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*Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* 138 (1979–1980): 231–53, and Tiziana Agostini Nordio—Valerio Vianello, *Contributi rinascimentali. Venezia e Firenze* (Abano: Francisci, 1982). Ultimately, Vianello produced a critical survey of recent publications on the author of the *Dialoghi*: “Sperone Speroni: opere, stile e tradizione. Un ventennio di studi (1968–1988),” *Quaderni veneti* 9 (June 1989): 203–22. Of further interest in regard to the texts discussed in this article is Jon R. Snyder’s “Writing Under Pressure: Speroni and the Dialogical Mask,” in *Writing the Scene of Speaking* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 87–133.

**Daniel R. Lesnick**, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality*. Athens GA and London: University of Georgia Press, 1989. xii + 306.

With this book Daniel Lesnick adds to the growing number of studies of preaching and its social context in the later Middle Ages. As with many academic books, the subtitle reveals more of the book’s contents than does the title. Lesnick focuses his inquiry on the social position of Dominicans and Franciscans in Florence during the pivotal years at the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries, paying considerable attention to the political content of their preaching. In this period Florence underwent considerable political turmoil, including the disenfranchisement of the *magnati* (old nobility), and factional struggles within the dominant Guelf party. These changes capped the thirteenth-century transformation of the city from a provincial backwater to a leading commercial and manufacturing center. Lesnick’s book studies the roles played by the major mendicant orders in this period of extreme stress in Florentine society as reflected in their sermons and writings.

The book consists of three major sections and six prosopographical appendices. The two chapters of the first section recapitulate Florentine social, economic, and political development in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Lesnick pays particular attention to the development of a ruling elite of merchant and banking families, the *popolo grasso*, which gained control of the city and displaced the other component of the city’s patriciate, the *magnati*, older noble lineages whose wealth was based on land holdings. There follows a discussion of the growth of the orders of artisans, craftsmen, shopkeepers, and professionals who coalesced politically into the *popolo*. The analysis of Florentine class structure shapes the two remaining sections on the social origins of recruits to the two major mendicant orders and on the preaching techniques, audience, and goals of each order.

In perhaps the most successful section of the book, Lesnick analyzes the social backgrounds of the Franciscans of Santa Croce and the Dominicans of Santa Maria Novella, the centers of these two orders in Florence. Neither order excluded members of any urban social group, persons from the *contado* (the surrounding rural district subject to Florentine rule), or foreigners. Nonetheless, the overall patterns of recruitment differed in crucial ways which mirrored the social affiliations of the two orders. Working from necrologies and other documents referring to the years between 1290 and 1310, the author has determined the social origins of a great number of the friars in the city. The Franciscans took in more people from villages and towns in the *contado* and far fewer members of the urban patriciate than the Dominicans. Nearly all of the patricians who did join the Franciscans came from magnate families rather than the *popolo grasso*; Lesnick suggests that the *magnati* tried to maintain some influence in public affairs after their exclusion from power in 1293 by placing members in every important religious congregation in the city. Geography also played a role; most of the patrician recruits came from neighborhoods close to Santa Croce, while recruits from the *popolo*, who made up the bulk of the Franciscans in Florence, came from throughout the city and the *contado*.

Dominican recruiting followed a significantly different pattern. Patrician families throughout the city gave sons to the Friars Preacher, but the majority of these recruits came from the *popolo grasso* rather than the *magnati*. While identifiable patricians did not predominate numerically, they obtained the lion's share of leadership positions, including the task of public preaching. The majority of *popolo* members of the convent of Santa Maria Novella came from the immediate neighborhood, thus mirroring in reverse the social patterns of Franciscan recruitment across town at Santa Croce.

In the third section of the book Lesnick applies the insights gained from his social analysis to an investigation of the preaching methods and aims of the two orders. Dominican preaching followed the model of the *sermo modernus*, a tightly structured, logically rigorous form with a minimum of emotional appeal and limited use of biblical narrative or *exempla*. The author argues that this style not only reflected the scholastic training of the Dominicans but also appealed to the coolly rational businessmen of the *popolo grasso*. Furthermore, this method buttressed their political hegemony: "[T]he Dominicans presented the *popolo grasso* with an epistemological model embodying the principles of rational structuration, intellectual control, and therefore dominance. . . . These techniques and structure . . . taught the *popolo grasso* the scholastics' mental habits of orderliness,

logical clarity, structuration, and control" (176-77). Thematically, Dominican preachers stressed issues important to their *popolo grasso* constituency: the suppression of vendetta (a hallmark of magnate families), individual routes to salvation, and the limits of licit business practices. The net effect was to bolster the social and political control of the *popolo grasso* and the Black Guef party.

In contrast, the Franciscans employed a simpler style in their sermons, making extensive use of biblical narrative and *exempla*, and emphasizing emotional appeal over logical rigor. This older style of preaching appealed more directly to listeners than the *sermo modernus*. These listeners, Lesnick argues, consisted mainly of the humbler, less educated *popolo* rather than the *popolo grasso*. Franciscan preachers encouraged meditation on the life of Christ and of saints and biblical figures. In their choice of examples, they lauded the active over the contemplative life. They consistently rejected the scholastic method and the scholastic use of knowledge as a tool for control. Lesnick argues that this approach met the spiritual needs of the *popolo* by giving them concrete examples which they could grasp directly (unlike the sophisticated logical arguments of the Dominicans) and by establishing ways for the laity, engaged in the active life, to partake in some degree of the spiritual meditation of the contemplative life.

