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**ABSTRACT**

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**THE PROBLEM OF GENDER  
IN THE WORKS OF ANGELA CARTER**

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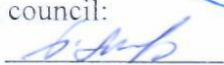
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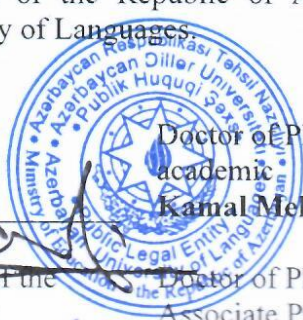


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## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

**The degree of significance and study of the topic.** The research direction of various texts, a cultural phenomenon in world philosophical and philological thinking, has gained artistic and aesthetic functionality in many ways. Moreover, it has become necessary to study it from a typological and genetic point of view. The process of separating literary texts into male and female and distinguishing them is no longer controversial. On the contrary, research in this direction has become a tradition. This division does not only create differences in the research strategy of literary texts but also contributes to an in-depth study. Although not sharply but male and female texts were distinguished from each other by some identifying patterns. Examples of this could be the opposition of intertextual meanings and the emergence of new definitions from existing cultural interpretations. This "free and predictable" style of writing of any text makes itself obvious to the reader whether it is written by a female or a male writer, as soon as the reader lips touch the words.

Angela Carter (1940-1992) was one of the brightest postmodern British writers of our time. Despite the fact that the writer intended her works for an elite-intellectual audience, she attracted the attention of a large number of readers with her style of description and narration. Angela Carter's literary heritage is very rich with 7 novels, several collections of essays and short stories. In 2008 *The Times* ranked Carter tenth in their list of "The 50 greatest British writers since 1945". The writer has a rich literary heritage of books: "Shadow Dance" (1966), "The Magic Toyshop" (1967), "Several Perceptions" (1968), "Heroes and villains" (1969), "Love"(1971), "The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman" (1972), "The Passion of New Eve "(1977), "The Bloody Chamber" (1979), "The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography" (1979), "Nights at the Circus" (1984), "Black Venus" (1985), "Wise Children" (1991) and others. She received the James Tait Black award, The John Llewellyn Rhys Prize and Somerset Maugham awards.

This research aims to study the problem of gender in fiction through Angela Carter's works. Carter researched the gender problem from work to work in various writing methods and, especially, on the intertextual level. The specificity of intertextuality, functionality of intertextual relations, is comprehensively described in her literary texts. Through her works the main criteria of the intertextual period, the inexhaustibility of the intertwined texts and the culmination of the creation of meaning show themselves most vividly. Studying gender issues in Carter's work does not only target women's literature, but also shows aesthetic views on the construction of literary texts and the way she recycles forgotten texts of centuries ago. That is, the research on Carter's work explores the history of the gender-women literary movement in depth based on all possible facts and revises the various meaning shades that these "aesthetic games" gave to literature before her. The various devices of female and male styles and their ways of creating literary texts gave rise to the study of literary tendencies, which is still beyond the philological consideration; therefore the research on gender issues in the work of Angela Carter is highly relevant.

The heart of the women's movement, which demands the social, economic, and political emancipation of women, is the goal of ending gender inequality. Gender inequality, the most global problem of the last century, led to building organizations and societies protecting women's rights. However, women are still criticized by society, family, and relatives for their free steps, ideas, and feelings. Thus, the gender issue is still touched by many writers in their works. The research topic is therefore relevant not only to introduce the British writer Angela Carter to Azerbaijani literary criticism but also to study gender issues in her works.

Azerbaijani literary criticism, in the period of integration into Europe, introduced foreign samples and new trends to Azerbaijani readers. From this point of view, Angela Carter's work is important. In her stories, she highlights topics, such as violence, the lack of women's rights in the family and society, the neglect of feelings and emotions, thoughts and ideas, and reveals the socio-psychological composition of her time.

Gender issues are the object of research in Azerbaijani literature, along with the world literary criticism. Azerbaijani researchers A.Abbasov<sup>1</sup>, R.Mirzazada<sup>2</sup> have studied gender-related concepts such as gender and its development, gender research, gender and feminism.

In Western literary criticism themes such as gender, women's literature, and feminism were extensively studied and researched by Moyers, P. Morris, D. Prentice, C. Randall, C. Robert, Ruthven<sup>3</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Abbasov, Ə.S. İnsanın gender dünyagörüşü / Ə.S.Abbasov. – Bakı: – 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Mirzəzadə, R.R. Gender və Feminizm / R.R.Mirzəzadə. – Bakı: – 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander, F. Contemporary Women Novelists / F.Alexander. – London: Edward Arnold, – 1989. – 111 p.; Beauvoir, S. de. The Second Sex / S. de Beauvoir. Translated and edited by H.M.Parshley. – New York: Vintage, – 1974. – 717 p.; Butler J. Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity./ J.Butler. – London: Routledge, – 1990. – 172 p.; Butler, J. Imitation and gender insubordination / J.Butler. In: D.Fuss (Ed.) Inside / Outside-Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories. – London: Routledge, – 1991. – p. 13-31; Case, A.A. Plotting Women. Gender and Narration in the Eighteenth - and Nineteenth-Century British Novel. / A.A.Case. – London: University of Virginia Press, – 1999. – 240 p.; Cixous, H. The Newly Born Woman. / H.Cixous, C.Clement. – Manchester: Manchester University Press, – 1987. – 168 p.; Elaine, Sh., Towards a Feminist Poetics. / Elaine Showalter. ed. The New Feminist Criticism. Essays on Women, Literature and Theory. – New York: Pantheon Books, – 1985. – p. 125-143; Robinson, S. “The Anti-hero as Oedipus: Gender and the Postmodern Narrative.” Gender and Self-Representation in Contemporary Women's Fiction. / S.Robinson. – Albany: State of New York Press, – 1991. – p.98-117; Janet, T. Dictionary of British women writers. / T.Janet. – London: Routledge, – 1989. – XVIII+762 p.; Miller, N. Subject to change. Reading feminist writing. / – New York, – 1988. – 285 p.; Mews, H. Woman's Role in Women's Novels from Fanny Burney to George Eliot. / H.Mews, F.Vessels. – London, – 1969. – 221 p.; Moers, E. Literary Women. / E.Moers. – London: Oxford University Press, – 1977. – 338 p. Morris, P. Literature and Feminism: An introduction. / P.Morris. – Oxford: Blackwell, – 1993. – 217 p.; Prentice, D.A. What Women and Men Should Be, Shouldn't Be, Are Allowed to Be, and Don't Have to Be: the Contents of Prescriptive Gender Stereotypes / D. A. Prentice, E. E. Carranza // Psychology of Women Quarterly, – 2001. No.26, –p. 269–281; Rendall, J. The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France, and the United States, 1780-1860. / J.Rendall. – New York: Macmillan, – 1985. – 391 p.; Robert, J.S. Sex and Gender: The Development of Masculinity and Femininity./ J.S.Robert. – Karnac Books, – 1984. – 383 p.; Ruthven, K.K. Feminist Literary Studies: An Introduction. / K.K.Ruthven. – Cambridge: Cambridge UP, – 1984. – 152 p.

