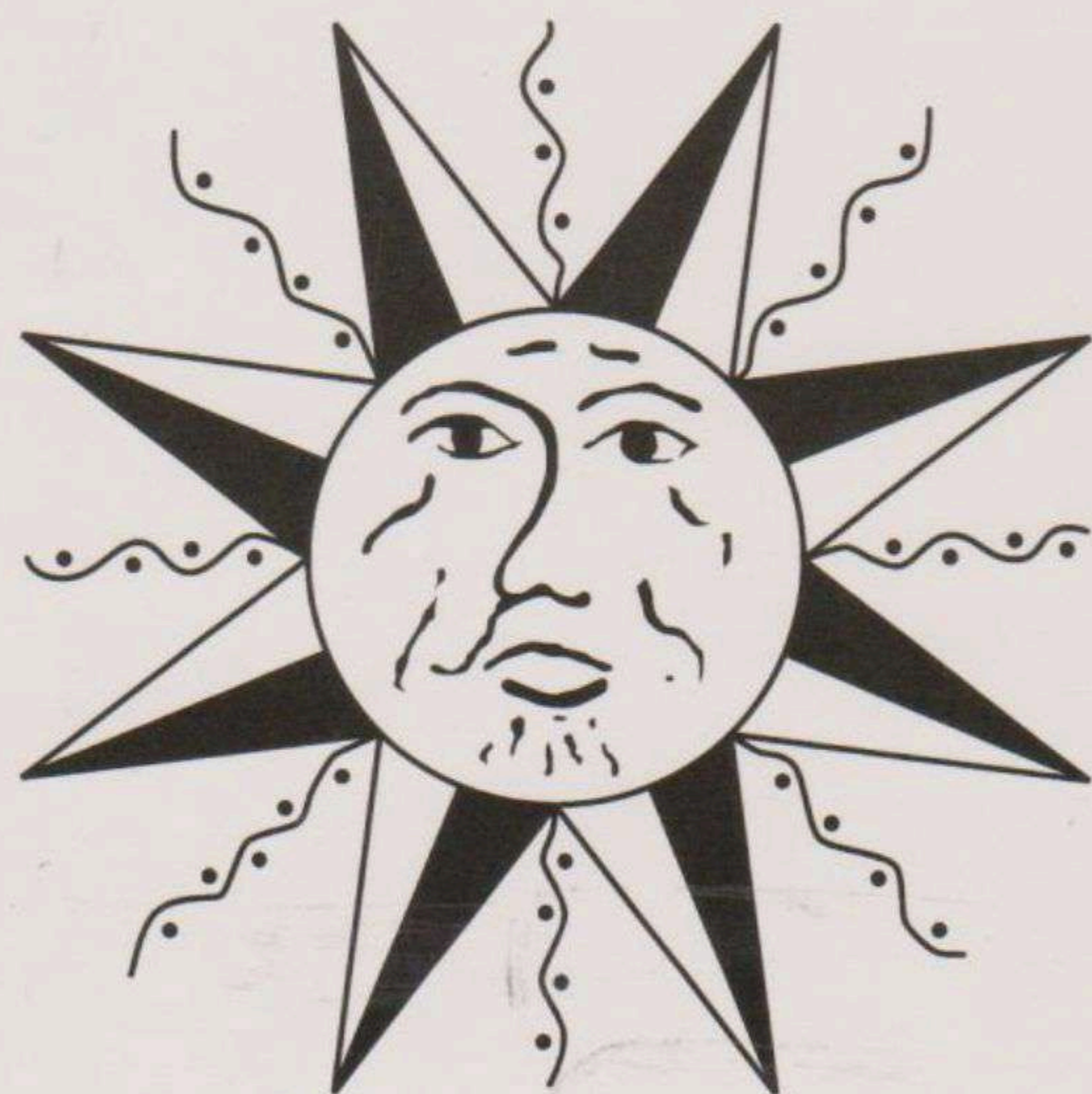


Popular Tradition

*Contemporary writers and poets
from the department of Jutiapa*

Artemis Torres Valenzuela



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Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala

Contemporary writers and poets from the department of Jutiapa

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Documenting popular culture and traditional popular culture from the east of the country, specifically from the department of Jutiapa, the University of San Carlos of Guatemala, through the Center for Folkloric Studies, presents a brief biographical compilation that also includes poetic samples from four authors from Jutiapa.

Carlos Rubí Barillas, Raúl Antonio Quintana Salguero, Milton Alfredo Torres Valenzuela, and Gerardo José Sandoval, four outstanding writers and poets who, through their work, offer us distinct, creative, and authentic ways of perceiving the world around us, of observing, analyzing, and transforming the surrounding reality, of delving, from non-traditional perspectives and very particular aesthetics, into concerns, joys, and reflections on issues inherent to the human condition.

In this way, the Center for Folkloric Studies, considering it important to reclaim and disseminate expressions of local cultures, incorporates this bulletin from the Popular Tradition collection on writers and poets from Jutiapa.

Carlos Rubí Barillas

Renowned writer, teacher of urban primary education and rural education, was born in the Medrano Alley of the city of Jutiapa, son of Martín Monzón and Lucrecia Barillas, originally from the village of El Tablón, San Antonio, in the municipality of Jutiapa, and from the municipality of El Adelanto, both in the department of Jutiapa. He completed his primary studies in the department of Jalapa, then continued in the municipality of Jutiapa. During this time, he wrote his first romantic poem titled Rosita.

In later years, thanks to readings of works

Combining influences from authors like Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer and Pablo Neruda, along with guidance and training from renowned professors specialized in the Spanish language, including Antonio Pereira, they delved into aspects of the language. Motivated by new writing techniques, they explored the genres of short stories, essays, and more frequently, chronicles and poetry.

