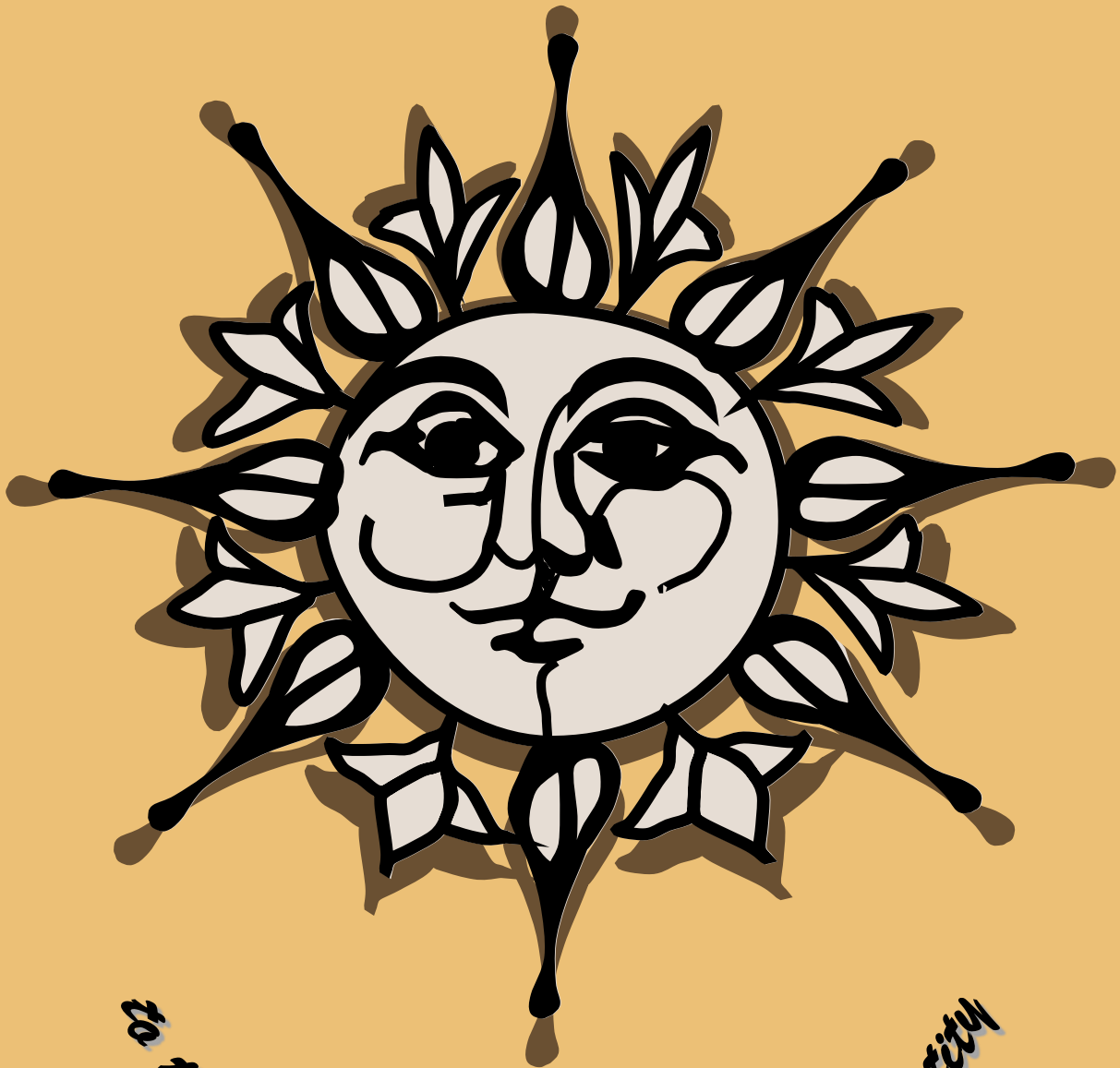




# *La Tradición Popular*



*to the rescue of the cultural identity*

Center for Folklore  
Studies – CEFOL –  
University of San Carlos  
de Guatemala

July 8th, 1967 – July 8th, 1997

---

# **For the 30th anniversary of the Center for Folklore Studies of the San Carlos de Guatemala University**

## **Contemporary Context**

### **WHAT IS THE CENTER FOR FOLKLORE STUDIES?**

Center for Folklore Studies (CEFOL for its initials in Spanish) is a center of cultural research whose main objective is to study popular traditional culture. It is the only university organization with a high reputation throughout the country due to its scientific Guatemala. The responsibilities of the organization are research, teaching, promotion,

advertisement, record and preservation of the particular features of popular culture. activities dedicated to the recovery and preservation of the dynamic of the popular culture of

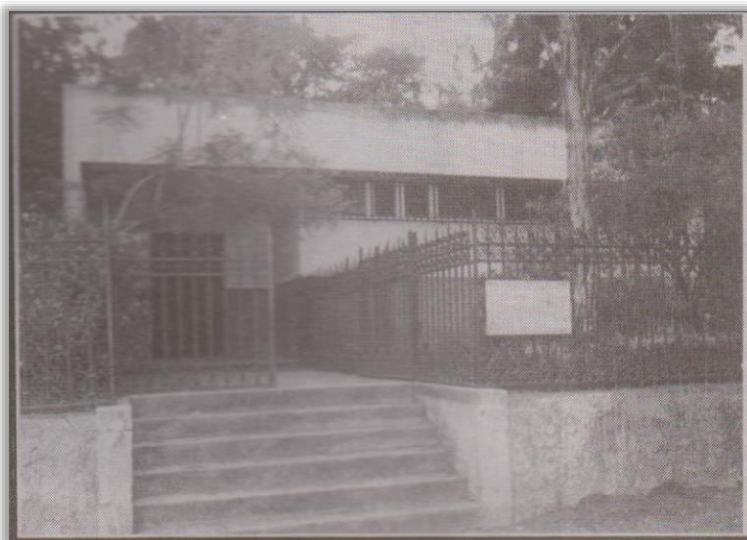
The centre has several areas of investigation which work individually in particular features of popular culture.

1. Area of popular arts and handirafts (Aracely Esquivel Vásquez)



**Head Office**

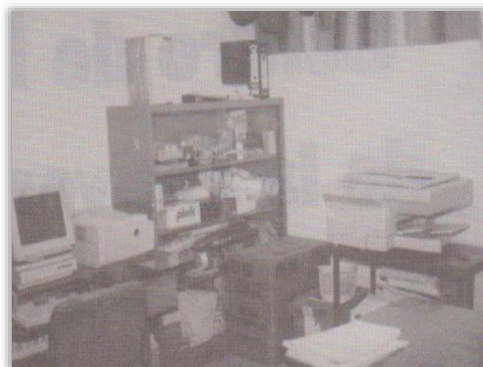
2. Area of popular traditional literature (Celso A. Lara Figueroa)
3. Area of popular traditional culture applied to teaching (Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez)
4. Area of popular traditional medicine- Medical anthropology.
5. Area of music. Section of ethnomusicology (Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés)



**View outside of the Centre of Folklore Studies**



Research desk



Budget and management desk

- a. Area of Music. Section of musicology (Maestro Enrique Anleu Díaz)

6. Area of popular and traditional choreography research (Carlos René García Escobar).

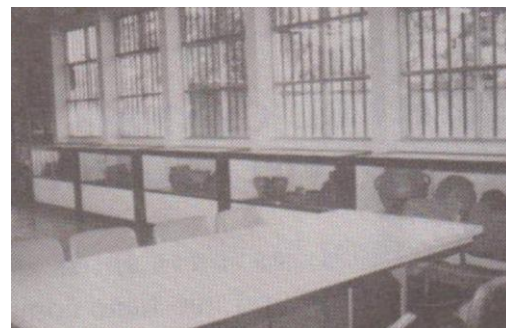
### Management and staff

7. Director (Marco Tulio Aguilar Barrondo).

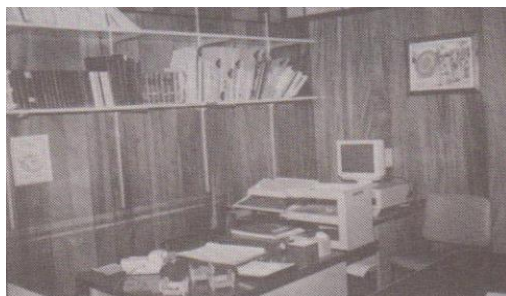
8. Rosa Elvira Franco Sandoval. Second Secretary.

9. Lillian Jeannette Barzallana Solórzano de Enríquez. Third management secretary, management secretary to February 2nd, 1998. From February 2nd, 1998 Ana Silvia de Orozco is the secretary.

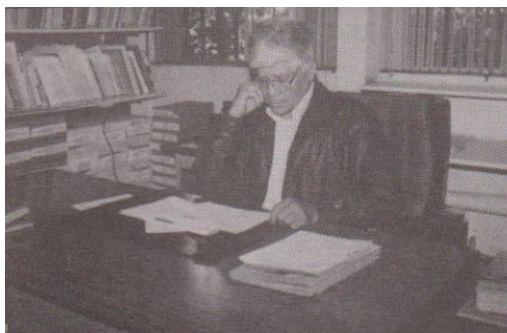
in charge of the budget)



Study room



Management Secretary Desk



Director of the Center Marco Tulio Aguilar Barrondo



Rosa E. Franco, Lilian J. de Enríquez and Adela M. Jicha. From left to right.

10. Adela Maritza Jicha Pocop (Third Worker

11. Second mail carrier and cleaning assistant (Gabino Choy Cujcuj and Marco Tulio Arriola López).

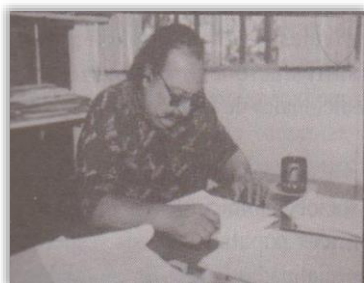




Gabino Choy C. and Marco T. Arriola L.

