

STAFF MEMBER STARTS SPANISH INSTITUTE IN DUBLIN

A Trinity Foreign Language Assistant, Senor Jose-Antonio Sierra, has started a centre in Dublin for the promotion of cultural and educational relations between Ireland and Spain. The centre has received the support of various Spanish Government departments, the Irish Department of Education, teachers of Spanish in Ireland, the universities and many other bodies. Antonio Sierra hopes that his "Centro Espanol" will be the nucleus of a Spanish Institute comparable to the French, German and Italian Institutes already in Dublin.

Senor Sierra has already organised three language courses. Two are in Spanish—a crash course for third-level students and school teachers. The third is a course in English for Spanish au pair girls in Dublin to qualify them to teach English when they return to Spain. These girls often come from poor families, but now they will have a professional qualification they would not have gained under the Spanish educational system. The accent of the courses is on value for money and in addition, exchanges of teachers and students are being arranged between Ireland and Senor Sierra's home in Castile.

Although currently housed in temporary accommodation, the centre contains a collection of up-to-date catalogues of Spanish publications and a reference library of books on the language, literature, culture, socio-economic and political affairs of Spain and Latin America. It is already being used

as an information centre by the travel trade and journalists.

It may be surprising to learn that Spanish is the second most popular language in Irish schools. Senor Sierra says that the 12,000 students of Spanish in Ireland must benefit by the services offered by his institute. The growth of interest in Spanish here is reciprocated by the recent introduction of English into Spanish primary schools on a nation-wide scale.

Antonia Sierra hopes to be able to raise the standard of English in Spain and the standard of Spanish here by particularly concentrating on the teachers and potential teachers of the two languages. He has also proposed an exchange scheme between the children of workers and farmers of Spain and Ireland for the benefit of the children and for the tightening of the bonds between the ordinary people of both countries.

DAVID GILES.

SPANISH CENTRE FOR DUBLIN

A venture which it is hoped may lead to the creation of a Spanish Institute in Dublin gets under way on March 19th. It is the official opening of a "Centro Espanol", based initially on the premises of the Language Centre of Ireland, and designed to promote cultural relations between Ireland and Spain, and to assist in the study and teaching of Spanish in this country.

The chief architect of the scheme, Senor Jose-Antonio Sierra, of Trinity College, Dublin, says: "It is my personal wish that the creation of a Spanish Institute in Ireland should lead to a greater understanding and fuller cultural relationship between the two countries".

IRISH TIMES

13 de enero de 1970

Move towards

Spanish Institute

A MOVE which may lead eventually to the creation of a Spanish Institute in Dublin has been begun by a young Spanish lecturer in Trinity College.

Senor Antonio Sierra Lumbreras, from near Madrid, has set up, in the Language Centre, Dublin, a course in conversational Spanish at all levels, a guide to latest publications in the Spanish language, and information on the latest methods of teaching Spanish. He is seeking financial support from the Spanish Government, and hopes eventually to develop extensive cultural exchange programmes between Ireland and Spain.

Senor Lumbreras' centre, called Centro Espanol de Documentacion e Intercambios Culturales, started this week. It is directed immediately at all Spanish teachers in Irish schools and at students of advanced Spanish.

Its instigator is concerned about the level of Spanish teaching in Irish schools. "I believe", he says, "that a complete reform is needed, both at university and at post-primary level. As long as students of Spanish in the universities continue to read, write and think in English, improvement in post-primary schools will always be necessary.

"There is also a need to introduce modern methods in all post-primary schools, and a compulsory oral examination.

"Unfortunately, I cannot change the system. I can only offer my experience to all those teachers, higher diploma students and final-year students who wish to maintain their present fluency or to improve it".

A meeting will be held on Thursday at 7.30 p.m. in the Dominican Convent, Eccles street, Dublin, to discuss details of the proposed conversation course.

The Irish Times
27-11-70

Spanish Centre opened in Dublin

By Our Education Correspondent
A NEW Spanish Centre has just been opened in Dublin by a lecturer in Spanish at Trinity College, Dublin. It exists at the moment on a provisional basis, but is eventually to be incorporated into a Spanish Institute. The idea was first mooted at a conference of teachers of Spanish held in T.C.D. and in University College, Dublin, in March last year.

