

previously analyzed in the first section, Fernández offers an overview of the origins of Linguistics, and provides helpful illustration of some important approaches and traditions still current in the field. She reflects on some traditional key concepts from a comparative point of view, which allows her to explain the reasons for the modern division in contemporary Linguistics in the second chapter in this section. This chapter deals with several branches of Linguistics such as phonology, grammar and lexicology. But the author also finds and explains a number of important links between other branches of the field, as some of them have common aims and ideas and can be better explained through a comparative analysis, for instance: Sociolinguistics and Anthropology, Psycholinguistics and Neurolinguistics. This chapter is completed with a very comprehensive introduction to some of the latest advances in Applied Linguistics: language teaching and learning, problems in translation, etc. The last chapter in this section is dedicated to Linguistics from a more philosophical perspective. Here Fernández applies the concept of epistemology to some of the linguistic theories and doctrines previously described, stressing that this epistemology is not prescriptive.

This book is a very comprehensive guide to some of the major problems in contemporary Linguistics and it is very well organized into several chapters, distributed over two coherent sections. This represents a clear advantage for the reader, as all concepts and theories described throughout the book are very well correlated. Furthermore, at the end of each chapter Fernández includes a number of texts, questions and practice material relating to the content provided in each chapter, so this work definitely serves as a very worthy and necessary introduction to historical and contemporary Linguistics.

**Agustín Coletes Blanco, *Pérez de Ayala, bajo el signo de Britannia*. Serie Literatura, 39. Valladolid: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Valladolid, 1997. 154 p.**

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The present book completes a trilogy devoted to the English sources in Pérez de Ayala's literary and non-literary works. It had started with the publication of *Gran Bretaña y los Estados Unidos en la vida de Ramón Pérez de Ayala* (Oviedo: Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 1984) and continued thereafter with *La huella anglonorteamericana en la novela de Pérez de Ayala* (Murcia/Oviedo: Universidad de Murcia y Universidad de Oviedo, 1987). In this case, its author, Agustín Coletes, writes about the presence of this influence in Ayala's "minor" works, that is to say, his poems, short stories and essays. On the whole, we have a very clear picture of Ayala's readings and opinions on many English and American authors from Shakespeare to Joyce or T. S. Eliot. Agustín Coletes demonstrates his extensive knowledge of the writer, whether when he refers to the contents of his library, or when he quotes the main critical reviews of his literary works. He has studied the character and his writings thoroughly and patiently, and his conclusions are the

result of an elaborate work and a sharp mind. The style of his prose is precise and vigorous and does not contain -something that should be praised for- any unnecessary reiteration or pedantry. The reading of his book becomes, then, an easy and pleasant task and, at the end, we have a whole view of Ayala's phobias and phobias and the main English sources of his books. The position of the scholar towards the figure of Pérez de Ayala shows real admiration on many occasions, but it does not lack the necessary criticism when he cannot share his points of view about women, his strong dislike for the so-called "psychological novels", especially those written by Joyce or, finally, when he sets aside the main trends in modern British and American literature.

The most interesting aspects of the book include his well-documented comparisons between Ayala's works and his English sources, of great relevance for the study of both his poetry and prose. In my opinion, as Coletes rightly observes, Ayala stands out as a keen and sensible literary critic when he reveals the influence of Byron in Espronceda, something then unknown and only thirty years later studied in depth by Esteban Pujals; and, especially, that of Cervantes in Fielding and Dickens (possibly due to the excellent translation of *Don Quixote* done by Smollett in the Eighteenth Century and which had exerted so great an influence on the England of the time). They all gather to make up a comprehensive and brilliant study of comparative literature and anticipate a series of further research on the matter. Ayala's opinion on Shakespeare and the creation of English National Theatre are also remarkable when compared with the Greek Theatre of the classical tragedy and with the Spanish Theatre of Lope de Vega and his contemporaries. He also dates the origins of the psychological novel, personalised in Joyce or Proust, to Richardson's epistolary novels of the late Eighteenth Century. Other interesting comments from Coletes are those referring to some biographical aspects of Ayala's life and about his compromise with realism in literature, showing his preference for Galdós or Dickens to Benavente or Zola, for example. A rigorous study, in short, very useful for those scholars interested in Pérez de Ayala or in comparative literature, but also for anyone who wants to increase their knowledge of Spanish and English literature in general. The passion of the researcher for his character is combined here with the necessary and dispassionate distance when he gets to analyse the different aspects of his artistic development and the strong and permanent English influence on his literary and essayist world.

**Vilar, Mar** *El español, segunda lengua en los Estados Unidos*. Universidad de Murcia: Servicio de publicaciones, 2000, 669 p.

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It is well known that the Spanish language has proliferated in its use in the last five centuries and that it is presently the second language of the United States. However, the teaching of Spanish and its progressive use in the U.S. had not been as extensively studied and recorded until Mar Vilar published *El español, segunda lengua en los Estados Unidos* (Spanish as a Second Language in the U.S.). This book takes a historical perspective on the advance of