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UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS OF GUATEMALA
CENTER FOR FOLKLORIC STUDIES

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TRADITIONS OF GUATEMALA

8

Guatemala, Central America

1977

ACTIVITIES
AND
NEWS

ACTIVITIES AND NEWS FROM THE CENTER FOR FOLKLORIC STUDIES

COURSE ON FOLKLORE APPLIED TO EDUCATION

A course on folklore applied to education was taught between May 3 and July 12, 1977, in two sessions: from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. and from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. It was a course especially designed for teachers of the various educational levels in the capital city. 96 students regularly attended, most of them primary school teachers serving in schools in the capital and some municipalities of the Department of Guatemala. Teachers from other levels, education supervisors, and graduates from the Universidad de San Carlos also participated; as well as middle school education students and people interested in the study of popular traditions.

The subjects taught were the following:

The science of folklore, its scientific implications and its place within the Social Sciences

Professors:

Roberto Diaz castillo

Celso A. Lara F.

Techniques and methods of folkloric research

Professor:

Celso A. Lara F.

Projection, application and use of folkloric facts in art and education

Professor:

Ofelia Columba Déleón Meléndez

Folklore of Guatemala

Professors:

Roberto Díaz Castillo

Celso A. Lara F.

Folklore applied to the curricula of Guatemalan education

Professor:

Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez

(For more information on this course, consult **Tradición Popular** No. 12-13, 1977, pages 25-33).

PRESENTATION OF FOLKLORIST BAUDILLO ORDOÑEZ

On August 23, on the occasion of the anniversary celebration of the founding of the School of History of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, the Center for Folkloric Studies presented a marimba recital with traditional music from different regions of the country.

This recital was offered by Professor Baudillo Ordóñez in the main hall of said house of studies.

PRESENTATION OF QUINTETO TIEMPO

Under the auspices of the Center for Folkloric Studies, the Board of Directors of the School of History and the student association of that same academic entity, Quinteto Tiempo was presented there on May 12.

After their performance, the members of the group held a colloquium with professors and students from the area of anthropology and in particular with those attending the folklore course of Guatemala. During this colloquium, experiences were exchanged about the artistic work of Quinteto Tiempo and their research, recreation and dissemination of the traditional oral culture of Latin American countries.

Taking advantage of their stay in Guatemala, Quinteto Tiempo also performed in the auditorium of the Botanical Garden of the Universidad de San

Carlos de Guatemala, on May 13, in a hearing - conference dedicated to the students attending the course on folklore applied to education, which was co-sponsored by the students themselves and the Center for Folkloric Studies.

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM THE CENTER FOR FOLKLORIC STUDIES

In an event in the session hall of the University Superior Council and with the assistance of the highest university authorities and members of the editorial board, the director of the Center for Folkloric Studies, Roberto Díaz Castillo, presented the rector of the University, Doctor Roberto Valdeavellano Pinot, with the latest publications edited by this university research institute.

The publications delivered were the following:

Revista **Tradiciones de Guatemala** No. 6 and bulletin **La Tradición Popular** No. 15.

In addition, the first copies of the books *Folklore Aplicado a la educación guatemalteca* by Ofelia Columba Déleon M., and *Contribución del folklore al estudio de la historia* by A. Lara Figueroa, were presented to their authors, both researchers at the center.

A Likewise, the book **Diccionario de teoría folklórica** by Professor Paulo de Carvalho-Neto was presented. All these titles included in the collection **Problemas y Documentos**.

Below are the words spoken by the director of the Center for Folkloric Studies at that event:

“Less than four years ago, in July 1970, a few months after the beginning of the rectoral period that is about to conclude and thanks to the generous initiative of licenciado Mario Dary Rivera, the Center for Folkloric Studies was housed in the Botanical Garden of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala. The resolution of the University Superior Council, dictated in November 1973, which ordered that the aforementioned Center be made a research institute equipped with the minimum resources for the fulfillment of its purposes, was then beginning to take shape.

It has been, therefore, throughout the rectorship of Doctor Roberto Valdeavellano Pinot, that the Center for Folkloric Studies has progressively become a favorable environment for scientific research and, what is even more important, an organization that disseminates its own work through its already numerous editions.

In 1975, this new research institute offered the first fruits of its creative work: The bulletin titled La **Tradición Popular**, of which 15 consecutive issues have now been printed, and the edition of **Tradiciones de Guatemala** continued, of which the semi-annual volumes corresponding to 1975 and 1976 are circulating. Added to this is that, also as a product of the research carried out, the Center for Folkloric Studies has published 9 works by various authors in its collections called **Problemas y Documentos, Breve and Proyección Folklórica**.

