Kolenda Gives View On Mexico’s Outlook

By ANN DAVIS

Dr. Konstantin Kolenda, professor of philosophy, spent two months in Mexico this summer, staying for most of this time in Mexico City. Dr. Kolenda went to Mexico for a vacation and to work on a new book he is writing on what he calls “philosophical anthropology.”

Exciting Future

Speaking of his impressions of Mexico, Dr. Kolenda said that there was, generally, a sense that the future was exciting. Industrial development is very important now, and an expansionist mood is prevalent. At the same time, the attitude of living only in the present, of not worrying about the future, exists alongside the expansionist outlook.

The two main problems which Mexico faces, according to Dr. Kolenda, are industrialization and education. It is thought that only one third of the population is productive, and great extremes of wealth and poverty exist. The minimum daily wage is about 10 pesos, or roughly 80 cents.

Culture and Art

Industrial expansion seems to absorb much of the interest of the young people of Mexico, yet there remains a strong orientation toward culture and art. Dr. Kolenda said that much of the cultural life of Mexico City is centered around the Palace of Fine Arts, a building decorated by the murals of artists such as Diego Riviera.

Biennial exhibitions of American art are held there. Commenting on the exhibit which he saw, Dr. Kolenda said that he was disappointed in the contributions from the United States. Art from the Latin American countries he found more forceful.

The Symphony

The symphony gave performances through the summer, with excellent seats for sixty cents. Chamber music groups and soloists also gave many concerts. These groups were both European and Mexican.

To find out what was going on in philosophy in Mexico, Dr. Kolenda spent a good bit of time at the University of Mexico. Faculty members there, said Dr. Kolenda, take a larger part in the political and social life of the city than is usual in the United States. He mentioned as an example Jose Vasconcelos, a philosopher who has been recommended for the Nobel Prize, and has also served as Minister of Education.

Life In General

Dr. Kolenda made some interesting comments on life in Mexico in general. For example: articles from the United States are held in high esteem, and stores such as Woolworth’s and Sears and Roebuck are flourishing. Dr. Kolenda felt that the popularity of American products might be connected with the great emphasis on successful industrialization.

Another rather amazing fact about Mexico is that there are rules, and the accident rate is very low.