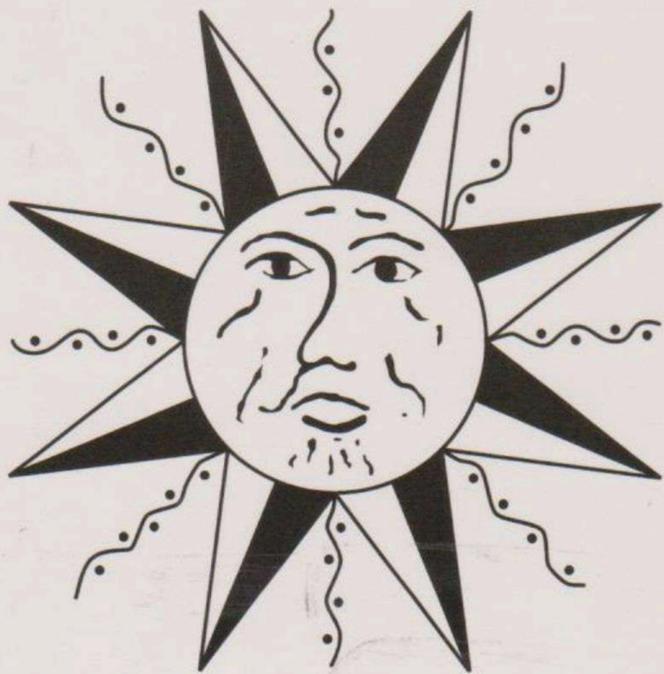




# Popular Tradition

*Contemporary writers and poets  
from the department of Jutiapa*

*Artemis Torres Valenzuela*



*NO.195*

*Year 2011*

# Contemporary writers and poets from the department of Jutiapa

## Artemis Torres Valenzuela

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 Villatoro<sup>1</sup>. 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,

<sup>1</sup> 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 them<sup>2</sup>.

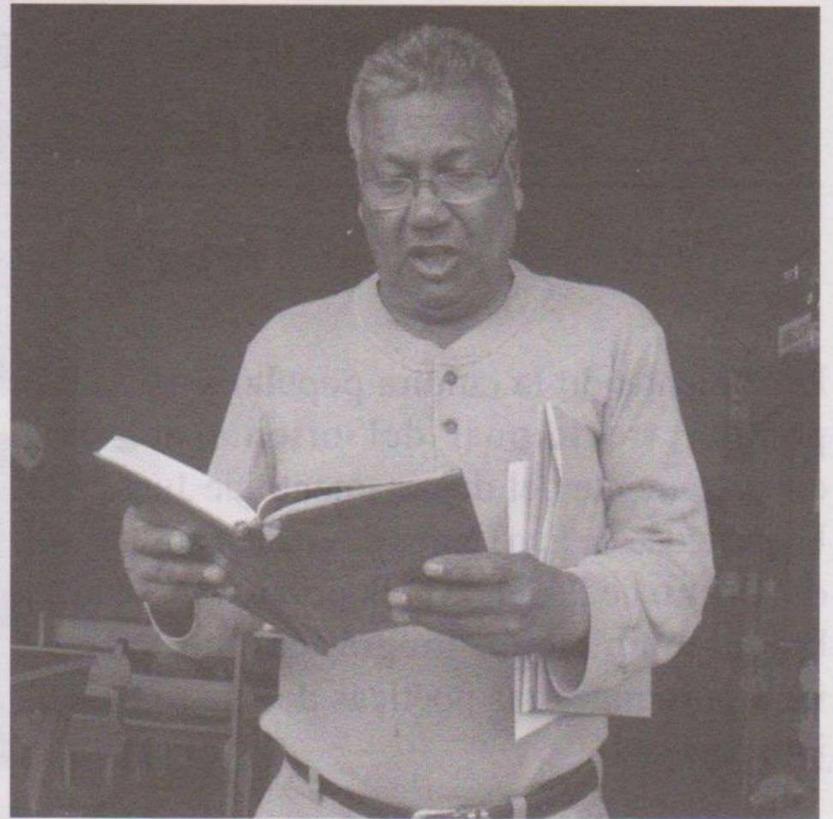
Founder of student editions and author of anthems for educational institutions and countless chronicles and articles that he has published in local and national newspapers and magazines, among which stand out La Pluma (Jutiapa), Culma (Jutiapa), Revista de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (section 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

