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GREGORIUS MAGNUS [GREGORY THE GREAT], *Moralia in Job (libri I-XIX)*

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper

Southern Italy, likely Sicily (Catania?), c. 1475-1485

264 ff, lacking last folios, mostly in gatherings of 12 (collation: i¹¹ (12-1), ii-xix¹², xx¹³ (12 + 1), xxi-xxii¹²), on paper [watermarks close to Briquet "char," no. 3549, Catania, 1475 and "anneau," no. 691, Syracuse, 1479 and Catania, 1481], written in a highly abridged littera bastarda or brevitura in light and darker brown ink (at least two hands: ff. 1-167v and ff. 168-264v), text copied on two columns (justification 50 x 50 x 160 mm), light plummet ruling, catchwords, quire signatures, some prickings still visible, rubrics in red, headings in red with Roman numerals numbering books, capitals stroked in yellow, initials painted in red, some with ajouré motifs, Roman numerals in the margins indicating textual divisions within each book (chapters?). Bound in a later rigid vellum binding over pasteboards probably of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, spine sewn on 4 thongs, ink inscriptions on edges: "B.V.M. C[imell]is" and "Mor. Greg." (Some light waterstains to certain folios, else very good condition). Dimensions 150 x 225 mm.

Clean attractive manuscript copy likely made in Sicily of the first Italian printed edition of Gregory's *Moralia in Job* (Rome, 1475). Sicilian manuscripts are relatively rare, and this one permits interesting observations on the procedures of copying printed books. In the seventeenth century, the manuscript was housed in the well-known library of an important French Franciscan monastery.

PROVENANCE

1. Watermarks and script clearly suggest a southern Italian origin for this manuscript, likely Sicily.
2. Early seventeenth-century ex-libris (f. 1) reads: "Conventus Sanctae Mariae de Cimellis Niciae," with the additional inscription: "S. Gregorii Decretales" followed by shelfmark [?] and correction: "[S. Gregorii] Magni Morales." This is the Franciscan Monastery Notre-Dame de Cimiez in Nice. The monastic provenance is confirmed by a pasted bookplate on upper pastedown: "Ex biblioth[eca] FF. MM.

Reform. S[anctae] Mariae Cemelii Nicaeae." After the destruction of their convent in 1543 by the Turks, the Brothers Minor of the Observance settled around 1546 in a chapel dedicated to Notre Dame and located above Nice in Cimiez (Kerval [1901], pp. 23-26). They built an abbey which housed a very fine library still in place in 1681 (see Baretty [1909], p. 18; Cottineau, II, col. 3070; Kerval [1901]; Moorman [1983], pp. 340-341).

TEXT

ff. 1-1v, [Miraculum de inventione librorum moralium beati Gregorii an[te] omnia prescribit] (text found in Rome, 1475 but title restituted according to the Paris, 1495 edition): incipit, "Beatus Gregorius papa librum beati Iob petente sancto Leandro spalense episcopo exponit sicut in prologo..."; explicit, "...apponere huiusmodi libros comparantes"[printed in incunable edition: Rome, 1475 (Paris, BnF Res. C-635), text placed after the *Registrum*, before the dedicatory epistle];

ff. 2-5, Dedicatory epistle to Leander, brother of Saint Isidorus, "Ad Leandrum": incipit, "Reverentissimo et sanctissimo fratri Leandro coepiscopo Gregorius servus servorum Dei. Dudum te, frater beatissime, in Constantinopolitana urbe cognoscens..."; explicit, "...mei quoque labor studii ex utraque fulciatur" [SC 32 bis, pp. 114-135; CCL 143, pp. 1-7];

ff. 5-11v, Preface, "Praefatio": rubric, *Incipit per probemio totius operas que viam prebet ad facilius intelligendum sequentes libros*; incipit, "Inter multos sepe queritur quis libri beati Iob scriptor habeatur..."; explicit, "... [SC 32 bis, pp. 136-173; CCL 143, pp. 8-24];

ff. 11v-19v, *Moralia in Job*, Book I: rubric, *Liber moralium*; incipit, "Vir erat in terra Hus nomine Iob. Idcirco sanctus vir ubi habituaverit dicitur ut eius..."; explicit, "...mentem sublevat a veneratione historiae non recedat" [SC 32 bis, pp. 174-251; CCL 143 B, pp. 25-58];

ff. 19v-34, *Moralia in Job*, Book II: rubric, *Explicit liber primus. Incipit secundus*; incipit, "Scriptura sacramentis oculos quasi quoddam speculum..."; explicit, "...ad momentum sublata tolleramus" [SC 32 bis, pp. 252-393; CCL 143, pp. 59-114];

