

Hisp. Qu. 53

Binding:

It is most likely a binding of the Royal Library in Berlin, made after accessioning the manuscript into the collection of the institution, that is after 1833; simple (cardboard covered with marbled paper). This type of binding is common to several volumes in which manuscripts and prints thematically connected to the Iberian campaign of the Napoleonic Wars were grouped (Hisp. Fol. 13-14, Hisp. Quart. 53-55).

History:

All the volumes from the abovementioned group reached the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin's collection thanks to a Prussian soldier, Andreas von Schepeler, who served in the Spanish army from 1809. In the light of German sources, Schepeler appears to be almost a collaborator of the Berlin library, purchasing books for this institution in Madrid in 1819 and the following years. Moreover, based on his own experiences from the Napoleonic Wars on the Iberian Peninsula, Schepeler wrote an extensive historic work. Considering the character and themes of the manuscripts comprising the abovementioned volumes from the collection deposited in Krakow, including volume Hisp. Quart. 53, it can be assumed that Schepeler used them when creating his own work, and then, in 1832-1833, they reached the Berlin library through the officer's connections with this institution. Volume Hisp. Quart. 53 consists of manuscripts dated to 1808-1809. The dating and location of the manuscript was accepted on the basis of data in the texts and the abovementioned historical premises. Spain, ca. 1809 (before 1833).

Content:

Manuscript I is an account of the military and defensive activities (defence of Trasdeza) in Spanish Galicia during the Napoleonic Wars, between January and June 1809. Manuscript II consists of transcripts of two letters in Spanish, exchanged in 1809 between the commander of the French army marshal Soult and the bishop of the Galician Diocese

of Orense. It is a handwritten copy prepared on the basis of a printed version of this correspondence. The annotated letters were published in one of Galician magazines, with a patriotic praise for the bishop's attitude, refusing the proposals of cooperation with the French side. An omission was found in the Berlin manuscript: the letter containing the bishop's response is only the initial part of a longer document. Manuscript III focuses on the figure of Hotham, an English navy captain (probably William Hotham, 1772-1848) and military actions in Galicia in which he participated (recapturing the port cities of La Coruña and Ferrol from the French army's hands). The text of manuscript IV, in the form of a diary, is divided into two parts (corresponding to a division into two notebooks), complimentary as far as the time period (respectively, May – September and October – November 1808) and sequence of described events is considered. Apart from detailed accounts of military activities in Galicia, other details depicting the situation in a war-ridden country are found in the text. It is most likely one of the versions of *Diario del Exercito de Galicia hasta la batalla de Espinosa de los Monteros* by a Spanish general, Joaquín Blake y Joyes (1759-1827). Of the manuscripts deposited in Krakow, probably none have ever been published.