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The Image of Valladolid in William Dean
Howells' *Familiar Spanish Travels* (1913):
Romanticism or Realism?

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ABSTRACT

The object of study of the present research project will be the analysis of the image of Valladolid that is projected in William Dean Howells' *Familiar Spanish Travels*, a travel book published by the American critic and realist writer in 1913, after his brief sojourn in Spain in 1911. With this in view, the essay will be divided into four sections: (1) a basic theoretical background essential to understand Howells' work – it will comprise the notions of *travel writing*, *Spanish Orientalism* and *Hispanism in the United States*; (2) a biographical approach to the author in connection with his passion for Spain (section based on both external sources and the commentary of Howells' *Familiar Spanish Travels*: “Chapter I. Autobiographical Approaches”); (3) the analysis and critical commentary of the image of Valladolid in the book; and (4) the presentation of conclusions.

KEYWORDS: *image, Valladolid, realist, travel writing, Spanish Orientalism, Hispanism.*

El objeto de estudio del presente trabajo de investigación será el análisis de la imagen de Valladolid que se proyecta en *Familiar Spanish Travels*, libro de viajes publicado por el crítico y escritor realista norteamericano William Dean Howells en 1913, tras su breve estancia en España en 1911. Con este objetivo, el ensayo se dividirá en cuatro apartados: (1) una base teórica esencial para entender la obra de Howells – abarcará las nociones de *literatura de viajes*, *Orientalismo español* e *Hispanismo en los Estados Unidos*; (2) un acercamiento biográfico al autor en relación con su pasión por España (apartado basado en tanto en fuentes externas como en el comentario de *Familiar Spanish Travels*: “Capítulo I. Acercamientos Autobiográficos” de Howells; (3) el análisis y comentario crítico de la imagen de Valladolid en el libro; y (4) la presentación de conclusiones.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *imagen, Valladolid, realista, literatura de Viajes, Orientalismo español, hispanismo.*

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Introduction

Valladolid is a Spanish city full of culture and history since the Christian repopulation of the River Duero basin, but most of all, as from the fifteenth century. Some remarkable historical events that have taken place in the aforementioned city are, for instance, the following ones: in 1469, King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile were married in the Palace of Juan de Vivero, in Valladolid; in 1527, King Philip II of Spain was born in the Castilian capital; Valladolid was also the seat of the Spanish court and, consequently, the capital of the Spanish empire between 1601 and 1606; the great Spanish author Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra lived there between 1604 and 1606; and so forth (Garrido 19; Gerli 219; Donovan 379; Testa 146; Rodríguez 539; Baker 60). Therefore, one may think that the aforesaid city, taking into account such a rich historical background, was a recurrent destination for Hispanists and Hispanophiles¹ in the United States in the course of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century; authors, scholars and intellectuals who would have portrayed their impressions of the city in their travel books. Nevertheless, after examining the state of the question, it is surprising to find that Valladolid, being so culturally remarkable, was excluded from the major part of the tours across Spain that a number of U.S. writers undertook at that time. On the contrary, the majority of those North American Hispanists travelled throughout the South of the Iberian Peninsula –La Mancha and Andalusia– driven, in great part, by a romantic and orientalist view of Spain; a perspective whose roots may go back to Washington Irving. Indeed, as Rolena Adorno (in Kagan 49) assures: “any consideration of the origins of Anglo-North American Hispanism must take into account the United States’ first man of letters, Washington Irving (1783-1859).”

Nonetheless, there were a few reputable American authors such as Caleb Cushing in *Reminiscences of Spain: The Country, Its People, History, and Monuments* (1833), Alexander Slidell Mackenzie in *Spain Revisited, by the Author of “A Year in Spain”* (1836), or William Dean Howells in *Familiar Spanish Travels* (1913), who did

¹ An Hispanophile is “an admirer of Spain or of Spanish-speaking countries or people” (it does not imply the study of the language, literature, culture, etc.). Definition taken from *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Edition copyright ©2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Updated in 2009. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

include Valladolid in their itineraries across Spain, and left record in their travel books of their life experiences and feelings in the city.

Furthermore, as the fundamental part of this research project is the review –mainly based on a personal and critical analysis and supported, when necessary, with information from external sources, illustrations and pictures– of Howell’s *Familiar Spanish Travels*²: “Chapters I. Autobiographical Approaches” and “Chapter IV. The Variety of Valladolid,” it is important to describe the methodology that will be followed in the analysis. This will consist of a literary-sociologic examination, focalized from a multidimensional perspective (historical, socio-politic, anthropologic and literary), placing Valladolid and Spain as the focus and, whenever possible, searching for intertextuality³. Thence: on the one hand, a series of recurrent topics spread throughout the United States about the Spanish history and literature (for instance, Cervantes and *Don Quixote*) will be presented, analyzed, and contrasted with what is portrayed in Howells’ book. On the other hand, some historical-religious topics such as the Spanish Inquisition will be debated, too. Finally, the commentary will also deal with geographical aspects, as the Castilian landscape, and socio-political issues such as the Spanish traditions, customs and way of life.

² In this paper I will be working with a modern edition of *Familiar Spanish Travels*. See Howells (2005) in the “Works Cited” section.

³ In this paper I will be working with the following definition of intertextuality: “the need for one text to be read in the light of its allusions to and differences from the content or structure of other texts; the (allusive) relationship between esp. literary texts.” Definition taken from: *Oxford English Dictionary*. Second Edition on CD-ROM (v. 4.0.0.3) © Oxford University Press 2009. All rights reserved.

1. Theoretical Background. Clarifying terms: Travel Writing, Spanish Orientalism and Hispanism in the United States

Since the fundamental object of study of the present essay is, most of all, the critical commentary of the image of Valladolid that is projected in William Dean Howells's *Familiar Spanish Travels*, first of all, it is important to discuss and clarify three key notions that are –from the theoretical point of view– fundamental to interpret in depth Howells' life experiences in the Spanish city and, most importantly, to analyze (regarding the historical, sociological and literary context) how these experiences are portrayed in his book. Therefore, as this is the most theoretical section of the essay, it will consist of the presentation of different ideas about the issues in question, developed by scholars and literary critics. The three concepts under discussion will be: (1) *travel writing*; (2) *Spanish Orientalism*; and (3) *Hispanism in the United States*.

1. 1. Travel Writing

In first instance, regarding the nature of Howells' *Familiar Spanish Travels*, it is necessary to consider the relevance and classification of *travel writing* as a literary genre; that is to say, pondering its place within literature but also within the field of humanities is something essential. Thus, without losing sight of the object of study of this research project, it is indispensable to highlight the transcendence of the resulting effect of travel writing in society. In this respect, the opening chapter of Tim Youngs' *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing* is quite enlightening. Youngs states:

Travel writing, one may argue, is the most socially important of all literary genres. It records our temporal and spatial progress. It throws light on how we define ourselves and on how we identify other. Its construction of our sense of 'me' and 'you,' 'us' and 'them,' operates on individual and national levels and in the realms of psychology, society and economics. The processes of affiliation and differentiation at play within it can work to forge alliances, precipitate crises and provoke wars. Traveling is something we all do, on different scales, in one form or another. We all have stories of travel and they are more than personal consequence. (Youngs 1)

Therefore, it is logically-founded to assert that every travel writing book displays its own image –good, bad, romantic, realistic, optimistic, pessimistic, etc.– of the place or places portrayed in it; in other words, when a travel book about a certain place is published, consequently, a certain image of that place is projected. In this sense, Joan Pau Rubiés connects the field of ethnography with travel writing. As Rubiés (in Hulme and Youngs 242) shrewdly notes:

The description of peoples, their nature, customs, religion, forms of government, and language, is so embedded in the travel writing produced in Europe after the sixteenth century that one assumes ethnography to be essential to the genre.

