

ILAS Newsletter



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EDITORIAL Central America and ILAS

Central America leapt into the attention of the North American public at the end of the 1970s and caught the nation by surprise. "What's this?" we seemed to say. "What's all the racket out of these little countries clustered on the isthmus?" The scholarly community was as ill-prepared for the sudden burst of interest and the dramatic increase in national importance of events in that region as were the media and the public-at-large. How many academic specialists were there who were capable of providing firsthand information? Barely a handful nationwide. How many students had been trained to analyze and follow events in the region? Who would have recommended that a budding scholar dedicate three or four years to a doctorate on the region? That's not where the action was, not where the breakthroughs were coming, not a region for which government or business or academia was hiring.

Central America touches the institute in many ways. The search for information by representatives of the media, the requests for speakers to address civic groups, and the opportunities for external funding all reflect increased interest in the region. The continued increase in both applications for the ILAS graduate program and enrollments in Latin American-content courses seems to be related to new awareness of Latin America, which, for reasons both good and bad, reflects the impact of Central America on students.

This issue of the newsletter mentions several new activities at the institute that focus on Central America. They reflect the fact that both the director and I were appointed at the same time in September 1986 and were, coincidentally but perhaps serendipitously, Central America specialists. Let's reflect for a moment on the proper place for Central American studies

within the context of Latin America and an Institute of Latin American Studies, and let us then place the new activities focused on Central America in that context.

Whether one approves of or opposes the Reagan administration's perspective on Central America, it is clear that national ignorance of the region contributed to the crises that now assail it and to the confused role that the U.S. is playing. Administration supporters would argue that our ignorance failed to anticipate the growth of Marxist influence. Others would argue, perhaps, that U.S. inattention to deteriorating living standards in the region after 1960, later publicized by the Kissinger Commission, failed to provide guidance on what we, as a nation, could have been doing to alleviate the crisis. And both sides argue at present that it is ignorance that motivates the opposition.

There has been a burgeoning of solid scholarship on Central America in the past ten years; but there has also been a vast increase in shallow, partisan, and poorly informed journalistic writing that responds to the U.S. debate over the Reagan administration's Central American policy. The two groups of writings are often difficult to separate, so there is an impression left for some that much of the Central American "scholarship" is also of secondary quality.

Prior to 1986 this institute did not participate in the redirection of research priorities toward Central America; with some few exceptions, the Central American focus of ILAS seldom went beyond precolonial Mesoamerica. Given the controversy that surrounded the confusion of journalism, partisanship, and scholarship, that was not difficult to understand. But the time has come for sorting through the issues and supporting solid, fully scholarly research and teaching on the region. There

are lessons to be learned from Central America, generalizations to the rest of Latin America, as well as other reasons for a valid research focus that emphasizes Central America.

The Central American countries may have been the first in Latin America to illustrate the fundamental limitations of the development models that have been pursued throughout the region since the Second World War. Analysts of a conservative bent, such as Howard J. Wiarda at the American Enterprise Institute, as well as those who are more liberal concur that Latin America may now have exhausted all of the development models that have come to it from the past. This was clear in Central America in the 1970s, had we been watching closely enough. As the Kissinger Commission reported, the "success" of agro-export development in creating "modernization" and "development" for a small minority of the Central American population completely obscured the quiet desperation into which it had cast the poor majority.

Central America is capable of becoming a crucible for developmental innovation. The very fragility of the political and economic structures of the Central American nations, their defenselessness before the international economy, and their very

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smallness means that they are much more sensitive to new programs, new initiatives, new assistance packages, and new models of development than any of the larger, more cumbersome, and more complex Latin American nations. And as peace comes to the region, new assistance programs must certainly follow. The future ability of Central American nations to replace political and economic dependence with some measure of national autonomy, to create new international roles for themselves by diversifying their ties, and to achieve the level of social justice required to reinforce nascent democratic structures may presage the future of the larger nations.

The institute seeks to contribute to that process on several levels. A new study of the Nicaraguan public sector was published this past year as the product of a research project funded by a grant to ILAS from the Ford Foundation and undertaken by University of Texas faculty and graduate students during 1986. The volume evaluates the development of seven Nicaraguan public sector areas since 1979.

This spring ILAS will host an un-

precedented gathering of leading Guatemalan social scientists as they meet to plan a research agenda for the development of social science in a Guatemala that now appears to be more open to the return of many of its exiled scholars. The role of ILAS here, as in other developing programs of support for our Latin American colleagues, is to facilitate communication among Latin American scholars and research institutions, as well as between them and the international research and research-funding community.

