

ITAL. QUART. 71

Binding:

A parchment binding, original, end of the 17th century. Cover painted on the outside: on the initial one – the lion of St. Mark, on the final – a coat of arms.

History:

The manuscript was most likely created between 31st December 1695 (last date in the text, cf. f. 5v^o) and 1st February 1696 – the date of departure of the Doge's envoys, to whom the collection of documents was addressed: Lorenzo Soranzo and Girolamo Venier. It is assumed that the manuscript is an original, since both the binding and the handwriting point to the 17th century as its origin. The first owners were surely the collection's addressees, Lorenzo Soranzo and Girolamo Venier, sent as ambassadors extraordinary to the King of England, William III. Most likely the manuscript travelled to England with them, though there are no traces to testify to it (the coat of arms at the back of the binding contains elements of the Soranzo coat of arms, but is not a faithful representation of a coat of arms of any of the three families: Soranzo, Valier, Venier). There are also no traces of other owners. The Berlin Library bought the manuscript on 19th September 1895, from Ernesto Aurelia, a publisher from Rome. Interestingly, the codex bears two accession numbers from the same year.

Content:

The text is a collection of legal advice from Doge Silvestro Valier to Lorenzo Soranzo and Girolamo Venier, appointed ambassadors extraordinary to King William III. It is divided into 6 parts (paragraphs). They discuss matters related to the journey to England and the audience granted by the newly crowned King. The instructions also speak of initiating good relations with foreigners present in the royal court, especially the Dutch and the Princess of Denmark. They regulate financial matters connected with remuneration and maintenance of the travellers and the persons accompanying them, as well as the procedure of returning from the diplomatic mission.

The work was not published. With reference to this Lemm, p. 83.