

Title: “¡Oh, incomprensivo inglés!” - translation, censorship and self-censorship in Gerald Brenan’s *The Face of Spain*

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Summary:

The Face of Spain was published in 1950 and is an account of the English Hispanist Gerald Brenan’s return to Francoist Spain the previous year. It was first translated into Spanish in 1952 and published in Argentina but was not translated or published in Spain until 1985. The proposed talk will first provide an overview of the problem of translating Brenan’s texts in Spain along with the verdicts of Franco’s censors towards these proposed editions. It will then examine the different strategies used by both translators to reproduce some of the uncomfortable views expressed by Brenan about Franco’s Spain and the Spaniards. The 1952 translation had no mission to construct the Brenan myth that later permeated the Transition and was free to faithfully reflect deeply offensive opinions about Spanish culture and the current political situation. On the contrary, the 1985 translator seems to have felt impelled to soften the original author’s frequently offensive comments so as not to spoil the myth of Brenan the anti-Francoist. This second edition was evidently under pressure to sustain an act of literary manipulation towards a supposedly progressive figure who was by then inscribed in the historical memory of the conflict and the post-war. Therefore, the talk will examine the response to this translational dilemma and compare it to the very different approach of the first translation which dated from early Republican exile and only sought to denounce the poverty and repression of Franco’s Spain rather than maintain Brenan’s anti-Francoist reputation.