

Insanity and Poetic Justice In Usigli's *Corona de sombra*

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"His wife is mad, you say. Nothing more just. This almost makes me believe in Providence. Was it not her ambition that incited the fool? I regret that she *has* lost her reason and cannot realise that she killed her husband and that a people are avenging themselves."¹

When the French radical politician, Georges Clemenceau, expressed this view after Maximilian's execution in 1867 he revealed a harsher sense of justice than that felt by the Mexican professor and dramatist, Rodolfo Usigli, some seventy-five years later. *Corona de sombra* certainly seems to treat Carlota's insanity as a kind of divine retribution for wrongs she committed; but in enabling her to rediscover her reason—as if in response to Clemenceau's wish—Usigli does not ultimately add to her punishment: he attenuates it. *Corona de sombra* reflects a subtle and complex attitude to the roles of Maximilian and Carlota² in Mexican history. While recreating an episode around which there has arisen a popular myth the dramatist also suggests a relevance of his ideas to his country's present outlook. It is above all through the handling of the protagonist's insanity that we discover precisely what his intentions are in this modern treatment of poetic justice.

If we compare Usigli's Carlota with the historical figure we find broad similarities that suggest he was not concerned with creating a completely autonomous character. We should not be misled by the dramatist's use of the term "pieza antihistórica": the play is not intended as a contradiction of history but as an interpretation of it.

Historians agree that in 1864 Carlota (Charlotte, daughter of King Leopold of Belgium) was bored and discontented in her luxurious residence at Miramar,

dreamed of greater things, was driven by restless ambition, and played an important part in persuading Maximilian to accept the Mexican throne. (See for example O'Connor, pp. 74, 87, 91, and compare *Corona de sombra*, Acto I, Escena ii).³ They agree too that when Napoleon was arranging for the withdrawal of French troops from Mexican soil in 1866 Carlota urged her husband not to relinquish the struggle and made the decision to go on a personal mission to win support for their cause in Europe (II, ii). Her interview with Napoleon III at St. Cloud in August 1866 (II, iii), his refusal to support the Mexican intervention any longer, her wildly agitated behavior, and even the glass of orange juice which she rejected in the belief that it was poisoned—all these details have been reported by eyewitnesses (O'Connor, pp. 245-8). Usigli may well have taken note of the memoirs of Maximilian's private secretary, José Luis Blasio, who was sent to Europe to assist Carlota and to report back to the Emperor.⁴ Blasio's account confirms the essence of the interview with Pope Pius IX in the Vatican in 1866. It is worth adding that even the scene where Usigli's Carlota is examined by an alienist (III, i) is based on fact: in October of 1866 the celebrated alienist and nerve specialist Dr. Riedel of Vienna examined the Empress and was compelled to admit that he saw no hope of curing her mental disorder (O'Connor, p. 273). She was transferred to the Château de Bouchout, north of Brussels, where she remained until her death in January 1927. It is not the intention to examine here the full connection of events in the play with historical events, but suffice it to say that with one exception this same broad basis in history characterizes them all. As we shall see below, it is this exception—the visit of Erasmo (I, i, and III, ii and iv)—that provides the key to the play.

Usigli has maintained the essential ingredients of historical fact because it is his plan to use history to gain insight into the present and prepare for the future. But he holds the view that "el poeta no es el esclavo sino el intérprete del acontecimiento histórico,"⁵ and he readily admits that "he cometido diversas arbitrariedades e incurrido en anacronismos deliberados."⁶ This approach follows a well-established tradition. Of the Spanish Golden Age theatre A. A. Parker writes: "The principal condition that the seventeenth century, following Aristotle, demanded of historical drama was that its theme, where necessary, be 'emended' in order to satisfy the requirements of poetry."⁷ Usigli makes two types of "emendment": one is a process of simplification, the other a question of interpretation.

