

# LEEDS STUDIES IN ENGLISH

*New Series*

Volume XI

1980

(for 1979)

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS  
SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

## APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL SERMONS

This paper was delivered at the first Medieval Sermon Studies Symposium held in Oxford in July 1979.

By L.J. BATAILLON

This attempt to review some of the ways in which medieval sermons may be classified is not intended to provide a series of definitive and perhaps delusive labels, but rather to assist generally in the description and analysis of these documents.<sup>1</sup> Studies of sermons may arise out of a variety of specialized interests, whose particular concerns may lead to neglect of some features which at first glance seem foreign to the research but may actually be highly relevant. In every case, the broader our concern, the better it is for our study.

It would seem logical to begin by considering general questions which have to be asked about all texts, that is, those concerning authorship, date and provenance, and then pass to more specific problems, such as liturgical practice, rhetorical patterns and matters of doctrine. But the two kinds of question are very intimately linked and we cannot, for instance, speak of chronology without alluding to liturgy. So it will be better to take the questions in the more practical order in which they often come to us when we have to study sermons. I should add that, as my main interest is in thirteenth-century sermons, this order is probably more suited to these than to earlier or later ones.

### *Collections*

The first question to ask in any attempt at classification is whether the sermon is an isolated one or part of some collection. Here we have to deal with a twofold question: first, how has our sermon come to have the form in which we now find it? Second, what was its original condition?

In its spoken form, a sermon may be an occasional piece or it may be a part of an organized cycle, such as the three series of Lenten "collations" preached in 1267, 1268 and 1273 by Bonaventure, "De decem praeceptis", "De septem donis Spiritus sancti" and "In Hexaemeron". (Many of my examples will be taken from Bonaventure's preaching because the sermons he left are many, can be found easily in good editions, and were preserved in several different ways.<sup>2</sup>)

As for the written text, a sermon which was originally isolated may very well be handed down to us in some collection. In practice we find sermons much more frequently in collections than singly, and it is not always easy to see what kind of collection we are dealing with.

We have first to judge whether we have an ordered collection or what Italians call a "zibaldone". We often find manuscripts which contain sermons without any order: a man interested in preaching, when he found a sermon he thought valuable, had it copied, generally because he had some idea of using it for his own preaching. In such collections we often find, together with sermons, other texts not actually preached but useful as preaching material, such as *exempla*, *distinctiones*, or short moral or liturgical *opuscula*. In such cases the collection has little to teach us about each of its elements, except some paleographic or codicologic indications of dating.

But we also have better-ordered collections, such as series of sermons on specific biblical books: sermons on the Psalter by John of Abbeville;<sup>3</sup> on John's Gospel by Bonaventure;<sup>4</sup> or, not to forget one of the most famous medieval collections, the *Sermones in Cantica* of Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>5</sup>

The sermons may be arranged in chronological order, sometimes by the author himself, as Matthew of Aquasparta probably did in his autograph manuscripts.<sup>6</sup> More often someone who heard it wrote up a succession of notes he had made (*reportatio*) when listening to the preaching. In this category we have very valuable collections of University sermons for the years 1230-1<sup>7</sup> and 1281-3.<sup>8</sup> A still more striking case is that of Peter of Limoges who wrote up his own "reportations" for the years 1260-3,<sup>9</sup> and provided a well-copied manuscript containing reports of many sermons preached in the parochial and monastic churches of Paris in 1272-3.<sup>10</sup>

We have some collections classified according to the type of congregation or occasion. Of this kind are several collections of *sermones ad status*,<sup>11</sup> with sermons to nobles, merchants, countrymen, widows or children; and series for clerical gatherings such as synods, ordinations, elections, pastoral visits and even the deposition of a prelate.<sup>12</sup>

But the order we find most frequently is liturgical. As sermons are ordinarily given on a liturgical occasion, chiefly during Mass or Vespers, and as their themes are normally chosen according to the liturgy, the most practical type of collection was that with a plan following the liturgical year. In liturgical books, especially Missals and Breviaries, there is a distinction between the series for Sundays and feasts of the Lord, including the movable Easter cycle, and that for the worship of the saints based on a fixed monthly calendar. Many collections of sermons are therefore characterized by the distinction between *sermones de tempore* and *sermones de sanctis*. In this case, the sermons for Christmas, Epiphany, Lent weekdays and Ascension, are to be found in the temporal series. But there is also another liturgical order where the distinction is between sermons for the Sundays, *dominicales*, and sermons for the feasts, either of the Lord or of his saints, *festiui*; then we find Christmas and Ascension in the *festiui*. If there are sermons for Lent weekdays, they normally form another series of *sermones quadragesimales*. Often there is a third or fourth collection, *de communi sanctorum*.

There are also some special dispositions, such as the collections of Cistercian sermons, like that of Guerric of Igny.<sup>13</sup> In the Cistercian use, preaching to the community was restricted to a list of fifteen to twenty occasions in the year.

We will look further at the implications and difficulties of the study of liturgical collections and how to distinguish them from chronological ones when we deal with the question of dating a sermon.

### *Versions*

We have now to ask questions about the relation between the written text that was preserved and the oral speech that is the usual form of a sermon. First, was there always a spoken form? Some of the texts presented as sermons may have been spiritual treatises cast in the form of sermons as a literary device but actually made to be read and meditated upon: what Michel Zink calls "preaching in an armchair".<sup>14</sup> They may also have been parodies or satirical imitations intended to provoke laughter or indignation.

