



CONFERENCE ARTICLE

**REFLECTIONS OF THE FEMALE IMAGE IN CHARLOTTE BRONTË'S JANE EYRE IN UZBEK
LITERATURE: A THEORETICAL AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the image of the main female protagonist in the famous novel *Jane Eyre* (1847) by the English writer Charlotte Brontë from a literary and philosophical perspective. The novel addresses issues such as a woman's self-awareness as an individual, her aspiration for spiritual independence, and her defense of her values as an equal human being in the face of men and society. This image is compared with the formation of female identity in Uzbek literature and is analyzed comparatively alongside the female characters of Kumush in Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *O'tkan kunlar* (*Bygone Days*) and Zuhra in Cho'lpon's *Kecha va Kunduz* (*Night and Day*). The article also provides an in-depth discussion of the evolution of the female image in national and world literary thought, focusing on women's spiritual independence and social activity.

KEYWORDS

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, women's independence, feminist thought, Uzbek literature, Kumush, Zuhra, women's dignity, national values.

INTRODUCTION

The image of a woman in the literature of every nation serves as a reflection of society's spiritual level and cultural identity. In English literature, the theme of women entered a new stage of development in the nineteenth century. This period, known as the Victorian era, was characterized by rigid social stratification, while women's lives were often confined to the framework of "home, marriage, and obedience."

In such a social environment, Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855) entered the literary scene with her novel *Jane Eyre* (1847), portraying women not merely as symbols of love or family life, but as intelligent, free, and spiritually independent individuals. She advanced the ideas of women's personal freedom, moral strength, and their right to defend their values as equal human beings in the face of society. *Jane Eyre* represents a new type of female character in literary history—a woman who asserts her rights and refuses to submit to social constraints. This novel is regarded as a revolutionary artistic interpretation of the female experience in nineteenth-century English society.

The Victorian period (1837–1901) was marked by a strictly patriarchal social structure in England.

Social expectations placed upon women included:

- fulfilling domestic and family duties;
- submitting to men in society;
- maintaining "purity" in moral and ethical terms.

Under such conditions, the issue of women's personal freedom and spiritual independence found expression through literature. Brontë's *Jane Eyre* precisely reveals these problems in an artistic form.

In Uzbek literature, the issue of women likewise became one of the most pressing topics in the early twentieth century,

alongside the national awakening. In the works of writers such as Abdulla Qodiriy, Cho'lpon, Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy, Uvaysiy, and Zulfiya, the inner world of women, their aspiration for freedom, and their social activity began to be portrayed. In essence, this process closely parallels the idea of women's emancipation expressed in Brontë's works.

Main Part

The Process of Female Self-Identity Formation in the Novel *Jane Eyre*

Jane Eyre is an artistic manifesto against the patriarchal society of its time. From childhood, Jane experiences inequality and humiliation. However, through her intelligence, diligence, and strong sense of conscience, she succeeds in finding her rightful place in life.

In the novel, the female image is embodied through the following criteria:

- Intellectual independence: Jane views knowledge and education as forces that liberate women.
- Moral integrity: Even in the name of love, she does not betray her principles.
- Social courage: Jane rejects society's perception of women as "inferior."

"Do you think I am an automaton? — a machine without feelings? ... I have as much soul as you — and full as much heart!" (Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 1847)

In this passage, Jane defends her emotions, her conscience, and her human right to dignity. Brontë challenges the Victorian stereotype of women as "emotional, weak, and obedient." This statement reveals not only a woman's spiritual independence but also her moral steadfastness: Jane does not abandon her

principles and thus creates a personal artistic manifesto against the patriarchal system of society. Another important aspect is that personal freedom is presented not merely as an individual right, but as something inseparably connected with moral strength and ethical principles. Brontë portrays woman not as a passive object, but as an active, decision-making subject.

From this perspective, Brontë's work assumes a programmatic significance in liberating women both socially and spiritually.

The Image of Kumush in Abdulla Qodiriy's Novel O'tkan kunlar (Bygone Days)

Kumush is the first idealized female figure in the history of Uzbek novel writing. She is devoted to her love, yet at the same time a woman who holds her honor and dignity in high regard.

"Although Kumush opens her heart to love, she preserves her honor and self-respect and submits to no one."