others.

**Object and subject of the research.** The object of the dissertation is to study gender peculiarities in Angela Carter's collection of short stories "Black Venus" and "Bloody Chamber" and gender identity in her novels "The Magic Toyshop", "The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman", "The Passion of New Eve" and "Nights at the Circus".

**Research objectives and tasks.** The main purpose of the dissertation is to study the current aspects of gender issues in English society in the works of Angela Carter and to define universal features to form a holistic view of gender issues in modern English literature. The dissertation is considered to be scientifically complete and examines the history of gender, its development, scientific and theoretical problems, myths and folklore tales in Angela Carter's stories, analyzes them from a feminist point of view, defines gender identity, gender stereotypes, reveals the methods and the means of the gender expressions through the descriptions of the literary characters.

**The research methods.** The research mainly refers to historical-literary, comparative typological, analytical, intertextual methods.

**The main provisions for defense are:**

- The term "gender" is specified by the fact that it includes the moral, psychological and sociological characteristics of man, far from the concept of "sex", which responds to biological factors;
- The scientific and theoretical bases of gender are determined at the developmental stage of literary criticism and led to the emergence of concepts such as gender problem, gender criticism, gender research;
  - Angela Carter uses myths and folklore tales in her stories, and visually demonstrates gender inequality in her works;
  - In her novels, Angela Carter presents the manifestation of the gender problem in social relations, tries to identify male/female stereotypes in the society.

**Scientific novelty of the research work.** The dissertation is the first large-scale research work devoted to the study on gender issues. The main factor determining the scientific novelty of the work is the analysis and research carried out for the first time. "First time"

does not indicate complete scientific innovation. What is happening for the first time may not be innovative. In the dissertation Carter, in her example an indirect intertextual nature of women's literature, the rebirth of gender "texts" in folklore and myth, and the creation of a series of new images are analyzed through considerably diverse methods. We believe that the "bottom" of these texts was created as part of a complete scientific innovation in discovering the functionality of purely women's literature. For example, Carter's hypothesis of creating a liberated female subject (undoubtedly, fictional) is remarkable by the harmony of the internal structural rhythm of fantasy genres. In the dissertation, these and similar philological problems are researched into two aspects - both theoretical and factual. Carter's method of deciphering the codes of old, worn-out traditions in the artistic style is a complete novelty in the context of English and world literature. The demythologization of Angela Carter is a function of her prose to reveal with "a sudden blow" the topics that were not open to the public, problems which were passed over in silence. That is, taking and analyzing a work of art and a cultural tradition are accompanied by innovations in the research process of the dissertation topic.

Despite the fact that Angela Carter's literary heritage has been studied to some extent in world literary criticism, in the Azerbaijani literary environment this author has not been researched. The author's works have not even been translated into Azerbaijani. In general, the topic of gender issues in Angela Carter's works is an unexplored field for Azerbaijani literary criticism.

**Theoretical and practical significance of the research.** The research has theoretical significance as the first major research work on the study of gender issues in Angela Carter's prose. Theoretical generalizations put forward by the dissertation can also be of scientific importance for dissertations that will explore different aspects of the modern stage of British literature.

The results of the research can be used in the philological faculties of universities teaching world and British literature. Furthermore, the scientific findings of the research on the topic of the

dissertation, the main provisions can be used in the preparation of textbooks and teaching resources for British literature.

**Approbation and application.** The ideas and opinions expressed in the research were reflected in scientific conferences, seminars, as well as in articles published in our country and abroad.

**Name of the organization where the dissertation work is performed.** The dissertation was completed at the Department of Foreign Literature of the Azerbaijan University of Languages.

**The total volume of the dissertation with a sign indicating the volume of the structural units of the dissertation separately.** The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a list of references. Introduction – 7 pages, 13327 signs, Chapter I – 38 pages, 74236 signs, Chapter II – 51 pages, 103351 signs, Chapter III – 43 pages, 85837 signs, Conclusion – 5 pages, 10079 signs, total 286830 signs, excluding the References list.

## **BASIC CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH**

The *Introduction* of the dissertation substantiates the relevance and level of development of the topic, the object and subject of research, the goals and objectives of research, methods, the main provisions of the defense, scientific novelty, theoretical and practical significance of the topic and scientific information is provided on the approbation and structure of research work.

The first chapter of the dissertation is “**Gender issues in modern English literature**”. In the subchapter “*Scientific and theoretical foundations of the gender research*” the concept of “gender is studied. The word was first used by John Mann in the field of sociology in 1950. Its original meaning used only to express a person’s sex, but later, as a result of certain political and social changes, it began to acquire new shades.

