

BERNARDINUS SENENSUS, *Quadragesimale de Christiana Religione*
In Latin, manuscript on parchment,
1 Italy, Tuscany? c. 1430-1450

II + 202 folios, lacking second part of manuscript [sermons 46-66] (likely bound in two separate volumes), mostly quires of 10 (collation: i¹⁰, ii¹⁰, iii¹⁰, iv⁷ (8-1), v¹⁰, vi¹⁰, vii¹⁰, viii⁷ [8-1: last folio of quire likely cancelled], ix¹⁰, x¹⁰, xi¹⁰, xii¹⁰, xiii¹⁰, xiv⁸, xv¹⁰, xvi¹⁰, xvii¹⁰, xviii¹⁰, xix¹⁰, xx¹⁰, xxi¹⁰, xxii⁴), written in brown ink in a tight gothic bookhand, copied by at least 3 different scribes, text in two columns (justification 170 x 55 x 55 mm), catchwords, some quire signatures still visible, prickings, ruled in plummet, rubrics in red, some capitals touched in red, paragraph marks in red or blue, numerous 2 to 4-line high painted initials in red, 2 to 5-line high initials painted red or blue with opposite blue or red penwork extending in the margins, some parti-colored initials painted red and blue, some spaces set aside for initials left wanting, some initials left unfinished; contemporary marginal annotations or corrections. Bound in full light brown calf over pasteboards, back sewn on 5 raised thongs with title and fleurons gilt, triple frame traced on boards of simple blindstamped fillets, leather scuffed but binding nonetheless sound, some ink fading. Dimensions 245 x 160 mm.

Early manuscript of the Latin sermons of Bernardino da Siena, evidently in a working copy (end lacking), of capital importance for the evolution of the sermon. Known as “the Apostle of Italy,” Bernardino was a renowned preacher and reformer, many of whose theological and political ideas are preserved in the *Quadragesimale de Christiana Religione*, which was one of his most important works. Most of the 45 extant copies are in Italian libraries (De Ricci cites only two copies in North America).

PROVENANCE

1. Script very close to recorded autograph copies (see below).
2. Partially scratched out inscription on first flyleaf reads: “Sumptibus f[ratri] Victorii [...] Boniensis [?] (Bologna ?);
3. Sixteenth-century provenance on folio 1: “Conventus sanctae Marie Magdalene de Ast.” This is Asti (Piedmont), near Turin.

TEXT

ff. I-II, Contemporary table of contents; heading: *Tabula totius operis*; rubric, *Incipit tabula sermonum et materiorum super sequens opus de Christiana religione* [table gives complete list of sermons from 1 to 66, which suggests that the manuscript was once bound in two volumes, the second one now missing];

ff. IIv-201v, Bernardino da Siena, *Quaresimale de Christiana Religione* [sermons 1 to 47; beginning of sermon 48; missing sermons 49-66]; rubric, *Incipit tractatus de Christiana religione per tota quadragesima compositus per fratrem Bernardinum de Senis ordinis minorum et primo ponit probemium ad sequens opus ubi Christiana religio [...] de comendatur dominica in 40^a [Quadragesima] de mane, incipit Prohemium (f. IIv), “Nunc manent*

fides spes caritas tria..."; rubric, *Sermo primus de prime fidei firmitate ubi declarantur eiusdem fidei .12. firmitates*; incipit Sermones (f. 1), [sermon 1 [sic], 2, *De Christiane fidei firmitate*] "Nunc manentur fides spes et caritas tria hec scilicet comprehendunt in se totum aedificium spirituale..."; last heading f. 185: *Vanitates et pompas sermo .44.* [sic] [sermon 45, *Contra mundanas, vanitates et pompas*, see Bernardino da Siena, *Opera...*, 1950, pp. 45-57; Pacetti, 1944, p. 30] [headings interrupted as of f. 184v]; explicit, "Tercium mysterium est mundane confusionis [...] Primo ponantur quatuor parte. Prima stultitia dicitur Tumor superbie [...] .ii. apostolus ait non est creatus..."

f. 202-202v, Added folio, not part of last quire [beginning of text cut off; two rubrics still legible], rubric (fol. 202): *Articulus primus de .V^{us} [quintus] proprietatibus [...] correspondentibus [...] divini amoris*; rubric (fol. 202v): *Quod [...] per donum amoris in anima triplicionis [?] timorem [...] capitula primam.*

