

Le Louvre des Antiquaires  
2 Place du Palais-Royal  
75001 Paris (France)  
tel. +33 (0)1 42 60 15 58 • fax. +33 (0)1 40 15 00 25  
info@lesenluminures.com

2970 North Lake Shore Drive  
Chicago, IL 60657 (USA)  
tel. +773 929 5986  
fax. +773 528 3976  
chicago@lesenluminures.com

**CARAFA, Diomede (1406?-1487), *De boni principis officii* [*De regentis et boni principis officii*], translation from the Italian by Battista Guarini  
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment  
Italy, Ferrara (or perhaps Naples?), after 1473, c. 1480-1500**

37 ff., preceded and followed by a single paper flyleaf, lacking one leaf at the beginning and two leaves at the end (collation: i<sup>r</sup> [8-1, missing first leaf of quire], ii-iv<sup>s</sup>, v<sup>o</sup> [8-2, missing the last 2 leaves of quire]), written in brown ink in a very delicate and even rounded humanistic minuscule ("antiqua tonda") by a single scribe, on up to 22 long lines (justification: 133 x 82 mm), ruled in dry point, some prickings still visible, some vertical catchwords, alphabetical contemporary quire signatures, paragraph marks in purple and red, one 3-line high initials in burnished gold with purple penwork, one 3-line high initial in burnished gold on a pink, green and blue ground highlighted with white tracery and decorated with three gold besants and brown hair-line penwork, two larger 5- and 6-line high white-vine initials in burnished gold with infill of white-vine ornament on pink, green and blue grounds, with white-vine extending in the margin with terminals of gold discs and brown hair-line strokes (ff. 3v and 18). Bound in modern rigid parchment, smooth spine with title in faded ink: "Carafa. De boni principis officio," gilt edges. (A few stains to binding, some scattered wormholes and stains to parchment, but overall in clear legible condition). Dimensions 220 x 150 mm.

Handsomely illuminated and elegantly written, this previously unknown humanist manuscript contains a copy of a text on governing by the Neapolitan Diomede Carafa in its second Latin translation signed by the humanist scholar Battista Guarini. Four other recorded manuscripts are in public institutions in Italy. This copy was most likely made in Ferrara where the dedicatee and commissioner of the translation, Eleonora de Aragon, held court and helped govern the Duchy-- hence her interest in political treatises on the art of governing.

## PROVENANCE

1. Written and illuminated in Italy, most likely Ferrara, based on decoration and quality of script. The present manuscript offers comparisons with other identified manuscripts related to the Ducal Court in Ferrara, such as a copy of Buonaccorso da Montemagno, *Della nobilità* (Modena, Bibl. Estense Universitaria, It 31=Q, 9, 29) dedicated precisely to Eleonora, or Tito Strozzi, *Origo Estensium principum* (Modena, Bibl. Estense Universitaria, Lat. 679= T. 9. 16), dedicated to Ercole d'Este (see comparisons in Lotti, 1997, respectively p. 316 and 302). The present manuscript also compares with manuscripts copied and illuminated in Naples, given the close ties between both cities in the last quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (both Eleonora and Ercole d'Este were raised in the Aragonese court at Naples). A fair number of manuscripts destined for the Duchess were copied and illuminated in Naples, including

the dedication copy of the second Latin translation of the present work by Colantonio Lentulo, dated 1477 and copied by Giovan Marco Cinico da Parma (see in general T. Da Marinis, *La Biblioteca napoletana dei re d'Aragona*, 1952-1969).

2. António Capucho, Portuguese book collector, his bookmark pasted on front pastedown (dated 1958 in Roman numerals).

## TEXT

ff. 1-3, Preface (or Dedicatory letter) addressed by Baptista Guarinus in the name of Eleonora of Aragon to the author Diomede Carafa, incipit, "[...] ipse fatearis et ego non ignorem quem et sapientissimum et ergendi imperii artibus..." [begins imperfectly, lacking one leaf at the beginning]; explicit, "[...] in dessiminandis laudibus tuis studium improbare non debebis," followed by a rubric placed in lower portion of the leaf: *Baptista Guarinus* [published in Carafa, 1668, pp. 1-7; critical edition, Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, pp. 100-106];