Senor Jose-Antonio Sierra, whose idea this is, outlined the aims of the centre—which is currently housed at 5, Wilton place, Dublin 2—as follows:

“To establish a permanent collection of catalogues of all Spanish publications pertaining to Spanish language and literature. Also to be able to provide examples of the latest methods of teaching and studying Spanish. In this way to be in a position to be able to supply teachers of Spanish, and any others interested in the same field, with all the necessary information they might require on their subject.

“To have available for reference selected books, magazines, newspapers and audio-visual materials. These to provide general information about Spain not only on cultural topics but also on recent change and development in the social political and economic life of the nation.

“To organise evening classes in Spanish; also talks and lectures on cultural affairs and courses in language and literature given, if possible, by native speakers.

“To help those Irish people, in particular students at university studying Spanish, who need information about jobs, courses in Spanish or other related matters. To provide a reciprocal service for Spanish people in Ireland.

“To promote the interchange of teachers and students between Ireland and Spain. To investigate the possibilities of obtaining grants for this in either country, with the eventual aim of bringing about a cultural agreement between the two countries.

Irish Examiner, Thursday April 2 1970
Spanish centre set up in Dublin

A Spanish Centre (a Centro Espanol) has been set up in Dublin on a provisional basis and is seeking official recognition by the Spanish Government.

Already Dublin has official German and Italian Institutes which cater for the languages and cultures of their countries.

Mr. Jose Antonio Sierra, a foreign languages assistant in Trinity College, Dublin is behind the move to set up a similar Spanish institute which was first mooted following a conference of teachers of Spanish held in Trinity College, Dublin and University College Dublin last March.

A native of Avila, Mr. Sierra points out that Spanish in Irish schools is second to French and the number of those studying it is growing. It will grow in popularity in Ireland he says, because of the historical links between the two countries, the increasing number of Irish tourists visiting Spain and because of the growing importance of South America as a source of Irish exports.

Apart from encouraging the study of Spanish, the Institute would promote the interchange of teachers and students between Ireland and Spain. It is also hoped to promote a summer course in Avila for Irish school-children studying Spanish for the Leaving Certificate.

Spaniard's dream comes true

The greatest ambition of Jose-Antonio Sierra, a handsome young Spaniard teaching in Trinity College, Dublin, has been to start some kind of Spanish Centre in Dublin. Now, at his own expense and almost single-handed, he has opened Dublin's first Centro Espanol.

Since last month it has been rented rooms at 5 Wilton Place, where bearded Jose-Antonio has an office and the beginnings of a library for students of Spanish language and literature.

Senor Sierra, who is an Assistant in T.C.D.'s Spanish Department, holds classes in Spanish once a week for about 10 people, mostly teachers and students. From publishers all over Spain he has collected catalogues of all Spanish language and literature publications. From these modest beginnings he hopes to see develop in Dublin a full-scale Spanish Cultural Institute under the direction of the Spanish Government.

THE IRISH PRESS,

FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 1970

DUBLIN POST VOL 2 NO 5 1970

Dublin Post Vol
Spanish Cultural Institute to open in Dublin soon
THE Spanish Government is officially opening a Spanish Cultural Institute at 58 Northumberland Road, in the near future. This will enable many Irish people to not only learn the Spanish language, but also enjoy the cultural events which will be held there.
One of the aims of the new Institute will be to strengthen the links between Ireland, and not only Spain, but all the Spanish speaking countries of the world. The Institute will also make available literature covering a diverse range of subjects from all these countries. It is hoped to initiate the Institute early in April with classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced students of the language.

EL CLARÍN

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«CENTRO ESPAÑOL» IN DUBLIN

At the Conference of Teachers of Spanish held in Trinity College and University College, Dublin, in March last year, the idea was put forward of establishing a Spanish Institute in Dublin. Since then this idea has been considerably developed and a CENTRO ESPAÑOL DE DOCUMENTACIÓN E INTERCAMBIOS CULTURALES has now been set up and was officially opened on March 19th. The *Centro Español* exists at present on a provisional basis but is eventually to be incorporated into a Spanish Institute.

