

PATRONS AND ADVOCATES OF THE SAILORS. THE SAINTS AND THE SEA IN CATALAN GOTHIC

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Date of receipt: 10th of March, 2010
Final date of acceptance: 19th of January, 2011

ABSTRACT

In late Middle-Age Catalonia, some saints were invoked as protectors of ships, which is understandable if we take into account the political-economic context. In fact, the miracle of rescuing the shipwrecked, which can be found in many saints' legends, appeared frequently in gothic Catalan altarpieces. In this article, using examples, the links between worship (especially among people linked to the sea), hagiography and plastic arts are studied in relation to this prodigy. Notwithstanding, it is also shown that the miracle of rescuing the shipwrecked was not always included in hagiographic cycles was not always related to the cultural practices of the seafarers.¹

KEY WORDS

Gothic Art, Hagiography, Worship, Artistic Promotion, People who worked at Sea.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Summa Artis Gothicae, Hagiographia, Veneratio, Promotio artium, Nautarum turba.

1. My thanks to the directors of my thesis, Anna Orriols and Jordi Cerdà, for checking this text. Also the corrections and comments by Marta Bertran, Cèsar Favà and Sílvia Solé, and the help of Francesc Rodríguez.

At the end of the Middle Ages, the number of voyages by sea increased considerably. With the expansion of the Catalan-Aragonese Crown across the Mediterranean the fear of attacks by pirates and corsairs diminished. Also, improvements in naval technology and the use of such developments as the compass and navigation charts led to a decrease in accidents on the high seas. However, going to sea continued to be dangerous and feared.²

The documentation offers us authentic proof that accidents of various kinds on voyages. Although a shipwreck was not necessarily the most common problem, nor did it always mean the death of the crew and passengers, personal misfortunes did occur. Jaume Aurell presents the striking case of the merchant Pere Salelles who, having lost his son-in-law on a voyage, rewrote his will to mention the misfortune, "Antoni Luna, my son in law, for who I pray to God to save his soul, as no more than two days ago, I learned that he had passed away on the island of Malta..."³ Some notations by notaries on the margins of insurance contracts let us see certain details of these accidents. For example, Francí Marlès' ship ran onto reefs off the lighthouse of Messina, on its way to Rhodes; or the caravel of Camelles ran aground on Majorca.⁴ Beyond this reality, the literature is full of tales of sudden storms and other unpleasant surprises while sailing. Thus, the risk of shipwreck or other kinds of accident during a journey must have been continuously *in mente* for everyone who went to sea.⁵ It was not only the cargo that was at risk, but also their lives, and it was well known that a sudden death that impeded guaranteeing the soul of the dead a good future was especially undesirable.⁶

Thus, it is no surprise that the devotional practices of seagoing people (sailors, fishermen, merchants) were aimed especially at obtaining the intercession of Christ,

2. del Treppo, Mario. *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió de la corona catalano-aragonesa al segle XV*. Barcelona: Curial, 1976: 339-344.

3. N'Antoni Luna, gendre meu, al qual prech Déu haia la sua ànima per tant com no havia molt, com no havia pus de dos jorns, que sabí que Déus lo savia presla en la illa de Malta...: Aurell, Jaume. *Els mercaders catalans al quatre-cents. Mutació de valors i procés d'aristocratització a Barcelona (1370-1470)*. Lleida: Pagès editors, 1996: 103, note 55.

4. For these examples and the "dangers of the sea" in general, see: del Treppo, Mario. *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió...*: 339-344.

5. Delumeau, Jean. *La peur en Occident (XIVe-XVIIIe siècles)*. Paris: Fayard, 1978: especially 49-62; Molina, Ángel Luis. "Los viajes por mar en la Edad Media". *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 5 (2000): 113-122; Batany, Jean. "Un 'estat' trop peu 'estable': navigation maritime et peur de l'eau", *L'eau au Moyen Âge*. Marseilles: Publications du CUERMA-Université de Provence, 1985: 23-42; Deluz, Christiane. "Pèlerins et voyageurs face à la mer (XIIe-XIVe siècles)", *Horizons marins itinéraires spirituels (Ve-XVIIIe siècles)*, *Marins, navires et affaires*, Henri Dubois, Jean-Claude Dubois, André Vauchez, dirs. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1987: II, 277-287.

6. *Ils craignent à la fois pour leur argent et pour leur âme*, thus Charles M. de la Roncière summarised the medieval merchants' fears (although in another field) in: de la Roncerie, Charles M. "La foi du marchand: Florence XIVe-milieu XVe siècle", *Le marchand au Moyen âge. XIXe Congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public (Reims juin 1988)*. Paris: Cid Éditions, 1992: 237-250, especially 240.



the Virgin Mary and the saints in the case of accidents on the high seas.⁷ This study concentrates on the saints invoked to protect ships in Catalonia in the 14th and 15th centuries.

1. Saint Nicholas of Bari

Saint Nicholas of Bari was widely venerated by seafarers, as shown by abundant devotional practices, as well as texts and a range of documents. In Johan Luschner's print of the *Llibre del Consolat de Mar* (1502), one of the first texts on maritime legislation, invokes the "*glorious saints Erasmus, Saint Nicholas, Saint Anthony and Saint Claire patrons and intercessors for seafarers*".⁸ The Bari saint's power to intercede is also reflected in the *Libre dels Mariners*, from the 14th century. This satirical work about the lives of sailors tells about their work on the sea and how they waste their money on land on good food, prostitutes and gambling. Despite the mood of the text, it includes the worship of the saint in verses 276-279:

7. The historiography has several times emphasised the fact that in the late Middle Ages, the saints were valued especially for their power to intercede, see: Pietri, Charles. "L'évolution du culte des saints aux premiers siècles chrétiens: du témoin à l'intercesseur", *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental (IIIe-XIIIe siècle), Actes du colloque*. Rome: École Française de Rome, 1991: 15-36; Vauchez, André. "Saints admirables et saints imitables: les fonctions de l'hagiographie ont-elles changé aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge?", *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental...*: 161-172. Regarding the saints who intervened in moments of difficulty on voyages, the bibliography about the Catalan area will be mentioned when relevant. For a more general viewpoint: Besc, Geneviève; Besc Henri. "Les saints protecteurs de bateaux. 1200-1460". *Ethnologie française*, 9/2 (1979): 161-178. For another geographic area, it is also interesting to see: Veyssière, Gérard. "Miracles et merveilles en Provence aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles à travers des textes hagiographiques", *Miracles, prodiges et merveilles au Moyen Âge, XXV Congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public (Orléans, juin 1994)*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1995: 191-214. Given that the following pages concentrate on the study of the saints, I mention some works on the Virgin Mary. In the general field, the above-mentioned study by Geneviève and Henri Besc (Besc, Geneviève; Besc Henri. "Les saints protecteurs...": 161-178) contains an epigraph dedicated to the *sanctuaires marins et sanctuaires de la piété maritime* (Besc, Geneviève; Besc, Henri. "Les saints protecteurs...": 172 and following).. Regarding the specifically Catalan area: García, Arcadi. *Història de la marina catalana*. Barcelona: Aedos, 1977: 140; in the same geographic area, there is the notable case of Montserrat, dealt with by: Llompарт, Gabriel. "Las tablillas votivas del Puig de Pollensa (Mallorca)". *Revista de Dialectología y Tradiciones Populares*, 28 (1972): 39-54 and, especially, Albareda, Anselm M. *Història de Montserrat*. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1972: 126 and Tarín, José. "Montserrat y su tradición marinera", *Leyendas y tradiciones marineras*. Barcelona: Ediciones de la Sección de Prensa de la Diputación Provincial de Barcelona, 1954: 59-61.

8. *Gloriosos sancts mossenyers sanct Helm, sant Nicholau, sant Antoni e santa Clara patrons e advocats dels nauegants*: Aguiló, Marià. *Catálogo de obras en lengua catalana impresas desde 1474 hasta 1860*. Barcelona-Sueca: Curial, 1977: 356-358. Joan Ors presents the invocation of "sanct Helm" and "sanct Nicolau" in the 1494 edition (Ors, Joan. "El 'Libre dels Mariners' (text i caracterització literària)". *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, 37 (1977-1978): 213-252, especially: 248, note 276. There are various editions of the *Llibre del Consolat de Mar*: *Consolat de Mar*, ed. Ferran Valls i Taberner. Barcelona: Barcino, 1930. More recently and a revision of the above-mentioned edition, *Llibre del Consolat de Mar*, ed. Germà Colón, Arcadi García. Barcelona: Fundació Noguera, 2001.



*Cert, per sent Nicolau,
més valgra que en nau
tota hora stat agués,
e no n agra despès.⁹*

The religiosity of those who worked at sea was also expressed through the names given to their ships. Although some were given profane names, of fast animals, for example, in other cases, they were given the names of those who could act miraculously to save the crew or the cargo. These same names were used to bless a voyage (prior to setting sail) or on the sea. Among the most frequent saints was Saint Nicholas.¹⁰

The proliferation of chapels and altarpieces dedicated to this saint around the country shows that he had a wide following. Within this, we can see that his presence in buildings that were especially significant for worship by seafarers reinforces the idea of his popularity amongst these. In this sense, especially notable is Santa Maria del Mar in Barcelona,¹¹ closely linked to the merchants.¹² Very close to this Gothic church there was the plain of the ships, also called Saint Nicholas Square (as it was the site of the old hospital named after him)¹³ and the old convent of Saint Claire, where there was “a chapel, which is dedicated, with its altarpiece of Saint Nicholas and Saint Helena and Saint Barbara”.¹⁴ Similarly, on the sea front in Barcelona, there was a chapel dedicated to the bishop saint. We must also add that, in Portopí,

9. “Certain, for Saint Nicholas,
It would have been better
In the ship to have stayed,
And so not to have had to pay”.

