

Professor Enrique Meléndez A Tribute



Dedicated to Prof. Meléndez on the occasion of his 70th birthday and to honour his retirement from the Chair of Organic Chemistry at the University of Zaragoza (Spain)

Enrique Meléndez was born in Zaragoza (Spain) on July 17, 1933. He obtained his degree in Chemistry from the University of Valladolid in 1955. Immediately after having qualified for the M.Sc degree, he moved to Paris and joined the group of Prof. Charles Prevost for his Ph.D. studies. He obtained a double Ph.D. title by France (1962) and Spain (1963). After nine years working at the Organic Chemistry department of the University La Sorbonne (Paris, France), Prof. Meléndez returned to Spain as a researcher of the Spanish Council of Research (CSIC). In 1968 he moved to Barcelona (Spain) as an Associate Professor of the Department of Organic Chemistry of the Faculty of Pharmacy (University of Barcelona) and in 1974 he was appointed Full Professor of Organic Chemistry at the University of Zaragoza. As a scientist and a leader of scientists, his broad knowledge and strong orientation to people led to positive and creative solutions in all the fields he chose to express himself. Prof. Meléndez is an eminent scholar and in many cases a highly respected mentor. He has supervised more than 20 doctoral theses.

His scientific interests, initially oriented to theoretical aspects of Organic Chemistry, turned more empirical after his incorporation to the Faculty of Pharmacy of Barcelona, where he worked on the synthesis of new therapeutic molecules. During this period he worked. From his incorporation to the University of Zaragoza, Enrique Meléndez showed the direction for making choices to young scientists that today are group leaders working on several fields of the Organic Chemistry including materials chemistry, heterocyclic chemistry and organic synthesis. Indeed, he pioneered research in Spain on liquid crystals and chemistry of azlactones directed towards the synthesis of enantiomerically pure aminoacids. At various times he has been Head of the

Department of Organic Chemistry at the University of Zaragoza. Prof. Meléndez is author of more than 150 scientific papers and reviews, and more than 20 patents on cephalosporins and non-steroidal antiinflammatory drugs.

Prof. Meléndez has been the recipient of several distinctions for his contributions to Chemistry. He has been distinguished with the 75th anniversary medal of the French Chemical Society, with the silver medal of the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Barcelona and with the J. Camp award for his research on lung surfactants and their applications to the analysis of fetal maturity. He is also an elected Member of the Academies of Sciences (1982) and Medicine (1988) of Zaragoza.

Enrique Meléndez has served the chemical community for many years. Along with his direct scientific activities, he was the promoter and motivator of various important events. He co-founded the Division of Organic Chemistry of the Spanish Royal Society of Chemistry (RSEQ) as well as the Spanish Medicinal Chemistry Society (SEQT). He was vice-president of the SEQT from 1977 to 1979 and the elected president from 1985 to 1989. He was the driving force behind the establishment of the National Meeting of Organic Chemistry celebrated under the auspices of the Spanish Royal Society of Chemistry since 1966, when he organized the first conference in Santa Maria de Huerta (Spain). After that, he undertook many efforts to organize the two following meetings (1968 and 1970) and to consolidate the Division of Organic Chemistry. He also organized the National Meeting of the SEQT in 1990.

Enrique Meléndez is always open, friendly and with remarkable sensitivity, he listens and helps, and not necessarily in relation to scientific work. Because of this is also true with respect to his friends it has been a great honour and pleasure for me to write this tribute and I wish him well in his retirement.

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Selected Publications of Prof. Meléndez

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