



Photos courtesy of Lorenzo Ochoa's family

Lorenzo Ochoa Salas

Friend and Contributor to *Voices of Mexico*

Archaeologist and anthropologist Lorenzo Ochoa died last December. *Voices of Mexico* is compelled to pay him homage, not only for having been one of the most critical, authoritative voices in the study of the country's Huasteca region and a scholar of the Mayan and other Mesoamerican cultures, but also because, from the time he published his first article in our magazine ("The Huasteca Region in Time in Space," *Voices of Mexico* 60, July-September, 2002), Lorenzo became our project's most enthusiastic contributor, kindest advisor and number one promoter.

Lorenzo always believed in *Voices of Mexico*. So, he supported me on countless occasions, whether by writing arti-

cles or calling on the endless list of his colleagues and friends to ensure that the magazine would include pieces by the best pens available for all the possible topics in his area of knowledge. A simple phone call was all that was needed to get him moving. "Say, I'm thinking of dedicating 'The Splendor of Mexico' section to Campeche. What do you recommend?" Right off, he would start listing topics, the names of specialists, their e-mail addresses, phone numbers, and minute details about each author. "So-and-so is an expert in this topic, but he writes really badly. It's better to go to this other one because he writes very well, even though sometimes he can be difficult.... It's better if I call this other one so he can

get you the article quickly....I can't remember the info on this one, but I'll send it to you this afternoon." In the afternoon, the info would be in my in-box, and two days later I'd have everything I needed to get *Voices of Mexico* the best names for the best topics.

He never hesitated to recommend our publication and join his name and prestige to ours. It is Lorenzo we owe for having gotten splendid contributions, both his own and from colleagues of his, in the issues dedicated to Chiapas, Campeche, Tabasco, Yucatán, Veracruz, Tamaulipas, Quintana Roo, Guerrero, and, of course, his beloved Huasteca.

His name opened the most interesting doors to me. Just as an example: when I went to Tamtoc, a Huasteca archaeological zone, far off the traditional archaeological beaten track, Guillermo Ahuja, the director of the dig, received me unenthusiastically. He wasn't familiar with our magazine and didn't know what to expect. We began the visit coldly, but then I remembered that my friend Lorenzo must know him because the Huasteca was his specialty. So I asked him, "Do you know Lorenzo Ochoa?" His expression changed immediately. "The Huasteco?" It was my turn to be flummoxed. "I

don't know. Is that what they call him?" "Sure I know him!" And he burst out laughing.

From then on, my visit couldn't have been better. Detailed explanations were interspersed with anecdotes about Lorenzo, his adventures and their innumerable agreements and disagreements about the study of the site. At the end, we snapped a picture of ourselves in front of a spectacular piece recently discovered in the area, a photograph I took it upon myself to send as soon as I could to Lorenzo, who was spending a few months in Spain at the time and still hadn't seen the find standing upright. Of course, I got the article and the rights for the magazine to print the first photograph of the piece.

Lorenzo was a friend to *Voices of Mexico*, but he was also my friend. I appreciated his generosity, his sarcasm, his sense of humor, and, above all, his unending dedication to the UNAM and his love of work and knowledge. My life in the UNAM will never be the same without him. **MM**

Elsie Montiel
Editor



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