(Ors, Joan. “El ‘Libre dels Mariners’...”: 213-252); especially 241. It was also included in: *Cançoners de les obretes en nostra lengua materna més divulgades durant los segles XIV, XV e XVI*, ed. Marià Aguiló. Barcelona: Libreria d’Àlvar Verdaguier, 1873-1900, f. 173r-176v. Other satirical poems on maritime themes appear in: Massó, Jaume. “Dos poemas catalans del XIV en segle sobre la vida de la gent de mar”. *Revue Hispanique*, 9 (1909): 241-251.

10. Bresc, Geneviève; Bresc Henri. “Les saints protecteurs...”; Carrère, Claude. *Barcelona 1380-1462. Un centre econòmic en època de crisi*. Barcelona: Curial, 1977: I, 250 and following; Varela, María Elisa. “Navegar y rezar. Devoción y piedad de las gentes de mar barcelonesas (siglos XIV y XV)”. *Anuario de Estudios medievales*, 29 (1999): 1120-1132.

11. The essential work about Santa Maria del Mar is: Bassegoda, Bonaventura. *Santa Maria de la Mar. Monografia històrica-artística*. Barcelona: Indústries gràfiques. Fills de J. Thomas, 1925: I, 150, of which there is a summarised edition: Bassegoda, Bonaventura. *Santa Maria de la Mar. Monografia històrico-artística del temple*. Barcelona: Universitat Politècnica de Barcelona-Editores técnicos asociados, 1975.

12. Aurell, Jaume. *Els mercaders catalans...*: 270 and following.

13. Duran, Agustí. *Barcelona i la seva història. La formació d’una gran ciutat*. Barcelona: Curial, 1973: I, 433. The capital dedicated to the saint nowadays conserved in the Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya which seems to show the miracle of the three young men brought back to life must be from this old hospital. See: Castiñeiras, Manuel. “San Nicola attraverso e al di là del cammino di Santiago”, *San Nicola. Splendori d’Arte d’Oriente e d’Occidente*, Michele Bacci, ed. Ginevra-Milano: Skira, 2006: 127-136; Camps, Jordi. “L’escultura en pedra”, *El romànic a les col·leccions del Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya*. Barcelona: Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya-Lunwerg, 2008: 165-183.

14. *una capella, la qual és de devoció, ab son retaule de Sanct Nicolau y Sancta Elena y Sancta Bàrbara*; Madurell, Josep M. “El pintor Lluís Borrassà: su vida, su tiempo, sus seguidores y sus obras”. *Anales y boletín de los*

the port of Palma de Mallorca, there was a little church dedicated to the same saint. Like the rest of the Majorcan port, this is portrayed on the altarpiece of Saint George by Pere Niçard. Still in the Balearic Islands, there was also a chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas in the port of Ciutadella, on Minorca.¹⁵

Prayers and refrains also show how the worship of this saint persisted over the years. Even in relatively recent times, sailors made offerings to Saint Nicholas.¹⁶ His reputation for protecting ships concords with the miracle of the rescuing of the shipwrecked narrated in the book of his life¹⁷ and in devotional texts like the *Sermó de sant Nicolau*, from the first half of the 14th century:

*alscuns noxes eren an mar
Qui no podien escapar
clamaren sen Nicolau
E sempra la mar fo en pau
E axí foren escapats
De gran paril et desliurats.*¹⁸

This sermon, also called *del Bisbetó*, was preached for the festivities of Saint Nicholas in a number of places, like Girona and Lleida, where there is known to have been a chapel dedicated to this bishop saint. The presence of the saint's maritime wonder in texts unconnected to his worship by seafarers is proof of the spread of this cult during the late Middle Ages.¹⁹ The supernatural intervention to save the lives of the

Museos de Arte de Barcelona, 7 (1949): 7-325; 8 (1950): 7-387; 10 (1952): 7-363, for this one in particular, 7 (1949): 59.

15. *El cavaller i la princesa. El sant Jordi de Pere Nisard i la ciutat de Mallorca*, ed. Gabriel Llompart, Francesc Ruiz. Palma de Mallorca: Consell de Mallorca-Sa Nostra Caixa de Balears, 2001. For the recreation of the port, see especially within the above-mentioned, the article by: Llompart, Gabriel. "País, paisatge i paisanatge a la taula de sant Jordi de Pere Niçard", *El cavaller i la princesa...*: 59-89, which contains the previous bibliography.

16. Llompart, Gabriel. "Las tablillas votivas...": 49.

17. da Varazze, Iacopo. *Llegenda Àuria*, ed. Nolasco Rebull. Olot: without publisher, 1976: 939-947.

18. "Some damage there was at sea

That we could not escape

We prayed to Saint Nicholas

And the sea was always calm

And we could escape and

From great danger were freed".

v. 63-68 of the poem. It also relates how the saint fasted when young, the miracle of the three maidens, the resuscitated altar boys, that of the wheat multiplied, the boy who fell into the sea, etc. Miret, Joaquim. "El Sermó de sant Nicolau". *Revue Hispanique*, 28 (1963): 390-395, specifically page 393 (here I have used this transcription); *Teatre hagiogràfic*, ed. Josep Romeu. Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1957: LXXX. For the transcription of the text, see: vol. II: 17-24, about the text vol. I: 24 and following.

19. *Teatre hagiogràfic...*: I: 26 (notes 4, 5 and 6). Josep Romeu collects the evidence supplied by: Villanueva, Jaime. *Viaje literario por las Iglesias de España*. Valencia: Faximil Edicions Digitals, 2001: XII, 281; XVI: 93). It is not the only the *sermó del bisbetó*. See another example (not dedicated to Saint Nicholas) in: *Blandín de Cornualla i altres narracions en vers dels segles XIV i XV*, ed. Arseni Pacheco. Barcelona: Edicions 62-"La Caixa", 1983: 172-193, note 96.



crew of a drifting ship is one of these wonders attributed to various saints, as we shall see. The hagiographic theme was incorporated into numerous cycles dedicated to the saint. The altarpiece from the end of the 15th century in the Llotja de Mar in Perpignan (Roussillon), attributed to the anonymous Master of Canapost identified by part of the historiography with the Master of la Seu d'Urgell (Illustration 1), is a significant example.²⁰



ILLUSTRATION 1. ALTARPIECE OF *CONSOLAT DE MAR*, PERPIGNAN. MUSÉE HYACINTHE RIGAUD (INSTITUT AMATLLER D'ART HISPÀNIC-ARXIU MAS).

20. Cornudella, Rafael. "El Mestre de la Llotja de Mar de Perpinyà (àlies Mestre de Canapost; àlies Mestre de la Seu d'Urgell)". *Locus Amoenus*, 7 (2004): 137-169.

This altarpiece only illustrated one narrative scene from the saint, this being the rescuing of the shipwrecked. The presence of the Bari saint's prodigy fits perfectly in the work's complex iconography. The elements that complement the depiction of the Trinity and the messages in the phylacteries comprise an interesting allegory of justice. This is not surprising if we bear in mind the altarpiece's destination, the chapel of the Consulate of the Sea, and that one of the functions of the consuls was precisely to apply justice according to the legislation in the *Llibre del Consolat de Mar*. The scene below recreates the results of the consuls' good work: a dynamic and economically prosperous port. And it even shows that the seafarers and traders are not imperilled by meteorological inclemency thanks to the supernatural power of Saint Nicholas.²¹

While the links between maritime activity, the worship of the saint and the presence of the scene on the altarpiece seem clear in Perpignan, I have more doubts in other cases about whether including the miracle in the iconography responds to the worship by seafarers. In this sense, mention must be made of the altarpiece in Canapost (Baix Empordà), also attributed to the anonymous master named after the town. In this, the image of Saint Nicholas and the scene of the rescuing of the shipwrecked fill one of the side panels. The Virgin of the Humility appears in the central panel and the Crucifixion, in the attic, as is habitual. The effigy of Saint Bernard is on the other side panel and the episode of the *lactatio* of the saint above this.

As Joan Molina has shown, the episodes of the Virgin and Saint Bernard make up a short cycle of exaltation of the Virgin Mary. The presence of Saint Nicholas must be due to a local or parochial devotion. He also argues (convincingly) that the altarpiece must have been a collective commission by the town's peasant community. However, that does not exclude the possibility that the presence of the bishop saint was also due to iconographic questions. During his infancy, Saint Nicholas sometimes abstained from feeding from his mother's breast to comply with the fast, which can be related to the episode of the *lactatio*. On the other hand, the miracle of rescuing the shipwrecked is sometimes attributed to the Virgin and, according to the sermon by Saint Vicent Ferrer, a prayer by Saint Bernard was recited after the miracle.²² With regard to the Cistercian saint, it is worth mentioning the problematic about a piece in the Episcopal Museum in Vic. Two scenes are illustrated: saving a ship (Illustration 2) and an exorcism. Although the saint in question has traditionally been identified with Saint Bernard, Rosa Alcoy suggests that it could be identified

21. Molina, Joan. "Relacions i intercanvis artístics entre Girona i el Rosselló a la segona meitat del segle XV". *Annals de l'Institut d'Estudis Gironins*, 33 (1994): 481-515, especially page 494 and following; monographically about this altarpiece, by the same author: Molina, Joan. "Espacio e imagen de la Justicia. Lecturas en torno al retablo del Consulado de Mar de Perpiñán". *Locus Amoenus*, 3 (1997): 51-66.

