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# Uzbek Translation of Chinese Literature

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**Abstract:** The traditional friendship between China and Uzbekistan has a long-standing history, deeply rooted in the ancient Silk Road's cultural integration. After more than 2,000 years of development, it has become a precious spiritual heritage passed down from generation to generation by the two peoples. As an important bridge for cross-cultural communication, literary translation and dissemination serve as a core carrier of cultural exchange and mutual learning in China-Uzbekistan bilateral relations, and a key path to enhancing emotional resonance, mutual understanding, and traditional friendship between the two peoples. As a concentrated expression of China's outstanding traditional culture, the translation, dissemination, and reception of Chinese literature in Uzbekistan carry China's historical memory, values, and humanistic spirit, opening a window for the Uzbek people to understand China and promoting in-depth cultural dialogue and positive interaction between the two countries. Meanwhile, this process provides solid cultural support for deepening all-round cooperation and building a closer bilateral relationship between China and Uzbekistan in the new era. Taking the translation and dissemination of Chinese literature in Uzbekistan as the research object, this study explores its communication paths, current development, and contemporary value. It not only enriches research findings on China-Uzbekistan cross-cultural communication and fills gaps in related fields, but also provides theoretical references and practical guidance for improving the quality and efficiency of China-Uzbekistan cultural exchanges and consolidating the cultural foundation of bilateral friendship, with distinct practical value and important social significance.

**Keywords:** Chinese Literature; Uzbek Translation; Value and Significance.

## 1. Introduction

The field of Uzbek translation of Chinese literature is like a cultivated land awaiting intensive farming, calling for researchers to sow high-quality "seeds" and promote its standardized and systematic development. Historically, Chinese literary works have long lacked systematic Uzbek translations, especially modern and contemporary works, which remained largely untranslated. This academic and communication situation makes the integration of translation practice and academic research the key starting point and core innovation of this study.

During the Soviet era, Uzbek translations of Chinese literature were characterized by indirect translation—all versions were rendered from Russian into Uzbek, with no direct translation from Chinese. The number of translated works was limited, focusing mainly on modern and contemporary Chinese literature, including Lao She's City of Cats (translated into Uzbek from Russian in 1996) and selected works by Mao Dun, Ba Jin, and other prominent Chinese writers. These translations served as the main channel for the Uzbek people to access Chinese literature at that time[1].

After Uzbekistan's independence in 1991, Uzbek translation of Chinese literature entered a crucial turning point, breaking away from dependence on Russian mediation and entering a new era of direct Chinese-to-Uzbek translation, with significant improvements in both quantity and quality. In recent years, with the in-depth advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative, Uzbek translation of Chinese literature has entered a golden age of rapid development, producing a number of high-quality and influential translations.

In the field of classical literature, Confucian classics The Analects and Mencius received their first Uzbek editions (chiefly translated by Ilham)[2]; the Taoist classic Tao Te Ching was translated by Ilham; and the classical Chinese short story collection Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio was also directly translated by Ilham, enabling Uzbek readers to engage with the essence of traditional Chinese culture. In modern and contemporary literature, translated works are even more abundant, including both Russian-mediated and direct Chinese translations of Lao She's City of Cats, as well as Uzbek versions of Mo Yan's Alcoholic Country (translated by Nozima Makhmudova)[3], Bi Shumin's short story collections, Qiong Yao's novels, and other works of diverse styles. Furthermore, translation has expanded to reference books and teaching materials: Ilham's Uzbek-Chinese Dictionary (containing over 8,000 entries) and China literature textbooks for Uzbek universities compiled by Sultanova and others have strongly supported the teaching and dissemination of Chinese literature in Uzbekistan[4].

## 2. The Value and Significance of Translation

The development of Uzbek translation of Chinese literature relies on dedicated translators and supportive institutions. Ilham, an Uzbek sinologist, stands as a key figure, having produced the first Uzbek translations of The Analects, Mencius, and Tao Te Ching, laying a foundation for the spread of Chinese classical literature in Uzbekistan. Young sinologist Nozima Makhmudova focuses on modern and contemporary Chinese literature, enriching its Uzbek translations. Scholars such as Bakhtiyor Omon and Elkin Ernazarov were leading figures in the early Russian-mediated period, contributing to the dissemination of Chinese literature in Uzbekistan during the Soviet era. Institutionally, Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies, as a major center for Chinese literature teaching and research, has strongly supported China-Uzbekistan joint publishing projects and participated in the Silk Road Book Project, ensuring steady progress in literary translation between the two languages[5].

Research on Uzbek translation of Chinese literature carries high academic and practical value, mainly reflected in two aspects. On the one hand, it effectively fills academic gaps. Studies on the foreign translation of Chinese literature have mostly focused on major languages such as English, French, and German, while research on Uzbek and other Central Asian minority languages remains scarce. As a Turkic language, Uzbek differs greatly from Chinese in linguistic structure and cultural context, and its translation practice and theory are still in the initial stage. This research fills this gap and provides academic support for China-Uzbekistan literary and cultural dialogue. Additionally, given the shortage of bilingual translators and stark linguistic differences, this study combines practice and research to test translators' competence, apply translation theories, and inform translator training. Examining Chinese literary works in the Uzbek context also explores the translatability and reception of philosophical Chinese texts in non-Chinese cultural spheres, expanding the boundaries of comparative literature and translation studies, and enhancing the cultural soft power of both countries.

