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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Sciences

**IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE IN THE LITERARY
EXPRESSION OF GENDER IN ENGLISH AND
AZERBAIJANI LITERATURE**

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH

Urgency of the theme and the degree of the research. Gender-related issues are deeply rooted in societal challenges, and fiction serves as a powerful medium for reflecting these problems. As literature often explores fundamental questions of human existence, it naturally engages with gender issues, which are highly relevant in contemporary society. In many sources and in most countries, “gender studies” is often associated with research on women’s issues or feminist studies. However, gender studies encompass more than just women’s concerns; they explore the essential characteristics of all genders, the dynamics between them, their roles in society, literature, and politics, as well as the evolution of women’s movements and their influence on the literary process. In examining gender identity and difference in fiction, it is crucial to explore male and female thought patterns, as well as masculine and feminine paradigms of understanding, as they are expressed in literature.

Analyzing how gender ideology is represented in fiction is incomplete without considering feminism and feminist theories. Feminism and feminist theories encompassed political, social, historical, and cultural dimensions, which were fully reflected in literary texts. This movement contributed to the development of feminist literary criticism and the establishment of a feminist literary canon. For an extended period in patriarchal society, the belief persisted that women lacked the capacity for logical and artistic thinking, abilities that were seen as exclusive to men. In a society governed by male logic, it was believed that women adapted and integrated by accepting the norms of male thinking, including the adoption of gender roles and stereotypes. Feminist engagement with literature and the new perspective they introduced gave rise to feminist literary criticism in the 20th century, which primarily spread across Western Europe, the United States, and Great Britain. As a result, the classical canon of major literary works began to be reassessed through the lenses of female authorship, female readership, and distinct female styles. Feminism’s engagement with fiction was crucial, as fiction mirrors the societal issues of its time. Feminists themselves explain the connection between feminism and

feminist literature as follows: Their relationship, particularly in contemporary contexts, is an ethical and social partnership rooted in moral necessity. Indeed, literature and literary studies, which aim to examine human experiences, would be incomplete if they relied solely on the perspectives of men, who represent only half of humanity. It is evident that the literary process must incorporate the perspectives of women, including writers and critics, and that feminist analysis should be acknowledged. The aim is not only to advocate for liberal causes but also to affirm literature as a universal humanistic discipline¹. For these reasons, feminism engages with literature. As literature and art encapsulate various aspects of the human experience, humanistic ideologies like feminism aim to find validation for their perspectives and ideas within literary works. From the 1980s onward, issues related to women's studies became integral to feminist theory. The concept of gender, viewed as a "constructor" shaped by cultural and social contexts, began to be specifically studied under the term "gender". Consequently, women's studies entered a new phase of terminological renewal, with a key focus on the neutrality of the term "gender". Gender studies have demonstrated that the core issue is not the division between men and women, but rather societal constructs surrounding gender. Germaine Greer coined the term "patriarchal society" in her works "The Female Eunuch"² and "The Whole Woman"³, emphasizing that the liberation of women is inherently linked to the liberation of men. Adrienne Rich, in her work "Of Woman Born"⁴, argues that such freedom can be achieved by integrating the female perspective with the male perspective, leading to the development of a universal language for understanding reality⁵.

¹ Showalter, E. Towards a Feminist Poetics // The New Feminist Criticism. Essays on Women, Literature and Theory/ E.Showalter. – N.Y.: Pantheon Books, – 1985. – p.126

² Greer, G. The Female Eunuch. / G.Greer. – Melburn: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, – 2002. – 400 p.

³ Greer, G. The Whole Woman. / G.Greer. – Melburn: Anchor, – 2000. – 384 p.

⁴ Rich, A. Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution. / A.Rich. – Baltimore: W.W.Norton Company, – 1995. – 322 p.

⁵ Abasov, Ə. Genderə giriş. Dərslik. / Ə.Abasov, R.Mirzəzadə – Bakı: Adiloğlu MMC, – 2004. – s.19.

All of this indicates that the foundation of gender studies fundamentally advocates for democracy. In other words, the focus is not on highlighting or validating the conflict between men and women, or on categorizing literature as women's or men's, or emphasizing their differences. The primary objective of gender studies is to create a society that fosters the protection and unity of all individuals who are marginalized and unable to defend their rights, free from discrimination based on gender, race, or other characteristics. Gender studies encompasses a variety of disciplines, making its scope quite extensive. Fields such as philosophy, history, political science, anthropology, ethnography, cultural studies, psychology, linguistics, and literature can uniquely contribute to the exploration of gender issues. Our research primarily focuses on examining gender issues in literature. This is because literature effectively encapsulates the nuances of society, politics, and culture, presenting ideas rooted in real events through figurative literary expression. Gender studies extend beyond the biological aspect of gender, seeking to explore its other dimensions. Recent findings indicate that gender studies examine the true characteristics of individuals, behavior patterns, types of activities, and the professions of both women and men within socio-cultural, psychological, and artistic contexts⁶.

K.Mario⁷ states that genderology seeks to evaluate and consider the role of men within literary studies and feminism. Therefore, since the third wave of the feminist movement, there has been a transition from feminist theories to gender theory, resulting in one of the most significant paradigm shifts. The focus of gender theory has expanded beyond women to encompass the interaction between both sexes. Numerous male researchers are now contributing to gender studies, thereby incorporating masculinity into the discourse. In this context, our research topic remains relevant in the 21st century and lays the groundwork for a broader exploration of gender issues in literature.

Notable figures in feminism include Simone de Beauvoir, Hélène Cixous, Elaine Showalter, Virginia Woolf, Margaret Atwood, Judith

⁶ See the previous reference, - p. 10.

⁷ Mario, K. *An introduction to literary studies*. / K.Mario. – Routledge, Taylor & Francis e-Library, – 2005. – 165 p.

Butler, Adrienne Rich, Luce Irigaray, Sandra Gilbert, and Susan Gubar, among others, who have played a significant role in establishing the theoretical foundations of gender studies. In Azerbaijan, researchers such as Ali Abasov, Zümrüd Guluzadə, İlham Məmmədzadə, Rəna İbrahimbəyova, Rəna Mirzazadə, Ləla Məvsumova, Kifayət Aghayeva, and Səhibə Gafarova have conducted studies across various aspects of gender studies.

The object and subject of the research. The object of this research is literary works that reflect women's and gender issues in both English and Azerbaijani literature, categorized according to various time periods. The subject of the research is to analyze the parameters of identity and difference in the literary expression of gender within those works and to make parallel comparisons based on examples drawn from English and Azerbaijani literature.

The goal and objectives of the research work. The aim of this research is to explore the historical development of gender theory in literature and the portrayal of gender in both English and Azerbaijani literature across parallel stages. To achieve this, the following objectives have been outlined:

- Analyzing the historical evolution of gender literature;
- Identifying the stage and underlying factors that led to the shift toward gender theories;
- Examining feminist literary criticism;
- Defining stages for literary analysis;
- Examining the early depiction of gender issues in both English and Azerbaijani literature;
- Identifying the role of women and gender identity in English and Azerbaijani literature prior to the achievement of voting rights;
- Analyzing and comparing the literary portrayal of gender in English and Azerbaijani literature;
- Exploring the theme of women's self-awareness in both English and Azerbaijani literature;
- Analyzing the disruption of traditional gender norms and their literary reconstruction in English literature;
- Investigating identity and difference in the artistic representation of gender in contemporary English and Azerbaijani literature in terms of

narration, narrator, ideas, and content.

The research methods. To draw parallels between English and Azerbaijani literature, the research employed comparative-typological and comparative-historical methods. Given that gender is both a social and cultural construct, cultural-historical and structural-semantic approaches were also applied. Additionally, descriptive and biographical research methods were used to analyze the content, themes, and character representations in the literary works. Furthermore, text-content-oriented, anthropocentric, and cognitive approaches were employed in the analysis of the literary texts.

The main provisions for defense:

- Feminist movements and theories played a key role in the development of gender literature, women's prose, and gender studies.

- While the recognition of women's identity and the notion of women's freedom in English literature was initially seen in the works of A.Behn, M.Wollstonecraft is regarded as the first purposeful feminist.

- In the comparison of English and Azerbaijani literature, the initial manifestations of female creativity and independent thought can be traced back to the 12th century in Azerbaijani literature.

- It is noted that women writers of the Victorian era largely refrained from engaging in discussions about women's societal roles.

- The period of Azerbaijani literature prior to the era of enlightened realism is notable for its artistic portrayal of unreal female characters. The first authentic representations of women and appeals for the protection of Azerbaijani women's rights can be found in the works of thinkers like M.F.Akhundzade.

- It is evident that the women's literary gatherings, which began in the second half of the 19th century, played a crucial role in the education, enlightenment, and perspectives of Azerbaijani women.

- Following the feminist movements, it became apparent that women writers transformed fiction into a battleground against the portrayals of women and the male values established by men.

- J.Mammadguluzade can be regarded as the first proponent of gender ideology in Azerbaijan and even in the Eastern context.

- English literature witnessed the rise of women's literature at the beginning of the 20th century, indicating that women were no longer in

conflict with men; instead, they began to discover their identities and pursue creative endeavors, documenting their daily experiences. As a result, a distinct “women's literature” emerged, separate from men’s literature.

– V.Woolf’s “A Room of One’s Own” is regarded as one of the feminist manifestos in English literature. Similarly, J.Jabbarli’s play “Sevil”, written a year earlier, can be seen as a feminist manifesto in Azerbaijani literature. The alternative that J.Jabbarli presents for Azerbaijani women significantly influences the development of a new perspective on women’s freedom in later literary works.