Let us consider briefly two examples of the first of these types. In the scene at Miramar in 1864 (I, ii) Usigli gives no sign that Carlota has any second thoughts about the Mexican venture; in reality she had her doubts, but subsequently overcame them. The dramatist concentrates on the dominating force within her—ambition—and thus captures the essence of the situation. It is a case where, despite the risk of doing his character an injustice, he is guided by his instinct to avoid excessive subtleties and to drive home salient points. A different kind of instance is the interview with Napoleon at St. Cloud in 1866 (II, iii). Historically, Carlota had three interviews with Louis Napoleon. She managed to control herself in the first of these; when a second meeting was refused she gatecrashed and behaved in a wild and melodramatic manner, finally rejecting the glass of orange juice and fleeing from the palace; a third meeting (at the Grand Hotel) ended with

Napoleon admitting that France was withdrawing its support and Carlota exploding in a vitriolic verbal attack on him. It is a sign of a skilled craftsman that Usigli should have captured the gist of the three interviews, with their tenor and their development, in one single, taut encounter. (The scene with the Pope is also a compressed version of three separate audiences on 27, 29 and 30 September.) Clearly what these examples involve is a matter of dramatic technique rather than interpretation, and they need not detain us any longer here.

Far more important are emendments of a second type. Usigli tends to gloss over the fact that there was something wrong with the marriage between Maximilian and Carlota: the word had passed round that they were sleeping separately, and "childlessness after seven years of marriage had become a very sensitive subject at Chapultepec" (O'Connor, pp. 177 and 147). The historian tends to reject the romantic picture of Maximilian and Carlota: "it was a love story with human flaws, that of a prince to whom casual infidelity was a princely privilege and a princess whose intense pride would not allow her to grant it" (O'Connor, p. 180). The dramatist, on the other hand, though hinting lightly at this, prefers the romantic picture: it is in keeping with his general intention of gaining sympathy for the couple; it makes their separation all the harder and more worthy of pity; and it prevents the domestic issue from assuming too great an importance in the play.

In Chapultepec in 1866, with abdication a serious possibility, Carlota wrote a memorandum for Maximilian in which she voiced her opinion that abdication amounted to failure, cowardice, or error. "I say that emperors do not give themselves up. So long as there is an emperor here, there will be an empire, even if no more than six feet of earth belong to him. . ." (See O'Connor, p. 228). Usigli's decision to omit all signs of this is highly significant, particularly since he makes Maximiliano say, "Estoy clavado en esta tierra. . . . Mejor morir en México que vivir en Europa como un archiduque de Strauss. Pero tú tienes que salvarte" (p. 30), transferring to him the spirit of determination and sacrifice. There seem to be two important inferences to be made here. Usigli is surely trying to make of Maximilian a figure more heroic, more sympathetic to the Mexican people. At the same time he is deliberately reducing—though without removing—Carlota's culpability concerning her husband's execution. He seems intent on generalizing her guilt so that it concerns, not merely her role in bringing Max to his death, but her part in a black episode in the nation's history.

According to Blasio the first signs of Carlota's madness appeared on the journey from Mexico City to Vera Cruz, where she was to embark for Europe. There were rumors indeed (for which Blasio finds no foundation) that at Puebla and Cuernavaca "she had been poisoned by being given . . . doses of toloache,"⁸ an Indian herb said to be capable of producing insanity. As opposed to this evidence, another source, Arnold Blumberg, considers that "It was on the journey to Rome that the first serious evidences of psychosis began to manifest themselves," and not until the first audience with the Pope that "the full force of her paranoid convictions became apparent."⁹ Usigli's Carlota shows the first symptoms during the interview at St. Cloud (though the theme is obliquely foreshadowed in the dialogue with Max at Chapultepec in 1866, where Carlota suddenly opts to seek aid in Europe: "Carlota—Ya sé que aquí parece una locura . . ."; and: "Maxi-

miliano—No digas locuras, amor mío”—II, ii; p. 31). The great importance of this consists in the fact that Usigli links her madness firmly and distinctly with her frustration in the attempt to gain cooperation from Napoleon. Her insanity is therefore made to derive, not only from the confrontation of her personal ambitions and desires with inflexible opposition, but from the treachery of France, the betrayal of Mexico, the evil of Napoleon.

Some historical reports suggest that when Carlota reached Rome she had lost sight of her principal objective in visiting the Vatican: in her first audience she had forgotten “that she had come to plead a truce between church and state” and “she had cried out that agents of Napoleon and Eugénie were trying to poison her” (O’Connor, p. 268). The Pope called at her hotel two days later and found her calm. The following day she demanded admittance to the Vatican and papal protection, creating a scene until the Pope allowed her to spend the night there. Although we may presume that she did mention her mission at some point it looks as though her principal concern was connected with her own safety. Yet Usigli makes the issue of the concordat play a prominent part in the opening of his Vatican scene (see p. 38). Again, therefore, we recognize the dramatist’s determination to diminish the purely personal aspect of Carlota’s situation in order to emphasize her role as a national emissary.

