

CHERUBINO DA SPOLETO, *Sermones quadragesimales*

In Latin with occasional Italian, decorated manuscript on paper and parchment
Italy (Florence, Naples or Fabriano?), c. 1475-1525 (probably before c. 1500)

378 folios on paper and parchment (parchment used for the outer and center bifolia of each quire, and paper for all other bifolia), plus two unfoliated modern paper flyleaves at the beginning and two at the end, the first and last of these marbled, watermarks, (sometimes visible in the center of the inner margin) tassled cardinal's hat, similar to Briquet 3373, Florence, 1474/83, Florence, 1476, Fabriano, 1475, Naples, 1468-71, sixteenth-century foliation in ink, top outer recto (collation i-vi²⁰, vii¹⁴, viii²⁴, ix-xix²⁰), quires signed in the bottom outer margin with Arabic numerals for each bifolium and letters for the quire (in three series, a-i, i.a-i.g, and ii.a-ii.c, frequently trimmed), catchwords in bottom outer margin of most quires (catchwords lacking in quires xvi and xviii, where the last page in the quire is blank, and also from quire ix), ruled in ink (no visible pricking) in one column of thirty-eight lines, with full-length vertical bounding lines (justification 155-160 × 93 mm.), written above the top line by multiple scribes, in formal gothic cursiva (ff. 1-134v, 359-378v) and gothico antiqua (ff. 135-344 [with f. 344-346, added, and ff. 346v-358v, blank]) scripts (script throughout is clear and upright and influenced by humanist scripts), two- and three-line initials in alternating red and blue but occasionally not filled in or filled in by a later reader in black outline (ff. 103, 148, etc.), six-line decorated initial "S" in red with elaborate purple penwork stretching down on the length of the inner margin of f. 1, red rubrics (for which instructions to the rubricator have been written at the bottom of the page, often trimmed), occasional slashing of majuscules in red (e.g. ff. 102, 102v, 103, 103v, etc.) and yellow (e.g. ff. 102, 105, 116, 116v, 117, etc.), good quality parchment and paper, with the exception of f. 378v, damaged by insects and wear, and mostly illegible. Bound in a later binding of tan sheepskin over pasteboard, spine decorated with gold filets, a small white circular library sticker marked with "MS" at the foot of the spine, marbled endleaves and pastedowns, in good condition, but with some superficial damage to the leather. Dimensions 215 × 145 mm.

The Lenten sermons of Cherubino da Spoleto, here in a carefully written, very legible copy, cover topics ranging from the defense of the faith to condemnations of clerical simony to elaborate denunciations of fornication and the "vanities of women." This is an important manuscript since it includes almost the complete sermon cycle (these sermons were previously known in only a single complete copy, manuscripts with excerpts, and a printed edition of 1502 and 1511). There is no modern critical edition, or modern study of these sermons.

PROVENANCE

1. Evidence of the script and watermark support an origin in Italy, c.1475-1525, almost certainly before c. 1500, possibly in Florence, Naples or Fabriano. The main text has been copied by four hands, in stretches ff. 1-134v (hand 1, quires i-vii), ff. 135-178v (hand 2, quires viii-ix), ff. 179-315 (hand 3, quires x-xvi, leaving ff. 315v-318v blank), ff. 319r-344r (hand 2, quires xvii-xviii; at the end of quire xviii, ff. 344-346, carry text added by a later reader not part of the manuscript's original process of production, and ff. 346v-358v are blank), ff. 359-378v (hand 4, quire ix). While the changes in scribe line up with quire divisions, they can occur within the middle of a single text (ff. 134v/135r).

2. Foliation added in the sixteenth century, perhaps at the same time that "Cart. 378" was written on f. 378v, twice: one has been partly effaced, and the second is written above in the same hand.
3. Extensive sixteenth-century marginal notes in a number of different hands appear throughout the manuscript. The most important of these are a humanist miniscule (ff. 344r-v) and a humanist cursive (ff. 344v-346) who have not only added marginal notes throughout, but have also supplemented the text itself by providing the end of the sermon beginning on f. 342 which had been left unfinished by the original scribe. Marginal notes by these (e.g. f. 343) and other annotators are occasionally trimmed.

