

**REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**THE PROBLEM OF SELF-IDENTITY IN  
ROBERTSON DAVIES' AND MARGARET ATWOOD'S  
WORKS**

Speciality: 5718.01 – World literature (English literature)

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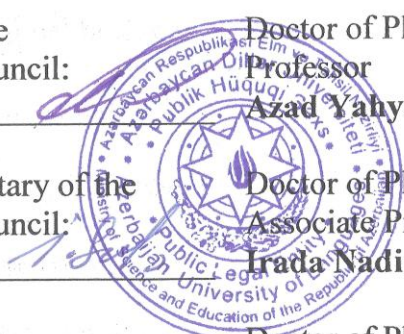
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## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

**Actuality of the topic and the degree of research.** After gaining independence, the Republic of Azerbaijan aimed at integrating into the world, set the task of adopting the priorities of the globalized world based on the national identity platform and the complex of ethnological values in a suitable manner, and following the strategy of developing in this direction as its main goal. This cooperation, covering all fields, has revealed the need to conduct the research and promotion of world literature in a newer form and on the basis of a wide range of research in the field of science and education. The study of Robertson Davies' and Margaret Atwood's works, the well-known representatives of Canadian culture and especially literature, arose from this need as a problem of special relevance. The study examines the stages of historical development of Canadian literature, especially the reasons why the theme of "self-awareness" is the main research object, and the description of the process of "self-awareness" of Canadians. The research is based on the analysis of the works of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, two well-known figures in Canadian literature in the XX century. Taking into account that most of modifications of form and content in modern Canadian novels take place within the framework of the postmodern concept, we can see that the works of both writers have played an important role in defining the specific mentality of Canadian society. From this point of view, it is undeniable that the presented research is important.

The reasons of being the theme of "self-identity" as a main topic in contemporary Canadian literature and the literary heritage of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, who have exceptional roles in the recognition of Canadian literature all over the world have not been sufficiently studied in several countries of the world, including Azerbaijan. Despite the fact that it is young and insufficiently studied compared to other world literatures, the research of the history of Canadian literature proves its literary representatives' exceptional contribution to the formation of the Canadian national identity.

Interest in English-speaking Canadian literature and its representatives and the number of studies in this direction are increasing in modern literary studies. Canadian literature during the period of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood takes an important place in the world literature of the 20th century, despite its sharp contradictions. Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, whose works we refer to in our dissertation and their works have not been fully - involved in extensive and systematic research in Azerbaijani literary criticism. One of the important tasks intended to fulfil is an objective study of the works of these two figures of Canadian literature in accordance with the requirements of modern Azerbaijani and world literary criticism, and it expresses the topicality of the research.

From this point of view, in Azerbaijani literary studies<sup>1</sup>, the monograph "English-speaking Canadian Literature" by associate professor Nasir Khankishiyev and the scientific research work entitled "Feminist Ideas and Dystopia in the Creativity of Margaret Atwood" in doctor of philosophy in philology by Asmar Akparova can be considered an important step in investigating Canadian literature. However, there is hardly any research paper related to the works of these figures of Canadian literature in the XX century based on "self-identity" in our literary studies. The works in different genres written by Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood have always been interesting for literary world and never been neglected by literary criticism A.E.Davidson, C.A.Howell, J.P.Campbell, J.S.Grant, N.Cooke, S.S.Blackburn, S.E.Grace, and others in European and American literary criticism have commented on the works of these talented writers, and plenty of works have been written about them. From this point of view, American researchers A.Lalhiatruil, A.E.Davidson, B.A.Silverman, R.P.Cole, European researchers O.C.Gheorghiu, C.A.Howell, and W.Toye, and Russian researchers Yevgenia Petrovna Zharkova, Ksenia Sergeevna Yeremenko and Ivan Noxrin have conducted scientific researches

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<sup>1</sup> Xankişiyev, N. İngilisdilli Kanada Ədəbiyyatı. / N.Xankişiyev. – Bakı: Elm, – 2003. – 131s.; Əkrərova, Ə.C. Marqaret Etvud yaradıcılığında feminist ideyalar və antiutopiya: / filologiya üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru dis. avtoferatı./ – Bakı, 2023. – 29 s.

about various themes based on these writers' work in Canadian literature<sup>2</sup>. However, the problem of self-identity in Canadian literature and the analysis of this problem in the works of Robertson Davis and Margaret Atwood have not become an independent research object. Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, whose creative styles are of global importance not only for the Canadian people to whom they belong, but also for all the world, are such writers of world literature that to learn their literary heritage and convey the evolution of Canadian people with the help of their works are important to enrich our modern literary criticism.

**The object and subject of the research.** The object of the research is the related study of the history followed in the direction of the analysis of the process of "self-identity" in Canadian literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the literary heritage of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, well-known representatives of Modern Canadian literature, and the problem of self – identity, which is an artistic reflection of historical and modern reality in their work. The subject

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<sup>2</sup> Annabel Lahlriatruil. *Negotiating Power: A Study of Selected Novels of Margaret Atwood*: / Diss. Doctor of Philosophy in Philology. / – Toronto, 2021. – 184 p.; Davidson, A.E. *The Art of Margaret Atwood: Essays in Criticism* / A.E.Davidson, C.N.Davidson, – Toronto: House of Anansi Press, – 1980. – 304 p.; Bryan A. Silverman. *Canadian Identity, Multiculturalism, and A Cosmopolitan Future*: / Diss. Doctor of Philosophy in Philology. / – Kent, Ohio, 2014. – 172 p.; Cole, R.P. *A reality running like a subterranean river under the surface: The Place of the Jungian Concept of Individuation in the non-Deptford Writings of Robertson Davies*: / Diss. Doctor of Philosophy in Philology. / – University of Alberta, 1998. – 279 p.; Gheorghiu, O.C. *Rewriting Politics, or the Emerging Fourth Wave of Feminism in Margaret Atwood's The Testaments* / M.Praisler // *English Language Overseas Perspectives and Enquiries*, – Ljubljana: – 2020. Vol. 17, No. 1, – p.87-96; Howell, C.A. *Atwood's Reinventions: So Many Atwoods* // – Ljubljana: *English Language Overseas Perspectives and Enquiries*, – 2020. Vol.17, Issue 1, – p.15-28; Toye, W. *The Concise Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature*. / W.Toye. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, – 2012. – 694 p.; Жаркова, Е.П. *Антиутопии М. Этвуд «Рассказ Служанки» и «Трилогия Безумного Адамса» в контексте традиции и новейших тенденций в развитии жанра: / дисс. канд. филологических наук. / – Воронежский государственный университет, 2017. – 164 с.; Еременко, К.С. *Поиски национальной идентичности в общественном дискурсе Канады 1950-1960-х гг.:* / дисс. канд. исторических наук. / – Дальневосточного Федерального университета, 2015. – 225 с.*