Among some of the most significant works that have influenced their literary writings are **El Tigre** by the Guatemalan Flavio Herrera and **El No nacido** by David Shobin. These creations, in some way, reflect a broad range of cultural themes that transition from the everyday to the experiential, and from there to the affective romantic. These themes transcend the local sphere and place their aspirations on a more universal human level.

Carlos Barillas, announcer and journalist.

To self-taught training are added countless specialized courses in broadcasting and journalism. They have participated in TGW La Voz de Guatemala radio programs, a broadcasting institution that awarded them the distinction of professional broadcaster, in this field they shared experiences with professional Joel Villatoro¹. Currently, they are a member of the Asociación de Locutores de Guatemala.

As a radio producer, their work in favor of Jutiapa's local culture has stood out, among other activities, for the authorship and direction of the renowned radio program titled: La carta de la Justa Pérez para su Chenchó Monzón, through which, with the talented satire that characterizes them,

¹ Professional broadcaster license number B-011, issued on July 26 of Carlos 1991 by the General Directorate of Broadcasting of Guatemala. Oral interview, Barillas, Jutiapa, 21 of December 2010.

takes an objective and critical approach to the departmental and national contextual issues, proposing solutions to them².

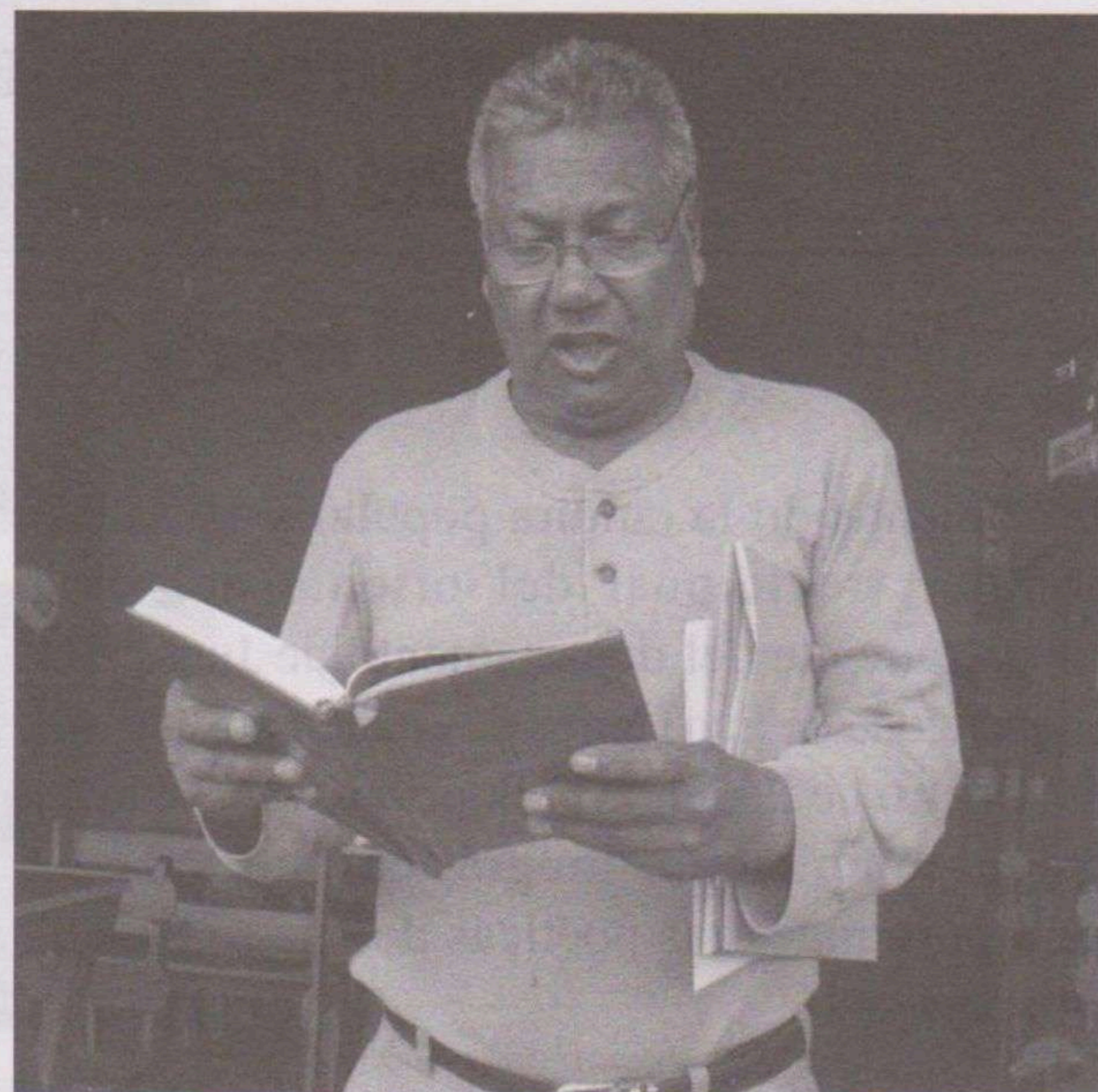
Founder of student editions and author of anthems for educational institutions and countless chronicles and articles that he has published in local and national newspapers and magazines, among which stand out La Pluma (Jutiapa), Culma (Jutiapa), Revista de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (section Quetzaltenango) and others. Currently working on the unpublished book titled "From my memories," in which using real names he addresses events that occurred at different times in his life, thus recovering unique experiences that have been part of the generational sensitivity of some people from Jutiapa.

Town and art.

