

MS. GALL. QUART. 105

Mikhaïl Semionovitch Vorontsov et Alexander von Humboldt

Binding:

The binding was made in the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin – cf. super ex-libris of this library and marbled paper typical for its bindings; spine made of green fabric.

History:

The manuscript contains a letter from prince Mikhail Semyonovich Vorontsov (1782-1856, viceroy of the Caucasus to Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859). The letter contains the date and place of its writing: 31st March 1851 – Tiflis (currently Tbilisi). It was written not by Vorontsov, but was dictated by him to his secretary - it contains his signature. Vorontsov's wife, Elisabeth Branicka Vorontsov, added a few personally signed words to her husband's letter, expressing her affinity with Humboldt. He, on his part, added several words addressed to professor Carl Ritter, dated 3rd October 1855, and presented the manuscript to him. Von Humboldt is also the author of the note summarizing the letter in German. Humboldt's additions were probably created in Germany, perhaps in Berlin. Therefore, in 1851-1855 the manuscript was in Alexander von Humboldt's possession, and subsequently – in Ritter's. It was bought by the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin from T. O. Weigel, a Leipzig antiquarian, and comes from Carl Ritter's legacy; it entered the accession register of the Königliche Bibliothek on 28th January 1867.

Content:

The manuscript consists of eight sheets. It is an autograph in its main part, by Vorontsov, as well as the additions: both his wife's and Alexander von Humboldt's. Vorontsov's letter is an account of the six years he spent in the Caucasus. It is a reply to Humboldt's letter of 1st December (most likely 1850). Vorontsov pays a lot of attention to scientific discoveries conducted in the Caucasus: his own, as well as professor Otto Wilhelm Hermann von Abich's

(1806-1886) and Moritz Wagner's (1813-1887). Part of Vorontsov's correspondence was published in *Archiv Knjazja Voroncova*, Moscow, 1870-97.