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BERNARDINUS DE SIENA, *Quadragesimale de Christiana religione*
In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper
Eastern France, Franche-Comté (Convent of Rougemont), dated 1470-1471

168 ff., lacking 4 leaves at beginning (collation i⁸ [12-4], ii¹², iii¹⁴, iv-viii¹², ix¹⁴, x-xiv¹²), on paper (watermark of the type Briquet, Tête de boeuf, no. 14198, Besançon, 1478; no. 14199, Bellevaux [near Vesoul] or no. 14200, Besançon, 1487: all papers from the Franche-Comté), contemporary foliation in red ink on rectos, text copied on two columns, with 58 to 76 lines per column (justification 165 x 110), ruled in lead (very pale), written in dark brown ink in a very small gothic cursive bookhand, headings in red or more often underlined in red, capitals touched in red, painted initials in red throughout (usually 3 lines high), numerous contemporary marginal annotations (some now slightly cropped). Binding, likely nineteenth century, composed of pasteboards covered with marbled vellum pieces from a late medieval manuscript Choir Book, paper endleaves, rebacked in black leather, edges speckled in blue (A bit of worming at beginning, a few minor stains and marks, but generally in fine condition). Dimensions 212 x 140 mm.

Signed and dated by a friar in the Franciscan convent of Rougement (Franche-Comté) for his own use ("ad usum meum"), this collection of sermons survives as the only extant manuscript recorded from Rougement, newly founded some twenty years earlier. The 45 extant manuscripts of the Lenten sermons by the famous Franciscan preacher, Bernardino of Siena, are found mostly in Italian libraries (only two in North American collections). Written in France, the present copy, predating the first incunable edition of 1475, confirms the diffusion Bernardino's sermons outside Italy in the generation following his death.

PROVENANCE

1. Signed and dated by the scribe, Friar Johannes Guilloni, O.F.M. of Foncine (Jura), who completed it for his own use at 2 o'clock in the afternoon on 13 February 1470 in the convent at Rougement as recorded in the colophon: "Finitus fuit liber iste de christiana religione per me fratrem Johannem Guilloni ordinis minorum, ad cuius usum pertinet in conventu rubrimontis 13^a die februarii hora 2^a post meridiem, anno domini 1470. Qui scripsat scribat, semper cum domino vivat. Quod scribere et opera implere concedat benedictus ihesus dicto fratri Io[hanni] Guilloni de Foncina" (fol. 167). The scribe also notes that he has corrected certain passages: "Et correctus est per me fratrem Johannem Guilloni ad meum usum pertinet in conventu rubeimontis anno domini millesimo septuagesimo primo" (fol. 163). There are several places called "rubeus mons" [red mountain]: the most likely here is Rougement in Franche-Comté (eastern France [Doubs]), where the remains of the Franciscan convent of the Cordeliers still dominate the town on the former castle mound. The Convent of the Cordeliers at Rougement

was founded by Thiébaud II de Rougemont in 1448, and was placed under the authority of the convent in Dole. There were around 20 friars by the end of the fifteenth century. The present scribe Johannes Guilloni [Guillon] was also native of Franche-Comté/Jura region, and the colophon mentions he is from a town called Foncina: there are two localities, located side by side, called Foncine-le-Haut and Foncine-le-Bas (Jura). This scribe is recorded in Bouveret, III, no. 9939 as having copied another manuscript in Dole, dated much earlier in 1447: "Et fuit finitus per manus M. Io[hannis] Guilloni in iure canonico baccalarii Dole a.d. 1447, 11 die mensis octobris et hora 11 circa mediam noctem etc." (Leiden Univ. Abl. 13, fol. 232v; see *Manuscripts datés des Pays-Bas... (1964)*, I, no. 142, pl. 247). Manuscripts from the monastery of Rougemont are not common, and we have not localized any other manuscript from this convent in public collections.

2. Ex-collection Dr. André Rooryck, his MS. 22.

TEXT

ff. 1-163, Bernardinus de Siena, *Quadragesimale de Christiana religione*, Sermo 2, art. ii., cap. 1, "[...] verbo non credatur, ymmo etiam cuilibet..." (lacks beginning) – Sermo 66, art. iii, explicit, "[...] eam vulgari sermone reservabo vobis [...] reservare notitia habere non potui. Explicit. Deo gratias" (Sermons published in *S. Bernardini Senensis...*, Quaracchi, (1950), I and II);

ff. 163-163v, Added considerations on the work (perhaps composed by the scribe himself), beginning "Longus evasit hoc opus quam volebat quamquam putabat..." with corrections supplied by the scribe, "Et correctus est per me fratrem Johannem Guilloni ad meum usum pertinet in conventu rubeimontis anno domini millesimo septuagesimo primo";

ff. 164-167, Contemporary table of contents, heading underlined in red, *Incipit tabula per ordinem alphabeti materiarum quadragesimalis de religione Christiana*; colophon, "Finitus fuit liber iste de christiana religione per me fratrem Johannem Guilloni ordinis minorum, ad cuius usum pertinet in conventu rubrimontis 13^a die februarii hora 2^a post meridiem, anno domini 1470. Qui scripsat scribat, semper cum domino vivat. Quod scribere et opera implere concedat benedictus ihesus dicto fratri Io[hanni] Guilloni de Foncina" (f. 167);

ff. 167v-168v, *Sermo de dedicatione ecclesie*, rubric, *De dedicatione ecclesie*; incipit, "De dedicatione ecclesie inter alias festivitates sollempniter ab ecclesia celebratur..." (a single manuscript recorded in *In Principio: Budapest, Orsz gos Széchényi Könyvt, MS. 82*, in E. Bartoniek, *Codices manuscripti latini*, vol. I [1940]).

This manuscript contains the Lenten sermons of the greatest Franciscan writer of the fifteenth century, Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), whose preaching was so eloquent that Pope Pius II remarked that audiences listened as they would to Saint Paul himself. Preaching was central in the Middle Ages, to quote J. Huizinga: "Rarer than processions and executions were the sermons of itinerant preachers, coming to take people by their eloquence. The modern reader of newspapers can no longer conceive of the violence of the impression caused by the spoken word on an ignorant mind lacking mental food" (J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* [ed. 1955]).

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 sunrays, 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.

The *De Christiana religione* comprises 66 sermons for Lent and Easter, composed c. 1430-1436. There are 45 extant manuscripts containing the entire 66 sermons (Pacetti, p. 29), mostly in Italian libraries (including five in the author's handwriting) and only two in North America (De Ricci, p. 212: Washington, D.C., Library of Congress; p. 479, Washington, D.C., The Holy Name College). The first incunable edition was published by Wilhelm Hees c. 1475 [GW 3894], followed by two editions in c. 1490: Basel, Johann Amerbach, not after 1490 [Goff, B-346; GW 3882] and Lyon, Janon Carcain, c. 1490, [Goff, B-347; 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*. . . vol. I and II (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.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Franciscan Links (Bernardinus Senensis)

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