The aims of the *Centro Español* are as follows:

a) To establish a permanent collection of catalogues of all Spanish publications pertaining to Spanish language and literature. Also to be able to provide examples of the latest methods of teaching and studying Spanish. In this way to be in a position to be able to supply teachers of Spanish, and any others interested in the same field, with all the necessary information they might require on their subject.

b) To have available for reference selected books, magazines, newspapers and audio-visual materials. These to provide general information about Spain not only on cultural topics but also on recent change and development in the social,

political and economic life of the nation.

c) To organize evening classes in Spanish. Also talks and lectures on cultural affairs and courses in language and literature given, if possible, by native speakers.

d) To help those Irish people, in particular students at university studying Spanish, who need information about jobs, courses in Spanish or other related matters. To provide a reciprocal service for Spanish people in Ireland.

e) To promote the interchange of teachers and students between Ireland and Spain. To investigate the possibilities of obtaining grants for this in either country, with the eventual aim of bringing about a cultural agreement between the two countries.

The director of the scheme, Mr. Sierra of Trinity College, Dublin, says that the *Centro Español* has been set up solely as a result of his personal conviction of the great and pressing need that there is for an institution of this sort in Ireland.

Finally, it is his personal wish that the creation of a Spanish Institute in Ireland should lead to a greater understanding and fuller cultural relationship between the two countries.

Spanish Institute wanted

SPANISH students here to learn English, and Irish students of Spanish, are trying to influence the Spanish Government to establish a Cultural Institute in Dublin. An average of 3,000 Spaniards come here every year to learn English; some 30,000 Irish people go to Spain on holidays and an estimated 12,000 secondary students take Spanish as an examination subject in Ireland.

Senor Antonio Jose Sierra Lumbreras, an assistant lecturer in Spanish at Dublin University, said that the Spanish students both of Ireland and of Spain felt the lack of an Institute such as those set up in Dublin by the French and German Governments. He has established a Spanish Centre at Wilton Place but his aim is to make the centre a meeting place for Spaniards who come here. There were, for example, a pair of girls who found time heavy on their hands in Dublin because they could not contact one another.

El Centro Espanol Documentacion in Wilton Place may be the foundation for such an Institute and has the approval of some Departments of the Spanish Government. One of the features is the teaching of Spanish on a non-commercial basis and a novel experiment in teaching conversational Spanish for tourists is in progress.

D-128445

JOSE ANTONIO SIERRA, DIRECTOR DEL INSTITUTO DE ESPAÑA EN DUBLIN

Nuestro colaborador José Antonio Sierra, cuya firma es ampliamente conocida por los lectores del suplemento pedagógico "La Vida en la Escuela", ha sido nombrado director del Instituto de España en Dublín, que ha sido recientemente creado por la Dirección General

de Relaciones Culturales del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, que tendrá una función social, docente y cultural.

José Antonio Sierra ocupaba hasta hace poco el cargo de lector de español en el Trinity College de la Universidad Nacional de Dublín.

A B C. MARTES 12 DE FEBRERO DE 1974.

15-8-71

LA VANGUARDIA 17

VIDA CULTURAL

INAUGURADO EL INSTITUTO ESPAÑOL EN DUBLIN

Dublín 11. El Instituto Español en Dublín ha sido inaugurado hoy con una ceremonia presidida por el ministro de Educación, Richard Burke.

El director general de Relaciones Culturales del Ministerio español de Asuntos Exteriores, don José Luis Messia, se trasladó expresamente desde Madrid a la capital irlandesa para asistir a esta inauguración, en la que estuvieron también presentes el embajador de España en Dublín, don Joaquín Justa; el director del Instituto inaugurado, don José Antonio Sierra, y numerosos representantes de la vida cultural y artística irlandesa, así como miembros de la colonia española.

El Instituto Cultural Español tiene un amplio programa de tareas divulgadoras de la cultura y arte españoles, así como un Departamento docente.—Efe.



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CARTA DE ESPAÑA N.º 171 MARZO, 1974

CREACION DE UN INSTITUTO DE ESPAÑA EN DUBLIN

Madrid, 14. — La Dirección General de Relaciones Culturales, del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, acaba de aprobar un proyecto de nueva creación de un Instituto de España en Dublín, que tendrá una función social, docente y cultural.

