



Mineralogical Society of Poland

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FIRST POLISH TEXTBOOKS ON MINERALOGY

The Mineralogical Society of Poland (MSP) is celebrating its 40th anniversary. However, the tradition of the mineralogical sciences in this country is much older and dates back to the 18th century.

The pioneer book on “useful” minerals was published in Polish in 1781–1782 by a provincial priest, Jan Krzysztof Kluk (1739–1796). This monograph, *Rzeczy kopalnych osobliwie zdutniejszych szukanie, poznanie i zażycie* (*Exploration, Identification, and Application of Useful Minerals*), presented the state of the geosciences in the second half of the 18th century and was recommended by the Commission on National Education, founded in 1773, as a school textbook. The Commission significantly modernized the educational system in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and concentrated higher education in Cracow and Vilna, the capitals of the two united countries.

After the complete partition of Poland in 1795 by the three neighboring powers, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, when Poland and Lithuania disappeared from the map of Europe, the conditions of proper modern education were much more difficult due to the russification and germanization politics of the occupants. Consequently, scientific activity was concentrated mainly in the universities of Cracow and Vilna, which had been founded much earlier (in 1364 and 1579, respectively) and were already well known. Separate departments of natural history were formed in 1803 in the capital of Lithuania and eight years later (1811) in Cracow. The great activity of geoscientists in Vilna’s university was manifested by the publication in Polish of several textbooks on mineralogy. Their authors, former students of A.G. Werner (1750–1817), also lectured and promoted the system of mineralogy of their Freiberg master.

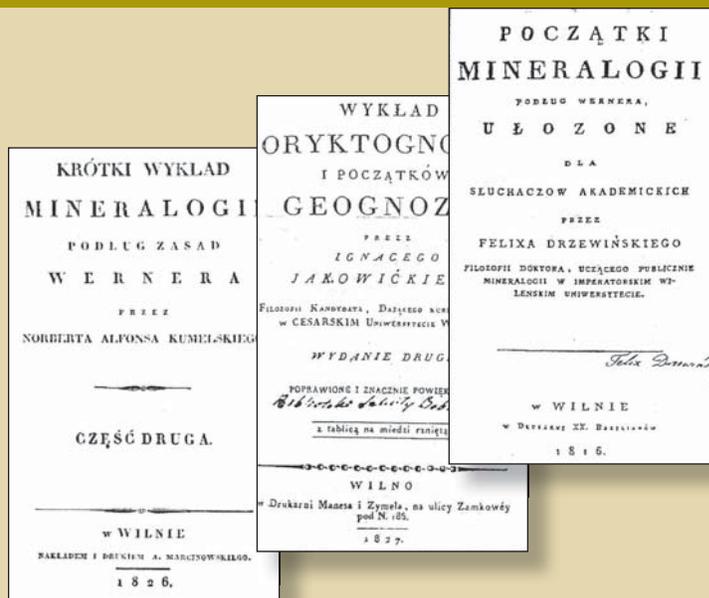
Roman Symonowicz (1763–1813) was the first lecturer in mineralogy in Vilna. In 1806, he published the first original Polish textbook on mineralogy, entitled *O stanie dzisiejszym mineralogii* (*On the Present State of Mineralogy*). It concisely presented Werner’s basic principles of oryctognosy (mineralogy) and geognosy (geology), as well as critical analysis of R.J. Haüy’s (1743–1822) system, which was based on the physical and chemical properties of minerals. Symonowicz was acquainted with the achievements of such mineral chemists as A.F. Cronstedt (1722–1765), M.H. Klaproth (1743–1817), and T.O. Bergmann (1735–1784), the author of the first chemical classification of minerals.

The first exhaustive university textbook (611 pages), *Początki mineralogii podług Wernera ułożone dla słuchaczy akademickich* (*Rudiments of Mineralogy According to Werner for Academic Students*), was published in 1816 by Feliks Drzewiński (1788–1850), who was another former student of the Freiberg master and lecturer in mineralogy at Vilna University. Adopting A.G. Werner’s approach, he paid particular attention to the external physical properties of minerals. Drzewiński applied the Wernerian systematics of minerals, based on Avicenna’s principles, but he took into account their chemical properties as criteria for subdivision into genera, species, and varieties. His unquestionable merit was in the proposed Polish nomenclature of minerals, in which the majority of names corresponded to polonized versions of generally accepted terms.

The third textbook on mineralogy, *Wykłady oryctognozy i początków geognozy* (*Lectures on Oryctognosy and on Rudiments of Geognosy*), published in Vilna in 1825 and reedited in 1827 by Ignacy Jakowicki (1794–1847), another of Werner’s pupils, is considered as a supplement to Drzewiński’s pioneer monograph.

These old Polish textbooks on mineralogy are important contributions to the European heritage in the mineralogical and geological sciences.

Wojciech Narebski, Museum of Earth PAN



MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Conference of the Geochemical Group

This meeting will be held on September 27–30, 2010, in Kielce (Holy Cross Mountains) and will be organized by the Geochemical Group of the Mineralogical Society of Poland and the Institute of Chemistry of the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce. The theme will be “Contemporary problems in geochemistry.” The conference will include plenary sessions on September 28 and 29, as well as a tour entitled “Geodiversity and geologic heritage protection in Kielce.” The following field trips will be held on September 30:

“Influence of pyrite mineralization on the generation of acid mine drainage in the Wisniowka mining area,” and (2) “Biogeochemical and hydrogeochemical studies in Swietokrzyski National Park.”

The conference registration fee (including full board, bus transfers, and conference materials) will be around US\$200. For information, contact Zbigniew Migaszewski (geochemistry2010@ujk.edu.pl).

17th Session of the Petrology Group

This meeting will be held on October 14–17, 2010, in the Kłodzko region, Sudetes, southwestern Poland. The theme will be “Lamprophyres and related mafic hypabyssal rocks – current petrological issues.” The Sudetes, at the northeastern margin of the Bohemian Massif, represent one of the larger lamprophyre subprovinces in the Variscan Belt of Europe. In this region, the emplacement of calc-alkaline lamprophyre dykes occurred in Carboniferous times. Recent studies have brought new data on the petrology, mineralogy, and geochemistry of these intriguing rocks, documenting their strong diversity (kersantites, minettes, vogesites, spessartites) and a complex magmatic evolution. During the conference, a field trip will take participants to selected lamprophyre localities in the Kłodzko region and will offer stimulating discussions on the emplacement and differentiation processes of lamprophyre magmas in late- to postorogenic settings. For information, contact Marek Awdankiewicz (marek.awdankiewicz@ing.uni.wroc.pl). A link to the conference website is available on the MSP website page.

Abstracts of oral presentations and posters (1–2 pages) for the above conferences will be published in *Mineralogia*, *Special Papers*, whereas full papers will appear in *Mineralogia*.