– In contemporary English literature, there is a noticeable shift in traditional gender roles, along with artistic representations of issues related to the third gender.

Scientific novelty of the research work. In English literature, it is possible to encounter scholarly research presented as articles and theses that examine gender issues, along with analyses of the works of particular authors. In Azerbaijani literature, the topic of gender identity has been addressed to a lesser extent. While there have been instances of gender analyses based on the works of specific authors within the scholarly and literary discourse in Azerbaijan, the systematic exploration of gender in literary texts, along with comparative analyses with Azerbaijani literature, has not been documented until now in the dissertation presented by us. In this dissertation, gender identity in literature has been examined in a comprehensive manner for the first time in Azerbaijan. Both literary canons have been analyzed in parallel, and a cohesive overview has been systematically presented. This work includes analyses based on examples from both literary traditions, highlighting comparisons and differences between them. Specifically, for the first time in articles published internationally, a comparison has been made between English literature and Azerbaijani literature concerning the theme of gender. This dissertation, which offers an analysis through parallel comparisons, has the potential to make a significant contribution to global scholarship by enhancing the understanding of the gender landscape within Azerbaijan’s literary context.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research work.

The theoretical significance of this research lies in its exploration of feminist theories, gender theories, feminist literary criticism, feminist literature, women's literature, gender linguistics, and queer theory, all of which can serve as foundational elements in shaping perspectives on the study of gender aspects within world literature, including both English and Azerbaijani literature. Furthermore, this dissertation may contribute to identifying the compatibilities, similarities, and differences in gender identity between English literature and Azerbaijani literature.

The practical significance of this research is that the dissertation can be incorporated into undergraduate and graduate curricula in literary studies and gender studies at philology, language, and literature departments in various higher education institutions. Additionally, it can serve as a valuable resource for writing various scholarly research papers, textbooks, and teaching materials.

Approbation and application. The main findings and conclusions of this research are reflected in the abstracts of presentations at national and international scientific conferences. They are also published in academic journals recognized by the Higher Attestation Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as in articles in journals based abroad that are indexed in international summarization and indexing systems.

Name of the organization where the dissertation is performed. The dissertation was performed at the National Azerbaijan Literature Museum named after Nizami Ganjavi, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The structure of the research work. The dissertation is structured into an introduction, five chapters – each containing multiple paragraphs, a conclusion, and a list of references. The introduction consists of 12978 characters, while Chapter I consists of 77124 characters, Chapter II encompasses 79862 characters, Chapter III has 79765 characters, Chapter IV consists of 86910 characters, and Chapter V includes 78002 characters. The conclusion contains 6216 characters. In total, the dissertation comprises 420857 characters, excluding the bibliography.

BASIC CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH WORK

The **introductory** section of the dissertation establishes the relevance of the topic, delineates the object and subject of the research, and outlines the goals and objectives. It also details the research methods employed, highlights the scientific novelty of the work, and presents the key arguments being defended. Additionally, it provides a succinct overview of the theoretical and practical significance of the study, its validation, and the overall structure of the dissertation.

Chapter I of the dissertation, titled “**The Path to Incorporating Gender Ideology into Fiction**” is comprised of five paragraphs.

The first paragraph, titled “**The Influence of Feminist Theories on Fiction**”, analyzes and discusses the substantial effect of feminist theories on the exploration of gender and literature, as well as on gender roles, identity, and difference within fictional works. Feminist theories comprise a diverse array of concepts and movements aimed at critiquing and challenging gender dynamics in a society that has traditionally marginalized women. These theories arose from the necessity to confront systemic inequalities experienced by women and have developed over time to incorporate various perspectives and methodologies. Feminist theory focuses on analyzing the formation of social structures related to gender, gender identity, and differences, as well as gender relations, and how these factors contribute to the continuation of gender inequality. The goal of feminist theories is to deconstruct these power disparities and promote social, political, and economic equality.

In “*The Second Sex*”, Simone de Beauvoir observes that throughout history, women have been regarded as “the other” in relation to men, consistently positioned alongside them yet excluded from the realms of culture and civilization, thereby being deemed secondary beings. This perspective leads her to critique the views of various thinkers and writers. For instance, she cites Aristotle’s assertion that “*The female is female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities*”. Similarly, Thomas argues that “*We should regard*

women's nature as suffering from natural defectiveness." perceiving woman as an "incomplete man," an "incidental" being. In this view, humanity is defined by the male perspective, with men characterizing women in relation to themselves rather than through women's own attributes; thus, women are not regarded as autonomous beings. "*We should regard women's nature as suffering from natural defectiveness*". "*Humanity is male, and man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being*"⁸.

The socio-psychological issues highlighted by feminist theorists are depicted in fiction. In the dystopian society of Gilead portrayed by M. Atwood in "The Handmaid's Tale", men prioritize their interests and reduce women to their reproductive roles. They select "breeding" women solely for the purpose of procreation, childbirth, and nursing, illustrating the oppression inherent in the female experience. In the novel, women are classified into distinct categories. Those capable of bearing children are designated as "handmaids", stripped of their individual identities and referred to by names that incorporate the prefix "of" from the names of the men they serve. This prefix signifies possession in English, as seen in names like Offred and Ofglen, which underscore their subservient status and association with male figures. The novel describes that women who suffer miscarriages, are infertile, or unable to bear children are labeled as "Unwomen" (non-women) and are sent to the colonies, where they are condemned to die of starvation: "*Unwomen go to the Colonies and starve to death*"⁹. Similarly, in Anar's "The Sixth Floor of a Five-Storey House", Zaur's mother refers to Tahmina as "empty" and "barren" because she had been childless for years and unable to conceive, highlighting societal expectations tied to women's reproductive roles¹⁰.

Although feminist theorists played a significant role in shaping

⁸ Beauvoir, S. The Second Sex. / S. Beauvoir. – New York: Random House, – 2010. – p.25.

⁹ Atwood M., The Handmaid's tale. London, Vintage, 1996, – p.34

¹⁰ Anar. Təhmīnə və Zaur və ya Bəsmərtəbəli evin altıncı mərtəbəsi. / Anar. – Bakı: Qanun nəşriyyatı, – 2019. – s.301

and advancing the feminist literary canon, they were not unified under a single ideology. Instead, they were divided into various groups, including radical, liberal, socialist, psychoanalytic, and postmodern feminists, each with distinct perspectives and approaches¹¹.

In her research on the theoretical and ideological concepts of feminism in Azerbaijan, R.Mirzazadeh¹² examined gender ideas within the context of Western-Eastern and Azerbaijani social perspective. She identified distinctive gender stereotypes specific to the Azerbaijani people and presented valuable proposals and recommendations for addressing these issues.

Feminist theories have significantly influenced English literature, particularly from the 20th century onwards. As feminist ideas evolved, authors began to challenge conventional literary structures and themes, promoting the portrayal of women's experiences and rethinking gender roles within literary works.

The issues explored in this paragraph, along with some of the conclusions drawn, are presented in the article titled "Socio-political Ideology of Feminism in Fiction"¹³.

The second paragraph, titled **"Gender as a Socio-cultural Phenomenon in Fiction"**, asserts that, in theoretical terms, gender's primary role in literature lies in its interpretation as a socio-cultural category. Gender socialization is central to understanding gender identity. Individuals adopt the socio-cultural roles expected by the society they belong to, initially undergoing indoctrination and imitation, and gradually internalizing these roles. An individual is born as a person but is shaped into a gender based on the cultural context of the society they are born into. Gender roles and stereotypes are defined in relation to the socio-cultural factors of that society. Analyzing gender identity in literary works, whether in

¹¹ Введение в гендерные исследования. Учебное пособие. / Под ред. И.Жеребкиной. – Харьков, Спб., – Часть 1. – 2001. – с.233

¹² Gender: tarix, cəmiyyət, mədəniyyət. Qərb Universiteti Gender Araşdırmaları Mərkəzi. / – Bakı: Qərb Universiteti NPM, – 2002. – s.79.

¹³ Ağabəyli, V.E. Bədii ədəbiyyatda feminizmin sosial-siyasi ideologiyası // – Bakı: AMEA, M.Füzuli adına Əlyazmalar İnstitutu, Filologiya məsələləri, – 2020. №12, – s.230-239.

English or Azerbaijani literature, we see that parents who are carriers of patriarchal society keep their daughters under their protection, give their sons more freedom, and educate them in the direction of economic independence.

However, when discussing the cultural context of gender, it is important to recognize that individuals' lives are situated within a framework of asymmetrical roles. In other words, culture and traditions can simultaneously provide opportunities for individuals to experience either oppression or freedom, depending on the demands of the time. Culture itself is not a fixed entity; it evolves and changes. National-cultural values evaluate various elements of culture, determining which aspects should be preserved and which should be discarded¹⁴.

When discussing gender and culture, it is important to highlight the role of radical feminists in shaping women's culture. Their efforts were instrumental in establishing women's clubs and clinics, aiming to break free from male dominance and dependence, which became a driving force behind the development of women's art, as well as issues related to motherhood and reproduction. These initiatives, in turn, gave rise to alternatives such as women's language, literature, music, and art.

The research explored in this subchapter, along with some of the conclusions drawn, are presented in the articles "Gender Aspects of Culture" and "Gender Socialization as a Process of Understanding Gender Identity"¹⁵.

