among the very few surviving examples, the most surprising is the one found in Athlit, where divers discovered an intact bronze ram that is now stored at the National Maritime Museum in Haifa.[46] The Athlit ram, made of high-grade bronze, weighs about 1,025 pounds and measures about 3 feet high and 7 feet long. The ram is cast in one piece, and even if it had a practical use during sea battles, its apotropaic function is evident from the shimmering, reflective bronze material and the symbols of sea deities integral to the casting. This ship ram survived as remains of a shipwreck. We know of many others that were used as votive gifts—for example, in the monument that Augustus erected at Nicopolis to cel-

Fig. 8. Ship at the Ostia harbor ("Torlonia relief"), ca. third century CE. Torlonia Collection, Rome. Photograph © O. Testaguzza, *Portus: Illustrazione dei porti di Claudio e Traiano e della città di Porto a Fiumicino* (Rome: Julia Editrice, 1970), 230.

ebrate his victory at Actium, and those placed in the Roman Forum, where many rams from captured ships have been documented.[47] Even the famous Nike of Samothrace, a central piece of the Louvre's collections, derives from religious practices linked to ships. She is the goddess of victory just landing on the prow, presented as a commemorative votive in a sanctuary on the Greek island of Samothrace after victory in a sea battle ca. 200 BCE.

Although votive practices connected with seafaring and ships are of complex heterogeneity, with specific differences in time and regions, there are nevertheless astonishing continuities and similarities. Structurally, we can distinguish two different types of votive offerings and practices related to ships: one is concerned with the integrity of the vessel, seen as a body and an organism; the other with its fragmentation into pieces, as in the case of adversity and war. At least in antiquity, however, in both cases votive ships or their parts were considered *res sacrae* or *res religiosae* (sacred or religious things).

Several of these aspects were taken up by early Christian theologians. But it seems that only Christians, not pagans, considered the ship's mast a particularly sacred place.[48] The inclusion of the story of the shipwreck

and salvation of St. Paul (Acts 27:27–28:5) in the story of the apostles (a passage partly written or inspired by a different author, as historical analysis has shown) exemplifies the strong impact of the religious and cultic practices of seafaring on Christian thought and its competition with pagan practices.[49] The image of a second-century CE boat with its mast presented in the form of a cross can be found in Roman catacombs.[50] In the case of a fifteenth-century Italian miniature, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, in which Jesus himself is shown as the mast of a vessel, again as if the mast were a cross, the bodily metaphor of the ship is not limited to the body of Christ but is also extended to the crew and the passengers as the collective body of believers (fig. 9). In this type of representation, exemplified by an Indo-Portuguese ivory in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the ship has a metaphorical meaning, representing a passage through the sea of life made possible by Christ's firmness and sacrifice. Within the Christian context, the symbolic meaning of the ship as *ecclesia* (the Church)—developed in various forms, with strong implications of governance, community, and divine aid—can never be separated from the meaning and embodied desires that any of the much more popular votive ships stand for.[51] At the same time, the religious meaning is always repeated and confirmed by the cultic practices connected with actual maritime sailing experiences.

The metaphorical, Christian rendering of the ship—often with a bishop as the rudder—is featured in one of the most prominent images of Roman Christianity, Giotto's mosaic known as the *Navicella* (lit., little ship) or *Christ on Lake Tiberias*. The early fourteenth-century mosaic was made around 1313 for Cardinal Stefaneschi and placed at the center of the entrance of the basilica of Old St. Peter's in Rome, the main church of the popes.[52] The mosaic only survives in an early drawing by Pari di Spinello, now in New York, and also a cartoon by Francesco Beretta done in 1628, when the mosaic was already heavily damaged. The *Navicella* reinterprets the biblical narrative of the apostles, showing the community of the apostles on the vessel endangered by the wind gods, blowing from above as demonic forces. The ship sails on the Sea of Galilee, so the voyage is not a maritime one, but its meaning could easily be transferred to any community on a sailing boat. Several of the pagan visual elements related to ships as *res sacra* seem to be incorporated into a new vision of totality and leadership, in which the meaning of the mast and the community of people on the boat are emphasized.[53] In the assemblage of ex-voto ships we have considered, communality is evoked through the

Fig. 9. St. Peter navigating the Ship of Church, from the "Piccolomini Breviary," ca. 1480. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MS M.799, fol. 234v. Photograph © The Pierpont Morgan Morgan Library, New York. MS M.799.

community of travelers and sailors on a single ship and through the se-
riality of ex-votos as a community of believers who share a faith in the
efficacy of the same saintly body or sacred image.