With the logistical collaboration of the governor and some authorities, a few decades ago, a group of dynamic people was identified by this name, among whom were, among others, Carlos Barillas and Carlos Centeno. Organized with the purpose of spreading culture in the neighborhoods of Jutiapa (then called: La Federal, Chaparrón, Latino, and the Central neighborhood), they promoted theater, popular song, dance, and musical hours enlivened by various marirTdas, local groups, and bands. The performances of comedians who parodied important figures were frequent.

Product of frequent and routine trips to hamlets, villages, and municipalities of the department of Jutiapa and surrounding regions, among other contributions, the work of Maestro Barillas compiles, documents

²The letter from Justa Pérez to her Chenchó Monzón is a creative, proposal-driven program, whose characters inspired by real and authentic Jutiapaneco villagers were initially influenced by a school theatrical work, whose script and direction were handled by the well-known professor Carlos Alfonso Rojas. In that representation, Rolando la Rodríguez acted (as Hilario) and Luis Morazán (as Cirilo). Subsequently, with the idea of reproducing scenes of Jutiapaneco customs with characters that satirized personalities and civil, military, and religious authorities, among others, Carlos Barillas, along with the talent of Manuel de Jesús Rodríguez Godoy, evolved with the characters that already at that moment embodied Inocencio Monzón (Chenchó) and Venancio Godoy (Nancho). The theatrical performances took place in the kiosk located in the Rosendo Santa Cruz park, in the historic center of the city of Jutiapa, specifically in the weekly space called La Hora Cultural, which was hosted by professors Factor Méndez and Rafael de Paz, among others.



Poet: Carlos Barillas

and energizes a wide, fluid, and authentic language, often using ancestral words (Mesoamerican and Spanish), that are still used daily by the rural population.

Another facet: sports.

Soccer player, basketball player, baseball player, boxer, and five thousand meter runner, Carlos Barillas has promoted local sports.

Among his poetic compositions is "Los Regalos," dedicated to the historian Artemis Torres Valenzuela as a recognition of the cultural work benefiting the society of Jutiapa. The text was recited by the author in the City of Jutiapa on August 15, 2010, and in November at the event of the Floral Games commemorating the departmental fair of 2011.

Over time, the protagonists came to be characterized as we know them today; Justa Pérez and Chenchó Monzón: On the other hand, Justa and Chenchó have become important paradigm references, dynamic, lively, colorful, talented, nuanced characters that are easily recognizable, differentiated, and at the same time complementary of the rural and urban, offering us humorous and constructive dialogues that transcend the listeners who experience the fictional transfer to places, times, and situations, stimulating their imagination, being participants in the discourse and the scenes through the construction of solutions. Finally, the program demonstrates not only a research process but also knowledge and updates on issues of national reality, which reach the radio listeners thanks to the handling of voice tones that interchangeably combine words and silences. Oral interview with Carlos Barillas, Jutiapa, December 21, 2010.

THE GIFTS

A Artemis Torres Valenzuela

From XUTIAPATES,
no longer in irons or jutes,
I greet you,
you
who debate
calling yourself Juana,
Hilaria or Pioquinta
for being of the same
peel with which jocote is eaten,
you call yourself ARTEMIS
like the ones from over there,
but you are not mythological
you are real
and down-to-earth.
you are green and spicy
but not tasteless,
you have your style,
your voice
your character
and your look.
For you
I unlock today
my pouch of memories.
you told me
that from COMAPA
to the hill
of sighs and hopes
you would rise
on the shoulders
of earthen men.
you touched me too
this burning chest
clear-water socolimo
that you drink
to bear children
and you come the page
from my hands
like you open sandals
in the taste of leggings
of raw jute.
like now
they were the drums of the town.
Your daughters
with fair
you, health and yours.
I wore Managua sandals
like footsteps too
from the edge of the BARREAL.

So then
I also brought you
fresh cow cream
flavored with morro gourd,
taken from the cloths
shaped with a curved machete,
with the feel
of the eastern man
from cattle-raising JUTIAPA
which is your sacred town.

Carlos Rubí Barillas

Jutiapa, August 15, 2010

Creatively, the use of figurative language recreates and connects people, places, and things from the municipality of Jutiapa. This is materialized in compositions such as *Génesis* and *Vejentud*, works that achieve, among other effects, identifying the reader and directly taking ownership of the poem's experiences.

GENESIS AND YOUTH

I

I'm going to plant in you the tree of my life
so that my genealogy remains in your history
and you also remain in my sap.

II

Because you are unforgettable
I don't have the strength to forget you
but I have more than enough strength to adore
you histrionically.

III

So that you stay
I will take your late suns
turning them into early dawns
your nights into twilight silences
So that you won't leave,
to hold you at every moment
in the centuries of my centuries.

IV

You were mine since childhood.
I possessed you in the little paper boats
that brightened our sad winters
with innocence.
I possessed you
on the doors with cypress carvings,
in the heraldic hallways
of the old mansions
of the CARRILLO
or the BERGANZA
in the center of the town.

I loved you so much on the old tables;
on the grandparents' large wooden beds
adorned with lanterns of time.

V

I met you rustic. You didn't know how to speak.
Semantics was forbidden fruit
for your tongue.
You wore sandals and ribbons
and rosy cheeks on your face
that played with the rose of your village hair.

You carried water on your peasant waist
with a muddy clay jar
resting on your sculpted hip
that you filled at any chipped stone trough
paved with cobblestones from an ancient corner,
where time wrote legends of love,
of apparitions, frights, and ghostly tales:
The Headless Horseman, The Ox Cart,
El Zipitillo, El Sisimite, and El Sombrerón.
Not forgetting the Sigumonta with her
backward feet,
and La Llorona with her infinite wailing.
Then, water dripped from old spouts
refreshing the back of stones on winding,
sedentary streets.