### Research Support Staff:

12. Style editor and editorial assistance (Guillermo Alfredo Vásquez González)
13. Photographer (Jairo Gamaliel Cholotío Corea)

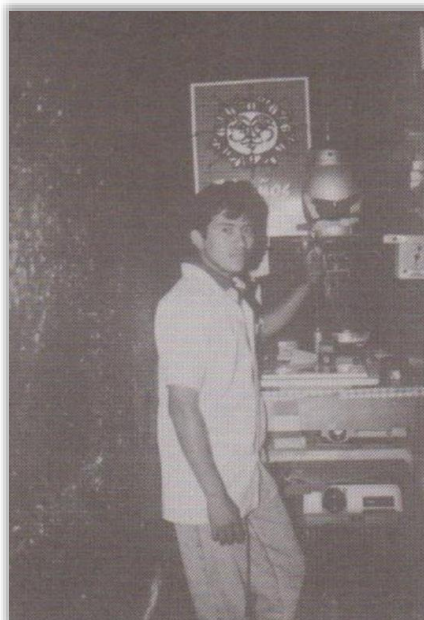


Guillermo Vásquez G.

### LET'S TALK ABOUT THE WORD "FOLKLORE"

The Center of Folklore Studies was founded in 1967 and since that moment it has had an epistemological approach, folklore studies. This concept of folklore studies is understood in the classical sense of the concept proposed by

William Thoms in 1846, and this term was confirmed by the Folklore Society of London in 1878 as the **knowledge of the people** according to the etymology and meaning accepted at that time.



Jairo Cholotío

Therefore, this term was considered worthless and negative due to the development and promotion through the 20th century by the hegemonic western groups who only seek for the good of them. It was since 1980 that the social Latin American thinking was wider and deeper related to the concept of **popular culture**. This rejects the term "folklore" because it does not work for the particular features in the social historical process in Latin America

due to its global characteristic.

Because of this, the researchers of this Academic Unit decided to follow the new trends of social science designed by Latin Americans. We added the concept of the "Popular Traditional Culture" field presented by the **Interdisciplinary group of experts on popular culture and education** convoked by the Organization of American States in the buildings of the Inter-American Center of Popular Handicrafts and Arts (CIDAP by its initials in Spanish) at Cuenca, Ecuador in May 1980.

Due to practical reasons the center has decided to maintain the name **FOLKLORE STUDIES** because it is known by that name in Guatemala and around the world. Therefore, we are compromised to the theoretical and conceptual analysis of the phenomenon of popular traditional culture.

### IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

The organizations of the University of San



Carlos have suffered from attacks at different sociological moments, so the Centre, being one of them, has also suffered them since its founding. In the last stages of the 20th century, we find ourselves deeply immersed in the global politics that excessively conservative neoliberal groups have established in the country.

This situation makes us analyze the concepts one more time because the social economic changes generated an extreme transformation in the content and shape. These changes happen in the ones who bear the culture but also in the way the popular culture is manifesting. There is a large variety of examples but these are the ones who highlight more: the awakening of ethnic groups' demands, the mixed-race, the multicultural linguistic diversity, the ungovernable demographic grow, the great transformation strength of the media, promotion of fundamentalist doctrines that generated important changes in the mindset of the people who carried

popular culture, neoliberal economic policies and its effects: unemployment, poverty, privatization of social services such as health care, education, social security and the increasing value give it to the apotheosis of the individual as a main principle of the activities of the neo-capitalism, cultural dependency, technology and other more; the disrespect to the scientific development of the social science and the propensity to the natural science and others.

This complex point of view commits us to a regular analysis of the theoretical concepts and the application of new processes in the methodology. All this with the objective of searching for explanations for the popular traditional culture, one of the sides of humanity.

But then, San Carlos University, as a national organization is despised by the followers of neoliberalism, but also the privatizations arranged plans. The negotiation of its management budget assigned by the constitution is one of the

first steps to that process against the university.

## EDITORIAL WORK

Since its founding, the Center for Folklore Studies has published several works:

### Periodical works:

- *Tradiciones de Guatemala* magazine (semiannual).
- *La Tradición Popular* bulletin (quarterly).

### Not periodical works:

Books, published by collections:

- Monographs
- Arts and handicrafts
- Archives of folklore literature
- Folklore applied to teaching
- Ethnomedicine
- Ethnochoreology
- Ethnomusicology

CEFOL realized several types of works apart from these collections, all according to the topic and importance of it to the knowledge and promotion of popular traditions of Guatemala.



### 30 YEARS OF RESCUING POPULAR IDENTITY

Since its founding today, the center has followed the guidelines of the University Superior Council. In 1981 was incorporated the Management Division of Research (DIGI by its initials in Spanish), which coordinated research programs in San Carlos University (USAC by its abbreviation in Spanish).

#### OBJECTIVES

Identify and understand Guatemala's popular culture, social reality and the social economical context that surround it.

Establish a scientific recovery and solid foundation for key cultural aspects that showcase Guatemala's unique and popular knowledge.

Create appropriate movements and scientific tools that help with the conservation and protection of the popular culture of the country.

Promote the necessary activities to

increase the national production and income and increase the standard of living of farmers and producers.

Spread Guatemala's popular culture using different levels of media that allow for the transmission of popular knowledge.

#### Objectives of the research area

Execute and encourage research in the different fields of expression that are part of popular culture.

#### Methods

Perform interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research between the Centre and other universities, organizations and professional associations. Always keep in mind the self-management techniques.

Collect in a direct, scientifically and systematic way the material used to create an organic group of Guatemalan traditions and then make a record,

classification and interpretation of them.

Conduct periodic diagnostics to determine the permanence, validity, and level of transformation of popular and traditional manifestations in Guatemala.

Establish the social cultural context of popular authors and artists and their surroundings to set the number of members and their needs through an investigation and collaborative work.

Encourage the creation of different spaces in which the investigation of popular traditional culture can be developed in every level of Guatemala's society.

Demand for the legal, physical and technical assistance of the Centre for the creation of programs of protection, conservation and promotion of the popular traditions of Guatemala in collaboration with specialized organizations and the State.

Actively participate in the creation of tools that allow us to



find a complete solution to the problems of the ones who bear the popular culture (in an economic, socio cultural, artistic and ecologic field and others).

Ensure the preservation of the key essence of sociocultural expressions as well as the expression of historical memory in traditional culture.

Support in the creation of museums and documentation units that keep the better qualified samples according to techniques, tradition and specialization to make it a guiding model.

Propose protection politics in the corresponding expressions of popular culture and the bearer of it: social security, economic and cultural; financing, raw materials, systems and production techniques, distribution and selling that correspond to their own specifications.

Report in any media about any forgery, alteration or abuse to the popular traditional culture, which some organizations and people

made under the cover of promoting development.

### **Objectives of broadcasting**

Edit printed, audio and visual content as well as other kinds of popular periodical media used to investigate, promote and broadcast popular culture aimed at Guatemala's society according to the level of appeal or interest of them to it.

Set and organize courses, short courses, workshops, conferences, debates, seminars, meetings, conventions and other pedagogical activities about popular culture and popular traditional culture of Guatemala aimed for every education system level.

Give information about popular culture when it's asked by governmental and private organizations, as well as national or international ones, to the general public and national and foreign professors.



**Discography Production**

Organize periodical exhibitions at the building of the Centre and other suitable places, as well as international exhibitions and support historic sites which produce the different manifestations of the popular culture which guide and set the awareness of popular knowledge.



**Production of literary**





Contribute to advice in the organization, planning and editing of radio and television programs which broadcast different expressions of popular culture and with this help to set in the heart of producer groups their traditional knowledge and their role in the process of the building of Guatemala's cultural identity.

Engage with the promotion of popular culture with the methods and along with the people who is living it.

Organize different activities (meetings, music, dancing, acting, literature, medicine workshops and others.) which recognize the different and authentic manifestations of Guatemala's popular culture.

### **Objectives of record and preservation**

Organize libraries and preserve documents, photographs, audio recordings, videos, films, newspapers, and all kinds of essential elements of popular culture in archives, thus increasing

the country's historical memory archives.

Monitor and guarantee the protection and adequate use of the historical memory archives which will be a benefit of the ones who bear it and the University as the one who keep them.

Preserve all the results of research on the expression of Guatemalan popular culture, using specialized techniques so that they can be transmitted again through appropriate methods.

Recognize that the use of the historical memory archives are for the benefits of the ones who bear the culture and so the following agreements will be set.

### **AREA OF POPULAR ARTS AND HANDICRAFTS**

One of the objectives of the area of popular arts and handicrafts is to investigate the popular arts and handicrafts of Guatemala from different points of view: historical, artistic, social and economic.

The anthropological study of the handicraftsman as a bearer of important technical knowledge for reproducing tangible elements of Guatemalan popular culture, but also a socioeconomic study of the handicraftsman as a social class that generates work and produces objects of exchange and everyday use, but is affected by the country's political, social, and economic problems like any other social class. (Head of the area, *Licenciada* Aracely Esquivel Vásquez).

- *Licenciada* is an academic degree in Guatemala.

### **AREA OF POPULAR TRADITIONAL LITERATURE**

This field focuses on oral and traditional literature transmitted informally and as a legacy of the different ethnic and sociocultural groups in the country's rural and urban environments. Ultimately, it is seeking the self-development of folk literature in the communities that created them and looking deeply for the signifier and the signified of the literary





manifestation by locating the bearers of the tradition.

The head of the Folk Literature is in charge of maintaining the highest level of preservation of phonogram archives, as well as other technical and management archives. They are also in charge of fulfilling every project and program approved by the Centre Management and corresponding areas. (Head of the area, *Licenciado* Celso Lara).

### **AREA OF POPULAR TRADITIONAL CULTURE APPLIED TO TEACHING**

The general objective of the area of popular traditional culture applied to teaching is to realize investigations about Popular Traditional Culture that can be used or applied in the teaching process, this looks to enrich teaching and that schools became a promoter of traditional heritage.

In order to accomplish this objective, three stages are needed: the first stage is to realize field research; the second

one is the analysis and synthesis of the information; the last stage is to choose information of the research useful in the teaching area, as a way to apply the outcome.

