

Dolování cinabaritu v Horních Lubech u Chebu, Česká republika

Cinnabar mining in Horní Luby (Ober Schönbach) near Cheb (Eger), Czech Republic

DALIBOR VELEBIL

Národní muzeum, Václavské náměstí 68, 115 79 Praha 1

VELEBIL D. (2009): Dolování cinabaritu v Horních Lubech u Chebu, Česká republika. - *Bull. mineral.-petrolog. Odd. Nár. Muz. (Praha)* **17/2**, 39-61. ISSN: 1211-0329.

Abstract

The stratiform deposit of mercury in Horní Luby near Cheb (Czech Republic) is developed within Ordovician phyllites of Vogtland - Saxony Paleozoic Unit, in the Saxothuringian Zone of the Bohemian Massif. Ore mineralization is represented by grains of cinnabar with the size in the range of 0.0X to X mm disseminated within phyllite foliation. Grains of cinnabar and several cm large aggregates of cinnabar are cumulated in conformal parallel lens with the thickness in range of X to X0 cm and the length in range of 0.X to X0 m developed in different horizons of the phyllite foliation. Cinnabar is accompanied by pyrite. Despite being relatively small, the mercury deposit in Horní Luby competed to the mercury mines in Idria (Slovenia) and Almaden (Spain) in the 16th century. The production of mercury in Horní Luby is estimated to reached about 10 - 30 % of the mercury production in the mines of Idria and Almaden. Through 1525 - 1527, the miners from Idria even repeatedly enforced a restriction to transport Czech mercury over Alps to the significant trade in Venice, in 1525 - 1527. Besides Venice, the mercury from Horní Luby was also supplied to Nuremberg, Antwerp and Lyons. In 1520 - 1540 the production of mercury from the Horní Luby mines was 6 to 15 tons per year. During 1560 - 1570 the production dropped to 0.5 to 3 tons per year. In 1520 - 1570 the accessible upper parts of the main part of the deposit (the mining complex *Maria Verkündigung - Drei König*) was exploited to the depth of 50 - 100 m below the ground surface. Then the mining went down and in 1597 the mines were abandoned. Attempts to recover the mining activity in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries were not very extensive and they failed. The total production of Horní Luby mines during the whole mining history is estimated to be at least 200 tons of mercury. The major portion of this amount was extracted between the years 1520 - 1540, minor portion between 1560 -1570. Later occasional mining was insignificant.

Key words: cinnabar, mercury, history of mining, geology, Horní Luby, Bohemian Massif, Saxothuringian Zone, Czech Republic