The presence of Dr. Arturo Arias as research associate and visiting professor for the 1987-1989 period will provide unprecedented access for students to a leading novelist and sociologist who is teaching about both Central American literature and Central American political and social development. The man who is arguably the most prominent Central American social theorist, as well as secretary general of the most important Latin America-wide research consortium (FLACSO), Edelberto Torres Rivas, will also teach under institute auspices during the spring 1988 semester.

The institute's newly formed Central America Working Group is organizing a series of lectures in the spring focused on "An Insider's View of the Central American Peace Process," including prominent nongovernmental participants, observers, and commentators from the countries of the region and from the U.S. And a conference will be held in April on the future of the Central American economies in which the full range of analyses and perspectives, from that of the State Department to those of Marxist scholars, will be explored.

These activities represent a determined attempt by the university's faculty to bring the highest standards of scholarship to bear on the controversial and rapidly changing Central American scene. If we were to do less, we would not only fail to meet the needs of our students and our responsibilities as Latin Americanist researchers, but we would also be ignoring the urgent needs of Central America itself for cogent, careful, effective scholarship and public education about Central America in the United States.

Michael E. Conroy,
associate director

PROGRAM NEWS

New Introductory Textbook

The Institute of Latin American Studies, the University of Texas at Austin, and Pantheon Books (a division of Random House) will publish an introductory textbook to Latin America and Latin American studies.

This new introduction to Latin America will emphasize differences in U.S. and Latin American perspectives on critical contemporary issues likely to influence the evolution of Latin America and U.S.-Latin American relations significantly during the rest of this century.

Latin America and the United States are being drawn more closely together every day. As Latin America approaches its 500th birthday in 1992 and as we jointly approach a new millennium, increasing economic interdependence, ever more in-

tricate and mature diplomatic relations, and shrinking distances bind our futures as never before. The need for perception, understanding, and sensitivity on the part of the citizens of the United States may never have been greater.

The book will serve several overlapping purposes:

- It will provide a 12th-grade or introductory collegiate supplemental text for a wide variety of social science courses oriented to Latin America;

- It will be a marketable trade book for a nonacademic audience interested in an introduction to major contemporary issues in Latin America;

- It will provide adequate historical background for each of the topical areas covered to encourage sensitivity to Latin American perspectives on critical issues;

- It will contribute to improved understanding of the background for major current and potential issues in Latin American development and U.S.-Latin American

relations over the course of the next decade.

Each chapter will explore a major contemporary issue in Latin American culture and politics in the mid-1980s, including some discussion of the historical background of the issue, how and why Latin American perspectives may differ from mainstream U.S. perspectives, and implications of each of the issues for the evolution of Latin America during the remainder of the 20th century.

Each chapter will consist of an original essay produced by one of 15 collaborating specialists at the University of Texas. Each chapter will be lightly end-noted, rather than footnoted, and each will provide brief suggestions for additional semipopular readings that might be reviewed by those who seek deeper understanding of the phenomenon described in the chapter.

The book will be graphically enriched with original, unpublished photographic

material from the Benson Latin American Collection, with graphs, tables, and maps produced especially for the volume, and with a comprehensive chronology, keyed to the chapters, that integrates major events in the hemisphere from 1492 to the present.

The two coeditors include in their collective backgrounds a wide range of political, social science, and humanities experience relevant to Latin America. **Arturo Arias**, with a Ph.D. in the sociology of literature, is a Guatemalan novelist, scriptwriter, research scientist at the institute, and visiting lecturer in both the Department of Government and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. He was coscriptwriter for the screenplay of the movie *El Norte* and is completing an opera based on Guatemalan indigenous themes. **Michael E. Conroy**, economist, has written on economic demography, regional and urban planning, the Nicaraguan economic experiment, and on U.S. policy toward Central America.

Changing Theoretical Orientation Seen in Latin America

“What Happened to Latin American Social Science?” a recent talk given by **Bryan Roberts**, the C. B. Smith chairholder in sociology, to a packed room of UT faculty, incited stimulating discussion concerning changing theoretical orientations. Roberts proposed that macro theory, specifically Marx, had lost its influence as compared to the 1970s, and the emphasis of current work was on more specific empirical processes, social movements being one of the most important. The discussion brought forth arguments that Marx was by no means dead, but that his influence was now more diffuse, and that individual researchers were exploring more immediate concerns within the context of the on-going political and social reality.

