

S.I. Strong, Katia Fach Gómez and Laura Carballo Piñero (2016). *Comparative Law for Spanish-English Speaking Lawyers. Legal Cultures, Legal Terms and Legal Practices. Derecho comparado para abogados anglo- e hispanoparlantes. Culturas jurídicas, términos jurídicos y prácticas jurídicas. Cheltenham, UK/Northampton, MA, US: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 670, €199.83. ISBN 978 1 84980 786 9 (hardback); ISBN 978 1 78811 676 3 (paperback).*

Legal practice in a globalised world requires the need to exercise, interpret and apply law from a multilingual and multi-concept approach, providing solutions to the array of –commercial, civil, criminal– conflicts that may result from international transactions and relations (Engberg, 2003; Orts, 2015). Understanding the ethnography of other legal systems is, then, a proviso for those who dare to cross frontiers to practice law. *Comparative Law for Spanish-English Speaking Lawyers* is, precisely, poised to overcome the potential legal and linguistic barriers between two major linguistic areas in the world: the Spanish and the English-speaking ones. According to its authors, legal advisers who work in all kinds of international and multinational organisations and institutions must be familiar, not only with international treaties, but also with the national legal regimes of the jurisdictions they are working with. But because the cultural asymmetries between legal systems pose actual challenges when trying to transpose legal words, concepts and institutions to other cultures (Šarčević, 1997), this book enables legal practitioners and translators, academics and law students who are conversationally fluent in both languages to acquire legal fluency as well, providing linguistic and legal skills through cultural contextualisation and instruction. Since, according to the authors, a comprehensive account of English- and Spanish-speaking jurisdictions as a whole would be an unfeasible task, this work discusses some of the more common principles and practices in several of the most important ones. It, thus, covers a variety of substantive and procedural areas of law including information on legal and business praxes in Spain, Mexico, England and Wales and the US, while also providing clues as to how legal procedures and texts work in the two most important legal families in the world: the Continental and the Common-Law ones.

The book is structured into five parts, further subdivided into fourteen chapters in all, which are offered in the two languages, a peculiarity that is of special interest for interpreters and translators, since salient legal terms are presented in bold within the relevant conceptual field. Sections on abbreviations, cases and legislation are also offered in the two languages, and keywords are listed in a monolingual manner following the information on a particular field of law –either in Spanish or English– which is provided in each of the chapters. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the excellence and usefulness of the work, a couple of traits could be improved for translation purposes. One of them could be the introduction of a bilingual glossary compiling the most important terms in each of the parts; the other

could be the provision of clearer conceptual transitions when, say, the Mexican and Spanish jurisdictions or the English and American ones and their peculiarities are discussed in each section.

All in all, however, the book is a scholarly piece of work and a must-have in the Spanish-English legal translator's library.

References

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