

trabajos previos de Julio Ramos en *Desencuentros de la modernidad en América Latina* (1989) o de Mariano Siskind en *Deseos cosmopolitas* (2016).

WOJCIECH TOKARZ

*St. Francis Xavier University*

ÓSCAR IVÁN USECHE. *Founders of the Future: The Science and Industry of Spanish Modernization*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2022. 263 pp.

Useche's handsome and polished study analyzes the response of a variety of Spanish *fin-de-siglo* thinkers to the country's experience of industrial modernization. Focusing on "symbolic spaces — narrative strategies, rhetorical devices, metaphorical systems," the author posits the guiding metaphor of the *social foundry* as a way of exploring the "dialectical exchange between industrialization and society" (3). Drawing on the idea that the steel industry "presented a new means of circulating ideas about time, energy, productivity, and collectivity that reshaped the projects of national modernization," the *social foundry* becomes "a critical framework to approach industrialization as a space of cognitive transformation that gave shape to a new way of approaching reality" (4, 21).

After a chapter in which he elaborates on the theoretical underpinnings of the *social foundry*, Useche then spends five chapters examining Spain's industrial modernization in a variety of authors and texts. Chapter 2 focuses on José Echegaray, Lucas Mallada, and Pere Estasen. Echegaray connects Spanish backwardness to a lack of progress in mathematics (using the language of an economy of scarcity), which in turn stemmed from the religious dogmatism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, he stops short of offering solutions. By contrast, Estasen and Mallada both explore ways to convert "the country's symbolic wealth into the natural and material resources required for modernization" (45). Estasen sought to address the unequal distribution of wealth by advocating for the "implement[ion of] a mixed economy in the country where free trade and protectionism could coexist" (59). For his part, Mallada focused on geology, one of the fields of science where Spanish backwardness was less pronounced, to argue that a process of "endo-colonization," or colonization by the state of its own population, could help overcome the country's greatest problems (73).

Chapter 3 looks specifically at the views on education of Gumersindo Vicuña, Laureano Calderón, Zoel García de Galdeano, and José Rodríguez Mourelo. These authors identify the preference in Spain's education system for practical over theoretical knowledge as a significant problem. To

address it, Vicuña advocates for a separation between technical institutions, with a focus on applied knowledge, and universities, which would be “repositories of theoretical erudition” (82). Calderón ties Spain’s modernization to its ability to exploit its potential energy and labor force. For his part, García de Galdeano contributed to the creation of an intellectual atmosphere in Spain with his academic journal, *El Progreso Matemático*, and Rodríguez Mourelo resorts to “elemental notions of energy, work, and power to emphasize the importance of finding balance between practical and theoretical knowledge and between local and foreign ideas” related to education (102).

In chapter 4, Useche examines “modernization as [a] socially disruptive force” in works by Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, Manuel Ciges Aparicio, and Concha Espina. In his novel *El intruso* (1904), Blasco presents industry as “a sort of new feudal economy that exposed the failure of the Restoration’s political system to serve the actual needs of modernization” (114). From a journalistic perspective, Ciges also highlights the “conflictive nature of industrialization,” specifically in how industry exploited labor (117). Ciges’s social foundry adopts the language of utility as it relates to workers. In contrast to Blasco and Ciges, Espina sees religion as the friend of the proletariat. Accordingly, “[t]he tension between workers and [international] corporations was ... a struggle to defend national traits,” among which Catholicism figured centrally (124).

Chapter 5 considers journalism’s role in disseminating scientific ideas. Echegaray “give[s] prominence to the duality of body and soul, material and spiritual components, that needed to be in harmony to consolidate national identity as an amalgam of tradition and progress” (138). In Emilia Pardo Bazán, who defends Catholicism and traditional values, order and harmony “reaffirm the divine nature of the cosmos” and contrast with the central notions of Darwinism (142). Although she decries the conflation of social improvement and material progress, she also depicts the country as “an active living organism with growing and dynamic potential, a body in which modernization could be the heart of that new and more dynamic Spain” (148). For his part, Pedro Antonio de Alarcón engages with the “spatial and temporal dislocation produced by the train” in order to juxtapose the glory of Spain’s past with the social challenges of the present (154).

In chapter 6, Useche draws on ecocriticism to analyze novels by Benito Pérez Galdós, José Ortega Munilla, and Armando Palacio Valdés. Galdós argues in *Marianela* (1878) that despite certain costs, progress would ultimately benefit Spain. By contrast, Ortega’s *El tren directo* (1880) warns about “the negative consequences of modernization for rural communities and for the environment” (174). Similarly, Palacio Valdés adopts a nostalgic view of the past; in his novel *La aldea perdida* (1903) “national regeneration

is subjected to the recovery of moral and religious values" (188). Industrialization represents "not the engine of civilization," but "an agent of barbarism" (195).

Useche has done an admirable job wrangling a rather disparate, in my view, selection of texts. His analyses provide for effective elucidation of ideas about industrialization and modernization in the *fin-de-siglo* period, though the penetration of industrial images/concepts/terms is clearer in some texts than in others. As a result, by the end of the book I found myself wondering if the central metaphor of the *social foundry* had not been stretched so thin that it lost some of its explanatory power. Other minor quibbles include the somewhat two-dimensional treatment of religion and the cover image (thematically appropriate, but why a Dutch painting for a book about modern Spain?). Occasionally one comes across a stilted phrase, but otherwise the chapters progress at an even pace and in terms of the production quality of the book (quite high), I found only a few typographical errors. In sum, Useche can congratulate himself on a job well done.

RYAN A. DAVIS

*Illinois State University*

FERNANDA ZULLO-RUIZ. *Motherhood and Childhood in Silvina Ocampo's Works*. Croydon: U of Wales P, 2023. 240 pp.

En su reciente publicación, Fernanda Zullo aborda el estudio de parte de la obra de la escritora argentina Silvina Ocampo enfocándose en el tratamiento que la misma hace de la maternidad y la infancia; y con ello se suma al creciente movimiento internacional de revalorización de la producción literaria de esta admirada escritora. En la introducción, Zullo se pregunta cuál es el motivo del auge de nuevos estudios centrados en la obra de Ocampo y su persona, con enfoques multidireccionales, en particular a partir de finales de los 90. Así, Zullo hace un recuento de los factores que influyeron en este renovado interés, lo que en consecuencia la ayuda a dilucidar "the power of her recursive return to the subject of motherhood and childhood..." (xvi) que estructuran su libro como un principio rector. La académica hace un valioso y detallado recuento de los estudios más prominentes de la obra de Ocampo y de los eventos que lo delimitaron, y los divide en tres períodos de revalorización. En su opinión, las repetidas incursiones de Ocampo en el audaz tratamiento de temas tabús en la sociedad en la que vivía la ayudaron a cultivar una voz única dentro de la literatura argentina, muy adelantada a la época que le tocó vivir.