On the one hand, in order to elucidate concepts, and according to Schensul (1), *ethnography* can be defined as methodology that focuses on the investigation and description of the different patterns of behaviors and customs of peoples and cultures. On the matter, Hammersley and Atkinson –in an attempt to define the concept, and taking into account that it is not a standardized term– summarize ideas developed by Reed-Danahay (1997) and Holman Jones (2005), and add the following:

Ethnography is one of many approaches that can be found within social research today. Furthermore, the label is not used in an entirely standard fashion; its meaning can vary. A consequence of this is that there is considerable overlap with other labels, such as ‘qualitative inquiry,’ ‘fieldwork,’ interpretative method,’ and ‘case study,’ these also having fuzzy semantic boundaries. In fact, there is no sharp distinction even between ethnography and the study of individual life histories, as the example of ‘auto/ethnography’ shows; this referring to an individual researcher’s study of his or her own life and its context. (Hammersley and Atkinson 1)

Moreover, a differencing feature of ethnography is that it “depends on the researcher as the primary tool for data collection, so ethnographers pay special attention to issues of bias and ways of ensuring accuracy of data” (Schensul 1).

On the other hand, now returning to our initial purpose of classifying travel writing, it seems difficult to draw a categorical definition of the term. Thereby, it is necessary to bear in mind that travel writing is not universally considered and recognized as a literary genre by itself, but as a sub-genre of the autobiography, which –at the same time– finds itself under the umbrella of the so-called *life writing genres*; a polyvalent

term that comprises autobiography, memoirs, biography and diaries. Therefore, although the differentiation among ‘life writing genres’ throughout the late-nineteenth century and the twentieth century is blurred, many scholars agree, however, that travel writing is a sub-genre of autobiography endowed with literary elements; depending this literary embellishment –to a greater or lesser extent– on the author and his or her own style. In this regard, travel writing combines fiction and reality, biographical facts and autobiographical interpretations (Renders and Haan 181; Anderson 270). In the same line, Youngs claims:

Travel writing consist of predominantly factual, first-person prose accounts of travels that have been undertaken by the author-narrator. It includes discussion of works that some may regard as genres in their own right, such as ethnographies and war reporting, but it distinguishes these from other types of narrative in which travel is narrated by a third party or imagined. Comparison with these latter narratives aids a clearer understanding of the relationship between forms. The boundary between them is not fixed. The way that texts are read changes over the years. Our understanding of genres is historically as well as textually determined. (Youngs 3)

To summarize, travel books are texts more or less faithful to reality that gather life experiences, feelings and reflections about a trip, journey or tour undertaken by a narrator who may coincide with the real author, in most cases, but not always.

1. 2. Spanish Orientalism

In order to understand the notion of *Spanish Orientalism*, since we will occasionally classify Howells –in section three (3. *W. D. Howells: biographical approach*) and four (4. *Critical commentary of W. D. Howells’ Familiar Spanish Travels: “chapter IV. The variety of Valladolid”*)– as an orientalist author, in the first place, it would be convenient to explain the term *Orientalism*. Then, to understand *Spanish Orientalism*, we would extrapolate the concept *Orientalism* to Spain as a nation as well as to the peninsular Spanish culture. With this in mind, Edward W. Said⁴ (November 1935 – September 2003), a Palestinian American literary critic and professor at Columbia University, defines *Orientalism* as “a style of thought based upon ontological and

⁴ Biographical information taken from “Edward Said (American Critic).” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. N. p., n.d. Web. 22 June 2014.

epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’” (Said, 2). On the same topic, Said adds that *Orientalism* is the reception or admittance in the Western World of “the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, ‘mind,’ destiny and so on” (Said 2, 3). In this sense, from the point of view of European and American orientalists, as from the nineteenth century on, Arab culture has been seen as distant, exotic, underdeveloped and, somehow, wild and parlous.

Therefore, recovering the initial intention of this section, and once a general overview of the term *Orientalism* has been given, one may conceive beforehand what *Spanish Orientalism* means; and the fact is that, in the West, there is still a belief that Spain –due to its Arabic background– is an oriental country (Mallette 33-57; Colmeiro 127; Said 1-27; Buchanan 269).

In this respect, José F. Colmeiro, in his article “Exorcising Exoticism: Carmen and the Construction of Oriental Spain,” uses the image of the fictional character “Carmen”⁵ to exemplify the European view (it can be extended to the American perspective, too) of Spain as an oriental place; even though he proposes to abandon that idea since there is, in his opinion, a “confusion of cultural identities” (Colmeiro 127). Colmeiro affirms the following:

Several underlying myths deeply imbedded in the European imagination converge on the construction of Carmen: the orientalization of Spain, or cultural conflation of Spain with the Orient, in the nineteenth century, the romantic mythification of the bohemian as gypsy, or imaginary conflation of Bohème (the region where many Gypsies lived) and Bohème (the “gypsy way of life”); and the conflation of Gypsy, Andalusian, and Spanish identities as mutually interchangeable signifiers. This conflation of national, ethnic, and racial identities created a profound cultural remapping that repositioned both Spain and Gypsies in Europe as exotic internal others. It also led to the cultural appropriation of the Gypsies’ mystique, their commodification as embodiments of the exotic, and their ambiguous relocation to the symbolic center as icons of Spanishness. (*ibid*)

⁵ “Carmen” is the main character of *Carmen*, an opera composed by Georges Bizet and based on a novella of the same title written by Prosper Mérimée. Information taken from “Carmen (opera by Bizet).” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. N. p., n.d. Web. 22 June 2014.

Another iconic element of *Spanish Orientalism* is the Alhambra; which would lead to a branch or Orientalism known as *Alhambraism*. In relation to this issue, Buchanan (269) points out that “in the early years of the nineteenth century, there appeared a vogue for sentimental exoticism associated with the Alhambra, and a fantastically extravagant and romantic conception of Spain itself.” Thus, as it is easily inferable from Buchanan’s words, a romantic view of the Iberian Peninsula is an inherent feature of *Spanish Orientalism*.

On the one hand, this Oriental image of Spain (mainly of the South), with which many American and English authors of travel books are unable to break up, is clearly contaminated by a romantic historicist view of Muslim culture in the Peninsula. In connection with the point previously mentioned, it is important to remember that the southern half of the Spain –known as Al-Andalus or Muslim Spain–was occupied and dominated by the Arabs for almost eight centuries, from 711 to 1492 (Palencia 9-11; Urbánski 170).

On the other hand, with regard to the search for intertextuality in *Familiar Spanish Travels*, and in order to determine the genesis of *Alhambraism* and *Spanish Orientalism*, there are four books that cannot be ignored: *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards* (1672-73) by John Dryden, *Ancient Ballads from the Civil War of Granada* (1803) by Thomas Rood, *A very Mournful Ballad on the Siege and Conquest of Alhama*⁶ (1806) by Lord Byron, and *The Alhambra Tales* (1832) by Washington Irving; work that pushed to extremes the romantic conception of southern Spain, specially Granada; all these works are strongly inspired or influenced by Ginés Pérez de Hita’s *Historia de los Bandos de Zegríes y Abencerrajes* (1595-1619), also known as *Guerras Civiles de Granada*⁷ (Rodríguez 615, 623; Aguinaga et al. 263, 264).

⁶ Poem collected in: Byron, George Gordon Byron Baron, and J. W. Lake. *The Works of Lord Byron: Including the Suppressed Poems. Complete in One Volume*. A. and W. Galignani, 1828. Print.

⁷ For more information about Pérez de Hita’s book, see this edition: Hita, Ginés Pérez de. *Guerras civiles de Granada: en donde se expresa los crueles vandos entre los convertidos moros, y vecinos christianos: con el levantamiento de todo el reyno, y vltima rebelion, sucedida en el año de 1568*. Madrid: Don Pedro Joseph Alonso y Padilla, 1731. Print.

