

Don Carlos Felice Cardot (1913-1986)



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OBITUARIES

Don Carlos Felice Cardot (1913–1986)

JOHN V. LOMBARDI*

A classic Latin American *pensador*, that characteristic Hispanic archetype of action and letters, Don Carlos Felice Cardot's career leaves a record of remarkable accomplishment. Born in El Tocuyo in the early twentieth century, Don Carlos pursued his education there and then traveled to Caracas to complete his studies with a doctorate in political science from the Universidad Central de Venezuela in 1936.

Combining the roles of public servant, diplomat, and historian, Felice Cardot contributed to his country's political and intellectual life in an incredibly varied career. Judge, professor, congressman and senator, minister and ambassador, and above all a passionate defender of the glory that is Venezuela's history, Don Carlos has left us both a lifetime trajectory and an intellectual heritage worthy of reflection and study.

For those of us interested in the history of Venezuela, el Doctor Felice offered an inescapably compelling perspective on his country's past. A fervent *bolivariano*, Felice Cardot produced studies of social history, political history, cultural history, and biography. With his comprehensive enthusiasm for all aspects of Venezuela's past, his personal bibliography contains works that span topics as diverse as *La iglesia y el estado en la primera república* and the influential *La rebelión de Andresote* or the *Rebeliones y motines de masas en el siglo XVIII venezolano*. He wrote *Curazao hispánico*, *antagonismo flamenco-español* and *Gil Fortoul en la intimidad familiar y en la diplomacia* as well as the fundamental *Décadas de una cultura*.

For a generation and more, Don Carlos Felice Cardot exemplified the strengths and intellectual passion of Venezuela's official historical establishment, the Academia Nacional de la Historia. As *miembro correspondiente* from the State of Lara from 1944 to 1949 and then as *individuo de número* from 1949 until his death in 1986, Dr. Felice unswervingly supported the development of the academy's historical program. He served

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in various positions of academic responsibility, including secretary, and was elected director from 1983 until his death. During this period, the academy celebrated the *bicentenario* of the birth of Simón Bolívar with a spectacular congress of historians from all over the world representing every historical style and perspective.

Generations of students and scholars have benefited from his assistance and friendship, and all of us mourn his passing. And, though his gracious enthusiasm is no longer with us, his phenomenal dedication to the history of his country remains ever alive in the pages of his books and articles, essential reading for anyone who hopes to understand *Venezolanos de ayer y de hoy*.