

***Turkish Literature in Bulgarian Translation
1990-2010
A study commissioned by the Next Page Foundation***

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I. Introduction

The first translations made from Turkish (more precisely from Ottoman Turkish) into Bulgarian were mostly of administrative texts and legislation from the period in which Bulgaria was still part of the Ottoman Empire. They served pragmatic purposes making the contacts of the Bulgarian population with the Turkish institutions more adequate.

During the 19th century, marked with the struggles of the Balkan nations for ecclesiastical and political independence, there was an increase of translations both in number and in quality. In this period translations of fiction and journalistic works appeared, including historical compositions, song books, fairy tales, etc, and last but not least – Turkish-Bulgarian dictionaries, textbooks and grammar books.

In the last quarter of the 19 century and the first half of the 20 century translations of administrative texts written in the Ottoman Turkish language still dominated (in translation by Diamandi Ichiev, Petar Miatev, Galab Galabov, and D. Gadjanov). They came in response to the need of "transfer" of the administrative information from the previous (Ottoman Turkish) to the present (Bulgarian) official language. This coincided also with the establishment of the Bulgarian studies in the Ottoman and Altaic languages and culture. The latter made possible the first "genuine" professional translations from Ottoman Turkish language. Among them (in 1901) came out the translation of the drama *Poor Child* by one of the founders of the new Turkish literature Namık Kemal (1840-1888). About a decade later a poetic anthology *Flowers from all Fields* was published, compiled by Ivan Andreichin. It presented poems by some Turkish modernist from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century - Abdülhak Hamid and Recaizade Ekrem, as well as poems by the reformer of the Turkish poetry - Tevfik Fikret (1867-1915). The poetry collection of the latter *Horizont and a Crescent* was published only just in 1967 in translation by Gülçin Çeşmecieva, Grigor Lenkov, Simeon Vladimirov, et al.

During the two World Wars most translations of Turkish writers were coming out as series in periodicals. Such is the case with the novel *Mother of Raik*, published in *Mir Magazine*, by one of the prominent Turkish woman writers Halide Edib Adivar (1885-1964), as well as many poems by Nazım Hikmet (1902-1963), published in the *Nakovalnia Magazine*. In 1931 the same fate shared the *The Wren* novel by Reşat Nuri Güntekin (1889-1955), published as a serial in *Zora* newspaper (in translation by B. Achkov). This translation came out only nine years after it was written, and quickly became one of the most read professional translations of Turkish fiction. Its success among readers' audience led to its publishing in a single edition in 1944, in translation by Vladimir Vladimirov.

Although after the Second World War Bulgaria and Turkey were divided by the Iron Curtain, owing to the "Balkan line" of the cultural policy in both countries, to translators of the rank of Parashkev Parushev, Donka Melamed, Stefka Parvanova, and Stefan Velikov, and to the efforts of the biggest at the time publishing houses (*Narodna Kultura* in Sofia, *Hristo. G. Danov* in Plovdiv and *Georgi Bakalov* in Varna), Bulgarian readers had the chance to know the names and some popular works of nearly all important Turkish authors.

In the 50-ies of the 20 century translations of Turkish literature in Bulgaria appear primarily in the pages of periodicals but single publications also come out like the novels *The Devil in Us* and *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* by Sabahattin Ali, and *İnce Memed* by Yaşar Kemal.

During the 60-ies were published three novels depicting the rural life in Turkey by Orhan Kemal (1914-1970), two novels by Reşat Nuri and Fakir Baykurt (1929-1999), *Zübük*, *Under the Shadow of the Car* by Aziz Nesin (1915-1995), as well as short story collections by Haldun Taner

(1915-1986), the Turkish "Chekhov", Sait Faik (1906-1954), Nevzat Üstün (1924-1979), and also the anthology *Turkish Short Story* (1966). Turkish poetry of the 40-ies was presented in the anthology *Tripod* including poems by Orhan Veli, Melih Cevdet Anday and Oktay Rifat.

In the 70-ies social issues continue to dominate in the selection of works for translation - *The Clown and His Daughter (Sinekli Bakkal)* by Halide Edib, *Bitter Tobacco* by Necati Cumali, *Is Yaşar Living?* by Aziz Nesin, etc.

The decade of the 80-ies in Bulgaria is marked in its second half by the so called "Revival Process"¹. In a sense it has been defining to the number of publications and their selection. While the first half of the period features plenty of authors, genres and titles, among which most impressive is the *Selected Works* in four volumes by Nazım Hikmet, in the period between 1986 and 1990 there is a sharp decline and not a single title to give an idea about the literary developments in contemporary Turkish literature. The only exception are two novels by Çetin Altan and Adalet Ağaoğlu.

II. Data and statistic about the publishing and translation market in Bulgaria

Right after the fall of the communist political regime in 1898 Bulgaria witnessed a boom in publications of foreign literature works in Bulgarian translation. It came as a direct effect of readers' interest towards Western authors whose works were banned for decades on end, but also towards religious texts which were almost missing before 1898. The significant increase in the print runs of translations during the first five years – from 1990 to 1995 - bypassed Turkish literature which had to wait for its lucky hour that came only after a Turkish writer was awarded the Nobel prize in 2006.

The exorbitant demand for foreign language literature in Bulgarian translation and the lifting of the restrictions on private business ventures resulted in the establishment of scores of new publishing companies, some of which had 1 to 2 titles in their portfolio.

Between 1990 and 2008 in Bulgaria were published annually about 3000 to 6000 books and counting with each year, while the print runs went down, as shown in Table 1.²

Table 1: Number of titles and print run of books and booklets, published between 1990 and 2008.

Year	Titles	Print run (thousands copies)
1990	3412	47074
1991	No available data	No available data
1992	4773	53677
1993	5771	55356

¹ „Revival process” is the common name of the policy of forceful assimilation of Bulgarian Muslim population undertaken by the ruling Communist Party in the 70s and throughout the 80s, and including replacement of personal names with “Bulgarian” or “Slavic”- sounding ones, imposing restrictions on the use of Turkish language in public and on Muslim religious practices and rituals.

² Source: National Statistical Institute (1990-2008).

1994	5925	42746
1995	5400	32085
1996	4840	20317,3
1997	3773	10416,8
1998	4863	11873,9
1999	4791	10438,3
2000	5027	9363,2
2001	4984	6567,1
2002	6018	5616,2
2003	5511	4483,5
2004	6432	4286,1
2005	6029	30917.1
2006	6562	4137.6
2007	6648	4797
2008	6767	4646

The share of translations of foreign language literature between 2001 and 2008 is at an average of 24% of the total number of published books.³

Table 2: Number of translations, print runs, and percentage of the total number of published books

Year	Titles		Print run (thousands copies)
	Number	Percentage	
2001	1292	25,9%	2959,6
2002	1440	23,9%	1753,8
2003	1357	24,6%	1588,0

³ Source: National Statistical Institute, 2001-2008.

