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## Evgeny Larchenkov (13.11.1946–2.11.2012)



The Fifth Special Volume of the journal *Quaternary International* is dedicated to the memory of Prof. Dr. Evgeny Larchenkov (1946–2012), a Co-Coordinator of the Working Group 6 “Structural Geology and Active Tectonics” of IGCP 521 and INQUA 501.

Evgeny Larchenkov was Head of the Department of Physical and Marine Geology at Odessa I.I. Mechnikov National University and Academician of the Ukrainian Engineering Academy of Sciences. He was a high ranking specialist in structural geology, had a forceful personality, was a fine leader, an excellent teacher, and impressed all as an honest and energetic person with a great sense of humor. His scientific interests were related to the history of oil and gas development, the genesis of these resources, and the petroleum potential of the rift sedimentary basins of the Eastern European and Siberian platforms as well as the passive continental margins of South America, western Africa, and the western and southern parts of Australia. Within the IGCP 521 and INQUA 501 frameworks, he evaluated the role of active tectonics on sea-level change and coastal processes in the Black Sea, the Marmara Gateways, the Aegean Sea, and northern Turkey.

Evgeny was born in Moscow into the family of a military officer on November 13, 1946. In 1964, he enrolled the Moscow M.V. Lomonosov State University with a specialization in “Geology and the exploration of oil and gas fields.” After graduation he served for two years in the Soviet Army as a platoon commander of the 1st Guards Moscow-Minsk Division.

Beginning in 1971, he worked as an engineer, then in 1972, as a junior scientist at the scientific-research sector of the Department of Physical and Marine Geology, Odessa I.I. Mechnikov State University. While working there, he actively participated in the experimental metrical survey of methane emissions on the bottom of the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. This pioneering survey was headed by Prof. G.G. Tkachenko and was aimed at developing cheap and effective methods for identifying areas with elevated concentrations of methane and its homologues in order to understand their origin and spatial distribution for the oil-gas industry. By that time, it was suspected (and recently proven correct) that the amount of methane in the Azov-Black Sea basin is several times larger than known gas reservoirs on Earth. On the scale of investigation, the survey of the early 1970s had no analogues, neither in the USSR nor in other countries.

In December 1974, Evgeny Larchenkov became a PhD student at Moscow M.V. Lomonosov State University under the supervision of the famous Soviet oil geologist Prof. Dr. B.A. Sokolov. The subject of his PhD Thesis was “Historical and genetic preconditions of oil-gas potential in the southeastern part of the Lena-Vilyui basin.” This research was needed for evaluation of oil-gas potential in the territories adjacent to the future Yakutsk-Magadan pipeline route. As a PhD student, he participated in field work in Siberia (basins of the

Lena, Aldan, and Vilyui Rivers). In 1979, he successfully defended his PhD and returned to Odessa I.I. Mechnikov State University to work as a Senior Researcher in the Laboratory of Marine Geology. His main subject was related to the exploration of oil and gas resources in the Azov-Black Sea basin.

In 1979, Evgeny Larchenkov started his teaching career by offering fundamental courses in “General Geology,” “Geology of Fossil Fuels,” “Regional and Historical Geotectonics,” “Regional Geology of Northern Eurasia,” “The Economy of Mineral Resources,” “Current Problems in Geology,” “The Doctrine of the Biosphere,” and others.

In 1982, he became Associate Professor at the Department of Palaeontology and Regional Geology, then the Head of the Department (1983–1986), Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Geology and Geography (1987–1990), Vice-Rector on Education (1990–1991), and finally the Head of the Department of Physical and Marine Geology (1991–2012).

Administrative work went well with teaching and science. He continued to study tectonic evolution, the origins of oil and gas in the intercontinental and marginal sedimentary basins of Eurasia, South and North America, Africa, and Australia.

In October 1991, Evgeny Larchenkov successfully defended his Doctoral Thesis “Formational regimes of rift sedimentary basins and criteria for prognostication of their oil-gas potential” at Moscow M.V. Lomonosov State University. In January 1992, he obtained the degree of Doctor of Geological-Mineralogical Sciences and in April of that year, he became a Full Professor in the Department of Physical and Marine Geology.

In addition to his main field, he also worked on the geological-geochemical assessment of contamination by heavy metals and organic pollution in the onshore and offshore areas of the northern Black Sea as well as the estimation of geological and geochemical factors affecting migration and deposition of the pollutants. Lately, he became actively involved in the geology, tectonics, and paleogeography of the Black Sea during the Late Pleistocene and Holocene within the frameworks of the IGCP 521 and INQUA 501 projects. He was author and co-author of more than 200 publications, including two monographs and two training manuals.

Evgeny Larchenkov was a corresponding Member of the Engineering Academy of Ukraine; member of the UK-Ukraine Professional Network, British Council, Ukraine; member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists; member of the Editorial Board of the Scientific and Technical Journal *Environmental Geology and Safeguards to Human Life*, Kiev, Ukraine; and member of the Editorial Board of the International Marine Literary Miscellany *Black Sea Compass Points* (Chernomorskie rumby), Odessa, Ukraine.

He was well known abroad, participating in international projects and presenting results of his investigations at numerous

international fora. For his excellence, he obtained fellowships at Wye College, University of London; the School of Applied Geology, Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Western Australia; and the Department of Geology, Eastern Washington University, Washington, USA.

Even painful illness could not keep Evgeny from his explorations and creative thinking. His latest research will be published in the near future through the efforts of his colleagues, associates, and students. However, a number of projects, in particular IGCP 610 “From the Caspian to Mediterranean: Environmental Change and Human Response during the Quaternary,” which is a continuation of the IGCP 521 and INQUA 501 projects, will be carried out without his continued participation. He has nevertheless left a rich legacy. His publications will be used by generations of researchers to come, and memories of him will constantly remind his many friends to be open and positive.

Evgeny Larchenov was a bright personality, a talented scientist dedicated to geology, a fine leader, an honest and sensitive person. He lived a successful and happy life, though we wish it had been longer. He was surrounded by family, friends, and colleagues who loved, respected, and admired him. We are confident that he would appreciate knowing that remembering him makes us happy rather than sad. Geological science has suffered a heavy loss. But the

bright memory of a respected and beloved colleague and teacher will remain in our hearts.



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