It is in this preface that Battista Guarini states that he translated Diomede Carafa's work at the request of Eleonora: "[...] dedi operam ut a Baptista Guarino homine non nullius in re litteraria...in latinam linguam...converteretur [...]" [I gave this work to Battista Guarino, man most literate...so that he may translate it into Latin...] (f. 2v). Battista Guarino was the youngest son of the celebrated humanist Guarino Veronese, who founded a school for the Ducal children in Ferrara. Battista was born in Ferrara, and raised at the Ducal court where Guarino Veronese held the post of tutor of Leonello d'Este. Interestingly, both Isabella and Beatrice, daughters of Eleonora, were subsequently tutored by Battista Guarini, who thus established a close tie with the mother Eleonora. Battista Guarino was a logical choice as a translator; he himself authored one significant work on humanist education, in 1459, the *De ordine dicendi et discendi* (On the Method of Teaching and Studying).

ff. 3v-4v, Diomede Carafa, *De boni principis officio*, translated from the Italian by Giovanni Baptista Guarinus, rubric followed by dedicatory preface, *Diomedis Carraffe comitis Madeloni etc. Regii consilarii secreti. Ad Illustrissimam Ferrarie Ducissam .D. Elianorum Aragoniam de boni principis officio*; incipit *Proemium*, "Quod multis non nunque accidere videmus Illustrissima Ducissa dum bene merendi studium suum cupiditatemque ostendere quaerunt arrogantie crimen incurrant..." [published in Carafa, 1668. pp. 8-11; critical edition, Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, pp. 106-110];

ff. 5-17v, Diomede Carafa, *De boni principis officio*, rubric, *Operis divisio*, incipit, "Cogitanti igitur mihi illustrissima Elianora..."; explicit, "[...] non ediderit debere letari" [published in Carafa, 1668. pp. 12-36; critical edition, Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, pp. 112-146];

ff. 18-24, Diomede Carafa, *De boni principis officio*, rubric, *Secunda pars*, incipit, "Quoniam de rebus ad tuendum imperium..."; explicit, "[...] in commodius est" [published in Carafa, 1668. pp. 37-51; critical edition, Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, pp. 148-164];

ff. 24v-32v, Diomede Carafa, *De boni principis officio*, rubric, *Tertia pars*, incipit, "Quemadmodum tuendi imperii negotia..."; explicit, "[...] predicationes largitione consecetur" [published in Carafa,

1668. pp. 52-72; critical edition, Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, pp. 164-188]; text followed by a erased inscription, still perceptible but now illegible, even with ultraviolet light;

ff. 33-37, Diomede Carafa, *De boni principis officio*, rubric, Quarta pars, incipit, Restat ut de subditorum..."; explicit, "[...] inde fructum se consecuturum sperate poterit [...]" (text breaks off incomplete, missing two leaves of text) [published in Carafa, 1668, pp. 73-84; critical edition, Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, pp. 190-206];

This manuscript contains the Latin translation made by Battista Guarini (1434-1513), son of Guarino Veronese, of the vernacular political treatise by Diomede Carafa entitled *I doveri del principe*. Composed in the 1470s, the vernacular work was dedicated to Eleonora of Aragona who, it seems, did not understand Latin: nonetheless it is she who asked Battista Guarini to translate the work into Latin, language of the learned. It has been suggested that she had the treatise translated into Latin so it could be diffused abroad, outside Italy. Although the text is missing its frontispiece, the identity of the work is clearly stated in the rubric placed after the dedicatory epistle (f. 3v).

Diomede Carafa (or Caraffa), conte di Maddaloni (1406?-1487), was a central figure at the Neapolitan Aragonese court. At a very young age, he entered the service of Alfonso the Magnanimous and took on many responsibilities under Alfonso's son Ferrando I (1458-1494), both as a statesman and as a soldier. At the court of the kings of Aragon, Diomede Carafa was in contact with a number of humanists and artists although apparently Diomede Carafa was not himself educated as a humanist, having come to writing and art patronage rather late. Nonetheless, Carafa is considered a pioneer of Renaissance culture in southern Italy. Studies about him conducted so far deal mainly with his activity as a patron of arts (see Divitiis, 2007) or his social and political views expressed in his writings, especially in the eight *Memoriali* written in the vernacular (see Miele, 1989).