2004	1461	22,7%	1427,9
2005	1244	20.6%	1229.7
2006	1765	26.9%	1639.9
2007	1656	24.9%	219
2008	1633	24,1%	1885

In the last few years (and probably also in the two decades after 1990) foreign literature is translated into Bulgarian mostly from English. The next popular languages are German, Russian, and French. They have traditionally strong positions on the market of foreign literature in Bulgarian translation, and these data do not come as a surprise. Rather unexpected is the number of translations from "less popular" languages to which the Modern Turkish language belongs.

Table 3: Number of foreign literature titles translated into Bulgarian, (2001-2008)

Year	Eng.	Sp.	It.	Ger.	Russ.	Pol.	Fr.	AGk.	Hung.	Cz.	Others
2001	772	13	20	124	93	6	82	15	3	9	49
2002	791	23	43	117	91	11	108	13	11	9	106
2003	737	14	19	146	87	7	97	17	4	4	81
2004	768	11	31	98	104	7	124	22	15	5	85
2005	684	20	21	63	101	8	89	20	8	4	73
2006	929	22	31	104	197	8	107	19	5	15	90
2007	962	19	24	104	166	11	103	10	7	10	105
2008	854	97	1	5	136	44					13

Between 2001 and 2008, the share of works of Turkish literature in Bulgarian translation is comparatively small in comparison to translations made from West European languages. Although in the table above they are included in the column "Others", their number (69) is competitive to that of the translations from Hungarian (53), and Czech (56) languages⁴.

III. Translations from Turkish into Bulgarian for the period 1990 – 2010

⁴ No data is available for translations from Hungarian and Czech for 2008.

General statistics and data about books by genre

Таблица 4: Number of Turkish titles in Bulgarian translation by genre and year

Year/ Genre	Religion	Humanities	Reference	Fiction	Poetry	Children's Literature	Drama	Total
1990	1							1
1991		1			1			2
1992		3	1	1		3		8
1993	1							1
1994	2	1		1		1		5
1995								0
1996	1							1
1997		1						1
1998	1				1			2
1999					1			1
2000		2		1				3
2001								0
2002	5	3						8
2003		2						2
2004	2	1		3	1			7
2005	4	1			1	1		7
2006	4	1		2	1			8
2007	6			4	2		1	13
2008	7	2		10	1	4		24
2009				13				13
2010	2			23	2			27

Total	36	18	1	58	11	9	1	134
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The source of data included in this table is a bibliographical research done particularly for the needs of this survey. Unfortunately, the National Statistical Institute can provide rather incomplete data for some years and literary genres only, or data that does not correspond to the real situation in the publishing and translation business.

In the process of compiling the comprehensive bibliography were made inquiries about the available titles in the catalogues of the "St.St.Cyril and Methodius" National Library (SCMNL) and the interesting Index Translationum (Index). According to data of the SCMNL the number of translations from Turkish into Bulgarian is about 60, while those from Bulgarian into Turkish are 24. The same figures according to the Index are respectively 28 and 12. All cited figures have an approximate accuracy due to the rather inefficient management of the catalogues of the biggest public library in Bulgaria.

Data in this table show that between 1990 and 2010 in Bulgaria were published about 134 book translations from Turkish into Bulgarian. Translations from Turkish included in collections with translations from other languages are not included in this number. For the same period, translations from Bulgarian into Turkish are about 80. Although a rather modest number, we should not underestimate its value.

In conclusion, we would like to note that while there is a tendency towards increase in number of translations from Turkish into Bulgarian, there are also years with no editions at all. Recently the number of publications grew rapidly and in the months to come this trend is expected to continue.

Book publications by genre:

Holy texts and theology

Since the changes in the political regime in Bulgaria, the acute shortage of religious literature which continued for over fifty years has been temporarily satisfied with a number of new editions, most of which were translations of Christian holy texts from English, and of Islamic religious literature from Turkish and Arabic. As the period was characterized with general economic dropdown and lack of whatever coordination and planning of the translations of foreign language literature, almost all translations from Turkish were selected and published with the financial support of foreign religious foundations in their efforts to attract followers among local population. Such are the *Roza* Foundation, *Ahmet Davudoğlu* Foundation for Friendship and Brotherhood, and *İrşad* Foundation. This certainly does not mean that they publish low quality literature or defend radical religious beliefs. Examples of such publications are the works of the eminent Turkish philosopher and religious figure **Fethullah Gülen**. Beginning with his *The Horizons of Faith*, published in 1996, in the next almost 15 years **he becomes the most widely translated and published in Bulgaria Turkish author**. A new work of Gülen is published roughly every two years. Most of the above mentioned titles are collections of religious talks (presented to the reader as questions and answers) on particularly disputed, or hot topics for modern Muslims. In the form of questions and answers are presented the *Uncertainties Bred by Our Times*, translated by Sami Nuri. The above mentioned works succeed to receive the approval of the academic as well as of governing political circles. This is a unique phenomenon due less to the content of Gülen's works (otherwise deserving attention) than to the fact that the "Bulgarian" recognition of Gülen came about a decade after the West European acknowledgment. The latter was prompted by the understanding that Gülen upholds

the principles of the 'moderate Islam' which call Muslims and people of all world religions to begin a dialogue denying all forms of violence and constraint. It is not by chance that the work of Gülen *Towards Global Civilization of Love and Tolerance* was published in 2008 not by Roza Foundation or by the little known publishing companies *Dunav 94* and *Brother* (which published also the rest of the works by Gülen in Bulgarian translation) but by the large TRUD Publishing House which had already produced more than 900 Bulgarian titles and foreign literature works in Bulgarian translation. With the exception of the first translated work of Gülen *The Horizons of Faith* in Bulgarian translation by Süleyman Hafiz, the rest of the translations are made by nonprofessional translators who work as journalists for *Ümit* Magazine (Mehmed Ömer, Sami Nuri), and *Zaman–Bulgaristan* Newspaper (Vasfi Tasimov, Seycan Karani). *Ümit* Magazine and *Zaman–Bulgaristan* Newspaper are the two main publications of the followers of the religious and political beliefs of Fethullah Gülen in Bulgaria. Both of them are bilingual periodicals.

