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**BERNARDUS DE ROGERIO, *Miranda de laudibus francie et de ipsius regimine regni***  
**In Latin, on parchment**  
**[France, last third of the fifteenth century (1461-1475)]**

iii + 12 + iii folios, complete (collation i<sup>s</sup> + ii<sup>t</sup>), vellum size (238 x 162 mm), modern foliation in pencil in Arabic numerals, no catchwords or signatures, main text written in a very professional and intricate gothic-bâtarde script with frequent ligatures in a somewhat faded brown ink, table of contents and chapter headings written in rubric in the same gothic-bâtarde script, first words of chapters written in a larger gothic textualis script with flourishes in brown ink, vertical and horizontal justification in light brown ink and hard point (justification 148 x 105 mm.), ruling in light brown ink and hard point, single column text 31 lines per page, chapter titles and table of contents in rubric, paraps in alternating rubric and blue ink, 1-3 line capital initials with cadels used in chapter headings in rubric (except for f. 2r which is in brown ink), ONE LARGE ILLUMINATED INITIAL WITH ERASED FRENCH ROYAL COAT OF ARMS on f. 1r (62 x 62 mm), 15 ILLUMINATED INITIALS WITH GILDED FLOURISHES 4 to 12 lines in height, initials alternate between royal blue backgrounds (ff. 2r, 3v, 6v, 8v, 9v, and 10v) and maroon backgrounds (ff. 3r, 4r, 6r, 7r, 7v, 9r, 10r, 11r, and 11v), 2 GILDED PANELS WITH ACANTHUS AND RINCEAUX on f. 1r., two line gilded and black vertical border on left margin on f. 1r, interlinear pen flourishes, pen flourishes into lower and upper margins and in rubricated chapter titles, name of owner (F. Maillok) in lower margin on f. 1r, scribal error in the table of contents list on f. 1v which lists (septimum) for the word scepter (sceptrum) of France as found in the chapter heading of the text, ff. 1r and 12r show wear slightly effecting legibility, contemporary sewing repair on f. 11 effecting text, upper margin creases on ff. 3,4,6-7, slight thumbing and soiling to outer margins, small smudge in upper left margin on f. 11v. Bound in eighteenth-century brown calf binding over cardboard, gilded blind stamped double line border on front and rear cover, gilded double-lined panels with floral decorations between the four raised cords on spine, slight fire damage mark on front cover, front and rear covers and all cover edges have moderate wear, breaking of spine at head and foot, head and foot corners worn through to cardboard, front and rear paste-downs and first and last flyleaves in modern heavy bonded paper, two original bifolium flyleaves at front and rear of manuscript bound as separate quires, small holes on first front vellum flyleaves, small section flaking from first front and last rear vellum flyleaves, heavy water staining on front vellum flyleaves and last rear vellum flyleaf, painting bleeding onto verso of second front vellum flyleaf, rear vellum bifolium flyleaf trimmed with justified and ruled text in rubric with blank double column writing space, front pastedown has catalogue information ("N°47") in light brown ink in late sixteenth-seventeenth century script, purple ink stamp ("Flips") and capital initials in modern pencil ("AN") on front pastedown, catalogue information ("3F7XL") in modern pencil on rear pastedown, handwriting visible on pastedown side of rear pastedown, one legible fifteenth- and one heavily worn and illegible early sixteenth-century provenances on verso side of first front vellum flyleaf (see below), seventeenth-century marginalia and provenance on recto side of second front vellum flyleaf. Dimensions 242 x 173 mm.

The present deluxe illuminated manuscript is a previously unknown copy of the *Miranda de laudibus*, which exists in only one other extant manuscript (which is incomplete) located in Paris. Bernardo de Rogerio's treatise discusses the kingdom of France and the rights of the king over his realm. This manuscript served as a presentation copy by the author to Louis XI when the king ascended to the throne after the death of his father in 1461. It embodies an important example of courtly relationships, where subjects both write and prepare works as part of the material exchange expected between subject and ruler.

