

PABLO ANTONIO CUADRA

BOOK OF HOURS

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1. NICARGUAN POETRY - XXI CENTURY
2. NICARAGUAN LITERATURE

Dedication

For those who come and go
and come again
for those who love Nicaragua
then hate, then love more
for those who love Jesus
and would see Him in his
people of Nicaragua
for those who are seeking truth
but have not yet found a name
for it
PAC is a true guide.

Appreciation

To Lorraine Stuart for encouragement.

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FOREWORD

by Pedro Xavier Solis Cuadra

My grandfather, Pablo Antonio Cuadra, had a Biblical father: full of history, patriarchal, cattle rancher and with an immense library. My great-grandfather, Carlos Cuadra Pasos, gifted more than a century to the childhood of my grandfather. And there in those books this child knew the magic of places. And this made my grandfather: places. He wanted to give him a place to [become] man, in an environment where everything conspires so that man forgets his eternal destiny, but now is left without space to think about another life that is immediate and material. And in this search (for his Christian faith, his humanist thought, his poetry in struggle against time) his true relationship with the Twentieth Century was that of a dissident, that of a man against the century in which he was born to live.

The eighth of July, 1999, sick and weak —gravely ill— he was able, with help, to receive his daily communion seated in his bed. At the feet of a Crucified Christ from Colonial times —hung on a wall of his bedroom— there were two consecrated wafers in a silver box. He invoked the Lord and the Lady ‘in these decisive hours for me’, he gave communion to his grandson and breaking in half the other wafer, shared it with his wife. He prayed a prayer of thanksgiving for the favors he had received in his life, and asked blessings for the two who accompanied him. Here the grandson confronted for the first time the farewell.

The poet survived this crisis of health, but never was the same again. Nor did his body resist for much more time. Somewhat later, rocking in a wheelchair, he told me: ‘Aging is death disguised as life.’ I stretched to him my hand, while he returned to close his eyes, each time more tired.

The night of Saturday, the 17th of April, 1999, my grandfather went to lie down, but he could not sleep. Towards dawn he was able to get to sleep. And he dreamed of the Virgin Mary. He was in a new island (a small island) making a sculpture. Around him were many like himself, on other little islands, making sculptures of the Lady. Although the next day my grandfather could not reconstruct the dream, he told me that the image was like a review of the many distinct ways of appreciating the qualities (of the Virgin Mary) that he liked the most. But more than that of her physical appearance, he was impacted by her Presence.

Now I know that my grandfather rejoices in the fullness of Heaven. ‘Life transforms, it does not end,’ says the very ancient preface of the service for the dead. Not of few of us feel grief for his physical absence; but all physical reference is always nothing more in the apparent. From there, I do not have the least doubt, the Poet continues guarding his Country, his ‘small Christian country.’

From Chontales to Leon, from North to river, from river to heart.

FOREWORD

*by Carlos Mantica
Junio de 2012*

There is in a rotunda in Managua a monument with a pedestal several times higher than the statue that sustains it. Without doubt there are many monuments in the world with this characteristic.

The works of men seem to be like the pedestal that elevates to notoriety the hero, the wise one, the poet, the genius, the leader.

But upon the pedestal many times there is a small insignificant man. A weak, corrupt human overcome by vices. A common and ordinary man surprised in a moment of heroism. A complacent doll ready to always say what is great to those who are great and what they want to hear; open to repeat slogans in exchange for applause. To betray friends and betray his own self. Men who give their word, speaking foolishness, accompanying it by saying it well and sounding pretty.

Nicaragua is full of great works produced by very small men. The work of PAC is admirable in its magnitude, profundity, and stature, and should have been more admired if only he had been willing to identify himself with the revolution that betrayed itself. To repeat their slogans. And (he would have been) more honored with prizes internationally if he had only been a little less Christian. But his immense work united, his bronze pedestal could not support the weight nor match the stature of all that is a man called Pablo Antonio Cuadra.

I choose not to write about the work of PAC because others are able to do much better than I, and PAC deserves the best, but I will tell my grandchildren that I knew an extraordinary man who honored me with his friendship.