Ha sido nombrado director del mismo don José Antonio Sierra Lumberas, licenciado en Filosofía y Letras por la Universidad de Madrid, y que hasta hace poco tiempo ocupaba el cargo de lector de español del "Trinity College" de la Universidad Nacional de Dublín. — Eifra

Minister opens Spanish Institute

The Minister for Education, Mr. Burke, officially opened the first Spanish Cultural Institute in Ireland yesterday at 58, Northumberland Road, Dublin. Senor Messia, Director-general of Cultural Relations in the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, travelled from Spain for the ceremony.

The primary object of the Institute is for the diffusion of Spanish culture particularly the language. It has a staff of six and five teachers. The director is Don Antonio Sierra.

THE IRISH PRESS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1974

Trilingual Minister

Irish Independent Reporter

THE MINISTER for Education, Mr. R. Burke, addressed a reception in three languages in Dublin last night, drawing on his expert knowledge of Spanish to augment his accomplished Irish and well-spoken English.

The occasion was the opening of the Spanish Cultural Institute in Northumberland Road, Ballsbridge. The Institute is helping to improve contacts of a cultural, educational as well as social nature between the peoples of Spain and Ireland.

Speaking in Irish, Mr. Burke expressed his pleasure at attending the opening which put a seal on the historical contacts between the two countries. In English he explained Ireland's lengthy connections with that country. In Spanish, he spoke of the cultural value of such contacts.

Irish Independent, Tuesday, February 12, 1974

Ireland's Cultural Relations—by Michael Page

SPAIN

THE SPANISH Cultural Institute is less than one year old: it was founded in April 1972 with Señor Antonio Sierra as its first director. Much of its programme is still in the formative stage but, at the same time, a great deal has been planned and some of it is now taking shape.

The library is not due to open for another two months but already 4,000 volumes have been collected in the institute's headquarters at 58 Northumberland Road. Books on literature and the fine arts abound, naturally, but there are also works on economics, engineering and science, farming and sociology. The director intends to add a substantial number of books in English in order to reach a wider cross-section of the Irish public than merely those who can read Spanish.

Spanish is the second foreign language being taught in Irish schools, with 247 secondary schools having courses on the syllabus, and there are approximately 15,000 students at all levels. In Spain the teaching of English has recently been started in primary schools, so that now over five million children are learning English. This will provide great opportunities for Irish teachers with a knowledge of Spanish. A scheme is now in the pipeline that will give about 200 teachers of Spanish a working holiday during the summer in Spain. They will confer — at holiday resorts — with their Spanish colleagues on teaching methods and the use of audio-visual aids, etc.

Latin America

There are about thirty-five cultural institutes all over the world, under the direction of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Madrid. Many of these are in South America. A legacy from the days of Spanish exploration and conquest are the strong links between Latin America and the mother country. Spaniards enjoy dual citizenship with 12 Latin American nations.

Señor Sierra emphasises that the institute in Dublin exists not only to bring a knowledge of Spain to the Irish people but also the culture of countries like Peru, Chile and the Argentine. Already

among the 360 records available for lending to members are representative artists of countries south of the Caribbean. Latin-American poets and novelists will be found in the library and, naturally, films showing colourful aspects of life in the Spanish-speaking tropics may tempt the Irish tourists to venture a little further than the Costa Brava.

It would be difficult for any Dubliner not to notice the Spanish schoolchildren who visit here during the summer. As many as five thousand come here and stay with private families, as part of an exchange scheme which the institute helps to promote. Irish pupils have the opportunity to stay in Spain. At present there is no scholarship system operating for Irish students to study at Spanish universities, but there is an arrangement with the Irish Government to provide grants for the exchange of two from each country to spend a year in each other's land. These grants are not confined to students but could apply to graduates of any profession. It is hoped that this number will be increased by a mutual agreement between the two Governments who provide the necessary finance and facilities.

Broad scope

The Dublin Institute enjoys a great deal of autonomy, which means that the director is largely responsible for his programme of activities. This is in contrast to the Goethe Institute, for example, where Dublin is part of a world-wide network of concerts, lectures and theatrical activities planned in Munich. The director can, therefore, orient his programme to what he considers to be the special needs of the Irish people.

It is far too early to discern any trends that distinguish the policy of this Institute from the others but it is already evident that the intention is to present a programme broad, even popular, in its scope. It is not planned to appeal only to the intellectuals or to those with a knowledge of

the language. Films on sport, including bullfighting, will be shown. Since the success of the movie "Man of La Mancha" the exploits of Don Quixote have become familiar to many who never heard of Cervantes. This month the Institute will devote a week to La Mancha and its most noted citizen.

