

IN MEMORIAM

FRAY LINO GÓMEZ CANEDO (1908-1990)

On December 24, Father Lino Gómez Canedo, one of the most senior and distinguished members of *the Americas* editorial board, died in Mexico City from a heart attack, the last of a series of ailments which had plagued him in the past several years. "I am constantly springing new leaks in my roof," he wrote in one of his last letters. His illnesses, however, did not stop him from working. A few days before his death he was preparing an article on missionary evangelization methods in Latin America, due to appear in the next issue of the *Manual de Historia de los Franciscanos en América*. Although Father Lino was mentally able to continue his work, he lamented that he no longer had the energy to finish the article. Until his last day, he continued as the active and indefatigable Franciscan that we all knew. Although he could have received good medical treatment and care in the convent in Compostela (Galicia), he preferred this past fall to return to Mexico in order to spend his final days in the country to which he had devoted most of his studies. Another case of the "conquistador conquistado."

Father Lino was born in the town of Tenda in Laracha, Coruña, Spain, on June 24, 1908. He finished his seminary studies in 1931, and was ordained that same year. In 1933, he traveled to Rome to work in the office of his order's Curia General, where he was exposed to the methods of historical investigation through courses in library science and paleography at the Scuola di la Biblioteca Vaticana and the Scuolo di Paleografia del Archivo di Stato, respectively. Two years later, he entered the Gregorian University in Rome, where he obtained his doctorate in history in 1939 with a thesis entitled "Don Juan de Carvajal, cardenal de Sant'Angelo y Legado en Alemania y Hungría."

His interest in Latin American history was born during his early years in the priesthood because of frequent contact with Father Atanasio López, the well-respected founder of the *Revista Archivo-Iberoamericano*. The year he finished his doctoral studies, this interest was reinforced with his appointment as director of the *Revista Archivo-Iberoamericano*. In truth, how-

ever, his real absorption in Latin American issues came seven years later when he received a fellowship from the Committee on Cultural Relations of the Spanish Ministry for External Affairs to travel abroad to prepare a *Guía de los archivos americanos*. Through this work, Father Lino embarked on his studies of colonial Hispanic-American history. In addition, this trip brought to Father Lino the additional benefit of bringing him into contact with the recently formed Academy of American Franciscan History which he joined in 1949 and to which he has remained affiliated ever since. It was in the Academy that his most important studies came to fruition.

Father Lino's publications are quite varied. Because he participated in many congresses, academic meetings and collaborative efforts with diverse institutions and journals, his works address a range of themes which makes it impossible to list them all here. It should be noted, however, that there are significant features of Father Lino's works which suggest his contributions to Latin American historiography. Thus, in the first place, one would have to point out his interest in the study of sources for the colonial history of Hispanic America. It is quite significant that, as noted above, the work with which he first introduced himself to the Americanist field was the *Guía de los Archivos Americanos*, important because it was his research for the guide which introduced him to the field of Latin American history. This interest in the sources for history carried him to a very closely related area: the critical edition of classic works on colonial history such as the *Crónica Franciscana de las Provincias del Perú* (1957) and the *Crónica de los Colegios de Propaganda Fide* (1964) as well as the publication of relevant historical documents such as *Las misiones de Píritu. Documentos para su historia* (1967), *La Provincia Franciscana de Santa Cruz de Caracas. Cuerpo de documentos para su historia* (1974), and the *Epistolario de Fray Toribio de Motolinía* (1986), to mention only some of the most important. Only much later, and apparently with little enthusiasm as can be seen in his own evaluation, did Father Lino produce more general works such as *Evangelización y Conquista* (1977) and *Educación de los Marginados en la Epoca Colonial* (1982), works always hedged with substantial documentary appendices.

Nevertheless, Father Lino's career in Latin American history cannot be limited to these great works. Our journal includes innumerable articles, reviews and notes in which he pointed out new paths to explore, offered important insights into the understanding of some colonial themes, or presented divergent points of view from those held by his colleagues. He generously shared his broad knowledge of the colonial world with his fellow professionals in endeavors such as the *Handbook of Latin American Studies*, to which Father Lino had contributed from the 1960s onward.

In the field of American Franciscan history, the work which gave significance to its Academy, and in part to this journal, Father Lino's scholarly contributions are indispensable to anyone intending to investigate these subjects. For those of us who work in them, Father Lino, with his exemplary professionalism and dedication to research, whose service was his ministry, will be a continuing presence among us.

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