

I wish to express my gratitude to the Board of Trustees of Mt. San Antonio College for allowing me the privilege of a leave which permitted me the opportunity to broaden my personal and professional perspectives so that I could improve myself and my services to Mt. San Antonio College.

I wish also to express my appreciation to Mr. Thorn for carrying on the duties of my office during my period of leave.

Thomas J. O'Connor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MAPS OF TRAVEL .....	ii
OBJECTIVES OF SABBATICAL	
HISTORICAL .....	1
EDUCATIONAL .....	4
SOCIOLOGICAL .....	9
PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS .....	16

H I S T O R I C A L

## HISTORICAL - OLD AND NEW

As an administrator, my sabbatical leave was not delimited by any fixation upon a specific academic discipline. Instead, it was felt that exposure to many cultural facets would be of great value. In preparation for the visit to Spain, we enrolled in a course in conversational Spanish knowing that some effort in speaking the language of the country we were visiting would be appreciated. In addition, we planned to go into areas where we knew English would not be spoken. Preliminary reading indicated that our travels would expose us to the broader possible concepts of historical perspective. Vistas of a country, powerful throughout the Old and the New World, captured our imaginations. The anthropological contributions of Spain were there to be seen by us at Altamira and Nerja where man's earliest known artistic efforts, dating back to 20,000 years B.C., were viewed. The contributions of the Church in beautiful architecture, superb music, and stirring art were seen to be of broadening value. It isn't often that one can step back many centuries and participate in ceremonies dating back to the 12th Century such as we did at Sevilla during Holy Week. One can be a "Man for all Ages" by listening to age-old religious music; by visiting museums and art galleries; by traversing ancient cobblestone streets and alleys to see examples of Judaic and Mudejar art; by visiting famous pilgrimage sites; and by observing excavations such as Medinat az Zahara, just now beginning to emerge as one of the greatest and largest expositions of the Moslem culture which had such a profound influence on Spain. A visit to the home of Maimonides and reading about him left profound feelings of sorrow and joy, because despite Spain's aversion towards Jews, Maimonides became famous as a physician and a philosopher.

The grandeur and the beauty of the ancient cathedrals are of lasting memory. On the other hand, Spain's contribution to modern architecture by Gaudi can never be forgotten. His unfinished symphony, La Sagrada Familia, remains as a tribute to modern architectural skill. Even though unfinished, its promises of future architectural beauty is evident to the beholder.

It is paradoxical to reflect that modern Spain, which has resisted all encroachments of modern culture and to some extent modern technology, should have embraced such extra territorial influences as Domenico Teotocopulo (El Greco), a person originating in Crete and influenced by Venetian and Roman instructors, as well as Caravaggio who became the precursor of Velasquez. We were privileged to view the works of El Greco, Velasquez, Zurbaran, Leal, Murillo, and Goya at the Prado in Madrid. In the cathedrals of Toledo and Sevilla, as well as the Monastery of El Escorial, we saw the most astonishing collections of paintings, sculpture, and all forms of decorative art. The impact of French and Italian influences on the art to be seen at the royal palace at Madrid is readily visible. However, the same influence was visible in Sweden and Southern Germany, but we felt that Spain made a greater effort to maintain the dignity and order of its palaces more than any other country we had seen. There seemed to be more reverence and respect for its art forms than we had observed in other countries.

E D U C A T I O N A L

## SPANISH HIGHER EDUCATION

As a person interested in higher education and somewhat preoccupied with its problems, I planned to learn a little about Spanish higher education before traveling there so that my observations could be conducted with some background. The system of higher education in California, wherein there are three segments of higher education--the university, the state college university, and the junior colleges--is different from that of Spain. The differences arise mainly from problems related to Spanish history and its ethnic origins. The influence of the Church on higher education is still substantial and extraneous institutions, professional associations, and corporate bodies have made their thrusts also. Not to be ignored in the spheres of influence is the only student association in Spain, the Sindicato Español Universitario.

There are, at present, twelve state universities in Spain. They are located in Barcelona, Granada, La Laguna, Madrid, Murcia, Oviedo, Salamanca, Santiago de Compostela, Saragossa, Sevilla, Valencia, and Valladolid. These are what remain from an imposing list of outstanding educational institutions, the first founded by bishops in 1212 when the influence of Spain was felt all over the Old World and in a great part of the New World. There are also four private universities and a number of higher technological institutes. At the present time, it is planned to establish equivalence and coordination amongst higher technical education, university education, and scientific research with the intent of integrating these three areas into the broad concept of a university. One of the obstacles herein lies in a form of provincialism nurtured and fostered both politically and socially, that of linguistic bias. There are three sub-linguistic groups in Spain; Catalanian, Galician, and

Basque. In addition, the Basque present a problem of ethnic difference. However, under a liberalized policy, these languages are approved for use educationally.

