

In memoriam Manuel Marzal

Manuel Marzal, honorary life member of the IAHR, died in Lima on July 2005. Our association has lost one of its most representative and active members, one of the most respected academics of the study of religion in the ambit of the Spanish speaking scientific community and in particular in Latin America. His task was fundamental in the consolidation of ALER (Asociación Latinoamericana para el Estudio de la Religión) and the scientific meetings carried out under the auspice of that active regional association of the IAHR. He was the president of the IX Latin-American Congress on Religion and Ethnicity hosted in 2002 by ALER at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (see <http://www.pucp.edu.pe/eventos/congresos/>).

He was born in Olivenza (Extremadura), in Spain, just in the borderline with Portugal, in 1931. At the age of twenty he left for Peru, place where he lived the largest part of his life and developed his academic career. He resided in other Latin American countries, mainly Ecuador, where he fulfilled his philosophy studies, which reached their height in 1964 when he acquired his doctorate at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Ecuador. He also lived in Mexico where he studied theology and social anthropology at the Universidad Ibero-americana where he obtained his master in 1968.

It is precisely in the field of anthropology, and specifically in the anthropology of religion where he developed his teaching and research work, from 1968 in the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Perú and in the last five years of his life successfully creating the Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya in Lima, of which he became first president. Manuel Marzal identified himself with the trajectory of Ruiz de Montoya as he exposed in his two volume book *La utopía posible: indios y jesuitas en la América colonial* (Lima, 1992-1994).

As anthropologist, Marzal demanded the interest and documentary value of the works of the colonial documentary sources as he expressed in his books *Historia de la antropología social* and *Historia de la antropología cultural* (Lima-Quito, 1996-1997) or also in his *Historia de la antropología indigenista: México y Perú* (Lima, 1981, with 6 editions).

In his research trajectory, we can also highlight his ethnographic task, of compilation of direct documentation, centered around the study of the religion of the peasant communities in Peru or the migrants from the rural areas to Lima (*El mundo religioso de Urcos*, Cusco, 1971, *Estudios de religión campesina*, Lima, 1977; *Los caminos religiosos de los inmigrantes de la Gran Lima*, Lima, 1988). Sensitive to the values of the religious change, so essential in Latin America, he dedicated different synthetic works to these processes (*La transformación religiosa peruana*, Lima, 1983; *El sincretismo iberoamericano*, Lima, 1985) which he resumed, from a global perspective of an academic career at its height, in his book *Tierra encantada. Tratado de antropología religiosa de América Latina* (Madrid-Lima, 2002).

A project to which he dedicated his efforts in the last years, was in the consolidation of the EIR (*Enciclopedia Iberoamericana de Religiones*, Madrid, 2002-), in whose academic committee he was one of the most active members. He participated in the first volume with a summary on the contributions of anthropology to the study of religion (*El estudio de la religión*, Madrid, 2002, F. Diez de Velasco & F. García Bazán, eds.) and was the editor of the fourth volume on Andean religions (*Religiones andinas*, Madrid, 2005), which he saw published only two months before his death.

A great anthropologist and a very intelligent person disappears with Marzal, but also a scholar who tried to go beyond the commodity of the odd erudition and specialization,

who did not show disdain for the general analyses and the use of comparative method in trying to understand the complexity of the religions in their diversity and similarities, an intellectual profile and an ambition which, in my opinion, is a distinctive stamp of the IAHR since its foundation.

Francisco Diez de Velasco