

Memorial of François Permingeat September 17, 1917–June 14, 1988

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François Permingeat, director of research at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), vice-president of the French Mineralogy Society, and the only French scientist to have the honor of being a Life Fellow of the Mineralogical Society of America, passed away on June 14, 1988, in Millau, after a short illness and while he was actively engaged on a mineralogical mission.

François Permingeat, known worldwide in mineralogical circles, was born in Chabrillan (Drome) in 1917. Educated at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Mines in Saint Etienne (intake of 1939), he obtained a Doctorat d'Etat in 1958 with a study of the molybdenum, tungsten, and copper deposits of Azegour in Morocco. On leaving the Ecole des Mines he was mobilized in 1939, and from 1944 onward took part in the campaigns in France, in North Africa, in Italy, and on the Rhine and the Danube. Wounded, he was mentioned three times in dispatches, decorated with the Croix de Guerre, and appointed Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.

His career was composed of three principal stages: the Service Géologique du Maroc, the Bureau de Recherche Géologique et Minière (BRGM), and the CNRS. After having been Chef de Travaux for two years at the Ecole des Mines in St. Etienne, he joined the Geological Service of Morocco where he occupied the post of head of the service of mineral deposits until 1957. First a disciple and then an emulator of Jouravski and of l'Abbé Gaudfroy, he undertook numerous mineralogical studies, both fundamental and applied, the latter being in relation with ore deposits. Thus he described numerous new minerals, among which can be mentioned marokite, gaudefroyite, henritermierite, and jouravskite.

In 1957, he took an active part in the organization of the International Geological Congress in Algiers and led an excursion into the Moroccan South.

During his time in Morocco he was also Professor of Mineralogy at the Ecole des Mines in Rabat.

His love of Morocco, which he considered as his second homeland, led him to undertake, from 1957 on, a yearly mission to the Mineralogy Laboratory of the Service Géologique. His research will be gathered in an exhaustive work on the Mineralogy of Morocco, of which the first volume is shortly to be published. His untimely death prevented the completion of the last volume.

In 1958, he joined, at the request of C. Guillemin, the BRGM in Paris, where he assumed the joint direction of the Mineralogy Department until 1967. At that time he was one of the precursors in the use of the microprobe,



demonstrating the useful application of this apparatus in mineralogical studies. Furthermore, he led a European group responsible for drawing up metallogenic maps and established an original list of conventional signs that was published at the International Geological Congress in New Delhi (1964).

His administrative responsibilities separating him increasingly from mineralogy, in 1967 he entered the CNRS as a Director of Research and was attached to the Laboratory of Mineralogy and Crystallography in Toulouse, directed by Professor L. Capdecemme. In this environment, and until the end of his life, he permitted numerous research workers to take advantage of his immense scientific culture, always accompanied with attentiveness and kindness, which nevertheless did not prevent him from setting demanding standards. During this time he directed many dissertations, both in France and in Morocco.

François Permingeat was vice-president of the French Mineralogical Society, a holder of the medal of this society, and a Life Fellow of the Mineralogical Society of America. He played a major role in the creation of the

Commission on New Minerals and Mineral Names; his report to the commission (published in 1961) set the standards used by the commission, and he was the French delegate to the commission for many years. In 1984 an International Scientific Jubilee was organized in his honor in Toulouse.

More than 200 publications witness to his scientific activities. All those who had the good fortune to work with him will keep the memory of a man of human warmth, of remarkable modesty, of great intelligence, and of vast culture.

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