

Article

The Figure of Chulpon and Its Artistic Interpretation in Uzbek Literature

Yuldashev Zafarbek

1. Senior Lecturer at Urgench State University named after Abu Rayhan Beruni

* Correspondence: zafarbekyuldashev077@gmail.com

Abstract: This article analyzes the artistic interpretation of the image of Abdulhamid Cholpon in Uzbek literature of the subsequent period. Using such works as *Turkiston qayg'usi*, *Qurqma*, *Madfun Turkiston*, and *Yaldo kechasi* as examples, the study examines the forms in which the image of Cholpon is represented in works of different genres and artistic types. The research explores Cholpon's image as a historical figure, patriotic poet, enlightener, and creative personality, as well as revealing the functional role of his poetic legacy in literary works.

Keywords: Abdulhamid Cholpon, artistic interpretation, image of a historical figure, national awakening, Jadid literature, national identity, enlightenment, freedom, historical memory, Cholpon's poetry

1. Introduction

In the history of Uzbek literature, the figure of Abdulhamid Cho'lpon is inextricably associated with national artistic thought, spiritual awakening, and the ideas of national independence. His creative legacy, views on the fate of the nation and homeland, complex life path as a literary figure, and tragic fate are of significant importance not only for literary studies but also for artistic literature. The image of Cho'lpon has continued to re-emerge in various forms and manifestations in the literature of subsequent periods [1].

The creation of the image of a historical figure in literature differs fundamentally from the mere retelling of historical facts. A writer selects information related to the life of a historical figure in accordance with their own artistic and aesthetic conception, chooses particular events and character traits, and interprets them within a new literary context. This aspect is particularly important when examining the literary representations of Cho'lpon. In Uzbek literature, the image of Cho'lpon appears not only in works specifically devoted to his life and creative legacy but also in various literary texts addressing historical events, national awakening, Jadidism, political repression, independence, and questions of national identity. In some works, Cho'lpon is portrayed as the protagonist and central figure, whereas in others, reference is made to his name, literary works, poetry, or historical persona [2].

In particular, Nabi Jaloliddin's novel-dilogy *Cho'lpon* and Nabijon Boqi's educational novel *Cho'lpon* place the writer's personality and fate directly at the center of their artistic representation. The reflection of Cho'lpon's image in literature can also be observed in works belonging to different genres and possessing diverse artistic characteristics. For instance, references to Cho'lpon's name, personality, or creative legacy can be found in Alikhontora Soguni's *Turkiston qayg'usi* (*The Sorrow of Turkestan*), Javlon Jovliyev's novel *Qo'rqma* (*Do Not Be Afraid*), Nabijon Boqi's *Madfun Turkiston* (*Buried Turkestan*), Zarifa Saidnosirova's *Oybegim mening* (*My Oybek*), and Khayriddin Sulton's *Yaldo kechasi* (*The Night of Yaldo*) [3].

Citation: Zafarbek, Y. The Figure of Chulpon and Its Artistic Interpretation in Uzbek Literature. *International Journal on Integrated Education (IJIE)* 2025, 8(1), 57-61

Received: 13th Jan 2025
Revised: 28th Feb 2025
Accepted: 15th Mar 2025
Published: 29th Apr 2025



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

Alikhontora Soguni's *Turkiston qayg'usi* is a historical and publicistic work based on the author's memoirs, historical observations, and personal experiences accumulated over seven years of writing. In recalling events that he personally witnessed, the author expresses his views on the political, social, and spiritual life of Turkestan [4]. Issues concerning the nation, homeland, education and enlightenment, ignorance, and national development constitute some of the central themes of the work. Cho'lpon's image is referred to only briefly, through his poem "Ko'ngil" ("The Soul"). Recalling his childhood memories of 1935–1936, Soguni mentions Hamid Saidiy, a language and literature teacher who had fled Tashkent and arrived in Ghulja. The author remembers him as "one of the true patriots and devoted advocates of progress." Hamid Saidiy taught his students poems written by patriotic poets who expressed deep sorrow over the difficult situation of Turkestan. Among these poems, Cho'lpon's "Ko'ngil," written by one of Turkestan's patriotic poets, is also mentioned [5]:

"Ustimizdagi qora bulut parchalanmasmu endi?

Sen ham insonsen, hur tug'ilgansen,

Bo'yin egma, kishan kiyma..."

