

# Obituary

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## Professor Martín Guzmán



Those of us who work in the polymer field know that the name of Professor Martín Guzmán signifies the growth of polymer science in Spain. Sadly, Professor Guzmán died on 22 August 1991.

In Spain, as in other countries, polymer science came into being as an appendix, as it were, of organic chemistry. This occurred within the structure of the Consejo superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) at the end of the 1940s in Madrid. After his time in Birmingham (PhD 1953) the decisive impetus given by Professor Martín Guzmán and other colleagues led to the establishment of a new institute within the organization of the CSIC, namely the Plastics and Rubber Institute. This was a milestone in the expansion of scientific and technological research into polymers in Spain.

Professor Guzmán's non-conformist character took him to Barcelona in 1967. Starting from nothing and within an engineering school in the Spain of the 1960s—a rather inappropriate structure for scientific research—Professor Guzmán succeeded miraculously in generating a new polymer research group, the fruits of which can be seen today in developments in other Spanish Engineering Schools as well as in diverse Spanish industries.

As if starting from nothing was his true vocation, in 1975 Professor Guzmán undertook the creation of a Chemistry Faculty in the University of the Basque Country in San Sebastián. Here students received specific instruction in the field of macromolecules during the last 2 years of their university course. Today, the Chemistry Faculty of San Sebastián is the only centre of its kind in Spain and there has been parallel development in the activities of research groups. Thanks to his conviction about the importance of polymer research, Professor Guzmán has succeeded in directing more than 50% of the present staff of the Faculty towards research fields related to the chemistry, physics and engineering of macromolecules.

Professor Guzmán has been Rector of the University, Dean of the Chemistry Faculty, and Spanish representative to IUPAC. Although modesty would have prevented him from mentioning it, he has received most of the awards and prizes to which a Spanish Scientist may aspire.

*Isabel Goñi*