1. 3. *Hispanism in the United States*

According to the DRAE dictionary, *Hispanism* is “the fondness for the study of the Hispanic languages, literatures or culture (my translation).” Regarding the same issue, Kagan (2) notes that “when *Hispanism* was first used to refer to Hispanic studies is not altogether clear, but it is worth noting that Unamuno, in the 1906 lecture noted earlier, used the term *estudios hispánicos*, Hispanic studies, with reference to Americans engaged in the study of Spanish culture.” Also, in connection with the point previously boarded, James D. Fernández (in Epps and Cifuentes 60, 61) notes that it is relevant to mention a letter written by Federico de Onís, a Spanish philologist who devoted his life to reinforce the attention of the United States towards Spain. For that reason, Fernández continues, de Onís moved from Salamanca, where he was a member of the faculty at the University of Salamanca, to New York to work at Columbia University. In that letter, the Spanish philologist analyzes –at times in a way more typical of military reports– the reasons why U.S. Hispanism was so remarkable during the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century; indeed, such flowering of Hispanism in North America at that time was called by the author “*fiebre colectiva*, or collective fever, to learn Spanish.” Federico de Onís’ letter, quoted by Fernández (in Epps and Cifuentes 61), declares the following:

There has always been a small but select group of individuals in the United States that has made of our Spain an object of their love and devotion. The names of Washington Irving, Longfellow, Prescott, Ticknor, Lowell and Howells come immediately to mind. When, in 1914, those great nations involved in the European war were forced to abandon their foreign trade, the United States saw, with keen instinct, the unique possibility of taking over those markets and developing in them their own commerce and export industry. It was then that a collective frenzy began to manifest itself, the ardent desire to learn Spanish. The Spanish language was the tool that would permit North Americans to understand, and carry out commerce with, Hispanic America. But to carry out commerce properly is a difficult task. Knowing the language is not enough; one must also know the nations that speak it, their tastes, their character, their traditions, their psychology, their ideals; in order to achieve this, one must know their history, their geography, their literature, their art. The Latin American nations are the offspring of Spain; one must, then, go to the source and become knowledgeable about Spain. (Epps and Cifuentes 61)

Hence, it is in this context of U.S. Hispanism where we find W. D. Howells. On this subject, in the introduction of *Spain in America: The Origins of Hispanism in the United States*, Kagan (13), according to Romera-Navarro and Stanley T. Williams (a “professor of U.S. literature at Yale”) also points out that, thus far, the eight American authors that have achieved more success in interpreting Spanish culture are: “Irving, Ticknor, Prescott, Longfellow, Lowell, [...] Bret Harte, and William Dean Howells, an essayist who, despite a lifelong passion for Spain, never managed to visit the country until he was seventy-four” (*ibid*).



⁸American writer William Dean Howells (1837-1920), California College of Arts. 1900.

⁸ Picture taken from “In Photos: Remembering Portrait Photographer Zaida Ben-Yusuf ~ Photography News.” N. p., n.d. Web. 10 July 2014.

2. William Dean Howells (1837-1920): Biographical Approach

This section is divided in two subsections: (1) a general overview of the author's life, achievements and main works; and (2) the analysis of Howells' passion for Spain, including a commentary of Howells' *Familiar Spanish Travels: "Chapter I. Autobiographical Approaches."*

2. 1. The Author

William Dean Howells (1837 – 1920), dubbed “the Dean of American Letters” was a prolific American realist author, editor and literary critic (Crowley, 1999: 3). Furthermore, as Greasley (273) points out: “Howells was the first president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, received honorary degrees from many prestigious universities in America and Britain, and was recognized by the National Institute of Arts and Letter.”

He was born in 1837, in Martins Ferry, Ohio, being the second of eight children. Son of William Cooper Howells –who, during his lifetime, was the owner and editor of several newspapers in Ohio– and Mary Dean Howells, W. D. Howells grew up in the bosom of a humble but intellectual family (Greasley 272; Werlock 333; Lynn 35). Because of his father occupation, Howells learned from his youth the printing business and developed a fascination for letters and literature; his father's beliefs in abolitionism and in Swedenborg's philosophy also had a great impact on him (Werlock 333; Olsen 33, 34). By the end of 1850, he experimented for a short period of time with the creation of “a utopian socialist community” (Greasley 272). Regarding his formal education, he was chiefly an autodidact, being literate in classical and contemporary literature thanks to his literary interests –as a result of the family concern– and his extensive readings of authors such as Cervantes, Shakespeare, Irving or Poe (*ibid*). In this respect, Crowley adds:

Howells had enjoyed a more enduring special comradeship with Jim Williams, a compositor in his father's printshop. The two felt a common enthusiasm for songs and literature, especially Cervantes and Shakespeare, whom they read to each other during excursions in the forest. (Crowley, 2009: 60)

Some years later, in 1858, young Howells began to work as a journalist for the *Ohio State Journal* (Greasley 272). Werlock adduces:

In 1860, this work took Howells to New England, where he met many giants of American literature, including James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman and Nathaniel Hawthorne. (Werlock 333)

In the same year, Howells published a biography of Abraham Lincoln, which is considered his first successful book. In 1861, in reward for his support to Lincoln, and being at that time politically relevant and also an emergent writer, he attained “the American consulship at Venice” (*ibid*), where he met Elianor Gertrude Mead, who became his wife in 1862; Howells and Mead would have three children (Greasley 273). In 1865, once the American Civil War was ended, he returned to his home country and, a year later, Howells moved to Boston where he started working as an editor for *The Atlantic Monthly*, “becoming editor-in-chief in 1871 and remaining there until 1881” (*ibid*); he also wrote literary reviews and articles for the *Harper’s Monthly*, a New Yorker magazine (Lynn 6; Werlock 333; Olsen 329, 330). Thenceforward, settled in the Northern cities of New York and Boston, his literary career as a writer –primarily of novels, but of other genres as well– and editor became more and more remarkable (Greasley 273; Werlock 334). He also devoted his life to the support and promotion of contemporary fellow authors, such as Emily Dickinson, Hamlin Garland, Paul Laurence Dunbar or Stephen Crane; having a specially good relationship with Mark Twain (Howells wrote *My Mark Twain: Reminiscences and Criticisms* (1910), the biography of his friend) and Henry James (Werlock 333, 334; Lynn 163; Olsen 268).

Regardless of his great success as an editor and literary critic, however, Howells is best known because of his career as a realist novelist. In this respect, it is widely agreed that his most notable novels are *A Modern Instance* (1882), *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885) and *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890) (Greasley 273; Werlock 334; Crowley, 1999: 19, 20). On the same topic, Olsen –in the preface of his book– claims:

William Dean Howells was the primer novelist of the nineteenth century American middle class. He was a “domestic” novelist, master of the urban parlor scene, the setting reserved for tasteful display of affluence and elegant presentation of self. (Olsen XV)

Nevertheless, the American writer worked on more genres than the novel. He produced, inter alia, several biographies and *Years of My Youth* (1916) (an autobiography), a few travel books, as *Familiar Spanish Travels* (1913), plus an incredible large amount of essays on literary criticism, thirty-six plays and forty-six short stories (Werlock 334; Greasley 273). In the same way, Crowley declares:

Howells [...] was probably the most powerful literary man in Victorian America: author of over a hundred widely read volumes of fiction, drama, reminiscence, travel and criticism; a prominent editor and arbiter of taste, whose crusade for literary realism did much to advance the careers of Henry James, Mark Twain, Stephen Crane, and many others; an anatomist of American social ills and a disseminator of European art ideas. (Crowley, 2009: 57, 58)

In the winter of 1920, an aged Howells was seriously ill because of a cold, which would string out for months and eventually became pneumonia. Finally, during the night of May 11, Howells –being eighty-three years old– died peacefully at home in his sleep (Goodman and Dawson, 2005: 432, XXV; Greasley 273).

2. 2. *William Dean Howells and Spain*

From his early adolescence, Howells developed great enthusiasm for Spain and Spanish literature. Yet, he did not visit his beloved Iberian Peninsula until 1911, at the age of seventy-four (Kagan 13). As Goodman and Dawson (407) also note: “for more than half a century he had dreamed of visiting Cervantes’ homeland.” Indeed, the Hispanist author all along showed a special predilection, as it has already been mentioned, for the author of *Don Quixote*.

Goldman and Dawson (20) also sustain that he always remembered the first time when his father spoke of Cervantes’ masterpiece.

