

gall. quart. 85

**Binding:**

Binding made of grain long leather, original, rich in gilded ornaments, its bibliophilic value differentiates it from most of the manuscripts from this collection.

**History:**

The manuscript is probably an autograph written by the hand of the memorial's author, Johann Reinhold Forster. Considering the period of using the paper, which the manuscript is made of, and the period of using marbled paper, which the protective cards are made of, as well as the type of binding, the note of a German librarian and elements of Forster's biography, the manuscript was made around 1780. Although it was written in French (lingua franca of Enlightenment Europe), the binding is French and paper is English, it is probable that the manuscript was made in Prussia, where Forster settled down in 1780, for an unknown recipient, perhaps for the king of Prussia, Frederick II, Berlin Academy, Kassel Academy, one of Forster's patrons or for persons who supported him financially. It reached the Royal Library at Berlin on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 1850 and it was a gift from S. V. Klaatsch.

**Content:**

The manuscript is an account of a four-day stay on the Easter Island in 1774, during the second voyage of Captain Cook around the world, in which Forster participated as a naturalist together with his son George. It contains a short presentation of the most important features of the island; the history of its discovery by the Europeans; the description of the difficult voyage and of the first contact with the natives; information on geography, geology, flora; ethnological and linguistic considerations with emphasis on the cultural universals; hypotheses on reasons for a little number of women in the population; comparative considerations about ancient art; a detailed map; drawings with portraits of the autochthons; watercolours; comparative table of languages of the Southern Seas region. The memorial, as well as the manuscript, is unknown to the researchers. Considering the high literary, historical and scientific value and the figure of the author – an outstanding scientist born in Tczew and

connected with the Royal Prussia, it deserves deeper research and a critical edition. With reference to this subject cf. Joanna Baradziej, "Wkład Jana Reinholda i Jerzego Forsterów w rozwój nauki światowej", in: "Szkice z dziejów Prus Królewskich XVI-XVIII wieku", J. Włodarski (ed.), Gdańsk 2008, pp. 211-221 - Jerzy Forster, "Podróż naokoło świata", Cracow 2007. With reference to this manuscript, cf. Lemm, p. 19 - Marzena Chrobak, "A journey to Easter Island according to an eighteenth-century manuscript from the "Berlin collection" of the Jagiellonian Library, in "Fibula" 1/2010 (5), pp. 52-57.