Before the Institute was founded here there was already a Spanish Circle, a purely private body operating in Dublin and in other towns. Naturally the Institute assumed many of its functions. Señor Sierra plans to open branches down the country and they are already closely co-operating with the Spanish Circle in Cork. In order to implement the policy of reaching the man in the street, they are contacting clubs, associations and Government institutions offering their services and asking how they may best serve the Irish community. However the limiting factor is, as always, money. The operating budget is only £16,000 (out of which the rent for premises must be paid) and there are only 350 members, mostly language students, who pay two pounds a year.

Strong links

Yet a full programme of events is scheduled. There will be concerts, lectures, film shows, conferences and dance groups. In co-operation with the Spanish Tourist Board, the famous guitarist Ismael will play and recite his poetry in the R.D.S. on the 27th and 28th of this month. Non-members are welcome.

Despite the fact that Spain is not in the E.E.C., there are strong historical connections between Ireland and Spain and the director hopes that his programme will strengthen the ties between the two countries.

THE IRISH PRESS

The attached cutting appeared in our issue
of OCTOBER 3, 1973

Library of Spanish books open

By DERMOT KEOGH

THE SPANISH Cultural Institute in Dublin has opened its lending library containing 6,000 books.

The range of works which is available to members only, constitutes one of the most comprehensive collections on Hispanic American culture and literature in Ireland.

Teachers of Spanish will find the most up-to-date material on how best to present their subject. Moreover, students of Catalan, Basque and Gallego will also be able to find the classic works of these languages in the institute.

The library will also receive popular Spanish and Hispanic American current affairs and literary magazines.

A Special Report by The Irish Times, February 18, 1976

SPAIN: a critical era

Institute is forging cultural links

By Christina Murphy

THE SPANISH CULTURAL Institute is a relative newcomer to the international cultural scene in Dublin. It is small compared to its French and German counterparts, both of which have been established for much longer. The Spanish Institute was opened in 1970, and slowly has been making an increasingly great impact on Irish cultural life. It is part of the Spanish Embassy, funded by the Spanish Government, but operates separately in separate premises at 58 Northumberland Road, Dublin.

The director is Jose Antonio Sierra, who came to Dublin to study in the late sixties. He was brought up near Salamanca, the location of one of the Irish colleges in Spain, and as a result has heard a lot about Ireland. He talks of the historical links between Ireland and Spain and sees the role of the Institute as one of building cultural links between the two countries. He is anxious to foster exchange between cultural, professional and educational bodies in both countries.

The institute has over 500 members. Membership costs £2 per year and entitles one to use of its library, be informed regularly of all the activities of the institute, attend courses (at an extra fee) and to reduced rates for cultural and educational activities. The institute also

operates a very useful audio-visual loans scheme for schools and colleges. For an annual fee of £3 schools can avail of any of the institute's films, tapes, slides and other such material.

After French, Spanish is now the second most widely taught foreign language in the Republic; at present 12,000 Irish people are studying Spanish. There are 187 schools around the country teaching the subject. (Co. Leitrim is the only county where Spanish is not taught). The institute gives a lot of support to teachers of Spanish

and runs refresher courses in the summer.

Interest is spreading at adult education level because of the large numbers of people going to Spain on holidays. There are also people interested in Latin America who learn Spanish and a number who need it for trade and business. The institute runs a number of Spanish classes, and a small class in Catalan. So far there is no demand to study Basque. Rates for the courses start from £5 a term and are cheaper than in commercial language schools.

The institute is trying to get an interesting experiment in "school twinning" on the ground. The idea is to enable students to stay in each other's homes in Spain and Ireland and, perhaps, spend some time in a school in Spain or Ireland as the case may be. The scheme would also encourage teacher-exchange between schools and correspondence and pen-friend schemes.

In Ireland we probably tend to think of Spanish as being spoken solely in Spain, but it is spoken by over 200 million people between Spain and Latin America and in global terms is the most widely used language after English.

