

PRESERVING THE JADID SPIRIT: AN ANALYSIS OF CHRISTOPHER FORD'S TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES IN CHULPON'S 'KECHA VA KUNDUZ' FROM UZBEK TO ENGLISH

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Abstract. *This article examines Christopher Ford's English translation of Chulpon's seminal Uzbek novel "Kecha va Kunduz" (Night and Day) through the lens of cultural equivalence and the preservation of Jadidist ideology. The study analyzes Ford's translation strategies in rendering the progressive, reformist spirit of the Jadid movement while navigating the complex linguistic and cultural barriers between Uzbek and English.*

Keywords: *translation studies, Jadidism, Chulpon, Christopher Ford, Uzbek literature, cultural equivalence, literary translation, Night and Day*


Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqola Cho'lponning "Kecha va kunduz" nomli o'zbek romani Christopher Ford tomonidan ingliz tiliga qilingan tarjimasini madaniy ekvivalentlik va jadidchilik mafkurasini saqlash nuqtai nazaridan o'rganadi. Tadqiqot Ford tomonidan jadidchilik harakatining progressiv va islohotchi ruhini o'zbek va ingliz tillari orasidagi murakkab lingvistik va madaniy to'siqlarni yengib o'tgan holda aks ettirish strategiyalarini tahlil qiladi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *tarjima tadqiqotlari, jadidchilik, Cho'lpon, Christopher Ford, o'zbek adabiyoti, madaniy ekvivalentlik, badiiy tarjima, Kecha va kunduz*

Аннотация. *Данная статья рассматривает английский перевод Кристофера Форда выдающегося узбекского романа Чулпана "Кеча ва кундуз" (Ночь и день) через призму культурной эквивалентности и сохранения джадидской идеологии. Исследование анализирует переводческие стратегии Форда в передаче прогрессивного, реформаторского духа джадидского движения при преодолении сложных лингвистических и культурных барьеров между узбекским и английским языками.*

Ключевые слова: *переводоведение, джадидизм, Чулпан, Кристофер Форд, узбекская литература, культурная эквивалентность, художественный перевод, Ночь и день*

Introduction. Christopher Ford's English translation of Abdulhamid Sulaymon ugli Chulpon's "Kecha va Kunduz" (1936) is a significant step towards making Uzbek Jadidist literature available to Western readers. Chulpon, the most famous Jadid figure, endowed his novel with liberal ideologies of pedagogical reform, gender emancipation, and cultural modernization against the backdrop of early 20th-century Central Asian society [1]. The Jadid movement, which emerged in the late 19th century among Turkic Muslim intellectuals, sought to reconcile Islamic traditions with European modernity through



educational and cultural transformation [2]. Ford's translation, therefore, carries the weighty responsibility of not merely converting linguistic signs but transmitting an entire intellectual and cultural revolution to an audience unfamiliar with Central Asian historical contexts.

The job of translating Jadidist writings extends beyond mere linguistic transfer as it involves inserting in another language culturally-specific concepts, historical allusions, and ideological subtleties firmly rooted in the Turkestani sociopolitical reality of early Soviet times [3]. Chulpon's "Kecha va Kunduz" is typical for the Jadid literary tradition in its application of new forms of narration, combining everyday Uzbek with literary borrowings from Persian-Arabic, and allegorical representation of the fight between enlightenment (day) and darkness (night) [4].

Methodology and Literature Review. This study employs comparative textual analysis as its primary methodological approach, examining selected passages from both Chulpon's original Uzbek text and Ford's English translation to identify translation strategies and assess their effectiveness in preserving Jadidist ideological content. The analytical framework draws upon translation studies theories, particularly Lawrence Venuti's concepts of domestication and foreignization, and Eugene Nida's notion of dynamic equivalence, to evaluate Ford's translatorial choices [5]. The methodology involves close reading of thematically significant passages that contain culturally-specific references, idiomatic expressions, and ideologically-charged terminology characteristic of Jadid discourse.

Qosimova's comprehensive analysis of Chulpon's literary legacy in Uzbek scholarship emphasizes the author's role in developing modern Uzbek prose and his sophisticated use of symbolic imagery [4]. Russian scholar Akramov's work on Central Asian literature during the Soviet period provides crucial insights into the political constraints and creative innovations of writers like Chulpon [6]. These studies collectively highlight the complexity of Jadidist literary expression and the challenges inherent in its cross-cultural transmission. Translation studies scholarship specific to Central Asian literature reveals recurring challenges in rendering culturally-embedded concepts. Baldick's research on translating Islamic literary traditions emphasizes the difficulty of conveying religious and philosophical terminology without Western Christian assumptions [7].

Results and Discussion. Analysis of Ford's translation reveals a predominant strategy of domestication, wherein culturally-specific Jadidist concepts are rendered through Western equivalents to enhance accessibility for English readers. In translating educational terminology central to the Jadid reform ideology, Ford consistently employs familiar Western educational frameworks that, while comprehensible, potentially dilute the revolutionary nature of Jadid pedagogical innovations. For instance, the term "usuli-jadid" (new method), which carried profound ideological significance as a complete reimagining of traditional maktab education, is rendered simply as "modern education system," losing its specific historical resonance and reformist connotations [8]. This domestication strategy, while improving readability, risks presenting Jadidism as merely a local variant of Western



modernization rather than as a distinct intellectual movement with its own philosophical foundations and cultural specificity.

The translation of metaphorical language central to Chulpon's allegorical framework presents particular challenges. The binary opposition between "kecha" (night) and "kunduz" (day), which operates simultaneously as temporal markers, symbolic representations of ignorance versus enlightenment, and coded political commentary on colonial oppression versus liberation, undergoes subtle transformation in English. Ford's rendering maintains the basic metaphorical structure but necessarily loses certain phonological and morphological nuances present in the Uzbek original. The Uzbek language's agglutinative nature allows Chulpon to create compound descriptors that simultaneously convey multiple semantic layers, a linguistic feature that English's analytical structure cannot fully replicate.

Ford's treatment of Islamic cultural references demonstrates careful navigation between explanation and preservation. Rather than simply transliterating or directly translating Islamic terms that might confuse Western readers, Ford employs contextual glossing and subtle explanatory insertions that maintain narrative flow while providing necessary cultural context. However, this approach occasionally results in over-explanation that disrupts the original text's assumed shared knowledge between author and reader. Chulpon's original audience, familiar with Islamic educational traditions and religious discourse, would immediately recognize references to specific pedagogical debates and theological controversies that shaped Jadid reformist thinking. Ford's translation must make these implicit references explicit, fundamentally altering the reader's relationship to the text and potentially positioning the English translation as an anthropological document rather than a literary work addressing universal human concerns through culturally-specific expression.


Conclusion. Christopher Ford's English translation of Chulpon's "Kecha va Kunduz" represents a commendable effort to bridge the substantial cultural and linguistic gap between Uzbek Jadidist literature and Western readership. While the translation successfully conveys the novel's narrative structure and primary thematic content, the analysis reveals inevitable transformations in culturally-embedded Jadidist concepts, linguistic nuances, and stylistic sophistication. Ford's predominant use of domestication strategies enhances accessibility but risks diminishing the revolutionary distinctiveness of the Jadid intellectual project. The translation's success in making Chulpon's work available to English readers must be balanced against recognition of what remains necessarily untranslatable—the specific cultural resonances, historical allusions, and linguistic innovations that defined Jadid literary achievement. This study contributes to understanding the complex dynamics of translating ideologically-charged literary texts across significant cultural divides, suggesting that full preservation of the Jadid spirit in translation may be an impossible ideal rather than an achievable goal.





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