



*Dear Diego, Elena Poniatowska*

LETTER OF FEBRUARY, 2, 1922

# Review of our discussions

- Considering that the texts of Wolfe and *Dear Diego* intend to formulate an image of Angelina Beloff and that the discourse of both texts forces us to look at the historical documentation. There are six letters at the Museo Frida Kahlo in Mexico City. **What else have we looked at our discussions?**
- Four of those letters are dated 14 of September 1921, 21 of December 1921, 8 of February 1922 and 2 of July 1922, two do not have dates.
- Those documents are the letters that Angelina wrote to Diego while she waited for him in Paris.
- The letters at the *Museum Frida Kahlo* reveal a very different image of Beloff to the one given by Wolfe and Poniatowska when reconstructing Beloff's image. They take the reader to further investigate who this Beloff is.

# 2/2/1921, Dear Diego

- "...How wise they were! They gave me the tools to my own happiness. The greatest source of satisfaction in my life has been the fact that I have achieved economic independence, and I am proud of being one of the most advanced women of my time..." p. 80 **Who is AB?**
- "Zadkin exclaimed.." Look how funny..." p. 82 **What is the message here?**
- "...we came together..." p.83 **What was Angelina reply to Zadkin's comment?**
- "...If I could be born again..."p. 83 **What is she saying?**
- In *Memorias*, after Diego's departure to Mexico in 1921, Angelina Beloff comments that she was in love with Faure but he already had a partner, and she did not want to get involved in a relation that was not going to last that she had enough with Rivera's. She states that she would have married again if she had found a simple, good and intelligent man. But that wonder never materialized...Faure died while she was in Mex. She remembered their friendship with great affection. AB states that **Faure** was like Diego, loving love more than women. P. 70 **Share your thoughts**
- In *Memorias*, Angelina comments about her present life with her work, friendships and small diversions. P.70 **How is AB describing herself?**
- She also speaks of the many trips she took Argel, Marseilles, Ceret.. But reminds us that life was also difficult at times. p. 72-3 **What has she been doing since Diego left?**

# Dear Diego

- Bruce-Novoa offers this commentary: "Poniatowska's re-creation and publication of the letters can be seen, ..., as an ambiguous act of opening the print media to the voice of a wronged woman who seems to prove the stereotypical rule about female behaviour... in fact her text re-creates successfully the process of grieving for a lost love. Yet this type of limited interpretation is possible only if we read with those patriarchal expectations..."<sup>121</sup> **Your opinion**
- Bruce-Novoa comments that Poniatowska in *Dear Diego* "creates the possibility of reading the letters as a recuperative healing process" (125). **How can writing be a healing process?**
- **Schaffer** resumes appropriately: "In *Dear Diego*, Poniatowska does not merely exact revenge on patriarchy's depiction of women, she also opens up for her subject a new dispersive space in which room is allowed for complexity, contradiction, and evolution"  
86 "epistolary language and letters are marked by hiatuses of all types: spatial separation between writer and addressee; time lags between event and recording, between message transmission and message reception; blank spaces and lacunae in the manuscript"  
189. **What does the *Dear Diego* allow us to do?**

# Dear Diego

- Jáuregui indicates that: "Quiela's illusions for a child are not figurative, but uncannily literal: [the] last letter in *Dear Diego* ends nine months and three days after the first one. The text is [Beloff's] child. Thus, the real child is replaced by a 'literary' child" 77 **Your thoughts**
- The painter, Quiela, however, finally gives up on her desire for a child "Even your colors, cleaning your palette, keeping your brushes and not getting pregnant" Quiela 65 **Why Poniatowska added the last sentence about the pregnancy?**
- Poniatowska addition to Beloff's letter of Wolfe's text is significant when compared to the original: "I could even be useful to you, grind your colors, make your stencils, help as I did in Spain together and in France all through the war," *Life and Times*, p. 135, *Fabulous Life*, p. 126 (here Wolfe and Beloff) without modifications in the letter of 2 January 1922.
- Why Poniatowska adds the ... "not getting pregnant in the novel"?

