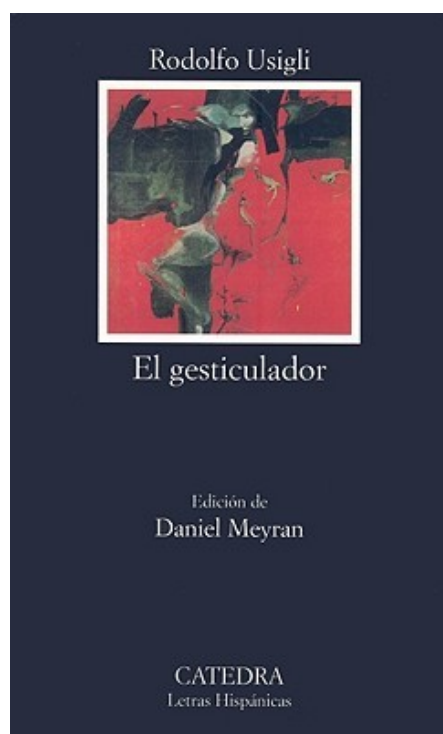




El gesticulador

Rodolfo Usigli

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El gesticulador Details

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From Reader Review El gesticulador for online ebook

Evelyn says

I enjoyed reading *El gesticulador* more than I thought I would. One thing that stuck out to me was how Usigli addressed the idea of the Mexican "mask." It feels as if each of the characters, in his or her own way, is playing with this idea. César pretends to be another, more valiant, version of himself. I think that Julia's character is interesting. She doesn't consider herself pretty, but the author draws a lot of attention to her figure. To me, Usigli uses his characters as symbols of the Mexican Revolution. César's character suggests that the revolution is full of wonderful ideas and heroes, but the people needed to make those ideas come to life don't exist and will be defeated by corruption.

Ivan T. alzate says

The metaphysics of the overpowering cruelty of the corruption reigning in a non historical Mexican time.

Dani says

fine I guess

Sophia K-I says

I was surprised by how much I actually enjoyed reading *El gesticulador*. Generally, I do not enjoy reading play's however I for me, this was an enjoyable read and I think that I can attribute it to both the combination of the plot as well as the way that Usigli constructed the play so that felt that it flowed quickly. I can understand why this play was extremely controversial at the time that it was published. Usigli offers a very harsh critique of the Mexican government as well as the Mexican revolution, painting a picture of a movement steeped in corruption, lies and manipulation all for personal benefit and gain. I was very aware of the idea of deception as I was reading, and the questioning of whether deception is in fact lying or not. The contrast between César Rubio and his son Miguel's opinions highlight this distinction; while César does not believe that he has lied as he never actually admitted to being General Rubio, Miguel believes that by continuing to let others believe that his father is General Rubio, he is a liar and no different from individuals like Navarro. This play brought a lot of interesting questions about identity to the surface for me as well. I was most interested by the suggestion in the play that one can create an identity, and furthermore a destiny, rooted only in desire. At one point César is so convinced that he is the General that he says that he has to look in the mirror to remember who he really is or maybe, was. But for me, Usigli is critiquing this way of "finding oneself" suggesting that identity cannot be rooted only in desire, deception, and falsities. As this play was written post-revolution, to me it suggests that Usigli is calling upon the Mexican people and leaders to take responsibility for what happened during the revolution and for their actions.

Mary Frantz says

Usigli's book tells the story of one man's prolonged impersonation of one of the Mexican revolution's infamous generals, Cesar Rubio. I liked the author's decision to break the play into three parts, each at time intervals four weeks apart, because it allowed for the reader to understand the progression of Cesar's new role over a span of time. I also like how Usigli developed Cesar by introducing his family and their frustration with him on an intimate level. I was able to connect with him and understand his thought process behind the lie - which made it interesting to continue reading. I also enjoyed the diction: the story was mostly easy to follow (with the exception of several scenes in which many political figures were conversing). Although I enjoyed reading the book, I do not think that I would choose to read it again; however, that being said, I think it presents the revolution from an interesting perspective of identity and one's possession of one's self versus one's nation. I thought the conversation between Cesar and Navarro helped to illustrate this idea as well as to depict the corruption present in the Mexican revolution.

