

The Ishoqkhan Ibrat Museum and The Contribution of His Scientific and Literary Heritage to World Civilization

Xasanova Feruza Raxmonaliyevna

Senior Lecturer at the National Institute of Fine Arts and Design named after Kamoliddin Behzod,
Independent Researcher at the State Museum of Memory of Victims of Repression under the
Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Email: hasanovaferuza1982@gmail.com

Abstract

This article discusses the life and creative activity of Ishoqkhan Tora Ibrat—an outstanding enlightener of his time, born in the Namangan region—who made a significant contribution to the development of Uzbek culture, science, and art. He was an enlightened poet, writer, linguist, historian, and the first Uzbek publisher. The article also examines the activities of the Ishoqkhan Tora Ibrat Museum, which operates today. The study is based on scientifically reliable data and employs a creative and artistic approach.

Keywords: madrasa, peshtaq (portal), hujra (cell), minaret, museum, exhibit, exposition, infokiosk, geography, chemistry, gramophone, treatise, pedagogue, Jadid movement

1. Introduction

Ishoqkhan Ibrat (1862–1937) was an enlightened poet, an outstanding linguist, a historian, and one of the first Uzbek publishers. He was born in 1862 in the village of Turaqorgon near Namangan. He received his initial education at a traditional school and later continued his studies under the guidance of his mother. Afterwards, he went to Kokand to study at a madrasa. Between 1878 and 1886, Ibrat studied at the Muhammad Siddiq Tunqator Madrasa in Kokand. There, he became acquainted with prominent representatives of the Kokand literary circle such as Muqimi, Furqat, and Zavqiy, and actively participated in literary gatherings to benefit from their творчество [1], [2].

During his time in Kokand, he mastered Arabic and Persian languages and seriously engaged in the study of history and linguistics. In 1886, he returned to his native village and opened a school as a progressive educator; however, this school was later closed by the authorities of the Governor-General [3], [4], [5].

In 1887, Ishoqkhan Ibrat embarked on a long journey abroad. He traveled to Turkey, Iran, Egypt, and Arabia. Together with his mother, Huribibi, he performed the Hajj pilgrimage.

*Corresponding author : hasanovaferuza1982@gmail.com

Article history : submitted; 2025/02/15 revised; 2026/01/03 accepted; 2026/02/10 published; 2026/03/24

Unfortunately, his mother fell ill and passed away in Jeddah in 1891 (1309 AH). After burying his mother there, Ibrat continued his journey from Mecca via the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean to India. Between 1892 and 1896, he lived in India, particularly in Calcutta.

2. Research Method

During this period, Ibrat mastered the Russian language as well as several widely used languages, including Arabic, Persian, Hindi-Urdu, and English. He believed that, alongside Eastern languages, knowledge of Western languages was equally essential. In his work “Jome’ ul-khutut”, he notes that he studied French in Arabia and English in India, as well as ancient writing systems such as Phoenician, Hebrew, Syriac, and Greek [6], [7].

While abroad, Ibrat closely observed the lifestyle, culture, and art of different peoples and collected valuable materials for his scientific works. He earned his living through decorative art—engraving patterns on mosque and madrasa portals and tombstones—and through calligraphy, copying manuscripts.

Ibrat also established friendships with scholars and intellectuals during his travels. In 1896, he returned from India via Burma, passed through China and Kashgar, and eventually came back to his homeland, Namangan. He brought with him various technological innovations unfamiliar to the local population, including a gramophone, a refrigerator, a film projector, and a camera. These items held great cultural significance. For example, he introduced a musical instrument called the “Santur,” which operated similarly to a gramophone and could play multiple musical compositions sequentially [8], [9], [10].

Being knowledgeable in music, Ibrat himself skillfully played the tanbur. As a progressive intellectual, he organized film screenings in his home and opened a photography studio, which became an important cultural event in the life of the Namangan population.