There are two central bodies responsible for higher education in Spain. They are the Directorate General of University Education and the Directorate General of Technical Education, both of which are segments of the Ministry of Education. The Office of Commissioner for School Welfare and Social Security, responsible for administering student services, and the Directorate of University Religious Education are attached to the Ministry of Education. The Directorate General of University Education is composed of a technical secretariat, a university's section, and an inspectorate of the colegios mayores. The advisory bodies to the Directorate General are the National Council of Education, the Council of Rectors, and the General Council for the colegios mayores.

There are twelve university districts in Spain corresponding to the universities previously named. The rector of the university has supreme authority in his district over both the university faculties and the other institutes of higher learning in his district. The chain of command administratively in each university is as follows: the rector, the vice rector, the bursar, and the general secretary. Within the university itself, the authorities are as follows: the rector, who is appointed by decree from among the faculty heads after being proposed by the Minister of Education; the vice rector, who is appointed by ministerial order. The university itself is governed by an administrative board composed of the rector as president, the vice rector, the deans, and representatives of the staff and the students.



The Spanish university system does not consist of divisions or departments. It is established on a faculty basis; for example, philosophy and letters, science, law, medicine, pharmacy, political science, economics, and veterinary medicine.

I would like, now, to make some observations on higher education in Spain. These are based partly on observation and partly on research. I must confess to having a great deal of awe as I contemplated some of those universities. I certainly did not feel overwhelmed by their architecture, but reflection on the influence of these great educational establishments on world leaders, on educators, and on clergymen made me feel reverence for their accomplishments and sorrow for what befell some of them.

One university, in particular, caused me to do a great amount of thinking. As we wandered around Salamanca University, we saw little of the hustle and bustle of students moving from one class to the other. This gave us an opportunity to see many things we might have missed otherwise. We visited the library where a sign, in true medieval tradition, promised excommunication to anyone so wicked as to remove a book from the premises. We saw documents which were centuries old and we walked into a classroom where in 1572 Fray Luis de Leon was removed and turned over to the Inquisition on the charges he was of Jewish blood and, furthermore, he had dared, after studying the Hebrew version of the Bible, to question the accuracy of the Latin translation. He spent more than five years in prison but was finally released and allowed to resume his position on the faculty at Salamanca. The story of his return to that barren, dark and, on that day, crowded classroom is very moving. In

imperturbably fashion, he strode to the podium and commenced, "As we were saying yesterday," and then he continued his interrupted lecture. That story moved us a great deal and we paused to look at his statue in the entrance to the University.

Further reading on this university showed a tremendous decline in prestige over the centuries. Some of the reasons for its decline were based on false pride and, to a certain extent, on bias. The question kept arising in my mind as to what happened to such a prestigious institution that caused it to fail. The university first started to fail when it refused admission to Jews. Then, it began to reserve student positions for sons of nobility who were not necessarily college caliber nor really interested in college studies. As a result of student apathy, mathematics and medicine were eliminated. The university declined in population from 7,800 students in 1567-1568 to 300 students in 1824. It has since re-established itself to some degree, but it has no longer the pre-eminent position it once held. I feel there is a great lesson for educators and political scientists in that fall. People of noble standing and economic stature do not necessarily make good students. I feel strongly that the American approach to education, now that economic barriers have been removed, will help us to avoid such errors. This will be so only if we refuse to compromise with quality education. It is one thing to lower admission standards to care for underprivileged, but it is a far different proposition to lower requirements for advancement to baccalaureate or higher-level education.

S O C I O L O G I C A L

## PORTUGAL, SPAIN, AND FRANCE

Our sabbatical was planned for us to arrive in Lisbon, Portugal, and spend the better part of a week sightseeing and then take delivery of our car. These plans worked out and we motored through Southern Portugal, leaving that country shortly before the revolution. This revolution changed our plans for the latter part of the sabbatical to such an extent that we did not return to Portugal.

We found Portugal to be very beautiful. Spring was arriving and the foliage was coming to life. Our plans directed us south along the Atlantic Coast through Setubal, Santiago do Cacem, Odemira, Lagos, and Sagres where in the 1400 period Henry the Navigator conducted his school for navigators. There, we stayed at the Pousada do Infante where we had a beautiful view of the ocean. As we drove around, it was interesting to see school children, even though it was Saturday, on their way to school wearing white jackets (nylon) or smocks.