Cappella Feroni in SS. Annunziata, Florence:
A Monumental Ship Votive

One last example will again demonstrate the very strong potentials, as
well as the ambiguities, of the Christian readings of vessels, especially
in the early modern period. The artwork—the decoration of a baroque
chapel in Florence—not only elaborates on the metaphoricity of the ship
and brings the notion of salvation related to ships to an extreme but also
shows the possible cynical dimensions of the Christian readings of "salva-
tion." This particular exemplar of the metaphorical and Christian mean-
ings of ships may be found in a chapel in Florence built for a merchant
engaged in the maritime slave trade of the seventeenth century. The
chapel is named after its commissioner, Francesco Feroni. The Feroni
Chapel possesses one of the largest and best-studied series of ex-voto
collections, once located in SS. Annunziata in Florence.[54] The ex-votos
were dedicated to a fourteenth-century fresco depicting the Annuncia-
tion that is still venerated in a small *tempietto*, or tabernacle, at the en-
trance wall inside the church.[55] We know that in 1630 there must have
been more than six hundred wax *boti* (life-size figures) and thousands of
small ex-votos within the church and the adjacent, smaller cloister, the
Chiostrino dei Voti. It might have been this accumulation of ex-votos
that as early as 1450 inspired Leon Battista Alberti's ironic and critical
account of the overwhelming number of ex-votos in his *Momus*, in which
he mocks both the ridiculous human custom of offering votives for any
imaginable desire to the (pagan) gods and the gods for being charmed
by the offerings.[56] Although most of the votives were removed in the
eighteenth century, one of the remaining offerings still visible today after
the purification of the church's interior is an early twentieth-century ship
votive, the *Viareggio*, made of mother-of-pearl, to the left of the shrine.[57]

The prominent chapel of Francesco Feroni has not been studied in
relation to the miraculous image of the Annunciation and its votives.
As the first side chapel in the left nave, it is situated in close proxim-
ity to the fresco. The luxurious baroque ensemble is stylistically based
on Roman models developed by Bernini, with rich marble decoration,

stucco work, and two funerary monuments on the left and right walls of the chapel.[58] The chapel was consecrated in 1693 and dedicated to St. Joseph. It was designed by Giovanni Battista Foggini; the sculptures were made by Foggini's assistants and the altarpiece by Johann C. Loth. The monuments are formed by a sarcophagus with large seated allegorical figures and a standing statue of a saint on each side. The right wall shows the allegories of the female "Fortune of the Sea" (*Fortuna del mare*), and the male "Thought" (*Il pensiero*) with their attributes: a cornucopia filled with shells and corals for *Fortuna del mare* and books for *Il pensiero* (fig. 10). On the left side, we find the figures of "Diligence" and "Fidelity," together with a statue of St. Francis and the bronze portrait of Feroni.[59] "Fortune of the Sea" holds an enormous gilded locket, about 20 inches tall, hanging from an elegant ribbon, with a meticulously crafted relief of an imposing sailing boat, presenting all details of the ship's architecture,

Fig. 10. Giovanni Battista Foggini. Monumental ex-voto for the Feroni Chapel, Church of the Santissima Annunziata, Florence. *Fortuna del mare* (left) and *Il pensiero* (right) by Giuseppe Piamontini; *St. Dominic* by Carlo Marcellini (center). Photograph © M. Visonà, *Cappella Feroni nella Santissima Annunziata*, in M. Gregori, ed., *Cappelle barocche a Firenze* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan: Silvana, 1990).