## Poniatowska's impression of Diego after her interviews with him

- Poniatowska acknowledges her fears but is overwhelmed by Diego's charm: "Perhaps afraid of him, as all of Mexico is also afraid of him. But I went to see him, and . . . really, Diego Rivera is one of the most disconcerting and charming men that I have had the view" (*Palabras cruzadas*, p.41)
- Poniatowska's posthumous homage to Rivera seeks reconciliation: "The Diego that suits us is the one with the enormous body that one day turned his head around and discovered the Indian" (*Palabra cruzadas* 65)
- "Now that Diego rests in the Illustrious Men's Rotunda with his great brethren, we can approach those who loved him and were close to him: Guadalupe Marin, Lupe and Ruth, Emma Hurtado, Angelina Beloff and Frida, who must be saying to him: "Yes, Diego, your heart was so big that only lots of women united in the fraternity of your love could hold it." (*Palabras cruzadas*, p. 65)

# Poniatoewska and Wolfe texts

- Regarding Wolfe, it is important to note that de la Torriente writes in *Memoria y razón* that Rivera experienced a vitriolic reaction to Wolfe's text on the author "the poor devil, Bertram Wolfe)"..."Really, Wolfe could not do anything with my biography but weave poorly analyzed facts convenient to his personal aims as a social climber, seeking not economic success . . . but rather fame and political power, which of course he failed to obtain given his faulty methods." pp. 45 In the "Introduction" to his *Fabulous Life*, Wolfe explains that , even though Rivera responded to all his questions, gave him access to his archives and documents, and provided him with the addresses of his sister, his relatives, and friends, he never saw a word of the manuscript of *Life and Times* until it was published. ... Because of that, says Wolfe, the published text "both infuriated and pleased him."

## *Letter of September 1922, Museum Frida Kahlo*

- Beloff tells Diego in this letter that she has received a letter from his father, she knows that he is sick, and Angelina declared "You have no idea how much I would like to get to know him/, kiss him, to see him. Now I would have needed this more than ever." **In this letter she expresses gratitude for the letters she received from his family and from him.**
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- She talks about Faure and how much work she has done for the *Floreal* journal and how Faure expressed his desire to go to Mexico. Beloff speaks about Marika and Marieva.

## *Third letter, Museum Frida Kahlo*

- Third letter, n.d.: Beloff begins with the lyrics of a Mexican song “Well, believing if I am the abandoned one, abandoned by an ungrateful woman.” A popular song suggesting a different look at Diego. **Why?**
- A Russian song at the beginning of this same letter: “Why did you enamored me? Why did you force me to love you? Is it difficult to be true to one love?”  
**Does this song speak of a love long gone?**
- Beloff speaks of her friendship with Siquieros. **Next class we will explore his work and influences.**

## 12/21/1921 letter, Museum Frida Kahlo

- 12/21/1921 in response to Diego's Mother missive about the death of Diego's father, Angelina replies to Diego by saying I will not go to Mexico ( Diego's mother implies that it is Angelina the one that does not want to go to Mexico). Beloff says, "Unless you send me a letter asking me to go and now more than ever. I do not want to go against your wish." **Your thoughts.**
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- In this letter, Angelina writes about the things she had sent to Diego and about Jacobson learning Spanish, she is teaching Spanish! **What kind of female is Beloff?**
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- 2/8 and 2/2, 1922 in the real letters she is not so alone as described in the *Dear Diego* and Wolfe (Beloff also gives testimony of this in *Memorias*). She begins a letter in French and then Spanish saying that she writes in French but speaks and reads Spanish, she has read Don Quijote (**is she proving her love for Diego by these actions?**)
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- By the last letter, Diego has married Lupe Marín.

