

Figures from the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian World

2017

Paul Ilie (1932-2017)

It is with great sadness that we inform you that Paul Ilie passed away on July 18, 2017. According to a "Distinguished Alumnus" citation from Brown University in 1984, Paul was considered "one of the most significant authorities on modern Spanish literature." His broad interests included French-Spanish eighteenth century intellectual relations, Nietzsche in Spain, Unamuno's existentialism, Surrealism, Futurism, the literary grotesque, inner exile, poetry, fiction, and the painter Goya.

Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1932, the youngest child of immigrant Jewish parents from Romania, Paul attended Stuyvesant High School and Brooklyn College (BA 1954). He had MA and PhD degrees from Brown University (1956, 1959). He taught at the University of Michigan from 1959 to 1982 and at USC from 1982 until 1997 when he retired.

His books include *Unamuno: An Existential View of Self and Society* (U Wisconsin P, 1967); *The Surrealist Mode in Spanish Literature* (UMichigan P, 1968), *Los surrealistas españoles* (Taurus, 1972), *La novelística de Camilo José Cela* (Gredos, 1978), *Literature and Inner Exile* (Johns Hopkins UP, 1981), *The Age of Minerva. Volume I: Counter Rational Reason in Eighteenth-Century Thought. Volume II: Cognitive Discontinuities in Eighteenth-Century from Body to Mind in Biology and Art* (U Pennsylvania P, 2009).

Paul had an elegant mind and a generous spirit. He tirelessly promoted and encouraged his students and mentees, although it was not always easy to live up to his high expectations. He was ever eager for intellectual engagement. Although in recent years, he lived very privately, we will miss knowing that his fertile mind is devouring the latest trends in literary criticism and formulating his acerbic critiques of them or fashioning them to his own inimitable approach to Spanish literature and art.

-Roberta Johnson (friend and mentee) and Silvia Bermúdez (doctoral student and mentee)

2016

(None posted on AATSP Website for 2016)

2015

MUERE CARLOS BOUSOÑO

Gran poeta y estudioso de la literatura



El académico asturiano, que tenía 92 años, fue premio Príncipe de Asturias de las Letras

Carlos Bousoño, fallecido el sábado en Madrid a los 92 años, era un hombre que sonreía. Cuando en los últimos tiempos acudía acompañado de Ruth, su esposa, a la lectura de algún amigo en la Residencia de Estudiantes, sonreía incluso a aquellos a quienes, perdido en las tinieblas de la memoria, ya no reconocía. Era un escritor serio que sonreía. Las sucesivas ediciones de su poesía reunida -la última la publicó **Tusquets en 1998**- llevaron siempre el mismo título que su segundo libro: *Primavera de la muerte*. No en vano, la tensión entre lo que florece y lo que perece atraviesa la obra de un autor que, como su amigo Vicente Aleixandre (cuyo archivo heredó), dedicó tantos esfuerzos a escribir sus versos como a leer los de sus contemporáneos.

Nacido en 1923 en Boal, un concejo del occidente asturiano, Bousoño se estrenó en 1945 con *Subida al amor*, el primero de una decena de libros que le sitúan entre la primera generación de la posguerra (la de José Hierro y José María Valverde) y el grupo de los años cincuenta (el de sus amigos **Francisco Brines** y Claudio Rodríguez). "Hice de la angustia mi casa", escribió sobre la etapa existencial de su poesía, que se movió desde el sentimiento religioso hacia la meditación metafísica al tiempo que sintetizaba las lecciones del realismo con el vuelo del irracionalismo.

En 1967, publicó un título clave, *Oda a la ceniza* (Premio de la Crítica). En él se leen versos como estos: "Más allá de esta rosa e impulsando su sueño, / paralelo, invertido / hay un mundo, y un hombre / que medita, como yo, a la ventana. / Y cual yo en esta noche, con estrellas al fondo, / mientras muevo mi mano, / alguien mueve su mano, con estrellas al fondo, / y escribe mis palabras / al revés, y las borra". Su incursión en la metapoesía no hacía más que unir al Bousoño poeta con el Bousoño profesor, que en 1952 había publicado *Teoría de la expresión poética*, el ensayo que avivó el debate entre poesía como comunicación o como conocimiento. Fue premio Nacional, de la Crítica y príncipe de Asturias. No perdió la sonrisa. En uno de sus primeros libros él mismo se retrataba así: "Alegre soy: mi alma está desnuda. / ¡Vedla dorada por el sol!". Puro Bousoño.