Roberts also suggested that foreign schools of thought, specifically European and North American, had become more dominant, overriding Latin American schools, and cited the influence of training

abroad and the intellectual fragmentation of Latin American social scientists. Enrique Semo, visiting scholar from Mexico, agreed, pointing out that it had been Marx who had provided the earlier unity of a “Latin perspective” a decade ago. Torcuato Di Tella, visiting scholar from Argentina, pointed out that it was the ideology of Marx that had disappeared, whereas the theory was still alive. It was suggested that perhaps there was a macro theory emerging in the form of a kind of Darwinism that now placed greater emphasis on indeterministic aspects of social process and on questions of selection.

Others pointed to the “professionalization” of social science in some Latin American countries, particularly in certain disciplines such as economics, which further erodes a peculiarly Latin American social science perspective. Institutional weaknesses were mentioned, such as the precarious funding for social sciences in many countries and dependence on external sources of money, resulting in small research centers with limited capacity for systemic research.

The meeting was the third in a series of Comfortable Seminars designed to facilitate intellectual interchange in the UT Latin Americanist community. They are held the first Friday of each month at the Faculty Center. Earlier sessions were led by Larry Gilbert of the Zoology Department and Greg Knapp of the Geography Department.

Richard N. Adams

State-of-the-Art Workshop on Water Resources Research

Dr. Ignacio Rodríguez-Iturbe, professor of hydrology at the Instituto Internacional de Estudios Avanzados in Caracas, Venezuela, and internationally recognized expert on the statistical analysis of hydrologic problems, directed the November State-of-the-Art Workshop on Probabilistic Point Process Models of Rainfall. The workshop series, organized by Dr. David R. Maidment of UT-Austin, is sponsored by the institute, the Center for Research in Water Resources, the Center for Enhanced Oil and Gas Recovery Re-

search, and the Center for Statistical Sciences at UT-Austin.

The goal of the research on the probability structure of rainfall is to describe the random variation of rainfall recorded at points on the land surface by studying the variation in space and time of the rainfall intensity produced by storm clouds. Dr. Rodríguez-Iturbe’s morning lecture developed the statistical theory necessary for the study of precipitation processes, first considering time variation alone, then simultaneous variation in space and time. An afternoon seminar, followed by a discussion period, was a general presentation of the fractal structure of rainfall, that is the concept that a process can be self-similar at different scales of space and time.

SCHOLAR NEWS

The Making of El Norte: An Interview with Guatemalan Novelist, Arturo Arias

Latin American scholar Arturo Arias and others involved in producing the film *El Norte* were surprised at its success. Produced by Gregory Nava, Arturo Arias, and Eraclio Zepeda for American Playhouse and the Public Broadcasting System in 1983, it became a major film in the United States, Europe, and Latin America and received an Academy Award nomination for best original script.

“None of us signed a contract in which there would be a percentage of royalties for us—just a fixed-sum type of contract.” Arturo, born and reared in Guatemala, recounted the logic. “And we thought that was the best deal, given that a PBS film, 99 times out of a hundred, goes unnoticed—even in TV.”

A PBS film, 99 times out of a hundred, goes unnoticed—even on TV. We didn't know it was going to become the success it did.

“What happened,” he continued, “was that Greg Nava, coauthor of the script, had been a student of the Sundance



Director Gregory Nava prepares the next shot during the shooting of El Norte while producer Anna Thomas looks on.

Copyright © 1983 Cinecom International Films.

Institute, which is an institute put together by Robert Redford and some people in Utah. They had a film festival of people who had attended the Sundance Institute and Greg brought *El Norte*. There were quite a few influential film critics in that festival. They all thought *El Norte* was great and should be given a chance to have a theater run before going on TV. That appealed to PBS, too, because that meant more money. So they decided to do an experimental run in Chicago at first and it worked very well. Then they decided to do a second run in New York City and it did very well. And then they decided to go for a major distribution."

"I think it did well," Arturo explained, "because it touched a subject that a lot of people could identify—it had become an issue. It did it in a very humane way so that one could identify with the characters as real people. And even though it was a very politically explosive theme, it was not heavy-handed politically so that it could become then a partisan issue. But it was tried in such a way that, yes, there are politics, but above all they are human beings."