As William told about Sancho and Dulcinea, about Cervantes’ own enslavement in Algiers and his loss of a hand in battle, Will felt the walls of the family house open to the Spanish countryside. He fancied alive and ready to return to his affection. Soon he thumbed through his own *Don Quixote*, translated by Charles Jarvis. (Goldman and Dawson, 2005: 20)

Henceforth, as part of the examination of Howells' relationship with Spain, we will go into the commentary of *Familiar Spanish Travels*: "Chapter I. Autobiographical Approaches," which is to a certain point an introduction or preface to the travel book. Moreover, we know from textual evidence that this first chapter was written on November 6, 1911, on the way from Seville to Granada (Howells, 2005: 1). Notwithstanding, we also know that Howells started his over one-month trip to Spain in early October; therefore, the first chapter starts as a flash-forward and the second chapter goes back in time up to early October (the itinerary that Howells followed throughout Spain is reflected in the book's table of contents). In this respect, it is interesting to highlight that there is not an accurate day-by-day record of the tour; it is not even stated the exact day he arrived or left Spain. On the contrary, all along the book we can only find vague references to the period of the month –early, mid or late– when he arrived or left the different destinations; there are only four references to specific dates: November 1, 4 and 5 (in "Chapter X. Sevillian Aspects and incidents"), and November 6 (in "Chapter I. Biographical Approaches").

His itinerary across the Peninsula was the following: San Sebastian (early October); Burgos (early October); Valladolid (early October); Madrid (early October); Toledo (early October); The Great Gridiron of San Lorenzo (San Lorenzo del Escorial) (early October); Cordova (Córdoba) (mid-October); Seville (Sevilla) (mid-October – November 6); Granada (November 6 – undefined); Ronda (undefined); Algeciras (undefined); and finally, Tarifa (undefined).

In the light of such an intentional blurring of the flow of time, one might come to the following conclusion or, at least, that is the one I reached: this manipulation of time perception is a technique used by Howells in an attempt to provoke in the reader the romantic sensation of being lost in Spain; as if the whole nation belonged to another remote epoch and Howells himself would have travelled not only physically, but also in time, once he crossed over the Pyrenees. Furthermore, that feeling of being lost in Spain turns more evident as he gets close to the South. Hereon, after a brief examination of other travel books of the time (no matter if they were written by British or American authors) one realizes that there are always two Spains, the Spain of the North and the Spain of the South. More concretely, Howells descriptions of the North (in this case, Valladolid) are much more objective than those of the South when the influence of

Spanish Orientalism finds its climax; see, for instance, Howells' recreation in the history of the Moorish Kingdoms in Spain, in the first chapter of the book.

Thus, in "Chapter I. Biographical Approaches", Howells explains to the readers the motives of his "passion for Spanish things which was the ruling passion of my [his] boyhood" (Howells, 2005: 2). Thus, he starts the chapter by telling he was in a train on the way to Granada. In this sense, he presents his romantic and orientalist view of the city, describing it as a quite distant place (both in time and geographically): the "vanished kingdom of the Moors" (*ibid*). He also describes the scenery from the railroad compartment, pointing out "the olive groves and white cottages of the Spanish peasants" (*ibid*), may be one of the most significant symbols of the fertile Vega of Granada. Right after conveying that romantic image of the Andalusian city, the author also apologizes to the readers since –although he tries to do his best to be a realist reporter of his experiences in the Peninsula– he recognizes, however, that there are certain moments in which he is inevitably conditioned by his idealistic view of Spain; an emotional view that occasionally overrules his attempts to be objective. Therefore, he admits that, sometimes, he is not impartial in the record of his journey throughout Spain, and that is why he uses this first chapter to ask forgiveness to his readers.

Then, he gives an account of something that has already been said at the beginning of this subsection. He tells that the reading of *Don Quixote* was the trigger of his passion for Spain; he confesses he did not read it in Spanish –though he would like to do so– but in English, his native language. In connection with this point, Goodman and Dawson (20) inform that Howells "learned Spanish from a worn grammar that had belonged to a veteran of the Mexican War." In addition, concerning his reading of *Don Quixote*, three years after the publication of his travel book about Spain, in *Years of My Youth* (1916), he would recognize:

But, after all, I am not a Spanish scholar, and can neither speak nor write the language. I never got more than a good reading use of it, perhaps because I never really tried for more. But I am very glad of that, because it has been a great pleasure to me, and even some profit, and it has lighted up many meanings in literature, which must always have remained dark to me. (Howells, 2006: 154)

Back again to “Chapter I. Biographical Approaches”, Howells claims he always wanted to write the biography of Cervantes, something that was on his wait list yet. But at the same time, he is aware of the difficulty and complexity of accomplishing such task; he expresses such enterprise would take him many years (Howells, 2005: 3); Also in *Year of My Youth*, Howells would repeat the same idea: “when I [he] learned Spanish it was with the purpose, never fulfilled, of writing the life of Cervantes, although I have since had some forty-odd years to do it” (Howells, 2006: 34). Nevertheless, Howells did not know at that time that he would never come to write the biography of the Golden Age Spanish author, though “near the end of his life he undertook [...] an edition of an older friend, the Jarvis translation of *Don Quixote*” (Goodman and Dawson 20). Later on, Howells reveals himself as a Hispanist (not literally stated but deducible from his declarations); he explains that during his lifetime he was always fascinated by Spanish literature, and that he had studied the language as well. In this regard, he tells that being in London some time before his travel to Spain he had taken classes of Spanish, one hour a day, with a private tutor; in October 11, Howells would meet the Spanish writer Armando Palacio Valdés in Madrid and, as Goodman and Dawson (407) indicate, “the novelist Armando Palacio Valdés arranged to welcome him, and Howells, determined to speak with Valdés in Spanish, had prepared himself by engaging a tutor.” Howells, focusing on phonetic aspects of the manner of speaking of his professor, also points out that, although this man was from Barcelona, he “beautifully lisped his *c*’s and *z*’s like any old Castilian, when he might have hissed them in the accent of his native Catalan” (Howells, 2005: 3).

In this respect, apart from his concern with Spanish phonology, it is also relevant to highlight that, along *Familiar Spanish Travels*, the author reproduces some idiomatic expressions from Spanish; idioms he had learned through his readings. Nevertheless, Howells also admits he never used them in talking; he only employed such idioms in written language (Howells, 2005: 4).

Then, he moves to another ground; the last three pages of *Familiar Spanish Travels*’ first chapter, Howells focuses on discussing two concrete events of the history of Spain:

the *Spanish's Black Legend*⁹ and the *Reconquest of Spain*¹⁰; it is interesting that he talks first about the *Black Legend*, when this is chronologically subsequent to the Spanish's Reconquest of the South.

Firstly, apropos of the *Black Legend*, Howells comments on the Spanish colonization of Mexico and Peru, and the ensuing destruction of the Incas and the Aztecs on behalf of the Spanish colonizers. However, in spite of being critical with such part of the Spanish history, he doubts what side (the Mexicans and Peruvians or, on the contrary, the Spaniards) should have won, and he alleges he “could not punish the Spaniards for their atrocious destruction of the only American civilizations” (Howells, 2005: 4). At this point, one might reach two conclusions: on the one hand, he felt such a great devotion for Spain that –as he advances at the beginning of the chapter– it irretrievably has an influence upon his perception of Spain; on the other hand, one may think that he (a white citizen of the United States) could have compared, too, the Spanish destruction of the Incas and the Aztecs, with the American extermination of the original native inhabitants of North America. Nonetheless, this is a quite controversial issue that would take too much time to discuss and, accordingly, it should be left for other dissertations.

Secondly, as to the *Spanish Reconquest* and the resulting defeat of the Moors, whether or not he recognizes the Spanish misgovernment after the Reconquest of Granada, yet he appears to welcome the Spanish victory over the Moor kingdoms; here it is important to underline that Howells' knowledge of the topic, as he himself affirms, arose from the reading in his youth of Washington Irving's *A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* (1829). Furthermore, although Howells notes the cruelties carried out by the Spanish Inquisition, however, he charges against the moral and religious implications of Islam; he also rails at the despotism of Islamist rulers (Howells, 2005: 5).

