

OBITUARY

VINCENZO FRANCIOSI (1925 - 1989)

Vincenzo Franciosi, Member of the Editorial Board of "Meccanica", passed away on 10 March 1989 after a short illness. He was born in Lacedonia (Avellino) on 22 August 1925, but moved in his infancy to Naples, where he lived since. He completed High School and Engineering studies at an exceptionally young age, and became an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Naples soon after graduation. He pursued all his career in the same Faculty: a few years later He was appointed Lecturer of Bridge Constructions, and in 1956, at the sudden death of his Master Prof. Adriano Galli, Professor of "Scienza delle Costruzioni" and Director of the homonymous Institute, He kept the same Professorship until His death, although He passed to younger Colleagues the Directorship of the Institute, which in the meantime grew from the one Full Professor of 1956 to the six of today, while other former Assistants of Franciosi's moved to other Departments and Universities.

Among Vincenzo Franciosi's many publications, perhaps He will be remembered mostly for his works on plastic limit analysis of structures, which contributed greatly to the knowledge and development in Italy of this modern method of structural design. But one must not forget His studies on other aspects of the Theory of Structures, like problems of instability and of analysis of bridges: I think worth quoting in particular the formulation of the Generalized Betti's Theorem (that we should learn to call "Betti-Franciosi's Theorem"). In the last years, His interests have been mainly devoted to the analysis of masonry structures, a field in which again He has published essential contributions.

Professor Franciosi has been a prolific book-writer, since His 1958 "Ponti ad arco con impalcato sospeso". Most of His later books are textbooks, but certainly His treatise of "Scienza delle Costruzioni" remains a monumental reference work. His last book "Le situazioni semilineari in Scienza delle Costruzioni" has been defined, in the review by Giulio Maier (Meccanica, No. 1/1988), a "remarkable book" that "reflects the extensive, widely acknowledged experience of Professor Franciosi as scholar, researcher, teacher and designer of structures. The presentation is clear throughout and often brilliant . . .".

Indeed, Professor Franciosi was above all an exceptional teacher, which combined rigour and clarity in an unsurpassed manner: from my undergraduate years I still remember with admiration His lectures, and I know that He engaged in His teaching up to the last months with the same dedication and enthusiasm. He was also instrumental in starting in the University of Naples a Postgraduate (Ph. D.) course in Structural Engineering, and was always available to present throughout Italy advanced lectures which never were routine events: indeed, a few days before the end, He was still arranging a lecture of His in Pisa.

Teaching and researching, and the never neglected care of the family (He instilled the love of Science into His two sons and only daughter, all three now engaged in University research), did not leave Professor Franciosi much time for other activities: nevertheless, He could count the design of a couple of significant and novel bridge structures among the achievements of His early years of professional activity.

He was a difficult character, and it was not always easy to deal with Him, because often He concealed His innate shyness under an apparent rudeness. But in our Committees and in our meetings we shall greatly miss His interventions, His criticisms, His ironic innuendos.

It is a sad coincidence that in these very days Vincenzo Franciosi's name appears as a Member of the Scientific Committee in the First Announcement of the Meeting that AIMETA has promoted to honour the memory of two other recently disappeared great Italian Colleagues, Riccardo Baldacci and Michele Capurso, the former a few years Franciosi's senior, the latter an under-graduate student of His. Let us honour the three of them, together with the youngest Colleague that also left us suddenly a few months ago, Manfredi Romano, another Franciosi's student and former Assistant.

GIULIANO AUGUSTI