



The Nobel Committee in Literature 2018

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Application for the Nobel Prize in Literature 2018

Hereby you receive the official nomination of Nicaraguan **Mr. Ernesto Cardenal**, poet, priest, theologian, writer, translator and politician, to the Nobel Prize in Literature 2018.

Ernesto Cardenal is one of the all-times-greatest literary exponent of Latin America. His works, translated into more than 20 languages, shape a universe of surprisingly expressive power that spans the entire human knowledge without ever losing touch of the social context of their times, of the material and immaterial substance that nourishes them, and of the subversive force of a language that still make that land speak.

Cardenal has set the foundations of a contemporary language that, without renouncing its roots, will inspire several new generations of poets. New hints of an ancient wisdom, that after long time finally found in Cardenal's voice the musical traces of a new poetic pathway.

Ernesto Cardenal also represents the purest example of an intellectual man always engaged with the reality that he experienced in his long life.

He served in the resistance army against the regime of Anastasio Somoza García and participated in 1954 to the April Revolution, a failed attempt to put an end to one of the most ferocious dictatorships in all of Latin America's history.

He also co-founded the Solentiname religious community on an island in Lake Nicaragua, where he preached non-violence and where he started a group of *primitivist* artists. After being identified as member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), he was forced into exile.

He then became ambassador of the Sandinista opposition in Havana (Cuba).

On 19th July 1979 he marched into Managua with revolutionary troops, overthrowing the Somoza family regime and was appointed Minister of Culture by the new revolutionary government. From that Ministry he gave life, together with his brother Fernando, to the National Literacy Campaign. Their work against one of the plagues of their country, illiteracy, helped the country's achievement of UNESCO awards.

Thanks to the National Literacy Campaign, at least 500.000 Nicaraguans learned to read and write.

In 1983, during his visit to Nicaragua, Pope John Paul II publicly invited him to resign: after his refusal, he was then suspended *a divinis*.

Literary work

The main subject of his literary work is oppression within contemporary society. Besides to enchant the readers, the aim of his poetry is to motivate them into acting towards social change. In Cardenal's work, Christianity is meant as a real denunciation of injustice.

Among his works, the most noteworthy:

Hora 0 e Gethsemany; Sky (1960); *Epigramas* (1961); *Salmos* (1964); *Oracion por Marilyn Monroe y otros poemas* (1965, about the alienation and commodification of the capitalist world); *El Estrecho Dudoso* (1966) and *Homenaje a los indios americanos* (1969, dedicated to the historical drama of Native Americans); *Canto nacional* and *Oraculo sobre Managua* (1973); *Quetzalcoatl* (1988, a poem where the evocation of ancient pre-Columbian civilizations evolves into a criticism of the degradation of human relationships within the capitalist world); and *Cosmic Song* (1969) that was reviewed by Paul W. Borgeson, University of Illinois, USA inside "*Hacia el hombre nuevo, poesia e pensamiento de Ernesto Cardenal*" as "[...] the masterwork of a poet that we can define among the greatest of the twentieth century. Together with Pablo Neruda's *Canto General*, it embodies the greatest poetic work that Latin America ever produced".

The poet J.C. Urtecho associated this poem to Dante's *Divine Comedy* as well as to Lucretius's *De rerum natura*.

Awards

1980: *Premio de la Paz del Comercio Librero Alemán*

2005: *Reconocimiento Internacional Foca Mediterránea - Premios Ondas Mediterráneas*

2009: *Premio Iberoamericano de Poesía Pablo Neruda*

2010: *Elected Miembro de la Academia Mexicana de la Lengua*

2012: *Premio Reina Sofía de Poesía Iberoamericana*

2013: Honorary degree by *Universidad de Huelva*

2013: France's *Legion of Honour*

2014: *Premio Internacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña* (2014), *XVII Feria Internacional del Libro, Santo Domingo 2014* (FILRD)

2015: Honorary degree, *Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile*.

For these as well as for other reasons related to his incommensurable literary and human work, hereby we propose Mr. Ernesto Cardenal's nomination for the Nobel Prize in Literature 2018

“Quell’uomo sta facendo la rivoluzione del Nicaragua... una rivoluzione a suon di salmi, nella luce dell’antico Esodo... E sono stati questi suoi canti che hanno infiammato le coscienze, che hanno sollevato il popolo: quasi avessero i poveri udito di nuovo la Voce parlante dalle fiamme dell’antico Roveto che nel deserto continua ad ardere senza consumarsi.”

p. David Maria Turollo su Ernesto Cardenal

Best regards,

Promotive Committee:

- **Josè Mujica**- (Ex-President of Republica del Uruguay)
- **Milton Fernández** (Artistic Director of Festival Internazionale di Poesia, Milan, Italy)
- **Giuseppe Masera** (Oncologist, Pediatrician, Pioneer of scientific and medical collaboration with Latin American countries)
- **Guido Oldani** (Poet - Founder of Realismo Terminale)
- **Andrea Semplici** - (Journalist)