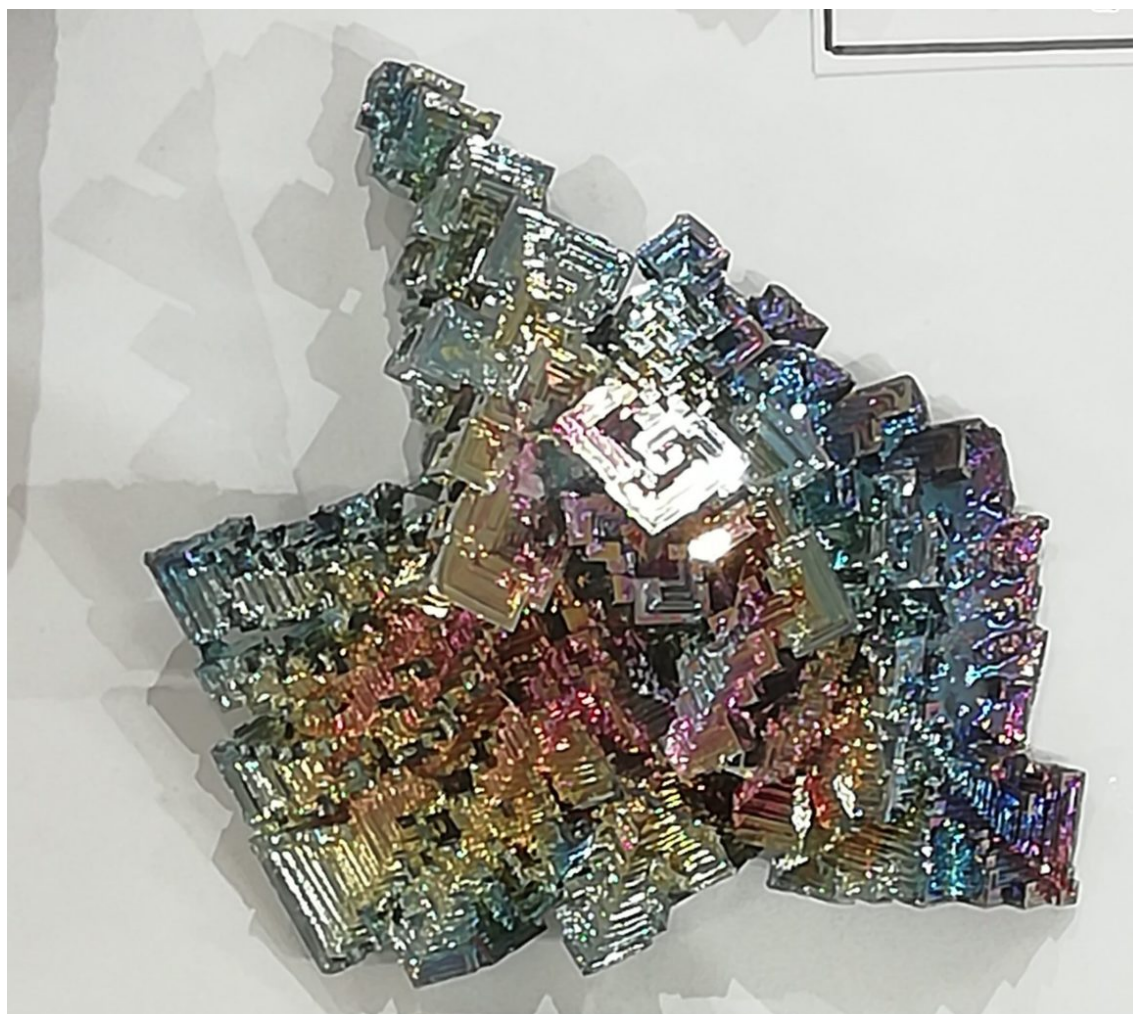


[1914 to Present](#), [Germany](#), [Industrial](#), [people](#)

