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## Biography

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J. J. López-Ibor Aliño

# Juan José López Ibor

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Professor Juan José López Ibor was born in Sollana, a town in Valencia, Spain, on April 22, 1906 and died on the day of his 85th birthday (April 22, 1991).

He was the son of Miguel López Marco, a school teacher who moved from his native Teruel to Sollana at the beginning of the xx century. Miguel López Marco's activity in the school allowed him to culturally enrich the town in which he became Mayor. There he married and had three children: Miguel, who died during his medical studies; Vicente, a doctor, and Juan José.

Juan José López Ibor was always a good student. He obtained a scholarship through competitive examination for the University Residence Beato Juan de Ribera of Burjasot (Valencia) where he was admitted at the exceptionally early age of fourteen, when his father told him that he could not learn any more at the school.

Among his contemporaries were the artist Francisco Lozano, Pedro Laín Entralgo and Rafael Calvo Serer, with whom he maintained a long and fruitful friendship. He remained there until he finished his medical career, at the Medical School of the University of Valencia. He said that when he was in the third year of his medical studies, he was exposed to a work of Freud that influenced his calling for psychiatry for ever.

He obtained the scholarship Alfonso XII from the Delegation of Valencia for training outside of Spain. He spent the following years between 1924 and 1928 at the University of Munich (where he studied psychiatry with Oswald Bumke), Paris (where he studied neurology with Théophile Alajouanine and Georges Charles Guillain), Zurich, Berlin and Tubinga.

In 1930, he received his doctorate degree in Madrid, where he read his thesis on rent neurosis.

He immediately began a teaching career as head professor of legal medicine (1932) at the Medical School of Santiago de Compostela. There, in 1934, he occupied the same chair as that of Valencia. In that period, psychiatry formed a part of the normal program of legal medicine.

In Valencia, he worked with Professor Juan Peset Aleixandre, a great teacher of legal medicine and of Psychiatry and contributed to this discipline with original research such as the detection of the blood group in the remains of the saliva on cigarette butts, something innovative in his time.

In 1940 he was named professor of psychiatry in the Institute of Medicine Ramón y Cajal of the Scientific Research Council and in 1943, chief of the Neuropsychiatry Department of the Hospital General of Madrid. In 1967 he assumed the post of dean of the Provincial Charity Health Service. During his term of office, the County Council of Madrid began the construction of the hospital now known as Gregorio Marañón and the Psychiatric Hospital more known as Alonso Vega and which, since the year 2003, is called Hospital Dr. Rodríguez Lafora, undertaking an extensive transformation of the health care panorama of Madrid.

He occupied the first chair of psychiatry of the University of Salamanca. In 1950 he became a member of the Royal Academy of Medicine. His admission speech, «Penal responsibility of the mental patient», continues to be a basic text of forensic psychiatry.

In the same year, he took on the responsibility of the chair of medical psychology of the Medical School of the Complutense University. In 1966, he obtained the chair of psychiatry of the same university by transfer and took on the responsibility for the direction of its Psychiatry and Medical Psychology Department and the Professional School of Psychiatry until he retired in 1976. He was the last director of the Hospital San Carlos located on Atocha Street (Madrid), that was moved to its current site in the Ciudad Universitario.

In the Hospital Provincial of Madrid a team of collaborators and doctors in training from Spain and Latin America was formed around him, this becoming a very fruitful school. The most relevant psychiatrists worldwide were generally invited there to develop their teachings in a period in which congresses were not very common and when the Spanish people did not have much opportunity to travel. With this same spirit, he created and directed the publishing company Gredos of the «Biblioteca de Psicología y Psicoterapia»

(Psychology and Psychotherapy Library) which published translations of the most significant works of international psychopathology from 1965 to 1970.

In 1940, he founded and directed for many years the journal *Actas Españolas de Psiquiatría*. The publication soon added the word *Neurology* to its name. In 1947, its name was changed to *Actas Luso-Españolas de Neurología y Psiquiatría*, when it was decided to convert it into an international publication. At that time, Barahona Fernández, of Lisbon, and later Leme Lopes, of Rio de Janeiro, collaborated with him in its management. Presently, the journal is still published (with its original name since 1998) and it is among those having the best impact index of the speciality published in non-english language.

In 1950 he founded the Society of Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy and, along with Antonio Vallejo Nájera, the Spanish Society of Psychiatry. He was one of the founders of the International Catholic Association of Medical Psychology and Psychotherapy and presided over the first congress of this organization. He was a speaker at the Neurology Congress in Paris (1949) and the I World Congress of Psychiatry (Paris, 1950) and in all of the successive ones until 1972. The World Association of Psychiatry, of which he was Secretary (1961-1966) and later president (1966-1973), was born from this first congress. He organized and presided over the IV World Congress of Psychiatry (Madrid, 1966), which was a landmark in the association and in the discipline itself due to the wide range of new perspectives that then began to appear. He delivered some of the most emblematic lectures of psychiatry, among them the Maudsley Lecture in the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the Kraepelin Vorlesung in Munich.

He was doctor honoris causa (honorary degree) of the University of San Marcos of Lima, member of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon, of the Medical Academies of Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico, of the Medical Society of Sweden, of the French Society of Neurology, of the Swiss Society of Psychiatry, of the American Association of Psychiatry and of the International Association of Neurology and Psychology.

The beginning of the civil war caught him in Valencia. He decided to move to Pamplona, where he collaborated on a regular basis in a newspaper, writing under a pseudonym (Pablo Marco), to protect his family of Sollana (in fact, several died simply because they «smelled of incense»). It was during this time that his interest arose regarding the destination of Spain, the role of the university and anthropology subjects. In 1935, he had founded the journal *Normas* (Norms) together with Pedro Laín Entralgo and Francisco Marco Merenciano. Its first number began with an article by López Ibor entitled «Raíz vital de la universidad» («Vital importance of the University»).