A small doodle in red of a broom (f. 123v) is the manuscript's only pictorial illustration, and seems to have been added by a reader at the same time as or soon after the humanist cursive annotator whose notes "Ciconijs" and "Scarabeis" he has highlighted with red boxes. The broom seems to refer to a passage in the text, "O bona mulier do tibi vnum bonum consilium..." where the "good woman" is advised not to scatter the dirt through the whole house when sweeping (or when instructing a servant to sweep), but to cast it instead into the sewer: a metaphor for the appropriate behavior of a sinner who is "cleaning house."

4. Library stamp, circular and with a small fleur-de-lys and text, erased and now mostly illegible, in the outer bottom margin of f. 1r: "Biblio[teca]...."
5. Manuscript deaccessioned, with the stamp of the Redemptorists (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer) of France: "Cong. SS. Redempt. Prov. Gallica. Domus Studiorum" (f. ii recto). The library identification (in modern block capitals) of the manuscript as "Manuscrit Latin sermons, Italie XV^e s. MS. 4A 27 (12162)" and "4A. 27." (f. [i verso]) may also date from its time in the Redemptorist library. It is interesting to note while the Redemptorists did not record the author of these sermons, another manuscript on this site (TM 683, Online resources) a fifteenth-century copy of the *Quadragesimale de aeternis fructibus spiritus sancti* of Antonius Vercellensis that was owned by the same Redemptorist library (and also numbered 4A. 27), was misidentified as Cherubino. There is no evidence, however, that the two books travelled together before entering Redemptorist hands.

The Redemptorists were a society of missionary priests founded in 1732 by Alphonsus Liguori (b. 1696, d. 1787, canonized 1839) at Scala, in Italy. The primary focus of the society was missions to the poor, and the principle requirement of those missions, preaching, which may explain the importance of a sermon collection like this one for the Redemptorist project. While the society began in Italy, by 1800 it had already begun to spread around Europe, with foundations reaching France by the middle of the nineteenth century (in Alsace in 1842, St.-Nicolas-du Port in 1845, and two in Savoy in 1847).

TEXT

ff. 1-5v, *Dominica in lxx^a de fidei necessitate ubi probatur 7^{ma} rationibus fidem esse necessariam* [sic] *ad salutem*, incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Inuestigando et inquirendo affectus humanos et desideria mortalium dilectissimi in christo ihesu ...";

ff. 5v-9, *Dominica in lxx^a post prandium de fidei veritate ubi tribus rationibus fidem indubitabiliter ueram esse monstratur* [sic], incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Expedito primo misterio scilicet de fidei necessitate ...";

ff. 9-13, *Feria 2^a de fidei veritate ubi tribus aliis rationibus fides ostenditur esse uera*, incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Tribus aliis rationibus ad honorem beatitudine trinitatis in presenti sermone de veritate fidei ostendere intendimus ...";

ff. 13-16v, *Feria 3 de fidei veritate que demonstratur tribus aliis rationibus*, incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Sanctissime fidei christiane veritas indubitabilis tribus aliis rationibus ad honorem beatitudine trinitatis in sermone presenti demonstrare intendimus ...";

ff. 16v-21v, *Feria 4 de fidei veritate ubi vnica alia ratione eius veritas probatur*, incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Fidei uestre christiane necessaria et stabilissima veritas ...";

ff. 21v-26, *Feria 5 de fidei integritate*, incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Posuimus in principio huius tractatus si bene memini ...";

ff. 26-30v, *Feria 6 de fidei integritate ubi de simbolo articulis tractatur*, incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Diximus in presenti sermone duas condiciones quas fides debet habere ...";