Published by *El País* October 24, 2015

2014

ANA MARÍA MATUTE

1925 - 2014

Ana María Matute, a novelist whose explorations of alienation and the loss of innocence children experienced during and after the Spanish Civil War made her one of Spain's most popular and acclaimed writers, died on Wednesday, June 30, 2014, in Barcelona. She was 88.

The Royal Spanish Academy announced her death.

Ms. Matute (pronounced ma-TOO-tay) was 10 when the civil war began, in 1936, and some of her best-known novels, among them "The Dead Sons," "School of the Sun" and "Soldiers Cry by Night," focus on children caught in the conflict, including those from poor, rural areas she had visited as a girl....

[Click here to read the complete obituary on the *New York Times* website.](#)

PROFESSOR R.C. WILLIS

Emeritus Professor, the University of Manchester, UK

In Memoriam

On April 18, 2014, Portuguese Studies lost one of its greatest scholars, Professor R.C. Willis, Emeritus Professor of Portuguese at the University of Manchester, UK, known to his colleagues and friends as Clive Willis.

Professor Willis had as wide a circle of colleagues and friends as his equally wide range of interests and research, all spanning several continents. He was better known for his work on Camões, the Portuguese 16th-century poet, and as a specialist on the Peninsular Wars (18th-19th centuries), with a long list of publications on these and many other areas, including Brazilian and African literature, a living example of the proverbial Renaissance man. His interest in Camões extended to the poet's close links with the Far East reflected in 'Camões, China and Macau' (Portuguese Studies, Vol. 17, 2001), and in his editorial and translation work in China and Macau. Portuguese Encounters with the World in the Age of the Discoveries (Aldershot, 2002). 'The Correspondence of Camões (with Introduction, Commentaries, Translation and Notes)' (Portuguese Studies, Vol. 11, 1995), containing letters from Ceuta, Lisbon and Goa, and including several poems, is a showcase of Professor Willis's qualities as a skillful translator. Always attentive to the Portuguese-speaking world, he also published 'Las principales variedades de la pronunciación brasileña culta' (Asociación de hispanistas de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda, 1993-94), 'The Reception of Graciliano Ramos's Vidas Secas outside Brazil' (Fiction in the Portuguese-Speaking World, 2000), David Livingstone, Africa and the Portuguese (Bristol, 2003), and 'Captain Jorge Álvares and Father Luís Fróis S.J.: Two Early Portuguese Descriptions of Japan and the Japanese' (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 22, 2012). His last major work, however, Camões, Prince of Poets, was published in 2010.

Professor Willis was also a fine linguist and grammarian having produced several English-Portuguese, Portuguese-English dictionaries, and a pioneer of modern technology in the Humanities. In the early 1980's, he was leading a team of people working on Cassell's first computer-generated dictionary. His book An Essential Course in Modern Portuguese (London: 1965) became a requirement in most British

universities and abroad, with a second revised edition and several reprints.

His international profile was equally impressive as Treasurer of the International Higher Education Standing Conference (1988-95); Corresponding Member of the Portuguese Academy of History, Lisbon (1989-2014); Leader of the British Council Mission to the Universities of Chile (1990); and President of the Association of Hispanists of Great Britain and Ireland (1992-94).

In the last five years, Professor Willis became a major collaborator in the Fernão Lopes Translation Project, as a translator and as the editor of the general revision that the finished product of this extensive collaborative project requires. Without the expertise he possessed in such a broad range of areas and skills, the project would not have been possible. The four volumes to be published by Tamesis in 2015 are sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, USA, the Direcção Geral do Livro, dos Arquivos e das Bibliotecas and the Fundação Luso-Americana para o Desenvolvimento, Portugal, among other international cultural organizations. The completion of this project will be a well-deserved tribute to Professor Willis and to Professor Teresa Amado, the Project's co-Director who, sadly, also passed away in August 2013.

Speaking for the Fernão Lopes Translation Project team and for his academic colleagues and friends, I can only say that Clive's passing away is felt as a great loss to Portuguese Studies and to all those who had the privilege of knowing and working with him.