The paragraph titled "**Gender Linguistics**", analyzes and interpretes "gender linguistics" that emerged due to the reflection of the concept of "gender" in linguistics in the second half of the 20th century, as a result of the development of women's movement, the social and literary activities, creative works, and research

¹⁴ Gender in Culture, European Institute for Gender Equality / – Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, – 2016. – p.3

¹⁵ Ağabəyli, V.E. Gender sosiallaşması gender identikliyiinin dərk olunma prosesi kimi // – Bakı: "Risala" elmi araşdırmalar jurnalı, – 2020. №2(19), – s.179-187; Aghabayli, V.E. Gender Aspects of Culture // Akdeniz Zirvesi 3. Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Kongresi, – Girne: UBAK Publications, – 17-18 Ekim, – 2020, – p.97-104.

contributions of radical feminists.

Gender linguistics refers to the language shaped by the cultural and social dynamics of gender. Language plays a central role in the formation of gender identity. Analyzing linguistic structures, styles, literary texts, and media representations reveals that across different languages, societies, and cultures, the concepts of women and men, as well as the portrayal and approaches to female and male figures, are presented in distinct ways. This variation extends to the stylistic differences between men and women. In this context, gender functions as both a socio-cultural factor and a linguistic issue. Key considerations include dominance, power dynamics, deficiency, difference, and the interpretation of identity, all of which arise during the analysis of male and female behaviors and speech patterns.

Gender studies originated alongside the evolution of postmodern philosophical ideas. Postmodernists argued that the concept of language constitutes reality; thus, everything we perceive as reality is, in fact, a phenomenon shaped by social and linguistic factors, resulting from the language systems we analyze¹⁶.

D.N. Maltz and R.A. Borker¹⁷, in their exploration of the social and psychological issues affecting women, studied the speech patterns of boys and girls during play from an early age to examine the differences in male and female relationships from multiple perspectives. Their analysis revealed that the communication style of boys significantly differs from that of girls. In boys' speech, characteristics such as dominance, assertiveness, and self-focus are prevalent, whereas girls tend to communicate more softly, aiming to express warmth, affection, and to foster egalitarian relationships through their choice of words.

In the late 20th century, specifically the 1990s, researchers began examining the subtle disparities in language between genders.

¹⁶ Кирилина, А.В. Тендер: лингвистические аспекты / А.В.Кирилина. – М.: Ин-т социологии РАН, – 1999. – с.25

¹⁷ Maltz, D.N. A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication. // In L.Monaghan, & J.E.Goodman (Eds.). A Cultural Approach to Interpersonal Communication: Essential Readings / D.N.Maltz, R.A.Borker. – Blackwell Publishing, – 1982. – p.168-185.

D.Tannen¹⁸ emphasizes the differences in terminological vocabulary and frames the communication between men and women as a challenge of intercultural communication.

An examination of gender linguistics in fiction reveals that descriptions of women's physical attributes tend to emphasize delicacy and refinement, in contrast to those of men. Women are often associated with words and natural phenomena that convey gentleness and beauty, such as delicate, small, rose, flower, pearl, star, moon, sun, butterfly and waterfall. In contrast, men are portrayed with terms that suggest strength and power, including wrestler, brave, steep rock, steel, lightning, and volcano. *"We were precious flowers that had to be kept safely inside glass houses, or else we would be ambushed"*¹⁹.

The analyses and conclusions presented in this paragraph are documented in the article "Linguacultural analysis of Gender in Fiction" as well as in the textbook "Linguaculturology and Gender Issues"²⁰.

The section titled **"Reflection of Religious Gender Stereotypes in Fiction"** explores the interplay between gender, religion, and literature, focusing on how religious beliefs and practices shape the portrayal of gender roles in fiction. Analyzing the religious nuances present in the intergender relationships depicted in both English literature and Azerbaijani literary texts reveals that men's approaches to similar issues are strikingly similar across societies predominantly influenced by Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Fiction serves as a platform for interrogating and critiquing religious gender norms. Feminist authors offer alternative viewpoints in their narratives, portraying characters who defy religiously imposed gender roles and challenge conventional religious perspectives on gender.

¹⁸ Tannen, D. You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation. / D.Tannen. – New York, William Morrow, – 1990. – 342 p.

¹⁹ Atwood, M. The Testaments. / M.Atwood. – London: Vintage, – 2019. – p.17

²⁰ Aghabayli, V.E. Linguacultural Analysis of Gender in Fiction // – İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Çalışmaları, Paradigma Akademi, – 2023. – p.163-181; Ağabəyli V.E. Linqvokulturologiya və gender məsələləri. Dərs vəsaiti. / V.E.Ağabəyli – Bakı: Zəngəzurda, – 2023. – 76 s.

Humanity often depicts God as male, mirroring the perception of both humanity and the universe as masculine. M. Atwood argues that men shape the concept of both God and religion to maintain control over the society they have established. Carefully crafted rules, disguised as religious doctrine, serve as a means to keep individuals – particularly women – subservient. The defiance of women is equated with disobedience to God. Ultimately, both man and woman reflect the image of God on Earth; however, men endeavor to instill in women the notion of God as a male figure: *“They want God to be only one thing”, It says in the Bible we’re in God’s image, male and female both. But it’s holy. God isn’t what they say*”²¹.

Overall, the examination of religious gender stereotypes in fiction encompasses the portrayal of societal attitudes towards gender and religion. These representations encourage readers to reevaluate the traditionally accepted religious roles that define intergender dynamics. The findings discussed in this paragraph are detailed in the article “Reflection of Religion and Gender Issues in Fiction”²².

In the concluding paragraph of Chapter I, titled **“Gender and Literature”**, the focus is on how literature engages with contemporary gender issues, which are of great significance and interest. The discussion touches on whether there is a distinct “female style” or “female narrative approach” in literature, as well as on the dominance of male-centered literary theories. The chapter particularly emphasizes the importance of re-examining narratology in this context.

H.Cixous argues that writing and text offer a space where one can break free from the constraints of political and economic systems. She suggests that women possess unique opportunities to express themselves through writing in their own distinctive style. Rather than concealing or rejecting their bisexuality, women acknowledge and embrace this aspect of their identity, recognizing

²¹ Atwood, M. The Testaments. / M.Atwood. – London: Vintage, – 2019. – p.289

²² Ağabəyli, V.E. Din və Gender məsələlərinin bədii ədəbiyyatda əksi // Bakı: Elmi əsərlər, Bakı Qızlar Universiteti, – 2023. c. 16, №3 (55), – s.153-160.

and accepting the existence of another self within them²³. Fiction provides writers with a level of freedom that is often unavailable within societal and economic constraints. Women's literature, in particular, offers unique opportunities, allowing female writers the creative liberty to bring their thoughts to life and imbue their characters with any qualities or colors they choose.

L.Irigaray argues that women are unable to fully express themselves outside of masculine discourse. As a result, women often mimic this discourse while incorporating elements of femininity. This dynamic positions women as perpetually "*different, secondary, or other*"²⁴ within the framework of masculine discourse. Contemporary women's prose seeks to shatter the "mirror" that fails to reflect a woman's true identity and to dismantle the myth of femininity shaped by male-dominated cultural traditions²⁵. This challenge highlights the necessity of incorporating the study of women's texts - texts that already possess distinct characteristics - into the research framework and calls for a reevaluation of existing literary theories.

S.Gafarova²⁶ points out that the gender aspect can be expressed in various ways within literary works. Every literary work essentially reflects life from the writer's perspective, representing an event within their inner world. The writer selects specific aspects of life and the characters related to it for depiction, all of which are guided by the central idea.

Several issues explored in this paragraph, along with some of the findings, were previously published in the articles "Fictional Text as a Representation of the Sociological and Psychological State of Gender" and "Identity and Differences Between Female and Male

²³ Cixous, H. *The Newly Born Woman* / H.Cixous, C.Clement. – Manchester: Manchester University Press, – 1987. – p.85-86

²⁴ Irigaray, L. *This Sex Which Is Not One*. / L.Irigaray. – Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, – 1985. –p.76.

²⁵ Киляков, В. О женском в современной литературе // Лит. Учеба, – 1996. №4, – с.108-110

²⁶ Qafarova, S. *Gender və Filologiya. Dərs vəsaiti*. / S.Qafarova. – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 2009. – s.67.

Styles in Fiction”²⁷.

Thus, the first chapter explored gender issues in fiction, examining gender as a socio-cultural and religious phenomenon while uncovering the connection between gender and literature. It was found that, while gender identity is primarily reflected in the social and cultural spheres, feminist theories and women’s movements have played a key role in shaping women’s language and literature. Gender, though biologically determined, is molded by the social environment and the culture of the society it belongs to. Since fiction serves as a broad space that mirrors the social and cultural dynamics of its time, it inevitably addresses gender-related issues.

Chapter II, titled “**A Feminist Perspective in Literary Studies**”, is comprised of four paragraphs. The first paragraph, called “**Feminist Literary Canon**”, is further divided into two sections: “**Transition from Feminist Literary Theory to Gender Theory**” and “**Feminist Literary Criticism**”. This paragraph discusses how the history of feminist literature serves as a crucial example of literature’s capacity to reflect and influence societal changes. It posits that feminist literary theory identifies “gender difference” as an overlooked element in literary criticism. Consequently, feminist literary theorists advocate for a reevaluation of traditional literary criticism through a gendered lens.