The difference between “sex” and “gender” was first proposed by the famous American psychoanalyst Robert Stoller. In a study “Sex and Gender” he noted that sex glorifies man in biological, and gender in cultural, psychological and sociological aspects. Ann



Oakley, an English sociologist who confirmed Robert Stoller's view, said: "*sex is a biological term and gender is cultural*"<sup>4</sup>. Based on such views, it can be agreed that gender is a concept that defines the cultural, social, political and mental role of women in society.

The views of Ann Oakley and her colleagues' on the theoretical difference between the concepts of "sex" and "gender" are very useful. This is a universal view. The American historian Joan Scott tried to disclose the theoretical and methodological aspects of gender history in his book "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis". The publication of the collection "Women, Culture, Society" provoked a debate and discussion in the West. Collected and edited by M.Rosaldo and L.Lamphere (1972) and published in this collection, Sherry Ortner's "Is female to male as nature is to culture?" poured fuel to the fire. Also, over the years, R. Unger, Andrienna Rich and Gail Rabin opened the way to a broad discussion on the concept of "gender".

The concept of "gender" is a socio-cultural phenomenon. The main principles of gender are "*to realize equality between women and men in society, to provide women with equal status, to prevent and eliminate discrimination against women, to improve their situation and to reinforce gender-related laws of the governments*"<sup>5</sup>.

We cannot restrict the concept of "gender" only by including the social life of women. Gender is classified as "female and male gender" based on the social functions of women and men.

Born out of feminism in the West, the concept of "gender" meant the struggle of women for their rights. However, "gender" and "feminism" are not the identical words.

The term "feminism" was derived from the Latin word "Femina" meaning "female" and refers to Women's Rights Movement for the protection of women's rights. The term "feminism" coined by the utopian socialist Charles Fourier.

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<sup>4</sup> Oakley, A. Sex, Gender and Society. / A.Oakley. – London: Routledge, – 2015. – p.5

<sup>5</sup> [http://edu.dvgups.ru/METDOC/CGU/SOTS\\_RAB\\_S/GENDER%20\\_FEMIN/METHOD/ABATUROV](http://edu.dvgups.ru/METDOC/CGU/SOTS_RAB_S/GENDER%20_FEMIN/METHOD/ABATUROV)

According to researcher Jane Randall, *the word “feminism” means a woman who claims her rights to determine her place in society*<sup>6</sup>.

The feminism movement is divided into three waves by feminist scholars: first, second and third-wave feminism. The first wave covered the end of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century.

From the second half of the 19th century the international women’s movement- the second wave of feminism became more active. The second wave is the “suffragist” movement.

The third stage - “post-feminism” dates back to the middle of the twentieth century. The struggle for true equality between men and women was typical of this period.

The second half of the first chapter explores ***“The national-cultural specifics of English gender literature”***. The formation of gender literature is characterized by the emergence of women writers who are valued in world literature. Thus, in ancient and medieval times there were very few female writers and poets. Women’s responsibilities were limited to domestic services. Therefore, women were objects of literature described only by male writers. From time to time, this object of description also changed its nature and matured in the form of new qualities. If we look at the history of English literature, we see that the first person to introduce female characters to Anglo-Saxon literature was Cynewulf. It was in her poems “Elene” and “Juliana” that the beauty of women was praised and composed<sup>7</sup>.

At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 18th century, articles claiming that women had the same rights as men were mainly reflected in pamphlets and essays.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the number of English women writers interested in poetry and drama was increasing, and the women’s literature of this period was very different from the literature of the previous century. This difference can be noticed mainly in the choice

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<sup>6</sup> Rendall, J. *The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France, and the United States, 1780-1860.* / J.Rendall. – New York: Macmillan, – 1985. – 391 p

<sup>7</sup> Hecker, M. *English Literature.* / M.Hecker. – M.: Prosveshenie, – 1973. – p.19

of topic and its perception by readers. Thus, it is possible to observe how the female characters of housewives, ladies, faithful women, and the love-crazed were replaced by female characters that were treacherous and unfaithful to their husbands. Although adultery in marriage was considered to be crime until the end of the 18th century and was criticized, in novels the psychological and spiritual sufferings and contradictory thoughts of those became the object of description. Examples of this are McCarthy's "The Fair Moralist" (1745) and Smith's "Emmeline" (1770). Such works contradicted and challenged the English conservative way of thinking and the existing code of ethics.

Although the main object of description in Victorian literature was the family, the patriarchy prevailed in families. A woman was a poor creature in the family, obeying her husband and with no right to decide for herself.

Victorian literary researcher George Henry Lewes said that "*men are ruled by intellect and women by emotions*"<sup>8</sup>. C.H.Lewes mentioned that since women are more emotional than men, their works also depict the inner-psychological world of human beings. Therefore, women have a better chance to create a masterpiece in world literature.

Researcher Shamina Viktorovna, in her dissertation "The Problem of Women in the Victorian Novel of 1840-1870: Jane Austen, Charlotte and Emily Bronte, George Eliot" studied the work of Victorian women writers and concluded that as they succeeded in the literature with their intellect and worldview they were not far behind men. The researcher also repeatedly emphasized that Jane Austen was an initiator of the subject of women in Victorian literature. A Victorian woman in the works of J. Austin was an image seeking her happiness in her family-husband and children. Austin's novels do not discuss the social role of women, nor do they suggest to the reader that "*women should have certain rights and have the same status as men.*" Austin's female protagonists implant the image of the Victorian ideal woman and present "femininity" as a virtue.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://file://C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/378-1180-1-PB.pdf>, – p.85-86

Describing the social status of the Victorian woman and her family, J. Austin created an opportunity for nineteenth-century female readers to look at themselves from another angle.

In contrast to Austin, in the novels of Charlotte, Anne and Emily Bronte, as well as in the novels of George Eliot, women protest against the gender stereotypes in patriarchal society that hinder their success in personal and business life. These women are independent, courageous, and new types of female characters who are able to make their own choices and take responsibility for their choices.

