SUMMARY

Gregory Thaumaturgus (‘Wonderworker’) is one of the most charismatic figures in the history of Early Christianity. For centuries he has been considered the pupil of Origen who later became the bishop of Neocaesarea and evangelised Pontus. His evangelical activity was considered to be supported by his works and by the large number of miracles which eminent figures such Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa and many other hagiographies attributed to him. In the last forty years, however, scholars have radically called into question the foundations of his biographical and literary profiles to the extent that the figure of Gregory seems to be groundless to many. This dissertation has a twofold structure, for it aims to verify the degree of reliability of Gregory’s traditional identity on the basis of the reconsideration of the ancient sources concerning him and of the main works handed down under his name. The first part of this study deals with three issues related to the biographical problem: a short outline of the cultural context of Neocaesarea will introduce the scrutiny of the ancient accounts on Gregory, which will be followed by a section concerning chronological problems. The second part includes four chapters focusing on the In Origenem Oratio Panegyrica (CPG 1763), Metaphrasis in Ecclesiasten (CPG 1766), Ad Theopompum de passibili et impassibili in Deo (CPG 1767), Confessio fidei (CPG 1764) and Ad Gelianum. It is argued that Gregory’s traditional figure is substantially reliably attested because the ancient biographical accounts are to a large extent trustworthy and because the main works ascribed to him are indeed authentic and corroborate Gregory’s engagement in confronting and evangelising pagans.