

OBITUARY



Prof. Carmelo Sturiale
(1932 - 1988)

Carmelo Sturiale, an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Science of Catania University, died after a short illness at the age of 56, leaving his wife, Rosa, and three children, Luisella, Giovanni and Angela.

Carmelo was born in Catania, Italy, in 1932; he took his degree in Natural Sciences at the end of 1957 and immediately began a detailed survey for the Servizio Geologico Italiano of certain zones of Mount Etna. After a few years of voluntary assistantship at the Catania University Volcanology Institute, he became a full-time assistant. In the Volcanology Institute, now absorbed into the Earth Science Institute, Carmelo, with that seriousness and ability so characteristic of his work, spent the first years of his professional career as Curator of the Institute Museum and then organized the first modern chemistry laboratory in Catania for carrying out wet analysis on silicic rocks. In 1983 he became Associate Professor in the Catania University Science Faculty where he gave a course in Applied Geochemistry.

"Melo", as he was known to his friends, was one of the first pupils in Catania of the late Professor Alfred Rittmann, who was appointed in 1957 as Director of the Volcanology Institute of Catania University. Under the guidance of Prof. Rittmann, Melo began on series of geologic-petrochemical research projects on Mt. Etna, which are to be considered the starting point of new and more modern way of investigating a volcanic area. The majority of his scientific output, more than forty publications in Italian and foreign journals, are concerned with the Etnean volcanic hazard in the Eolian Island Archipelago, which were the center of his study interest in the last years of his life, as well as on the basic volcanism of the island of Ustica. His teaching of Applied Geochemistry had recently led him into the field of pollution problems regarding aquifers and the environment, and the enthusiasm and energy which he managed to put into that were remarkable for someone who had already begun to feel the effects of incurable disease.

Melo's contribution to the preparation of the 1:50,000 Geological Map of Mount Etna was of inestimable importance. As the co-author of the map, I personally can testify to the tenacity and yet modesty which characterized his work on it. In fact, I worked a lot with him on the geology and petrochemistry of Mount Etna and Ustica and on ancient and recent Etnean eruptions; I shall always remember our long discussions, both in the field and laboratory: sometimes they were tough, but always constructive and from my point of view extremely formative.

Finally a word should be said of his work as a teacher: I shall not easily forget the admiration and devotedness his students displayed towards him; he was their older brother rather than their "Professor".

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