Feminist critics argue that, prior to the early 20th century, the representation of women in literature conformed to the norms and frameworks set by male writers, or women were entirely excluded from literary narratives. In other words, they contend that women and femininity were often misrepresented in literary works. Feminist critic E.Showalter²⁸ categorizes women’s literature into three distinct

²⁷ Ağabəyli, V.E. Bədii mətn genderin sosioloji və psixoloji vəziyyətinin representasiyası kimi // “Azərbaycan əlyazmaları dünya kitabxanalarında” mövzusunda V Beynəlxalq elmi konfrans, – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – 30 noyabr, – 2020, – s. 47-49; Ağabəyli, V.E. Bədii ədəbiyyatda qadın və kişi üslublarının identikliyi və fərqi // Bakı: Gənc Tədqiqatçı elmi-praktiki jurnal, – 2021. c. 7, №1, – s.195-201.

²⁸ Showalter, E. Towards a Feminist Poetics // The New Feminist Criticism. Essays on Women, Literature and Theory / E.Showalter. – N.Y.: Pantheon Books, – 1985. – p.129.

periods:

1. The period from 1840 to 1880, referred to as the “Feminine Phase”, saw women writers navigate the prevailing notion that “a woman cannot be a writer”. To circumvent this stigma, they often adopted male pseudonyms and conformed to male values, refraining from engaging in the struggle for women’s societal rights. Notable authors from this era include the Brontë sisters, George Eliot, and Elizabeth Gaskell, among others.

2. The period from 1880 to 1920, known as the “Feminist Phase”, marks a time when, spurred by the rise of feminist movements, women began to abandon their male pseudonyms and actively opposed male-dominated literature. They sought to develop a language and style that challenged traditional frameworks. However, despite their efforts to combat the representations of women and the values imposed by men, they were unable to offer viable alternatives for their own lives. Notable figures from this period include Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Kate Chopin.

3. The period beginning in 1920, referred to as the “Female Phase” is characterized by women moving away from struggle to focus on self-discovery and the documentation of their daily experiences. This shift led to the emergence of distinct “women’s literature” separate from men’s literature. Female writers during this time successfully developed a new feminine language and style, and feminist literature began to thrive. Key figures of this period include V.Woolf, E.Showalter, S.Beauvoir, S.Gilbert and S.Gubar.

While E.Showalter's categorization is certainly valuable, it falls short of encompassing the full scope of women’s writing. Although her observations regarding the “Women’s Era” hold true for the period between 1920 and 1980, the influence of third-wave feminism and queer theory, which began to gain prominence in literature from the mid-1990s onward, complicates this division. At this current stage, it is difficult to classify women’s writing solely within this framework.

The efforts of feminist literature and critics have led to the establishment of contemporary studies known as gender studies. Current gender studies enable an analysis of the representation of

women's images, issues, and characteristics in literature from various perspectives.

The analyses presented in this paragraph, along with some of the findings, are detailed in the publication "Feminist Literary Criticism"²⁹.

In the second paragraph, titled **"The Initial Picture of Gender Identity in English Literature"**, the focus is on the identity and literary expression of gender from the time the English literary canon was established. It examines the literary portrayal of English women whose rights were stripped away after the Norman invasion and who could not regain them until the late 19th century. When assessing the theme of "The Wife of Bath's Tale" (1386) in J. Chaucer's³⁰ "The Canterbury Tales" through the lens of gender studies and feminist theories, it becomes evident that women have been striving for power over men since the 14th century. However, this idea also reveals that a woman whose duties and authority are constrained may be perceived as a witch by men, while a woman who achieves her rightful power can be seen as an angel, capable of making a man incredibly happy. In "The Taming of the Shrew", written by W.Shakespeare between 1590 and 1592, the portrayal of women as inferior, their subjugation to men as a social class, and their depiction as property became focal points for feminist literary critics³¹.

A. Behn³², regarded as the first professional female writer in England, critiques the treatment of women in marriage and slavery in her works "Oroonoko or the Royal Slave" and "The Adventure of the

²⁹ Ağabəyli, V.E. Feminist ədəbi tənqid // "Klassik Azərbaycan ədəbiyyatı və incəsənətinin milli özünüdərsəddə və Mərkəzi Asiyadakı mədəni tərəqqidə yeri" adlı Beynəlxalq elmi konfransı, – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – dekabr, – 2020, – s. 150-152.

³⁰ Chaucer, G. Canterbury tales: [Electronic resource] / G.Chaucer. – Cambridge University Library, London, Tubner & CO, – 1868-1879. – 786 p. URL: <http://dbooks.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/books/PDFs/300054587.pdf>.

³¹ Bean, John C. Comic Structure and the Humanizing of Kate in The Taming of the Shrew. The Woman's Part; Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare. / John C. Bean. – Urbana: University of Illinois, – 1980. – p.65-78; Kehler, D. Echoes of the Induction in The Taming of the Shrew. // Renaissance Papers, – 1986. – p.31-42.

³² Behn, Aphra. Oroonoko and Other Writings. / Behn, Aphra. Ed. Paul Salzman. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, – 2009. – 320 p.

Black Lady” in the 17th-century. She examines the similarities and differences between the sexes and highlights issues such as racism, slavery, adultery, and nepotism within the context of gender. V. Woolf³³ emphasizes the significance of Behn’s contributions, viewing her as a symbolic figure for female writers. Behn’s independence and boldness served as an inspiration to women, proving that it was possible to earn a living through writing³⁴. As a result, from the early 18th century onward, women began to enhance their incomes through translations, writing essays on Shakespeare, and creating and selling simple writings, although without public recognition. This period also marked a notable increase in intellectual engagement among women. By the next century, middle-class women such as J.Austen, the Brontë sisters, and G.Eliot were able to publish novels.

In the 18th century, D. Defoe significantly contributed to addressing women’s issues. He portrayed the general legal constraints and challenges faced by women in his short stories, didactic works, and journalistic articles, without distinguishing between categories such as rich or poor, married or single. His works, including “Moll Flanders”, “Roxana”, “Education of Woman”, and “Review”, which offers guidance to women, advocate for education and enlightenment. These texts address the struggles of women subjected to humiliation by their husbands in family life, who endure abusive punishment for minor mistakes, as well as issues related to marriage, divorce, extramarital affairs, unwanted children, prostitution, bigamy, and motherhood. These themes are particularly significant in the context of gender studies.

Some of the analyses and conclusions presented in this paragraph are detailed in the article “Early Gender Representations in English Literature”³⁵.

³³ Woolf, V. *A Room of One’s Own*. / V.Woolf. – Wordsworth Editions, Ware, Hertfordshire, – 2012. – p.74.

³⁴ Salzman, Paul. Introduction. *Oroonoko and Other Writings*. By Aphra Behn. Ed. Paul Salzman. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, – 2009. – p. ix-xxiv.

³⁵ Aghabayli, V.E. Early gender representations in English literature // – Baku: Ancient Land, International online scientific journal, – 2023. vol.5, Issue: 3, – p.29-34.

In the third paragraph, titled **“A Call for the Protection of Women's Rights in English Literature”**, the central theme of M.Wollstonecraft's “Vindication of the Rights of Woman” (1792) is examined as the first coherent and intentional feminist text in English literature. Additionally, the works of M.Cavendish and S.Scott, regarded as the inception of feminist utopia, along with the writings of J.Austen, are analyzed and interpreted in relation to gender issues.

Although “Vindication of the Rights of Woman” was written in the context of the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft concentrated on women's rights, which were experiencing significant transformations, particularly regarding gender issues: *“It is time to effect a revolution in female manners, time to restore to them their lost dignity and make them, as a part of the human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world”*³⁶. While she highlighted the importance of educating children, she also stressed that women's education is crucial for both children and the family. She argued that educating women would contribute to stronger marriages and a stable lifestyle for children, ultimately believing that women could achieve freedom through education.

Utopian literature, which emerged in English literature during the 16th century, addresses women's issues from its earliest period. M.Cavendish's “The Blazing World”³⁷ and S.Scott's “Millennium Hall”³⁸ can be regarded as the first feminist utopian works. These texts portray the status of women in society as severely limited. The only freedom afforded to women in that era is the liberty to dream. The central themes of these works revolve around the roles and positions of women in society, moral values, and, to some extent, women's education. It can be asserted that these works established a new direction in English literature.

Although J.Austen wrote her works in the early 19th century, her writings show a transition toward Victorian literature. While

³⁶ Wollstonecraft, M. Vindication of the Rights of Woman. / M.Wollstonecraft. Ed. Miriam Brody. – London: Penguin, – 1985. – p.132.

³⁷ Cavendish, M. The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing-World: [Electronic resource] 18.04.2016. URL: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/51783>.

³⁸ Scott, S. A description of Millenium Hall: [Electronic resource]. 13.07.2008. URL: <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/2/6/0/5/26050>.

Austen does not explicitly frame her narratives from a strictly feminist perspective, her works reveal insights into the portrayal of female and male characters, societal attitudes toward gender, the advantages and privileges afforded to men, and the societal standards imposed on women.

The character of Elizabeth in J.Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" (1813) stands out from other women in terms of her personality. Austen contrasts two types of women in the novel: the independent woman and the submissive woman. Elizabeth embodies independence, while Charlotte represents submission. As the most prominent female character, Elizabeth distinguishes herself from the women of her era, including her mother and sisters, who are preoccupied with marriage. Instead, she seeks to explore her emotions and potential free from male influence, even in a society that may not accept such aspirations. Elizabeth displays self-confidence and pride, resisting the constraints imposed by men. In contrast, Charlotte serves as a prototype for many middle-class women in early 19th-century England. Through Charlotte's character, Austen reflects the societal attitudes toward women and their thoughts during that time. The remark, "*A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for one of our girls!*"³⁹ illustrates how English women lack control over their identities and destinies, as married women are regarded as superior to their unmarried counterparts in any circumstance.