Emily Bronte protested against gender inequality in marriage and seeing women as male property. She claimed for women's right to decide freely in marriage, that it should be based on mutual respect and love, and that the wishes and desires of women should not be sacrificed.

Elizabeth Gaskell's innovation was in describing the working class women's difficult and painful fates in her novels (*Mary Barton*, 1848). The author also touched on the subject of the "immoral woman" and correctly explained the reason for their existence. The blamed it on the society that treated people unequally (Ruth, 1853) Elizabeth Gaskell, labeled an "**antifeminist**" by some critics, did not accuse men in gender inequality. The writer, of course, objected to the patriarchal nature of the society in which she was imprisoned. However, these protests were aimed at the injustices that would hinder women become "household angels" as well as socially active, that is, a woman had to find a balance between these two sides.

Thus, women writers undermined the patriarchal system depicting women and contributing to the development of the feminist movement.

The third half of the first chapter, "***Gender and its representation in modern English literature***", discusses the changes in women's socio-political positions, worldviews, and perceptions in England in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Overburdened with family worries, Victorian women were economically, intellectually, and psychologically dependent on men. However, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, women began to refuse to have the status of an "angel", which overshadowed their future dreams. The rapid development of

the economy, the invention of new technologies, advances in medicine and education required the role of women in the social environment.

However, the formation of the image of the “new woman” was delayed by the outbreak of World War I. The war radically changed people’s minds and psychology to such an extent that they began to doubt the models of “ideal society”, “ideal woman” and “ideal family”. Thus, the psychological collapse created by World War I laid the foundation of a new beginning – modernism.

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), a prominent exponent of modernism and a herald of feminism, went down in history as a free-thinking writer of her time, covering both the stereotyped concept of the novel and topics that had not yet been addressed.

Virginia Woolf’s feminist conception stemmed from a number of events in and around her personal life: the Victorian cultural tradition, the loss of her parents, siblings at an early age, the Bloomsbury group that influenced her outlook on life, the atrocities of World War II, and the socio-political situation. It was this chaos that prompted Woolf to act more boldly in her works, to destroy the dogmas. However, the male-dominated society, pressures, and traditions did not allow it. Woolf argued that to be free as a “woman” in literature, she had to be freed from pressure.

In her essay “A Room of One’s Own”, Woolf shared her thoughts on an issue: “*Why do power, administration, education, wealth and fame belong only to men, and women have nothing but children?*”<sup>9</sup> The same theme was highlighted in the next essay “Three geniuses” and continued with the demand for intellectual and spiritual freedom for women.

Doris Lessing, the 2007 Nobel laureate, described women’s fears of being doomed to loneliness, their hesitant and contradictory feelings they experience within domestic, social, cultural, political, racial, and sexual discrimination in patriarchal society.

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<sup>9</sup> Woolf, V. A Room of One’s Own. Non-fiction, Literary Essay. / V.Woolf. Mariner Books: 1st edition, –2005, 1 August, – 224 p.

Fay Weldon, whose real name was Franklin Birkinshaw, was one of the writers who supported feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s and was “concerned about the situation of women in the world”. In those years, Fay Weldon was called the “Voice of the Rising Feminist Consciousness in the United Kingdom”. Biographer, critic, and novelist Margaret Drabble’s 1963-69 novels were dedicated to women searching their identities. According to Allan Massie, “*Drabble's early novels made her a representative of the educated women of her generation*”<sup>10</sup>.

Researcher A. Ismayilova in her study “Young generation and middle class in the works of English writers of the 60s-70s of the XX century” notes that “*women in M. Drabble’s novels were dissatisfied with their lives and they lived in a state of conflict*”<sup>11</sup>.

Dame Antonia Susan Duffy known professionally as A. S. Byatt, is an English novelist, poet and Booker Prize winner. In 2008, The Times newspaper named her on its list of the 50 greatest British writers since 1945.

Byatt’s female protagonists want to be loved not only as a mother, a beloved woman, but also as a person with a spiritual-physical and a free thought.

Rich in epigraphs, dialogue, and allusions, the author’s novel “Possession” is on a par with prominent British writers.

In general, A.S.Byatt does not accept women who are passive, but she is on the side of those women who are struggling and spiritually strong.

The results of the problems studied in this chapter of the dissertation are published and presented to the scientific community.

The second chapter of the dissertation, “**Gender peculiarities in Angela Carter’s short prose**” consists of three subchapters. The first half of this chapter is devoted to “*Gender aspects in Angela Carter’s mythopoetic*”. Angela Carter Pars (May 7, 1940 – February 16, 1992) was a short story writer, journalist, and a well-known

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<sup>10</sup> Massie, A. A Critical Guide to the British Novel 1970-1989. / A.Massie. – New York: Longman, – 1990. – p.19

<sup>11</sup> Исмайлова, А.А. Молодежь и средний класс в произведениях английских писателей 60-х-70-х гг. XX в. / А.А.Исмайлова. – Баку: Нурлан, – 2005. – с.89

English novelist. In her works she introduced feminism through magical realism.

She communicated a great interest in researchers as she was in a constant search for the ways to penetrate into man's subconscious. She is able to draw her readers' attention to the events she had intended by transferring the play to the context of the novel.

It should be noted that Carter's works have four main elements: fiction, gothic themes, violence and secret eroticism. Carter's novels cannot be understood beyond the historical, social, and cultural context, so it is necessary to refer to the literature based on cultural history.

Carter's novels are connected with modern literary processes. Compared to the English version of postmodernism, there can be detected regularities and differences in the structure, plot and genre of the novel form. The complexity of the novel is due to the fact that Carter combined many different outlines and themes, reinforced by extra-plot structures. Thus, Carter's two distinct novel genres were: psychological, seemingly and traditionally spirited, and science fiction.

