

Translations from Turkish in Lithuania, 1990-2010
a study by the Next Page Foundation

conducted by **Justina Pilkauskaitė Kariniauskienė**
November 2010

Next Page Foundation series of studies on translation flows

in partnership with "Translating in the Mediterranean" project of Transeuropéennes and the
Anna Lindh Foundation

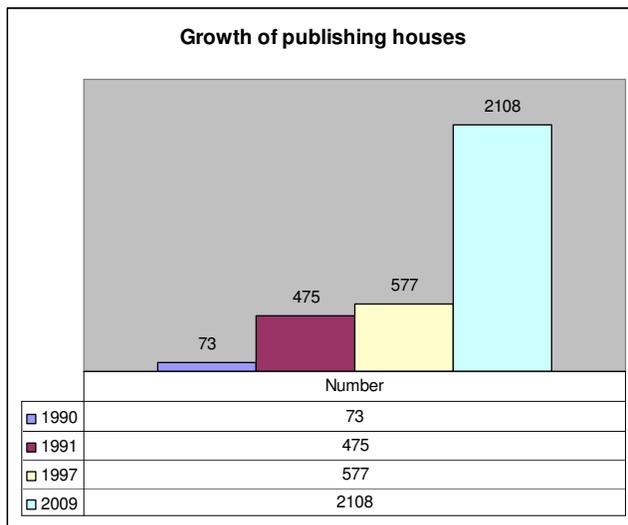
This work is licensed under Creative Commons



Introduction

General information on Lithuanian Publishing market during the period of 1990-2009

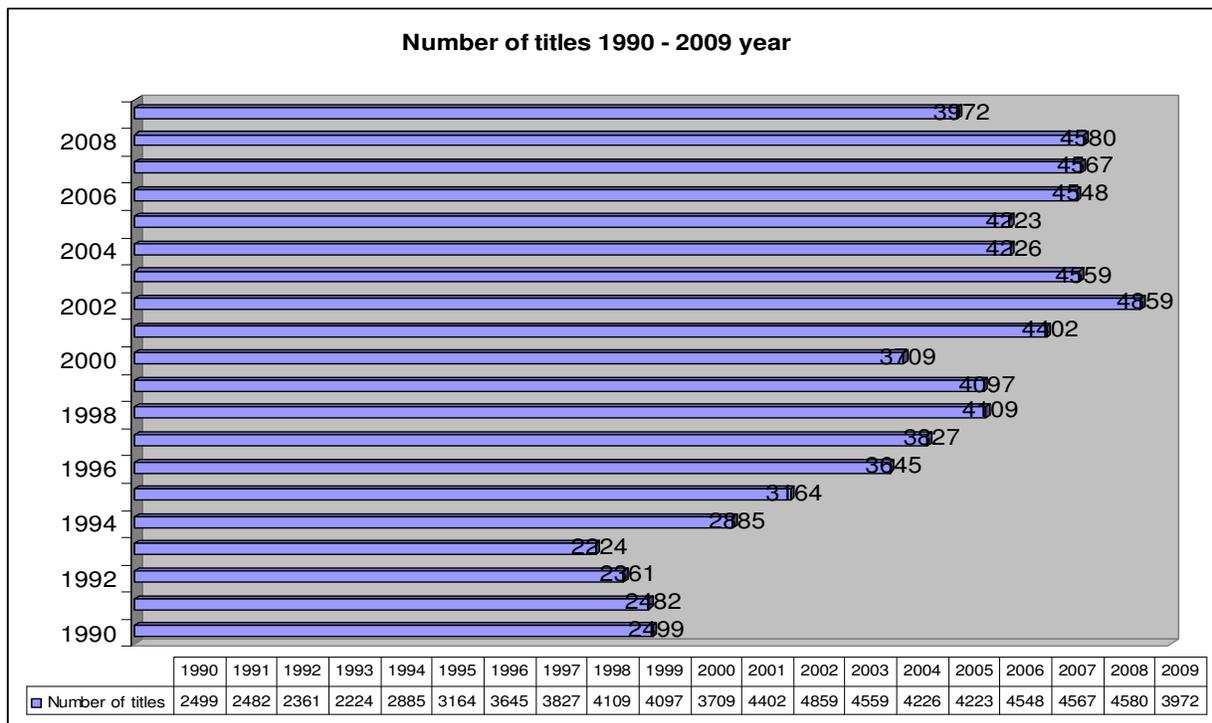
After the re-establishment of independence in 1990, major economic and cultural changes took place that strongly affected the process of publishing and translation in Lithuania. During the Soviet period Lithuania's publishing market was strongly centralized and publishing function in the country was performed by 6 national publishing houses (Sklieriūtė, 2002). After the collapse of Soviet union, the centralized Soviet publishing system was replaced by a free-market system. This had a great impact on rapid growth of commercial publishers. National Statistics of Lithuania's Press has registered 73 publishers in 1990, 475 – in 1991 and 577 publishers in



