

PRESENTATION

The informal group GABeC (Georisorse, Ambiente, Beni Culturali - Earth resources, environment, cultural heritage) was established in 2003 as a contact instrument of Italian mineralogists, petrologists, and economic geologists working in the fields of Earth resources, environmental applications, and issues related to cultural heritage. Currently the group, which operates under the umbrella of SIMP (Società Italiana di Mineralogia e Petrologia), comprises about 100 researchers, mainly from Universities. The group main activities consist of promoting research and teaching in the pertinent fields through the organization of, and support to, events such as workshops, schools and meetings, and diffusion of relevant news to members. A typical activity is the organization, every other year, of a one-day workshop (*Giornata dei giovani ricercatori del GABeC*) devoted to presentations by young researchers on a specific topic. In 2010, the theme of the workshop, organized by Giovanna Saviano and held in Rome on 14 June, was the applications of mineralogy and petrology to cultural heritage.

The *Periodico di Mineralogia*, an ISI journal from 2009, kindly offered space in this special issue to publish a selection of papers arising from contributions to the workshop. Annamaria De Francesco and Giovanna Saviano served as Guest Editors for the issue, with the editorial assistance of Antonio Gianfagna, Scientific Editor of the journal.

I trust that these papers will attract the interest of a wide audience of national and international scientists working in this field. This special issue will hopefully mark a first step of a fruitful interaction between the GABeC group and the host Journal.

Pierfranco Lattanzi, President, GABeC

FOREWORD

During the “*Giornata dei giovani ricercatori del GABeC*” of June 14, 2010, the young researchers presented poster and oral communications concerning the results obtained by the application of both the traditional and innovative analytical methods. In particular, topics related to archaeometric studies on the provenance of the building stones used in very famous archaeological sites (Italy - Spain), and on the technology and sourcing of raw materials used for the production of ancient ceramics of the Lucania region, Italy, were

presented. Other contributions focused on the origin of the natural pigments and their degradation in the paintings. The introduction in the workshop of a more complex and complete statistical methodology (multivariate analysis, GIS) of studying and collecting information, also was of relevant importance. In the last years, a considerable volume of new and different data have been collected in a lot of Italian archaeological sites, concerning various topics (materials: terracottas, ceramics, stones, glass, pigments, metals; methods: composition, technology of craftsmanship, provenance of raw materials, restoration, conservation, etc.). Such an increasing of collection data shows a great interest and step forward in the consideration of archaeometric topics. A framework in which new results can be compared and stored will be very useful in order to reconstruct, for instance, ancient commercial routes.

Since Italy is a country with a such a rich artistic and archaeological history, it is even more essential to encourage, support, and document these studies.

Anna Maria De Francesco and Giovanna Saviano
Guest Editors of the Special Issue

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