The totality of this bibliographic production has been widely accepted within and outside the country. In some cases, subtitles appear as mandatory reference texts in several universities, and in others, they have been recommended as guides for middle school studies. Universities and cultural centers abroad -Spain, Venezuela, Peru, USA- continue to request and highly appreciate our books. To all this is added the circumstance that, as has happened with **Leyendas y casos de la tradición oral de la ciudad de Guatemala**, by colleague and friend Celso Arnaldo Lara Figueroa, the national critics have granted them honorable distinctions. This work, for example, received an honorable mention on the occasion of the presentation of the **Quetzal de Oro** award - established by the association of journalists of Guatemala - in 1974.

But what most satisfies the researchers of the Center for Folkloric Studies is the fact that several of their books are already completely sold out. And that the interest in the new ones promises them the same fate.

The volumes that I will deliver today to the university rector are three: *Folklore aplicado a la educación guatemalteca* by Ofelia Déleon Meléndez, *Diccionario de teoría folklórica*, by Paulo de Carvalho-Neto; and *Contribución del folklore al estudio de la historia*, by Celso Arnaldo Lara Figueroa. To these titles we must add number 6 of **Tradiciones de Guatemala**, our semi-annual magazine, and number 15 of la **Tradición Popular**, an illustrated bulletin of bimonthly circulation.

Regarding the first of the aforementioned books, I wrote on the flap of its cover:

“...With this work by researcher Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez, the Center for Folkloric Studies enriches its already extensive bibliographic production and breaks ground in a field that is still virgin: that of folklore applied to education.

Aimed especially at school teachers, the subject matter of this work has been ordered in a way that allows the reader to be offered a series of basic notions about folklore as a scientific discipline, its theoretical postulates and the possibility of discerning between the authentic and the inauthentic in this matter.

But the core of these pages is contained in the chapters related to the importance of folklore in teaching, the formation of personality and the consolidation of the national spirit. The conclusions and recommendations reached by the author are very precise and achievable in our environment.

Without a doubt, this book will add to the new currents of Guatemalan folklorology - alien to picturesque, erudition for the sake of erudition itself and sterile and sterilizing aestheticism - that is increasingly rooted in the methodological and technical resources of contemporary science...”

The second of the works object of this delivery is extremely honorable for the Center for Folkloric Studies and, therefore, for the University. It is an unpublished work by the illustrious Brazilian professor Paulo de Carvalho-Neto, the indisputable authority in the field of contemporary folklorology. This dictionary is not only a masterpiece and necessary but the first to be published in the Spanish-speaking world. “The question of terminologies is of undeniable importance,” - points out Joaquín Ribeiro, in this regard -. And he adds that: “A certain wise man said with absolute reason that every science must be a well-made language.” With a similar criterion, Américo Paredes notes that “We need a language for us folklorists. It is not necessarily a pseudo-scientific language - he says - but simply a clear definition of terms, so that we can understand each other.” Hence the high merit of this dictionary of folkloric theory, whose unpublished originals, as I indicated, with a meritorious renunciation of the corresponding editorial rights, were given to the Center for Folkloric Studies in a fraternal gesture by its author.

Regarding the third of these titles, *Contribución del folklore al estudio de la historia*, I underlined its importance in the note that presents it:

“...Lenin first, and Gramsci later, warned that within each national culture there is evidence of the existence of elements, even if undeveloped, of a

democratic and socialist culture. That is to say, a culture of the exploited workers whose living conditions inevitably engender their own ideology. Based on this approach, it was great and pioneering to explain folklore as the culture of the dominated classes, not only different but also opposed to the official culture of the dominant classes. The idea of a scientific and materialist discipline dedicated to the study of popular traditions was then beginning to consolidate.

To this current belong today the tendencies of folklore studies (folklorology) that emerged in socialist countries, which conceive of the folklore phenomenon as an authentic expression of popular culture, as a collective creation of the masses within which the best traditions of struggle resistant to foreign cultural penetration take refuge. The Cuban case, within this area, is an exemplary case.

Contribución del folklore al estudio de la historia by Celso A. Lara F., is moving in the indicated direction. Rich in contributions and in the analysis of specific situations, this essay tends to demonstrate the considerable possibilities that folkloric events have of becoming a historical source. Methodological questions and innumerable problems that the exegesis of traditional culture brings with it are also successfully addressed by the author of these pages.

For historians and folklorists, and, of course, for those who still do not understand, ignore or simply deny the value of oral tradition as an instrument capable of helping to reconstruct the past of our peoples, this book that addresses it joins the fruitful editorial work of the Center for Folkloric Studies of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, will undoubtedly constitute a reason for deep reflection..."

