

Zagros deformation not only determined the size and shape of reservoirs but also their permeability and porosity.

The economic importance of this area is obvious. The Middle East, especially the Arabian-Persian Gulf and its periphery, is presently producing more than one third of the world's oil. Recent discoveries and extensions of known reservoirs have increased production to the point that the area produces more than North America. More than half of the world's proved reserves are in this area.

Communist-block countries, in spite of tremendous potential, are contributing less than one-sixth of total world oil. Doubtless this is partly a result of the fact that these countries still have not attained the same wide use of petroleum products as the free world. Also, oil commerciality depends on the proper balance between a stable growing market and cheap transportation. The unique accessibility and availability of Middle East oil from this gulf guarantees its rising importance in world-energy needs.

A plethora of oil is here and available; transportation is cheap. Extensive oil discoveries in new, inaccessible, or distant inland areas, even in the Middle East, world conditions permitting, should in no way threaten this source for many years to come.

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HYDRODYNAMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF MOLLUSKS IN PLIOCENE TURBIDITES NEAR VENTURA, CALIFORNIA

The distribution and orientation of valves of a small species of pelecypod in Pliocene turbidite sandstone near Ventura help clarify the complicated hydrodynamic history of turbidite events. Because of their relatively constant configuration and size, these pelecypod valves are superior to platy or elongated minerals and rock fragments in this respect. Moreover, it can be shown that valve stability orientations differ according to basic mode of sediment accumulation and possibly flow regime. The preliminary conclusions presented below are based on both laboratory experiments and field observations.

The stable orientation of convex-concave shells seen within the massive, graded basal part of a typical turbidite bed is concave up. Laboratory experiments suggest that the shells are "rotated" into this configuration by consolidation of the viscous turbidite "slurry" during the final few seconds of motion before this part of the bed "freezes." There is evidence that the opposite configuration will exist if internal shear was present in any significant amount, such as near the base of the flow.

Shells located in the upper, laminar parts of the turbidite sequence generally are convex upward; this is the well-known stable configuration for current flow.

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STATE OF THE SOCIETY

The Society of Economic Paleontologists and Mineralogists was organized by a small group of specialists in micropaleontology and sedimentary petrology, and was established as a division of The American Association of Petroleum Geologists in 1926. Since then it has attained a membership of more than 2,400, and a reputation as an important international society.

The S.E.P.M. publishes two journals and a series of special publications, and performs other useful services to the profession. The membership is composed of a variety of specialists with diverse interests and professional connections, and this makes for a certain amount of unrest and dissatisfaction with the *status quo*. There is a widely held desire to change the name of the society to something that would express more accurately its aims and activities. Some members have suggested splitting into two societies, one for sedimentary petrology and one for paleontology; others have suggested that the Paleontological Society and the paleontologists of the S.E.P.M. join in a separate society. Many members and non-members of the S.E.P.M. have expressed disapproval of the status of the society as a subordinate division of the A.A.P.G. In particular, there is a strong feeling on the part of some that the requirement of membership in the A.A.P.G. as a qualification for full (active) membership in S.E.P.M. makes second-class citizens of the associate members of S.E.P.M., many of whom are outstanding members of the profession.

Recent councils of the S.E.P.M. have sampled the opinions of the membership, and have arrived at what is believed to be a consensus that can be used for making necessary adjustments in the affairs of the society.

The name-change movement distills down to the following. There is no agreement on a possible new name; a change in name would create serious confusion, because the society's publications are indexed in libraries and bibliographies; and it is believed that the society's aims and activities are widely known under its present name. No change is being made.

The fractionation sentiment is countered by a majority opinion that paleontology and the study of the physical environment should be kept together in the same society, to provide for continued cross-fertilization and the strengthening of the ecological approach to stratigraphy and paleogeography.

The independence movement is faced by the practical consideration that the society is still partly supported and aided by the A.A.P.G., both in the close association in the headquarters office and in the operation of the joint annual meetings. The financial status of the S.E.P.M. is good, but completely independent operation would be a risky endeavor and would limit the vigor of the society's work.

With reference to all of the foregoing questions, an appreciable number of members, including both academic and non-academic types, value the economic aspect of the profession and the S.E.P.M.'s association with petroleum geologists.

A new constitution has been written, the principal feature of which is the removal of the requirement of membership in the A.A.P.G. as a basis for full status in the S.E.P.M. A large majority of the old associate members can be advanced immediately to full membership and acquire the right to vote and hold office. A new class of associates is established, to include somewhat more junior members of the profession, who would not have voting or candidacy rights but who could advance into the member rank, on gaining further experience, without having to join another society. Other provisions of the new constitution in general merely state more accurately the society's present functions and business procedures.

I do not wish to imply that the Council thinks that all of the problems have been solved, or that all factions have been satisfied. I am sure that succeeding