# *Appollinaire*

- The 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic claimed the lives of as many as 100 million people of all ages. Among the prominent victims was the poet and critic Guillaume Apollinaire, the unsung driver of the pre-WWI art scene.
- As a poet, he was also a visual artist, pioneering the calligram, a process where words are laid out in such a way to form pictures.
- Apollinaire was friend of Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, and a champion of both in a time when the two men had yet to dominate the art world. He also introduced Picasso to Georges Braque, thereby effectively fathering Cubism.
- In 1918, Apollinaire published "Calligrammes: Poems of Peace and War 1913-1916," a collection that was both visual and verbal. Calligrams are poems where the arrangement of the words on the page adds meaning to the text. In a letter to André Billy, Apollinaire writes, "The Calligrammes are an idealisation of free verse poetry and typographical precision in an era when typography is reaching a brilliant end to its career, at the dawn of the new means of reproduction that are the cinema and the phonograph." The poet was still on the forefront of new cultural conventions.
- Take, for example, "The Stunned Dove and the Water Jet." The image features a bleeding dove with spread wings, followed by a fountain with the water coming out of a vase that is reminiscent of the dove's wings.



Douces figures poi <sup>gnardées</sup> **C**heres levres fleuries  
 MIA MAREYE  
 YETTE LORIE  
 ANNIE et toi MARIE  
 où vous êtes -  
 jeunes filles  
 M A I S  
 près d'un  
 jet d'eau qui  
 pleure et qui prie  
 cette colombe s'extasie

Tous les souvenirs de nâgère Billy Dalize  
 O mes amis partis de nâgère ? Où sont Raynal se mélancolisent  
 Jaillissent vers le firmament Dont les noms dans une église  
 Et vos regards en l'eau dormant Comme des pas qui s'engagea  
 Meurent mélancoliquement Où est Cremitz qui s'engagea  
 Où sont-ils Braque et Max Jacob Peut-être sont-ils morts déjà  
 Derain aux yeux gris comme l'aube De souvenirs mon âme est pleine  
 Le jet d'eau pleure sur ma peine

CEUX QUI SONT PARTIS A LA GUERRE AU NOED SE BATTENT MAINTENANT  
 Le soir tombe **O** sanglante mer  
 Jardins où saigne abondamment le laurier rose fleur guerrière



