Consecratio Navis:
Ships and Propaganda in Henry V's England

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Abstract: Sometime between 1413 and 1422, a special liturgy was compiled in the diocese of Canterbury for the consecration of Henry V's warships. This liturgy (*Consecratio Navis*), contained in three contemporary pontifical manuscripts, was unprecedentedly elaborate and more resembled the service for the dedication of a church than the occasional blessings for ships. Evoking the terrors of the sea and the contingencies of maritime life, this blessing transformed the wooden walls of Henry's ship into a repository of sacred power, invested with the presence of the Holy Trinity, angels, and the saints. Though the ship did not become a floating church, it did become a kind of sacred space, a bulwark against foes both material and spiritual. In addition to being an especially ostentatious apotropaic ritual, this liturgy is also an extremely significant piece of evidence for the politics and self-image of the English Church under Henry V. Using the imagery of the Ship of the Church, *Consecratio Navis* substantiated the alliance between the English Church and the Lancastrian monarchy. In short, this article shows how this liturgy ritually manifested a societal and gubernatorial ideal of the Church contained within and protected by the state.

Keywords: Henry V; maritime history; liturgy; consecration; propaganda

n July 1418, William Barrow, Bishop of Bangor, dedicated Henry V's new flagship, the *Gracedieu*.[1] This vast but unfinished warship was to be the pride of Henry's fleet and required a suitable blessing. The liturgy that he probably used, here referred to as *Consecratio Navis* (the consecration of a ship), survives in three contemporary manuscripts: British Library Additional MS 6157, Trinity College, Cambridge MS B.11.9, and Cambridge University Library MS Mm.III.21.[2] It was exceedingly elaborate. Indeed, it was

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This article is dedicated to the memory of Captain Nicholas Richard Harrap, Royal Navy, OBE (1959–2015), "On eternal patrol."

[1] The Issue Rolls of the Exchequer record a payment of £5 made in 1418 to the Bishop of Bangor, William Barrow, for the "consecration" of Henry's ship, the *Gracedieu*, at Southampton. Frederick Devon, ed., *Issues of the Exchequer* (London, 1837), 356; Henry Summerson, "Barrow, William (d. 1429)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/95126.

[2] The incipit is: *in consecratione navis*. These manuscripts are henceforth referred to as Add. 6157, Trin. B.11.9 and CUL Mm.III.21.

unlike any blessing that had hitherto been used in the dedication of a ship. Barrow would have begun by aspersing the vessel three times with holy water and then censing it.[3] He would then have proceeded to dedicate the ship under the general protection of the Holy Trinity and, possibly, another patron. Finally, Barrow and his assistants celebrated five votive Masses on the deck. In short, he performed a ceremony that more resembled the consecration of a church (*Dedicatio Ecclesiae*) than the brief customary benedictions of ships.

Though Add. 6157, Trin. B.11.9, and CUL Mm.III.21 are well-known liturgical sources, *Consecratio Navis* represents a hitherto untapped source of insight into the politics and self-image of the English Church under Henry V.[4] That the ritual has not garnered any interest before now is unsurprising. The study of religious practices related to or performed at sea during the Middle Ages remains nascent and, for now, focused largely on the Mediterranean.[5] Studies of liturgies connected with maritime life are fewer still.[6] Yet, while this article is tangentially connected with the religion of fifteenth-century mariners, its proper context is that of the broader relationship between the English Church and the crown. *Consecratio Navis* was a rite formulated within an elite context. There is little evidence that mariners could have impacted its final form. Add. 6157, Trin. B.11.9, and CUL Mm.III.21 are all pontificals—liturgical compendia containing rites that either can only be performed by a bishop (such as ordination), or which are primarily to be performed by bishops but which may be delegated (as in the dedication of a church).[7] Moreover, Add. 6157 and Trin. B.11.9 were not just books for bishops but are, in fact, associated with Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1414

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[3] See Table 1.

[4] When Henderson wrote a notice of the manuscript in his edition of *Liber pontificalis*, he did not mention this liturgy; see: William Henderson, ed., *Liber Pontificalis Chr. Bainbridge* (Durham: Surtees, 1875), xlii–xliii, nor is it mentioned in the manuscript descriptions in Richard Kay, *Pontificalia: A Repertory of Latin Manuscript Pontificals and Benedictionals*, https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/bitstream/handle/1808/4406/PONTIFICALIA.pdf, 30, 31, 63. The liturgy is noted but not otherwise commented on in the manuscript descriptions of BL Add. MS 6157 and Trin. B.11.9 in J. Brückmann, "Latin MS. Pontificals and Benedictionals in England and Wales," *Traditio* 29 (1973): 391–458, 412, 419 and in Edward Jones, "Rites of Enclosure: The English *Ordines* for the Enclosing of Anchorites, S. XII-S. XVI," *Traditio* 67 (2012): 145–234.

[5] Notable entries in the corpus include: Robert Miller, *One Firm Anchor* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2012); Vincent Patarino Jr, "The Religious Shipboard Culture of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century English Sailors," in *The Social History of English Seamen*, ed. Cheryl Fury (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012), 141-–192; Amy Remensnyder, "Mary, Star of the Multi-confessional Mediterranean: Ships, Shrines and Sailors," in *Ein Meer und seine Heiligen*, ed. Nikolas Jaspert and Marco di Branco (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2017), 297–325; Michel Bacci, ed., *The Holy Portolano: the Sacred Geography of Navigation in the Middle Ages: Fribourg Colloquium 2013* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014). Alain Cabantous is a great stalwart of the history of mariners' religion, though his work usually focusses on the later period; see, in particular, *Le Ciel dans La Mer: Christianisme et civilisation maritime (XVIe-XIXe siècle)* (Paris: Fayard, 1990); Alain Cabantous and Gilbert Buti, *De Charybde en Scylla: Risques, périls et fortunes de mer du XVIe siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Humensis, 2018).

[6] See: Derek Rivard, *Blessing the World* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 218, whose work is largely based on the small selection of blessings reproduced in Adolph Franz, *Die Kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter*, 2 vols. (Freiburg: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1909), 1:621–628.

[7] A fairly comprehensive bibliography of pontifical manuscripts has been compiled by Richard Kay; see: *Pontificalia*.

until his death in 1443: the order for the degradation of heretical clergy in both manuscripts refers to him directly.[8] Yet, the special intervention of the highest echelons of the English Church in Henry's ship-building gives some indication of the symbolic importance of Henry's warships at this time. *Consecratio Navis* made them sites for the ritual affirmation and articulation of the growing closeness between the English Church and the crown in their shared pursuit of religious orthodoxy and military success in the war against France. The liturgy is, therefore, a highly circumstantial snapshot of the time and place of its formation.

Given this joining of ecclesiastical benediction with royal military endeavour, it is natural to consider whether *Consecratio Navis* should be thought of in terms of "propaganda." It is no exaggeration to say that liturgy played a structural role in late-medieval political society. It was the prime mode of mediating political and national ideology between Church, crown, and the nation at large; only the Church was capable of communicating between rulers and ruled on such a scale. Bishops routinely organised processions in their dioceses to accompany the setting out of military expeditions. At such events, the royal rationale for war would be expounded and the public enjoined to make prayers of intercession for the king's protection.[9] On a smaller scale, the royal chapel of St Stephen in Westminster, and the chapel of St Mary, St George, and St Edward at Windsor grew into centres of the cult of chivalry and English aristocratic nationalism, following Edward III's founding of the Order of the Garter in 1348.[10] Henry V's use of his chapels and chaplains was no less strategic. Not only did the Chapel Royal supply military chaplains for the king's campaigns, but Henry's household also became a centre for liturgical and musical innovation, which virtuosity was deployed in the celebration and commemoration of royal victories.[11] The chapel's more conventional performances were supplemented by grander quasi-liturgical celebrations that required a much greater cast of performers, such as Henry V's civic entry into London following the Battle of Agincourt. This event, described in detail in the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, closely followed the structure of the Office for the Dead, involved dozens of performers and craftsmen, and dramatized nothing less than the apotheosis of the victorious king.[12] *Consecratio Navis* was, therefore, just one instance of a

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[8] BL Add. MS 6157, fols. 6v–8r; Trin. B.11.9, fol. 214v.

[9] A good summary is given by Alison McHardy, "Liturgy and Propaganda in the Diocese of Lincoln during the Hundred Years' War," *Studies in Church History* 18 (1982): 215–227.

[10] D. Morgan, "The Banner-bearer of Christ and Our Lady's Knight: How God became an Englishman revisited," in *St George's Chapel, Windsor, in the Fourteenth Century*, ed. Nigel Saul (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 51–62; Emily Howe, "Divine Kingship and Dynastic Display: the Altar Wall Murals of St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster," *Antiquaries Journal* 81 (2001): 259–303; Mark Ormrod, "The Foundation and Early Development of the Order of the Garter in England, 1348-1399," *Fruhmittelalterliche Studien* 50 (2016): 383–390.

[11] Alison McHardy, "Religion, Court Culture and Propaganda: the Chapel Royal in the Reign of Henry V," in *Henry V: New Interpretations*, ed. Gwilym Dodd (York: York Medieval Press, 2013), 131–156; Robert Nosow, *Ritual Meanings in the Fifteenth-Century Motet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 7–43. Henry himself is thought to have contributed to this innovation. Two liturgical compositions, a *sanctus* and a *gloria*, are attributed to "*Roy Henry*" in the so-called, "Old Hall Manuscript", a royal choir book of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. BL Additional MS 57950, fols. 12v–13r and 80v.

[12] Gordon Kipling, *Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy, and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998),

much wider program of performances on behalf of the crown. Such celebrations not only presented a spiritual interpretation of royal actions, but were also vehicles for widespread participation in royal ventures and victories. Through prayers, processions, and performance, they made the king present to his people far beyond his immediate person and ritually bound his subjects together under their ruler.

