

Theses

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The use of the modellsermons of Robertus Caracciolus (OFM)

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Overview of the subject-matter

The topic of the present doctoral thesis is directly related to the research I have done since 2004 under the guidance of the late Ildikó Bárczy. Initially I started studying the sources and compilation technique of late Hungarian mediaeval sermons as a member of the *Ars Compilati* group primarily through the *Érdy Codex* and the works of Pelbárt of Temesvár.

The name of the Italian Robertus Caracciolus, whose printed works had a significant impact on the practice of preaching in Europe from the 1480s onwards, first surfaced as a potential source to the *Érdy Codex*. One of the chapters in this thesis is solely dedicated to establishing the collection of Caracciolus entitled *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* as the direct source for three sermons of the *Érdy Codex*.

As the only member of the research group to speak Italian I was given the task of doing research related to our interests by gathering information from relevant academic works and to potentially find further usages of the Franciscan preacher in Hungary.

This thesis presents a large part of my research and explores how collections of sermons were utilised as works of reference by preachers. The sermon – as a primarily oral genre – had always preserved its public nature and the characteristic of being delivered aloud. A number of early incunables are in fact written collections of actual sermons. However, we must also take note of the otherwise frequent usage of referencing in mediaeval speeches, whereby the preacher gives instructions or advice to a fellow preacher on how to make use of the given sermon when writing his own. Unfortunately, there are no instances of the so-called *reportatio* in Hungarian mediaeval literature, and the number of comments on the art of preaching or its technique potentially useful for later research is also very limited. The *University Lectures of Pécs* and the *Lines of Gyulafehérvár* indicate a significant preaching practice in the 13-14th centuries, however, these only carry an indirect implication of how the sermons were actually constructed and delivered.

While examining the effect of Robertus Caracciolus's *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* in Hungary I came across two documents which reveal two distinct usages of the same work of reference sermons. The two related manuscripts describe the task of the preacher from gathering material through organising the subject matter to structuring the final version of the sermon.

The first source, to which Edit Madas drew my attention, surfaced through a bibliopole a few years ago, and is the 1489 edition of Robertus Caracciolus's *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* published in Venice by Georgius Arrivabenus. Together with numerous marginalia, the volume contains a register written by the same hand in which the preacher lists which religious feasts he prepared sermons for, what he talked about, what original sources he used for his sermons and what the main themes were. Although both the marginalia and the drafts were written in Latin, the manuscript does indicate the time and location of compiling the register: 1495-1496, Pécs. Therefore, it can be stated that the volume was undoubtedly used in Hungary. The manuscript, to which I refer to as *Draft-sermons of Pécs* in my thesis, contains drafts in Latin based on Latin model-sermons, and sheds light on the first phase of preparing a sermon.

The second document – far from being a recent find – is the *Érdy Codex*, the longest surviving sample of mediaeval Hungarian. The Unknown Carthusian used Robertus Caracciolus's *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* for three of his sermons. The sources for the sermons written for the feasts of St. Catherine of Siena, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Francis are all to be found in this volume. In a separate chapter I give a detailed overview of how all three sources were made use of in identical fashion. Thus, the comparison of the three Hungarian sermons and their originals leads to establishing general conclusions. Here we

have a document which allows for a textual analysis of Caracciolus's model-sermon and its vernacular counterpart.

The present thesis consists of three main chapters. First I give an overview of Robertus Caracciolus himself and his works, by which I wish to make up for the lack of related academic works in Hungarian. The second and most important chapter is the analysis of the *Draft-sermons of Pécs*. The importance of this manuscript lies not only in the fact that it is a hitherto unknown document, but also because it illustrates the process and method of compiling sermons in an immediate and unique way. The third chapter is the study of Robertus Caracciolus's *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* as being the source of the *Érdy Codex*. Finally, I summarise the findings which have yielded themselves by analysing the sermons which feature in the *Draft-sermons of Pécs* and the *Érdy Codex*, thus giving a detailed picture of the process of the so-called *ars compilandi*.

Methodology

Although the three chapters of my thesis are related, they discuss different topics, thus various methods were required. I presented the life and work of Robertus Caracciolus di Licio relying primarily on Italian academic material. The study of the Franciscan preacher's oeuvre in Italy is an integral part of a wider research on mediaeval preaching, it is no surprise, therefore, that an in-depth monograph on Robertus Caracciolus appeared as early as 1947. Since then critical editions, numerous studies on a single sermon and comprehensive works on the art of preaching have also dealt with his activity. For my research I tried to choose and focus on the most important such academic literature.

Relying on already existing studies in connection with the *Draft-sermons of Pécs* was not possible, since it is a collection which only surfaced recently. This is why a detailed description of the source and the verbatim transcription of the draft-sermons were essential. I intentionally chose not to include the marginalia, because the extensive glossary can only be interpreted together with the original printed text. An overview and the classification of the marginalia constitute a separate chapter. When transcribing the draft-sermons I followed the order of the manuscript, and only diverged from the verbatim transcription in as much as I added necessary punctuation marks and used brackets to help interpret ambiguous abbreviations. Furthermore, I also indicated biblical references in parentheses. Following the detailed presentation of the manuscript, I interpreted the newly revealed source.