1997. According to the electronical database of Martynas Mažvydas National Library, currently there are registered 2108 publishers, though only 547 of them have issued publications to the Lithuanian book market in 2009 (Mikutytė, 2010).

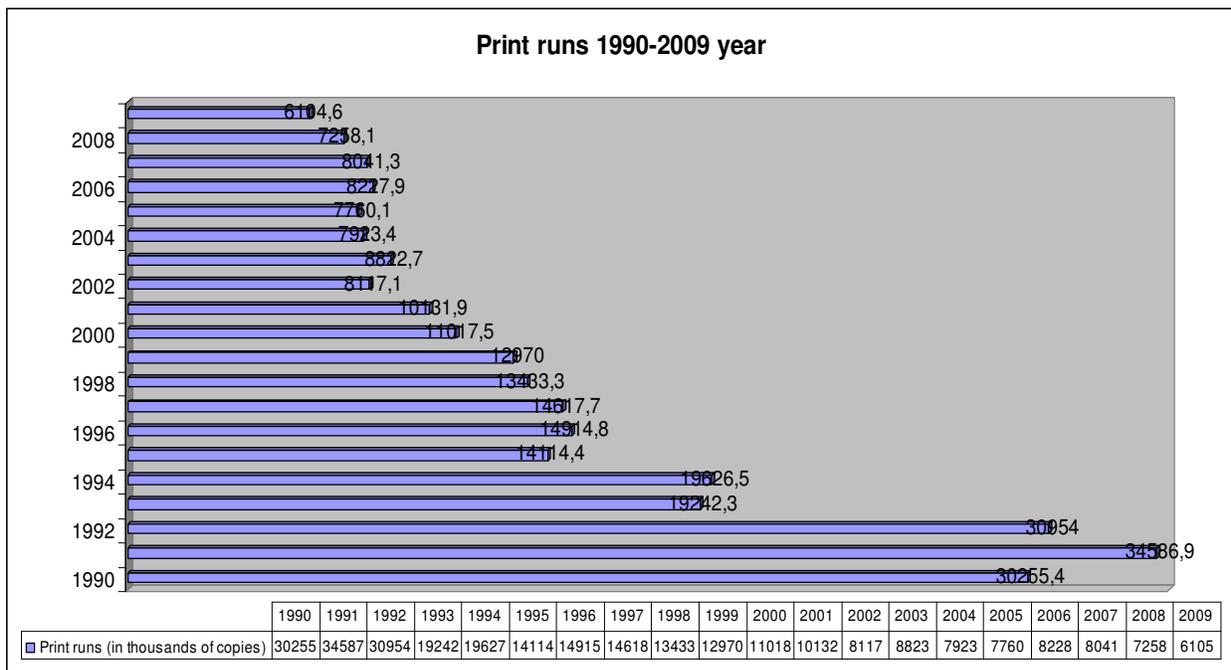
It should be taken into consideration that during the period of Soviet Union the number of titles printed per year in Lithuania has apparently changed in comparison to the number of titles issued during the last two decades of independence. If to compare, number of

titles has risen almost twice from 2499 in 1990 to the figure of 4580 in the 2008. The fall of titles seen in year 2009, has undoubtedly been influenced by world economical crisis, which has affected all areas of business in Lithuania, including publishing. (See chart *Number of titles 1990-2009*)



[Source based on National Statistics of Lithuania's Press 1990-2009]