Even assuming that the sermon we are studying was actually preached, we may still be dealing with different situations. The text we have may be a preliminary draft, or the definitive text put into writing by the preacher before he delivered the sermon. Alternatively, it may have been written by the preacher himself after preaching; this case is very difficult to distinguish from the preceding one, even when we have the autograph text of the preacher as we have for Matthew of Aquasparta.<sup>15</sup> Again, our text may consist of notes taken by some hearer, which we call *reportatio*, or the reworking of such notes; or it may be a model written to be used by less gifted or more lazy preachers; and we can also find mixtures of these different types. If Servasanto of Faenza explains clearly that, being too old to preach himself he writes models for his younger confrères, these models are so personal that it is highly probable that they are in great part sermons that he actually preached when younger.<sup>16</sup> The collection *De sanctis* of Evrard de Valle Scolarium is also a model collection, but some of its elements are sermons which were in fact preached, as we also have reported versions of them.<sup>17</sup> In these cases the text we have corresponds to a sermon preached at least once, and perhaps many times.

Reported versions raise more intricate questions. We have to ask how they were made, if we can trust them and how we are to edit them. There were probably different ways of taking notes during a sermon. A case of what seems to be a *reportatio* in its primitive, rougher state was recently found by Nicole Bériou. It is more a series of key-words than a continuous text and is very difficult to understand, but we can compare it with a text which was made afterwards with the help of these notes and which is easily readable.<sup>18</sup> In this case we see the role of memory in the making of a *reportatio*, and though we must remember that medieval people had a much better training in memory than we have, even the best memory may have defects and there is a chance that the *reportator* has in some places used his own vocabulary instead of the preacher's.

However, even if every *reportatio* is subject to some influence

from the *reportator*, it can also be a more vivid witness of what was actually preached even than the same text written by the author himself. If we compare the same sermon written by Aquasparta in his own hand, and as reported by a hearer, we see that in the autograph an example is merely indicated as *exemplum de puero mutinensi*, the story of the young man of Modena, but that in the reported version there is a very lively description of a scene, witnessed by Aquasparta himself, between a cautious provincial and a generous young candidate for the Franciscan order.<sup>19</sup> So we should never discard a *reportatio* for the sole reason that we have a text written out by the author: we must always study both with equal care. The same is true when we have to deal with several reports of the same sermon. We have first to ask whether they come from different hearers, each having expanded his text independently; or whether they have their origin in a single report with independent elaborations; or whether we have before us some combination of these possibilities. If we have to prepare an edition of a sermon which has come down to us in different forms, we may choose one of them, we may publish all, but we must avoid combining them in an attempt at reconstitution.

Written out by the author or reported by hearers, the sermon could be afterwards abridged, and this fate befell a good many. Sometimes it was done out of thrift. Young Godfrey of Fontaines was one of the *socii* of the Sorbonne, of which the official title was "Poor Masters' College". His habit was to copy for himself the texts he needed, abridging them very carefully and cleverly. He did this with a collection of sermons belonging to Stephen of Abbeville, a canon of Amiens and benefactor of the Sorbonne. As the two manuscripts are still preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, we can see how Godfrey was keeping essential things while eliminating others.<sup>20</sup> It may also have meant that the condensation of the sermon reduced it to a form more practicable for the light luggage of an itinerant preacher.

If Godfrey left unchanged important parts of the sermons he abridged, there are more severe shortenings, as is the case with several collections of Bonaventure's sermons, and two in particular. When we can compare the original version we see how drastic the cuts were: often there remain only the main articulations with a single biblical authority instead of a whole development.<sup>21</sup> Very often also, without suffering internal amputations, sermons are deprived of their prologue (*prothema*) or their *collatio*. The literary value of the complete text may of course be badly affected by such curtailments.

#### Language

After the problems arising from the writing and reporting of sermons, we may now turn to those that concern language. We have sermons written wholly in Latin, wholly in the vernacular, and in a mixture of both. The first conclusion would be to assume they were delivered as they are now written, and this was the position of Barthélemy Hauréau in a long discussion with Lecoy de la Marche.<sup>22</sup> Hauréau maintained that a great deal of preaching to lay people was

in a macaronic mixture, while Lecoy asserted that normally all sermons to the laity were preached in the vernacular. Lecoy was certainly right. We cannot however be sure of the original language used in any given case without some examination. Even sermons written in the vernacular can be translations of Latin ones. We have at least two examples: one in a collection of French translations of St Bernard; another, also in French, in Maurice of Sully's Latin models for parish priests.<sup>23</sup> Instances of sermons preached in the vernacular but written in Latin are much more numerous. In the Leipzig manuscript of Albert the Great's sermons, a great number bear the indication *in uulgari*, but nearly everything is in Latin, with a very few short phrases in German.<sup>24</sup> We also have many Latin sermons with the rubric *in gallico*. In these the Latin is sometimes a word for word rendering of French constructions, so that, to understand the Latin, we have first to reconstruct the French. A more interesting case is a sermon delivered by Bonaventure to the nuns of Saint Antoine in Paris for the feast of St Mark in 1273. The whole sermon is in Latin without any French words, but nonetheless the preacher comments on his poor command of French: "Licet ego nesciam bene loqui gallice, non tamen propter hoc uerbum Dei, quod debeo proferre, in se minus ualet. Ideo non curetis de hoc, dum tamen me intelligere possitis". The style of this sermon itself contains many gallicisms, such as "debemus . . . clamare misericordiam de bono corde ad exemplum unius bonae dominae . . .".<sup>25</sup>

