IN MEMORIAM

RAMON MARTINEZ-LOPEZ

Professor Emeritus Ramón Martínez-López died September 12, 1989, in Pontevedra (Northern Spain), ending a lengthy active period in his native country following his retirement from the University of Texas in 1971. He is survived by his wife Isabel, of Santiago de Galicia, and daughter Maribel, of Pontevedra.

Professor Martínez-López was born April 4, 1907, in Boiro (La Coruña), Galicia. Following his early schooling in local institutions, he studied at the University of Santiago de Compostela, where he received a degree in law in 1927 and one in letters and sciences in 1929. He was awarded a Ph.D. in philosophy and letters at the University of Madrid in 1936, but prior to that time he had already been teaching Latin and Spanish at the Institutes of Ibiza (Balearic Islands) and Vigo (Pontevedra province), Spanish language and literature at the Institute of Lugo, and, from 1933 to 1936, at the Spanish Institute in Lisbon, a post earned by competition (oposiciones) conducted by the Committee on Cultural Relations of the Spanish Department of State, during the period of the Second Republic in that country (1931-1936). While in Portugal he became Professor of Comparative Spanish and Portuguese Literatures at the University of Lisbon. In 1934 he held a grant for research in Paris awarded by the French Secretary of Education and in 1935 he served as secretary general of the Spanish Book Exposition of that year.

In 1936 the uprising of General Francisco Franco marked the beginning of Spain's Civil War, which was to de-stabilize the country and ultimately lead to the exile of a vast number of Spanish artists and intellectuals. Professor Martínez-López was a cultural attaché in Lisbon and Paris during the years 1936 and 1937, and for three months was a lecturer in the chair of Marcel Bataillon at the University of Algiers in North Africa. He saw military service in his country in the Cuerpo de Carabineros, on the side of the Republic, but following the victory of the Nationalist forces was forced to take refuge in France, and then in Argentina. In the latter country he was employed as a curator in the Library of Pergamino, following which he was for approximately seven months a research fellow at the Philological Institute of the University of Buenos Aires, under the directorship of the eminent Spanish philologist Amado Alonso.

In 1940 Professor Martínez-López took advantage of an opportunity to come to the United States, specifically to the University of Texas in Austin, thus establishing a presence
which would leave its mark on the Department of Romance Languages for many years to come. Appointed as assistant professor, he was soon promoted to associate professor, and in 1959, to full professor. In 1950 he became a naturalized American citizen, after which, with the assistance of Lyndon B. Johnson, he was able to bring his wife from Spain to this country, thus ending a separation of over a decade. In 1964-65 he served as acting chair of the Department of Romance Languages.

During his years here Professor Martínez-López was active on a national and international level as well as on local and regional ones. He held visiting appointments at the Universities of Wisconsin, New Mexico, Puerto Rico, Denver, and at Middlebury College in Vermont. In 1958 he was appointed General Recorder of the Second International Congress of Historians of the United States and Mexico. He represented his Department at philology and literary conferences abroad, and here at the University of Texas he chaired or collaborated on a number of significant conferences on major figures in Spanish literature, among them, Unamuno, Valle-Inclán and Juan del Encina. Probably his outstanding accomplishment in this respect was his editing of a special volume of The Texas Quarterly, in 1960, on twentieth-century Spanish art and culture, to which the very top scholars of the time contributed, each in his own field. An invaluable document, absolutely unique for its time, it attracted attention on a universal scale, was published in book form with the title *Image of Spain*, and within a few years had become a collectors' item. Among those who took note of it was James A. Michener, who describes Don Ramón in all his charm, wit and erudition in his book *Iberia*.

For pure love of scholarship it would be hard to find a match for Professor Martínez López. He had already begun publishing as a young man in Galicia. While in Texas he continued his work on a wide variety of research interests, from medieval to contemporary. Central among these was his work on the abundant works written under the direction of Spain's thirteenth-century king Alfonse the Wise, an undertaking which would culminate—but not end—in the 1960s with the publication in Spain of a critical edition of a Galician manuscript of an alfonsine historical text and of a study on lexicographic sources for alfonsine texts. Thus, those who knew him thought of him first as medievalist, but his publications, lectures, reviews, and translations ranged from philological, Galician and medieval topics to contemporary linguistics and literary criticism, not to mention his publication in book form (with the French Hispanist, Robert Marrast) of unpublished pieces of the great modern Spanish poet Antonio Machado. He also contributed sections to literary encyclopedias on a wide variety of major figures in Spanish and Galician literature.
In a very different area, during the fifties, in the midst of the tidelands controversy, he assisted the Texas Attorney General's office in the formulation of its arguments vis-à-vis the federal government. The result of his research in this area produced the following two volumes: Concerning the Ownership of the Beds of Creeks in the Civil Law (Austin, 1954) and Concerning the Sea Shore and the Alluvion in the Civil Law (Austin, 1958).

An inveterate bibliophile and bibliographer, while at the University of Texas Professor Martínez-López amassed an extensive collection of books and journals, largely in Spanish and Romance philology, but which included numerous other areas, a collection which required several years to transfer back to Spain on the occasion of his retirement.

Following his return to his native Galicia in 1971, he took up primary residence in Santiago de Compostela, where he again became involved in both political and cultural activities, now as administrator, now as scholar. He became head of the Galician Party (Partido Galeguista) and director of the Seminary of Galician Studies, and he continued publishing articles and giving lectures. One of the climactic moments for Don Ramón in his post-retirement period was his election to membership in the Royal Academy of Galicia, and among other distinctions, he was also recipient of one of the highest awards one can attain in his province, the "Medalla Castelao".

While Don Ramón spent time in the summer in the beautiful area of Northwest Spain known as Villagarcía de Arosa, he and his wife spent a number of winters in Alicante, on the Mediterranean coast. Here, although at an advanced age, he was allowed to be reinstated in the Association of Teachers of Secondary Education, a status which he had earned in competition prior to the Civil War. This enabled him to teach in an institute, or prep school, in Alicante, and thus to qualify for a pension within that system. Reports are that this was not only a great stroke of luck for the institute, but that it enabled him to share his knowledge and experience with the neighboring University of Alicante, where he was well appreciated.

A former high official of the University of Texas has stated well what Don Ramón meant to this institution: "For those of us who worked at the University in his time here, and for the University of the future, Professor Martínez-López has set an unforgettable example. He has always matched his wide learning with concern for the widest and best purposes of education. His innate courtesy fortified his intellectual honesty. His "Image of Spain" made friends for Texas in many quarters of the reading world. The University of Texas will keep claiming the Martínez-López family as part of this institution, no matter where their
This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Douglass M. Rogers (Chairman), Miguel González-Gerth, and Carter Wheelock.
voyaging may take them." Harry Ranson, Chancellor Emeritus, April 28, 1971.

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