



The Art of Preaching: Five Medieval Texts and Translations

Siegfried Wenzel

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In the later Middle Ages, preachers learned how to structure a sermon from technical treatises called *artes praedicandi*. These treatises taught and illustrated how to select a biblical text for the sermon of a given day and then develop it by means of divisions and various kinds of expansion. Their exposition is highly technical and sometimes can be obscure. About 240 such works are known to exist in Latin, but only a few of them have been edited and even fewer translated into modern English.

Based on his wide-ranging knowledge of late-medieval Latin sermons from England as well as his editorial experience with medieval Latin texts, Siegfried Wenzel offers critical editions of five instruction manuals on the "art of preaching" dating from 1230 to the fifteenth century. Four of the texts are edited and translated for the first time; the fifth is re-edited from all extant manuscripts. Each of the five sermons is accompanied by a facing-page translation into English. The book aims to stimulate interest and new research in a field that still awaits closer analysis of the relationships among existing treatises and of their historical development.

Siegfried Wenzel, a longtime professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is author or editor of numerous books and articles, most recently *Preaching in the Age of Chaucer* (CUA Press). Wenzel is recipient of the Medieval Academy of America's prestigious Charles Homer Haskins Medal for his contributions to medieval literature and religion.

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