Arturo was sensitive to the story because "it felt very close to what was happening in Guatemala at the time. The bulk of the massacres of Indian villages in Gua-

temala were in 1982. That was the big year when most of the refugees left Guatemala, so it was very painful because of that. So even if I have a middle-class urban origin, it still was very painful to see the situation that was happening in the Indian villages. I could identify with their terror, with their fear, and also the abstract fear of the army, whose logic one doesn't understand. If you've taken sides against the army, well, you know what you got into, but for most people the army is just an abstraction. The army comes and they are to be feared because of what they do but you don't know why exactly or what's at stake.

"That was one of the main reasons I left Guatemala in 1980. I was working at the university at a time when tensions were beginning to be very, very high. A few professors had been machine-gunned to death and the university was publicly being labeled by the army as a center of subversion, therefore subjected to military intervention, which did come later on. So one could already see that things weren't looking good at all. As long as you remained in that environment you were liable to be hurt or killed simply by being in that environment.

"But psychologically it was untenable, too, because you lived under constant fear, you lived under constant pressure, you saw people that you cared for and loved die or disappear on a daily basis. And you just can't live forever that way. So, given that it wasn't too late for me to leave and I had possibilities—connections—in Mexico, all I had to do was call the people at the university in Mexico, who said 'We can find you a place here.' I was privileged in that sense," he said with a smile.

Arturo's good humor is reflected in his five-foot Santalike figure's movements, sometimes seeming to bounce as he walks. Merry facial expressions reflect his demeanor, but do not reveal his 37 years. Dark eyes dominate his jolly face, which is circled by dark hair and beard and divided by a soft Manchurian-style mustache.

His playfulness carries through into some of his writing. He describes his latest novel, a periodic history of Guatemala from the conquest to the present: "It's kind of making fun of the official history. It

begins with four characters, two Sephardic Jews, a gypsy, and an Arab woman, who are forced to leave Spain because of the Inquisition and they move to Guatemala in the 16th century just to discover that the Castilians had arrived just before them, so they have to take sides with the Indians. And so we'll look at history from the opposite end of the way official history is looked at. And I play with all kinds of irony, humor and things—there're all kinds of literary games."

Arturo developed his skill at Boston University, writing his first novel there, and continued his education at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he received a doctorate in the sociology of literature in 1978. He has written the libretto for an opera expected to be produced in New York next year on Guatemalan Indian themes. Two published novels and a third completed, as well as the film script, have established Arturo's place in the creative writing profession. He received the Casa de las Américas Award for Best Novel, *Itzam Na*, in 1981.

Arturo became involved in the production of *El Norte* while living in Mexico City. "Greg Nava was the director—the original idea was his. Greg is Chicano, his family is from San Diego. He wanted to do a film originally about Mexicans coming to L.A. and what that experience was about. Doing field research in downtown Los Angeles he came into contact with Guatemalans and came to realize that a great many of the people living in downtown L.A. were Guatemalans. And then all of a sudden he got interested in that possibility and thought it would be more original. And also because he had always been very attracted to the *Popol Vuh* [sacred book of the Mayas] and to the Mayan myths and Mayan tales. And so he thought that would be a nicer idea. He sketched out the idea. But then he felt that to make it credible and coherent he needed to work with a Guatemalan writer, so he inquired about Guatemalan writers and came up with my name. Called me up. Came to Mexico City, explained to me all the ideas. We talked about it and finally we reached an agreement."

Arturo and Gregory, who moved with his wife to Mexico for the project, worked

intensively for about three months in the fall of 1982. "We were working separately on each other's ends and we would get together every evening with some cheese and crackers and things and read to each other what we had done. And argue. And try to persuade each other that we were both right. Until finally an agreement would be reached and a consensus would be made. Then we would go back our separate ways and do it again. It was difficult at times, but it was never... we never reached the breaking point. On the contrary. We're still very close friends and we are thinking again of collaborating in the future."

Pat Boone

Visiting Scholars

Olivier Dabene, research associate in the study of migrant population, at the University of Grenoble, France, and recent recipient of a doctorate in political science, has arrived to research a comparative study of Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, and Costa Rica, which have experienced a long period of political stability and democracy. The French government granted him a Lavoisier scholarship for 1987–1988, and he plans to complete his study by July 1988. A native of France, Dr. Dabene taught at the University of Groningen, Holland, from 1982 to 1984, at the University of Costa Rica in 1985, at the University of Grenoble from 1984 to 1987, and served as the general secretary of the French Cultural Center in Groningen, Holland from 1982 to 1984.

