

Juana Toledano Molina, "El teatro de Ramón Goy de Silva" and Francisco J. Sedeño Rodríguez, "Entre Montilla y Amsterdam: una 'Peregrinatio Amoris'", also undertake an archeological enterprise. Cruz Casado presents a study of a forgotten early twentieth-century author whose fantastic fiction, mainly short stories, deserves vindication; Juan Toledano Molina does the same with the symbolist Spanish theatre of the nineteenth-century, which she considers to be at the core of twentieth-century innovations in Spanish theater. Sedeño Rodríguez presents the forgotten works of a seventeenth-century Sephardic writer, Miguel de Barrios, who, in Holland, continued to innovate and write in the Spanish literary tradition that exiled him. Lastly, Emilio Quintana's article traces the literary experience of several young vanguard poets in Madrid in the heyday of Ultraism. The critic studies the evolution of these young poets, who, after winning regional literary prizes, arrived in Madrid and clustered around a transatlantic peripheral figure, the Chilean poet Huidobro, head of this avant-garde school.

Córdoba lingüística y literaria, and the collection *Letras de la Subbética*, is an excellent academic enterprise for all interested in these Spanish regions and the Iberian Peninsula in general. Both the linguistic and literary studies in the volume are a fine showcase of academic endeavors in the area. Finally, its focus on region-center cultural interactions provides an enriching perspective on diverse literary topics and traditions.

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Encounters with Malta. Eds. Petra Bianchi and Peter Serracino Inglott. Malta: Encounter Books, 2000.

On Pope John Paul II's visit to Malta in 1990, the pontiff declared that "Malta is not unaffected by the problems and changes transforming the cultural as well as the political face of Europe and the world. Because of its geographical position and history, Malta presents a symbiosis of European and Mediterranean cultures and is thus well-placed to observe and participate in the present changes of outlook" (351). Long before the Pope's declaration, Maltese studies had been a rigorous and fascinating research area with boundaries often crossing and complementing more mainstream disciplines. The central location of Malta and her sister islands in the Mediterranean had lured visitors from around the globe to study and to recount their experiences with her rich culture. Despite the plethora of research materials now available, students outside the archipelago wishing to delve into Maltese studies have had to work diligently in piecemeal fashion to gain a comprehensive overview of Maltese history and culture, especially when in relation to global history and culture. Thankfully, both new and experienced researchers can get that essential overview from *Encounters with Malta*.

This book documents various "encounters" that significant foreigners had with Malta or Maltese culture. Benedict Anderson's seminal study *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1st ed. 1983; rev. ed. 1991) recognised that representations of a culture by foreigners can have as much

if not more impact than natives' construction of their own national identity. Appropriately, the editors of *Encounters with Malta* chose wisely to profile individuals who did not necessarily travel the Maltese islands, but who still contributed to perceptions of Malta and the Maltese. Two of the most recognisable contributors to *Encounters with Malta* are long-time Maltese scholars Peter Serracino Inglott and Paul Xuereb. The research team consists of other academics and professionals with established interests in multi-disciplinary fields that both include and exceed Maltese studies. Consequently, the volume represents a cross-section of the humanities, with particular attention to literature, music, the visual arts, history, and politics. *Encounters with Malta* bridges cultures and disciplines over more than two millennia, making it an excellent resource.

Encounters with Malta opens with a foreword by Professor Guido de Marco, President of Malta, and active promoter for over 30 years of Malta's international significance. A second foreword by Michael J. Bianchi, a representative of the researchers' sponsor (*Encounters with Malta* is the "Millennium Project of Vodafone Malta Ltd" [5]), acknowledges the continued need for cross-cultural communications and studies to promote "a deep and knowledgeable understanding of the other side" (5) to ensure a world of tolerance and cooperation. These forewords testify to the importance of Maltese studies within and beyond the academy. The volume is then divided into three major sections. "Section One" examines Malta from its recordings in ancient Greek epic to AD 1530 when the Knights of St. John colonised the islands. "Section Two" examines the period of Malta's effective Europeanisation during the Knights' 268-year reign. "Section Three" examines Malta during British colonisation and post-1964 independence. Each section begins with a historical overview of the period, followed by brief biographies and descriptions of significant individuals who "encountered" Maltese culture. At over 400 pages in length, the volume "is clearly not a full list of the numerous eminent and famous people who ever came into contact with the Maltese Islands and Maltese affairs" (13)—for example, the book makes no mention of *The Maltese Falcon* novelist Dashiell Hammett and the subsequent film starring Humphrey Bogart—yet the more than 240 entries presented provide an excellent overview of the "lives and events of the travellers, scientists, politicians, writers, artists and others" (13) from Homer to Sir Tom Stoppard who experienced or shaped Maltese culture.

The appendices include lists of foreign fiction influenced by or produced in Malta, and the names, dates, and nationalities of composers, opera singers, and painters who also contributed to the global recognition of Malta. A 24-page bibliography of mostly academic documents, an index of proper names, and eight brief *curricula vitae* for the main contributors completes the volume. Fully coloured images of portraits, maps, sketches, paintings, photographs, postcards and other artifacts — many of these visuals are rare — decorate and reinforce the content in ways that text alone could not.

Occasional typographic flaws mar this work, such as mistyped letters and some missing prepositions, though these errors do not hamper the reader's comprehension. Otherwise, the writing is informative, entertaining, and succinct. Some scholars may be put off initially by the coffee-table book format. However, the format is a good marketing tool, allowing for a wider profiling of Maltese culture beyond the academy. Rest assured that the research is accurate and substantial.

Maltese studies remains an under-represented field beyond the Maltese islands, especially in North America, despite Malta's long influence over other cultures. This scholarly but not pedantic encyclopedia will appeal to a wide audience and should arouse more curiosity about Malta, her culture, and the foreigners who put her on the map. *Encounters with Malta* is a successful introduction to Maltese studies and is truly "a valuable tool for further research" (13).

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