Nayely Romero says

3.5

Me encantaría verla representada.

O adaptada al cine.

Víctor Sampayo says

Es la obra capital de Rodolfo Usigli. Fue varias veces censurada desde su aparición, en 1938, por el retrato sin concesiones que hace de las "maniobras" empleadas por los políticos mexicanos posrevolucionarios, encarnados principalmente en Navarro y los que rodeaban a César Rubio; pero al mismo tiempo es una obra acerca de la identidad y de cómo puede significar una oportunidad de trascendencia para un hombre que antes de ello había chapaleado continuamente en el fracaso.

Taylor says

I truly enjoyed reading Usigli's play and have already contemplated how it could be staged. El gesticulador embodies the "search for identity" so common to literature of the Mexican Revolution. While César and Miguel's relationship was dynamic and pronounced in the true/false sense of César's tale, I found the women's roles to be particularly interesting. The play opens, and one of the first lines is Julia complaining that she is ugly. The repetition of her self-loathing demonstrates the machista attitude in Mexico. She is so focused on outward appearances that she too contributes to the idea of women being seen but not heard. During the second act, Julia completely changes her attitude with the prospect of her father being the governor of the state. César's wife Elena is also an interesting role in that she is the voice of reason in the family. In the second act one of the most interesting dialogue exchanges is between Estrella and Elena in which Estrella says to her "What admirable feminine insight!" (166). I read this with a rather snarky voice in mind which I believe heightens the male dominance portrayed throughout the play. Another pivotal role is that of Oliver Bolton. Though his actual dialogue is rather limited, his influence on the life of César is undeniable. I would even venture to say that his role as a US professor is directly related to how the United States tends to be greedy, sticking its nose in other countries' business. His gullibility also fuels the fire to expand César's outrageous tale.

Mary Clare says

Although the actual language is relatively easy to understand and the themes of appearances and self-identification are overtly emphasized, I consider this play to be a wonderful insight into the mind of artists during the early to mid twentieth century. To begin, we find the protagonist, César Rubio, struggling to justify his actions, specifically the moving into the country, and beliefs during the revolution to his wife and children. Already Usigli introduces themes of doubt, family dispute and tension, and appearances, which is first mentioned by Miguel, Rubio's son, on the fourth page. Some readers may criticize the quick development, overuse, and frequent mentioning or insinuation of the theme, but I believe this writing style to be a result of the authors' during this time, 1920s, own identity crisis. Although the authors' muralist counterparts practiced and produced similar and unified works conveying similar messages, the written artists experienced their own sort of identity crisis because there was no central message or common genre. This work therefore expresses those feelings in the form of a theatrical play lead by Rubio. In summary, this story highlights the desperate and extensive efforts of one man, in the wake of the Mexican Revolution, attempting to elevate his status through a lie, to reinstate some of the goals of the revolutionaries as he runs for governor (equality), and as a result, is not fully supported by his family and in the end, is assassinated. Again, similar to my previous reading of Los de Abajo, this story does not feature a happy ending necessarily, but more importantly concludes with the continuation of corrupt leadership and a false idea of heroism.

Andrés Culebro says

El gesticulador es una de las pocas obras de teatro mexicanas de gran valor político por la forma en que denuncia la farsa en que vivimos en México y de como la vida política del país se aprovecha de las mentiras para convencer al pueblo y como no escuchan al personaje de Miguel Rubio que es la imagen de los jóvenes idealistas.