Very often in a sermon written mostly in Latin we find phrases or words in the vernacular, and this can provide a good opportunity to discover the dialect of the preacher; but here also some caution is necessary. We have a very precious collection of *reportationes* made by Peter of Limoges during the years 1260-3 from sermons preached in Paris by such men as Robert of Sorbon and Barthélemy of Tours. These contain several vernacular expressions, but this vernacular is not the northern French used in Paris and natural to men from Champagne or Touraine: it is Occitan, the language of Limoges, the native region of the *reportator*.<sup>26</sup>

To explain these cases of sermons rendered in a language other than that which was actually used, we may postulate a translation, or perhaps notes taken in the vernacular but put into Latin by the reporter, but we cannot be sure: Latin seems to have become for many clerics a language as natural as their own vernacular and they may have translated at the same time as they reported. This seems to have been the case in the rough *reportatio* I alluded to above.<sup>27</sup>

Reported versions do not only give us Latin renderings of vernacular sermons. At the end of the eleventh century Ralph of Escures sent to some Norman abbots the Latin text of a sermon that, he says, "in conuentu fratrum, prout potui, uulgariter plus semel exposui".<sup>28</sup> Here it is the author himself who either published in Latin a sermon composed in the vernacular or delivered in Norman French what he had written in Latin. Yet it was not difficult to preach in the vernacular with the help of a Latin text or draft. Humbert of Romans tells us an illuminating story about Innocent III.<sup>29</sup> The Pope was preaching in Italian for the feast of St Mary Magdalen and was giving word for word a rendering of Gregory the

Great's homily. He had an assistant near him with the Latin text to prompt him in case of some lapse of memory. He was acting in this manner, he explained to some bewildered witnesses, to show by personal example that there is no shame in using works of predecessors. For us now this is a clear case of oral translation from one language to another. Innocent was used to preaching in Italian, for he says of his own sermons, in the preface to the collection: "quosdam sermones ad clerum et populum, nunc litterali, nunc uulgari lingua proposui et dictavi".<sup>30</sup>

#### Audience

"In Latin and in the vernacular, to the clergy and to the people": the question of language leads us naturally to questions about audience and places of preaching.

If some sermons were preached to highly mixed assemblies, as on solemn occasions when a great part of the clergy gathered with crowds of the people, generally speaking audiences were more specialized and the congregations were mostly either lay or clerical.

Sermons to laymen could be given in the open air, in some large area, such as the famous sermons at St Paul's Cross in London.<sup>31</sup> In some Italian towns outside pulpits for open air sermons still survive, such as the one at Santa Maria Nuova in Viterbo which is said to have been used by Thomas Aquinas. Here there is no room for a large number of people,<sup>32</sup> but in Florence the space before Santa Maria Novella was enlarged in the mid-thirteenth century to allow greater crowds to attend sermons by Dominican preachers.<sup>33</sup> This large Piazza retained its function until the beginning of the fourteenth century when Giordano da Pisa frequently preached in the morning during Lent to a large crowd of people. He had another open air gathering in the afternoons, often in some garden, for more specialized congregations, generally using the interior of the church only for the Vespers preaching.<sup>34</sup>

For, of course, the ordinary place for delivering sermons was a church or a chapter house. But a church could be used for different kinds of assemblies. In a parish church, the nave served for the most essential kind of preaching, the Sunday sermon given during the Mass to the parish flock; lateral chapels were the normal place for the instructions addressed to more restricted congregations, chiefly fraternities. A Cathedral church or its chapter house was normally reserved for great ceremonies and gatherings of the diocesan clergy for ordinations, synods, or elections. In monasteries or convents of men, the sermons to monks or friars were ordinarily given in the chapter house, *coram fratribus in capitulo*, as many rubrics of Bonaventure's sermons say,<sup>35</sup> but in religious houses for women, the sermons to nuns or beguines took place in the monastery church.

University sermons, at least in Oxford and Paris, were normally preached on Sundays *apud predicatores*, and on feasts occurring on weekdays *apud minores*.<sup>36</sup> We ought to use the expression "University sermon" with some care and restrict it to the official sermons *coram universitate*, delivered by Masters or Bachelors in Theology, which students and probably also masters were compelled to attend. Of

course there was only one such preaching, with morning Mass sermon and evening Vespers collation in one day. But too often the appellation "University sermon" has been given to sermons delivered by masters to an audience outside the University, and sometimes to sermons which have merely been preserved with true University sermons. Such mistaken usages can be very misleading.

If we sometimes have rubrics giving valuable indications about places and audiences these are unfortunately rather exceptional. In general we have no external clues and have to rely only on the content of the sermon. It is often easy to detect clerical or monastic sermons: ordinations, elections, synods were necessarily alluded to in sermons delivered on those occasions, while a preacher addressing monks or nuns would frequently speak of the virtues of the founder or of the special duties of religious life.

But apart from these cases it is often difficult to know the type of audience being addressed. We have some negative criteria. If a sermon was definitely given in Latin, it was made for a clerical audience, certainly not for a parish or a congregation of women; if it was clearly in the vernacular, it was not for the University. But we cannot be sure that regular or secular priests were always addressed in Latin: we have learned from the case of Ralph of Escures that some Norman monks of the end of the eleventh century received instructions in French,<sup>37</sup> and when a thirteenth-century bishop, Eudes Rigaud, wanted to be understood by his priests, he certainly had to speak to them in their native language. Even if we cannot be sure of the actual language, there is some probability that a very learned sermon with many patristic and classical quotations and using a highly theological or philosophical language, was preached *coram universitate*, but we have equally some University sermons very popular in manner, and even some sermons certainly preached to parish people or to nuns in which we find philosophical expression of some difficulty. Prayers for the good state of the University do not necessarily indicate a university audience: we find them also in sermons for Parisian parishes or monasteries.<sup>38</sup> So, in too many cases, we cannot be sure of the type of audience being addressed.