We continued on our way, skirting the Mediterranean. We took the ferry from Villa Real de Santo Antonio to Ayamonte. We found that because of the coming of Holy Week reservations were most difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. We decided to take our chances on finding a place in Sevilla. In this, we were very lucky and obtained a room for five days at a hotel which faced the cathedral so that we had an excellent view of the Holy Week procession. This was almost beyond description. Starting at about 4:30 p.m. on Palm Sunday, the constant processions of beautifully decorated floats, called passos, emerged from the cathedral. The costumes and the figures on the floats were spectacular.

We left Sevilla and continued on our way to Jerez de la Frontera, the city of Spain's biggest item of export, sherry wine. Cadiz was the

next city on the list. Here, we saw some of Spain's fleet anchored or docked in the harbor. Further on down the coast, we stopped at Algeciras. We were able to vaguely discern Gibraltar through the mist. Heading along the Costa del Sol, we were lucky enough to secure a hotel in Fuengirola which we used as a base for trips through Marbella and Torremolinos to the caves of Nerja, to Ronda, and points of interest in the surrounding countryside. We found Marbella and Torremolinos to be greatly similar to Miami Beach but on a smaller scale.

On Easter Sunday we arrived at Cordoba which at one time outrivaled Damascus as a center of Moorish influence. There, we visited a Mosque which, in part, the Christians had converted into a cathedral. Sad to say, the conversion did little to enhance the Mosque. There, we saw the Mihrad which is a domed chapel of Byzantine mosaic in which was housed the Koran. This city is one which does much to tie the traveler into the history of Spain's past. After staying one night in Ubeda, we went to Granada where we spent a few days at the Parador San Francisco in the Alhambra. It was at this place that Ferdinand and Isabella were first buried before being moved to the Capilla Real in the center of the city. Their tombs at the Capilla Real are magnificent. The cathedral was beautiful, but cold, as usual. In the morning, we were the first persons admitted to the Alhambra and were overcome with its beauty. From the gardens, we had our first view of the snow-covered Sierra Nevadas. This tour then led us to El Generalife which was the summer palace of the Caliphs.

The trip back to the coast was most pleasant. We saw Gaudix with

its white tiled chimneys and the white-washed facades of the gypsy caves on the surrounding hillsides. We continued on after a two-night stay in Mojacar, which is right on the Mediterranean, through Murcia, Alicante, and Javea. Valencia was a very interesting city. The cathedral claims to have the Holy Grail, which brought an entirely different concept of history to our travels. We visited La Lonja, which had been the bourse, and then went through the city market which was quite a scene.

The road to Barcelona took us along the Costa del Azahar through a beautiful spot called Peñíscola, where we stayed at a parador, and then moved on to Tarragona and Barcelona. However, we detoured before going to Barcelona and visited the monasteries at Poblet and Montserrat. Montserrat reminded us of the Grand Tetons, and the boy's choir rivalled that of Vienna. Here, we stayed in a hotel owned by the monks. The church was beautiful. This church is one made famous by the many pilgrimages and by the fact that so many young people feel it is "the" place to be married.

Barcelona is a city we shall remember for a long time. Las Ramblas, a beautiful concourse dividing the street with its flower and bird stalls, paintings, and vendors of all types, was spectacular. The side streets, little more than alleys, were full of interesting shops. We attended services at the cathedral which were very impressive as was the cathedral. An aerial tram took us out over the harbor and back up to Montjuich, a vast park area. This city has many places of interest. We saw Gaudi's Fountain and many other examples of his art and architecture in Guell Park which were built for the World's Fair of 1888.

From Barcelona, we proceeded to the Pyrennees where we visited

Andorra, a tiny principality under the joint rule of Spain and France. This is Basque country and we saw many Basque shepherds who were always willing to smile and return our waves. Andorra is nestled snugly against the mountains and the surrounding countryside was covered with snow. In these mountains, which is the Continental Divide of the Pyrenees, we were reminded of the Rockies.

From Andorra, we proceeded on with visits to Balaguer, Lerida, and Zaragoza. Madrid was the next big stopping place, but on the road towards Madrid we drove to the Alcala de Henares, the site of the great university founded by Cardinal Cisneros. Madrid is a fascinating city and seemed more cosmopolitan than any we had previously visited. We visited the Palacio Real and the Prado and were impressed by both of them, although, we felt the lighting in the Prado left a lot to be desired. After sightseeing in this capital city for five days, we devoted the next several days visiting the historical towns which surround Madrid, spending the nights in interesting inns and paradores replete with historical backgrounds.

