

The Formation and Development of Korean–Uzbek Literary Relations

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Abstract. *The study examines Korean–Uzbek literary relations, emphasizing historical, cultural, and intellectual interactions shaped by the Great Silk Road and Eastern philosophical traditions. It explores the role of translation, comparative literature, and scholarly exchange in fostering mutual understanding, highlighting shared ethical values, epic narratives, and literary motifs. The work underscores the significance of institutional cooperation, translation projects, and academic dialogue in the post-independence period, contributing to the international recognition of Uzbek literature and intercultural communication.*

Keywords: *Korean–Uzbek Literary Relations, Silk Road, Translation, Comparative Literature, Intercultural Communication, Epic Narratives, Cultural Exchange, Alisher Navoi*

Literature is a vital cultural phenomenon that reflects a nation’s spiritual identity, historical memory, and worldview. Beyond its artistic function, literature preserves collective experience and transmits ethical values across generations. The development of national literatures is significantly enriched through interaction and mutual influence with other literary traditions. Such interactions allow literatures to renew themselves, broaden their thematic scope, and refine aesthetic principles. In this regard, Korean–Uzbek literary relations possess deep historical roots and represent a product of a shared cultural space shaped within the broader framework of Eastern civilization.

Korean–Uzbek literary relations developed gradually through historical contacts, cultural exchange, and intellectual dialogue. Their study enables the identification of common cultural patterns, shared ethical ideals, and distinctive national features that emerged through centuries of interaction. Literary relations are not limited to translation alone; they also include creative influence, comparative literary studies, scholarly dialogue, and cultural cooperation. Through these processes, literature functions as an effective instrument of intercultural understanding and mutual respect. The formation of cultural and literary relations between the Korean and Uzbek peoples is closely connected with the Great Silk Road.

This historical network linked East Asia with Central Asia and the Mediterranean world, facilitating not only economic exchange but also the circulation of ideas, beliefs, and artistic traditions. As a result, literary motifs, narrative forms, and philosophical concepts spread across regions and were adapted to local cultural contexts. During the early medieval period, the spread of Buddhism into Central Asia significantly contributed to literary interaction. Buddhist monasteries served as centers of learning and translation, where religious and philosophical texts were rendered into Sanskrit, Chinese, and Turkic languages.

These translations were often creatively adapted to local linguistic and cultural norms, acquiring original literary value. Confucian philosophy also played an important role in shaping Eastern literary thought through its emphasis on moral self-cultivation, social harmony, and respect for tradition. These ethical principles influenced the intellectual environment of East and Central Asia. The didactic spirit

and moral ideals present in the works of Alisher Navoi exemplify shared Eastern literary values and demonstrate the interconnectedness of Eastern literary heritage. A new stage in Korean–Uzbek literary relations began with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Korea on January 29, 1992. This political milestone created favorable conditions for institutional cooperation in literature, education, and culture. During the years of independence, literary relations became an important component of humanitarian collaboration. Literary festivals, academic conferences, book exhibitions, and translation projects were organized to promote mutual awareness of each nation’s literary heritage. In this period, several works of Uzbek literature were translated into Korean, including O’tkir Hoshimov’s *The Affairs of the World*, collections of Uzbek folk tales, and modern short stories. At the same time, Korean literary works began to be translated into Uzbek, enabling Uzbek readers to engage with Korean historical narratives and aesthetic traditions. Translation activities became a central pillar of literary relations, supported by the training of young translators, mentor–student traditions, and practical workshops. Comparative literary studies provide an important methodological basis for examining Korean–Uzbek literary relations. Through comparative analysis of genres, motifs, and themes, scholars identify both similarities and differences that illuminate the cultural identities of the two peoples. Oral folk literature, in particular, reveals notable parallels. The Uzbek epic *Alpomish* and the Korean epic *Jumong* share common themes of heroism, patriotism, loyalty, and moral strength. In both traditions, epic heroes embody ideal qualities admired by society and serve as symbols of collective memory and national values.

In recent years, international scholarly interest in Uzbek literature has grown, especially within the context of world literature and comparative studies. Academic cooperation between Korean and Uzbek universities, joint research projects, and exchange programs have expanded opportunities for scholarly dialogue and professional training. The translation and study of Alisher Navoi’s literary heritage remain among the most important tasks today, as his works embody universal humanistic ideals with strong international relevance.

In conclusion, Korean–Uzbek literary relations are rooted in a long historical process shaped by the Great Silk Road, shared Eastern cultural traditions, and centuries of intellectual exchange. In the years of independence, these relations have gained new significance through institutional cooperation, translation initiatives, comparative research, and academic exchange. Further systematic study of Korean–Uzbek literary relations will contribute to the global recognition of Uzbek literature and foster deeper cultural understanding between the two nations.

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