

Teresa's favourite metaphors (the soul as a silkworm, for example), overall her writing lacks the nuance and poetry of Teresa's. Yet, this is definitely a book worth reading. Sister Ana is a feisty, likeable character, and her observations humanize the religious conflict of the early seventeenth century.

Donahue has also included three additional selections: Ana's account of the hardships faced by the nuns who founded, in Burgos in 1581; the 'Prayer in Abandonment', in which Ana prays for strength in her struggle against Bérulle; and 'Spiritual Lectures' on poverty, obedience and religious vocation. These readings enhance Ana's image as a profoundly spiritual woman who overcame affliction to serve the cause of the reform.

Despite Ana's sometimes chaotic style, Donahue's translation is clear, fluid and highly readable, capturing beautifully Ana's down-to-earth manner. There are a few errors, however. For example, *oficial* should be translated 'workman', a common meaning in early modern Spanish (56), rather than as 'official'. Yet these minor slips hardly diminish the value of this excellent volume.

BARBARA MUJICA

Georgetown University, Washington, DC

—CRYSTAL ANNE CHEMRIS, *Góngora's Soledades and the Problem of Modernity*. Woodbridge: Tamesis. 2008. xx + 174 pp. ISBN 9781855661608.

The mid-twentieth century celebration of Góngora's poetry as pure art, isolated from its historical context, was dispelled by John Beverley's study of the *Soledades* in the context of political and economic crisis. Chemris's lucidly theorized study expands the scope of this contextualization through a profoundly philosophical view of the poem in terms of the baroque crisis of ontology, perception, and representation. The 'problem of modernity' in the title is, at least in part, that of the uneven development of Spanish modernity, an aesthetic and philosophical problem inextricable from Spanish consciousness of the ambivalent effects of its imperial project. Chemris demonstrates how the loss of a cosmological centre and discursive authority in the early modern period is reflected not only in the poem's fragmentation but also in

its experimentation with genre and syntax, voice and text, space and time. In developing her argument, she draws upon a rich comparative background and familiarity with the full range of scholarly approaches to Góngora.

Chemris begins her discussion of modernity with problems of subjectivity exemplified by the ironic treatment of courtly love and the sense of estrangement in the *Celestina*. She reveals a gender-based argument in Boscán's defence of the poet's subjective vision, which she interprets as implicitly feminized lyric emotion. Highlighting Garcilaso's shift away from emotion towards the aesthetic, she reads his eclogues as precursors to the *Soledades*. Chapter Two, 'Crisis and Form', addresses Góngora's experimentation with genre in the *Soledades* and his disruption of the illusions of seamlessness and immediacy. She examines the poet's intensification and exposure of the mechanisms of metaphor through the device of hypallage, exemplified in *Soledad primera*, line 44: 'montes de agua y piélagos de montes' (25).

The central chapters, two, three, and four, present Chemris's most original contributions to Góngora studies. Her brief reference to gender in Boscán's privileging of the aesthetic becomes central in her approach to the rape imagery of the opening lines of the first *Soledad*, and the closing scene of the second. Developing Margaret Carroll's concept of the 'erotics of absolutism' in a distinct cultural context, Chemris links the idealization of sexual violence with the political power of the Habsburg Empire (55). She observes that the violent images of hunting in *Soledad primera* are 'a startling counterpoint to idealized depictions of suffering' in the literature of courtly love; they participate in 'a dynamic of both expression of, and aesthetic detachment from emotion' (61). This observation is key to her brilliant analysis of Éfire's 'gender-bending' fishing exploits in the second chapter, and the falconry scene in the fourth. One of the many strengths of this monograph is its attention to these important passages in the often overlooked *Soledad segunda*. The chapter between these two explores questions of epistemology and visual perception not only in the context of baroque painting but also in the poem's proto-scientific references to observation, measurement, the field of vision, maps,

