

TURKISH LITERATURE PUBLISHED IN SPAIN (1954-2010)

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Abstract

This article traces the publication of Turkish literature in Spain from 1954, the date of the first Turkish book that was translated into Spanish, to 2010. The study was carried out as empirically as possible with data that was collected from various sources. The sources of references therefore, include the databanks with empirical data, bibliographies and catalogues. There have been several challenges in the data collection process: It was extremely difficult to trace and detect the Turkish books in data banks as well as tracing the language they were translated from into Spanish since there was neither any indication of the country of origin for the publication nor the original name of the book. The steps that followed the data collection were the detection of the source language and culture, the intermediary language of the translation and the original names of the books. Although Turkish literature did not have a significant place in the Spanish culture between 1954 and 2010, a slowly increasing interest is being observed in the last decade. Two major problems that prevail are the lack of translators to translate from Turkish into Spanish and a guide-book for publishers to inform them about the books that are worth being translated.

Keywords: Turkish literature, translations into Spanish, translation bibliography, editorial world in Spain.

Özet

Bu makale İspanyolcaya çevrilen ilk Türkçe kitabın çeviri tarihi olan 1954 yılından 2010 yılına kadar İspanya'da Türk edebiyatının yayımlanma serüvenini ele almaktadır. Çeşitli kaynaklardan toplanan verilerle yapılan bu çalışmanın olanaklar ölçüsünde görgül verilere dayanmasına özen gösterilmiştir. Bu nedenle başvuru kaynakları görgül veri içeren veri bankaları, bibliyografyalar ve kataloglardan oluşmaktadır. Veri toplarken çeşitli zorluklar yaşanmıştır: Türkçe kitapların veri bankalarında izini sürmek ve belirlemek son derece güç olmuştur. Bu güçlüğün yanı sıra hangi dilden İspanyolcaya çevrildiklerini saptamak da bir başka sorun olarak karşımıza çıkmıştır. Veri toplamak için yararlanılan kaynaklarda ne özgün yapının hangi ülkede yayımlandığına dair bir bilgi ne de kitabın özgün ismi bulunmaktadır. Veri toplama aşamasından sonra, kaynak dil, kaynak kültür, çeviri yapılan aradil ve kitapların özgün ismi saptanmaya çalışılmıştır. Türk edebiyatı 1954 ile 2010 yılları arasında İspanyol kültüründe çok önemli bir yere sahip olmamakla birlikte son yıllarda yavaş da olsa artan bir ilgiden söz edilebilir. Sürmekte olan iki temel sorun ise Türkçeden İspanyolcaya çeviri yapacak çevirmen ve yayıncılara çevrilmeye değer Türkçe kitaplarla ilgili bilgilendirecek bir yayın kılavuzu eksikliğidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Edebiyatı, İspanyolcaya çeviriler, Çeviri bibliyografyası, İspanya'da yayıncılık dünyası.

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Introduction

This article has its origin in the bibliography of Turkish books translated into Spanish prepared by Ayşe Nihal Akbulut for the *First International Symposium of Translators and Publishers of Turkish Literature* organized by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Boğaziçi University in June 2007. Although the bibliography was not complete at the time, it was undoubtedly a very important landmark in terms of the recognition of the heritage of Turkish literature in the Spanish-speaking world. The basic foundation of the current paper was formed by a slightly developed version of the same bibliography, “La literatura turca en España”, which was presented at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid in November 2007 at a seminar on Spanish-Turkish relations throughout the history. As the situation has not changed much since then, the papers of the seminar in question¹ still serve as sources that provide further information about the issue.

The third phase of the study came with a project initiated by the platform-revue *Transeuropéennes* to create a “map” of translations in the Mediterranean area. The project became active in 2006 and intends to establish an exhaustive bibliography of the books that were translated from each language in the area into another. In August 2010, *Transeuropéennes* contacted me to prepare an up-to-date version of the Turkish-Spanish bibliography and an explanatory study on it, the published version of which can be accessed through the web page of the platform-revue².

Having introduced the previous phases that initiated the current work and what has been so far done by *Transeuropéennes*, it might help to say that the work carried out by *Transeuropéennes* was more in the format of a form to be completed with questions not exclusive to the language pair that is the object of this specific study (such as the question about institutions and organizations dealing with translation) and did not give the chance to analyze the facts presented in the bibliographies, which, as a matter of fact, were not included either.