# *Apollinaire*



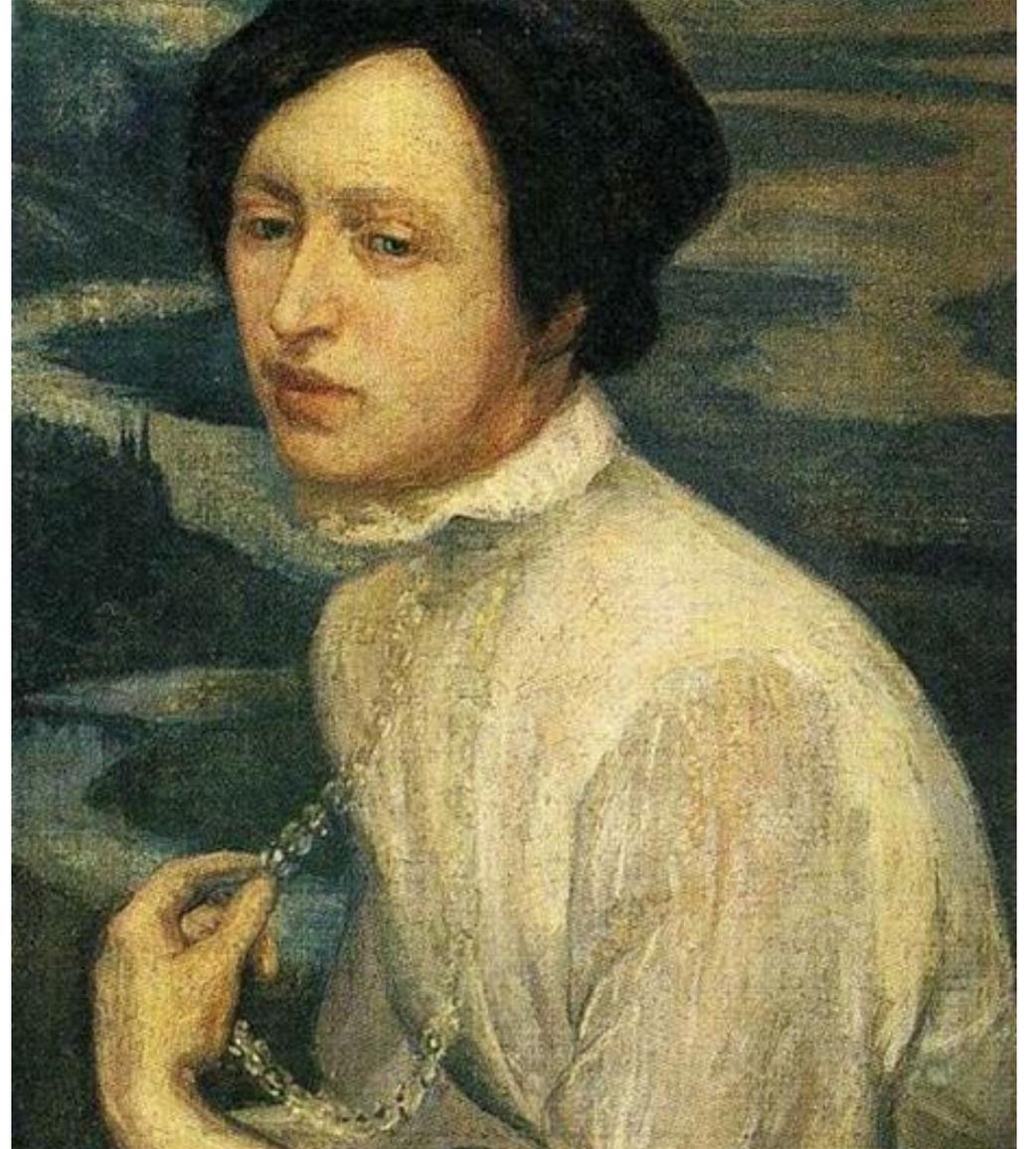
- Apollinaire's writing on art was more than simple review. He captured the spirit of the movements. Of Picasso, he wrote in the March issue of *Montjoie!*, "He is a new man and the world is as he represents it. He has enumerated its elements, its details, with a brutality that knows, on occasion, how to be gracious." Apollinaire, in 1918, wrote of Matisse, "With the years, his art has perceptibly stripped itself of everything that was non-essential; yet its ever-increasing simplicity has not prevented it from becoming more and more sumptuous."
- While producing a large quantity of art criticism, he also found time to publish a book of poetry, "The Rotting Magician" in 1909, a collection of stories, "L'Hérésiarque et Cie" ("The Heresiarch and Co."), in 1910, a collection of quatrains called "Le Bestiaire" in 1911, and what is considered his masterpiece, "Alcools," which contains poems spanning the years 1898 to 1913. The poems in the collection do not follow any consistent theme.