Yet to categorise the liturgy as propaganda is to raise further questions about how ritual could transmit a political message and to whom. Neither *Consecratio Navis* nor the other examples outlined above are the same as the propaganda of the twentieth or twenty-first centuries, nor is the English Church usefully characterised as a "propaganda ministry."[13] Since liturgy was the medium for the propagation of political ideologies, however, we need to ask, firstly, why we see this level of coordination between crown and Church and how the interests of both institutions are represented in the final product. Secondly, we must ask how (and how effectively) liturgy could function as a medium of political expression. Liturgical research raises numerous interpretative problems. Without corroboratory evidence, we cannot know whether the ritual on the page matched that which was performed. The audiences for such liturgies are equally mysterious, as is their level of participation and response to what they beheld.[14] What, moreover, is the relationship between the synchronic requirements of propaganda and the diachronic structures of liturgical tradition? It is the response to these questions that will allow us to determine the sense in which we can apply the terminology of propaganda in a late-medieval context. As such, *Consecratio Navis* is not only a case study through which we may explore the political theology of Henry V's reign, but also an opportunity for broader reflection on how we conceive of political communication in a late-medieval context.

The Manuscripts
Blind copying notwithstanding, the manuscripts in question can all be tentatively dated to between 1414 and 1422. Add. 6157 and Trin. B.11.9 were probably compiled in Canterbury, during the first quarter of the fifteenth century. Given that the manuscripts mention the Archbishop personally, Chichele's elevation in 1414 provides a fairly secure *terminus a quo* for the beginning of the manuscript's compilation. Both manuscripts also contain an order for the profession of Bridgettine nuns and monks, presumably to be used at the new royal monastery at Syon. Chichele himself received the first professions in 1420.[15] Yet, since the project had

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201–208. For the account in the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, see: Frank Taylor and John Roskell, eds., *Gesta Henrici Quinti* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 102–113.

[13] Dougal Shaw, "Nothing but Propaganda? Historians and the Study of Early Modern Royal Ritual," *Cultural and Social History* 1, no. 2 (2004): 144.

[14] Helen Gittos, "Researching the History of Rites," in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton (London: Routledge, 2016), 29–33.

[15] Chichele received the first professions according to Syon tradition, recorded by the monk Richard Whitford in his manuscript of the Syon Martirloge. See: Francis Procter and Edward Dewick, eds., *The Martirloge in Englysshe* (London, 1893), xxx.

been mooted as far back as 1413 and the priory's foundation stone was laid in 1415, it is possible that the inclusion of the liturgy in Chichele's book preceded Syon's completion. Thus, the Syon connection reinforces *c.*1414 as the earliest date of compilation. If the conjecture that it was the rite used in the blessing of the *Gracedieu* is correct, then *Consecratio Navis* must have been composed by 1418, but, that notwithstanding, the inclusion itself of the rite in these manuscripts also provides a more solid *terminus ad quem* of 1422. When Henry died, the ships in his navy were either mothballed or sold on to pay the King's debts.[16] Such an elaborate ship blessing would not have been used for anything other than royal ships and immediately after 1422 no new commissions took place.

Add. 6157 and Trin. B.11.9 were probably intended for use by a proxy. The existence of two manuscripts associated with Chichele is itself reflective of the Archbishop's preference to delegate minor blessings. Chichele regularly employed proxies to perform services and benedictions that he was unable to: specifically, he engaged both John, Bishop of Sora (a titular bishop without a diocese), and John Chourles, non-resident Bishop of Dromore in Ireland, whom he appointed as his permanent suffragan in 1420.[17] Moreover, the order for the profession of a monk, in both Add. 6157 and Trin. B.11.9, was to be made "in the presence of *Dom.* N Archbishop or N acting for the Archbishop of Canterbury in his part."[18]

Though CUL Mm.III.21 contains no direct evidence of proxy use, the appointment of Barrow to perform the blessing over the *Gracedieu* raises the possibility that it too was used in this way. The manuscript has been mistakenly assigned to John Russell, Bishop of Lincoln (d. 1494), owing to a misidentification of the arms on folios 5v, 91v, and 142r. They are in fact those of Robert Gilbert, Bishop of London (d. 1448).[19] These arms are painted over other arms, making 1436 (the date of Gilbert's enthronement) the absolute latest possible date for the compilation of this manuscript. It is possible that the arms of Richard Clifford (d. 1421) or John Kemp (1380-1454), Bishops of London during Henry V's reign, rest beneath those of Gilbert, but such a conclusion is ultimately suppositious. If CUL Mm.III.21 is a London manuscript, and Clifford was its earliest possessor, this could explain the selection of William Barrow to perform the ceremony at Southampton. As Bishop of London, Clifford was also dean of the province, and had responsibilities outside his diocese, principally the transmission and execution of archiepiscopal mandates including those ordering processions and liturgies for the crown. William Barrow, unusually, from May 1418 until the end of 1419, was Clifford's vicar general.[20] Barrow's Diocese of Bangor had been devastated by the Glyndŵr Rising

[16] Ian Friel, *Henry V's Navy: The Sea Road to Agincourt* (Stroud: The History Press, 2015), 150.

[17] See: Ernest Fraser, ed., *The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Canterbury and York Society, 1937-1947), 4:38, 57, 63, 73, 74, 78, 81, 83, 100, 105, 193.

[18] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 74v: "in presencia domini N. archiepiscopi vel N. gerentis vices domini archiepiscopi Cant in hac parte." All translations are my own unless stated otherwise.

[19] Paul Binski and Patrick Zutshi, *Western Illuminated Manuscripts: A Catalogue of the Collection in Cambridge University Library* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 220.

[20] The only pontifical certainly associated with Richard Clifford—Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 79—

(1400–1415), and its bishops were generally non-resident, seeking their income from other sources.[21] Barrow might also be thought of as substituting for Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, in whose diocese *Gracedieu* was built. Beaufort was unable to perform the ceremony himself because, in mid-1418, he was out of the country, making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem after having attended the Council of Constance. He was also, at this stage, something of a *persona non grata*. Pope Martin V had appointed him cardinal the year before, an act Henry V feared was a prelude to an attempt by the papacy to reclaim their lost rights of taxation and provision.[22] It was, therefore, in his capacity as Clifford's deputy and Beaufort's substitute that Barrow made his way to the River Hamble to bless the *Gracedieu*. The rite that he used, therefore, may well have been that contained in CUL Mm.III.21 or, otherwise, the exemplar from which it was copied.

It must be made clear, however, that we cannot say that *Consecratio Navis* was certainly the liturgy Barrow used to bless the *Gracedieu*. All that can be said is that the balance of probabilities is in its favour. The coincidence of this rite's compilation with the building of, thitherto, the largest ship in the history of the British Isles is, by itself, highly circumstantial. But perhaps more significant was the payment given to Barrow when considered against the shortness of other maritime blessings. Though £5 was a small expense, it was not insubstantial. Entries in the *Issue Rolls* suggest that this was a normal allocation for those commissioned to travel overseas on royal business. *Consecratio Navis* was, at that time, the only ship blessing of any length.[23] Since the ship blessings recorded in other insular manuscripts would scarcely have taken more than a few minutes to say, it makes sense that something more substantial was envisaged.

There is not enough space in this article to thoroughly compare *Consecratio Navis* with earlier maritime blessings.[24] This must await a separate study. Yet, it is worth giving some indication of how the liturgy compares to other rites. Given the partiality of the evidence and poor record of transmission, any conclusions must be tentative and provisional, Neither Adolph Franz nor Derek Rivard, who collected small numbers of ship blessings as part of broader treatments of priestly benediction, have addressed the relationships between these texts or the bibliographic relations of their manuscript witnesses. Of the approximately twenty different maritime blessings from manuscript and printed sources that I have uncovered,

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contains no ship blessing of any kind.

[21] David Walker, *Medieval Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 80, 89, 118; Glanmor Williams, *The Welsh Church* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1976), 229, 253, 270.

[22] Gerald Leslie Harriss, "Beaufort, Henry [called the Cardinal of England]," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi: 10.1093/ref:odnb/1859.

[23] On 16 July 1414, for example, the Issue Rolls record a payment of £5 to Sir Walter Hungerford to cover his travel expenses as ambassador to the King of Hungary. On 28 October 1421, £5 was also paid to Walter Wodehall, to cover his travel expenses to serve in the King's Chapel overseas. See: Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer*, 333–334, 361.

[24] By maritime blessings, I here refer to blessings of ships, blessings of sailors and blessings to be said when entering a ship collectively because they all have a shared apotropaic function.

which represent around fifty manuscript witnesses from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries, not one approaches *Consecratio Navis* in length or grandiosity.[25] Most continental blessings belong to a tradition, the earliest instance of which is a blessing for a ship in the pontifical of Gundekar II (1019-1075), Bishop of Eichstatt.[26] It was an adaptation of this prayer that Guillaume Durande (1230-1296), Bishop of Mende, incorporated into his pontifical, a blessing that consisted of a single prayer and an aspersion. Owing to the wide dissemination of the Durande-pontifical, this blessing became widespread in western continental Europe during the fourteenth century.[27] The longest and most elaborate version of this rite, that I know of, is to be found in British Library Egerton MS 1067, a later manuscript than any of those containing *Consecratio Navis*, produced for a French bishop some time before 1502. This is still a relatively brief blessing, consisting of the prayer from the Durande pontifical, an aspersion, a Gospel reading, *pater noster*, antiphons, and a further prayer.[28] Maritime blessings found in insular pontifical manuscripts tend to be less uniform than their continental counterparts; none belong to the aforementioned continental tradition. Of the ten insular manuscripts that I know to contain a maritime blessing, three contain *Consecratio Navis*. Of the others, the longest is that in British Library Harleian MS 873, a mid-fifteenth-century Sarum missal, which consists of a single prayer of one hundred and fifty-five words.[29] This prayer is, in fact, a variation on one that is used in *Consecratio Navis*, but which is not used to bless the ship itself but its service vessel or tender.[30] In short, *Consecratio Navis* was a radically new departure in maritime blessings, and its length and complexity was unparalleled.

