

**THE BAKER GIRL: A VICTIM OF IGNORANCE****Baxriddinova Umida**

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**Abstract:** This article explores the ideological structure, composition, plot, and distinctive features of the literary language in Cho'lpon's short story The Baker Girl.

**Keywords:** Uzbek poetry, Jadid literature, literary work, socio-political life, similes, artistic devices, rhetorical questions.

**Introduction**

The works of Abdulhamid Sulaymon o'g'li Cho'lpon, one of the most active figures of the Jadid movement, which considered the role of knowledge and education as unparalleled in the development of Uzbek literature and society in the 20th century, left an indelible mark on this period's literary scene. In harmony with the progressive intellectuals and writers of his time, Cho'lpon created works in genres such as novels, stories, and essays that reflected the essence of the new era of literature. No matter the genre, his deep sensitivity to the intricacies of human life ensured that his works were impactful and timeless, turning them into unique literary treasures that have retained their relevance and significance to this day.

Living in this miraculous world called life is indeed a great fortune for any person. However, life is not a smooth, seamless process free from difficulties or challenges. It is these trials that shape a person into their true self. Cho'lpon's stories address such critical issues, often focusing on the tragic and painful paths of Uzbek women in the past, their cruel fates, and the deep sorrow and anguish they endured. His stories, including On Moonlit Nights, Tulip in the Snow, and The Baker Girl, written in the 1920s, are considered early classic examples of lyrical prose in Uzbek literature. As a masterful storyteller, Cho'lpon portrays the tragic fate of Uzbek women, emphasizing the progressive idea that the level of a society's development is determined by its treatment of women. The depiction of the fate of Uzbek women, especially under colonial rule, forms the ideological core of his poems, stories, and his novel Night and Day.



In stories like Tulip in the Snow, The Baker Girl, and On Moonlit Nights, Cho'lpon vividly illustrates the steadfast will, patience, sincerity, and openness of Uzbek women. Among these, The Baker Girl stands out as a story that captivates readers from the first sentences, drawing them in as if under a spell. Although written over a century ago, the story retains its historical, educational, and moral significance.

The title, The Baker Girl, naturally piques readers' curiosity. Bread, symbolizing sacredness and nourishment, suggests the innocence of the protagonist, who becomes a victim of cruelty due to her naivety and sincerity. The story centers on the fate of a simple, kind-hearted baker girl who falls prey to evil because of her honesty and straightforwardness. The composition and plot structure of the story present a striking contrast to what readers might expect.

The story opens with a tragic scene: "After it was all over, they lay silently on opposite sides of the room. Inside the house, the courtyard, the streets – everything was engulfed in a deep, heavy silence, much like the moments just before dawn." This introduction immediately draws readers into the unfolding darkness in the protagonist's life. Such lines cannot help but capture attention: "The sea, though vast, is always defeated by the shore. In its fury, it sends waves crashing against the shore, but no matter how fierce, the shore remains unmoved. The waves break apart and return to the sea, only to be gathered and thrown against the shore again. Endless struggle, endless defeat..." The sea symbolizes the baker girl, while the shore represents the antagonist O'lmasboy, highlighting Cho'lpon's narrative skill.

As the story progresses, misfortunes continue to besiege the baker girl. Upon returning home, she finds that her mother has passed away, having left behind sustenance for her daughter even in her final moments: "Sitting by her mother's bedside, the poor girl, who had no one else in this world, drank a tasteless broth made from plain water. "Oh, my poor mother! Even in death, she leaves me her share of sustenance. But what now? Who will provide for me in this cruel world?"

The girl's fate becomes increasingly precarious, and the loss of her only support, her mother, leaves her in a state of despair. As the story approaches its grim conclusion, the reader is introduced to a courtroom scene, where the baker girl's honor is on trial.



Having endured cruelty and injustice, she transforms into a proud, resolute woman by the story's end.

"The sea – silent as a girl enslaved – spoke. The shore – as calm as a towering mountain – listened. The shore crumbled. The mountain fell. The sea's waves and currents, now free, sought to protect the shore, to guard it from harm."

Cho'Ipon's brilliance as a storyteller shines through in this short yet powerful story. In conclusion, The Baker Girl vividly reflects social realities with its highly artistic and expressive language. By skillfully employing various literary devices, Cho'Ipon enhances the story's artistic value, engaging readers to the point where they empathize deeply with the protagonist. The reader is led to ponder how they would react if they found themselves in such tragic circumstances, imagining how they would navigate the depths of despair. By the end, the story presents a transformation from a powerless, oppressed girl into a courageous and victorious woman.

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