

ITAL. QUART. 53

Binding:

Binding of red silk, 17th (201 × 155 mm). Super ex-libris of Erasmus Starhemberg. On the spine, a label with an old collection pressmark: *I. / 188*. Gilded edges (in the second codicological unit). 2 raised bands.

History:

The first owner was Starhemberg Erasmus der Jüngere, Graf von (1595-1664), whose coat of arms can be found on the binding (also, the ex-libris on Ir^o: *Ex libris Erasmi Iunioris Comitis ac Baronis de Starhemberg*). Erasmus Starhemberg was a scholar, a member of the Palmenordens – a society based on the model of Accademia della Crusca. The manuscript remained in the Starhemberg family library (Fürstlich Starhembergsche Bibliothek) until its purchase and incorporation to the Königliche Bibliothek in 1889.

Lemm, p. 81.

Content:

I

ff. 1r^o-39r^o MARCUS VELSERUS(?): SQUITINIO DELLA LIBERTÀ VENETA (Analysis on the freedom of Venice).

Anti-venetian pamphlet, first printed in 1612. The author was probably Markus Welser, although many point to Alfonso de la Cueva-Benavides, marchese di Bedmar. The treatise destroys the alleged myth of the independence of Venice at its origins and later on. The author was well acquainted with the works of Venetian historians (Paruta, Contarini) and, most likely, the political life of Venice (cf. J.G. Sperling, *Convents and the body politic in late Renaissance Venice*, Chicago 2000, p. 109). Published in: 1612 (2), 1619. Published in Cologne (1681), with the text translated from French. 1677 - French edition (*Examen de la liberté originnaire de Venise*). Manuscripts of the treatise in (among others): New York, Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library Plimpton Add. MS 10, cc. 1-56; Biblioteca Riccardiana, Firenze, Ricc. 404, ff. 139r^o-197v^o.

II

f. 41r^o – 159r^o CORRISPONDENZA ANONIMA (Letters).

Letters of an Italian to a foreigner and the foreigner's replies. The correspondence lacks elements allowing the identification of the persons – it is a sort of a letter template collection, though a closer analysis reveals that they were real letters with names removed during transcription. Perhaps the author of the collection planned to create a kind of an Italian letter-writing textbook.

159r^o-159v^o DETTI E PROVERBI (Sayings and proverbs)