What followed was more melodramatic in reality than anything that Usigli has inserted in his play. Back at her hotel Carlota accused the lady of her bed-chamber—whom she had known for many years—of selling herself to Napoleon’s agents. She dismissed her and told her to flee (with her husband and the physician Dr. Bouslaveck) or be arrested. She filled a jug with water at a public fountain, bought a stove and cooking equipment, two live chickens and a basket of eggs, and back in her room ordered her maid to kill the chickens there and then, and to dress and cook them immediately. From that day she ate only things cooked in her presence. When Blasio went to take dictation from her a few days afterwards an extraordinary sight met his eyes: “There was . . . a table, on which was the charcoal stove used by Mathilde in cooking the Empress’ meals. Some hens were tied to the legs of the table, and on it were eggs and the pitcher of water which Carlota procured for herself.”¹⁰ Such material may have been appropriate for a drama showing the disintegration of a personality, but it did not form part of Usigli’s plan for a drama with a national focus. Nor did it suit the elegant, dignified portrayal of insanity that he wished to give of Carlota.

In his handling of this insanity an essential verisimilitude is maintained. The functional psychosis from which Usigli’s Carlota suffers is manifested in symptoms that correspond with those that psychologists would expect to find in a genuine case. Schizophrenia in general is described in the following terms: “Usually young people are affected, once ill they show an inclination to withdraw and as the illness progresses the personality, though not the intellect, shows signs of dilapidation. The schizophrenic’s inner life becomes of more concern to him than objective reality, against which he does not check his ideas. . . .”¹¹ The sub-group of schizophrenics to which Carlota would seem to belong, the paranoid schizophrenics, “are notably hallucinated (perceiving—usually hearing—things when there is nothing there) and deluded (possessed of false beliefs of a fixed and pathological type).”¹² We know that the real Carlota conformed with this de-

scription. She had "periods of withdrawal from reality" (O'Connor, p. 345). When the Empress Elizabeth of Austria visited her at Bouchout in 1875 she found "a gloomy salon with draped windows, which had been converted into Carlota's throne room. . . . Carlota sat on her mock throne, wearing a tinsel crown, toying with a bowl filled with fake jewels" (*ibid.*). She was known to write letters in which she called Maximilian "Lord of the Earth" and "Sovereign of the Universe" (O'Connor, p. 344). The Carlota we observe in the first scene of *Corona de sombra* is similarly hallucinated: she expects to be treated as a monarch (her servants address her as "Majestad") and she believes—after seeing Erasmo's book—that Maximilian is alive and that she has returned to him in Mexico. We could add that her demand for more light, when the sun is pouring through the windows, manifests a lack of awareness of objective reality, while her sudden change of mood, as she contemplates the History of Mexico, is symptomatic of an unstable mental condition. In one or two details the impression we have of Carlota echoes even more closely that conveyed by historical records. The scene on stage when the *Dama de compañía* has drawn the curtains and lit the candles reminds us of the sight witnessed by the Empress Elizabeth; her anguished questions concerning time ("¿Y qué es el tiempo? ¿Dónde está el tiempo? ¿Dónde lo guardan? . . ." (p. 9) and "Max, Max, Max. El tiempo está en el mar, naturalmente" (p. 10)) call to mind words that the real Carlota is reputed to have voiced to Elizabeth: "Love makes time pass. . . . Time makes love pass" (O'Connor, p. 345).

