

## THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION IN THE CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT OF UZBEKISTAN: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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**Abstract:** This article provides an in-depth exploration of how translation studies have developed in Uzbekistan, outlining the modern difficulties and future opportunities in the field. It highlights the valuable role of the nation's historical translation legacy, which acts as a bridge between the past and the future and supports the growth of scientific and educational approaches to translation. Translation is described as an essential tool for revealing cultural identity — a process visible throughout history, as renowned Uzbek scholars have greatly shaped the formation of translation studies as a separate academic area.

**Keywords:** translation studies, Bayt al-Hikma, cultural exchange, translation heritage, Central Asian scholars.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqola O'zbekistonda tarjima tadqiqotlarining rivojlanishini chuqur tahlil qilib, sohadagi zamonaviy qiyinchiliklar va kelajakdagi imkoniyatlarni yoritadi. Unda mamlakatning tarixiy tarjima merosi alohida ahamiyatga ega ekanligi ta'kidlanadi. Bu meros o'tmish va kelajak o'rtasida ko'prik vazifasini bajarib, tarjima sohasida ilmiy va ta'limiy yondashuvlarning shakllanishiga xizmat qiladi. Tarjima madaniy identitetni ochib beruvchi muhim vosita sifatida tasvirlanib, tarix davomida mashhur o'zbek allomalari tarjimashunoslikning mustaqil ilmiy yo'nalish sifatida shakllanishiga katta hissa qo'shgani alohida qayd etiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** tarjimashunoslik, Bayt al-Hikma, madaniy almashinuv, tarjima merosi, Markaziy Osiyo allomalari.

**Аннотация:** В данной статье проводится глубокий анализ развития переводоведения в Узбекистане, раскрываются современные проблемы и будущие перспективы этой области. Подчеркивается ценность исторического переводческого наследия страны, которое служит связующим звеном между прошлым и будущим и способствует развитию научных и образовательных подходов к переводу. Перевод представляется как важнейший инструмент раскрытия культурной идентичности, что прослеживается на протяжении всей истории. Выдающиеся ученые Узбекистана внесли значительный вклад в формирование переводоведения как самостоятельной академической дисциплины.

**Ключевые слова:** переводоведение, Байт аль-Хикма, культурный обмен, переводческое наследие, ученые Центральной Азии.

In today's world, translation studies have become both a relevant and indispensable aspect of global processes that involve mutual understanding and cultural interaction. As societies change rapidly, the reduction of language barriers strengthens the function of translation as an essential bridge connecting different cultures, nations, and communities. This field serves as a driving force for communication, enabling not only the spread of knowledge but also the strengthening of relationships among various civilizations. This sphere holds particular significance in Uzbekistan, where the tradition of translation represents not merely a collection of scholarly works, but a living thread that unites cultural heritage with the modern era. Each year, Uzbekistan increasingly advances along the path of scientific translation, discovering new possibilities for international cooperation and intercultural exchange. In the age of globalization, when the world is becoming more interconnected than ever before, it is important not only to preserve and continue translation traditions, but also to adjust them to contemporary demands. This includes training qualified translators,

developing innovative teaching methods, and fostering cultural links that can contribute to a more harmonious and understanding global community.

The beginnings of translation history in the East can be traced back to the 9th century, when the renowned scholarly institution Bayt al-Hikma (The House of Wisdom) was founded in Baghdad under the patronage of Caliph al-Ma'mun al-Rashid. This center became the most important intellectual platform for the development of science and philosophy in the Arab world. Among the scientists and philosophers working at the Academy were many representatives from Central Asia, which emphasizes the importance of the region for the scientific progress of that time. Within the framework of Bayt al-Hikma, work was actively carried out on translating many works from various languages, such as Greek, Hebrew, Sanskrit, Syriac and Persian, into Arabic. These translations covered a wide range of topics, including philosophy, science, literature and ethics, and played an important role in the dissemination of knowledge and deepening intellectual exchange between cultures. The activities of the Academy not only contributed to the preservation and development of ancient knowledge, but also contributed to the creation of a foundation for the further development of Islamic and world science, exerting a long-term influence on the intellectual tradition. Furthermore, among the greatest scholars who had a profound influence on the development of translation in Central Asia, the great scholar Al-Beruni (973–1048) stands out in particular. He not only had extensive knowledge in various fields, but also deeply studied languages such as Greek, Sanskrit, and Syriac, actively using them to work with texts and translate. Al-Beruni, along with such outstanding thinkers as Al-Farabi (873–950), Ibn Sina (980–1037), and Mahmud of Kashgar (1028–1101, 1126), played an important role in the development of world scientific traditions and civilization.