The three stages generate the following activities: writing articles, essays and other theoretical works; there are also the performances of courses, short courses, workshops and conferences aimed at active teachers in the several educational levels. There are also conferences about various topics of Popular Traditional Culture for students of any education level, writing textbooks about Popular Traditional Culture of Guatemala (Head of the area, *Licenciada* Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez).

### **AREA OF POPULAR TRADITIONAL MEDICINE**

The objectives of the area of popular traditional medicine are the ones that fulfil the needs of the Center for Folklore Studies: research, analysis, recovery and promote medical beliefs, practices

and resources. It is important to recognize that Guatemala is one of the countries of Latin America that is characterized by having a large cultural heritage inherited from the Maya and contemporary groups of maya people influenced by the knowledge brought by Spanish and which is involved in the traditional medical practice.

This traditional medical culture is the result of a historical past in which health and ill problems were solved in specific ways that traced the worldview of the group who practiced them. (Head of the area until March 31st, 1997. *Licenciada* Elba Villatoro).

### **AREA OF MUSIC**

The area of music has two sections, one is ethnomusicology and organology together, and the other one is the section of musicology, the main objective of both of them is to study music. Ethnomusicology studies music as in the oral tradition and musicology studies it as the written music discipline. Organology is focused in



the study of sound sources, an emphasis in musical instruments and their acoustic and timbre.

Therefore, the area of music is the central area that joins the different fields and allows interrelated work between these sections. (Head of the section of ethnomusicology and organology: *Licenciado* Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés. Head of section of musicology: Maestro Enrique Anleu Díaz).

## SECTION OF MUSICOLOGY

The section of musicology is part of the ethnomusicology and organology area, and its work is deeply related to them.

The main objective of this area is the recovery, preservation and study of music written by Guatemalan composers from the colonial era to the 20th century in order to find the relations between classical music and popular music in the cultural historical development context of Guatemala.

In addition to being helpful in the field of ethnomusicology and organology, one of the specific objectives of this section is to search for and locate sheet music, programs, choir books, and any type of information that allows for the study of Guatemalan music, through national, ecclesiastical, and newspaper archives, as well as government and private libraries that allow for its organization, classification, and study. This section also aims for the recovery of sheet music that is owned by individuals in the countryside. (Head of the section, Maestro Enrique Anleu Díaz).

## AREA OF POPULAR AND TRADITIONAL CHOREOGRAPHY RESEARCH

The general objective of the choreography research area of CEFOL is to locate, collect, recover, analyze, interpret, promote and appreciate the different popular dancing manifestations that we can find in the heart of Guatemala's people. It is important to make

emphasis in the study of the structure of traditional dance, from the concept that they are human groups related by the society and culture and joined by the dancing tradition of the country and the anthropological relations created by the internal and external context of this same group. This popular artistic practice is passed down in an informal way and by cultural heritage of the different ethnic and sociocultural groups of the rural and urban areas of the country.

All this is about the different dances, their classification and searching of the symbolism in them and the presence of it in every step of the dance. (Head of the area, *Licenciado* Carlos René García Escobar.

*Licenciado* Marco Tulio Aguilar Barrondo.

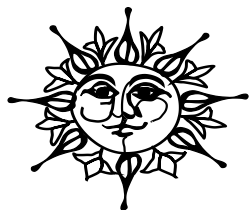
Director

Center for Folklore Studies

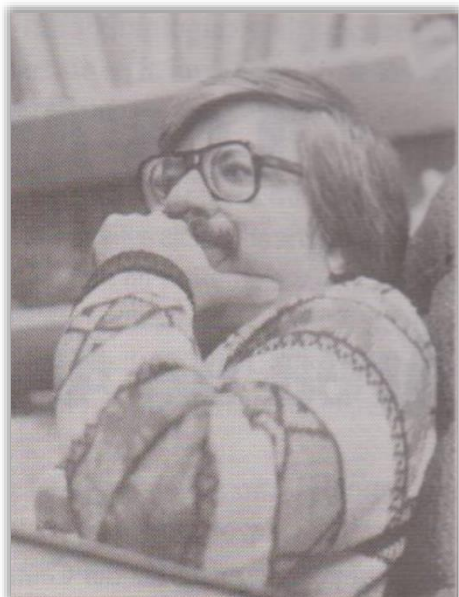
July 8th, 1997



**CENTER FOR FOLKLORE  
STUIDES' DIRECTORS**



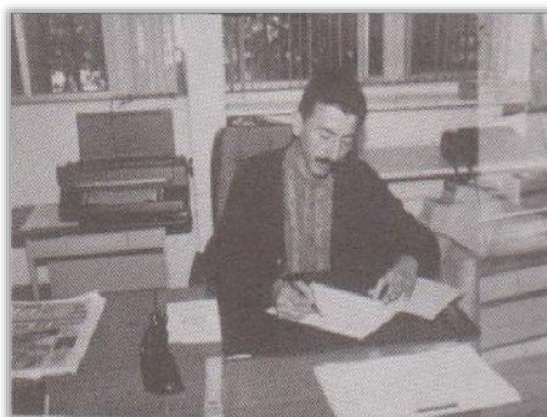
**Roberto Díaz Castillo**  
1973 - 1981



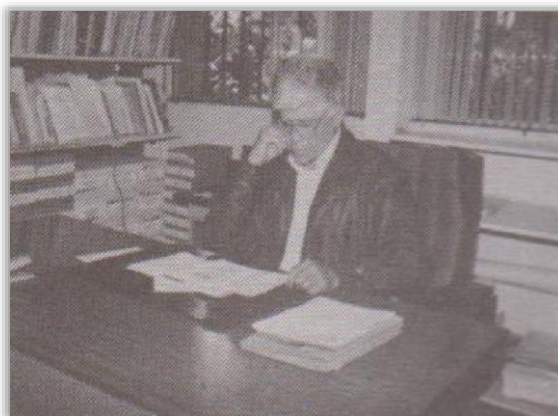
**Celso A. Lara Figueroa**  
1981 - 1986



**Ofelia Déleon Meléndez**  
1986 - 1992



**Haroldo Rodas Estrada**  
1992 - 1994



**Marco Tulio Aguilar Barrondo**  
1994 - 1998



## CONTRIBUTION OF THE AREAS

### AREA OF POPULAR ARTS AND HANDICRAFTS

Aracely Esquivel Vásquez

The path of the Center for Folklore Studies has two stages. The first one started with the fourth item of Minute number 957 of the session of the Honorable University Superior Council on July 8th, 1967; and organized again by them in November 1973 following the instructions of the fourth item, number 4.4. Minute 12-24.

On October 17, 1976, the rector's

office, by prior agreement,

appointed the members for one year for the Center: *Licenciado* Roberto Díaz Castillo, Engineer Amérigo Giracca, *Licenciado* Luis Luján Muñoz, Doctor Juan José Hurtado Vega and *Licenciada* Ida Bremme de Santos.

This first stage makes possible some important works as the establishment of the Popular Arts and Handicrafts Museum at *Antigua Guatemala* City in the restored *Colegio Santo Tomás* building that was the headquarters of



Aracely Esquivel Vásquez, head of the area since January 2nd, 1998

San Carlos de Guatemala University and the before it was the building for the *Santo Tomás de Aquino* School.

This first stage made possible some important projects, such as the founding of the Museum of Popular Arts and Handicrafts of the city

of Antigua Guatemala in the restored building of the *Colegio Santo Tomás*, which was the headquarters of the University of San Carlos de Guatemala and formerly the headquarters of the *Santo Tomás de Aquino* School. The museum opened on

November 28, 1968,

located in the kitchen of the building then called *Casa Antigua*, and has since become a center for cultural activities.

Following the ideas of the museologist Jorge Angulo Villaseñor, the board of directors of the Centre of Folklore Study established this first





regional museum dedicated to popular arts and handicrafts of *Sacatepéquez*. The engineer Américo Giracca and the architect Lionel Méndez Dávila were in charge of solving architectural and museum management problems, and by the end of 1975 the museum of Popular Arts and Handicrafts of *Sacatepéquez* was renewed. The back of the building was made by the old cafeteria, the kitchen nook and the kitchen itself. This museum was destroyed by the earthquake of 1976.

On November 25, 1968, the first book "*Folklore y Artes Populares*" by Roberto Díaz Castillo was published (Problemas y Documentos Collection Volumen 1).

The Center for Folklore Studies worked with the Vértebra Gallery and the Assembly of Professional Association Presidents to create the exhibition of popular ceramics from Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Chile. The exhibition was displayed at the room Vértebra gallery from

February 13th to 28th in 1970.

The second stage began after the Honorable University Superior Council approved the center's reorganization project presented by the Board of Directors of the center at the meeting held in November 1973.



**Carlos E. López,  
"Cowboy" Saddlery**

In 1974 the first two areas were created: Popular Arts and Handicrafts was managed by Roberto Díaz Castillo (Director of the Centre at that time) and Luis Luján Muñoz, who retired from the CEFOL the following year. And the Popular Traditional Literature area was managed by Celso A. Lara Figueroa.

The preparation of the *Casa del Arte Popular* (Popular Art Home) project was the most important activity carried out in 1974. This project was an architectural complex that would house the Center for Folklore Studies and the following areas: popular arts and handicrafts museum, the library and the reading room, as well as the auditorium, the museum warehouse, the popular



**Marroquín Cota Brothers, "Nueva Juventud" Saddlery**



arts and handicrafts shop, and the restaurant.

This complex would be built in the area of the Botanic Garden in which the Pedro Molina Library was built, the building plans were presented and approved by the authority of the university.

Since 1975, the Center for Folklore Studies has implemented an annual program focused on researching and promoting the traditional culture of Guatemala.

The first tasks were assigned to researchers: Luis Luján Muñoz was in charge of The Majolica in Antigua Guatemala and Roberto Díaz Castillo was in charge of Popular Handicrafts of *Sacatepéquez* (a kind of guide for the visitors of the Popular Arts and Handicrafts Museum at Sacatepéquez, which will be the first step in a new series called *Colección Breve*).