It is really only this blessing of the service vessel that clearly links *Consecratio Navis* to other ship blessings. The prayer itself is a variation on the blessing of a ship also used in the Sarum *manuale*, a collection of liturgies to be performed by a priest.[31] The prayer in *Consecratio Navis* is, for the most part, identical to that in the *manuale* but it is not clear which was prior.

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[25] For the sake of brevity, the following list is limited to a selection of printed editions and insular manuscripts. In addition to the continental tradition discussed below, the *benedictio pro navigantibus* contained in Edmond Moeller, ed., *Corpus benedictionum Pontificalium*, 2 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1971), 2:573 was widespread in continental Europe from the ninth to the fifteenth century. For further printed examples of insular blessings, see Moeller, *Corpus*, 709 (a *benedictio pro navigantibus* from the fourteenth century Westminster Missal) and in Ralph Barnes, ed., *Liber pontificalis of Edmund Lacy* (Exeter: W. Roberts, 1847), 236, two short consecrations in the pontifical of Chichele's contemporary, Edmund Lacy (d. 1455). For unedited insular manuscripts, maritime blessings may be found in: BL Cotton MS Vitellus A XVIII, fol. 220v (an eleventh century sacramentary from, Wells); BL Harleian MS 2892, fol. 200v (an eleventh century Benedictional from Canterbury); BL Harleian MS 873, 27r (a fifteenth century missal); BL Harleian MS 955, fol. 79v (a fifteenth century miscellany from Syon Abbey).

[26] Cyrille Vogel and Reinhard Elze, eds., *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du dixième siècle*, 3 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1963-1972), 2:377.

[27] Michel Andrieu, *Le Pontifical Romain au Moyen Age*, 4 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1938-1941), 3:547.

[28] BL Egerton MS 1067, fols. 169v–170r.

[29] BL Harleian MS 873, fol. 27r.

[30] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 17v.

[31] Arthur Collins, ed., *Manuale ad Usum Percelebris Ecclesi[a]e Sarisburiensis* (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1960), 70.

Few *manuales* survive that can be positively dated to before 1414, the *terminus a quo* for the compilation of the manuscripts containing *Consecratio Navis*.[32] Those that can tentatively be assigned a compilation date before 1414 do not appear to contain a ship blessing.[33] That said, these are only partial manuscripts and do not represent complete corpora of blessings. For now, all that can be confidently said is that further work is needed to ascertain the origin of this prayer.

Thematic parallels notwithstanding, therefore, the proper context for understanding *Consecratio Navis*, is less ship blessings and, as we shall see, much more the *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* rite that it imitated. But *Consecratio Navis* drew on both traditions for its glorification of Henry V as the Church's protector and of the Church as intercessor for the crown and kingdom. It was, nonetheless, a liturgy of the moment. Like all liturgical texts, pontificals like Add. 6157, Trin. B.11.9, and CUL Mm.III.21 were highly mutable and sensitive to changes in local conditions.[34] Incoming bishops frequently commissioned a new compilation to commemorate their election. Mary Mansfield has calculated that Northern French pontificals, between 1150 and 1350, had a "lifespan" of only around fifty years.[35] Pontificals produced in England were no different: two of the books discussed above can be dated by their contents to a fairly narrow eight-year window in the early fifteenth century and the other to one of twenty-two years. Pontificals tended, therefore, to be opportunities for liturgical creativity—creativity that was often placed at the service of the state. It is, therefore, in pontifical liturgies that one might expect to find the dialogue between Church and secular power most vividly reflected.

Propaganda?

On the face of it, *Consecratio Navis* might not seem as though it has much to do with the liturgical propaganda outlined in the introduction. The ritual is apotropaic—that is to say that it is intended to ward off danger. Neither king nor state are mentioned at all (though states are by no means the only users of propaganda), and it is only implied that the ship being blessed will be used in warfare.[36] Yet investigation of the text's connection with "propaganda" is inevitable for three reasons. First, as mentioned, there is its elaborateness. The liturgy is clearly trying to say more than an ordinary ship blessing. Second, the liturgy itself was trying to inculcate a new image of the relationship between sacred and secular spheres. In appropriating the imagery of *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* for the blessing of a royal warship, the ritual propagated an

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[32] Collins, *Manuale*, viii–x.

[33] BL Add. MS 40740; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Lat. Liturg. F. 25; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. Liturg. D. 5.

[34] Gittos, "Researching the History of Rites," 13–38.

[35] Mary Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 162. For evidence of this practice elsewhere, see: David Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History of Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 93.

[36] The dedicatory prayer mentions "missiles" and "boarders," but it should be remembered that violence was endemic in the English Channel at this time and certainly was not limited to periods of formal war.

image of the union, perhaps even the merging, of Church and state as the vessel became a temporary sacred space, endowed with altars and adorned with the sacrament of the Mass. As a new ritual, designed to evoke moods and motivations in participants and onlookers, it was clearly meant to project and propagate an image of the sacredness of the king and his property. But third, and perhaps much more important, is the context of its writing, against the backdrop of Henry V's re-initiation of the Hundred Years' War and the related efforts of the Lancastrian monarchs to secure their legitimacy by cultivating an image of divine approval. Both contexts generated texts and performances suffused with propagandist intentions. Even if *Consecratio Navis* is not to be read as propaganda *per se*, it was produced in a culture where the projection of meaning was intensely politicised and where speech and images were increasingly tightly controlled. It is impossible to consider it apart from propaganda. Yet propaganda itself is a highly loaded term: it comes packed with *a priori* assumptions and so it is important to clarify the historical context and what we mean by the word here.

Consecratio Navis was composed in the midst of a short-lived naval moment. It is rarely noted that, to put his army in the field, Henry V probably employed about the same number of sailors as he did soldiers. Unlike his forebears, Henry perceived the strategic value of continuous maritime supremacy to military operations on land. It was with the intention of establishing a permanent naval presence in the English Channel that he set about re-organising England's maritime infrastructure in 1413.[37] Henry's innovation was the expansion of the permanent core of the crown's sea power. Under the capable direction of his Clerks of Ships, William Catton and William Soper, the King's ships increased in number from two in 1413 to thirty-six by 1422 (obtained through building, purchase, gift, and capture).[38] The crowning achievement was, of course, the aforementioned *Gracedieu*, completed late in 1418 (sometime after its consecration). At 1400 tuns burden, it was the largest ship that had ever been built in Britain and remains by far the largest clinker-built vessel ever constructed.[39] In 1415 and 1416, Henry's navy proved itself repeatedly in the operations supporting the Agincourt campaign and against the combined French and Genoese fleets at the Battle of the Seine. By 1417, Henry had a semi-permanent naval presence in the channel, with yearly seakeeping operations taking place between 1417 and 1422. With so much invested in the creation of his navy, it is unsurprising that display was a critical function of the fleet. Exchequer rolls suggest that Henry's ships were richly decorated. Strikingly, the fleet sailed adorned with sacred banners,

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[37] Craig Lambert, "Henry V and the Crossing to France: Reconstructing Naval Operations for the Agincourt Campaign, 1415," *Journal of Medieval History* 43, no. 1 (2017): 26.

[38] William Soper's accounts have been edited by Susan Rose for the Navy Records Society, see: *The Navy of the Lancastrian Kings: Accounts and Inventories of William Soper, Keeper of the King's Ships, 1422-1427* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982).

[39] Ian Friel, "Henry V's *Grace Dieu* and the Wreck in the Hamble near Burlesdon, Hampshire," *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 22, no. 1 (1993): 3–19; W. J. Carpenter-Turner, "The Building of the Gracedieu, Valentine and Falconer at Southampton 1416-1420," *Mariner's Mirror* 40 (1954): 55–72.

bearing the images of saints associated with the royal family or else with particular vessels.[40] Perhaps most indicative of Henry's association of his navy with the divine was his choice of names. When John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon, captured three Genoese carracks off the Pays de Caux in 1417, among Henry's orders was that they be re-named after saints, becoming the *Paul*, the *Christopher*, and the *Andrew*. As Malcolm Vale points out, they joined a veritable pantheon: "the *Litill John* and the *Swan* were heavily outnumbered by the *Jhesus*, the *Trinite Roiale*, the *Holygost*, the *Marie* (four vessels so named) the *Agnes*, *Anne*, *George*, *Gabrielle* and *Nicholas*."[41] While calling ships by sacred names was not unusual by the fifteenth century, the consistency of Henry's naming practice is suggestive of his desire that his military endeavours be regarded as a sacred mission and belief that his victories were obtained *Dei Gratia*, which conviction was especially evident in the naming of the *Gracedieu*.[42]

While the English Church's involvement in strictly naval matters was largely administrative, its contributions to Henry's war more generally and particularly in matters of propaganda are well known.[43] The English Church had, since at least 1297, routinely acted as a disseminator of the crown's take on current affairs.[44] Writs were sent from chancery to the archbishops of both provinces, commanding prayers, processions, or (occasionally) sermons on the king's behalf. The archbishops then circulated these orders to their subordinates who passed them down the ecclesiastical hierarchy to the localities: pontifical registers usually provide the evidence for these services.[45] This ecclesiastical process mirrored the circulation of news via royal writs to sheriffs, who proclaimed them to an elite audience in county courts.[46]

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[40] Nicholas Nicolas, *A History of the Royal Navy, 1327–1422* (London: Richard Bentley, 1847), 447.