(A. Qodiriy, O'tkan kunlar, 1994)

In the character of Kumush, A. Qodiriy reflects the harmony between a woman's dignity and social norms. Although the writer limits a woman's personal choice by linking it to national values such as honor, family, and loyalty, Kumush's spiritual independence is nevertheless evident: she unites love with dignity, thus creating the image of the ideal woman in Uzbek literature.

The following traits can be observed in Kumush's character:

- preserving feminine chastity;
- refusing to remain silent in the face of social injustice;
- harmonizing love with honor.

There are common spiritual parallels between Jane Eyre and Kumush:

- both regard love as an integral part of human dignity;
- both experience the conflict between social expectations and the voice of the heart;

- for both, the highest value is humanity and conscience.

However, the difference lies in the fact that Jane determines her own destiny, whereas Kumush faces tragedy within the strict boundaries of national mentality. Thus, the image of Kumush represents a national interpretation of female dignity, while Jane embodies universal human values.

Zuhra as a Symbol of Freedom in Cho'lpon's Novel Kecha va Kunduz (Night and Day)

The character of Zuhra created by Cho'lpon expresses the idea of women's intellectual freedom and spiritual awakening in Uzbek literature. Zuhra challenges the restrictions imposed by society and seeks knowledge, equality, and freedom of love.

"I have the right to speak for myself; I choose my love and my thoughts on my own."

(Cho'lpon, Kecha va Kunduz, 1989)

Cho'lpon links women's social activity and consciousness to national awakening, viewing women's intellectual freedom as a contribution to the moral progress of the entire society. This approach is harmonious with the image of Jane Eyre, yet differs in its national context and historical circumstances, such as the colonial period and religious-moral constraints.

Like Jane Eyre, Zuhra:

- recognizes the necessity for women to have their own voice in society;
- associates love with the freedom to choose one's own destiny;
- regards women's education as a guarantee of social development.

Thus, the images of Jane and Zuhra are closely aligned in terms of intellectual independence and spiritual freedom. Both characters represent a new type of woman emerging during the stages of moral and cultural awakening of their respective societies.

Features		Charlotte Brontë – <i>Jane Eyre</i>	Abdulla Qodiriy – <i>O'tkan kunlar (Bygone Days)</i>	Cho'lpon – <i>Kecha va Kunduz (Night and Day)</i>
Women's Awareness	Self-	Personal freedom and independent decision-making	Loyalty in love, but conflict with social boundaries	Freedom of thought and the pursuit of enlightenment
Relationship with Society	Fighting against	the patriarchal system	the Pressure from family and tradition	Religious and spiritual obstacles during the colonial era
aim		Spiritual freedom and equality	Maintaining honor	The awakening of the nation through the enlightenment of women
Final		He finds happiness by choosing his own path.	Becomes a victim of social pressure	As a symbol of the movement towards freedom

This analysis demonstrates that the idea of women's spiritual independence has acquired a universal character in both Western and Eastern literature. The works of Brontë, A. Qodiriy, and Cho'lpon express freedom, moral purity, and human values at a high level through the image of woman.

Conclusion

This article has provided a theoretical and comparative analysis of the female image created in Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre* and its artistic and ideological reflections in Uzbek literature. The study demonstrates that the image of *Jane Eyre*, which emerged in nineteenth-century English literature, portrays a woman not as a passive and obedient representative of a social class, but as an independent individual who defines her place in society through intellect, conscience, and moral determination. This character embodies artistic, aesthetic, and philosophical resistance to the patriarchal structure of the Victorian era and elevates the issue of women's freedom to a universal level.

Through comparative analysis, both the common and distinctive features between *Jane Eyre* and the characters of Kumush from Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan kunlar* and Zuhra from Cho'lpon's *Kecha va Kunduz* have been identified. While Kumush represents an artistic symbol of female dignity grounded in national values, honor, and loyalty, Zuhra embodies the idea of women's liberation through intellectual freedom, enlightenment, and social engagement in Uzbek literature. In all three characters, the inner world of women, their moral choices, and their spiritual independence occupy a central position.

The findings confirm that although the evolution of the female image in Western and Eastern literature has taken place under different historical and social conditions, its essential core—human dignity, freedom of conscience, and spiritual independence—emerges as a universal value. The female figures created by Charlotte Brontë, Abdulla Qodiriy, and Cho'lpon possess not only literary and aesthetic significance but also provide important theoretical insights into understanding the role and position of women in the moral development of society. Therefore, these works offer a deeper comprehension of social and philosophical perspectives in both national and world literature through the representation of women.

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