

gall. oct. 2

Binding:

Binding made of beige paper, on the spine there is a title label bearing a partly faded inscription *Lucas Esp[rit] de Spinoso* in black ink. Pastedowns and flyleaves of white paper. The binding has no elements which would allow precise dating, but is most likely original.

History:

The manuscript comes from the first half of the 18th century. It was created after 1721, that is after the publication of the print of which it is a transcript. It comes from the collection of Johann Christian Massow, a member of the von Massow family, residing in the town of Massow (currently: Maszewo, West Pomeranian Voivodship) since the 13th century. The evidence for that is the ex-libris *Ex Libris M. Joh. Chr. Massow Wolgasto-Pom. Lipsiae 1749*. The manuscript was sold to Johann Christian by a Potsdam antiquarian, Johann Andreas Rüdiger. It has not been established how the manuscript got to the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin. It bears no accession number, therefore it reached it before 1828, when the accession register was introduced.

Content:

The manuscript contains a text known as *Traité des trois imposteurs*. Its author is most likely Jan Vroese (or Vroesen), who lived in the years 1672-1725. The main thesis of this work is that three religions based on revelation – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – are the work of three frauds trying to take control over naïve people. It should not be mistake for the Latin treatise *De tribus impostoribus*. The texts are different, in spite of evident interference. The story of *Traité des trois imposteurs* is remarkable. The text first appeared in print in 1719. It was initially entitled *L'esprit de M. Benoît Spinoza* and was published together with the text *La vie de M. Benoît Spinoza*. The latter is a biographical work, attributed to Jean Maximilien-Lucas. In 1721, another edition appeared, in which *L'esprit* was entitled *Traité des trois imposteurs* and was published separately. This is the state of all subsequent editions of the work. We collated the manuscript of gall. oct. 2 with the 1777

edition, serving as the basis for many critical editions, which allowed us to establish the following differences: § 8 of chapter II was omitted; similarly, § 10 of chapter III; in chapter V §§ 1 and 2 were combined into one and number 6 was omitted (numbering error); finally, chapter VI § 6 was divided into two §§, numbered 6 and 7. With reference to this manuscript, cf. Lemm p. 22.