Some of the findings presented in this paragraph are discussed in the publications "Gender Issues in Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice"" and "The Beginning of Feminist Utopia in English Literature"⁴⁰.

In the concluding paragraph of Chapter II, titled "**Initial View of Gender Issues in Azerbaijani Literature**", a comparison is

³⁹ Austen, J. *Pride and Prejudice*. // Paperback, Modern Library Classics, USA, CAN, – 2000. – p.6.

⁴⁰ Ağabəyli, V.E. Ceyn Austenin "Qürur və Qərəz" əsərində gender məsələləri // Gənc Tədqiqatçıların V Respublika Elmi-praktik konfransı, – Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti, – 15 aprel, – 2022, – s. 23-25; Ağabəyli, V.E. İngilis ədəbiyyatında feminist utopiyanın başlanğıcı // – Bakı: Filologiya və Sənətsünaslıq, – 2021. №1 – s. 171-177.

drawn between the early perspectives on gender in English and Azerbaijani literature, examining women's issues and challenges as represented in Azerbaijani literary works up until the 19th century through the lens of gender studies. The 12th-century work "Amir Ahmed and Mahsati"⁴¹ by M.Ganjavi illustrates that women were able to write and create in Azerbaijani literature five centuries earlier than their English counterparts, such as A.Behn's "Oroonoko" (1688). Mehsati's poetry expresses a longing for free thought and a desire to break free from the constraints that bind women. Rafael Huseynov notes that "*The inner horizons of Mehsati's seemingly small poetic heritage are more limitless*"⁴², highlighting her as one of the early advocates of free thinking in Azerbaijani poetry. The protagonist of Mehsati's autobiographical work "Amir Ahmed and Mehsati" is portrayed as a bold woman who sheds the veil of modesty and articulates her emotions openly. Huseynov also draws attention to the rubai of R.Ganjavi, who lived during the same period as Mehsati, along with five other female poets, all of whom share similarities in expression, style, and spirit with Mehsati's work. This further indicates that Mehsati established a women's literary school in the 12th century.

The central theme of Nizami's work revolves around the portrayal of humanity and its fate within a just and compassionate society, a key concern of contemporary gender studies. His perspectives on women emerged in Western literature five or six centuries later. Unlike merely depicting women as symbols of divine love, purity, and nobility, Nizami⁴³ elevates them to the highest echelons of power and governance, as exemplified by characters like Nushaba, Mehinbanu, and Shirin. During his time, women were often relegated to the role of silent subordinates within their fathers'

⁴¹ Gəncəvi, M. Əmir Əhməd və Məhsəti dastanı: [Elektron resurs]. URL: https://az.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C9%99hs%C9%99ti_G%C9%99nc%C9%99vi

⁴² Hüseynov, R. Söztək gözəl. Məhsəti. Monoqrafiya. / R.Hüseynov. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, – 2013. – s.32.

⁴³ Gəncəvi, N. Xosrov və Şirin. / N.Gəncəvi. – Bakı: Lider, – 2004. – 392 s.; Gəncəvi, N. İsgəndərnamə. İqbalnamə. / N.Gəncəvi. – Bakı: Lider, – 2004. – 256 s.; Gəncəvi, N. Poemalar (ixtisarla). "Məktəb kitabxanası"seriyasından tərtib edilib. / N.Gəncəvi. – Bakı: Maarif, – 2002. – 240 s.

and husbands' households, treated as property transferred from one palace to another. Nizami, however, attributed a significant worth to women, recognizing their value at a time when they were viewed as second-class citizens.

Later, in Kh.Shirvani's "Tohfatul-Iraqeyn"⁴⁴ the portrayal of his mother highlights women as diligent, nurturing and selfless figures dedicated to their children. Additionally, the text expresses sympathy for the unfortunate lives of women who are regarded as slaves.

In Nasimi's works, women are portrayed as the most exquisite and exalted beings, symbolizing the beauty of life. The poet equates a woman's grace and beauty with the splendor of the heavens, suggesting that this beauty is intended for humans, love and happiness⁴⁵. The idealized woman he depicts is flawless and unmatched. Similarly, Fatima Naimi, who actively participated alongside men in the Hurufi movement, championed her beliefs and demonstrated her talent through her creative endeavors. Her ghazals convey themes of humanity, love, equality and freedom.

In the work of M.P. Vagif, who challenges the practice of veiling innocent women with the idea, "What is there to hide, what is there to cover, what is there to be ashamed of? Enough of this, stop!"⁴⁶, we find his perspective on the issue. While he provides a literary portrayal of a woman's beauty, he also depicts women as shy and modest, embodying faithfulness, devotion, and purity.

The analyses and conclusions presented in this chapter have been published in theses and articles titled "Gender Issues in Nizami's Creative Works", "Early Assessment of Gender Concerns in Azerbaijani Literary Context", and "Investigation of Gender Identity in the Literary Works of Prominent Medieval Azerbaijani

⁴⁴ Karimi, M.R. Azərbaycan mədəniyyəti və ədəbiyyatında məşhur qadınlar. / M.R.Karimi. Fars dilindən tərcümə. – Bakı: "Zərdabi" nəşriyyatı, – 2014. – 96 p.

⁴⁵ Azərbaycan klassik ədəbiyyatı kitabxanası: [20 cildə] / Bakı: Elm, – c.5. – 1985. – 368 s.

⁴⁶ Molla, P.V. Bibliografiya /tərt. ed.: M.Vəliyeva, M.İbrahimova, G.Misirova; elmi red. K.Tahirov; red. G.Səfəraliyeva. – Bakı: – 2017. – s. 35.

Authors”⁴⁷.

From the analysis in this chapter, we can conclude that male poets and writers in Azerbaijan depict women in exclusively positive terms. When conducting a comparative study with English literature, it becomes evident that in Virginia Woolf’s “A Room of One’s Own” (1929), she likened the act of a woman writing a poem or any literary work in 16th-century England to signing her own death warrant. In contrast to Woolf’s⁴⁸ lament over the society that celebrated Shakespeare but denied women similar recognition, we can point to Mahsati, a contemporary of Nizami in Azerbaijani literature. The themes in Mahsati’s 12th-century works, reflecting a sense of renaissance, would likely appear revolutionary even centuries later to British, European, and American literature, where women’s roles were more restricted⁴⁹. While Daniel Defoe and Mary Wollstonecraft called for women’s education in the 17th and 18th centuries, Mahsati of 12th-century Azerbaijan exemplifies an educated, creative woman who even established a women’s school.

Chapter III, titled “The Feminine Stage and the Gender Landscape in the Azerbaijani Literary Environment During the Corresponding Period”, is composed of four sections.

In the first section, titled **“The Specificity of Male and Female Relations in E.Brontë’s Works”** the gender dynamics in Victorian literature and the gender perspectives within E.Brontë’s “Wuthering Heights” are analyzed and interpreted. E.Showalter labeled the 1840-1880 period as the “feminine” phase, noting that while female authors produced literary works akin to those of their

⁴⁷ Ağabəyli V.E. Nizami yaradıcılığında gender məsələləri // Nizami Gəncəvinin anadan olmasının 880 illiyinə həsr edilən Respublika Gənclər konfransının proqram və materialları, – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – 7 oktyabr, – 2021, – s. 136-140; Ağabəyli, V.E. Early Assessment of gender concerns in Azerbaijani literary context // – Norway: Norwegian Journal of development of the International Science, – 2024. № 126, – p.89-93; Ağabəyli, V.E. Investigation of Gender Identity in the Literary Works of Prominent Medieval Azerbaijani Authors // – Tashkent: Golden Scripts – Öltün Bıtıqlar, – 2023. vol. 4, – pp. 97-108.

⁴⁸ Woolf, V. A Room of One’s Own. / V.Woolf. – Wordsworth Editions, Ware, Hertfordshire, – 2012. – p.60.

⁴⁹ Hüseynov, R. Söztək gözəl. Məhsəti. Monoqrafiya. / R.Hüseynov. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, – 2013. – s.32.

male counterparts, their contributions significantly advanced the novel genre and elevated women's roles in literature in the years that followed. A distinct female self-awareness gradually emerged in Victorian literature. Through literary works, women re-examined husband-wife dynamics and found a platform to express their thoughts and experiences on life and gender relations. Most importantly, literature became a medium through which women could independently express themselves for the first time in history, thus offering a fresh, female-centered perspective.

Although the lives of Edgar and Catherine in Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights" (1847) reflect the traditional values of Victorian morality, Catherine herself does not entirely conform to these norms. Despite marrying the wealthy Linton out of practicality, she continues to love Heathcliff passionately. This love, far from diminishing, grows stronger, causing her intense emotional suffering: *"Nelly, I AM Heathcliff! He's always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being"*⁵⁰. While Brontë portrays Catherine as more liberated than most women of her time - expressive of her emotions, confident in her actions - she remains a Victorian woman who understands her social and familial role. She embodies the traits of a dutiful wife, whose femininity and maternal potential reinforce her marriage. Despite her early boldness and desire for freedom, Catherine ultimately resigns herself to death rather than defy societal expectations by leaving her husband for Heathcliff.

Thus, in "Wuthering Heights", a novel that diverges from the typical literary canon of the Victorian era, Emily Brontë sets herself apart from her contemporaries by offering a distinctive portrayal of the relationship and concept of love between a man and a woman.

