

DE LA CRUZ, Juan & Ángel CAÑETE (1992): *Historia del inglés. (Fundamentación e historímetro)*. Málaga: Ediciones Edinford. 363 pp. (Ptas. 4,000).

We must congratulate the authors of this book because they have offered us a new, different, elaborated and rigorous view of the history of English from its oldest stages to the modern times. With the exception of F. Fernández's impressive and thorough *Historia de la Lengua Inglesa* (1982), no other history of English that covers all its periods has been published in Spanish or in Spain so far, although some monographs of a particularly high standard have dealt with concrete topics or periods of this aspect of English Studies.

De la Cruz and Cañete's approach to the history of English is also new and unconventional because their *Historia del inglés* is not a mere history of English in a traditional sense. The book is not revolutionary in the data that its authors offer, but rather in the way in which such data are presented to the reader. This is unusual, because De la Cruz has contributed extensively to explain several issues in the history and evolution of English (see for instance, among others, De la Cruz 1969, 1970, 1972a, 1972b, 1972c, 1972d, 1973a, 1973b, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1983, 1986a, 1986b, 1988), and his work has always been characterized by the careful examination of data and the reevaluation of previous studies, a procedure that has frequently implied the eager formulation of arresting and demanding theories. That this *Historia del inglés* presents a mixed methodology in the presentation of facts and explanations, and a peculiar handling of sources and references, may be a result of the audience that might have been in mind when preparing the book, that is, one may assume that this is a university handbook for the very likely audience of Spanish undergraduate students of English. Although we may presume that, and also that De la Cruz and Cañete's own Málaga students might

have been one of the primary targets of *Historia del inglés*, the book is worth reading by all other students and scholars of the history of English.

Two main methodological approaches have been applied to the composition of this *Historia del inglés*, and they have been used with different intentions within the structure of the work:

1) the first one is an external view of the history of the English from the period of the migration of the Anglo-Saxons from their continental territories to Britain, up to 1066: all that constitutes what is chapter 1 in the book (pp. 45-84); plus a section in chapter 2 (pp. 107-126) that deals with the Scandinavian and French influences on English, especially on its lexicon;

2) the second one is mainly an internal view of the history of English divided into two well defined parts. The first portion deals with the older stages of English and its previous evolution from Indo-European to Old English (pp. 85-106 in chapter 2); and then, most of the book (chapter 4: 139-340) is devoted to the diachronic study of the English language that we find in written documents. The second part presents some precise illustrations of those texts (chapter 3: 127-138, and the first part of chapter 6: 341-350) and offers a well constructed pattern that may guide the student through the process of a linguistic commentary of the texts.

This appreciation contrasts partially, no doubt, with the authors' declaration in their prologue (p. 15) that their book is constituted by two parts: the first one devoted to building the 'necessary foundations for the successful study of the historical evolution of the English Language' and which is subdivided in five sections; and a second part formed by an 'historímetro' (i.e. a historymeter: a chronological set of charts that measure the history of English) that provides 'an analytical instrument' to study the texts that illustrate that evolution and a set of suggestions for further textual commentaries. De la Cruz and Cañete also explain that their first part contains three sections that cover (1) a 'general view of the peoples that have contributed to the creation of the English nation and its tongue;' (2) the 'analysis of the linguistic sources of English plus a short survey of Indo-European declensions,' and

their relations with Latin and Germanic, together with a review of Scandinavian and French influence on Middle English; and (3) the ‘first steps for the practical study of the language of the first English people.

This *Historia del inglés* also includes a “shock” for the reader (pp. 21-28), a general introduction -section 0 (pp. 29-43), a short section -the second part in chapter 6 (pp. 351-356)- directed to present to the student the elemental commentary of a text from the perspective of the history of English, and finally a bibliography -chapter 7 (pp. 357-363)- whose incorporation to the volume one has to assume as being principally a guide for supplementary reading because references in the text have been kept to a minimum.

The Index divides the volume in 8 sections, and it may suggest to the reader a different structure. These sections are numbered and entitled: 0. General introduction and general history; 1. Population; 2. Linguistic relations of English; 3. First steps and adapted texts; 4. History of historical English; 5. Diachronic illustration of texts; 6. Suggestions for the elementary treatment of the texts from the perspective of the History of English; and 7. Bibliography.

References in this *Historia del inglés* are to some extent irregular. For instance on p. 230 a mention to *La prosa de los anglosajones* is quoted without brackets -and this is the procedure normally followed in the book-, whereas in other places such as on p. 309 we find a double possibility: Samuels’ *Linguistic Evolution* contrasts with Lass’ *English Phonology*, because this latter is bracketed whereas the former is not. When Samuels is cited again on p. 316 a full reference is given, although it is customary in the book to use *op. cit.* and similar Latin abbreviations when an item has appeared previously. Also, there are books quoted in the text or in the notes that have not been collected in the general bibliography: some of them such as C. Castillo’s thesis: *El verbo frasal en Shakespeare*, (note 13 to section 4.5.2, p. 270), have their full reference when they appear for the first time. However, there are other cases reference to which can never be traced in the *Historia del inglés*: such is the allusion to Martinet on p. 310: it may refer to

the *Économie des changements phonétiques*, but one can never be sure. Another one appears on p. 287 where ‘Gimson (p. 159)’ is alluded to. It is obscure, unless the reader is familiar with English Phonetics, because Gimson is neither in the general bibliography nor in the notes, and whereas there may be very little doubt that it must be A. C. Gimson’s popular and excellent handbook *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*, that may not be so evident for the undergraduate student or for a more general audience.

It would be advisable, hence, that when the volume is revised for a new issue only one system of reference may be used, as that will relieve the reader considerably from the pains of checking and rechecking pages searching for the appropriate notes or from the frequent coming and going from the main text to its accessory parts. In this aspect it would also be highly recommendable that the notes should appear at the bottom of pages rather than at the end of subsections and sections. We will now discuss the sections of this book in detail.

