

THE HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW

Vol. XXVIII

May, 1948

No. 2

RAMÓN IGLESIA Y PARGA
1905-1948

The death of Ramón Iglesia on May 4 in Madison, Wisconsin, at the moment when we were looking to him for guidance in this puzzling jungle of Latin-American history is a loss of such magnitude that we can only mourn his passing. In him were combined qualities as rare as they are necessary to growth: intellectual curiosity, scholarly integrity, humility, and vast industry. Not content with limiting himself to the conventional accumulation of historical data, he chose the far more difficult course of examining the bases upon which historiography is erected. It was typical of him that he did not spare himself in that examination. His first publication in English ("Two Essays on the Same Topic: Bernal Díaz del Castillo and Popularism in Spanish Historiography, and Bernal Díaz del Castillo's Criticism of the *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, by Francisco López de Gómara," which appeared in the November, 1940, number of this REVIEW) was in reality a study of the growth of a historian, himself, in the light of experience. He had written the first essay prior to 1936. Like most of us he had written in his study, working from documents. Upon the outbreak of the Spanish civil war he joined the Loyalist army, in which he served until the débâcle of 1939. In those heart-breaking years he learned something of history in the raw and a great deal about the virtues of military leadership, and by 1939 he found himself in complete disagreement with the Ramón Iglesia of 1936 with respect to Bernal Díaz' evaluation of Cortés. In this reversal he discovered a new regard for Gómara, and in his second essay he reestablished Gómara as our first authority on the conquest of Mexico.

Iglesia accepted the implications of the philosophical approach, and in the seminar which he conducted for several years at the Colegio de México he and his pupils subjected some of our most respectable sources for the history of the conquest to a critical analysis. The brilliant series of essays which resulted from it (*Estudios de historiografía de la Nueva España*) should put an end for all time to complacent acceptance of authority, no matter how hallowed by antiquity.

A further contribution of Ramón Iglesia, one to which I give great weight, was style. He had a sensitive ear for the grace of his native tongue (see his appreciation of the artistry of Bernal Díaz and Gómara in the article cited), and his own writing was a model of clarity and conciseness, as well as of a singular beauty of expression. For him historiography had not only to subject itself to rigid canons of criticism, but no less to those of aesthetics. He believed that the writing of history without reference to a philosophical and artistic framework was meaningless.

I should like to end this brief appreciation with a tribute to the courage of the man. When I first knew him, in 1939, he had lately arrived in Mexico, a penniless, half-starved, and countryless refugee. His library consisted of three volumes. He earned a scanty living by doing hackwork for twelve hours a day. And yet he somehow found time for study. In the short nine years since then, with the selfless help of his wife, by prodigious and unsparing effort he gave a new direction to the historiography of his adopted country and achieved a distinction which few of us can hope to equal in a lifetime.

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