The second paragraph, titled **"Literary Expression of Women's Issues in Ch.Brontë's Works"**, explores and analyzes the depiction of women through a traditional male lens, while also examining their freedom of expression, ability to take control of their own lives, self-confidence, and courage in S. Brontë's writings.

⁵⁰ Bronte, E. Wuthering Heights / E.Bronte. – London: Harper Collins Publishers, – 2009. – p.106.

The novel "The Professor"⁵¹ can be regarded as one of the earliest attempts to artistically depict male-female relations. From the perspective of this research, the most significant aspect of the novel is the way the female author expresses her sense of duality. Brontë deliberately conceals her identity as a woman while using this dual strategy to explore the concepts of "masculinity" and "femininity". By adopting the "mask" of the male protagonist, Crimsworth, she critically and ironically portrays male dominance over women. This tactic also enables her to provide a fair and objective assessment of gender dynamics. Through the character, in whom she embeds many of her personal traits, Brontë is able to challenge the restrictive norms of femininity. She asserts women's rights in areas traditionally reserved for men, while simultaneously gaining access to male social spaces and ensuring her voice is heard. In addition, under the guise of Crimsworth and the pseudonym Currer Bell, the author defends women against the criticisms of Victorian society and its readers.

In "Jane Eyre"⁵², Ch.Brontë addresses the challenges and difficulties that single women face, as well as the certain advantages afforded to married women. While Brontë grants her heroine a level of courage and freedom uncommon for her time and social status, it is evident that she remains cautious of potential feminist criticisms. After meeting Rochester, Jane ultimately embraces traditional views on love and marriage, though she does assert her ability to set boundaries within the relationship. The novel critiques the prevailing gender ideology of Victorian England, advocating for the creation and preservation of "femininity" and "female identity". Brontë rejects male dominance and offers a fresh perspective on male-female relationships. Throughout the novel, Jane stands in opposition to her peers, and this boldness allows her to express distinctly feminine values in various ways. She embodies a new type of woman, a new female identity, that evaluates and defines itself in relation to these models.

⁵¹ Bronte, Ch. The Professor. / Ch.Bronte. – London, Smith, Elder & Co.65, Cornhill, – 1857. – 433 p.

⁵² Bronte, Ch. Jane Eyre. / Ch.Bronte. – London: Smith, Elder and Co., Cornhill, Third Edition, – 1857. – 295 p.

Ch.Brontë emphasizes women's inner qualities, such as spirituality and intelligence, over their physical appearance. By the end of "Jane Eyre", although Jane, who embodies purity and strong moral character, ultimately triumphs, it becomes clear that a Victorian woman's success is still seen as finding a "good husband" and getting married. Rochester's previous marriage, his daughter, and his involvement with Blanche are largely overlooked, as Jane is willing to marry him as long as he chooses her. The novel reflects the traditional view that the man remains the decision-maker, and marriage continues to be the highest achievement a woman can attain, reinforcing the limitations imposed on women's roles.

In Charlotte Brontë's novel "Shirley"⁵³ (1849), the subordination of women in a male-dominated society is examined alongside industrial changes and the plight of workers facing exploitation. The novel extensively portrays women's loneliness and marital challenges. Brontë also contrasts two types of women: the submissive and the independent. While Jane Eyre gradually and independently showcases Jane's courage and exceptional qualities, Shirley approaches these themes through a comparative analysis of the characters Caroline and Shirley.

In reality, Shirley is not entirely free from traditional notions of gender relations, as she seeks a suitable partner from the opposite sex. Additionally, Shirley's character embodies the author's internal contradictions regarding women's desires and needs: while she takes pride in her independence, she simultaneously craves support. This duality highlights Brontë's reflections on the concepts of "woman", "female identity" and "femininity" through the characters she develops.

In the novel "Villette"⁵⁴ (1853), Ginevra and Paulina, two other young female characters, embody traditional romantic aspirations, despite their differing personalities. Both women are confident in their expectation of marriage; however, Ginevra actively pursues her

⁵³ Bronte, Ch. Shirley: [In Three Volumes] / Ch.Bronte. – London: Smith, Elder & Co., Cornhill, – 1849. – 670 p.

⁵⁴ Bronte, Ch. Villette: [In Three Volumes] / Ch.Bronte. – London: Smith, Elder & Co., Cornhill, – 1853. – 507 p.

goal, while Paulina waits patiently for her suitor to choose her. As Lucy subconsciously compares herself to these two women, she comes to understand her own individuality and gains deeper insight into her complex female identity.

In the conclusion of the novel “Villette”, the idea that a woman can achieve significant accomplishments is reinforced. Lucy starts to embrace her uniqueness and individuality, recognizing her difference from other women. Unlike Jane Eyre and Shirley, where Brontë resolves various contradictions with a happy ending, “Villette” does not follow this pattern. Instead, regardless of the outcome of marriage in the story, the novel affirms a woman’s right to independence.

In conclusion, Ch.Brontë’s works feature not only female characters that align with the Victorian canon - such as Blanche in “Jane Eyre”, Caroline in “Shirley”, and Ginevra and Pauline in “Villette” - but also introduce entirely new representations of women. These new characters are morally refined, independent, and possess a clear understanding of their own dignity. They assert their choices, demonstrate independent judgment, and strive to break away from traditional gender norms, favoring marriages founded on mutual trust and respect. Throughout nearly all her novels, Brontë addresses the position and role of women in society from both a “female” perspective and a traditional male viewpoint, often reflecting a condescending attitude toward the institution of marriage as perceived by the opposite sex.

The third paragraph of Chapter III, titled **“Issues of Female Self-Awareness in the Works of G.Eliot and T.Hardy”**, explores feminist perspectives, gender identity, and the challenges faced by women in the writings of both G.Eliot and T.Hardy.

In feminist studies, G.Eliot is recognized not only as a prominent figure who utilized both creative and social spaces for self-affirmation, but also for his portrayal of the unjust treatment of women in Victorian England, particularly in “The Mill on the Floss” and “Middlemarch”⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ Eliot, G. The Mill on the Floss / G.Eliot. – London: Penguin Books Ltd, – 2003. – 529 p.; Eliot, G. Middlemarch. / G.Eliot. – Midlands, London: W.W.Norton & Company, – 1999. – 688 p.

Through his depiction of gender asymmetry, male dominance, and the silencing of women within the patriarchal structures of England, Eliot vividly illustrates these inequalities. However, he ultimately resolves the tension between his internal protest and societal morality in favor of the latter. While Eliot critiques the restricted lives of his female characters, he simultaneously portrays them as “victims”. This view aligns with E.Showalter’s observation that “*G.Eliot elevates suffering to the level of a woman’s profession*”⁵⁶.

In his novels, Eliot portrays talented and unconventional women who possess a rich inner life, yet despite their potential, he does not provide them with a space to fully utilize their abilities. The treatment of women in Eliot’s works introduces new elements compared to his predecessors: women’s social and spiritual issues are framed as moral dilemmas, the conflict between egoism and altruism (sacrifice) is explored, and the tension between a woman’s duty to society and her pursuit of personal happiness is depicted. By the end of his novels, the female characters are often faced with the two typical choices of Victorian literature - either death or marriage.

T.Hardy’s work holds significant value in comparison to his Victorian peers included in our research, who were women and primarily addressed issues such as the power imbalance between men and women, society’s treatment of women as inferior, and the challenges surrounding marriage and divorce. As a male writer, Hardy presents a sharper contrast between men and women than his female contemporaries, offering more radical perspectives on how patriarchal society and men view women’s honor.

Although the social dynamics of the time called for revolutionary characters, T.Hardy, like other Victorian-era writers, did not introduce radical transformations in his works and characters. Nevertheless, Hardy succeeded in planting the seeds of advocacy for women’s rights through characters like Tess, Bathsheba, and Sue. The delicate female figures portrayed by Hardy are clearly presented as advocates for change. Despite the increasingly traditional nature of Victorian society, Hardy’s

⁵⁶ Showalter, E.A Literature of Their Own. The British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing. / E.A.Showalter. – Princeton: Princeton University Press, – 1977. – p.137.

depiction of women can be seen as transcending the prevailing ideologies of his time. Although society reacted harshly to these themes, Hardy sought to elevate the status of his female characters along a progressive line. He strongly challenged Victorian norms that imposed different standards on men and women. His use of the word “pure” to describe Tess, the innocent protagonist who loses her virginity and bears an illegitimate child in “Tess of the d’Urbervilles”, reflects his intent to break free from the taboos of the time: “*What a fresh and virginal daughter of Nature that milkmaid is!*”⁵⁷ While Hardy guides the reader, he leaves it up to them to decide whether the female characters are portrayed positively or negatively. The freedom and strength embedded in Hardy’s women distinguish them from other Victorian female characters. His depiction of a passionate woman who embodies both sexuality and traditionally masculine traits introduced a new type of woman in Victorian literature.

The fourth paragraph, titled “**Artistic Reflection of Real Women in Azerbaijani Literature**”, explores gender issues in 19th-century Azerbaijani literature and analyzes writers and works significant for gender studies during that period. From a gender studies perspective, 19th-century Azerbaijani literature is notable for promoting women’s enlightenment, education, and active participation in society, while also advocating against polygamy and religious superstition. Additionally, it is significant due to the presence of prominent women writers and poets, such as Khurshidbanu Natavan, Ashiq Pari, Fatma Khanum Kamina, Heyran Khanum, Govhar Khanum, Mashadi Khanum Leyli, Gonchabeyim, and Aghabayim Agha.