***Portrait of  
Angelina Beloff***

**Diego Rivera**

**Date: 1909**

**Style: Social  
Realism**



***Cubist  
portrait of  
Angelina  
Beloff and her  
son, 1916-17***



*Angelina Beloff,*  
**1918 by Diego  
Rivera.**



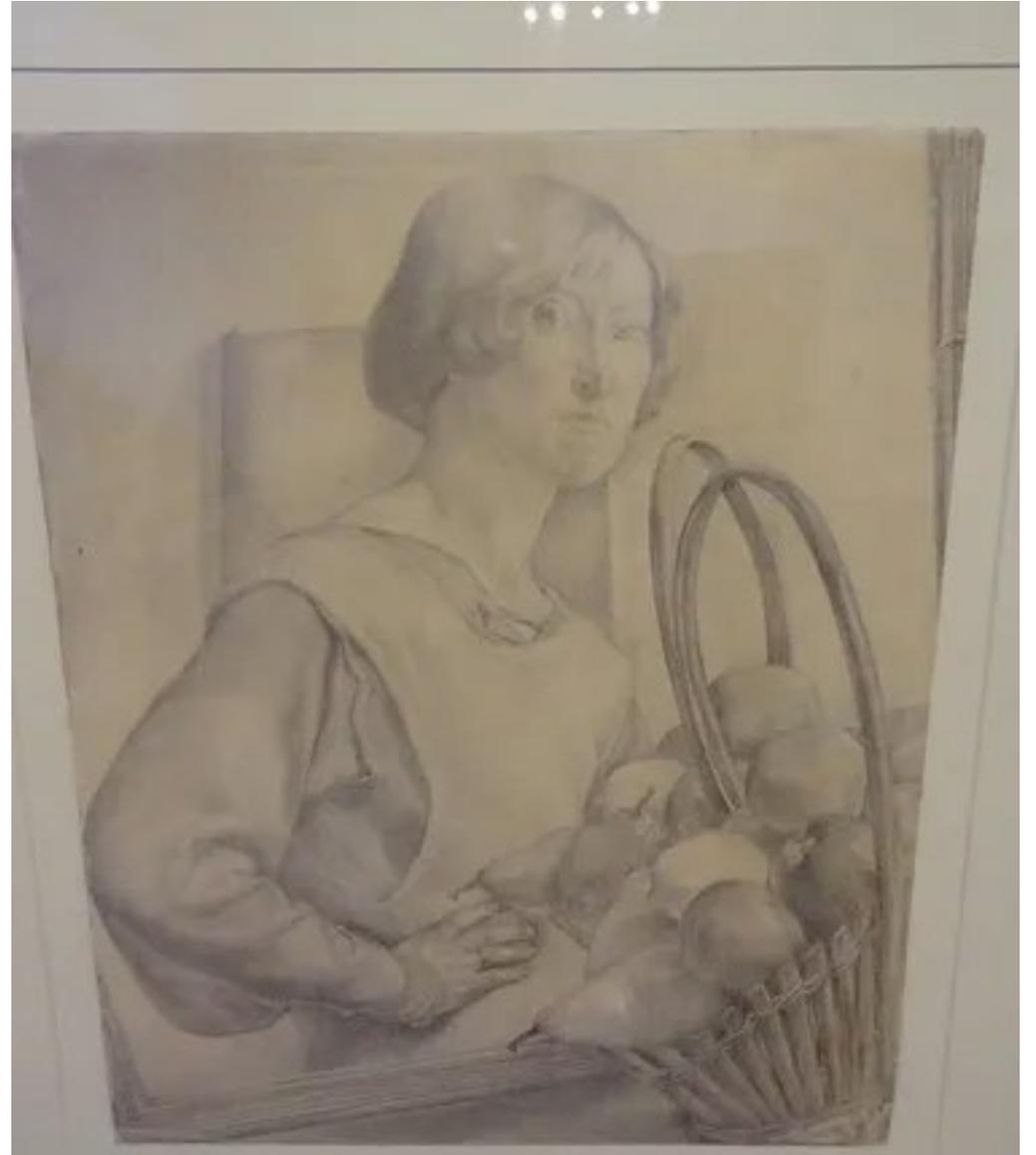
**Mujer Sentata, or  
Portrait of Angelina  
Beloff, by Diego  
Rivera (1914).**



