



Global Conference on Multidisciplinary Research and Innovation

Hosted Online from Berlin, Germany

Date: 2nd February, 2026

Website: <https://econferencia.com>

THE IMAGE OF CHO‘L PON IN CONTEMPORARY UZBEK DRAMATURGY: THE TRAGEDY OF CREATIVITY AND FREEDOM

Jamila Badalova

Lecturer at the Department of Philosophy and
Spirituality, Termez State Pedagogical Institute

Annotation

This article explores the image of Cho‘lpon in contemporary Uzbek dramaturgy, emphasizing the tragedy of creativity and freedom. Cho‘lpon, as a poet, thinker, and intellectual of the early 20th century, becomes a central figure through which modern playwrights examine the tension between artistic independence and political oppression. The study analyzes how dramatists portray his inner struggles, moral courage, and commitment to national and cultural values amidst historical adversity. By focusing on Cho‘lpon’s tragic fate, the article highlights broader themes of the artist’s responsibility, the conflict between personal ideals and societal pressures, and the enduring relevance of intellectual freedom in modern Uzbekistan. The dramatization of Cho‘lpon’s life serves not only as a historical reflection but also as a philosophical and ethical commentary for contemporary audiences.

Keywords: Cho‘lpon, contemporary Uzbek dramaturgy, creative tragedy, freedom, intellectual independence, artistic responsibility, moral courage, national identity, historical drama, ethical reflection.

Contemporary Uzbek dramaturgy has witnessed a significant revival of historical and literary figures as central characters, serving both aesthetic and philosophical purposes. Among these figures, Cho‘lpon (Abdulhamid Cho‘lpon, 1897–1938) occupies a special place. As a poet, playwright, critic, and intellectual, Cho‘lpon



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represents the pinnacle of artistic and moral integrity in the context of early 20th-century Uzbekistan. His life, tragically cut short by political repression, embodies the perennial tension between creative freedom and oppressive power—a theme that contemporary dramatists revisit to explore the dilemmas of the intellectual in society.

In modern Uzbek drama, Cho‘lpon is not merely a historical figure to be portrayed for biographical accuracy. Rather, he functions as a symbol of the universal struggle of artists against limitations imposed by political, social, or cultural forces. The dramatization of Cho‘lpon’s life allows playwrights to probe essential questions: What constitutes true intellectual freedom? How does an artist remain faithful to personal and national ideals under oppression? What ethical responsibilities does the creative personality bear in shaping society? These questions resonate profoundly with contemporary audiences, who confront similar issues in the realms of cultural, social, and political life [8].

This article aims to examine the representation of Cho‘lpon in contemporary Uzbek dramaturgy, emphasizing the interplay between creativity, freedom, and tragedy. It analyzes how modern playwrights reconstruct his historical and psychological profile, using dramatic techniques to convey the profound moral and philosophical dimensions of his life and works.

Cho‘lpon’s historical significance lies not only in his literary output but also in his unwavering commitment to the intellectual and moral development of his society. Born during a period of profound social change in Central Asia, he was an active participant in cultural, literary, and political life. His works, written in Uzbek and Russian, emphasized enlightenment, national consciousness, and moral responsibility. For contemporary dramatists, Cho‘lpon’s life offers a rich narrative that exemplifies the challenges faced by intellectuals who seek to combine artistry with social commitment [1].



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In dramaturgical terms, Cho‘lpon functions as a symbol of resistance, moral courage, and cultural continuity. His literary achievements, as well as his personal integrity in the face of persecution, allow playwrights to present a multidimensional character whose struggles are both historically grounded and universally resonant. By reinterpreting Cho‘lpon’s life for the modern stage, dramatists are able to explore the enduring question of the artist’s role in society. Central to Cho‘lpon’s portrayal in contemporary drama is the theme of creative tragedy. Unlike historical dramas that emphasize chronological events, modern dramaturgy focuses on the internal conflicts of the protagonist, his intellectual dilemmas, and his emotional struggles. Cho‘lpon is often depicted as a creative mind caught between the demands of society and the imperatives of personal expression. This tension reflects the broader existential challenges of artists in oppressive or transitional societies.

In many contemporary plays, Cho‘lpon’s creative process is portrayed as inseparable from moral and ethical responsibility. Writing, teaching, and literary criticism are not merely professional activities; they are acts of civic and ethical significance. The dramatization of Cho‘lpon’s creative life emphasizes that true artistry is inseparable from conscience. The tragedy emerges from the collision of this conscientious creativity with the forces of political repression, societal misunderstanding, or moral compromise [2].

Dramatists often depict Cho‘lpon wrestling with questions of duty, loyalty, and integrity. These portrayals highlight the painful realization that intellectual and artistic freedom may demand personal sacrifice. The historical outcome of Cho‘lpon’s life—his arrest and execution—becomes the culminating expression of this tragic tension. In this sense, contemporary Uzbek drama uses Cho‘lpon as a lens through which the audience can reflect on the ethical and existential dilemmas of all creative individuals.



