

## INTERPRETATIONS OF TRANSLATIONS OF ALISHER NAVOIY'S RUBAIYAT INTO RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH

Alisher Navoiy Rubaiyatlarının Rusça ve İngilizce Çevirilerinin Yorumlanması

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**Öz:** 20. yy. sonu ve 21. yüzyılın başında, kitle sosyal hareketlilik , internet, kültürel değişim ve küreselleşme kültürlerarası edebi iletişim'in önemini ve bu alanda yapılan çevirilerin ne kadar muhim olduğunu göstermiş oldu. Kültürel edebi örneklerden biri Rubaiyat, İran şiir türü, uzunluğu serbest, her bir kitası ikinci ve dördüncü dizeleri tam kafiyelidir. Bu makale, Farsça Tacikçe'den Özbekçe'ye, J. Kamol ve A. Abdulhakim E. Ochilov tarafından tercüme edilen Rubaiyatları inceler .

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** metaforlar , semboller , tasavvuf , ideoloji , iddia , sevgi, özgürlük , adalet , Rubaiyat , ritim , kafije , eksik bilgi

**Abstract:** At the end of 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century, mass social mobility, the internet, cultural exchange and globalisation emphasized the importance of intercultural literary communication and the place of translations done in this field. One of the examples are Rubaiyat, Persian poetry expression, open in length, all made of four stanzas out of which first, second and forth verses all rhyme. This paper examines the Rubaiyat which were translated by J. Kamol, A. Abdulhakim and E. Ochilov from Persian Tadjik into Uzbek.

Makale Gönderim:

09.04.2016

Kabul Tarihi:

10.05.2016

**Key words:** metaphors, symbolize, image, Sufism, ideology, claim, love, freedom, justice, Rubaiyat, rhythm, rhyme, lack of knowledge.

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## Introduction

In his theoretical discourse, Borges presented the translation of poetry as an ambivalent act. For him, translation practice represents highly “idiosyncratic expression, and, inevitably a quotation, both part of the natural order and an overt artifice.” (Tcherepashenets, 2005) According to both Newmark and Baker, translation requires both general and close reading in order to transmit the idea of the original text into a different language. (Newmark, 1988, Baker, 2011)

The main question about translation and especially that of poetry is whether to translate “word for word” or “sense for sense.” (Munday, 2001). Of course, from a linguistic point of view, the strength of words plays a huge role, and the pragmatic meaning often is threatened to be altered if the poetry to be translated has as rhyming scheme.

Cicero outlined his approach to translation in *De optimo genere oratorum* (46 BCE/1960 CE), introducing his own translation of the speeches of the Attic orators Aeschines and Demosthenes. “And I did not translate them as an Interpreter, but as an Orator. In that way keeping the same ideas and forms, or as one might say, the 'figures' of thought in language that conforms to our usage. And In so doing, I did not hold it necessary to render word for word, but I preserved the general style and force of the language.” (Cicero 46 BCE/1960 CE: 364) (Munday, 2001)

Culture-specific concepts can present an issue in translation. (Baker, 2011) However, defining the main idea or message behind the original text and especially, determining its universality, can lead to an acceptable translation, and, in some instances, even better form of the original.

According to Baker, the propositional meaning of the word or an utterance arises from the relation between the particular word and that what it describes. (Baker, 2011) Therefore, translating a piece of text, in this case poetry does not necessarily require the use of the same words. On the contrary, what it requires is to evoke the same feeling as the original text did.

In this study, we have examined several Rubaiyat and their translation into English and Russian, in order to demonstrate that the predisposed meaning of the original text did not lose its value after the translation.