⁹ “Black Legend, Spanish leyenda Negra, term indicating an unfavorable image of Spain and Spaniards, accusing them of cruelty and intolerance, formerly prevalent in the works of many non-Spanish, and especially Protestant, historians. Primarily associated with criticism of 16th-century Spain and the anti-Protestant policies of King Phillip II (reigned 1556–98), the term was popularized by the Spanish historian Julián Juderías in his book *La Leyenda Negra* (1914; “The Black Legend”).” Definition taken from “Black Legend (Spanish History).” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 July 2014.

¹⁰ For further information about the Reconquest of Spain and the Spanish's Black Legend see O'Callaghan (3-22) and Carbia and Martínez (69-72).

In this regard, in order to illustrate what has been said above, it is relevant to extract the following quote from the text:

They would hardly avail now to reverse the tragic fate of the Moors, and if I try I cannot altogether wish to reverse it. Whatever Spanish misrule has been since Islam was overthrown in Granada, it has been the error of law, and the rule of Islam at the best had always been the effect of personal will, the caprice of despots high and low the unstatuted sufferance of slaves, high and low. The gloomiest and cruelest error of Inquisitional Spain was nobler, with its adoration of ideal womanhood, than the Mohammedan stat with its sensual dreams of Paradise. (Howells, 2005: 5)

Then again, he comes back to his internal fight between subjectivism and objectivism, between Romanticism and Realism as a stylistic framework. Second time around, he warns about the reception of his book by claiming that the reader must be suspicious of what is written, assuming the fact that his perspective is very influenced by a Romantic conception of an oriental Spain. Thereby, when Howells (2005: 6), as he was coming toward Granada, states “I will as little pretend that my attitude toward Spain was ever that of the impartial observer after I crossed the border of that enchanted realm where we all have our castles,” his subjectivism becomes manifest from the very moment he uses the expression “enchanted realm.” Here we can find a clear connection with *Spanish Orientalism* and the already suggested notion of the two Spains: the northern one, the Spain of the realities (as we will see in the next section) and the southern one, the Spain of the unrealities (the Spain veiled by an historicist and *Orientalist* view of the country).

Farther on, Howells tells the reader he had spent several years travelling through European countries such as Italy, Germany, Holland, France, or England “and yet I [he] had never visited the land of my [his] devotion” (*ibid*). Moreover, in connection with what has already been stated in the opening paragraph of this section, and making use of a metaphorical statement –“It was fully a month before that first night in Granada that I arrived in Spain after some sixty years’ delay” (*ibid*)– he suggests the rough time he arrived at San Sebastian and, even more, he insinuates his lifelong desire of visiting the Peninsula, “desire, which was turning into a duty, unfulfilled” (Howells, 2005: 7).

To conclude, in the last seven lines of the chapter, once he finally reached Spain after such a long wait, he asks himself if he was actually there. The chapter is literally ended as follows:

When at last we crossed the Pyrenees, and I found myself in Spain, it was with an incredulity which followed me throughout and lingered with me to the end. “Is this truly Spain, and am I actually there?” the thing kept asking itself; and it asks itself still, in terms that fit the accomplished fact. (*ibid*)

With respect to the previous quotation, the combination of the word “incredulity” plus that rhetorical question creates a tension that is transmitted to the reader; in such a way, Howells catches the reader’s eye; we do not know if what he discovered in Spain was what he hoped to find and, therefore, in order to figure it out, we have to keep reading.



“Puerta del Sol –Gate of the Sun– Toledo,” from Howells (2005)¹¹; it is the first illustration of the book.

¹¹ All the illustrations from Howells (2005) are the original ones from the first edition of 1913.

3. The image of Valladolid in *Familiar Spanish Travels* (1913) by William Dean Howells

First and foremost, I would like to bring up a beautiful paragraph taken from “Chapter IV,” which might be considered as a synthesis of Howells’ experiences in Valladolid, a city the American author always wished to visit since the house of his beloved Cervantes was there. The paragraph is the following.

The boy who once meant to write the life of Cervantes, and who I knew from my recollection of his idolatry of that chief of Spaniards would not have listened to the excuses of Valladolid for a moment. All appeared fair and noble in that Spain of his which shone with such allure far across the snows through which he trudged morning and evening with his father to and from the printing-office, and made his dream of that great work the common theme of their talk. Now the boy is as utterly gone as the father, who was a boy too at heart, but who died a very old man many years ago; and in the place of both is another old man trammelled in his tangled memories of Spain visited and unvisited. (Howells, 2005: 74-75)

After reading these delightful words by Howells, one rapidly realizes that *Familiar Spanish Travels* is written in a style that deviates from the standards of a typical travel book. Howells did not confine himself to the record of experiences; he was not only a travel writer but also a great novelist, and this fact is clearly perceived because he uses an extremely metaphorical language (as the one displayed in the paragraph quoted above).

As to the configuration of this section, on the one hand, it will be based on a personal and critical analysis of Howells’ *Familiar Spanish Travels*: “Chapter IV. The Variety of Valladolid.” On the other hand, the analysis will be thematically organized, gathering Howells’ most relevant descriptions of his experiences in Valladolid (from the time he was on the train until the moment that he left the city). Furthermore, in order to provide evidence and textual support, the commentary will be reinforced with illustrations (taken from Howells’ book) and pictures of Valladolid in the early twentieth century.

3. 1. *The Rural Castile: the Landscape and Its People*

Howells' declares that a "moral difference [...] a change of mind" between Burgos – the place from which he came– and Valladolid can be perceived (Howells, 2005: 53); in this respect, it is important to point out that the only base for such an outstanding statement is built on Howells' sight of the Castilian plateau from inside the railway car. In the next breath, he makes a comparison between his view of Biscay and his first impressions about the province of Valladolid. First of all, he compares the green and fertile Biscayan farms with the "economic and topographic waste of Castile" (*ibid*); later, he will display more appreciations about the landscape of the Castilian plateau. In the second place, he compares the rural people from Biscay and Castile (in this chapter, when he comments on Castile –on its rural inhabitants, in this case– he is making reference to the province of Valladolid). Thus, he throws the following generalization: while the Biscayan farms, in his view, were full of more or less beautiful and well dressed shepherdesses, in rural Castile –on the contrary– one may only see shepherds in ragged plaids and with a stubbly beard and, occasionally, some or other "men and women riding donkeys" (*ibid*); in the next page he will say that "the women riding their donkeys over the level waste, the rounding gray in the distance were the only women we saw except those who seemed to be keeping the stations" (Howells, 2005: 54). Then, in an attempt to be realistic (though we should not forget about the fact that *perception* is always a subjective matter), he continues with the description of rural Castile's scenery. He writes about the Castilian landscape as huge, waste and desolate. He talks about "the nakedness of the land" and the immeasurable fields of wheat. He describes the villages as dispersed settlements difficult to distinguish from the soil, as "dreary towns with golden tides of harvest" (Howells, 2005: 53, 54). He uses this metaphor to evoke an image of the typical Castilian villages; little centers of population lost between vast fields of wheat; he uses the word "golden" because it is the hue that the harvests have in October. Howells relates the panorama as follows:

I am not sure but goats, when brown and black, add to the horror of a desolate scene. There are no longer any white farmsteads [alluding to Biscayan farms], or friendly villages gathering about high-shouldered churches, but far away to the eastward or westward the dun expanse of the wheat-lands is roughed with something which seems a cluster of muddy protuberances, so like the soil is not distinguishable from it. (*ibid*)

It is also suggested that the tools of the Castilian peasants and plowmen were extremely rudimentary for the time. Therefore, we may conclude that Howells projects a simplistic and negative image of Castile's countryside so far; he describes the place as almost deserted, backwards and uninhabited.