The book's strengths arise from the author's command of the sources for the mendicant orders in Florence from ca. 1290 to ca. 1310. Some weaknesses, however, stem from the narrow range of these sources. Where ample material is available, as for the analysis of the social composition of the orders, the author's arguments deserve great respect. As for the preaching done by these orders, however, the body of evidence on which Lesnick advances his class-oriented analysis is quite thin. As he notes, few Italian sermons from the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have survived. The mendicant orders prohibited the distribution of vernacular sermons for fear of fostering unguided speculation which could lead to heresy. For the most part, what we have are collections of *exempla* suitable for use in sermons and outlines of sermons in Latin preaching manuals, but not the sermons as preached. In some cases, laymen's transcriptions of sermons have survived, and happily a group of sermons preached by the Dominican Giordano da Pisa in Florence from 1304 to 1307 are among these. Lesnick bases much of his analysis in Giordano's sermons, which bear out the *popolo grasso* orientation he ascribes to Dominican preaching. One may object that they do not fully represent Dominican preaching in Florence, particularly since Giordano was not himself a Florentine. Further, Giordano began preaching just after the suppression of the last major White Guef

attempt to regain control of the city. In this highly charged political atmosphere, it seems likely that his sermons would assume an overtly political tone of support for the regime, perhaps more than was usual in Dominican preaching.

Lesnick's inquiry into Franciscan preaching faces even greater difficulties. No extant collection of Franciscan vernacular sermons exists before the fifteenth century. One must perforce examine preaching manuals, collections of *exempla*, and devotional books. Lesnick does this, giving particular attention to a devotional manual in Tuscan, the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* of Giovanni de Caulibus of San Gimignano (ca. 1300). While this necessarily indirect approach does produce some valuable insights, it cannot fully represent the content and technique of Franciscan preaching, and the author's conclusions on the sociopolitical import of Franciscan preaching must therefore be treated cautiously. Finally, in the cases of both the Dominicans and the Franciscans, preaching before the last years of the thirteenth century receives very little attention, even though both orders were established in Florence well before mid-century.

A number of lacunae in the scholarly literature cited in the book cannot but puzzle; in some places wider reading would have produced a more nuanced discussion. For example, the examination of Franciscan ideas of poverty (146-52) ought to have taken account of the broad range of studies by Michel Mollat and others on medieval conceptions of poverty; this might have prevented the remarkable statement (151) that the first hospitals in Europe arose in Florence and Tuscany during this period (institutions for the treatment of the sick appeared in several countries by the twelfth century). Furthermore, the limited role in poor relief that the author sees for the Franciscans might seem less significant when viewed against the whole panoply of charitable endeavors by other groups such as lay confraternities, some of which were under the spiritual guidance of the Franciscans. Likewise, the failure to mention John Moorman's *Medieval Franciscan Houses* in the discussion of Franciscan expansion in Tuscany is curious, though not a fatal flaw. Other points such as the treatment of heresy also suffer from an inadequate acquaintance with recent scholarship.

To sum up: *Preaching in Medieval Florence* provides a useful case study of the social dimensions of medieval preaching but suffers from a number of flaws. Lesnick's analysis of the class affiliations of the mendicant orders in Florentine society is the solidest part of the book. The author goes too far at times in linking the content of the sermons preached by members of the two orders to class affiliations. Much of what he infers may be true, but evidence in the form of extant sermon texts does not survive in sufficient

quantity to verify his hypotheses. The relatively narrow time span covered by the book leaves one wondering how far to extrapolate Lesnick's findings forward or backward. Was the preaching of the period 1290–1310 typical of mendicant preaching before or later? If it differed, how and why did it differ? Answering these questions will require considerable study. Despite its shortcomings, this book provides a starting point for further work, not only on Florence but also in other, less studied cities and regions.

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**Richard L. Kagan, ed.**, *Spanish Cities of the Golden Age: The Views of Anton van den Wyngaerde*. Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989. 415.

In the 1560s, Anton van den Wyngaerde, a Dutch painter specializing in topographical views of cities, was appointed to the court of Philip II. While in Philip's service, van den Wyngaerde made a series of trips through Spain and created beautiful topographically correct views of several cities. The views of the various cities presented in the catalogue of van den Wyngaerde's itinerary are quite naturalistic, more so than the works of contemporary artists who were not technically trained in topography. The depictions are variously of whole cities, preliminary sketches and partial views. In *Spanish Cities of the Golden Age*, Richard L. Kagan has assembled the works together, including the itineraries of van den Wyngaerde's trips. Illustrated essays by Kagan and three other contributors set the historical and artistic background for the works, detailing the relation between Philip and van den Wyngaerde. Articles included in this work are Jonathan Brown's "Philip II as Art Collector and Patron," Kagan's "Philip II and the Geographers" and "Cities of the Golden Age," Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann's "Spanish Views of Anton van den Wyngaerde," and Fernando Marías's "City Planning in Sixteenth-Century Spain." Essays by Jonathan Brown and Kagan note the collecting patterns of Philip and his interest in geography and cartography, examining the royal court and royal patronage of artists in general, and of van den Wyngaerde in particular. These essays take pains to portray Philip as an active monarch with his own artistic vision.

The two essays which address Spanish cities and their planning will likely be of most interest to the reader of this book. In his essay "Cities of the