



**CENTRAL ASIA THROUGH THE PRISM OF FRENCH ORIENTAL
STUDIES**

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the history of French oriental studies, which originates from the end of the early Middle Ages and found the heyday of the Middle Ages, including the late Middle Ages (IX-XVI centuries). The main events that reflected the acquaintance of France with the East are given.

Keywords

French oriental studies, Central Asia, Islamic studies, Sinology, Turkology

INTRODUCTION

The development of trade and diplomatic relations that took place between the countries of Western Europe and the Eastern states led to the appearance of numerous records and books of travelers, monks, merchants and diplomats who visited the countries of Asia and the Far East. As a result, Oriental studies appeared in Western Europe in the 15th-17th centuries, and at first it had a practical and applied character. He was characterized by descriptiveness and complexity, within which the first special areas - philology and regional studies, connected, in particular, with the interest in the East of the Renaissance figures, only gradually developed¹.

In addition to researching and translating the works of prominent scholars of Movaraunnahr and Khorasan, such as Navoi, Babur, Abulgozi Bahadir Khan, they also researched sources related to the geography, history and theology of the Eastern peoples. Outstanding representatives of French Oriental studies such as B. d'Erbello, S. de Sacy, E. Quatremere, A.-J. Klaproth, F. A. Belen, A.-P. Courtel, Ch. Grenard, J.-L. Baquet Gramont and others made a huge contribution to the study and popularization of the scientific and spiritual heritage of the Eastern scholars.

As a result of the development of Islamology and Sinology, in French Oriental studies, the idea arose of opening a Central Asian object of research. The era that

¹ Холбеков М. Н. Узбекско-французские литературные взаимосвязи (в аспекте перевода, критики и восприятия). Дис.док.филол.наук. Ташкент,1991.– С.



began at the end of the early Middle Ages, found the heyday of the Middle Ages and included the late Middle Ages (IX-XVI centuries), can be characterized as a period of accumulation of knowledge about the East: at first sporadic information, then more and more systematic. The accumulation of knowledge about Central Asia continued as a result of active trade relations between the European countries of the Mediterranean with the Muslim Middle East, as well as due to the existence of European missions in the region, during the 16th-17th centuries. In Europe, extensive collections of oriental manuscripts began to accumulate².

MATERIALS

The research material in this article is the scientific works of French orientalists on Central Asia from the 17th century to the first half of the 20th century. Also analyzed are the works of Uzbek and Russian specialists in French Oriental studies.

METHODS

The studied theme of the flock is covered on the basis of the methods of component, comparative-historical and comparative-typological analyses.

RESULTS

As a result of a comprehensive analysis of the research and translation activities of specialists in the study of Central Asia, formed in French oriental studies, for the first time, the scientific views of orientalists provided for the true coverage of the literary process are revealed.

The practical results of the research can be used: to highlight the history of international relations, it can also be used in monographic studies on the study of French Oriental studies. The reliability of the results of the study is ensured by the use of fully accessible information, indicating their sources.

DISCUSSION

Active trade relations between the European countries of the Mediterranean with the Muslim Middle East, as well as due to the existence of European missions in the region, during the 16th-17th centuries, extensive collections of oriental manuscripts began to accumulate in Europe. In France, on their basis, the Orientalist d'Herbelot (1625-1695) compiled the famous Oriental Library³, which had a very beneficial effect on the development of Orientalism in this country. Several generations of Orientalists have taken place as researchers thanks to the work of d'Herbelot. The diplomatic activity of France in the Muslim East was of great importance. Thus, in the work of Rafael du Man, a missionary in Persia (1646-

² <https://elibrary.com.ua/m/articles/view/РАЗВИТИЕ-ВОСТОКОВЕДЕНИЯ-ВО-ФРАНЦИИ-И-ИЗУЧЕНИЕ-ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ-АЗИИ>

³ Bibliothèque orientale ou Dictionnaire universel contenant généralement tout ce qui regarde la connaissance des peuples de l'Orient par monsieur d'Herbéllet. – Paris, 1967. – 1059 p.; <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k82422h/f14.image>



1696), "The Persian State in 1660", republished by Sh. Schaefer⁴, some aspects of the political history of Central Asia are touched upon.

Back in the 18th century, French orientalists created rare works about the East and carried out translation work. Sadi's "Guliston"⁵ was first translated in 1634 by the French orientalist André Ray and then in 1704 by the orientalist Alegre. Antoine Galan translated the tales "A Thousand and One Nights"⁶, and Petit de la Croix translated "Zafarnoma" by Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi into French⁷. K. Anon's book "Turkish novel or gallant story"⁸ was published. Among them, the work of Marg de Tilly "The History of the Mongol Emperor and the Asian Emperor Amir Temur"⁹, created in 1739, is of particular importance.