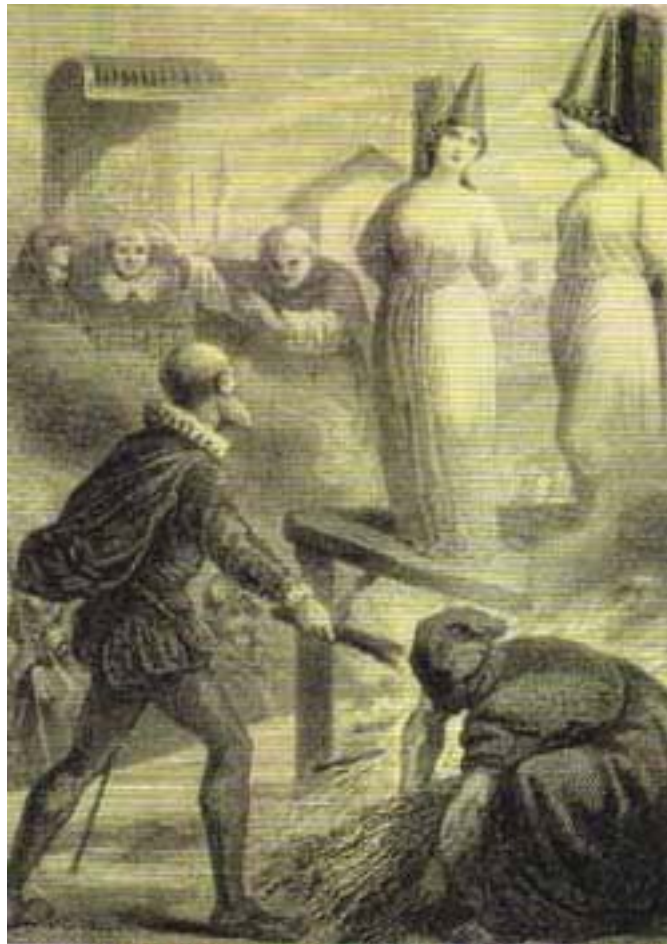
3. 2. *The People in Valladolid: Experiences, Anecdotes, Stereotypes and Generalizations*

Howells tells the reader that his journey from Burgos to Valladolid was quite boring, and remembers two unimportant anecdotes that happened on the train during the travel time: one about a fat lady and the other about a father and his two sons. This time, in addition to what has already been said, Howells adds the following: "nothing happened on board the train to distract the mind from the joyless landscape until we [he and his travel partner] drew near Valladolid" (Howells, 2005: 55). At this juncture, he describes the fields of vineyards, and he says over again that in Castile, at least apparently, there was a lack of women. Somehow, we might state this is the first instance of disillusionment of the author with Spain. On this account, it is relevant to bring forward the following quote:

In Spain we nowhere saw the women sharing the outdoor work of the men; and we fancied their absence the effect of the Oriental jealousy lingering from centuries of Moorish domination; though we could not entirely reconcile our theory with the publicity of their washing clothes at every stream (*ibid*).

Later, when Howells describes his first impressions about his arrival to the city, he relates how, being still at the train station of Valladolid, one of the oddest things he experienced in Spain happened. He tells that a rude officer of local taxes inspected his trunks in search of contraband goods, regardless of Howells' declaration that he did not carry anything dutiable; following the grain, Howells explains that in Valladolid there was what was called as *octroi*, a duty tax on various goods brought into certain European towns or cities at that time (Howells, 2005: 56). Then, being on the way to the hotel, the American writer depicts a romantic image of several women –mothers and daughters– carrying jars of water from a public fountain to their homes; he defines the

view as “beautifully picturesque” (*ibid*). Straight afterwards, he goes on to comment that the weather of Valladolid, in comparison with that of Burgos, is warm (we have to take into account it was early October when he arrived at Valladolid; maybe, he would not have made such declaration if he had arrived at Valladolid in January). Still on the way to the hotel, he makes reference to the burning of martyrs by the Spanish Inquisition.



Engraving from the year 1581 of the *auto-da-fé* of Valladolid, in which the Marquis of Cardena burned his own daughters for being protestant.

Although he does not state where he was literally, one may think because of his description of the streets –“on one side the place was arcaded, and bordered with little shops” (Howells, 2005: 57)– that he was somewhere near the *Plaza Mayor* of Valladolid (where the cited burning of martyrs took place in the *autos-da-fé* of 1559). Here he provides a quite realistic depiction of the promenade that –in contrast with the description of the women at the fountain– is really illustrative of this duality between using a realistic or romantic style of writing:

They were [the walkers] in the standard proportion of two girls to one young man, or, if here and there a girl had an undivided young man to herself, she went before some older maiden or matron whom she left altogether out of the conversation. They mostly wore skirts and hats of Paris, and if the scene of the fountain was Arabically oriental the promenade was almost American occidental. (*ibid*)

Howells also points out that during the few days he spent in Valladolid, he enjoyed the scenes and the sounds of the promenade from the balcony of the hotel in which they stayed at. Moreover, he suggests that the street cleaners in Valladolid were more silent than their American counterparts; he uses the term “street-cars” though he refers to the garbage trucks that could be heard from the room’s window. He affirms that the “street-cars, which in Valladolid are poetically propelled through lyre-shaped trolleys instead of our prosaic broomstick appliances, groaned unheeded if not unheard under our windows through the night” (Howells, 2005: 59)

Afterwards, Howells gives account of “the Military in Valladolid, where an army corps is [was] stationed” (Howells, 2005: 60). In this regard, he falls again into a generalization; he insinuates it was difficult to classify the social rank of the Spanish officers. Moreover, he also states that the Spanish soldiers in general, although they used to be good looking, they had not an impressive appearance (*ibid*). Dropping the issue, Howells recognizes that he remained ignorant of local history of the city while he remained there, because he could not find any sketch of the local history in the booksellers of the city. Instead, he could only find a few guidebooks with very limited and general information about its history; he points out the only information such books provided was that the city “had once been the capital of Castile, and after many generations of depression following the removal of the court, had in these days [the early twentieth century] renewed its strength in mercantile and industrial prosperity” (Howells, 2005: 61). His metaphorical use of the term “arid” makes reference to the fall in the population of Valladolid after the court was moved to Madrid. Thereon, Howells provides a brief account of the history of the city, and he does so from a romantic perspective; this time, he focuses on highlight four milestones in the history of Valladolid, without getting into the subject. Thus, he mentions: (1) the wedding of Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon in 1469; (2) Christopher Columbus’ death; (3) the birth of Phillip II of Spain; and (4) the recurrent issue of the Spanish Inquisition,

indicating that “in 1559 a very famous *auto-da-fé* was celebrated in the Plaza Mayor,” something that he had already advanced before (Howells, 2005: 61-62).

At a different time, after visiting the museum of the University, Howells writes he took a break stopping in a grocery, while he awaited a cab. From this experience, Howells points out the kindness and excellent treatment of the grocer who took charge of calling the cab. Furthermore, he describes in detail, and from a very realistic point of view, two conventions that took place at the grocery and caught his attention while he was waiting for the cab. Therefore, it is compulsory to broach the entire quote:

An elderly man with his wife bought a large bottle which the grocer put into one scale of his balance, and poured its weight in chick-peas into the other. Then he filled the bottle with oil and weighed it, and then he gave the peas along with it to his customers. It seemed a pretty convention, though we could not quite make out its meaning, unless the peas were bestowed as a sort of bonus; but the next convention was clearer to us. An old man in black corduroy with a clean-shaven face and a rather fierce, retired bull-fighter air, bought a whole dried stock-fish (which the Spaniards eat instead of salt cod) talking loudly to the grocer and at us while the grocer cut it across in widths of two inches and folded it into a neat pocketful; then a glass of wine was poured from a cask behind the counter, and the customer drank it off in honor of the transaction with the effect also of pledging us with his keen eyes. (Howells, 2005: 66-67)

Finally, the cab arrived. Nevertheless, unlike the grocer (who was a charming person), the cabman turned out to be unkind and even rude; what would lead Howells to throw another generalization, assuring that not a single cabman in Valladolid agrees to open the top of his cab (Howells, 2005: 67).

In other respects, Howells tells there was a wedding (he uses the Spanish term “boda”) in the hotel at lunchtime. He describes the experience as nice and assures that Spain is the only country in the world where women in weddings are better dressed than men (Howells, 2005: 70-71). Right after his account of the wedding, en route to Cervantes’ house, he comes back again to the issue of the Spanish Inquisition and remembers “the terrible Torquemada dwelt for years in Valladolid and must have excogitated some of the methods of the Holy Office in dealing with heresy” (Howells, 2005: 71).