In the story “Rashid Bey and Saadat Khanum”, I.Gutgashinli highlights the characteristic features of Eastern men and women, portraying a woman who shows the courage to abandon wealth, status, and societal expectations to reunite with the man she loves. The restricted life of women in the harem, where they are veiled, isolated from all men except their father and brother, and forced into obedience, is depicted as burdensome for both women and men. In marriage, men bear the responsibility of handling

⁵⁷ Hardy, T. Tess of the d’Urbervilles. / T.Hardy. – GlobalGrey, – 2018. – p.134.

engagements and dowries, while women are burdened with obedience. Gutgashinli remarks, *“All Muslims are deprived of seeing the woman who will be their future spouse until they are married”*⁵⁸.

M.F.Akhundzade⁵⁹ was a pivotal figure in 19th-century Azerbaijani literature, and his work holds particular significance for gender studies. Depicting an Azerbaijani woman on stage alongside a man for the first time marked a remarkable achievement, not only in Azerbaijan but across the broader East, during a time characterized by widespread ignorance. As the first literary critic in Azerbaijani literature, Akhundzade also actively critiqued the position and role of women in the Muslim world. Issues such as forced marriages, the exploitation of women and girls, lack of education, domestic challenges, and the impact of religious superstition and ignorance were central to his concerns. He believed that progress and enlightenment could only be achieved through education and equal rights for both men and women, as well as their representation in public life. Akhundzade’s criticism of the era’s unacceptable norms and his use of literature to advocate for reform played a significant role in disseminating his progressive ideas.

In summarizing the literary landscape of this period from a gender studies perspective, it becomes evident that early marriage, low social status, polygamy, and the harsh treatment of women were significant issues. However, the emergence of female intellectuals during this time, despite their inability to initiate a more substantial movement due to contemporary realities, highlighted their activism. These women such as Khurshidbanu Natavan, organized charitable and awareness-raising events, leveraging their families’ influence, reputation, and financial support. This engagement marked the presence of 19th-century activist women intellectuals and served as a catalyst for paving a brighter future for Azerbaijani women in subsequent stages.

⁵⁸ Qutqaşınlı, İ. Rəşid bəy və Səadət xanım. / İ.Qutqaşınlı. Tərcüməçi: Səlim bəy Behbudov. VİVO –book.com. – 2014. – s.14.

⁵⁹ Axundzadə, M.F. Əsərləri: [3 cildə] / M.F.Axundzadə. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, – c.1. – 2005. – 296 s.

In summarizing the gender characteristics found in both English and Azerbaijani literature of the period, it becomes evident that while feminist movements were more prominently reflected in the literature of Western Europe and America in the 19th century, it was the writers of the Victorian era who laid the groundwork for the exploration of women's roles and positions - not only in society but also in the broader context of existence. In Azerbaijan during the same century, intellectual women such as Khurshidbanu Natavan, Gonchabayim, Govhar Khanum, and Gamar Sheyda did not have the opportunity to organize women's movements or hold marches as seen in the West, nor could they fully escape the societal realities of their time. Nevertheless, the literary gatherings organized, led, and attended by these women were significant steps toward promoting women's creativity, freedom, and enlightenment. Additionally, their involvement in charitable activities demonstrated their social engagement and mirrored the successful initiatives typically associated with men.

Overall, several topics and findings explored in this chapter have been published in articles, including "Issues of Female Self-Awareness in George Eliot's Works", "Gender Issues in Emily Brontë's 'Wuthering Heights'", "The 'New Woman and Feminist Perspectives in Thomas Hardy's Works'" and "Gender in the Literary and Cultural Environment of Azerbaijan"⁶⁰.

Chapter IV, titled "Developing Gender Perspectives in English and Azerbaijani Literature", is structured into four paragraphs. The writers of the "Feminist" stage (1880-1920) significantly contributed to the establishment of gender literature in the

⁶⁰ Ağabəyli, V.E. George Eliotun əsərlərində qadın özünüdərk məsələləri // Bursa 1st International Scientific Research Congress, – Bursa: Academic Sharing Platform Co. Publication, – December 18-19, – 2021, – s. 77-84; Ağabəyli, V.E. Emili Brontenin "Uğuldayan aşırım" romanında gender məsələləri // Bakı: "Risalə" elmi araşdırmalar jurnalı, – 2021. №2 (21), – s. 28-35; Ağabəyli V.E. Tomas Hardinin əsərlərində "Yeni Qadın" və Feminist perspektivlər // 3rd International Congress of Khazar Scientific research, –Baku: IKSAD Publication, Khazar University, – January 7-9, – 2022, – s. 553-558; Ağabəyli, V.E. Azərbaycan ədəbi-mədəni mühitində gender ideologiyası // "Xan qızı Natəvan və Azərbaycan qadınının ədəbi-mədəni mübarizələri" adlı Beynəlxalq Konfrans, – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – 5-6 iyul, – 2022, – s. 191-198.

English language and the evolution of women's prose. They not only challenged the social norms of their era but also laid the groundwork for the subsequent literary development known as the "Female" stage (1920-1990), which pertains to women's literature. These feminist writers examined themes such as the "New Woman", marriage, economic independence, gender identity, and sexuality while critiquing the patriarchal structures that dominated society, thereby facilitating advancements toward greater gender equality. Consequently, the literary depiction of gender issues emerged as one of the most prominent and rapidly expanding themes in 20th-century British literature.

The first paragraph, titled **"Breaking Traditional Gender Norms in English Literature"**, explores the groundbreaking and provocative styles of modernist writers like V. Woolf, E.M. Forster, and D.H. Lawrence, who challenge conventional gender roles. It also analyzes the artistic representation of the intricate nature of gender within their works.

Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own" can be regarded as one of the pioneering texts in feminist literary criticism. Written in 1929, shortly after women gained the right to vote in England in 1928, Woolf critiques the works and styles of writers, particularly those of women, from the 16th century onward. She analyzes the role of women in both society and literature, highlighting their social and economic dependence. By comparing the two sexes, she points out that men tend to be affluent while women are often impoverished, leading her to characterize women as failures in this context. Woolf calls for women's liberation from economic constraints, asserting that literature can serve as a means to achieve this freedom. She encourages women to express their thoughts freely and write on any subject. Furthermore, Woolf metaphorically describes women as mirrors, suggesting that they have historically reflected men in a way that exaggerates their significance: *"Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size"*⁶¹. This dynamic, she argues, is why figures like Napoleon and Mussolini emphasized the perceived weakness of women - because

⁶¹ Woolf, V. A Room of One's Own. / V. Woolf. – Wordsworth Editions, Ware, Hertfordshire, – 2012. – p.52.

if women were not positioned as inferior, men could not elevate themselves. This perspective underscores the essential role women play in shaping men's identities.

In "Mrs.Dalloway", Virginia Woolf explores the transformation of Clarissa, the novel's protagonist, who changes her name and title to Mrs.Dalloway upon marrying Richard, symbolizing a shift in her identity and personality. This change emphasizes Clarissa's dependence on a male-dominated society, illustrating how her marital status exacerbates her reliance on men, a pattern established even before her marriage - first under her father's and brother's authority, then her husband's and ultimately through her son. Woolf underscores the intrinsic link between "self" and "identity", arguing that a person cannot possess an identity without a sense of self. Clarissa reflects, "*But often now this body she wore, this body with all its capacities, seemed nothing - nothing at all*"⁶², illustrating her struggle to reconcile her individual identity within the constraints imposed by societal expectations.

Power holds equal significance to knowledge in the lives of the female protagonists depicted by D.H.Lawrence. He portrays confident women who are unafraid of solitude and adept at tackling challenges independently. Lawrence's works stand out for their rejection of traditional gender roles, incorporating numerous feminist ideas that illuminate women's personal experiences and emotions. He asserts, "*A woman has to live her life, or live to repent not having lived it*"⁶³. Furthermore, he does not shy away from exploring women's inner lives and sexuality. From the perspective of gender artistic identity, Lawrence's novel "Lady Chatterley's Lover" can be seen as a vehicle for sexual liberation, as it confronts societal taboos and advocates for women to reclaim control over their bodies and desires. The narrative exposes power dynamics related to both class and gender. However, the fact that Lawrence's heroine triumphs over one man only to yield to another, along with the novel's conclusion in marriage, reflects

⁶² Woolf, V. Mrs. Dalloway. / V.Woolf. – London, Wordsworth Edition Limited, – 2003. – p.8.

⁶³ Lawrence, D.H. Lady Chatterley's Lover. / D.H.Lawrence. – Lincolnshire, Modern Library, – 1983. – p.93.

characteristics typical of the Victorian novel genre.

E.M.Forster's "Maurice"⁶⁴ stands out as a significant work in 20th-century British literature, delving into the complexities of gender identity within the English context. The novel artistically represents gender identities while illuminating societal norms, challenges, and the transformative journeys of its characters. Forster vividly contrasts the literary environment of Edwardian Britain, highlighting the stark differences in gender identities within a society steeped in Victorian values and social expectations. Although similar themes can be found in Woolf's "Orlando"⁶⁵, "Maurice" is regarded as the pioneering text that established the "gay" literary tradition, which was largely unrecognized in England at the time. The novel serves not only as a proponent of gender issues but also as a manifesto for homosexual love. By challenging the prevailing norms of gender and sexuality in the early 20th century, Maurice emerges as a precursor to LGBTQ+ literature, presenting same-sex love in a groundbreaking way.

