



The Willow and the Spiral: Essays on Octavio Paz and the Poetic Imagination

Roberto Cantu

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Octavio Paz (Mexico, 1914-1998) was one of the foremost poets and essayists of the twentieth century. Read in translations into many of the world's languages, Paz received numerous awards and prizes during his lifetime, participated in major artistic and political movements of the twentieth century, served as Mexico's ambassador in India (1962-1968), and was the editor of *Plural* and *Vuelta*, two literary journals of prominent influence in Mexico, Latin America, and Spain. In 1990 Paz was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. This book of essays is a commemoration of Octavio Paz on the first centenary of his birth, a celebration undertaken with Paz's distinguishing legacy: criticism, internationally inclusive, and open to differing viewpoints. *The Willow and the Spiral: Essays on Octavio Paz and the Poetic Imagination* contains studies in English and in Spanish by top-ranking Paz scholars from various continents and wide-ranging literary traditions, as well as by an emerging generation of critics who approach the work of Octavio Paz from diverse and recent theoretical methods. Specially written for this volume, the fourteen essays are in-depth studies of Paz's poetry and essays in relation to art, eroticism, literary history, politics, the art of translation, and to Paz's life-long reflections on world cultures and civilizations as represented by China, France, India, Japan, the United States and, among others, Mesoamerica. The essays range from new critical analyses of *Piedra de sol* (Sunstone) and *Blanco*, to studies of *Renga*, the haiku tradition and, among other topics, Marcel Duchamp and the literary Avant-Garde. This book will be of importance to Paz scholars, teachers, students, and the general reader interested in Octavio Paz and in topics related to artistic, literary, and cultural movements that shaped the twentieth century and that continue to inspire and steer artists and writers in the twenty-first century.

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