

AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF POETIC FORM

By WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS,
Auditorium of the University,
Wednesday, April 16, 1941.

PREAMBLE

The difficulty is to keep such a talk as this informal.

After all, there is no great point at issue. We are here for the most part to look at each other, to recognize in each other—that curious complexity called a writer, to encourage and to learn. But most to try to find a means, through the art which we practice, to communicate with each other—for what may come of it.

The study of poetry is based still largely on metaphysical criteria. This makes for as many approaches to any given poem as there are schools or attitudes of thought in the world.

This richness may have its rewards but it is likely to cause a great confusion in the mind of the student. What should be our basic attitude toward a poem, any poem, there, lying on the page? It is acceptable, repellant? Is it a work of art or a sub-mental impertinence or both?

Upon what shall a judgment be based? If we can get to that, we can get to something, we can understand together.

A beginning is made toward a clarification among this swarming mixture of approaches by cutting across all categories and declaring flatly:

Every poem either is or is not related to the structural character of its own age. Then I would go on to say: that unless a poem is so related it has already lost its primary opportunity and significance.

Drop that there and let me make another statement:

The arts are really the history of the mind. If they are cramped or inadequate the mind will be found to have been deformed—as much so as were the feet of Chinese women, formerly, to indicate their aristocracy.

Thus we have two statements—the poem is or is not related to the structural character of its own age *and* the poem in itself constitutes the history of the mind.

To carry the argument still further let me insist that the poem presents the history of the mind in any age primarily by its structure

—which, if the poem is to matter at all, will represent in some particular the true structure of that age which produces it.

What we need in verse today is a great technician.

We need one who can hear the “normal” language and who knows the patterns of the past to forget them. Then to invent, that is, to rediscover in the vernacular about him, as a fresh insight, the simple elements that, also, made up the old rigidities—and reintegrate them among the living material into adequate modern forms expansive enough to include the whole armamentarium of the mind as we know it today,—forms uncramped, unclipped, uncompressed *structurally* into those past “aristocracies” which are today damnable in their deforming limitations.

The language is the thing. The language must not be deformed to fit the pattern of the verse. The verse must be transformed to fit the exigencies of the language.

By debased rigidities of pattern, if we are not careful, our vehicle of communication, our language will be falsified and if in its structure, you may be sure in its meaning also. We are likely to be made to say what we do not intend and to come off brutalized thereby.

Let us remember, the elements of composition are always free and available—if we have the genius to find them; it is only in their outworn entanglements of past usage that they tyrannize over us and need breaking down and *not* in their essence.

The cleansing and rehabilitation of the language gives the poet much of his seriousness of purpose facing the world.

So, before reading a few poems by way of illustration—let me go back a moment for emphasis, here and there, and the elaboration of one or two points:

1. There are many ways of looking at a poem, all of them misleading unless founded upon structure.

2. A poem is a use of words (as emphasized by Gertrude Stein) which when taken with the structure together comprise its form—the elements of form being: the line (What is it to be?) and the word, its selection, position and sequence in the line.

But now something extraordinary takes place—which is the essence of poetry: the form achieved, becomes itself a “word”, the most significant of all, that dominates every other word in the poem.

NOTE: Imagism, which had a use in focusing the attention upon the importance of concrete imagery in the poem, lost its place finally because as a form it completely lacked structural necessity. The image served for everything, so that the structure, a weaker and weaker free verse, degenerated finally into a condition very nearly resembling in meaninglessness that of the sonnet.

“The “objectivists” attempted to remedy this fault by fusing with each image a form in its own right—but there were few successes—or have been few so far.

The *structural approach* has two phases, the first, the selection of forms from poems already achieved, to restuff them with metaphysical and other matter, and, the second, to parallel the inventive impetus of other times with structural concepts derived from our own day.

The first is *weak* and the second *strong*.

NOTE: This does not imply that the men who take the positions one way or the other are either weak or strong. The thing to remember is that weak and strong are *both* phases of the structural approach.

The weak approach (to the intricacies of poetic form) is typified by the teaching attitude. Teaching—that is, the academy—is predominantly weak in this respect. It can’t be otherwise and this, in fact, is its strength. It is the throne of precedent. But because of this it tends to arrogate to itself, mistakenly, prerogatives which, sometimes, it does not deserve.

