

studies (see Davies), which in addition extended the analysis to verbs of perception such as *ver*, *oír*, and *sentir* (eg. *vieron a Juan trabajar*). In these studies, one sees how changes in syntactic phenomena – case marking, clitic placement, word order, the use of the *se*, and the presence of lower clause subjects – had shifted from verbs of perception to verbs of causation, based on the degree of perceived force by the main clause subject on the lower clause subject.

While Chapters 2 and 3 deal mainly with the synchronic facts from Old Spanish, Chapter 4 extends the analysis to discuss diachronic shifts during the period 1200–1500, with a few comments regarding changes since that time. Alfonso Vega shows how there is greater flexibility in terms of transitivity, greater flexibility in the syntactic and lexical classes to which verbs belong, an increase in the degree of lower clause subjects (eg. *hicieron venir a Juan vs. hicieron matar a Juan*), the use of connecting prepositions (*et enbiólas un día [a] coger leña*), an increase in the use of lower clause *se* (*la dejaron sentar[se]*), a supposed shift from accusative to dative case marking (*la > le hicieron comer el pan*, although the shift was actually in the other direction), and a general increase in the syntactic independence of the lower clause. Except for the use of connecting prepositions, each of these changes has already been examined in detail (see Davies) in studies that move beyond the period 1200–1500 and show important shifts during the past 400–500 years, in both Spanish and Portuguese.

In summary, Alfonso Vega deals with a topic that is of considerable interest to historical linguists and to theoretical syntacticians, both because of the insight that causative constructions give to a general theory of clausal structure, as well as the fact that the construction has undergone major changes in the Romance languages during the past millennium. The study is handicapped, however, by the fact that nearly all of the phenomena had already been treated in detail in previous studies, which in addition were based on a more comprehensive database, both in terms of the synchronic and the diachronic spheres, as well as cross-linguistically.

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ZAMIR BECHARA. *Literatura hispanoamericana colonial: primeros siglos de poesía colombiana (Siglos XVII y XVIII)*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang. 1997. 412 pp.

Valiosa aportación al conocimiento de la literatura colonial hispanoamericana es el estudio de Zamir Bechara sobre la poesía barroca y rococó de la Nueva Granada, hoy Colombia. Más que una escueta presentación de la vida y la obra de los poetas neogranadinos, este libro se centra en cuatro autores representati-

MILAGROS ALFONSO VEGA. *Construcciones causativas en el español medieval*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México; El Colegio de México. 1998. 258 pp.

*Construcciones causativas en el español medieval* by Milagros Alfonso Vega (UNAM) is an investigation of the main lexical and syntactic characteristics of the causative construction in Old Spanish (eg. *fizieron matar al rey*, *forçaron a Pedro a trabajar*, etc.). This is a strongly data-based study and it does provide evidence for some interesting interplay between lexical and syntactic factors during the period 1200–1500. However it is seriously handicapped by the fact that she neither uses nor seems to be aware of previous research that had already reached most of the same basic conclusions as her study and which in addition was based on a much more comprehensive database of texts and examples (see studies by Davies).

Chapter 1 of the book deals with the linguistic theory underlying the causative construction, and shows how the construction brings to light basic and important questions about clause structure and cross-clausal syntactic effects. In both this and subsequent chapters, however, there is a discussion of only a subset of the features that make the causative construction interesting to researchers (such as Finnemann, Zubizarreta, Goodall, and Bordelois), including case assignment (*ellos la/le fizieron comer el pan*) and word order (*el rey fizo [el barco] salir [el barco]*). However there is no discussion of other phenomena that are manifestations of the same underlying processes, such as clitic placement (*me [lo] dexaron comer / me dexaron comer[lo]*) and the use of *se* (*la dexaron sentar[se]*), perhaps because Alfonso Vega is unaware that there is already variation with these phenomena in the period 1200–1500.

Chapter 2 presents a synchronic overview of the main syntactical features of the construction during the period 1200–1500, and focuses especially on the high degree of transitivity it exhibits during this time. This is in turn related to other phenomena, such as strongly agentive subjects, a high frequency of lower clauses without subjects (*fizieron destruir la ciudad*), variation in case marking with the subjects of transitive lower clause verbs (*ellos la/le fizieron comer el pan*), and a high frequency of unaccusative lower clause verbs (*fizieronla sentar* = “he had her seated / sit down”). In spite of the descriptive adequacy, however, she does not attempt to answer *why* the construction was highly transitive during this period, which is related to morphological changes originating in Late Latin and more basic functional and typological universals of language change.

Chapter 3 deals with the different lexical classes to which the Old Spanish causative verbs belonged, as well as how these verbs formed a continuum in terms of the degree of control between the main clause and the lower clause and how the semantics of the verb were related to a number of syntactic phenomena. Again, each of these phenomena had already been discussed at length in previous