
Martyna Rabajczyk / Józef Czapski in Spain

Józef Czapski was in Spain twice, in 1930 and 1981. He described his first journey to the Iberian Peninsula on the pages of "Pamiętnik Warszawski" [The Warsaw Diary] magazine under the title *Notatki z podróży. Hiszpania* [Notes from the journey. Spain]. For Czapski one of the most exciting artistic experiences during this trip was "discovering" El Greco and Francisco Goya in the Prado. In the 1920s and 1930s, when Czapski attended courses at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, and afterwards when he went with the Kapist group to Paris, the very El Greco was the most admired among Spanish old masters. The rank of this born on Crete and active in Spain artist was made firm thanks to tracing similarities between his and Paul Cézanne's oeuvres. The latter gained more and more admirers in the period between the WWI and WWII. In the post-war artistic work of Czapski we are able to trace his inspirations by Spanish painting. In his *Diaries* he used to sketch some still-lives by Juan Sánchez Cotán and Francisco Zurbarán, as well as some portraits by Goya. In his texts he also pointed out influences by Spanish masters on contemporary to him painting of Chaim Soutine and Georges Braque.