22. Molina, Joan. "Relacions i intercanvis...": 481-515, especially page 500 and following. This was not the first time Saint Nicholas and Saint Bernard were linked. In Santa Maria del Pi, in Barcelona, there is a chapel dedicated to both. Bernaus, Magda. "Santa Maria del Pi", *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Arquitectura II: Catedrals, monestirs i altres edificis religiosos*, Antoni Pladevall, ed. Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2004: II, 96-101.



with Saint Romuald. The scene that concerns us is precisely one of the arguments that she uses in favour of the latter, to whom the miracle is attributed.²³



ILLUSTRATION 2. COMPARTMENT OF THE ALTARPIECE OF SAINT BERNARD (?). MUSEU EPISCOPAL DE VIC (MARTA NUET).

Bearing in mind the reiteration of this scene in Catalan Gothic art, one asks oneself if this could be iconographic “contamination” that would have transferred the prodigy to Saint Bernard.²⁴

23. Alcoy, Rosa. “Sant Romuald de Camaldoli i el problema de les taules de Vic relacionades amb Ferrer Bassa”. *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensis*, 65 (1992): 211-248.

24. The doubt about the authorship and the origin should be added to this question, but that's away from the purpose of these pages. Regarding the latter question Rosa Alcoy mentions the possibility that this is a piece done in Italy. Alcoy, Rosa. “Sant Romuald de Camaldoli i el problema de les taules de Vic...”: 219. Regarding the, this has been situated in Bassa's circles. There are two opinions diametrically opposed opinions about Bassa's painting. Rosa Alcoy's is presented –among other studies– in: Alcoy, Rosa. “Ferrer Bassa allo specchio”. *Arte medievale, periodico internazionale di critica dell'arte medievale*, 2 (2003): 107-127. Joaquín Yarza presents his case in: Yarza, Joaquín. “María de Navarra y la ilustración del ‘Libro de Horas’ de la Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana”, *Libro de Horas de la Reina María de Navarra*. Barcelona: Moleiro, 1996: 93-356. A recent contribution about the piece in the Museu Episcopal de Vic is: Cornudella, Rafael. “Mestre de la Coronació de Bellpuig. Escenes de la vida de sant Bernat (?)”, *Convidats d'honor. Exposició commemorativa del 75è aniversari del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya*. Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, 2009: 126-131.

Let us return to the Canapost altarpiece. This piece, together with others that are dealt with below, lead me to think that, while Saint Nicholas must have had a relevant role in the devotion among seafarers, a good part of the examples of worship of the saint that we know correspond to other areas. In Santa Maria in Cervera (Segarra), a chapel dedicated to the saint was built around 1405-1410 (situated on the southern corner of the building) and was acquired by the priests in 1411. The bishop saint was also portrayed in the keystone sculpted by Francesc Marata in 1407.²⁵ Among the chapel's ornamental elements and liturgical furnishings, there was the altarpiece of Saint Nicholas, by Borrassà, which has been lost, and the cross of Saint Nicholas, dated from 1435-1437, by the silversmith Bernat Llopart, which remains *in situ*. We have little information about the altarpiece, but we do know that it was made and placed in the church in Cervera through a document: "In 1419, the venerable Monsignor Nicolau of Cornellana and Monsignor Bernat Lop being priors of the Brotherhood, which was made in Barcelona by Master Lluís Borraça and Luch, slave of said Borraça, painters..."²⁶

Regarding the cross, this is known especially as the protagonist of the episode of "competition" between the brotherhood of Saint Nicholas and that of the Virgin, as the promoters of the work requested explicitly that the cross "be as big or bigger and no smaller than the one in the Brotherhood of Our Lady Saint Mary". Moreover, it presents a very wide narrative cycle dedicated to the saint that includes "the story of the miracle on the sea, that is, a ship where there will be sailors in the hands of fate, tie put their hands together and kneel, invoke Saint Nicholas, and an image will be made of Saint Nicholas, who will appear in said ship to reveal their fate". The "miracle on the sea" is complemented with other episodes featuring the bishop saint: the saint resuscitating the three altar boys; the child saint praying while bathing; giving the golden balls to the maidens as a dowry; and the image of the child with a golden chalice in front of the altar.²⁷

The miracle of the rescuing of the shipwrecked (that appears frequently in the hagiographic cycles dedicated to the saint) and the resurrection of the boys, do not

25. Beseran, Pere. "Santa Maria de Cervera", *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Arquitectura II...*: 39-50.

26. *En 1419, éssent priors de la Confraria los venerables mossèn Nicolau de Cornellana y mossèn Bernat Lop, lo qual se féu en Barcelona per mestre Lluís Borraça y Luch, sclau de dit Borraça, pintors...* Madurell, Josep M., "El pintor Lluís Borrassà...", for this document see: VII: 247 and 248 (doc. n° 222); Gudiol, Josep; Alcolea, Santiago. *Pintura gòtica catalana*. Barcelona: Polígrafa, 1986: 86.

27. *Sie tan gran o mayor e no pas menor que es aquella de la confraria de madona Sta. Maria; la historia del miracle de la mar, ço és a saber una nau en la qual haura marines posats en fortuna e ab les mans junctes de genollons invocaran sent Nicholau, e farà la imatge de sent Nicholau qui apareixerà en la dita nau per revelar la fortuna*. Ainaud, Joan. "Creu de Sant Nicolau. Bernat Llopart", *Catalunya Medieval*. Barcelona: Lunwerg-Generalitat de Catalunya, 1992: 316-317; de Dalmases, Núria. *Orfebreria catalana medieval*, Barcelona, 1300-1500. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1992: I, 265-267; II, 276-277 (the extracts of the contract are from here); Duran, Agustí. "Orfebreria catalana: la creu de Sant Nicolau de Cervera. Els argenters de Cervera". *Estudis Universitaris Catalans*, 8 (1914): 108-201. The prodigy of the resuscitated children comes from a literary tradition. About this aspect, see: Ainaud, Jordi. "De Jaume Roig a Stephen Sondheim: canibalisme i misogínia", *Actes del VII Congrés de l'Associació Hispànica de Literatura Medieval*, Santiago Fortuño, Tomàs Martínez, eds. Castelló de la Plana: Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I, 1999: 243-253.



clash in a context of passion and redemption. As is habitual, there is the Crucifix on the other face of the cross. However, if we consider globally the miracles by the saint displayed there, they seem to show his power as an intercessor through the relics that had to be kept on the cross²⁸.



ILLUSTRATION 3. ALTARPIECE OF SAINT NICHOLAS AND SAINT MICHAEL. SEU DE MANRESA (MONTSERRAT BARNIOL).

28. I restrict myself to indicating some "classic" studies on the subject of the relics: Brown, Peter. *Le culte des saints. Son essor et sa fonction dans la chrétienté latine*. Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1984; Geary, Patrick J. *Furta Sacra. Thefts of relics in the central Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978; Herrmann, Nicole. *Les reliques des saints. Formation coutumière d'un droit*. Paris: Éditions Klincksiek, 1975; Bozóky, Edina; Helvétius, Anne Marie. *Les reliques. Objets, cultes, symbols. Actes du colloque international de l'Université du Littoral-Côte d'Opale (Boulogne-sur-Mer)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1999.

Nowadays there is still an altarpiece dedicated to Saint Nicholas of Bari and Saint Michael (Illustration 3) contracted by Jaume Cabrera in 1406 in Santa Maria de Manresa (Bages). It was originally in the chapel of the brotherhood of Saint Nicholas, the clergy, canons and doctors, where the saint is depicted on the keystone, as in Cervera. Four miracles by Saint Nicholas are shown. In the lower compartment of one of the lateral streets we see two scenes of the saving of the three altar boys murdered in their sleep. In the other street, there is the illustrated story of the father who had asked Saint Nicholas for a child. On the way to the saint's sanctuary to thank him, the boy fell into the sea. Despite this, the father reached the sanctuary to give him the gold cup, and miraculously found the baby there. There are two more miracles flanking the holy burial on the predella. The first is the sailors who Saint Nicholas asked to give part of their cargo of wheat to a city affected by famine. Despite doing so, they found that their cargo weighed the same on reaching their port of destination, obviously, through the saint's intercession. The other is that of the tree cut down which the devil comes out of.²⁹

As we have seen, the clergy had chapels dedicated to Saint Nicholas in Cervera and Manresa. In Lleida and Girona, the *Sermó del Bisbetó* was performed. On these occasions, it seems reasonable to think about him being worshiped as an exemplary bishop and a protector of infants and altar boys.

