

VALORIZATION OF THE WORLD MINERALOGICAL HERITAGE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE WORLD MINERALOGICAL ORGANIZATION

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Abstract: A large amount of mineralogical samples are used for different purposes, from simple collection hobby, to scientific research and teaching material, exhibition objects and museistic objects. Beyond these activities, the involved samples represent a part of humanity's inheritance. The valorization, conservation, promotion and sustainable management of this inheritance represent the objectives of the recently founded WMO. The paper deals with the objectives and activities planned to be performed by WMO in this field

Key words: mineralogy, cultural heritage, mineral samples, virtual museum

A large amount of mineralogical samples are used for different purposes, from simple collection hobby, to scientific research and teaching material, exhibition objects and museum objects. Beyond these activities, the involved mineralogical samples represent a part of humanity's inheritance.

They are important in two meanings. First, as aesthetic effect, being natural objects with a fascinating beauty, in color, geometric form, a.s.o. Secondly, they represent parts and testimonies of economic value holder ore bodies, which after total exhaust are irreplaceable. The collection, preservation, description classification, cataloging in a systemic manner of all these samples represents a valuable contribution towards preservation of this inheritance of humanity's patrimony.

The valorization, conservation, promotion and sustainable management of this inheritance represent the objectives of the recently founded WMO. Implanted in Monaco, WMO is a scientific ONG, constituted under the form of an international association of many diplomatical, political and economical components. WMO was born at the initiative of a group of researchers, animated by Prof. Angela Craciun, who launched the idea of this project during the meetings of an International Scientific Conference in Alushta, Crimea in September 2003. This idea was met with great interest and enthusiasm by the scientists as well as the representatives of the universities from all over the world, present at the conference.

WMO reunites under its banner institutions and well-known scientific personalities: professors, researchers, curators, collectors, specialized organizations, editors of publications in the domain of Mineralogy. WMO has already as members more than 60 universities and hundreds of individual members. We have to underline the fact that as founding members there are prestigious institutions such as, **The American University of Washington D.C., Columbia University of New York, University of Freiberg, University of Moscow, University of Bucharest, University of Petrosani, Geological Institute of Romania, The Mineralogical Society of Romania, The Gold Museum of Brad, The Mineralogical Museum of Baia Mare**, as well as individual members, well-known personalities recognized for their contribution for the development of Mineralogy such as, Jan Kutina, author of more than 20 geological maps in as many countries, on 6 continents, the heart of the **World Institution of Metalogenetics**; Iliia Deleff, founder of three museums, donor of great collections of minerals, and so many others.

Always preoccupied with life and environment quality and with its influences on human health, WMO:

- sustains and encourages the scientific research, the interpretation of the results obtained and their dissemination for the great public,
- sustains and favors significant projects of mineralogical studies as well as their application, with the specialized scientific institutions as well as with the financial organizations and international governments involved in the environmental protection,
- generates and initiates cooperation activities, exchange of opinion and ideas among the specialists, promotion of the national scientific and cultural values, taking into consideration that the minerals are submitted to a special regime of protection, identical to that of preserving works of art from the national patrimony,

Regarding the resources of WMO, they are constituted by: annual fees of individual members and institutions, subsidies and donations, financing from the governments or international organizations, incomes from exhibitions, tombolas, concerts, balls, shows, organized by WMO. We have to mention the fact that the WMO scientific, cultural and educational project, made it possible to obtain from UNESCO the statute of associate partner, statute that gives it the public recognition and important financial support.

As a main intention, in order to fulfill its objectives concerning the valorization of mineralogical heritage as a part of humanity's patrimony, WMO plan to realize a virtual mineralogical museum, as a MetaDatabase in order to serve scientific, academic, general

public interests, creating the awareness to the necessity to disseminate knowledge and to preserve this natural inheritance of the humanity.

It exist a large number of virtual mineralogical museums, representing parts of material museums around universities, public natural history museums, private collections, a.s.o.

The existing museums have as objectives and as a consequence target people pure entertainment, scientific education, training, research, hobby, business, a.s.o.

The quasi majority of them are freely accessible, except the purely scientific and the commercial ones.

As content, their metadatabases are from picture + short description until more sophisticated data, such as chemical formula, identification elements, orebody description, etc.

