Pharies, David A. *A Brief History of the Spanish Language*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007. xv + 298 pp.

In May of 2007, I was fortunate enough to attend the Roundtable on "Resources for the Teaching of the History of the Spanish Language" at the 42nd International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan, organized under the auspices of the Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies. One of the panelists in that session was David Pharies, who discussed his recently published book that we review here.[1] As indicated by the author (xii), the book addresses a need that has been felt among historical linguistics for some time, namely that of having a text that is appropriate for a one-semester introductory course on the history of Spanish. I am currently using the book for the second time in my own course on the history of the Spanish language and can attest to its usefulness as a pedagogical tool.

The material is organized under nine principal chapters, prefaced by an introductory chapter that addresses the question of language history and the rationale (in case the reader needs additional prodding) of why it is important to study the history of Spanish in particular. Chapter 1 discusses the characteristics of language change, its causes, and the mechanism by which change occurs, as postulated by Labov. Chapter 2 focuses on language families and traces the genealogy of Spanish from Latin. Chapter 3 presents the external history of the Iberian Peninsula from pre-Roman times through the 13th century, while Chapter 4 discusses the Latin language and acquaints the reader with its principal linguistic characteristics: orthography, pronunciation, phonology, morphology, and syntax.

These initial chapters serve as background preparation for the "nucleus" of the book, Chapters 5, 6, and 7. The information in these chapters, which represents the historical grammar of the language, is organized by linguistic component as well as by chronology. Chapter 5 presents the most important phonological developments from Latin to Medieval Spanish, while Chapter 6 focuses on the principal morphosyntactic changes during that

same period. After a brief review of the external history of Spain from the 13th to roughly the 18th century, Chapter 7 presents the principal phonological, morphological, and syntactic developments from Medieval to Modern Spanish. The last two chapters of the text round out the discussion of the history of the language focusing on lexis and dialectology. Chapter 8 discusses the most salient aspects of the history of the Spanish lexicon including the topics of popular vs. learned words, other loan words and their sources, and etymology. Chapter 9 presents the principal characteristics of Castilian, Andalusian, and Canary Spanish and discusses the influence of all three dialects in the formation of American Spanish. The remaining components of book include a five-page appendix entitled "Rudiments of Spanish Phonetics and Phonology", a glossary, nine maps, the list of works cited, and finally, two indices: an index of Spanish words cited and a subject index.

From the perspective of teaching, this book is an unparalleled resource. Students find it interesting, engaging, and easy to read. Despite its concision, it covers a wide range of topics and exposes the student to all areas of interest in historical Spanish linguistics, one of the stated aims of the author (xiii). The text works particularly well for an undergraduate course in the History of the Spanish Language, after students have taken an introductory course in Spanish linguistics. The book can also serve as an accompanying text or as introductory reading for a Master's level course in the topic. In these courses, it is often the case that at least some students have never taken a course in Spanish linguistics as undergraduates and plunging right into the standard books used at the graduate level (e.g. Lapesa, Lloyd, and Penny) can be quite daunting. For these students, one feature of the book that is helpful is the brief primer on Spanish phonetics and phonology (233-237), which serves as a good starting point for review before tackling the subject. Other features of the book that are useful and/or engaging are the questions and exercises at the end of each chapter (although some questions are decidedly more broad than others), the textual analyses and

commentary featured in Chapters 4-7, 9, and the informational sidebars that treat intriguing topics such Mozarabic (42) and Judeo-Spanish (144-145), or which serve to dispel oft-repeated myths about the Spanish language, e.g. the phonemic character of its orthography (165) or that the interdental fricative /θ/ of Castilian Spanish came about through imitation of a lisping king (155).

Here I would like to comment on two exercises that are particularly useful. In the discussion of Latin nominal morphology in Chapter 4, the author presents readers with a series of examples of Latin noun, adjective, and pronoun declensions (59-66). In the exercises at the end of the chapter, students are asked to translate a series of sentences from Spanish to Latin and from Latin to Spanish (71-72). Since students are given all the components needed to do the translations, even those who have never studied Latin are able to grasp the workings of the nominal system and the intricacies related to declension, case, and gender. This exercise proves to be invaluable in Chapter 6 when the changes in the nominal system from Latin to Spanish are discussed. Students are able to draw on their own experience (albeit limited) to better understand the differences between the two languages.

Likewise useful is the exercise at the end of Chapter 5 where students are asked to transcribe an Alfonsine passage, taken from the *Estoria de Espanna*, to represent the pronunciation of the text in 13th-century Castilian (99). Once again, this experience becomes directly applicable to material presented later in the course. Transcribing the text not only gives them a better understanding of what the language was like in the time of Alfonso X, but also allows them to better conceptualize the phonological changes that took place in the language from medieval to modern times, information presented in Chapter 7.