[41] Malcolm Vale, *Henry V: The Conscience of a King* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 47.

[42] For western European ship-naming practices, see: Genevieve Bresc and Henri Bresc, "Les Saints Protecteurs de Bateaux 1200-1460," *Ethnologie Française* 9, no. 2 (1979): 161–178.

[43] Histories of ecclesiastical propaganda during the Hundred Years' War are numerous: see Herbert Hewitt, *The Organization of War under Edward III* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966), 160–165; W. R. Jones, "The English Church and Royal Propaganda during the Hundred Years' War," *Journal of British Studies* 19, no. 1 (1979): 18–30; McHardy, "Liturgy and Propaganda"; Alison McHardy, "Religious Ritual and Political Persuasion: The Case of England in the Hundred Years' War," *International Journal of Moral and Social Studies* 3 (1988): 41–57; Alison McHardy, "Some Reflections on Edward III's use of Propaganda," in *The Age of Edward III*, ed. J. S. Bothwell (York: York Medieval Press, 2001), 171–192; McHardy, "Religion, Court Culture and Propaganda," 131–156; James Doig, "Propaganda, Public Opinion and the Siege of Calais in 1436," in *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Rowena Archer (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), 83–88; Andrea Ruddick, "National Sentiment and Religious Vocabulary in Fourteenth-Century England," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 60, no. 1 (2009): 1–18. For earlier cases see Barnaby Keeney, "Military Service and the Development of Nationalism in England, 1272-1327," *Speculum* 22, no. 4 (1947): 534–549; David Bachrach, "The Ecclesia Anglicana goes to War: Prayers Propaganda, and Conquest during the Reign of Edward I of England," *Albion* 36, no. 3 (2004): 393–406.

[44] David Bachrach, studying the English Church's intercessory processions on behalf of Edward I, has found no evidence that these performances took place before this date. See: Bachrach, "Propaganda," 396.

[45] McHardy, examining pontifical registers from the diocese of Lincoln, counted thirty-four requests connected with warfare between 1337 and 1453; see: "Liturgy and Propaganda", 216.

[46] John Maddicott, "The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 28 (1978): 34; Keeney, "Military Service"; Jones explicitly makes the link, "The English Church," 19.

Like his predecessors, Henry used liturgy to mediate his foreign policy to the kingdom at large and to embed his self-image and the memory of his victories in the national consciousness. During his reign, orders for intercessory processions were numerous and regular: episcopal registers record evidence of at least eight archiepiscopal mandates for prayers and processions for the King's campaigns, along with five others for the more general safety of the Church and realm.[47]

To ascribe a propaganda function to such processions does not detract from their apotropaic function. As the forty-day indulgence routinely attached to participation in such intercessions suggests, the protective function of these liturgical performances depended on stimulating the maximum participation from the populace, both in terms of numbers and emotional investment. Two of Chichele's surviving mandates (albeit ones concerning the welfare of the Church at large as well as the realm) voiced concern that his orders were not being observed by all of his clergy, "and so, they have rendered lukewarm the devotion of the people for prayer for the aforementioned [Church and realm] by their negligence and inattentiveness."[48] Notably, the author of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, probably a member of Henry's household chapel, corroborates the perception that through prayer, the whole kingdom participated in the King's victories, ascribing the victory at Agincourt in 1415 in no small part to the "multitude of prayers and supplications" made for the king in England.[49] Performance alone was not enough: victory demanded the enthusiastic participation of all.

Henry having won his victories *Dei gratia*, the English Church was no less diligent in ensuring that they were liturgically commemorated. Chichele's mandate of 4 January 1416, elevating St George's day to a double feast (even though it made no direct mention of Henry's victories), nevertheless emphasised the role of the saint as military patron, whose intervention "guides the armed campaigns of the English people against hostile invasion in the time of wars."[50] His subsequent order that both the deposition and translation of the House of Lancaster's unofficial patron saint, St John of Beverley, be observed throughout the province

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[47] Fraser, *The Register of Henry Chichele*, vol. 3, 323–325 (20 April 1415), 435–437 (7 June 1415), vol. 4, 123–124 (9 April 1415), 127–128 (2 August 1416), 167–168 (8 May 1417), 175–176 (22 June 1417), 206–207 (25 September 1419); Thomas Scott Holmes, ed., *The Register of Nicholas Bubwith, Bishop of Bath and Wells 1407-1424*, 2 vols. (London: Somerset Record Society, 1914), vol. 2, 334 (8 August 1418), 405 (20 July 1421); G. R. Dunstan, ed., *The Register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter, 1420-1455*, 5 vols. (Torquay: Canterbury and York Society, 1963-1972), vol. 1, 38 (1 August 1421), 85 (5 September 1421); Margaret Archer, ed., *The Register of Bishop Philip Repingdon (1405-1419)*, 3 vols. (Hereford: Lincoln Record Society, 1963-1982), vol. 3, 235–256 (4 April 1418), 267 (26 October 1418). There is also evidence that at least one bishop, Nicholas Bubwith of Bath and Wells, ordered processions independent of royal or archiepiscopal command; Holmes, *Register of Nicholas Bubwith*, 2:351.

[48] Fraser, *The Register of Henry Chichele*, 4:167–168, 175–176: "sicque populi devocionem ad orandum pro premissis ex sua necligencia et incuria tepidam reddiderunt."

[49] Taylor and Roskell, *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, 88–89: "Sed et nec oblitus est deus multitudinis precum et oracionum Anglie, in quibus, ut pie creditur, nostri cito resumpserit vires et, fortiter resistentes, repulerunt hostes usque solum perditum recuperarunt."

[50] Fraser, *The Register of Henry Chichele*, vol. 3, 8–9: "huius namque ut indubitanter credimus interventu nedum gentis anglicane armata milicia contra incursus hostiles bellorum tempore regitur."

of Canterbury, by contrast, made the connection with Henry's military campaigns directly. The saint's translation day was also 25 October, the anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt. Chichele was clear that the saint's special patronage of the King played a part in the victory and that his celebration, alongside saints Crispin and Crispinian, was as much a commemoration of the battle as the saint's role in it.[51] This augmentation of provincial liturgy mirrored, on a large scale, the expansion of the liturgy in Henry's own household. The author of the *Gesta* records that, in thanksgiving for his victories, the King made extensive additions to the daily rituals of his chapel in 1416, including a memorial of the Assumption of the Virgin, to celebrate the Duke of Bedford's victory at the Battle of the Seine, which had taken place on that day, and another of St George, "our champion and protector."[52]

Though the clergy were held to participate in Henry's victories through liturgy, their efforts in his name were not merely limited to religious performances.[53] Just as they had also done for earlier kings, Churchmen acted as administrators and logisticians for Henry's military expeditions. Chaplains followed his armies to war.[54] Perhaps most surprisingly, in view of the ecclesiastical prohibition on shedding blood, English clergy were also expected to arm themselves and function as a sort of home guard in the event of French or Scottish incursions. From 1368 to 1418, there were regular assemblies of armed clerics gathered in anticipation of imminent invasion (called arrays of the clergy), including two during Henry's reign, in 1415 and 1418.[55] These arrays seem not to have been in any obvious way controversial. Indeed, on a number of occasions, these forces actually went into battle, as in 1377, when the Abbot of St Augustine's Abbey, Michael Pecham, led successful efforts to repel French and Breton raiders in Kent.[56] So, there was not only a well-established precedent for the English clergy acting as propagandists, but they were also very visibly part of the war effort.

Consecratio Navis can only be seen, therefore, as a creative extension of this long-term participation in royal war making. However, the argument of this article is emphatically not that it is, itself, a piece of propaganda. Alongside Henry's image making, it is widely recognised that there existed a diffuser body of what may be called "government aligned" writing and performance, the creators of which cannot be said to have received a commission, but who nevertheless disseminated a pro-government message.[57] Works in this category are determined

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[51] Fraser, *The Register of Henry Chichele*, vol. 3, 28–29.

[52] Taylor and Roskell, *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, 152–153: "pugile et protectore nostro."

[53] Alison McHardy, "The English Clergy and the Hundred Years' War," *Studies in Church History* 20 (1983): 171–178.

[54] For military chaplains, see: McHardy, "The Chapel Royal," 132–133.

[55] Bruce McNab, "Obligations of the Church in English Society: Military Arrays of the Clergy, 1369-1418," in *Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Joseph R. Strayer*, ed. William Chester Jordan, Bruce McNab and Teofilo F. Fuiz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 293–314.

[56] McNab, "Obligations of the Church," 299.

[57] See, for example, the studies by: Antonia Gransden, "Propaganda in English Medieval Historiography," *Journal of Medieval History* 1 (1975): 363–381; Paul Strohm, *England's Empty Throne* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Peter Lewis, "War Propaganda and Historiography in Fifteenth Century France and England," *Transactions*

primarily by their internal content rather than by clear evidence of propaganda use and include partisan chronicles, polemical treatises, sermons and verses. A good example of such writing is the moderately well-known series of macaronic, Lenten sermons contained in Bodleian Library MS Bodley 649, which, from internal evidence, can be ascribed to an anonymous Benedictine monk, based in Oxford and writing after 1415, and while Henry V was still alive.[58] Five of the twenty-five sermons in this collection mention the King, describing him in explicitly providential terms, and echoing the preambles of archiepiscopal mandates both for prayers and the commemoration of the saints connected with the king's military victories. In sermon six, Henry is the warrior of 2 Maccabees 11, sent by God to relieve the Church from its oppressors—that is, the Lollards. In sermon fifteen, he is the strong pillar supporting the Temple. In sermons twenty-two and twenty-four, Henry is again styled the defender of the Church. In sermon twenty-five, he is evocatively styled "oure maistur mariner, our worthi prince," steering the ship of the kingdom of England safely through the shoals of calamity.[59] Such writers are not propagandists in the sense normally comprehended by that term. There is no evidence to suggest that the author of Bodley MS 649 was the King's spokesman, or that these sermons accompanied official intercessions for the King. Rather, by circulating such ideas, the preacher reveals himself not as a propagandist, but as one influenced by propaganda.