As the foundation of the present study, I refer once more to the bibli-

¹ *Las relaciones turco-españolas a lo largo de la Historia/Tarih Boyunca Türk-İspanyol İlişkileri*. Madrid: Editorial Tam, 2008.

² http://www.transeuropeennes.eu/en/95/L_etat_des_lieux_conclusions_et_recommandations

ography prepared by Akbulut which is now in its complete version with more recent data from the Spanish ISBN agency³, the Index Translationum database⁴ and the library of the Instituto Cervantes in Istanbul⁵. The Index Translationum was quite incomplete while the ISBN database contained some inexactitudes mostly due to incorrect/ bad data provided by the publishing houses regarding the language of the original. The library of the Instituto Cervantes gave some information about less known works which were out of the scope of the above mentioned databases.

The books presented in the revised list are only those that were published in Spain, therefore the books published in other Spanish-speaking countries are left aside. One of the main reasons is that it would be extremely difficult to find isolated titles published in the whole of Latin America, and the Spanish book industry (publishing houses) are usually well present there since they are the heads of big publishing groups. As a matter of fact, 37 Spanish publishing companies had 156 subsidiaries in Spanish speaking America (*El sector del libro en España 2010-2012*⁶). The list prepared for this study cover the years between 1954, the date of the first Turkish book that was published in Spain (*The Clown and his Daughter* by Halide Edip Adivar) and 2010.

Spanish Publishing Industry

According to the study of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports about the book sector in Spain for the period 2010-2012⁷, the number of the new titles registered in the ISBN in the year 2011 was 97,504, about 20% of which was constituted by translations. This represents more or less twenty thousand translated books per year. Although the number includes translations made among various official languages of Spain (especially from and into Castilian), the figures for this category of translations are not high;

³ <http://www.mcu.es/libro/CE/AgenISBN.html>

⁴ <http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/>

⁵ http://estambul.cervantes.es/tr/kutuphane_turkce/kutuphane_hizmetleri/kutuphane_katalogu.htm

⁶ http://www.mcu.es/principal/docs/MC/2012/Libro/Sector_del_Libro_Abril_2012.pdf

⁷ http://www.mcu.es/principal/docs/MC/2012/Libro/Sector_del_Libro_Abril_2012.pdf

constituting about 12% of the total of the translated books. Out of the total number of the books, more than 23,000 are considered “literary creation”, excluding children and juvenile books. Keeping in mind that the biggest amount of publications in Spain are text books for the schools, it would be very reasonable to think that most translations pertain to the category of “literary creation”.

Another study by the same Ministry (*La traducción editorial en España*, 2010⁸) shows the distribution of the “main languages of translation” as English (with a roughly 12% of books inscribed in the ISBN), Castilian (3.5%, to foreign languages and other official languages of Spain), French (almost a 3%), German and Italian (both with a 1.5%), and Japanese, Catalanian, Portuguese, Galician, Greek, Latin, Russian and Euskera (Bask) with less than 1% down to a 0.1%. Translations from other languages do not represent even a 0.1% of the Spanish editions. Judging by the fact that about one hundred and twenty Turkish books (corresponding to less than eighty different titles) got published in Spain between 1954 and 2010, it is clear that the situation of Turkish literature in Spanish can be improved. The truth, as demonstrated by the conclusions and recommendations of the *Mapping of Translation in the Euro-Mediterranean Area by Transeuropéennes*⁹, is that the presence of Turkish Literature could be improved in all foreign languages.

Turkish Literature in Spain

According to our data, between 1954 and 2010 a total of 117 Turkish books were translated into Spanish. However, there is an important number of new editions in paperback, reading club’s editions¹⁰ and translations into other official languages of Spain. The total number of titles, bearing in mind that some of them are poetry anthologies and may have similar contents, seems to be only seventy (roughly an 80% of the total sum). We should not forget, however, that there might be more titles that got published without

⁸ <http://www.mcu.es/libro/docs/MC/CD/Traduccion.pdf>

⁹ http://www.transeuropeennes.eu/ressources/pdfs/TIM_2012_Conclusions_and_recommendations_116.pdf

¹⁰ Círculo de Lectores

the indication of the original language for the ISBN or just were published outside ISBN (as is the case in some poetry anthologies published by universities).