Despite the many positive aspects of this book, it is not without its shortcomings. In order for his history of Spanish to be brief, the author, naturally, had to limit the topics under discussion. He therefore had to omit

certain aspects of the language's history. So, for example, while the author provides an example of the effect of the yod on the consonant /g/, FAGEA > *faya* > *haya*, when palatalization is discussed generally (81), he does not treat the topic of the effect of the yod on /d, g/ in his analysis of consonantal changes. This is understandable. However, I feel that one omission in the phonological analysis could be rectified in a future edition of the book. The author states that he consciously omitted the discussion of the metaphonic effect of the yod from the analysis in order to reduce the complexity of the presentation (93). He explains this after providing examples such as NOCTE > *noche*, and FOLIA > *foja* > *hoja* and before also explaining that changes in words such SAPIA > *sepa*, which are affected by metaphony and metathesis, are likewise omitted from the analysis. Given the fact that the author has taken the time to provide these examples, as well as the fact that metaphony and metathesis are defined elsewhere in the book, it seems that dedicating another brief paragraph to the phenomenon would not over-complicate the matter and would make the phonological analysis applicable to a far greater number of popularly derived words.

Another related omission that I find unfortunate involves the rhizotonic preterite forms of Old Spanish and other perfect forms based on them. The author mentions that archaic verb forms such as *sopo*, *ouo*, and *troxo* could pose difficulty for the reader (135), but does not address the question of the high vowel that has come to be associated with them. The lack of discussion may unnecessarily handicap the reader since rhizotonic preterites and related forms are ubiquitous in Alfonsine texts. To wit: in the 13-line passage from *Estoria de Espanna* that students are asked to analyze morphosyntactically and lexically, the forms *troxe*, *ouieredes*, and *sopiessen* are found (139). *Troxe* and *ouieredes* are among the forms signalled for analysis. While students should be able to associate them with modern *truje* 'traje' and *hubiereis/hubieren*, the analysis would be more well rounded if discussion of the metaphonic effect of the yod on these types of forms was presented.

One final critique of the book revolves around the treatment of the Andalusianist theory of American Spanish. The author correctly states that Andalusian influence in the configuration of American Spanish is indisputable but questions "the way in which the theory has traditionally been formulated" (208). While the author does not cite a source for this "traditional" formulation, he follows Lipski's arguments against this view by pointing out that American Spanish and Peninsular Spanish shared parallel linguistics developments during and after the 16th century and that colonies and their speech modalities were undoubtedly affected by subsequent waves of immigration during the colonial period. The author seeks support for the first facet of the argument based on the dating of the linguistic changes that affected the macro-varieties and states that "the Spanish spoken at the moment of discovery of the New World still manifests a large number of premodern characteristics" (208). While the author is correct in stating that American Spanish was by no means consolidated in the 16th century, he nevertheless ignores the body of data that has been collected in the past decades that shows that many of the features shared by Andalusian and American Spanish (e.g. *seseo*, aspiration of /-s/, *yeísmo*, neutralization of /-r/ and /-l/) are documented in the Southern Peninsular variety by the 16th century and often earlier (cf. Boyd-Bowman, Frago Gracia).

The author concludes his treatment of the Andalusianist theory by "correcting" the traditional view (210, 212). He states that Andalusian influence was more intense in the lowland areas due to the commercial ties between the latter and Andalusia during the colonial period. Likewise, he states that while Andalusian Spanish was influential in the highland areas, it was less decisive there due to the influence of the prestige norm of Castile. This current view of the Andalusianist theory is not new, having been articulated decades ago by Menéndez Pidal in his seminal work "Sevilla frente a Madrid". It has been a basic tenet of *andalucismo* since then, although it has been updated in view of theories of dialect contact and koineization (cf. Fontanella de Wein-

berg).

These critiques aside, Pharies has provided the field of Spanish historical linguistics with an excellent textbook for an introductory course on the history of the language. The breadth of topics covered, which are presented in a style that is easy to read, and the inclusion of a wide-range of useful exercises make it an invaluable resource. It can readily serve as a stand-alone text for an undergraduate course, or alternatively, the instructor can easily supplement the book with information on topics of his/her special interest that may not be covered in this brief history.

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NOTAS

[1] The author has also written a Spanish-language version of the book: *Breve historia de la lengua española*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007. xvi + 294 pp.