VI

I loved you on the scorched rocks of your hills,
on the trails that served as shortcuts
to get lost in the cemetery
that knew my whispers and your kiss.
I knew your Manta Cantel underwear,
your silk threads, your light lace skirts
that brushed against my dog-head trousers
which I wore so many times in Parque Rosendo
Santa Cruz,
for Christmas or the Feast of San Cristóbal.
I don't forget you
because in the act of loving you so much, my
innocence
was spilled into the Zope's Cave,
in the romantic foothills of Culma.
In the refreshing, picturesque pools
of La Ahogadita, El Cajón, El Cuje, El
Almendo,
El Salto or Los Líos, where I saw you naked.
Then you took Talnete Honey for stomach aches
that turned into children
who didn't need Chicoria Honey for bravery.
I saw so many voices in you, that I kept them in
my pupils
stirring my veins with their villages and silences.

Your wind filled my Octobers
so that I wouldn't forget you
that's how I climbed the hillsides of November
to kiss your face. So then, know that I love you
from the Volcano of Culma, to Uncle Chevo's
pastures.

From Cerro Gordo to the fields of El Satélite.
From the majesty of Suchitán
to the mouthwatering mangroves of El Brujo.

In that anatomy of your landscapes,
in the X-ray of your places, I raise my cry
to ask you to stay in the forefront of my
desires
to play again in the courtyard of your humble
church
with the swallows that make rosaries
at five in the afternoon, every afternoon.
I desire you in the downpours of May as in
the
heat of April.
I desire you in the leaf-caressing air
as in the summers that awaken love stories.

VII

Here I am now seeing. Always learning
in life, from life.
Watching the skulls of children walk
mothers constantly pregnant: hating
and raising.
Politicians
deceiving fools
spilling their venom.
Masses
sowing hopes in furrowless fields.
Drunken phantoms parading a
crucified conscience.
But even so, you don't die
My People!
Because the day you die, I die.
My People!
XOXIAPAN OF MY MEMORIES.

In that anatomy of your landscapes,
 in the radiography of your places, I raise my cry
 to ask you to stay at the forefront of my desires
 to play again in the courtyard of your humble
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 XOXIAPAN OF MY MEMORIES.

GALIMATÍAS

I

I used to write about your days
 almost every day... inevitably.
 What can I write about your life today?
 The muck of your memory won't let me.
 Memory reeks.

II

I was never yours.
 You were mine in the summer
 and you left me your winter
 with all its wreckage.

mockery, selfishness, and cruelty
 that taught me to kill
 others.

A weapon is not necessary
 to kill a man
 a hypocritical smile is enough
 to kill a soul.

III

I found her
 on the corner of prostitution.
 I wanted to make the Mistress
 a Lady.
 She preferred to stay on the corner.
 With a proud heart,
 I told her:
 Don't forget
 that Deceit
 is LOVE FOR A MOMENT
 and that Forgetfulness
 is ETERNAL LOVE.
 Whore! What a whore my poetry is.

IV

They instructed me
 to break the heart
 of the corn that feeds.
 To hang
 with the noose of contempt
 the heart that loves.
 They taught me
 that you have to play dirty
 to always be the first;

and I, crooked as I was,
always arrived after.

V

I got tired
of writing nonsense,
of writing sappy clichés;
of ridiculing the word
in poetry that is beautiful,
pure, sublime, tender, real,
with your sluggish figure
useless mandrake.

I ask forgiveness from poetry.

VI

What is life,
is forgetfulness.
To say absence
is to say forgetfulness.
To remember in absence
is to die in life.
I will live
until the moment ends,
after this
my mistakes
will be horrors.

GERONTOLOGICAL VERSES

Old folks are young
just out of style,
still eager to play
Matatero tero la...
The "Green-Tail" old folks.

shoot at the target
but miss the mark.

Sharpshooters
with no aim,
which is a guarantee
but lacks charm.

As La Lupe said:
He who spits little
is good for the needs
but not for the pleasures.

Carlos Barillas

Raúl Antonio Quintana Salguero

Originally from Jutiapa, son of Encarnación Salguero (Doña Chonita), from the village of Las Pozas, Canoas in the municipality of Jutiapa, and of Mr. Isaac Quintana Lima from the municipality of Santa Catarina Mita, Jutiapa. He married the well-known teacher Elba Linares de Quintana⁵ with whom he had four children: Erick Vladimir (a lawyer), Raúl Isaac (an engineer), and the teachers Guissela and Elba María Quintana Linares.

From a young age, Raúl Antonio showed a sensitivity for the world of letters, since, as he recalls, when he was around 8 years old and experiencing schooling for the first time, he wrote his first acrostic. Dedicated to a girl, Margarita Ruano, he —according to his recollection— possibly said⁶:

⁵ Elba Linares de Quintana, originally from the municipality of Asunción Mita, Jutiapa. A renowned teacher, she completed her studies in the department of Jalapa and graduated as a teacher from the Instituto Normal Central Para Señoritas "Belén" in Guatemala City. An educator of several generations, for many years she taught in various educational institutions in the municipality of Jutiapa, among which are: Lorenzo Montúfar School, Escuela Tipo Federación "Salomón Carrillo Ramírez," and the Experimental Institute "Mario Efraín Najera Farfán."

Oral interview with Professor Elba Linares de Quintana, Jutiapa: 12-29-2010.

⁶ Oral interview with Raúl Quintana Salguero, Jutiapa: 12-20-2010 and 12-29-2010.



Poet: Raúl Quintana

"Multicolored butterflies form a fence to adorn
a flower

Aroma says goodbye to your steps, and the lepidopterans
follow your path

Roused with emotion, like a female that attracts and
bewitches

Gorgeous woman, such a little girl, and you awaken a
wounded child

Admire you and caress all your tiny
body

Re-emerge both with adult bodies and kiss
with passion

I traverse time, grow together and love
always

Tremble from cold, but not from fear; face
the bodies

Admire with madness, making her own
path"

As time passed, he continued writing letters and poems, later also stories, articles, reflections on various topics, and short stories. His interest in literary expression included declamation and public speaking. During his years of academic training, he read works by transcendental authors such as Alexandre Dumas, Emilio Salgari, Dostoevsky, Rubén Darío, and others.