The first of the areas created was: Popular Arts and Handicrafts, this has to be without doubt the

first area because as we can see in the background and story of the foundation of the Center for Folklore Studies and the code that ruled the first steps of the Organization, the founders were interested in the research about tangible popular culture because of their passion for it. Another of the reasons that this was the beginning of the areas of the center was *Licenciado* Roberto Díaz Castillo and his theoretical studies of popular American art at Chile University where he was the assistant in the course of Tomás Lago.

There are two branches that have received some contributions from this area: the theoretical one that wants to set the study of popular arts and handicrafts in the framework of folklore and folklore studies. And the applied one which is research on popular arts and handicrafts of Guatemala.

The theoretical branch of the area of popular arts and handicrafts

has produced several essays published in books, in the CEFOL magazine and bulletin, and some of them have even been published abroad.

One important contribution of this area is the attempt to define the concepts of arts, handicrafts and popular industries. The basic information about these concepts has been introduced by the Center for Folklore Studies in the objectives of organic law, which suggests the creation of the National Institute of Popular Arts and Handicrafts.

This area wanted to present the folklore event of popular culture as



Carlos E. López, "Cowboy" Saddlery



a scientific one, at the same time it wanted to present folklore and folklore studies as an ideological problem.

There are a lot of research works about popular arts and handicrafts of Guatemala, that we can mention the ones about: ceramics of Totonicapán, Antigua Guatemala and Rabinal; votive paintings of church of San Felipe, Antigua Guatemala; pyrography, wrought iron, tin-smitting, carpentry, pyrotechnics workshops, nativity scenes and kites of the department of *Sacatepéquez*.

In this area some proposals such as the remodelling of the Museum of Popular Arts and Handicrafts of *Sacatepéquez* and the unsuccessful *Casa del Arte Popular* (Popular Art Home) project were presented.

The area of popular arts and handicrafts participated too in courses, conferences, debates, international conventions and technical assistance, consulting, exhibitions and editorial workshops.

Some articles for special publications abroad have been written by their head of writers.

culture that are in a disappearing process, or they have already disappeared; one example of this is the majolica in



Natural environment of the Eastern, Taxisco Guatemala

Another activity of high importance is the handicraftsman and artists exhibitions. These give a great opportunity to handicraftsmen and artists to make themselves valuable, without the necessity of the selling and commercialization area. Renowned names in the field of arts and crafts owe their prestige to the support provided by the Center for Folklore Studies.

The promotion activities look for the recovery of objects of popular handicrafts and sometimes these objects are elements of popular

Antigua Guatemala. *Licenciado* Carlos René García Escobar was in charge of this area from 1984 to 1985 and then *Licenciada* Claudia Dary Fuentes was in charge of the area of Popular Arts and Handicrafts from 1986 to February 1996.

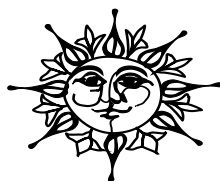
*Licenciada* Aracely Esquivel Vazquez was in charge of this area from February 3rd, 1997, to December of the same year. But from January first of 1998 through a selection process realized in October 1997 she was indefinitely in charge of this area.



The center for folklore studies had shared in their bulletins 28 articles about popular handicrafts written by renowned Guatemalan researcher: Roberto Díaz Castillo, Celso Lara, Italo Morales Hidalgo, Ana Antonia Reyes Prado, Carlos René García Escobar, Ofelia Déleon Meléndez, Brenda Mayol, Claudia Dary, and Aracely Esquivel Vásquez.

In the *Tradiciones de Guatemala* magazine had been published 42 articles about popular handicrafts by renowned Guatemalan and foreign researchers: Claudia Dary, Roberto Díaz Castillo, Félix Castillo Guzmán, Aída Díaz Paniagua, Aída de Ritz, Gladys de Borhenberguer, José Enrique Martínez Rodríguez, Gustavo Palma, Josefina Alonso de Rodríguez, José Fernando Rodríguez, María Cristina de la Vega, Julio González Celis, Miguel Alvarez, Faustino Collado, María Guadalupe Navas, Sonia Yolanda Reyes, Lyuba Méndez, Abilio Berganza, Julia de Mérida, Charles Arrot, Lily de Jongh Osborne, Robert S. Smith, Mario Monteforete Toledo, Italo Morales

Hidalgo, Ofelia Déleon, Agustín López, Dalila Gaitán, Lesbia Ortiz, Mario Chacón Polanco, Carmen Valenzuela Garay, Amparo Rodríguez Abascal, Ramiro Araujo Arroyo, Rosa María Alvarez, José Alejos, Edgar Pappe Yalibat, Carlos René García Escobar, Ligia Archla Serrano, Arturo Matas Oria, Antonio Mosquera, Fernando Urquizú.

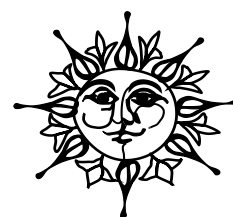


This area has in additions some of popular handicraft's collections such as simple majolica glaze ceramic and colored ceramic of Antigua Guatemala, glaze ceramic of Totonicapán and Jalapa, ceramic of Mixco, San Luis Jilotepeque, Jalapa, Chinautla, Rabinal, Zacualpa, San Sebastián, Huehuetenango, San Raymundo. Jícaras (recipient made of hard-shell fruit of the calabash tree), jarcias (traditional handicraft made with maguey fiber to make various products such as hammocks, bags, and other objects), dolls or

tusa (corn husk) and fabric shepherd dolls of San Antonio Aguas Calientes, municipality of *Sacatepéquez* and, tinsmitting objects, and toys.

The collections of majolica ceramic and colored ceramic of Antigua Guatemala and *Totonicapán* are displayed in MUSAC (by its initials in Spanish) and other pieces are in CEFOL.

There is a directory of Guatemalan handicraftsmen with regular actualizations of information for the researchers to consult.







## AREA OF POPULAR TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

*Celso A. Lara Figueroa*



The area of Popular Traditional Literature was created in the heart of the Center for Folklore Studies at San Carlos de Guatemala University in 1975, after *licenciado* Celso A. Lara Figueroa welcomed back from his graduate studies in Folklore, Anthropology and Music at the Central University of Venezuela.

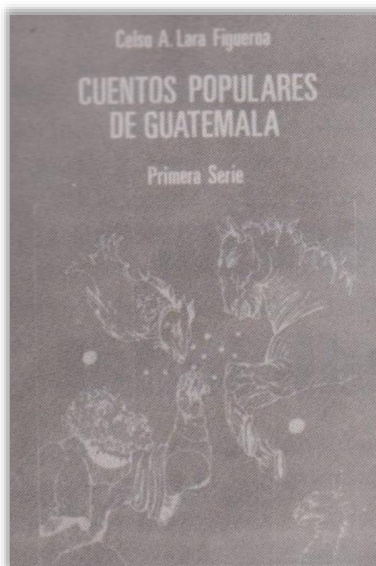
Since the beginning, this area with the lead of Lara was dedicated to the recovery, promotion and giving of value to the oral literature manifestations of Guatemala's culture with the objective of deciphering the ideological content in them.

Between 1975 and 1976, the focus of this area was to put in knowledge popular legends as the first connection for research in the urban society of the capital city of the republic and Antigua Guatemala. Then they will focus on folktale and popular poetry, they wanted to claim that in Guatemala the number of legends were larger than folktales, but this assumption was promptly declined as there was no way to prove it.

To do the aforesaid research, the country was divided in several work zones: eastern, south coast, north and western, this division allow the study and analyze of eastern tales

and the ones in the south coast, as well as some ethnographic approximations in the afro-Guatemalan and indigenous areas of the western and north of the country.

After this research works on oral literature, they were extend to areas of different cultural expression as traditional poetry, this allow important discoveries of *coplas* (a short couplet composed of short irregular length and no fixed rhyme, that are frequently used as songs), *romances* (an indefinite series of octosyllabic verses with assonance in the even lines), *romancillos* (also known as short romance, is a series with the same pattern of assonance as *romance* but it is composed of six or seven syllable lines) and the discovery of the *Décima Cantada* (*Décima* is a group of ten octosyllabic lines rhyming.) in Eastern Guatemala (Jalapa and El Progreso).



Since 1977 to 1997 the folklore literature area has explored all around the country to collect legends, tales, *coplas*, “*bombas*” (verses that are improvised at some popular festivals), and other popular oral expressions such as jokes, short stories and creation myths.

This area have also related with the process of definition of the main characteristic of the worldview of communities in the countryside of Guatemala and there they had found unknown discoveries in the anthropology of Guatemala as we can see it with the presence throughout the country of the Señores de los Cierros and Leyendas de

Encantamientos that determine the social relation with the environment by the cultural practices of the contemporary Mayan-Guatemalan.

The Popular Traditional Literature Area has archived 5,300 oral samples that are the same as 700 recording hours. They also have a complete record of storytellers (*cuenteros*) - this is the name of the teller of stories-, poets and other popular literature narrators.

The classification of tales had been made according to the rules of the system of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson: common tales (tales of magic, religious tales, realistic tales and tales of the stupid ogre, giant or devil); animals’ tales; formula tales; and anecdotes and jokes. The methodology that was used is the Finish and formalism approach. And for the editorial convenience the tales have been divided into two volumes that collect samples of every classification aforesaid, there is a total of 1000 versions (500 per

volume). Due to the difficulty to publish them because of the large of the volumes it was decided to select some classification of tales and organized them in two groups: the first one -anecdotes and jokes-, “Pedro Urdemales” and “El Compadre rico y el Compadre pobre”; and the second one -animal tales- “Tío conejo y Tío coyote”.



