

# Obituary





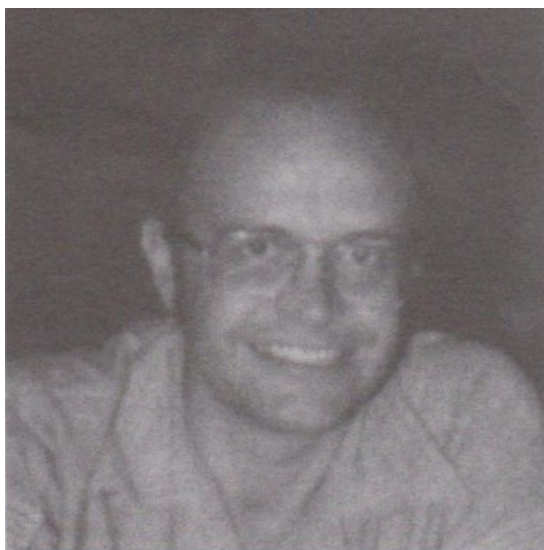
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*Licenciado*  
**Arturo Francisco  
Matas Oria**

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Born in Ciego de Ávila, Cuba, on May 11, 1944, he moved to the Republic of Guatemala with his parents, Mr. Arturo Severo Matas Trigo and Mrs. Orlanda Elsa Oria Ramos, in 1953. They settled in Zone 1 of the capital city, where he continued his education. His youth was spent between studies and the pastimes of the era on Sixth Avenue. He entered the workforce in 1967 as Production Manager in the assembly of televisions and other electrical devices. Later, he obtained a Diploma in Electrical Engineering from the International School for Latin America, Pennsylvania, United States.



In 1979, he joined the National Electrification Institute as a Communications Technician and Engineering Assistant, performing planning and administrative functions. Since 1978, he worked in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of San Carlos of Guatemala as a Laboratory Instructor in Electrical Machines and Electromagnetic Conversion. In 1989, he earned a degree in Anthropology from the School of History at the same university, specializing in ethnohistory, topography, social anthropology, and physical anthropology.

Between 1993 and 1999, he worked at the School of History of the University of San Carlos as a professor and coordinator of the Anthropology Area. From 1997 to 1998, he was an instructor for the Tourism Sector, teaching Anthropology and Folklore of Guatemala at the Technical Institute for Training and Productivity. From 1996 to 2010, he coordinated research projects in ethnohistory within the University Program for Historical Research in Guatemala (DIGI).

From 1999 to 2010, he served as an adjunct researcher at the Institute of Historical, Anthropological, and Archaeological Research of the School of History at the University of San Carlos. From 2002 to 2010, he was a Research and Special Projects Advisor for the Center for Folklore Studies (CECOL).

He served as a student representative on the Advisory Council of the Anthropology Area at the School of History at USAC.

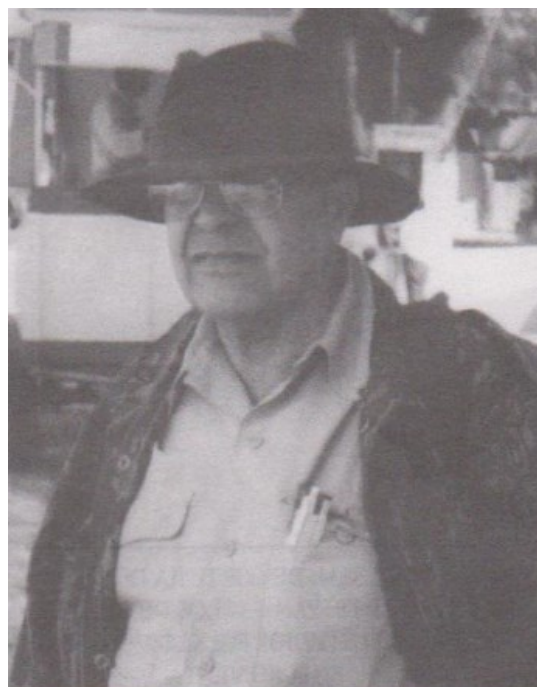
Additionally, he was a member of the following: The Research Commission of the School of History and the National Council for the Protection of La Antigua Guatemala. The Space, Land, and Ocean Commission, as well as the Environment Commission of the National Council of Science and Technology, representing the School of History and CEFOL. Project evaluator for the Program on Current Issues, History, and Human Settlements of the Directorate General of Research (DIGI) at the University of San Carlos. The National Council for Sociocultural Research of the Ministry of Culture and Sports. The Coordinating and Promoting Council for Research at USAC, representing the Center for Folklore Studies.

He participated in radio and television programs focused on ethnohistorical research. He was a speaker at Anthropology Congresses, National Historians' Meetings, and Archaeology Symposia held in Guatemala between 1997 and 2010. He published 15 of his research works in the journals of CEFOL and the School of History between 1984 and 2010. Among these are: *El Camino de Parramos* (1995), *Etnohistoria de los Conflictos por las Tierras en el Valle de Chocojol Juyú Durante el Siglo XVIII* (1998), and *Etnohistoria de la Formación y Desarrollo Histórico de la Población de los Santos Inocentes de Paramos* (2000).

In addition to his academic life, he had a true passion for mountaineering, being one of the founders of the Mountaineering Federation and receiving recognition for

climbing all 37 volcanoes in Guatemala. Due to his experience and spirit of service, he was commissioned, after the 1976 earthquake, to lead a group of Boy Scouts in distributing food supplies in San Juan Sacatepéquez as an honorary volunteer. His love for walking through the municipalities of Chimaltenango inspired him to pursue ethno- and micro-history in the region, driven by the archaeological evidence he encountered on his long journeys.

Thus, the Center for Folklore Studies pays homage to the man, colleague, and friend who, on October 25, 2010, confronted humanity's greatest foe, entrusted his soul to God, returned his body to the earth, and bequeathed his knowledge to those privileged to work alongside him. He is now with God, where he fears neither what is to come nor life's hidden trials, nor the solemn and shadowy eyelids of death. Surely, he is rejoicing in heaven, in that



special place God prepared for him—a place where no serpent will strike and the sun will not scorch his brow. With God by his side, he has everything in infinity, where neither pleasure, fortune, extreme poverty, nor hardship can divert a man from the path of duty. To die is a duty, and exemplary individuals like Arturo Matas Aria, models for the university community, are not mourned but emulated! May he rest in peace.

COURTESY MATERIAL FROM THE  
UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS OF  
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