

gall. quart. 33

Binding:

Original paper binding, floral pattern on a gilded background.

History:

The manuscript is not an autograph. It was made by Friedrich Jacob Roloff, a Berlin bibliophile, the first owner of the manuscript, between the year 1770 (the date of taking over the Bavarian Fichtenmüll paper mill by Johann Friedrich Quinat jr., whose initials can be found on the watermark in the text) and 1788 (the date of Roloff's death), perhaps in Germany (considering the above). After Roloff's death the manuscript, together with the rest of the collection, was acquired by Frederick II and it was included in the Royal Library at Berlin.

Content:

The manuscript contains three pamphlets on the French scholar Maupertuis: *Diatribes du Docteur Akakia Medecin du Pape* (4r^o - 7r^o); *Decret de l'Inquisition de Rome* (7v^o - 8r^o); *Jugement des Professeurs du Collège de la Sapience* (8v^o - 12r^o). It does not contain the name of the author, which is understandable, considering the circumstances in which the text was written: during his stay in Potsdam, at the court of Frederick II, as a guest of the king, honoured with the title of chamberlain, Voltaire criticized his countryman appointed by Frederick II to the position of the president of the Prussian Academy of Sciences. In the text, the French philosopher assumed the following masks one after the other: Doctor Akakia, deriding crazy ideas of his mentally ill patient; inquisitor; university professors. The first edition, which was published in print in several dozens of copies (Bauer, Berlin), was entirely destroyed by Frederick II, who, however, was not able to prevent the spread of the second edition (Luzac, Leiden) despite tearing and burning most of the copies in public. Several years later Voltaire included *Diatribes* in *Collection de ses oeuvres* (1756), which he provided with a short foreword with acknowledgement that he edited it. Other editions in the 18th century: in: *Histoire du docteur Akakia et du natif de Saint-Malo*, 1753; in: *Siècle politique de Louis XIV*,

numerous editions; in: *Collection de ses oeuvres* 1756; in: *Oeuvres complètes*, Kehl, 1785-1789; and many others in form of brochures. Contemporary editions: *Histoire du docteur Akakia et du natif de Saint-Malo*, Paris, Nizet, 1967; *Histoire du docteur Akakia et du natif de Saint-Malo*, in: Voltaire, *Mélanges*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1961, pp.289-299; *Voltaire intégral*, 2009. Textual differences are of no great importance. With reference to the text cf. R. Pomeau (ed.), «Voltaire en son temps», Fayard/Voltaire Foundation, 1995, vol. I, pp. 693-712; with reference to the manuscript «Bibliotheca Roloffiana», Berolini, Ex officina J.F. Unger, 1789, Pars 2, Sectio XII, p. 6 - Lemm, p. 17.