Looking to make an easy transcription of the tales, the Folklore Literature area prepared a special code based on international indexes. Paulina Marambio in 1976 and Vilma Fialko in 1977 worked to apply this code. Anantonia Reyes Prado worked on it from 1978 to 1981 and Claudia Dary Fuentes from 1981 to 198. Since the last year of

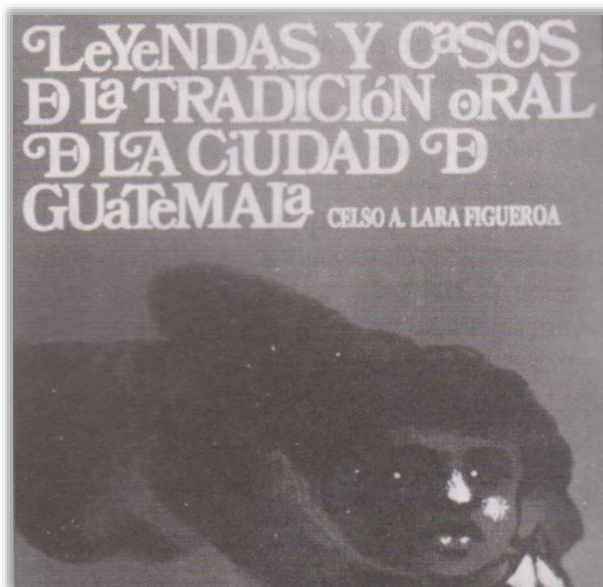


Claudia the Folklore Literature area did not have research personnel, so this job was part of the responsibilities of the *Licenciado* Celso A. Lara Figuero, head of the area.

According with the selection criteria that was begun to use to edit researches about tales in the Center for Folklore Studies, it was created in 1980 the collection of archives of Folklore literature, the content of the first volume are **Las increíbles hazañas de Pedro Urdemales en Guatemala** by Celso A. Lara Figueroa. There was also the second volume **Cuentos Populares de Guatemala (1982-1990)** by the same author and there are others that were published in a newspaper.

In 1978, the Popular Traditional Literature Area received the assistance of the field data collector José Ernesto Monzón, who was part of the personnel who provided their services in the research program sponsored by the Rector's

Office of San Carlos de Guatemala University. His job contributed to increasing the recording archives of the Center for Folklore Studies.



One of the main characteristics of the job being done in the Popular Traditional Literature area are the awareness and knowledge of the life of the storytellers and the social vigency in these tales as well as take them as illustrations in the popular literature of the social and economic reality.

It cannot leave aside the importance of the studies of this area on the *décima*, this is a kind of poetry developed by the people in the eastern part of the country.

One of the most important discoveries that was made in the folklore literature area was the definition of the tales of magic as the top type of tales in the eastern and south coast; we can say that this is something that happen throughout the country because something similar happens in other zones, as we can frequently see animals tales in the western zone. We also need to say that in all the zones of the country we have a large kind of legend where the top one is the animistic kind, one example is “**El sombreroón**”.

As every area of the Center for Folklore Studies does, the folklore literature area is not only focused on research, but also in promotion. To promote information, they carry out conferences in the country and abroad, as well as participate in the writing of articles and essays for the *Tradiciones de Guatemala* and *La Tradición Popular* magazines, and some specialized publications abroad.



One of the notable events of this area is the memorable academic visit of Paulo de Carvalho-Neto during his stay in 1979 at Guatemala. The well-known folklorist said back then that the most prestigious collection of folkloric tales in Latin America is the one of Central America.

After that, in 1996 the folklore literature area was chosen to be part of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters (or its Latin name Academia Scientiarum Fennica) of Helsinki, Finland is the academic world organization in charge of save the oral tradition of the planet.

This area and his main researcher Celso Lara Figueroa represent Guatemala and Central America. This are representing Guatemala in specialized organizations of America, Europe and Mexico: Pan American Institute of Geography and History, Inter-American Committee on Culture of OAS (Which is the current forum for discussion for matters of Culture); Cuba: UNESCO

with its **Oralidad** magazine; and Spain: this area represents Guatemala and Central America in *Casa de América* in Madrid.



The Popular Traditional Literature area focuses on oral and traditional literature transmitted informally and as a legacy of the different ethnic and sociocultural groups in the country's rural and urban environments. Ultimately, it is seeking the self-development of folk literature in the communities that created them and looking deeply for the signifier and the signified of the literary manifestation by locating the bearers of the tradition.

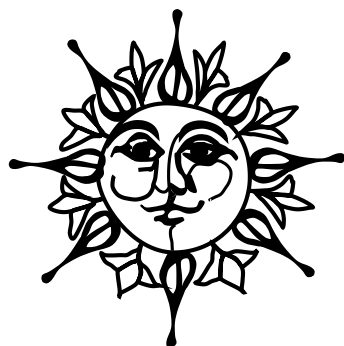
The head of the Folk Literature is in charge of maintaining the highest level of preservation of phonogram archives, as well as other technical and management archives. They are also in charge of fulfilling every project and program approved by the Centre Management and corresponding areas. (Head of the area, *Licenciado Celso Lara*).

Finally, we can say that the achievements of the Popular Traditional area of the Center for Folklore Studies at USAC can be presented in two main movements a) demonstrated thanks to the their researches the existence of oral literature in Guatemala and with that give value to its manifestations and successfully give to Guatemala's literature an unique profile; and b) the recovery of the historical memory between 1975 and 1977, this means that in the archives of San Carlos University are all the oral manifestations of Guatemala pre-war-war-time, and post-war, the





area archives are the only one that can provide accurate and truthful information at the Era of Peace when it as tried to transmit the tradition and identity of the cultural groups of Guatemala. This archive is the most complete oral traditions deposit of the country, as well as one of the largest and complete of Latin America.



## AREA OF POPULAR TRADITIONAL CULTURE APPLIED TO TEACHING

*Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez*



The Popular Traditional (Folklore) Culture Applied to Teaching area was created in 1976 so the Center for Folklore Studies of San Carlos de Guatemala University can spread out its job to the teaching field. This was necessary so the institute could achieve all its responsibilities such as “encourage the performance of interdisciplinary research between the Centre and other university units, and non-university units” as well as “the creation of courses aimed at the study and research of folklore in

every education system level”.

The first task of the research unit of this area was to organize a public library with essential books for everyone: from elementary school students to higher education, teachers, researchers, and visitors. The objective was to have a list of basic bibliographic sources to provide the requested advice and guidance.

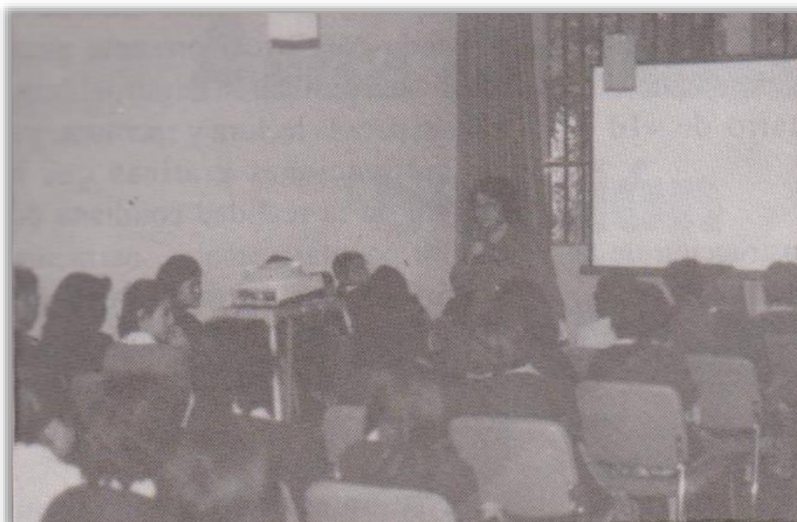
Due to the large and continuous request to bibliographic sources, advice and guidance make that the person in charge



of this unit carried out two bigger scale programs: the well-known **Programed visits to the Center for Folklore Studies and Courses on Folklore applied to teaching.**

The general objective of the first aforesaid program was to “propose an orientation for elementary school and secondary school students about the responsibilities and objectives of the Center for Folklore Studies, as well as the role of this organization in the research field of popular traditions in Guatemala” and the specific objectives are “encouraged different activities that allow students to: **a-** get to know the popular traditions of Guatemala and **b-** to understand that popular traditions are an important part of the national culture”; and “introduce them to the popular arts and handicrafts samples of the country.”

These programs have realized several activities to achieve the aforesaid objectives, some of them are: short conferences about “What is the Center for Folklore Studies?”; “What is folklore?” - etymology of



the term, postulate on folklore events, elements

are: Ensure that participating teachers

#### Conference for students

that are part of the popular traditional culture and “A View of the Popular Traditional Culture of Guatemala” presented through audiovisual media. In addition to these short conferences, there are tours in the building of the Center for Folklore Studies, and an explanation about the popular arts and handicrafts samples exhibited in the exhibition room and the final activity is the assignment of supervised small bibliographical research about the popular traditional culture.

The courses about **Folklore applied to teaching** are imparted to active teachers. The objectives of these courses

acquired experiences that allow them to value, respect and defend popular traditional culture; acknowledge the necessary promotion of the national folklore through teaching, because teaching has an important role in the culture of Guatemala; train teachers in the use of folkloric materials for teaching; and discover new and broad didactic and pedagogical possibilities of the popular



traditional culture.

**Popular toy in the capital city of Guatemala**



This area has developed 6 (six) courses-workshops, these activities have the participation of several active teachers, especially preschool and elementary level, as well as people interested in the topics. Some of the topics presented in these courses are: "The science of Folklore, its relations with natural sciences and its place in social sciences", "Projection, application and use of folklore events in fields such as art and education"; "Folklore in Guatemala"; and "Folklore applied to program of study in the

The general objective of the area of popular traditional culture applied to teaching is to conduct investigations about Popular Traditional Culture that can be used or applied in the teaching process. This looked to enrich teaching and that schools became a promoter of traditional heritage.

In order to accomplish this objective, three stages are needed: the first stage is to realize field research; the second one is the analysis and synthesis of the information; the last stage

The three stages generate the following activities:

- Writing articles, essays and other theoretical works.
- Performing courses, short courses, workshops and conferences aimed at active teachers at several educational levels.
- Carrying out conferences about various topics of Popular Traditional Culture for students of any education level.
- Writing textbooks about Popular Traditional Culture of Guatemala.

For the writing of articles, essays and books it is important to highlight that the investigation in charge of this area has written 2 books of folklore applied to teaching and almost 40 articles and essays about several topics related to the work of this area.

We can highlight the aforesaid courses about folklore applied to



Popular children artist of El remate village, Petén

system education of Guatemala". In 1979 the "Introduction to *Ki'che'* language" class was added to the course-workshop.

is to choose information of the research useful in the teaching area, as a way to apply the outcome.





teaching that the last one realized helped to validate some of the textbooks written by this area.