of the research is the systematization of numerous resources used for the research and analysis of both writers' works.

**The goal and objectives of the research work.** The main purpose of writing the dissertation is to study the features of the problem of historical and modern self-identity in Canadian literature, based on the works of world-famous Canadian writers - Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood. For this purpose, following tasks are fulfilled in the dissertation:

- To clarify the reasons for the struggle of the Canadian people for their identity, to study the impact of countries such as France, Great Britain and the United States on this process;

- To investigate why "self-identity" is one of the main themes in Canadian literature and to analyze scientifically and theoretically the way Canadian literature has passed through;

- To examine the works of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, and the problem of the self-consciousness of the Canadian people in literature, in the context of modernity, based on the works of both writers;

- To analyze scientifically – theoretically the themes, problems and issues of the writers' works and to determine their places and roles in the national, literary-artistic and cultural-spiritual processes;

- To examine and analyze the most important aspects of the identity and self-consciousness of the Canadian people surrounding the entire work of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood;

- To assess the attitude of literary criticism to Robertson Davies' and Margaret Atwood' works that are involved in the study;

- To analyze the elements of the fantastic genre in the works of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, and to determine the influence of supernatural forces and archetypes on the process of "self-identity" of the heroes;

- To introduce the life and work of these great writers to the scientific community of Azerbaijan.

**The research methods.** Methods of studying literary works, especially cultural-historical, biographical, comparative methods, have been used in the process of writing the research work. The research was conducted on the basis of English-language sources.

The works of the writers, which are the main research object of the research, was systematically analyzed and generalizations were made and scientific results were obtained.

**The main provisions for defense are.** In order to explore and fully cover the theme of self-identity in works of Robertson Davies' and Margaret Atwood's works in Canadian literature, the main provisions are as follows:

- The influence of society on the process of self-esteem and self-formation of a person, which is the subject of extensive discussion in Eastern philosophy and other philosophies, is irreplaceable;

- Like literature of many countries under occupation, "self-identity", which is one of the main themes of Canadian literature, is related to the dominance of different cultures in the country at that time and the deprivation of people's national and spiritual identity;

- The undisputed influence of American and British literature on Canadian literature has been a major factor in postponing the writing of original works in Canadian literature that reflect the real Canadian people, their society, and their living conditions;

- A playwright, journalist, literary critic and writer Robertson Davies, who excelled at artistic thought, achieved to introduce unique national-spiritual identity of Canadian literature to the world;

- The analysis and generalizations of Robertson Davies' main characters' search for their inner real identity are carried out on the basis of the analytical theory of Carl Jung, archetypes such as individuation, synchronization, "I, shadow, persona, anima and animus" which was widespread in the 20th century;

- The essential role and importance of the moral development of Robertson Davies' characters based on dialectical conflict and the characters' being always open to the judgments of the public that lead to their wisdom and development are defined;

- The characteristic features of the elements of the fantastic genre based on Robertson Davies' and Margaret Atwood's literary heritage are examined;

- A supporter of gender equality in society, Margaret Atwood's works describe the injustices she faced in her personal life against women and their struggle for their own identity;

- Margaret Atwood's portrayal of nature in her works as a key component in the formation of Canadian self-consciousness and the indispensable role of nature in the survival of the heroes is of particular interest;

- The place of women who suffer from illegality in a male-dominated society and their struggles for identity, the gender issue that worries humanity and has become a global problem regardless of time and place are determined on the basis of Margaret Atwood's dystopian novels "Handmaid's Tale" and "The Testaments".

**Scientific novelty of the research work.** The analysis of the theme of "self-identity" in a multicultural country Canada, based on the works of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood and the determination of the reasons for the actuality of this theme are the main factors that determine the scientific innovation of the research work. From this point of view, the presented dissertation can be considered an act of innovation in the study of the concepts of "self-awareness" and "identity" in the Canadian literature of the 20th century. The analysis of Robertson Davies' and Margaret Atwood's works which are always in the focus of literary criticism, can be the basis for a wide investigation of the subject of self-identity, which is considered important for the scientific, literary and literary thought of Azerbaijan, and for the study of Canadian literature from different spectrums. Analyzing the novels of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood not by using traditional approaches, but by using a modern, free research opportunity can also be presented as a scientific novelty. In the study, researching the works of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood as a whole can serve as a basis for publishing a book by choosing from the works of these writers in the future.

**Theoretical practical and significance of the research.** In modern literary studies, the study of the works of writers who have a great role in the recognition of the Canadian identity in the world is of particular importance. The results of the research can be used in the writing of the latest period in the history of the world literature and in the preparation of university textbooks, curricula, and teaching aids on the world literature. At the same time, the thesis of the dissertation can be used in future research on the study of Canadian

literature, as well as in various types of research papers. The information provided in the current study of world-renowned Canadian writers Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood may serve to enrich the knowledge of Canadian literature in Azerbaijan. The information provided in the study about Canadian writers - Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood, can serve to enrich the knowledge of Canadian literature in Azerbaijan. Master and Ph.D. students, as well as literature teachers of our country can practically benefit the results of our research.