Submitted by Amélia Hutchinson

Director of the Fernão Lopes Translation Project
University of Georgia, USA

2013

(none posted on the website)

2012

CARLOS FUENTES

1928 - 2012

Carlos Fuentes (November 11, 1928 - May 15, 2012) ranks as the most acclaimed modern novelist in Mexico and one of the central figures in Latin America's literary "Boom," a generation that consists of Julio Cortázar, Gabriel García Márquez and, among others, Mario Vargas Llosa. Raised in a family that represented Mexico's economic and diplomatic interests in Latin America and in the United States, Fuentes was an award-winning novelist often associated with questions of national identity, historical origins, Mexico's capital as a megacity, and the unresolved conflicts--with Spain, with the United States, and with itself--that define Mexico as a modern nation.

From his early short stories in *Los días enmascarados* (1954), to novels and essays that include *La región más transparente* (1958), *Cambio de piel* (1967), *Terra Nostra* (1975), and *Los cinco soles de México, memoria de un milenio* (2000), Fuentes portrayed Mesoamerica—generally allegorized as Mexico-

Tenochtitlan, therefore with an emphasis on the Nahua--as a determining force in modern Mexico, and as an integral part in the world's history of ruling transnational powers. The unresolved cultural and social conflicts between Mexico's native peoples in relation to the Spanish conquest and colonial New Spain remain to this day a thematic constant in Fuentes's novels and essays, portrayed as the fundamental background and condition to Mexico's modernization and political development as a democracy. Fuentes's novels thus mark the historical present as an artistic possibility for reflection and symbolic resolution to modernity's most crucial questions, arguably a juncture shared by Mexico with other developing countries.

The simultaneous representation of the national and the global in Fuentes's narrative has been a determining factor in its translations to major world languages. An impressive bibliography of critical studies has recognized in Fuentes's work a will to poetry and an energetic narrative experimentation stemming from 20th-century aesthetic movements, such as Cubism and Surrealism. Consistent with his views on national origins--often defined by Fuentes as Mexico's question of being and becoming, or as the weight of the past and the spur of a desired future--Fuentes claimed a double origin for the modern novel: on the one hand, as an avant-garde poetics intent on redefining art and its function in a contemporary world; on the other, as the uninterrupted artistic heritage that Latin America's literary modernity has embraced and appropriated in Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote de la Mancha*.

The death of Carlos Fuentes on May 15 thus marks the horizon that best defines the achievements, vitality, and poetic imagination of a generation of writers who ambitiously reshaped the Latin American novel into narratives where politics, art, culture, and history merge and produce novels known for their exceptional singularity, such as *Pedro Paramo*, by Juan Rulfo; *The Death of Artemio Cruz*, by Carlos Fuentes; *Hopscotch*, by Julio Cortazar; and, among others, *The Green House*, by Mario Vargas Llosa. A younger generation of Latin American writers can only benefit by the challenges posed by writers like Carlos Fuentes, who from the beginning was too big for one nation, one genre, and one literary tradition. Although now dead, Carlos Fuentes is more alive than ever.

Submitted by Roberto Cantú, Professor of Chicano Studies and English, California State University, Los Angeles

2011

ALLEN WHITMARSH PHILLIPS

1922-2011

I would somehow feel remiss if I did not bring to the attention of your readers the passing of an important figure in the world of Hispanic literature and criticism. Allen W. Phillips was my professor for several memorable courses at the undergraduate and graduate level and we had maintained an epistolary relationship for over thirty-three years at the time of his death this past March of 2011.

Allen Phillips was originally from Providence, Rhode Island and received his B.A. degree from Dartmouth College in 1943. He enlisted in the military in that same year and was sent to Europe where he served in many different capacities. As World War II drew to a close, he was once again free to pursue his intellectual interests. He became a student at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and completed M.A. studies there in 1948.

As fate would have it, in this same year, the great Hispanic writer and philologist Enrique Anderson-Imbert would be forced to leave his position in Argentina and become a member of the faculty at the

University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Allen Phillips would eventually become a student of Anderson-Imbert and complete his PhD studies there in 1955. His doctoral dissertation was a study of the Mexican poet Ramón López Velarde which would eventually be transformed into his pioneering and definitive study of the poet: *Ramón López Velarde: El poeta y el prosista*, 1962. Indeed, he traveled to Mexico and was instrumental in organizing many of the papers of the author of *Suave patria*, as his daughters have recounted. In retirement, he returned to this theme once again during the centennial year devoted to López Velarde in 1988 with: *Retorno a Ramón López Velarde*. Soon to follow was another study: *Francisco González León: El poeta de lagos*, 1964.