These lines remained preserved in the author's memory for decades. As Hamid Saidiy taught his students the poems of patriotic poets, he encouraged them to understand the tragic situation of Turkestan and to comprehend the causes of ignorance and backwardness. Cho'lpon's poem "Ko'ngil" was also memorized as part of this educational and moral process. This demonstrates that Cho'lpon's poetry played a particularly significant role in awakening the consciousness of the younger generation and fostering in them a sense of freedom and national identity. Alikhontora Soguni emphasizes this enduring influence, stating, "Its impact is still in my heart" [6]. In *Turkiston qayg'usi*, however, a fully developed literary portrait of Cho'lpon is not created. His image emerges through a single recollection and several lines quoted from his poem "Ko'ngil." Nevertheless, this reference demonstrates the influence that Cho'lpon's poetry exerted on the younger generation during his lifetime and shows how the poet's nationally oriented verses remained deeply embedded in the memory of those who encountered them.

2. Materials and Methods

Javlon Jovliyev's novel *Qo'rqma* (*Do Not Be Afraid*) explores the complex historical period of Turkestan at the beginning of the twentieth century, the national awakening movement, and the fate of Turkestani young people who received their education in Germany. One of the distinctive features of *Qo'rqma* is the considerable attention devoted to the literary representation of historical figures. The author does not merely mention representatives of the national awakening period, such as Cho'lpon, Fitrat, and Fayzulla Khodja, as historical personalities; rather, he connects their views on the fate of the nation, enlightenment, and freedom with the events depicted in the novel. Cho'lpon's figure appears in several parts of the novel, and his name, creative work, and activities contribute to revealing the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere of the period [7].

Cho'lpon's involvement in the activities of the "Ko'mak" organization occupies a particularly important place in the novel. Established in 1922, one of the principal objectives of "Ko'mak" was to provide young people from Turkestan with opportunities to study in Europe and equip them with modern knowledge. In the novel, the organization's activities are interpreted as part of an enlightenment-oriented movement whose primary purpose was to serve the future of the nation. The novel notes that Cho'lpon, in cooperation with a theatrical troupe led by Mannon Uyg'ur, prepared a performance for "Ko'mak": "Together with the theatrical troupe led by Mannon Uyg'ur and our great poet Cho'lpon, we will prepare a performance and present it for 'Ko'mak'" [8].

3. Result

Another important dimension of Cho'lpon's image in the novel is revealed through his attitude toward the fate of students studying in Germany. During a gathering, Cho'lpon enters the circle and reads a letter written by Abduvahob Murodiy to Turkestan.

After reading the letter, Cho'lpon calls upon those present to provide assistance to the student, addressing them with the following words: "If one of the sons of the homeland wants to acquire knowledge but has to abandon his studies because of money, is this not a shameful and disgraceful situation for our Turkic nation and our honor?!" [9]. "After that, Cho'lpon also organized a literary evening, and all the tickets were sold because he had so many admirers" [10]. The strong interest in the literary evening testifies to Cho'lpon's reputation among the people and the influence of his creative work. The event was organized to support Turkestani young people studying in Germany. Thus, Cho'lpon is portrayed as a figure who made every possible effort in the interests of enlightenment and the future of the nation.

The characters in the novel assess Cho'lpon's literary work in the following terms: "How clearly Cho'lpon has portrayed imagination: 'Imagination. Imagination. Only imagination is beautiful; I am afraid of the eyes of truth.' How frightening it is to look into the eyes of such a terrifying truth!" [11]. Another character states: "Cho'lpon is a hero struggling not only for my dreams but for the dreams of the entire nation. There is no other poet as famous as Cho'lpon in our homeland. As long as he is alive, the nation will not remain under colonial oppression for long. Sometimes a single poet of a people can accomplish what an entire army has been unable to do. Cho'lpon is a great force!" [12].

Cho'lpon's poems also occupy an important place in the lives of Turkestani young people studying in Germany. They recount that during the "Eastern Nights" they recited poems by Cho'lpon and Fitrat alongside national melodies and songs: "We used to organize 'Eastern Nights,' during which students took turns reading and reporting on their studies. Then we would perform national melodies and songs and recite poetry. I admit that we read the poems of Cho'lpon and Fitrat and that I still repeat them within myself" [13]. They further explain that their aim was not to abandon their homeland but to introduce, and even "borrow," every innovation that could contribute to the nation's development.