**Approbation and application.** The subject of the study was approved by the protocol of the meeting of the Council on Literary Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan named after Nizami Ganjavi on April 28, 2016.

The main thesis and provisions of the study on the topic of the dissertation have been published in scientific magazines, journals and collections, besides reports have been attended and abstracts have been published by the applicant at international and republican national scientific conferences.

**Name of the organization where the dissertation is performed.** The work was performed at Department of the English Language at Baku Engineering University.

**The total volume of the dissertation with a sign including a separate volume of the structural units of the dissertation.** The dissertation consists of an introduction, 3 chapters, conclusion and a list of sources used. The introduction of the dissertation consists of 8 pages, 15432 characters, Chapter I 18 pages, 35394 characters, Chapter II 40 pages, 78779 characters, Chapter III 49 pages, 97913 characters, Conclusion 3 pages, 5194 characters. The total volume of the dissertation, excluding the list of used literature consists 232112 characters.

## **BASIC CONTENT OF THE THESIS**

The “**Introduction**” provides information about the topicality of the research, the research object and subject, the scientific novelty, the main arguments submitted for defense, the theoretical and

practical significance of the research, the research methods, approbation and the structure of the work.

The first paragraph of the first chapter, “**The Problem of Self-Identity in Canadian Literature**”, entitled “*Analysis of Self-Awareness and Identity in the Scientific Literature*” clarifies the concept of “identity” and defines the concept of “identity” as a characteristic of each individual or group. In this paragraph, the concepts of “identity” and “self-awareness” are interpreted in different ways in scientific thought, and the ideas put forward by various scientists and literary critics are confirmed in order to understand this concept.

The concept of “identity” and “self” characterizes an individual as a member of a certain society and defines it as a combination of human and spiritual characteristics. People distinguish themselves from other groups based on race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture and form ideas about who they are. To understand who they are, first of all, people must understand themselves - they must examine their relationship between themselves and the world. As a result, people understand who they are or above all, who they want to be. The assessment of personal characteristics, knowledge and skills, role in life and physical characteristics determines a person's identity and self-esteem. The scientists Penuel and Wertsh wrote by analyzing the concept of “self-identity”: “*Identity*” and “*Uniqueness*” are the appropriate embodiment of the combination of knowledge, skills, beliefs and history of the individual. It means making choices and decisions freely about people, ideas, values and ideologies”<sup>3</sup>. According to the famous American investigators Rosenberg and Kaplan, a person's “self” and “self – awareness” consist of his thoughts and ideas about himself as an object; moreover, the self or self-concept represents the totality of an individual’s thoughts and feelings about oneself as an object <sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Penuel, W.R., Wertsch, J.V. Dynamics of Negation in the Identity Politics of Cultural Other and Cultural Self // – California: Sage Journals, – 1995. Vol. 2, Issue 2, – p.343-344

<sup>4</sup> Rosenberg, M. Social psychology of the self-concept / M.Rosenberg, H.B.Caplan. – Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, Inc, – 1982. – 184 p.

The subject of "self-awareness" has been one of the main themes in the literature of many countries, especially those under occupation. The role of literary thought in the national development and self-identity of every nation is undeniable. The national-ethnic self-identity and self-realization of a number of nations with great philosophical schools are reflected to a greater extent in fiction. The human factor and its national and spiritual self-awareness are most appropriately expressed in the literary works. Historical, cultural and ideological conditions make people feel alienated and lonely in their own countries, and the conflict within them makes them search for their true identity. Self – identity and the struggle of characters for their true identity are reflected in almost all types of literary works. This theme helps readers understand the way people think, full of conflicting ideas about who they are and what they want to do. The main aspect of the works written by Canadian writers was the struggle of the protagonists for self – realization. Regardless of the genre of Canadian fiction, writers demonstrate all Canadians' search for an "identity" and their wish to form real self through their works. Robertson Davies – one of famous Canadian literary figures reflected his opinion about the literature: "*Canadian literature will not imitate the literature of the European people who have a great historical past. We, the people of today, carry characteristics of the 19th century, and Canada has its own national literature. Our writers embody not an ordinary nation, but a multicultural nation with international unity*"<sup>5</sup>.

The multicultural population and changing nature of Canada makes it difficult to develop a common sense of national identity that can be shared by all Canadians, regardless of age or nationality. Most of today's writers understand the importance of creating authentic Canadian literature for Canadian identity to be recognized around the world, and strive to write literary examples reflecting their identity that can be accepted in the world literature.

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<sup>5</sup> Голунова, Т.Н. Мультикультурализм и Канадская литература // Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Язык и литература, – 2008. Вып.2. Ч.II. – с. 16

In the second paragraph of the first chapter, *“The Role of the Problem of Self-Identity in the Evolution of Canadian Literature”* Canadian national and spiritual identities are analyzed as features that distinguish Canadians from other cultures and peoples around the world. This paragraph describes the struggle of not only people but also poets and writers in Canada, which has been under occupation for centuries by countries such as Britain and France and a powerful exploitative neighbor like the United States, to form a unique national and spiritual identity that distinguishes it from other nations.

Works written in Canada in the XVIII and XIX centuries followed a trend in English literature. During this period, "The History of Emily Montague", which was written by the English-Canadian writer and playwright Francis Brooke, was considered the first Canadian work, as well as an example of American literature. This period was also identified by the rise of the number of women writers in English-language Canadian literature. Although British culture was already a literary trend with its impressive and substantial traditions around the world and Canadian writers were happy to get inspiration from English literary trends, they understood that in order to form an independent, unique Canadian national-spiritual identity, they had to limit the influence of other countries and create their own unique literary trend. Therefore, Canadian writers adapted British literary genres, models and forms to their own society so that their works reflect real Canadian people, their society and people's living conditions.

