

Professor Demetrio Gaspar Tebar awarded the Second José Calleja Prize for Professional Excellence in the Area of Cement and its Applications

Professor Demetrio Gaspar Tebar received the José Calleja Prize for Professional Excellence in the Area of Cement and its Applications in a ceremony held at the Eduardo Torroja Institute for Construction Science (IETcc, a Spanish National Research Council body) on 10 November 2011, as the culmination of the "Chemistry of Cement and Society" seminar, organised on the occasion of Science Week 2011. The ceremony was presided by IETcc director Victor Velasco, OFICEMEN general manager Aniceto Zaragoza, IECA (Spanish Institute of Cement and its Applications) director general Juan Carlos López Agüí and National Research Council Deputy vice president Juan José Damborenea. Professor Demetrio Gaspar Tebar delivered a very moving acceptance address (standing up for the duration, at his own insistence), in which he fondly recalled all the people in whom he had found support throughout his professional and personal life.



The *Materiales de Construcción* editorial board, in the firm conviction that professor Demetrio Gaspar's work in the field of the chemistry of cement fully merits this distinction, takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to the three awarding institutions: the National Research Council, OFICEMEN and IECA. Demetrio has always worked closely with the journal, having served on several of its editorial boards and currently sitting on its Advisory Board.

That collaboration makes this the ideal place for a brief review of his career and personality. Demetrio's brilliance was apparent to all, even during his childhood in Roda, in the Spanish province of Albacete. There, thanks to his own efforts and his family's support, he earned his secondary school diploma and later went on to study chemistry at the Central University of Madrid (UCM), where he graduated with honours in the late nineteen forties. After graduation, he worked as assistant professor in Analytical Chemistry at the UCM's Faculty of Chemistry. Shortly thereafter, on the basis of a personal interview with Eduardo Torroja y Nadal, he began to work at the Institute for Construction and Cement Engineering. In 1953, he successfully defended his PhD. thesis, written under the supervision of Enrique Burriel. Although he spent most of his career at the Eduardo Torroja Institute, he was also a member of the academic community, as professor not only at the UCM Faculty of Chemistry, but at the Polytechnic University of Madrid's School of Mining Engineering as well. In the late nineteen fifties he worked in the private sector with Riocerámica, a company engaging in the manufacture of pan forms and precast structural floors.

Demetrio published any number of books and scientific and technical articles on construction materials and more specifically on cement and concrete. His studies on fly ash, masonry mortars, concrete admixtures, the determination of portland cement components and many others are classics in the field. He also conducted outstanding research on cement and concrete durability in sulfate and saline environments, much of which was published in this journal. In addition, he generously trained new scientists and engineers, supervising PhD. theses, tutoring and mentoring young professionals and delivering countless courses and seminars. Even after retirement, he has gone on working (tirelessly) as emeritus professor at both the Eduardo Torroja Institute and the Madrid School of Mining Engineering.

Another constant in Demetrio's professional profile is his involvement in the quality of cement workmanship, which has led him to participate actively in the formulation of standards and certification requirements. He has presided and participated on many a standardisation committee in such important areas as the chemical analysis of cements, lime and plaster (AEN/CTN-80 on construction cements and Lime), and concrete admixtures, repair products and masonry mortars (all under AEN/CTN-83 on concrete).



Demetrio is not only a reputed professional in the area of cement and its applications, but also a wholly likable person, much loved and admired by his friends and colleagues for his generosity and congeniality. The work he pioneered is being furthered by many people who continue to conduct research in the field, a substantial number of them at the Eduardo Torroja Institute.

This journal can only express its joy and gratitude for the prize awarded to Professor Demetrio Gaspar. Congratulations, Demetrio: you deserve it.

Miguel Angel Sanjuán and Francisca Puertas Maroto