The conferences carried out in this area, we can say that at least 20 are held every year. So, 20 years after the creation of the area of folklore applied to teaching, almost 400 conferences about several topics on popular traditional culture have been held and for several different attendants: elementary school students, secondary school students, university

Education University (PUIE by its initials in Spanish) of San Carlos University, this was made with the main objective to obtain funds to write textbooks about popular traditional culture of Guatemala in order to provide a direct source of information about the culture to preschool and elementary school teachers and students.

The project was approved for three years (1994, 1995, and 1996). Throughout the three years it was aimed to

the Professor Vivian Salazar.

Some of the general objectives of these books that we can mention are:

1. Promote the popular traditional culture of Guatemala at preschool and elementary level of the education national system.
2. Blend the academic production of San Carlos University with the student population, in order to fulfill the university motto "**Go forth and teach everyone**".
3. Collaborate in the construction of the Guatemalan's cultural identity.
4. Enrich teaching in their informative and formative aspects.

It is worthy to mention that this was the first time that a work of this kind was made, even taking Guatemala culture as the base of the content.

The outcome of this project was 14 books, 7 for students and the other 7 for teachers. These books include the pre-school grade throughout the final grade of



students and the general public.

employ five people to write the books: *Licenciada* Patricia

Training session to active teachers

When we talk about writing textbooks we can highlight the project presented to the Management Division of Research through the

Escobar de García, *Licenciada* Sonia Reyes, *Licenciada* Bertalina Orella; *Licenciado* Maximiliano Nájera and





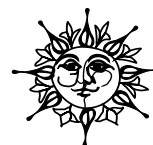
elementary school. The objective of this collection of books is to awaken the interest of the students of the different levels of the education system, from preschool student to university student. It is expected for the student to become aware of the popular culture in Guatemala and reading material that are part of a complex mosaic that frame the life of the Guatemalan people, we can know that some of the symbols in this popular culture are a part of our national identity, more than the ones set by abroad cultures. The students have to know that there is not only “superman”, “Donald duck”, “power rangers”,

“heavy metal”, but that there are some symbols that are created from the core of popular culture and that they are shown through different expressions.

One of the ways that we used to show our identity are through our textbooks for reading and writing, they are the manifestations that have been developed from the daily popular reality in culture: tales, novels, historical stories that are part of the historical oral tradition passed down through generations.

Our effort has been huge because we have to fight against the invasion of powerful forces of national and

international communication that drive us to have a dependent mentality and to give up the creative capacity presented in the copies. This context presented us a more complex problem where there are related different elements that are not cultural, but social and economics, and they impose certain patterns of behavior that are against our anthropological and social principles that guide our professional activity.



Children game



## AREA OF MUSIC

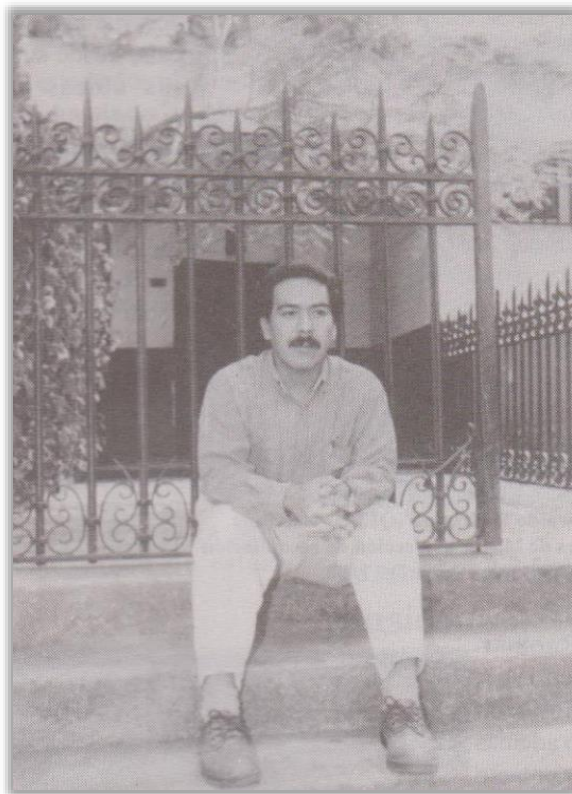
### SECTION OF

### ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

*Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés.*

Since the end of the last century, Europeans have shown interest in music in the new geographical and cultural world that was formed by a series of new discoveries. Since that moment, different sciences have expanded their focus to try new ways to explain the new surrounding world. Music was not an exception in these concerns, so *comparative musicology* was born from these concerns, and research works as the ones by Bela Bartok. Comparative musicology was a proposal by Berlin School lead it by Erich von Hornbostel (1877-1935) and Curt Sachs (1889-1959); this proposal lead to the new field *Ethnomusicology*, developed by the American School and based in the works of Bruno Netl, Allan Lomax and Mantle Hood, a long

path has been covered by this field to finally have gained a space in the minds of social scientists and the work made by different investigation institutes. Although this field is considered as a new science, it was part of the center's academic project for more than two decades, becoming the only place where there is systematic research on traditional oral music in Guatemala and Central America. Ethnomusicology in Guatemala is focused in the study of sound expressions (music) of the oral tradition by making an analysis of sound fenomen, musical instruments and the social and symbolic world that it is around and explain



them from different fields. This field also tries to explain music and its main role in the constructions of culture and identity.

#### **History of the area**

In 1977 ethnomusicology became part of CEFOL, thanks to the management of the director at that time who made that the University Superior Council agreed to begin a program dedicated to the knowledge of oral tradition music in Guatemala. Although at the beginning was a temporary program, and soon became a full time area in the center, since



that day ethnomusicology was dedicated to: in situ collection of the sound phenomenon of the oral tradition of the country; phenology; transcription and analysis of sound events, and study of musical instruments; organology, acoustics and timbral; and the information of the context; this means that the main activity of this research is focused on the anthropology of music field based in the theoretical method proposed by the study of the America Allan Merriam, which is part of the ethnomusicology movement in North America.

### Sound Archives

The area of ethnomusicology received in 1981 two researchers, Juárez Toledo and Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés, both of them study specializations in Ethnomusicology at the Inter-American Centre for Ethnomusicology and Folklore in Caracas, Venezuela. This organization sponsored by the Organization of American States was crucial in the promotion and development of the

study of popular cultures and ethnomusicology in American and the Caribbean, some of the researchers of this area were involved with this organization. Arrivillaga Cortés was also an anthropologist at USAC and had a specialization in planification of culture of the *CIACDEC* of Caracas, Venezuela. The **maestro Manuela Juárez Toledo** (pedagogue and well-known musician) was the person in charge of the area, but after his unexpectedly death, the position was assigned to **Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés** who decided to keep with the work or enlarge the musical archives and the analysis of the sound phenomenon of oral tradition and its social and cultural context. The work of the ethnomusicology area is nowadays the owner of the most valuable and important musical archive of oral tradition collected in the last 50 years. Due to the civil war process of the country all these recovered materials are of

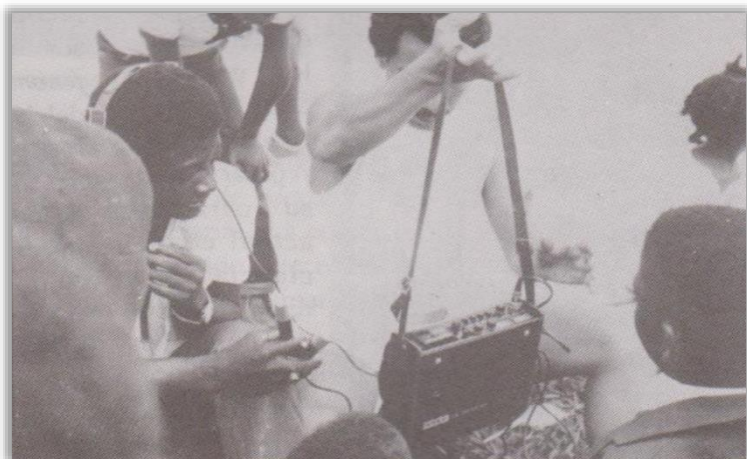


Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés recording traditional music of flute and drum for the dance of *Moros y Cristianos* (Moors and Christians) of *Lo de Bran* Village, Mixco.

great value and the key to save and transmit the sound heritage of Guatemala and the region.

The collected work *in situ* allow to shape this valuable sound archive, and even some copies of work done by researchers, scholars and travelers were added, so this make possible to find in it samples of the first half of this century such as the ones collected by renowned American researcher Henrietta Yurchenco who make a compilation on ethnomusicology, a research, edition of sound and text of sound expressions of popular Guatemalan tradition. One of them is the drama dance **Rabinal Achí** compiled in 1947; and many others





Alfonso Arrillaga Cortés and the garifuna Oswaldo Rodríguez (R.I.P.), checking the equipment before start a recording session for traditional garifuna music, December 1985.

more, one thing to highlight is that we have kept in touch for academic purposes with Doctor Yurchenco. This archive is duly organized in card that can be identified by a phonogram, in there we can find every type of music sample of indigenous and traditional groups of Guatemala and the region; we can listen different types of recordings, drum and flute “xul (a whistle or flute made of clay)”, chirimia and drum, marimbas sencillas (diatonic), *tecomate* marimba, bambu marimba and marimbas dobles (chromatic), harp, violin and *guitarrilla*, guitar and voice (solos, duets, trios and more), traditional bands, popular orchestras, garifuna drum “garaon”, parts with the turtle shell instrument, conch-shell trumpet,

acappella voices and different types of sound expressions (sound textures, prayers, chants, rocketry, noise, and more) that are part of the oral traditional world of sounds expressions. This is the way that many other departments of the country have been recorded, from their capital town to every

unknown village and hamlet; but there have been some multinational operations to encourage ethnomusicology in South Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. This documental heritage is kept in safe deposits which only qualified and accredited researchers are allowed.

