

NICOLAUS DE AQUAVILLA [NICOLAS D'HACQUEVILLE], *Sermones de sanctis* [Sermons for the Sanctoral]; *Sermones de communi sanctorum* [Sermons on the Commons of the Saints]

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment

Italy (South? Naples?), c. 1275-1325

210 ff. + [1] f., complete [collation: i-xiv8, xv6, xvi-xxv8, xxvi6, xxvii7 (of 8, missing the last leaf of quire, likely a cancelled blank)], tight gothic script in light brown ink, text on two columns, with up to 40 lines per column (justification 140 x 100 mm), quire signatures, catchwords, paragraph marks in alternating red or blue, guide letters, guide words for the rubricator in the margin (e.g. f. 13v; f. 18 etc.), penwork initials in blue or red with opposing color filigree penwork, one larger parti-colored initial with filigree penwork (10 line high) with a descender (bandes d'I) along the left-hand column (opening leaf), marginal annotations in a later late 14<sup>th</sup> or early 15<sup>th</sup> c. hand (e.g. ff. 20v-21, ff. 211-211v). Bound in a limp vellum 16<sup>th</sup>-century binding, smooth spine, title on the spine "*Sermones fratris Nicolai de Aquavilla*," traces of ties (now wanting). Dimensions 205 x 155 mm.

This collection of unpublished model sermons by Nicolaus de Aquavilla (d. c. 1317), a French Franciscan preacher, appears to have been copied within the author's lifetime or little after, and it contains a colophon with the name of the scribe "Gaufridus." It includes sermons for the Sanctoral and a few for the Common of the Saints, likely for use in a Franciscan milieu, perhaps Naples or Sicily, witnessing the influence of French and Italian cultures in the second half of the thirteenth and first quarter of the fourteenth centuries. Fewer than twenty extant codices of this collection survive.

## PROVENANCE

1. Manuscript copied by an identified scribe who provides only his first name "Gaufridus," as stated in the colophon: "Expliciunt sermones fratris Nicholai de Haquevilla de festis omnium sanctorum que celebrantur per totum annum. Expliciunt sermones fratris Nicholai de Haquevilla de ordine minorum fratrum et dicitur preparate maior. Nomen scriptoris Gaufridus cultor amoris" (fol. 210v). The associated formula "cultor amoris" [devotee of love] is found in other signed manuscripts, for instance Vendôme, BM, MS 225: "Nomen scriptoris Nicholaus cultor amoris" (France, Paris (?), 13<sup>th</sup> c.). Our Gaufridus "cultor amoris" is not recorded in Bénédictins du Bouveret, *Colophons de manuscrits occidentaux des origines au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Fribourg, 1976).

The preparation of the parchment as well as the script suggests the present manuscript was copied in Italy. A Franciscan origin is suggested by the choice of texts by a Franciscan predicator (although this is not proof that it was necessarily copied in or intended for a Franciscan milieu) but also the presence of a near contemporary or at least early enough ownership mark referring to "fratrum minorum" (brothers minor) (f. 210v; f. 211). The filigree initials however rather resemble French Parisian production of the 1270s onwards (see Stirnemann, 1990, cat. 35, 39, 45). We would like to suggest the possibility that the present manuscript might have been copied in Southern Italy, but perhaps decorated by a rubricator of French stock. There are manuscripts produced in Sicily or in the Kingdom of Naples in the thirteenth century that present elements of

both the southern and northern cultures that met during the period of French rule in Naples (after the conquest in 1266 of Sicily and Naples by Charles d'Anjou, crowned King Charles I). One could quote a Missal sold recently at auction (Sotheby's, Collection of Joseph Pope, 5 July 2011, lot. 60): this Missal was for Dominican use, copied in Naples, with filigree initials that certainly present northern French influences.