## Banned word: The 'Uranium'



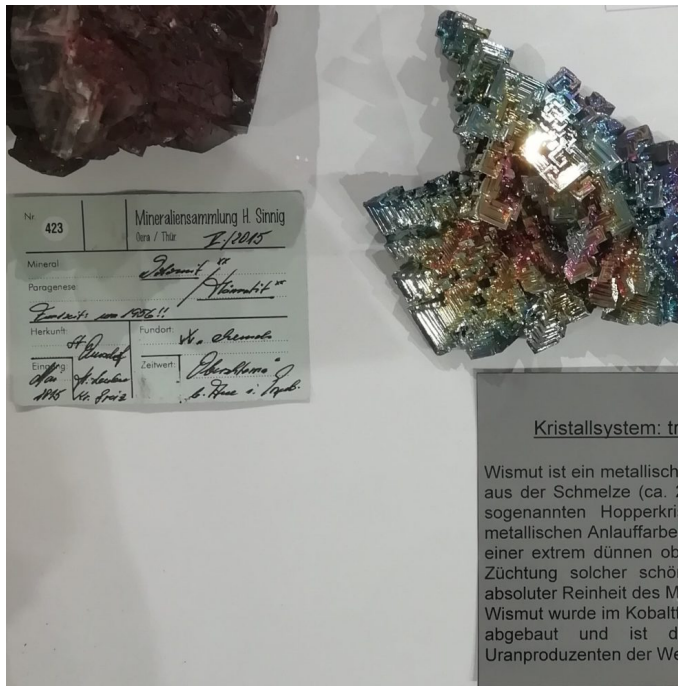
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**We would not have known the reason behind the nebulous meanings and definitions of *wismut* in Bad Schlema in Saxony region, if we would not meet a man in the Uranium Museum (*Uranbergbau*, The Museum of Uranium mining).** This story might also enlighten you about the origins of the name of Wismut Company in East Germany, which is still active in the region for the current industrial activities. *Wismut* is the German word referring to bismuth, which is a chemical element with the symbol of Bi.



Wismut, Uranbergbau, The Museum of Uranium  
Gozde Yildiz 2022

The man's words about the uranium mining industry in was explaining the historical stratifications of the minin quite surprising. He said: The man's words about the ur: Ore Mountains while he was explaining the historical st minerals in this region were quite surprising. He said: " uranium."

It was known that uranium was previously mined, though decorative purposes, such as for the famous uranium glass produced in the Czechoslovakian part of the Ore Mountains of Bad Schlema already knew that this black mineral — silver and cobalt ores — could be extracted during the smelting process, as described by German mineralogists and chemists. It was known that this unique mineral was different from the other minerals in the family as it might cause cancer due to radon, but this was not a concern for the miners due to the small quantity of the cases among an



Uranium glass, Uranbergbau, The Museum of  
Photo: Gozde Yildiz 2022.

### **Wismut or the Mineral A9 that makes Bad So Manchester'**

This mineral has been the greatest paradox in world history. It is a material of the radon gas that killed many people, on the one hand, and a material of counterpoison via the radon spas. In the 1920s, the fact that the waters of the region had come to the fore through the Bad Soden where people come not only for treatment of diseases but also for other purposes.

In the 1940s, people started to become sick due to this mineral in the industry. Yet the word 'uranium' was never used in the Ore Mountains area in Saxony, where the first industrial radon spa in the world. From the 1920s until 1949, several radon spas

the one in Bad Schlema, caught the attention of the Soviets during the interwar period when the region became one of the most important uranium mining areas. It became a kind of hopeful place for lots of people, despite the damage of the war.

In fact, the region became a secret project, and uranium was often covered by 'wismut' or 'the mineral A9' to hide the radioactive nature — a new potential goldmine for the industry. The industry gave lots of hope to many people until the beginning of the war and its environmental consequences. Despite the destruction on the environment and the great number of deaths, it all led to 'wealth' to the mining region. For example, Bad Schlema is often called 'Manchester of the East', as a place of hope for many people, since it provided employment and welfare for the people after the war period.



Uranium and protective costume sample from Uranbergbau, The Museum of Uranium mining

2022.

## Interactive relationship: the industry, people.

The Erzgebirge region is a complex landscape consisting of different industrial milestones in history through discovered minerals. The landscape itself holds a kind of guided humankind to shape their living environment but Thus, the outstanding landscape of the mining industry : extraordinarily comprehensive picture of the relationship place, which has been continuously adapted according to context.

## About author



Gozde Yildiz

Gozde YILDIZ was born in Ankara, but she is currently living in Italy as a conservation architect. She received her PhD in Architectural and Landscape Heritage from the Polytechnic University of Turin. Her field of interests focus on the industrial heritage sites' transformation via the contemporary culture. She has worked with various stakeholders for developing new strategies in how to use new and digital culture in these heritage sites as a new representative of industrial culture for future. She likes to discover different heritage sites and to tell their historical development trajectories via memory, culture and time concepts. Volunteer for European Heritage Times since 2022.

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