When one of the novel's characters, Marta, asks Murodiy, "Do you have a poet greater than Cho'lpon?" he replies, "No, there is no one like Cho'lpon."

Thus, in *Qo'rqma*, Cho'lpon is portrayed as a national poet, an advocate of enlightenment, an active intellectual who supports the education of young people, a powerful personality capable of uniting the people, and a literary figure who exerted a significant influence on national consciousness. His poems serve as a source of spiritual support for the characters of the novel, while the poet himself stands at the center of their hopes and anxieties concerning the future of the nation.

References to Cho'lpon's figure in Nabijon Boqi's *Madfun Turkiston (Buried Turkestan)* are relatively brief. Although the work is based on recollections and reflections concerning historical events, the fate of the nation, and the political and social conditions of Turkestan, references to Cho'lpon are connected with particular historical processes and questions of national literature. For the author, Cho'lpon is first and foremost a patriotic intellectual who understood the socio-political environment of his time and was deeply concerned about the future of his people [14].

In the section entitled "To'ylar muborak" ("May the Weddings Be Blessed"), the author discusses Cho'lpon's translation of Maxim Gorky's novel *Mother* into Uzbek. He interprets Cho'lpon's choice of this work in the context of the socio-political environment of his time. In particular, the author writes: "...Cho'lpon, who decided to translate the novel *Mother*, sought to warn the public about the dark days that would emerge in the future of the Turkic world" [15]. This indicates that Cho'lpon pursued a particular social and intellectual purpose through his translation activities as well.

The work also makes extensive use of Cho'lpon's poetry. In particular, the inclusion of the poem beginning with the line "Turk beshigi – Turkiston" ("The Cradle of the Turks – Turkestan") provides an opportunity to express the poet's views on the homeland and national identity directly through his own words:

"Turk beshigi – Turkiston,
Yeri oltin, tog'lari kon,
Bolalari qahramon,

Vatan uchun berur jon.
 Turkistonlik – shonimiz, turonlik – unvonimiz,
 Vatan – bizning jonimiz, fido o'lsun qonimiz!"

4. Discussion

From the very opening lines of the poem, Turkestan is glorified as the "Cradle of the Turks." The image of the "cradle" carries a symbolic meaning associated with the historical roots of the people, the homeland in which they were born and raised, and their national identity. In describing Turkestan as a land "whose soil is gold and whose mountains are mines," the poet does not merely enumerate its natural resources; rather, he expresses a profound sense of pride and reverence for his homeland. The inclusion of this poem in the work is not accidental. In Uzbek literature, Cho'lpon occupies a distinctive position as a patriotic poet who deeply felt the suffering of the nation, the fate of the homeland, and the future of the people. Issues such as national awakening, freedom, love for the homeland, and the historical memory of the people occupy a prominent place in his poetry [16].

The work also concludes with the inclusion of Cho'lpon's poem "Baljuvon." Written in 1922, this poem strongly expresses the poet's anguish associated with freedom and the fate of the nation:

Tiflis havolari bir najot erin
 Qora qonga bo'yab yerlarga soldi (2).
 Tarixning rangini ko'p qora qonlar bilan
 Qorartgan, toldurgan, biroq Baljuvon.

The placement of "Baljuvon" at the conclusion of *Madfun Turkiston* also serves a specific artistic function. Throughout the work, the historical fate of Turkestan, the tragedies of the nation, and the severe trials endured by the people are discussed. A fully developed literary characterization of Cho'lpon is not created in *Madfun Turkiston*. He does not occupy the center of a separate plotline. Nevertheless, through the author's reflections on his translation activities and the inclusion of poems such as "Turk beshigi – Turkiston" and "Baljuvon," Cho'lpon emerges as a patriotic writer who was deeply concerned with the fate of his homeland and capable of profoundly perceiving historical events.

In Khayriddin Sulton's recently published novel *Yaldo kechasi*, the works of representatives of Jadid literature, particularly Cho'lpon's poetry, are invoked in constructing an atmosphere associated with historical events and the ideas of national liberation:

"Tabiatida shoirlik, darveshlikka moyil bir ruh bo'lsa-da, u hech vaqt qo'lga qalam olib biron bayt aytmoqqa rag'bat sezmagani, bunga o'zini iqtidorsiz hisoblar edi. Rahmatli padari ila abadiyan vidolashar ekan, ko'zlaridan shashqator yosh to'kilib, qovjir oq lablaridan ixtiyorsiz suratda quyidagi satrlar uchdi:

"Bilg'iz qabringni qaro tunlarda
 Amalimning sham'in yoqib izladim.
 Qizil va pok qoning islarin sochgach,
 Kuchsiz ko'yi yurishimni tezladam..."

