

Editorial

## Remembering Professor Jose Luis García Fierro (1948–2020)

Rufino M. Navarro Yerga <sup>†</sup>

Instituto de Catálisis y Petroleoquímica (CSIC), C/Marie Curie 2, 28049 Cantoblanco, Madrid, Spain; r.navarro@icp.csic.es

<sup>†</sup> On behalf of my colleagues of the Sustainable Energy and Chemistry Group: M.A. Peña, B. Pawelec, M. López Granados, R. Mariscal, J.M. Campos Martín, S. Rojas, M.C. Alvarez Galvan and R. Guil Lopez.

Received: 9 March 2020; Accepted: 10 March 2020; Published: 25 March 2020



On 3 February, Professor Jose Luis Garcia Fierro died in Madrid, Spain, at the age of 71. Professor Fierro studied Chemistry at the University of Oviedo (Spain) where in 1973 he graduated with honours. In 1976, he received his PhD Degree in Chemistry from the Complutense University of Madrid (Spain). As post-doctoral researcher, he expanded his scientific experience working in prestigious laboratories of University Pierre et Marie Curie (Paris, France), University College of Cork (Ireland) and Université Catholique de Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium). Since 1974 and until the end of his life, he worked at the Spanish National Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) where he developed his passion for scientific research.

Professor Fierro was an internationally recognized scientist in diverse areas of heterogeneous catalysis and solid state chemistry applied to: natural gas conversion, selective oxidations of paraffins and olefins, synfuels, environmental catalysis, catalytic combustion, surface chemistry, heteroatom removal and dearomatization of petroleum feedstocks, fuel cells and hydrogen production. He was a reference in the application of XPS technique for the characterisation of catalytic surfaces and pioneered in Spain the developments of catalytic technologies in C1 chemistry, the set of reactions around methane that allow the synthesis from natural gas of a variety of chemicals and fuels. He was the promoter and leader of the Sustainable Chemistry and Energy Group at the Institute of Catalysis and Petrochemistry (CSIC) which has become an important Spanish research group of renowned international prestige in the areas of heterogeneous catalysis and chemistry of materials and where a large number of national and foreign students have carried out their doctoral work. His broad research, both fundamental and applied, are compiled in more than 1200 papers in renowned specialist journals devoted to heterogeneous catalysis, chemical engineering, materials science and surface

chemistry. He has edited a total of 10 books (editor and/or co-author), holds 37 patents, and was plenary speaker at many congresses, seminars and scientific events held in national and international Universities, research centres and companies all around the world. His work was recognised with several acknowledgements: Award on Hydrogen production from Renewable Energies (2004), Senior Research Award of the Iberoamerican Federation of Catalysis Societies (FISOCAT) (2008), Medal of the King Saud University, Saudi Arabia (2008), Senior Research Award “Miguel Catalan”, Madrid (2008) and Honoris Causa Doctorates from the University of Patras, Greece (2009), the University of Concepción, Chile (2014), and the San Marcos University, Peru (2017).

During his scientific career, Professor Fierro oversaw and inspired more than 100 doctorate, graduate students and postdocs all around the world (USA, Saudi Arabia and especially Latin American countries such as Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Colombia, with which he always kept a special connection). Among his former students and post-doc researchers, there are many scientists who today occupy key positions in national and international universities, industries and different organisations. All of them will remember his brilliant scientific capacity, his meticulousness and patience in the laboratory and his willingness to help. In addition to his scientific accomplishments, Professor Fierro was known for his ability to build and manage successful work teams and create a family environment among researchers. He was a wonderful colleague and friend and one of those rare beings, an exceptionally effective and dedicated scientist, a good and cheerful person and always with time to listen and help others. His human quality was exceptional, valuing everyone’s work, from the most important to the least, which made him win the respect for all of us who were lucky enough know and meet him.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflict of interest.



© 2020 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).