But if he is the propagandist's dupe, he is also his co-worker. The great weakness of characterising such writing as "propaganda" is the term's reductionism. As Jennifer Nuttall has shown of the political poetry of the early fifteenth century, an assumption that a piece of writing was propagandistic tends to erase the nuances of its author's voice. Even so-called "Lancastrian" writers seldom univocally or unequivocally lauded the government. Such texts, she contends, are better cast as literary "commentary" or "conversation" on royal policy that circulated within a particular social context (in the case of the poems, networks of royal clerks and other professional bureaucrats).[60] Their exaltation of the king came as part of a desire to guide the formation or implementation of royal policy. The abiding concern of the author of Bodley MS 649 was not the exaltation of Henry V, whom he ultimately praised as the instrument of a greater purpose, the expurgation of the Lollard menace that, purportedly, threatened the peace of the Church and the security of the kingdom. But in characterising

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of the Royal Historical Society 15 (1965): 1–21; Jennifer Nuttall, *The Creation of Lancastrian Kingship: Literature, Language and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[58] This is one of two sets in the same manuscript. These sermons have been discussed at length in Gerald Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966), 70–75; Roy Martin Haines, *Ecclesia Anglicana: Studies in the English Church of the Later Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 201–221; Siegfried Wenzel, *Macaronic Sermons: Bilingualism and Preaching in Late Medieval England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 49–51; Patrick Horner, "'The King Taught Us the Lesson': Benedictine Support for Henry V's Suppression of the Lollards," *Medieval Studies* 52 (1990): 190–220. They have been published with a facing translation in Patrick Horner, ed. and trans., *A Macaronic Sermon Collection from Late Medieval England; Oxford, S. Bodley 649* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2006).

[59] Horner, *A Macaronic Sermon Collection*, 154–159, 412–413, 460–461, 504–505, 526–527.

[60] Nuttall, *Creation*, 120–126.

Henry as the instrument by which, he hoped, God would carry out that purpose, the preacher built on and retrenched ideas originating in royal image propaganda.[61]

It is in a similar sense that a concept of propaganda should inform a reading of *Consecratio Navis*. Propaganda does not describe the intentions of the liturgy's compiler. Instead, it is used here only to signify the text's persuasive potential and situatedness within the discourses of image making by Church and state. The liturgy draws together imagery produced by both, for quite different purposes, and shapes it in a creative new way. In this framework, both Church and state are subject and object of liturgical propaganda. They are both contributors to its ultimate shape and yet are shaped by it as, through ritual actions, it symbolises and makes substantial its own vision of the relationship between them. Such an understanding of propaganda takes us away from questions of manipulation and deception by particular propagandists, and instead shifts us towards understanding how the grammar of political persuasion is shaped by multiple agencies.[62] As is appropriate to a religious ritual, the ultimate effect of *Consecratio Navis* is integrative. But the liturgy itself is multimodal, potentially expressing quite different things to different groups of participants and onlookers. For seamen, the liturgy invested the vessel with sacred power, placing ship and crew under the protection of a divine patron. Churchmen performing this liturgy, by contrast, enacted their service to the crown and were presented with the classic *locus* of ecclesiastical orthodoxy, the Ship of the Church. But that ship was now a royal ship and the security of that orthodoxy the crown's gift.

Audience(s)

Consecratio Navis instituted a community, even if that community was conceptual rather than actual. The *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* rite on which it was based quite literally incorporated the Church, linking its physical fabric with the bodily probity and integrity of the parish community, both collectively and individually.[63] Yet the community incepted by *Consecratio Navis* was quite different to that created by its precursor. As Table 1, below, illustrates, the ship blessing deducted much from the original rite. The subtraction of several rituals radically shifted the emphasis of the ceremony from the instructional and sacramental functions traditionally embodied by a church onto themes of spiritual and physical danger. In effect, what remained was fundamentally apotropaic. The rite established a community bound together not by sacraments and teaching, but by shared peril. But whom that community included and the danger that they faced depended on the audience.

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[61] For Henry's use of the putative Lollard threat to underline his enthusiasm for religious orthodoxy, see Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 32–62.

[62] Bertrand Taithe and Tim Thornton, "Propaganda: A Misnomer of Rhetoric and Persuasion," in *Propaganda: Political Rhetoric and Identity, 1300–2000*, ed. Bertrand Taithe and Tim Thornton (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 3.

[63] This article will refer to the form of the *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* service recorded in William Maskell, *Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, 3 vols. (London, 1846), 1:161–203. For the Church as body, see Dawn Marie Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place* (New York: Routledge, 2003), xv; Laura Varnam, *The Church as Sacred Space in Middle English Literature and Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018, Kindle Edition), loc. 1020.

Table 1: Comparison of *Consecratio Navis* with *Dedicatio Ecclesiae*

Dedicatio Ecclesiae (from *Monumenta Ritualia*)	*Consecratio Navis*
Bishop robed in tent	Bishop robed in tent
Bishop comes before the door: Deacon closed within.	*No parallel*
Bishop prepares holy water	
Bishop asperses the exterior of the church circumambulating the walls three times	
Doors are opened and the bishop enters the church The laity are shut out	The bishop enters the ship
Litany	*No parallel*
Abecedarium (Latin and Greek alphabets are written on the floor of the church)	
Bishop prepares Gregorian water	Bishop prepares Gregorian/holy water
Bishop asperses the interior of the church, going around it three times The Choir sings psalms	Bishop asperses the exterior and the interior of the ship (from above *desuper*), going around it three times
Bishop asperses the interior length and breadth of the church's interior "in the manner of a cross" The bishop then goes out of the church and asperses the exterior walls three times again Goes back into the church and asperses to the north, south, east, and west	*No parallel*
Happens later in the ritual	The ship is censed
Dedication prayer *Vere dignum* followed by a variable "secret"	Dedication prayer *Vere dignum* followed by a variable "secret"
Bishop anoints the church with chrism	*No parallel*
The church is censed	*Happens earlier in the ritual*
Consecration of the altar	*No parallel*
Blessing the altar ornaments	Blessing the tender (a sort of service boat)
Mass	Five simultaneous Masses
Concluding prayers	Concluding prayers

There are two ways of thinking about the audience of *Consecratio Navis*. It was either a

ceremony with a congregation of mariners (presumably those who would make up the crew) or it was a closed rite observed only or largely by the celebrants. *Prima facie*, there is little that would explicitly support the first scenario. At one point, close to the end of the ceremony (if the ship had been blessed in the name of the Trinity), the bishop pronounced a blessing over "you and all who will sail in this vessel, dedicated in His name."[64] The "you" here, however, could easily refer to the other celebrants, and the use of the second person here is probably more to do with the prayer's source: it is an adaptation of a pontifical blessing of the Holy Trinity.[65] Perhaps the most compelling evidence that the ceremony was to be conducted without the laity is simply that in July 1418, when the *Gracedieu* was consecrated, it was still little more than a hull. There was no crew yet engaged who could have observed the ceremony.[66] There is no evidence that even potential crew were present. Yet, perhaps more importantly, the structure of the ceremony itself is suggestive of a closed ritual. *Consecratio Navis* opens with a prayer from the middle of *Dedicatio Ecclesiae*, the incipit of which is *Crux pellit*. This is significant because it is at this point in the church dedication ceremony that the bishop and clergy are shut in the church, with the laity outside. The following translation demonstrates how closely the prayer in *Consecratio Navis* is modelled on that of *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* and gives some indication of how nearly it recalled the closed part of the church dedication. The *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* blessing, "May the Cross cast the enemy from this place, may the Cross defend those praying here, may the Cross triumph, now and forever,"[67] was rendered as "May the Cross cast the enemy from this place, may the Cross defend all sailing in this ship, may the Cross triumph, now and forever"[68] in *Consecratio Navis*.

The only participants mentioned in the rubric are the bishop and his assistants, a choir, and a group referred to as "other reverend persons" who were to prostrate themselves with the bishop following this oration.[69] Given that the ceremony closed with simultaneous Masses (while the High Mass was being sung on the sterncastle, the rubric requires two consecutive Low Masses to be said both on the foredeck and also the main deck), the simplest interpretation is that "reverend persons" referred to the other clerics required. Unlike *Dedicatio Ecclesiae*, where the laity would normally be present for the dedication of the altar, there is no rubric in *Consecratio Navis* to suggest that the laity were brought into the ceremony once the closed rituals have been completed.[70]

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[64] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 18v: "vos et omnes in hoc vase suo nomine dedicato navigaturos."

[65] See also: Henry Wilson, ed., *The Pontifical of Magdalen College* (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1910), 48–49.

[66] Carpenter Turner, "The building of the *Gracedieu*"; Friel, "Henry V's *Grace Dieu*," 4–5.

[67] Maskell, *Monumenta*, 1:172: "Crux pellit hinc hostem, crux Christi defendat hic orantes. Crux Cristi triumphet hic et in aevum."

[68] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 8v: "Crux pellit hinc hostem crux [Christi] defendat o[m]nis in hac naui nauigantes crux [Christi] t[ri]umpet hic et in aevum."

[69] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 8v: "aliqua reu[er]enda p[er]sona."