On the cultural level the institute arranges a number of courses here, and visits of flamenco dancers and musicians: later this year the well-known flamenco guitarist, Serranito, will visit Ireland. Other activities have been the Spanish film week, and the performance two years ago by the Teatro Nacional Maria Guerreiro of "Misericordia" in Spanish at the Abbey theatre. It was most successful.

In co-operation with the National Gallery the institute is organising a series of lectures on the history of Spanish painting. It has thousands of slides of Spanish art for lending, and is exploring the possibility of an exchange scheme between the art school in Waterford and one in Spain.

Descendants of Wild Geese

SPANISH people of Irish descent are very much aware of their origin. Indeed in 1972 an association of Spaniards of Irish origin was established with branches in Barcelona and Madrid. The association is named Wild Geese Spanish Clan, or in Spanish El Clan Espanol de los patos salvajes. According to the clan there are 300 Spanish surnames of Irish origin and 1,500 families bearing these names today. Some of the founding members of the association were O'Donnells, O'Callaghans, O'Neills, Eyres and others.

The Barcelona newspaper *Hoja de Lunes*, when writing about the clan, told the story of the Spanish horse competing at Olympia in

London called 'Frederico Kirpatrick O'Donnell O'Farrell'—and everyone thought that it had been mistaken for an Irish horse.

The most common Irish names in Spain, the clan says are O'Donnell, O'Callaghan and O'Connor. They are very proud of a Spanish Father O'Callaghan who made important discoveries in the Caves of Qumran and a General Leopoldo O'Donnell, all of whose family followed a military career.

Some members of the clan visited Ireland last year. 'Españoles irlandeses' *Hoja de Lunes* tells us, "have a true Irish spirit"; they are sentimental, proud of their origin and "with the famous temperament which has made Irish literature legendary".

ARTS AND STUDIES

CULTURE FOR EXPORT—4

By Marion FitzGerald

Spanish Cultural Institute

THE SPANISH Cultural Institute is the youngest institute of the kind in Dublin; it was opened in February, 1974. That we have one at all is largely due to the efforts of one man, Jose-Antonio Sierra. Sierra, who was teaching in England when he applied for a job in Dublin, had applied for three posts: one in Scotland, one in London, and one in Trinity College. He decided to come here because he had a romantic attachment to Ireland — his grandfather used to tell him stories about it when he was a small boy.

"I grew up near Avila, on the borders of Salamanca, and I can only assume that my grandfather had friends there from whom he learned about this country. He had certainly never been here himself — he was a farmer. As you know, there was an Irish College in Salamanca until it was, sadly, closed a few years ago. So you see I always had this dream of coming here." He arrived in 1969.

Teaching Spanish, organising courses, talking to Irish people about Spain, he became increasingly convinced of the need for Spain to have its own cultural institute in Dublin, like the French, the Germans and the Italians. Spain's links with Ireland have always been strong: even in the sixties and seventies many young people were coming here from Spain to study English; and more and more Irish people were going to Spain on holiday.

Antonio Sierra wanted people to learn more about Spain, know more about it, "because in general, at that time, I found that Irish students knew very little about Spain. They might be learning about the literature, but nothing about its geography, its history, all its many other aspects, and I felt literature shouldn't be taught in isolation."

A cultural institute, he felt, could offer complementary courses and activities; so he began to plan and organise work for one. The Spanish centre came in February, 1974. The Spanish centre was opened in rooms rented from the Latin School in Ireland at 5 Wilton Street. Classes were held in the evenings and publications were made available. It was a small beginning.

Over the next few years, in his spare time and during his holidays, Antonio Sierra worked and campaigned for his idea. He wrote to people, he called on

people, he went to Spain to try to persuade the Spanish authorities to help him in his ambition. In papers in Ireland and Spain, he wrote about his hopes for an institute; he spoke about it on Spanish radio. It took him four years, but in February, 1974, Mr Richard Burke, TD, opened the new Instituto Cultural de Espana at 58 Northumberland Road. And Jose-Antonio Sierra was appointed director.

* * *

TODAY the institute aims to promote Spanish studies and to encourage artistic, cultural, scientific and technological co-operation between Ireland and Spain. It is responsible for the cultural services of the Spanish Embassy in Dublin. It is one of thirty-five cultural institutes around the world, all under the direction of the Cultural Relations Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Madrid.