**Angeline Beloff**  
**Diego Rivera, 1917**  
**Style: Social**  
**Realism**



***Self-Portrait by  
Angelina Beloff,  
1964***



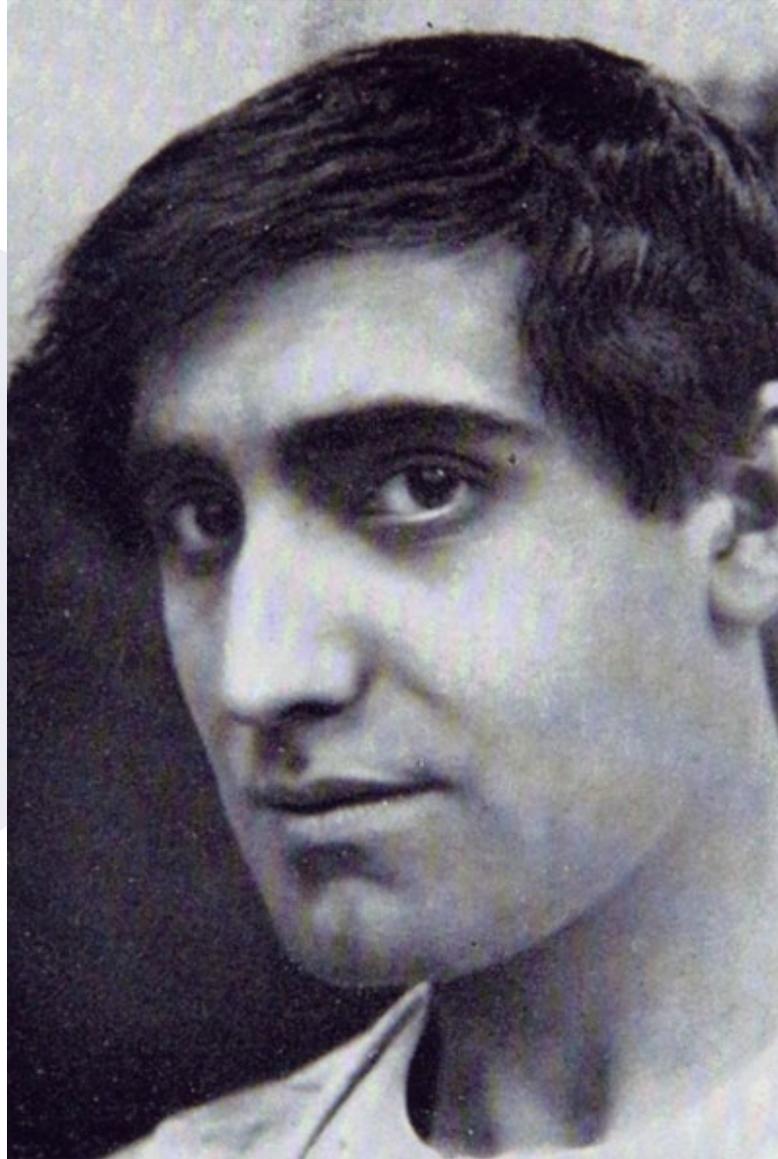
***Julio Antonio  
Rodriguez  
Hernandez***