During this time, he taught at the University of Michigan as well as at the University of Chicago and, eventually, at a conference in Oaxaca, Mexico, met a distinguished scholar who would become his life-long friend and colleague in the profession; Ricardo Gullón. Gullón had been appointed to a professorship at the University of Texas at Austin and Allen Phillips was to join that distinguished and memorable faculty a few years later. Allen Phillips's moving tribute to Ricardo Gullón can be found in *Hispanic Review* 60.1 (Winter 1992): 120.

A devoted mexicanist, his critical pursuits and investigations shuttled quite naturally between the literature of Latin America and Spain. Of particular interest would be *Cinco estudios sobre la literatura mexicana moderna*, 1974. He was intrigued with the phenomenon of modernism in Hispanic literature and poetry and had a particularly keen attraction for the works of Ramón del Valle Inclán. This seemed quite logical considering that Mexico played such a prominent role in the life and works of Valle Inclán. Those of us that were fortunate to be conducted by Allen Phillips through a study of Valle Inclán's *Luces de Bohemia*, could not help but notice the particularly delightful esteem, zeal, and joy which emanated from his critique of the work and his obvious affinity for the phenomenon of "esperpenticismo".

Indeed, his fondness for Valle Inclán spawned several more works. He was invited to write a most insightful and informative "Prologue" for the 1972 edition of the *Sonatas*, (Editorial Porrúa). Also soon to appear would be *Alejandro Sawa: Mito y realidad*, 1976, *Algo más sobre la bohemia madrileña*, 1985, *En torno a la bohemia madrileña*, 1999, and *Poetas del día: El Liberal (1908-1909)*, 1989.

His final scholarly venture was *Ruben Darío: Antología poética*, 1994.

This is by no means a definitive list of all of his accomplishments. I only wish to point out some of the most significant.

Many of us that were so fortunate to study in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Texas at Austin during those years remember fondly the excitement and enthusiasm which seemed to be constantly brewing in that revered building. There were theater productions in which both students and faculty participated as the actors. Seminars and conferences on Baroja and Azorín, Ruben Darío, among others, were summoned forth with distinguished guest lecturers from around the world. Indeed, Octavio Paz and Jorge Luis Borges were in residence at various times during those years.

Allen Phillips departed from UT Austin in 1977, bound for a distinguished research professorship at the University of California at Santa Barbara. It was my pleasure to participate in a tribute concert dedicated to him for his many years of inspired teaching and contributions to the University of Texas. On that occasion, Ricardo Gullón arrived from Chicago to present Allen Phillips with the "*Orden de Alfonso el Sabio*" granted by the Spanish government for his contributions to the field. Dr. Phillips was also twice the recipient of Guggenheim Fellowship Awards in 1960 and 1973.

I shall be eternally grateful to him for his guidance and enlightening criticism in the poetry and prose courses which I studied under his tutelage. It would have been a much different world for many of us

without those inspiring and thought-provoking moments spent studying works of Fray Luis de León, Espronceda, Bécquer, Martí, Darío, Nájera and a host of others. I was always particularly fond of the manner in which he recited poetry to us; always without affectation and somehow making the words coloristic and infused with character and subtle meaning. His Spanish was impeccable and unerring and yet his corrections were gentle and kind but always strived towards a high standard. He directed and guided countless graduate students through dissertations and projects, and always made it a point to mention at the beginning of each semester: "Estoy a su disposición".

He was blessed with a very long and productive life, and he enjoyed fully his time with his second wife Dorothy in Escondido, California. He often referred to his "second" life spent in retirement as a true gift.

Although Dr. Phillips requested no memorial service, a group of friends gathered to celebrate his life recently, framed by a beautiful California sunset. At this gathering, it was my great privilege to present a brief tribute and eulogy as his family members and others remembered his life. I felt obligated to read some of the verses from various poets which I knew were some of his favorites and which had made such a lasting impression upon myself and many other of his students. I included those immortal lines written by Antonio Machado as a tribute to his own teacher; Giner de los Rios:

...¡Yunque, sonad; enmudeced, campanas! Y hacia otra luz más pura partió el hermano de la luz del alba...

