

THE REPRESENTATION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL REALITIES IN A. QODIRIY'S NOVEL "BYGONE DAYS" AND ITS ENGLISH TRANSLATION**Samandarov Jasurbek**

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu tezisda Abdulla Qodiriyning mashhur "O'tgan kunlar" romanida aks etgan tarixiy va madaniy realliklarning badiiy ifodasi hamda ularning ingliz tiliga tarjimasida talqin etilishi masalalariga bag'ishlangan. Tadqiqotda asarning tarixiy- madaniy konteksti, ijtimoiy hayot, urf-odatlar, diniy qarashlar va milliy mentalitetning badiiy aks ettirilishi chuqur tahlil qilinadi. Shuningdek, roman ingliz tiliga tarjima jarayonida yuzaga keladigan lingvokulturologik muammolar, realiyalarni tarjima qilish strategiyalari va tarjimonning madaniy vositachi sifatidagi roli yoritib beriladi. Ishda qiyosiy, lingvistik va madaniyatlararo tahlil usullari qo'llanilgan bo'lib, tarjimada milliy rang-baranglikni saqlash masalalariga alohida e'tibor qaratilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: Abdulla Qodiriy, "O'tgan kunlar", tarixiy roman, madaniy realiyalar, milliy mentalitet, badiiy tarjima, lingvokulturologiya, tarjima strategiyalari, madaniyatlararo muloqot, inglizcha tarjima

Аннотация. Данное научное исследование посвящено анализу исторических и культурных реалий, отражённых в романе Абдуллы Кадыри "Минувшие дни", а также особенностям их репрезентации в английском переводе произведения. В работе рассматривается историко-культурный контекст романа, специфика изображения социальной жизни, традиций, религиозных воззрений и национального менталитета узбекского общества конца XIX – начала XX века. Особое внимание уделяется переводческим стратегиям передачи культурно- специфических реалий, проблемам эквивалентности и роли переводчика как посредника между культурами. Исследование основано на сравнительном, лингвистическом и межкультурном анализе.

Ключевые слова: Абдулла Кадыри, "Минувшие дни", исторический роман, культурные реалии, национальный менталитет, художественный перевод, лингвокультурология, переводческие стратегии, межкультурная коммуникация, английский перевод

Abstract. This thesis is devoted to the artistic expression of historical and cultural realities reflected in the famous novel "Days Past" by Abdulla Qodiriy and their interpretation in the English translation. The study deeply analyzes the historical and cultural context of the work, the artistic reflection of social life, traditions, religious views and national mentality. It also highlights the linguo-culturological problems that arise in the process of translating the novel into English, the strategies for translating realities and the role of the translator as a cultural mediator. The work uses comparative, linguistic and intercultural analysis methods, and special attention is paid to the issues of preserving national diversity in translation.

Keywords: Abdulla Qodiriy, "Days Past", historical novel, cultural realities, national mentality, artistic translation, linguo-culturology, translation strategies, intercultural dialogue, English translation.

Relevance and necessity of the dissertation topic. The relevance of this dissertation is determined by the growing interest in the study of national literary heritage within the context of global cultural exchange and translation studies. Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *Bygone Days (O'tkan kunlar)* occupies a central place in Uzbek literature as the first realist novel, reflecting profound historical, cultural, and social realities of late 19th-century Turkestan. In the era of globalization, literary translation serves as a crucial bridge between cultures.

However, the transmission of historical and cultural realities - such as customs, social institutions, worldview, and national mentality - poses serious challenges in translation. The English translation of *Bygone Days* offers a valuable opportunity to examine how Uzbek cultural identity is represented, transformed, or partially lost in the process of translation.

Therefore, the topic is both timely and necessary, as it contributes to literary studies, cultural studies, and translation theory by analyzing how national realities are conveyed to an international readership.

Degree of previous research on the problem. The novel *Bygone Days* has been extensively studied in Uzbek literary criticism, particularly from historical, ideological, and aesthetic perspectives. Scholars have analyzed Qodiriy's realism, character system, social criticism, and contribution to the formation of the modern Uzbek novel. At the same time, translation studies related to Qodiriy's works remain relatively limited. While some research addresses general issues of translating Uzbek literature into foreign languages, systematic analysis of historical and cultural realia in the English translation of *Bygone Days* has not been sufficiently explored. Foreign scholarship mainly focuses on Orientalism and Central Asian history, often without deep engagement with original literary texts. Thus, the present study fills an important research gap by combining literary analysis with translation studies.