Other translations made by the followers of Gülen in Bulgaria include *The Holy Qur'an and the Science* (2006), *Golden Pages of the History of Islam* (2007) by Ahmet Şahin and *Dialogue In the Light of the Islam* (2010) by Ahmet Kurucan.

The most active institution in the sphere of translation of religious texts from Turkish into Bulgarian is undoubtedly the Chief Mufti Office in Bulgaria. Most of its publications are very practically oriented and consider the observance of religious rituals: *How to Wake up for the Morning Namaz?* (2008) by Cemil Tokpınar, translated by Salih Halil; *The Fundamentals of Islam – The Concept of Tevhid (Monotheism)* (2008) translated by İzzet Caley; *Eating Pork in the Light of Religion and Medicine* by Asaf Ataseven, translated by Ahmed Yurukov, and *The Wisdom of the Hadj Generation* (2008) by Mustafa İslamoğlu, translated by Süleyman Sıbev. To these we can add also one publication of the Regional Mufti office in Kardjali: *The Fundamentals of Faith and Worship (Ibadet) in Islam - Namaz Hocası* (1998) by Ömer Öztop, translated by Selim Gazi and Bilal Darcan.

The first translation of religious text from Ottoman Turkish into Bulgarian after 1989 was published by the Chief Mufti Office. In 1990 was published, in collaboration with the Committee for the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and Religious Cults to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the translation of the most popular religious work among Bulgarian Muslims – the poem *Mevlûdu Şerif (The Noble Birth Of the Holy Prophet Muhammad)*. The translation of the extremely difficult XVth century poem is the work of Şevket Feyzulla Karasüleyman, but quite often his name is absent in bibliographies or substituted by the name of the then Chief Mufti Nedim Genjev, who is a formal compiler only.

The Chief Mufti Office published two more translations of texts dedicated to the life of the Prophet Muhammad *Hazreti Muhammad (s.a.v)* (2007) by Yaşar Kandemir and *Hazreti Muhammad and the Islamic Society* by Hayati Yılmaz (2008). The topic is taken also by Roza Foundation and the *Ahmet Davudoğlu* Foundation which attest their veneration for the Prophet Muhammad with three publications: the three volume edition *Prophet Muhammad – the Pride of Humanity: Eternal Light* (2005) by Fethullah Gülen and *The Prophet of Mercy Muhammad* (2004) by Osman Nuri Topbaş.

With a few exceptions, both the already mentioned foundations, and the Chief Mufti Office work with translators who have little or almost no experience at all. This is due mostly to the desire to keep the holy Islamic texts under "Muslim" control. The fact that translators need to know Muslim religious terminology, unwonted for the professional translators of the socialist generation, is also taken into account. Unfortunately, this approach leads to another extreme – most of the translations bristle with "terms" like "namaz" (Persian word for "prayer"),

“peygamber” (Pers. for “The Prophet”), “ibadet” (Arabic for “worship”), etc, which the Muslim translators either do not regard as necessary to translate or they can’t do it successfully. Hence, this type of translations become difficult to read or even incomprehensible for the general Bulgarian reader. On the other hand, it should be acknowledged that such irregularities are quite normal for the period of formation of a new, and in it its majority a self-thought, generation of Muslim translators.

In line with the abovementioned titles we should note also some translations published in Turkey: *Introduction to the Study of the Holy Qur’an* (2002), *Briefly about Islam* (2002), *Way to Happiness* (2002), translated by İslam Beytullah Erdi, and *Namaz with Illustrations* (2002) by Seyfettin Yazıcı, translated by Hayriye Süleymanoğlu. Both translators are emigrants from Bulgaria, who considering the common place, year of publication and publishing company, have probably worked on a project of the Turkish Office of Religious Matters in Ankara.

The Bulgarian translation of the last book on the list of religious texts – *The Evolutionary Counterfeit* (2002) by Harun Yahya, is also published in Turkey. The author challenges the Darwin’s theory of evolution with the statement that no fossils of intermediate plant or animal species have been found, while according to Darwin’s theory they should be found in abundance.

Humanities and social sciences

In this group, dominate translations of history books with special focus on the Ottoman Empire under the House of Osman. The official Bulgarian historiography of the 20 century depicts this period simply as grim times and refuses to acknowledge that Bulgarian population with its economic and spiritual life made a significant part of the diverse ethnic population of the Ottoman Empire. The interpretation of historic events is more emotional then strictly scientific one. Since the beginning of the 90-ies, has started a gradual change in the general appreciation of this historic period which resulted in its rediscovery as reflected in the title of one of the translated into Bulgarian works by the popular Turkish historian İlber Ortaylı – *Rediscovery of the Ottoman Empire* (2008). Undeniably, this process was stumulated by the Bulgarian translations of history works like *Rulers of the Ottoman Empire: Sultans of the House of Osman Gazi* (2003) and *The Epoch of Sultan Mehmed II the Conquerer: Studies and Materials* (2000) by the world-famous Turkish Ottoman historian Halil İnalçık.

It’s noteworthy that most of the translations on the bibliography list are made on the initiative of certain academic circles – Evgeni Radushev, Hüseyin Mevsim, Zeynep Zafer – or on personal initiative.

The most significant translation of a historical source for the events of the early and classical period of the Ottoman Empire is *Crown of Histories* (2000) by Sadeddin Hoca. The translation from Ottoman Turkish, the study and commentaries are work of Maria Kalitsin from the Institute for Balkan Studies to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Despite the big number of scientific staff this Institute produced almost no translations from either Turkish or Ottoman Turkish in the last 20 years. The same is valid about the programme of Turkish and Altaic Studies at the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. It recently celebrated its 50th anniversary but cannot boast with a direct contribution to the popularization of Turkish culture and literature in Bulgaria in modern times while it is the very acadademic unit which could be highly instrumental in raising the quality of translations from and into Turkish.

Fiction

Classical and contemporary fiction

Statistical data about the book market in the last ten years show a gradual growth in the rate of Turkish fiction in Bulgarian translation. While in the first years after 2000 dominate translations of religious works and modern Turkish poetry and prose are included mainly in literary collections addressed to more demanding reading audience, after 2006 the works published as a separate publication increase as seen from **Table 3**.

Fifty titles of Turkish fiction in Bulgarian translation have been published since 2000. The market of translated Turkish literature became much stronger after 2008. Most of the translated works came out thanks to the participation of Bulgarian publishing companies in the TEDA project of the Turkish Ministry for Culture and Tourism. The latter supports the promotion of Turkish literature abroad.