After the Second World War, the place and position of Canadian literature in the world literature changed radically. Professor F.Coulmas noted: *“Never before had Canadians been as ready as these first three decades after Confederation to welcome a native literary movement, and this public responsiveness undoubtedly had something to do with the marked increase in the quantity and quality of literature during the period”*<sup>6</sup>. In the twentieth century, writers such as Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, Michael

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<sup>6</sup> Coulmas, F. Sociolinguistics: The Study of Speakers' Choices. / F.Coulmas. – Cambridge University Press, – 2013. – p.178

Ondaaji, Robertson Davies, and Northrop Frye saw this period as the best time not only for national self – identity, but also for researching and writing new topics to promote Canadian identity around the world. Canadian professor and literary critic Edward Brown wrote in his article "The Problem of Canadian Literature" that Canadian literature had no influence outside the country<sup>7</sup>.

After the Second World War, the place and status of Canadian literature in world literature changed significantly. In the last decades of the 19th century, in the so-called "Union period", national-spiritual consciousness was formed and works were written in a new form and content. If previously writers preferred to write about the themes related to investigation, settlement and survival, by the end of the century, it was common to write in genres that included social themes, including women's rights, politics of independence, and depictions of the supernatural. In one of his articles, Ivan Nokhrin, one of the researchers of Canadian literature, especially mentioned the role of literature in the process of forming the self-realization of the individual: "*If historiography in this process serves as the root of the Canadian people in the past, literature and art serve as the soul of the present*"<sup>8</sup>.

The works written in this period include "The Recollection of Nova Scotia" and "Clockmaker" by Thomas Shandle Haliburton, who managed to create a literary form corresponding to Canadian prose – a collection of story cycle – connected in terms of time, space and characters, as well as Campbell Scott's "In the Village of Vigar and Other Stories", and Margaret Lawrence's "Manashaka Trilogy". In 1977, emerging from her own creative experience., Margaret Laurence wrote about Canadian literature, which confidently reflects Canadian national-spiritual consciousness: "*The calibre and scope of our literature now is such that it can be read and taught simply because it is interesting, worth reading and worth*

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<sup>7</sup> Brown, E.K. On Canadian Poetry. / E.K.Brown. – Toronto: The Ryerson Press, – 1943. – 154 p.

<sup>8</sup> Нохрин, И. Общественно-политическая мысль Канады и становление национального самосознания. / И.Нохрин.– Канада: Алтасфера, – 2012. – с.232

*teaching. It is our own; it speaks to us, through its many and varied voices, of things which are close to our hearts; it links with our ancestors and with one another*<sup>9</sup>.

The analysis of literary examples enables us to say that the main issue that writers on Canadian identity had to illuminate was the direct influence of territory and heritage on the formation of Canadian identity. Over time, Canadian writers achieved this, wrote works that reflected the spiritual characteristics of their people, and were able to make Canada known around the world.

The first paragraph of the second chapter of the dissertation, **“Description of the Struggle of Characters for Self-Identity and Self-Image in Robertson Davies’ Works”**, *“Stylistic Features of Robertson Davies’ Novels and the Attitude of Contemporary Literary Criticism to his Work”*, the interesting life of the writer, the stylistic features of his works, and the attitudes of critics and literary critics to his works are analyzed from different angles. It is noted that Robertson Davies, one of the most famous authors of the world literature, is one of the prominent representatives of Canadian literature in the XX century. The writer, who had creative way of thinking, was awarded numerous prizes for the breadth of his creative style and the power of his works. He was known in the literary world not only as a talented writer, theater critic, but also as a literary critic. His literary and scientific journalistic fund includes 11 novels, numerous short stories and articles. His Salterton trilogy – “Tempest Tost”, “Leaven of Malice”, “A Mixture of Frailties” written in 1951-1958, Deptford Trilogy – “The Fifth Business”, “Manticore” and “World of Wonders” written between 1970 and 1975 and involved into research, and Cornish Trilogy - “The Rebel Angels”, “What’s Bred in the Bone”, “The Lyre of Orpheus” written in 1980-1988, and unfinished Toronto trilogy have changed the place of Canadian literature in the world literature and literary attitude to it. Twentieth-century European literary criticism has been sympathetic to the works of Robertson Davies, several of his books have been published by journalist James Madison Davies, and a number of his works have

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<sup>9</sup> Verduyn, Ch. Margaret Laurence: An Appreciation. / Ch.Verduyn. – Ontario: Broadview Press, – 1988. – p.141

been edited by Canadian writer and editor Judith Skelton Grant, theater director Tyrone Guthrie, journalist Jennifer Zurich, and his wife Brenda Davies. Canadian literary criticism admired his ability to create characters and narrate events in his works, by expressing delight in the writer's wisdom, sense of humor and persuasive style<sup>10</sup>. The positive accepting of Davies' works by literary critics not only brought him to the forefront of Canadian writers, but also increased his world fame and led to the translation of his novels into many world languages. A critic writer Nicholas Maes, in his work about Davies, "Robertson Davies: Magician of Words", clarified many aspects of Davies' works. At the end of the book, he gave "The Chronology of Robertson Davies" and here includes a great number of works written about Robertson Davies<sup>11</sup>. These works are Robertson Davies: An Appreciation" [Cameron Elspeth.1991], "Robertson Davies: A Man of Myth" [Grant, Judith Skelton, 1994], "Robertson Davies: A Mingling of Contrarities" [Camille La Bossiere, 2001], "Robertson Davies and His Works" [John Mills, 1984], "Robertson Davies: A Portrait in Mosaic" [Val.Ross, 2008].