Howells dedicates the last pages of the chapter to tell an anecdote that happened to him in dealing with the staff of a bank of Valladolid (it was the *Banco de España*). He relates that he went to that bank, with a letter from his own bank, in order to request ten pounds and that, after they kept him waiting for an extremely long time, they refused to give the money; moreover, Howells pays special attention to denounce the bad treatment and rudeness of that bank at Valladolid, where he maintains to have had the worst experience in Spain, in terms of impoliteness.



Banco de España (Valladolid) in the early twentieth century.

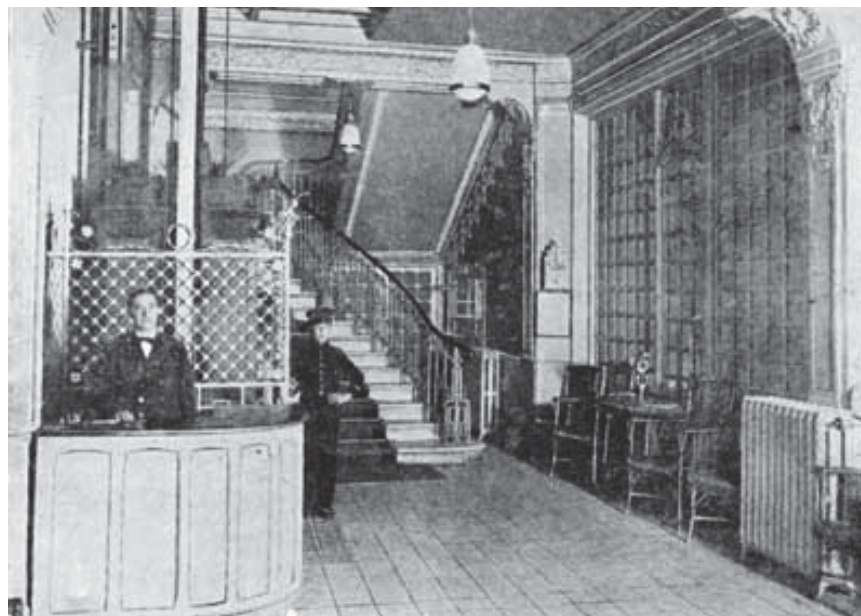
On the way to the train station, as he was leaving the city to head for Madrid, Howells gives some notes about the importance of railway industry at Valladolid. Then he divagates for the fourth time about the Spanish Inquisition and the *autos-da-fé* that took place once in the Plaza Mayor of the city. After that, he dedicates an instant to remember with affection the lovely “chico” that worked in the hotel.

Finally, the last lines of the chapter make explicit that, although Howells enjoyed a few good experiences in Valladolid, however, he left the city with certain bitterness and a manifest celerity (Howells, 2005: 78-80). The chapter is ended as follows:

I really do not remember how it was got to its feet again; but I remember the anguish of the delay and the fear that we might not be able to escape from Valladolid after all our pains in trying for the Sud-Express at that hour; and I remember that when we reached the station we found that the Sud-Express was forty minutes behind time and that we were a full hour after that before starting for Madrid. (Howells, 2005: 80)

3. 3. *Places in Valladolid*

Howells relates he lodged in the “principal hotel of Valladolid” (Howells, 2005: 57). Although he does not say its name, it is known that the principal hotel of Valladolid in 1911 was the *Gran Hotel Inglaterra*, which was located in María de Molina Street. He describes the hotel as acceptable enough, but not so much as it might be, making a special emphasis on the cooking (a recurrent Spanish topic), which was “delicious.” Howells considers that the rate for a full board was too small; “two dollars a day [...] wine included, and very fair wine at that” (Howells, 2005: 58). With respect to his impressions of the hotel, Howells throws another generalization about the country he was visiting, and this is that “in Spain you must take the bad with the good, for whether you get the good or not you are sure of the bad, but only very exceptionally are you sure of the bad only” (*ibid*). Next, he tells a mother and her two daughters managed the hotel, and that there was a ten years-old boy (“the *chico*”) who efficiently worked helping the stuff of in the hotel (*ibid*). We can see below some pictures of the hotel at that time taken from *Fundación Joaquín Díaz: Enciclopedia de la Industria y el Comercio de Valladolid*.





GRAN HOTEL INGLATERRA

DE PRIMER ORDEN

Director Propietario:

Manuel Rodriguez

□ □ □

GRAN CONFORT

Calefacción - Ascensor

Cuartos de baño

Duchas - Salón de lectura

□ □ □ GARAGE con departamentos independientes
Automóvil a la llegada de todos los trenes □ □ □

□ □

Teléfono

número 101

Doña María
de Molina, 2

VALLADOLID





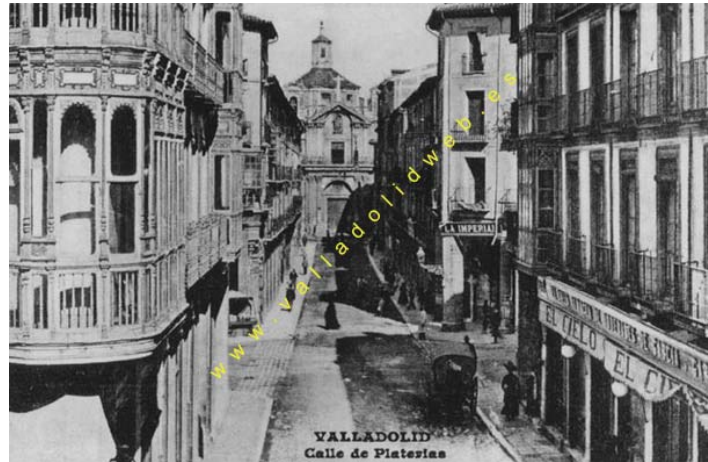
During his brief sojourn in the Castilian Capital (probably three days and a half, though it is not clearly delimited), the rest of the little time Howells spent there, he visited five remarkable places: the Cathedral, the University, the Royal Palace, the Church of San Pablo, the riverbank of the Pisuerga and the house of Cervantes.

As to the Cathedral, apart from an anecdote he tells and a few positive general appreciations, from an aesthetical point of view, about the austere style of the building by Herrera (the same architect who designed the Escorial), there is nothing relevant to comment on (Howells, 2005: 62-63).



“A Street¹² Leading to the Cathedral,” from Howells (2005).

¹² This is actually Regalado Street.



*Platerias Street*¹³ (Valladolid) in the early twentieth century (at the bottom it is the Church of *La Vera Cruz*).

Regarding the University, Howells highlights only its façade baroque in style and the sculptures in the museum of the University. He declares: “Pictures you can see anywhere, but not statuary of such singular interest, such transcendent powerfulness as those carvings of Berruguete and other masters less known, which held us fascinated” (Howells, 2005: 64-65). The aforementioned grocery was located in the left corner of the picture below, in the intersection of *Librería Street* and *Ruiz Hernández Street*.



University of Valladolid in the early twentieth century.

¹³ Howells walked several times by this street though he did not make any outstanding comment about it.



"The University of Valladolid," from Howells (2005).

In his tour across the city, the same day he visited the Church of San Pablo, he also stepped by the house where Phillip II was born (he does not comment on it), and the Royal Palace and the College of San Gregorio, wherefrom he enhances their *patios*, though he notes that “the *patio* is to be seen best in Andalusia, its home, where every house is built round it” (Howells, 2005: 70). From the Church of San Pablo, which he visited twice the same day, he puts the stress on its plateresque façade. In this sense, he claims that “the plateresque in Valladolid does not suggest fragility or triviality; its grace is perhaps rather feminine than masculine; but at the worst it is only the ultimation of the decorative genius of the Gothic” (Howells, 2005: 68). Again, Howells displays a metaphorical use of the language; when he says “its grace is perhaps rather feminine

than masculine,” he is actually suggesting that the plateresque style in Valladolid is more delicate and refined than in other Spanish’s cities.