## The Translation of Rubaiyat

Rubai as a poetic expression consists of four lines, which form a couplet. Two types of Rubaiyat are verified. One of them is a “Taronai Rubai”. Its rhyming scheme is [a a a a], where the other kind of Rubaiyat has [a a b a] rhyming scheme. I. Sultan says “rubai has a special form and a peculiar meaning” (6, 256)

A Sufi<sup>1</sup> poet considered that the real way of conveying the true knowledge to humanity was speaking with the usage of symbols and images. Therefore, we come across various stylistic devises, phonetic means, and special notes in the Sufism literature. Mainly, such metaphors are of a nightingale and a rose, moth and candle symbolising the lover and the beloved one. They show the images of a Sufi man who lays claim in justice and trust in God. This justice is expressed by the word “wine”. Prophet or holy clergyman is expressed by the word “wine server”. (4, 171)

Najmuddin Kubro (1145-1221) as other representatives of Sufism religion who dealt with creative activity, wrote Rubaiyat. His poetry helps us to verify outlooks and demands of Sufism ideology. According to his Rubaiyat, being devotee and being in love are two important things for human race. The man in love usually feels pain, but that pain leads him towards Heavens, to God, and makes him be aware of All Mighty Justice.

Najmuddin Komilov in his book “Tasavvuf” gave examples from Kubro’s creative activity, namely from his Rubaiyat which had been shown on page. [1,187]

The source text was written in the Persian, Tadjik language:

Chun ishq ba dil rasaad, dil dard kunad,

Dardi dili mard mardro mard kunad.

Dar otashi ishqı xud biso‘zad v-on gah,

Do‘zax zi baroyi digaron sard kunad.

The translation of the poem to English:

When love is imparted into heart, the heart holds pain,

However, this very pain makes a man be self-made, bold man.

The heart been soaked with its own love, busts into flame,

In addition, overcomes heat of hell, which tortures soul of men.

Translator D. Sultanova could preserve the form, meaning, idea and art of the source text. The poet’s communicative aim was shown clearly. Conceptual words as love, pain, bold, diminish had been completely used in the target text. Mainly such figurative devises as alliteration allusion, which were used by the poet, were re-created nearly on the whole.

If the word “dil” (heart) was repeated three times, the translation of the poem also repeated it three times. The same case was with the word “dard” (pain), which was repeated twice and it was all repeated twice in the target text. If alliteration was given with the sound [d] in the source text, it was given with the sound [h] in TT, rhymed

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<sup>1</sup> Sufism is a mystical dimension of Islam.

words (hold, bold, soul) were given.

Example from Navoiy's Rubaiyat:

G'urbatda g'arib shodmon bo'lmas emish,

El anga shafiqu mehrimon bo'lmas emish.

Oltin qafas ichra gar qizil gul bitsa,

Bulbulga tikondek oshiyon bo'lmas emish.

Philosophic idea is that a man can be happy in his motherland, when he is cared of, loved by his men, and when he is free.

Concept of the above couplet is that nothing is as valuable as freedom.

Translation of this verse was done by K. Mamurov:

A poor is said to be not happy in a strange land,

People are said not to treat him friendly and kindly.

Should there grows a red rose in the cage,

Is said not to make a company like a prickle for nightingale.

The poet emphasizes that even a golden cage in which a red rose is in bloom does not attract the nightingale, and that he prefers the thorn growing in the desert, as here he is free where the nature is taking care of him.

Mamurov could not convey that idea more clearly in his translation, the word "golden" is omitted. The rhymed and measure are not preserved in the target text. There are no rhymed words, radif<sup>2</sup> also is not given.

Translation done by D. Sultanova:

If a needy leaves his birthplace he'd be unhappy,

Lack of his men's care and mercy make him unhappy.

Let a red rose spring in the cage golden, nightingale

Would prefer the thorn in the plain, there he'd be happy.

The form of the source text is preserved, idea is given, radif is also given, rhymed words only in two lines given (golden-plain).

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<sup>2</sup> **Radif** (Arabic: ردیف) is a rule in Persian, Turkic, and Urdu poetry which states that, in the form of poetry known as a Ghazal, the second line of all the couplets (bayts or Shers) must end with the same word(s).“

A red rose, the golden cage, symbolizes living a wealthy life but in slavery. A thorn in the plain symbolises living a poor life but in freedom.