The group of translators from and into Turkish has become too varied in the last few years. Besides the doyens like Gülçin Çeşmecieva, Rozia Samuilova, Yordanka Bibina, Kadriye Cesur, Hüseyin Mevsim, Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş, Jana Zhelyazkova, new translators start working - Rüstem Aziz Mümin, Menent Şukrieva, Emilia Draganova, Panaiotka Panaiotova, İmren Tahsinova, Nahide Deniz, Azis Karakurt, Ayten Delihüseynova, Hubavinka Philipova, Svetlana Grigorova, Paulina Mateeva, and Gülhane Kivanç.

Turkish fiction in Bulgarian translation comes in a wide variety of genres – history novel, love stories, popular history, biographies, and contemporary psychological novel. The original language of translation is Turkish with some works translated through English, French, German, and even Russian.

The most widely published author is Orhan Pamuk with 7 works published after 2000. His main translator is Rozia Samuilova. Only the *Black Book* (Sofia: Narodna Kultura Publishing House, 1990) was translated by Gülçin Çeşmecieva. Pamuk is presented to the reader's audience in Bulgaria by the Ednorog Publishing House. Some of his novels were published after he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature but even before that *The White Castle*, *My Name is Red*, *The Black Book* and *Snow* were already on the book market.

Other Turkish writers with more than one book in Bulgarian translation are:

Reshat Nuri Guntekin with the next edition of *The Wren*, *Leaf Fall* and *From The Lips to the Heart* (the last two novels are sugary family sagas very popular in Bulgaria because of the TV serials produced after the novels of the same name;

Zülfü Livaneli – with *Creeps in the Eye of the Viper* and *Happiness*;

The authors of historical novels Hıfzı Topuz (*Ataturk and Fikrie* and *Do Not Bow Your Head*), Reha Çamuroğlu (*The Last Yanissary*, and *Shah Ismail*); and Solmaz Kamuran (*Esther – A Jewish Woman in the Ottoman Court*, and the *Wind of the Dardanelles*);

The young mystic writer Serdar Özkan who is compared to Ekzuperi and Paulo Coelho – with *The Missing Rose* and *Alongside An Island Of Flowers The Hope Is Hidden*.

Bulgarian market of translated Turkish fiction offers a curious phenomenon, or maybe sets a precedent for the publishing companies: In 2009 two publishing houses appeared to be simultaneously attracted to the novel *Happiness* by Zülfü Livaneli. But while Janet-45 presents the book to the reader in the Bulgarian translation by Hüseyin Mevsim and Ayten Delihüseynova, the *Infodar* Publishing House chose to publish the work in translation by Irina Manusheva through English. This phenomenon brings up an important issue – is it admissible to

translate a literary work not from the original language in which it was written but through another foreign language?

The serious presence of women writers in contemporary Turkish fiction set a noticeable trend. Among them are Aslı Erdoğan, Elif Şafak, Perihan Mağden, Müge İplikçi, Ayfer Tunç, Oya Baydar, Sibel Türker. Their works came out in the collection *Contemporary Women Prose from Turkey*, published by Janet-45, in Bulgarian translation by Kadriye Cesur and Hüseyin Mevsim. It gives a good idea of what contemporary Turkish novel looks like. *Literary Gazette* in its first issue of 2009 wrote about them the following: "Women writers belong to the youngest generation of Turkish novelists, whose works speak about woman's place in society, sociopolitical changes, assertion of freedom, and the consequences of migration and urbanization."

Among the titles of Turkish authors published in Bulgarian between 1990 and 2010 figure also *Living through the 1970s: Daily Life in Turkey* by Ayfer Tunç, *Love* by Elif Şafak, *Return to Nothingness* by Oya Baydar, *Rapana Man and other stories* by Aslı Erdoğan, *A Woman for Hanging* by Pinar Kür, *From Whom Did We Run Away, Mother?* by Perihan Mağden, *Death of the Poetess* by Sibel Türker, *Latife Hanım* by İpek Çalışlar, *Tales of Istanbul* by Mine Soysal, *The Concubine* by Gül İrepoğlu.

We would certainly not bypass the second edition of the classical work of Halide Edib Adıvar who was the first woman writer of the new Turkey of the 20 century - *The Clown and His Daughter (Sinekli Bakkal)* published by Riva Publishing House in the Bulgarian translation by Gülçin Çeşmecieva. In her works Halide Edib Adıvar portraits strong willed women searching for their independence, who force their way in a conservative society.

Historical novels constitute a separate group within the published Turkish literature after 1990 and they arouse readers' interest with a mix of historical facts and events and a love story. Some of the titles are: *Creeps in the Eye of the Viper* (Balkani Publishing House, translated by Hüseyin Mevsim), *Esther – A Jewish Woman in the Ottoman Court* (Pamet Publishing House, translation by Panaiotka Panaiotova), *The Last Yanissary* (Steno Publishing House, translated by Rüstem Aziz Karakurt), *Ataturk and Fikrie* (Letera Publishing House, translation by Menent Şukrieva), *Latife Hanım* (Uniscorp Publishing House, translated by Nahide Deniz), *The Music By My Bedside* (Kolibri Publishing House, translation by Rozia Samuilova).

Translated Turkish fiction abounds in social topics and family stories. Good examples are: *Leyla* by Feridun Zaimoğlu (Letera Publishing House in translation by Emilia Draganova), *From Whom Did We Run Away, Mother?* by the woman writer and journalist Perihan Mağden who is compared to Jerome Selindger for her sensitive and prematurely wise characters (Riva Publishers, translation by Gülçin Çeşmecieva), *Citizen* by Tahsin Yücel (Uniscorp Publishing House, translation by İmren Tahsinova). Tahsin Yücel is a winner of ten literary prizes among which Balkanika Literary Award for his novel *Skyscraper*. Under the title *Rapana Man and other stories* (Paradox Publishing House, translation by Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş, Hasine Şen) are presented four novels by the successful Turkish woman writer Aslı Erdoğan - *Rapana Man*, *In the Stillness of Life*, *The Diary of a Mad Woman* and *Wooden Birds*; *Prayers Remain* by the young Turkish writer Tuna Kiremitçi (TRUD Publishing House, translated by Paulina Mateeva), *A Woman for Hanging* (Letera Publishers, translation by Yordanka Bibina) by Pinar Kür shows affinity with the West European psychological novel; *The Museum of Innocence* by Orhan Pamuk (Ednorog Publishers, translation by Rozia Samuilova), *Do not Submit* by Hıfzı Topuz (Steno Publishers, translation by Aziz Karakurt) – a documental description of the first political assassination in Modern Turkey.