“Church of San Pablo,” from Howells (2005).



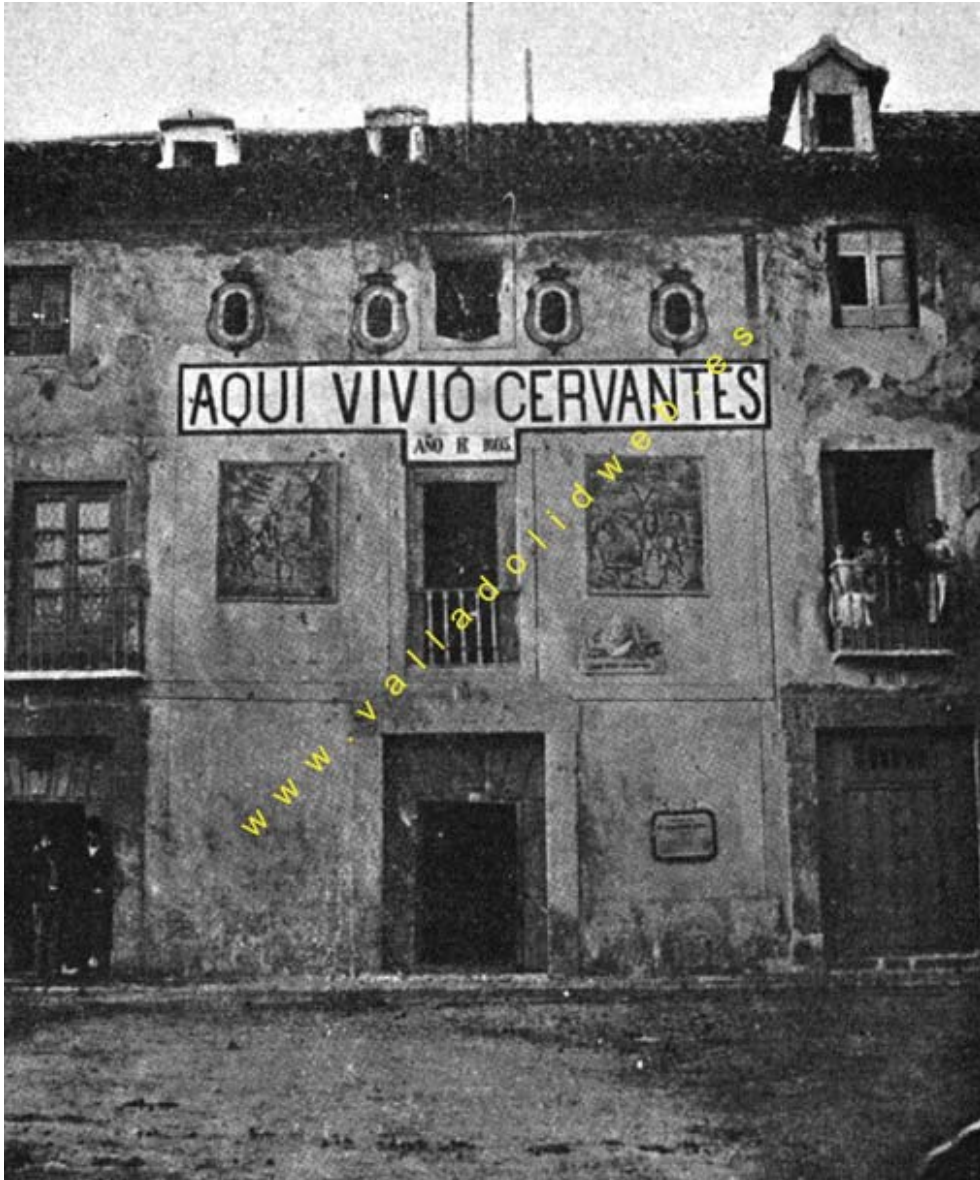
“The House in Which Phillip II Was Born,” from Howells (1913)

Insofar as the Pisuerga, Howells does not give a good image of it, maybe because the day he decided to see it there was a death by drowning (Howells, 2005: 71). When describing his experience in the river, he makes the following statement:

Up to the time the wedding guests left us we had said Valladolid was the most interesting city we had ever seen, and we would like to stay there a week; then, suddenly, we began to turn against it. [...] The river was shrunken in its bed, and where its current crept from pool to pool, women were washing some of the rags which already hung so thick on the bushes that it was wonderful there should be any left to wash. (*ibid*)

Finally, from the visit to the house of the author of *Don Quixote*, which certainly was his major motive for visiting the city, he appreciates that it was “all very Spanish and very strange” (Howells, 2005: 73). Indeed, Howells was really disappointed with the bad conservation state of the house. Therefore, on the one hand, being in the same place where his literary idol once lived was something that excited him and transported him four centuries before, but, on the other hand, he realizes the house was not well conserved. Howells felt frustrated because of the poor attention Valladolid had paid to

the preservation of such an iconic monument (Howells, 2005: 72-74). Indeed, it was not until some years after Howells visited the city, in 1924, that the house was restored¹⁴ by the Marquis of Vega Inclán and Archer Milton Huntington – the President of the Hispanic Society in New York (Rivera 31-61).



Cervantes' house in Valladolid (1903).

¹⁴ For further information see: Azorín, F., "El Marqués de la Vega Inclán y el Museo Romántico". El Madrid de Alfonso XIII. Madrid, 1997. Print.

4. Conclusion

After the examination from multiple perspectives of the image of Valladolid projected in William Dean Howells' *Familiar Spanish Travels*, and once a theoretical background has been provided, one may reach the following conclusions:

Firstly, regarding the history of Spain, there are certain historical issues that are quite recurrent in *Familiar Spanish Travels*, and that are strongly rooted in the American folklore, too, as a result of two major phenomena: on the one hand, a historicist and orientalist conception of the Peninsula (due to its Muslim background) which dates back to Ginés Pérez de Hita's *Historia de los Bandos de Zegrías y Abencerrajes* (1595-1619); on the other hand, the Black Legend of the Spanish Inquisition, which continued to be especially alive in the United States during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

Secondly, we may state that two main elements inspired or encourage Howells to undertake a tour across Spain: first of all, the influence of his passion for Cervantes' *Don Quixote*; in the second place, his extensive readings of other works by English and American Hispanophiles, particularly by Washington Irving.

Thirdly, *Familiar Spanish Travels* can be overall classified within the framework of Realism in terms of writing style, since Howells' descriptions use to be objective; for instance, his description of the conventions at the grocery is a very good example of costumbrist Realism. However, there are certain retrospective moments in which Howells falls into recurrent historicist topics (which not always are judged or criticized) and, consequently, his romantic and orientalist view of old Spain oversteps his attempts to be objective.

Finally, in connection with the notion of the two Spains (the Spain of the North, the one of the realities; and the Spain of the South, the one of the unrealities), there is a clash between the hopes, preconceptions and expectations of the author and the reality he finds at his arrival to the Peninsula. With respect to the Valladolid of 1911, in spite of the fact that Howells records some good impressions about the city (such as the scene of the women and the fountain, the description of the Church of San Pablo or the

wedding at the hotel), nevertheless, the general portrait of the city and its wasted landscape is rather negative, in so much as the author implies an aftertaste of disenchantment or disillusion. In this regard, the Castilian capital is depicted by Howells as an underdeveloped place that, although it seems to incorporate little by little certain elements of the modern life, it is not yet at the same level as other great European metropolises as London: the principal hotel of the city was not so luxurious as it might be, its banks were not used to deal with international steps, and its inhabitants were generally inefficient in their works and, on many occasions, impolite. Howells points out that some of his worst experiences and pains in Spain took place in Valladolid; this feeling of disappointment reaches its maximum point when he visits Cervantes' house and realizes its deplorable conservation state. Therefore, the sum of all these negative experiences (as opposed¹⁵ to the few positive ones) must have led the author to declare that he was looking forward to "escape" from Valladolid.

¹⁵ This contrast is reflected in the title of the fourth chapter, "The Variety of Valladolid."

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