Submitted by Charles Asche, UC Santa Barbara

LEANDRA TERESA VALDIVIESO

May 2, 2011

Beloved friends and colleagues: On May 2nd, 2011, Leandra Teresa Valdivieso, PhD, left this earth after gracing us with her presence for 87 years. A well established author, lecturer, and esteemed visiting professor at several universities around the world, for almost 40 of those years she taught at Arizona State University, finally becoming an Emeritus Professor. She was also a recipient of Spain's Officer's Cross in the Order of Queen Isabella the Catholic. Her dedication and passion for the humanities and women's literature was only rivaled by her faith, commitment, and service. She leaves behind Jorge, her husband, son Jesse, granddaughters Michelle and Nicole, and great-grandchildren Carlos and Evalyn as well as her sister, Maria Lucia and her beloved Godson, David Raúl Foster.

JUAN MANUEL SAMPERE VILLAR

Chairman of Estudio Sampere S.A

March 4, 2011

Juan Manuel Sampere, 1955-2011

Te comunico que mi hermano (Juan Manuel Sampere Villar, Presidente de Estudio Sampere S.A.) ha fallecido hoy viernes 4 de Marzo en Madrid, tras una larga enfermedad .El próximo viernes 11 de marzo a las 20.00 horas, organizaremos un Acto de Condolencias, en Estudio Sampere. Lagasca, 16. 28001 Madrid.Saludos,

I wish to inform you that my brother (Juan Manuel Sampere Villar, Chairman of Estudio Sampere S.A.) has passed away today, Friday 4th March, in Madrid, after a long illness. Next Friday, 11th March, at 8 pm, we will hold an Act of Condolence in Estudio Sampere, Calle Lagasca, 16 Thank you.

Submitted by Virginia Sampere, Estudio Sampere

2010

JUAN MARICHAL

August 9, 2010

Muere el intelectual canario Juan Marichal

Juan Marichal, el hombre que redescubrió desde el exilio la obra de Manuel Azaña y trabajó por la reivindicación histórica de Juan Negrín, su paisano canario, falleció esta madrugada en Cuernavaca, México, según ha comunicado su hijo, el profesor Carlos Marichal, con quien vivía allí desde hace siete años.

http://www.elpais.com/articulo/cultura/Muere/intelectual/canario/Juan/Marichal/elpepucul/2010809elpepucul_2/Tes

Submitted by: Stephanie Salim

ANA MARÍA FAGUNDO

June 13, 2010

Ana Maria Fagundo (1938-2010) Professor Emerita of Spanish in the Department of Hispanic Studies at UC Riverside

La poeta canaria Ana María Fagundo nacida el 13 de marzo de 1938 pasó a la que ella denominaba la otra dimensión el 13 de junio de 2010, víctima de un cáncer galopante. Compaginó sus años de docencia en la Universidad de California en Riverside con temporadas en Madrid y Tenerife, siempre con lápiz y papel a mano, plasmando su particular visión tan marcada por su amor a su isla natal. En 2001 estableció su residencia permanente en España tras jubilarse de UC Riverside donde había dictado clases de ficción y poesía durante 34 años. Su fallecimiento a los 72 años nos lega una profunda y gran obra poética estudiada y traducida y por estudiar y traducir. Sus aportaciones a la difusión de escritores, escritoras y artistas españoles, hispanoamericanos y latinos permanecen archivadas en *Alaluz*, la revista que fundó en 1969 y dirigió hasta su jubilación, y en cuyas páginas suenan voces ancestrales buscadas y añoradas así como voces nuevas abriéndose paso. A Ana María sus colegas, estudiantes, amigos y amigas la recordaremos por su generosidad, poder creativo y pasión por la vida. A los que no llegaron a conocerla o su obra invitamos a visitar la fonoteca digital del Instituto Cervantes donde podrán escuchar a la poeta Ana María Fagundo recitar algunos de sus más memorables poemas (<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/FichaAutor.html?Ref=6815>).

Submitted to AATSP by María Salgado, Professor Emerita UNC Chapel Hill, Candelas Gala, Wake Forest University Charles E. Taylor Professor of Romance Languages, and Mari Pino del Rosario, Greensboro College Professor of Spanish

Visit [Letralia: Tierra de Letras](#) for additional information.

JUAN L. ALBORG

May 6, 2010

Juan Luis Alborg, of Bloomington passed away Thursday, May 6, 2010 at Bell Trace Health and Living Center. He was 95 years old.

