

FERNANDO DURÁN LÓPEZ, *José María Blanco White o la conciencia errante*. Sevilla: Fundación José Manuel Lara. 2005. 646 pp. ISBN 84-96152-79-0.

José María Blanco White has come to enjoy a privileged place in the Spanish literary canon as a seminal figure in Spain's late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Nonetheless, a lingering question among Hispanists has been whether Blanco White's consecration as a Spanish author proceeds from his literary works, or from the quintessentially romantic trajectory of his life. Much like fellow iconoclast and author Mariano José de Larra, Blanco White has become inextricably linked to the crises and unique events that shaped his life. His 1810 departure from Spain and subsequent adoption of England, his difficult relationship with religion and his polemical literary production have all contributed to the elaboration of a polysemic figure.

Durán López shows a keen awareness of this dichotomy in this volume, which constitutes an attempt at reconciling Blanco White's life with his works. The author's praxis is evident from the start when he writes that 'a un escritor hay que valorarlo por lo que escribió, no por su vida, por mucho que ésta nos sea atractiva' (10). What follows can largely be categorized as a biography designed for a general public, written in a more accessible style than previous scholarly works on the subject of Blanco White. The author's goal was to provide a more complete appreciation for Blanco White's decidedly unique trajectory, basing himself on 'las obras impresas de Blanco White y en los estudios publicados hasta la fecha' (13). The organization of Durán López's text is as predictable as it is effective: the first (and unapologetically shorter) half is titled 'Vida de Blanco' and focuses on the Spanish half of the author's life, while 'Vida de White' takes care of his British experience.

The author warns the reader of his intent to divorce his text from previous scholarly investigations and their concomitant, copious footnotes and esoteric references; what follows is a meticulously crafted reconstitution of Blanco White's life, written in an engaging, manageable prose. Durán López generally shies away from facile generalizations, and bolsters his psychological forays into the workings of Blanco White's mind

with ample textual and historical support. The author structures this biography and presents his subject's life and works in universal terms, and attempts to draw parallels between Blanco White's life and the modern condition. There exists, he writes, 'una lucha incesante entre el impulso hacia la verdad y su deformación idolátrica' (536-37) which informs the dialectic between an individual's life and the social collective with which Blanco White struggled. The subject of religion commands the lion's share of the chapters, as it should in Blanco White's case, but the author always manages to keep the topic fresh and objective.

A bibliography and onomastic index round out this volume, which also features sixteen pages of black and white portraits, photographs and illustrations. Durán López should be praised for contributing a work that both humanizes and contextualizes one of Spain's most polemical authors.

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JACK DE GROOT, *Intertextuality Through Obscurity: the Poetry of Federico García Lorca and Luis de Góngora*. New Orleans: University Press of the South. 2002. viii + 306 pp. ISBN 1-931948-05-4.

In the introduction to his study of Góngora and Lorca, Jack de Groot tells us that he is arguing for an intertextual relationship between the two poets. Your reviewer, like any Hispanist with a reasonable general knowledge of Spanish literary history, has always known that Lorca and Góngora are linked and that without that linkage there could never have been a poetic generation called the 'Generation of 27'. So, when reading the early pages of this stimulating book, one is tempted to observe that de Groot is kicking at an open door. Of course, had no one hitherto attempted an intertextual analysis of the poems of Góngora and Lorca, this would surely be a book that had to be written. Incidentally, anyone particularly interested in reading about Lorca or Góngora in intertextual terms as distinct from reading a study of influence will find scant reference here to what today is understood by intertextuality. Theories of intertextuality do not figure in this study.