Robertson Davies, who took great responsibility for the process of writing a novel, said in an interview with journalist Elizabeth Sifton: "*Getting to work on a new novel is a dismal business, for the beginnings never seem to get any easier with the passing of time. I toil like a swimmer who feels himself about to sink beneath the waves at any moment*"<sup>12</sup>. The content of Davies's works does not directly reflect the imagination of the writer, but reflects the realities of Canadian society. Throughout his career, the writer tried to convey the realities of life in the background of artistic realities. His works are full of funny and entertaining characters, as well as deep meaningful thoughts that reflect the psychology of human life and make the reader think. Although Davis used fundamental themes such as individuality, myth,

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<sup>10</sup> Grant, J.S. Grant, J.S. Robertson Davies: Man of the Myth. / J.S.Grant.– Vikings Book, – 1994. – 787 p.

<sup>11</sup> Maes, N. Robertson Davies: Magician of Words. / N.Maes. – Sydney: Read How You Want. – 2017. – 268 p.

<sup>12</sup> Sifton, E. Robertson Davies, The Art of Fiction: [Electronic resource] / The Paris Review, issue 110. – spring, 1989. <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/2441/the-art-of-fiction-no-107-robertson-davies>

collectivity, unconsciousness in his novels, he approached these themes from different aspects in each of his works.

The second paragraph of the second chapter, entitled "*Carl Jung's Influence on Robertson Davies' Characters' Self-Awareness and the Inner Self*" analyzes K.Jung's influence on Robertson Davies' works and on the basis of his analytical psychological theory, how his characters had become wise through self-awareness was investigated. The process of analysis dictates that one of the characteristics of Robertson Davies' works is the change in the psychological state of the heroes as a result of their struggle for their true identities. Such an approach to Davies' characters can be considered the influence of Jung's psychoanalysis on his work. Critic Roger Sale notes in the "New York Review of Books" that like Jung's belief in the influence of archetypes on the human mind, Davies' literary heroes discover the meaning of their lives, by discovering the ways those lives conform to ancient patterns. Patricia Monk claimed in her "The Smaller Infinity: The Jungian Self in the Novels of Robertson Davies" "*deep and long-lasting affinity with Jung.... Davies eventually moves beyond his affinity... to a more impartial assessment of Jungians as simply one way of looking at the universe, one myth among a number of others*"<sup>13</sup>. Deptford trilogy which is one of four trilogies (Salterton, Deptford, Cornish and unfinished Toronto) that symbolize Davies's work is said to have been written under the influence of Jung's psychoanalysis. According to the writer Blackburn *to depict human need for psychological wholeness*"<sup>14</sup>. This paragraph of the chapter describes the struggle of Davies' heroes for self-awareness by analyzing "Fifth Business", written under the influence of Jung's psychoanalysis. The protagonists of Robertson Davies' "Deptford trilogy", Dunstan Ramsay ("Fifth Business"), David Staunton ("The Manticore") and Paul Dempster ("World of Wonders"), skillfully connect Jung's three

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<sup>13</sup> Monk, P. *The Smaller Infinity: The Jungian Self in the Novels of Robertson Davies*. – University of Toronto Press, – 1982. – p.183

<sup>14</sup> Blackburn, S.S. *Robertson Davies: Playwright: A Search for the Self on the Canadian Stage*. – Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, – 1985. – p.29-30

main different models of consciousness – collective unconsciousness, individual consciousness and unconsciousness. Based on the belief in the dominance of the human soul over the world, Davies describes the protagonists of his novel in accordance with the archetypes of Jung. Based on the book review, it should be noted that the novel” *“Fifth Business” can be read on two levels: on the surface, then this is a simple story about the life of one unremarkable man, a supporting player to the stronger personalities around him. But on a deeper level, it is a complex study of several characters, Jungian archetypes, questions about power, love, and faith”*<sup>15</sup>. Believing in the irreplaceable role of myth in the process of self – realization of images, Robertson Davies laid a strong mythical foundation for his heroes by collecting different types of myth. This section describes Dunstan Ramsay, the protagonist of “Fifth Business” – a masterpiece published in leading Canadian and North American newspapers, and his journey full of myths and magic to find his true identity, and his conversations with various people about saints<sup>16</sup>. Thus, the analysis of the work proves that the protagonist's self-identity and realization process is carried out in the form of a straight line - a dialogue between the image and the surrounding world. Combining the characters in his work and the ideas of Carl Jung, Davies was able to write what can be considered the best work of Canadian literature.

In the last paragraph of the second chapter, ***“The Dialectic of the Inner Self of the Robertson Davies’ Heroes”***, the way how the heroes of Robertson Davies understand their inner true self through dialectic is analyzed based on the novels “The Manticore” and “World of Wonders”.

Robertson Davies noted that the questions, “To what extent is a man responsible for the consequences of his actions, and when does man's sense of responsibility begin?” are the main reasons for writing the Deptford trilogy. According to him, every individual living in the

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<sup>15</sup> Phronk. Book Review: Fifth Business, by Robertson Davies: [Electronic resource] / phronk.com. – June 01, 2009. URL: [http://www.phronk.com/2009/06/book-review-fifth-business-by\\_robertson.html](http://www.phronk.com/2009/06/book-review-fifth-business-by_robertson.html)

<sup>16</sup> Aliyeva, T.N. The Concept of Self – Identity in Fifth Business by Robertson Davies // I International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers, – Baku: BEU, – 05-06 May, – 2017, – p.847-849

physical world is in constant contact with the surrounding world, and as a result of the dialectical process between this person and the material world, a man realizes himself, his identity. The writer tried to write the Deptford trilogy on dialectics as a spiritual work. In the process of analysis, it is noted that all three works of the Deptford trilogy reflect the connection between historical facts, the personal analysis of these facts by the heroes and the public reaction to this analysis. The second novel of the Deptford trilogy, “The Manticore”, and the third novel, “World of Wonders”, describe how a man achieves self-realization through dialectics in more detail. David Staunton, the protagonist of the novel “The Manticore”, ends his inner conflict as a result of a conversation with psychologist Doctor von Haller and his friends Ramsay, Eisengrim Liesl and he realizes the essence of his existence in life. As a result of the dialectic, he believes in the limitations of the egocentric view and forms more mature thoughts towards himself and the world. Liesl encourages David by telling him: “*the modern hero is the man who conquers in the inner struggle*” and called him “*be the hero of your own epic.*”<sup>17</sup>

In this paragraph of the chapter, the people that Magnus Eisengrim, the protagonist of the novel “World of Wonders”, encountered on his way of self – realization, his conversation with them, and their influence on Magnus’ life, which made him self-confident, are described in detail. Davies tried to answer the question he posed when writing the Deptford trilogy - moral responsibility - in all three works. The main line of the trilogy is a complex dialectical structure in which the value of protagonists is examined by analyzing universal values, logical conclusions and facts, which proves the richness of Robertson Davis's spiritual world and the success of his work.