There are some other cases with narrative scenes from the Bari saint in the Catalan altarpiece tradition. There is very little information about an altarpiece that was said to come from the Maresme (figs. 4 and 5). Although some of its panels have been lost, it is mostly preserved in the Amatller Institute of Hispanic Art (Barcelona).³⁰ The altarpiece, dedicated to Saint Nicholas, includes several of his miracles. The narrative cycle begins a damaged scene where the bishop saint is giving balls of gold to three maidens whose father could not pay the dowry for their weddings. Under this, we find the saint preventing the murder of three innocent soldiers. On the other lateral street, there is the saint rescuing the shipwrecked and, finally, resuscitating three dead boys. The other testimony is the altarpiece in the parish church in Cameles (Roussillon), also dedicated to Saint Nicholas and dated from 1407-1408. This was done with a wide repertoire of scenes of the saint's life and miracles, among which the saint helping sailors in peril.³¹ Although the places these altarpieces come from (Maresme and Rosselló) are near the coast, we have no evidence to link them to worship by seafarers. Thus, I am inclined to think that, in

29. Yarza, Joaquín. *Els retaules gòtics de la Seu de Manresa*. Manresa: Fundació Caixa de Manresa, 1993: 56. Anna Orriols i Alsina has dealt with the altarpieces in La Seu on various occasions: Orriols, Anna. "Els retaules gòtics de la Seu", *Manresa i la Seu*. Manresa: Amics de la Seu, 1991: 113-127; Orriols, Anna. "La pintura gòtica a la Seu", *Manresa Medieval. Història, art i cultura a l'Edat Mitjana*. Manresa: Amics de l'Art Romànic del Bages, 2001: 105-133. These studies contain the previous bibliography about the altarpiece and its artistic context.

30. Gudiol, Josep; Alcolea, Santiago. *Pintura gòtica...*: 52 (cat. n° 111); 305 (Illustration 232).

31. Gudiol, Josep; Alcolea, Santiago. *Pintura gòtica...*: 117 (cat. n° 371); 383 (Illustration 626-627); Ruiz, Francesc. "Els pintors del Rosselló", *L'art gòtic a Catalunya, Pintura II, el corrent internacional*, Francesc Ruiz, coord. Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2005: 127-133.



these cases, the inclusion of the miracle in the cycle is due more to the wish to show the saint's powers in general, and not limited strictly to maritime activities.



ILLUSTRATION 4. ALTARPIECE OF SAINT NICHOLAS. INSTITUT AMATLLER D'ART HISPÀNIC (INSTITUT AMATLLER D'ART HISPÀNIC-ARXIU MAS).

2. Saint Erasmus of Formiae

Saint Erasmus, or Elmo, is also venerated in various places as the patron saint of sailors. There are many variants of the name: Elm, Erm, Antelm, Telm, Tem, etc. He has often been mistaken with the 13th-century Dominican saint Pere González Telmo, which is logical given the similarity between the names (T)elm and Telmo.³² Some written references (more than artistic depictions) gathered from various places help us to reconstruct partially the demonstrations of devotion to the saint. Like Saint Nicholas, he is one of the saints ships are named after.³³ According to the 1547 pastoral visit to the convent of Sant Antoni i Santa Clara in Barcelona, there was,

32. Colomer, Ignasi M. *Sant Elm i la coca*. Calella: Museu-Arxiu Municipal de Calella, 1989; García, Arcadi. *Història de la marina...*:140-141; Amades, Joan. *Els exvots*. Barcelona: Orbis, 1952: 105.

33. Carrère, Claude. *Barcelona 1380-1462...*: I, 250 and following.



ILLUSTRATION 5. ALTARPIECE OF SAINT NICHOLAS, DETAIL. INSTITUT AMATLLER D'ART HISPÀNIC (INSTITUT AMATLLER D'ART HISPÀNIC-ARXIU MAS).

“the image of Saint Elmo, with the arms of the Mariners [...] in the middle, on the altar, a beautiful altarpiece, with gilded quilting, image of Saint Erasmus, with his history, with his golden circle and the arms of the Mariners”.³⁴ We know that the painters Bernat Martorell, Jaume Cirera and Lluís Dalmau worked on the painting of the altarpiece or on the decoration of the chapel of Saint Erasmus in this convent.³⁵

In Sant Feliu de Guíxols (Baix Empordà), the seamen worshipped Saint Erasmus, where there was a chapel dedicated to him.³⁶ In Calella (Maresme) there was another dated from 1449. Colomer³⁷ proposed this was the place of origin of the votive offering in the shape of a *coca* (a short, very wide-beamed ship), traditionally known as the *coca* of Mataró. There was also a gothic altarpiece from the same place that supposedly depicted Saints Abdon and Sennen, as well as Saint Erasmus,

34. *La image de sanct Helm, ab les armes dels Mariners [...] en mig, en lo altar, un bell altarpiece, daurat en mig stoffa, ymage de sanct Helm, ab la història de ell, ab ses polseres ab les armes dels Mariners.* Madurell, Josep M. “El pintor Lluís Borrassà...”: VII, 58-59.

35. Duran, Agustí. *Barcelona i la seva història. L'art i la cultura*. Barcelona: Curial, 1975: III, chapter 6; about Bernat Martorell page 116-134 (docs. n° 55, 65), chapter 7; about Lluís Dalmau and Jaume Huguet page 135-179 and 147-148; Madurell, Josep M. “El pintor Lluís Borrassà...”: VIII, 375-376 (doc. n° 365); Ruiz, Francesc. “Lluís Dalmau”, *L'art gòtic a Catalunya. Pintura III, darreres manifestacions*, Joan Sureda, coord. Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2006: 51-67 and 64.

36. Amades, Joan. *Els exvots...*: 116; Villanueva, Jaime. *Viaje literario...*: XIV, 66.

37. Colomer, Ignasi M. *Sant Elm...*



but its current whereabouts are unknown. In their legends, these two saints are also attributed with having saved a ship that was on the verge of sinking. A 1428 manuscript, probably copied from an earlier text, includes the episode of the saints' relics being taken from Saint Mark's in Venice to Arles del Tec (Vallespir). After embarking the relics, the Catalan expedition sent to bring them back continued its homeward voyage. Some ten miles from, they came across a ship that was sinking. The abbot of Arles, who was in charge of the saints' bodies, began to pray to Saints Abdon and Sennen for help. After finishing his prayer, the sailors were able to continue their voyage to Cadaqués (Alt Empordà) without problems.³⁸ Although this prodigy by Saints Abdon and Sennen is narrated in their legendary, we know of no cases where it is depicted in Catalan Gothic art.

Returning to the *coca*, this little vessel is a wooden votive offering, nowadays in the Maritiem Museum Prins Hendrijk, in Rotterdam (Holland). Although it has always been known as the *coca* of Mataró, Colomer argues that it was from Calella as the chapel of Saint Simon in Mataró dates from the end of the 16th century. On the other hand, a marine votive offering fits perfectly in a place of worship dedicated to Saint Erasmus.³⁹ The most recent historiography has echoed this hypothesis, but without any firm arguments in favour of either possibility. The majority tendency in the historiography is to maintain the *coca*'s place of origin as Mataró.⁴⁰

Thanking a divinity or the saints with an ex-voto was not new to the Middle Ages. This phenomenon already had a long tradition with numerous examples in both the ancient and medieval worlds.⁴¹ In Gothic art in Catalonia and in other countries, when the inside of a building or the tomb of a saint is depicted, hanging votive offerings were sometimes added. We see this on the above-mentioned

38. Sistac, José. *Vida, culto y folklore de los Santos Abdón y Senén, popularmente llamados "sant Nin i sant Non" abogados de los agricultores, antiguos co-Patronos de Barcelona y Patronos de multitud de lugares de Cataluña, Aragón, Valencia y sur de Francia*. Barcelona: Gráficas Ramón Sopena, 1948: 46-55.

39. Colomer, Ignasi M. *Sant Elm...*: 32 and following.

40. It is clear that there is no definitive study of this piece. In the recent: de Meer, Sjoerd. "La coca de Mataró", *Mediterraneum. L'esplendor de la Mediterrània medieval*, Joaquim Alemany, Xavier Barral, coords. Barcelona: Lunewerg, 2004: 573-579, looks into the origins. The typology of the ship is studied (*coca*, *nau* (generic term for "ship") or caravel), and he inclines towards a *coca*, and he evaluates whether this is a votive element. It is also interesting to consult the museum's online file <http://www.maritiemmuseum.nl/pix/tentoon/mataro/online/eng_mataronline.pdf> and Martínez, José M. *Evocaciones en torno a la Coca de Mataró*. Barcelona: Cámara Oficial de Comercio, Industria y Navegación de Barcelona, 1986, which also includes information about the context and typologies of late medieval vessels. For the latter question, see also: Gertwagen, Rudy. "Caractéristiques de les embarcacions marítimes de la Mediterrània durant els segles XIII-XV", *Mediterraneum...*: 543-561.