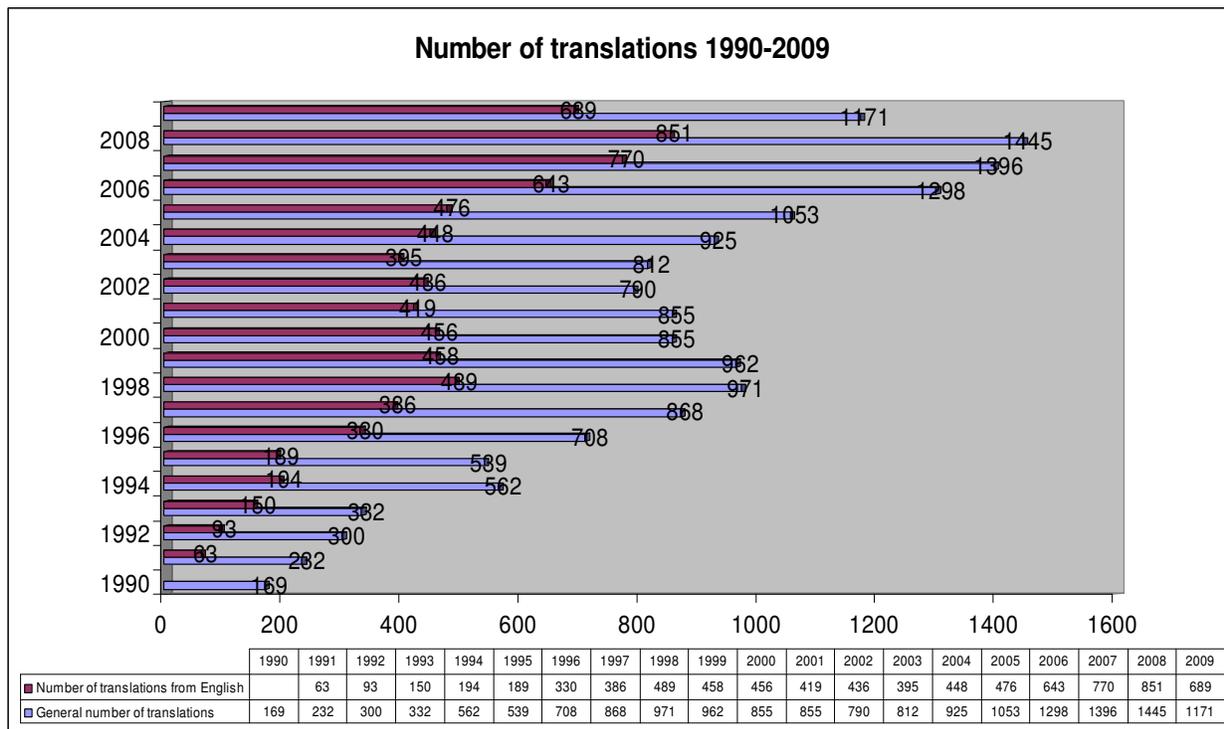
Though, together with the repeal of censorship restrictions number of titles has almost doubled, there is seen a radical declination on number of print runs per year. (See chart *Print runs 1990-2009*.) Shown numbers do not necessary mean that Lithuanians read less, as there are several reasons for such a decline. First of all, the majority of books, published in the early 1990-s, were re-prints. Secondly, the print technology, left after the fall of the Soviet Union, was much cheaper, although the quality was low, comparing to today's standards.



[Source based on National statistics of Lithuania's Press 1990-2009]

According to the statistics, growth of book titles reflects a boost of translations as well. In the Soviet period the dominant language of translations was Russian. Meanwhile independence has opened boundaries of globalization, number of translations has risen and English has taken its place. As it is seen from the chart shown below, almost half of the translations is being made from English, which is followed by such languages as German, French and Russian. Starting from 1996, number of translations from English has reached nearly 50% of all translated books.