These are the *Quaresimale de Christiana Religione*, a group of Latin sermons composed by Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444) between c. 1430 and 1436. Composed of 66 sermons (the last 17 are missing here, undoubtedly bound in a second volume, since the table of contents is complete), the text is extant in five autograph copies, all in Italian libraries: Vat. Ross. 40; Vat. Chig. C. VI. 163; Vat. Lat. 1045; Siena, Bibl. Comm. U. III,1; Siena, U. III. 2 (see Pacetti, 1934-36). Including the five autograph manuscripts, there are 45 extant manuscripts containing the entire 66 sermons (Pacetti, p. 29); others contain only the sermons numbered 33-40, which constitute the treatise sometimes referred to as *De restitutionibus*. De Ricci cites only two copies in North American collections (pp. 212, Library of Congress; and 479, College of the Holy Name). The first incunable edition was published by Wilhelm Hees c. 1475 (GW 3894), followed by two editions in 1489 and 1490 (Basel: Johann Amerbach, 1489, [GW 3882]; and Lyon: Janon Carcain, c. 1490, [GW 3883]). On the printed tradition, see Pacetti, 1945, p. 27-31. This collection of sermons is published in Bernardino da Siena, *S. Bernardini Senensis. Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Opera Omnia...PP. Collegii S. Bonaventurae...*, vols. 1 and 2, Florence, 1950.

On diverse topics--faith (sermons 2-5), idolatry (sermon 11), contrition (sermon 12), the Prodigal Son (sermon 25), against the Guelphs and the Ghibellines (sermon 26), fear of God (sermon 31), duplicity (sermon 33), the restitution of temporal belongings (sermon 38), the Resurrection (sermon 58)--Bernardino's Latin sermons, quite unlike his lively and anecdotal Italian sermons, are highly erudite dissertations organized into divisions and subdivisions and written for his own study and education rather than for public delivery. Characteristic of Bernardino's sermons, each is preceded by a prologue and then divided into three "articoli con didascalìa"; each *articulus* is in turn divided in three chapters.

Of enormous popularity and considerable controversy in his own day, Bernardino is considered the "Apostle of Italy," an epithet that calls attention not only to his activity as a preacher but his reform of the Friars Minor. His biographers recount that penitents flocked to confession "like ants," and that through his sermons Bernardino "cleansed all Italy from sins of every kind" He was a peacemaker, reconciling the quarrelling Guelphs and Ghibellines, enabling the recall of political exiles, restituting their property to them. His symbol, the initials I. H. S. surrounded by a rays, led to a devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus associated with him. Accused of heresy in 1423, he was cleared in 1427, and he was canonized shortly after his death in 1450.

It remains to compare the present manuscript with the autograph copies, with which it appears to be contemporary. Written by different scribes, its composition is odd and may either date over a period of time or be unfinished. Although without the annotations one would expect in an autograph, the manuscript bears many characteristics of a working copy: the headings, the penwork initials, and the rubrics start and stop at different points in the manuscript; some quires are of different size parchment sheets, but without loss of text.

LITERATURE

Bernardino da Siena, Saint. *S. Bernardini Senensis, ordinis Fratrum minorum. Opera omnia...studio et cura PP. Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad fidem codicum edita*, Florence, Quaracchi, 1950, vols. 1-2.

Debby, N. *Renaissance Florence in the rhetoric of two popular preachers: Giovanni Dominici and Bernardino da Siena*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2002.

Pacetti, D. "Gli scritti di San Bernardino da Siena," in *S. Bernardino da Siena. Saggi e ricerche pubblicati nel quinto centenario della morte (1444-1944)*, Pubblicazioni dell'Università Cattolica del S. Cuore, Nuova Serie, vol. 4, 1945, pp. 25-138.

Pacetti, D. "I codici autografi di S. Bernardino da Siena della Vaticana e dell'Comunale di Siena," in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 27-29, 1934-1936, pp. 231-260; pp. 253-272; pp. 215-241; also Florence, "Ad Claras Aquas," 1937.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Franciscan Links (Bernardinus Senensus)

<http://users.bart.nl/~roestb/franciscan/franautb.htm>

TM 93