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Conference Reports

XVII INTERNATIONAL MINERAL PROCESSING CONGRESS DRESDEN, GERMANY

The XVII IMPC was held in Dresden, Germany, from September 23 to September 28, 1991. Although the congress was conducted at the time of considerable depression experienced by mining and mineral processing industries, more than 700 delegates were in attendance, with 190 papers presented either orally or in poster sessions.

Twenty four papers that dealt with magnetic separation, and four contributions on electrostatic separation were presented in four sections, namely "Fine particles processing" (Vol. III, 11 papers on magnetic separation, 2 papers on electrostatic separation), "Hydrometallurgy" (Vol. V, 1 paper on magnetic separation), "Processing of potash ores" (Vol. VI, 2 papers on electrostatic separation) and "Recycling of metals and non-ferrous metals from scrap, municipal solid waste and other secondary materials" (Vol. VII, 13 papers on magnetic separation). List of these papers can be found in section "Recent Publications" in this issue.

Three distinct directions can be identified in the application of magnetic separation to minerals beneficiation. All of them have a common goal to improve selectivity of magnetic separation.

Magnetogravimetric separation has been receiving considerable attention as the means of overcoming inherent non-selectivity of magnetic separation in katadynamic fields. Similarly, matrix vibration in HGMS is seen as a promising technique to improve the selectivity of separation which is a limiting factor in otherwise efficient HGMS. Fine particle treatment in magnetic separation, by modifying surface interactions, is a well-researched technique and its potential in large-scale applications is obvious.

The number of papers presented at the congress confirmed that waste treatment and recycling is becoming an important field where magnetic separation finds its application. Thirteen papers were submitted on the subject and the increasing environmental pressures in developed countries, together with immense potential

in the second and third-world countries are likely to make waste reprocessing a major application of magnetic separation.

The proceedings of the congress have confirmed that versatility of magnetic separation, combined with insufficient theoretical research into the principles of magnetic separation offer a vast field of activity for engineers and scientists involved in magnetic methods of materials treatment.

As a result of geographic and linguistic diversity of participants, the quality of presentations varied. Disturbing was a large number of poorly presented papers; the low standard was matched by equally inferior visuals.

In many instances, meaningful discussion was not possible, either because the presenters did not understand or speak English, or because some contributions were read by proxies.

On the other hand, informal tea-time conversation and discussions among the delegates were most fruitful and rewarding.

The organizers had a remarkably unique and difficult task of preparing the congress under the conditions of two distinctly different political and economic systems. The team from Bergakademie Freiberg deserves all the recognition for professional and impeccable organization of a successful congress.

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