In 1726, the work of Abulgozi Bahadir Khan "Shajaray Turk" was published in French¹⁰. The work, as a major work on the history of the Turkic peoples, attracted the attention of not only Eastern, but also Russian, Western European historians. The studies carried out on the manuscript, the history of translation into Russian, German, French and English are described in detail in the scientific works of Professor M. N. Kholbekov¹¹.

In the years 1753-1758, the French philosopher Voltaire published a large work entitled "On the manners and manners of peoples" ("Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des Nations"). Chapter 3 was devoted to "History of the Mongols and Timurids in Central Asia". In the chapter "The Epoch of Amir Temur" the author describes his state and administration. A clear and detailed description of the land of Central Asia is given, in particular the capital of the state - Samarkand. Regarding the contribution of Ulugbek to astronomy, he is described as an enlightened ruler, the founder of the first academy in Samarkand, a scientist who was engaged in land measurements, a pioneer who created an astronomical table.

In the 6th volume of the book, Voltaire describes the reign of Baburi in India, the social and cultural state of India during the reign of Humayun and Akbar Shah.

⁴ Mans R. du Etat de la Perse en 1660. Ed. Par Ch. Shefer. P., 1890.

⁵ Saadi, Mustadini. Goulistan, ou L'empire des Roses. Traduit par Alegres. – Paris, 1704. – 204 p. www.wikiwand.com/fr/Golistan.

⁶ Les mille et une nuit. Contes arabes. Traduite en français par M. A. Galland. Tome 1 – 9. – Paris: Chez la veuve Claude Barbin, 1704-1788. <https://www.edition-originale.com/fr/livres-anciens>

⁷ Yasdy, Charaf-Eddyn Ali. Histoire de Timour Bec (Tamerlan). Traduite par Fr. Petis de le Croix. –Paris, 1722. – 204 p. google.fr/ <https://archive.org/details>.

⁸ Anon C. Le Roman tartare, ou Histoire galante. – Amsterdam, 1725. – 224 p.

⁹ Marga de Tilly. J. B. Histoire de Tamerlan, empereur des Mogolset et conquérant de l'Asie. – Paris: H.-L. Guerin, 1739. – I volume. – 298 p. – II volume. – 392p. <https://books.google.co.uz/books>.

¹⁰ Histoire généalogique des Tatars, traduite du manuscrit tartare d'Aboulgasi-Bayadurchan et enrichie d'un grand nombre des remarques authentiques et très criuese sur le véritable estat présent de l'asie septentrionale avec les cartes géograiphiques necessaire. – paris, 1726. – 854 p.

<https://books.google.co.uz/books?id>

¹¹ Nasirdinova Yo. Uzbek folklore and classic literature are in french language (based on remy dor's translations), dissertation abstract. – Tachkent, 2019. – 59p.



Unlike such thinkers of the 18th century as Voltaire, Diderot, Montesquieu, who created works under the influence of the ideas of Oriental literature, the ideas of philo-orientalism do not stand out in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. However, the Russian orientalist K. G. Zaleman admitted that the library of the great philosopher of French culture had a collection of works by representatives of classical oriental literature. Among them were Navoi's Divan, Saadi's Gulistan in Turkish, and other examples of Uzbek literature.

From the late 18th century to the early 19th century, France became the center of Oriental studies in Europe. Eastern philology, which forms the basis of comparative linguistics, has reached a high level of development. This process was associated with the discovery of ancient writing and languages. 1771 French scientist A. Du Perron translated into French the first book of the Avesta, the literary monument of the peoples of Central Asia and Iran "Vendidad". In 1821, the Asian Society was founded in Paris, and in 1823, under the editorship of the society, the Journal Asiatique began to be published. Higher educational institutions for the study of living Oriental languages were created in Paris, including the "School of Living Oriental Languages". In antiquity and the Middle Ages, great works appeared on the history and culture of the peoples of the East.

Among the orientalists of this period, Henri Jules Clapro, Abel Remuseau, Sylvester de Sacy, Etienne Quatremere, A. Pave de Courtey, Francois-Alphonse Belin, Charles Schaefer and others did an effective job of studying and translating literature samples. peoples of Central Asia, in particular, Uzbek literature. In particular, in 1824, in the journal "Journal Asiatique", A. Klaproth gave brief information about the life and work of Babur, his work "Boburnoma", and also translated from him into French a description of the Ferghana Valley.