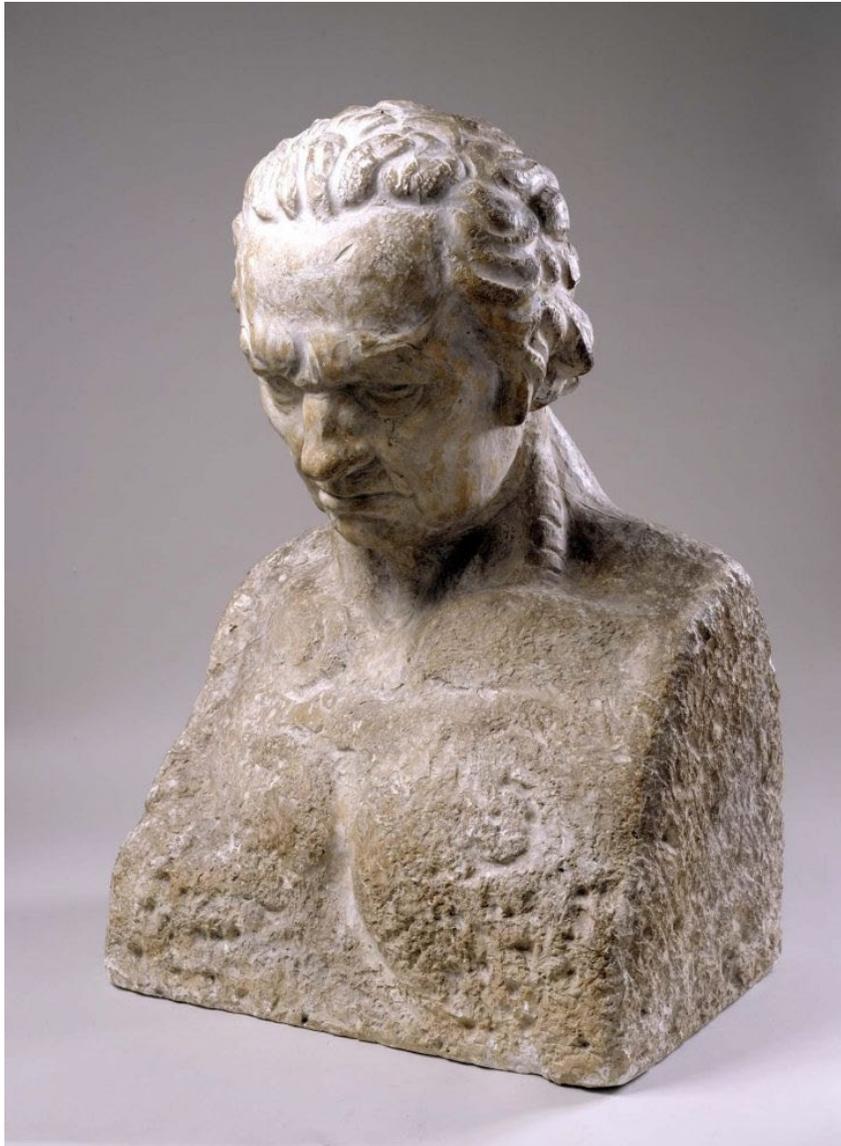


***Autorretrato**  
**Julio Antonio**  
**(Antonio**  
**Rodríguez**  
**Hernández), 1909***

MÓRA D'EBRE,  
TARRAGONA, ESPAÑA,  
1889 - MADRID, ESPAÑA,  
1919





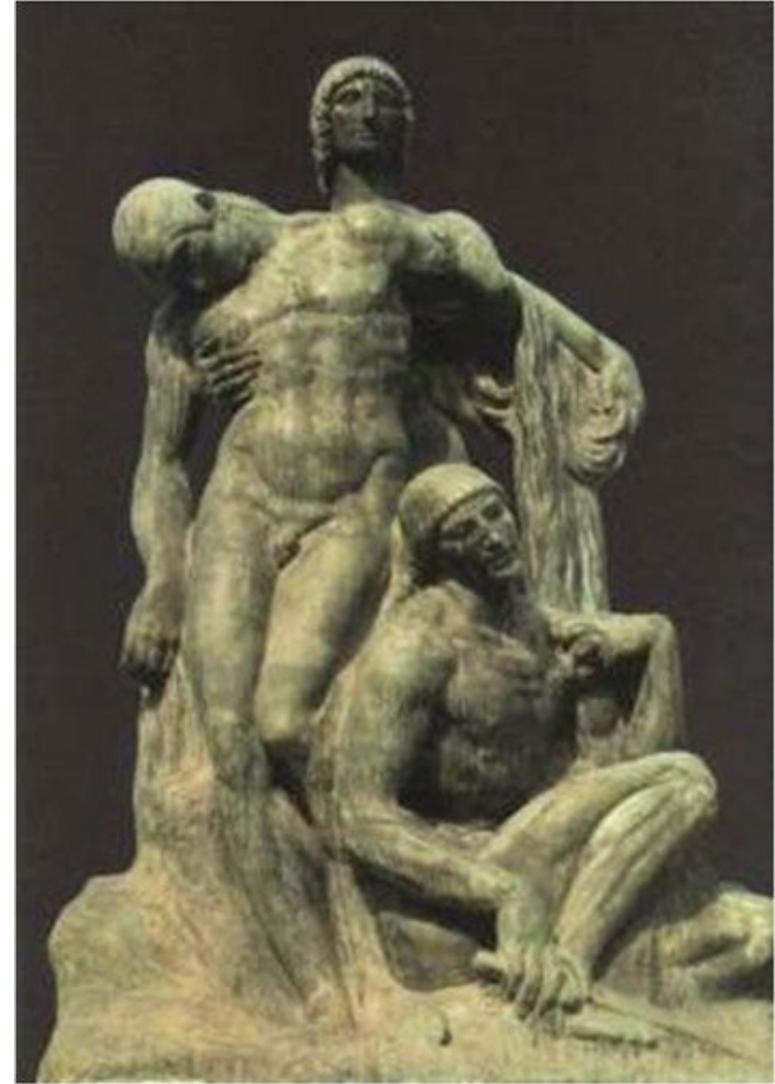


*«Monumento a  
Francisco de  
Goya»*

- JULIO ANTONIO (ANTONIO  
RODRÍGUEZ HERNÁNDEZ)

## ***Monument to the Heroes of 1811***

• AFTER BEING AWARDED A SCHOLARSHIP IN 1907, JULIO ANTONIO MOVED TO MADRID TO STUDY AT MIQUEL BLAY'S STUDIO. HE BEGAN HIS CAREER DRAWING URBAN LANDSCAPES AND NUDES, WHICH HE PRESENTED AT HIS FIRST EXHIBITION IN TARRAGONA IN 1908, MOST OF WHICH ARE NOW LOST. HE WENT FROM DRAWING TO SCULPTURING. ANOTHER SCHOLARSHIP, GAVE HIM THREE MONTHS TRAVELING THROUGH ITALY WITH HIS MOTHER, VISITING ROME, FLORENCE AND NAPLES. "BUSTS OF THE RACE" WAS A SERIES OF SCULPTURES HE CREATED TO SHOW THE MANY FACES OF LOCAL VILLAGE PEOPLE. HIS BEST-KNOWN PIECE IS A MONUMENT FOR THOSE WHO DEFENDED TARRAGONA DURING THE PENINSULAR WAR, "MONUMENT TO THE HEROES OF TARRAGONA," WHICH WAS STARTED