The *strong approach*—made through the vernacular by attention to its modulated character, inventing from that—is relegated too often to the services of outlaws. Over long periods the weak approach tends to culminate in the strong, establishing the peaks of literature.

NOTE: The validity of this entire proposal (that structure is of such pre-eminent importance in a poem) has been questioned, by the academy, the point being raised that Villon did not invent but took over the ballad, a form hackneyed by court use, in his day almost a popular game. But Villon dignified it to such powerful advantage that his use of it constitutes in itself a unique meaning, an excellent example of just that strong approach through the vernacular which I wish to show.

New concepts will always call for new forms and new forms demand new structures. The basis of new poetic forms will always be the language of that age which demands of them its fullest expression.

In hearing the following poems please remember that modern poetry is not selective—as poetry in the past has been. It is inclusive and comprehensive by its definition: to raise or enlarge the imagination to new areas of understanding. It says nothing of what shall be admitted. Nothing is excluded. How can it be? Every conceivable thing is material for poetry under the structural definition.

ALL THE FANCY THINGS

music and painting and all that
That's all they thought of
in Puerto Rico in the old Spanish
days when she was a girl

So that now
she doesn't know what to do
with herself alone
and growing old up here—

Green is green
but the tag ends
of older things, *ma chère*
must withstand rebuffs
from that which returns
to the beginnings—

Or what? a
clean air, high up, unoffended
by gross odors

BRILLIANT SAD SUN

Lee's
Lunch

Spaghetti	Oysters
a Specialty	Clams

and raw Winter's done
to a turn—Restaurant: Spring!
Ah, Madam, what good are your thoughts

romantic but true
beside this gayety of the sun
and that huge appetite?

Look!
from a glass pitcher she serves
clear water to the white chickens.

What are your memories
beside that purity?
The empty pitcher dangling

from her grip
her coarse voice croaks
Bon jor'

And Patti, on her first concert tour
sang at your house in Mayagüez
and your brother was there

What beauty
beside your sadness—and
what sorrow

ADAM

He grew up by the sea
on a hot island
inhabited by negroes—mostly.
There he built himself
a boat and a separate room
close to the water
for a piano on which he practiced—
by sheer doggedness
and strength of purpose
striving
like an Englishman
to emulate his Spanish friend
and idol—the weather!

And there he learned
to play the flute—not very well—

Thence he has driven—
out of Paradise—to taste
the death that duty brings .
so daintily, so mincingly,
with such a noble air—
that enslaved him all his life
thereafter—

And he left behind
all the curious memories that come
with shells and hurricanes—
the smells
and sounds and glancing looks
that Latins know belong
to boredom and long torrid hours
and Englishmen
will never understand—whom
duty has marked
for special mention—with
a tropic of its own
and its own heavy-winged fowl
and flowers that vomit beauty
at midnight—

But the Latin has turned romance
to a purpose cold as ice.
He never sees
or seldom
what melted Adam's knees
to jelly and despair—and
held them up pontifically—
Underneath the whisperings
of tropic nights
there is a darker whispering

that death invents especially
for northern men
whom the tropics
have come to hold.

It would have been enough
to know that never,
never, never, never would
peace come as the sun comes
in the hot islands.
But there was
a special hell besides
where black women lie waiting
for a boy—

Naked on a raft
he could see the barracudas
waiting to castrate him
so the saying went—
Circumstances take longer—

But being an Englishman
though he had not lived in England
desde que avia cinco años
he never turned back
but kept a cold eye always
on the inevitable end
never wincing—never to unbend—
God's handyman
going quietly into hell's mouth
for a paper of reference—
fetching water to posterity
a British passport
always in his pocket—
muleback over Costa Rica
eating patés of black ants—

And the Latin ladies admired him
and under their smiles
darted the dagger of despair—
in spite of
a most thorough trial—
found his English heart safe
in the roseate steel. Duty
the angel
which with whip in hand. . .

—along the low wall of paradise
where they sat and smiled
and flipped their fans
at him—

He never had but one home
Staring him in the eye
coldly
and with patience—
without a murmur, silently
a desperate, unvarying silence
to the unhurried last.