These scholars are considered to be among the pioneers in the field of translation, and their contribution to world science and culture is of great importance. They contributed to the development of such disciplines as mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, linguistics and natural sciences, while actively translating scientific and

philosophical works from Greek, Sanskrit and Persian into Arabic. Their work not only enriched the Arabic scientific tradition, but also ensured an important cultural exchange that contributed to the dissemination of knowledge between different civilizations. Since ancient times, Uzbek people, with their rich cultural tradition, were already familiar with outstanding works of oriental literature translated into their native language. These works have become an integral part of the cultural heritage and history of Uzbekistan. Translation is closely related to the development of Uzbek science and culture. Literary heritage was replenished with new themes, plots and images thanks to translation. That is why the study of issues related to the history of translation is important for restoring the development of Uzbek literature and its relationships with the literatures and cultures of other peoples.

This center became a key intellectual hub for the advancement of science and philosophy in the Arab world. Numerous scholars and thinkers from Central Asia worked at the Academy, highlighting the region's significant role in the scientific progress of that era.

Alongside other notable thinkers—Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina and Al-Beruni contributed significantly to the growth of world scientific traditions and human civilization. These scholars are regarded as early pioneers in translation studies, and their contributions to global science and culture remain highly influential. They advanced disciplines such as mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, linguistics, and the natural sciences, while also translating scientific and philosophical texts. Their efforts enriched the Arabic scholarly tradition and facilitated vital cultural exchange, enabling the spread of knowledge across different civilizations.

Since ancient times, the Uzbek people, with their rich cultural traditions, have been familiar with outstanding works of Eastern literature translated into their native language. These texts have become an essential component of Uzbekistan's cultural heritage and historical identity. Translation has always been closely connected to the growth of Uzbek scholarship and cultural development. The literary treasury expanded with new themes, narratives, and images through the process of translation. Therefore,

researching the history of translation is crucial for reconstructing the evolution of Uzbek literature and understanding its connections with the literatures and cultures of other nations.

As a result, the development of translation theory in Uzbekistan began to gain momentum in the latter half of the 20th century. This progress was spearheaded not by literary critics or linguists, but by skilled translators who were directly engaged in practical translation work. Among the remarkable figures who made notable contributions to the advancement of translation practice in Uzbekistan are Jumanazar Sharipov, Sanjara Siddiq, Ibrahim Gafurov, Mikhail Salye, Amonzhan Muminov, Nosir Kambarov, and others. Their efforts played a crucial role in shaping and strengthening the translation tradition within the country. From the 1940s to the 1990s, a cohort of skilled translators and translation theorists emerged in Uzbekistan, whose contributions greatly shaped the progress of this field. Gaibulla Salomov (1932–2000) played a pivotal role in establishing and advancing the Uzbek school of translation. Under his scholarly guidance, the school strengthened the theoretical and practical foundations of translation in the country and helped cultivate an entire generation of experts.

Even at FIT (International Federation of Translators) symposia held under the auspices of UNESCO, highly appreciative remarks were made about the Uzbek school of translation. It was noted that “a translation school has emerged in Uzbekistan that can compete with the leading centers of translation studies in the former Soviet Union and beyond.”

Researchers from this school conducted extensive studies on both universal and language-specific aspects of translation theory, placing particular emphasis on improving translation quality. Their works carefully examined translations from Russian into Uzbek and vice versa, as well as translations from related languages—such as Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Tatar, Turkmen, Azerbaijani, and Karakalpak—as well as from Persian, Tajik, Arabic, Hindi, and Chinese into Uzbek. Central attention was

given to conveying meaning accurately and ensuring the highest possible standard of translation.

A notable development since the 1990s, following Uzbekistan's independence, has been the rapid expansion of direct translation from foreign languages—especially English—which marked an important stage in the evolution of translation work in the country. Independence created wide opportunities for the advancement of translation and all forms of artistic creativity. This allowed Uzbek translators and writers to enter the global arena, helping promote national culture and literature on the world stage.

In conclusion, this is a process that encourages the pursuit of new meanings and values, stimulating a desire to share knowledge and ideas. As a result, translation continues to be a vital element of intellectual and cultural development, enabling the country not only to preserve its individuality but also to take an active role in global cultural and scientific dialogue. All of this highlights the significance of translation as a fundamental component of cultural identity and international cooperation. Ultimately, through translation, we gain access to understanding the world and, in return, help introduce our world to others.

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