

Translation as remembrance: Translating from minority languages in Turkey

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My paper will focus on some publishing houses established by “minority communities” in Turkey after the 1990s that focus on translated – as well as original – literature from and into minority languages. The main argument of my paper will be that the recent publications, among them literary translations, by these minority publishers help the survival (Bassnett 2003) and revival of a multiethnic and multilingual Ottoman/Turkish past in the collective memories (Assmann 1995). In order to shed light onto this past, a specific time span from the Ottoman period to the early years of the Republic, the paper will first look at the position of minority languages and discuss the language policies in Turkey during the Republican era from a historical perspective. It will then focus on literatures written in minority languages and the translation activities between Turkish and these languages. Special emphasis will be given to some publications -in original as well as in translation- by the Armenian publishing house Aras that have “remembering” as one of their main motives. By focusing on some literary translations of Armenian works remembering a period of a multiethnic and multilingual coexistence, I will discuss the ways in which these works are reframed (Baker 2006) into the realities of the current Turkish context.

References:

Assmann, Jan. 1995. Collective Memory and Cultural Identity. *New German Critique* 65: 125–133.

Baker, Mona. 2006. *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account*. London and New York: Routledge.

Bassnett, Susan. 2003. Translation as Re-membering. In Edric Caldicott & Anne Fuchs, eds., *Cultural Memory: Essays on European Literature and History*, 293–309. Oxford: Peter Lang.