EVE

Pardon my injuries
now that you are old—
Forgive me my awkwardnesses
my impatience
and short replies—
I sometimes detect in your face
a puzzled pity of me
your son—
I have never been close to you
mostly your own fault;
in *that* I am like you.
It is as though
you looked down from above
at me—not
with what they would describe
as pride but the same
that is in me: a sort
of shame that the world
should see you as I see you,
a somewhat infantile creature—
without subtlety—
defenseless.
And because you are defenseless
I too, horribly,
take advantage of you,
(as you of me)
my mother, keep you
imprisoned—in
the name of protection
when you want so wildly to escape
as I wish also
to escape and leap into chaos
(where Time has
not yet begun)

When Adam died
it came out clearly—
Not what commonly
might have been supposed but
a demon, fighting for the fire
it needed to breathe
to live again.

A last chance. You
kicked blindly before you
and nearly broke your leg
against the metal—then sank
exhausted.

And that is the horror
of my guilt—and the sweetness
even at this late date
in some kind of acknowledgement
I realize why you wish
to communicate with the dead—

And it is again I
who try to hush you
that you shall not
make a fool of yourself
and have them stare at you
with natural faces—
Trembling, sobbing
and grabbing at the futile hands
till a mind goes sour
watching you—and flies off
sick at the mumbling
from which nothing clearly
is ever spoken—

It not so much frightens
as shames me. I want to protect
you, to spare you the disgrace—
seeing you reach out that way
to self inflicted emptiness—

As if you were not able
to protect yourself—
and me too—if we did not
have to be so guarded—

Therefore I make this last plea:

Forgive me
I have been a fool—
and remain a fool.
If you are not already too blind
too deaf, too lost in the past
to know or to care—
I will write a book about you—
making you live (in a book!)
as you will desperately
want to live—
to live always—unforgiving

I'll give you brandy
or wine
whenever I think you need it
(need it!)
because it whips up
your mind and your senses
and brings color to your face
—to enkindle that life
too coarse for the usual,
that sly obscenity
that fertile darkness
in which passion mates—
reflecting
the lightnings of creation—
and the moon—
*"C'est la vieillesse
inexorable ch'arrive!"*

One would think
you would be reconciled with Time
instead of clawing at Him
that way, terrified
in the night—screaming out
unwilling, unappeased
and without shame—

Might He not take
that wasted carcass, crippled
and deformed, that ruined face
sightless, deafened—
the color gone—that seems
always listening, watching waiting
ashamed only
of that single and last
degradation—
No. Never. Defenseless
still you would keep
every accoutrement
which He has loaned
till it shall be torn from
your grasp, a final grip
from those fingers
which cannot hold a knife
to cut the meat but which
in a hypnotic ecstasy
can so wrench a hand held out
to you that our bones
crack under the unwonted pressure—

THE FLOWER

A petal, colorless and without form
the oblong towers lie
beyond the low hill and northward the great
bridge stanchions,
small in the distance, have appeared,
pinkish and incomplete—
It is the city,
approaching over the river. Nothing
of it is mine, but visibly
for all that it is petal of a flower—my own.
It is a flower through which the wind
combs the whitened grass and a black dog
with yellow legs stands eating from a
garbage barrel. One petal goes eight blocks
past two churches and a brick school beyond
the edge of the park where under trees
leafless now, women having nothing else to do
sit in summer—to the small house
in which I happen to have been born. Or
a heap of dirt, if you care
to say it, frozen and sunstreaked in
the January sun, returning.
Then they hand you—they who wish to God
you'd keep your fingers out of
their business—science or philosophy or
anything else they can find to throw off
to distract you. But Madame Lenine
is a benefactress when under her picture
in the papers she is quoted as saying:
Children should be especially protected
from religion. Another petal
reaches to San Diego, California where
a number of young men, New Yorkers most
of them, are kicking up the dust.
A flower, at its heart (the stamens, pistil
etc.) is a naked woman, about 38, just
out of bed, worth looking at both for
her body and her mind and what she was seen
and done. She it was put me straight
about the city when I said, It