Born June 18, 1914 in Valencia, Spain he was the son of Juan Alborg and Agustina Escarti. He received his PhD from the University of Valencia. He was awarded Spain's National Prize for Literature in 1959. Juan came to the United States in 1961 under the auspices of the Fulbright Program beginning as a professor at Purdue University and then coming to Indiana University in 1977. He was a very well known literary critic and was Knighted in 2003 by the King of Spain in recognition of his dedicated work. He was a member of the Modern Languages Association, Sigma Delta Pi and authored numerous publications including 5 volumes of the History of Spanish Literature. He lived by the phrase, "work hard and challenge yourself".

May 17 would have been his 30th wedding anniversary with his wife Muriel Kdan of Bloomington, IN; He had two children, from his marriage to Concepcion Carles, JuanLuis Alborg of Madrid, Spain and Concha Alborg of Philadelphia, PA; One sister, Teresa Alborg of Valencia Spain; five grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

No services are scheduled. Cremation has been entrusted to Allen Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Monroe County Humane Society, 3410 South Walnut Street, Bloomington, IN 47401.

Online condolences may be made to the family at <http://www.allenfuneralhome.org/>.

"It is strange how life gives us JOY one day and takes it away on another day" - The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

From <http://www.allenfuneralhome.org/obituaries/juan-luis-alborg.aspx>

MIGUEL DELIBES

March 13, 2010

Miguel Delibes se ha caracterizado siempre por poseer una producción literaria cargada de perspectiva irónica, de la que se aprovecha para denunciar las injusticias sociales y criticar a la pequeña burguesía. Sin embargo, su obra no se reduce a la mera denuncia social, sino que profundiza en la rememoración de la infancia y en la representación de los hábitos y el habla propia del mundo rural, muchos de cuyos términos ha recuperado para la literatura. Considerado uno de los grandes escritores españoles contemporáneos, su trabajo ha merecido numerosos galardones entre los que destacan el premio Nadal, el Príncipe de Asturias, el Nacional de las Letras Españolas y el Cervantes.

From *El País*: [Muere Miguel Dibeles, alma del castellano](#)

LUIS LEAL

January 26, 2010

Con profunda tristeza les informo que el día 26 de enero murió a la edad de 102 años don Luis Leal. En su largo recorrido por la vida don Luis recibió un sinnúmero de reconocimientos, entre los que se encuentra la Orden del Águila Azteca, otorgada en 1992, por el Presidente de México Carlos Salinas, y la no menos prestigiosa Medalla de las Humanidades otorgada por el Presidente Clinton en la Casa Blanca, en 1997. Recibió también un doctorado Honoris Causa por la Universidad de Illinois en el año 2000. Fue un escritor prolífero que publicó más de 45 libros y 400 artículos académicos sobre literatura mexicana y la literatura en lengua española en los Estados Unidos. Su trabajo intelectual y sentido humanitario le hicieron merecer la admiración no solamente de sus colegas, sino también de académicos de otras disciplinas.

A través de estas líneas queremos expresar nuestras más profundas condolencias a sus familiares, a sus colegas más cercanos y a todos los que lo sintieron como su amigo.

Announcement submitted to AATSP by Janet Perez, and written by Dra. Blanca López de Mariscal, Directora del Programa de Maestría y Doctorado en Estudios Humanísticos

AATSP Note: Dr. Leal was a long time AATSP member, joining the organization in 1942.

Read more:

[***Los Angeles Times* article on Luis Leal's death.**](#)

[**University of California, Santa Barbara Press release**](#)