ff. 34-44v, *Moralia in Job*, Book III: rubric, *Explicit liber secundus. Incipit tertius*; incipit, "Beatus Iob ad mortem petitus in temptatione ad vitam..."; explicit, "...prout singular expetunt loca perducamus" [CCL 143, pp. 115-157];

ff. 44v-59, *Moralia in Job*, Book IV: rubric, *Explicit liber tertius. Incipit liber quartus*; incipit, "Qui textum considerat et sensum sacrae locutionis..."; explicit, "...et servus liber a domino suo" [CCL 143, pp. 158-217];

ff. 59-76, *Moralia in Job*, Book V: rubric, *Explicit liber quartus. Incipit quintus*; incipit, "Cum valde occulta sint iudicia..."; explicit, "...qui adhuc in desideriis infirmatur" [CCL 143, pp. 218-283];

ff. 76v-88v, *Moralia in Job*, Book VI: rubric, *Explicit liber quintus. Incipit sextus*; incipit, "Servata historie veritate beati Iob dicti amicorum..."; explicit, "...fortiter dirigens civem ferit" [CCL 143, pp. 284-333];

ff. 88v-101, *Moralia in Job*, Book VII: rubric, *Explicit liber sextus. Incipit liber septimus*; incipit, "Quorundam mentes plus flagella..."; explicit, "...aura levitatis portat" [CCL 143, pp. 334-381];

ff. 101-119v, *Moralia in Job*, Book VIII: rubric, *Explicit liber septimus. Incipit octavus*; incipit, "Precedenti libello tractavimus..."; explicit, "...ad eterna penam rapiuntur" [CCL 143, pp. 382-455];

ff. 119v-138v, *Moralia in Job*, Book IX: rubric, *Explicit liber octavus. Incipit nonus*; incipit, "Perverse mentes si semel ad studium..."; explicit, "...suplicia horroris evadamus" [CCL 143, pp. 456-533];

ff. 138v-149v, *Moralia in Job*, Book X: rubric, *Explicit liber nonus. Incipit decimus*; incipit, "Quotiens in arene spectaculum fortis athleta..."; explicit, "...quoque institutione respirat" [CCL 143, pp. 534-577];

ff. 149v-159, *Moralia in Job*, Book XI: rubric, *Explicit liber decimus. Incipit undecimus*; incipit, "Quamvis in prolixo opera esse culpabilis..."; explicit, "...huc delectationem venit" [SC 212, pp. 40-145; CCL 143 A, pp. 585-627];

ff. 159-168v, *Moralia in Job*, Book XII: rubric, *Incipit liber duodecimus*; incipit, "Mos iustorum est tanto sollicitius..."; explicit, "...veritas de cordis simplicitate laudavit" [SC 212, pp. 146-242; CCL 143 A, pp. 628-668];

ff. 168v-174, *Moralia in Job*, Book XIII: rubric, *Explicit liber duodecimus. Incipit liber tertius decimus*; incipit, "Esse hoc perversorum proprium..."; explicit, "...vocibus securus nomine" [SC 212, pp. 246-319; CCL 143 A, pp. 669-698];

ff. 174-184v, *Moralia in Job*, Book XIV: rubric, *Explicit liber tertius decimus. Incipit quartus decimus*; incipit, "Superiori huius operas parte tractavimus..."; explicit, "...ante iudicium diutius expectat" [SC 212, pp. 322-445; CCL 143 A, pp. 699-748];

ff. 184v-195, *Moralia in Job*, Book XV: rubric, *Explicit liber quartus decimus. Incipit liber quintus decimus*; incipit, "Quia amici beati Iob nequaquam perversi..."; explicit, "...sed etiam in aliis oderunt" [SC 221, pp. 10-135; CCL 143 A, pp. 749-798];

ff. 195v-205v, *Moralia in Job*, Book XVI: rubric, *Incipit liber sextus decimus. Explicit liber quintus decimus*; incipit, "Qui contra veritatis verba..."; explicit, "...opitulante Deo latius diserantur. Amen" [SC 221, pp. 136-269; CCL 143 A, pp. 799-849];

ff. 205v-213, *Moralia in Job*, Book XVII: rubric, *Explicit liber sextus decimus. Incipit liber septimus decimus*; incipit, "Quotiens in sancti viri istoria..."; explicit, "...magnitudinis illus intueri" [CCL 143 B, pp. 850-885];