makes me ill to see them run up
a new bridge like that in a few months
and I can't find time even to get
a book written. They have the power,
that's all, she replied. That's what you all
want. If you can't get it, acknowledge
at least what it is. And they're not
going to give it to you. Quite right.
For years I've been tormented by
that miracle, the buildings all lit up—
unable to say anything much to the point
though it is the major sight
of this region. But foolish to rhapsodize over
strings of lights, the blaze of a power
in which I have not the least part.
Another petal reaches
into the past, to Porto Rico
when my mother was a child bathing in a small
river and splashing water up on
the yucca leaves to see them roll back pearls.
The snow is hard on the pavements. This
is no more a romance than an allegory.
I plan one thing—that I could press
buttons to do the curing of or caring for
the sick that I do laboriously now by hand
for cash, to have the time
when I am fresh, in the morning, when
my mind is clear and burning—to write.

CANCION

(Lupercio De Argensola)

Alivia sus fatigas
El labrador cansado
Cuando su yerta barba escarcha cubre,
Pensando en las espigas
Del Agosto abrasado,
Y en los lagares ricos del Octubre.
The tired workman
Takes his ease
When his stiff beard's all frosted over
Thinking of blazing
August's corn
And the brimming wine-cribs of October.

TO ELSIE

The pure products of America
go crazy—
mountain folk from Kentucky
or the ribbed north end of
Jersey
with its isolate lakes and
valley, its deaf-mutes, thieves
old names
and promiscuity between
devil-may-care men who have taken
to railroading
out of sheer lust of adventure—
and young slatterns, bathed
in filth
from Monday to Saturday
to be tricked out that night
with gauds
from imaginations which have no
peasant traditions to give them
character
but flutter and flaunt
sheerags succumbing without
emotion
save numbed terror
under some hedge of choke-cherry
or viburnum—
which they cannot express—
Unless it be that marriage
perhaps
with a dash of Indian blood
will throw up a girl so desolate
so hemmed round
with disease or murder
that she'll be rescued by an
agent—
reared by the state and
sent out at fifteen to work in
some hard pressed
house in the suburbs—
some doctor's family, some Elsie—
voluptuous water
expressing with broken

brain the truth about us—
her great
ungainly hips and flopping breasts
addressed to cheap
jewelry
and rich young men with fine eyes
as if the earth under our feet
were
an excrement of some sky
and we degraded prisoners
destined
to hunger until we eat filth
while the imagination strains
after deer
going by fields of goldenrod in
the stifling heat of September
Somehow
it seems to destroy us
It is only in isolate flecks that
something
is given off
No one
to witness
and adjust, no one to drive the car

If, in a work of art, it is by the nascent form that the fullest—and most timely significance is expressed—what function might not Latin America exercise toward the United States and Canada in this respect? To introduce us to Spanish and Portugese literature— pure and simple. And if to that literature, to make us familiar with its forms as contrasted with our own.

For instance: *What* influence can Spanish have on us who speak a derivative of English in North America? To shake us free for a reconsideration of the poetic line.]

You can suggest to us that we are not English. That the Elizabethan triumphs, except for their magnificence, concern us not at all. That is, in their formal quality they do not concern us.

Specifically, by showing us a shorter, four stressed line rather than the pentameter; by showing us a great dramatic talent, Lope de Vega, who did not use the iambic pentameter—give that hint which will tend to free us to our own uses.

For in many ways 16th and 17th century Spain and Spaniards are nearer to us in the United States today than, perhaps, England ever was. It is a point worth at least taking under consideration. We in the United States are climatically as by latitude and weather much nearer Spain than England, as also in the volatility of our spirits, in racial mixture—much more like Gothic and Moorish Spain.

Even more specifically, we have a problem before us in the United States to find a verse form that will be suitable for the theatre. We know it can never be blank verse. It may very well be that hints from the romancero or at least Lope's shorter, swifter line will finally discover something more acceptable to our temperament, manner of thought and speech.

We know what we should have but we don't know how to get it. We know what we should do but we don't know how to do it. It looks as though our salvation may come not from within ourselves but from the outside.

