

**REFLECTION OF STOIC PHILOSOPHY IN TRANSLATION: ON THE
EXAMPLE OF THE WORK OF MARCUS AURELIUS "MEDITATION"**

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Abstract: This article examines the translation of Marcus Aurelius' Meditations from English into Uzbek, focusing on the philosophical, linguistic, and cultural challenges that arise during the process. The study aims to identify how Stoic concepts such as virtue, reason, and nature can be effectively rendered in the Uzbek language while maintaining the reflective tone of the original text. Using a comparative analysis of selected passages and applying translation theories such as dynamic equivalence and domestication versus foreignization, the paper explores strategies for achieving balance between accuracy and naturalness. The findings reveal that philosophical translation requires not only linguistic skill but also deep cultural sensitivity to convey the essence of Stoicism in a way that resonates with modern Uzbek readers.

Key words: philosopher emperor, stoicism, meditation, logos, localization, foreignization, dynamic equivalence.

Touching on this topic, we believe that before thinking about translation transformations, it would be logical to reflect on the author of the work, his environment and position in society, as well as look at his life.

The author of the work, Marcus Aurelius (Latin Marcus Aurelius Antoninus), was born in Rome in 121 in a family of senators of Spanish nationality. Being a child from a family of the upper class, he received a mature upbringing of that time and in the future was called the "philosopher-emperor." His philosophical worldview goes back to the direction of the latter "Stoicism". Stoicism is a philosophical doctrine founded in ancient Greece by Zeno of Kition, whose main idea is that a person should live in harmony with reason and nature. The Stoics believed that true happiness lies not in external factors, but in inner peace and moral perfection. A person should focus on thoughts and actions that are under his control, and calmly react to events that cannot be controlled. Stoicism promoted the principles of patience, responsibility, and self-control. Marcus Aurelius paid more attention to the rules of morality in his philosophy, while the rest of the philosophy served "propaedeutic" purposes, contributing to the study of important sciences. Unlike the previous views of Stoicism, Marcus Aurelius identified three principles in man: soul, body and intellect, adding them to the first two. In his opinion, the mind should be harmonized with the whole of nature and, as a result, achieve carefree. Happiness is a concept constructed in accordance with universal reason.

The environment in which Marcus Aurelius grew up, that is, the period of the Roman Empire, paid special attention to the education of children from the upper strata of society, and their upbringing in the spirit of patriotism and the development of critical thinking skills was carried out by the most prominent philosophers and scientists of that time. In particular, Marcus Aurelius, in his book Reflections, commenting on each of his teachers, emphasized that they were excellent in all respects and taught the young emperor not only material knowledge, but also the secrets of spiritual knowledge.

It is also noteworthy that in those days the main task for children from the upper strata of society was to receive a literary education. There are several reasons for this: firstly, literature and philosophy are the main stages of science and cognition based on self-awareness. The first lessons of education are connected precisely with literature, future statesmen are more inclined than representatives of other strata of society to make informed decisions and look at the future



from a different point of view. For example, studying the epic work of the great Roman poet Publius Virgil Maron (Virgil), which at that time embodied national identity and values, was considered mandatory, or rather necessary to instill in the minds of the younger generation. This is because the work included the tasks of glorifying the origins of Rome, establishing a connection between Rome and the heroes of Troy, as well as legitimizing the rule of Emperor Augustus and portraying Rome as a powerful state ruling the world. This in itself increased the patriotism and enthusiasm of the future rulers for the development of the state. "But literature served only as a preparation for his future achievements," explains Gregory Hayes in his book about Marcus Aurelius.

As everyone knows, Marcus Aurelius made a huge contribution to the development and dissemination of philosophy with his work *Meditations*. This masterpiece, as readers know, was not originally intended to be published as a book, but was a diary written by Marcus Aurelius at the end of his life in order to control his actions and collect thoughts about his loved ones. For centuries, this work has been used as a highly artistic source and manuscript, and in some countries as a textbook.

This manuscript, as we have already mentioned, did not actually have a title; he was just writing down his observations on paper. Later, based on the content of the work, it was given the Greek name “τὰ εἰς ἑαυτόν (Ta eis heauton)”, which literally translates as "Look at yourself".

The work has been translated into English several times, the first translation was made in 1634 by Merik Kazoban and was called “*Meditations concerning himself*”. Since then, it has been translated several times, the last translation was made in 2011 by Robin Hard, and it became known as “*Meditations*”. "Meditation" did not mean "meditation" in the modern sense, but in Old English it meant “thoughts” and “ideas”.

In the process of studying this work, it becomes clear that the style of language used by Marcus Aurelius and the extraordinary consistency and conciseness of the presentation of information are a great achievement for modern linguistics, as well as for the field of translation.