Fig. 11. Detail of Giovanni Battista Foggini, monumental ex-voto for the Feroni Chapel, Church of the Santissima Annunziata, Florence (fig. 10). Bronze medallion with ship by Massimiliano Soldani Benzi. Photograph © M. Visonà, *Cappella Feroni nella Santissima Annunziata*, in M. Gregori, ed., *Cappelle barocche a Firenze* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan: Silvana, 1990).

its cannons, sails, and tackle (fig. 11). The ship, shown in high relief, is floating on the open sea, with a fortified harbor in the background. It could well be one of the larger of the four vessels belonging to Francesco Feroni, the commissioner of the chapel, recorded as the *Speranza*, *Prudenza*, *Catherina*, and *San Giovanni*.

The large bronze medallion is not placed in a completely upright position; instead, it is inclined toward the position of the beholder and turned slightly to the right. It therefore faces the miraculous image of the Annunciation on the opposite wall. The gilded medallion with the shimmering vessel is immediately visible from the entrance to the church. Even if integrated into the funerary context, the image of the imposing sailing boat on the medallion should be understood as another, more sophisticated ex-voto, a ship offered to the miraculous image of the Lady of the Annunciation as a gift of sacred commerce. As has been suggested for ex-votos in general, we might call this arrangement an "egodocument" of its commissioner,[60] but it is worth exploring the concrete circumstances of this document to understand its full metaphorical and material dimensions.

Francesco Feroni, the commissioner of the chapel, was a merchant from Empoli.[61] He left Tuscany and moved to Amsterdam in 1640, where he successfully managed his mercantile activities, initially investing in the grain trade. In Amsterdam he arranged a contract between the Dutch East Indian Company and the Genoese *titolari del asiento* (the slave mar-

ket, in fact) in the name of the Spanish king. Feroni was able to set up his own fleet, engaging in the African and Indian slave trade with four large ships. When Grand Duke Cosimo III visited Amsterdam in 1667, he met Feroni and even stayed in his house; six years later, Cosimo III called him to Florence. The grand duke honored him with the title of *marchese* and made him a senator and his financial minister. Back in Tuscany, Feroni immediately investigated the possibility of enlarging the slave trade at the Medici harbor of Livorno. After undergoing several misfortunes with his ships, he gave up his involvement in trading humans. When he started to think of his funerary chapel, his first choice was the Brancacci Chapel in Santa Maria del Carmine, but after experiencing resistance in 1691 to his plan to destroy the Quattrocento and Cinquecento frescos to make way for his own memorial in 1691, he decided on the SS. Annunziata.

In the funerary room, a large inscription in Latin composed by Anton Maria Salvini tells the reader about Feroni's life and enterprises, his "work" and "fortunes," the vessels he sent to India and Africa, his maritime negotiations, and his having been called back home to Florence. In the second part of the long text, these sea voyages are transformed into a different kind of navigation. It is no longer his trade fleet to Africa and India that is addressed, but Feroni himself voyaging on the sea, his navigation now directed to an eternal harbor, as the last lines very clearly indicate: "IN QUO NAVIGATIONE SUA EXPLETA / PORTUM TENERET AETERNITATIS" (with his navigation fulfilled, he holds the harbor of eternity).[62] In the inscription the literal and metaphorical meanings of "navigation" are addressed and purposefully blurred. Even the ship on the medallion—carrier of the "riches" of the new marquess, the slaves—is turned into a metaphor, transformed into an offering to the sacred image of Mary. "Navigation," with its double meaning, is also emphasized in the figure of "Diligence," close to the portrait of Feroni. The allegorical female is holding a marble tablet with a wind rose carved on the back, clearly visible to the beholder. Finding the right direction on the sea and piloting the ship are thus transformed into the moral virtue of diligence. On a smaller scale, the device of the wind rose is repeated several times on the pedestal of the figure of "Fortune of the Sea," along with her shells and corals.

Feroni's letters show that, in fact, he feared several times that he would lose his boats to storms or piracy. For example, in October 1669 he prays to God to send his two ships back to safety.[63] We have no information, however, about Feroni's having offered any votive gift during his maritime commercial activity. His elegant ship votive in his chapel

relates to his burial place and thus his dead body and his soul. The case of the Cappella Feroni once more demonstrates the potential of the ship as a metaphor. What first might be understood as a portrait of one of Feroni's vessels—in fact transporting slaves—can be seen as a device for his own salvation. With this metaphorical use of the motif of the ship and concept of "navigation," he—or his advisor—is negating the dramatic physical realities of the slaves on the ships.