In her irrational behavior, then, Carlota comes across as a convincing dramatic character; and we have seen that her insanity takes a similar form to that of the real figure. But Usigli's great innovation is in bringing to his protagonist full lucidity together with a new insight into her past, and in enabling this discovery to release her from the enduring torment of her life. The extent of this departure from historical fact could be justified on the grounds that it contains an underlying truth and that it is vital for Usigli's moral purpose. We know that from 1866 to 1927 the real Carlota "endured alternating periods of sanity and insanity" (O'Connor, p. 343). A few weeks after Maximilian's funeral she sent a photograph of him to Blasio inscribed: "To Don José Luis Blasio. . . . Pray for the repose of the soul of His Majesty, Ferdinand Maximilian Joseph, Emperor of Mexico,"¹³ proving that she knew of his death even though at other times she seemed to think him ruler of the Earth. Usigli has transferred this pattern of alternating light and darkness into one single change from darkness to light. There is no evidence of any great illumination for the real Carlota at the time of her death. In January 1927 she caught influenza and, after willful resistance, finally died of the ensuing pneumonia. The play's version treats her death as the direct outcome of the traumatic experience of reliving painful scenes and also of her new insight into the meaning of Maximiliano's death. This is the full extent of Usigli's sense of poetic justice, which we may now consider in detail.

Although much of Usigli's concept of the theatre may be traced back to the Greek tragedians it is quite possible to see his understanding of poetic justice as belonging equally to the tradition of the Spanish Golden Age dramatists. A. A. Parker defines it as "The satisfaction or appropriateness felt when a deserving man should meet with good fortune or an undeserving man with ill fortune,

whether or not the particular recompense is directly connected with his deserts. . . . The 'punishment' of the character who has erred . . . need not be punishment by any outside agent; it may only be a failure or a frustration brought about by events; but the failure must be felt to be fitting."¹⁴ In *Corona de sombra* the purely fictional Erasmo, playing the dramatist's role within the play, makes the assumption in the first scene that poetic justice exists (though he does not call it this), and that it is in some way connected with the inability of Carlota to meet a definitive death: "Yo no creo, como todos en mi país, que Carlota haya muerto porque está loca. Creo que ha vivido hasta ahora para algo, que hay un objeto en el hecho de que haya sobrevivido sesenta años a su marido, y quiero saber cuál es ese objeto" (p. 9). He has already summarized her wrongs categorically: "Esta mujer era una ambiciosa, causó la muerte de su esposo y acarreó muchas enormes desgracias" (p. 5). By the time the play's action returns to 1927, three scenes from the end, we are able to see the reason for his words; it is possible at this stage to argue that her "undeserving" behavior consists of two main things, each with its appropriate punishment. For her excessive ambition, which has led her to interfere with the affairs of Mexico, she has been punished with personal frustration and sixty years of insanity. For driving Max to his death (though we remember that Usigli does not emphasize this point) she is punished with sixty years of remorse. The moment of enlightenment, when she comes to realize the full extent of her wrongs and her suffering, is itself a final punishment—the one that Clemenceau desired. Indeed it is possible to make the case that she has been subconsciously avoiding this moment since 1867, and to see her insanity as a form of flight from the reality that causes her pain; or to consider it as a form of self-inflicted punishment, as Usigli himself suggests in his "Prólogo a *Corona de sombra*": "Edipo se arranca los ojos y . . . Carlota se arranca la razón" (p. 67). It is highly significant, however, that Erasmo remains dissatisfied with the position in this scene; he does not feel yet that poetic justice has completed its course.

Intuitively we might already sense extenuating circumstances that he has overlooked. When the Pope says of Carlota: "su corona es de espinas y de sombra" (p. 42) he calls to mind an extra dimension in the symbolism of the crown. It is not difficult to see that the crown symbolizes the darkness of insanity, distress and torment, while also serving as an ironical reminder of her frustrated dreams of empire. Carlota herself calls it her "corona de sombra" (p. 50) and "corona de pesadilla" (p. 51). But "espinas," in its obvious allusion to Christ's crown of thorns, suggests not only mockery and suffering but also the notion of sacrifice. It is possible to see Carlota, therefore, as a sacrificial victim, who wears her crown on behalf of Mexico, as Christ wore his on behalf of mankind. If her madness could be considered as a form of sacrifice, besides a moral punishment, the question arises whether she has suffered more than is "felt to be fitting." In Act III, scene ii, Usigli allows her to argue this case. She sees a divine purpose and justice in the outcome of all but herself (p. 50). She hints at the disproportion between her punishment and the crime: "¿Cometí un crimen tan grande para merecer esta separación" (p. 49) and "¿Y no bastan acaso sesenta años de vivir en la noche, en la muerte, con esta corona de pesadilla en la frente, para merecer el perdón?" (p. 51). As she cries out she is a pitiable figure and we are probably

ready to grant our pardon; but before finally yielding we await the reaction of Erasmo, the "mirada de México" (p. 51).

