

MANUSCRIPT 59

Gregorius I, the Great, saint, pope, ca. 540-604
Moralia. In Italian.
MS 59

Italy

Ca. 1475?

A 15th-century Italian text of a much published work by Pope Gregory the Great, originally wrapped in two sheets of vellum, on which a number of later owners have scribbled a few lines. The second note on the flyleaf bears the date 17 March 1483, but it is not in the same hand as the main text, and was probably written several years (or even several decades) after the copying of the codex. The watermark in the paper is of the very common "three mounts and a cross" type--but the crossbar of the cross seems to be missing, or exists only as a very faint line, which gives it a good resemblance to watermark No. 11684 in Briquet's Filigranes, which is dated Fano 1400. In size, the three mounts are almost identical with watermark No. 1266 in Zongli's Watermarks, which is dated Fabriano 1404. However, neither the Briquet nor the Zongli watermark is exactly identical with the one in the codex, so that the paper cannot be dated with any precision, and it would be foolish to try to assign an early-15th-century date to the codex on the basis of watermark resemblances.

The flyleaf note dated 1483 mentions Andrea Filippo di Loffreda, his sister Catarina di Loffreda, and a certain Stesivene (?) Barriti--none of whom have been identified. A note at the head of the text indicates that the codex was owned (about 1530) by Cola Marino Capece of Naples, who belonged to a fairly prominent family--see Scipione Ametrano, Della famiglia Capece (Naples, 1603). For further information see Goodspeed, Descriptive catalogue, p. 68, and De Ricci, Census, I, 563.

Folio, 29 x 22 cm.

225 leaves (fully foliated).

Modern half-leather binding.

A fair copy in a single unidentified hand. Rubricated throughout. Preceded by a table of contents. No index and no marginal notes. The text is in excellent condition, but many of the words have been contracted.

Belonged to the marquis of Taccone (late 18th century) of Naples, treasurer to the kingdom of Naples. Part of the Berlin Collection.

3 February 1968
T. Bentley Duncan