In those years, he was called to Rome to give classes to Prince Don Juan de Borbón on the University. These lessons

gave rise to his book «Discurso a los universitarios españoles» (Speech to the Spanish University Students) that made him very famous in the academic settings. He maintained a political posture close to that of the Spanish Action, being decidedly monarchical. He was a member of the private council of don Juan. In 1943, he was exiled to Barbastro due to the project of a document that should have been addressed to general Franco by a large group of university professors asking the Chief of State to resign and for the reestablishment of the monarchy with don Juan de Borbón.

When López Ibor initiated his university and professional activity, mental illnesses were a world apart in Spain and in many other countries. The scientific-natural method dominated in medicine and anatomoclinical, pathological and etiological perspectives formed the bases of an investigation on the process of becoming ill, that was very successful.

In «Los problemas de las enfermedades mentales» («The problems of mental illnesses»), he gives an extensive view full of originality on this aspect of the human process of becoming ill. It is extensive because it is a treatise on psychopathology and original because he was capable of joining perspectives that had appeared as opposite up to then or that were mutually ignored, from the purest psychoanalytic to the most biological aspects.

His most original contributions are about neurosis and anxiety. Eric Engstrom, the psychiatry historian from Oxford, has said that they are the only original contributions of Spanish psychiatry from the XX century. He began by studying the contributions of psychoanalysis to the problem of the origin of neurosis and anxiety in general. A cycle of lectures given in Valencia was published with the title «Lo vivo y lo muerto del psicoanálisis» («The live and dead of psychoanalysis»), and later, with small variations as «La agonía del psicoanálisis» («The agony of psychoanalysis»). His last book, «Freud y sus ocultos dioses» («Freud and his hidden gods») returns to the subject, but with emphasis on the personality of Freud and his anthropological perspective, that he considered reductionistic and gnostic.

In «La angustia vital. Patología general psicósomática» («Vital anxiety. General psychosomatic disease»), he describes a subtype of neurosis, anxious thymopathy, characterized by the presence of an endogenous form (later endothymic) of anxiety (vital anxiety vital, a feeling of the same nature as that of vital sadness described by Kurt Schneider as the central phenomenon of endogenous depression). In «Las neurosis como enfermedades del ánimo» («The neurosis as mood diseases»), he expanded the concept to all neurosis. Up to then, neurosis had been considered as abnormal reactions to experiences (Kurt Schneider), that is, as variations of the way of being psychic more than as diseases with a detectable organic cause. He coincides with Freud in that all are the expression of anxiety, but differs from him in that they refer to the type and origin of it. For Freud, this has to be sought in intrapsychic conflicts and precocious vicissitu-

des of the development of the personality. However, for López Ibor, it has to be integrated into a larger perspective and one that is also close to the clinical aspect. For López Ibor, neurotic anxiety was not anxiety about life events (emotional feeling) but belonged to the stratum of vital feelings. Thus it was more separated from the circumstances and more embodied. That is why he studied its psychosomatic manifestations, investigated its possible neurobiological origins and used biological methods in its treatment. He was ahead of his time with this in what would begin to be recognized by North American psychiatry first and then by the rest of the world forty years later. Later he expanded these concepts to psychosomatic disease and to depressions, being a pioneer in the description of masked depressed and depressive equivalents, that is of the symptomatic forms of the more somatized depression. The international symposium on «Dynamics and treatment of neurosis» (June, 1969) decisively recognized his contribution.

He was a prolific lecturer and since he generally wrote down his participations, he could publish many of his humanistic and cultural interests such as «El español y su complejo de inferioridad» («The Spaniards and their inferiority complex»), «El descubrimiento de la intimidad» («Discovery of Intimacy»), «Rasgos neuróticos del mundo contemporáneo» («Neurotic traits of the contemporaneously world»), «El español y la técnica» («The Spaniard and technique»), «La aventura humana» («Human adventure»), «De la noche oscura a la angustia» («From the dark night to anxiety») and «Rebeldes» («The rebellous»).

His activity resulted in great popularization, in interviews and in publication of articles. He directed the publication of the book «Libro de la vida sexual» («Book of sexual life») in whose prologue he presented an innovating anthropology of sexuality for his period. The work began with the subject of sexuality for the general public when censorship was still very powerful.

He was a great professional, he directed the Sanatorium Esquero de Madrid, he was an advisor to the famous Swiss clinic «Les Rives de Prangins» and founded a private clinic the Institute of Neuropsychiatric Research Dr. López Ibor.

He married Socorro Aliño Testor, who had literally participated in all his work since she had typed everything he wrote since they had met. They had twelve children, six of them doctors (four psychiatrists, one neuroradiologist and one pediatric oncologist) and the rest were dedicated to other intellectual activities that they have seen within the

family home (psychology, history, biology, music, laws, etc.). Some of his grandchildren have also continued with the vocational calling for medicine, psychiatric and psychology.

He was an affable, very talkative man who was a practicing catholic and a friend of his friends. He organized gatherings in his home that were attended by the intellectuals of his period. He spent long hours of his day caring for his patients and dedicated to teaching in the university. Being extremely fond of his native Mediterranean area, he spent the summers of his last thirty years in Mallorca where he wrote many of his works in his office overlooking the sea. He died in Madrid after a long disease on April 22, 1991, on the day of his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## WORKS OF LÓPEZ IBOR

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