Sometimes we have some indications, if not of a precise place, at least of a region. Of course a vernacular sermon gives us some certainty of the country where it was preached, and sometimes a dialectal study may prove helpful; but we have to remember the case of Parisian sermons interspersed with Occitan expressions.<sup>39</sup> Some allusions to local events or institutions may be good evidence: if an *exemplum* concerning a king does not necessarily point to a kingdom, the use of *balliuis* or *senescalcus*, or *scabinus* or *potestas*, may usefully restrict the area. We may also find some clues in liturgical implications. Of course, if we know the author, even a great traveller like Bonaventure, we can generally make reasonable guesses about the places where he preached.

#### *Authorship and Date*

After questions of place and audience, we now turn to those concerning authorship and date, but as the dating of a sermon is very



often linked with liturgical elements we have to deal more or less simultaneously with medieval liturgy, chronology and authorship.

It is better to begin with the simplest cases, where some reliable indications give us the name of the preacher and the date of his sermon. We have this good luck in the case of the "Collationes de decem praeceptis" of Bonaventure: *Explicit expositio decalogi secundum fratrem Bonaventure ministri generalis ordinis minorum, quam predicavit parisiis anno domini m.cc.lx.septimo in sacra quadragesima prout potuit notari dum ipse predicaret.*<sup>40</sup> Such indications of author, date, liturgical occasion, place and character of a reportation, are however seldom found together. Some rubrics may be less clear, such as: *Dominica eadem. Sermo fratris Willelmi de millac ordinis minorum qui legit sententias apud minores anno lxxv.*<sup>o</sup> Here we cannot be sure whether William preached this sermon in the Franciscan church in 1265, or whether he was lecturing here on the *Sentences* at this date and preached later in this church, or in another one.<sup>41</sup>

Fortunately we have many solid attributions of the authorship of single sermons and of whole collections. Some identify important authors such as Pope Innocent III, Stephen Langton, the Chancellor Philip, the Cardinal Legate Eudes of Chateauroux or King Robert of Naples, but more often they bear lesser-known or unknown names, such as the William of Millac (or perhaps Nullac or Willach) I have just mentioned. Sometimes there is at least, as in this case, mention of an order or of an office, but some of the more widely spread collections of model-sermons of the thirteenth century come from very shadowy figures; Nicholas of Biard, William of Maily, Thomas Brito. All we know of these is that they were religious, as their names are usually preceded by *frater*; that they spoke French, as they often quote French proverbs and expressions; and that they issued their collections before the years 1275-80, when they were included in the *exemplaria*-list of the University of Paris. It is often said that Biard was Franciscan and Maily Dominican, but both of these assertions are without any solid foundation.<sup>42</sup>

If we have many correct attributions, there are also too often false ones, and confusions have arisen in the past as well as in recent times. Let us take a curious example.

I have just mentioned Thomas Brito. Besides a collection *de communi sanctorum*, he has left a rather diffused series *de tempore*. As he was practically unknown, he was easily mistaken for a more famous "frater Thomas", namely Aquinas, and we have a fourteenth-century manuscript which bears an attribution to the Dominican Doctor. This manuscript is in the Vatican Library and was noticed by Pietro Uccelli, a good Thomist scholar but too easily swayed by his enthusiastic zeal to find new works of Aquinas, and so a part of Brito's collection was printed during the last century under the name of Aquinas.<sup>43</sup> Brito's popular style with its French quotations, is very different from that of Aquinas, and the great majority of scholars rejected Uccelli's attribution without hesitation. But, at almost the same time, the catalogue of the manuscripts of the Library of Troyes was compiled. This collection includes a manuscript which consists of two different parts: the first, anonymous,

is Thomas Brito's collection; the second contains the *Sermones de sanctis* of Guibert of Tournai. The two parts, with no special similarities, were bound together by chance. Nevertheless the author of the catalogue described the two series as one, giving Brito's incipit and the final attribution to Guibert, and this false authorship was followed for an anonymous manuscript of Bordeaux.<sup>44</sup> When August Pelzer made his otherwise excellent catalogue of a part of the *Vaticani latini*, he had to give a description of Brito's manuscript bearing Aquinas's name. He correctly rejected this attribution, but placing too much confidence in the catalogues of Troyes and Bordeaux, he then ascribed the sermons to Guibert, and was followed by Anneliese Maier for a Borghese manuscript.<sup>45</sup> More recently, misled by a Madrid manuscript, Schneyer put Brito's sermons under the name of Thomas de Lisle, an English Dominican of the fourteenth century.<sup>46</sup> There are several similar cases that show how cautious we have to be in the question of authorship.

As for provenance, we may sometimes not know the name of a preacher but still not be completely ignorant about him. We can at least identify the religious order of a monk or friar if he says *beatus pater noster Benedictus* or *Franciscus*. We may also sometimes draw inferences from his opinions: a fierce attack upon friars' privileges is not ordinarily the mark of a Dominican or Franciscan. But here also we must not be too hasty: an anonymous sermon in a Venice manuscript provides a clear example of strong Augustinism, the author attacking the use of Aristotelian philosophy in theology so heavily that a part of the sermon was regarded as the work of some Franciscan master. But there is another copy in Soissons which bears without equivocation the name of William of Luxi, colleague of Aquinas at St Jacques of Paris, a Dominican if not a Thomist.<sup>47</sup>

We have to be even more cautious in chronological questions. We rarely have precise rubrics and very seldom internal indications in the sermon itself, as when we find an invitation to pray for the election of a good pope.<sup>48</sup> So we have to take into account liturgical data, thus entering a field which is still too little known and in which some rather serious mistakes have been made, but which can be very instructive when investigated with proper care.

