

Mineral collection of Philipp Franz von Siebold (II)

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Introduction

Since 2001, our research on the mineral collection of P. F. von Siebold (1796-1866) was carried out both in the Netherlands and in Japan. We examined specimens at the National Museum of Natural History (Naturalis) in Leiden by comparing them with specimens at the University Museum of the University Tokyo (UMUT). We also produced a database of the Siebold mineral collection in the Naturalis. The database is available as an open resource via the web museum of the UMUT website. Part of the results of our investigation was published in 2008 as "Mineral Collection and 'Lapidographia Japonica' by Philipp Franz von Siebold" (Tagai & Mikouchi, 2008). In that report, we provided a complete list of the specimens in the Siebold mineral collection, the plates of the selected 197 mineral specimens whose labels were identified as being written by Siebold or his assistant and later his successor, H. Bürger, and the manuscript of 'Lapidographia Japonica' prepared by Bürger together with the possible route of collecting.

In the present research, we address the mineral list prepared by J.J. Hoffmann (1805-1878), whose background, unlike Bürger, was neither in mineralogy nor in any branch of science. Though Hoffmann later became a well-known professor of Japanese, he was only an assistant of Siebold when he prepared the list of minerals and possibly in the course of processing all of Siebold's specimens from Japan. A comparative analysis among Hoffmann's complete mineral list with the 231 specimen database of Siebold, which indicates a correspondence in many respects, is shown here.

In addition we show another mineral list by H. Schlegel (1804-1884), who was a zoologist and the second director of the Royal Museum of Natural History. While Schlegel compiled a list of the contents of the Siebold mineral collection by sorting out the minerals in a way different from Bürger, he did not provide descriptions of any of the specimens.

Finally, we note that this report is part of our effort to publish Siebold's unfinished book on mineralogy. In his letter to Temminck, Siebold showed strong interest in publishing books on botany, zoology and mineralogy. While the books on botany and zoology were published as "Flora Japonica" and "Fauna Japonica," respectively, the book on mineralogy does not exist. However, as explained in our last report, the discovery of the handwritten manuscript by Bürger, was assumed to be intended for the book on the mineralogy and geology of Japan (Tagai & Mikouchi, 2008). By examining its structure, together with their work in Japan, it was also assumed that Bürger prepared the manuscript for book publication at the request of Siebold. The manuscript, with our detailed interpretation of their views on mineralogy, was reproduced in the last report. Since a title for the intended book publication could not be found, we proposed the title 'Lapidographia Japonica.' Later, we realized that the title 'Lapidographia Japonica' would not suffice, since 'lapido' and 'graphia' have different origins in Roman and Greek, respectively (Ohba, priv. com). In the present report we would like to propose 'De Mineralogia Japonica' as the title according to the suggestion of Dr. L. Schröpfer (Frankfurt Univ., priv. com.).

This report is part of our attempt to publish Siebold's unfinished 'De Mineralogia Japonica.'

The contribution of J. J. Hoffmann to the mineral collection of Siebold

Johann Joseph Hoffmann was born in Würzburg, Germany, in 1805. Although Hoffmann later became a well-known Japanologist, it is said that he had been an opera singer in his younger days. While living in Antwerp at the age of 25, he met Siebold by chance. Hoffmann, in fact, did not become involved with Japanese studies until hired by Siebold to assist in arranging his collections. Several reasons can be imagined as to the cause of Siebold and Hoffman working together. For instance, Siebold and Hoffman were from the same city, Würzburg. Hoffmann was both talented in languages and interested in the Orient. After moving to Leiden where Siebold's specimens were labeled and studied, Hoffmann learned Japanese and contributed greatly to the publication of Siebold's "Nippon, Archiv für Beschreibung von Japan und dessen Neben- und Schutzländern Jezo mit südlichen Kurilen, Sachlin, Korea und Liukiu-Inseln." This book is one of the three major books by Siebold, together with "Flora Japonica" and "Fauna Japonica". Hoffmann, who later became the first professor of Japanese at Leiden University, was a leader in Japanese studies for all of Europe. He was assigned to form the base of Japanology in Europe. Hoffmann later published "Japanische