Conclusion

Over time, floating vessels and their representations in ship models, graffiti, or paintings stand for divergent kinds of transfer and refer to different types of exchange. In all cases, they move things from one realm to another. Sailing boats and vessels are instruments for the transportation of objects and people; ex-voto ship models are part of a transactional process between the physical and divine worlds. They are intended as vehicles for transfer from the profane to the sacred and vice versa. Because of the metaphorical potential of ship ex-votos, transactions between the material world and the religious sphere can be negotiated in a complex way. This potential lies in the creation of a community of travelers as well as in the dangers of seafaring and the fragility and resistance of the vessels, which in turn point to the fragility and resistance of the human body.

Both Feroni's late seventeenth-century allegorical use of the motif of the ship as a votive for the salvation of his own soul and Ulysses Butin's sentimental reading in the 1880s of religious practices are part of this larger history of votive practices. As such, they are both related to other images and therefore are single components within the seriality of votive artifacts. Their relation to other votive images is not so much an iconographical one, as might erroneously be assumed; rather, they relate to certain image practices and the dream or desire of effectiveness they embody, as materializations of a vow. Both works must be understood as responses to these practices, as becomes evident from the specific forms of repetition and difference that are at the basis of their seriality. In fact, the merchant-commissioner Feroni and the painter Butin both distance themselves from the serial accumulation of votive images, but they both nevertheless work within the same seriality. Feroni, with the intellectual help of his advisor, Massimiliano Sodani, "offers" an entire chapel as well as his whole mercantile activity (represented by the vessel and the

inscription) to a miraculous image repeatedly covered by other votive offerings. Butin "offers" Parisians a distant, nostalgic view of the practice of peasants. Both the merchant and the painter try to distinguish and singularize their particular ex-votos while giving their "offerings" to the community of beholders. Within a span of two hundred years, both votives have become documents and actualizations of a long history of ex-voto practices related to seafaring, with their respective continuities as well as ruptures. If ex-votos are structured by difference and repetition, both images can be understood as powerful variations, built nevertheless within the seriality of votive practices. Both refer to the strong metaphorical potential of ships in their capacity to create communities and to relate to practices that even go beyond institutionalized religion. If we read them carefully and critically in terms of how they "work" or are meant to "work," they invite us to open up the concept of the votive image to a broader, more polyvalent understanding of votive practices. In this sense, we could think of every artwork as a votive, made within a series of other artworks, each with its own agency, offering themselves for the creation of various forms of communality.

NOTES

1. The term is taken from Christopher Wood, *The Votive Scenario*, in *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 59/60 (2011): 206–227.
2. *Catalogue sommaire illustré des peintures: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lille*, vol. 2: *École française* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1999–2001), 52; Gabriel Weisberg, *The Realist Tradition: French Painting and Drawing 1830–1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 205, cat. no. 179.
3. Dominique Lobstein, "Butin, Ulysse-Louis-August," in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon* (Munich: Saur, 1997), 15:368.
4. See Hans Blumenberg's classic study, *Schiffbruch mit Zuschauer* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979). See also Hannah Baader and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *Das Meer, der Tausch und die Grenzen der Repräsentation* (Zurich: Diaphanes, 2010).

5. Geographically, a much larger view would be needed than can be offered in this chapter.

6. For a discussion of devotion and art in France, see Isabelle Saint-Martin, *Art chrétien / art sacré: Regards du catholicisme sur l'art, France, XIXe–XXe siècle* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014).

7. Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Ex Voto: Zeichen, Bild und Abbild im christlichen Votivbrauchtum* (Zurich: Atlantis, 1972).

8. See Michael Fried, *Manet's Modernism, or, the Face of Painting in the 1860s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 192–197.