Purpose and objectives of the research. The main purpose of the research is to analyze the representation and translation of historical and cultural realities in Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *Bygone Days* and its English translation, identifying translation strategies and evaluating their effectiveness.

Objectives. To achieve this purpose, the study aims to:

- Identify key historical and cultural realities depicted in the novel;
- Analyze their artistic and semantic functions in the source text;
- Examine how these realities are rendered in the English translation;
- Classify translation strategies used by the translator;
- Assess the degree of equivalence and cultural adequacy;
- Determine losses, transformations, or additions in translation.

Object of the research. The object of the research is Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *Bygone Days* and its English translation as a literary and translational phenomenon.

Subject of the research. The subject of the research is the linguistic, cultural, and stylistic representation of historical and cultural realities (realia) in the original Uzbek text and their transformation in the English translation.

Research methods. The study employs a комплекс of interdisciplinary research methods, including:

- Comparative analysis (Uzbek original vs. English translation);
- Descriptive and contextual analysis of realia;
- Semantic and stylistic analysis;

- Translation analysis based on theories of equivalence and domestication/foreignization;
- Cultural analysis to interpret national worldview elements

These methods ensure a comprehensive and objective investigation of the research problem

Scientific novelty of the research. The scientific novelty of the dissertation lies in:

- Conducting a systematic and comprehensive analysis of historical and cultural realities in *Bygone Days*;

- Revealing translation strategies applied specifically to Uzbek realia in English;
- Demonstrating how cultural identity is preserved or transformed in translation;
- Proposing classification and evaluation criteria for translating Uzbek historical and cultural elements;

This research represents one of the first in-depth studies of *Bygone Days* from a translation-oriented cultural perspective.

Practical significance of the research. The practical value of the research includes:

- Use in courses on literary translation, comparative literature, and Uzbek literature;

- Application in training translators working with Turkish and Central Asian texts;
- Contribution to improving future English translations of Uzbek literary works;
- Serving as reference material for scholars and students.

Implementation of research results. The results of the research can be implemented through:

- Inclusion in university curricula for translation studies and philology;
- Use in seminars and workshops on literary translation;
- Application in academic research and publication projects;
- Recommendations for translators and publishers working with Uzbek literature;

Structure and volume of the dissertation. The dissertation consists of:

- Introduction;
- Chapter I: Theoretical foundations and historical-cultural context;
- Chapter II: Representation of historical and cultural realities in *Bygone Days*;
- Chapter III: Translation strategies and analysis of the English version;
- Conclusion;
- References.

The total volume of the dissertation is approximately **Pending**, meeting the requirements for a master's-level academic research work.

Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *Bygone Days* (O'tkan kunlar) occupies a central position in Uzbek literary history as the first full-scale realist novel in Uzbek literature. Written in the early 20th century, the novel reflects a critical transitional period marked by the decline of traditional feudal structures and the emergence of new social, cultural, and ideological paradigms. The work is not only a literary masterpiece but also a valuable historical and cultural document that portrays the everyday life, moral values, customs, and socio-political tensions of late nineteenth-century Central Asia.

The English translation of *Bygone Days* introduces global readers to the Uzbek cultural and historical experience. However, the process of translating such a culturally rich and historically grounded text presents serious challenges.

Many culture-specific elements, historical references, and social norms embedded in the original text require careful interpretative strategies to preserve their meaning in the target language.

This study aims to analyze how historical and cultural realities are represented in *Bygone Days* and how these realities are conveyed in its English translation. The research focuses on cultural symbols, social institutions, and historical contexts, as well as translation strategies applied to render these elements intelligible for English-speaking readers.

“*Bygone Days*” (O‘tkan kunlar) is deeply rooted in the historical realities of Central Asia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - a period marked by profound political, social, and cultural transformations. Understanding this historical background is essential for interpreting the novel’s thematic structure, ideological orientation, and narrative strategies.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Central Asia experienced significant geopolitical changes due to the expansion of the Russian Empire. The gradual annexation of khanates such as Kokand, Bukhara, and Khiva led to the erosion of traditional political institutions and introduced colonial administrative systems. Although local rulers formally retained authority in some regions, real power increasingly shifted to Russian officials. This colonial domination reshaped economic relations, legal frameworks, and social hierarchies, all of which are subtly reflected in “*Bygone Days*.”