Besides national – spiritual self – realization of Canadians, one of the prominent figures of Canadian literature, Margaret Atwood, who has tried to identify women’s roles, rights and self in the society, is described in the first paragraph “***The Role of Margaret Atwood’s Works in Canadian Literature***” of the third chapter “**Formation and Solution of the Problem of National-Spiritual Self-Consciousness in the Works of Margaret Atwood**”. In the

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<sup>17</sup> Davies, R. The Manticore. / R.Davies. – Penguin Classics, – 2006. – p.269

first paragraph, the most interesting moments of the writer's life have been analyzed. In the process of analysis, it has been noted that Margaret Atwood is one of the best writers of recent time as a very powerful literary figure in Canadian literature. She is a world-renowned writer, poet, critic and cultural activist. Her works have been translated and published in more than 22 languages. Loren York expressed her opinion about her in her book: *“Atwood's work spans every genre – novels, poems, short story collections, critical works, children's works, and most recently, a comic about her half-cat, half-human, half-bird superhero named Angel Catbird”*<sup>18</sup>. As a sensitive observer, Margaret Atwood could not remain indifferent to what was happening in Canadian society and the world around her, and the main theme of her writings was the events she lived and witnessed. Noting Atwood's keen observational skills, Rebeca Mead called Margaret Atwood the "Queen of Anti-Utopia" and argued that her works depicted a misogynistic, oppressive, and disorderly society<sup>19</sup>.

Above all, Margaret Atwood has tried to convey strong feminist themes to her readers through her writings. The female protagonists in most of her works are women who are humiliated by gender inequality and whose rights are trampled upon. Psychologist Barbara Rigney noted: *“Atwood's heroes are constantly searching for a new self, language, and voice to prove their identity. Her works reflect the strong aspects of female nature fighting against inequality.”*<sup>20</sup> She began her literary career with “The Edible Woman”(1969), and strengthened her place as a talented writer around the world with her works – “Surfacing”(1972), “Lady Oracle” (1976), “Life Before Man” (1979), “Bodily Harm” (1981), “Handmaid’s Tale” (1985), “Cat's Eyes” (1988), “Alias Grace” (1996), “Blind Assassin” (2000), “Oryx and Crake” (2003), “The Year of the Flood” (2009), “Maddadam” (2013), and “The Testaments” (2019).

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<sup>18</sup> York, L. Margaret Atwood and Labour of Literary Celebrity. / L.York. – University of Toronto Press, – 2013. – p.132

<sup>19</sup> Mead, R. Margaret Atwood, the Prophet of Dystopia: [Electronic resource] / The New Yorker, – April 17, – 2017. URL: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/04/17/margaret-atwood-the-prophet-of-dystopia>

<sup>20</sup> Rigney, B.H. Margaret Atwood (Twayne’s World Authors Series). / B.H.Rigney. – Boston: Twayne Publishers, – 1984. – p.21

As a woman, Atwood tries not only for women's understanding of their real self and self – realization process in a predominantly male-dominated patriarchal society, but also for the recognition of Canadian identity in the world as a descriptor of national existence.

The second paragraph of the chapter “*Issues of Formation of National Consciousness in Canadian Society in Margaret Atwood’s Works*” analyzes the factors influencing the formation of Canadian identity. The main conclusion of the analysis is that Margaret Atwood considered the role and influence of nature in the formation of a man to be important, and viewed nature as both an external dangerous force and a unifying part of human subjectivity. In “Survival”, Atwood tried to prove that nature is a means of survival, and that under the influence of nature, a man must fight his character internally and respond externally in a manner befitting nature. Atwood writes: “*Nature is a giant, and if a man fights and opposes it instead of accepting it and living in harmony with it, he will be angry with it.*”<sup>21</sup>

According to Atwood, men's encounter with nature is not only their encounter with external forces, but also men's encounter with their own nature and self. The author also criticizes colonial goals of the United States in her novel. The author claims that while Canadians always follow and praise every step of the United States, most Americans are not interested in or worried about what Canadians are doing<sup>22</sup>. In this paragraph of the dissertation, Atwood's views about ways of liberating itself from slavery, self-awareness and the formation of self-consciousness of a country that has lost its national and moral values as a result of many years of invasion are analyzed in detail.

The role of living in harmony with nature in the process of spiritual self-awareness of a person was investigated on the basis of Margaret Atwood's work “Surfacing”. In Margaret Atwood’s works, the human "self" is built in a very complex way and combines two or more

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<sup>21</sup> Atwood, M. *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature.* / M. Atwood. – Sydney: ReadHowYouWant, – 2013. – p.66

<sup>22</sup> Aliyeva, T.N. The Analysis of Characters’ Struggle to Survive in Margaret Atwood’s Works // – Norwegian Journal of development of the International Science, – 2023. Issue 115, – p. 27-30

beings within itself. Eric Daffron explored the contradictions in the human self and called it the "double self". "Double Self" is the main feature of many of Atwood's novels including "Surfacing". Literary critic Barbara Hill Rigney writes, "*If one cannot communicate, feel, have no name, and is completely fragmented as the protagonist of Atwood, he is psychologically dead*"<sup>23</sup>. In the work "Surfacing", Atwood drew the attention to the limitation of women's creativity and the negative effects of forced abortion on the female psyche and how women are intellectually, emotionally and spiritually exploited in a male-dominated society. The nameless protagonist of "Surfacing" realizes himself and finds his identity after going through various stages and finally reuniting with nature, returning to his ancestors.