Enrique Jaramillo-Levi, of the University of Panama and a Fulbright scholar visiting UT through May 1988, is researching life-styles in Panama during the 19th century and during the construction of the Panama Canal—social, political, and cultural trends that manifested themselves between 1821 and 1914—for a historical novel. Mr. Jaramillo-Levi, a native of Panama, received a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing as well as a Master of Arts degree in Spanish from the University of Iowa, and teaches at the University of Panama.

BENSON LATIN AMERICAN COLLECTION

Margo Gutiérrez, who is in the institute's master's degree program, has been appointed Mexican American studies librarian in the Benson Latin American Collection. She formerly held positions in the library of the University of Arizona and at the Blumberg Memorial Library at Texas Lutheran College. She is chairwoman of the American Library Association's Committee on Library Services to the Spanish Speaking and active in the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials. Ms. Gutiérrez, a native of Tucson, Arizona, holds Bachelor of Arts and Master of Library Science degrees from the University of Arizona.

STUDENT NEWS

ILASSA Plans Newsletter

Planned to begin in the spring semester, the ILASSA newsletter will publish student submissions of personal experiences in Latin America, political dialogues, and other information significant to ILAS students. The editor is Emma-Lee Caprio, a graduate student from California concentrating on journalism in Latin America.

Student Conference

The Institute of Latin American Studies Student Association's Eighth Annual Student Conference on Latin America will be held March 4–5, 1988, at the University of Texas at Austin. Topics being considered for presentation include the Role of Latin American Women; the Church Today; Migration; the Arts; Music; Literature; Insurgency; Urban Poverty; the Media; and Economic and/or Political Development. For information, write to ILASSA, Institute of Latin American Studies, Sid Richardson Hall-Unit I, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712.

ALUMNI NEWS

Helen Edwards, M.A. '75, is chief of the employment section at the Inter-American Development Bank. After receiving her degree, she worked at the American Freedom from Hunger Foundation in Washington before joining the bank. Initially her work with the bank involved economic analysis as a senior operations officer for Guiana and the Trinidad & Tobago Division. Later she transferred to the recruitment section as chief of recruitment, and in a recent merger of the recruitment and employment section she was appointed chief of the employment section and is responsible for the selection and contracting of all administrative staff.

María Garza-Lubeck, M.A. '78, obtained her Ph.D. in fall 1987 from UT's Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Her dissertation, supervised by Douglas Foley, is entitled "A Case Study of Academic Work and Student Productivity in an Inner City Middle School" and is based on her research in a large urban city in the Southwest. She now serves at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Austin as a training/technical assistant associate in the School Improvement Resources Division. Dr. Garza-Lubeck trains personnel from state and regional education agencies and provides them with state-of-the-art information on education issues and reform matters.

Emily Baldwin McPhie, M.A. '78, is currently working as a program officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development in Mogadishu, Somalia. She is responsible for social analysis, project design, implementation, and evaluation for development activities in that country. She initially worked for AID as a graduate work/study employee. While she has never been posted to a Latin American country, she is pleased with her experience in Africa. She cautions students "to think broadly, i.e., to not limit career goals too narrowly."

José Alfonso Méndez, B.A. '73 and M.A. '76 in economics, also obtained a Ph.D. in economics from S.M.U. He is a

research economist with the U.S. International Trade Commission while on leave from the Economics Department of Arizona State University. He leads a group of researchers comprising attorneys, business graduates, and other economists. He is also a project leader for a study requested by the Senate Finance Committee on how to promote development of the U.S.-Mexico border. He feels his LAS degree helped him to get a teaching position.

Sonia Merubia, MLIS '73, M.A. '84, is the serials records and acquisition librarian for Latin American materials at the Benson Latin American Collection.

Anna Cate Miller, B.A. '76 and M.D. from the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, reports that she is a third-year resident in psychiatry at the Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago, with a focus on psychotherapy. She is planning to do further psychoanalytic training. Dr. Miller feels her ILAS degree helped her to be accepted at medical school in San Antonio because many of the indigent patients were Spanish-speaking; she often became an interpreter for her medical team. She is also working in a Chicago clinic in a Puerto Rican barrio.