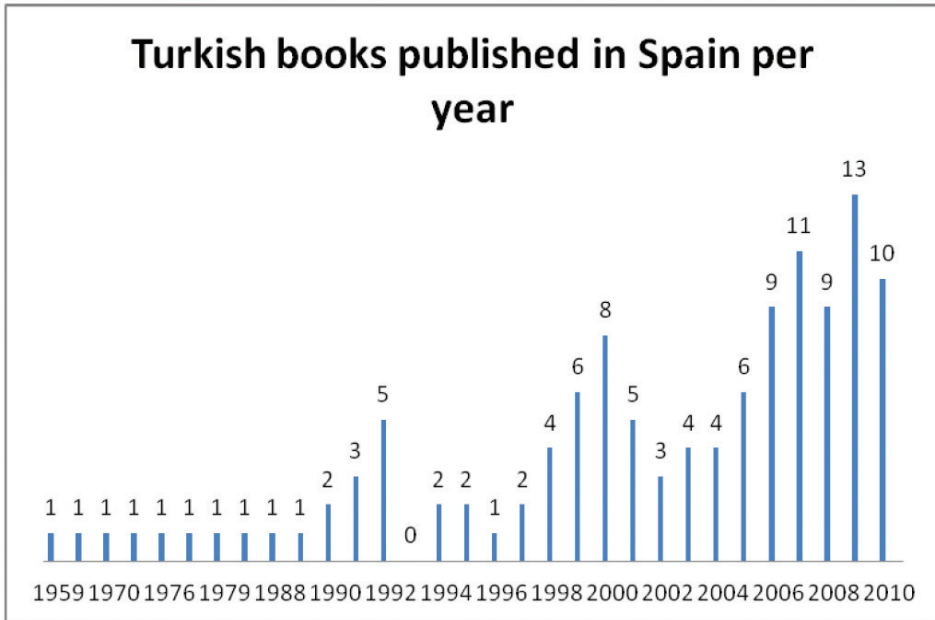
Historical tendencies

It is somehow pretentious to speak of “historical tendencies”, if we consider that the first Turkish book in Spanish was published in as late as 1954 for reasons unknown. However, from that date until the end of the 80’s (with only nine books, of seven titles) we can observe the importance of Yaşar Kemal and, most of all, of the work of Solimán Salom as a translator. The motives behind the translation of two novels by Yaşar Kemal, apart from his international relevance, could be his political views (besides Franco’s censorship, leftist authors were published with great success in Spain) and the predominance of social literature in Spain in the sixties. The same, more or less, could be said of Nazım Hikmet, who was first translated by Solimán Salom. A poet and a translator, Salom was born in Turkey¹¹ and translated four important anthologies of poetry including the modern poets of the time, especially Nazım Hikmet, and the classics like those by Yunus Emre and Fuzuli.

The relationship of Solimán Salom with the poet Clara Janés, and the friendship of the latter with the Turkish poet İlhan Berk, led to the second period of the translation of Turkish literature into Spanish, owing to two main factors: the importance of poetry and the dominance of small publishing houses, with only one or two exceptions, especially Fernando García Burillo’s Ediciones del Oriente y del Mediterráneo. This publishing house that is specialized in books from Muslim countries, edited seven of the more or less twenty books published in the decade 1988-1998. Both García Burillo and Clara Janés (with five books in these years) translated in collaboration with Turkish counterparts. Eight books of poetry, almost fifty per cent of all, were translated either by them and their collaborators or by Ertuğrul Önalp.

¹¹ Some information about Salom can be found in this on-line article about Nâzım Hikmet written by Fernando García Burillo
<http://nazimhikmetpoesia.blogspot.com/2009/01/nazim-hikmet-en-espanol.html>

Although some bigger publishing houses had begun to publish Turkish novelists by then (like Caralt with Yaşar Kemal, Edhasa with Orhan Pamuk in 1994, or Editorial Roca with Nedim Gürsel), it is not until the end of the 90's that the Turkish novel reached the mainstream of its publication/editions in Spain. From that date on, Turkish novels have been published, in general, by big publishing groups, while poetry or short stories, or less-well known novelists, remained in the hands of smaller publishing houses. By the beginning of the 2000's, all possible political motives for publishing Turkish literature had disappeared while the interest of Spaniards in Turkey, mostly for touristic reasons, had greatly improved. If the first period of Turkish literature in Spain is the “political period”, and the second one is the “poetical period”; then, the third one is that of “mainstreaming”. We can see the slight but constant increase in Turkish titles through the years as a proof of the “mainstreaming” of Turkish literature in Spain.