Repetition of the word “happy” makes the poem expressive, emotional and melodious. Alliteration of the sound [m] (men’s mercy, make) and of the sound [r] (red rose), usage of the diphthong [ei] (place, cage, plain) and the sound [a] make the lines smooth, soft, but imparts might into the poem.

Rubaiyat is usually used to express human’s feelings thoughts, adventures, in deep philosophic ideas and in a short poetic genre. Poets with its genre describe a man, his life, meaning of living a life, love and depict the world and the place of a man in this sphere.

The samples of written forms of rubaiyat appeared in Persian-Tadjik Literature in IX-X centuries. Umar Khayyom made a great influence on the development of the classical genre. Alisher Navoiy gave a chance to Uzbek nation to enjoy that form of poetry.

The source text:

Jondin seni ko‘p sevarmen, ey umri aziz,

Sondin seni ko‘p sevarmen, ey umri aziz.

Har neniki sevmak ondin ortuq bo‘lmas,

Ondin seni ko‘p sevarmen, ey umri aziz.

The same rubaiyat was translated by K. Mamurov:

I love you more than my soul, oh, my dear,

I love you more than all numbers, oh my dear.

Loving anything cannot be more than that,

I love you much more than that, oh my dear.

The same rubaiyat was translated into Russian by S. Ivanov too:

Сильней души моей тебя люблю я, жизнь,

Сильней любви своей тебя люблю я, жизнь.

Бывает ведь любовь, сильней которой нету,

И все ж еще сильней тебя люблю я, жизнь!

As it is seen, conceptual words “love to dear life” are not translated clearly, the key word “life” is omitted in three lines. We can say, “We love you more than numbers”,

as power of love has never been counted by numbers. The English reader would understand that plot, as poet's love to his mistress is more than his own love to his soul.

As for the Russian translation, we can say that it was done well, where only the word dear and exclamation word “hey” are omitted.

The poet's communicative aim is preserved in the translation done by Ivanov.

D. A. Sultanova submits her own translation:

O life dear, I love you much, much more than I love my own,  
O life, if love had measure in great numbers my love would be shown.  
Any love cannot make a stand against my deep love to thee,  
O life dear, even grant numbers cannot note my love overall.

In the target text, each line is enlarged in two syllables, and the plot of couplet meaning idea all artistic means is handled. The philosophic idea that the love cannot be measured is shown with the usage of the sentence in subjunctive mood. Repetition of the words “o dear life” is given. Rhymed words are: own, shown, whole. Only instead of repeated word in the end, anaphora is used.

Navoiy was himself life and soul of his society and art, but he loved the life on the earth more than his soul and life.

Another sample of Rubaiyat by Yusuf Amiri:

Till the world exists, in this word Sultan you be,  
Till the earth goes round, on the earth than you be,  
Above the people on Earth shining sun you be,  
For men of yours a good health and fun you be.

(Translation done by D. Sultanova)

## Conclusion

To conclude, the words of Borges that the original is unfaithful to the translation, (Borges, 2000) serve a great sample of what high value even poets have given to the practice of translation. Translating poetry has never been an easy task and the fear of non-equivalence and the loss of the original meaning and word strength is a never-ending battle for both translators and readers.

However, contrary to some critics' argument that poetry “loses” in translation or poetry is “untranslatable”, there others with the opposite standpoint that it can be preserved, illustrated and illuminated if a good job is done, because poetry is in large

part found again and repainted by the translator.

The role of poetry not always is intended only for the language in which it was written, but also for the possible future languages into which that poetry is to be translated. We can prove this standpoint by giving the ST and TT interpreting them and evaluate translators' abilities.

Ruboiy genre in difference of Turkish Literature is peculiar in Persian Tadjik classic Literature. Didactic, philosophic ideas can be given in short form but been soaked with deep meaning with an independent genre. In this short study on this genre, we have shown the beauty of Rubaiyat in all three presented languages.

Therefore, the translation of a poem is both a change and a highly idiosyncratic experience. Translating a poem often means rewriting it, or creating an even better experience.

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