Part of the sound material has different applications in teaching and even sometimes they were used as teaching material in specialized centers; the necessities of all the levels of the education system are fulfilled as well as we have guided with our documental edition of sound heritage, short films and radio programs. Other



Alfonso Arrivillaga and Garifuna Gerardo Ellington, and an unidentified person, reviewing a report about Garifuna culture, June 1989.





field that it has been developed in the edition of records and cassettes co-produced with other organizations such as National Council of Popular and Traditional Cultures of Venezuela, Guatemalan Tourism Institute - (INGUAT by its initials in Spanish), Casa Larú Duna and to this point it has been 7 productions.

Throughout the years the results of the ethnomusicology area have been presented through the editorial work of the center: *Tradiciones de Guatemala* magazine and *Tradición Popular* bulletin, as well as special editions such as "the catalogue of instruments of popular Guatemalan tradition". These publications have established a part of the monograph and history of music and musical instruments of the oral tradition of the country. Through this work sound expressions have been identified, analyzed and sometimes produced to become an analytical proposal about the state of these expressions.

Some specific research areas with special

focus are: ***Kaqchikel***, flute, drum and snare drum; ***Q'eqchi'*** area, flute and drum, chirimia and drum, *cuaj*, marimbas, sea snails, harp, violins, *guitarrillas* and prayers; ***Garifuna*** area (circum-Caribbean) drum (*garaan*) performance, *sonajas*, conch-shell trumpet, and songs; Central *Petén* area (***Ladino culture***) musical sheet for chromatic marimba, marimba orchestra and instrumentals and vocals duets, and *cacho* performance; ***Q'anjob'al*** *mayor* area (*Popti'* group) marimbas, guitars and violin, *guitarrillas*, chirimias and drum. As it was mentioned before, one of the main ways to collect ethnomusicology is *in situ* due to the constant modifications and adaptation process that are part of the cultural expressions, so the program has a permanent status.

### Teaching

Hand in hand with investigation is the development of teaching, even though teaching is not the main objective of this area, some conferences, courses and thesis guiding have been

done to expand and combine research and teaching. The same way the organization has been invited as a special speaker in national and international conferences (America, Europe and Asia).

Publications and editions of sound materials is one of the ways of promotion of this area, but there are also exhibitions of musical instruments of popular tradition of Guatemala classified by the organology classification by Hornbostel and Sachs. There have been soundproof events, montages and other types of exhibitions done by this organization.

## SECTION OF MUSICOLOGY

*Maestro Enrique Anleu Díaz*

The section of musicology was created in 1983; despite having a close relation with the ethnomusicology section due to its object of study, they were created as two separate and independent sections that will achieve their own objectives.



As the main activities, the section of musicology is dedicated to the study, analysis, collection, conservation and promotion of academic and popular music; as well as other activities of musicology such as transcription and comparative analysis of the music of different times and regions.

For the time this area has been created some important discoveries have been made about music written by Guatemalan composers of the 20th century and some of the dances, *sones* and balls of the several regions of Guatemala have been written on paper. Some of the most important comparative studies made is the transcription and annotation of the music of the ballet-drama *Rabinal Achí*, which have had two edition translations into Spanish and a record of the choreography movements of the dance.

And along with the ethnomusicology area, an important organology classification of Mayan flutes and whistles have been made. And so was with San Carlos de

Guatemala University and National Printing Office the study work "Música en Guatemala" was the first research study about the musical manifestation in Guatemala with a focus on the social, historical and political aspects. This information has been published on the magazines and bulletins of the Center for Folklore Studies, as well as researches on music of our country and its different stages in history, and some important historical research work done sponsored by the **Management Division of Research** (DIGI), published in "HISTORIA SOCIAL DE LA MÚSICA Y LA PLÁSTICA EN GUATEMALA (1871-1976)".

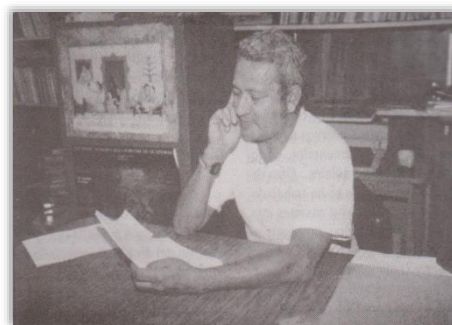
The person in charge of the musicology section had participated in important musicology conventions and in the verification of musical documentation in *Santo Domingo*, Dominican Republic; Washington, U.S.A.; Coral Gables, Florida, U.S.A.; as well as speaker in talks, conferences and debates in Guatemala to the public, or student groups

of different education levels.

This section has also provided advice and guidance to students and foreign and national professionals; as well as participating with others areas of CEFOL in group works.

Among some important projects proposed by this section, but which unfortunately for various reasons have not been possible to develop by the university authorities, such as the creation of the "Symphony Orchestra of the University of San Carlos de Guatemala", this project began in 1995 with the elaboration of the regulations, registration of members, operating budget and more that were part of the first stage, leaving the other stages on hold due to budget issues.

**Z**



Maestro Enrique Anleu Díaz



## AREA OF POPULAR TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

*Elba Villatoro*

The objectives of the Popular Traditional Medicine Area were mainly focused on the necessities of the Center for Folklore Studies of the University of San Carlos de Guatemala, which are: research, analyze, recover and promote the beliefs, practices and medical resources.

It is important to recognize that Guatemala is one of the countries of Latin America that is characterized by having a large cultural heritage inherited from the Maya and contemporary groups

of Maya people influenced by the knowledge brought by Spanish and which is involved in the traditional medical practice. This traditional medical culture is the result of a historical past in which health and ill problems were solved in specific ways that traced the worldview of the group who practiced them.

We need to indicate that medical



practice is not heritage only of indigenous people, but also of those groups who belong to lower economic stratum, even if it is a small group they also are part of the resource people for the higher stratum. This is a practice that lost its origin in history but still remains until our time; so, we try to investigate and analyze all those resources that can be good for the people in order to revitalize and promote them.

The social and economic crisis also encouraged the search for alternatives on health, so it is considered that in popular medicine we can find them, due to its culturally accepted resources and the low price.



Celebration ceremony for the new Maya year, Totonicapán



Guatemala has already developed studies related to practices and beliefs on medical traditions, mainly focused on indigenous communities on the highlands of the country, some of these studies have been made by Guatemalans but most of them were by foreign researchers. These studies were the basis for further medical research.

Popular Traditional Medicine area was founded in February 1981, by proposal of *Licenciado* Celso Lara Figueroa who was director of the center at that time.

Since this date and after, *Licenciada* Elba Marina Villatoro was in charge of the Popular Traditional Medicine area and she conducted research in different indigenous and ladino villages of the Republic of Guatemala, they were published in two promotion media of the Center for Folklore Studies: Traditional magazines of Guatemala and La Tradición Popular Bulletin.

They also have been published on DIGI

and Research, Development and Comprehensive Education Association (IDEI for its initials in Spanish). Some of them were printed abroad.

The first studies were conducted in 1981 in communities in the department of Petén, with the goal of reaching a broader audience, especially those connected to health services who received Western or formal health education. This study sought to reveal important aspects of popular medical culture, seeking to achieve a better understanding, appreciation, and respect for the different cultural backgrounds of these groups and thus foster positive communication



Maya Healer

between physicians and patients.

The first name of the area was Traditional Medicine, but after some investigations they found some interrelations with elements that according to anthropology goes beyond the concept of traditional, so it was decided to change the name to



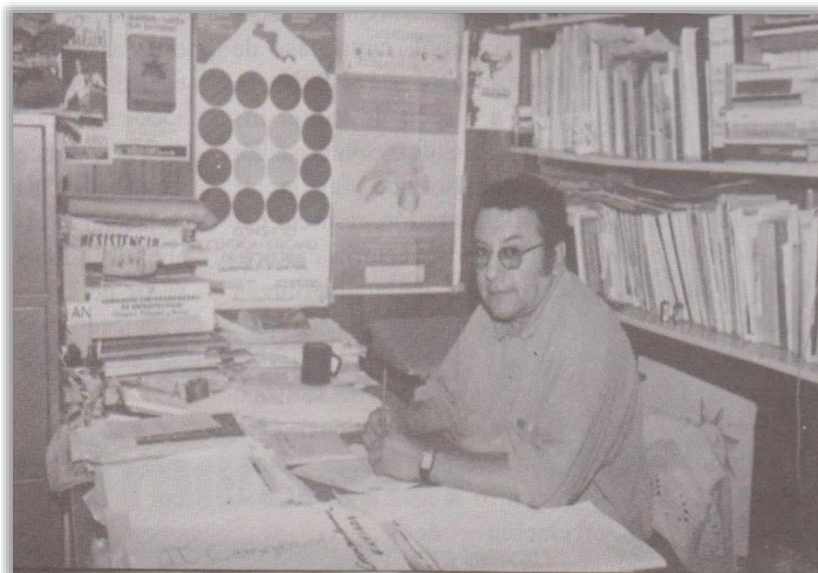
Traditional Therapists "Toto-Integrado Association"





Popular Traditional  
Medicine, the one that is  
until this date.

The Popular  
Traditional Medicine Area  
has advised different  
organizations related to  
the study of medicinal  
plants, as well as guided  
medical sciences students,  
health promoters,  
traditional midwives,  
social and agricultural  
promoters until March  
31st, 1997, because  
*Licenciada Elba Marina  
Villatoro*, retired from her  
position on April 1st of the  
same year. And from that  
moment, the area is  
working following the  
regulations of research of  
CEFOL.



## AREA OF POPULAR TRADITIONAL

### CHOREOGRAPHY RESEARCH

*Carlos René García Escobar*

The area of  
popular and traditional  
choreography research  
was founded in 1985  
under the name of Area of  
Ethnochoreology with  
direction of *Licenciado  
Celso A. Lara Figueroa*;  
but in charge of *Carlos  
René García Escobar*, a  
last semester student of  
the Anthropology Area of  
the School of History of  
the University of San  
Carlos. In November of  
the same year, *García  
Escobar* get a degree in  
Anthropology with his  
study of thesis of *morerías*  
(store in which dancers  
can rent mask, clothes and  
accessories to present  
ritual dances) in

Guatemala: **Las Morerías  
de Totonicapán, Estudio  
Histórico-Etnográfico de  
una institución Social  
Tradicional en  
Guatemala.**

The person in  
charge of this area had  
already started to  
introduce himself in the  
choreography research  
area since 1980, when he  
was accepted as a member  
of the traditional dance  
group of the *Lo de Bran*  
village, municipality of  
*Mixco*, department of  
Guatemala in 1983, this  
was a great opportunity  
for him to delve deeper  
into the investigations of  
traditional dances.