41. Freedberg, David. *El poder de las imágenes, Estudios sobre la historia y la teoría de la respuesta*. Madrid: Cátedra, 1989. About votive offerings in the Middle Ages it is also interesting to see: Sigal, Pierre-André. "L'ex-voto au Moyen Âge dans les régions du Nord-Ouest de la Méditerranée (XIIe-XVe siècles)". *Provence historique*, 33/131 (1983): 13-31. The study by Francesca Español is very interesting for an overview of this question in Catalan lands. Español, Francesca. "Exvotos y recuerdos de peregrinación", *El camí de Sant Jaume i Catalunya. Actes del Congrés Internacional celebrat a Barcelona, Cervera i Lleida els dies 16, 17 i 18 d'octubre de 2003*. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2007: 297-317; going outside the limits of the Middle Ages: Parés, Fina. "Ex-voto catalans", *Provence historique*, 33/131 (1983): 87-101, also: Amades, Joan. *Els exvots...*





ILLUSTRATION 6. COMPARTMENT OF THE ALTARPIECE OF THE CONVENT OF *DOMUS DEI* DE MIRALLES. MUSEU DE PERALADA (INSTITUT AMATLLER D'ART HISPÀNIC-ARXIU MAS).

altarpiece of Saint Nicholas in Manresa, where ex-votos hang above the altar. There is the scene of the pilgrims at the tomb of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino on the *Domus Dei* altarpiece by Antoni Llonje in Miralles (Castellví de Rosanes, Baix Llobregat) (Illustration 6). There are many little figures, some whole bodied, others, legs or arms, etc., hanging above the saint's tomb. Although the composition is different, we find the same in the scene of the pilgrims at the tomb of Saint Vicent in the altarpiece of Sarrià, by Jaume Huguet. However, the most interesting case related to this study is the altarpiece in Granollers. Here, the scene of the exorcism of princess Eudòxia is illustrated above the tomb of Saint Steven. There is a *coca* among the votive offerings hanging above the saint's grave.⁴²

42. See note 28 for the altarpiece in Manresa. For the altarpiece at Miralles: Orriols, Anna. "Iconografía de san Agustín en los ciclos góticos catalanes". *Boletín del Museo e Instituto Camón Aznar*, 41 (1990): 13-46, specifically pages 26 and following; Elsig, Frédéric. "Antoine de Lonhy. Muerte de santa Mónica y Milagros ante la tumba de san Nicolás de Tolentino, c. 1460-1462", *El Renacimiento Mediterráneo, viajes de artistas e itinerarios de obras entre Italia, Francia y España en el siglo XV*, Mauro Natale, coord. Madrid-Valencia: Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza-Museu de Belles Arts de València, 2001: 481-484. Regarding this aspect of the altarpiece by Huguet: Llompart, Gabriel. "Aspectos folklóricos en la pintura gótica de Jaume Huguet y los Vergós". *Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares*, 29 (1973): 391-408; Molina, Joan. "Hagiografía



We have no evidence of the miracle of the shipwrecked being depicted among the scenes about Saint Steven in any of the altarpieces. However, it is included in his legendary.⁴³

Fragments that illustrate the practice of giving votive offerings can be found in Catalan medieval literature. The following verses appear in the poem *Veles e vents han mos desigs complir*, by Ausiàs March, with a metaphor of a voyage and love and fortune (v. 17-20):

*Los pelegrins tots ensems votaran
e prometran molts dons de cera fets;
la gran paor traurà-l l'lum los secrets
que al confés descoberts no seran [...].*⁴⁴

As seen above, the votive offerings could be made of wax or wood. However, on other occasions, more luxurious materials were used. Changing the geographic setting, one example is that of Louis IX. In 1254, when the king was returning from Syria to France with Queen Joinville, near Cyprus the wind became "so strong and so terrible" that there was a danger of the ship sinking.⁴⁵ Then the queen prayed Saint Nicholas and promised him a silver ship of five marks. This golden silver ship with the insignias of Prince Martin and Maria de Luna for which the silversmith Romeu des Feu was paid seventy-two *lliures*, three *sous* and three Barcelona coins on the 12th of June 1372, could respond to a similar casuistic.⁴⁶

Returning to the works of art possibly from Saint Erasmus in Calella, I now focus on the altarpiece, stylistically in the orbit of the Vergós workshop. Between Saints Abdon and Sennen, a bishop saint is depicted with a little ship in his hands.

y mentalidad popular en la pintura tardogótica barcelonesa (1450-1500)". *Locus Amoenus*, 2 (1996): 125-139. For the altarpiece in Granollers, see the above-mentioned article by Gabriel Llompart and also: Tintó, Margarita. *El retaule gòtic de Sant Esteve de Granollers*. Granollers: M. Tintó, 1990; Garriga, Joaquim. "L'antic retaule major de sant Esteve de Granollers, dels Vergós". *Lauro. Revista del Museu de Granollers*, 15 (1998): 15-35; Ruiz, Francesc. "Els Vergós i el Retaule de Sant Esteve de Granollers. Un nou apropament a la seva complexitat", *Entra a l'església gòtica de Granollers*, Jaume Dantí, coord. Granollers: Museu de Granollers, 1997: 74-79. In general, for the iconography of ships, see: Villain, Christiane. "Iconographie et datations du navire médiéval", *Iconographie médiévale. Image, texte, contexte*, Gaston Duchet, dir. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1990: 49-73. Concerning the drawings on the back of the altarpiece of Púbol, see the portrayal of vessels, especially the Iberian ones, Yarza, Joaquín. "¿Dibujos, esbozos, modelos?", *Bernat Martorell i la tardor del gòtic català. El context artístic del retaule del Púbol*, Joan Molina, ed. Girona: Museu d'Art de Girona, 2003: 147-168.

43. da Varazze, Iacopo. *Llegenda Àuria...*: 971 and following.

44. "The pilgrims together took the vow
of many donations of wax images;
the great fear will out the secrets
not revealed by he who confesses [...]."

(March, Ausiàs. *Tria de poemes*, eds. Josep Pujol, Francesc Gómez. Barcelona: Biblioteca Hermes, 1998: 117).

45. *Si forz et si orribles*. Delumeau, Jean. *La peur en Occident...*: 51.

46. de Dalmases, Núria. *Orfebreria catalana...*: II, 74.



Traditionally identified as Saint Nicholas,⁴⁷ Colomer proposes that this is, in fact, Saint Erasmus. This is feasible if we believe that it is from the chapel dedicated to this saint. This would not exclude it from having been moved to the church of Saint Quirze and Saint Julita where the brotherhood of Saint Erasmus was established in a side chapel. Colomer's hypothesis is reinforced by the fact that its iconography is the same as that of the saint on the keystone in the chapel of Saint Erasmus in the church of Tossa (La Selva).⁴⁸

Logically, to weigh up how accurate this identification of the bishop saint is, it must be compared with the iconography in other pieces. Although above I have mentioned pictorial works where the saint appears, we only know about these through the cited documents. So, we must look beyond Catalonia to make comparisons. Saint Erasmus appeared on a Valencian altarpiece dedicated to three Saints, attributed to Bartomeu Baró, whose whereabouts is nowadays unknown. The images in the central and right-hand side panel can be identified as Saint Sebastian, with his martyrdom depicted at the peak, and Saint Bernard, identified by the accompanying inscription. However, what interests us is the effigy on the left. Although one can read "S. Blas Obispo" beside the saint's feet in old photographs, this was originally an image of Saint Erasmus repainted to turn it into Saint Blaise. In one of the compartments of the predella, just under the effigy of the bishop saint, there is a depiction of the rescue of the shipwrecked. An *imago pietatis* and a miracle by Saint Bernard complete the predella.⁴⁹ In Italy there is also an image of the saint with the vessel in his hand. This is in a compartment of a polyptych by Giovanni Canavesio from the second half of the 15th century.⁵⁰

In light of the examples mentioned, Saint Erasmus was not as widely worshipped as other saints. However, both the signs of devotion to the saint and his iconography (with the boat) accentuate his speciality as an intercessor against the feared dangers of the sea.

3. Saint Onophrius

One of the prodigies by Saint Onophrius is the "miracle that happened on [the] sea". In the Catalan life of the saint in the Library of Catalonia (ms. 13), and versions of this, which also include *post mortem* miracles by the saint, a prodigy is explained that must have been added by the person who translated the text into Catalan. This tells how a merchant from Barcelona went to visit his sister, a Poor Clare nun in Pedralbes, before he set sail. She advised him to

47. Gudiol, Josep; Alcolea, Santiago. *Pintura gòtica...*: 181 (cat. 503); 434 (Illustration 879).

48. Colomer, Ignasi M. *Sant Elm...*

49. Cornudella, Rafael. "El Mestre de la Porciúncula i la pintura valenciana del seu temps". *Butlletí del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya*, 9 (2008): 83-111.

50. Kaftal, George. *Saints in italian Art. Iconography of the saints in the painting of north west Italy*. Florence: Casa Editrice Le Lettere, 1986: IV, 262.



pray to Saint Onophrius in case of danger. Once at sea, they sailed into a storm and the merchant invoked the hermit saint, just like his sister had told him to, promising that, if he survived, he would have a chapel built in the saint's name in the Poor Clare monastery. As can be expected, the story has a happy ending and merchant kept his promise.⁵¹ However, it seems that in reality this type of promises and other votive offerings were often easily forgotten once the danger had receded and the person was safe and sound.⁵²

In the necrology of Pedralbes, Beatriu d'Òdena (†1389) is said to have had a predella made with the history of Saint Onophrius for the altar of the eleven thousand virgins. The work commissioned by the Poor Claire must be the panel dedicated to the saint nowadays in Barcelona Cathedral Museum (Illustration 7). The life of the hermit is portrayed on this predella, but does not include any *post mortem* miracle, or the rescuing of the merchant. Various authors who have studied the piece date it from about 1360-1370 and, in any case, we have 1389 as an *ante quem* date. However, it dates from before the version in the Library of Catalonia, the oldest surviving Catalan life of Saint Onophrius, from *circa* 1400.⁵³

51. The transcription is from the very interesting study of the iconography of the saint in Mallorca by Gabriel Llopart: Llopart, Gabriel. "San Onofre, eremita, en el medioevo mallorquín". *Estudios lulianos*, 7-8 (1963): 203-208. There is a full edition of the life of Saint Onofre in ms. 13 of the Biblioteca de Catalunya: Hernández, José. "El manuscrito 13 de la Biblioteca de Catalunya: 'Comença del Benaurat sant Honoffree la sua santa e uirtuosa vida'". *Estudios románicos*, 8-9 (1993-1995): 185-262. Some fragments (transcribed, studied and compared with the incunable from Valencia) are also found in: Wittlin, Curt. "'Qualsevol qui de mi scriurà libre, Déu li perdonarà tots los pecats': the full Catalan translation of the 'Vida de sant Onofre' ampliada", *De la traducció literal a la creació literària*. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1995: 103-118.