Only after the re-enactment of Maximilian's execution at Querétaro is the picture complete for Erasmo, as indeed it is for Carlota. Usigli makes his own attitude clear by enabling her—with great lucidity—to recognize the integrity of her husband's death; he adds to this peace of mind the spiritual comfort derived from her hope of being reunited with Max in death. Her death releases her from not only the crown of darkness but also the agony of separation from her husband (with the associated sense of guilt). If this dramatic transformation in her and this romantic idea of reunion go dangerously near the melodramatic and the sentimental it is because Usigli wished to drive home his point that the real Carlota underwent a greater punishment than was fitting in the light of his own understanding of her role in Mexico's history (which we shall see below).

Something similar could be said of the way Maximilian is treated in this play. Although he has some of the weakness that history imputes to him, our reaction to him is complicated by Usigli's emphasis on certain ennobling traits: he is seen to be devoted to his wife, yet he will not place State affairs in jeopardy for the sake of his love for her (he postpones their meeting in the wood, II, ii); he is an anguished thinker who seeks a meaning for his life; he is a man of courage and dignity, even in the face of death; and he becomes dedicated to Mexico's interests. In the context of our earlier reasoning, if Carlota is punished by being denied for sixty years a death that is a solace, Maximilian is permitted that grace because his crime was less serious. Though his execution punishes his interference in Mexico, the absence of suffering corresponds with the absence of any blameworthy motivation. Not only Carlota but he too emerges from the play in a more favorable light than that in which Mexican history tends to see him.

To these arguments we should compare comments that Usigli has made on the real figures of Carlota and Maximilian. In his prologue to *Corona de sombra* he sees the historical events of the period as a contest between the forces of good and evil, or—as he puts it, in more vivid terms—between "el acto del diablo y el acto de Dios" (p. 72). When therefore Usigli's Carlota says to the Pope "Yo sé que fue el diablo el que nos llevó a México, Santidad, lo sé ahora—y el diablo es Napoleón" (p. 41) she is not merely speaking in figurative language. There is indeed a basis for this use of terms in a letter written by the real Carlota to Maximilian after her failure to gain reassurances from Napoleon: of him she wrote, "for He has Hell on his side. . . . He is the reincarnation of villainy on earth and means to destroy what is good . . . for me, He is the Devil in person" (O'Connor, p. 250). Instead of treating these as the words of a woman gradually losing her reason Usigli regards them as essentially reasonable. In the dramatist's eyes the Devil was triumphant in taking over Europe; but God intervened to save Mexico by choosing Maximilian, by having the Pope reject the Concordat, and by causing the execution of Maximilian and the insanity of Carlota. "La muerte de Maximiliano, que es uno de los medios divinos, parece un castigo; pero es, en realidad, la única forma en que Dios puede salvarlo" (Prólogo, p. 73).

In this context Usigli considers the historical Carlota's madness to be, not punishment, but prevention: the means by which God prevented her from continuing with the struggle and from possibly taking the Devil to Mexico. Maxi-

milian and Carlota are visualized as pawns in a contest between the powers of Good and Evil. Although this interpretation of history is less convincing than the play itself, there is a similar result: their own responsibility is reduced. Usigli interprets Carlota's punishment—and pardon—in terms that imply a kind of poetic justice in history itself: "Carlota es castigada por lo único irredimible: por el tiempo. Pero el tiempo, que es su castigo, se convierte al final en su perdón—prueba de perfección crítica—puesto que antes de morir ella pudo saber, aunque sólo fuera en el último fondo de su subconsciencia, que el tiempo había segado a todos los héroes y a todos los villanos de la tragedia, y que el acto de Dios había borrado totalmente el acto del diablo" (p. 73).