Besides offering Spanish-language courses at all levels, it disseminates Spanish culture by means of exhibitions, film weeks, lectures and other activities in conjunction with Irish institutions and societies. At its headquarters in Northumberland Road, it maintains a library with over 3,000 volumes, and periodicals, film slides and records, all of which may be borrowed. Recently it inaugurated a video compilation of recent Spanish news: each fortnight a new edition will be shown.

Sierra feels very strongly, however, that these facilities shouldn't be limited to those who can visit the institute itself. "If you live in Cork or Limerick, you can borrow Spanish records through the county library system. If you want to borrow a film, I have made more than seventy documentary films on all aspects of Spain available through the Irish Film Institute. And Spanish books, periodicals and magazines are also available through the public libraries.

"Even if you live in Mayo, or Donegal, or Kerry, you should still be able to get Spanish reading material by asking your local public library to get it for you through the central library system, which is why I have tried to set up sections of Spanish books in libraries all over Ireland. And I have to say that the Spanish authorities have been very supportive: I've got help from a number of different sources in

Spain when I've told them what I'm trying to do."

The institute also works in collaboration with the libraries to put on special exhibitions. One, entitled "Celts of Asturias", was held in Dean's Grange Library in June, and also in June Tralee Library held an exhibition highlighting the works of the famous Catalan architect, Gaudí. And just recently, the Institute helped to mount an exhibition on Gaudí for visitors to the environment conference in the National Gallery.

Study and research are encouraged by granting scholarships each year to Irish students to attend courses in Spanish universities. The institute is responsible also for the implementation of the programme established under the agreement between Ireland and Spain on Cultural Co-Operation, which was signed in June, 1980.

* * *

LIKE the directors of the other institutes, Antonio Sierra is very happy about the way in which all four work together. "It is, I believe, a very special kind of co-operation and a very important one. All our cultures are inter-related in some way, each one can learn from the other, and by working together we all benefit, Irish institutes alike. It is a mutual cultural exchange." Like the others, the Spanish Institute organises many events on its own, and other events as a joint enterprise — such as the jazz concerts held last night and tonight in the National Concert Hall.

The institute is financed by a grant from the Spanish Government, which covers about eighty-five per cent of the running costs: the balance comes from student fees.

Spanish, it should be noted, is spoken in at least 22 countries, and by over three hundred million people. In terms of geographical spread, it comes second only to English in the number of countries where it is officially spoken. In the United States and Canada, Spanish is the first foreign language studied throughout the educational system.

If you want to find out any more about the Spanish Cultural Institute here, if you want to go to classes or simply learn more about Spain, you can call to 58 Northumberland Road in Dublin, or phone them at Dublin 01-682024.

Leabharlanna Poibli Atha Cliath 108
DUBLIN PUBLIC LIBRARIES



CENTRAL DEPARTMENT,
CUMBERLAND HOUSE (2nd Floor),
FENIAN STREET,
DUBLIN 2.

Telephone No. 6619000
Fax: 6761628

14 June 1994

Mr. Antonio Sierra,
Head of Cultural Affairs,
Instituto Cervantes,
58, Northumberland Road,
Dublin 4.

Dear Mr. ^{Antonio} Sierra,

A recent music recital held in the Dublin Corporation Central Library and supported by Instituto Cervantes reminded me that I had neglected to congratulate you on your taking up a new role as Head of Cultural Affairs. Cultural activity was a dimension of work which, as Director of the Spanish Cultural Institute, you had developed over many years both through the Institute directly and in association with external organisations in Dublin, among them the Dublin Public Library system. One of the Librarians here tells me that so many 'events' have taken place in the Libraries facilitated by the Institute on your initiative that it would be impossible to list them, but they cover a broad range of visual arts activity, music recitals and donations of books, records and videos. I have of course myself had direct experience of co-operation with the Institute going back many years and I am aware that such co-operation with the Dublin Public Libraries extends to the 1970's, back into the time of the previous City Librarian.

Thank you for enabling the citizens of Dublin to share in the wealth and diversity of Spanish culture. I hope that we will have many more opportunities to work with you in your capacity as Head of Cultural Affairs and indeed with other members of the re-organised Instituto Cervantes which has emerged from a base founded in the Spanish Cultural Institute. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Deirdre Ellis-King
City and County Librarian