2. Inscription placed below the colophon (15th c.?), partly effaced: "Iste liber est fratrum minorum [...]" [This book belongs to the Brothers Minor...]. Unfortunately, the name of the abbey has been scratched out. Another inscription (same hand) is found on f. 211 recto (an added flyleaf, no doubt): "Iste lib[er] est consesu ad usum fratri [J]acomo de Patro (?) decanum (?) de ordine fratrum minorum."
3. At the foot of the spine, one reads "i 4" or perhaps "14," perhaps a shelfmark. On the front cover a few other numbers "[..]36" and "en 850."
4. France, Private Collection. A pasted strip on the upper pastedown contains an inscription in brown ink (19<sup>th</sup> c.) in French, suggesting that the manuscript was in France at least by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The inscription reads: "In 4o fin XIII ou commencement du XIV" [In-4 format, end of the 13<sup>th</sup> or beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century].

## TEXT

ff. 1-192v, Nicolaus de Aquavilla [Nicolas d'Hacqueville], *Sermones de sanctis* [Sermons pour les fêtes des saints], rubric, *Sermoni adventu vel quando voveris* [Sermon for Advent or for when you want] incipit, "*Preparate corda vostra domino et illi soli servite... Duo sunt ibi consideranda...*" [Schneyer, IV, S 44, p. 200, no. 129]; following sermon (f. 3v), rubric, *De beato antonio sermo*; incipit, "*Quasi stella matutina...*" [Schneyer, IV, S 41, p. 200, no. 128]; following sermon (f. 6), rubric, *De beato iohanne baptista sermo primus*; incipit, "*Tu puer propheta altissimi...*" [Schneyer, IV, S 44, p. 200, no. 130]; rubric, *In translatione beati martini sermo*; incipit, "*Enoch placuit Deo... In verbis istis duo...*" [Schneyer, IV, p. 200, no. 134]; last sermon "de sanctis" (f. 190), without a rubric, "*Dedi spiritum meum super eum... Verba ista ad litteram dicta sunt...*" [Schneyer, I V, S 40, p. 200, no. 125];

ff. 192v-210, Nicolaus de Aquavilla [Nicolas d'Hacqueville], *Sermones de communi sanctorum*, first sermon "de communi sanctorum" (f. 192v); incipit, "*Ecce ego mitto vos sicut oves... Verba ista dicuntur de omnibus...*" [Schneyer, IV, C 2, p. 204, no. 178]; sermon (without a rubric), incipit, "*Fecerunt autem filii Israel... Verba ista plana sunt...*" [Schneyer, IV, C 11, p. 204, no. 183]; last sermon (without a rubric): "*Sacerdotes tui induantur... O bone Jesu...*" [Schneyer, IV, C 14, p. 204, no. 184]; explicit, "[...] illam coronam vite eterne concedat nobis ihesus christus filius dei unii amen";

f. 210v, Colophon containing identified scribe (Gaufridus): "Expliciunt sermones fratris Nicholai de Haquevilla de festis omnium sanctorum que celebrantur per totum annum. Expliciunt sermones fratris Nicholai de Haquevilla de ordine minorum fratrum et dicitur preparate maior. Nomen scriptoris Gaufridus cultor amoris."

This manuscript contains a collection of "model sermons" for the feasts of the saints (Sanctoral) and a few also for the Common of the Saints. The sermons were composed by Nicolaus de Aquavilla (Nicolas de Hacqueville), a franciscan preacher active circa 1300 (died circa 1317?). We know relatively little about Nicolaus de Aquavilla. His name suggests the topographical reference to "Hacqueville" corroborated by the spelling found in the colophon of the present manuscript: "Nicholai de Haquevilla" (f. 210v). Hacqueville being a town in Normandy, Nicolas de Hacqueville is thus thought to have been from Normandy. Some believe him rather to have

been a Franciscan from England (see Richard Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland Before 1540*, Turnhout, Brepols, 1997, p. 383). Others have even suggested that he was a Dominican, which seems unlikely (see CGM, Bordeaux, 1880, tome I, p. 103, MS. 285, Nicolaus de Aquavilla, Sermons sur les saints, XIIIe s.).