For instance, if we know that a sermon for an identified feast was given on a particular day of the week then the number of possible years is automatically narrowed down. When the details are fuller, as when we know for instance that the sermon was for a feast of the Annunciation which fell on Palm Sunday, the possible years may be only two or three in one century.<sup>49</sup> Occasionally a further element will allow us to know the actual year with certainty. The same criterion may be used for a collection of sermons: if we are sure that it follows a genuine chronological order, we may identify those years in which that order was possible.

But here we have to be very cautious, as there are two main temptations, and experience shows that it is easy to be ensnared by them. The first mistake is to take a purely liturgical order for a chronological one: we must realise that for one manuscript in chronological order, we have at least twenty in liturgical. This error may lead to serious mistakes. For instance, seven manuscript collections

were said to be from the academic year 1267-8, but only one of these is actually a chronological collection of this year: another perhaps may be, but the others contain sermons from at least 1249 to 1281.<sup>50</sup>

The second temptation is to forget that liturgy is not usually a fixed system. The stability of Roman liturgy between the councils of Trent and Vatican II has in fact led many people to use modern missals or breviaries for dating medieval sermons, but this has also caused many mistakes. Actually, there were as many liturgical variations as there were regions or orders. The Parisian use was not the Sarum use, and Dominican books differed largely from Franciscan ones: the former had a series of pericopes for Epistles and Gospels for Sundays very near the Parisian order, but the Franciscan used the Ordinary of the Roman Curia (a rather disturbed one) and so after Pentecost read a passage of the Gospel one or two weeks before Parisian or Dominican churches.<sup>51</sup> And so, when we do not know the liturgy in use at the church where a sermon was preached it may be very dangerous to attempt to place it chronologically solely on the basis of the liturgy; it is better not to use liturgical criteria if we are not very well acquainted either with liturgy or with reliable liturgists.

### Structure

We arrive now at those internal criteria for classification which concern the structure and the style: the literary aspects of preaching.

We have first to see if our text is more a homily or a proper sermon. The two terms seem sometimes to have been used indifferently and never very clearly distinguished, but a useful distinction is to reserve the term 'homily' for the kind of preaching where a whole biblical pericope, normally one of the two or three read during the Mass, was explained thoroughly phrase after phrase to the listeners. This was the normal use in patristic times and it seems to have been kept up in Italy till the thirteenth century.<sup>52</sup> The sermon was more properly the type where only a short quotation, also normally taken from the lections or chants of the liturgy for the day, was divided and developed at length according to the technical patterns later systematized in the *Artes praedicandi*. This kind of preaching seems to have begun in northern Europe during the twelfth century.

Another distinction is between sermon and collation, but this last word is also ambiguous. Sometimes it is given to a series of sermons preached successively on a common theme. Such are the Lent preachings of Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas. Sometimes it seems to designate a less formal discourse, such as instructions given to religious in their chapter. A third application, perhaps commoner from the thirteenth century onwards and chiefly used for the University sermons, indicates an address normally shorter in length and delivered at Vespers to complete the principal sermon given during Mass. Generally the collation is nothing more than the last part of the proper sermon, often introduced by a reminder of the general division given in the morning. It may happen that sermon and collation were copied together without marking the break, or that one of the two parts was dropped by the copyist; however the two

parts are generally both given.

It happens more often that the copyist omits the preliminary part of a sermon, the *prothema*, normally based on a different biblical passage from the sermon itself. The use of such introductions, seems to have developed in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, chiefly at the University. The *prothema* is intended as an invitation to pray for the good result of the preaching by asking God to bestow his grace and give wisdom and eloquence to the preacher and open minds and hearts to the hearers.<sup>53</sup> Very often there is a common word in both biblical quotations. In a sermon for St Andrew, Bonaventure takes for *thema*: *Lignum uitae desiderium ueniens*; and for *prothema*: *Lingua placabilis lignum uitae*.<sup>54</sup> This of course can be a good occasion for the preacher to demonstrate his subtlety. A University sermon normally has a *prothema*, but we have seen it may be omitted by the copyist, and there are sermons with *prothemata* even in parochial preaching.<sup>55</sup> We have also some collections of *prothemata*. If sermons may begin with a *prothema*, they may also end with a bidding prayer but these are seldom copied by the scribes.<sup>56</sup>

The inner structure of the sermon may be more or less sophisticated, but the general plans are often quite simple, consisting of three or four parts with a similar number of subdivisions, but rarely with subdivisions of subdivisions. When the principal parts are more numerous they are not normally subdivided. The general scheme seems to be with three parts, each subdivided in three, the preachers following the advice of the *Artes praedicandi*.<sup>57</sup>

We have next to see if the sermon does or does not conform to other rules of the *Artes*, noting whether it is rhymed or has rhymed divisions, or whether the preacher uses proverbs or allusions to secular literature. Even though the majority of quotations are normally biblical, the number of other authorities cited, the Fathers or the philosophers, may be very characteristic of some preachers and may sometimes give clues to the date: a citation of "Theophilus", for instance, is probably in fact a passage of Theophylact, found in Latin only in the *Catena aurea* of Aquinas, and therefore indicating a date after 1265.<sup>58</sup>

An important question concerns the use of *exempla*. Some authors give many, others few or none; sometimes they are told with many details, sometimes only summarized or even indicated by a short title. Some preachers who use few or even no *exempla*, instead develop lengthy comparisons taken generally from the *thema*; Peter of Rheims and William of Maily have curious examples of this type, comparing oxen with the apostles, or a boat or medicine with penance.<sup>59</sup>

Nearly every thirteenth-century preacher built his sermons on *distinctiones*, classifications of the various interpretations of biblical terms. Study of these may prove interesting, but at present too few collections of *Distinctiones* are available for us to judge their influence.