A study of Atwood's works proves that the concept of double self can be observed not only in her fiction, but also in her poetry and other works. This is especially typical for peoples, especially Canadians, who have been deprived of their identity for years, live under the pressure of other peoples, and cannot understand who they are. In the examples of Margaret Atwood's characters, it is proven that each Canadian, despite their internally divided identities, achieves their inner integrity in different ways.

Margaret Atwood's growing popularity in the world literature is due to her attitude towards women's freedom and her protests against the exploitation of women. The third paragraph of the chapter, "*Description of Women's Self-Consciousness and Exploitation in Margaret Atwood's Works*" describes the author's approach to this human problem. In the world literature, the issue of female emancipation was studied within the framework of the concept of man solved as an important social problem. For centuries, the issue of women's freedom has been in the center of attention in the history of socio-political thought of all times as one of the most complex and difficult problems to solve for progressive humanity. As a feminist writer, Margaret Atwood's goal is to study the inner psyche of women, their conflict, self-consciousness, the search for national identity, and self-consciousness as a representative of a particular

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<sup>23</sup> Rigney, B.H. Margaret Atwood (Twayne's World Authors Series). / B.H.Ridney. – Boston: Twayne Publishers, – 1984. – p.11

nation, religion, culture. In her work, the problems in society have been reflected in the background of the contradictions of women's images, the complexity of their characters, and also the paradoxical manifestations of their psychology. In her works, Atwood has tried to reflect the problems not only of Canadian women, but also of Canada at that time. Atwood, who considered people's happiness to be her own work, has described the socio-political and social problems of that time, gender relations, the cruelty of the majority, human values and rights in her works. The problem of women's freedom and exploitation is clearly described in Atwood's "Surfacing" and "Lady Oracle" written in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the author's latest works, "The Handmaid's Tale" and "The Testaments", a dystopian future society is illustrated. It is claimed that by reading Atwood's works, the readers are confronted with the unequal gender structure that exists in a patriarchal society in which women are oppressed. These works also show women the way to fight and find their true identities. Christina Gomez noted: "*The Handmaid's Tale is set in the future, in the Republic of Gilead, which occupies part of the territory of what was once the U.S.A. This is a dystopia which carries existing patriarchal tyranny and the victimization of women to an extreme. According to Atwood, everything in the book is true and has been already accomplished in some form in some society.*"<sup>24</sup> Women are divided into various categories in patriarchal Gilead society and some who are called "handmaids" are given the responsibility of giving birth to commanders. Brook Bouson wrote: "*Through its imposition of a rigid system of hierarchical classification, the Gilead Regime effectively robs women of their individual identities and transforms them into replaceable objects in the phallogocentric economy.*"<sup>25</sup> The struggle for the survival of the protagonist Offred throughout "Handmaid's Tale" is described in detail in this paragraph of the

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<sup>24</sup> Gomez, Ch. From Being an Unaware Victim to Becoming a Creative NonVictim: A Study of Two Novels of Margaret Atwood, in Perspectives on Canadian Fiction. / Ch.Gomez. – Vancouver: Talonbooks, – 1994. – p.85

<sup>25</sup> Bouson, J. Brooks. Critical Insights: The Handmaid's Tale. – Salem Press, – 2009. – p.137

dissertation. He realizes the destructive influence of society on her and begins to struggle to gain a new identity. Deprived of education, jobs, property, luxurious clothes, women were even deprived of their names to completely destroy their identity, and religion was the main tool behind the exploitation of women in this society. Offred acquires a new identity as a writer and publishes her life and experiences in the form of a book.

In the novel "The Testaments", which is considered a sequel of "The Handmaid's Tale", how women's rights in the era of Donald Trump affect Atwood's re-imagining of the society of Gilead was investigated and the description of the society was presented from three different points by Aunt Lydia, Agnes and Nicola. The novel is particularly effective in exploring the effects of trauma on the formation of human identity, as seen in the characters' divided selves, emotions and diminished capacity for love. An extensive analysis of the novels confirms that Margaret Atwood's speculative fiction work, "The Handmaid's Tale" and "The Testaments" present a satirical picture of various social, political, and religious trends in the United States in the 1980s. Through this work, Atwood has tried to answer those that are oppressive, totalitarian and religious states, have occupied other countries for years, and have claimed "this regime is impossible to exist in our country" and Atwood also tried to show the consequences of the existence of such a state.

The "**Conclusion**" section of the dissertation summarizes the scientific and theoretical outcomes obtained during the study. Research on the "The Problem of Self-Identity in Robertson Davies' and Margaret Atwood's Works" allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- The concept of "self" and "identity" which define an individual as a member of a certain society, determine their roles in society, regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity. A self-realized person acquires unique characteristics that will distinguish him from others and has a unique position and function in life. The claims presented in the dissertation are confirmed with imperative ideas taken from the opinions of individual researchers and literary critics;

- The human factor and its national and spiritual self-awareness are expressed in the most appropriate way in the works of art. Canada faced great obstacles to form its national-spiritual identity under the influence of colonial powers like England and its powerful exploitative neighbor America. Therefore, the struggle of poets and writers to form a unique national-spiritual identity belonging to the Canadian citizen, which will distinguish them from other nations of the world, cannot be denied;

- The genre of "story cycle", which is in harmony with the real possibilities and needs of Canadian national literature, shows an innovative attitude to the embodiment of the ideals of self-awareness and the search for identity, and tries to describe certain applicable national-spiritual values in relation to reality. This can be considered as a revival in the context of the future development of Canadian literature. Towards the end of the century, in Canadian literature, a great number of literary works with a wide range of socio-political and social topics such as independent statehood, human rights, gender inequality, live descriptions of "supernatural" phenomena, paved the way for the development of genre criteria in this literature and led to the formation of a different literary environment;