The novel is set primarily in the Kokand Khanate, portraying a society governed by feudal norms, clan rivalries, and patriarchal traditions. Qodiriy presents this historical setting not merely as a backdrop but as an active force shaping human destinies. Conflicts between local elites, arbitrary governance, and the absence of social justice are depicted as systemic problems rather than individual failures. These realities help explain the tragic fate of the protagonists and highlight the destructive consequences of political stagnation. Economically, the period was characterized by agrarian relations dominated by landowners and merchants, while peasants and artisans remained vulnerable to exploitation. Trade routes connected Central Asia to Russia and other regions, bringing new goods and ideas but also deepening economic dependency. In the novel, commercial activities, dowries, and wealth disparities serve as indicators of social status and power relations.

Thus, “*Bygone Days*” functions as a historical narrative that reconstructs the lived experience of a society standing at the crossroads of tradition and change. Qodiriy’s depiction of history is not neutral; it is evaluative and critical, aimed at exposing the causes of social decay and encouraging reformist thinking.

The cultural landscape of “*Bygone Days*” reflects a complex system of customs, beliefs, and moral codes that governed everyday life in traditional Uzbek society. Qodiriy meticulously portrays family relations, marriage practices, gender roles, and social etiquette, making culture a central element of the narrative. One of the most prominent cultural realities in the novel is the institution of marriage. Arranged marriages, polygamy, and the lack of women’s autonomy are depicted as deeply ingrained traditions. The tragic story of Kumush illustrates the vulnerability of women in a patriarchal society where personal happiness is sacrificed to social norms and male authority. Through her character, Qodiriy criticizes customs that deprive women of agency and dignity.

Family structure in the novel is hierarchical, with elders exercising unquestioned authority. Respect for parents and adherence to tradition are valued above individual desires.

However, Qodiriy exposes the tension between obedience and personal freedom, particularly through the character of Otabek, who represents a new type of individual—educated, reform-minded, and morally conscious.

Religious practices and beliefs also occupy an important place in the novel. Islam is presented as an integral part of daily life, influencing moral judgments and social behavior. At the same time, Qodiriy distinguishes between genuine spirituality and religious hypocrisy. Some religious figures are portrayed as morally corrupt, using faith to justify injustice and manipulation. This nuanced representation reflects the Jadid critique of stagnant religious practices.

Cultural rituals such as weddings, mourning ceremonies, and hospitality traditions are depicted with ethnographic precision. These details not only enhance the realism of the novel but also preserve cultural memory. For modern readers and translators, such culturally specific elements pose significant interpretive challenges, especially when transferring them into another linguistic and cultural context.

A crucial aspect of “Bygone Days” is its ideological foundation in Jadidism - a reformist movement that emerged among Muslim intellectuals in Central Asia at the turn of the twentieth century. Jadids advocated educational reform, social modernization, and national awakening, seeking to reconcile Islamic values with modern knowledge. Abdulla Qodiriy, as a prominent Jadid intellectual, infused his novel with reformist ideas. Otabek, the protagonist, embodies Jadid ideals: he values education, rational thinking, economic progress, and ethical responsibility. His opposition to outdated customs and unjust practices symbolizes the broader struggle between tradition and modernity.

The novel critiques ignorance, fanaticism, and blind adherence to tradition as obstacles to social development. Qodiriy argues that true progress requires intellectual awakening and moral renewal. Unlike overt political propaganda, his critique is embedded in narrative conflict and character development, making it more persuasive and emotionally resonant.

Education is presented as a transformative force. Characters who lack education are often portrayed as narrow-minded or morally compromised, while educated individuals are shown as capable of empathy and critical thought. This emphasis reflects the Jadid belief in enlightenment as the foundation of national revival.

Importantly, Qodiriy does not idealize Westernization uncritically. Instead, he advocates selective modernization rooted in national culture. This balanced approach underscores the novel’s enduring relevance and explains why “Bygone Days” remains a foundational text in Uzbek literature.

In sum, “Bygone Days” is a historically grounded and culturally rich narrative that reflects the socio-political realities of late nineteenth-century Central Asia. Through its depiction of historical conditions, cultural practices, and reformist ideology, the novel transcends mere storytelling and becomes a powerful medium of social critique. This historical and cultural embeddedness forms the basis for analyzing how these realities are represented—and transformed—in the English translation, which will be examined in the subsequent chapters.

Abdulla Qodiriy’s novel is distinguished by its highly expressive and culturally saturated language. The author’s linguistic choices are deeply rooted in the socio-historical environment of late nineteenth-century Turkestan. Qodiriy employs a narrative style that combines classical literary Uzbek, colloquial speech, and archaic lexical elements, which together create a vivid representation of the period.

