



Pillar of Salt: An Autobiography, with 19 Erotic Sonnets (Texas Pan American Literature in Translation)

Salvador Novo

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Salvador Novo (1904–1974) was a provocative and prolific cultural presence in Mexico City through much of the twentieth century. With his friend and fellow poet Xavier Villaurrutia, he cofounded *Ulises* and *Contemporáneos*, landmark avant-garde journals of the late 1920s and 1930s. At once "outsider" and "insider," Novo held high posts at the Ministries of Culture and Public Education and wrote volumes about Mexican history, politics, literature, and culture. The author of numerous collections of poems, including *XX poemas*, *Nuevo amor*, *Espejo*, *Dueño mío*, and *Poesía 1915–1955*, Novo is also considered one of the finest, most original prose stylists of his generation.

Pillar of Salt is Novo's incomparable memoir of growing up during and after the Mexican Revolution; shuttling north to escape the Zapatistas, only to see his uncle murdered at home by the troops of Pancho Villa; and his initiations into literature and love with colorful, poignant, complicated men of usually mutually exclusive social classes. *Pillar of Salt* portrays the codes, intrigues, and dynamics of what, decades later, would be called "a gay ghetto." But in Novo's Mexico City, there was no name for this parallel universe, as full of fear as it was canny and vibrant. Novo's memoir plumbs the intricate subtleties of this world with startling frankness, sensitivity, and potential for hilarity. Also included in this volume are nineteen erotic sonnets, one of which was long thought to have been lost.

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