I want to end these words with a fraternal congratulations to the fellow researchers of the Center for Folkloric Studies, Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez and Celso Arnolfo Lara Figueroa, now that they are receiving the harvest they knew how to sow with their own hands.

Mister Rector:

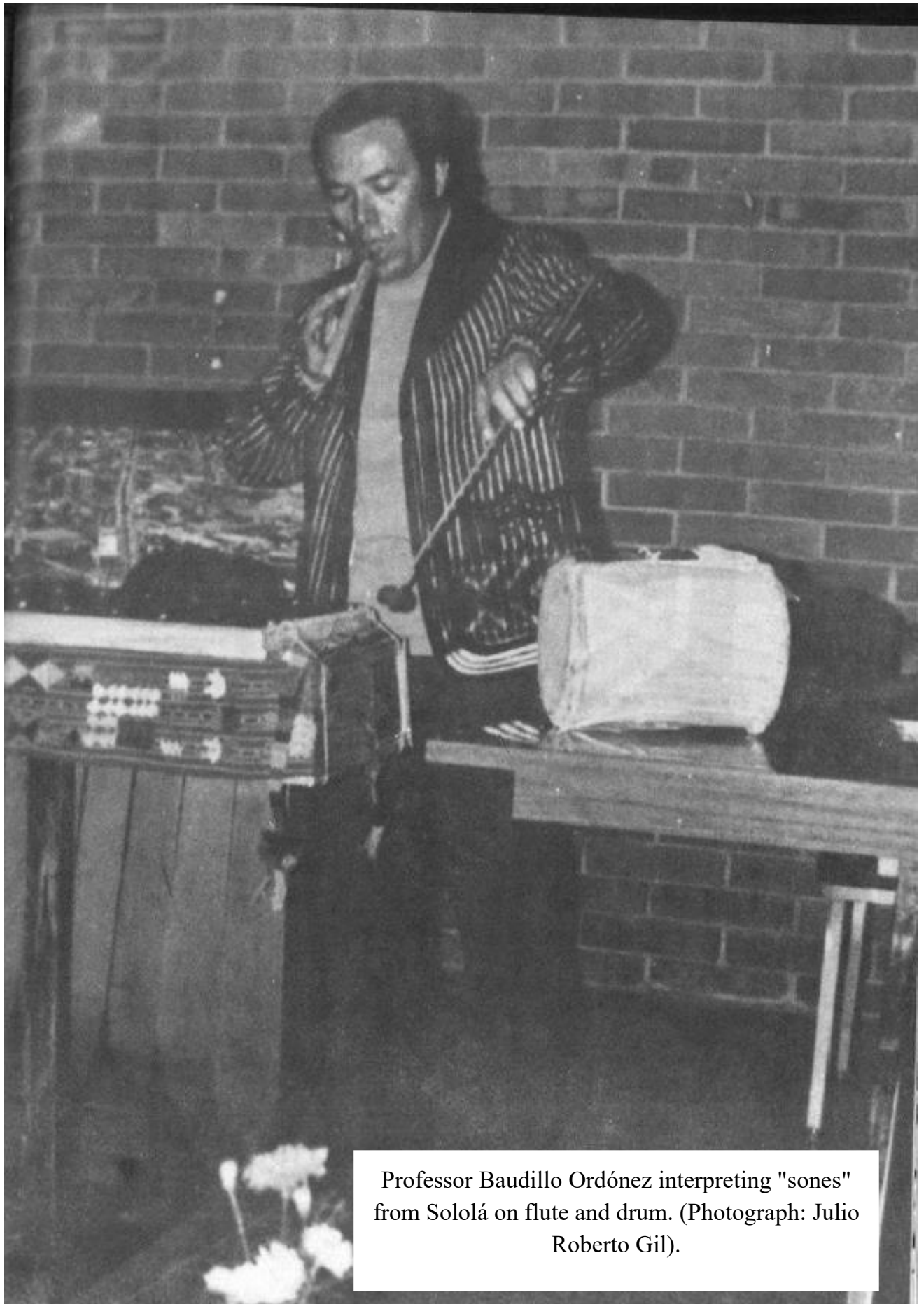
It is unnecessary to tell you that this act entails for me a doubly felt emotion: that of sharing the joy of my colleagues for these pages of theirs that they receive printed today, and also the very emotional one of delivering to the academic dignitary, but fundamentally to the friend, the result of an effort that adds to the unexceptionable editorial work of his doctorate.

