

Tato-Laviera Poem

- [1]

Homenaje a Frank Bonilla

This-Curso

THIS-CURSO (epistle PARA UN SABIO)

Professor Frank Bonilla

Armed with profundo integrity of pensamientos
honing his academic excellence.

Frank

Community strategist for empowerment
Utilizing métodos en mesa colectiva,
Escudriñando, recovering
Puerto Rican historical documents
Organizing institution builders.

Bonilla

All the upcoming intellectuals,
Community activists, izquierdistas-leftists,
Students clamoring to join forces
With CENTRO de Estudios Puertorriqueños
Led by his humble presence.

Frank

University Maestro, calificador of many writing disciplines,
From theses to book proposals
With the genuine respect for learned evaluation.

Bonilla

Defender against collegiate racism.
Vocabularist, sociologist.
silk-smooth orator conferenciante.

Professor Frank Bonilla

We left his office,

Scratching our cabezas remarking,
“E/se Bonilla tiene tremenda plasta
Cómo es posible that
We shouted, fought and engaged
In multiple desacuerdos **sacando uñas**
Y ese Frank, no se le paraban los pelos.”

Frank

I was facing this frightful moment of being called into his office
“Oyeme Tato, I hand you this published document,
Our most important CENTRO publication,
Published in Daedalus, using the title of your book.
La Carreta Made A U turn, as our entire document.
Daedalus is a journal of intellectual Americana.”
I read the forty-page document.
I was being introduced to mainstream America and
Baptized by this cra/de of writers, which also expanded
The writings of Dr. Juan Flores.

Dr. Bonilla

The best callejerismo **chatter that** I ever heard
On a bus, towards a protest march in Connecticut,
An elder pa/trio/ta de la vieja guardia
Commenting, “Mira, yo no estoy
De acuerdo que el Frank Bonilla se retire del CENTRO.
Ese hombre Frank, tú lo ves ahí, ten cuidao, él es un apache.
El tiene una cueva, y adentro está un tigere.
No lo **molesten** mucho, el te puede salir de atrás palante, y darte
un Boricua bimbazo de inteligencia que te puede mandar
hasta freírte tus fundillos.”

Bonilla

Un sabio, deep alma
Frank, mi amigo, un caballero
At his residence, he took his time to read my entire manuscript.
His remarks were hemispheric esencia in the study
Of my Puerto Rican thoughts.
Entoces Frank me enseñó, he taught me the values
Of the written word, this majestic scholar imprinted in me
The necessity to impose our will to create institutions
Like the library and the archives so to be developed so they
can last a lifetime.
When I enter the Evelina López Antonetti CENTRO library
I think of... lifetime.

After a round of vino and bocadillos
I left his home. I walked the glorious riverside drive
I understood Bonilla’s brilliant
academic/community mission.

oye me Dr. Frank Bonilla, gracias, compañero!
Los ángeles celestiales rascándose los cascos, adivinando ¡qué
diablo!
Se va a inventar el Frank ese, con su próximo scholarly atrevimiento.

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