On the other hand, it effectively promotes China-Uzbekistan cultural exchange and civilizational mutual learning. As a key country along the Belt and Road, Uzbekistan benefits from enhanced translation and research of Chinese literature, which deepens mutual understanding and cultural identity, provides practical models for Chinese culture's global outreach, and strengthens people-to-people exchanges under the Belt and Road Initiative. Translation is not merely linguistic conversion but cultural transfer. By analyzing the reconstruction of Chinese philosophical texts in Uzbek, this study reveals the cross-border flow of cultural imagery and fosters in-depth dialogue between Chinese and Central Asian civilizations. Such dialogue deepens traditional friendship, builds momentum for a China-Uzbekistan cultural community, and offers a practical blueprint for strengthening bilateral relations between China and neighboring countries.

The traditional friendship between China and Uzbekistan has a long-standing history, deeply rooted in the ancient Silk Road's cultural integration. After more than 2,000 years of development, it has become a precious spiritual heritage passed down from generation to generation by the two peoples. As an important bridge for cross-cultural communication, literary translation and dissemination serve as a core carrier of cultural exchange and mutual learning in China-Uzbekistan bilateral relations[6], and a key path to enhancing emotional resonance, mutual understanding, and traditional friendship between the two peoples. As a concentrated expression of China's outstanding traditional culture, the translation, dissemination, and reception of Chinese literature in Uzbekistan carry China's historical memory, values, and humanistic spirit, opening a window for the Uzbek people to understand China and promoting in-depth cultural dialogue and positive interaction between the two countries. Meanwhile, this process provides solid cultural support for deepening all-round cooperation and building a closer bilateral relationship between China and Uzbekistan in the new era. Taking the translation and dissemination of Chinese literature in Uzbekistan as the research object, this study explores its communication paths, current development, and contemporary value. It not only enriches research findings on China-Uzbekistan cross-cultural communication and fills gaps in related fields, but also provides theoretical references and practical guidance for improving the quality and efficiency of China-Uzbekistan cultural exchanges and consolidating the cultural foundation of bilateral friendship, with distinct practical value and important social significance.

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Research on Uzbek translation of Chinese literature carries high academic and practical value, further deepened by the following dimensions.

First, it advances translation theories and methods. (1) It challenges traditional translation strategies. As a nation of poetry, Chinese literature is characterized by obscurity, poeticity, and philosophicity, posing challenges such as semantic ambiguity, cultural gaps, and rhetorical untranslatability in Uzbek rendering. Despite difficulties, analyzing strategies such as literal translation, free translation, annotation, and cultural substitution enriches theoretical models for literary translation in non-universal languages. (2) It constructs localized translation standards, helping to establish an evaluation system for Chinese literature translation adapted to the Uzbek context, breaking the dominance of Western translation theories, promoting a decentered paradigm, and diversifying translation theory and standards between Chinese and Uzbek.

Second, it supports language teaching and cultural communication. Research findings provide vivid teaching cases for Uzbek and translation majors, enhancing students' cultural sensitivity and linguistic adaptability. Analyzing reader reception also offers empirical evidence and targeted strategies for publishers and cultural institutions to promote Chinese literature in Uzbekistan[8].

Third, it expands the international perspective of Chinese literary studies. Feedback from Uzbek readers helps re-examine the universality and particularity of Chinese literature, driving its internationalization. Placing Chinese literature in the global literary network also explores its meaning reconstruction in non-Western contexts, helping to build a Chinese discourse system and boost its international influence.

# 3. Translation Methods and Strategies

In short, research on Uzbek translation of Chinese literature is not merely a technical study of linguistic conversion but an academic exploration of cross-civilizational dialogue, featuring academic innovation, cultural communication power, and strategic significance. It is vital for promoting Chinese literature's global outreach, deepening Central Asian area studies, and enriching translation theory. For focused research, specifying particular texts or authors is recommended to enhance depth. This endeavor is both a literary translation project and a practice of cross-civilizational dialogue, helping modern and contemporary Chinese poetry enter Central Asia, gain new vitality in the Uzbek-speaking world, and reflect on Chinese literature's self-understanding and global communication.

The innovations of this study lie in three aspects: Marginal breakthrough in non-mainstream languages: Breaking the Euro-American-centric research paradigm, it focuses on Uzbek translation, revealing cultural filtering and variation in translation and offering a new perspective.

Intensive study of niche texts: Exploring culturally or philosophically distinctive works challenges the tendency to prioritize realistic or popular literature, examining translatability limits and creative treason in minority-language contexts. To further the research, diverse approaches and strategies are proposed: Research methods: Integrate ecocriticism and cultural translation studies to analyze cross-cultural transplantation of natural imagery and ecological thought; apply digital humanities and corpus-based methods to quantify linguistic and cultural variation; expand intermedial translation to film adaptation, game localization, and comics.

Translation strategies: Innovate decentered strategies such as cultural compensation and transliteration with annotation; establish a minority-language evaluation framework based on linguistic equivalence, cultural appropriateness, and reader reception; practice thick translation with annotations, prefaces, and appendices for deep cultural interpretation. Belt and Road localized communication: Design targeted strategies aligned with bilateral policies; explore crowdsourced translation and community participation; promote multimodal development of literary IP through film, animation, and digital publishing. Translation methods and strategies also contribute in three ways: Challenging Eurocentrism in translation studies and building a more inclusive global paradigm; Enriching theories of cultural symbol variation and reconstruction in imagology and retranslation studies. Defining translation as a "third space" of cultural negotiation, fostering mutual understanding and identity reconstruction.

# 4. Conclusion

In summary, the research innovations in minority-language translation of Chinese literature lie in the marginality of objects, interdisciplinary methods, localized strategies, practical communication models, and reflection on traditional paradigms. These innovations expand the theoretical boundaries of translation studies, serve the global dissemination of Chinese literature and civilizational mutual learning, and provide academic support and practical paths for effectively telling China's stories to minority-language audiences.

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