We can see an ascending tendency of publication through the years after the 90's. Until then, Turkish books published in Spain were rare (only eight titles between 1954 and 1989) and were mostly due, as we have said, to the efforts of the translator Solimán Salom. In 1989 appears the first book of the publishing house Ediciones del Oriente y del Mediterráneo. This

publishing house plays a very important role in the promotion of Turkish literature; the owner Fernando García Burillo, being a translator himself as mentioned above (the house published twelve books until 2010, 15% of the total of 79 titles). During the 90's we can observe an increase in the number of titles that got translated with the very important presence of poetry and of various authors. This period witnessed the reappearance of Yaşar Kemal and the publication of the first novel of Orhan Pamuk in Spain (*The White Castle*) under the strange title of *The Astrologer and the Sultan*.

The 2000's, undoubtedly, is the decade of Turkish novel in general and of Orhan Pamuk who changed his publishing house short before receiving the Nobel Prize in 2006. Turkish books started to be published mostly by big publishing houses (for example in the case of Pamuk, it was first Alfaguara pertaining to the Prisa Group, publishers of the newspaper *El País* and Random House-Mondadori, a multinational company) instead of small independent publishers. The relative "explosion" of Turkish titles in Spanish in the last years can be explained in part by the TEDA program subventions¹². Yet, bearing in mind that TEDA began in 2005, it falls short of explaining the interest in the previous years.

From 1997 onwards, we can also see a considerable number of titles being retranslated, translated into other languages of Spain or republished for readers' clubs editions or paperback collections. For instance, Yaşar Kemal's *Memed, my Hawk* was retranslated with a subvention of UNESCO, got translated into Catalanian in 1997 and was republished in 2000 for a readers' club and was out also in paperback (Punto de Lectura). *Círculo de Lectores* has always been a major actor in Spain's publishing market and *Punto de Lectura* was the result of some of the biggest publishing houses presenting a common paperback collection which cannot be underestimated. In our data, about forty eight of the total number of the books (roughly a 40%) are this group of retranslations and re-editions, although some of these can be disputable cases since they are poetry anthologies.

¹² TEDA was initiated by the Turkish Ministry of Culture to promote the translation and promotion of Turkish Literature in other languages and cultures/ countries.
<http://www.tedaproject.com/EN/ana-sayfa/2-22864/20130710.html>.

Authors

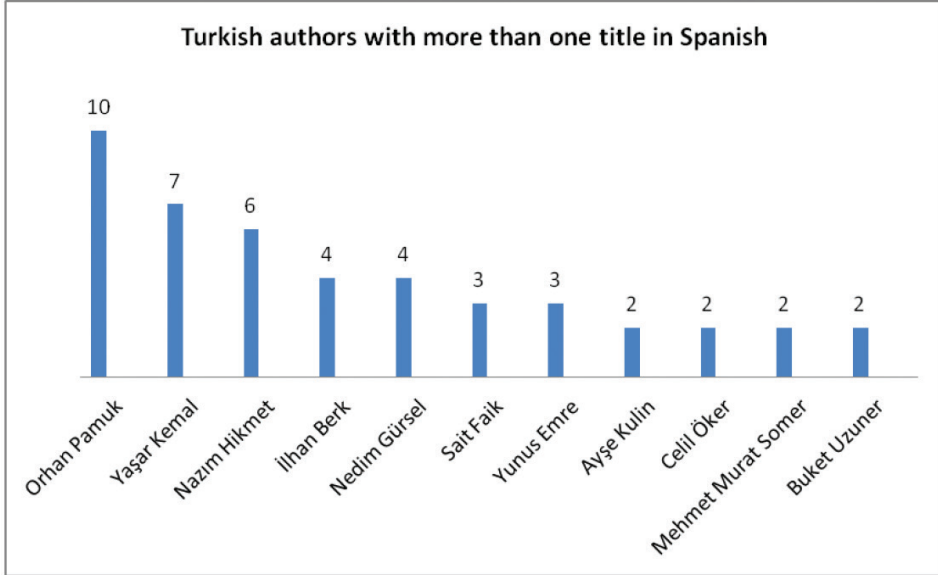
Translation scholar Gideon Toury mentions two “preliminary norms” of translation (2000/ (1978): 198-211). The first is the “politics of translation”, meaning which texts are chosen to be translated. If we consider the list of books translated from Turkish into Spanish, we can easily see that most of the books are literary works (only five of the books can be considered as social sciences), and mostly narrative and poetry.