2009

FRANCISCO AYALA

November 3, 2009



Photo Credit: Krum Krumov / Fundación Francisco Ayala, www.ffayala.es

El escritor y académico Francisco Ayala murió el 3 de noviembre a los 103 años de edad. Sus cenizas fueron trasladadas a Granada, su ciudad natal (16-III-1906), y sede de la Fundación de su nombre (<http://www.ffayala.es/>), establecida hace cuatro años en el Palacete Alcázar Genil. Ayala era el último superviviente de la Generación del 27 entre cuyos miembros se contaba otro conocidísimo granadino, el poeta Federico García Lorca. Hijo de un abogado y una maestra y pintora, el joven Francisco se estrenó públicamente como escritor a los diecisiete años con un breve artículo en la prensa madrileña en torno al pintor cordobés Julio Romero de Torres. Su primera novela, *Tragedia de un hombre sin espíritu*, se publica en 1925 y al año siguiente sale a la luz la segunda, titulada *Historia de un amanecer*. Estos tempranos éxitos fueron alcanzados sin desatender a las labores de estudiante universitario que cursaba, por libre, dos carreras a la par, la de Filosofía y Letras y la de Derecho. Concluyó ambas brillantemente siendo dotado por la segunda Facultad con una beca que le permitió estudiar en la Universidad de Berlín a lo largo de un curso. A su marcha para Alemania había dejado en prensa dos libros más, la colección de relatos *El cazador en el alba*, y la de artículos sobre el nuevo arte del cine *Indagación del cine*. Con su estancia germana y el perfeccionamiento de sus estudios de filosofía y derecho, Ayala sigue los pasos del líder intelectual de aquella generación que fue José Ortega y Gasset. En la tertulia de su *Revista de Occidente*, frecuentada por Julián Marías, Rosal Chacel y Benjamín Jarnés, y en las páginas de tan insigne publicación, Ayala participa de la vida intelectual más vanguardista de España. La venida de la Guerra Civil (1936-39) destruye las vidas y carreras de cientos de miles de españoles. Ayala pierde no solo su cátedra universitaria y todos sus puestos oficiales, sino a su padre y a su hermano Rafael, víctimas tempranas ambos de las fuerzas nacionalistas. A raíz de estos golpes, decide abandonar España en un periplo que difícilmente podía haber adivinado duraría poco menos que cuatro décadas. Primero en Buenos Aires (1939-49), seguidamente en Puerto Rico (1949-57) y finalmente en Estados Unidos (1957-1975), Ayala reanuda su labor como narrador, sociólogo, editor, profesor e intelectual de una cala tal que hoy, aun tras una vida tan larga como la suya, nos parece inimaginable. Su monumental *Tratado de Sociología* (3 tomos), las colecciones de relatos *La cabeza del cordero* y *Los usurpadores*, tan alabadas por Borges, las novelas *Muertes de perro* y *El fondo del vaso* entre otras, los numerosísimos ensayos de crítica literaria en torno a Cervantes, Quevedo, Galdós, Unamuno o Antonio Machado, la fundación de revistas como *Realidad*, donde aparecen juntamente el temible Bertrand Russel y el todavía desconocido Julio Cortázar, *La Torrepuertorriqueña* que sigue vigente hoy, y las lecciones impartidas en Princeton, Bryn Mawr, Chicago y New York University--todo ello lo logra Francisco Ayala sin las lamentaciones del típico desterrado. El se guía por el poco sentimental credo que acostumbraba citar cuando alguien le preguntaba acerca de la patria perdida: "la patria del escritor es su lengua." Un breve y discreto viaje a España en verano de 1960 insinúa un posible retorno tras dos décadas de ausencia. Poco a poco se suceden las visitas hasta que por fin vuelve a España ya abiertamente tras la muerte de Franco y se reintegra de pleno a la vida intelectual del país. Los premios literarios y culturales más prestigiosos, como el Cervantes, el Príncipe de Asturias, el

Nacional de Literatura, la elección a la Real Academia Española, la reedición de sus obras por las editoriales más selectas, la creación de la Fundación Francisco Ayala, todos los mayores homenajes que una nación puede otorgar a un escritor los recibió este gran hombre. Aunque físicamente decayó en sus últimos meses, víctima de una bronquitis que no pudo superar, el escritor mantuvo su lucidez mental hasta el fin. Sus últimas palabras públicas, pronunciadas el 2 de julio, con motivo de la donación de miles de sus papeles y manuscritos a la Fundación F.A., demuestran con típico buen humor y plena conciencia del regalo que supone una vida centenaria: "Lo que no hay derecho es a vivir tanto." Francisco Ayala había sido miembro de AATSP durante largo tiempo y la revista *Hispania*, en conmemoración de su centenario, le dedicó un número monográfico correspondiente a Diciembre de 2006.

Submitted by Ricardo Landeira, University of Colorado at Boulder

JOSÉ MARÍA RODRÍGUEZ MÉNDEZ

October 21, 2009

Prominent Spanish playwright, novelist and essayist died in Aranjuez, Spain. Born June 6, 1925 in Madrid, Spain.

Works attributed to Mr. Mendez; *Vagones de madera*, 1959; *Los inocentes de la Moncloa*, 1960; *Bodas que fueron famosas del Pingajo y la Fandanga*, 1965. He was awarded the Premio Larra in 1964; Premio de Literatura Dramática in 1993, and the Premio de Honor de los Max de las Ares Escénicas in 2005.

Submitted by Robert Lima, OIC