Classical and contemporary poetry

The only example of classical Turkish poetry translated in Bulgarian is *Since Love Came to Me. Selected Poems by Vagrant poets from XIII-XX c.*, published in 1998 by Zlatorog Publishing House. Sabahattin Bayramov compiled this volume and wrote the foreword and notes, while the translation is the work of a team of six well known Bulgarian translators – Yanko Dimov, Viktor Samuilov, Dobromir Tonev, Sabahattin Bayramov, Hubavinka Philopova, Yordanka Bibina.

After the end of the socialist political regime in 1998, during which in Bulgaria were tolerated mainly left-wing Turkish poets like Nazım Hikmet, began a period of stillness – in the last two decades of the 20 century were published only two volumes of poetry: *I am the one who comes* (1991) by İbrahim Abdülkadir Meriçboyu, translated by Rangel Stamenov and the bilingual edition *Dead Wind* (1999) presenting selected poems by Kemal Özer, translated by Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş. In this period contemporary Turkish poetry was published also in some periodicals like the *Literary Gazette*, etc.

Thanks to the TEDA project and the personal initiative of translators like Kadriye Cesur and Hüseyin Mevsim, during the first decade of the 21 century, and mostly in its second half, the number of poetry books grew up to 8. The selection of writers and works goes away from the stereotypes of the past years and their poetic charge is much stronger and varied. *If I Stop Loving You* by İzzet Kösterelioğlu comes out in 2006; *Time Kisses Everything* by Enver Ercan – in 2007, and *Ash Book* by Özdemir İnce – in 2008. Two years later thanks to the efforts of Kadriye Cesur was published the first volumes of selected poems by the eminent Turkish poets Hilmi Yavuz (*The Evening and the Desert*) and Ataol Behramoğlu (*Once, during one summer*).

In 2005 – 25 years after the last anthology of contemporary Turkish poetry was published in Bulgaria – came out *Bread and stars. Anthology of the 20th century Turkish poetry*. It is compiled and translated by Jana Zhelyazkova. While her efforts in producing this edition fully deserve admiration, some of the translated poems reveal a prose-like features probably because she has a long experience in translation of fiction. Close to an anthology is the collection published by Janet-45 – *Contemporary Turkish poetry* featuring poetic works of Cevat Çapan, Hilmi Yavuz, Özdemir İnce, Ataol Behramoğlu, Ülkü Tamer, Güven Turan) (2007).

Despite the political changes in Bulgaria Nazım Hikmet did not lose his positions among the reading audience. A selection of his works translated by Nickolay Tsonev was published in 2004 under the title of *Lion in an Iron Cage*.

Children's literature

Besides the religious works and books in theology, humanities, fiction, and poetry in 2008 were published 4 books for children. Earlier, in the 90-ies came out 3 books of *Turkish Folk Tales*, a second edition of tales by the Nazım Hikmet *The Cloud Who was in Love*, and in 2005 was published *Tales about Nassretin Hoca*.

Drama works and theatre plays

During the last two decades, only one collection of Turkish drama works has been published in Bulgaria under the title *Contemporary Turkish Drama* (2007), translated by Hüseyin Mevsim. It includes works by Tuncer Cücenöğlu, Civan Canova, Behiç Ak, Özen Yula. The translators' team - Hüseyin Mevsim and Kadriye Cesur translated also a few theatre plays by Behiç Ak – *A Town For One Man*, *Chaos*, *It's Good That You Were Born* by Onur Bayraktar and *Çıcu* by Aziz Nesin.

Other publications

For the sake of clarity, Turkish literature translated and published in periodicals can be divided in texts published in literary periodicals and texts of all genres published in the bilingual periodicals *Zaman-Bulgaristan* weekly newspaper (published since 1992, available also on www.zaman.bg), the party newspaper *Rights and Freedoms* (published since 1990), the monthly magazine *Muslims*, edition of the Chief Mufti Office (available on <http://www.genmuftibg.net/bg/library/downloads/category/1-magazine.html>) which replaced the *Muslims* newspaper. The *Muslims* Magazine has also a 20 pages supplement for children – *Hilal*. To these publications we can add the *Ümit* monthly magazine for the family, children and culture (available on <http://umitdergisi.com>). Since the 90-ies in Bulgaria have been published other similar bilingual editions which existed for different period of time depending on the financial support they had. An example of such periodical is the independent cultural and informational weekly newspaper *Güven-Доверие* published by the foundation of the same name.

Undoubtly the translations of Turkish literature published in literary periodicals are much more important for the present study as the literary periodicals show a relatively steady interest towards such translations. To this group belong *Literary Forum* and *Literary Gazette*, as well as some other magazines in whose pages we find mostly contemporary Turkish literature. Here we shall mention the *Ah, Maria* literary magazine which published in 1996 one of the first translated works by Orhan Pamuk as part of a broader introduction into Turkish literature in a special issue entitled *The Literary Boom of the Balkans*.

“New Turkish Poetry and Fiction” is the motto of the first issue of *Literary Balkans* magazine. Translations of Turkish writers appear incidentally in the pages of *Plamuk* literary magazine, *Krag*, *Antimovski Han*, *Panorama*, *Prostori*.

Translators of Turkish literature (again mostly of contemporary) find a particularly beneficial sphere of action on various Internet sites or even personal blogs. Firstly, we should mention here the literary sites such as <http://litenet.bg/>, www.litclub.com, www.public-republic.com. Remarkable is also the lasting interest in contemporary Turkish literature on the Internet taken by the young poetess Pavlina Kanalieva who observes the publications in printed and Internet media and makes a selection of texts posted on her personal blog (pafka.blog.bg) with proper note of the translator whenever possible.

Quite a few are the cases of translations of Turkish literature through intermediate languages on some blogs. Such are the postings signed by *gumbert* on the new site for fiction www.hulite.net – for example the translation of a poem by Orhan Veli Kanik (<http://hulite.net/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=55399>).

Apparently such publications could pass unnoticed during the work on this study but they have their undeniable role not only in filling gaps but also in gaining new reading audience of Turkish literature and culture showing unbiased attitude towards foreign literature and otherwise.

To this group belong series of collections presenting different aspects of the literature of the East, published by students and lecturers from the Centre for Eastern Languages and Studies at the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. We shall note here the meticulous attention to the issues of translation and style evident in the publications, due to the academic background of the participating translators.