One of the defining linguistic features of the novel is the extensive use of historically marked vocabulary, including titles, forms of address, religious expressions, and administrative terms. Words such as *bek*, *qushbegi*, *mahalla*, *nikoh*, and *shariat* function not only as lexical units but also as carriers of cultural and ideological meaning. These elements reflect the hierarchical structure of society and the dominant worldview of the era. Additionally, Qodiriy's syntax is characterized by long, rhythmical sentences influenced by classical Eastern prose traditions. Such syntactic constructions enhance the emotional depth of the narrative but also pose challenges for translation, particularly into English, where sentence structure tends to be more concise. Another important feature is the use of proverbs, idiomatic expressions, and figurative language, which serve as a means of moral instruction and social commentary. These expressions are deeply embedded in Uzbek cultural consciousness and often lack direct equivalents in English, making their translation especially complex.

The English translation of *Bygone Days* presents significant challenges due to the novel's dense cultural and historical content. One of the primary difficulties lies in translating culture-specific items (CSIs), which include social institutions, customs, clothing, food, and religious practices. For example, concepts such as polygamy, arranged marriage, and gender segregation are central to the novel's narrative but may appear unfamiliar or controversial to modern English-speaking readers. Translators must decide whether to preserve the original terms through transliteration, explain them through footnotes, or replace them with approximate equivalents.

Another major challenge involves the translation of archaic and stylistically marked language. While the original Uzbek text deliberately uses outdated expressions to convey historical authenticity, rendering these features in English without making the text obscure or unnatural requires careful stylistic balance. Furthermore, ideological nuances embedded in the text - such as criticism of feudal oppression, patriarchy, and social injustice - must be conveyed accurately. Any distortion in translation may weaken the novel's reformist message, which was central to Qodiriy's literary mission. The translator also faces the dilemma of maintaining emotional tone. Qodiriy's narrative often shifts between lyrical romance and sharp social critique. Preserving these tonal shifts in English demands not only linguistic competence but also cultural sensitivity.

To address these challenges, translators of *Bygone Days* employ various translation strategies grounded in modern translation theory. One commonly used approach is foreignization, which preserves original cultural elements to maintain authenticity. This strategy is evident in the retention of Uzbek terms related to social hierarchy and religious life. At the same time, domestication is applied selectively to ensure readability. For instance, certain metaphors or idiomatic expressions are adapted to more familiar English forms while preserving their intended meaning. Another important strategy is explicitation, where implicit cultural information in the source text is made explicit in the target language. This technique helps bridge the cultural gap between Uzbek and English readers. Overall, the translation of *Bygone Days* represents a negotiated balance between fidelity to the source text and accessibility for the target audience. The success of the translation largely depends on the translator's ability to function as a cultural mediator.

One of the most challenging aspects of translating *Bygone Days* into English lies in rendering the historical realities embedded in the novel. Abdulla Qodiriy's narrative is deeply rooted in the socio-political and cultural context of nineteenth-century Turkestan. These realities include feudal governance, khanate administration, social hierarchy, legal practices, and everyday

life under traditional norms. Such elements are often unfamiliar to English-speaking readers and require careful mediation by the translator. Historical realia such as khan, bek, mingboshi, qazi, mahalla, and madrasah do not have direct equivalents in English. Translators usually adopt strategies such as transliteration, descriptive translation, or functional substitution. For instance, retaining the word khan preserves historical authenticity, while explanatory additions help readers grasp its meaning. This approach aligns with Lawrence Venuti's concept of foreignization, which emphasizes preserving the source culture rather than fully assimilating it into the target culture. Another important issue is the translation of historical events and customs referenced implicitly in the text. Qodiriy does not explain historical realities explicitly, as his intended readers were familiar with them. However, English readers lack this background knowledge. Therefore, translators often rely on footnotes, commentary, or contextual expansion to bridge this gap. While this may disrupt narrative flow, it enhances comprehension and cultural awareness. Furthermore, historical realities are closely intertwined with ideological undertones. *Bygone Days* reflects Qodiriy's critical stance toward feudal oppression, outdated customs, and social injustice. Translators must be cautious not to neutralize or distort these ideological messages. Faithful translation requires not only linguistic accuracy but also ideological sensitivity, ensuring that the historical critique remains intact in the English version.