#### *Doctrinal Material*

There remain now the doctrinal criteria for classification,

probably the most important, as sermons were intended for the Christian edification of their hearers. It would be very interesting to chart the evolution of doctrinal concerns over the years. We know the importance of eschatology for the preaching of Carolingian times, especially among the Anglo-Saxons,<sup>61</sup> and in the last years of the Middle Ages. But in the thirteenth century, the Last Judgment has a rather limited interest and the dominant theme is personal penance and moral conversion.<sup>62</sup> We can sometimes see the more precise positions of a preacher in disputed problems: if Bernard of Clairvaux and Geoffrey of Auxerre remind their auditors of the dangers of Abelard's and Gilbert's doctrines, we find in the following century much discussion of the use of secular philosophy or Roman law, of the plurality of benefices and, above all, the role and privileges of Mendicant Friars. We may find in such discussions suggestions of identification, but we have seen in the case of the Dominican William of Luxi, mistaken for a Franciscan, that here also we have to be cautious.

I have often urged the need for caution, but I would not wish recognition of the difficulties in the study of medieval sermons to be taken as a deterrent to work in this field. Rather it is because the field is rich but still not sufficiently cultivated that we often find ourselves in the position of pioneers, and pioneers must be acquainted with the problems of the terrain if they want to gather a plentiful harvest into their barns.

NOTES

- 1 A more accurate analysis of the classification of medieval sermons, with a careful study of the methodological problems, is being prepared by Jean Longere for *Typologie des sources médiévales* edited by Léopold Gênicot.
- 2 St Bonaventure, *Opera omnia*, (Quaracchi, 1882-1902), vols. V and IX. The *Collationes* are printed in vol. V, pp.327-532. The collection of sermons for Sundays may now be consulted in the new edition: St Bonaventure, *Sermones dominicales*, ed. I.G. Bougerol, *Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica Medii Aevi*, XXVII (Grottaferrata, 1977).
- 3 J.B. Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit um 1150-1350, Beiträge zur Geschichte des Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters*, 43 (Munster, 1969-), vol. III, pp.534-58 (afterwards cited as Schneyer, RLS with volume, page, and if necessary, item numbers). F. Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, (Madrid, 1949-), vol. III, p.342 no.4541.
- 4 Bonaventure, *Op. om.*, vol. VI, pp.535-634.
- 5 St Bernard, *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, ed. J. Leclercq, C.H. Talbot, H.M. Rochais, (Rome, 1957-58), in *Opera*, vols. I and II.
- 6 Matthew of Aquasparta, *Quaestiones disputatae de gratia*, ed. V. Doucet, *Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica Medii Aevi*, XI (Quaracchi, 1935), pp.xxxviii-ix, cxxxix-lii.
- 7 MS Paris B.N.Nouv. acq.lat.338. See M.M. Davy. *Les sermons universitaires parisiens de 1230-31. Contribution à l'histoire de la prédication médiévale, Etudes de philosophie médiévale*, XV (Paris, 1931); Schneyer, RLS VI 13-16.
- 8 MSS Paris B.N.lat. 14947 and 15005. See B. Hauréau, *Notices et extraits de quelques manuscrits latins de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, (Paris, 1890-93); vol. IV, pp.8-17, 190-255; Schneyer, RLS VI 36-46.
- 9 MS Paris B.N.lat.15971, ff.68-132; 16482, ff.285-347. See Schneyer, RLS IV 665-86; A. Lecoy de la Marche, *La chaire française au moyen âge spécialement au XIIIe siècle*, 2nd ed., (Paris, 1886), pp.103, 106-7; M. Mabilille, "Pierre de Limoges copiste de manuscrits", *Scriptorium*, 24 (1970) p.46; "Pierre de Limoges et ses méthodes de travail", in *Hommage à André Boutemy* (Coll. Latomus 145) p.249.
- 10 MS B.N. 16481. See Schneyer, RLS IV 686-94; N. Beriou, "La prédication au béguinage de Paris pendant l'année liturgique 1272-73", *Recherches Augustiniennes*, 13 (1978), pp.105-229; B. Hauréau, "Sermonnaires", in *Histoire littéraire de la France*, 26 (1873) pp.387-468.
- 11 The best known are, after the "Sermo generalis" of Honorius Augustodunensis in his *Speculum ecclesiae* (Pat.Lat. 172, cols. 861-70), those of Jacques de Vitry (Schneyer, RLS III 212-21), and of Guibert of Tournai (RLS II 299-307); also the second part of Humbert of Romans' "De eruditione praedicatorum", see Th. Kaeppli, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi* (Rome, 1970-), vol.II, p.287, no.2013.
- 12 Among many examples may be cited the twin collections of Erlangen Univ. Bibl. 322 ff.1r-45r (2d foliation) (Schneyer, RLS VI 140-2, nos.73-87) and München, Bayer.Staatsbibl. Clm 26491 ff.85r-105r, 129r-156v (RLS VI 65-7,

