

## **Amos Salvador (1923-2007)**

On december 2, 2007 died in Austin Amos Salvador, professor emeritus of Geology at the University of Texas at Austin, former chair of the International Subcommittee on Stratigraphic Classification (ISSC) for fifteen years (1977-1992) and author of the second edition of the International Stratigraphic Guide.

His entire professional life was dedicated to the research, assessment and exploitation of natural resources, first in oil companies, then in education, as resulting from the following summary of his life: Amos was born in 1923 in Madrid, Spain from a family of diplomats. He moved to Havana, Cuba, with his family when he was fifteen, and a few years later to Caracas, Venezuela. In Caracas he enrolled at the Universidad Central de Venezuela and obtained a degree in Geology in 1945. Soon after he started to work as surface geologist with Mena Grande Oil Co (of Gulf Oil Company) back riding mules in the interior of Venezuela. During these years as young exploration geologist he met Hollis D. Hedberg, who has been his mentor and advisor and friend for the years to come. Following Hedberg's advise, he moved to Stanford in California to continue his education. Amos completed his Ph D in 1950, and was married in Stanford with Lynn Sherwood, who has been his wife for 57 years.

From 1950 to 1955 he moved to New York City, where he worked for Gulf Oil as regional geologist with projects in south America, north Africa and Europe. In 1955 he left Gulf for Exxon and went back to Venezuela (Creole Petroleum Corporation) until 1980, when he retired from Exxon USA as chief geologist.

After retirement he moved to Austin, his final destination. He started to teach Energy Resources as Alexander Deussen Professor at the Department of Geological Sciences of the University of Texas at Austin from 1980 to 1990 and then Petroleum Geology as Morgan J. Davis Professor from 1990 to 1993.

Salvador was a strong supporter of Stratigraphy, that he considered of fundamental importance in geological sciences and in exploration in general . He often complained about the decline of its teaching in USA, and kept accurate records of the publications, the enrollments, the journals dealing with this subject. He has been chairman of the North American Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature (NACSN), and succeeded to his old friend and mentor Hollis Hedberg as chair of ISSC. Hedberg took over 20 years to create the first International Stratigraphic Guide (Hedberg, 1976) and retired the year after its publication. Salvador worked for years at the second edition (Salvador, 1994) and co-authored with his successor Murphy the abridged edition (Murphy and Salvador, 1999) .

Salvador strongly defended the International Subcommittee on Stratigraphic Classification that risked to be disbanded by its parent body, the International Commission on Stratigraphy of IUGS reportedly for the conceptual differences between the "boundary stratotype" definition of Hedberg (1976) and Salvador (1994), and the GSSP of Cowie (1986) and Remane et al (1996).

After retirement, Amos Salvador continued in his strenuous and untiring efforts in defense of Stratigraphy, as shown by his chairmanship of the Working Group on Sequence Stratigraphy of ISSC (1996-2001), by the organization of the AAPG Hedberg conference in Dallas in 2001, by his coordination of the volume on the Gulf of Mexico Geology published in 2005 and the monograph on Energy: a historical perspective and 21th century forecast. His last publications are dated 2006 and concern the "Quaternary quarrel". They clearly show his continuous efforts in defense of the historical perspective of Stratigraphy.

Amos Salvador will be remembered by all those who have met him as a gentleman of european origin who spent most of his life in central America for the research and scientific development of natural resources, and by all geologists in general for his important role played in Stratigraphic Classification.

We will miss him and share the sorrow for his unforeseen and premature departure with his wife Lynn, children (the eldest son Phillip is a geologist working for an oil company in Indonesia) and grandchildren.

Maria Bianca Cita

chair of the International Subcommittee on Stratigraphic Classification