52. Varela, M. Elisa. "Navegar y rezar...": 1123.

53. There is one edition of the necrology of Pedralbes: de Castro, María. "Necrologio del monasterio de Sta. M^a de Pedralbes (s. XIV)". *Hispania Sacra*, 21 (1968): 391-427. For the bancal of Saint Onophrius it is interesting to consult: Trens, Manuel. *Ferrer Bassa i les pintures de Pedralbes*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1936: 22; also the article by Francesca Español that, although not dedicated to the bancal, has relevant contributions: Español, Francesca. "Los *membra disjecta* de un coro gótico catalán en el Museo de Cleveland", *Imágenes y promotores en el arte medieval*, M. Luisa Melero, Francesca Español, Anna Orriols, Daniel Rico, eds. Bellaterra: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona-Servei de Publicacions, 2001: 337-352 and, by the same author: Español, Francesca. *El gòtic català*. Manresa: Angle Editorial-Fundació Caixa de Manresa, 2002: 238; Carbonell, Marià; Castellano, Anna; Cornudella, Rafael. "Una col·lecció per al monestir de Pedralbes", *Pedralbes. Els tresors del monestir*, Marià Carbonell, Anna Castellano, Rafael Cornudella, dirs. Barcelona: Museu d'Història de la Ciutat-Museu Monestir de Pedralbes, 2005: 25-33; Alcoy, Rosa. "Ramon Destorrents i taller. Predel·la de sant Onofre", *Millenium, història i art de l'església catalana*. Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1989: 258. You could also consult my dissertation (Barniol, Montse. *El culte a Sant Onofre a Catalunya en època gòtica i la seva traducció plàstica*. Barcelona: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (PhD Dissertation), 2006), which includes this and other bibliography. More recently, about this piece: Cornudella, Rafael; Favà, Cèsar. "Francesc Serra (?). Bancal de la vida de sant Onofre", *Convidats d'honor...*: 132-137.



ILLUSTRATION 7. PREDELLA OF SAINT ONUPHRE. MUSEU DE LA CATEDRAL DE BARCELONA (ANNA ORRIOLS-MONTSERRAT BARNIOL; © CATEDRAL DE BARCELONA).

Considering all these data, Assumpta Escudero proposes that the protagonist of the prodigy is the brother of Beatriu d'Òdena, so that the hagiographic text and the pictorial work would be closely linked. Although this hypothesis is interesting and tempting, I consider it perhaps too bold.⁵⁴

I believe it is interesting to highlight the fact that this text is not the only that links a merchant to the cult of Saint Onophrius. In Barcelona City Historical Archive there is an inventory of the goods belonging to merchant Eloi de Navel dated 1457. The wealth he accrued from the saffron trade meant he had a privileged financial situation, as is clear in the document. Among his possessions, there are the contents of a large library, among which there was a life of Saint Onophrius. Despite originally being from Cardona (Bages), like so many other merchants from the same town, he lived in Barcelona, although he never severed his links with his birthplace, where he owned a house. Precisely, a predella nowadays in a private collection, attributed to Pere Vall, is from Sant Miquel in Cardona, "the merchants'" church. The Egyptian hermit appears on it, among other saints. Again, to attempt to link the Navel family directly with this fragment of an altarpiece would be, at least, precipitated. Similarly, it shows that the cult of Saint Onophrius was alive in Cardona, a place of intense commercial activity and, as a result, strong economic and demographic growth towards the end of the Middle Ages.⁵⁵ The worship of Saint Onophrius is also seen

54. Escudero, Assumpta. *El monestir de santa Maria de Pedralbes*. Barcelona: Edicions de Nou Art Thor, 1988: 76-77.

55. From Eloi de Navel's will: Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona. Arxiu Notarial. I. 10. f. 27v; Iglesias, Antoni. "De drassanes i drassaners: Eloi de Navel (†1457), un drassaner lletraferit". *Drassana*, 11 (2003): 84-96; Aurell, Jaume. *Els mercaders catalans...*: 150 and 188; Aurell, Jaume; Puigarnau, Alfons. *La cultura del mercader...*: 263-264 and note 199. Regarding the burghers of Cardona (among whom were the Navels) in the Late Middle Ages: Galera, Andreu. *Territori, senyoriu i jurisdicció a la Catalunya central: la batllia de Cardona, ducat de Cardona i baronia de Santa Maria d'Aguilar (s. XI-XVI)*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona (PhD Dissertation), 2001: 558; Casas, Montserrat. "Els habitants de Cardona i les seves activitats econòmiques al voltant de 1400". *Cardener*, 2 (1985): 125-143; Galera, Andreu. "Els Ros de Garrigosa: entorn les relacions entre l'oligarquia de la vila de Cardona i l'alta burgesia barcelonina (segles



in the will of Caterina Llull i Çabatida, a Catalan merchant from the second half of the 15th century. The document contains money assigned to pay for masses on seventeen festivities, among which was Saint Onophrius.⁵⁶

Although less evident, there are other signs the saint enjoyed relative popularity of among the merchants. In a 1508 document, in the chapel of Saint Michael in Santa Maria del Mar there was an altarpiece "*sub invocacione sanctorum Honofrii et Antonii*".⁵⁷ On the other hand, one of the figures on the west doorway has been identified as Saint Onophrius.⁵⁸ Some news in the same line can be found in the documentation related to the promotion of the arts by the merchants. The saint is sculpted on one of the keystones of a chapel in the cloister of Sant Jeroni de la Murtra (Badalona, Barcelonès); a merchant's mark appears on the outer shield of the same part.⁵⁹

It seems that in 1401, the saint was venerated in Barcelona cathedral, near the altar of Saint Oleguer, which is in the chapel of Saint Augustine.⁶⁰ According to the patriarch Saperá, this worship was still alive twenty years later "[...] the image being painted on an oratory or kind of triptych, that is, an altarpiece with hinged panels".⁶¹ We do not know who the promoter was. However, we do know that, among many others, two merchants, Ponç de Gualbes (1369) and Pere d'Urgell (1391) founded benefits in the chapel. This simply shows that the chapel where the saint was venerated was a place where merchants went to worship.

The worship of Saint Onophrius did not reach Catalonia until the 14th century and was never one of the most widespread. However, given the above-mentioned examples, it seems that Saint Onophrius enjoyed a certain degree of popularity among merchants and seafarers.⁶²

XII-XV)". *Acta Historica et Archeologica Mediaevalia*, 20-21 (2000): 591-615. About the painting: Orriols, Anna. "La pintura gòtica a Sant Miquel de Cardona", *L'Església parroquial de Sant Miquel de Cardona, El gòtic al mig Cardener*. Cardona: Centre d'Estudis del Bages, 2003: 131-195.

56. Colesanti, Gemma. *Caterina Llull i Çabatida: una mercantessa catalana nella Sicila del '400*. Girona: Universitat de Girona (PhD Dissertation), 2005: 79.

57. For Santa Maria del Mar, see: Borau, Cristina. *La fundació de capelles i retaules a la Barcelona del Segle XIV*. Barcelona: Fundació Noguera, 2003: 525-526.

58. Bassegoda, Bonaventura. *Santa Maria de la Mar...*: I, 150.

59. Aymar, Jaume. "El monestir de Sant Jeroni de la Murtra", *L'art gòtic a Catalunya, Arquitectura II...*: 217-223.

60. Mas, José. *Guía / Itinerario de la Catedral de Barcelona*. Barcelona: Imprenta La Renaixensa, 1916: 93.

61. [...] essent pintada la imatge en un oratori ó especie de triptich, es á dir un retauló ab portelletes. Mas, José. *Notes Històriques del Bisbat de Barcelona, Taula dels altars y capelles de la Seu de Barcelona*. Barcelona: J. Vives-La Renaixensa, 1906: I, 52. The *Visitatio Sedis* (1421/25-1428, f. 72-72v), is referred to in the following terms: *Est ibi sepulcrum de alabaistro cum ymagine Sti. Oulegarii satis pulcre sculpta et cum aliis diversis ymaginibus parvis et operaturis de vitro livido et daurato, supra quodquidem sepulcrum est quoddam oratorium de Sancto Honofre*, transcribed in: Terés, M. Rosa. *Pere Ça Anglada. Introducció de l'estil internacional en l'escultura gòtica catalana*. Barcelona: Artestudi, 1987: 126.

62. I dealt with this in greater detail (and citing more data) in: Barniol, Montserrat. "El culto a San Onofre en Cataluña durante los siglos XIV y XV", *El culto a los santos: cofradías, devoción, fiestas y arte. Actas del Simposium, 2/5-IX-2008*. San Lorenzo de El Escorial: Ediciones Escorialenses, 2008: 177-190.