This poetic passage is not presented in Cho'lpon's name but is recited by Yodgorbek, one of the novel's characters. Although Yodgorbek does not know the exact location of his father's grave, he strives to find it, preserve his memory, and fulfill his final filial duty. The images of the grave, night, candle, blood, and mourning flower expressed in Cho'lpon's poetry correspond closely with the character's psychological state. The incorporation of this poetic passage into the narrative structure of the novel enables the author to convey Yodgorbek's inner experiences more powerfully. Khayriddin Sulton harmonizes the poem's atmosphere of suffering, separation, and mourning with the fate of the protagonist. Cho'lpon's poetry, which profoundly expresses subtle human emotions, thus continues to retain its artistic influence in contemporary literature.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Cho'lpon's life and creative legacy demonstrate their broad potential for interpretation in literary works. His identity as a poet and advocate of enlightenment, his concern for the fate of the nation and homeland, and his views on freedom and national awakening all contribute to his enduring literary significance. In particular, the incorporation of Cho'lpon's poetry into the speech, memories, and psychological experiences of other literary characters demonstrates that his creative legacy continues to perform an active artistic function in the contemporary literary process.

REFERENCES

- [1] B. Tukhliev and I. Ismoilov, "The Image of Iskandar in Turkic Sources," *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 1195–1200, Feb. 2020.
- [2] I. Ismoilov, "About the Talismans of Iskandar (Alexander) by Alisher Navoi," *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 139–145, May 2021, doi: 10.21744/ijllc.v7n3.1488.
- [3] I. Ismoilov, "Nizomiy va Navoiy: bir mavzuning turfa talqini," *O'zbekiston: til va madaniyat. Adabiyotshunoslik*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 18–32, 2023, doi: 10.47689/ULAC-vol1-iss1-y2023-pp18-32.
- [4] I. Ismoilov, "Alisher Navoiyning 'Saddi Iskandariy' dostoni debochasi badiiyati," *Oltin Bitiglar–Golden Scripts*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 101–119, 2021.
- [5] I. Ismoilov, "Tafsirlarda Iskandar mavzusiga oid talqinlar," *Oltin Bitiglar–Golden Scripts*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 3–19, 2021.
- [6] I. A. Ismoilov, "On the Issue of Literary Influence and Originality in the Epic 'Saddi Iskandariy'," *Foreign Languages in Uzbekistan*, no. 3, pp. 220–226, 2020.
- [7] I. Ismoilov and A. A. Nasriddinov, "Nizomiy 'Iskandarnoma'sining o'zbek adabiyotshunosligida o'rganilishi," *O'zbekiston: til va madaniyat*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 41–50, 2019.
- [8] I. Ismoilov, "Iskandar oynasi," *Oltin Bitiglar–Golden Scripts*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 68–98, 2019.
- [9] I. Ismoilov, "The Image of 'The Mirror of Iskandar' in the Poetry of Alisher Navai and Its Comparative Analysis," *American Journal of Research. Social Science and Humanities*, no. 7–8, pp. 133–160, Jul.–Aug. 2018, doi: 10.26739/2573-5616-2018-8-14.
- [10] I. Ismoilov, "'Baburnama' as a Literary Source," *American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Research*, vol. 5, no. 11, pp. 128–130, 2025, doi: 10.37547/ajsshr/Volume05Issue11-32.
- [11] A. Soguni, *Turkiston Qayg'usi*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Sharq, 2003, 496 p.
- [12] J. Jovliyev, *Qo'rqma*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Nihol, 2020, 376 p.
- [13] N. Boqiy, *Madfun Turkiston*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Tirilish, 2023, 528 p.
- [14] Z. Saidnosirova, *Oybegim Mening: Xotiralar*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Sharq, 1994, 256 p.
- [15] A. H. To'ychiyev, *O'zbek Nasrida Jadid Obrazi Talqini*, Dissertation for the Degree of Candidate of Philological Sciences, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 2000.
- [16] X. Sulton, *Yaldo Kechasi: Tarixiy Roman*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Xaybar-25, 2025, 464 p.