Included amongst these *Memoriali* is the present *Doveri del principe*, likely composed between 1473 (the treatise is dedicated to Eleonora of Aragon who is referred to as Duchess of Ferrara, a title she acquired upon marrying Ercole d'Este in Naples in 1473), and 1477 (because there is a manuscript in Saint Petersburg which contains a dated presentation copy of the Latin translation by Colantonio Lentulo; see below). The *Doveri del principe* contains advice on governing offered to Eleonora of Aragon. It is a sort of "Mirror of Princes" that has been described as more realistic than the later work by Machiavelli and less imbued with the preoccupations of the humanists. It is an immensely practical work, as shown by the amount of space it devotes to the management of the economic, political, and judicial spheres. Carafa's aim is to secure good governance in order to obtain peace and freedom for the ruler but also for the monarch's subjects. The subjects accordingly bonded to the ruler will contribute to the greater wealth of the realm, thus providing the monarch with the funds he needs, establishing a link between the economic health of the kingdom and political order (see Bentley, 1987).

It is interesting that such a work on governance and power should be dedicated to a woman. Born a Neapolitan princess, Eleonora of Aragon was the wife of Ercole d'Este (1471-1505; also raised in Naples), a monarch reputed to have been an unscrupulous and devious ruler. Eleonora, in turn, was a supportive and active spouse: she was frequently deputed to govern the State in the absence of

her husband; her letters demonstrate remarkable common sense, and she was generally concerned by good governance. Arriving in the ducal capital of Ferrara at the young age of twenty-three, she brought with her much of the practical knowledge and advice she was exposed to at the Aragonese court of Naples. Her political abilities and general acuteness inspired many political works, including Antonio Cornazzano's *Del modo di regere et di regnare* dedicated to Eleonora and illuminated with the famous bust-portrait of the Duchess (New York, Morgan Library and Museum, MS M. 731). The Ferrarese court clearly exhibited a sympathetic attitude towards women, with a number of examples of educated women of influence (see Grunderheimer, 1984, pp. 43-65; Guerra, 2005).

The vernacular work entitled *Doveri del principe* (or *Memoriale sui doveri del principe*) is found in a single manuscript (Naples, Bibl. della Società napoletana di storia patria, XX C 26; critical ed. in D. Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, referred to as *Memoriali III*), composed in Naples in the 1470s. More or less contemporaneously, the work was translated twice into Latin at the demand of its original dedicatee Eleonora of Aragon: first by Giovanni Battista Guarino (translation entitled *De regentis et boni principis officiis*); secondly by Colantonio Lentulo (translation entitled *De regimine principum*).

There are four known manuscripts containing the present Battista Guarino translation (Lucca, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS 525, ff. 61-130, 15<sup>th</sup> c.; Modena, Archivio di Stato, Letterati, Busta 13 [*De regentis et boni principis officiis*, transl. B. Guarino], dated 1756; Modena, Bibl. Estense, MS Est. Lat. 679 [*De regentis et bonis principis officiis*, transl. B. Guarino], end of 15<sup>th</sup> c.; Naples, Biblioteca nazionale, MS VIII G 46 [*De regentis et bonis principis officiis*, transl. B. Guarino], end of 15<sup>th</sup> c.). A complete list of manuscripts and early printings containing all the known works by Diomede Carafa and their translations is found in D. Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. F. Petrucci Nardelli, 1988, pp. 27-40.

There are two identified manuscripts containing the translation by Colantonio Lentulo: Naples, Biblioteca nazionale MS IX G 43 [*De regimine principum*, transl. C. Lentulo], end of the 16<sup>th</sup> c.; Saint Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, MS O. R. N. 26 [*De regimine principum*, transl. Colantonio Lentulo], dated Naples 1477, copied by Giovan Marco Cinico da Parma (see T. da Marinis, I, p. 49 and *Supplemento*, I, p. 31 and II, tav. 184a and 184b; a sister manuscript containing another political treatise by Carafa, *De institutione vivendi* and dedicated to Beatrice of Aragon, Eleonora's sister, is found in Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm. 1654, also copied by Giovan Marco Cinico).

This is an extraordinarily rare manuscript of an important text but one that must have enjoyed only limited circulation restricted to ducal circles in Ferrara. No manuscripts whatsoever by Carafa are recorded in the Schoenberg Database. In addition to expanding the evidence on the humanist author Carafa and on Eleanora of Aragon as a ruler, the work documents an important aspect in Battista Guarini's career as an educator-translator.

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

E. Guerra: Eleonora d'Aragona e i "Doveri del principe" di Diomede Carafa: l'esercizio del potere tra realtà e precettistica

<http://www.donneconoscenzastorica.it/testi/recensioni/donnedipalazzo8.ht>

On the Carafa of Naples:

[http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carafa\\_\(famiglia\)](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carafa_(famiglia))

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