- The issue of original expression, imagery, unity of images is unique in the subject line of Robertson Davies' works. Through his trilogies, Robertson Davies tries to present the realities of Canadian society in the background of literary truth and illuminates topics such as good and evil, historical truths and spiritual identity, truth and illusion, art and mysticism in his works;

- Robertson Davies' "Fifth Business" is an example of the magical realism style, depicting the characters' struggle to find their inner selves full of humor, magic, and wonder. In the novel, which is claimed to have been written under the influence of Carl Jung's analytical-psychological theory, the comparison and analysis of the images encountered by the main character Dunstan Ramsay in the process of self-awareness with Jung's archetypes is clearly visible. The idea of the importance of releasing oneself from the feeling of self-blame and the shackles of society in order to reach one's true identity and self-realization increases the emphatic power of the work;

- The analysis of the heroes of the Deptford trilogy "The Manticore" and "World of Wonder" who left their homeland to escape their inner conflicting identities, the impact of their interactions with the people they met on the formation of their identities, and the indelible traces of past events on their current true identities suggests that the heroes' self-awareness is based on historical facts. It is realized on the basis of the analysis of the relations between and the reaction of the public to this analysis. In novels, dialectic embodied by adequate literary means is valued as an important factor in the process of self-awareness of characters;

- Margaret Atwood, who reflects the global problems of the modern era and has a unique place in the world literature as a disseminator of women's rights, reveals the inner worlds of the Canadian protagonists and clearly demonstrates her Canadian origin by connecting the main subject line of her works with Canada. Atwood's role in the formation of Canadian national self-consciousness is undeniable;

- Margaret Atwood considered the role and influence of nature in the formation of a person to be important, she viewed nature as both an external dangerous force and a unifying part of human subjectivity. An analysis of "Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature" and "Surfacing" suggests that nature is a means of surviving and that under the influence of nature, man struggles internally with his character and responds outwardly in a natural way;

- Through the unnamed protagonist of "Surfacing", Margaret Atwood expresses her ideas about "conflicted identity", "victim of patriarchal society", "uncertainty", "redemption" and "the impact of collective and personal trauma on the human's mind" in Canadian society suppressed by Americans and presents the rise to the superhuman level of self – realization as an only way;

- Margaret Atwood managed to create an alternative reality of patriarchal societies where women are kept under pressure in "The Handmaid's Tale" and "The Testaments", which depict a dystopian society. The author opens a real literary space to the principle of "there is a greater reality" that stands above the existing realities of gender inequality;

- The analysis of the theme of “self-identity” in Canadian literature based on the works of Robertson Davies and Margaret Atwood shows that the history of Canada as a country has caused contradictions in the internal identities of its citizens. One of the main principles of the writers is to achieve the embodiment of universal problems in the form of concrete images, to create an objective picture of society's social problems, in a more natural and vivid description of the main characters' struggle to understand their national identity, in general, the individual qualities, spiritual and moral world of the characters.

**The main arguments of the dissertation are reflected in the following published articles and theses of the author:**

1. Aliyeva, T.N. The Conception of Women in Margaret Atwood's Works // – Baku: Philological Issues, – 2017. № 12, – p.388-397;
2. Aliyeva, T.N. Women Subjections and Female Quest for Self-Identity in Margaret Atwood's Surfacing // – Baku: Journal of Baku Engineering University, – 2017. Vol.1, № 1, – p.152-159;
3. Aliyeva, T.N. The Concept of Self – Identity in Fifth Business by Robertson Davies // I International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers, – Baku: BEU, – 05-06 May, – 2017, – p.847-849;
4. Aliyeva, T.N. An Overview on Self – Identity in Canadian Literature // – Baku: AUL, Research Papers, – 2018. № 3-4, – p.116-120;
5. Aliyeva, T.N. The Analysis of Influences on Margaret Atwood's Work // II International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers, – Baku: BEU, – 27-28 April, – 2018, – p.1321-1323;
6. Aliyeva, T.N. The Description of Women's Exploitation in Margaret Atwood's Handmaid's Tale // – Baku: AUL, Language and Literature, – 2019. Vol. IX, № 1, – p.137-143;
7. Aliyeva, T.N. The Role of Story Genre in the Formation of National Consciousness in Canadian Literature // III International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers, – Baku: BEU, – 29-30 April, – 2019, – p.1295-1298;

8. Aliyeva, T.N. The Protagonist's Discovery of his Real Identity in *Manticore* by Robertson Davies // I Republican Scientific Conference on Fundamentals of the Humanities and Social Sciences, – Baku: Scientific Work, – 2020, – p.89-91;
9. Aliyeva, T.N. Robertson Davies' *Fifth Business* as a Pattern of Canadian Myth // II International Ankara Conference of Scientific Research, – Ankara, – March 6-8, – 2020, – p.124-130;
10. Aliyeva, T.N. The Analysis of Mythic Elements Used in *Fifth Business* by Robertson Davies // – EuroAsia Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, – 2020. Vol. 7, Issue 3, – p.56-63;
11. Aliyeva, T.N. The Role of Dialectics in the Characters' Quest of Identity in *Deptford Trilogy* by Robertson Davies, Sumgait: Sumgait State University, Research Papers, – 2021. Vol.17, № 2, – p. 43-47
12. Aliyeva, T.N. The Description of Victimhood and Survival in Margaret Atwood's Works // International Conference on Literature, Education Social Science and Cultural Issues, – Vancouver, – August 9-10, – 2023, – p.38;
13. Aliyeva, T.N. The Analysis of Characters' Struggle to Survive in Margaret Atwood's Works // – Norwegian Journal of development of the International Science, – 2023. Issue 115, – p. 27-30.







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