The sermons found in this collection by Nicolaus de Aquavilla are "model" sermons, that is sermons grouped into a collection by a famous or renowned preacher (here Nicolaus de Aquavilla), to be used and adapted by other preachers, often less experimented. Collections of model sermons either offered "turnkey" sermons for a specific feast day (as in the present case) or for each Sunday of the liturgical calendar, or were used as a base or support to create other sermons adapted to local use.

There are two collections of sermons attributed to Nicolaus de Aquavilla: the most copied and widely disseminated are the *Sermones ad Tempore*. This collection has recently been chosen as the object of study and edition by two Swedish scholars (see E. Odelman and M. Hedlund, 2007; edition in preparation). There are some 50 manuscripts that contain all or a portion of the *Sermones ad Tempore* and a number of early incunable and sixteenth century editions (see Odelman, 2007; editio princeps *Sermones dominicales in Evangelia per anni circulum* (s.d.; Hain, 8353)).

By contrast, the present collection of model sermons for the Sanctoral and the Common of the Saints (*Sermones de sanctis*; *Sermones de communi sanctorum*, named in the colophon "Preparate maior" after the opening words of the first sermon) is unpublished (although one cannot exclude that certain isolated sermons might have been published in the incunable period or the sixteenth century) (see Bériou, 2008, p. 181; note 49). The collection as described in Schneyer has not been edited or properly studied. Schneyer lists only 16 manuscripts of the *Sermones de sanctis et de communi sanctorum* (see Schneyer, IV, pp. 204-205). To this list, one should add London, BL, Egerton MS 3086 (13<sup>th</sup> century); Tours, BM, MS 482, Sermons pour les fêtes des saints (from Saint-Gatien, 14<sup>th</sup> c.).

Sermon manuscripts made for Franciscans constitute essential documents for the appreciation of the Minorite ministry of preaching. They are also central to the study of the culture of the Minorites who regarded the acquisition and production of books as an integral part of religious life. We are here witness to the transmission of a collection of model sermons composed by a French author for Franciscans across Europe to use and adapt according to their preaching needs and evolving culture. A close study of this manuscript with the other twenty-some extant codices will certainly reveal how this copy differs and whether the sermon collection was adapted to local use.

## LITERATURE

Bataillon, L.-J. *La prédication au XIIIe siècle en France et en Italie*, Aldershot, 1993.

Bériou, N. "Parler de Dieu en images : le Christ pèlerin au Moyen Age," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 2008 (vol. 152).

Hedlund, M. "The Use of Model Sermons ad Vadstena: A Case Study," *Constructing the Medieval Sermon*, ed. Roger Andersson, Turnhout, Brepols, 2007, pp. 117-164.

Kienzle, B. M. *The Sermon*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2000.

Johnson, T. J. ed. *Franciscans at Prayer*, Leiden, Brill, 2007.

Odelman, E. "Editing the *Sermones moralissimi de tempore* by Nicholas de Aquavilla," *Constructing the Medieval Sermon*, ed. Roger Andersson, Turnhout, Brepols, 2007, pp. 165-176.

Schneyer, J. B. *Repertorium der Lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters...*, IV, Münster, 1972, pp. 189-205.

Stirnemann, P. "Fils de la vierge. L'initiale à filigranes parisiennes : 1140-1314," *Revue de l'Art*, 1990, Volume 90, no. 90, pp. 58-73.

Sbaraglia, G. G. and L. Wadding, *Supplementum et castigatio ad scriptores ttium ordinum S. Francisci a Waddingo...*, t. 2, Rome 1921, p. 265.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

On Nicolas de Aquavilla:

<http://beauchesne.immanens.com/appli/article.php?id=7197>

[http://users.bart.nl/~roestb/franciscan/franautn.htm#\\_Toc426759645](http://users.bart.nl/~roestb/franciscan/franautn.htm#_Toc426759645)

Bordeaux, BM, MS 285, Nicolas de Hacqueville, *Sermones de sanctis*:

<http://manuscrits-drac.bnsa.aquitaine.fr/?doc=1405>

On Medieval Sermons:

<http://sermones.net/>

TM 783