As we mentioned above, the work was originally written in Greek and translated into Uzbek from an English translation. During the translation process, we paid attention to the dynamic equivalence of Yu. Nida's concept of “dynamic equivalence” is not a direct translation from the original, but rather the fact that the reader in the target language is strongly influenced by the original text. The main content of dynamic equivalence is that the more strongly the reader is influenced by the original text in his native language, the more similar the effect is achieved in the translated text with other linguistic units.

Dynamic equivalence focuses not on the exact translation of words and grammatical units, but on the semantic function of information in the text.

The translator achieves dynamic equivalence by restructuring phrases, reordering words in sentences, choosing natural expressions in the target language, and sometimes replacing facts in the original with more precise explanations.

Dynamic equivalence is compared with formal equivalence.:

- The formal equivalence is close to the structure and words of the original.
- In dynamic equivalence, it is important that the text is understood naturally in its native language.

In this case, the quality of the translation is natural and corresponds to the communicative purpose. It is achieved by conveying the semantic messages of the original, such as persuasion, information, and inspiration.

For example, if we translate the phrase “white as snow” for a girl, then the Uzbek translation as “qordek oppoq” is not very acceptable for the Uzbek audience, because “qor” has a negative



connotation of cold for Uzbeks who love warmth. Therefore, we translate it as “sutdek oq” or “sutga chayilgandek oq”, that means “as white as milk”.

In the process of translating the work “Meditation” into different languages, translators are faced with an important choice: to bring the text closer to the reader (localization) or to preserve the cultural and philosophical alienation inherent in the author (foreignization). The text of Marcus Aurelius is one of the works that requires a delicate balance between these two approaches.

1. Related to the concept of “logos”:

English (Gregory Hayes):

“To live in accordance with nature is to live in accordance with reason.”

Localized Uzbek translation:

“Tabiatga muvofiq yashash — aql-idrok asosida yashash demakdir.”

Here the original Greek concept of logos is explained in English by the word “mind”, that is “aql”. This is an element of localization, since leaving the “logos” without explanation makes it difficult for a modern reader to understand the text. In the Uzbek translation, the combination “aql-idrok” was chosen, enriching the concept with a more spiritual and moral tone. However, in this process, the cosmic and metaphysical scope of the logos is partially narrowed, which is an inevitable consequence of localization.

2. The concept of stoic indifference (apathy):

English:

“Accept everything that comes to you, woven into the pattern of your destiny.”

Uzbek translation, close to the foreign language:

“Taqdiring naqshiga to‘qilgan har bir hodisani qabul qil.”

In this example, the Uzbek translator has retained the metaphorical structure, that is, the phrase “woven into the pattern” is presented in the form of “naqshiga to‘qilgan”. This is an example of “foreignness”, when the reader is confronted with an alien image, but the author does not lose his poetic and philosophical tone. If this sentence were fully localized, it could be reduced to a simplified form, for example, “accept events in life as they are,” which would reduce the aesthetic and philosophical burden of the text.

3. Related to Social Duty and Roman Philosophy:

English: “You were born to work with others.”

Localized Uzbek translation:

“Inson jamiyat bilan hamnafas yashash uchun yaratilgan” – “Man is created to live in harmony with society.”

Here, the concept of collective responsibility inherent in Roman state thought approaches the idea of collectivity in Uzbek culture. Thanks to this cultural localization, the content is conveyed through values that are not alien to the reader. However, it can be noted that the tone of active service and duty in the English version of the phrase “born to work” is somewhat softened in the Uzbek translation.

4. Self-referential form:

English:

“Start the morning by telling yourself...”

A translation inclined to Uzbek foreignness:

“Tongni o‘zingga shunday deya boshlagin...”

One of the main features of the work of Marcus Aurelius is its self—referential form. The preservation of this style is an important aspect of the film adaptation. If we summarize this sentence as “this is how you should think in the morning,” then the diary genre and personal internal dialogue disappear.



This article analyzes the philosophical, linguistic and cultural problems that arise in the process of translating the "Meditation" of Marcus Aurelius from English into Uzbek. The study showed that the translation of concepts related to Stoicism requires not only changing words, but also preserving the inner essence of the author's thought. Categories such as "virtue", "reason", and "nature" should be expressed in Uzbek not only lexically, but also in a culturally acceptable way.

The results of the analysis showed the need for the translator to have deep philosophical knowledge, linguistic sensitivity and intercultural thinking. It has been proven that through dynamic equivalence, as well as the harmonious application of localization and alienation methods, it is possible to preserve the original spirit of the work. In conclusion, a high-quality translation of Marcus Aurelius's Meditation into Uzbek will serve to further bring Stoic philosophy closer to the modern Uzbek reader and make a worthy contribution to the development of national translation studies.

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