

Presentación de Oscar A. Vardé

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Distinguidas autoridades, señores, estimados colegas.

Es apropiado que el hombre busque, entre sus símbolos más significativos, las ceremonias de alegría de una sociedad para enaltecer el pasado, para disfrutar el presente, y para proyectarse hacia el futuro. Así interpreto la Casagrande Lecture que será expuesta por Oscar Vardé.

Cuando hace días me telefoneó nuestro querido amigo Guillermo Noguera para pedirme que dijera unas pocas palabras de presentación de Oscar Vardé, tantas fueron las razones que me convencieron para aceptar el honor y placer, que puedo resumirlas en no más que la felicidad de retribuir el cariño con que hace dos años apoyó a María Luiza, mi mujer, hacia la publicación del DE MELLO VOLUME.

Pero, no me ilusiono con respecto a las posiciones compartidas: puedo ser el menos joven, pero entre los latinoamericanos indudablemente es la presencia de Oscar la más conocida, y, por tanto, la presentación es de mi persona por su presencia. Por tanto, en un mundo que hoy día cuenta con el placer comunicativo del idioma común de la CNN, permítanme reducir mi tarea al propósito de presentar a nuestro agraciado a los hermanos nórdicos, para quienes una identificación y caracterización suscita sea menos injustificable.

Oscar Alberto Vardé, born on March 24, 1936, graduated Summa Cum Laude in Civil Engineering from the Engineering Faculty of the University of Buenos Aires in 1959. We could refer to him as a second generation leader of geotechnical engineering, since his mentors Moretto and Bolognesi imported into Argentina in the early Brave New World the teachings of Casagrande, Peck, Terzaghi and other stars of the Boston Big Bang.

This long trajectory through 32 years, and more than 60 publications, suggests that I emphasize only three keynotes: origin, means and recent milestone. It is to me very

significant that in common with many great civil and human engineers (such as, for example, Manuel Rocha of Portugal) his roots fed in a dedication to physics, for eight years, as assistant professor to that chair at his alma mater.

The means are the broad spectrum activity of Teaching-Inspection-Monitoring-Theorizing, a fertile continuum, a cauldron of common sense through intense, enthusiastic, critical and creative effort in every type of project as foundations, dams and hydraulics works, transmission lines, highways railroads and canals, bridges, ports, industrial plants, urban and subaqueous tunnels, etc. The recent achievements-recognitions-platforms for leaps, are, for instance, the South American Vice Presidency of the ISSMFE 1985-1989, the Theme Lecture on Embankment Dams at the Rio 1989 International Conference of ISSMFE, the General Report on Rock Mechanics at the 1986 International Conference of the IAEG, and the election into the prestigious Argentine National Academy of Engineering, 1987.

Such long transport identifies him in the medium to fine fraction; very well rounded, all angularities removed, and zero crushability. Very high activity index, although refusing plotability in the Casagrande Chart because of unknown liquid limit, and resilience to any appearance of plasticity; tough, should belong high above the A-line. Shrinks from no challenge. Swelling never observed in the upper vital members, but deep down in the heart, affable expansivity always reported. Collapsivity intrinsically excluded. Low compressibility; avidly unsaturated, hardly develops excess pore pressures, rapid dissipation, excluding any vibratory liquefaction. Very predictable static constitutive behaviour, despite display of high gregarious sensitivity, rejecting lukewarm remolded cam-clay and rehashed mac-boulder models. Clarity and brilliance, of micaceous translucence and reflection, always expressed in frictionless manner. In the realm of finite elements demonstrates infinite capacity at integrating, and at maintaining distortion within the micro-strain range of serviceability. Zero dispersivity, and reliable filter for nonsense.

For clients, colleagues, society, friends, and family, Oscar Vardé a man for all seasons that international Civil and Geotechnical Engineering take pride in presenting.