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HOMILETICS is the art of preaching; its history is perhaps best understood as shifting conceptions of a homiletic triad that consists of the scriptural text, the preacher, and the preacher's audience. Each conception depends on distinct yet recurring beliefs about human nature, the intelligibility of scripture, the function of the institutional church, and the accessibility of God and divine truths. Thus, homiletics as a rhetorical art influences and is influenced by psychological, hermeneutical, ecclesiastical, and theological doctrines that reemerge, in differing combinations and with differing emphases, throughout the Christian tradition.

Although the homiletic triad recalls other triads from the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition (especially Aristotle's *logos*, *ēthos*, and *pathos*), the most distinctive element of Christian preaching—the discussion of a scriptural text—has its origin in the rabbinical sermons delivered in synagogues. The term *homiletics* comes from the Greek noun *homilia* or “conversation” (*sermo* in Latin). It designates the relatively straightforward and informal oral interpretation of a scriptural text and stands in contradistinction to a *logos* (*oratio* in Latin), which denotes a more self-consciously rhetorical composition modeled on secular forms such as the encomium, invective, and apology. Origen (c.185–254 CE), a Neoplatonic theologian, and John Chrysostom (c.347–407 CE), the patron saint of preachers, are usually credited with elevating the *homilia* to a higher level of rhetorical sophistication. Origen identified nonliteral (moral, allegorical, theological) levels of meaning in Holy Scripture, which allowed him to make the dead letter of scripture

speak to the lived spiritual experiences of his listeners. Chrysostom composed eloquent expository homilies on Old and New Testament texts that employ a more grammatical and historical method of scriptural interpretation and, like his numerous topical sermons, vividly depict the religious and social conflicts facing early Christian communities.

De doctrina christiana (On Christian Learning; completed in 427 CE) by Augustine (354–430 CE) has been called the first and most important Christian rhetorical treatise because it adapts, some say distorts, Ciceronian rhetorical principles for homiletic purposes. In its first three books, Augustine discusses rules for discovering the meaning of scripture and posits the rule of *caritas*, charity or love (for Augustine, the double love of God and neighbor) as the ultimate criterion for judging the validity of an interpretation. In its final book, he defends the Christian use of classical rhetoric, calling it a potent weapon against the enemies of the nascent church. Echoing Cicero, he writes that the preacher's three duties are to teach, delight, and move; and that these three duties correspond to the three traditional levels of style: the simple teaches, the middle delights, and the grand moves.

The period between the late fifth and the twelfth century is noted for the codification of existing homiletic techniques rather than the invention of new ones. In the Eastern Church, homilies and panegyric discourses by Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus (c.330–389 CE), and other Greek Fathers were copied down, imitated, and incorporated into the liturgical calendar. In the Western Church, the same period witnessed the prolific production of homiletic aids—such as *homilaria* (collections of printed sermons by famous preachers to be read aloud at the pulpit), postils, concordances, gatherings of *exempla*—meant to aid inexperienced or incompetent preachers. These materials helped to canonize the sermons and rhetorical strategies of the Church Fathers. [See *Exemplum*; and *Panegyric*.]

The first major innovation in the sermon form and the handling of its scriptural text arose with the medieval *ars praedicandi*, which theorized the “thematic” (or “university” or “modern”) sermon as a method of treating any scriptural text or religious topic: the preacher reads a short scriptural

passage (the “theme”), divides it into members (specific words, images, or subjects, usually in groups of three), and makes further subdivisions, which are in turn elaborated upon using citations and *exempla* from scripture, saints’ lives, and even pagan literature. Unlike the “ancient” sermon, which offered a running, oral, scriptural commentary, the thematic sermon highlighted the preacher’s skill (or lack thereof) in invention and arrangement; it also betrayed the influence of Aristotle’s newly rediscovered writings on logic (although many *artes praedicandi* incorporated terms from the Ciceronian *partes orationis*). A later sermon form, influenced by Ramist dialectic and popularized by the puritan William Perkins’s *The Arte of Prophesying* (Lat. 1592, Engl. 1607), divided the sermon into the explication of a scriptural text, the statement of doctrinal points, and the application of these points to the “manners” of the audience; these parts were frequently subdivided further. This schematic text–doctrine–application structure encouraged outlining and allowed preachers to avoid the twin perils of reading aloud a previously written sermon and of preaching *ex tempore*; the same structure helped listeners to remember and reconstruct the sermon. [See overview article on Medieval rhetoric.]