The essence of Angela Carter's rich prose flows between two power fields: the false literary reality ("The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor") and the anarchic denial of the social scenario ("Love").

The most important aspect in her tales is visibility. In the episode of her early story "The Magic Toyshop", the main female character, Melanie, looks at herself in the mirror; it reflects her as being in love with Annabel. Carter's interest in visibility was always associated with myths and was consistent with the structure of the society.

Angela Carter was a writer in love with mysticism and demythologization. The tendency to rewrite the traditional style of Western canon and to subvert a man's unrealistic ideas about femininity allowed her to outstand with her style. Describing archetypal girls and monsters, she spoke up for women who were deprived of telling their stories in men's literature: Leda in "The Magic Toyshop", in "Heroes and Villains", the biblical character Eve and Mignon in "Nights at the Circus". These women do not only

express their views on events, they also actively change the course of their own lives.

In “Black Venus”, Carter downturns two aspects: first, she questions the man’s perception of an “exotic woman”, second, she opts for metapoetics. “Black Venus” is also a rewrite of the history of male literature.

The second half of the second chapter of the dissertation is *“The reflection of feminism through Angela Carter’s traditional folklore tales”*. Angela Carter’s artistic world was surrounded by legendary, terrifying creatures: female monsters, birds, transvestite queens. The complex natures of these mythical figures are often seen in her novels and short stories. Taking a closer look at such complex images, this work will focus on two of the complex personalities in “The Passion of New Eve”: Eve (Evelyn) and Tristessa. In particular, we would like to point out that the notion of grotesque means a bisexual body through different values in Carter’s text, which can also be seen in the course of the work. The use of grotesque in this way also provides parody of gender norms in the novel. When thinking of the figures as grotesque, the reader can discover two different forms of the term and the corresponding values are usually associated with the term itself, as Bakhtin puts it. Therefore, it is possible to define one grotesque as positive and the other as negative.

One of the definitions of grotesque realism appears in Bakhtin’s analysis of Rabelais and is based on depicting a transgressive body. It is said that there is a lower layer that performs bodily functions and covers the interactions between death and birth. Grotesque body is open, convex, secretory, changing body: “In grotesque realism ... the physical element is very positive.” The material body is described as “cheerful” and “utopian”. Bakhtin reveals the second meaning of the analysis, calling it “post-romantic”. This grotesque corresponds to the modern meaning, because it reflects descriptions such as alienation, hostility and cruelty. It is possible to attribute negative value to this form, as it contains rejection and disobedience. Its use in plain language is explicitly belittling.

Both grotesque forms are engraved on the bodies of the main characters. Carter’s male Evelyn physically and mentally turns into a



woman - Eve. When the Beulah tribe captures her in the desert, Evelyn is taken to meet the “mother”, the goddess. Her body filled her captive’s peripheral vision. According to Evelyn’s description, her arms were “like beams” and “the sun was in her mouth.” Here we can see some aspects of the Rabelais-like grotesque - an inflated body shape; inaccessibility is a symbol of further productivity, and a focus on the lower strata. This is further emphasized in the descriptions of the subsequent construction of Eve’s womb and the placement of Beluha’s ovaries under the desert layer. The image is certainly not without humor: her breasts were bouncing like fringes of an old-fashioned, red, luxurious curtain. Here, the writer’s extreme presentation with a carnivalistic laughter coincides with an important aspect of Rabelais mood.

This analysis of the grotesque body is also confirmed when it is read through the bodies of Evelyn and Tritessa, who experienced humiliation.

In “The Passion of New Eve”, the attitude towards the hermaphrodite subject is sometimes compared to the grotesque in the writings of the South American writer Carson McCullers. However, in McCullers’ works, grotesque is used to investigate the lives of those who are marginalized by society and called mad. In grotesque realism, the physical element is very positive. The material body is described as “cheerful” and “utopian”.

What can be understood from the image of a positive grotesque wearing the token of a negative grotesque? Both are far from official culture. But the first is happy, crazy, and free. The modern grotesque affirms and glorifies failure, prohibition, and abnormality.

In patriarchal, dualistic cultures, a man needs a woman to prove himself. As a result, if a woman tries to define herself outside the male structure, she must find a new basis for her personal identification. To be different together means to be other. In this sense, Angela Carter presents it as a means of self-disclosure. A similar twin in “Wise Children”, one the female characters, conceals her “face” and hides away from the patriarchal structure’s bondage of praise.

In this work, Carter openly satirizes the need for *her*. This need is a man’s secret desire to have a child. She shows that the difference

is not a sign of the offspring, but the shortage. In “Wise Children”, Angela Carter explores ideas of self-clarity, identity, and origin. She opens up a new perspective and shows that real and different are indicators that have no special meaning. The concept of identity serves to expose patriarchal identity which is based on faith of male supremacy, which is the male genital.

As the postmodern world realizes that it is impossible to have a basis for origin and privileged perspective and external identity, one is forced to find a new space to sustain one’s existence. For Nora’s and Dora’s children, too, a new personal identity may be common; opposing forces exist together, not as itself and the other, as two halves of the Yin-Yang symbol, always separated and united, good and evil, woman and man, white and black, us and they.

The third half of the subchapter, “*Gender strategy through the mythical characters*”, focuses on the possibility of A. Carter’s creation of a liberated female subject, and “Nights at the Circus” is a kind of celebration of this theme. “Nights at the Circus” is a majestic and fantastic novel that could be the culmination of Carter’s work, but again not the last. Being both a summary and a start, it answers some questions or creates new ones. “Nights at the Circus” returns to many issues that Carter’s earlier novels explored. “Passion” reveals the codes of patriarchal ideology to dismantle the false universals of sexual policy. Adopting a strategic policy shows that women are real beyond stereotypes. This paradox depicts the triumph of women’s differences and the clash of demythologizations, which confirms the overlap of “French” and “American” feminist critical positions. Fevvers lives up all the expectations that others began but could not fulfil. She is a symbol of freedom, change and a positive woman. She represents a new departure for the women, “*consecrated by the celebration of the beginning of the 20th century*”<sup>12</sup> as Rory P.B.Turner puts it. The novel creates an open connection between Fevvers’ flying potential and the new century: “*This is the last season of our God’s last year coming to an end, the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine. Fevvers has the greatness*

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<sup>12</sup> Turner, Rory P.B. Subjects and Symbols: Transformations of Identity in Nights at the Circus // Folklore Forum, – 1987. – Vol. 20, No 1/2, – p. 58

to start a new era”<sup>13</sup>.