<sup>2</sup>The 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 Hilarío) 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 Sombrero.  
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  
     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 children's skulls walk  
 mothers constantly pregnant: hating and raising.  
     Politicians  
     deceivers of fools  
     spilling their venom.  
     Masses  
     sowing hope in furrowless fields.  
 Drunken phantoms parading a crucified  
     conscience.  
 But even so, you do not die  
     My People!  
 Because the day you die, I die.  
     My People!  
 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 Quintana<sup>5</sup> 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 said<sup>6</sup>:

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> 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"

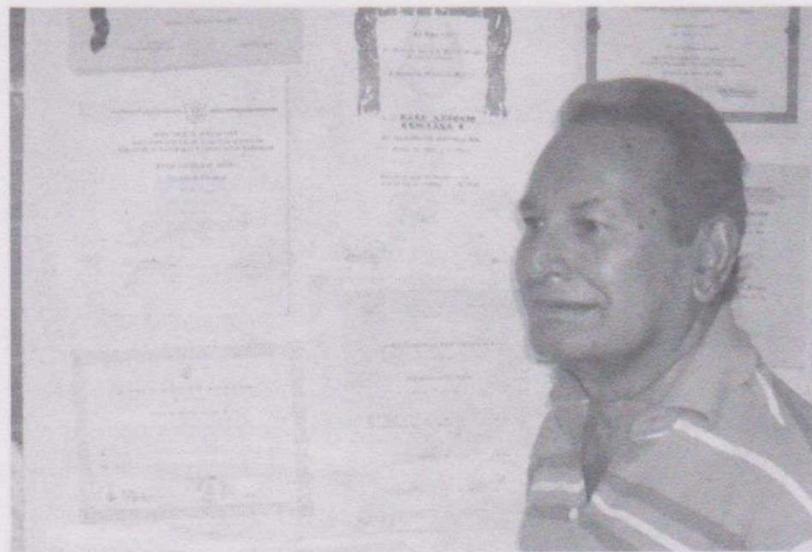
Nothing is certain, sleepy poet, that your surname is Quezalteco or from Old Castile, as the custom is old Hispanic, of deceiving, lying, and loafing. But Qixtan or Quintana have their resemblance, although they differ in profile.

Shitumul or Shitucul are similar, Mux, Mox, Miax, Churumuyo or Bush, are the same m..."<sup>8</sup>

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.

<sup>7</sup> Original creation by Raúl Quintana Salguero 25-12-2003.

<sup>8</sup> 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, Jaime I University of Castellón, Valencia, Spain (Jaume I University of Castellón, Valencia, Spain), doctorate in administration (UNED, Costa Rica).<sup>9</sup>

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...

<sup>9</sup>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"<sup>10</sup>.

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?...<sup>11</sup>



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."<sup>12</sup> 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*:

<sup>10</sup> Oral interview with Gerardo José Sandoval. Jutiapa City, February 26, 2011.

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

<sup>12</sup> 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"<sup>13</sup>

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

<sup>13</sup> 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.

### Style editing and content suggestions:

Licenciada Aída Chavarría de Calderón.

### Interviewed individuals

Writer, Professor: Carlos Barillas

Professor Elba Linares de Quintana

Licentiate Gerardo Sandoval

Licentiate Raúl Antonio Quintana Salguero

Teacher Milton Alfredo Torres Valenzuela

### Online Documents

<http://www.blog/www.blogschapines.com/index.php?feed=104>

<http://diariodelgallo.wordpress.com/2009/10/23/los-otros-de-gerardo-jose-sandoval/>

### Unpublished Documents

Sandoval, Gerardo José. Kiktem Ja.

