

The Story Uhud: Historical Truth And Literary Interpretation

Farruh Sadriddinovich Bafoyeu

Institute of Uzbek Language, Literature and Folklore of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Received: 14 July 2025; **Accepted:** 15 August 2025; **Published:** 14 September 2025

Abstract: In this article, the story Uhud, which is part of a series of popular folk tales about Hazrat Ali, is analyzed. The historical reality described in this story is comparatively studied on the basis of sources related. In particular, based on hadiths and books of biography, a comprehensive analysis was conducted, certain conclusions were drawn on the interpretation of historical truth in the artistic thinking of the people, and the boundaries of historical truth and artistic interpretation were determined.

Keywords: War of Uhud, Hazrat Ali, folk tale, hero, historical truth, literary interpretation.

Introduction: The story Uhud, which is a product of the storytelling tradition in Uzbek folklore and is considered one of the works of the Hazrat Ali cycle, belongs to the category of purely historical stories in terms of content and essence. As the title suggests, the story tells the story of one of the most famous wars of Muslims against polytheists in Islamic history. According to sources, Uhud was one of the mountains near Medina, and it became known in history as the War of Uhud because the event took place there. According to historical sources, the War of Uhud took place in the third year of Hijra, 625 CE. Therefore, at the beginning of the story, the event of the migration, the subsequent War of Badr, and then the origin of the War of Uhud are mentioned: "After the War of Badr, Muhammad (peace be upon him) gained strength and gathered three thousand soldiers. Then news came to Mecca... the disbelievers Abu Sufyan and Hunayfa were in Mecca, and the nobles of Mecca told them both: "A measure must be taken. Muhammad was an ant, became a snake. Thinking there will be fewer dragons, they gathered an army. Ten thousand soldiers were assembled. They headed towards Medina..." [3.94]. According to the traditional motif of the story, this event is conveyed to Muhammad (peace be upon him) through revelation. The Muslims were ready, and a fight broke out between them. Unlike historical sources, the story tells about one-on-one fights between the armies of both sides. In particular, the work first describes the fight between the companion

Hamza and Khalid ibn Walid. According to it, his emir Hamza defeated Khalid ibn Walid and took him prisoner. This is a heavy burden for the polytheists. A woman named Hind from the Quraysh who entered the war announced to everyone that whoever killed Hamza would give his daughter Anbariya in marriage. Among the warriors was a slave nicknamed Wahshi, who was in love with Anbariya. Hearing these words from Hind, he negotiated with him and entered the war. At this time, Abu Sufyan explained to the soldiers that everyone should enter war at the same time, otherwise it would be difficult to defeat the Muslims, and a mass war began. The war lasted a long time. The polytheists will retreat. At this moment, Wahshi, who was secretly watching Hamza, took advantage of his wife's girth and struck him with a spear from behind. As a result, Emir Hamza died. Meanwhile, Prophet Muhammad's horse's feet sank into a pit, and he fell from his horse, and at that moment two of his teeth were broken by a stone thrown at them. Seeing this, Satan whispers, announcing "Muhammad is dead," resulting in the Muslim soldiers fleeing. Hazrat Ali, who was said to have gone to another holy war under Gabriel's revelation, arrives at the warfield. There will be a fierce war. Many of the polytheists die, and the rest flee to Mecca. At the end of the story, Abu Sufyan and Khalid ibn Walid convert to Islam. Everyone returned to Medina, and the condolences of Amir Hamza took place.