4. Saint Anthony the Abbot

The historiography has also referred to Saint Anthony the Abbot as a protector of ships.⁶³ According to Joan Amades, he was worshiped among seafarers in Catalonia owing to the episode explained in the legend, supposedly translated from Arab to Latin by Alfons Buenhombre in 1341. According to this text, the saint reached Barcelona from the desert of Thebes by crossing the sea on a cloud that has come to be known as Saint Anthony's boat.⁶⁴ Saint Anthony's miraculous journey inevitably recalls the one attributed to Saint Raymond of Penyafort, who crossed the sea on his cloak. On reaching the port of Barcelona, he picked up the surprisingly dry cloak from the water. Catalan folklore has made much of this prodigy. For example, it appears in a song collected by Joan Amades,

*Des de Montjuïc
barco senyalaven
tots els mariners
surten a muralla
Què és això que es veu?
n'és galera o barca?
No n'és barca, no
ni galera armada
que n'és sant Ramon
que ha fet un miracle
Santa Caterina
toca les campanes⁶⁵*

It seems that this miracle was written down in 1456. The Dominican saint, who lived from 1175 to 1222, was not canonised until 1601 and, although he was

63. Bresc, Geneviève; Bresc, Henri. "Les saints protecteurs...": 161-178.

64. Amades, Joan. "Tradiciones marineras catalanas", *Leyendas y tradiciones marineras...*: 28-49. See also: Halkin, François. "La légende de Saint Antoine traduite de l'arabe par Alphonse Bonhome, O.P.". *Analecta Bollandiana*, 60 (1942): 143-203; Meersseman, Gil-M. Gérard. "La chronologie des voyages et des oeuvres de frère Alphonse Buenhombre O.P.". *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 10 (1940): 77-108.

65. "From Montjuïc
a ship was pointed out
all the sailors
went to the wall
What is that we see?
Is it a galley or a ship?
No, not a ship, nor
An armed galley
It is Saint Ramon
Who has done a miracle
Saint Catherine
Ring the bells"
(Amades, Joan. *Els exvots...*: 43).



already widely worshiped before, I cannot guarantee that he had a special place among seafarers in the Middle Ages.⁶⁶

The fantastic journey of Saint Anthony is not shown in any of the surviving Catalan altarpieces or those known from photographs.⁶⁷ However, further afield, it was recreated in the manuscript of the saint's life profusely illustrated by Robert Fournier in 1426 in Saint-Antoine-en-Viennois (Delfinat, France), the home of the Anthonians, under the orders of Guigue Robert, prior of the abbey. The codex, conserved in the Public Library in La Valletta (Malta), was copied three years later by order of Jean de Montchenu, preceptor of Ranverso Abbey (Piedmont, Italy).⁶⁸ However, Joan Amades' hypothesis does not match the opinion of Geneviève and Henry Bresc, that attributed an ongoing veneration among seafarers from 1200 onwards, and which only weakened slightly after 1400.⁶⁹ Whatever the truth, like the other saints protecting ships, we also find his name on various ships, alone or sometimes combined with other saints or the Virgin Mary.⁷⁰

During the Gothic period, Saint Anthony was very widely worshiped in Catalonia. Although it is impossible to describe in a few lines the reasons for this wide popularity, let me note a few. Firstly, it seems that throughout the Middle Ages he was valued as an example, both among hermits and monastic orders. His life, written by Saint Athanase and translated into Latin by Evagrius of Antioch, was notably present in later texts, where it is easy to find texts borrowed from it. On the other hand, from the end of the 11th century, the Order of Saint Anthony spread. It was basically dedicated to treating the victims of ergotism, an ailment also known as "Saint Anthony's fire". His "speciality" was not as an intercessor before the perils of the high seas, but we cannot deny categorically that, on occasions, he was invoked for this purpose. It is true that we have the mention in the *Llibre del Consolat de Mar* mentioned above, although it does not specify whether it refers to Saint Anthony the Abbot or Saint Anthony of Padua.⁷¹

66. Valls, Ferran. *San Ramón de Penyafort*. Barcelona-Madrid: Editorial Labor, 1936; Réau, Louis. *Iconographie de l'art chrétien. Iconographie des saints, P-Z*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959: III, 1139; Vauchez, André. "Raimondo di Penyafort, santo". *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*. Rome, Citta'nuova editrice, 1968: XI, 16-24. For the iconography of the saint, it is also interesting to consult: Kaftal, George. *Saints in Italian Art. Iconography of the saints in Tuscan painting; Iconography of the saints in the painting of north east Italy...*: I, 873-874; III, 895-898.

67. Nor in other areas. Meiffret, Laurence. *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340-1540)*. Rome: École Française de Rome, 2004.

68. Cockerell, Sidney C. "Two pictorial lives of St. Anthony the Great". *Burlington Magazine*, 63/399 (1933) 58-67; Graham, Rose. *A Picture-book of the Life of St. Anthony the Abbot, by the Monastery of Saint-Antoine de Viennois in 1426*. Oxford: John Johnson for the Society of Antiquaries, 1933; and by the same author: Graham, Rose. "Le Livre d'images de la vie de saint Antoine". *Annales de l'Académie de Mâcon*, 3/29 (1934): 176 and pl. XV, 2.

69. Bresc, Geneviève; Bresc, Henri. "Les saints protecteurs...", in this sense, the painting on page 169 is very graphic.

70. Carrère, Claude. *Barcelona 1380-1462...*: I, 250 and following.

71. The worship of Saint Anthony would undoubtedly require a much more detailed explanation. Although there is a very extensive bibliography dedicated to the question, I only cite here some relevant studies. There is a Catalan edition of the Greek text: Atanasi. *Vida de sant Antoni*, trans. Daniel Codina, Miquel Estradé. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1989; the French version is especially



5. Saints from mendicant orders

The fragment of the *Llibre del Consolat de Mar* mentioned above cites Saint Claire as a patron of sailors. Despite this reference, there are very few mentions of the saint as a protector of ships in either Catalonia or abroad.⁷² A notable exception, in Italy, is a 14th-century predella by Giovanni di Paolo, now in a private collection. It shows the saint interceding to help a vessel in difficulties.⁷³

The rescue of the shipwrecked forms part of the hagiographic scenes featuring Saint Dominic and Saint Peter the Martyr.⁷⁴ The Dominican prodigy is recreated in the altarpiece by Lluís Borrassà in Santa Clara in Vic (Illustration 8), nowadays in the town's Episcopal Museum. The miracle is also illustrated on a panel attributed to Jaume Cabrera, in a private collection in New Jersey (United States).⁷⁵ On occasions, however, it has been suggested that the character in the panel is Saint Peter the Martyr (and not Saint Dominic).⁷⁶ Saint Peter the Martyr is portrayed in the mural paintings in Sant Domènec in Puigcerdà (Cerdanya) (figs. 9 and

accurate with a very useful introduction and notes, d'Alexandrie, Athanase. *Vie d'Antoine*. ed. G. J. M. Bartelink. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2004. About the saint's survival in the later tradition see: Leclercq, Jean. "Saint Antoine dans la tradition monastique médiévale". *Studia Anselmiana*, 38: 228-247; Penco, Gregorio. "Il ricordo dell'ascetismo orientale nella tradizione monastica del medio evo europeo". *Studi Medievali*, 3/4 (1963): 571-587. Regarding the Antonine order, see: Mischlewski, Adalbert. *Un ordre hospitalier au Moyen Âge. Les chanoines réguliers de Saint-Antoine-en-Viennois*. Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble- La Pierre et l'écrit, 1995; and in a more specific field: Tomàs, Macià. *El foc de sant Antoni a Mallorca. Medicina, història i societat*. Palma de Mallorca: El tall editorial, 1996. Dealing with the worship of Saint Anthony, one cannot omit mention of his protection of the rural world, for which one can refer to: Llompart, Gabriel. "San Antonio Abad y su fiesta en la ruralía mallorquina". *Boletín de la Cámara Oficial de Comercio, Industria y Navegación de Palma de Mallorca*, 661 (1968): 207-221.

72. Réau, Louis. *Iconographie de l'art chrétien...*: 316-319; Blasucci, Antonio. "Chiara da Assisi", *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*. Rome: Istituto Giovanni, 1962: III, 1201-1208; dins el mateix volum: Zocca, Emma. "Chiara da Assisi, iconografia", *Bibliotheca Sanctorum...*: 1208-1217; Kaftal, George. *Saints in italian art. Iconography of the saints in central and south italian schools of painting...*: II, 297-300; *Saints in italian art. Iconography of the saints in the painting of north east Italy...*: III, 225-226; *Saints in italian art. Iconography of the saints in the painting of north west Italy...*: IV, 201-202.

73. Kaftal, George. *Saints in Italian Art. Iconography of the saints in tuscan painting...*: 269-279; also: Arrouye, Jean. "L'en-dessous et l'en-dessus de la mer", *Mondes marins du Moyen âge. Actes du 30^e colloque du CUERMA, 3, 4 et 5 mars 2005*. Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 2006: 27-41, specifically page 33. Here the author makes an interesting parallelism between the meaning of the saint's name (Claire) and the fact that she saved the ship from being swallowed up by the darkness.

74. Nuet, Marta. "El salvamento de náufragos, metáfora de la penitencia en el gótico catalán". *Locus Amoenus*, 5 (2000-2001): 53-65.

75. Gudiol, Josep; Alcolea, Santiago. *Pintura gòtica...*: 84 and 96; 205 (cat. n.º. 205 and 256). Also the Vic altarpiece: Nuet, Marta. *El retablo de Santa Clara, de Lluís Borrassà una imatge de devoció en la orden de las clarisas de la ciudad de Vic*. Bellaterra: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 1998 (unpublished research project).

76. Ruiz Quesada. "La darrera producció del taller de Lluís Borrassà. Una via per a l'aproximació de dos artistes: Lluís Borrassà i Pere Sarreal". *Lambard*, 10 (1998): 53-96; Post, Chandler R. *A History of Spanish Painting*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 1930-1966: X, 308.