His vocation for the land was solidified when he graduated as an Agronomist from the National School of Agriculture (1965), with an excellent grade, he is part of the honor roll and obtained first place in his thesis examination. Perseverant, tenacious, and disciplined, he continued his professional training, achieving other academic successes, among which stand out: Bachelor of Pedagogy, Educational Sciences, Secondary Education Teacher in Pedagogy and Educational Sciences, a graduate of the University of San Carlos de Guatemala. With his poetry, he creatively addresses and relates aspects of national and departmental reality, identity references, exalts local geography without missing themes inherent to the human condition: affectivity. In this regard, the poem titled "Woman's Smile" is reproduced, which shows the link and synthesis between diverse and opposing elements.

Woman's Smile

"Woman with a virginal smile

Image of a protective angel

Morning warmth, with a matutinal air

Holding daring hands, of dreams without prayer.

Today you come of age,

The little birds sing their finest melody

The mockingbirds fall silent, to admire your
beauty.

Teenagers get lost in your gaze.

Bride of Culma, of Gordo and Amayo.

The Suchitán would want to take a manly form

To offer you its vegetation and protect your body

Maiden of womanhood, breathe through your
nose the oxygen...

To awaken each day in the warm east of woman
and place a kiss on your tender lips...

without color, pitahaya that begins to ripen...

Your origin, beautiful Mimi, took refuge in my lap
of Pipiles...arios...

To a beautiful, pleasant, and simple woman, who
therefore becomes great, like the skirts that
envelop her.”

The historical, political, and cultural semiotic approach
is illustrated by the following composition:

I Am Castilianized

My surname Mateo, Castilianized Matéu. Pure European.

My surname Quiquibix, Castilianized Quintana. Pure
European.

My surname chicoj, Castilianized Martínez. Pure Iberian.

My surname Coyoy, Castilianized, Salguero. Pure Spanish.

The colonial-era curia Hispanicized indigenous surnames,
The civil registry of Pasaco has examples from the year 1,700,
which
says:

"I, the Holy Priest, baptized today the male whom I named,
Lorenzo Antonio Matéu Galicia; the godparents were xyz"

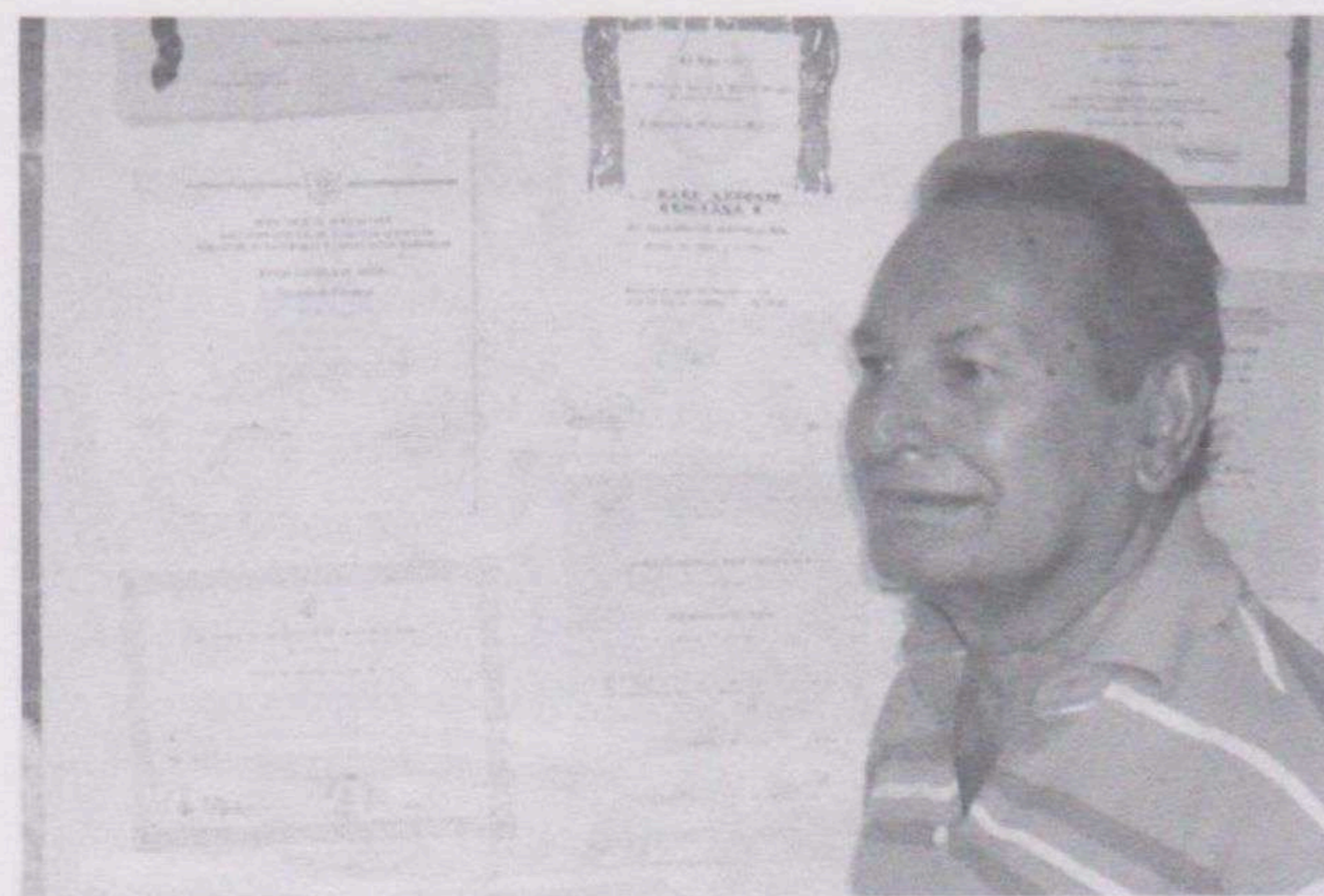
Nothing is certain, sleepy poet, that your surname is
Quezalteco or from Old Castile, as the custom is old
Hispanic, of deceiving, lying, and loafing. But Qixtan or
Quintana have their resemblance, although they differ in
profile.