Although the general details of the story reflect the

true historical reality, in the details of some events, there are cases of submission to the epic tradition, the effective use of artistic fiction. For example, the number of soldiers participating in the war from both sides in the story does not correspond to historical reality. It is said that three thousand Muslims and ten thousand polytheists participated in the war. According to historical sources, seven hundred Muslims and three thousand Quraysh people participated in the War of Uhud [2.207]. As can be seen, exaggeration, characteristic of folk prose, is effectively used in such images. According to historical fact, Hamza ibn Abdulmuttalib, who is considered the uncle of Muhammad, mentioned in the story under the name of his emir Hamza, participated in the War of Uhud and was killed by a person who appeared in the story under the name Wahshi, whose real name was Abu Dasama Wahshi ibn Harb al-Habashi. However, we see that the event presented in the motif of conditionality is artistically adapted, characteristic of folk prose. That is, Wahshi did this not to gain the girl he was in love with Anbaria, as in the story, but because of his master Jubayr ibn Mut'im's promise: "If you kill Hamza, I will free you." Because in the War of Badr, Jubayr's uncle Tu'aym ibn Adiy was killed by Hamza ibn Abdulmuttalib, may Allah be pleased with him. Intending to avenge his uncle, Jubayr swore oaths by the idols of Lot and Uzzo, walking in bitterness. For this reason, he made this promise to Wahshi. Wahshi, who had dreamed of freedom since childhood, immediately agreed to this condition [6.196]. Additionally, Hind bint Utba, the wife of Abu Sufyan, who was from the Quraysh polytheists, had promised reward to the person who killed Hamza ibn Abdulmuttalib for the revenge of his father and uncle who were killed at Badr. Thus, Wahshi, who was unmatched in accurate spear throwing, observed for a long time and killed Hamza ibn Abdulmuttalib while he was fighting. According to the promise, Wahshi was freed from slavery. But this doesn't make him happy. They live in fear of Muslim vengeance. Years later, he himself found guidance, accepted Islam, and by killing the false "prophet" Musaylimat the Liar, he became a balm for the wound in the hearts of Muslims. For this reason, historians wrote about him: "This person killed the best person after Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him... and also the worst person" [8]. Thus, the beautiful "Anbariya" depicted in the folk tale, in which Wahshi fell in love and did not hesitate to kill someone for him, is a symbol of freedom, personal freedom.

The story emphasizes Hazrat Ali's bravery and portrays him as a hero who decides the fate of the war. Is this really the case? What information about this can be found in historical sources? According to historical truth, Hazrat Ali was among the companions who stood

out on the warfield with their bravery and courage in the War of Uhud. The legends about this war support our opinion. In particular, when Mus'ab ibn Umayr, the flag bearer of Muslims who fought heroically in the War of Uhud, was martyred, Muhammad (peace be upon him) handed the flag to Ali ibn Abu Talib, who fought skillfully. Seeing him, the banner-bearer of the polytheists calls upon the Muslims to fight one-on-one: "You claimed that those who were killed among you would enter Paradise, and our people would enter Hell. Come on, let one of you come up to me?!" – he shouts. These words put an end to Ali ibn Abu Talib's patience. He said: "I have come out to you. O Abu Sa'd ibn Abu Talha! Fight me one-on-one! O enemy of Allah!" A life-or-death struggle begins. They begin to strike each other. Ali ibn Abu Talib, without delay, struck the polytheist hard in the soul with his sword named Zulfiqar as soon as the first opportunity arose, and he fell with a cry. Ali ibn Abu Talib, who was supposed to strike another blow to the polytheist according to war rules, bent down but retreated without striking. The reason for this was that at that time, the dying polytheist's private parts were exposed [7.208]. Through this narration, we witness, on one hand, Hazrat Ali's courage, and on the other hand, his piety and modesty. According to another narration, after the War of Uhud, Muhammad's eyes fell on the women bustling around Ali ibn Abu Talib. When the women saw him, they said, "O Prophet of Allah, when we bandaged one of his wounds, another is opening." The Prophet of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, approached him, looked at his body, and said: "Whoever encounters all of this in the way of Allah will certainly be tested and excused." According to Sa'id ibn Musayyab, Hazrat Ali was wounded in sixteen places on the day of Uhud [7.210]. These historical facts show that the events narrating the courage of Hazrat Ali, embedded in the content of the story, did not arise without reason.

