

" !

i (paper) + i (parchment) + 98 + i (parchment) + i (paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, upper outer rectos, 1-98, complete (collation i-ii<sup>10</sup> iii<sup>12</sup> iv<sup>10</sup> v<sup>12</sup> vi-ix<sup>10</sup> x<sup>4</sup>), quire and leaf signatures on q. i, horizontal catchwords with brown and red pen decoration, center lower versos, qq. i-viii, ruled in brown ink with full-length horizontal and vertical bounding lines, prickings in upper, outer, and lower margins (justification 95-98 x 76-77 mm.), written in a handsome, compact gothic rotunda in two columns of thirty-one to thirty-two lines, additions in a more rapid gothic hand on ff. 92-98, guide letters for initials, guide notes for rubrics in margins, red rubrics, capitals touched in red, running headers ("liber" on versos and "primus" through "quartus" on rectos) in dark brown ink, one-line paraphs in blue, red, or black, one-line initials in blue or red, one- to two-line initials in blue or red with contrasting pen decorations, FOUR ILLUMINATED INITIALS of six to eleven lines, painted in pink on dark blue grounds and decorated with rounds of orange and burnished gold, with blue foliate infill on pink grounds and with red, green, and blue foliate extensions (ff. 2, 18, 39, 65v), all but the last followed by a line of red-highlighted capitals, ONE ILLUMINATED HISTORIATED INITIAL of thirteen lines (f. 1) in the same style, with a foliate and floral extension reaching into the lower margin, followed by a line of capitals written in gold, two later round diagrams on f. 98, corrections in the hand of the primary scribe, manicules and marginal annotations in several medieval hands, one of which may be the hand found on ff. 92-98, burnished gold of initials partially flaked away, small stains and losses of pigment in historiated initial and its acanthus extensions, smudging and dampstaining on ff. 1-4 and ff. 91-97, some soiling in the margins from handling, worming on f. 98 with some loss of text, otherwise in excellent condition with wide clean margins. Bound in nineteenth-century half parchment over pasteboard, with a smooth spine bearing a brown leather label with gilt stamped inscription, "S. GREG. /DIALOG. /CODEX /SEC. XV," similar identification on front parchment flyleaf, mostly effaced, slight staining, wear at hinges and edges, first quire slightly loose along the bottom. Dimensions 150-154 x 101 mm.

A refined illuminated author portrait and delicate filigree initial grace this signed and complete *Dialogues*, an influential collection of early medieval Latin



f. 1, Saint Gregory the Great, seated behind a tonsured scribe taking dictation on a scroll.

Framed within a pale pink initial set upon dark blue grounds, all decorated with white filigree, the figures of Saint Gregory and his scribe are shown against the backdrop of rose and a pale pink curtain.

manuscript, or one of very few, in their personal library?). From the index we can divine that at least one reader was invested in rendering Gregory's treatments of particular topics more readily accessible, and, from the annotations, that more than one early reader was reading this text carefully, marking off passages of particular interest. One reader, for example, demonstrates a sustained interest in the value and inculcation of obedience, leaving marginal notes on the subject throughout the volume. The same reader seems to have read the text with an interest in extracting lessons on appropriate conduct to apply to himself and others, with many of his notes following the format of *quomodo prelati obedire debemus* [how we ought to obey prelates] (f. 32v). The annotations promise to yield further information on how this book was being read and used by its medieval readers.

Evans, G. R. *The Thought of Gregory the Great*, Cambridge, 1986.

de Vogüé, Adalbert, ed. *Grégoire le Grand. Dialogues*, Sources chrétiennes, no. 251, 260, 265, Paris, 1978-1980.