The selection of authors and works seems to be somehow irregular. The three Turkish authors better known abroad (Nâzım Hikmet, Yaşar Kemal and Orhan Pamuk) have been translated in a more (Pamuk) or less (Yaşar Kemal) complete way. We can see also that other important «classic» Turkish writers like Sait Faik, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar or Orhan Kemal have been translated too. Still, A. H. Tanpınar, Orhan Kemal or Halide Edip Adıvar have only one work translated each while a detective-genre author like Celil Öker has two books published and some of the authors translated are not even well known in Turkey. The reason is that, apart from fashion issues, there is not a clear reference for Spanish publishers to know what should be published and they usually depend on the hearsay. That might be the reason of the importance in the total three books by, for instance, Nedim Gürsel, recommended by Juan Goytisolo, a very prominent Spanish writer. We should not forget that twenty nine of the thirty eight authors (more than a 75%) have only one title published in Spanish.

The first conclusion we can infer from the data is that the «politics of translation» of Turkish books into Spanish does not seem to be related with the importance of the author (canonical or not) in Turkish literature. The obvious reason is that the Spanish publishers do not have access to any kind of quality criteria and must be confident in the consideration of the author in other countries (as in the case of Nedim Gürsel, well known in France). At the same time, it seems to depend on the taste of the publisher or personal recommendations, as can be seen by the fact that all the books by İlhan Berk have been co-translated by Clara Janés or that Sait Faik have been only published by Ediciones del Oriente y del Mediterráneo.

The importance of poetry could be explained by the same reasons. Twenty five of the seventy titles are poetry books (about a 35%). In the Spanish

book industry, poetry can hardly be considered mainstream in a market dominated by novels.



Translations and translators

The second one of Toury's «preliminary norms» is the «directness of translation», meaning the degree of permissibility of translations through a secondary language. Compared with other European countries like France or Germany, Turkish is almost unknown in Spain for various reasons; therefore, the use of intermediary languages is more «tolerable». It is very difficult to determine whether a translation has been made through an intermediate language because Spanish publishing houses usually indicate in the page of credits only the original title and not from which language the text was translated. The opposite happens in the ISBN, where only is indicated the language of translation; making it extremely difficult to find which books are from Turkey without any external lead. In any case, we can observe that the languages used for indirect translations are usually English and French, although there are others like Italian.

In regard with this «tolerance» to translate through intermediate languag-

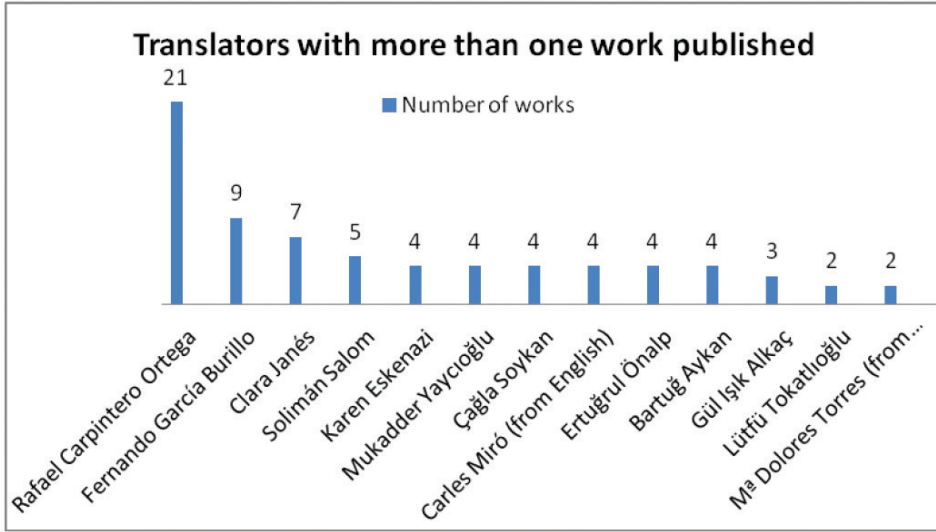
es, we must not forget the fact that, for instance, Halide Edip Adıvar's *The Clown and his Daughter* was first published in English in 1935 and that the works of authors like Nedim Gürsel are quickly translated in France (the influence of French publishing houses like Gallimard in Spain cannot be underestimated). Similar cases occur with authors like Elif Şafak. However, we have excluded from this study other writers like Emine Sevgi Özdamar, who to any extent is considered a German author even if she is Turkish in origin because she writes exclusively in German.