"Kutadgu bilig", one of the unique masterpieces of the literature of the Turkic peoples of the 11th century, was studied by the French scientist, professor of the College de France A.P. Jaubert (1777-1847). One of the representatives of the "School of Living Oriental Languages", the famous orientalist Sylvest de Sacy (1758-1838), in his studies repeatedly referred to the work of Alisher Navoi. Etienne Quatremere (1782-1857) published his works devoted to the study of culture, history and literature of the Uzbek people in the journal Asiatique. His early articles such as "Essays on the History of the Abbasid Dynasty" (1835), "The Life of Shah Rukh Sultan" (1836) aroused great interest among European scholars. His book "Anthology of Eastern Turkic writing", published in 1841, is especially highly appreciated by scientists.

In the second half of the 19th century, the study of Uzbek literature intensified in Europe, in particular, in France. Sylvester de Sacy and Francois-Alphonse Belen, a student of the Quatremere school, French orientalist, French ambassador in



Istanbul, made a significant contribution to the study and translation of Uzbek literature. The Orientalist was engaged in printing manuscripts stored in the National Library of Paris. In 1861, his first article about Navoi was published in the Asiatic Journal, Volume 5, Series 2. For the first time, the article clearly and truthfully stated the opinion about Alisher Navoi. Belen describes the period from the childhood of the poet to how he grew up and reached the level of an Eastern philosopher, based on the works of such historians as Mirkhond, Khondamir, Babur, Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi, Davlatshah Samarkandi. Giving a separate description to each of his literary heritage, he listed 25 poetic and prose works at number 108 in the Imperial Library of Paris. In the course of the article, he translated an excerpt from Majolisun Nafois into French.

However, not all of Belen's points in the article are correct. For example, when describing the works of Nava'i, he erroneously concluded that "Nasoim ul-Muhabbat" is a translation of Jami's treatise "Nafohat ul-uns" and is filled with information taken from "Tazkirat ul-Avliya" by Fariduddin Attar and other Indian and Turkish notices of sheikhs. Navoi, who was critical of Jami's work, said that "they do not mention all the ancient masters and do not mention most of their contemporaries, and do not finish it themselves." He paid much attention not only to the Sufi views of the persons included in the work, but also to the definition of their place in literature and society.

Continuing the description of the literary heritage of Navoi, the orientalist expresses the opinion that "Lisaon-ut-tair" is a translation of "Mantik ut-tair" by Farididdin Attar, and "Xayrat ul Abror" was written as an imitation of Nizami and Jami. From this it can be seen that Belen read works about the life and work of Navoi, but did not deeply study the works, did not notice that there was only a logical connection between them.

Despite the shortcomings, Belen's scientific views on Navoi remained the only ones in terms of perfection for a long time. The work of his work was an article devoted to the analysis and translation of the work "Mahbub ul-Kulub" in the journal "Asia" for 1866. Continuing to study the work, he published the original text in 1872. In 1874, Pave de Courteille's review of this edition was published: "Very rarely did Mahbub ul-Kulub arouse such strong interest among students of the Turkish language. However, not only is it not included in the collection of works by Navoi in the National Library, but it is also rare in the East itself," the review begins. The author highly appreciated Navoi's work and Belen's research.

Pave de Courteille's most important work in the field of Turkic studies was his Oriental Turkish Dictionary or Chigatai-French Dictionary. Later Professor M. Kholbekov gave information about the dictionary in the first chapter of his doctoral dissertation. In 1997, F. Salomova defended her Ph.D. thesis on the topic



“Lexicographic and textual characteristics of Pave de Courteille’s “Eastern Turkish Dictionary” and translations of “Boburnom””.

By the second half of the 19th century, the National Library of Paris had become a major repository of ancient and valuable written records. By the end of the century, French orientalists began to catalog oriental manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. One of the main initiators of this work was Charles Schaefer. Working as a translator in Constantinople, he collected many manuscripts in oriental languages, ancient sources, including monuments of Uzbek classical literature. Schaefer's catalog lists over 800 sources, 237 of which are in Turkish. Later, the heritage of the orientalist was included in the collection of the National Library of Paris. Its catalog contains information about the manuscripts of the works of Ahmed Yassavi, Lutfi, Abul-Gazi Bahadirkhan, Alisher Navoi, Babur. After Charles Schaefer, his close student Edgar Bloch published his collection in 1900.

