IQRO JURNALI , IQRO JOURNAL, ИКРО ЖУРНАЛИ
ISSN:2181-4341| wordlyknowledge.uz/index.php/iqro
Volume 22 Issue 01 IYUN 2026

THE INTERPRETATION OF ARTISTIC IMAGERY IN ABDULHAMID CHOLPON'S POEM "KO'NGIL"

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In the history of twentieth-century Uzbek literature, Abdulhamid Cholpon's work occupies a special place in terms of the artistic expression of national awakening, the idea of freedom, and human spirituality. In the poet's poetry, the inner sufferings of the lyrical hero, national consciousness, the spiritual struggle against colonialism, and the ideas of homeland and freedom are manifested in an inseparable connection with one another. In Abdulhamid Cholpon's poetics, the image of the "ko'ngil" (heart) is formed not merely as a lyrical concept denoting a person's emotional state, but as a symbolic expression of the national spirit, historical memory, and the aspiration for freedom. Through the lines:

Heart, why have you become so attached
To the chains that bind you?

the spiritual slavery and national suffering in the human heart are revealed in an artistic and philosophical manner. In this poem, the image of the "Heart" transcends the boundaries of personal emotion and turns into a generalized artistic symbol expressing the spiritual condition of an entire nation. From this perspective, the poem may be evaluated as an example of national-social lyric poetry. In Abdulhamid Cholpon's lyrics, the image of the Homeland – Turkestan – often appears as a civilization that, although deprived of freedom, has not lost its spiritual power. In this poem as well, the same spiritual condition is revealed through the inner conflict of the lyrical hero. His address to the heart is, in essence, an appeal directed to the spirit of the nation, while such images as "chains" and "sword," together with imperative verbs such as "do not wear chains" and "do not bow your head," are interpreted as symbolic-aesthetic expressions of the idea of national liberation.

In many cases, the historical destiny of the nation is expressed in Abdulhamid Cholpon's poetry through the inner conflict of the lyrical subject. In particular, the concepts of the "self" and the "nation" become harmonized in the poet's poetics. This phenomenon is also clearly manifested in this poem. The central image of the poem – the symbol of the "ko'ngil" – is often interpreted in classical Uzbek literature as a symbol of the human soul and spiritual purity. However, Cholpon loads this traditional image with a new socio-philosophical meaning: in his interpretation, the heart appears as the spiritual image of an oppressed nation. The poet addresses the heart:

You have neither lament nor complaint,
Why have you become so weak?

At this point, the dialogue of the lyrical subject with himself is evaluated as an inner rebellion against the fading of national consciousness. Through the verb "have become weak," the decline of the nation's will under the influence of colonialism is expressed.

The Russian literary scholar M. Bakhtin emphasizes that "a person's inner speech is formed in connection with social consciousness" [1]. Cholpon's dialogue with the "heart" may also be regarded as a national-philosophical manifestation of such an inner dialogue. The image of "chains" in the poem possesses particular semantic significance:

Will the chains never be shattered?

Will the swords no longer be broken?

Here, the “chains” symbolize slavery, dependence, and colonialism, while the “sword” symbolizes freedom and struggle. The poet’s rhetorical questions intensify the artistic contrast. In them, inner rebellion is manifested more strongly than external reality. In Cholpon’s works, the Homeland – Turkestan – acquires a broader meaning than a mere geographical space. It is remodellled as an artistic space embodying the nation’s historical memory, spiritual values, and dreams and aspirations for freedom.

Although the name Turkestan is not directly mentioned in the poem “Ko‘ngil,” the entire spirit of the poem is imbued with the idea of national liberation. The poet’s lines:

Do not wear chains, do not bow your head,
For you too were born free!

directly express the idea of national awakening. Through the phrase “you were born free,” human liberty and freedom are transformed into an artistic-aesthetic ideal. Here, the address “you” is interpreted as a generalized lyrical appeal directed to the entire nation.

“One of the important characteristics defining Abdulhamid Cholpon’s poetics is the formation of the image of the East as a national-spiritual concept” [3]. In the poem “Ko‘ngil,” this concept is also manifested through the idea of inner freedom. While in Eastern poetics the heart signifies the inner world of a person, in Cholpon’s poetry it becomes the spirit of the nation. In this respect, the poet enriches the traditional mystical image with a new national-social content.

The image of the Homeland is not depicted directly in the poem. However, its destiny is felt through the “pain” of the lyrical subject. In Cholpon’s poetics, the Homeland often appears as an artistic concept associated with suffering, longing, and the dream of freedom. Through the images of “chains” and “bowing one’s head,” the colonial condition of the Homeland is symbolically expressed, while the lyrical subject’s appeal to the heart resounds as a spiritual call aimed at awakening the nation. This part of the poem possesses a particularly strong emotional spirit:

You are alive, you have not died,
You are a human being, you are a person!

In these lines, the ideas of human dignity and national pride prevail. Cholpon calls upon a person, first of all, to become spiritually free. As noted, “the principal conflict in Cholpon’s poetry is the spiritual confrontation between freedom and slavery” [2]. For the poet, spiritual unfreedom is more dangerous than external physical slavery.

Thus, the poem “Heart” is one of the works that embodies the most important features of Abdulhamid Cholpon’s lyrics. In the poem, the image of the “heart” is interpreted not as an individual psychological state, but as the spiritual image of the nation. Images such as “chains,” “sword,” and “you were born free” serve as artistic-aesthetic expressions of the idea of national

liberation. In this respect, the poem “Ko‘ngil” occupies an important place as a vivid example of the literature of the National Awakening period.

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