

## Acceptance of the Dana Medal of the Mineralogical Society of America for 2018

JÖRG HERMANN<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Geological Sciences, University of Bern, Baltzerstrasse 3, 3012 Bern, Switzerland

Dear President, dear colleagues, and friends,

I thank Brad Hacker for the nomination, colleagues for writing support letters, the selection committee for their work, and the society for the support. It is a great honor for me to get this award. When I tried to explain to my youngest son, a great football fanatic, what it means to get such an award, I said that I have just been given the “Man of the Match” award. And indeed this analogy is quite valid. While in the end, one person is getting the prize, it is essential to make clear that such awards also belong to the team, the coaches, and the mentors. So I will take the next few minutes to acknowledge and thank those who made this success possible.

Let’s start in my junior years at ETH-Zürich, Switzerland, where I had an exceptional coach, Volkmar Tromsdorff, who sparked my fascination in field and metamorphic petrology and Alan Thompson, Eric Reusser, and Peter Ulmer, who trained me in the essential petrological skills. I would also like to acknowledge my fellow strikers Othmar Müntener and Marco Scambelluri. All three of us were young, enthusiastic, and keen to score goals. The approach to science, training for critical thinking, and intense discussion with both of them through the Ph.D. years provided the basis for my academic career.

In any discipline, there are special weeks (like a world cup) where everything can change. Such a moment was the eclogite conference in Ascona, Switzerland, in 1997. Incidentally, this was the first time I met Brad and the start of many discussions about our common interest in process-oriented studies on metamorphic rocks. At this conference I met David Green from the Research School of Earth Sciences (RSES), the Australian National University, and within a week a transfer was organized not only for me but also for my partner Daniela Rubatto. The change in hemispheres brought with it a complete change in topics, as I was to start a postdoc in experimental petrology. I was very fortunate to be embedded in a top team with exceptional mentoring by David Green and Hugh O’Neill. The uncompromising approach of Hugh to strive for excellence always is a great inspiration. I also thank the skilled trainers, Bill Hibberson and Dean Scott, the technical officers who taught me how to actually do experiments.

From 1999 onwards the strongest partner in my life and research has been Daniela Rubatto and many of my best works have been in collaboration with Daniela. As we were going to get married in 1999 we thought it would be a nice idea to announce this through a journal article that we submitted: “*We tackled the problem of exhumation-rate determination by marrying metamorphic petrology to geochronology to allow dating of titanite that formed at different P-T conditions.*” Unfortunately, as the paper was initially rejected, the announcement came late. Incidentally the paper was handled by MSA President, Mike Brown. But to his and our credit, the paper eventually got accepted.



RSES has been a fantastic place to work, with the world-class facilities for micro-analyses and high-pressure experiments making it possible for me to link metamorphic petrology and experimental petrology with in-situ trace element analyses. I also had the opportunity to interact on a daily basis with top scientists from RSES such as Greg Yaxley, Andrew Berry, Trevor Ireland, and Marc Harrison, who as a Director signed off on my first permanent position. The continuing stream of visiting academics from all over the world at RSES, like Terry Plank and Mark Hirschman, hugely enlarged my horizon on how to approach geological problems.

In 2015, I followed a call back to Switzerland to work at the University of Bern. I thank my colleagues there for the support during the transition and the friendly environment and the fruitful discussions on all aspects from research to teaching.

As with all teams, nothing would work without the sponsors. I thank the Swiss National Science foundation and the Australian Research Council for their generous support.

Last but not least, I give a special thank to all the Ph.D. students and postdocs that I had the pleasure and fortune to work with, represented here from my first Ph.D. student and now colleague Carl Spandler, to the most recent crop with Julien Reynes, Elias Kempf, and Siggy Signe Nformidah. It is a privilege to work with young and enthusiastic scientists; as we transition from strikers to coaches, they help us to keep young at heart.

Finally, I come back to the start and thank my family who supported me throughout my career and especially my two boys who make sure that the term “work-life balance” is not only an aspirational goal.