- nos. 54-63, 71-87).
- 13 Gueric d'Igny, *Sermons*, ed. J. Morson and H. Costello, trans. P. Deseille, *Sources chrétiennes* 166, 202: *Série de Textes Monastiques d'Occident*, xxxi, xliii, (Paris, 1970, 1973); cf. vol. I, pp.22-3. (Schneyer, *RLS* II 248-52.)
- 14 M. Zink, *La predication en langue romane avant 1300*, *Nouvelle bibliothèque du moyen âge*, (Paris, 1976), p.478.
- 15 See note 6 above.
- 16 Assisi Comunale 520 f.99v; edited by V. Gamboso, "I sermoni festivi di Servasanto da Faenza nel codice 490 dell'Antoniana", *Il Santo* 13 (1973) 19.
- 17 Schneyer, *RLS* II 2-15, nos. 52 and 160; 142 and 153. Add no. 6 and MS Venezia Marciana, fondo antico lat. 92 ff.211ra-213ra (*RLS* VI 220 no. 11).
- 18 N. Bériou (see note 10 above) p.115.
- 19 L.J. Bataillon, "La predicazione dei religiosi mendicanti del secolo XIII nell'Italia Centrale", in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome, Moyen âge et temps modernes* 89 (1977) p.693, note 14.
- 20 MSS Paris B.N.lat. 15956 ff.211r-315r (Stephen of Abbeville); 16515 ff.461r-474r (Godfrey of Fontaines).
- 21 MSS Milano, Ambrosiana A.11 sup. and Paris B.N.lat. 14595. The abbreviated form is given (after the long one if this is known) in the Quaracchi edition of Bonaventure (see note 2), vol. IX; cf. p.102 and 106, 151 and 155 etc..
- 22 A. Lecoy de la Marche (see note 9: 1st ed., (Paris, 1868) pp.219-46; 2nd ed. pp.233-69). B. Hauréau (see note 10) pp.388-90. Phyllis B. Roberts, *Stephanus de Lingua-Tonante. Studies in the Sermons of Stephen Langton*, *Studies and Texts*, 16, (Toronto, 1968), pp.52-4. M. Zink, (see note 14) pp.85-107.
- 23 M. Zink, (see note 14) pp.32-6 (Maurice of Sully); 65-71 (St. Bernard).
- 24 J.B. Schneyer, "Predigten Alberts des Grossen in der Hs Leipzig Univ. Bibl. 683", *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 34 (1964) pp.45-106. Idem., "Deutsche Bestandteile in einer scholastischen lateinischen Predigtsammlung des 13. Jahrhunderts (Hs. Leipzig, Univ. Bibl. 683)", *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 89 (1967) pp.54-71.
- 25 Bonaventure, *op. om.* (see note 2) vol. IX, pp.519-24. The cited passages are pp.519 col.2 and 521 col.1.
- 26 MSS cited note 9. A. Lecoy de la Marche (see note 9) p.107.
- 27 See note 18 above.
- 28 A. Wilmart, "Les homélies attribuées à S. Anselme", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 2 (1927) p.21.
- 29 "De eruditione praedicatorum", I, 7, in Humbert of Romans, *Opera de Vita Regulari*, ed. J.J. Berthier, vol. II (Rome, 1889), p.397.

- 30 Pat.Lat., 217, col.311.
- 31 G.R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England. An Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the period c.1350-1450*, (Cambridge, 1921), p.198.
- 32 A. Walz, *Luoghi di San Tommaso*, (Rome, 1961), p.97.
- 33 S. Orlandi, "Il VII<sup>o</sup> Centenario della Predicazione di S. Pietro Martire a Firenze (1245-1945). I Ricordi di S. Pietro Martire in Firenze", *Memorie Domenicane* 64 (1947) pp.123-5. A. Dondaine, "Saint Pierre Martyr. Etudes", *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 23 (1953) p.77.
- 34 C. Delcorno, *Giordano da Pisa e l'antica predicazione volgare*, *Biblioteca di "Lettere" Italiane*, XIV, (Florence, 1975).
- 35 Bonaventure, *op.om.* (see note 2) pp.33, 39, 40, 42, 49, 51 etc.
- 36 A.G. Little, F. Pelster, *Oxford Theology and Theologians c. A.D. 1282-1302*, (Oxford, 1934), pp.170-1. P. Glorieux, "L'enseignement au moyen âge. Techniques et méthodes en usage à la Faculté de Théologie de Paris au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, 35/43 (1966), p.150.
- 37 See above note 28.
- 38 N. Bériou (see note 10) p.137 and note 86. Bonaventure, *Op.om.* (see note 2) vol. IX, p.524, col.1.
- 39 See above note 26.
- 40 MS Troyes 951 f.43r. Bonaventure, *op.om.* (see note 2), vol. V, p.xliii. P. Glorieux, "La date des 'collationes' de S. Bonaventure", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 22 (1929) pp.257-72.
- 41 MS München Bayer. Staatsbibl. Clm 23372 p.35a; cf. *ibid.* p.115b, "Sermo fratris Willelmi Lectoris apud minores factus in uigilia ascensionis domini" and Vat.lat. 1265 f.133va, "In conuersione sancti pauli a fratre G. de wilach". See R.E. Lerner, "A collection of sermons given at Paris ca. 1267 including a new text by Saint Bonaventure on the life of Saint Francis", *Speculum* 49 (1974) 466-98, especially 489.
- 42 The arguments given by Hauréau and Schneyer in support of the view that Nicholas of Biard was a Franciscan are taken from sermons which do not belong to his authentic works. B. Hauréau, *Notices et extraits de quelques manuscrits latins de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, (Paris, 1890-93, vol. II, p.91. J.B. Schneyer, "Einige Sermoneshandschriften aus der früheren Benediktinerbibliothek des Mont Saint-Michel", *Sacris Erudiri*, 17 (1966), pp.188-9; *ibid.*, "Eine Sermonesliste des Nicolaus de Byard, O.F.M.", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 60 (1967) pp.3-4. On William of Mailly, see Th. Kaeppli (see note 11), vol. II, p.118.
- 43 The most usual edition is, Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia*, ed., S.E. Fretté, vol. 32 (Paris, 1879), pp.694-790, 807-15.
- 44 MS Troyes 823 (*Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques des départements*, vol. II, Troyes, (Paris, 1855), p.342). MS. Bordeaux 288 (*Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France. Départements*, vol. XXIII, Bordeaux, ed. C. Couderc (Paris, 1894) p.159).