Shitumul or Shitucul are similar, Muy, Mox, Miox,
Churumuyo or Bush, are the same m..."⁸

Raúl Quintana's work experiences led him to specialize in
educational,
literary, sociological, and agricultural topics. He held the
position of
education technician, from which he promoted the
formation of values
in children and young people through poetic production.
He has been a professor of sociology at the Universities of
San Carlos de Guatemala,
Rural, and Francisco Marroquín. Among the themes
that refer to and identify the particularity of Jutiapa are
poems such as the one
reproduced below.

⁷ Original creation by Raúl Quintana Salguero 25-12-2003.

⁸ Creation by Raúl Quintana Salguero. September 2005. Oral
interview with Raúl Quintana Salguero, December 20, 2010



Poet: Raúl Quintana

My East

"Judge, my homeland, the honor of your best children.
Some mutilated you, others murdered you and... All
plunged you into vices and drugs and claimed to be.
Illustrious bearers of honor and truth... To love and
defend you, to offer their lives,... So as not to deceive you,
I believe, homeland, that you are... Love alongside the
sweat of the farmer, worker, and child."

Raúl Quintana has compiled his work under the
following titles: "Travesuras de un aprendiz" printed in
Jutiapa, Guatemala, March 2005. "Mosaico literario",
writings for remembrance, Jutiapa, Guatemala, November
2002. The sociological themes are gathered under the
titles: "Fundamentos de Sociología", Jutiapa, November
2002 and "Sociología Rural", Jutiapa, January 2003.....

Milton Alfredo Torres Valenzuela

He was born in the city of Jutiapa on September 27,
1961, son of Licenciado Florencio Torres Oliva
(originally from Guatemala City) and Armida
Valenzuela (a native of Jutiapa). He completed his
studies at the Eusebia Auseda Kindergarten School,
Padilla neighborhood, Escuela Tipo Federación
"Salomón Carrillo Ramírez", Instituto Nacional de
Educación Básica Experimental Mario "Efraín
Nájera Farfán" and Instituto Normal de Magisterio
2 de junio, all educational centers in the city of
Jutiapa. In 1978 he was a founding member of the
theater group "Divulgación" of the Instituto de
Magisterio 2 de junio.



Poet: Milton Torres

In 1980, he graduated as a Master of Urban Primary Education from the Central Normal School for Men in the capital city. In subsequent years, he obtained the following degrees: Secondary Education Teacher in Literature (Faculty of Humanities, University of San Carlos of Guatemala), Secondary Education Teacher in Philosophy (University of San Carlos of Guatemala), Bachelor of Arts in Literature (University of San Carlos of Guatemala), Researcher in the area of Spanish language and literature (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation, Madrid), Specialized Teacher in Spanish language and literature (AECI, Madrid), Master in Administration (Complutense University of Madrid). Other studies: completed curriculum for the Bachelor's degree in Philosophy (USAC), diploma in power and culture of peace (Catholic University of Brussels), course on philosophy of peace, Jaume I University of Castellón, Valencia, Spain (Jaume I University of Castellón, Valencia, Spain), doctorate in administration (UNED, Costa Rica).⁹

He currently works at the University of San Carlos as a full professor in the Faculty of Humanities in the Department of Literature, where he teaches the courses: Greco-Latin Literature, 20th Century Spanish Poetry, Introduction to Literary Theory and Analysis, and also serves as director of the Guatemalan Literature Seminar and leads the readers' club at the University of San Carlos of Guatemala.

On different occasions, he has held the position of full professor in the Faculty of

Law and Social Sciences at the University of San Carlos in the courses: Language and Literature, Introduction to Sociology and Philosophy. Currently, he works as a professor at the Faculty of Humanities at Rafael Landívar University.



Writer: Milton Torres

His thoughts and opinions have been expressed in articles and columns in local magazines and newspapers. Throughout his career, he has received countless decorations and recognitions, and his work has won various literary competitions.

The following are some of his poems (unpublished).

JAGUARS IN THE NIGHT

(fragments)

Hymns of repressed fury
 wrathful infernal flashes
 glory of the warrior
 silver shadow of a golden chest:
 haughty, sweaty, exultant
 a thousand jaguars in longed-for expectation of death.

Dancing wind of sensual Uranus
 fluttering of the concave universe
 crystalline modesty of the eyes
 pupils, aquatic mirrors,
 vaporous lichens,
 reflections of crystals and dreams...

⁹ Oral interview with Milton A. Torres Valenzuela, Guatemala City, February 25, 2011

Celestial caverns that yawn generous nostalgias
and spill their gleams into the deep
cumulus
of the night.

Helios has his power diminished
by the honeys of sin
and of war
annulled twilight
silent echoes of the night
are fertilized with fire.

Blood runs through bodies
black is seeded
with the green of new life
everything collapses
words that were never spoken
stars that never shone
a thousand bells drink desires,
soft
sweeeeeeeeeeeep
sweeps
the stars.

As the reader may note, among the themes
addressed by Milton, universal topics stand out
such as time, life, the brevity of life,
existence and the flow of things.