Edgar Bloch also created a two-volume "Catalogue of Manuscripts in Turkish Available at the National Library" containing the works of Eastern thinkers. His catalog was much more complete, covering all 1815 Turkish manuscripts of the National Library of Paris.

In addition, there is a second catalog by Edgar Bloch called "Manuscripts-Miniatures in Turkish Available at the National Library". Describing 35 works of Navoi in the catalog, he draws false conclusions about the work of Navoi as an imitator of Persian poets. It can be said that Bloché never read Navoi's works and knew only their titles.

In the 20th century, French orientalists continued to conduct scientific research on Uzbek classical literature. In 1902, Lucien Buva (1872-1942), a representative of the "Asian community", reported in the "Journal of Asiatick" that Navoi's manuscript "Muhokamatul Lugatayn" had been found.

When studying the samples of Persian and Turkish poetry, the didactic poetry of L. Buva Saifi Bukhari, Babur's prose, the correspondence of Jami and Khoja Abdullah Marvarid Bayani, the philosophical views of Jami, Navoi, Hussein Vaiz Kashafi, such historians as Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi, Abdurazzok Samarkandi, Mirkhand, Khondamir spoke about their prose works. In the works of the orientalist, the development of all areas of science, art, music and other spiritual foundations is widely covered. However, he makes even more serious mistakes than Belen and Blochet. Navoi's Mahbub ul-Kulub is an imitation of Nasyr Khusrav's Saodatname, Lison ut-tayr is a translation of Fariddin Attar's Mantik ut-tayr, and Khairat ul-Abror is compiled from various sources by Persian writers.

The views of French orientalists, such as Blochet and Bouvet, on Navoi as a translator and imitator of Persian writers can only be considered the result of a



misunderstanding. Due to the similarity of the themes and plots of the East, Orientalists looked at their study superficially. They irresponsibly approached their essence and content. Although Navoi refers to Persian themes, his works are distinguished by artistic perfection, realistic ideas, and a reasonable description of the spiritual experiences of the characters. He exacerbated the plots of the idea of humanity, resisted superstitions that had sown the seeds of evil and enmity, and glorified divine love.

In the 20th century, encyclopedias and collections on various topics were published in France. They also provided information about Uzbek classical literature. In particular, several volumes of the Encyclopedia of Islam were published in 1913-1942.

The encyclopedia contains articles on the history, religion, culture and literature of the peoples of the East, in particular the peoples of Central Asia. The work of Yusuf Bolosoguni, Ahmad Yunnaki, Abulgozi Bahadirkhan and other poets and writers in the Turkic language is also widely covered.

In 1956, a collection was published under the title "Encyclopedia of the Pleiades", edited by the famous French poet and critic Raymond Queneau, by the Gallimard publishing house. Volume 1 of the 2-volume section "History of World Literature" is devoted to "Ancient, Oriental and Oral Literature", one of its topics is called "Turkic Literature of Upper Asia". The chapter was prepared by literary critic Louis Gambi and consists of the following parts: Introduction. Ancient Turks. Uighurs. Kashgar. Chigatoys. Bibliography. The author reviewed literature in Turkish in chronological order.

Uzbek literature of the Soviet period has been very little studied by French orientalist. French readers got acquainted with the works of Oybek, Khamza Hakimzad Niyazi, Abdullah Kahkhor, Gafur Ghulam, Askad Mukhtar and others through translations from Russian. The translations were published in the journal Soviet Literature.

CONCLUSION

So, the article traces the evolution of French Orientalism in that part of it, which concerned the development of research on Central Asia. Obviously, Oriental studies did not develop in isolation: already in the Middle Ages and in the New Age, the French, together with all Europeans, tried to get to know the East, which was then far from them. During the colonial era, certain regions of the East became part of the French colonial empires. As noted, in the 19th-20th centuries, scientific and social thought in France got acquainted with the life of the peoples of Central Asia thanks to the efforts of their travelers and scientists. The classical period in the history of the development of Western Oriental studies in France was marked by a number of outstanding discoveries and fundamental research. And despite the fact



that French Orientalism has always been a part of European science, it had its own characteristics, which, at certain stages in the development of this discipline, allowed it to lead in certain areas. In the XX century. Central Asian studies in France, as well as in other Western countries, were strongly influenced by the political and ideological upheavals that the past century was so rich in. After 1991, nothing prevents direct political, cultural, scientific and economic dialogue between France and Uzbekistan.

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