- 45 MS Vat.lat. 812. (*Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae codices manuscripti recensiti. Codices Vaticanici Latini*, vol. II, 1, Cod.679-1134 rec. A. Pelzer, in *Bibliotheca Vaticana*, 1931, p.153-62). Cod. Borgh. 76 (*Codices Burghesiani Bibliothecae Vaticanae*, recensuit A. Maier, *Studi e Testi* 170, (Città del Vaticano, 1952), pp.94-5.
- 46 Schneyer, RLS V 631-9; the *Sermones de communi sanctorum* are on pp.663-70. The intermediate series *De sanctis*, pp.642-62, is from Tommaso Agni da Lentini.
- 47 MSS Venezia Marciana fondo antico lat.92, ff.191ra-195va; Soissons 125, ff.74va-79va. Schneyer, RLS II 477 nos.8-9. M. Mückshoff, "Die Quaestiones disputatae de fide des Bartholomäus von Bologna O.F.M.", *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters*, XXIV, 2 (Münster in W., 1940), pp.152-3, note 50. L.J. Bataillon, "Les crises de l'Université de Paris d'après les sermons universitaires", in *Die Auseinandersetzungen an der Pariser Universität im XIII. Jahrhundert Miscellanea Mediaevalia*, 10, pp.167-9.
- 48 MS Bruxelles B.R. II.1142 f.43va. This gives the date October 5th 1242 for a sermon of John of La Rochelle. J.G. Bougerol, "Le origini e la finalità dello studio nell' Ordine Franceseano", *Antoniano* 53 (1978) p.419 note 50.
- 49 MS Oxford Merton Coll. 237, ff.46rb-48vb, giving the dates of 1263 and, more probably, 1274 for a sermon of Nicholas of Gorran. Cf. *Bulletin Thomiste* IX (1954-6) p.950, no.1804.
- 50 P. Glorieux, "Sermons universitaires parisiens de 1267-8", *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 16 (1949) pp.40-71. Cf. L.J. Bataillon, "Sur quelques sermons de S. Bonaventure", in *S. Bonaventura 1274-1974*, II, (Grottaferrata, 1974), p.503, note 37.
- 51 L.J. Bataillon (see previous note), p.503, note 38. N. Bériou (see note 10), p.127, note 76. A more detailed article on this topos by M. O'Carroll will appear in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 49 (1979).
- 52 Thomas Waleys, "De modo componendi sermones cum documentis", ch.2, in Th.-M. Charland (ed.), *Artes praedicandi. Contribution à l'histoire de la rhétorique au moyen âge*, *Publications de l'Institut d'Etudes Médiévales d'Ottawa*, VII, (Paris, Ottawa, 1936), p.344: *in aliquibus partibus, puta in Italia, communiter quando praedicatur non clero sed populo, non accipitur breue thema, sed totum euangelium quod legitur in missa accipitur pro themate, et totum exponitur*. Cf. *ibid.* p.112. Some sermons of the Dominican Tommaso Agni da Lentini (see note 46), active during the second and the third quarters of the thirteenth century, are still built on homiletic patterns.
- 53 On the prothema and its function see J.B. Schneyer, *Die Unterweisung der Gemeinde über die Predigt bei scholastischen Predigern. Eine Homiletik aus scholastischen Prothemen Veröffentlichungen des Grabmann-Instituts*, N.F. 4, (München-Paderborn-Wien, 1968).
- 54 Bonaventure (see note 2) IX, 463.
- 55 N. Bériou (see note 10), p.177.
- 56 *Ibid.* p.123-5.

- 57 Charland (see note 52), pp.150-2.
- 58 L.J. Bataillon, "Iacopo da Varazze e Tommaso d'Aquino", *Sapienza*, 32 (1979), 22-9.
- 59 Peter of Rheims: MS Soissons 125 f.7ra (Schneyer, *RLS IV* 753 no.469). William of Mailly, MS Paris B.N.lat.15956 f.30va (the boat, Schneyer *RLS IV* 484 no.19); f.42vb (the medicine, *ibid.* no.26).
- 60 R.H. and M.A. Rouse, "Biblical Distinctions in the Thirteenth Century", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, 41/49 (1974), 27-37.
- 61 M.McC.Gatch, *Aelfric and Wulfstan. Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England*, (Toronto-Buffalo, 1977).
- 62 J. Longère, *Oeuvres oratoires de maîtres parisiens au XIIe siècle. Etude historique et doctrinale*, (Paris, 1975), vol. I, pp.231, 255-70, 277-8, 354-5. N. Bériou (see note 10) pp.183-94.