IN 1910 AND FINISHED JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEATH. IT WAS DEDICATED IN 1931. AMONG HIS MOST MEMORABLE CREATIONS ARE "FLORES MALSANAS," "MONUMENTO A LOS HEROES DESNUDOS," "MONUMENTO A GOYA," "MONUMENTO A CHAPI," "MINERO DE PUERTOLLANO," "VENTERO DE PENALTORDO," "PASTOR DE LA SIERRA" AND "MONUMENTO A EDUARDO SAAVEDRA." IN 1968, THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART IN TARRAGONA WAS BEQUEATHED A LARGE PART OF HIS WORK. IN NOVEMBER OF 2018, IN PREPARATION FOR THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH, HIS REMAINS AND THOSE OF HIS MOTHER WERE EXHUMED FROM THE CEMENTERIO DE LA ALMUDENA IN MADRID AND RELOCATED TO THE CEMETERY IN MORA DE EBRE, HIS BIRTHPLACE. HE DIED FROM THE COMPLICATIONS OF TUBERCULOSIS AT THE VILLA LUZ SANATORIUM IN MADRID. HIS DEATH WAS COVERED WELL IN THE NEWSPAPERS. THIS MONUMENT IS DEDICATED TO THE TARRAGONIANS IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST THE FRENCH TROOPS IN 1811, *THE PENINSULAR WAR*.



**"Monumento a los Héroes de 1811"**