### Photographs

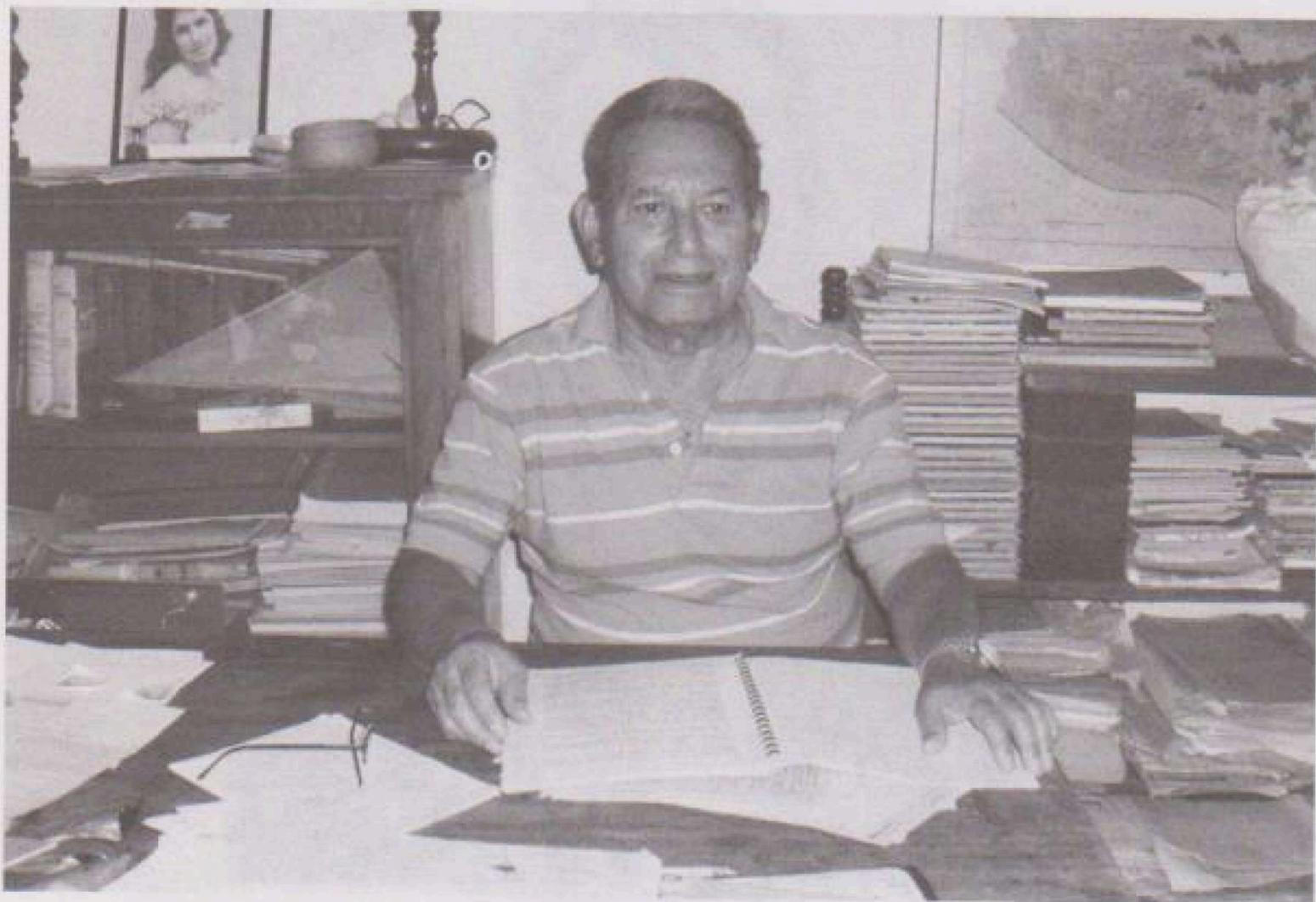
Lic. Virginia Godoy Castillo

Artemis Torres Valenzuela

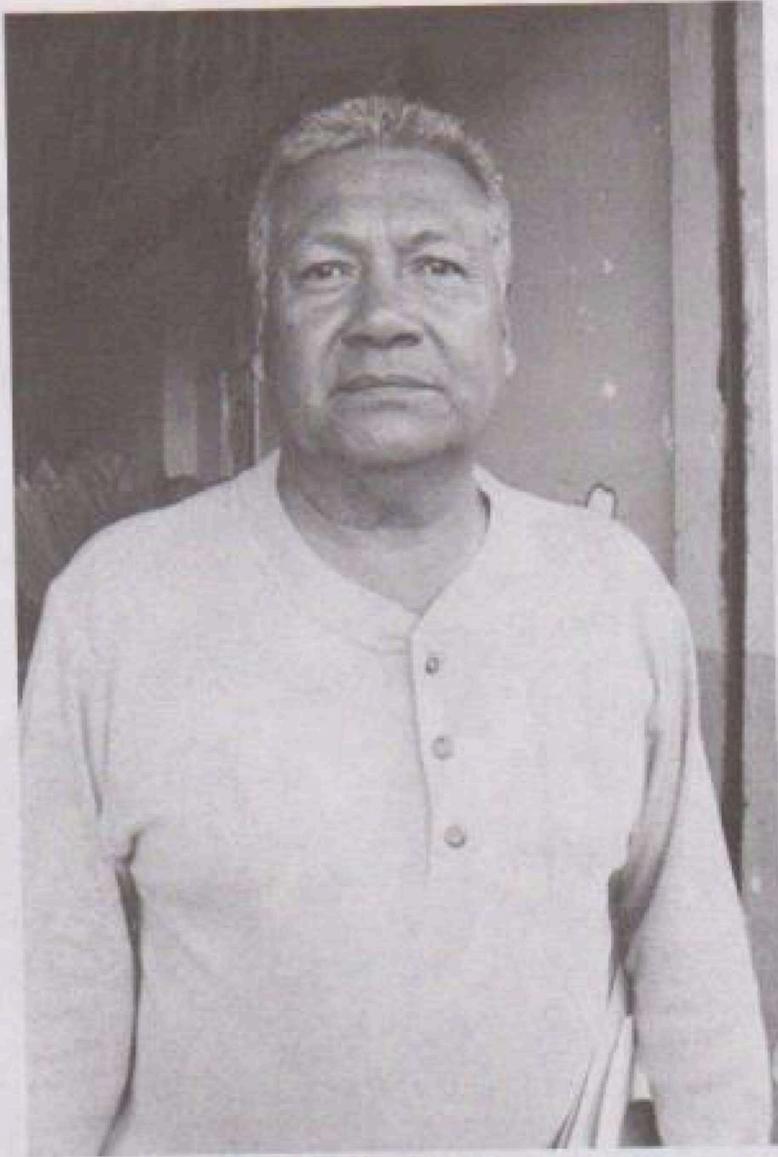
# Poets and writers



Milton Torres Valenzuela



Raúl Quintana Salguero



Carlos Barillas



Gerardo Sandoval



Avenida La Reforma 0-09, Zone 10  
Guatemala City, Guatemala  
Phone/Fax: +502 2331-9171 and  
+502 2361-9260

**Director**

Celso A. Lara Figueroa

**Assistant to the Director**

Zoila Rodríguez

**External Researchers**

Celso A. Lara Figueroa

Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés

Aracely Esquivel Vásquez

Artemis Torres Valenzuela

**Musicologist Researchers**

Enrique Anleu-Díaz

**Internal Researchers**

Anibal Dionisio Chajón Flores Matthias

Stóckli Fernando Urquizú Deyvid Molina

**Preserving Cultural Heritage Researcher**

Mario Rodríguez Esquivel

**Proofreader**

Guillermo A. Vásquez González

**Documentation Center**

María Eugenia Valdez Gutiérrez

**Illustration and Interior Layout**

Cristian Alexander Hidalgo

**Interior Photography**

Artemis Torres Valenzuela,

Virginia Godoy Castillo