3. Results and Discussion

Among Ibrat’s linguistic works, “Lugati Sitta al-Sina” holds particular significance. Prior to him, Russian–Uzbek and Uzbek–Russian dictionaries existed, such as those compiled by V. Nalivkin and M. Nalivkina. However, these were written in Cyrillic and intended primarily for Russian speakers and a limited number of Uzbek readers familiar with Russian. Ibrat addressed this issue by compiling his dictionary in the Arabic script, becoming one of the first Uzbek educators to undertake such a complex and important task. His dictionary, containing over a thousand active words, played a significant role in education and was used in “usul-i jadid” (new method) schools, where Russian was introduced as a subject.

Another important linguistic work by Ibrat is “Jome’ ul-khutut” (“Collection of Scripts”), dedicated to the history of writing systems. The work provides information about the history of Arabic script and 41 writing systems known in the world, and it is enriched with knowledge related to the art of calligraphy.

As a historian, Ibrat conducted in-depth research on the life and history of the Uzbek people and paid particular attention to describing historical events and the roles of khans and local rulers. His work “Tarikhi Fergana” presents detailed information about the rulers of the Kokand Khanate, especially its last ruler Khudoyar Khan, the Kipchak massacre, and the Russian conquest of Central Asia and its consequences. The work also includes valuable information about the origins, geographical location, and natural features of cities and villages within the Fergana Valley. In this regard, the work bears resemblance to Babur’s “Baburnama.”

Ishoqkhon Ibrat was a multifaceted enlightener and intellectual figure. His patriotism and selfless dedication are clearly reflected in his deep love for his homeland and in his efforts to educate his compatriots and raise them as knowledgeable individuals. In 1907, he established a new-method (“usuli savtiya”) school in his native village, opening it free of charge for local children. He allocated a spacious and well-lit room in his own courtyard for the school and equipped it at his own expense with modern educational tools, including desks, tables, chairs, textbooks, notebooks, a blackboard, and a globe. The teaching process was organized based on a curriculum he personally developed, and lessons were conducted according to a weekly schedule with the assistance of qualified educators.

In 1908, Ibrat undertook another significant initiative. He purchased a lithographic printing press from a printer named Gaufman in Orenburg, agreeing to pay for it over a ten-year period. With great effort, he transported the equipment by train to Kokand and then by camels to Turaqorgon. He established a printing house on the site of a bathhouse he had built and named it “Matbaai Ishoqiya.” This printing house regularly published books, educational brochures, textbooks, posters, and announcements aimed at promoting literacy and enlightenment.

Among the works published in his printing house were his own educational and literary writings, including “San’ati Ibrat, qalami Mirrajab Bandiy”, dedicated to calligraphy and literacy; “Ilmi Ibrat,” a collection of poems; and “Jome’ ul-khutut,” devoted to the history of writing systems. The printing house itself symbolized enlightenment: Ibrat designed its emblem as an image of the sun radiating light, with the word “knowledge” written inside it, thereby likening knowledge to a source of illumination. This symbol appeared on all publications issued by the press. In his poem “Tarikhi chopkhona” (“History of the Printing House”), Ibrat explicitly states that the purpose of establishing the printing house was to spread the light of knowledge.

In his work “Tarikhi madaniyat” (1926), Ibrat recorded that over the course of twenty years he had created fourteen scientific, historical, and linguistic works, as well as a poetic collection titled “Devoni Ibrat,” which encompassed thirty years of his literary творчество. Among his major works are “Tarikhi Farg’onai umrani,” “Tarikhi hurriyat,” “Mezon uz-zamon,” “Lugati sitta al-sina,” “Jome’ ul-khutut,” “Qorbo’shilar zamoni,” and “Tarikhi madaniyat.” In addition, he compiled the poetic collection “Devoni Ibrat,” which includes historical poems, national odes, ethical reflections, and descriptions of contemporary events. Some of his later works, such as “Gulshani roz,” “Mushkulot ul-gharoib,” “Muzabzab,” “Turkistonda turli mashaqqatlar,” and “Barzah,” were written during the revolutionary period but have not survived. At the time, he was also engaged in translating an Arabic medical work titled “Tazkirai suwaydo” into Turkic and had prepared his autobiographical travel narrative describing his journeys to Afghanistan, India, and Arabia.

