

## ORIGINAL ROCKS OF URALIAN AND TIMANIAN DIAMONDS

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Curved-face diamonds of gem quality have been mined from loose rocks on the western slope of the Urals for more than 50 years during which geologists have been looking for the original diamond-bearing rocks, though without any success. In the 1990s, new ideas were put forward concerning the nature of loose diamond-bearing sandy-clayey and gravelly rocks. They are interpreted as original diamond-bearing rocks similar to sandy tuffisites of Australia. This view has had both support and a lot of opposition. In order to prevent debate about the nomenclature, we named these rocks «visherites» according to the area of their occurrence. Diamond field Ichetju in the Middle Timans occurs in general geological structure with Uralian diamond localities. Prospecting and mining of the curved-face Ichetju diamonds, which are similar to the Uralian ones, have been carried out for 20 years. Studying the diamond-bearing gravelstones in the Timans, we found out that flat-dipping bed gives way to the steep one cross-cutting other strata. The diamond-bearing sandy-clayey gravelly masses of the funnel-shaped bodies in the Urals and in the Timans consist of high-pressure mineral associations: moissanite, pyrope-almandine, tschermakite hornblend, disthene, ilmenite, alumochromite (eclogite paragenesis) and chromite, andradite-knorringite-pyrope, picroilmenite (ultrabasic paragenesis). Gold and PGM have been found in the black sand and show no signs of roundness: they occur as spongy, porous grains, often with imprints of syngenetic minerals. These features would not be preserved in a river stream. In 1998, a diatreme with ultrabasic peralpotassium rocks (sanidine-chlorite-chrizotile-carbonate-titanomagnetite) similar to lamproite diatremes in structure was found in the Timans. So we conclude that visherite may be considered as original rocks for diamonds in the Urals and Timans.