Presenting Robertus Caracciolus's *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* as the source of the *Érdy Codex* required yet another approach. To enable a comparative study I chose to present the texts in parallel charts. Examples to illustrate the use of sources by the Unknown Carthusian are all taken from the charts. I employed the rules for transcribing devised by the *Sermones Compilati* research group. I replaced special characters in the text of the *Érdy Codex* by its present-day equivalent and also added punctuation to help better interpretation.

By studying the influence of Robertus Caracciolus in Hungary my doctoral thesis presents a number of new findings and sheds light on hitherto unrevealed connections, which will serve a better understanding of late 15th-early 16th century preaching practices.

Results and findings

1. Robertus Caracciolus *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum*

The 1489 edition of *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* published in Venice by Georgius Arrivabenus contains a set of hand-written entries along the margins of the printed text. Beside underlinings, linkages, numbers and cross-references there are a number of marginalia related to the subject-matter. These marginalia feature throughout the volume, at the end of

which we find a unique document in the history of Hungarian preaching. The handwriting is identical to that of the marginalia. Whoever used the collection lists the various religious feasts for which he prepared sermons, what he said and where he drew his inspiration from. The manuscript also contains a specific reference to time and place: *1495-1496, Pécs*. The author of the short draft-sermons separates the feasts from each other not only by drawing a horizontal line across the page, but also by indicating the specific name of the feast in the middle of the page. These headings clearly indicate the various special days within the religious calendar, enabling the preacher to search for previous draft-sermons later without difficulty. At the beginning of each draft-sermon the preacher refers to the exact passage of the Bible which served as the basis and then gives the *division of the sermon*. Even though these are sometimes embedded within a sentence, the three-part division is clearly indicated using numbers. Indicating the main aspects of a given sermon is only absent when it is based on a single source. The three-part division is followed by referring to the exact sources used for the given sermon. Since there are no exceptions to this practice, we can assume that the primary reason for compiling the list was to spare the preacher from having to search for new topics to discuss. This is why indicating the exact sources used serves not as a so-called *auctoritas* which would lend it authority before its readers, but rather gives a unique insight into the *ars compilandi* by revealing which works of reference were at the preacher's disposal.

2. Resources of the preacher

We have seen that the study of sources reveals the preacher's degree of learnedness and his given circumstances, and further enables a better understanding of compilation techniques.

The primary and most important source is the volume itself into the back of which the preacher wrote his draft-sermons. He must have kept the collection with himself at all times, since he chose to preserve his sermons for a given year in it. This is proven by the high number of references – he makes twenty-one references to this single volume alone. Looking at the sources for his draft-sermons we find a reference to all of Caracciolus's works, which indicates that the preacher had an up-to date knowledge and regarded Robertus Caracciolus as essential to his work.

The other frequently cited volume is a collection of so-called *exempli*. The short draft-sermons show that the majority of the sermons exemplify the third elements of the division. This is why the preacher needed a collection of *exempli* containing a comprehensive and detailed index.

During Lent the preacher discusses the five senses in detail, dedicating several days to a single sense. These sermons all draw from a single source, which is Nicolaus de Dinckelsbühl's work entitles *Tractatus de quinque sensibus*.

The various sources which feature in the volume contain a number of popular reference works of the time, which are very rarely referred to in the final sermon, yet their aim is evident from the study of existing copies and their content. These include Petrus de Palude's *Thesaurus*, the *Promptuarium exemplorum*, Johannes Nider's *Praeceptorium* and the *Summa angelica*. Apart from these works we find others to which there are only one or two references. The works required for preparing sermons were publications that were widespread in Europe at the time with many surviving copies in libraries across the continent.

3. Making use of Robertus Caracciolus's sermons based on the marginalia and the *Draft-sermons of Pécs*

It is the draft-sermons subsequently added to the *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* which lend it extra significance, nevertheless, a detailed analysis of the marginalia along the printed text also gives an insight into how the preacher read and interpreted the original work.

Furthermore, by comparing the side-comments with the short draft-sermons we can understand the intended usage of the collection.

I have divided the handwritten comments along the margins – all intended to enable a better understanding of the text – into four categories. The first category includes notes that merely indicate a given passage. The reader often uses lines, side-marks or other symbols to indicate a new unit of thought within the given sermon. This is most often – but not exclusively – used when the printed text does not indicate internal divisions clearly. The second category also includes underlinings, abbreviations, highlighting certain words, but this time not to make the structure of a given sermon more obvious, but to indicate instances of so-called *auctoritas*. The third type of marginalia is direct quotations from the text. In such instances a certain passage or phrase regarded by the reader as important is copied using his own handwriting as if to reassert them. The fourth category includes any comment which is at least a word long and is not directly taken from the text itself. Sometimes this is only a notification referring to the content of the sermon (the phrase *Nota bene!* frequently features throughout the text), but we also encounter paraphrases of expressions taken from the printed text (e.g. on the recto side of leaf k6 *origonale peccatum* appears beside the printed *originalis macula* phrase). Occasionally there are lengthier entries.