[70] Almut Pollmer-Schmidt and Bernward Schmidt, "Ritual and its Negation. Dedicatio Ecclesiae and the Reformed First Sermon," in *Foundation, Dedication and Consecration in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Maarten Delbecke and Minou Schraven, (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 321; in Maskell, *Monumenta*, 1:185–186, the rubric has the bishop

However, absence in the text does not constitute absence in practice.[71] If *Consecratio Navis* was used to bless the *Gracedieu*, then it would have been celebrated in a busy shipyard on the Hamble, a few miles from the royal fleet's main anchorage in Southampton Water.[72] There is no evidence for mariners' reception of this liturgy, but one should be careful about assuming their absence. The grounding of the symbolism of the liturgy in that of *Dedicatio Ecclesiae*, with its emphasis on the inauguration of a community, made little sense if no lay presence was envisaged. Whatever the case may be, it is possible to talk about how a shipboard community was constituted by the ritual, even if *in absentia*. Moreover, interest in the broader reception of this liturgy should not obscure the fact that the clergy themselves were also a constituency for the message it contained. As liturgical celebrants, the clergy not only produced meaning but also observed and interpreted of the rituals they performed.[73] While we should not doubt that prayers and processions were thought to be instrumental in themselves and cannot be characterised as "mere" propaganda, we should also realise that, as group performances, they created ritual communities that, in their thoughts and actions, identified themselves with the war aims of the crown.[74] Propaganda and performance were and are inextricable and in *Consecratio Navis*, the clergy affirmed their service to the crown.

Imagery

In formulating the sacred character of the ship, the compiler's strategy seems to have been to start with the sacredness invested in a church by *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* and then to deduct what was irrelevant or inappropriate. *Consecratio Navis* did not create a floating church and the rite itself reflects that. Much of the pastoral symbolism, therefore, was lost. The subtraction of *Dedicatio Ecclesiae*'s triple circumambulation, for example, was symbolic rather than practical. Ships such as the *Gracedieu*, after all, would have been in drydock and a circumambulation perfectly feasible. But the point of the procession around the church was to constitute it as a pastoral and as a penitential space. The prayers of the first circuit present the Church as the earthly image of the Heavenly Jerusalem, those of the second inveigh against communal discord, and in the third the role of the clergy in absolution is foregrounded and all reminded that "whatever is done rightly and perfectly by them in Your name, can be trusted to be done by You."[75] Since the ship has no such soteriological function, this symbolism is irrelevant to it, as, indeed, is the *Abecedarium*, the ritual by which the Latin and Greek alphabets are inscribed upon the floor in ashes to denote the presence of God's word and the Church's teaching

leaving and re-entering the church but does not, in fact, mention the entry of the laity.

[71] For the importance of situating liturgical texts, see Mette Birkedal Bruun and Louis Hamilton, "Rites for Dedicating Churches," in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy*, ed. Helen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton (New York: Routledge, 2016), 183.

[72] Rose, *The Navy of the Lancastrian Kings*, 38.

[73] Hewitt, *The Organization of War*, 161; Jones, "The English Church," 23; McHardy, "Some Reflections," 181.

[74] Ruddick, "National Sentiment," 5.

[75] Maskell, *Monumenta*, 1:169–171: "ut quicquid in tuo nomine digne perfecteque ab eis agitur a te fieri credatur."

function.[76]

The last deduction was the use of Gregorian water, which was retained from the *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* in the two Canterbury manuscripts, Add. 6157 and Trin. B.11.9, but became ordinary holy water in CUL Mm.III.21.[77] Gregorian water was usually reserved for the blessing of ecclesiastical buildings and cemeteries.[78] Specifically, it was sprinkled throughout the church during the closed part of the *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* and was used in the blessing of a repaired or a polluted church.[79] Medieval liturgical commentators generally agreed that the blend of elements allegorised the community and mission of the church. The water represented the people, the salt religious doctrine, the ashes the passion of Christ, and the wine (when mixed with water) Christ's divine nature.[80] Gregorian water, therefore, symbolised both the preaching and the sacramental functions of the Church. Shorn of the ecclesial context, however, its symbolism could only have been exorcistic. But its inclusion in the Canterbury manuscripts of *Consecratio Navis* may indicate an associative intention. In using a rite particular to ecclesiastical buildings, the bishop implicitly placed the things of the Church under royal protection. It was potentially an act of enormous submissiveness, which makes its deduction from the London manuscript particularly intriguing. While it is tempting to read much into this action, it is impossible to know exactly what rationale informed the choice. It is possible that it was retroactively deemed canonically dubious or equally that it was symbolically incongruent with the rest of the rite. Quite possibly, the change indicated the limits of ecclesiastical service and the desire to protect the special character and rights of Church property.

What remained from the *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* was the baptismal imagery, the triple aspersion so often allegorically linked to triple immersion. Having consecrated the Gregorian/holy water, the bishop sprinkles the exterior and the interior of the vessel, from above, in three circuits.[81] The analogy between baptism and aspersion was a staple of church dedication sermons and liturgical commentary.[82] Just as baptism cleansed and separated out the Christian body from the rest of humanity, aspersion purified and separated the space of the church from the profane, secular world and consecrated it to the use of the Christian community. But this link between baptism and church dedication went beyond analogy. In both rituals, water established a border, the transgression of which jeopardised the status constructed in the ceremony. De-consecration of a church was usually a result of contact with

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[76] Guillaume Durande, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, 3 vols. (Antwerp, 1614), vol. 1, fol. 27.

[77] CUL Mm.III.21, fol. 273r.

[78] Bruun and Hamilton, "Rites for Dedicating Churches," 197; Pollmer-Schmidt and Schmidt, "Ritual and its Negation," 322.

[79] Maskell, *Monumenta*, 1:177–180, 208–209; Durande, *Rationale Divinorum*, 1:29r, 30r.

[80] *Quid significet duodecim candelae*, in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 131, col. 853; see also Ivo of Chartres, *De Ecclesiasticis Sacramentis Officiis*, in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 162, col. 532; Hugh of St Victor, *De Sacramentiis Christianae Fidei*, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 176, col. 442; Durande, *Rationale Divinorum*, vol. 1, fol. 33r.

[81] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 10v: "Deni[que] asp[er]gat ep[iscop]us de ipsa[m] aqua b[e]n[e]d[i]c[t]a nave[m] ter cum ysopo in circuitu et desuper tam int[erius] quam ext[erius]."

[82] Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place*, 14.

the unregulated or un-Christian body, as when blood or semen was shed within the church precinct or when an unbeliever's unbaptised body was buried within it.[83] As such, *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* established an organic link between the locative holiness of the church and the integrity of the baptised body. The one depended on the other. It cannot, therefore, have been far from the celebrants' minds that, as a warship, *Gracedieu* might one day be awash with blood.

Instead of a soteriological community, characterised by bodily containment, *Consecratio Navis* inaugurated a community of peril, characterised by shared exposure to contingency and bodily dissolution. Throughout the ceremony, but especially in the dedication prayers, the rite emphasised the danger of maritime life. Irrespective of to whom the ship was dedicated, the dedication prayer always contained the following passage:

> May every enemy power, every adversity, every calamity be far removed from her[.] May no pirate pillage her, may no missile of cannons or a bow hurt her, and may no boarding party of the enemy prevail in her[.] May lightning not strike her, may the whirlwind not envelope her, and may fire not ignite her[.] May no fog darken her, nor hold her back, when delayed by this, may neither rock nor sandbank crush or strike her[.] May the surge of great whales or immense sea-monsters not wash over [her], may the shadow of vain phantasm not seduce, nor anything trick or dupe[.] May no madness of the storm batter [her], may no wave overwhelm her, and may no tide engulf or sink [her].[84]

This was highly dramatic language, setting up a variety of typological antecedents for the vessel. The prayer has vocabularic similarities to a passage from Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis troiae*, describing Antenor's journey home from an embassy to the Greeks.[85] Some of the wording is also plainly Biblical: the reference to *cetegrandium* almost certainly comes from the *cete grandia* of Genesis 1:21. The ship, therefore, set forth into an ocean filled with danger on a mythological scale, a space characterised by absolute contingency. Indeed, from practically the dawn of writing, the sea was one part of a dualistic confrontation between order and chaos.[86] In a Christian context, the sea has sometimes denoted the vicissitudes of the world

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[83] Durande, *Rationale Divinorum*, fol. 30v.

[84] BL Add. MS 6157, fols. 13v–15r: "absit ei procul omnis inimica potestas omnis adv[er]sitas omnis calamitas non eam pirata diripiat non ei machinarum iactus vel arcuitia noceat nec ullus in eam hostilis incursus praevaleat. Non fulgur hanc feriat non turbo involvat nec ignis assumat. Non vapor caliginosus obtenebrat non huius infixam retinieat non scopulus aut zabulum [sabulum] conterat vel celidat Non cetegrandium vel i[n]maniu[m] belua[rum] occursus invadat non vani fantasmatis umbra seducat nec ullum carminet vel illudat Non rabies tempestatis co[n]quaciat non unda qua[e]libet obruat ne[que] fluctus absorbeat vel submergat."

[85] Guido delle Colonne, *Historia destructionis Troiae*, ed. Nathaniel Griffin (Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1936), 55: "Et eo alta maria scindente pro reditu, odiosa cuiusdam rabies tempestatis obduxit aerem tenebrosa caligine, et contrariis ventis aflantibus funduntur ymbres in tonitorum rugitu mirabili et corruscationum fulgoribus odiosis."