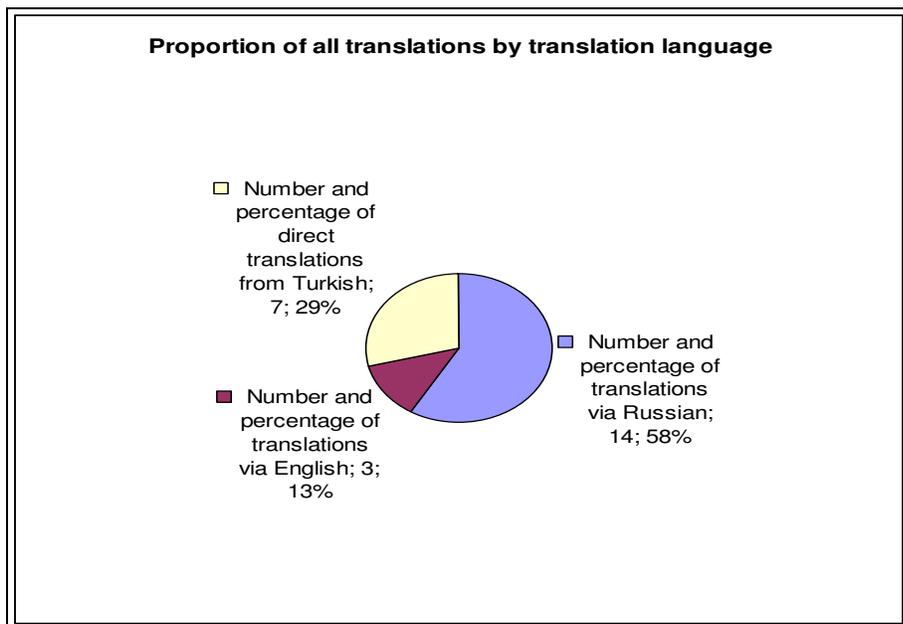
A peculiar fact about translations is that one third of books published in Lithuanian were translations from other languages. In year 2009, there was 1171 book translated. As translations are the most popular among the readers, the average print run of translated book was 2,3 thousands of copies, meanwhile the average print run of original Lithuanian books was only 1,2 thousands of copies. Important to mention, that 57% of all translated books were belles-lettres (National Statistics of Lithuania's Press, 2009).



[Source based on National Statistics of Lithuania's Press 1990-2009]

Translations of Turkish literature by translation language

Meanwhile the number of translated literature in Lithuania is being increased annually, the place of translations from Orient languages – including Turkish – is significantly poor in comparison to the flood of translated books. According to LIBIS – the electronic database system of Lithuanian National Library – the first book of Turkish literature was published in 1960. Up-to-date there are registered 16 titles (without counting re-editions) of Turkish literature's translations, out of which only 6 are direct translations from Turkish into Lithuanian. A chart below shows a division of all published (including re-editions) books of translated Turkish literature into Lithuanian by translation language.



The first book of Turkish literature in Lithuanian was published in 1960 by Soviet Lithuania's *National Fiction Press*. It was translation of classical, world-wide known Turkish roman *The Wren* (also translated as *The Authobiography of a Turkish girl*) written by Reşat Nuri Güntekin. The second translated book introduced to Lithuania's readers in 1965 was *Turkish tales*. These and all the other following books representing Turkish literature were translations via Russian, as in the Soviet times there was an absence of translators from Turkish language in Lithuania.

From the table shown below it is clearly seen how language of translation shifts together with a kind of political and cultural changes in the country. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union all the translations were made via Russian, though after 1990, smooth changes can be seen. In the period of 1990-1994 as it was mentioned before, mainly re-editions were printed. After two re-editions of Turkish literature in 1994, there is a 10 years period of absence of any kind of Turkish literature translated or repeatedly printed. Only after 2005, there is a visual change observed in Turkish literature's translation market: translations via Russian are changed by translations from English as the intermediate language and direct translations from Turkish. The following reasons of this phenomena will be discussed later on.