and global exploration, and to aesthetic transgressions of the boundary between the sublime and the grotesque. Chemris moves from this discussion of spatial references in Chapter Three, to the fireworks of apocalypse in Chapter Four. Here, she addresses the baroque disruption of the classical concept of an orderly world through the poem's references to vast expanses of sea and landscape and its 'conflicted time structures', which result from a 'loss of mediation between the eternal and the moment' (89). Chemris reads the focus on dissolution in the falconry scene in multiple registers: the political geography of the birds' origins, their emblematic significance, Habsburg allegories of messianic prophecy, astronomical references, and the aestheticization of the erotic. She concludes with a view of Góngora as quintessentially baroque, 'unable to imagine a world without imagining also its dissolution' (103).

Góngora's modernity and his influence on twentieth-century writing in Spain and Latin America has become a critical commonplace, but it is seldom demonstrated with the clarity of Chemris's discussion in the fifth and final chapter of this volume. She reads the modernity of Góngora in light of Gorostiza's *Muerte sin fin*, Vallejo's 'Himno entre ruinas', and Paz's *Blanco*. In this twentieth-century context, she returns to Walter Benjamin's writings on the baroque, in dialogue with considerations of indigenous culture and political history, to address questions of history and time in Vallejo's imagery of ruins.

For scholars in early modern peninsular baroque poetry, Chemris's published articles on violence and the erotic in the *Soledades*, and in *Soledad segunda* in particular, have transformed critical discussion of the poem. In light of current critical attention to baroque and neo-baroque in Latin American literature, however, this lucidly written study is certain to become essential reading for a much wider audience.

EMILIE L. BERGMANN

University of California, Berkeley

IGNACIO DE LUZÁN, *La poética*. Letras Hispánicas, 624. Edición de Russell P. Sebold. Madrid: Cátedra. 2008. 722 pp. ISBN 978-84-376-2480-8.

En 1977 Russell P. Sebold hacía historia cuando publicaba en Barcelona, en la Editorial Labor, colección de Textos Hispánicos Modernos dirigida por Francisco Rico, su edición de *La poética o reglas de la poesía en general y de sus principales especies*, edición destinada a convertirse en canónica no solo por el establecimiento del texto, con el uso inteligente de materiales provenientes de la segunda edición (de 1786), sino también por el impresionante prólogo que antepuso a la obra de Luzán. Antes de que apareciera esa edición, Luigi di Filippo había editado *La poética o reglas de la poesía*, en dos volúmenes, en Barcelona y para Selecciones Bibliófilas, en 1956; y también Isabel Cid de Sirgado había preparado en 1974 para Cátedra *La poética o reglas de la poesía en general y de sus principales especies* (Ediciones de 1737 y 1789). Con las memorias de la vida de don Ignacio Luzán, escritas por su hijo. En 2008, 31 años después de la edición Sebold en Labor, la Editorial Cátedra da cabida a la edición de Sebold en la que, tanto por número de títulos como por calidad de ediciones, se ha convertido en la colección de clásicos más reconocida del panorama hispánico; me refiero a la colección Letras Hispánicas.

Recuperar esa edición es recuperar el texto de Luzán, obra clave en un programa cultural que se propuso como objetivo la regeneración de las letras hispanas. *La poética* de Luzán constituye sin lugar a dudas uno de los jalones intelectuales de un país y de una cultura. Para su desgracia – y para nuestra desgracia – el relato de la historia literaria española estuvo marcado en el siglo XIX por la interpretación conservadora. Dicha versión historiográfica quiso borrar de sus propias raíces – acusando al siglo XVIII de ser mimético y extranjerizante, decían, de ser antinacional y anticastizo – lo que fue más de un siglo lleno de experimentaciones y progresos, y sin el cual nada de su propio presente hubiera sido imaginable. A pesar de algunos comentarios aislados (entre otros, de Leandro Fernández de Moratín o de Quintana) sobre la casi nula influencia que *La poética* de Luzán había tenido, hay que dejar claro que *La poética* constituirá el marco determinante

"Nostalgias imperiales,"
Paz's