CRONUS

Only the wind knows your secrets
old Cronus
twisted-minded god.

Only the wind born at your feet
when you chose to create the world and make a
world
Decided.

And in the trail of joyful race
that in your course
with your feet you unfold
dragging the misery of humankind,
cruel and one
you reveal yourself.

And on the horizon
which is your end and your return
a blessing in you
of the species
you also are.

Because it was you whom the winds
protected
and through you, in whom they
in solidarity
keep your secret in heat entertained.

And the light that your face reflects to us
is a beneficent sign of your essence,
because light is your path
and in light, the gaze of things
reveals you.

God, love of fleeting moments
your macabre expansion and retraction
monotonous and ephemeral
torments us...

THE WARRIOR

Volcanoes
feline apses,
wounded jaguar
in the ancient towers
of dreams.

Libertarian echoes
of warriors
who give substance
to the new sap of the created race.

Your eyes look beyond
the walls
of wrath
and beyond the uncontrollable scourge
of war.

You quiet the barking of dogs
and ignite the cauterizing flame,
wind that raises the banners of dreams.

Echo of virile voices
that in the portent of cannons and thunder
defy the eternal executioner
and the cynical, sarcastic mask
of the vulture.

Warrior
visionary of the eternal
lover of death
redemption through love for the precarious
in the hardship of everyday life.
Joyful and restrained pride...

The endemic misery of history
cruel inertia of frightful cosmic
movements
butterfly wings bound
in the web
of collective nightmares
poison your flight
and tear your song,
warrior,
friend
soldier
falcon man
chest of indigenous quetzal.

In the gray clash
of gunfire and screams
in vile offense,
like a mighty thunder
of a new warrior,
you live.

A BODY

Exultant gusts of wind...

Each second hits us.
Instants
evaporated,
measured like unfathomable deserts.

Without footprints on the horizon
they,
irate hours,
bastard daughters of faith.

well and deflate the sails
that shipwreck in the turbulent sea of the
instant
yearning to anchor in the corals,
benevolent backwaters
that when touched exhale in the ether.

Consolation of the sea,
sublime abyss,
consolation of death.

Breasts
tearing the night
mysterious castaways
topaz in my mouth

marine opals of distant epics
hidden in the tomb-stone of your body,

celestial altar
labyrinth of lost kisses
where passions grow
while hope dies.

Hands that are nests
of indomitable Pegasi
long to be your bed.

MOON

hat moon that looks behind the mountains
breaks in its waning sepia
candied longings
empty joys
pale memories
distant lights,
crystal shards
embedded in the genes.

The rivers return to the sea
faster than ever,
lyrical undulations
explosion of repressed desires
black hole of the soul
that swallows and strangles,
denied will
dissolved
love for the past of verbs.

Weariness.

The mirror of the night
breaks in the pupils.

Waning moon
pale yellow
face of old sadness,
falls over the horizon
like the drunkards
after metallic euphoria.

Gerardo José Sandoval

Writer, poet, and communicator, born in 1981 in the city of Jutiapa. Author of the poetry books *Carreta Ajena* (2004) and recently *Los Otros* (2009). He has worked in the field of social communication, journalism, and television production. In 2008, he presented the documentary titled: "Cuando Despertemos," which addresses the experience of the armed conflict in Guatemala from its causes, as well as the conditions that arose after the signing of the peace. He currently directs *Revista Impacto Noticioso*, an important media outlet that circulates in the department of Jutiapa.

Among his unpublished poetic works is the one titled *Primicia del Hombre*, its content, as he refers to it, "addresses the story of 'the New' and his friends in Guatemala at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. After a childhood marked by mental and physical repression, they seek their place in a country that offers no guarantees. Divided into six chapters, four of them cover the characters' journey through passionate youth, resentment, the attraction to easy money, contract killing, drug trafficking, or covert prostitution. The last chapter, *When I was Guatemalan*, is the final testimony of the author's renunciation of being Guatemalan, a furious protest that reviews the nation's historical flaws. In itself, the work is a poetic approach to the vital experience of being Guatemalan"¹⁰.

The content of the work "Los Otros" is precisely described by Carolina Escobar Sarti as follows: "(...) it begins with a 'We' and closes with a 'The Others'. In the rest of the poetic text, one traverses the vital nausea produced by discovering a 'defeated humanity'. Poetry of the disillusioned postmodernity, if there is anything we can qualify as such, because it is exhibited in fragments that refer us to images of outraged worlds and empty spirits, of an order that seems universal and unalterable and attacks the very human being.

Lapidary poetry that goes off to portray the others but stops to talk with the other and the other along the poetic journey to ask that deception not intervene, to affirm the confusion of living, to be the others that it can never be. To ask for conspiracies to stop the chaos, to free us from the guilt of being and remember that "man is a stávic suffocated anxiety"... and that "the word / forms and condemns him." Is it perhaps the word of a condemned poet?...¹¹



Poet: Gerardo Sandoval

Gerardo Sandoval's latest (unpublished) work titled *Kiktem Ja* (house of tranquility, in the K'iche' language) is, as he states, "the vision of the narrator-poetic subject, about the love story lived with a single mother. The content is a sensitive and sincere journey through the paths of love."¹² With over four hundred verses, the author alternates times and places, leading the reader through Guatemala, Mexico and the United States.

Below is a segment of *Kiktem Ja*:

¹⁰ Oral interview with Gerardo José Sandoval. Jutiapa City, February 26, 2011.

¹¹ <http://diariodelgallo.wordpress.com/2009/10/22/los-otros-de-gerardo-jose-sandoval/> Online document consulted on February 28, 2011.

¹² Oral interview with Gerardo José Sandoval. Jutiapa City, February 26, 2011.