Ma Nelson, the owner of the brothel, saw Fevvers’s wings first. She saw Fevvers as a symbol of the victory of women’s freedom in the new century: “*Ah! My child, it seems that you are the baby of the new century, and no woman will be locked up there. Then she cried. That night we threw up arms and for the first time I posed like The Winged Victory*”<sup>14</sup>.

Paulina Palmer, critic, divides Carter’s novels into two periods: before 1987 and post-1987 calling them “analytical” - “demythologizing” and “festive” respectively. This approach is an unusual comparison of two biased impulses in the novel “Nights at the Circus”: in the novel, almost all the moments are accompanied by demythologizing endings.

“Nights at the Circus”, like “Passion”, tries to prove the definition given to women wrong.

“Nights at the Circus” outlines Fevvers's development in patriarchal society and shows how her self-confidence increases in the exploitation of customs. Patriarchal society defines a woman so that to keep her under control. The men in Fevvers’s life also try to capture and assimilate her into their systems of perception. Fevvers’s wings, her story – all are described as objects of desire. Fevvers’ wings are the reason many want to trap her, but those wings also help “demolish” the symbols created by men to capture her.

Is Fevvers a new female example? Fevvers represents what already exists, here and now. She is not a heroin, the one we learn and define as the events develop. The hero is Walser.

Fevvers and the open field of reading that we are trying to cover from the beginning to the end of the dissertation are thought to be beyond contradiction, as staged by Carter and described in this study: far from comparison, the connection between two incompatible styles of reading - festive and demythologizing, transcendental and textual. The outcome of this connection is definitely dual, because it represents both the known and the unknown. On the one hand, it results in connection, recognition and

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<sup>13</sup> Carter, A. *Nights at the Circus*. / A.Carter. – London: Vintage, – 1994, – p.11

<sup>14</sup> Again there, p.25

re-evaluation, and on the other hand, character, identity, gender, narrative centers, intertextual sources and meanings, customs, which are all visible elements of fiction, are presented as reading products; they are standards for the important reading process. Cognition and knowledge make it possible for a new concept to be born. When habits are perceived as such, it must be accepted that they are open to change. Change is unpredictable and liberating. It is also frightening because it is unknown. Fevvers represents this duality: she is known and unknown, an ordinary “human” and a monster.

We have shown the connection between the patriarchal definitions of revolutionary women used in Carter’s works and any definition that would threaten the status quo, and this includes the idea of any open reading space. A study on Angela Carter’s works show how fiction can be a very powerful weapon in the feminist struggle. Carter’s fantasy dramatizes, criticizes, and speculates on various feminist alternatives. She achieves the impossible with fiction: she creates a greater woman than life; she has liberating wings, but still explores the perception of personality.

Thus, Carter creates an incomprehensible, but positive and productive symbol of hope and change. All of her work highlights, materializes, and supports fear. To read Carter is to fight the monster, and more importantly, to reinterpret the idea of monster through Walser.

The results of the problems studied in this chapter of the dissertation are published and presented to the scientific community.

The last - third chapter of the dissertation is “**The search for gender identity in Angela Carter’s novels**” This chapter consists of 3 subchapters as well. The first half of the chapter examines “*The gender problem in Angela Carter’s system of characters*”. Angela Carter’s work is analyzed in a postmodern aspect, both as a whole and in the form of individual works, and reveals the traditions of the Victorian novel. In one of her articles, Carter writes: “*As a woman, I began to question the nature of reality: ‘How social creativity of ‘my femininity’ came into existence against my will and came to me as a reality.*”

Analyzing Carter’s essays and articles, we can say that some of

them were taken from Freud's stories. In "Peter and the Wolf", Carter rewrote Freud's story about a little boy who discovered gender differences. She also explored Freud's conception of a woman as a castrated male in "The Passion of New Eve", and rewrote Freud's views on the girl's oedipal transformation in "The Magic Toyshop".

Unlike Freud, Carter sees it as culture rather than biology. But she does not go beyond the general pansexual attitude. From a linguistic point of view, Carter was able to understand all events and the function of male-female relations in different way.

More than Freud, Lacan's theories help understand Carter's approach to the cultural use of incomplete female imagery. In "The Magic Toyshop" she does not simply describe what kinds of meals are offered, what pressure is used, and how she is forced to accept the limits of femininity. She also discovers how a woman is castrated, how she becomes a silent object who takes the ideas of male as her own reality.

She shows us another event that upsets the balance of power: the young man rejects the laws of patriarchy, and demonstrates this by cutting off the symbol of masculinity.

In Peter and the Wolf, Carter also opposes Freud's incomplete character of a woman and replaces it with the character of an untouched woman.

In "The Passion of New Eve", Carter fights with a real "defect". She revises Freud's myth that "a woman is a castrated man" and why men (including Freud) do need to portray a woman incomplete.

The novel "The Magic Toyshop" can be considered as a work that reveals the secret violence in the father-daughter relationship. Although the novel resonates with science fiction and horror, "The Magic Toyshop" is a family novel.

