



ENRIQUE RIOJA (1895-1963)

Enrique Rioja Lo-Bianco stands out as one of the pioneers in Polychaete research in the History of Spanish Zoology during early decades of the 20th century. He was born in Santander on 16 February 1895 when his father, José Rioja y Martín, professor of zoology, was the director of the Marine Biology Station. Graduated from high school with excellent grades, he went to Madrid to study at the University and he took his degree in Natural Sciences with the highest honours. He earned his doctorate in 1916 after conducting his early research on Annelid Polychaete fauna.

Several notes on the study of Polychaetes had already been published in Spain, but it was Rioja's investigations that would prove fundamental in revealing this group on the Spanish coasts. His most important work focused on the Polychaete group known as "*Sedentaria*". His scientific career in Spain was linked to two research centres: the Marine Biology Station in Santander (1913-1916) and the National Museum of Natural Sciences in Madrid

(1917-1939). At the last one he started out as an assistant to the Zoology courses and later he directed the summer courses in Marine Zoology. In 1923 he was the head of the Section on Molluscs and Lower Animals. Teaching was another important part of his work and, as educator, he wrote books on Zoology and Marine Biology. However, his work was not to be completed in our country. Owing to his liberal ideology, he was closely linked to the Republican Government and after the end of the Spanish Civil War (1939) he was forced to seek exile in México. During his early years in this country, he taught at the National Polytechnic Institute and linked to the National University of México (UNAM) he continued his contributions to Science: he did research work at the Biology Institute where he reorganised the Hydrobiology Laboratory, launching it as a research centre. He was a Professor at the School of Sciences as well. He organised and took part in a myriad of scientific activities in Oceanography and Marine Biology and he repre-

sented México at international meetings. Dr. Enrique Rioja died in México on 20 September 1963.

Dr. Rioja is one of the most prolific biologist: his publications number over 200, including research papers, books, monographic pieces and articles in journals about different disciplines: Polychaetes (51), Crustaceans (45), Hidrobiology (31), teaching (27) and others (66). The most outstanding of his works is the monographic piece on "Sedentary Polychaetes of the Iberian Peninsula" since it has been the reference point for subsequent studies of this group. He created the family Oweniidae and he also discovered new species previously unknown to Science. Enrique Rioja recorded more than 300 species of polychaetes on the coasts of México and most of the 43 species he described are recognised as valid today.

Some of the Spanish scientists, who have continued his polychaetological work, more than 30 years later, were Dr. Miguel Ibáñez and Dr. Antonio Campoy. The last one completed Rioja's work with his study of the "*Errantia*" Polychaetes on Spanish coasts. In México, he was also influential in the scientific training of zoologists in other fields of expertise: Dra. Elena Caso, Dr. Alejandro Villalobos, Dr. Jorge Alberto Cabrera and Dr. Juan Luis Cifuentes.

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