"On the university bus that goes to the Periférico, I
met you

"your nineteen years loomed over your back
your eyes were blazing pools
your face a succession of many faces.
you were Cassandra
you were

a dark light that blinded
my sad condition of clay

I walked you home and you smiled
upon seeing my pack of Payasos
one by one they were smoked
possessed by the miracle of the encounter
and the bond with which life marked us
with you I went out into the day like a prisoner
who has finally finished his sentence
from the Guarda to Cuatro Grados, and to your
home
how many streets we walked without holding hands

Your blazing and turbulent life
mine ghostly, almost distant
no one would've bet a dime on us
no one
would see us together in the park
no one

would speculate on the union of two beings
so far from their route and calendar

Nothing to be done, damn time
Soon confirmed our moves"¹³

Finally, among other themes addressed by Gerardo's
poetic work are the freedom of choice and otherness.

¹³ Fragment taken from Sandoval, Gerardo José, Kiktem Ja.
(unpublished book) The quoted text fully respects the original
spelling.

The drunkards
On their lips, the tremor of the day
on their foreheads, the postponed kiss
defiant, haughty sadness

at the bottom
of the glass, the lost causes
the drunk speaks with the universe
loquacious, lucid, mediocre
he drinks it
internalizes it, condemns it
ignites the abyssal fire
and forcefully
vomits the universe
defeated.

Final Note

In this way, dear readers are invited to explore
and read more deeply the poetic and literary
work of the cited authors from Jutiapa. Likewise,
they are encouraged to stay attentive to the
thematic continuity in upcoming publications of
this same collection.

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Online Documents

[http://www.blog/www.blogschapines.com/i
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[http://diariodelgallo.wordpress.com/2009/1
0/23/los-otros-de-gerardo-jose-sandoval/](http://diariodelgallo.wordpress.com/2009/10/23/los-otros-de-gerardo-jose-sandoval/)

Unpublished Documents

Sandoval, Gerardo José. Kiktem Ja.

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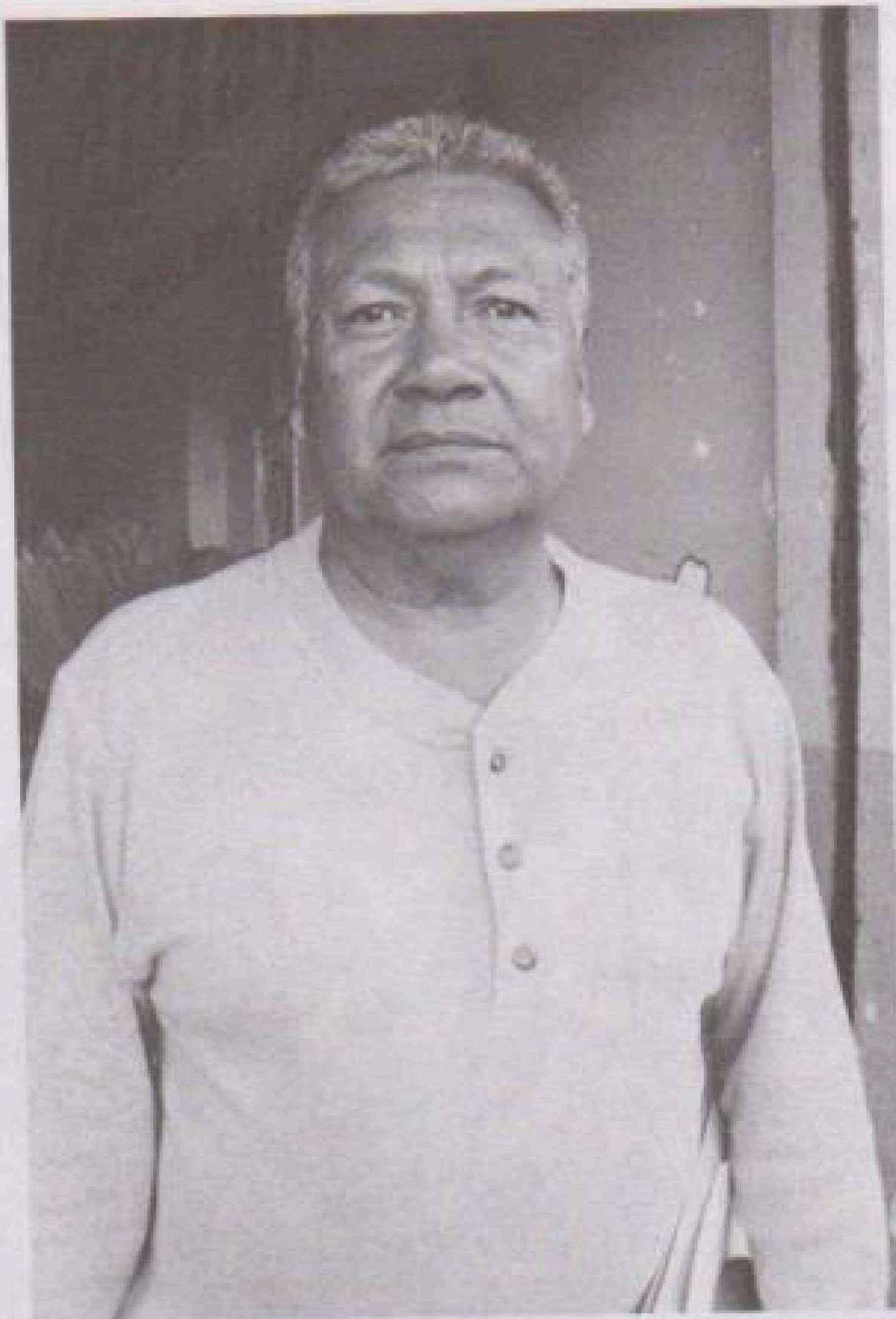
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