Year	Translations via Russian	Translations via English	Direct translation from Turkish
1960	1		
1961	1 (re-edition)		
1965	1		
1967	1		

1969	1		
1972	1		
1979	1		
1986	1 (re-edition)		
1991	1 (re-edition)		
1993	3 (including 2 re-editions)		
1994	2 (re-editions)		
2005		1	1
2006		1	1
2008		1	2 (including 1 re-edition)
2009			2
2010			1

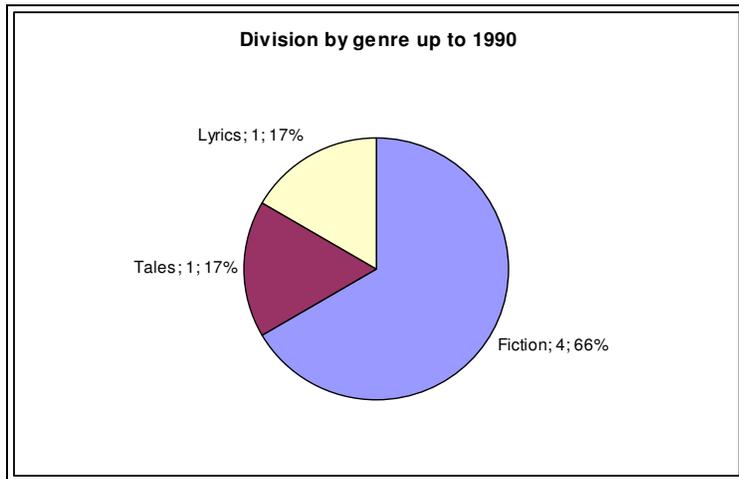
[Source based on LIBIS - the electronic database system of Lithuanian National Library]

An interesting fact needed to be mentioned is that with the appearance of Turkish literature's translations into Lithuanian directly from Turkish language, classical Turkish roman *The Wren* was repeatedly retranslated into Lithuanian but this time from the original language. The translation of this roman appeared in 2008.

Translations of Turkish literature by genre

During the Soviet period all Turkish literature translated via Russian was strictly fiction of realism (Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *The Wren*), social realism (Orhan Kemal, Suat Derviş), lyrics of such a poet as Nazim Hikmet – which is described as „romantic communist“, – featured writings of Aziz Nesin, who was also ideologically close to communistic views and, surely, a selection of Turkish tales. Up to 1990 there were translated only 6 titles, out of which 66% were books of fiction, excluding selection of Turkish tales.

The division of genre of all the Turkish literature (excluding re-editions), translated up to 1990, can be displayed as it follows in the chart below.

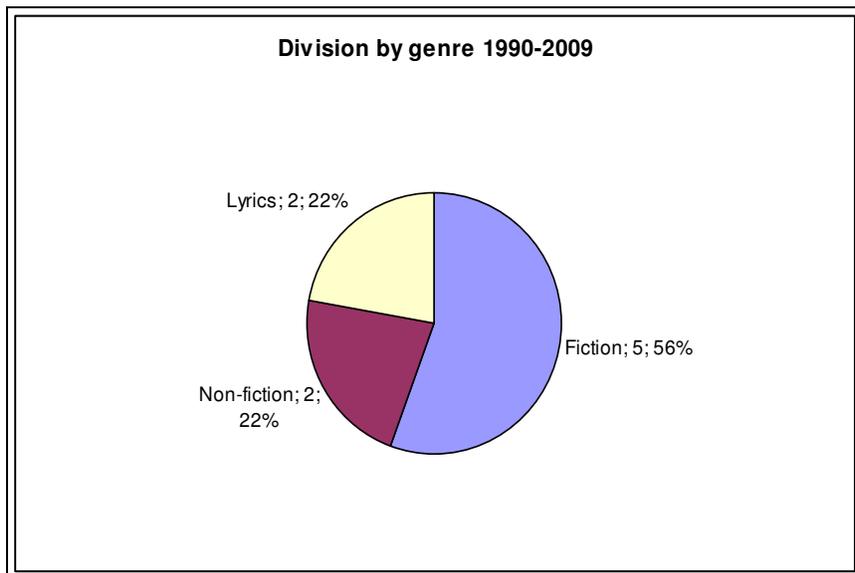


The 1990s were quite unproductive in translations of Turkish literature. Except the re-editions of previously translated literature, only one new title appeared in 1993. It was a translation of lyrics via Russian as an intermediate language.

Shifts and radical changes in translation market of Turkish literature appeared in 2005. Firstly, it was forgone of Russian as an intermediate language, English took its place. But the most important fact is that 2005 was marked by translations made directly from Turkish.