In his poetic works, Ibrat expressed his ideas, aspirations, and worldview in a simple yet impactful manner. His poetry is characterized by its humanistic and socially oriented content. As a responsive and perceptive poet, he reflected scientific and cultural developments of his time in his verses. His lyrical works stand out for their clarity, rhythmic richness, and artistic expressiveness. Due to their folk-like tone, many of his poems were set to music and performed by singers, similar to the works of Ahmad Yassavi, Alisher Navoi, Atoyi, Ogahi, and Mashrab.

Valuable information about Ibrat’s life and creative path can be found in his works such as “Ilmi Ibrat,” “San’ati Ibrat,” “Lugati sitta al-sina,” “Jome’ ul-khutut,” as well as historical

works like “Tarikhi Farg‘ona,” “Tarikhi madaniyat,” and “Mezon uz-zamon.” His views and activities were also reflected in early newspapers published in Uzbek and Russian, such as “Turkestarskiye Vedomosti” and “Turkiston viloyatining gazetasi.” More than 45 of his articles, published in newspapers such as “Sadoi Turkiston” and “Sadoi Farg‘ona,” promoted enlightenment, scientific knowledge, and the study of foreign languages, demonstrating his broad worldview and his dedication to the interests and independence of his homeland.

Like many enlightened intellectuals of his time, Ibrat became a victim of political repression. In the early spring of 1937, he was arrested. During one of the most tragic periods of repression against Uzbek intellectuals, the 75-year-old scholar, who had devoted his entire life to the enlightenment and future of his people, was unable to withstand the physical and psychological suffering in Andijan prison and passed away after two months of imprisonment. Ishoqkhon Ibrat, like many other victims of repression, was officially rehabilitated in 1959.

By the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated April 13, 2017, entitled “On the establishment of a memorial complex named after the prominent enlightener Ishoqkhon Ibrat in Turaqorgon district of Namangan region,” large-scale construction and restoration works were carried out in the district, and a memorial complex was established to perpetuate the memory of Ishoqkhon Ibrat [11], [12].

The Ishoqkhon Ibrat Memorial Complex is located in Turaqorgon district of Namangan region. It is situated along a river and occupies an area of approximately 2 hectares. The complex includes a museum, a garden, a printing house, a preschool educational institution, a specialized creative school focused on foreign languages, and a student dormitory. The architectural monument of the Goyibnazar Qazi Madrasa was reconstructed and adapted to house the Ibrat Museum. In addition, a center for traditional applied arts and handicrafts was established within the complex. A few years after the completion of the complex, the Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages named after Ishoqkhon Ibrat was founded near the school [13], [14].

The building in which the museum is located was originally constructed in 1860 by Mulla Qirgiz ibn Ibrohim, under the order of Goyibnazar Qazi, as a madrasa intended for students. Ishoqkhon Ibrat himself served in this very madrasa as a qazi (judge). On the front façade of the madrasa, above the entrance portal, an inscription indicates that the building was constructed by the prominent architect Mulla Qirgiz. Goyibnazar Qazi, who financed the construction, was a generous, enlightened, and people-oriented figure who served as a judge in Turaqorgon from the late 19th to the early 20th century. During periods of famine, he supported the local population by providing food and care for orphans. Motivated by piety, he commissioned the construction of the madrasa and entrusted the work to the renowned architect Mulla Qirgiz ibn Ibrohim [15], [16].

The madrasa has a rectangular layout, consisting of a courtyard surrounded by hujras (cells). The eastern side includes two-story cells, while the main façade features a monumental portal (peshtaq) flanked by arched galleries on the second level. The corners of the structure are accentuated by minaret-like towers decorated with brick patterns. Some of the corner rooms were used as classrooms, covered with ribbed domes. Above the entrance, an inscription in Arabic script records the construction and later restoration of the building: “1311 (1893), built by architect Mulla Qirgiz; 1384 (1964), restored by master Fazil Namangani.” The building was later renovated by Fazil Ne‘matulla oqli Namangani and his students, during which the courtyard was roofed and adapted into halls and performance spaces.