9. Robert Herbert, *Monet on the Normandy Coast: Tourism and Painting 1867–1886* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994); Juliet Wilson-Bareau and David Degener, eds., *Manet and the Sea*, exhibition catalogue (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

10. Michele de Mollat, *L'Europe et la mer* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1993), 274.

11. Herbert, *Monet.*

12. François Boullet and Collete Boullet, *Ex-voto marins* (Rennes: Édition Ouest-France, 1996); *Ex-voto marins dans le monde de l'antiquité à nos jours*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Musée de la Marine, 1981). See also Hans Szymanski, *Schiffsmodelle in niedersächsischen Kirchen* (Göttingen: Otto Schwartz, 1966); Wolfgang Steusloff, *Votivschiffe: Schiffsmodelle in Kirchen zwischen Wismarbucht und Oderhaff* (Rostock: VEB Hinstorff, 1981); *La devozione e il mare: Aspetti di fede e religiosità in Liguria*, exhibition catalogue (Genoa: Tormena, 2000).

13. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 19.

14. Fernand Braudel, "La longue durée," *Annales: Économies, sociétés, civilisations* 13 (1958): 725–753.

15. Steusloff, *Votivschiffe*, 97.

16. G.L. Kosegarten, *Die Inselfahrt oder Alysios und Agnes: Eine ländliche Dichtung in 6 Eklogen* (Berlin: Voss, 1804); Steusloff, *Votivschiffe*, 134.

17. Giovanna Nepi Scirè, *Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia* (Milan: Electa, 1998).

18. Szymanski, *Schiffsmodelle*, 4.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 5.

21. Ibid., 5 n. 8.

22. Marco Tangheroni, *Commercio e navigazione nel medioevo* (Rome: Laterza, 1996), 240; Jacques Le Goff, *St. Louis* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996).

23. Szymanski, *Schiffsmodelle*, 7–10.

24. Heinrich Winter, *Die katalanische Nao von 1450 nach dem Modell im Maritiem Museum Prins Henrik in Rotterdam* (Magdeburg: Loef, 1956); Steusloff, *Votivschiffe*, 174.

25. *Il tesoro dell'isola: Capolavori siciliani in argento e corallo dal XV al VIII secolo*, exhibition catalogue (Catania: Maimone, 2008), 2:895–897; Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Ex Voto*, fig. 181.

26. I would like to thank Verena Alves for bringing the Vilnus chandelier to my attention.

27. For Liguria, see Steusloff, *La devozione e il mare.*

28. Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Ex Voto.*
29. Joseph Muscat, "Maltese Ship Graffiti," in *Medieval Ships and the Birth of Technological Societies,* ed. Christiane Villan-Gandossi (Vienna: European Documentation Centre for Research and Documentation in Social Sciences, 1991), 2:323–342.
30. David Arduini and Chiara Grassi, *Graffiti di navi medievali sulle chiese di Pisa e Lucca* (Pisa: Felci, 2002); Scott Redford, "Everything and Everybody Came and Went by the Sea," in *Alanya Ships: Ship Graffiti in the Medieval Castle,* ed. Tufan Karasu (Alanya: Yayinlayan, 2005), n.p. For a discussion of 400 fifteenth- to twentieth-century graffiti, see Vincent Carpentier, *L'église de Dives-sur-Mer et ses graffiti marin* (Cabourg: Cahier du Temps, 2011).
31. Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (1971; repr. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).
32. Muscat, "Maltese Ship Graffiti"; Joseph Muscat, "The Tarxien Ship Graffiti Revisited," *Melita Historica* 13 (2000): 49–57.
33. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Ex-voto: Image, organe, temps* (Paris: Bayard, 2006).
34. Peregrine Horden and Nicolas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 403–460; Michele Bacci, "Portolano sacro: Santuario e immagini sacre lungo le rotte di navigazione del Mediterraneo tra tardo Medioevo e prima età moderna," in *The Miraculous Image in the Middle Ages and Renaissance,* ed. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: "L'Erma" di Brettschneider, 2004), 223–248; Tangheroni, *Commercio e navigazione nel Medioevo,* 239–243.
35. Horden and Purcell, *Corrupting Sea,* 440–443.
36. Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.21.12; Dietrich Wachsmuth, "Pompimos ho daimon: Untersuchungen zu den antiken Sakralhandlungen bei Seereisen" (PhD diss., Berlin, 1967), 113. For further reading on the ambivalence of the sea, see Peter N. Miller, *The Sea: Thalassography and Historiography,* Bard Graduate Center Cultural Histories of the Material World (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013); Titus Heydenreich, *Lob und Tadel der Seefahrt: Das Nachleben eines antiken Themas in den romanischen Literaturen* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1970); Manfred Frank, *Die unendliche Fahrt: Die Geschichte des Fliegenden Holländers und verwandter Motive* (Leipzig: Suhrkamp, 1995); Franco Montanari, "Episches Meer, Epos des Meeres," in *Das Meer, der Tausch und die Grenzen der Repräsentation,* ed. Hannah Baader and Gerhard Wolf (Zurich: Diaphanes, 2010), 193–206.
37. See Horden and Purcell, *Corrupting Sea,* 438–443, esp. 439, map 25.
38. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship,* 31.
39. The general question of the plurality of images is addressed by Felix Thürlemann, *Mehr als ein Bild: Für eine Kunstgeschichte des hyperimage* (Munich: Fink, 2013), and Davis Ganz, ed., *Das Bild im Plural: Mehrteilige Bildformen zwischen Mittelalter und Gegenwart* (Berlin: Reimer, 2010).
40. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
41. Wachsmuth, "Pompimos ho daimon." See also Casson, *Ships and Seamanship,* 344–360.

