

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.

Reviewed by Teresa Morell Moll
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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

the Spanish language in the United States. It begins with the introduction of the study of Spanish in the thirteen colonies in 1776 and it progresses chronologically until 1848. The significance of this period (i.e., from the founding of the nation to the annexation of part of Mexico) corresponds with a transition in the educational system. The traditional English education of classical studies was replaced by a more practical and open one. This new system permitted the study of the Spanish language along with other modern languages.

Each of the ten chapters of this book deals with the teaching of Spanish in the schools and universities of the East Coast, which later served as models for the institutions across the nation. In reviewing the events which led to the incorporation of the Spanish language in the North American educational system, Mar Vilar makes reference to the role of several founding fathers (e.g., Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson), countless scholars of the Spanish language (e.g., Félix Varela, Mariano Velazquez de la Cadena and Mariano Cubí) and numerous prestigious colleges and universities (e.g., University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Yale, Columbia, etc.) in the advancement of the Spanish language.

Chapter 1 begins with Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where the use of two languages-English and German- paved the path for the introduction of the teaching of modern languages, including Spanish. In addition to Benjamin Franklin's influence, a Spanish-speaking colony with commercial interests living in Philadelphia also promoted the publication of newspapers and books written in Spanish. Subsequently, Chapter 2 deals with Thomas Jefferson's efforts to reform the Virginia educational system. Among his achievements are: the establishment of the first university department of modern languages, the secularization of the curriculum as well as the establishment of an elective system which allowed students to design their own study program. Spanish became one of the first three languages chosen by students.

Chapters 3, 4 & 5 deal with Harvard, the oldest college of the U.S. founded in 1636, which played an important role in initiating trends later followed by other institutions. The author carefully reconstructs and examines the evolution of Harvard from its traditional stand to a more innovative one influenced by the thoughts and principles of the successive rectors and presidents. Although French was introduced in 1787, it was not until 1817 that Spanish was taught through the "Abiel Smith" professorate. The work of the successive professors: Ticknor, Longfellow and Lowell, who chaired the position, is examined in detail to determine their role as teachers, structural innovators and world renowned researchers of the Spanish language and its literature. Harvard was the most notable center for Spanish investigators during the period of study.

In contrast to Harvard, Yale maintained its traditional view and focus on classical languages and theology as is demonstrated in chapter 6. Nevertheless, French and Spanish became optional courses for students as of 1826.

Chapter 7 is reserved for New York, the great metropolis which, then just as now, marked the rhythm of the times, in so far as culture and education were concerned. Here she points out the influence of the Sephardic Jews, newspapers such as *El Redactor* and *Mercurio de Nueva York* and the incorporation of Spanish into the curriculums of King's College (later named Columbia), City University of New York and Union College.

Chapter 8 deals with Maryland, especially Saint Mary's College, the first Catholic college of the U.S., which served as a model for future colleges. Vilar shows how St.

Mary's gave special attention to the Spanish language, partly due to the number of Hispanic and Spanish students. Not only does she trace the importance of Spanish in St. Mary's, but also everything connected to the organization, administration and staff of the institution.

Finally, chapters 9 and 10 complete the panoramic view of the teaching of Spanish and other modern languages within North America prior to 1848. In chapter 9 she refers to colleges in the north, such as Princeton, Rutgers, Dartmouth etc. and the development of their traditional curriculums that made room for modern languages. Then she goes on to the institutions of the Upper Midwest, which gave preferential treatment to French and German due to their cultural tradition in the area. Similarly, many institutions of the Lower Midwest, such as North Carolina State University, also taught French and German. However, others included Spanish, for example, the University of South Carolina, the University of Georgia and many other private universities which followed the model established by St. Mary's. The last territories she refers to in chapter 10 are Florida, Louisiana and Texas, those with a direct connection with Spain. Here she deals with the linguistic and cultural manifestations of the Spanish and French settlements. She studies the 'anglisation' suffered by Louisiana, Florida and Texas before, during and after the annexation of the territories by the United States in 1804, 1819 and 1845, respectively.

The summary provided above does not do justice to the comprehensive study this book entails. Each chapter carefully examines the institutions, curriculums, scholars, books, and communities that played a role in the advance of Spanish as a second language in the U.S. It fills the gap in recorded history of the period within which Spanish began to be taught. The precision with which the book encompasses such a vast area of study and the extensive research undertaken has produced an outstanding historical and applied linguistic reference book.

Wharton, Edith. *La carta*, 1999. Selection, translation and epilogue by Teresa Gómez Reus. Barcelona: Clásicos del Bronce. 176 págs.

Reviewed by M^a Dolores Martínez Reventós
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The compilation of short narrative pieces titled *La carta* puts together for the first time in Spain some of Edith Wharton's best well-known short stories, which, surprisingly enough, had not yet been translated into Spanish. If we consider this fact surprising – even unbelievable – it is because, although Edith Wharton's fame is based on her novels, such as *The House of Mirth* (1905), *Ethan Frome* (1911) or *The Age of Innocence* (1920), her short narratives are an essential part of her literary output. She published a total of eighty five short stories, and no less than twenty of them have been highly acclaimed by Anglo-American critics. Hence the need for this anthology, which contains some of her most memorable pieces.

In her epilogue, the editor and translator, Teresa Gómez Reus, regrets "esa pérdida que supone traducirla" and comments that it is not always possible to translate "de manera satisfactoria todo el contenido de las vivencias sabrosas, sutiles ironías y evocaciones