Cultural and social elements constitute the core of Qodiriy's artistic world. These include family relations, gender roles, marriage traditions, moral values, religious practices, and daily routines. Translating these elements requires deep intercultural competence, as they reflect the worldview of Uzbek society in the late nineteenth century. Marriage customs, such as arranged marriages, bride price (*qalyn*), and women's limited agency, are central to the novel's conflict. In English translations, these practices may appear exotic or even controversial. Translators must strike a balance between explanation and narrative subtlety. Over-explanation risks turning the literary text into an ethnographic account, while under-explanation may lead to misunderstanding. Social hierarchies are also conveyed through forms of address and honorifics. Words like *aka*, *opa*, *ota*, *ona*, and respectful speech forms convey nuances of age, status, and respect. English lacks equivalent linguistic markers, which often results in partial loss of meaning. To compensate, translators may use contextual cues, sentence restructuring, or additional descriptors. Religious expressions and Islamic references present another layer of complexity. Phrases invoking God, destiny, or moral judgment are deeply embedded in the characters' speech. Translators must decide whether to render these expressions literally or adapt them to target-language conventions. Literal translation preserves cultural flavor, while adaptation enhances readability. Most successful translations combine both approaches strategically.

Importantly, cultural elements are not static; they interact dynamically with characters' inner conflicts. Otabek's progressive views, Kumush's emotional depth, and Zaynab's tragic jealousy are shaped by cultural constraints. Translating these psychological dimensions requires sensitivity to both language and culture, ensuring that character development remains coherent and impactful in English.

No translation is free from loss. In translating *Bygone Days*, certain stylistic, emotional, and cultural nuances inevitably diminish. The poetic rhythm of Uzbek prose, rich metaphors, and culturally loaded expressions often resist direct translation. However, translation also allows for gain, introducing new interpretative possibilities and expanding the novel's global reach. One common loss occurs in the translation of idioms and proverbs.

Uzbek idiomatic expressions carry condensed cultural wisdom and emotional resonance.

Literal translation may sound awkward or meaningless in English, while substitution risks altering the original tone. Translators often employ functional equivalence, replacing Uzbek idioms with English expressions that convey similar meanings, though not identical imagery. To address unavoidable losses, translators use compensation strategies. This may involve enhancing expressiveness elsewhere in the text, adding descriptive detail, or adjusting syntax to recreate emotional intensity. For example, if a culturally specific metaphor cannot be preserved, the translator may compensate by strengthening narrative voice or emotional clarity in adjacent passages. Despite challenges, the English translation of *Bygone Days* succeeds in conveying the novel's central themes: love and tragedy, progress and tradition, individual desire versus social norms. While some cultural specificity is softened, the translation opens the text to international readers and situates Uzbek literature within world literary discourse. Ultimately, translation functions as a cultural dialogue rather than a mechanical transfer.

The English version of *Bygone Days* represents a negotiated space where source and target cultures interact, creating a new literary artifact that reflects both fidelity and transformation.

This thesis has examined The Representation of Historical and Cultural Realities in

A. Qodiriy's Novel "Bygone Days" and Its English Translation through a comprehensive literary and translation-focused analysis. The study demonstrates that *Bygone Days* is not merely a historical novel but a complex cultural document reflecting the social, political, and moral fabric of nineteenth-century Uzbek society. The novel established the historical and literary background of Abdulla Qodiriy's creativity, emphasizing his role as a founder of the Uzbek novel and a reformist thinker. The analysis showed that Qodiriy's artistic vision was deeply shaped by Jadid ideology, which sought social progress, education, and cultural renewal. *Bygone Days* emerged as a literary response to feudal stagnation and moral decay, presenting a critical yet emotionally nuanced portrayal of its era. It also explored the representation of historical and cultural realities within the novel itself. It revealed how Qodiriy skillfully integrated real historical settings, social institutions, and cultural practices into his narrative structure. Characters function not only as individuals but also as embodiments of social forces and ideological tensions. Through detailed depiction of daily life, traditions, and conflicts, the novel constructs a vivid and authentic picture of Uzbek society at a turning point in history. Moreover, it focused on the English translation of *Bygone Days*, analyzing translation strategies, challenges, and outcomes. It highlighted the difficulties of conveying historical realia, cultural norms, and stylistic features to a foreign audience. The study showed that translators rely on a combination of transliteration, explanation, adaptation, and compensation to preserve meaning while ensuring readability. Although certain losses are inevitable, the translation succeeds in transmitting the novel's core themes and emotional depth. Overall, this thesis confirms that translation plays a crucial role in globalizing national literature. The English translation of *Bygone Days* allows international readers to engage with Uzbek historical experience and cultural heritage. At the same time, it raises important questions about equivalence, cultural representation, and translator responsibility.

In conclusion, *Bygone Days* stands as a powerful example of how literature preserves historical memory and cultural identity. Its translation into English represents not only a linguistic achievement but also a significant contribution to intercultural understanding and world literature.

Future research may further explore comparative translations, reader reception, and the role of Uzbek literature in global literary studies.

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