And if everything else that I have said is wrong-headed, destructive to that precious soul of things which the true poet should cherish! If I have been mechanical and crass in my concepts, relying for my argument on mere techniques and materials—Well, in that case, from the old and alien soul of America itself, may the reliques of its ancient, its pre-Columbian cultures still kindle something in me that will be elevated, profound and common to us all, Americans. There is that path still open to us.

LA IMPORTANCIA DEL TRADUCTOR EN LAS RELACIONES LITERARIAS ENTRE LAS AMERICAS

Por ERNESTO MONTENEGRO,
Auditorium de la Universidad,
Jueves, 17 de abril de 1941.

Mi ponencia en esta grata reunión tiene que ver con la influencia de la traducción en el comercio intelectual entre los pueblos, y más particularmente en el caso de las relaciones entre las Américas. Cuatro grandes grupos que hablan inglés, español, portugués y francés formamos esta comunidad de naciones, tan cercanas por una vecindad de siglos, pero aisladas siempre por la barrera del idioma: muro impalpable, y sin embargo espeso y duro, que no sólo estorba la comunicación de individuo a individuo, sino que además va creando fatalmente prevenciones antojadizas de pueblo a pueblo. Por razones muy humanas, es decir sin razón aparente, los pueblos que se mantienen en desconocimiento mutuo pasan pronto de la indiferencia al recelo, y del hecho de no saber nada uno del otro se deslizan poco a poco a la conclusión de que seguramente hemos de estar hechos de distinta arcilla—más frágil en ciertos casos, y por lo tanto muy delicada al contacto; en otros, de más sólida contextura, pero ¡cuán rígida y refractaria!

La traducción traspasa esa barrera del lenguaje, haciéndola transparente. Traducir es hacer un acto de fe. Al verter una obra extranjera a nuestro propio idioma no solamente indicamos con ello nuestra confianza en la posibilidad de darle un ropaje apropiado en el nuestro, sino que en un sentido más general confesamos nuestra adherencia a la proposición de que la naturaleza humana, cualquiera que sea su procedencia, las ideas y el sentir de otros hombres y mujeres de origen remoto por el tiempo o la distancia cuando están expresados con vigor y sinceridad, pueden y deben ser comprensibles y hasta apasionantes para otros seres humanos.

El ideal será siempre por cierto llegar a comprender a los grandes escritores y poetas en la lengua original en que escribieron, alcanzando con ellos hasta esa exquisita intimidad en que uno cree asistir a la formación de sus pensamientos. El sello de su genio está en la justeza de su expresión, tanto como en la honesta desnudez de su alma. Esa sensación de lo definitivo y lo perfecto que recibimos de

THE UNIVERSITY *of* PUERTO RICO BULLETIN

SERIES XII—No. 2

DECEMBER 1941

The First Inter-American Writers' Conference of the University of Puerto Rico

April 14-23, 1941

Primera Conferencia Interamericana de Escritores Universidad de Puerto Rico

14-23 de abril, 1941



PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY
RIO PIEDRAS, P. R.

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of the University of Puerto Rico

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THE FIRST INTER-AMERICAN WRITERS' CONFERENCE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

I. *The Aims of the Conference.*

The First Inter-American Writers' Conference of the University of Puerto Rico, held from April 14-23, 1941, at the University, had two chief purposes. First, it aimed to stimulate an interest in writing among the students of the University or any others who wished to attend. Through direct contacts with the distinguished writers who attended, students of writing obtained encouragement for their own efforts. From the public lectures and the round table discussions, as well as from private conferences with the leaders, they obtained practical advice about writing and publishing, as well as the stimulus of the writers' personalities and presence. The directors of the Conference feel that these contacts with the famous writers who were our guests were both inspiring and helpful to those who took advantage of them.

The second aim of the Conference was to promote fuller understanding and mutual appreciation among the writers and intellectuals of the American Republics by bringing together a group of the outstanding writers of Latin America and the United States in an atmosphere of friendly cooperation and good will. If the countries of the Western Hemisphere, are to unite for the defense of their cultures and traditions, the success of their efforts will depend in large part upon the mutual understanding and esteem of the intellectuals of these countries. The First Inter-American Writers' Conference was a tangible and valuable contribution to this cause.

