An early Spanish version of Virginia Woolf’s “Time Passes”.

The publication history of Virginia Woolf’s To the Lighthouse has always received special attention due to the author’s decision to publish the central part, “Times Passes”, in French translation in 1926, a year before the complete novel appeared in English. Since then there have been many translations of this text, as the excellent fourth edition of B. J. Kirkpatrick’s Bibliography of Virginia Woolf (1997) shows. According to this bibliography, the first Spanish translation of “Time Passes” was published in Sur (Buenos Aires, Argentina) in 1938 under the title “Pasa el tiempo”. The entry for this item (D190.1) informs us that the translation was “presumably” made by Antonio Marichalar, the translator of the first edition of To the Lighthouse in Spanish (Buenos Aires, 1938).

After reading both texts, there is no doubt that Marichalar is the author of that translation of “Time Passes”. However, this is not the first rendering of the piece into Spanish. An earlier version of “Time Passes” was published under the title “El tiempo pasa” in Revista de Occidente, Madrid, Vol. 31, No. 93, marzo 1931, pp. 283-97. Although the translator’s name is not given, this early text is very different from Marichalar’s, and three complete sections are missing (1st, 5th and 10th). It is a suggestive version which predates the Argentinian article by seven years and also comes before the first known text by Woolf in Spanish, which was thought to be Jorge Luis Borges’s translation of A Room of One’s Own, published in a series of articles in Sur (Buenos Aires, 1935-6).

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