42. Ibid., 87; Troy Joseph Nowack, "Archaeological Evidence for Ship Eyes: An Analysis of Their Form and Function" (master's thesis, Texas A&M University, 2006).

43. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 348.

44. Wachsmuth, "Pompimos ho daimon."

45. See ibid., 143–150.

46. *The Athlit Ram*, ed. Lionel Casson and J. Richard Steffy (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991). Four symbols on the ram are Poseidon's trident, two helmets surmounted by eight-point stars (the sign of the Dioscuri), two eagles' heads, and a caduceus.

47. Wachsmuth, "Pompimos ho daimon," 136.

48. Ibid., 377; Hugo Rahner, "Navicula Petri: Zur Symbolgeschichte des römischen Primats," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 69 (1947): 1–35; Hugo Rahner, *Symbole der Kirche: Die Ekklesiologie der Väter* (Salzburg: Müller, 1964), 473–490.

49. Arvid Göttlicher, *Die Schiffe im Neuen Testament* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1999), 226–248.

50. Georg Stuhlfauth, "Das Schiff als Symbol in der Altchristlichen Kunst," *Rivista archeologica christiana* 19 (1942): 11–141.

51. Helmut Rahner, *Symbole der Kirche*, 304; Martin Kemp, "Navis Ecclesiae: An Ambrosian Metaphor in Leonardo's Allegory of the Nautical Wolf and Imperious Eagle," *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et renaissance* 43 (1981): 257–268; Friedrich Möbius, "Navis Ecclesiae: Sinnschichten des zeitgenössischen Sprachgebrauchs," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1989): 15–23; Göttlicher, *Die Schiffe im Neuen Testament*. For the ship as political metaphor, see Dietmar Peil, *Untersuchungen zur Staats- und Herrschaftsmetaphorik in literarischen Zeugnissen von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Fink, 1983), 700–863; for the arts of the twentieth century, see Melanie Ulz, "Nachrichten aus dem Black Atlantik: Das Schiff als Bedeutungsträger im Kontext von (Post) Kolonialismus und Globalisierung," *Zeitschrift für Geschlechterforschung und visuelle Kultur* 51 (2011): 29–41.

52. Wolfgang Kemp, "Zum Programm von Stefaneschi-Altar und Navicella," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 30 (1967): 309–320; Helmtrud Köhren-Jansen, *Giottos Navicella: Bildtradition, Deutung, Rezeptionsgeschichte*, Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana 8 (Worms am Rhein: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1993); Tobias Leuker, "Der Titulus von Giottos 'Navicella' als maßgeblicher Baustein für die Deutung und Datierung des Mosaiks," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 28 (2001): 101–108.