## PROVENANCE

1. Probably commissioned by Bernardus de Rogerio (1400-1475) as a gift for Louis XI of France (1461-1483). The French royal arms appear on f. 1 within the initial "M," which has been subsequently defaced. The second to last chapter twice references that the text was completed up to the time of Louis XI on ff. 11v (*Epilogus xp̄istianorum Regum francie usque ad dominum Ludouicum huius nomini vndecimini Regem francorum modernum*) and 12r. (*Succedenter defficiente genealogia regum predictorum sunt Rex francie Philypus de valois qui incepit regnare domini M<sup>o</sup>iii<sup>o</sup>xxviii Cuius genealogie est dominus ludovicus rex .xi. modernui*). The manuscript was likely completed between 1461, when Louis became king, and 1475, when Bernard of Rogerio died in Toulouse.
2. Prior Haimo or Aymone (fl. late fifteenth to early sixteenth century) of an unknown priory of the Augustinian hermits located in Geneva. This information is found on the verso side of the first front vellum flyleaf written in a late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century gothic cursive script in dark brown ink. This note records how the manuscript was given to Fr. Stephen Perrini, an Augustinian hermit of the monastery of Seysell (Haute-Savoie) on 26 April 1515.
3. Fr. Stephen Perrini (fl. late fifteenth to early sixteenth century), an Augustinian hermit of the monastery of Seysell (Haute-Savoie). Fr. Perrini received the manuscript from Prior Haimo of the Augustinian priory of Geneva on 26 April 1515. This information is found on the verso side of the first front vellum flyleaf written in a late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century gothic cursive script in dark brown ink.
4. An unknown sixteenth-century owner. This information is found in a very worn and illegible notation on the first front vellum flyleaf under the provenance describing the book exchange between Fr. Perrini and Prior Haimo. The heavily worn text is written in a sixteenth-century gothic cursive script in light brown ink. The book was exchanged on 26 April 1515.
5. "F. Maillok," (fl. Mid- to late sixteenth-century). The name "F. Maillok" appears centered in the lower margin of f. 1r. The name is written in a cursive humanistic hand in light brown ink. The "F." may stand for the word "frater." If so, the Maillok may probably be another brother of the monastery of Seysell.
6. 1636, Philippe Viverius from Grenoble (fl. mid seventeenth-century). The verso of the second front vellum flyleaf records "Philippus Viverius gratianopolitanus 1636." This is written in a cursive humanistic script in brown ink.

## TEXT

f. 1r, Prologue, incipit, "Miranda de laudibus francie et de Ipsius regimine regni Intitulatur hoc opus quod offertur humiliter Illustrissimo principi Domino Karolo huius nominis septimo Francorum christianissimo Regi, et Suo primogenito excellenti Domino Ludovico Delphino viennensi..."; explicit, "...die prima mensis Januarii Anno incarnationis Domini nostri jhesu xristi Millesimo quadringentesimo quinquagesimo qui fuit Annus jubilei tempore Nicolai pape quinti."

ff. 1r-2r, Rubric titles, incipit, "Rubrice huius libri sunt iste. De francia quid sit, Et qualiter diffiniatur." explicit, "Epilogus xristianorum Regum francorum usque ad ludiuicum huius nominis vnecimini Rgem francorum modernum."

ff. 2r-12v, Bernardus de Rogerio, *Miranda de laudibus francie et de ipsius regimine regni*, incipit, "Francia alio nomine comata Gallia dicta est."; explicit, "Et ex post Nullus Rex francie Successit in Imperio Romanorum,"

Bernardus de Rosergio was born in 1400. In 1416, he went to Toulouse for his basic education in grammar and logic, which was followed by his studies in civil law. He joined the canons of Saint-Étienne of Toulouse in 1418, by which time he had a bachelor's in law. While a canon of Saint-Étienne, he held the offices of archdeacon of Gimoès in 1423. In 1426, he received his doctorate in law, and three years later became the chancellor of the University of Toulouse. By 1440 he held the degree of Master Theology. In 1435, he was the ambassador of Jean IV, Count of Armagnac (1396-1450), to the court of Henry IV of Castile (1425-1474), where he attempted to renew the traditional alliance between the two powers. In the 1440's, he went to the curia in Rome, where he continued to defend the papal position against Conciliarism, particularly the pragmatic sanction of 1439 and the Council of Basel. Eugenius IV made Bernardus de Rosergio bishop of Bazas in 1447, but he renounced the position because it was disputed by the nomination of Felix V. In 1450, Nicolas V made him bishop of Mountauban, and he became archbishop of Toulouse in January 1452, where he served until his death in 1475.