Along with the criticism of patriarchal sexual relationship, "The Magic Toyshop" offers an alternative. Melanie is in relationship with her "brother" Finn, who is at the same age, status with her and submissive to her father in this family structure. By choosing a more equal structure of sibling relations, she defeats the

father-daughter relationship, which means the formation of a woman's desire for passive responsibility that maintains hegemonic masculinity. This does not mean that Melanie suddenly becomes a free and self-aware hero from the sensitive girl we describe. On the contrary, Finn acts as an innovator who abolishes the privileges of masculinity, revealing the possibility of a different relationship between men and women.

Literary critics object that in her works such as "The Magic Toyshop" (1967), "Heroes and villains" (1969), and "The Passion of New Eve" (1977), Carter criticizes the patriarchy without offering any positive alternatives to it and exposes and rewrites social myths and their hidden harms.

The feminist aspect of the writer's work is of a great importance. For example, the Russian writer Y. Kristeva defines a woman as "not only the place of writing, but also the place of truth. This "truth" is "unimaginable" and "indescribable" by traditional means, and "lies beyond the imagination, logic, male dominance, and conformity to male reality". In this respect, Carter is very similar to Kristeva.

Irigaray, spiritually close to her, called on women to accept themselves as manifestation of the phenomenon of mother-nature. Carter tries to create a personal mythology that justifies the unity of the trinity. Demonstrating the superiority of the mother symbol in Freud's theory, Carter presents it as a true "teacher of truth".

Based on this, Carter supports Kofman, a "bold woman" who to some extent, denies the inevitability of the Freud-Derrida's the Oedipus complex and instead claims her dual and irresistible sexuality. Her novel can be called a "psychological woman novel" not because of the sexuality of the characters, but because of the psychological semantics of the genre and its importance in literature.

Critics reviews on her works. We can opine based on newspapers printed in the following publishing houses: Times Literary Supplement, Books and Bookmen, New Statesman, New York Times Book Review Library Journal, Washington Post Book World, etc. Leading critics such as Lorna Sage, James Brockway, Richard Boston, and William Hjortsberg described Carter as "the

most outstanding psychologist” who was able to “unravel the horrors of the schizophrenic world, a powerful combination of logic and poetry.”

Carter’s poetics are sensational with fantastic aggression that turn into action. According to Carter, female eroticism, which distinguishes between passive sexual objects and oppressive women, opens up only two paths for them in the trapped universe.

The second subchapter of the third chapter is “*Gender diversity in the descriptions of literary characters*”. In her latest controversial article “Butlerification”( the expression is related with Judith Butle’s gender activities) Joanne Trevenna explored Angela Carter’s postmodern feminist fiction. Trevenna claims that Carter’s fiction presents a more explicit model of related gender equality with her early feminist approaches as Simone de Beauvoir. Nevertheless, Trevenna cautiously justifies her initial claims, arguing that, unlike Beauvoir Carter she does not accept the unity and integrity of the individual subject, but rather describes the subject as unstable and fragmented.

Thus, Carter’s postmodernist approach creates a partial new transition to the works of Judith Butler. Carter’s work fascinatingly avoids theoretical continuity in favor of practical coherence. However, Carter’s work binds us tightly. It dances between the devil and the deep blue sea - the potential essentialism of the feminist equality policy of the 1960s and 1970s and the radical appeal of gender activism in the 1990s.

“The Magic Toyshop” is based on 3 important garden scenes. First, it recalls the story of Eve, enjoying the taste of apples in her parents’ garden and moving away from innocence. The second is a neglected public garden around the city of London, where Melanie has a failed romantic encounter with Finn Covell. The third garden is an imitation of the first two gardens, a painted scene in front of his uncle’s house and an eccentric doll. All three are contradictory, and sometimes the originality of the garden of Paradise changes. In each scene, Melanie looks unique, disguised to combine different characters. Carter, portraying Melanie as a masquerade in the garden, destroys this real character.

The world consistent only of a garden is as empty, infinite and eternal as the sky ... Loneliness clings to her throat ... She disappears in loneliness; terror takes place in the garden. She is drunken and defenseless as if she had wine ... When she becomes afraid, the garden turns against her.

If the world is “just a garden,” the garden itself is an alien world. Melanie’s parents’ garden stretches as if Melanie is alone in the universe. Still, the garden is associated with Melanie’s flourishing charm. Melanie’s growing body scares her. Carter goes on explaining that Melanie’s loss of elegance is her loss of heavenly innocence. Amidst the confusion and fear, Melanie accidentally closes the door behind her, climbs an apple tree, embarrassed to wake her nanny, and reaches the bedroom window upstairs. The large and frightening garden is a symbol of Melanie’s sexuality.

Melanie's dilemma focuses on the alienation of her true self and the real meaning of gender. In a similar way, her Leda mask is reflected by the real Melanie. Even if the garden of female sexuality is surrounded by high walls and the cultural obligations of the patriarchy, it would be valid in a sense.

However, Carter skillfully uses metaphorical allegories, and thus, the garden of the body, which is as strong as the primary and the original, from another perspective - in another embodiment - looks as a naked stage decor. The masquerade in gender's cultural play is both Melanie and not her. Melanie's performance as Leda is both a mask and a revelation. According to Butler, this is “one of the dramatized demonstrations” that reveals the “imaginary state” of gender relations.

At the end of the novel, Carter sets Uncle Philip's house of patriarchy on fire bringing Melanie and Finn together in the “garden” behind the burning house. On the one hand, this last meeting can be seen as a major return to nature, deforming the patriarchal rule. A paradise where gender relations are invented and perhaps denied; on the other hand, Melanie, prepared for the rich description of the novel, may be on the threshold of just another, more attractive mask. Critical discussions only emphasize the ambiguity of the ending. Melanie and Finn abandon the old system of gender discrimination.



Paulina Palmer sees the escape of lovers as a new renaissance of the patriarchal relations.