On behalf of the editorial board, whose members I thank for their permanent understanding of our work, and in my capacity as director of the Center for Folkloric Studies, I am pleased to place in your hands the latest hours of this institute printed during your period. I hope, Doctor Valdeavellano, that this modest proof of our desire to open new channels for scientific research into popular traditions constitutes the best testimony of the gratitude we owe to those who, together with other university authorities, have allowed us to work in peace, with dignity and freedom.

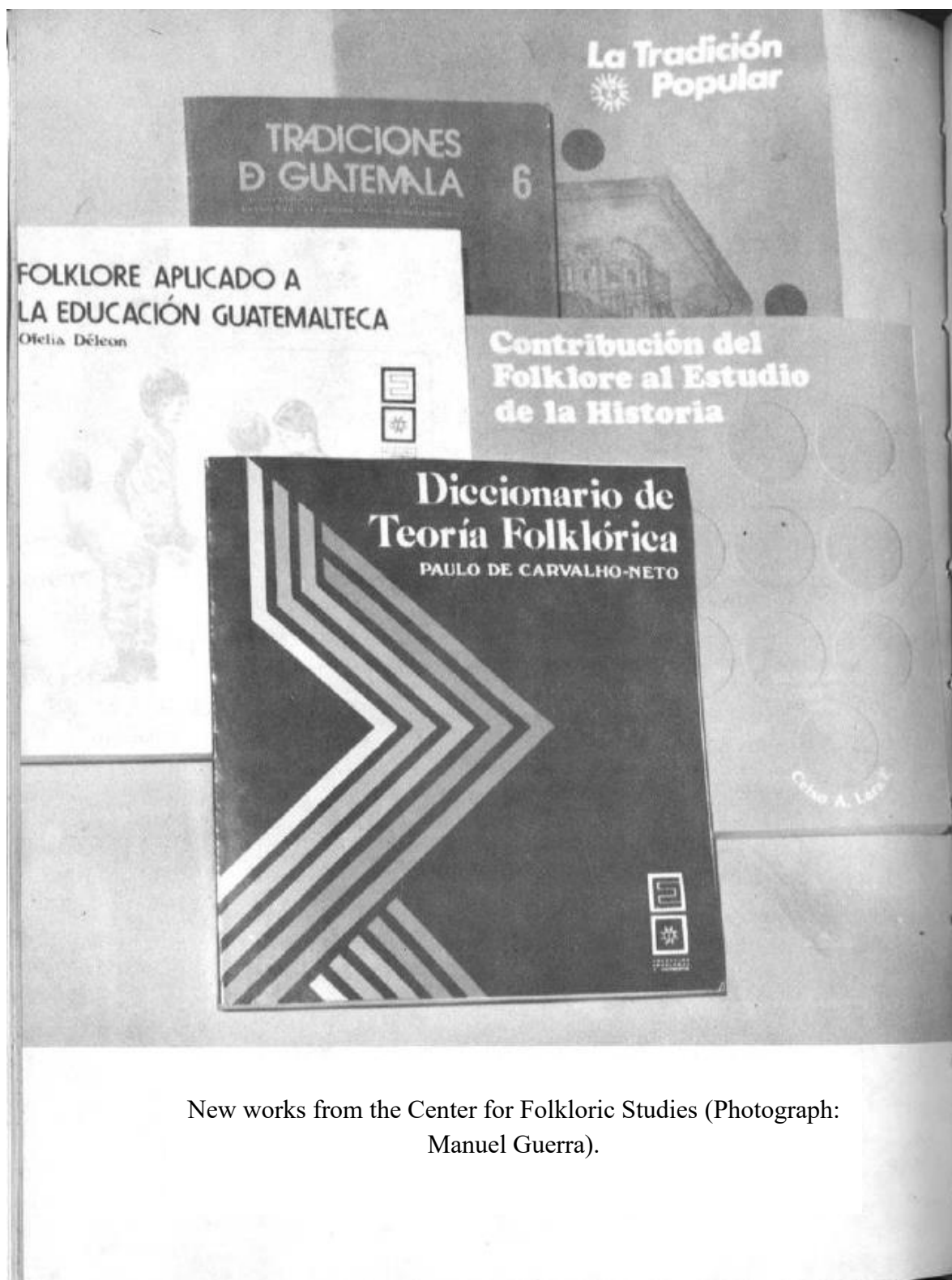


Course on folklore applied to education.

(Photograph: Mauro Calanchina).



Professor Baudillo Ordóñez interpreting "sones" from Sololá on flute and drum. (Photograph: Julio Roberto Gil).



New works from the Center for Folkloric Studies (Photograph: Manuel Guerra).