ff. 30v-34, *Sabbato de articulis fidei*, incipit, "Sic currite ut comprehendatis prime cor. 9. Iterum de articulis fidei tria misteria contemplemur. Primum misterium est de articulo fidei expositione ..."; [ff. 34v-35v, blank];

ff. 36-40, *Dominica in lx in mane 7^{em} fructu* [sic], incipit, "Instancia mea cotidiana sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum 2^e cor. 11. Diuina prouidencia est tanta et talis erga humanam generacionem ...";

ff. 40-43v, *Dominica in lx post prandium de verbi dei auditione ubi ponuntur 7^{em} regule qualiter audiri debet verbum dei*, incipit, "Instancia mea cotidiana sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum 2^a ad cor. 11. In precedenti sermone proposuimus de verso diuino tria misteria ...";

[... ff. 43v-113, continuing with sermons for *Feria 2^a post xl^{im}* to *Feria 2^a post primam dominicam xl^e* (following the 1502 edition)].

ff. 113-116, incipit, "Primum ergo misterium est de iudicii declaratione vbi nota quod iudicare proximum non est malum dicere de proximo sed malum cogitare et suspicari ...";

Copied without a rubric or other visible break from the preceding sermon; presumably intended for Tuesday. Added title in margin, "Sermo de iudicio proximorum." Lacking the usual prefatory citation of scripture and schematic plan for what will follow. Cf. the 1502 edition, with the usual prefatory material: *Feria iii. post primam dominicam in xl de iudicio temerario. Sermo xxx,* incipit, "Hortamur vos etc. secundum sententiam moralium philosophorum quibus non dissentiant ..."

ff. 116-120, *Feria 4^a post primam dominicam in xl in die sancti Matthei in mane de odio*, incipit, "Ortamur nos ne in uanum gratiam dei recipiatis 2^e cor. 6. Habuimus in precedenti sermone quod indicium temerarium quod fit ...";

Note that this sermon on "hate" is the third of three assigned to the Monday after the first Sunday in Lent in the 1502 edition of Cherubino's *Sermones*.

ff. 120-125, *Feria 4^{or} post primam dominicam in xl^e post prandium de 7^{em} modis quibus quis proximo detrahit*, incipit, "Ortamur nos etc. 2^e cor. 6. Quia ut superius dictum est sermo moralis spiritualis utilior est ...";

ff. 125-127, *Feria 5 post primam dominicam xl^e de detractionibus aggrauacione et punitione*, incipit, "Ortamur nos etc. 2^e cor. 6. In precedenti sermone de detractione tria misteria proposuimus quorum primum iam expeditum est ...";

ff. 127-130v, *Feria 6 post primam dominicam xl^e quando est peccatum audire detractionem et quando non*, incipit, "Ortamur nos etc. 2^e cor. 6. Quia peccatum detractionis comittitur non solum compleximum ...";

ff. 130v-136, *Sabbato post primam dominicam xl^e de tra[n]sfiguratione*, incipit, "Ortamur nos 2^e cor. 6. Quia transfiguratio christi facta fuit ...";

ff. 136-142v, incipit, "Fratres rogamus uos et obsecramus in domino ihesu ut quemadmodum accepistis a nobis ... ut habundetis magis prime thesa. 4 et in epistula hodierna. In hiis dulcissimus uerbis continetur quedam fructuosissima admonitio ...";

Lacking a rubric, but this should be for the morning of the second Sunday in Lent. An annotator has added the marginal title, "Sermo de blasfemia dei istorum."

ff. 142v-147v, incipit, "Fratres Rogamus uos etc. prime thesa. 4^o quia ut in precedenti sermone habitum est. Ludus uidetur esse fons et origo ...";

Rubric lacking; should be a sermon for afternoon of the second Sunday in Lent. An annotator has added the marginal title, "Sermo de ludo."

ff. 148-152, incipit, "Fratres rogamus uos etc. prime thesa. 4. Hori in mane super hiis uerbis diximus apostolum in hac epistula tria principaliter prohibere ...";

Rubric lacking; sermon for the Monday after the second Sunday in Lent. An annotator has added the marginal title, "Sermo de adulterio."

ff. 152v-159, incipit, "Fratres rogamus uos etc. primie the. 4^o. Vnum preceptorum positorum ab apostolo in presenti epistula ...";

Rubric lacking; sermon for the Tuesday after the second Sunday in Lent. An annotator has added the marginal title, "Sermo de matrimonio."