Bernardus de Rosergio wrote extensively on a wide variety of subjects throughout his career. His works ranged from treatises on law, heraldry, the power and authority of the Church, manners before the court, commentaries on the gospels, sermons, and works in praise of the Virgin Mary. His most famous work was his treatise on the life and comportment of foreign ambassadors, the *Ambaxiatorum brevilogus* (1436), which was drawn from his own experience while serving as ambassador to the court of Castile in 1435. This work was the first book describing how to conduct court-diplomatic practices for foreign ambassadors in Europe. The present manuscript, the *Miranda de laudibus francie*, was one of two other works (the *Liber de attemptato transportu personae Dalphini* and the *Arengae et orationes habitae coram Carolo VII francorum rege*) written on subjects dealing with the French kingdoms and its monarchs.

According to the prologue, Bernardus de Rosergio finished the *Miranda de laudibus francie* on January 1, 1450. The treatise was composed in part to defend King Charles VII's (1422-1461) inalienable rights to sovereignty within the *appanages* of France, which were being challenged by the League of Public Good led by the Dukes of Burgundy, Brittany, Bourbon, and Berry. The text also served as a sort of mirror of princes or *speculum regis* for the French monarch. The text is composed of fourteen

chapters, which treat the various rights of the king and the vestments of the king. Bernardus provided an account of the geographical extent of the country of France and how France was named and the interpretation of the name. Once established, he moves onto the inalienable rights of the king and the prophetic religious aspects particular to the king of France. He discusses the five praises used to acclaim the king of France above all other rulers, a description of the crown of France and how it recognizes no superior, the four rights granted to the person of the king, the prophetic importance of the white cloud over the kings of France derived from the Apocalypse, the prophetic importance of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar for the scepter of France, and the special guardianship that God grants to the king. In practical matters, Bernardus provides a list of the agreements which the king of France ought to maintain, especially those that deal with his royal majesty, a list of prerogatives that belong to royal authority, and the limits on this royal authority, along with royal rights particular to the kingdom and the crown. The author ends with an epilogue which enumerates the great kings of France, with a brief discussion of the kingdom of France having been formerly synonymous with the Holy Roman Empire, and as such establishing claims to the Holy Roman Empire then controlled by the Hapsburgs.

It is very likely that this manuscript was prepared by Bernardus de Rosergio as a presentation copy to be given as a *speculum regis* to Louis XI after the king ascended to the throne following the death of his father in 1461. In this, it embodies an important example of courtly relationships, where subjects both write and prepare works as part of the material exchange expected between subject and ruler. At the same time, the contents of the work directly engage the difficult problems confronting the French monarchy in its wars against the remaining powerful duchies surrounding the royal appanages. Bernardus de Rosergio's summary work on French royal power stands out as an important example of ultramontane support for the authority of the king of France based on a blend of historical precedent, civil law, and religious authority.

The present manuscript is a previously unknown copy of the *Miranda de laudibus francie*, which before its discovery was thought to exist only in Paris, BnF MS lat. 6020, which contains twelve other works by the author. The modern editor of the text, Patrick Arabeyre (*La France et son gouvernement*, 1992), was unaware of its existence when he prepared the critical edition of the work. The present manuscript also contains the complete text of chapter 14, missing in the Paris copy. As a presentation copy, this richly illuminated text contains several distinguishing characteristics, from the elegant and professional script, to the exquisite decorative and illuminated initials. Its preparation as a royal presentation gift makes this manuscript an important historical record both in its content and artistic composition.

## ILLUSTRATION

f. 1r, large 13 line illuminated decorated initial "M" (62 x 62 mm). This initial is painted within a simple single line black border on a rich and bright maroon background. Elegant detailed gold penwork tracery with vegetative motifs fills the background. The initial is painted in the bright blue of the French royal house. Wrapping around the initial are gilded gold acanthus leaves. Within the initial is placed the Royal French coat of arms, crested by a gilded royal crown. Standing on a light green base, two very detailed and elegant angels with white robes, gold capes, and green wings support the coat of arms on either side. The three original gilded fleur-des-lis symbols of the French royal house have been erased by smudging.

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