The building has since been restored and specialized for museum exposition purposes. It is equipped with modern heating systems, air conditioning, and video surveillance security systems.

The Ibrat Museum is located in the rooms on the right and left sides of the entrance. Within the same building, there is also another museum known as the “Museum of Memory of Victims of Repression.”

The exposition of the Ishoqkhon Tora Ibrat Museum consists of the following sections:

1. The life and personal belongings of Ishoqkhon Tora Ibrat
2. The scientific legacy of Ishoqkhon Tora Ibrat
3. The creative (working) room of Ishoqkhon Tora Ibrat

In the first hall, exhibits provide information about Ibrat’s birth, childhood, and life journey. The display includes books written about him, household items from his era, samovars, personal belongings, clothing such as robes and traditional caps, as well as objects used by his contemporaries. Visitors can gain general and engaging information about his life. At the museum entrance, a brief biography of Ibrat is presented. Although he was born into a modest family, his parents were educated and enlightened individuals. Notably, his mother also played an active role in educating other women in the community.

Ibrat was a highly cultured individual with a strong interest in music. The museum displays musical instruments associated with him. He would compose melodies for his own poems and perform them, finding cultural and spiritual enjoyment in music. In this hall, visitors can view photographs and video materials about Ibrat’s life on digital screens.

The museum houses not only books collected by Ibrat but also his handwritten manuscripts, demonstrating his mastery of calligraphy. Original journals and newspapers printed at “Matbaai Ishoqiya” are also preserved. Among the most valuable exhibits are items and dishes commissioned and brought by Ibrat from his travels to Arabia. Official documents from the period when he served as a qazi in the Goyibnazar Qazi Madrasa are also displayed.

4. Conclusion

According to museum records, Ibrat traveled to 14 countries, and souvenirs and gifts he brought from these journeys are preserved in the museum. These items were donated to the museum by his relatives and family members during its establishment. In one corner of the hall, there is a sculpture of Ibrat holding a book. Additionally, in the adjacent Ibrat park, there is a large monument dedicated to him, and his poems are inscribed along an arched gallery.

The museum exposition is equipped with modern multimedia tools, including infokiosks and televisions, which provide visitors with comprehensive information.

The second hall, located on the right side, is dedicated to Ibrat’s scientific activities. It features a painting by artist Tohirjon Ashurov depicting the transportation of lithographic equipment from Orenburg. In one of the display cases, a hand-drawn plan of Ibrat’s house and garden is exhibited.

Ibrat also brought various plants and saplings from abroad to cultivate his garden, and a model of this garden is preserved in the museum.

The museum also contains numerous photographs reflecting Ibrat’s pedagogical activities. Textbooks used in the “Usuli Savtiya” school are exhibited, including materials on geography, literature, native language, and chemistry, along with scientific books. Among the exhibits are also a gramophone and a kerosene lamp that belonged to Ibrat.

The final room represents a symbolic creative space of Ibrat, located in the outer courtyard. This room recreates the authentic atmosphere of a traditional national interior of that period and is dedicated to his creative work. It includes national household items, musical instruments, personal clothing, a samovar, teacups, as well as one of the earliest non-electric refrigerators in Uzbekistan, which Ibrat had commissioned during his travels to India. Carpets from that era further enhance the historical authenticity of the space.

Ibrat's life path was rich in content and serves as an exemplary model for all. As a well-rounded and highly educated individual in various fields, studying his life and work remains of great importance. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, thanks to Ibrat, numerous innovations in education, science, culture, and art were introduced to the Namangan region.

Today, Ibrat's descendants continue his noble legacy in various fields, including science, education, and television, particularly in the Andijan region and in the Turaqorgon district of Namangan region.