Translations from Bulgarian into Turkish

The number of translations from Bulgarian into Turkish is 80 altogether. It is considerably smaller than that from Turkish into Bulgarian. The reason lays in the lack of strong financial incentive for Bulgarian institutions (Ministry for Culture, private foundations, etc.) to support translation projects, but also in the insufficient promotion of Bulgarian culture in Turkey. Turkish publishers direct their attention to Bulgarian literature only incidentally and mostly thanks to the personal efforts of translators, or because of chance contacts made during international writers' meetings or book fairs.

Paradoxical as it is, part of the translations of Bulgarian literature published in Turkey between 1990 and 2010 present works which in that same period ingloriously fell into oblivion. We are speaking of the literature from socialist times, which despite the collapse of communism enjoy its true fans in the least expected place – in neighboring, yet capitalist Turkey.

The descendants of Mitka Grabcheva certainly have no idea that in 1990 in Istanbul came out the 18th edition of her book *In The Name of the People*. Nor do the heirs of Georgi Karaslavov know about the 11th edition of his novel *Partisan*. Seven years after the embalmed body of the legendary communist leader, Georgi Dimitrov was taken out of the Mausoleum and cremated, and two years before the Mausoleum was officially demolished to clear the memories of the "murky" past, Burhan Arpad published the first edition of his translation of *Geogri Dimitrov – Son of the Working Class* by Kamen Kalchev. Burhan Arpad is also the translator of the timeless novel by Dimitar Dimov "Tobacco", which was reissued twice in the 90-ies: the 10th edition was in 1991, and the 11th – in 1998. The above-mentioned publications were produced by non-commercial left-wing publishing companies.

Most widely published were "classical" Bulgarian authors - the poet Nikola Vaptsarov and the novelists Elin Pelin, Chudomir, Yordan Yovkov (who is highly respected for the character of Sali Yaşar from *The Song of the Wheels*), and Yordan Radichkov.

Theatre plays by Ivan Radoev, Stanislav Stratiev, Stefan Tsanev, and Hristo Boychev also enjoy popularity. A quick check on Internet forums show that plays like *Miracle*, *Roman Bath*, *The Other Death of Joan of Arc*, *The Wife of the Colonel*, and *The Titanic Orchestra* are topic of discussion for Turkish fans of contemporary Bulgarian theatre.

Children were not forgotten too: the favourite of several generations Bulgarian kids novel *The Incredible Adventures of the Boy Ian Bibiian* by Elin Pelin was published by the Evrensel Publishing House. We can also add to it *The Young Izo Mizo* by Angel Karaliichev (1999).

As ethnic Turks comprise a considerable part of Bulgarian population, in socialist times there was a practice to produce translations of Bulgarian literature into Turkish for "internal use". In the last 20 years, only one Bulgarian publisher - Janet-45 Print and Publishing Company – worked on a project for publishing the works of Bulgarian authors into Turkish language in Bulgaria. The initiators of the project called "Spiritual Gate" are Professor Vera Mutafchieva and the enthusiastic owner of Janet-45 Publishers - Bojana Apostolova. Within nearly two years (2006-2008) were published five translations with which the publishers presented Bulgarian literature at the Istanbul Book Fair in 2006. These are: the two short story collections *Women and Planets* (Kadınlar ve Gezegenler) by Anton Baev and *I am Looking for a Wife for My Husband* (Kocama Karı Arıyorum) by Hristo Karastoyanov in the Turkish translation by Hüseyin Mevsim; *A Book for the Bulgarians* (Bulgarlara Ve Bizans'a Dair Bir Kitap) by Petar Mutafchiev, in translation by Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş; the anthology *Ten Bulgarian Women Poets* (10 Bulgar Kadın Şair), translated again by Hüseyin Mevsim, and including works by Bojana Apostolova,

Ekatherina Yossifova, Kristin Dimitrova, Malina Tomova, Miglena Nikolchina, Mirela Ivanova, Nadejda Radulova, Sylvia Choleva, Sofia Nestorova, Valentina Radinska. The last of the five editions is the historical novel *I, Anna Komnena* (Ben, Anna Komnene) by Vera Mutafchieva, translated by Sabriye Ahmedova Tete.

This project was not financially successful but gained the approval of the Turkish Ministry for Culture and Tourism which in the last few years is giving an unflagging support to the projects of Janet-45 Publishers concerning translations into Turkish language.

It makes a good impression that quite a few collections of Bulgarian theatre plays on the list of translated drama works were brought on the stage in Turkey

The most prolific translators from Bulgarian into Turkish are the names we already know - Hüseyin Mevsim, Kadriye Cesur and Hasine Şen, which have scores of published translations of Bulgarian poetry and fiction in Turkish literary newspapers and magazines.

In 2001, the Department of Bulgarian Language and Literature at the University of Ankara published *Anthology of Contemporary Bulgarian Short Story* (Çağdaş Bulgar Edebiyatı Öykü Seçkisi) featuring works by 12 Bulgarian writers: Elin Pelin, Dimitar Talev, Yordan Yovkov, Nikolay Haitov, Angel Karaliichev, Konstantin Konstantinov, Nikolay Foll, Svetoslav Minkov, Chudomir, Georgi Raichev, Emilian Stanev, and Yordan Radichkov.

Contemporary Bulgarian novel is presented to the Turkish reading audience by a few titles only: *Bulgarian Ticket Collector* and *The Black Box* by Alek Popov, *Natural Novel* by Georgi Gospodinov (the three books are translated by Hasine Şen), and *A Ballad for Georg Henych* by Viktor Paskov, translated by Hüseyin Mevsim.

IV. Translations of Turkish authors into Bulgarian through intermediary languages

This kind of translations comprise a relatively small number and are mostly done not through an intermediary language but from texts written by Turkish authors in a language different than their native one. Four titles belong to this group: translated from English are: *History of the Ottoman Empire Classical Age / 1300-1600*. (published in 2002 and 2006) by Halil İnalçık, and *Love* (published in 2010) by the best-selling Turkish author Elif Şafak. In translation from German comes *Layla* (published in 2008) by Feridun Zaimoğlu. Translated from French is the work of the grand-granddaughter of Sultan Mourad V, Kenize Mourad - *Regards from the Dead Princess: Novel of A Life* (2008).

Still there are cases when with available original text in Turkish the publisher has decided to make the translation through some of the more popular languages. This is usually the English language. This is the case with the two novels published by Bard Publishing House – *The Lost Rose* (2008) and *Alongside An Island Of Flowers The Hope Is Hidden* (2010) by the Turkish writer Serdar Özkan whose popularity is higher abroad.

