SHORTER COMMUNICATIONS

SODALITE FROM LATIUM, ITALY MISLABELLED "LAZURITE"

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Specimens from Latium, Italy, labelled "Lazurite" or "Lapis Lazuli", found their way into mineral collections throughout the world following the publication of the Sixth Edition of Dana's "System of Mineralogy" in 1892. The Redpath Museum collection, for example, includes specimens from all five of the lazurite localities listed in this edition. Dana described the Latium lazurite as being found "in limestone inclusions in the peperino of Latium" (Dana 1892, p. 433) and gave as reference J. Strüver's article "Die Mineralien Latiums", which was published in Volume I of the Zeit- schrift für Kristallographie und Mineralogie (Strüver 1877).

Our recent studies of Redpath Museum lazurites included specimen 2919F, which appears to be typical of that described by Strüver and Dana as Latium lazurite. However, it turns out to be sodalite, as shown in Table 1.

Although such material does not appear to have been offered for sale in recent years, it is probable that a number of older collections still have specimens of a blue mineral from Latium mislabelled "lazurite". In catalogues and on specimen labels the locality may be given as: Ariccia, Rome; Lari, near Albano; or, the Alban Hills near Rome. It is suggested that curators of collections containing specimens acquired shortly after the publication of the 1892 Dana, check the identification of "lazurite" from the Latium location.

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REFERENCES


Manuscript received September, 1973.

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<th>TABLE 1. CRYSTAL DATA OF &quot;LAZURITE&quot; SAMPLE FROM LATIUM, ITALY, COMPARED WITH LITERATURE DATA OF SODALITE AND LAZURITE</th>
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For the sample "Lazurite", 2919F (Redpath Museum) as cell content:

- Formula written on the basis of 12/(Al+Si)
- D(measured) 2.26 g/cm³
- D(calculated) 2.225 g/cm³
- n 1.4905 (white light)
- a(A) 8.6576 Å at 20°C
- Space group π3m

For Sodalite and Lazurite=sulphur-rich halloysite:

- Space group Ia3d

The table shows the calculated and measured densities, hardness, and other properties for the Lazurite sample from Latium, Italy, compared with literature data for Sodalite and Lazurite. The Lazurite sample 2919F has a measured density of 2.26 g/cm³, compared with a calculated density of 2.225 g/cm³. The hardness is 1.4905, and the cell parameter is 8.6576 Å at 20°C. The space group is π3m.

The composition of Lazurite is given as 2.27-2.33 g/cm³, with a hardness of 1.483-1.487, and a cell parameter of 8.91-8.83 Å for Lazurite and Lazurite=sulphur-rich halloysite. The composition of Sodalite is given as 2.30-2.45 g/cm³, with a hardness of 9.08-9.40, and a cell parameter of π3m+ for Lazurite and Lazurite=sulphur-rich halloysite.

*Calculated from electron probe analysis which gave the following weight per cent oxides: 43.5% K2O, 36.38% Na2O, 33.74% CaO, 29.81% Fe2O3, 0.01% Al2O3, 0.02% FeO, 0.02% SiO2, total 98.38 after correction for errors.