The University  
Editorial published his  
graduation thesis with the  
title **Talleres, Trajes y  
Danzas Tradicionales de  
Guatemala. El Caso de  
San Cristóbal  
Totonicapán**  
(Workshops, Costumes  
and Traditional Dances of  
Guatemala. The case of  
San Cristóbal,  
Totonicapán) on its first



edition in 1987. When this edition was out of stock the first reprint in 1992. This research was the first important step of the development of the study of traditional dances in Guatemala because thanks to it new knowledge about the structure, function and social relationships of the tailing workshop with making of mask, the so called *moreñas* that since 17th Century were a place to rest costumes, masks, and accessories for different traditional dances of Guatemala that were known as “bailes de moros (moors dances)”.

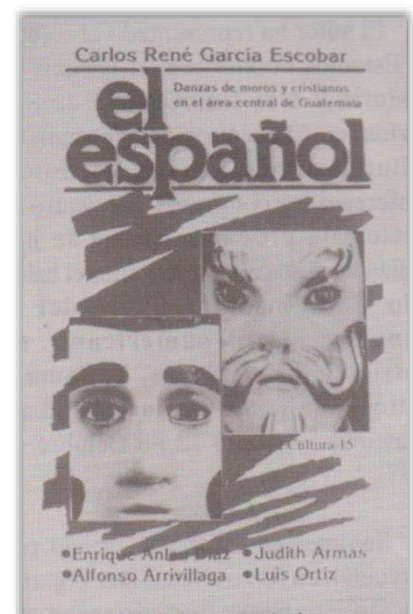
Since 1985 this area was known as choreography research area, and have published several studies that were out of stock, they were published in the following order:

1. **Historia, Etnografía y Aplicaciones del Baile de Toritos. Fiesta y Bailes de Santo Domingo Xenacoj, Sacatepéquez, Guatemala.** (History, Ethnography and Applications of *Toritos* dances. Festival and dances of Santo Domingo Xenacoj, Sacatepéquez, Guatemala). La Tradición Popular Bulletin, issue number 44 and 45. 1095. (Co-written with CEFOL researchers).
2. **La platería de Tactic, Alta Verapaz. El caso de Valerio Tujab.** (The silversmithing workshop in Tactic, Alta Verapaz. The case of Talerio Tujab). La Tradición Popular bulletin, issue number 51. 1985).
3. **El baile de Gigantes en el Área Central del Departamento de Guatemala.** (The Dance of Giants in the central area of the department of Guatemala). La Tradición Popular, bulletin. Issue number 60. 1986.
4. **La Cultura Popular Tradicional del Departamento de Guatemala.** (The Popular Traditional Culture of the Department of Guatemala). DIGI-USAC Booklets. Issue number 3 to 87. 1987.





5. **Talleres, Trajes y Danzas...** (Workshops, costumes and dances...). 1987 and 1992.
6. **Panorama de las Danzas Tradicionales de Guatemala.** (A View of the Traditional Dances in Guatemala). La Tradición Popular. Issue number 71. 1989.
7. **Detrás de la Máscara. Estudio Etnocoreológico. La Danza de Toritos Cakchiquel en Guatemala. El caso de Mixco.** (Behind the Mask. Ethnochoreology Study. The Cakchiquel Toritos dance in Guatemala. The case of Mixco). 1989.
8. **El Español, Danzas de Moros y Cristianos en Guatemala.** (The Spanish, Moors and Christians Dances of Guatemala). 1991.
9. **Historia Antigua, Historia y Etnografía del Rabinal Achí.** (Old History, History and Ethnography of Rabinal Achí). La Tradición Popular bulletin. Issue number 81. 1991.
10. **Bases para una ley protectora de las danzas tradicionales de Guatemala y sus portadores. Una polémica.** (The basis for a protection law for the traditional dances of Guatemala and the ones who bear them. A polemic). La Tradición Popular bulletin. Issue number 88 and 89. 1992.
11. **Danzas y Nahuales en Guatemala.**
12. **La Danza de Napoleón en Guatemala.** (The Napoleon Dance in Guatemala). La Tradición Popular bulletin. Issue number 109. 1006.
13. **Atlas Danzario de Guatemala.** (Collection of Dances of Guatemala). 1996.
14. Three research dance workshops were organized by the







choreography  
research area along  
with the Culture and  
Sports Ministry,  
focused on  
Traditional Dance  
Directors of the rural  
area of the country in  
1988, 1989 and 1990.

**15. Las Danzas de Guerra en Guatemala, Rabinal Achí, Moros y Cristianos, La Conquista, Yancunú y Napoleón.** (The war dances in Guatemala, *Rabinal Achí*, Moors and Christians, The conquest, *Yancunú* and Napoleon). La Tradición Popular Bulletin. Issue number 113.

We must add to this list the articles written by the author of this article, published in *Tradiciones de Guatemala* magazine of the Center for Folklore Studies, each one of them related to popular culture, arts, handicrafts, and dances. Such as issue number 33, a monograph magazine about dances and balls in Guatemala.

The author has represented the Center for Folklore Studies, the School of History and the

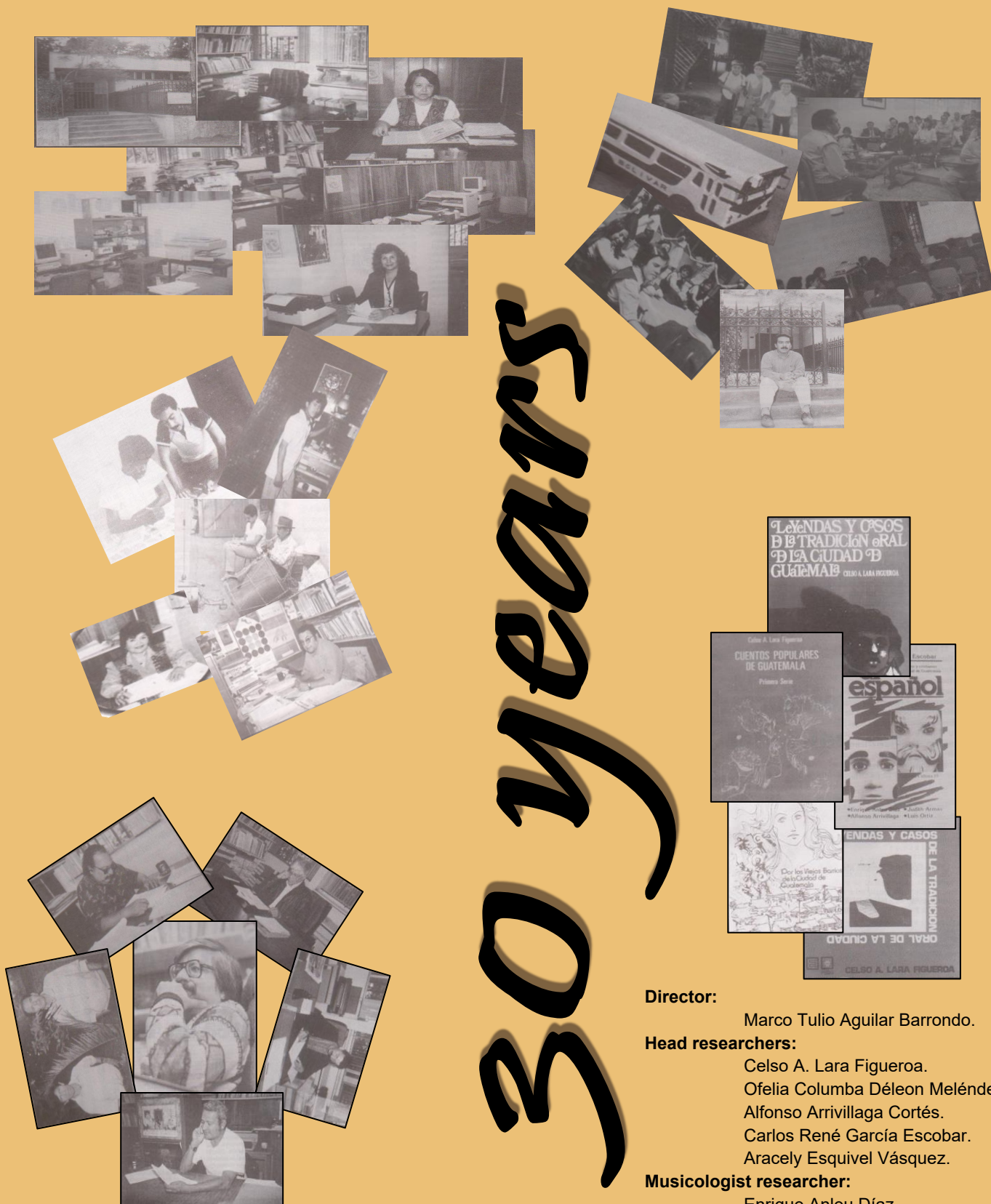
University of San Carlos in special cultural meetings, cultural specialist meetings, debates, conferences and conventions in Guatemala and Central America. One highlighted event is the **Second Central America Convention of Anthropology in Chiapas, Panama and Belize** held in Guatemala City from October 6th to 12th in 1997.

His speeches have been in general about popular culture and traditional dances of Mesoamerica.





# 30 years



## Director:

Marco Tulio Aguilar Barrondo.

## Head researchers:

Celso A. Lara Figueroa.  
Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez.  
Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés.  
Carlos René García Escobar.  
Aracely Esquivel Vásquez.

## Musicologist researcher:

Enrique Anleu Díaz.

## Style editor and editorial assistance:

Guillermo Alfredo Vásquez González.

## Photography area:

Jairo Gamaliel Cholotío Corea.

## Layout and cover design:

Jaime Homero Solares Rodríguez.



Bulletin Number 115 / 1997

IMPRENTA LLERENA, S.A.