Editorial Kapelusz

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One day, on a rainy Saturday evening in the autumn of 1989, I taught myself derivatives and integrals. Yes, I know, I didn't have many friends back then, talk about peak nerd stuff.

How did I do that? That particular afternoon (the exact date is lost in my memory) I rode bus 161 and went to the permanent book fair at Plaza Italia[1] in Buenos Aires, a place that I loved to visit every so often. I always loved bookstores, and I enjoyed going to Plaza Italia to find interesting used books about science and maths. They were affordable, and mostly in good condition.

It's in that book fair that I found some books about Mathematical Analysis written by the "saint trinity" of Argentine maths: Celina Repetto, Marcela Linskens, and Hilda Fesquet, published by Editorial Kapelusz[2][3], one of the most important textbook editors of Argentina in the second half of the twentieth century.

Professors Repetto, Linskens, and Fesquet published (together and separately) the best math textbooks ever written in all of Argentina's history. They featured clear explanations, lots of exercises with their solutions, and they were perfect for self-learning. A quick image search[4] gives an idea of the large catalog of math textbooks these ladies co-authored: Algebra, Geometry, Arithmetics, Analysis, Trigonometry... All gems, excellent textbooks. Maybe not comparable to those published by Mir[5] in the Soviet Union roughly at the same time, and which these three ladies most probably knew about, but excellent textbooks for high school students in any case.

I learnt a few months ago that my father studied maths in the class of professor Repetto during his time studying Architecture in the Universidad de Buenos Aires, around 1965. According to my father, she was a tough but brilliant teacher. For my part, I studied maths in high school with a disciple of professor Repetto: professor Elisa Quastler, another brilliant teacher who translated from Russian to Spanish at least one book, the "Introduction to The Theory

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[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plaza_Italia%2C_Buenos_Aires

[2] https://www.editorialkapelusz.com/

[3] Editorial Kapelusz was usually pitched against Editorial Estrada, because that's a thing we do a lot in Argentina: dichotomies, counterpoints, and contrapositions. Rosas versus Sarmiento, agriculture versus industry, River versus Boca, Clemente versus Muñoz. Argentines will understand.

[4] https://duckduckgo.com/?q=Repetto+Linskens+Fesquet+kapelusz&t=ffab&iax=images&ia=images

[5] https://mirtitles.org/category/mathematics/

of Groups" by Alexandroff (a book that is available in English at the Internet Archive[6], by the way.)

And that's how, during a rainy Saturday evening, I learnt how to calculate derivatives and integrals of continuous, simple, one-variable functions. Not that I became an expert in the subject, but I got a very good idea of the methodology, to such an extent that when I passed my exams of Maturité in the Collège Sismondi[7] of Geneva in 1993, I could ace all those math exercises and more.

So here's my belated thank you to the three great ladies of Argie maths, because they helped me get the best grades through all those years. Most importantly, they tried to make Argentina a better place, the one it deserved to be but wasn't[8].

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[6]https://archive.org/details/alexandroff-an-introduction-to-the-theory-of-groups
[7]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coll%C3%A8ge_Sismondi
[8]/blog/the-argentine-brain-drain/