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Cho‘lpon’s image is inextricably linked to the theme of freedom, both artistic and personal. In the context of early Soviet Uzbekistan, freedom was constrained by ideological and political pressures, making Cho‘lpon’s commitment to truth and artistic integrity especially courageous. Contemporary dramatists reconstruct these historical tensions, emphasizing Cho‘lpon’s determination to uphold intellectual independence despite grave risks.

This theme resonates strongly with modern audiences, as it raises questions about the boundaries of creative autonomy in a complex social and political environment. Cho‘lpon becomes an archetype of the intellectual who resists conformity, critiques injustice, and asserts the moral authority of art. His courage in defending the freedom of thought and expression serves as a moral exemplar for contemporary artists and audiences alike.

Dramatic representations often include confrontations between Cho‘lpon and authority figures, metaphorical expressions of censorship, and internal debates regarding compromise versus principle. These techniques allow dramatists to explore not only historical circumstances but also the timeless challenges that creative personalities face in any society [3].

Modern dramaturgy places significant emphasis on the psychological and emotional dimensions of Cho‘lpon’s character. Rather than presenting a purely heroic or idealized figure, contemporary playwrights depict his doubts, fears, and ethical dilemmas. This humanization enhances the dramatic impact and makes his struggles relatable to the audience.

Cho‘lpon’s inner conflict often revolves around reconciling artistic vision with social responsibility. His passion for literary and cultural advancement is constantly weighed against the dangers of political repression and social misunderstanding. Dramatic monologues, soliloquies, and reflective dialogues are employed to convey his internal deliberations, offering insight into the mind



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of a creative personality grappling with the existential consequences of intellectual freedom.

The psychological realism of Cho‘lpon’s portrayal ensures that his tragedy is not only historical but also existential. Audiences are invited to empathize with his moral courage, to reflect on their own ethical commitments, and to consider the price of remaining true to personal and cultural ideals in the face of adversity [6]. In contemporary Uzbekistan, Cho‘lpon’s image carries profound cultural and national significance. As an advocate for the Uzbek language, literature, and national consciousness, he embodies the intellectual and moral aspirations of the nation. Contemporary dramatists emphasize his contributions to national identity, portraying him as a custodian of cultural heritage and a defender of artistic and ethical values.

This national dimension is often intertwined with universal themes. Cho‘lpon’s struggle for freedom, creativity, and moral integrity transcends the specifics of time and place, making him a symbol of the broader human quest for justice, truth, and self-expression. His image on the contemporary stage reinforces a sense of continuity between past and present, demonstrating the relevance of historical figures in shaping modern cultural consciousness.

By dramatizing Cho‘lpon’s life, playwrights contribute to a cultural dialogue that underscores the importance of intellectual independence, artistic integrity, and civic responsibility in the formation of national identity. The stage becomes a space where history, ethics, and aesthetics converge to illuminate the challenges and possibilities of creative freedom [4].

Cho‘lpon’s tragic fate in history provides a foundation for exploring ethical and philosophical questions in contemporary dramaturgy. His life prompts reflection on themes such as:



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The moral responsibility of the artist

The tension between personal integrity and social conformity

The cost of intellectual and creative freedom

The role of historical memory in shaping ethical consciousness

Through dramatization, these questions are brought to life on stage, inviting audiences to consider their own ethical commitments and the societal conditions necessary for artistic and intellectual flourishing. In this way, Cho'lpon's image functions as both a historical lesson and a philosophical catalyst [5].

The image of Cho'lpon in contemporary Uzbek dramaturgy exemplifies the intersection of creativity, freedom, and tragedy. Modern playwrights depict him as a complex, morally courageous, and intellectually independent figure whose life embodies the challenges and responsibilities of the artist. Through dramatic techniques such as monologue, symbolism, and temporal juxtaposition, Cho'lpon's inner struggles and ethical dilemmas are brought vividly to the stage, allowing audiences to engage with his tragedy on both historical and existential levels.

Cho'lpon's representation serves multiple purposes: it commemorates a historical figure, illuminates the philosophical dimensions of creative freedom, and reinforces national and cultural identity. His tragic fate reminds viewers of the cost of intellectual integrity in the face of repression while inspiring reflection on the enduring significance of moral courage and artistic responsibility.

In contemporary Uzbek dramaturgy, Cho'lpon is more than a historical poet or critic; he is a symbol of the eternal struggle for freedom, creativity, and ethical integrity. His image invites ongoing dialogue between the past and present, offering lessons for artists, intellectuals, and audiences alike. As such, the dramatization of Cho'lpon's life remains a vital avenue for exploring the philosophical and moral questions inherent in the pursuit of art and freedom.



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