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# The contributions of Dr Salvador Reguant to the dissemination of the principles of stratigraphic classification and nomenclature

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A look at the curriculum vitae and the long list of publications of Salvador Reguant cannot fail to astonish us for the diversity of his interests and for the intensity and breath of his activities. His publications cover both geologic and religious themes, contribute to the spreading of general scientific information, and often deal with the teaching of the earth sciences. His contributions to geology range from the interpretation of the history of our planet and of the origin and evolution of its continents and oceans, to the most detailed studies of small intervals of the stratigraphic succession and of the fossils which they contain. Three subjects of study evidently favored by Salvador have been the stratigraphy of the Tertiary, particularly of the Paleogene of northeastern Spain (Catalunya, the Ebro Basin, and the Pre-Pyrenees), the paleontology of the bryozoans, and the concepts, mutual relationships and terminology of biostratigraphy and chronostratigraphy.

But equally important for Salvador over the years has been the debated process of codifying and disseminating the principles of stratigraphic classification and nomenclature, a process I had the pleasure to share with him and to which he made many valuable contributions.

Salvador Reguant's publications testify to his evident conviction concerning the need for international agreement on the principles of stratigraphic classification and on the development of a common stratigraphic terminology that allows communication, coordination, and understanding among worldwide stratigraphers. It has been clear for Salvador that if modern stratigraphic concepts are essential, such concepts are not applicable in practical stratigraphic work if they are not properly codified and

expressed by means of a clear, precisely defined, and universally accepted terminology.

Given this conviction, it is not surprising that Salvador would become involved in the activities of the International Subcommittee on Stratigraphic Classification (ISSC) of the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS), created in 1952 precisely for the purpose of developing recommendations for the codification of principles of stratigraphic classification and to propose a system of stratigraphic nomenclature that would be accepted and used by stratigraphers everywhere in the world.

In his article on "National and international stratigraphic nomenclatures: description and evaluation", Salvador supports the mission of the ISSC. He states: "The necessity to establish rules of stratigraphic nomenclature, obligatory or advisable in given situations, and the conviction that the ideal situation should be universal in nature is the reason, on the one hand, for the preparation in many countries of codes, guides, and norms of stratigraphic terminology and classification and, on the other hand, for the creation of the ISSC in 1952".

Salvador's participation in the activities of the ISSC during the last 25 years resulted in important contributions that, as Chairman of the Subcommittee from 1976 to 1992, I want to call attention to and acknowledge gratefully in this note.

Since its creation, the main objective of the ISSC was the preparation of the International Stratigraphic Guide. But to publish the Guide was not enough. For its recom-

mentations to be accepted worldwide it was essential that its availability was widely known. To this, Salvador provided invaluable help: in 1972 and 1973 he published information and commentaries about the reports that the ISSC had prepared ahead of the publication of the first edition of the Guide in 1976. Upon the publication of the Guide he joined Cecily Petzall, Jose Longoria, and me in the preparation of the Spanish translation of the Guide which was published in 1980. This was not easy: the differences between the geologic terminology used in Spain and that used in Latin America - in which anglicisms are commonplace - became evident early in the process and Salvador had to exert a great deal of patience defending the purity of the authentic Castilian.

In his 1989 article "Stratigraphic nomenclatures ...." Salvador compares the Guide with the North American Stratigraphic Code and with other national stratigraphic codes. He states in the concluding section of this article that if his goal "to make known the work and the viewpoints of the ISSC concerning stratigraphic classification and nomenclature" had been attained, he would consider that his efforts had not been in vain. He should not worry!

The ISSC published the first edition of the International Stratigraphic Guide in 1976 fully aware that it was not complete. Missing, for instance, was a discussion of the magnetostratigraphic units, and of the unconformity-bounded units, as well as a glossary of stratigraphic terms. The Subcommittee, therefore, undertook in 1977 the preparation of a second edition of the Guide. During the 17

years that it took to complete the second edition, Salvador, as the representative at the ISSC of the "Comité Español de Estratigrafía", contributed to the preparation of the new chapters and to the necessary revision and updating of the rest of the text. The second edition of the Guide was put up for sale in 1994. Salvador quickly published a note calling attention in Spain to the appearance of the new edition.

Salvador Reguant's contributions to the ISSC were not limited to all this. In 1994, when the Bureau of the ICS arbitrarily decided to eliminate or lower the category of the ISSC, arguing that once the second edition of the Guide had been published, the Subcommittee had nothing else to do, Salvador, as well as a large number of other individuals and organizations, appealed this decision in the name of the "Comité Español de Estratigrafía" to the ICS "authorities", contributing to the defeat of this aggression against the ISSC.

In wishing Salvador the pleasant retirement that he so well deserves, I want to express my hope that the passage to this new stage of his life does not mean that his valuable contributions to the ISSC and to the science of stratigraphy are going to diminish or cease. There is much yet to be done! There is, among other things, a large "flock" of "stratigraphic sheep" - genetic stratigraphy, ecostratigraphy, event stratigraphy, seismic stratigraphy, sequence stratigraphy, cyclostratigraphy, to mention only a few - that needs to be "sheared" to see if there is real "substance" under the "wool". And for that, we need the help of Salvador Reguant.