21th century also brought changes to the palette of genres. After Lithuania joined European Union, globalization and less restricted movement of people has triggered boost in interest of Turkish culture. Namely, appearance of Turkish originated Islamic movement supported by Gülen Fethullah was the main reason that caused the first translation of Turkish Islamic book, though the translation was made via English. Another culturally related translation, but this time made directly from Turkish, was a translation of a guidebook of Turkish language with a pocket dictionary included. The second non-fictional work was designed mainly for native speakers often traveling to Turkey. Though, despite two non-fiction translations and two books of lyrics, a significant portion of the translations still comprises of fiction.

The division by genres of books issued during 1990-2009 (excluding re-editions) is shown in the chart below.



Except one retranslation of classic Turkish novel (Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *The Wren*), all the rest books translated in the period of 1990-2009 were translations of modern Turkish literature. Out of 5 fiction books translated from Turkish, even 3 are novels of Orhan Pamuk, translated from the original language. To this number of Lithuanian translations of O.Pamuk's works can be added one more his book, translated and published in 2010.

Publishers of translations from Turkish

According to the electronical database of Martynas Mažvydas National Library, currently there are 2108 publishers registered in Lithuania. Despite this number, only a few of them have issued one or more title from Turkish. Among all the publishers issued translations of Turkish literature in the period of 1990-2009, only one publishing house has re-edited two titles of previously via Russian made translations (*Varnas*) and just 4 publishing institutions have introduced new titles, translated directly from Turkish: *Tyto alba* (2 titles up to 2009 and 1 title in 2010), *Alma littera* (1 title in 2008), *Baltos lankos* (1 title in 2006) and *Kronta* (1 title in 2006).

Even though, above mentioned *Alma littera* is the biggest and mostly productive publisher in Lithuania, the leading position in publishing translations from Turkish is undertaken by much smaller publisher *Tyto alba*, who's annual number of new titles published is quite smaller than *Alma littera*'s. For instance, *Tyto alba* presented 81 title in 2008 and 76 titles in 2009, meanwhile *Alma littera* issued 407 titles in 2008 and 295 titles in 2009 (Lietuvos spaudos statistika 1990-2009).

The facts show that except *Tyto alba*, who continuously issues translated works from Turkish, the other publishers have confined themselves to a strictly limited number of books. The main

reason of this problem is that despite growing interest in Turkish culture, publications of Turkish literature is a matter of financial risk as costs of promoting less known literature are significantly higher in comparison to those, needed to promote more popular books. This explains phenomena why *Tyto alba* has issued 3 titles till now. All the books published by *Tyto alba* are novels of O.Pamuk – the world wide known Turkish author. The first novel of O.Pamuk, translated into Lithuania was *The Black Book*, published in 2005. Soon after the Nobel prize was awarded to O.Pamuk in 2006, *Tyto alba* has tasked itself to translate more his books. Eventually, by the year 2008 *The Black Book* was re-edited with the indication on the cover that O.Pamuk is the Nobel prize winner. To ensure high sales and attract the audience of readers, the same marketing strategy was applied to the other translated works of this author.

Translators from Turkish

The non-existence of direct translations from Turkish into Lithuanian until 2005 can be reasoned by absence of translators and qualified specialists of this language. Despite the fact that interest in Oriental languages can be traced back to the beginning of the 19th century, when by the year 1810 The Department of Eastern languages was found, Oriental studies in Lithuania did not get duly attention and support. The department survived only thanks to a few devoted scholars.

After Lithuania regained its independence in 1990, a new wave of interest in Oriental studies began. The Centre of Oriental Studies was founded in Vilnius in 1993 setting as its major goal promotion and learning of oriental languages, culture and history. The Centre received generous support from social partners as well as state institutions. In 1993 by the initiative of Turkish embassy in Lithuania, the first lecturer from Turkey was invited to the Centre of Oriental Studies to prepare the first local specialists of Turkish. As a result, out of a few students finished the course, two of them – Natela Nasibova (currently has changed her surname into Statkienė) and Galina Miškinienė – have aimed themselves to become specialists and after one year internship in Turkey's universities, they were invited to Vilnius University as lecturers of Turkish language. As a result, again thanks to financial support of Turkish embassy in Lithuania cabinet of Turkish language was founded at Vilnius University in 1997.