There is a careful attempt as the curtain falls to achieve an emotional effect and to suggest a religious or spiritual mood. The figure of Carlota is bathed in sunlight, the *Dama de compañía* weeps, and the characters kneel. S. H. Tilles has pointed out that Usigli sees a relationship between the theatre and the "sentido religioso" of the audience,¹⁵ and that the effect is similar to that of tragic catharsis. In his "Primer ensayo hacia una tragedia mexicana,"¹⁶ basing his argument on the premise that there have been no true tragedies since the time of the Greeks, Usigli sees Mexico as the country where tragedy might find its resurrection. His hope derives from what he considers to be the persistence in Mexico of the "sentimiento religioso." Although *Corona de sombra* is not totally alien to this concept it would be wrong to consider the play a tragedy. The main problem is a fundamental one: the play lacks a true tragic hero. In his article, written some years after *Corona de sombra*, Usigli advances the belief that Mexico's national heritage does possess adequate tragic material, comparable to the Greeks' material in the Fall of Troy: Quetzalcóatl, Tollan, the fall of Tenochtitlán, and Cuauh-témoc.¹⁷ We can understand immediately that Carlota is not only of inadequate stature to meet his requirements, but she has the wrong standing in the public eye: she is not a figure whose sufferings are those with which the nation may identify. Still more important, however, is the result of Usigli's use of poetic justice. In an article on "*El pintor de su deshonra* and the Neo-Aristotelian Theory of Tragedy," A. I. Watson points out that "if the protagonist of a play suffers greater misfortune than he strictly deserves, then the tragic emotions are likely to be stirred and we may find that we are dealing with a *tragedia patética*" (by which he means a "true" tragedy).¹⁸ Carlota only partially meets this qualification. When we return to 1927 on the first of two occasions in the final act and compare the anguished woman, now lucid, with the ambitious empress of 1866 we feel that she has more than compensated for her flaws. At this juncture her plight stirs the "tragic emotions." But Usigli has not finished: he releases her from the affliction and indeed restores the balance with the reward of a new insight into Maximilian's (and her) role in Mexican history. She ceases to be a tragic figure in the final scene because she ceases to be a person who has suffered more than she deserves.¹⁹

What we have seen, then, is that without writing a tragedy or turning Carlota into a tragic heroine, Usigli seeks to arouse cathartic emotions. In order that his protagonist's fate may provide a lesson for his audience he relies on the notion of poetic justice. An insanity that endures for sixty years and leads unresolved into death is considered excessive punishment for Carlota. Usigli therefore emends

history by bringing her punishment to an end before her death and by allowing her to die with peace of mind. If his interpretation can, through this play, influence history's assessment of the real Carlota, then in a sense the dramatist can also help to reduce the punishment inflicted on the historical figure by public condemnation. Usigli's poetic justice can therefore overflow beyond the limits of fiction into reality.

It should not be forgotten that other Mexican dramatists have written plays in which Maximilian and Carlota are treated in a conciliatory manner and Napoleon is seen as the real villain: Julio Jiménez Rueda, *Miramar* (1932); Miguel N. Lira, *Carlota de México* (1943); Agustín Lazo, *Segundo Imperio* (1946)—to name three of roughly the same period as *Corona de sombra*. In an informative article on "Juárez, Maximiliano y Carlota en las obras de los dramaturgos mexicanos," Francisco Monterde tends to regard Usigli's attitude as that of an outsider rather than a fully integrated Mexican; he writes of "la simpatía con que él [i.e. Usigli], hijo de europeos nacido en México, ve lógicamente a Maximiliano."²⁰ But this does not take into account Usigli's clear denunciation of the evil forces at work in Europe. A spirit of antipathy—nurtured within the ideals of the Revolution—for foreign intervention and for the conservative interests within Mexico does not prevent the artist from discovering the positive side in the history of two figures who represent those alien values. A society can learn from the reassessment of its past, for "El presente se alía al pasado y el pasado se convierte en la base del futuro" ("Prólogo," p. 68). Within the play *Erasmus*, the "mirada de México," embodies that willingness to search for the truth, to keep an open mind, and to adapt the message from the past to the needs of the future.

Fundamentally, it is a question of national sovereignty. As *Erasmus* explains to Carlota just before she dies (p. 55), Maximilian (and she) enabled Mexico to achieve its full independence. Their intervention caused the nation to unite, and saved Juárez from a premature death at the hands of another Mexican. When Usigli allows his historian to claim that the Revolution will end when Mexicans understand the significance of Maximilian's death he is clearly appealing to his audience to remain united, to avoid internal conflict. The execution should be seen as a kind of sacrificial death by means of which the Indian Mexico, the Mexico of the people, as represented by Juárez, eliminated once and for all the claims of foreign countries to power on that soil, whether Spain, France, or the U.S.A. Implicitly, he is reminding the audience to shun the vested interests and subservience to foreign powers that they sentenced to death with the Emperor. As to the folly of excessive personal ambition, Carlota's pain gives the warning so obviously that the dramatist can even afford to reward rather than punish her in the final scene.

