

# Our Voice

In a 1919 essay, Sigmund Freud said that individuals experience the uncanny (*unheimlich*) differently but that it can be defined as something terrifying, long familiar to us. In this short essay, I want to underline not aesthetic examples from fiction, which is what Freud alluded to, but rather the experience of the uncanny, and very especially, *déjà vu*, the anxiety we feel when confronted with the uncanny evoked by a return to something similar.

That is exactly what happened to us on September 19, 2017. Our memories of how our day-to-day existence was broken apart in the past century, a kind of urban legend for young people who had only heard their elders' stories, were distant indeed. And every year for decades, we would more and more reluctantly attend earthquake drills, feeling that now what was breaking up our existence were the drills themselves.

The alarm sounds; the drill begins. And we don't even take a moment to remember what we were doing at 7 in the morning that day in 1985.

But then, hours later, Freud's uncanny feeling floods our bodies with goose bumps; anxiety, our memory hyperbolized. Because the alarm doesn't sound, and yet the earth moves. And amidst the commotion, we're grateful to be able to remember —thanks to the drill— where the safe areas are, those columns we hold onto as we listen to the walls creaking, the glass breaking, for elastic minutes that seem like hours and where something similar has returned to spark fright, a *déjà vu* that, as always, has traces of the implausible.

This issue of *Voices of Mexico* is exceptional for many reasons; first, because it is monographic: it covers the two September 19 that have indelibly marked both Mexico and Mexican society. Second, it is the magazine's longest issue ever published. Third, among the many voices presented here, a large number evidence the wealth and diversity of the UNAM, and specifically its humanities subsystem. This is because, from their specialties, both men and women researchers have carried out sociological, political, economic, urban planning, communications, cultural, and even literary analyses of what the earthquakes have taught us about the city and the country, as well as the society inhabiting them. But it also offers testimonies and art that complete that multifaceted vision of the voices surrounding the earthquake.

This issue of *Voices of Mexico* reflects on the date that will continue to be an uncanny coincidence and that is an x-ray of the disaster and what has come after it. We thank all the authors who contributed to building a very complete panorama that at the same time registers our university memory, our collective memory.

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