

In June 1796, on behalf of Pope Pius VI, Azara brokered a peace treaty in Bologna to halt the advance of Napoleon's forces on the Papal States. The letters he wrote during this period provide a fascinating insight into the complexities of this historical event, and serve to illustrate the many possibilities for research that Gimeno's book offers. From the letter Azara wrote to Godoy (Rome, 17 May) informing the First Minister that he had accepted the Pope's request that he mediate a peace settlement with Napoleon on his behalf, to the postscript he adds to his letter to the Prince of Peace (Florence, 16 September), writing despondently that he has just heard that the Pope will not accept the terms nor offer any alternatives (383–459), we can build up a remarkable picture of the intricacies, frustrations and personal cost to his health and well-being that such negotiations involved. We are witness to the pride he takes in his position as the representative of the King of Spain, brokering such a vital settlement. We read of his annoyance at being robbed in Lodi en route to Milan and how Bonaparte—in his own words, 'el hombre más feroz y atrabiliario que ha producido la Naturaleza [...] incapaz de moderación' (395–97)—saw to it that his effects were returned to him. We learn of his fear, frustration and desperation at dealing with the aged Pope and his advisers, none of whom appeared to understand the gravity of the situation they and the inhabitants of Rome faced. Rejecting the Treaty of Bologna, the Papacy left itself open to further aggression from Napoleonic forces and had to agree a much harsher treaty of surrender (Tolentino 1797). These insights are further enhanced by the responses included in the appendix from Godoy and Bonaparte (1107–20).

In spite of the challenges and disappointments he faced in 1796, Azara was to go on to accept the post of Spanish Ambassador to France in 1798 and to negotiate several further peace treaties prior to his death aged seventy-three. Gimeno's exceptional edition of the fascinating correspondence of José Nicolás de Azara is a superb resource that allows us to delve deeply into these times and gain new perspectives and insights, revealing to us a man at the very heart of key events in this turbulent period of European history.

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**ERIC STORM, *El descubrimiento del Greco. Nacionalismo y arte moderno (1860–1914)*. Translated from Dutch into Spanish by José Cuní Bravo, with an Introduction by Gregorio Marañón Bertrán de Lis. Colección Confluencias. Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica. 2011. 234 pp.; 45 colour illus.**

Eric Storm's book on the reception and rediscovery of El Greco, originally published in Dutch in Amsterdam in 2006 and now issued in Spanish, is the latest in the invaluable series of publications by the CEEH, studying the interrelationship between aspects of Spanish culture and that of other European countries, and is an early contribution to the forthcoming celebration of the quatercentenary of El Greco's death in 2014. It is focused more particularly on the changing attitudes to El Greco in Spain and the rest of Europe after the rediscovery of his work by the leading French Impressionists, and gives due weight to the social and political as well as the art-historical factors affecting the response to El Greco in France and elsewhere, tracing the major awakening of interest in El Greco in part, for instance, to the impact of paintings by him forming part of the Spanish Gallery of Louis-Philippe, on display in the Louvre between 1835 and 1848, and subsequently acquired by discerning artists and collectors when the paintings from the gallery were sold by Christie's in London in 1853. Professor Storm rightly recognizes that nationalist feelings in Spain, favouring the tradition of realistic as opposed to idealistic art, may have distorted Spanish responses to El Greco in the nineteenth century.

Inevitably there are overlaps between Storm's conclusions about the rediscovery and those of earlier scholars writing on El Greco, and in reality the rediscovery is more of a

movable feast than he suggests. In 1937, August Mayer, in his essay for the catalogue of the El Greco exhibition held in Paris that year, thought that El Greco had been rediscovered by the previous generation, whereas Manuel B. Cossío in 1908 believed that too much of the modern response to El Greco had concentrated on parts of the master's work that had always had admirers and not the whole *oeuvre*—'el sensato' El Greco, as opposed to his more original side, criticized in the past as 'escandaloso, disonante, estrafalario, y loco'. This had only very recently been re-assessed in Cossío's view. In some instances it can be argued, furthermore, that Storm undervalues the positive response to El Greco of art historians writing earlier in the nineteenth century than his official starting point for the rediscovery in 1860. The entry for El Greco in Volume V of Ceán Bermúdez's *Diccionario histórico de los más ilustres profesores de las Bellas Artes en España* (Madrid: Imprenta de la viuda de Ibarra, 1800), for instance, arguably balances rather carefully a few negative points with positive details about his reception by his contemporaries and, furthermore, Ceán's later view on El Greco in Volume VI of his manuscript *Historia de la pintura*, written between 1823 and 1824, in the library of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, and still unfortunately unpublished, seems more positive still, and considers that his paintings had been valued because they reveal 'un gran fondo de saber, de maestría y de libertad, que no puede tener sino uno quien posea el arte como él le dominaba' (VI, f. 50). Professor Storm likewise almost certainly undervalues the sensitivity of Stirling Maxwell's response to El Greco by basing his assessment solely on his *Annals of the Artists of Spain*, 4 vols (London: John Ollivier, 1848). Apparently passages in his travel diaries, particularly the one for 1845 which includes his visit to Toledo, reveal the fuller extent of his appreciation for El Greco's work, and these are currently being edited by Hugh Brigstocke and an edition of these is to be published by the Walpole Society in 2015.

But although we may regret the fact that limited time for the necessary research led the author to curtail his treatment of attitudes to El Greco before 1860, his book is an invaluable compendium of changing attitudes to El Greco particularly from the Impressionists onwards, paying due attention to the varying cultural contexts in which the views were expressed, and in the Conclusion, provides a quite admirable overview of Julius Meier-Graefe's contribution to the rediscovery of and spread of interest in the work of the artist.

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ANGELA JACKSON, *'For Us It Was Heaven'. The Passion, Grief and Fortitude of Patience Darton: From the Spanish Civil War to Mao's China*. Brighton/Portland/Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, in collaboration with the Cañada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies, with support from the International Brigade Memorial Trust. 2012. xx + 239 pp.

The 'origins of the International Brigades are to be found in the working out of a Soviet-Comintern policy of worldwide scope and not, as some would have it, in the spontaneous response of world democracy to the threat of fascism in Spain'. The quote hails from a monograph published by R. Dan Richardson (*Comintern Army: The International Brigades and the Spanish Civil War* [Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1982]). Richardson's interpretation echoes aspects of the Francoist view of the International Brigades in which volunteers who fought on the Republican side became creatures of Moscow and at whose helm stood André Marty: the so called 'butcher of Albacete' (the headquarters of the International Brigades). Historian Robert Stradling helped breathe fresh life into this perspective in 2010 by studying harsh punishment within the International Brigades (see 'English-Speaking Units of the International Brigades: War Politics and Discipline', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45:4 [2010], 744–67). For Stradling, the main International Brigade jail in Spain formed a