

Janina Schweitzer: The marketing strategies and the generation of publishing plans in Spanish publishing houses with a view to the censorship and economic policy employed during the Francoism (1939-1975)

Publishing houses are business companies and cultural institutions. In dictatorial political systems they are therefore affected by censorship conditions as well as by the economic policy of the government. This thesis analysis how Spanish publishing houses dealt with those outside influences during the dictatorship of General Franco from 1939 to 1975.

To inform about the circumstances for publishing in Franco's Spain, an overview is presented, which details the censorship measures applied during the Franco regime and the economic restrictions that effected the publishing industry. The policy against the book trade was shaped by giving it an exceptional position within the state economy and by its surveillance and control.

The second part of this thesis places a focus on the concrete marketing strategies, worked out by the publishing houses, and the generation of the publishing plans by the publishers, illustrated by concrete examples. To structure these points, they are examined with the aid of the so-called Marketing-Mix. It subdivides the measures of marketing into product policy (including the publishing programmes), pricing, promotion and distribution (placement).

After a short period of high demand for books and the low capacity of the publishing sector immediately after the Spanish Civil War, publishing houses increased in number and therefore had to deal with competition and overproduction. Well thought-out marketing strategies and publishing programmes became essential if a publishing house were to survive. Taking into account the surveillance and the restrictions for published content, publishing houses had three major possibilities for their orientation: a direction remaining ideologically close to the regime, neutrality or opposition.

The first group could count on government support but was confronted with less demand during the social changes that began in the 1960s. Neutral publishing houses generally accounted more for customer's demand and reacted more flexibly to changes in public taste and opinion. Their wide-ranging and balanced programmes made them less vulnerable to single censorship interferences. Some of these publishing houses could strengthen their market position by active marketing measures.

Oppositional publishing houses encountered big problems with censorship and were not able to achieve a considerable market position until the mid 1960s. Even then they often had economical problems. Their boom period was short and ended soon after Franco's death when public interest in political publications declined.

Some of the factors that characterized the Spanish book trade during the Franco years are still typical today, such as alternative distribution channels, direct sales etc. Most of today's important publishing houses which nowadays form big corporate groups had their basis at this time.