Later homiletics influenced by the Renaissance and the Reformation complained that such sermons relied too heavily on ingenious scholastic subtleties, crumbled the sacred text into mere dictionary forms and innumerable divisions, and (especially with the thematic sermon) encouraged the use of profane *exempla* to elaborate the written Word of God. Treatises by Desiderius Erasmus, Philip Melancthon, and numerous Catholic rhetoricians in the sixteenth century, by Bartholomew Keckermann, Gerardus Vossius, and François Fénelon in the seventeenth, Hugh Blair, George Campbell, and Richard Whately in the eighteenth, and Charles Broadus in the nineteenth all modified the standards of contemporary rhetorical theory to include sermons, in structure and style if not in substance and with strictures of varying severity for sticking to the scriptural text at hand. Homiletics increasingly became a species of rhetoric, preaching became pulpit oratory, and sermons became moral discourses. Less bound to classical rhetorical models,

zealous fundamentalist and twentieth-century homiletics adapted various inductive, narrative-based sermon strategies derived, respectively, from biblical models (jeremiad, parable, Pauline exhortation, revelation), and theories of mass communication.

Opponents of the historical affiliation of rhetoric and homiletics note that, at several points in the New Testament, the preacher is figured as a herald (*kēryx*) who proclaims God’s message (*kērygma*) free of rhetorical embellishment and cultural accommodation. This figure has inspired various orthodox movements to distinguish, sometimes vehemently, between the preacher as God’s herald and the preacher as (to use other biblical metaphors) ambassador, steward, or shepherd who prudently accommodates and applies divine truths to a fallen audience’s intellectual and spiritual capacity. Because many Church Fathers were celebrated orators, they took pains to distinguish the Christian preacher from the pagan orator more in terms of his motives than his methods. Chrysostom, for example, who before taking orders studied rhetoric under the notoriously pagan Sophist Libanius (314–393 CE), decried those preachers who sought the admiring applause of their listeners as would an ambitious declaimer. If the preacher uses the art of rhetoric, he must hide it. Chrysostom and other Greek Fathers also developed the doctrine of divine accommodation that provided a key theological justification of the preacher’s rhetorical artistry: just as Jesus Christ, the divine *logos*, became flesh (1.14) and took human form for the benefit of humankind, so too could Christian orators (like Saint Paul before them) imitate this divine accommodation and prudently adapt God’s Word to suit their fallen listeners in various rhetorical situations. While justifying the preacher’s rhetorical methods, the Church Fathers also note that the example of the preacher’s moral behavior while away from the pulpit often has a greater persuasive force than his verbal eloquence. To this view, Augustine adds that a bad man may compose and deliver a doctrinally-sound sermon and that the same sermon can later be recited to better effect by a good man. This latter statement anticipates the possible charge (a version of the Donatist heresy) that the efficacy of Christian preaching is lo-

cated in the preacher's holiness rather than in God's grace or in the working of the Spirit.

The splintering of the church following the Reformation brought into question the source of a preacher's authority: must he be appointed (and presumably trained) by an established church, elected by the congregation he is to serve, or impelled by Spirit and witnessed by the testimony of his conscience? In order to mediate between possible disparities between a preacher's ecclesiastical and spiritual authority, Christian rhetoricians adopted the classical principle that only the moved speaker is able to move an audience (cf. Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, first century CE, 6.2.5–7) while adding the Holy Spirit to the equation: only the preacher whose heart is inflamed by the Spirit is able to inflame the hearts of his listeners. The authority given to the speaker's *ēthos*—his personality, sense of calling, previous spiritual experiences—in later generations licensed the preaching to groups traditionally occluded from the pulpits of mainstream churches (e.g., women and African Americans) and allowed them to champion social reform in their sermons. In the nineteenth century, the character and presence of the preacher were emphasized—as in Phillips Brooks's (1835–1893) definition of preaching as “truth through personality”—and this emphasis created figures as different as the solemn Victorian pulpit orator and charismatic American tent revivalist. This same emphasis also prompted neo-orthodox countermovements, such as the one led by the Swiss theologian Karl Barth (1886–1968). He denounced the idea that the preacher's primary task was to reveal, convey, or adapt divine truths to fit a particular rhetorical situation; the preacher must obey, rather than clarify or apply, the Word of God. In preaching, the preacher does not bring us to Jesus, He comes to us. Homiletics does not belong with the art of rhetoric, but rather with biblical studies and church dogmatics. [See *Ēthos*.]