10)⁷⁷ and also in the sculptural altarpiece in Alòs de Balaguer (Noguera).⁷⁸ It is clear that the geographic origins of the pieces in no way lead us to think of a possible relation with the piety of the seafarers. Marta Nuet proposes, convincingly, that the rescuing of the shipwrecked is a metaphor for penitence. Among others things, she bases her argument on the Sermon of Lent by Saint Vicent Ferrer, where the simile is very explicit.⁷⁹ The miracle also ended up being attributed to the same preacher, canonised in 1455, and was portrayed on the altarpiece of Colantonio *circa* 1460.⁸⁰



ILLUSTRATION 8. COMPARTMENT OF THE ALTARPIECE OF SANTA CLARA OF VIC. MUSEU EPISCOPAL DE VIC (MARTA NUET).

77. Cid, Carlos. "Las pinturas murales de la iglesia de Santo Domingo de Puigcerdà". *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Gerundenses*, 15 (1961-1962): 5-97; Macià, Montserrat. "Els murals de sant Domènec de Puigcerdà", *L'art gòtic a Catalunya, Pintura I, de l'inici a l'italianisme*, Rosa Alcoy, coord. Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 2005: 115-118.

78. Duran, Agustí. *Els retaules de pedra*. Barcelona: Alpha, 1932: 80 and sheet 51.

79. Nuet, Marta. "El salvamento de náufragos...": 53-65.

80. Galli, Antonio. "Colantonio. Aparición de la Virgen a san Vicente Ferrer en su celda, c. 1460", *El renacimiento mediterráneo. Viajes de artistas e itinerarios de obras de arte entre Italia, Francia y España en el siglo XV*, Mauro Natale, coord. Madrid-Valencia: Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza-Museu de Belles Arts de València, 2001: 388-390.



ILLUSTRATION 9. DETAIL OF THE MURAL PAINTINGS OF SAINT DOMINIC OF PUIGCERDÀ.



ILLUSTRATION 10. DETAIL OF THE MURAL PAINTINGS OF SAINT DOMINIC OF PUIGCERDÀ.



Whether for this reason or not, it was added to the list of the saint's miracles, this prodigy (like so many others) would contribute to increasing the Dominican's merits to be sanctified.⁸¹

However, and as Marta Nuet shows, the origins of this metaphor go back to the writings of Saint Jerome and also appear in those of Saint Thomas Aquinas.⁸² I do not know to what extent this analogy between the maritime miracle and penitence explains why the miracle is included in certain texts or, especially, in hagiographic cycles about saints who do seem to have been widely worshipped by seafarers. I am thinking about the case of Saint Giles, a 7th-century Athenian, who left his native Greece to dedicate himself to eremitic life in Provencal lands and other places, such as the sanctuary of Nûria. His legendary also attributes him with rescuing sailors in danger and other prodigies especially related to penitence, like his pardon of Charlemagne. As part of a wider cycle, the miracles of the ship and emperor are illustrated on the walls of the south apse of the crypt of Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher (Loir-et-Cher, France), which date from around 1090. Given that the iconographic programme of the mural paintings in the crypt emphasises the need for penitence to save one's soul, I wonder if this can be read into the scene (or scenes) of Saint Giles or they simply aim to show the saint's power to intervene more generically. On the other hand, given the geographic location of the building it seems rather unlikely that it harbours a marine devotion.⁸³

The miracle of the shipwrecked is also attributed to Saint James. The *Liber Sancti Jacobi* relates how a pilgrim en-route to Santiago de Compostel-la by sea was caught by a sudden storm, which he escaped unscathed thanks to the apostle's intercession.⁸⁴ The historiography has shown the link between pilgrimage and penitence on various occasions.⁸⁵ Anyway, I do not believe that that is enough to

81. This miracle is also attributed to other saints from the end of the Middle Ages outside the Catalan lands. Vauchez, André. *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge d'après les procès de canonisation et les documents hagiographiques*. Roma: École Française de Rome, 1988: 571; Prouvost, Yveline. "Les miracles de Pierre de Luxembourg (1387-1390)", *Hagiographie et culte des saints en France méridionale (XIIIe-XVe siècle)*. Toulouse: Privat, 2002, p. 481-506.

82. Nuet, Marta. "El salvamento de náufragos...": 53-65, especially note 24.

83. About Saint Giles: Everlange, Pierre-Émile. *Histoire de Saint-Gilles, sa vie, son abbaye, sa basilique, sa ville, son pèlerinage, sa crypte et son tombeau*. Avignon: Seguin frères, imprimeurs-éditeurs, 1885. For the paintings of Saint-Aignan see the studies by Marcia Kupfer: Kupfer, Marcia. "Symbolic Cartography in a Medieval Parish: From Spatialized Body to Painted Church at Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher". *Speculum*, 75/3 (2000): 615-667; Kupfer, Marcia. *The Art of Healing: Painting for the Sick and the Sinner in a Medieval Town*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003; Kupfer, Marcia. "Images, Pilgrims, and the Dead: Spatial Practices of Penance and Burial at Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher", *Shaping Sacred Space and Institutional Identity in Romanesque Mural Painting*. Thomas E. A. Dale, ed. London: Pindar Press, 2004: 162-200.

84. *Liber Sancti Jacobi*, "Codex Calixtinus", trans. Abelardo Moralejo, Casimiro Torres, Julio Feo. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, 2004: 349-350. The same volume contains similar miracles that also took place at sea (like rescuing someone who had fallen overboard). In some lives of Saint Dominic, the seafarers saved are also pilgrims on their way to Santiago. See this in: Nuet, Marta. "El salvamento de náufragos...": 53-65.

85. This relation is presented, for example, in: Duby, Georges. "Peregrinaciones", *Vida y peregrinación*. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1993: 19-29. Specific cases are presented in: Gudíol, Josep. "De peregrins



justify attributing the miracle to Saint James. It may be another example to show the apostle's protection for the pilgrims on their way to his sanctuary.

6. Conclusions

As we have seen, the importance of maritime activity in Late-Middle-Age Catalonia influenced devotional practices. Seafarers (a heterogeneous class, made up of both humble sailors and rich merchants) prayed to the Virgin, Christ or saints, all of whom were effective intercessors in moments of peril. In these pages, I have attempted to analyse the most significant hagiographic cults among those who went to sea. The legends of the saints and the dedication of chapels and altarpieces, with their narrative cycles, are proof of some of the devotions. However, it is evident that these were not the only ones and that the full list could be long. This is shown, for example by the names of ships, where, apart from the most common names like Saint Nicholas, there are many others that appear with a certain frequency (Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, Saint John, Saint Eulalia, Saint Paul, Saint Peter, etc).⁸⁶ Nevertheless, it is also true the cults that these reflect were not necessarily widespread among seafarers. On occasions these may be more particular devotions.

Aside from these considerations, the cases studied show that this devotional panorama was made up both of saints considered to protect ships everywhere (like Saint Nicholas), and others that are only worshiped as such on Catalan territory. It is no surprise that such a widespread miracle and one that responds to the fears of quite a large group (seafarers) in Catalonia in the Late Middle Ages is included in the "local legends".⁸⁷ Examples would be the tale of the miracle by Saint Onophrius rescuing a merchant added to the life of the saint, or the transfer of the relics of Saints Abdon and Sennen. It is not surprising that the same miracle is attributed to various saints. The historiography has shown extensively how some hagiographic themes enjoy widespread popularity and these we then find reiterated in the lives of the saints. This phenomenon is illustrated by the miracle of the person hung unjustly that the saint keeps alive, or the theme of the child seized by the devil.⁸⁸

i peregrinatges religiosos catalans". *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia*, 3 (1927): 93-119; Llompart, Gabriel. "Penitencias y penitentes en la pintura y en la piedad catalanas bajomedievales. Un estudio de folklore retrospectivo". *Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares*, 28/3-4 (1972): 229-249.

86. Bresc, Geneviève; Bresc Henri. "Les saints protecteurs...": 161-178; Varela, M. Elisa. "Navegar y rezar...": 1121.

87. *Legendes autóctones*. This term is taken from the following article: Molina, Joan. "La ilustración de leyendas autóctonas: el santo y el territorio". *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia*, 70 (1997): 5-28. The author analyses a series of local hagiographic traditions (among these, the transfer of the relics of Saints Abdon and Sennen) and their artistic translation.

88. The historiography has often dealt with these hagiographic themes. I limit myself here to citing "classic" studies. About the miracle of the person hung: Saintyves, Pierre. "Les cheminements d'un thème miraculeux: le pendu miraculeusement suspendu", *En marge de la Légende dorée: songes, miracles et survivances. Essai sur la formation de quelques thèmes hagiographiques*. Paris: Nourry, 1930: 193-217;



On the other hand, I think it is interesting to emphasise the fact that the inclusion of the prodigy of rescuing a ship in the legendary or in the narrative cycle is not necessarily related to the devotion of seafarers. It may be due to other reasons. On occasions, it serves to illustrate (generically) the saint's power as an intercessor. This is exemplified by the cross in Cervera or the altarpiece of Saint Nicholas in Manresa. In other cases, as the historiography has already noted, an allegoric sense to the miracle must be sought. I am thinking about the altarpiece in Santa Clara in Vic or the mural painting in Sant Domènec de Puigcerdà, among others.

de Gaiffier, Badouin. "Un thème hagiographique: le pendu miraculeusement sauvé", *Études critiques d'hagiographie et d'iconologie*. Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1967: 194-226; de Gaiffier, Badouin. "Liberatus a Suspendio", *Études critiques d'hagiographie et d'iconologie...*: 227-232. Regarding the child stolen by the devil: de Gaiffier, Badouin; de Tervaeent, Guy. "Le diable, voleur d'enfants. À propos de la naissance des saints Étienne, Laurent et Barthélemy". *Homenatge a Rubió i Lluch*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1939: II, 33-58.