A few years later, in the academic year 2001 Turkish started being taught for BA degree students of Arab and Persian languages as the second foreign language. The same year BA degree program of Lithuanian philology and foreign (Turkish) language was launched in the department of Lithuanian Philology of Vilnius University. Students of this program were graduated in the year 2005, the same year Vilnius University announced call for applications for the same program. The third stream of students expected to become specialists of Turkish language were accepted to this program in 2009.

In parallel with this philological program, in 2008 a new BA degree program in Turkology studies was started at the Centre of Oriental Studies. Yet, if above mentioned program aims to prepare specialists of Lithuanian philology with knowledge of Turkish language, the main objective of the program launched in 2008 is to prepare qualified specialists with a broad spectrum of academic knowledge in the field of Humanities.

Though number of students finished the BA studies of Lithuanian philology and foreign (Turkish) language is nearly 30, what is a comparatively high number for a small Lithuania's market, only one of them – Justina Pilkauskaitė Kariniauskienė – works in the field of translations from Turkish language. Another part of graduated students have ventured into the fields of journalism or administration.

Currently there are only a few specialists of Turkish working in the field of translations. They are as follows:

- Galina Miškinienė (Vilnius University, Institute of the Lithuanian Language) – translated literary works: O.Pamuk's *The Black Book* (2005) and Ayşe Kulin's *Sevdalinka* (2006).
- Natela Nasibova (currently surname is changed into Statkienė) (Vilnius University) – translated one scholarly work: *Guide to Turkish Language – a Pocket Dictionary for Traveler* (2009).
- Halina Kobeckaitė (Lithuania's ambassador in Finland) –translated one literary work from Turkish: Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *The Wren*.
- Justina Pilkauskaitė Kariniauskienė – translated literary works: O.Pamuk's *Istanbul: memories and the city* (2009) and O.Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence* (2010).

Concluding remarks

The first translation made directly from Turkish into Lithuanian appeared only a few years ago, in 2005. Up to that date the majority of Turkish literature's translations were made via Russian as an intermediary language and just an insignificant part was translated via English. One of the reasons, why in the flood of translated books translations from Turkish still capture a marginal place, is a long lasted absence of translators and scholars able to prepare qualified specialists of Turkish language. Even though due cooperative attempts of university and Turkish embassy in Lithuania there were prepared specialists of Turkish, only a scattering of the is working in the field of translations. On the other hand, despite cultural dialog and the fact that Turkey is in the top of the most popular touristic destination, its culture still remains poorly known for a wide audience of readers. This is one of the main reasons why publishers, who are profit organizations, avoid taking risk of publishing translations from Turkish. Costs of human and financial resources to promote unpopular literature may be too high in comparison with

obtained financial profit. Yet, it seems that to publish a book translated from Turkish is a kind of prestige. This presumption derives from the fact that despite difficulties in promoting Turkish literature, a few the most prolific Lithuania's publishers have issued at least one translation from Turkish. Still, the number of publications is quite insignificant, as well as division between genres. A significant portion of the genres falls to novels as it is mostly requested type of literature in the market. Yet fiction is a small part what could be translated from Turkish. Religious, philosophy and classic arts, based on deep-rooted history of the Ottomans still is unknown for potential Lithuanian reader. To fill the gap of genres and topics publishers should seek for productive collaboration with social partners, various cultural and political institutions as well as seek for alternative fundraising means and not ignore translators as they may have critical insights and prized suggestions.

Appendix

The bibliography of translations from Turkish to Lithuanian in the period 1989 – 2010

Translations of Turkish literature:

1. Güntekin Reşat Nuri, Čiauškutė [*The Wren*]; from Russian translated by B.Puodžiukaitis, Vilnius: Valstybinė grožinės literatūros leidykla, 1960.
2. Güntekin Reşat Nuri, Čiauškutė [*The Wren*]; from Russian translated by B.Puodžiukaitis, Vilnius: Valstybinė grožinės literatūros leidykla, 1961.
3. Kantrybės akmuo: turkų pasakos [*Stone of Patience: Turkish tales*]; from Russian translated by Petras Velička, Vilnius: Vaga. 1965.
4. Orhan Kemal, Įstumta į bedugnę [*Thrown to Abyss*]; from Russian translated by A.Baliulienė, Vilnius: Vaga 1967.
5. Hikmet Nazym, Lyrika [*Lyrics*]; from Russian translated by Vytautas Bložė, Vilnius: Vaga, 1969.
6. Nesin Aziz, Čiki čiki bam: feljetonai [*Columns: Chiki-chiki-bam*], from Russian translated by V.Žilinskaitė, Vilnius: Vaga, 1972.
7. Derviš Suadė, Fosforinė Dževrijė [*The Phosphoric Suede*]; from Russian translated by D.Lenkauskienė, Vilnius: Vaga, 1979.
8. Kantrybės akmuo: turkų pasakos [*Stone of Patience: Turkish tales*]; from Russian translated by Petras Velička, Vilnius: Vyturys. 1986.
9. Turkų pasakos [*Turkish tales*], from Russian translated by P.Velička, Vilnius: Okto-Piligrimas, 1991.
10. Asena Indži, Lyrika [*Lyrics by Inci Asena*]; translated by Algimantas Bučys, Vilnius: [s.n.] 1993.
11. Güntekin Reşat Nuri, Čiauškutė [*The Wren*]; from Russian translated by B.Puodžiukaitis, Vilnius: Asveja, 1993.
12. Güntekin Reşat Nuri, Čiauškutė [*The Wren*]; from Russian translated by B.Puodžiukaitis, Kaunas: Aušra, 1993.

13. Orhan Kemal, Įstumta į bedugnę [*Thrown to Abyss*]; from Russian translated by A.Baliulienė, Vilnius: Varnas 1994.
14. Derviš Suadė, Fosforinė Dževrijė [*The Phosphoric Suede*]; from Russian translated by D.Lenkauskienė, Vilnius: Varnas, 1994.
15. Pamuk Orhan, Juodoji knyga [*The Black Book*]; from Turkish translated by Galina Miškinienė, Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2005.
16. Gülen M. Fethullah, Klausimai islamui [*Questions and Answers about Faith*]; from English translated by Migle Jurkuvienė, Vilnius: Dialogo kultūros institutas, 2005.
17. Sala: 10 Kipro poetų [*The Isle: 10 Cyprian poets*]; arranged and translated by Dalia Staponkutė, Vilnius: „Baltų lankų“ leidyba, 2006.
18. Kulin Ayşe, Sevdalinka [*Sevdalinka*]; from Turkish translated by Galina Miškinienė, Vilnius: Kronta, 2006.
19. Serdar Özkan, Rožės balsas [*The Missing Rose*]; from English translated by Ema Bernotaitė, Vilnius: Svajonių knygos, 2008.
20. Pamuk Orhan, Juodoji knyga [*The Black Book*]; from Turkish translated by Galina Miškinienė, Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2008.
21. Güntekin Reşat Nuri, Čiauškutė [*The Wren*]; from Turkish translated by Halina Kobeckaitė, Vilnius: Alma littera, 2008.
22. Universalus turkų kalbos vadovas: [parankinis keliautojo žodynelis] [*Guide to Turkish Language – a Pocket Dictionary for Traveler*], from Turkish translated by Natela Nasibova, Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2009.
23. Pamuk Orhan, Stambulas: prisiminimai ir miestas [*Istanbul: Memories and the City*]; from Turkish translated by Justina Pilkauskaitė, Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2009.
24. Pamuk Orhan, Nekaltybės muziejus [*The Museum of Innocence*]; from Turkish translated by Justina Pilkauskaitė, Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2010.

Bibliography

1. Skreliūtė Danute, Knygų leidyba Lietuvoje 1990-2002 metais ir Lietuvos mokslų akademijos bibliotekos fondai [*The Lithuanian Publishing during the Period of 1990-2002*

and the Stock of the Library of the Lithuanian Science Academy], In: Bibliotekos rinkiniai ir kolekcijos [Selections and Collection of Library], Vilnius, 2002. Pp. 81-86.

Lietuvos spaudos statistika 1990-2009 [*National Statistics of Lithuania's Press 1990-2009*], editors: Markevičienė Rita, Tamulynienė Laima, Vilnius: Nacionalinė Martyno Mažvydo biblioteka [*National library of Martynas Mazvydas*], 1990-2009.