Last subchapter of the dissertation "*gender issues as social relations and a look at Azerbaijani women's literature*" is involved in the study. In her postmodern, magical realist narrative, "The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman", written in 1972, Angela Carter overturns the dichotomy of active male and passive female and depicts various characters of female who, despite being victimized, maintain their sexual desires. Alison Lee notes that Carter "calls herself a feminist, but her feminism is more likely a representation of the female sex." and novels contradict feminist texts. The richness of Carter's pen and her feminist interpretations are reflected in her accurate and disturbing depictions of female erotica. Carter is a suspicious figure in feminist literature for her overt sexualization of women in oppressive situations between the sexes.

Although biased in the contemporary world, Carter is widely accepted and one of the most talented feminist writers and critics of her time.

Since the details of Carter's rich feminist explanations are extremely difficult to understand, critics have eased or simplified her complex feminist rhetoric. To understand this complexity, it is necessary to read of the relationships that Carter's protagonist, Desiderio, has with various women in "The Infernal Desire Machines". Thus, the difficulty of Carter's writings can be understood as a means of promoting widespread feminist criticism and activism.

Even the most recent discussions of "The Infernal Desire Machines" lack a coherent analysis of the desires of female characters for Desiderio. For example, Sally Robinson states that Carter in this novel "*portrays a man as the questioning, speaking subject, while a woman is portrayed as the opposite. She is complete subject to male domination, exploitation and violence.*"<sup>15</sup>

Robinson analyzing Carter's victimized and objectified female characters says that the author's portrayal of women with sexual

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<sup>15</sup> Carter, A. The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman. / A.Carter. – New York: Penguin Books, – 1994, – p.108

desire is beyond her choice. Robinson asserts that woman, in Desiderio's narrative, as in the classical quest story, occupies a range of traditional object positions: she is not seen as a subject. Robinson claims that Carter implicitly criticizes the generalized view of female experience with all passive female characters she created.

The results of the problems studied in this chapter of the dissertation are published and presented to the scientific community.

The following **conclusions** and generalizations were drawn from the research on the study of "Gender issues in Angela Carter's novel":

1. The formation and development of scientific and theoretical concepts of gender are inevitable factors. Let us express an important fact here as a result of the ideas put forward in the first chapter. We cannot characterize the concept of gender only by women's social life as it is used to determine the differences of men and women, but first on a socio-cultural and then on a biological basis.

2. The study of Angela Carter's work in the field of gender issues also provides an opportunity to determine the stylistic trajectory of "women's literature". How should it be comprehended? As a result of the analysis conducted in different chapters of the dissertation, it is clear that in the process of writing, the woman writer actually lives through the gender problem, therefore, it is extremely important for her to determine the style of writing, description, movement. The study concludes that woman's text must have at least two styles, especially inter-style transitions. That is, the conclusion is that there is no female text in itself, but for this to happen, the writer must switch between at least two or more styles.

3. Angela Carter's work, as noted, is as much connected with modern literary processes as it is with the power to direct and change processes. As a result, Carter's novel concept has the potential to enrich the literary process compared to the English postmodern novel. The main line in Angela Carter's novel is that the known plot is connected with external events, and creates the "illusion of reality."

4. During the development of English literature, attitudes towards women, gender inequality, and social injustice against women became the object of analysis by a number of writers. In modern

English literature, female emancipation is one of the frequently addressed topics. The actual picture of this is given satisfactorily in the study. The conclusion is that the "gender map of the world" has its own pattern in each country, and the gender issue in the literature, including emancipation, can not be studied without the contribution of other frontier sciences - psychology and philosophy.

5. The novels of Angela Carter, a prominent representative of British magical realism, are aimed at exposing social injustice and gender inequality against women. This was evident in Carter's novels in a variety of ways, exposing by exaggerating the prejudices within the most magnificent works of art.

6. In Angela Carter's prose, the gender map of the world is revealed in the context of mysticism and demythology. Although it seems to be resolved, Carter conveys all the possible subtleties of the gender problem through demythologization. This method allows to rewrite the traditional style of Western canon overturning man's unrealistic ideas about femininity.

7. Angela Carter is watching the process of the creation and destruction of the image of women in literature and society from a different angle. She generally plays with mystical signs, by presenting at first glance unimaginable images as a real event, creating a rift between reality and the unreal world, between realism and postmodern sensitivity. As a result, this attitude has its place in the literary bricolage, where Angela Carter, as the builder of the truth, makes literature out of what is wasted, broken and demolished, thanks to that mystical playfulness.

8. A. Carter describes real-life events with mythical, imaginary, magical elements in the collection of stories called "Black Venus", "Bloody Treasure" and explores and exposes the roots of gender inequality.

9. In "The Passion of New Eve", A. Carter addresses the elements of folklore and combines the features of grotesque realism. In "Wise Children", Angela Carter emphasizes the factors of women's self-determination and emancipation from existing stereotypes in patriarchal society

10. In “The Passion of New Eve”, A. Carter addresses the elements of folklore and combines the features of grotesque realism. In “Wise Children”, Angela Carter emphasizes the factors of women’s self-determination and emancipation from existing stereotypes in patriarchal society.

11. Angela Carter's perception of world was to enrich the technique of world novels. Thus, in her view, in order to expose the lie that has nested between the various layers of the world and reality is to return to words the conditional nature of another ancient reality, as it is more connected with the existential state of man than "playful faces." It was this detail that brought Angela Carter's feminist poetics to women's literature.

12. The issue of "women's literature" in Azerbaijani literature is still at an early stage. However, a number of manifestations of women's literature can be found in the works of Azerbaijani women writers that correspond to the concept of "gender". For example, Gunel Movlud's novel "Camp" is noteworthy in this sense. As mentioned in the dissertation, opening to the world with literary texts is one of the ways to get rid of male domination. Nancy Miller conducted a special study and came to the conclusion that we have mentioned: *“I write, then I exist. Writing to print means access to the world. This speech means renaissance, gaining the status of an autonomous subject ... Writing means coming out of the darkness, to be in the center of attention even for a short time.”*

**The main content and scientific provisions of the dissertation are reflected in the author’s following articles and theses:**

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