[... ff. 159-221v, continuing with sermons from *Feria 4 post 2^{am} dominicam xl^e* to *Feria 6 post 3^{am} dominicam xl^e de ornatibus mulierum*.]

ff. 221v-225v, *Feria 6 post 3^{am} dominicam xl^e scilicet in die sancti Georgii [sic] post prandium iterum de vanitatibus mulierum qualiter proximum dampnificant*, incipit, "Fornicacio et omnis immunditia nec nominetur in uobis etc. Diximus in precedenti sermone quod superflue uanitates ...";

The feast of St. George is April 23, a date too late in the year to ever be the Friday after the third Sunday in Lent. In a year when Easter is on April 4, however, the Friday after the third Sunday of Lent would be March 12, the feast of St. Gregory.

[... ff. 225v-308, continuing with sermons from *Sabbato post 3^{am} dominicam xl^e* to *Feria 5 post dominicam*].

ff. 308-315, *In die eadem post prandium de incarnatione diuine executione*, incipit, "Apparuit benignitas etc. In precedenti sermone proposita fuerunt de incarnatione verbi diuini tria misteria ... Et sic patet tercium misterium. Benedictus deus cum matre sua. AMEN"; [ff. 315v-318v, blank];

ff. 319-322v, *Feria 6 post dominum de passione de certitudine salutis quam penitens habere potest*, incipit, "Christus assistens pontifex futurorum bonorum &c. Habuimus in precedentibus sermonibus dilectissimi in christo iesu quod penitentie et contritio est ...";

322v-328v, *Sabbato post dominicam de passione quod pluribus rationibus periculosum est conuersionem differre usque ad mortem*, incipit, "Cristus assistens pontifex etc. In precedenti sermone consilium illud ...";

ff. 328v-332, *Dominica in ramis palmarum de obligatione ad communionem*, incipit, "Hoc enim sentite in uobis quod et in christo iesu. Ad phil. ii°. Diuina prouidentia est tam larga et copiosa ...";

ff. 332-336, *Dominica in ramis palmarum post prandium de punitione obmittentium communionem*, incipit, "Hoc enim sentite in uobis quod et in christo iesu. Iterum ubi supra vidimus primum misterium restat uideamus 2^m scilicet de communionis punitione obmissione ...";

ff. 336-342, *Feria 2^a Maioris ebdomade de preparatione ad sacram communionem*, incipit, "Hoc enim sentite in uobis etc. Vidimus in superioribus sermonibus de sacre communionis obligatione necessaria et omissione punitione restat ...";

ff. 342-346, *Feria 3^a maioris ebdomade de ineffabili sacramento eucaristie*, incipit, "Hoc enim sentite in uobis etc. Quia in hoc sacramento tempore institutum ... que dicuntur discreta premeditatio et feruida deuotio quas nobis ipse concedat que pius benignus est dominator que semper sit benedictus," AMMEN [in black]; [ff. 346v-358v, blank].

