

Journal Pre-proofs

OBITUARY: Prof. Luis Dante Martinez (1957-2020)

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PII: S0026-265X(20)31927-5
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.microc.2020.105160>
Reference: MICROC 105160

To appear in: *Microchemical Journal*

Received Date: 10 June 2020
Accepted Date: 11 June 2020



Please cite this article as: R.A. Gil, P.H. Pacheco, S. Cerutti, R.A. Olsina, OBITUARY: Prof. Luis Dante Martinez (1957-2020), *Microchemical Journal* (2020), doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.microc.2020.105160>

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OBITUARY

Prof. Luis Dante Martinez (1957-2020)

Dr. Luis Dante Martinez died on 22nd April 2020 at the age of 62. He was an outstanding Argentinean researcher in Analytical Chemistry and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of Microchemical Journal. For all those who knew and worked with him, his early departure represented a great loss. We would like with great honor to review his life through this simple reminder.

Professor Martinez was born in Rivadavia, Mendoza, Argentina in 1957. He lived a humble childhood and always remembered how proud he was of his origins. In 1976 he arrived to San Luis city (Argentina) to study Chemistry at the National University of San Luis, an institution that would accompany him all his life. By the end of 1980 and being a student, he was accepted as a technician by Prof. Carlos Marone in the Analytical Chemistry Area. However, an early death of Prof. Marone, left him under Prof. Roberto Olsina's guidance, who will become his greatest mentor and friend during his entire career as a scientist and professor. He obtained with great effort his Chemistry degree in 1985, by studying and working part-time in middle schools. He performed as an Analytical Chemistry Professor for 40 years and thousands of students attended his classes performed with passion and love.

During the year 1990, he obtained a scholarship from the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET) that allowed him to begin with his scientific career, obtaining his Chemistry Ph.D. in 1992. His research was based on the development of spectrophotometric techniques for Gd determination involving novel pyridylazo-group based complexones.

A paramount fact occurred in Prof. Martínez's life by the year 1994, when he was granted with an external scholarship at the prestigious University of Barcelona, in Spain. Under Dr. Riveros de la Vega's supervision, he worked in the "*Serveis Científico-Técnic*s". His studies were focused on trace elemental analysis employing XRF, ICP-OES, and EPMA. The experience acquired during this research stay meant a great thrust to his scientific career. For this reason, he encouraged all his students to improve their scientific formation by performing a research stay abroad.

At his return to San Luis, in 1995, he found that the Analytical Chemistry laboratories had acquired an ICP-OES instrument. According to the expertise obtained in Barcelona, he became the operator of that instrument. He developed methodologies based on flow injection analysis (FIA) coupled to ICP-OES, a technique he learned in Barcelona in his free time in that laboratory. The research on FIA was productive and a very fruitful research line was created based on the introduction of different sorbents for trace elements retention.

The protagonist role of Prof. Martinez for Analytical Chemistry in Argentina started in 1999 when along with Prof. Roberto Olsina, and other Argentinian researchers, promoted the creation of the Argentinian Association of Analytical Chemistry (AAQA) in San Luis, in the year 1999.

Dante's scientific production also included hundreds of papers and several book chapters dealing with analytical spectroscopy and trace element analysis. He became a recognized scientist in these topics not only in Argentina, but also abroad. A highlighted moment occurred in 2006 when his group was recognized as the most productive research team on automated spectroscopy at the beginning of the 21st century by Prof. Miguel de La Guardia [1]. In 2014 he was selected as Superior Researcher of CONICET, becoming the third scientist in San Luis to reach this status.

From Prof. Martinez group, many researchers were formed in atomic spectrometry and other analytical techniques. Thus, his knowledge and scientific guidance were spread to other groups and universities of Argentina, like the National University of Nordeste, National University of Cuyo, and the National University of La Pampa.

He was President of AAQA for two years (2009-2011) and Director of the recently created Institute of Chemistry of San Luis (2015-2020). In 2016 he became the director of the San Luis Scientific Center.

Dante was an extremely honest, nice and friendly person. He liked to talk with everybody in a restraining and conciliating way. He was a beloved and respected leader between his colleagues and students. The legacy of Prof. Martinez in spectroscopy will continue. His friendship, the most important legacy, as he used to say, will remain alive in our memories.

REFERENCE

[1] Eva Ródenas-Torralba, Ángel Morales-Rubio & Miguel de la Guardia (2006) Scientometric Picture of the Evolution of the Literature of Automation in Spectroscopy and Its Current State, Spectroscopy Letters, 39:6, 513-532, DOI: [10.1080/00387010600969671](https://doi.org/10.1080/00387010600969671)

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San Luis, June 10th

Dear Editor

Miguel de la Guardia

We are addressing to you with the aim to submit an obituary note to remember Prof. Luis Dante Martinez of our University who passed away on April 22nd. The note is a brief manuscript that surveys the scientific career of Prof. Martinez and the rich legacy that him leave to Analytical Chemistry in Argentine.

This is an original note that has not been presented for publication elsewhere, and no conflict of interest is declared.

Looking forward to hearing from you, we remain.

Sincerely yours

Dr. Raul Gil



