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LUCAS DE BITONTO (O.F.M.), *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis*; THOMAS DE AQUINIO, *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis*, et alia
In Latin, manuscript on parchment
[France (?), c. 1350-1400]

256 folios in all [145 folios (numbered 146 but lacking first folio) + 111 folios] (collation: i9 (10-1), ii10, iii10, iv12, v12, vi12, vii12, viii10, ix10, x12, xi10, xii12, xiii10, xiv12, xv-xvi8, xvii10, xviii8, xix10, xx-xxv8, xxvi7 (8-1) [missing last folio blank or cancelled]); written in a highly abbreviated gothic bookhand, in brown ink, on up to 22 long lines (justification: 50 x 75 mm); rubrics in red; catchwords; some initials touched in red, paragraph marks in red, 2-line high initials painted in red with blue penwork extending in the margins; contemporary foliotation [Roman numerals in red in upper righthand corner]; contemporary table of contents; contemporary annotations in the margins. Bound in a modern full vellum binding, smooth spine, boards decorated with interwoven leather straps (first 5 quires in good condition; quires 6-26 have been gnawed at although rodent stopped short of text; ink pale in certain parts). Dimensions: 110 x 85 mm.

Meriting further study, this portable manuscript was undoubtedly made for an itinerant friar and contains a collection of sermons by at least two authors, popular in the Middle Ages but little known in modern times and of which no modern edition as yet exists. Some of the additional sermons remain unidentified or attributed, and a contemporary index is interesting in the light of its original use.

PROVENANCE

1. Probably written in France in the latter half of the fourteenth century based on the script; an index placed at the end of the manuscript records all sermons; on ff. 96-99v, there are three sermons "In dedicatione ecclesiae"
2. Private Collection, Switzerland.

TEXT

First foliotation:

f. 1, missing;

ff. 2-146, Lucas de Bitonto [claruit 1233], *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis*; incipit "[...] [lacks beginning] esset videlicet (?)..."; rubric, *In festo sancti Stephani*; incipit, "Homo nascitur ad laborem avis ad volandum... // Dies die superat" [Schneyer, IV, 51, no. 23, S 9]; sermons recorded in Schneyer, IV, 49–71.

Second foliotation:

ff. 1-108, Thomas de Aquino, *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis*; rubric, *Incipiunt sermons festivum in vigilia nativitatis*; incipit, "Oportet prevenire solem... // Cras celebraturi..." [Schneyer, V, p. 592, no. 176, T5]; sermons recorded in Schneyer, V, 583–602: *Sermones dubii* (pseudographi); ed. Raulx, *Sermones et opuscula concionatoria*, I.

ff. 108v-110, Contemporary table of contents with page references in red ink;

f. 110, blank;

ff. 111-111v, Unidentified sermon; incipit: "Cum legamus Adam de limo..."

The first group of sermons is attributed to Lucas de Bitonto (Lucas Bituntinus/Lucas Apulus d. in or shortly after 1242), who was an Italian friar, possibly from Bitonto (near Bari). He probably studied theology at Paris (the manuscripts Vienna Staatsbib. 1349, Vienna, Staatsbib. 1364, as well as Sbaralea, *Supplementum* II, 175 give him the surname "parisiensis/parisinus"). Some thirteenth-century sources (Salimbene, *Cronica*, ed. Holder-Egger MGH *Scriptores* XXXII (Hanover, 1905), 87-88 call him an eminent doctor: "Et tunc vivebat frater Lucas Apulus ex ordine fratrum Minorum, cuius est sermonum memoria, qui fuit scholasticus et ecclesiasticus et litteratus homo et in Apulia in theologia eximius doctor, nominatus, sollemneis atque famosus; cuius anima per misericordiam Dei requiescat in pace, amen." He entered the Franciscan order before 1220. In that year, Francis of Assisi appointed him provincial minister of the oriental province. A Luke of Bitonto is further mentioned in some letters of Honorius III from December 1220 and February 1221 (BF I, 7-8) as provincial minister of Rumania, Greece, and the Holy Land. After his return to Italy, a friar called Luke of Bitonto became lector (cf. *Dialogus de Gestis Sanctorum Fratrum Minorum*, ed. F.-M. Delorme [Quaracchi, 1929], 117) and became quite renowned for his learning and homiletic eloquence. This might be the same friar (although Rasolofoarimanana [2002], pp. 240-241, has his doubts). According to Salimbene, Lucas

Apulus gave a sermon at the funeral of the son of Emperor Frederick II 1242 (Salimbene, *Cronica*, ed. Holder-Egger 87-88). Lucas Apulus died shortly thereafter.

He left behind a lengthy collection of *Sermones Domenicales*, with an interesting prologue, which doubles as a treatise of moral theology and a rudimentary *ars praedicandi*. Luke's sermons, written around 1233, follow the *sermo modernus*-structure, something that he might have picked up at Paris. His Sunday sermons in general amount to veritable commentaries on the Gospel and Epistle readings for Sundays and feast days, and they exhibit a sound theological learning. They also contain a lot of doctrinal and moral instruction, with ample recourse to etymological and symbolical explanations, and at times have an ad-status approach with attention to social issues, to urban virtues and vices, and to the stratified society of the French and Italian urban landscape. Pierre Péano, *DSPir* IX, 1122 remarks that his work shows a wide culture, borrowing extensively from biblical and Roman history and citing Anselm, Hugh of Saint Victor, Peter Comestor, and especially Saint Bernard.

The work, which, as Lucas signals in his prologue, was written on request of his provincial minister and the minister general, is devised to function as a model-sermon collection and as an instrument and aid for friars in training at the study houses of the order. Luke's sermons have this in common with those of Anthony of Padua. Like Anthony, Luke gives a full Sunday and quaresimal cycle. Only Luke is more "modern" in his division of the text in accordance with the latest developments as taught in the *artes praedicandi*, and his examples dwelling on the realities of life. As such they circulated widely, probably even more widely than the celebrated sermons of Anthony of Padua.

Schneyer records approximately 100 manuscripts, although none in North American collections. For an initial overview (that probably will change somewhat after further study), see Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters*, BGPhThM XLIII (Münster, 1972) IV, 49-71. The work was printed as *Sermones Dominicales, Quadragesimales et de Festis* (s.l. 1483) (a copy of this incunable edition is found in the Public library of Bruges, Belgium [Stedelijke Openbare Bibliotheek]). The prologue has been edited (Quaracchi, 1909), as have a few of the individual sermons (cf. Moretti, 1985-2000, and later; Barzon, 1930; and Delcorno, 1993). There is no complete modern edition, although one is in preparation by Rasolofoarimanana (cf. 2003).

LITERATURE

Barzon, A. "Saggio dei Sermoni 'Narraverunt' (...)," *Il Santo* 1 (1929), 348-357 & 3 (1930), 77-88;

D'Avray, David, L. *The Preaching of the Friars. Sermons diffused from Paris before 1300*, Oxford, 1985, p. 156

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Zanocco, R. "I Sermoni 'Narraverunt' sono del b. Luca Belludi?," *Il Santo* 1 (1929), pp. 337-343.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Lucas Apulus or Lucas de Bitonto:

http://users.bart.nl/~roestb/franciscan/franautl.htm#_Toc427566093