The original scribe broke off the text in the middle of a sentence on f. 344. The remainder of the sermon was supplied in a later humanist miniscule and then, beginning on f. 344v, a humanist cursive hand, ending mid f. 346. This premature end to the text is also reflected in the absence of the remaining sermons in the cycle up through Easter. The remainder of the quire is blank, evidence that the missing sermons were never present in this manuscript; text resumes again on f. 359 with a sermon for the Monday after the Sunday after Easter (*feria secunda post Dominicam in albis*).

ff. 359-365v, *Feria 2^a in albis quod iesus nazarenus filius Virginis Marie et verus deus*, incipit, "Deus erat cum illo act. x c. et in epistuloa hodierna. Vna ergo conclusionum fide christiane quam nos omnes credere obligamur ...";

Following the brief lacuna where the manuscript lacks sermons 73-76, the *Sermones quadragesimale* commence again with sermon 77, for the Monday after the first Sunday after Easter.

ff. 365-370, *Feria 2^a in albis post prandium quod yhesus nazareus*, incipit, "Deus erat cum illo act. x°. Habuimus in precedenti sermone quod triplex est ...";

ff. 370v-374v, *Feria 3^a in albis quod ihesus nazarenus est uerus deus*, incipit, "Deus erat cum illo vbi supra habuimus in precentibus sermonibus qualiter hec veritas scilicet quod ihesus nazarenus est verus deus probatum est ...";

ff. 374v, *Feria 3^{ma} In albis post prandium quod ihesus nazarenus est uerus deus*, incipit, "Deus erat cum illo ubi supra quod dominus noster ihesus christus sit verus deus iterum probatur ... a vobis capiam tamen multum et obseruanciam assequar. Quare quia ne [iis] excidam que iocunda mihi videntur in hac";

The text ends about a third of the way down the page, in the middle of a sentence. Cherubino's remaining sermons (nos. 81-90) are not included. Dirt and wear on this final page suggests that their absence is not due to the loss of an additional quire.

Cherubino da Spoleto (1414-1494), *Sermones quadragesimale* (Lenten sermons), beginning with the sermon "on Septuagesima Sunday about the necessity of faith, where it is proven by seven reasons that faith is necessary for salvation." Septuagesima Sunday is the ninth Sunday before Easter, and the beginning not of Lent but rather of an extended pre-Lenten season. The manuscript continues with Cherubino's Lenten cycle, including sermons 1-72 and 77-80, lacking only sermons 73-76 and 81-90, although not apparently due to any damage to the original manuscript.

Cherubino da Spoleto was born c. 1414 on Euboea (then under Venetian rule and called Negroponte) in the early fifteenth century. After moving to Italy to live with relatives in Spoleto, he joined the Franciscan order in 1432, where he distinguished himself as a preacher of great learning and elegance, although not, perhaps of popular appeal to an uneducated audience (Rusconi, 1980, p. 447). Like many Franciscans of his time, he was heavily influenced by the sermons of Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444). Active as an itinerant preacher between 1441 and his death in 1484, he was one of the best-known Franciscan preachers of his age (Rusconi, 1980, pp. 447-449). Cherubino was also the author of a series of didactic treatises for the laity that discussed topics ranging from the education of children (*Tractatus de cura filiorum*), marriage (*Regola della Vita Matrimoniale*), and on the spiritual life (*Regola della Vita Spirituale*). Other treatises circulating as his were compiled from his sermons (Roest, 2004, pp. 72, 529-30).

There is no modern edition of the *Sermones quadragesimales* (Lenten sermons), although they were printed in Venice in 1502, edited by Seraphinus Mantuani, and reprinted in 1511 (Wadding, 1906, p. 62). They are not listed in the continuation of Schneyer's *Repertorium* (Hödl and Knoch, 2001), and have been little studied by modern scholars. The complete *Sermones* exist in at least one other manuscript, Aquila, Archivio di Stato, cod. R. 110 (Cenci 1971, pp. 60-61; sources reporting their inclusion in Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, III.A.15 are inaccurate). Claremont, Honnold Library, Crispin MS 33 is a partial copy of this cycle, with the first twenty-four of the full ninety sermons (Dutschke, Rouse, and Ferrari, 1986, pp. 65-66, not identified as Cherubino's). It is far more common, however, for excerpts from the sermon cycle to appear in fifteenth-century sermon collections, in the company of sermons by other authors. The majority of these multi-author collections are currently in Italian libraries, in Padua, Florence, Rome, and, particularly, the Biblioteca nazionale in Naples (Rusconi, 1980, p. 451, see esp. Cenci, 1971, nos. 123, 148, 183, 390, 391, 399, 423, and 425). A manuscript at the Pontifical Institute in Toronto includes one sermon by Cherubino from a different cycle (Faye and Bond, 1962, p. 533). The textual importance of the manuscript described here – the second known example of the complete text of these sermons – is considerable.