The “shock” pages are a set of preliminary reflections on the nature and principles of textual commentary and the historical study of languages. This shock treatment is an excellent idea for attracting the attention of the student: it consists of a synchronic and diachronic comparison that implies simultaneously intracultural and intercultural effects and modes, because the texts chosen for the illustration are an excerpt from the Old English and its corresponding Medieval Spanish *Apollonius* together with their modern English and Spanish renderings. That, I think, provokes an automatic impression of proximity and alienation that is skilfully exploited by the authors and helps both to arouse and maintain the interest of the reader.

Chapter 0 includes an introduction that inserts a figure illustrating the human brain, and then a map followed by a set of diagrams depicting the Indo-European families of languages and a general chronology. These diagrams can be exceptionally useful for teaching purposes. In this sense, as this *Historia del inglés* makes a recurrent use of diagrams and charts in its

different divisions, it becomes a book full of tutoring resources: it would be rather effective, for instance, to use an overhead projector and xeroopies and transform De la Cruz and Cañete's excellent synthesis into introductory classroom material.

Chapter 1 deals with the population of Britain before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons (pp. 45-51), and then, in greater detail, with the migrations and the kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons (pp. 51-84). As this book is planned to be used together with De la Cruz's *Iniciación práctica al inglés antiguo* (1986a), it is only fitting that these aspects of population stop being discussed at the times of the Norman invasion. It might be worth adding a subsection on the true extent of Norman and French influences, plus commentaries on other influences such as Flemish in the 13th and 14th centuries for a future issue. From my point of view, a whole chapter considering the world expansion and fragmentation of English, with a special section on American English in particular, is also missing from this handbook. However, in this sense, one may also admit that it is truly a history of *English*.

Chapter 2 is devoted to Indo-European, Germanic and its varieties and characteristics, and includes different inventories showing French and Scandinavian influence on the English lexicon. These range from terms referring to the crown, nobility, state, army and warfare, church, crafts and trades, to cooking and the law. Chapter 2 ends with a section that explains different morphosyntactic aspects of French origin. In this sense, *Historia del inglés* does not depart significantly from other books in the same tradition, as for example A. C. Baugh & Th. Cable's *A History of the English Language*.

Chapter 3 is a brief presentation of Old English texts adapted for the first stages of learning: it comprises two lists of independent sentences and five excerpts that have been graded in difficulty. Consequently, it is a condensed primer, but, again, to be used with the *Iniciación práctica al inglés antiguo*.

Chapter 4 is the central part of the work. First it presents phonological charts (pp. 139-145), and then morphological ones followed by an extensive explanation of English forms and their interaction in terms of classes (nouns:

146-171; adjectives: 172-179; pronouns: 180-208;2 verbs: 209-261) and functions (negation, question: pp. 262-66; relative and phrasal complementation: 267-271). Then, sections 4.6 (pp. 272-292) and 4.7 (293- 340), are dedicated to the historical development of the sound systems of English and to English graphical systems.

This part of the *Historia del inglés* studies well known and controversial topics of English historical linguistics, and it is here where the reader may be more prone to agree or disagree with the authors. For instance, when dealing in detail with the Great Vowel Shift (pp. 308-322) -we must say, incidentally, that the GVS has a very happy Spanish rendering: ‘Gran Desplazamiento Vocálico’-, the only sources quoted are Samuels, Lass, Martinet and Jespersen, and the authors’ own interpretation follows explicitly that of Lass 1975 (see p. 310), and not that of Lass 1987, who revised some of his previous ideas about the GVS. The works of E. Dobson (1968), N. Chomsky & M. Halle (1968), P. M. Wolfe (1972), R. Stockwell (1978), F. Cercignani (1981), or C. Jones (1989), among many others, might have been used in this discussion, especially because Cercignani (1981), Dobson (1968), Jones (1989), and Lass (1987), appear in the final bibliography.

Chapter 5 offers the student two texts: the ‘Our Father’ (Matthew 6: 9-13) in different Germanic languages and dialects (Gothic, Northumbrian, West Saxon, King James Bible and German: Luther’s Bible), and the ‘Parable of the Prodigal Son’ (Luke 15: 11-24) in Gothic, German and in different stages of the history of English (West Saxon, Wycliffite Bible, King James Bible both in original and modernized spellings, and the Gideon Bible).

Chapter 6 introduces a set of suggestions for the ‘elementary treatment of texts from the point of view of the history of English’ (p. 351). This set of practical postulates and questions is one of the more useful parts of the book for the student: the authors supply a convenient thread that can be easily and profitably followed, and which will contribute to the better understanding of the nature and purposes of the study of the history of English.

Chapter 7 is devoted to sources. The bibliography is divided in three sections: what the authors call their fundamental bibliographical source, namely *The Year's Work in English Studies*; then dictionaries, and in conclusion a general bibliography. The latter, and we must welcome it once more, registers 155 entries of which there is a total of 16 registers in languages other than English (15 in Spanish and one in French). There are also two entries published in English by Spanish authors, but out of those 15 entries in Spanish, five are related to Indo-European and other Germanic languages. In such a field as English Historical Linguistics where the number of Spanish experts is very small, and whose contribution in absolute world terms is almost insubstantial, to be able to set down six different names to published items that De la Cruz & Cañete consider good enough to be recorded here is no mean accomplishment.

This *Historia del inglés* will very likely become a standard handbook for University students of English in Spain, especially when a new edition will have polished its minor defects and drawbacks (its price is also a possible deterrent for weaker economies). In any case it is to be highly recommended to any serious reader who is interested in the history of the English language.

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