Jorge Murrieta W., M.A. '76, is the president and general manager of Veleros, S.A. de C. V., a company that manufactures and retails sailboat parts and fiberglass products in Mexico City. He is also projects and construction manager for R.Y.A.F.S.A., an architecture and construction firm owned jointly with his father. Having previously studied architecture, the broad view he obtained in ILAS gave him "a strong overall criterion . . . that has been very useful in decision making."

Annette Riggio, M.A. '82, is now working with Market Development, Inc., in San Diego, California, as a qualitative project director. She is involved in qualitative research design using scientific tools to facilitate marketing across cultural and language boundaries by major multinational corporations.



RECENT PUBLICATIONS

UT Press

For information on the Maya writing system, the most comprehensive study of the verb morphology and syntax is available from the University of Texas Press: *Maya Glyphs: The Verbs*, by Linda Schele. 1982. 448 pp. \$35.00.

God and Production in a Guatemalan Town, by Sheldon Annis. 1987. \$27.50.

Heaven Born Merida and Its Destiny: The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, translated and annotated by Munro S. Edmonson, 1986. 304 pp. \$37.50. Centered in the city of Mérida, the Chumayel provides the western (Xiu) perspective on Yucatecan history. The eastern (Itza) viewpoint is presented in *The Ancient Future of the Itza: The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin*, an earlier book by Edmonson, also published by UT Press. Edmonson reinterprets the book as literature and as history, placing it in chronological order and translating it as poetry. The ritual nature of Mayan history clearly emerges and casts new light on Mexican and Spanish acculturation of the Yucatecan Maya in the post-Classic and colonial periods.

The Southeast Maya Periphery, edited by Patricia A. Urban and Edward M. Schortman, 1986. 376 pp. \$32.50. Archaeologists are continually faced with a pervasive problem: how can cultures be differentiated in the archaeological record? This issue is especially difficult in peripheral areas such as El Salvador, Honduras, and southern Guatemala. Encompassing zones that are clearly Mayan in language and culture, especially during the Classic period, this area also includes zones that seem to be non-Mayan. This study examines both aspects of this territory. Two sites—Quirigua, Guatemala, and Copán, Honduras—are studied for the Maya zones; for the non-Maya zone the Lower Montagua Valley in Guatemala, the Naco, Sula, and Comayagua valleys, and the site of Playa de los Muertos in Honduras; and the Zapotitán Valley and the sites of Cihuatán and Santa Leticia in El Salvador are studied.

FUTURE EVENTS

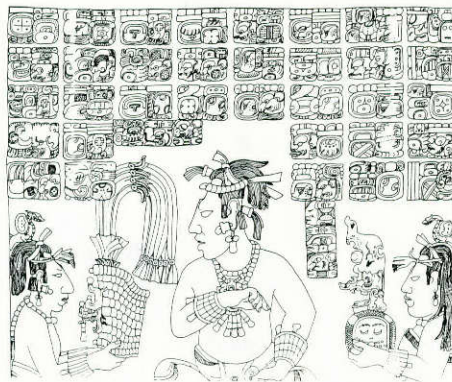
Conference on the Mexican Petroleum Nationalization

A conference to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the nationalization of the Mexican oil industry will be held on the UT campus February 25–26, 1988. Participants include Jonathan Brown, UT; Lief Adleson, INAH; Alan Knight, UT; Lorenzo Meyer, Colegio de México; George Philip, London School of Economics; Adrián Lajous, Pemex; Alberto Olvera, Universidad Veracruzana; Ruth Adler, La Trobe University; Fabio Barbosa, UNAM; Miguel Wionczek, Colegio de México; and Gabriel Szekely, UCSD. Further information may be obtained from Alan Knight or Jonathan Brown, Department of History, University of Texas, Austin, Texas 78712.

Meetings on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing

The 1988 Maya Meetings will be held in Austin on March 10–19, under the sponsorships of the Department of Art and the Institute of Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, and the Maya Workshop Foundation, Inc., a non-profit Texas foundation. The meetings will consist of four different sessions: the Texas Symposium, the “Introduction to the Workshop,” the XII Workshop on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing, and the VI Advanced Seminar on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing.

The focus of these meetings is the decipherment of the ancient Maya hieroglyphic writing system. The Maya Indians, who still live in southern Mexico and adjacent parts of Central America, created a written form of their language long before the Spanish reached the New World. With this script they recorded long texts describing such diverse matters as the genealogies of their kings and the wars in which they engaged. Scientists long considered this glyphic script impossible to decipher, but about fifteen years ago a series of linguistic discoveries demonstrated how the system worked, and now



Tablet of the Slaves in Palenque, Chiapas.

more than 90 percent of the Maya hieroglyphic texts can be interpreted.

