



Société Française de Minéralogie et de Cristallographie

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OBITUARY: JEAN-PIERRE MULLER (1946–2015)



Jean-Pierre E. Muller, emeritus director of research at the l'Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (Research Institute for Development; IRD), passed away suddenly in Paris (France) on 25 August 2015. Jean-Pierre was an agronomist by training who developed into a soil scientist, specialising in the analysis and mapping of lateritic soils. In this latter role, Jean-Pierre Muller worked in many tropical countries in Africa, Asia, and South America. He was a key

figure in the modern interpretation of the mineralogy and geochemistry of tropical soils, particularly laterites. He was a pioneer in integrating spectroscopic data into models of laterite formation through a multi-scale approach.

After graduating as an engineer from the National Institute of Agronomy in Paris, Jean-Pierre was hired as a research scientist by the French Institute of Scientific and Technical Research for Development and Cooperation (ORSTOM, now IRD) where he spent his entire career. He spent 13 years in Gabon and Cameroon classifying and mapping the soils there. In 1981, he joined Gerard Bocquier at the Laboratory of Alteration Petrology in the Department of Earth Sciences of the University Paris Diderot. At the same time, he created the ORSTOM Laboratory of Soil Analysis in Bondy (1982–1985). He then joined the Laboratory of Mineralogy and Cristallography of Paris (LMCP) in 1987 and subsequently became director of the ORSTOM section Geosciences of the Environment between 1993 and 1997. With students and colleagues at the LMCP, he worked on the importance and significance of lattice defects and impurities in kaolins, on the spectroscopic properties of the associated Fe- and Ti-oxides, and analyzing the relationship between the crystal-chemistry of soil minerals and the geochemical characteristics of tropical environments.

Jean-Pierre also advanced the study of ceramic science and contributed to finding natural analogues of nuclear waste repositories. He was an active member of various organizations, including the Clay Minerals Society, the Soil Science Society of America, the Association Internationale pour l'Étude des Argiles, the Groupe français des Argiles, and he was Vice-President of the Société française de Minéralogie Cristallographie (SFMC) from 1999 to 2003. He spent his last years managing research institutions until he retired in 2008.

Jean-Pierre transformed ORSTOM into IRD and was its director from 1999 to 2003. From 2003 to 2008, he was the director of the French Institute of Pondicherry in India. Jean-Pierre Muller devoted his entire career to North–South scientific cooperation. In addition to being a well-established scientist, he was also a man of culture and an exceptionally talented photographer who always shared his interests with his colleagues. Our thoughts are with his family.

Thierry Allard, Etienne Balan and Georges Calas

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 7th meeting of the Association Française de Cristallographie (AFC2016) will be held 4–7 July 2016 in Marseille (France). Sessions will focus on the applications of crystallography to the biological, chemical, physical, and Earth sciences. The SFMC will organize the session “Minerals, nanoparticles and the environment”, which will be convened by Armand Masion and Olivier Grauby. The deadline for abstracts is 15 February 2016, and registration will remain open until 15 May 2016. For further information (in French): afc2016.im2np.fr.

The second European Mineralogical Congress, EMC2016, will be organized by the University of Ferrara (Italy) and will take place 11–15 September 2016 in Rimini (Italy). The SFMC is contributing to this conference. For further information: emc2016.socminpet.it/

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SOCIÉTÉ FRANÇAISE DE MINÉRALOGIE ET CRISTALLOGRAPHIE

The SFMC's annual general assembly was held at the Laboratory of Hydrology and Geochemistry of Strasbourg (France), on 25 June 2015. Bruno Goffé, SFMC president, welcomed the members and thanked Damien Daval for the local organization. Marc Blanchard, SFMC secretary, presented the main actions of the year. The society organized two training days in Paris, which were devoted to the wide range of analytical techniques commonly used in mineralogy. The participation of the society in conferences (such as the 24th edition of the “Réunion des Sciences de la Terre”) and three thematic schools was also described. He also summarized the society's contributions to the *European Journal of Mineralogy* and *Elements*. Christian Chopin, SFMC vice-president, presented the 2014 budget on behalf of the treasurer.

After an enjoyable meal, the afternoon was first marked by the Haüy-Lacroix award ceremony rewarding outstanding PhD projects. The two 2015 laureates are Camille Cartier (Université de Clermont-Ferrand; Supervisors: Tahar Hammouda and Maud Boyer) and Marjorie Etique (Université de Lorraine; Supervisor: Christian Ruby). Unfortunately, Camille could not be present but she will have future opportunity to present to SFMC members her work about the “behaviour of rare earth elements (REE) and high field strength elements (HFSE) during the early differentiation of the Earth under low oxygen fugacity”. Marjorie entertained and enlightened the audience with a fascinating talk entitled, “Effects of iron-reducing bacteria and nitrate-reducing bacteria on the transformations of iron corrosion products, siderite and magnetite, formed at the surface of non-alloy steel”. Three lectures related to the access to energy and mineral resources followed: Bertrand Fritz (LHyGeS) talked about geothermal exploitation at Soultz-sous-Forêts illustrating the mutual benefits of long-lasting collaboration between fundamental research and industrial exploitation; Simonpietro Di Pierro (Saint-Gobain Recherche) explained the essential role of mineralogists in the glass industry; and Bruno Goffé (CEREGE) discussed the challenges of shale oil and gas exploitation.



Marjorie Etique receives the Haüy-Lacroix medal from Bruno Goffé, SFMC president.

The next day a small group took advantage of being in the area to visit the international Mineral & Gem show at Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines.

SCIENTIFIC MEETING OF THE SFMC “IGNEOUS PETROLOGY” GROUP (RENNES, 2015)

The third meeting of the “Igneous Petrology” group of the Société Française de Minéralogie et Cristallographie was held in Rennes (France) 3–5 June 2015, and was supported by funding from Géosciences Rennes, OSUR, and Université de Rennes 1. The theme “From field to isotopes within magmatic and metamorphic phases” attracted about 40 participants. The key presentations gave rise to many questions and thoughtful discussions on current subjects and research in progress covering a wide spectrum of the Earth and planetary petrology: meteorites (J.-A. Barrat, Brest), granitic rocks (J.-F. Moyen, Saint-Etienne), apatite (R. Tartèse, Paris), monazite (A. Didier, Lausanne), garnet (M. Ballèvre, Rennes), volatile elements (Y. Morizet, Nantes), and fluid circulations (Y. Branquet, Orléans). A one-day field excursion was organized to the Ploumanac'h composite granitic intrusion (E. Hallot, Rennes).