An interesting detail within our data is the importance of two translators working together, usually one of them Turkish and the other Spanish, even when the former is not openly stated as a translator (as in the Yunus Emre's *Diván* translated by Clara Janés in 1991, whose «literal translation» was made by Gürcan Türkoğlu according to the introduction). This has been the translation method of the above mentioned Clara Janés and Fernando García Burillo until the 2000s. In fact, about 15 books seem to have been translated by a Turkish and a Spanish translators. Some of the books have been translated by two Spanish translators too, but this have been done so for editorial reasons (for example, the early translations of *Memed, my Hawk*) or simply because the translators work as a team (Carmen and M^a Dolores Torres París, for instance). The system is presumed to function as follows: the Turkish translator makes a rough translation in Spanish and the Spanish counterpart develops it in a ready-to-publish version. In the case of languages other than Castilian Spanish the situation is even clearer with the Turkish parts making their versions in Castilian and the Spanish translating it to the other language (Catalonian, Galician or Bask).

About 60% of the books have been translated directly from Turkish; an important percentage having in mind the scarcity of translators from that language. This may reflect the general trend to publish translations from the original if possible, but it may be also a consequence of the TEDA program of subventions, even if not all the works assumed by TEDA were translated from the original.

Actually, most of translators from Turkish (as part of a team or by themselves) were born in Turkey. If we leave aside translators with only one book published, we will find that there are seven translators born in Turkey against three Spaniards. And, as a matter of fact, one of the latter (Clara Janés) does not know Turkish; which leaves us with only two Spanish translators from

Turkish (Fernando García Burillo and Rafael Carpintero). If we sum up the total number of works translated by both translators (including the works in collaboration in the case of García Burillo), we can see that they represent about 30% of the total of Turkish books published in Spain. It is certainly sad to see that one third of the Turkish literature in Spain depends on only two translators.



Conclusion

Turkish literature is not very well known in Spain although, as can be seen from the collected data, there is a constant presence of Turkish authors in the Spanish editorial scene, especially from 2000s onwards. There is no doubt that the awarding of the Nobel prize to Orhan Pamuk in 2006 had a great importance as well as the fact that Turkey is a popular touristic destination for Spaniards. These are probably also the reasons why a certain number of the translated books in Spain add the words «Istanbul» and/ or «Bosphorus» to the original title. This way each book gains reference to Pamuk's best-selling book *Istanbul* and the city as a touristic object, leaving the rest of Turkey aside. This, of course, creates a false image of Turkey, but, at the same time, encourages the interest in Spain for learning more about this country.

Two major problems of Turkish literature in Spain are the lack of translators and literary references. The first one is solved in part with translations

done in collaboration and through other languages. Unfortunately translations made from intermediate languages always depend on the preferences of the other language. However, establishing the collaboration between a Turkish and a Spanish translator provides the advantage of including more than one expert in the original frame of references. In any case, the last decision belongs to the publisher; in Spain, expert advice by translators is not counted on much. Spanish publishers mostly follow the references in the international book fairs or personal recommendations even from the agents. The role of the translator is a very passive one in the Spanish editorial world.

Turkish is always subordinate to Arabic in the few universities in Spain where it is taught, and there is not a very big Turkish colony in Spain, at least compared with Germany or France. The possible opening of Yunus Emre Institute in the near future in Madrid will, undoubtedly, increase the knowledge of Turkish in Spain, but only to an extent. As is the case in many countries in the world, in the long run, Turkish, like Swedish, Hungarian or Finnish, is likely to remain a minor foreign language used by a very restricted number of Spaniards mostly motivated by love and marital bonds.

As was discussed in the first symposium of translators and publishers of Turkish literature at Boğaziçi University, a source of reference of Turkish literature for foreign publishers would be very welcome by all parties. This way, the publishers would be able to go beyond personal recommendations and make sure of the quality and the relative importance of the works that could be translated and published.

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1958

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1962

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1970

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