Callie Deddens says

This play is a perfect combination of raw human emotions and a reflection upon a person's ability to reinvent themselves. In one of the most eye-opening passages in the book, César Rubio reflects that almost everyone in Mexico at this time was pretending to be someone else. Murderers could pose as heroes, thieves as diplomats and charlatans as founts of wisdom. The revolution destroyed the old order and made room for anyone to be whatever they wanted to be. El Gesticulador allows the reader to question the meaning of truth. According to César Rubio, truth is what is accepted by the people. El pueblo saw him as a revolutionary hero, and so he was one. Elena allowed herself to be convinced that what started as a lie in reality became a harmless opportunity for an unlucky man to take hold of his potential. Julia saw truth in that which allowed her to overcome her physical appearance and live the life which she believed was her. Only Miguel clings to a traditional concept of the truth. At the end of the day though, one must question whether it matters that César Rubio was living a lie. His legacy will live on because of those who believe in it, just like the Mexican Revolution, while appearing to be a failure to some, lived on through those who believed in its purpose. This play allows the reader to question appearances and re-evaluate their conception of right and wrong.

Janey Fugate says

My initial criticism would be that the themes and satire is developed too overtly and that the lack of subtlety in the dialogue and the story line take away from the play's power as a portrayal of the impact of the Mexican Revolution. Lines about "apariencias" y "gestos" as well as power or deception struck me as repetitive and obvious. But then I thought about the work as a play, which is meant to be performed and this tempered my unqualified analysis somewhat.

On the surface, there are two Cesar Rubios. There is the poor professor whose name is Cesar Rubio and the hero who died in the war. But I would argue that there are in fact three. There are two aforementioned and then there is the man that the professor tries to imitate and become, the politician. I think these are allegorical of three parts of the Mexican Revolution. First, the idealistic martyr who dies early in the war, the professor who inherits and tries to keep alive the revolution's legacy but fails, and then the politician who tries to evoke the ideals of the hero but is killed by the strongman and only ends up perpetrating the violence.

Dusty says

What is truth? What is identity? In this captivating play about a down-and-out professor who poses as the great Mexican Revolutionary hero César Rubio, recently reemerged from hiding, Usigli problematizes both of those concepts. Truth is what impostors, advertisers and politicians convince us it is. Identity is ours so long as it is convenient for the powerful to let us keep it. As one character points out to César, a hero's body belongs not to the hero -- but to his country. Written in the late 1930s, *El Gesticulador* took a decade to make it to the stage. Even then it was met with hostility. Not from audiences (who loved it) but from politicians (who probably saw too much of themselves in it and hired writers to publish scathing reviews). But the play has outlived the scandal and is one of Latin America's best. Usigli's a master.

Neal says

"Todo el mundo aquí vive de apariencias, de gestos. Yo he dicho que soy el otro César Rubio... ¿a quién perjudica eso? Mira a los que llevan águila de general sin haber peleado en una batalla; a los que se dicen amigos del pueblo y lo roban; a los demagogos que agitan a los obreros y los llaman camaradas sin haber trabajado en su vida con sus manos; a los profesores que no saben enseñar, a los estudiantes que no estudian. Mira a Navarro, el precandidato... yo sé que no es más un bandido, y de eso sí tengo pruebas, y lo tienen por un héroe, un gran hombre nacional. Y ellos sí hacen daño y viven de su mentira. Yo soy mayor que muchos de ellos. ¿Por qué no...?" (p. 54)

"El político es el eje de la rueda; cuando se rompe o se corrompe, la rueda, que es el pueblo, se hace pedazos; él separa todo lo que no serviría junto, liga todo lo que no podría existir separado. Al principio, este movimiento del pueblo que gira en torno a uno produce una sensación de vacío y de muerte; después descubre uno su función en ese movimiento, el ritmo de la rueda que no serviría sin eje, sin uno. Y se siente la única paz del poder, que es moverse y hacer mover a los demás a tiempo con el tiempo. Y por eso ocurre que el político puede ser, es, en México, el mayor creador o el destructor más grande. ¿Es parecido a mí este retrato? (p. 81)

Guy Arcuri says

Me encantó el contexto histórico.