II. *The Leaders.*

The following distinguished writers from the Latin American Republics attended the Conference:

Jorge Mañach, Chairman, (Cuba).
Ernesto Montenegro (Chile).
Mariano Picón-Salas (Venezuela).
Ciro Alegría (Perú).

From the United States the following famous writers attended:

Robert Morss Lovett, Chairman.
Morris Bishop.
Archibald Mac Leish.
William Carlos Williams.

III. Manuscripts.

Anyone interested in writing was invited to submit manuscripts of any type of literary composition, either in Spanish or in English, to the Manuscript Committee. The Committee selected the best manuscripts of each type and submitted them before the Conference to the appropriate leaders. They in turn read them and gave their criticism and advice to the respective authors of the manuscripts, either privately or in the discussion groups. Prizes consisting of copies of the works of our famous writer-guests were presented to the authors of the best composition of each type.

IV. The Program.

The public was invited to attend the public lectures and the round table discussions. The lectures were very well attended, both by the students and the faculty of the University and by the general public. The round table discussions proved to be lively and intensely interesting to the students of writing who attended. Selected manuscripts which had been submitted by the students were read and criticized by the writers conducting each group. The writers also discussed informally their own fields of writing with those present.

Our distinguished guests were also entertained at numerous social functions by various civic and cultural organizations. They were given full opportunity to become acquainted with Puerto Rico through these affairs and through excursions on the island. On the other hand the writers and intellectuals of Puerto Rico had ample opportunities of meeting them and establishing contacts with them.

The detailed program follows:

MONDAY, APRIL 14

- 12:30 P. M.—Welcoming Luncheon—Mallorquina Restaurant.
- 3:30 P. M.—Opening Ceremony—University Theatre.
- 8:30 P. M.—Reception at the Chancellor's Residence.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

- 10:00 A. M.—Airplane trip over the Island.
- 12:30 P. M.—Luncheon given by the Rotary Club of San Juan—Hotel Condado.
- 4:00 P. M.—Tea by American Association of University Women. Dr. José M. Gallardo's residence.
- 8:30 P. M.—Lecture by Dr. Jorge Mañach:
Perfil de Martí—
University Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

- 10:00 A. M.—Round-table discussion.
Leader: Dr. Jorge Mañach—
Library of Hostos Building.
- 12:30 P. M.—Luncheon given by the Lions Club—Hotel Condado.
- 8:30 P. M.—Lecture by William C. Williams.
An Informal Discussion of Poetic Form—
University Theatre.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

- 10:00 A. M.—Round-table discussion:
Leader: William C. Williams—
Library of Hostos Building.
- 12:30 P. M.—Luncheon given by *El Mundo* and *Puerto Rico Ilustrado*—Villa Caparra.
- 8:30 P. M.—Lecture by Sr. Ernesto Montenegro:
La importancia del traductor en las relaciones literarias entre las Américas—
University Theatre.

FRIDAY, APRIL 17

- 9:00 A. M.—Visit to the historical monuments of San Juan.
- 2:00 P. M.—Round-table discussion:
Leader: Sr. Montenegro.
Library of Hostos Building.
- 4:00 P. M.—Reception given by the Instituto Iberoamericano—Miss María E. Machín's residence.
- 8:30 P. M.—Lecture by Archibald Mac Leish:
The American Writers and the New World—
University Theatre.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

- 10:00 A. M.—Round-table discussion:
Leader: Archibald Mac Leish—
Library of Hostos Building.
- 3:00 P. M.—Lecture by Morris Bishop:
How to Write a Biography—
University Theatre.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

- 7:00 A. M.—Excursion to Coamo Springs.

MONDAY, APRIL 21

- 3:00 P. M.—Round-table discussion:
Leader: Morris Bishop—
Library of Hostos Building.
- 4:00 P. M.—Tea by the Women Graduates Association of the University of Puerto Rico—
Mrs. Andreu de Aguilar's residence.
- 8:30 P. M.—Lecture by Dr. Robert Morss Lovett:
Shakespeare in Relation to his Age; and presentation of *The Taming of the Shrew* by students of the Department of English.
Assembly Hall.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

- 2:00 P. M.—Lecture by Ciro Alegría:
Cómo se hace una novela—
University Theatre.
- 4:00 P. M.—Reception given by the Ateneo Puertorriqueño.
- 8:30 P. M.—Lecture by Mariano Picón-Salas:
Ciclo de la moderna poesía Venezolana, 1880-1940—
University Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

- 10:00 A. M.—Round-table discussion:
Leader: Sr. Picón-Salas—
Library of Hostos Building.
- 8:30 P. M.—La Fiesta de la Lengua Española and closing ceremonies—University Theatre.