Those sermons, along which handwritten marginalia feature and are referred to among the draft-sermons, prove that the preacher made use of Robertus Caracciolus's sermons to construct his own. Although we only find few such sermons, there are examples of a single model-sermon serving as the basis for several other sermons, while also illustrating how the preacher utilised the sermons methodically.

4. *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* as the direct source of the *Érdy Codex*

The primary aim of the *Sermones compilati* research group, founded by Ildikó Bárczi at the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest (ELTE) and which was active for almost a decade, was to explore the *Érdy Codex*. Previous research had identified and studied the possible sources of the codex – the works of Pelbartus of Temesvár, the *Legenda Aurea*, the collection *Legendae sanctorum regni Hungariae* and the works of Guillelmus Parisiensis can all be directly related to the *Érdy Codex*. Consequently our attention was aimed at those particular sermons of the *de tempore* section that had either not yet been dealt with or were proven not to have originated from Pelbartus, like the one written for the feast of St Francis. When searching for possible sources we initially studied the collections of model-sermons popular at the time, among others the volume of *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* by Robertus Caracciolus. The notion that this collection can be regarded as a source was first proven by Eszter Szép in relation to the sermon for the feast of St Catherine of Siena. This was soon followed by two further identifications – the first in-depth analysis of the sermon for the feast of St Francis was done by Dóra Rapavi and presented in her thesis entitled *The Unknown Carthusian's Sermon for the Feast of St Francis*, while I myself identified the sermon for the feast of St Anthony of Padua. The comparative analysis of these three sermons alone clearly revealed certain regularities as to which texts from Caracciolus were adopted or left out.

- The Unknown Carthusian follows the original structure of Caracciolus's sermons. The chapters and even the sub-points are identical. The main division and the order of related topics follow the model-sermon in all three cases.
- Those sections which feature in both sermons but are longer and more elaborate in that of the Unknown Carthusian cannot be regarded as translations but rather the original work of the Unknown Carthusian. These often expand on some theological or moral issue, so the less learned audience (the collection was intended to be read for nuns) would also understand more abstract matters.

- The Unknown Carthusian leaves out several sections from his chosen source. These most commonly include sophisticated theological reasoning and references to so-called *auctoritas* regarded as important by Caracciolus.

Comparing given sermons from the *Érdy Codex* with related sermons by Robertus Caracciolus is significant for several reasons. Whether considering the *Érdy Codex* or the collection of Caracciolus as the basis for comparison, new findings present themselves. In case of the former a new source was identified. Also, by establishing general rules of application, we get an insight into the silent monk's techniques and style. Finally, the role of Robertus Caracciolus in relation to preaching practices in Hungary is not only apparent through draft-sermons, references or the starting point for writing a sermon, but we can also see the process of compilation through texts.

5. Methodology of the compiler

The study of how late mediaeval sermons were designed gave rise to the phrase *ars compilandi*, which refers to a special writing process the rules of which had never been established by contemporary theoreticians. In her lengthy book entitled *Ars compilandi*, Ildikó Bárczi presents a large set of sermons with identical subject-matter to prove that different authors primarily used the same keywords to construct their sermons and arrange points in a strikingly similar manner. Therefore, I attempt to describe the process of sermon writing by relating texts to each other and thus create a universally applicable and valid theory.

This is complemented by the study of the many possible applications of a specific reference book, which conceals neither the personality of the author nor the possibilities and limitations of the given reference book. We can study Robertus Caracciolus's *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* volume from two different aspects based on available sources. By comparing it with relevant sermons in the *Érdy Codex* we can come to certain conclusions based on the similarities and differences between complete texts. The method employed is identical to that of Ildikó Bárczi the only difference being that the comparative study not only justifies the theory of compilation, but also reveals the Unknown Carthusian's distinct concept and personal ambitions. The other aspect is the *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* itself presented in my thesis in detail, the handwritten notes of which bear evidence to the process of gathering and arranging material. This corpus, thus, complements and justifies the concept applicable to complete sermons. Although the author of the *Érdy Codex* and the preacher who wrote the draft-sermons into the volume are not identical, the need for simple, accessible sermons resulted in similar methods of application. As a result, the two approaches of my research are interrelated, and reveal how one given collection was made use of for similar demands.

Therefore, the two documents confirming the application of Robertus Caracciolus's *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* proves and bears evidence of how the process of compilation took place.

1. Careful study of all available sources, making notes and preparing texts for future use.
2. Selecting authors with necessary so-called *auctoritas* to be referenced.
3. Identifying principle topics for the new sermon in accordance with the receptiveness of target audience.
4. Gathering and organising relevant sources to illustrate the given concept.
5. Selecting and arranging subject-matter.
6. Finally, appropriate wording of the text.

It is apparent that the writing process of the so-called *ars compilandi* is indeed a form of art, since the author had to demonstrate advanced and diverse writing and editing skills, and prove his simultaneous understanding of theology, liturgy and morality.

With the help of the documents revealing two distinct approaches to the same source we get an insight into mediaeval preaching practices. Furthermore, they illustrate the role and the development of the vernacular as the originally oral sermons became a complete written collection.

Publication

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