

**Chemiczne i alchemiczne próby Jerzego Forstera**

**Georg Forster's chemical and alchemical activities**

SUMMARY

Georg Forster (1754-1794), a well known German scientist and author, was born in Poland. In the years 1772-1775 he participated in the second voyage of Cook around the World. After then he was the professor of natural history at Carolinum in Kassel (1779-1783). During this time he was also active as the member of the Circle of Rose Crucians in Kassel. In this organization he attained the adeptus degree (seventh grade of initiation). At the beginning Forster's relation to this Society was the enthusiastic one, but it changed in 1782-1783 to the strongly critical. Forster rejected the mystic and transcendental part of Rose Crucians ideology. However, he remained to be the adherent of the idea on the possibility of transmutation of unobtainable metals into the gold, but he appreciated this idea as the scientific research problem only.

The conflict with Rose Crucians inclined Forster to accept the proposition of Polish Commission of Education to be Professor of Natural History at the University in Wilno. During his 7-month travel to Wilno in 1784 Forster visited many industrial and university centres in Germany, Austria, and Poland, with the aim to collect more information about the mineralogy and earth minerals manufacturing, which were needed for this teacher activity. During this travel he visited also many chemists and mineralogists, active as the members of Rose Crucian Order. The diaries and correspondence of Forster (especially the letters written to his intimate friend, T.S. Sömmering) contain a lot of informations on the situation in different circles of Rose Crucians. These informations concern also to the Polish branch of Rose Crucian Order in Warsaw. They evidence that the organization remained at that time in the state of destructive crisis, evoked by the disaccord between the alchemical tradition, represented by the Order, and the new development of chemistry.

In the article Forster's own experimental and literature works in the chemistry are also discussed.