The audience in homiletic theory is usually distinguished from those of two ancillary ministries: missionary preaching aimed at persuading individuals hostile to or ignorant of the Christian faith; and *catēchēsis* aimed at explaining core doctrinal beliefs. But faith can lapse and doctrines can be misunderstood or forgotten, so the audi-

ence that is implied in most homiletic theory (both converted and indoctrinated) requires admonition, consolation, and exhortation to proper conduct and to strong faith. The audience can also be thought of as either a congregation of believers or as discrete individuals. As a congregation, it forms a kind of microcosm of humanity, possessing members with diverse strengths and weaknesses. The widely-disseminated treatise entitled *Pastoral Care* by Gregory the Great (c.540–604 CE), for example, catalogs methods for admonishing three dozen opposing character types (men and women, the humble and the proud, even those who should preach but do not and those who should not preach but do). In this context, preaching targets the conduct and the beliefs of individual members in the hope of edifying and maintaining the integrity of the worldly church. Preaching takes its place alongside other rites of public worship—the liturgy and the sacraments—and becomes a mark of the true church on earth.

But preaching has always had as its ultimate objective the cure of souls; it is the mantra of preachers that “faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ” (*Rm.* 10.17, RSV). Sermons address the so-called inner man. Preachers need and in their sermons help to form (pessimistically) inveterate sinners struggling toward heaven or (optimistically) unperfected saints sojourning on earth. Usually the goal is to elicit some sort of nonrational response, to stir the heart instead of or in addition to the head. Augustine observes that a tear in a listener's eye is a sign of a persuasive sermon (centuries later, Alan of Lille, c.1128–1202, would agree, but add that nothing dries so quickly as a tear); post-Reformation homileticians stressed the individual's affective response to the Word preached and elaborated techniques for prompting it; preachers in the Age of Reason targeted the emotions and the imagination as a mechanism for goading the apprehending mind into action; eighteenth-century revivalists employed theatrical tactics (as explicated by the elocutionary movement), and modern evangelists use the strategies of mass communication in order to inspire awakenings, conversions, and rebirths. But preaching poses the additional challenge of dis-

cerning the true source of this emotional response: comfort at hearing the Gospel and terror at hearing the Law can be claimed as evidence either of spiritual regeneration or of spiritual lethargy, depending on how one views the process or event of salvation. Ultimately, homiletics, like other rhetorical arts, requires the management of doubt, especially doubt about the burning question: "What shall I do to be saved?"

[See also *Hermeneutics; and Religion.*]

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HUMANISM. Humanism is one of the most characteristic traits of the European Renaissance, to a greater or lesser extent affecting all aspects of the culture of that period, which extends approximately from 1300 to 1600 CE.

Although in current discourse the term *humanism* often denotes an emphasis on human values in general, Renaissance humanism is, in the wake of most nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians, to be understood as that particular concern with the study and imitation of classical antiquity, which is typical of the period and finds its expression in scholarship, education, and in many other areas, including the arts and sciences. During the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, humanism was centered in Italy. It spread to the rest of Europe, apart from a few earlier episodes, only during the fifteenth century and especially the sixteenth century. Whereas early Italian humanism had its own medieval antecedents, eastern and northern manifestations of humanism are much indebted to Italian influences but assumed in each country some individual traits that reflected, at least in part, the medieval traditions of the particular country, which differed in turn from those of other countries, including Italy.

The modern term *humanism*, current since the early nineteenth century, is derived from the term *umanista*, and was coined in the late fifteenth century to designate a teacher and student of the "humanities" or *studia humanitatis*. The Latin word *humanitas*, in English *humanity*, is semantically related to Greek *paideia*, education, and *philanthrōpia*, love of mankind. As such, the word is indicative of an attitude of mind that attaches prime importance to man, the development of his faculties, and respect for human values at large, especially benevolence, kindness, and sympathy, opposed as these latter notions are to the bestial and, if less conspicuously so in classical Greek and Roman writers, to the divine. The term *humanitas* first occurred in 85 BCE in the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, in the