Aranjuez was first on our itinerary and we enjoyed the palace gardens, the palace, the Museum of Costumes, the Casa del Labrador, the Jardin del Principe, and the Jardin de la Isla. We then went on to the parador at Toledo which was one of the delights of the trip. We found the Cathedral of Toledo a most inspiring place and were lucky enough to happen upon a rehearsal of a choir of one hundred and fifty voices accompanied by a seventy-five piece orchestra.

Avila, the home of St. Teresa, was next on our list. This is a walled city and very interesting. El Escorial was one of the most

imposing places we visited. It actually encloses within its plain walls a palace used by kings who ruled Spain, a mausoleum holding the sarcophagi of many kings and their children, a monastery, and a large church. This is where Charles V, or Charlemagne, is buried, as is his famous illegitimate son, Don Juan of Austria. The tapestries in the galleries here are by Goya, and one could spend many hours just viewing them. While in this area, we visited La Valle de los Caídos, a tremendous monument designed and built by Franco as a monument to those who died in the Civil War.

Our next scenic spot was Segovia where we were amazed at the durability of the famous Roman aqueduct. This town also boasts of the Cinderella Castle, which was like a scene from a fairy tale. Salamanca provided us with the opportunity to visit San Sebastian, the University, and the new and old cathedrals. Valladolid and Palencia were next on our itinerary as we continued on to Santillana del Mar where we had the opportunity to see the Caves of Altamira. From there, we pushed on through Santander and Bilbao to Fuenterrabia, our last stop in Spain. This concluded our two-month tour of Spain.

Angouleme was our first stop in France. Our travel in France was primarily through the Loire Valley. Chenonceaux was a delightful chateau situated right on the Cher River. Blois, Chambord, and Chateaudun preceded our visit to Fontainebleau where we were most impressed by the beautiful ballrooms, furniture, paintings, and statues. The bedroom of Napoleon was on display also. However, we felt we had never seen any more beautiful gardens surrounding a very picturesque lake.

Chartres and its cathedral with beautiful stained glass windows



were most interesting. Versailles occupied two days for us. The parks, the palace, and the galleries were almost indescribable. Paris was next, and it proved to be all we had expected. The Louvre was fascinating; Notre Dame Cathedral and its choir were a delight; and we felt, after having walked many miles seeing Paris, that it was a very pleasant substitution for our scheduled return to Portugal. From Paris, we departed for the United States thus ending a very pleasant and educational sabbatical.

## PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

Since this is a highly subjective area, I feel free to make the following comments. Spain is a country of opposites. It seems that there are the very rich and the extremely poor. In the middle, there is a strong group coping economically at present. The educational system seems to be taking care of the wealthy and the middle-class group. For the poor, there doesn't seem to be much hope. Spain, at the present time, has made education cheap and readily available for the top two classes. It runs the risk, as does the United States and did Nazi Germany, of over-educating its upper- and middle-class people. The problems of non-employment of these two groups will soon become apparent. The dissatisfaction of the poor class will become evident soon.

As it is, at present, Spain has four major areas of political and social pressure. They are: (1) the Church; (2) the army; (3) the aristocracy; (4) the newly emerging labor force which may soon overshadow the first three. Upon Franco's demise, it is my opinion that after a period of unsettlement there will come about a tremendous surge of labor which will lead to a situation similar to that of Italy. The student syndicate will probably join with the labor movement.

It was really quite a revelation to me to find out how Spanish people feel about Americans. I suppose one can get as many responses as questions are asked. However, while staying at the parador in Toledo, I asked La Directora, a patrician type lady, how she felt about Americans. She had already demonstrated her good-will, kindness, and hospitality to us. Her comment was that she likes Americans very much as individuals, but that she hoped the United States would never take any official action to support Spain on any issue because the United States' position always

attracted such powerful adversaries as Russia.

One of the unusual sights we saw was that of hundreds of students on their way home from classes around 9 p.m. Although Franco has sought to eliminate the siesta, there is a long lunch period lasting until 3 p.m. This is exasperatingly true in industry also.

I consider Spain a beautiful country. It is my hope that it will be possible to go there again some day. Never have I been so stirred to explore the history of a country as I have been on this sabbatical. I felt when I returned home that I was now ready to commence a new adventure in lifelong learning.

Source of reference information:  
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and Cultural Organization, World Survey,  
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