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Notes

1. Georges Clemenceau, quoted in Richard O'Connor, *The Cactus Throne. The Tragedy of Maximilian and Carlota* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971), p. 333.

2. I use the Spanish spelling "Carlota" for both the historical figure and the dramatic character.

3. The edition consulted is Rodolfo Usigli, *Corona de sombra, Corona de fuego, Corona de luz* (Mexico: Porrúa, 1973).

4. José Luis Blasio (Transl. R. H. Murray), *Maximilian: Memoirs of his Private Secretary* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1934).
5. Rodolfo Usigli, "Advertencia," in *Corona de sombra* (London: Harrap, 1965), p. XV.
6. Rodolfo Usigli, "Prólogo a *Corona de sombra*," in the Porrúa edition, p. 63.
7. A. A. Parker, "History and Poetry: the Coriolanus Theme in Calderón," *Hispanic Studies in Honour of I. González Llubera* (Oxford: Dolphin Book Co., 1959), p. 211.
8. ———, p. 84.
9. Arnold Blumberg, *The Diplomacy of the Mexican Empire 1863-1867* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1971), p. 106.
10. Blumberg, p. 107.
11. Peter Hays, *New Horizons in Psychiatry* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1964), p. 19.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Blasio, op. cit., p. 187.
14. Quoted by G. W. Ribbins in "Lying in the Structure of *La verdad sospechosa*," *Studies in Spanish Literature of the Golden Age presented to Edward M. Wilson* (London: Tamesis, 1973), pp. 211-2. It is worth remembering that with Juan Ruiz de Alarcón we have a Mexican dramatist who helped to establish this tradition.
15. S. H. Tilles, "Rodolfo Usigli's Concept of Dramatic Art," *Latin American Theatre Review*, 3/2 (Spring 1970), 35. Usigli means "religioso" in the "sentido extraclesiástico" of the word.
16. Rodolfo Usigli, "Primer ensayo hacia una tragedia mexicana," *Cuadernos Americanos*, IX, Vol. LII (1950), 102-25.
17. He promises to use these ideal themes himself "si un día me siento capaz de abordar la tragedia" ("Primer ensayo . . .," p. 124)—and, of course, he does this in 1960 with *Corona de fuego*.
18. A. I. Watson, "El pintor de su deshonra and the Neo-Aristotelian Theory of Tragedy," *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, XL (1963), 21.
19. On different grounds D. L. Shaw finds *El gesticulador* not quite attaining qualification as a tragedy; see "Dramatic Technique in Usigli's *El gesticulador*," *Theatre Research International* (Glasgow), New Series: 1, No. 2 (1976), 125-133.
20. Francisco Monterde, "Juárez, Maximiliano y Carlota en las obras de los dramaturgos mexicanos," *Cuadernos Americanos*, XXIII, Vol. CXXXVI, No. 5 (set.-oct. 1964), 236.

Muestra de Teatro Latinoamericano—UCLA

El Teatro Leído de la Universidad de California, Los Angeles, presentó una Muestra de Teatro Latinoamericano en mayo y junio de 1976. El programa, que fue auspiciado por el Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos, The Student Committee for the Arts, The Foreign Students Assn., The Graduate Students of the Spanish and Portuguese Department and Federación de Festivales de Teatro de América, consistió en las siguientes representaciones:

Fecha	Obra	Autor	Director	Grupo	País
7 mayo	<i>Te juro Juana . . .</i>	Emilio Carballido	Daniel Salazar	Grupo de Teatro de Bellas Artes de Jalisco	México
21 mayo	<i>Pantomimas</i>	Carlos Thiel	Carlos Thiel		Argentina
28 mayo	<i>La última cinta</i>	Samuel Beckett	Italo Riccardi		Chile
5 junio	<i>La colina</i>	Daniel Gallegos	Oscar Castillo	Compañía Nacional de Teatro	Costa Rica