[86] Peter Skrine, "The Destination of the Ship of Fools," *Modern Language Review* 64, no. 3 (1969): 581; Jean Danielou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, trans. Donald Attwater (London: Burns and Oates, 1964), 58.

and at others, the tumults of the individual heart.[87] St Ambrose and St Augustine, for example, both allegorised the sea or abyss as the abode of demons and the beasts and whales that inhabited it as symbols for the devil.[88]

A ship, therefore, upon this ocean of chaos was without hope if it did not have a divine guarantor. By investing the ship with the personality of the dedicatee, *Consecratio Navis* made them a member of the community of peril, a stakeholder in the enterprise. It did this, not by turning a ship not into a floating church, but something rather closer to a floating reliquary. Obviously, the ship contained no actual relics. However, the dedication prayer was clearly based on a *Benedictio Capsarum pro Reliquiis* (a blessing of cases for relics), which was often used in the dedication of churches when the relics were interred in the blessing of the altar:

> Thus, placated by the prayers of these your saints, always and everywhere, propitiously extend the right hand of your unconquered power for those venerating the merits [of the saints] and humbly embracing [their] relics, against the devil and his angels, against lightning and storms, against hailstorms and other pestilences, against corrupted air and the deaths of men and animals, against thieves and bandits, against incursions of peoples and against evil beasts, and the multitudinous kinds of snakes and creeping things [and] against the most wicked inventions of men.[89]

As in the *Consecratio Navis* dedication prayer, the Christian believer is presented as subject to infinite contingency that can only be controlled through access to sacred power. In the case of the *Benedictio Capsarum*, power is mediated by the remains of the saints contained in the reliquary. In *Consecratio Navis*, that power is invested in the fabric of the ship itself. There is a functional parity between it and the reliquary in repelling danger.

While the rite stresses the vulnerability of the ship, it also emphasises divine presence within it. When the ship was dedicated to the Trinity, a form was used in which each member of the Trinity was invited to inhabit parts of the ship itself:

> May you, O Holy Father, take possession of the stern, may you take the helm, and may

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[87] The fullest summary of this imagery during the Christianity's early centuries is that of Hugo Rahner, see *Symbole der Kirche. Die Ekklesiologie der Väter* (Salzburg: Müller, 1964), beginning at 280. See also: Sebastian Sobecki, *The Sea and Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge: 2008), 36–37.

[88] See: St Ambrose, *De Fide* in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 16, col. 655; St Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 36, col. 440, 474 and *PL.* 37, col. 1380.

[89] Vogel and Elze, *Le Pontifical romano-germanique,* 1:164. Owing to the COVID-19 Crisis I was unable to access a copy of this, so the Latin translated is that in Josephus Catalanus, ed., *Pontificale Romanum in Tres Partes Distributum*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1851), 2:462: "Ita ipsorum merita venerantibus et reliquias humiliter amplectibus, contra diabolum et angelos eius, contra fulmina et tempestantes, contra grandines et varias pestes, contra corruptum aerem et mortes hominum vel animalium, contra fures et latrones, sive gentium incursiones: contra malas bestias, et serpentium ac reptantium diversissimas formas, contra malorum hominum adinventiones pessimas, eorumdem Sanctorum tuorum precibus complacatus, dexteram invictae potentiae tuae … extende."

you steer the course. In harsh weather, O Holy Son, may you raise your cross in her with the sail and stretch out the banner of your passion, may you terrify and repel enemies visible and invisible. May you seize the prow, O Holy Spirit, that you may command the waves and the winds and that you may supply a fair breeze with your gracious breath. May you dwell inside its hull and all the keel, O whole [and] Holy Trinity, may you encircle the outside and may you diminish and preserve it from all dangers wherever they come from.[90]

God the Father received the site of command in the sterncastle. The assignation of the sail to the Son implicitly included the mast. This part of the ship had, in allegories of the Ship of the Church, become Christ's accustomed position owing to the identification of the Cross with its crossbeam.[91] The prayer continued, "May your defensive power, your helping wisdom, your saving clemency, we pray O Lord, be to it one with its rigging and its inhabitants."[92] When dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the dedication closed describing its patrons thus: "Your holy angels together with You and with that glorious Virgin Mary the mother of Christ, her special patron, inhabitants of it [the ship] remaining in it together."[93] The ship was not, therefore, simply placed under the protection of the saints and angels to which it was dedicated, but in a very real sense the prayer indicated that the ship contained and embodied them.

This marriage of maritime community of peril with holy patron was where much of the influence of royal propaganda may be seen in *Consecratio Navis*. Henry was presented as having special access to divine power: the saints were his allies in war. The liturgy, therefore, echoed Lancastrian kings' other enlistments of the saints. The use, for example, of the oil, miraculously received by St Thomas Becket from the Virgin Mary, to anoint Henry IV and Henry V after him, and Archbishop Chichele's promotion of St John of Beverly underlined the role of divine aid in Henry's successes.[94] Such actions, and indeed the processions discussed in the preceding sections, should not be seen as a *quid pro quo* between institutions that conceived of themselves as distinct. The reality is that they were projections of an increasingly self-confident and assertive *Ecclesia Anglicana* that self-consciously and even enthusiastically identified itself with a king who enthusiastically identified himself with religious orthodoxy.

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[90] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 13r: "Puppim eius tu pa[ter] s[ancte] possideas gubernac[u]l[u]m tenens cursum q[ui] dirigas In tempestua cum velo s[anct]e filii tu erigas tua[m] in ea cruce[m]& passionis vexillum obtendas visibile & invisibiles hostes exterreas & repellas Proram O Sancte spiritus occupes undis & ventis ut imperes auram q[uia] prosp[er]am tuo grato spiramine s[ub]mi[ni]stres Ratem eius tota[m]que carina[m] o tota sancta trinitas intrinsecus habites forinsecus ambias & ab om[n]ib[us] undequ[isque] periculis minuas et preserves."

[91] Rahner, *Symbole*, 239.

[92] BL Add. MS 6157, 13v: "Assit ei domine q[uae]sumus una cu[m] suis armamentis et h[ab]itatorib[us] tua potencia defensiva tua sap[ienti]a directiva tua clemencia salvativa."

[93] BL Add. MS 6157, 16r: "Set angeli tui s[an]c[t]i una tecu[m] et cu[m] ip[s]a virgine gloriosa [Christi] genetrice sua speciali patrona iugit[er] in ea manentes ei[us] habitatores."

[94] J. McKenna, "The Coronation Oil of the Yorkist Kings," *English Historical Review* 82, no. 322 (1967): 102–104; Richard Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval England: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 438–439.

English churchmen had long been servants of the crown, but the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries saw a recrudescence of this alliance. The nebulous threat of Lollardy provided the catalyst, and liturgy, the language of this renewal.

By 1414, the essential unity of society had become axiomatic to the politics of the English Church. What threatened the religious order *ipso facto* threatened the political order and vice versa. This premise formed the basis of ecclesiastical arguments against Lollard dissent from the first and informed anti-heresy legislation in parliament from as early as 1382, becoming the justification for a full-blown regime of repression by the Leicester Parliament of 1414.[95] The putative "Lollard menace" was probably more rhetoric than reality.[96] Yet it provided a source of negative cohesion that enabled the shaken Church and insecure Lancastrian monarchy to draw strength from one another.[97] While the secular arm brought to bear the weapons of the law against dissenters, the ecclesiastical answer to discord, and their unique contribution to this alliance, was liturgical. It was with liturgy, specifically the elaborate Sarum Rite, that the English delegation at the Council of Constance (1414-1418), which was called to end the Western Schism and reform the Church, asserted the pre-eminence of the *Ecclesia Anglicana* to the gathered delegates of many nations.[98] It was through regularisation and reinvigoration of the liturgy that Chichele sought to cultivate orthodoxy at home.[99] And in *Consecratio Navis*, we see an effort to liturgically substantiate the alliance between Church and state. Through it, Henry's warship became the image of the Ship of the Church.

The allegory of the Ship of the Church is practically as old as Christianity itself. The original, and most important, function of this allegory was to link salvation with ecclesiology. For second-century writers, such as Hippolytus of Rome, and especially for the authors of St Clement's epistle to James and the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the ship, its parts, and its crew represented the order and hierarchy of church. Each component had a role to play in the harmonious functioning and thus the safety of the whole.[100] Other writers such as Tertullian and later St Ambrose took the ecclesiological component of the metaphor for granted, shifting the focus from internal harmony to complete submission to the ecclesiastical and theological structures of orthodoxy.[101] The sea of the world became the domain of the heretic. The Ship of the Church became, in essence, a metaphor for the doctrine *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, and it was

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[95] Margaret Aston, "Lollardy and Sedition 1381-1431," *Past and Present*, no. 17 (1960): 4.

[96] Strohm, "England's Empty Throne," 32–39.

[97] Jeremy Catto, "Religious Change under Henry V," in *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship*, ed. Gerald Harriss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 97–115.

[98] Vincent Gillespie, "Chichele's Church: Vernacular Theology in England After Arundel," in *After Arundel*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Khantik Ghosh (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 7.

[99] Catto, "Religious Change," 105.

[100] Pseudo Clement, *Epistola Clementis ad Jacobum* in *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 2, col. 49–50.

[101] See: Tertullian, *Tertullian's Homily on Baptism*, ed. and trans. Ernest Evans (London: SPCK, 1964), 29; St Ambrose, *De Incarnatione* in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 16, col. 827; Pseudo-Ambrose, *Sermones* in *Patrologia Latina*, 17, col. 697.

this use that set the pattern for the employment of the imagery thereafter.[102]

The Western Schism and, in England, the heresy of the Lollards, leant the imagery of the Ship of the Church renewed resonance in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Numerous examples could be cited, but some indication of its importance as a symbol for churchmen thinking about the state of the Church, both in England and throughout Europe, may be found in its use by Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris and ultimately one of the chief architects of the conciliar resolution to the Schism, and by Henry Chichele himself.[103] For Gerson, writing in support of an ecumenical council, the clergy were a ship's crew doing battle with themselves. In his impassioned *Trilogus in Materia Schismatis*, written in the winter of 1402-1403, Gerson described a battle that had become so embittered that the common enemies of Christendom, implicitly the sea of heretics, surged unchallenged and the Ship of the Church sailed in imminent danger of destruction.[104] Chichele likewise invoked this imagery to convey the precariousness of the Church's existence even as the schism was nearing its end in the summer of 1415. In a mandate for processions for the state of the Church issued in June of that year, the Archbishop echoed Gerson's words, stating that "the ship of Peter, for a long time despaired of, is threatened by a tempest of advancing evils and persecutions of this kind, by an imminent [and] perilous wreck."[105] What these, and other, deployments of the allegory of the Ship of the Church show is that the metaphor had acquired a special synchronic significance in the context of the Schism and the movement to resolve it. The imagery constituted the Church itself as a community at imminent risk of dissolution, a community of peril. Though the schism had ended by 1418, *Consecratio Navis* appealed to that feeling of vulnerability. A protector was needed and for the compiler of this liturgy, the preeminent defender of the Church was Henry V.