5. References

- [1] J. H. Jeong, "Mecca between China and India: Wartime Chinese Islamic Diplomatic Missions across the Indian Ocean," in *Beyond Pan-Asianism*, Oxford University Press, 2021, pp. 293–326. doi: 10.1093/oso/9780190129118.003.0011.
- [2] I. Ali Sheikhnor, "Determinants of Banking Sector Performance in Some Selected OIC Member Nations: Turkey, Islamic Republic of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia and Algeria," *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, vol. 12, no. 10, pp. 1767–1776, Oct. 2023, doi: 10.21275/sr231023020505.
- [3] N. Kenny, N. Rogers, and C. Goodall, "'He is trying his best to get his voice out': A case study exploring the impact of Attention Autism for supporting development in communication and engagement amongst Autistic Pre-School Children within a Special School Setting.," Feb. 2025, doi: 10.35542/osf.io/2vhmc_v2.
- [4] A. R. Davlatova, "IS'HAKHAN IBRAT IS A LINGUIST," *International Journal Of Literature And Languages*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 26–29, Apr. 2024, doi: 10.37547/ijll/volume04issue04-05.
- [5] H. He, "Subversion and Deconstruction: A Study of Nobuhiko Obayashi's Films from the Perspective of Carnival Theory," *Research on Literary and Art Development*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 50–53, 2025, doi: 10.47297/wsprolaadwsp2634-786510.20250603.
- [6] T. Gault, "A voice operated musical instrument.," University of Louisville. doi: 10.18297/etd/482.
- [7] S. Jun, "A Study on Gang-am's Calligraphy through a Chronicle of His Life," *Korean Society for Science of Eastern Art*, vol. 39, pp. 131–161, May 2018, doi: 10.19078/ea.2018.39.6.
- [8] I. P. G. Diatmika and S. Rahayu, "Harnessing local creativity for technological advancement: Uncovering MSME innovations rooted in Sumbawa cultural wisdom," *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 2561–2570, Apr. 2025, doi: 10.55214/25768484.v9i4.6606.
- [9] R. Yamashita, "Urdu and Hindi: Languages of transnational history, business, and culture," in *Language Communities in Japan*, Oxford University Press, 2022, pp. 121–128. doi: 10.1093/oso/9780198856610.003.0012.

- [10] Q. He, "A dependency treebank-based study of syntactic complexity in English academic writing," *Journal of World Languages*, Dec. 2025, doi: 10.1515/jwl-2025-0054.
- [11] S. Li, "Suitability Zoning and Layout Optimization of Forages in Uxin Banner Surrounded by the Mu Us Sandy Land in China," *Journal of Ecology & Natural Resources*, vol. 6, no. 4, 2022, doi: 10.23880/jenr-16000316.
- [12] A. Alam, "The Financial Organisation of Islamic Piety," in *Inside a Madrasa*, Routledge India, 2020, pp. 111–132. doi: 10.4324/9780367818081-5.
- [13] M. J. Kodirjonovich, "Archetypes And Symbolic Images In Literary Works," *American Journal of Philological Sciences*, vol. 5, no. 12, pp. 140–143, Dec. 2025, doi: 10.37547/ajps/volume05issue12-38.
- [14] L. Mansukoski and V. S. Sparacello, "Smaller long bone cross-sectional size in people who died of tuberculosis: Insights on frailty factors from a 19th and early 20th century Finnish population," *Int. J. Paleopathol.*, vol. 20, pp. 38–44, Mar. 2018, doi: 10.1016/j.ijpp.2017.12.005.
- [15] S. Bahtiyor, "Alisher Navoi's Perspective on Music in His Works," *The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations*, vol. 02, no. 11, pp. 156–159, Nov. 2020, doi: 10.37547/tajssei/volume02issue11-28.
- [16] "TO Poet BAVIUS; OCCASION'D BY HIS SATYR He Writ in his VERSES TO THE KING, UPON THE QUEENS being Deliver'd OF A SON.," in *The Works of Aphra Behn*, Routledge, 2018, pp. 300–303. doi: 10.4324/9781351259484-86.