They use for search keys alphabetical name catalog, structural classification, geographic presence, a.s.o

For the purposes of the museum envisaged by WMO he following steps are to be taken:

- inventory of all known virtual and material collections and museums, in order to set-up a comprehensive metadatabase;
- creating a portal with links to all existing mineralogical virtual collections;
- digitizing and preparing digital records of collections and samples which are not yet presented in the framework of a digital (virtual museum);
- creating possibility of contributors to enrich this virtual museum by uploading digital material about samples.

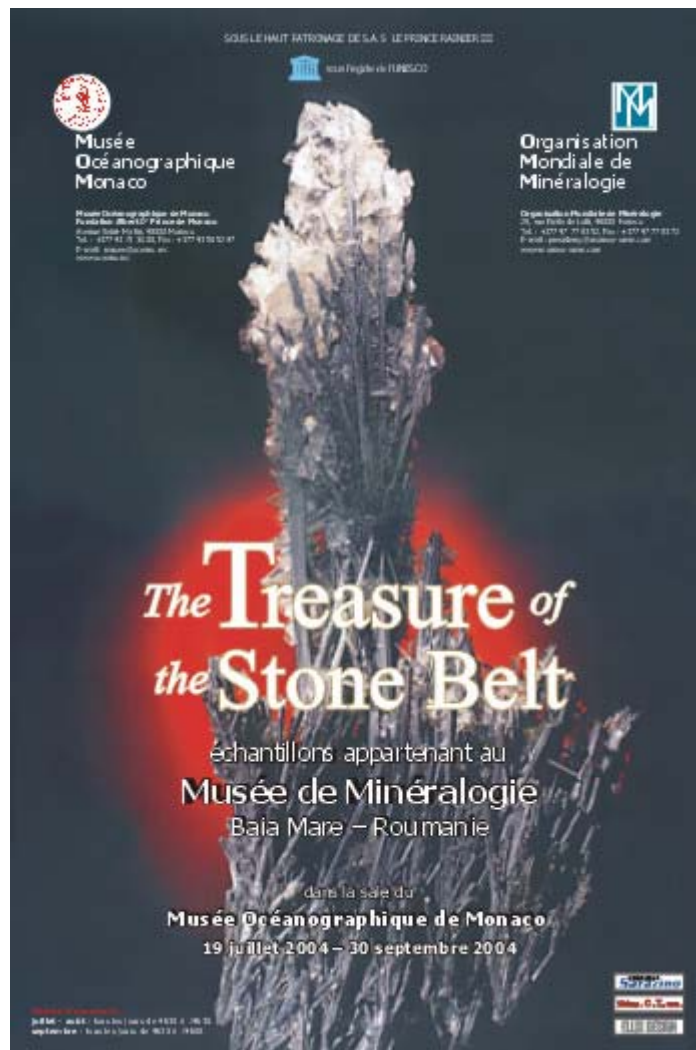
The purpose of the planned virtual museum is to offer an information resource for scientists, collectioners, students, academics, and general public, by a synergy of all good intentions in valorization and promoting the mineralogical samples ad information as a common asset of the humanity in order to concur to its preservation.

Organizing scientific events is also a way of WMO to bring together specialists and collectioners all around the world and to contribute to a best knowledge of mineralogical treasures of the world. A virtual discussion forum in the internet will be also set-up in order to collect valuable and reliable information about small less known collections in order to meke them available for public and researchers.

Mineralogy and its derived disciplines, Crystallography, Gemology, Geochemistry, Medical Geology, Economical Geology, etc, surpassed the limited academical boundaries.

These disciplines enlarged their action field and included Medicine, Oceanography and Environment Protection. They also arouse the interest of fashion designers and jewellers. They play an increasing important role in the world today.

This evolution needs a new formula of organization. In fact, the majority of the Mineralogical organizations have professional objectives. WMO is not only a professional organization. It is also an institution with diplomatical, political and economical dimension. WMO has the advantage of being open to all forms of dialogue, cooperation and alliances in order to favour the convergence of efforts for the interest of science and of all disciplines connected to Mineralogy.



In the picture the poster of the most recent event organized by WMO for the knowledge and promotion of the mineralogical collection of Baia Mare.

Also, its humanitarian manifestations will give it the opportunity to carry out the friendly message of the United Nations for a closer cooperation among all good willpowers engaged in the sustaining of noble causes.