This approach has some explanations which are probably quite appropriate not only for the translations of Turkish authors. Usually, for the Bulgarian publisher is quite difficult to find a translator from the original language of the literary work, or he may prefer to take advantage of a low-paid translator, from more popular language such as English. Another possible explanation is that the translator himself suggests a translation from language other than the original one.

V. Working conditions and training of translators from Turkish into Bulgarian

The increased interest in Turkish literature in Bulgaria in the last few years led to a boom in translations of Turkish authors. This phenomenon is positively influenced by the TEDA Project

of the Turkish Ministry for Culture and Tourism for financial support and promotion of Turkish literature abroad. It results, however in an imbalance of demand and offer of translations from Turkish – many titles selected for publishing are assigned to a few professional translators and mostly to beginners. This imbalance has positive as well as negative effects. As positive can be regarded the increased translator's fee per standard page of text in Turkish language, compared to the usually highly paid translations from more frequently used languages such as English, French, German, and Russian. We need to mention though, that now there is no fixed fare to assist beginner translators and publishers when negotiating their fee. Publishers take advantage of this situation as it allows them to work within a broad range of translator's fees (differing in "times"). Translators frequently contract their work under two contracts – one with the real fee and another with a higher fee which is intended for the sponsoring organization. This "compromise" is negotiated in advance between the translator and the publisher. It benefits the publication itself, as foundations often finance only one of the budget items – the translation, the printing costs, or the book launch. As the translation (paid by West European rates) comprises the highest sum, publishers understandably apply for it. Upon approval, the sum for translation is allocated among all other budget items. In this way, the publisher does not take any financial risk and from the moment of receiving the subsidy for translation, he is, so to say, on the safe side and gains profit which increases with the eventual sales of the book. This fact explains the unnaturally high percentage (of the total number of published books) of subsidized translations. From a formal point of view, this practice could be regarded as "negative" but it is born by the very real danger that the published title will not have enough sales to cover the expenses. An entirely different question is that in cases of translations which become best sellers publishers would not pay royalties to the translator. Contracts rarely include a clause providing for the translator to receive a percentage of the sales. When such clause exists, the translator has no mechanism to control either the book print run or the number of actual sales. Copyright claims or granting copyright on a translation is not a usual practice in Bulgaria.

The number of actively working translators from and into Turkish is 90 and they are listed below in alphabetical order by first name.

A: A. Apostolov, Ahmed Yurukov, Alexander Vezenkov, Ali Hayraddin, Alina Karahanova, Ayser Ali, Ayten Delihüseyinova, Aziz Celil, Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş ;

B: Bilal Darcan;

D: Daniela Deniz, Daniela Trifonova;

E: E. Hakova, Ekaterina Solnceva-Nakova (through Russian), Elena Mircheva, Emanuela Ivanova, Emilia Draganova (through German), Emilia Karahanova, Emilia Maslarova (through English), Emilia Slavkova, Emine Bayraktarova, Erdal Alova, Evgenii Radushev;

G: Gülçin Çeşmecieva, Gülhane Kıvanç;

H: Hasine Şen, Hayriye Süleymanoğlu Yenisoy, Hubavinka Philipova, Hüseyin Mehmed Hoca, Hüseyin Mevsim;

I: I. Georgiev, Irina Saraivanova, İmren Tahsinova, İzzet Calev;

J: Janna Zheliazkova;

K: Kadriye Cesur, Kalina Alexandrova, Katya Nikolova;

L: Liliana Atanasova (through French);

M: Manuela Daskalova, Margarita Dobрева, Maria Begova, Maria Kalitsin, Maria Neikova, Mariana Hristova (through English), Maya Dimitrova, Mehmed Antovski, Mehmed Ömer, Memiş Merdan, Menent Şukrieva, Milka Alipieva, Mirela Hristova (through English), Mustafa Hacı, Müjden Mehmedova;

N: N. Mircheva, Nahide Deniz, Necatin Uzunov, Nesrin İsmail, Nikola Robev, Nikolay Tsonev;

P: P. Cholakov, Panaiotka Panaiotova, Paulina Anastasova, Paulina Mateeva, Philip Horozov;

R: Rangel Stamenov, Rozia Samuilova, Rüstem Aziz Karakurt, Rüstem Aziz Mümin;

S: Sabahattin Bayramov, Salih Halil, Sami Nuri, Seycan Karani, Süleyman Hafız(ov)

Süleyman Sabev, Svetlana Grigorova, Svetlozara Kostova, Sylvia Dimitrova, Şevket Feyzulla Karasüleyman (from Ottoman Turkish);

T: Tanya Vironova (through English);

V: Vasfi Tasimov, Vedat S. Ahmed, Vera Perostiiska, Violeta Buzeva;

Y: Yaşar Abdülselamoğlu, Yordanka Bibina, Yordanka Kolarova, Yulia Kirilova;

Z: Zeynep Zafer, Züleyha Hacı.

In the last two decades, in contrast to the preceding socialist times translators from Turkish language have an almost unlimited possibility to master their language skills in Turkey, and meet with the authors whose works they translate.

Professional translators in Bulgaria are trained in the programme of Turkish and Altaic Studies at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. It is a fact though, that for the last 20 years the number of active translators that have graduated this programme is more than inadequate.

VI. Supporting and Mediating Institutions

The strongest mediator and supporter of publishing and dissemination of Turkish literature in Bulgaria is undoubtedly the TEDA Project of the Ministry for Culture and Tourism of Turkey. According to data published on the internet site of TEDA the approved for support Bulgarian proposals for translation are 81, and Bulgaria rises to second place after Germany by the number of Turkish books planned for publishing in Bulgarian translation.

Table 4: Number of approved proposals of the six most active countries under the TEDA Project (2005-2010)

Country	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Germany	3	13	69	41	16	5	147
Bulgaria	-	10	17	24	11	19	81
Iran	-	2	13	14	3	4	36
Egypt	-	-	13	10	5	5	33
USA	14	2	5	4	6	-	31

France	1	5	4	6	11	3	30
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Among the publishing companies which received support for more than two titles are: Steno Publishing House, Centre for Universal Media and Arka Publishing House with 8 books each, Janet 45 Print and Publishing Company (7), Letera and Uniscorp Publishing House, each with 6 books, TRUD Publishing House (4), Ednorog, Paradox, Hermes, and Riva, with 3 books each, and others.

Special merits deserve the few translators whose names appear most often in the bibliography of Turkish literary works translated into Bulgarian (supplement 2) who made the TEDA Project known to Bulgarian publishers.