V. *Exhibition of Puerto Rican Art and Books.*

During the days of the Conference an exhibition of Puerto Rican art and books was held. In the Puerto Rican Room of the University Library the exhibition of Puerto Rican books, in charge of Miss Margarita Walsh, the Librarian of the Puerto Rican Collection, was well attended and proved of special interest to the visiting writers.

The Exhibition of Puerto Rican art, in charge of Mrs. Matilde Pérez de Silva, was held in the lobby of the University Theatre, where it was seen by all who attended the lectures, as well as by the many who came at other times.

VI. *The Conference Organization.*

- Officers:** Honory President: Governor Guy J. Swope.
President: Dr. Juan B. Soto.
Vice-Presidents: Dr. José M. Gallardo.
Mr. Enrique Ortega.
Chairmen of the
Conference: Dr. Jorge Mañach.
Dr. Robert Morss Lovett.
Executive Director: Dr. Frederick O. Bissell.
Director of Publicity: Mrs. Muna L. de Muñoz Marín.

Committees: Central Committee.

Chairman: Dr. Frederick O. Bissell.
Mrs. Muna L. Muñoz Marín.
Mr. Domingo Boneta.
Dra. Concha Meléndez.

Program Committee.

Chairman: Dr. Frederick O. Bissell.
Dra. Concha Meléndez.
Sr. Rafael W. Ramírez.
Mr. José Gueits.
Mr. Rafael Rivera Otero.
Dra. Margot Arce.
Mr. George Warrek.

* Publicity Committee.

Chairman: Mrs. Muna Lee de Muñoz Marín.
Mrs. Mary Auffant.
Mr. Charles Mc Cabe.
Mr. William O'Reilly.
Mr. Harwood Hull.
Mr. Gustavo Agrait.
Mr. Rosendo Chevrement.
Miss Cynthia Wade.
Mr. Angel Luis Morales.

Committee on Arrangements.

Chairman: Mr. Domingo Boneta.
Mrs. Muna L. de Muñoz Marín.
Mr. Guy W. Ashford.
Dra. Margot Arce.
Dra. Josefina Rodríguez López.
Mr. Cesáreo Rosa Nieves.
Mr. Lidio Cruz Monclova.
Mr. Frederick N. Sackett.
Mr. William Power.
Mr. Mario B. Rodríguez.
Mr. Juan P. Blanco.
Mr. Pablo García Díaz.

Entertainment Committee.

Chairman: Dra. Concha Meléndez.
Mr. Enrique Ortega.
Mr. José Gueits.
Miss María E. Machín.
Mrs. Margaret N. Besosa.
Mr. Emilio Colón.
Mr. Ramón Sánchez.
Mrs. Lucille K. Ramírez.
Mrs. Domitila D. Belaval.
Mrs. Juan B. Soto.
Mr. Félix Alegría.
Mr. Jamil Galib.

Committee on Manuscripts.

Chairman: Dra. Concha Meléndez.
Mrs. Muna L. de Muñoz Marín.
Mr. Thomas Hayes.
Dra. Margot Arce.
Dr. Rubén del Rosario.
Dr. Tomás Blanco.
Mr. Maurice Segall.
Mr. George R. Warrek.
Dr. Francisco Manrique Cabrera.

Committee for the Exhibition of

Puerto Rican Art and Books.

Chairman: Miss Josefina del Toro.
Mr. Rafael W. Ramírez.
Mrs. Matilde Pérez de Silva.
Mr. J. C. Thomas.
Miss Margarita Walsh.
Dr. Sebastián González García.

Primera Conferencia Interamericana de Escritores
Universidad de Puerto Rico

14-23 de Abril de 1941

VII. *The Public Lectures.*