Annual meetings on the decipherment of the Maya glyphs have been held at the university since 1977. These sessions have grown until they now include ten full days of lectures and activities. The 1988 sessions will begin on March 10 with the Texas Symposium, in which a number of well-known archaeologists will lecture on early Maya archaeology and the evolution of the hieroglyphic system. On the evening of March 11, a three-hour lecture, the “Introduction to the Workshop,” will be given to explain some of the basic principles underlying the Maya calendar. The XII Workshop on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing, on March 12–13, will be conducted by Dr. Linda Schele, a member of the Department of Art at the university and one of the world’s leading scholars in Maya glyph decipherment. For the Workshop, Dr. Schele prepares a notebook of glyph drawings and decipherments so that participants can more easily follow her lectures. The two intense days of the Workshop are the heart of the Texas Maya Meetings. The VI Advanced Seminar on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing is the final segment. It is conducted by Dr. Schele and lasts from March 14 through March 19. During this time the participants practice the techniques they have learned in the Workshop by deciphering actual Mayan texts themselves.

Participation in all segments of the 1988 Maya meetings is open to anyone interested in the ancient Maya. The registration fees are as follows: Symposium,

\$20; “Introduction,” \$5; Workshop, \$30 (which includes the notebook prepared by Dr. Schele); and Advanced Seminar, \$150. Information can be obtained by writing to Dr. Nancy Troike, P. O. Box 5645, Austin, Texas 78763 and asking to be put on the mailing list to receive the annual flier describing the meetings; or by telephoning the Maya hotline (512) 471-MAYA (471-6292).

Conference of Guatemalan Scholars in March

The Institute of Latin American Studies, in consultation with a broadly representative group of Guatemalan scholars, both Guatemalan-born and non-Guatemalan, plans a conference on March 13–16, 1988 that will serve the following objectives:

1. To bring together 15 of the most prominent representatives of Guatemalan social science research and 10 prominent U.S. researchers on Guatemala, directors of research institutions that might assist further research on Guatemala, and other specialists to explore the state of social science research on Guatemala, to identify the most critical needs for new and renewed research, and to create preliminary plans for coordinated research on the themes identified;

2. To create a network of Guatemalan researchers and of research centers with an interest in research on Guatemala in order to lessen duplication of effort, to offer mutual support (and scholarly protection) for new research efforts, and to improve the process of obtaining financing and other support for research on Guatemala; the network, as currently proposed, will include a coordinating committee, a regular newsletter to link Guatemala researchers, and the establishment of an electronic network among as many of the participants as possible to facilitate frequent and continued communication;

3. To produce a draft consensus research proposal for future social science research on Guatemala that identifies research projects currently under way, the plans of leading scholars and their institu-

tions, and additional research areas that are most urgently needed; this document is intended to assist international research support institutions in the selection and design of projects to support;

4. To create a plan for mutual support among social science researchers to lessen the danger to all as they return to Guatemala to renew research, publication, and teaching that was disrupted by the political events of the early 1980s, to undertake new projects, and, in general, to begin to expand the systematic examination of Guatemala today.

The conference is scheduled for the four days that precede the XIV International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, which will occur on March 19-21, 1988, in New Orleans. Attendance at the conference in Austin will also permit all of the Guatemalan partici-

pants to attend the LASA meeting later that week.

Future of Central American Economies to be Examined

Five of the leading specialists on the Central American economies will present their views at "The Future of the Central American Economies," a conference on the University of Texas campus, April 21-22, 1988. The conference is sponsored by the ILAS Central American Working Group, the College of Liberal Arts, the Department of Economics, and the Workshop on Latin American Economies.

Each of the specialists is producing an essay on his view of the problems and possibilities for the Central American economies until the end of the century.

The essays will be edited by Michael E. Conroy, ILAS associate director, and will be published in book form before the end of the year.

For further information, contact Dr. Conroy, ILAS, SRH 1.310, University of Texas at Austin 78712, (512) 471-5551.

Nation-State and Indian in Latin America

Scheduled for April 29-30, 1988, at the Institute of Latin American Studies. Contact Joel Sherzer or Gregory Urban, Department of Anthropology, Burdine Hall 336, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712.



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Pat Boone, editor

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