53. Guido Mazzoni, *I boti della SS. Annunziata in Firenze: Curiosità storica* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1923). See also Eugenio Casalini, *The Basilica of the SS. Annunziata: Artistic and Historical Handbook* (Florence: S.T.E.F., 1957).

54. For discussions of SS. Annunziata, see Julius Schlosser, *Tote Blicke: Geschichte der Porträtbildnerei in Wachs; Ein Versuch* (1911; repr. Berlin: Akademie, 1993); Aby Moritz Warburg, *Bildniskunst und florentinisches Bürgertum* (Leipzig: Seemann, 1902); Didi-Hubermann, *Ex-voto;* Megan Holmes, "Ex-Voto: Materiality, Memory and Cult," in *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions, and the*

Early Modern World, ed. Michael Cole and Rebecca Zorach (London: Ashgate, 2009), 159–183.

55. For the history of the image, see also Gerhard Wolf, "Le immagini nel Quattrocento tra miracolo e magia: Per una iconologia rifondata," in Thunø and Wolf, *The Miraculous Image*, 305–320.

56. Leon Battista Alberti, *Momus*, trans. Sarah Knight, I Tatti Renaissance Library 8 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 92–93. For Francesco Sacchetti's account, see Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Ex Voto*, 96; Mazzoni, *I boti*, 18–22.

57. We know of other nautical votives in SS. Annunziata through Aernout van Buchel's account from 1587–1588, discussed in Mazzoni, *I boti*, 33. For the *riforme leopoldine*, see ibid., 34 n. 40.

58. Klaus Lankheit, *Florentinische Barockplastik: Die Kunst am Hofe der letzten Medici, 1670–1743* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1962), 86–89; Mara Visonà, "Cappella Feroni nella Santissima Annunziata," in *Cappelle barocche a Firenze*, ed. Mina Gregori (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 1990), 221–248.

59. Visonà, "Cappella Feroni," 237.

60. For the term "egodocument," see Winfried Schulze, ed., *Ego-Dokumente: Annäherungen an den Menschen in der Geschichte*, vol. 2 of *Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit* (Berlin: Akademie, 1996).

61. Paula Benigni, "Francesco Feroni, empolese, negoziante in Amsterdam," in *Incontri: Rivista di studi italo-nederlandesi* 1 (1985–1986): 97–121; Hans Cools, "Francesco Feroni (1614/16–1696): Broker in Cereals, Slaves and Works of Art," in *Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Hans Cools, Marika Keblusek, and Badeloch Noldus (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2006), 39–50; *La collezione Feroni: Dalle province unite agli Uffizi*, ed. Caterina Caneva, exhibition catalogue (Florence: Centro Di, 1998).

62. "FRANCISUS FERONIO MENTIS ADSIDUO LABORE / ET FORTUNAE OBSECUNDANTIS OBSEQUIO IN / MARITIMA NEGOCIATIONE QUAM SUIS NAVIBUS / AT AFRICAM ET OCCIDAM INDIAM MITTENDIS / AMSTERDAMI EXERCUIT AD NON MEDIOCRES / OPES ERECTO VIX AMPLIORI FORTUNAE LOCUS / ESSE VIDEBATUR QUUM EIUS FORTUNAE FASTIGIUM / GRADUM AD ALTERIORA FACIENS OPTIMI PRINCIPIS / COS. III DUCIS EGREGIA BENEFICIENTIA IPSUM / A SORTIS BANDIENTIS SINU HONORIFICENTISSIMUM / EXTRACTUM ET IN PATRIA REVOCATUM PRIMIS / IMPERII SUI MUNERIBUS OBEUNTIS INSIGNEM FECIT / SENATORIA AUXIT DIGNITATE ET PRAECLARIS QUIDEM / CIRCUMFUSUS ERAT HONORES MORTALITATIS SUAE / MEMOR LOCUM HUNC QUEM VIDES HOSPES SIBI/ PRAEPARAVIT IN QUO NAVIGATIONE SUA EXPLETA / PORTUM TENERET AETERNITATIS."

63. Benigni, "Francesco Feroni," 107.