The imagery of *Consecratio Navis* drew heavily on this tradition of the Ship of the Church beset by the evil sea of the world. The dedication prayer's fixed preamble, invoking the persons of the Trinity as protectors of ships, adduced Biblical narratives as evidence of divine protection: Noah's Ark, the boat in which Christ's disciples witnessed the calming of the

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[102] Later examples could be multiplied virtually without end. The *locus classicus* for discussions of the Ship of the Church was the miracle of Christ calming the storm (Matthew 8:23–27, Mark 4:35–41 and Luke 8:22–25). Across the eleven volumes of his *Repertorium* of Latin sermons, Johannes Schneyer records more than a hundred based on the passage from Matthew and a substantial portion of these signal that the Ship of the Church is their theme in the very first line. See Johannes Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1150-1350*, 11 vols. (Munster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1969-1991).

[103] For further examples, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints, and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378-1417* (University Park PA: Penn State Press, 2006), 50, 65–67, 105. John Gower used the symbolism in his *Vox Clamantis*, see: John Gower, *The Major Latin Works of John Gower*, ed. and trans. Eric Stockton (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), 144.

[104] Jean Gerson, *Trilogus in Materia Schismatis*, in Jean Garson, *Oeuvres Completes*, ed. Palemon Glorieux, 10 vols. (Paris: Desclée, 1960-1973), vol. 6, 263–298, 263; see also Cambridge, University Library MS Ii.iii.8, fol. 145r, for an English sermon that used the Ship of the Church imagery in a similar way.

[105] Fraser, *The Register of Henry Chichele*, 3:435: "petri navicula tempestate malorum et persecucionum huiusmodi ingruencium im[m]inenti periculoso naufragio extra spem quietis a diu deposita conturbatur."

storm, and the Holy Spirit's taming of the primordial waters at the start of creation. The ritual made quite clear that the ship should be conceived of allegorically as a symbol for the Church. But what changed these associations from a piece of poetic colouring into a statement of the Church's identification with Henry's cause and affirmation of his status as divinely appointed protector of the Church were the Masses. These took place at each of the locations outlined in the dedication prayer and, with the exception of the High Mass celebrated by the bishop on the sterncastle, they corresponded to the persons of the Trinity assigned to those places in the earlier prayer:

> With these things said, five Masses should be celebrated in the ship on three altars ... The first and highest altar should be solemnly prepared on the poop deck, that is sterncastle, which is thought the senior place ... Which Mass shall indeed be for the male or female saint in whose name the ship itself shall have been dedicated. The second altar should be prepared in the middle of the ship near the mast, where should be said (at the same time as the main Mass) two other private Masses, of which the first should be of the Incarnation of Christ, with the office *Rorate celi desuper*, and the second of the Passion of Christ, with the office *Nos autem gloriari.* The third altar should be prepared in the prow, that is in the forecastle, there should be said, at the same time as the principal Mass, two other private Masses, of which the first should be of the Holy Spirit, with the office *Spiritus domini replenit orben terrarum* unless the principal Mass shall have been the same, then, indeed, it can be [a Mass] of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary or of another feast of the same or of another as is pleasing, and the other Mass should [be] of the Angels with the office *Benedicite dominum omnes angeli eius.*[106]

Placing an appropriately themed votive Mass at each of these points on the ship, *Consecratio Navis* effectively fulfilled its own petitions that each member of the Trinity should inhabit the ship. The transubstantiated elements brought God, thaumaturgically, into its physical bounds. But the wooden walls that contained the divine presence belonged to Henry. The Ship of the Church was not here the trans-national ship of St Peter, but a decidedly English institution under an English king. The ritual elevated ecclesiastical submission to the crown to a

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[106] BL Add. MS 6157, fol. 18r: "Benedicite dominum omnes angeli eius. (Hiis d[i]c[t]is celebrentur in navi qui[n]q[ue] miss[a]e ad t[ri]a altaria ... P[ri]mu[m] & sup[ri]mu[m] altare paretur solempni[um] aliis in puppi hoc est in post[er]iori castello qu[a]e est p[ar]s p[ri]ncipalior computatus ... Q[uae] missa erit de S[an]c[t]o vel c[an]c[t]a in cui[us] no[m]i[n]e fuerit navis ip[s]a dedicata[.] S[e]c[un]d[u]m altare paret[ur] in medio navis ad malu[m] ubi dicant[ur] sub te[m]p[or]e p[ri]ncipalis miss[a]e ali[a]e due miss[a]e p[ri]uat[a]e qua[rum] p[ri]ma fiat de incarnac[i]one [Christi] cu[m] off[ici]o Rorate celi desup[er] & s[e]c[un]da[m] de passione [Christi] cu[m] off[i]c[i]o Nos aute[m] gl[or]iari Terciu[m] v[ero] altare paret[ur] in prora hoc est in ant[er]iori castello ubi d[ice]n[tu]r sub eod[e]m temp[or]e miss[a]e p[ri]ncipalis ali[a]e due miss[a]e p[ri]vate qua[rum] p[ri]ma fiat de s[an]c[t]o sp[irit]u cu[m] off[ici]o Sp[irit]us d[omi]ni replenit orbem t[er]ra[rum] nisi forte missa p[ri]ncipalis fu[er]it de eod[e]m tunc [enim] pot[er]it e[ss]e de assumpsione b[eata]e mari[a]e v[ir]ginis vel de alio festo ip[si]us v[e]l alt[er]i[us] ad placitu[m] & alia missa d[icentu]r de angelis cu[m] off[ici]o B[e]n[e]d[icite] d[om]i[nu]m om[n]es ang[e]li ei[us]."

gubernatorial ideal, a kind of royal hierocracy with Henry at its head.

This ideal is echoed very strikingly in the sermons of Bodley MS 649, which frequently feature ship imagery. Some of this is prosaic, such as the use of the ship to symbolise Christian life (sermon nine) and grace (sermon ten), but others show the influence of the times. Sermons sixteen and twenty-five feature not a Ship of the Church *per se*, but a ship of state, the prow of which is the clergy, the stern the nobility, and the body, the commons. Battered from all sides, in sermon ten, the preacher declares that it can only be saved by its unity and fidelity to God. In sermon twenty-five, he goes one step further, declaring that the nation's liberation from its doldrums (the preacher references the Great Revolt, the Glyndŵr Rebellion, and the heresy of the Lollards) depended on both God's provision of a monarch who, putting his hand to the rudder, could steer the ship through the shoals of adversity and on the prayers of the clergy, "'Pray for us', litanies, processions and special prayers at Mass" which, he asseverates, are the oars by which the ship of England escaped its oppressors. "The clergy," it is declared, "have rowed with hand and heart; never have they uttered more heartfelt prayers for a Christian prince than for him in time of war."[107] *Consecratio Navis*, though ultimately unconnected with Bodley MS 649, established a very similar reciprocity, demarcating the twofold role of the English Church within the state and putting liturgy at the centre of that relationship. The ship blessing, effectively, framed the liturgy of the Mass, by which divine power was most forcefully and completely mediated to Henry in the pursuit of his war. Defended and fortified by the rites of the Church, the king, in turn, steered the ship of state (of which the Church was an inextricable component) safely through the shoals of the sea of the world.

Conclusion

Ultimately, *Consecratio Navis* was a short-lived liturgical experiment. It may have been used for Henry's other ships; he built many. But there is no evidence—at least that I am aware of—for any performances other than its likely use in Barrow's consecration of *Gracedieu*. It attempted to visualise Henry V's claims to divine approbation and to display the unity between the English Church and the crown, providing rich and invaluable evidence of the efforts to negotiate and define the relationship. Ultimately, it must be remembered that the alliance between English Church and crown was predicated on orthodoxy and common enthusiasm for the greater *ecclesia*. English churchmen (quite literally, in the case of Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury) pushed their way to the forefront of ecclesiastical reform efforts at the Council of Constance.[108] *Consecratio Navis* should not, therefore, be read as a statement of the distinctness of the English Church under Henry V, but rather of its prestige within Christendom and Henry's pre-eminence as a Christian ruler and benevolent steersman of the Church as a whole.

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[107] Horner, *A Macaronic Sermon Collection*, 524–525.

[108] In a letter to the King, John Forester related how the bishop raced against and narrowly beat Pierre d'Ailly, Cardinal of Cambrai, to be the one to give the sermon of welcome to Emperor Sigismund when he entered Constance on 27 January 1417. See Gillespie, "Chichele's Church," 6.

With the decease of this energetic and enthusiastic patron of the Church and navy in 1422, the context for this liturgy evaporated. Henry's fleet had, by that stage, been so successful in clearing the seas of enemies that it largely obviated its own existence. The ships acquired at so great expense became so many floating white elephants and most of them were quickly sold to pay the King's enormous debts. *Gracedieu* herself was retained until 1439 when she was struck by lightning, burned to the waterline, and her wreckage sunk into the mud of the Hamble. She remains there to this day.