The sermons function together as a cycle, and sermons will frequently refer back to the content of the previous sermon, transforming the text into a sustained treatise on the chosen topic. They are, furthermore, highly schematic. In general, each begins with the citation of a scriptural passage, followed by a statement of the subject, with an analysis of the topics presented in a series of numbered points (frequently listing *rationes* or *mysteria*), which are announced and then expounded in ordered sequence. Topics range widely, beginning with proofs of the *veritas fidei* (truth of the faith), and moving on through the seven "rules" for hearing the word of God, the necessity of prayer, the dangers of mortal sin, duties of fasting and almsgiving, the dangers of various types of sin (including hate, slander, adultery, greed, lust, and usury), the benefits of contrition, and other subjects. The rubrics allot a sermon to each day, with two sermons on Sundays and other feasts: one for the morning, and one for the afternoon. The coincidence of certain days (e.g. the Thursday after Passion Sunday) with important immovable feasts, such as the feast of the Annunciation, suggests that they were designed for a year when Easter fell on April 4. This seems to have been an arbitrary choice, however, rather than the actual year that Cherubino delivered the sermons (he was only about 14 in 1428, and had already died by the next such year in 1507).

The relationship between the manuscripts of Cherubino's sermons and the 1502 printed edition, and the role of their editor, Brother Seraphino of Mantua, is a matter that deserves further study (cf. Galletti, 1938, p. 262). For example, it has been suggested that the system of rubrics assigning the sermons in the cycle to particular days was introduced by Serafino for the 1502 edition, and did not date back to Cherubino himself (see Rusconi, 1980, p. 451). The appearance of the rubrics in this manuscript, however, casts serious doubt on this idea. Given that the manuscript does not reflect the exact order used in the 1502 edition (see ff. 113-120) and furthermore that it appears to rely on an incomplete exemplar (given the absence of sermons 73-76 and 81-90), it is unlikely the manuscript was copied from or even corrected with reference to the 1502 edition. Moreover, the late-fifteenth-century partial copy of the *Sermones* in Claremont, Honnold Library, Crispin MS 33 employs the same rubrics. Given the appropriateness of the topic of the incarnation for the Feast of the Annunciation to which it has been assigned, moreover, it seems most likely that the apparatus of rubrics – and the chronological organization it reflects – was a part of the sermon cycle from its inception, and can be attributed to Cherubino himself.

Preaching was the primary focus of mendicant orders like the Franciscans. Founded in 1209 by St. Francis, the Franciscans deliberately went out into lay society, traveling from town to town and serving God not through contemplation or saying the monastic hours, but through preaching. Sermons for the penitential seasons of Advent or, as in the *Sermones quadragesimales*, Lent, were particularly popular (Wenzel, 1996, p. 7). Sermons were one of the primary methods of educating ordinary lay people about theology and the faith, and as such they can serve today as a useful barometer of how religious thought was delivered to ordinary people (Thayer 2001, p. 361). Cherubino's sermons address both educated and uneducated audiences. Their lay audience is reflected by the traces of Italian retained in these Latin sermons, but their erudition is also evident in the heavy emphasis laid on quotations from theologians and philosophers.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Briquet Online:

http://www.ksbm.oeaw.ac.at/_scripts/php/BR.php

On the Redemptorists (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer):

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12683a.htm>

Manuscript of Antonius Vercellensis, *Quadragesimale* (TM 683)

http://www.textmanuscripts.com/manuscript_description.php?id=3240&%20cat=all&

Cherubino da Spoleto, *Sermones quadragesimales*, Venice, 1502

http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10179548_00005.html

TM 681