In the last two years, several private TV companies began to broadcast Turkish TV serials which enjoyed an unparalleled interest amid TV audience. New and new serials were bought and their dubbing gave rise to a new type of translation from Turkish in Bulgaria. As the screenplays of some of the serials are actually modernized versions of well known Turkish novels, the success of the TV serials urged some publishers to publish (or reissue) novels like *Leaf Fall* (Locus Publishing, 2010, translated by Hüseyin Mevsim and Kadriye Cesur), and *From the Lips to the Heart* (Riva Publishing House, 2010, translated by Rozia Samuilova). Both novels are by Reshat Nuri Guntekin. Among the more active translators of Turkish films are Jana Zhelyazkova, Daniela Trifonova, Manuela Daskalova, Tatyana Blagova, Vesselina Radkova and Nadejda Petrova. Their is the translation of the following TV serials: *The Thousand and One Nights*, *Melody of the Heart*, *The Proud Asi*, *Perl*, *Tears Over the Bosphorus*, *Little Women*, *The Wolf Valley*, etc.

Even if indirectly, TV serials influence positively the readers' interest in Turkish literature which subsided between 1985 and 2005.

Regretably the role of libraries, quite frequent book fairs, literary readings and media information is quite insufficient, especially if compared to the effect of the TV serials. We should note however the Janet 45 Print and publishing company which very enthusiastically promotes Bulgarian literature in Turkey through its translation and publishing initiatives but also by making possible the participation of Bulgarian writers and poets in the annual Istanbul Book Fair like some poets, presented in the anthology *Ten Bulgarian Women Poets*. Georgi Gospodinov and Alek Popov were present at the launch of the translation of their works in Turkey on the initiative of their Turkish publishers. On the other hand, such type of communication between Turkish authors and their reading audience in Bulgaria are not lacking either, even if quite incidental. Pamet Publishing House presented actively the Turkish writer Solmaz Kamuran and her novel *Esther – A Jewish Woman in the Ottoman Court* consecutively in the town of Burgas, Plovdiv and Sofia. In 2009 Ciela Publishing House organized a book launch of the political thriller *Touching the Sultan* by Hakan Yel, translated by Alina Karahanova, at the *Helikon* Bookstore in the presence of the author. In its turn Uniscorp Publishing House presented in Plovdiv *Latife Hanim* by İpek Çalışlar in the Bulgarian translation by Nahide Deniz. The book launch was attended by the author and its translator.

How useful and insufficient are such initiatives was proved by the readers' interest to the series of events in Sofia in the summer of 2010 entitled "Turkish Literature on the Way to Europe". They were organized as part of the Cultural Bridges programme of the Goete Institute and involved Turkish poet Özdemir İnce, the writer Müge İplikçi and the translator Kadriye

Cesur. The fact that such events attract audience despite their incidental appearance indicates on one hand to unsatisfied needs, and on the other to unused opportunities for establishing of contacts and bridging cultural gaps.

VII. Assessments and Recommendations

Quality of translations

In the last 20 years, translations lacked proper editing. This is a serious breach of the tradition and practice of translations. After state publishing houses fell apart, the experienced editors literally “fell overboard” the book market and are badly missed until now.

Publishing companies en masse work without editorial services either because they save money or because they work with small teams in a family type business. Some big publishing companies have a huge production and their editorial staff cannot cope with it.

We already mentioned the varied and long (over 50 names) group of translators from Turkish who in the last years translate mainly fiction. Quite a few of them are commissioned to do a translation mainly because many publishers take as granted the language proficiency if the translator is an ethnic Turk. However, language proficiency by itself is not guarantee for a talent and skills in translation. This approach leads to some “distortions” in the translation either because the translator does not have a good knowledge of Bulgarian or because he translates word for word phrases that bear a peculiar meaning. This leads to obvious mistakes, incomprehensible phrases, and combinations of words. The result is an unsatisfactory translation.

Smaller publishing companies often can not afford to work with well known translators and instead commission the work to personal acquaintances and less experienced translators. Yet, some of the titles, object of this analysis are commissioned to debutants which explicably put even more questions to these translations.

Some Bulgarian translators from Turkish reveal an insufficient knowledge of subtleties and particular features of the language which affects the overall mood of the literary work and the way it sounds in Bulgarian.

Translations of holy texts abound in transliterated terms which make the reading and apperception of the text more difficult for the reader. This speaks of an ambition to make the translation more competent by using specific terms but the result is a clumsy text full of confusing word and phrases.

All these affect negatively the quality of translations from Turkish into Bulgarian and lower the professional standards.

Quality of Publications

In the last ten years, Bulgarian publishing industry overcame the “infantile disorders” of the 90-ies when the frantic publishing activity after the democratic political changes was accompanied by chaotic layout of the publications. Yet, we could point to a few shortcomings.

Presently many publishing companies have an artist in their team and their production has a recognizable face. Yet, there is another practice: to commission the layout of the book cover separately from the design of the whole book, to a chance artist. Hence, the publishing company does not create lasting relationships with a particular artistic team and this is damaging to the quality of the book design. Even big publishing companies are not particularly

keen on a good book cover and set store by commercial or too schematic, easily “digestible” design made up of a mix of cliché images or processed photos.

Another “soft spot” of the poligraphy is the unnecessary “meddling with” ill-matched or inappropriate fonts, using fonts with unsuited size or mixing mutually exclusive (from a designer’s point of view) fonts. This is evident not only in the layout of historical novels which attempts to find a formal likeness between the font and the historical epoch, but also in contemporary literary works which seldom find their satisfactory visual interpretation through the fonts of the book cover. There are instances of completely baffling book covers using an image which has nothing to do with the subject matter of the work. This happens when the artist is excessively ambitious to interpret certain work in an abstract visual language and go away from a figurative reading.

Among the publishing companies which can take pride in the layout of Turkish fiction are Riva PH, Ednorog PH, Janet 45 Print and publishing company, Steno PH, Kolibri PH, Balkani PH, etc.

A brief overview of the non-fiction publications in the last 20 years gives the impression that the shortcomings here are even more apparent. The layout of non-fiction books either accentuates the historical aspects and the historical characters or plays with the stereotypes of the mass reading audience about certain country. The problem is even more pronounced in the religious, historical, political or economical publications of foundations. As foundations do not usually hold publishing activities as a priority, part of their publications goes astray of the professional standards of book design.

Recommendations:

To ensure a better quality of translations the financing institutions should exercise a more effective control over the publishing companies. Some weaknesses could be spotted by seeking the opinion of a linguist in the particular language, and if the rate of “technical defects” is higher than usual, the subsidies should be reallocated to other publishing companies.

Supplement 1

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