

IN MEMORY OF DR. SILVIA SPEZZAFERRI, PHD, MER (1961–2024)



FIGURE 1. Dr. Silvia Spezzaferri working on foraminifera at her microscope in Fribourg, Switzerland.

Dr. Silvia Spezzaferri passed away peacefully on July 30, 2024, after a courageous battle against a devastating illness. She had been an internationally esteemed geoscience researcher, a beloved educator, and a mentor to many. Silvia Spezzaferri's legacy in the field of foraminiferal research will endure for generations, as she was a firm advocate that taxonomy is the basis of foraminiferal research. Silvia's warmth will forever remain in the hearts of those who felt it. She was always full of ideas, projects, and eager to work at her beloved forams, exploring every possible pathway her scientific curiosity and passion could conceive. More broadly, she was a beloved wife to the late Colin Bremner and mother to her son Maximilian, and she was dedicated to her treasured pets and her passion for science.

Silvia Spezzaferri was born in Milan on March 29, 1961. She graduated from the University of Milan where she earned a Master's degree in 1987 and a Ph.D. in Earth Sciences in 1992. Her doctoral thesis was on planktic foraminiferal biostratigraphy of the Oligocene and Lower Miocene. She was a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Milan from 1992–1995. In 1995, she joined the ETH-Zurich where she was a researcher and science coordinator of the European Science Foundation Scientific Committee for Ocean Drilling (ESCO Secretariat). In 2000, she became a researcher at the University of Vienna, then joined the Department of Geosciences of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, in 2002, completing her Habilitation in January 2004. There she became the leader of the Micropaleontology group and remained for the rest of her life (Fig. 1). As an academic, she mentored at least

ten postgraduates, sharing her vast knowledge and instilling in them a deep love for science and micropaleontology (Fig. 2). In 2015, among her active international leadership contributions, she became the Representative of the University of Fribourg in the Swiss International Union of Geological Science (IUGS) Committee.

Since the beginning of her academic career, Silvia Spezzaferri was involved in biostratigraphic micropaleontological research based on the cores recovered by several Ocean Drilling Program (ODP) and International Ocean Discovery Program (IODP) legs. She participated as shipboard scientist on ODP Leg 152 (East Greenland Margin) and ODP Leg 160 (Mediterranean I).

Her interest in biostratigraphy and foraminiferal evolution developed in parallel with the application of foraminifera and geochemical proxies for paleoceanographic reconstructions and environmental monitoring. She was one of the founding members of the FOBIMO (Foraminiferal-Biomonitoring) working group that spearheaded standardization in sampling strategies. Her skills as a multilingual scientist clearly broadened her contributions and participation in international ocean drilling activities as well as her organization of other international research projects and expeditions. She led and participated in field campaigns around the world, including in the Maldives and along Australia's Great Barrier Reef. She authored/co-authored more than 200 papers and abstracts since 1991, with two publications in *Science* and one in *Nature-Scientific Reports*, meriting an H-Index of 35. While she is deeply missed and will forever be in the hearts of many colleagues and former students, her many papers and especially the numerous taxa that she



FIGURE 2. Dr. Silvia Spezzaferri (third from left) with her students following the thesis defense of Akram El Kateb (center front) in October 2018 in Fribourg, Switzerland. From the left, Osvaldo Comozzi, Claudio Stadler, Silvia, Robin Fentimen behind Akram, then Stephanie Stainbank and Valentina Beccari (far right).

described and co-described will grant her immortality in the scientific literature.

FORAMINIFERAL TAXA DESCRIBED BY SILVIA SPEZZAFERRI AND COLLABORATORS

- Hyalinea marmarica* Spezzaferri & Yanko-Hombach, 2007
Affinetrina voloshinovae subsp. *eldarica* Maisuradze, Koiava & Spezzaferri, 2009
Catapsydrax indianus Spezzaferri & Pearson, 2009
Varidentella luzkowskiae Maisuradze, Koiava & Spezzaferri, 2009
Varidentella reussi subsp. *costulata* Maisuradze, Koiava & Spezzaferri, 2009
Schackoinella spina Stadler, Székely-Szabolcs, El Kateb, Van Rooij & Spezzaferri 2015
Trilobatus n. gen. Spezzaferri, Kucera, Pearson, Wade, Rappo, Poole, Morard & Stalder, 2015
Globigerinella roeglina Spezzaferri & Coxall 2018
Globigerinoides eoconglobatus Stainbank, Spezzaferri, Kroon, de Leau & Rüggeberg, 2018
Globigerinoides joli Spezzaferri, 2018
Globigerinoides neoparawoodi Spezzaferri, 2018
Globorotaloides atlanticus Spezzaferri & Coxall, 2018
Globoturborotalita eolabiocrassata Spezzaferri & Coxall, 2018
Quiltyella n. gen. Coxall & Spezzaferri, 2018
Trilobatus altospiralis Spezzaferri 2018
Ammonia bellaria Schönfeld, Beccari, Schmidt & Spezzaferri, 2021

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