In most of the stories of the series, Hazrat Ali does not take an active part in the details at the beginning of the events, but in the end, he appears as a decisive hero, distinguished by his enthusiasm and courage. In particular, Hazrat Ali appears at the end of events in the War of Uhud. This situation is described in the story as follows: "Narrators have said that at that moment, the Prophet (peace be upon him) buried himself under a stone. At that hour, the voice of the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) said: "O Muhammad, your God sends his greetings upon you. After greetings, the command is: "Will you seek help from angels or from Ali?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "I will ask Ali." Gabriel (peace be upon him) said: "O Muhammad, God Almighty called Ali 'My Lion.' Give Ali a prophecy"

[3.91]. However, according to the story, Hazrat Ali was not on the warfield at that time, but had been sent to another holy war. Then, following the words of Gabriel, Muhammad (peace be upon him) summoned Ali. As a result, Hazrat Ali appeared like the wind in the desert, reached the warfield, and defeated the polytheists. However, according to historical truth, these events related to Hazrat Ali in the story are a product of artistic fiction. Because Ali ibn Abu Talib participated in the War of Uhud from beginning to end. As mentioned in the story, he wasn't sent to another holy war. According to Ibn Is'haq, Mus'ab ibn Umayr carried the Muslim flag in the War of Uhud. During the war, he fought heroically and was martyred. Then the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, gave the flag to Ali ibn Abu Talib, and he continued the war with several Muslims. Ibn Hisham said: "Maslama ibn Alqama ibn Mazini narrated to me: 'On the day of Uhud, when the war was in full swing, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, sat under the banner of the Ansar and sent someone to Ali ibn Abu Talib, ordering him to bring the banner forward. Ali stepped into the front row and said: "I am Abul-fusn (the conqueror, the strong warrior)" [1.60]. In the book "Hadith and Life," regarding the transfer of the flag to Ali ibn Abu Talib during the War of Uhud: "And that warrior, holding the banner of Islam with his own hands and the famous Zulfiqar with his other hands, continued to destroy the polytheists. The Prophet (peace be upon him) praised these two renowned figures, saying: "There is no sword like Zulfiqar, no young man like Ali" [7.207]. This phrase, spoken by Muhammad (peace be upon him), is spoken by the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) in the Turkish version of the story "Khaybar" regarding the infidel hero Antar and Hazrat Ali who tore his horse into two pieces [4.49]. From the above details, it can be concluded that although the episode of Hazrat Ali entering the warfield in the story is a product of artistic fiction, these legends show his heroism in war. Thus, among the heroes mentioned in the story Uhud, Muhammad (peace be upon him), Hazrat Ali, Amir Hamza, Khalid ibn Walid, Bilal, Abu Sufyan, Hind, Wahshi are historical figures who, according to historical sources, actually participated in the War of Uhud. Anbariya, Hunayfa, and others are characters created as literary fiction.

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that in the plot of the folk tales of the Hazrat Ali series, based on historical events, the details of real historical events prevail over artistic fiction. So, reliable historical sources were the basis for the creation of works of this type. Through these stories, the common people not only received aesthetic pleasure, but also studied the

history of their religion and taught it to future generations. It is not surprising that the reason for the preservation of the storytelling tradition as a value for several centuries is their multifunctionality.

References

1. Abdulmalik ibn Hisham al-Ma'afiri. *As-Sira an-Nabawiyya* - II. - Tashkent: HILOL-NASHR, 2020. - P.60.
2. Abdulmu'ti Ismail Uboda. *History of Prophets (Stories of resolute prophets mentioned in the Holy Quran / Translators and publishers: Abbas Ahmad, Ibrahim Nurullah*. - Tashkent, 2022. - P.358.
3. *Stories about Hazrat Ali / Publ. Prepared and prefaced by: S. Rafiddinov*. - T.: Writer, 1992. -P.91.
4. *Hazret-i Ali Cenkləri*. Hazırlayan: İsmail Toprak.– İstanbul, 2016. –S.49.
5. *Hz. Ali cenkləri*. Hazırlayan: N.Ahmet Özalp. – İstanbul, 2017.
6. *101 great companions*. Compilers: I.Usmonov et al. - Tashkent: HILOL-NASHR, 2024. - P.196.
7. Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf. *Hadith and Life*. Part 22. Usman and Ali ibn Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with them both. - Tashkent: UzNU, 2021. - P.207.
8. <https://muslim.uz/uz/e/post/22936-vahshiy-ni-kechirolmagan-ona>