ff. 213-229, *Moralia in Job*, Book XVIII: rubric, *Explicit liber septimus decimus. Incipit liber octavus decimus*; incipit, "Plerumque in sacro eloquio..."; explicit, "...in ipso suo fonte biberimus." [CCL 143 B, pp. 886-955];

ff. 229-240v, *Moralia in Job*, Book XIX: rubric, *Explicit liber decimus octavus. Incipit liber decimus nonus*; incipit, "Quid mirum si eterna dei sapientia..."; explicit, "...subsequentum credebat" [CCL 143 B, pp. 956-1002];

ff. 241-264, Table of subjects or *Registrum punctorum tactorum* (Table of points addressed), in alphabetical order; rubric, *Incipit registrum breve et utile omnium punctorum tactorum in moralibus beati Gregorii pape secundum ordinem alphabeti inferius annotatum*; *Quoniam quae quidem de bonorum laborum...*; rubric, *Incipit tabula presentis operas per alphabetum et primo de hac littera*; begins letter A: "Abhominatio vestimentorum qualis sit .ix. .xci." and ends letter T: "Turbe premunt Christum .iii. .xlvi." [missing table for end of T and table for letters U-Z].

Including the first 19 out of 35 books of Gregory's *Moralia in Job*, the present manuscript was clearly copied from an incunable edition of the *Moralia in Job* (on the incunable editions of the *Moralia in Job*, see *Indice generale degli incunaboli delle biblioteche d'Italia*, vol. III, no. 4440-4447). The first edition was printed in Nuremberg, [Johann Sensenschmidt], 1471 (Hain, 7928; IGI, no. 4440). The first Italian edition was printed in Rome, apud Sancum Marcum, 1475 (Hain, 7929; IGI, no. 4441: a copy kept in Monreale) and then in Venice, Rinaldo da Nimega, 1480 (Hain, 7930; IGI, no. 4442: a copy in Palermo)). The present manuscript was copied from the Rome, 1475 edition, that is, from the first Italian edition, and not the other later Venice, 1480 edition, since the former includes the text later entitled *Miraculum de inventione librorum...*, whereas the latter does not. Also, certain textual clues reveal how the scribe copied from the Roman edition: one finds in the 1475 edition the following "ad eternal penam rapiuntur" (end of book 8); "adletha" (beginning of book 10); "expectat" (end of book 14). These characteristics have been corrected in the Venice 1480 edition into "ad eternal rapiuntur" (omitting "penam"); "athleta"; and "expectatur."

The conversion from the hand-written book to the machine-printed one was a gradual, slow and uneven process. Many decades after the first printed books became available, scribes continued to copy manuscripts in their accustomed way in scriptoria all over Europe. The present case is a reverse example of how, instead of using manuscript books to make printed editions, incunabula were used to compose hand-written books. Although the printed press appeared relatively early in Sicily (*Consuetudines urbis Panhormi* [Customs for the city of Palermo], Palermo, A. Vyel, 1478 is the first Sicilian imprint, followed by other imprints in Messina; see Pastena [1995], p. 75), printing did not actually thrive before the sixteenth century. It is thus entirely plausible and understandable that, given the scarcity of printed editions in Sicily in the fifteenth-century, readers would need to have hand-written copies made of their texts.

Gregory the Great was the first monk to become pope from 590-604. He left a substantial literary heritage, but his most ambitious work and one of the most popular works of scriptural exegesis in the Middle Ages remains the *Moralia in Job*, commenting on the Book of Job in 35 books. The biblical Book of Job concerns the question of why the believer (and unbeliever) should suffer alike: Job is a model of piety, tested by God and deprived of all his possessions. Notwithstanding, Job maintains his faith in God, and constitutes a prefiguration of Christ's suffering. The *Moralia in Job* was intensively studied as a model of interpretation and thinking, a treatise on Christian ethics.

The *Moralia in Job* consists not of a treatise but a commentary, verse by verse, on the biblical Book of Job. Gregory begins by giving the *sensus historicus*, then the *sensus allegoricus* and finally the *sensus moralis* of a given verse. He thus distinguishes three kinds of meaning which could be sought from Scripture: literal, allegorical and moral senses. Gregory seemingly perceived the last interpretation--the moral one--the most important one. Gregory believed that scripture has a deeper meaning than that associated with the literal or historical meaning. In his *Moralia in Job*, he examines each text to see which of the three senses (historical, allegorical and moral) can best transmit the Word of God. Gregory's *Moralia in Job* is extant in numerous manuscripts, testifying to its enormous popularity throughout the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Translation of first five books of the *Moralia in Job*:

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/gregory.html>