

## THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TOURMALINE (TUR2021)

Few localities can boast hosting the type or co-type localities of no less than six tourmaline species. The island of Elba (Italy) is one—so what better place to hold the Third International Conference on Tourmaline (TUR2021). Elba is surrounded by crystal clear indicolite/Paraiba-hued waters, is physically beautiful, and its hills contain a rich history of mines and colorful individuals to serve as the ideal backdrop to TUR2021, which was held 9–11 September 2021. In the era of COVID-19, the conference was especially meaningful because it was the first face-to-face meeting for many of the participants in nearly two years. The organizers managed to navigate the uncertainty and anxiety associated with the pandemic to keep all the participants safe and healthy; the organizers also offered an on-line conference option for those who could not travel. The integration of the in-person and on-line talks was flawless—a feat not commonly attained in hybrid meetings.



Portoferraio, Elba. PHOTO: DARRELL HENRY

The De Laugier Cultural Center in Portoferraio provided a historic venue with state-of-the-art audiovisual facilities for hybrid presentations. The presentations themselves were given by a range of tourmaline investigators across the experience spectrum from long-time tourmaline researchers to energetic and enthusiastic graduate students. A total of 52 keynotes, regular talks, and posters ranged from the latest in tourmaline nomenclature, to tourmaline development in a variety of petrologic settings, to experimental investigations on tourmaline stability and element partitioning, to industrial/environmental applications of tourmaline, and ending with studies on gem tourmalines. The abstracts were carefully reviewed by members of the TUR2021 Scientific Committee and were published in a high-quality and colorful issue of *Natura* (2021; v111n1). A follow-up volume of full-length papers will be published in the *Journal of Geosciences*. One of the conference highlights



The tourmaline-bearing rocks at Punta Bianca (Elba). PHOTO: DARRELL HENRY



Tourmaline-bearing granitic rocks at the Bontempelli quarry on Elba. PHOTO: HORST MARSCHALL

was the award for the best presentation by an early career female geoscientist: this was awarded to Alessandra Altieri of the Sapienza University of Rome (Italy).

Several social events provided time for participants to mingle, including an icebreaker party, a conference dinner in Portoferraio, and a visit to the MUM – Mineralogical Museum Luigi Celleri (located in San Piero in Campo) which included a presentation on the history of Elba mineral discoveries by Federico Pezzotta that was livestreamed on Facebook.

The conference was bookended by field trips, primarily lead by Andrea Dini. A day-long field trip prior to the meeting highlighted tourmaline and skarn zone occurrences in the eastern section of Elba. The skarn zones host important hematite-rich iron ore deposits that have been used for over 2,000 years, including for Etruscan swords. There was an additional stop at the Torre di Rio skarn with its remarkable exposures of hedenbergite and ilvaite. This is the type locality for ilvaite and is the second mineral species named for the island along with elbaite tourmaline. The two-day post-meeting trip focused mostly on lithium–cesium–tantalum (LCT) pegmatitic and metamorphic tourmaline localities, including the type localities of three tourmaline species.

The TUR2021 conference was masterfully organized by cochairs Ferdinando Bosi, Federico Pezzotta, and Giovanni Andreozzi. Sponsorship for the conference came primarily from the SIMP (Italian Society of Mineralogy and Petrology), with additional support by the Sapienza University of Rome, Natural History Museum of Milan, and nearly 15 other local and national sponsors.

The mix of participants and topics brought a freshness to the meeting that promises a bright future for tourmaline studies. Cutting-edge tourmaline science is alive and well and is employing a complementary mix of traditional and novel avenues of research that are having a profound impact both within and outside of the geosciences. We eagerly await the next International Tourmaline Conference, which will be held in 2025 at another undoubtedly exciting locality.

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