This paragraph illustrates how the works of V.Woolf, E.M.Forster, and D.H.Lawrence capture the life experiences of their characters, highlighting the psychological and social dimensions of gender, sexuality, and identity. They present alternative perspectives and new insights into human nature, addressing the complexities of gender while challenging the conventional literary norms associated with both women and men. The research conducted in this section and the conclusions drawn are discussed in the articles "Modernist Approaches to Gender Studies in the Works of Virginia Woolf" and "Genderological Characteristics of the Theme of War in Fiction"⁶⁶.

The second paragraph, titled **"The Search for Gender**

⁶⁴ Forster, E.M. Maurice. / E.M.Forster. – London: W.W.Norton Company, – 2005. – 256 p.

⁶⁵ Woolf, V. Orlando / V.Woolf. – London: Modern classics, – 2000. – 336 p.

⁶⁶ Ağabəyli V.E. Virciniya Vulfun əsərlərində gender tədqiqatlarına modernist yanaşma // – Bakı: Filologiya məsələləri, – 2022. № 14, – s. 294-303; Ağabəyli, V.E. Bədii ədəbiyyatda müharibə mövzusunun genderoloji xüsusiyyətləri // Bakı: Dil və Ədəbiyyat, ADU, – 2022. №1, – c. 12. – s. 46-55. V.E. Bədii ədəbiyyatda müharibə mövzusunun genderoloji xüsusiyyətləri // Bakı: Dil və Ədəbiyyat, ADU, – 2022. №1, – c. 12. – s. 46-55.

Identity and the Literary Reconstruction of Gender Roles”, examines the works of J. Rhys, A.Murdoch, and D.Lessing, which address issues of gender identity and female self-awareness while reflecting the intricate social, psychological, and existential challenges of their respective eras. Additionally, it explores the literary reconstruction of gender roles in the works of A.Carter and M. Drabble. In J.Rhys’s writings, the portrayal of alienated women in postcolonial literature reveals their quest for gender identity and their struggles with self-definition. A.Murdoch intertwines existential philosophy with human relationships and gender dynamics, as her characters confront moral dilemmas, the essence of love, and the intricacies of gender roles. D.Lessing’s works are notable for depicting women’s psychological and social challenges within the context of second-wave feminism, highlighting the intersections of gender, politics, and psychology while critiquing traditional gender roles.

In “*Wide Sargasso Sea*”⁶⁷, J. Rhys employs Brontë’s novel as a backdrop to explore the character of Antoinette/Bertha. By giving voice to both Antoinette and Rochester, Rhys introduces two distinct and conflicting subjectivities, thereby highlighting the tensions within male-female relationships. Analyzing J. Rhys’s “*Wide Sargasso Sea*”, A. Murdoch’s “*The Bell*” and D. Lessing’s “*The Golden Notebook*” through a gender studies lens reveals their significant contributions to understanding gender issues in the mid-20th century. These authors offer rich insights into the challenges and contradictions faced by women in a rapidly evolving society, illustrating the intricate interplay between personal and public dimensions of gender identity in their works.

To offer fresh perspectives on gender identity at the close of the 20th century, A. Carter employed myth and fantasy, while M. Drabble utilized realism to reconstruct traditional gender education and challenge stereotypical gender norms through a postmodern lens. Both A.Carter and M.Drabble stand out as key figures in the feminist literary scene, actively questioning conventional gender stereotypes and employing postmodern techniques in their works.

⁶⁷ Rhys, J. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. / J.Rhys. – New York: Penguin, – 1966.

Known for her integration of myth and fantasy, Carter's writings - such as "Bloody Chamber", "The Passion of New Eve" and "The Sadeian Woman"⁶⁸ - subvert traditional gender roles and present innovative interpretations of familiar narratives. Her work dissolves the lines between reality and fantasy, prompting new understandings of gender and identity. By addressing patriarchal structures through speculative literature, Carter's art transcends mere commentary, evolving into a profound tool for social critique, reflection, and exploration of alternative perspectives. In this way, her contributions significantly enrich discussions around gender, power, and social transformation within the realm of speculative fiction.

M. Drabble employs realism in works such as "The Millstone", "The Needle's Eye", "The Radiant Way", "Waterfall" and "The Witch of Exmoor"⁶⁹ to depict the complexities of women's lives, concentrating on their personal challenges and social roles. Her narratives delve into the nuances of female identity, frequently underscoring the conflict between individual aspirations and societal expectations. By mirroring the evolving feminist discourse of their era, these authors significantly enhanced the representation of gender and identity in literature, contributing to a richer and more diverse understanding of these themes.

The analyses presented in this paragraph and some of the findings derived from them are detailed in the publications "Gender Issues in Speculative Literature: The Creativity of Angela Carter", "Gender Representation in Postcolonial Literature" and "Gender

⁶⁸ Carter, A. *The Bloody Chamber, Burning Your Boats: Collected Short Stories.* / A. Carter. – London: Vintage, –1993. –p.111-143; Carter, A. *The Passion of New Eve* / A. Carter. – New York: Virago, – 1992. – 187 p.; Carter, A. *The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography* / A. Carter. – New York: Virago, – 1978. – 154 p.

⁶⁹ Drabble, M. *The Millstone* / M. Drabble. – London: Harper Perennial, – 1998. – 192 p.; Drabble, M. *The Needle's Eye.* / M. Drabble. – London: Mariner books, – 2004. – 444 p.; Drabble, M. *The Radiant Way* / M. Drabble. – London: Penguin Books, – 2005. – 396 p.; Drabble, M. *The Waterfall* / M. Drabble. – London: Penguin, – 2005. – 240 p.; Drabble, M. *The Witch of Exmoor* / M. Drabble. – London: Harper Perennial, – 1998. – 264 p.

Identity in Jean Rhys's Wide Sargasso Sea"⁷⁰.

The paragraph titled **“Gender Characteristics of Feminist Utopia”** analyzes how feminist utopian literature challenges traditional stereotypes of women, envisioning them as beings with equal, if not superior, power and authority compared to men in society, often set in a distant future or an unknown location.

One notable example is Mary E. Bradley Lane's “Mizora”⁷¹, which tells the story of Vera Zarovich, a Russian émigré who becomes a political exile and journeys to the all-female world of Mizora at the North Pole. In this society, science and knowledge are prioritized over wealth, and concepts such as poverty and disease do not exist. The community consists solely of highly educated, attractive women, effectively eliminating the presence of men. Unlike other utopian depictions in English literature, where men held specific roles, Mizora is characterized by their absence, highlighting a stark contrast to the society Vera comes from. Through the narrative voice of the protagonist, the author critiques the previous societal norms, portraying men as beings who seek to dominate and possess everything of value.

L.F. Dixie's works, including “Across Patagonia”, “The Young Castaways” and “Gloriana or the Revolution of 1900”, champion feminist ideals, celebrating the strength and bravery of women. Dixie posits that nature seeks companionship between the sexes rather than hostility, advocating for an absence of unhealthy competition, intrigue, and jealousy⁷².

⁷⁰ Ağabəyli V.E. Spekulyativ ədəbiyyatda gender məsələləri: Anjela Karter yaradıcılığı // – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dillər Universitetinin Elmi Xəbərləri (humanitar və ictimai elmlər), – 2024. №1, – s.39-44; Ağabəyli, V.E. Gender Representation in Postcolonial Literature // – Bakı: “Risala” elmi araşdırmalar jurnalı, – 2020. №1 (18), – p.67-73; Ağabəyli, V.E. Jean Rhysin “ Wide Sargasso Sea” əsərində gender identikliyi // XVI Respublika Elmi Qaynaqlar konfransı, Elmi İş, Beynəlxalq Elmi jurnal, – Bakı: – 12 mart, – 2024, – s. 13-17.

⁷¹ Bradley, M.E. Mizora: A Prophecy: [Electronic resource]. 04.03.2008 URL: www.gutenberg.org/files/24750/24750-h/24750-h.htm

⁷² Dixie, F.L. Gloriana, or, The revolution of 1900 / F.L.Dixie. – UK: Standard Publishing Co., – 1890. – 286 p.

In contrast, H.G.Wells's "Modern Utopia"⁷³ addresses the issue of women's roles within utopian society, emphasizing that the uncertainty surrounding women's positions represents a significant challenge for achieving a true utopia. He argues that resolving this issue is not only vital for women's well-being but also essential for men's welfare. Notably, Wells's focus is less on women's identities and individuality and more on their roles in marriage and motherhood, which arguably simplifies the task of defining women's positions in this new parallel world.

The women portrayed by Charlotte Perkins Gilman in "Herland", "Herland Trilogy" and "The Yellow Wallpaper" have evolved into fully developed individuals. They represent a completely liberated new generation that no longer seeks validation or compliments from men and eschews superficial, flirtatious behaviors. For men to undergo ideological transformation, women's self-transformation is a crucial first step. In this society, the distinction between genders has faded; there is no longer a separation between man and woman, only humanity. Unlike in the past, where women were often fatigued, lost, and stressed as mothers, this society is composed of specialized, educated, and intellectually engaged citizens. The foundation of this harmonious society rests on the principle that, *"When women were really free of man's selective discrimination they proved quite educable, and learned to be ashamed of their deformities"*⁷⁴.

The analyses presented in this paragraph, along with some of the findings, are documented in the article titled "Feminist Utopia in the Modern Era"⁷⁵.

The final paragraph of Chapter IV, titled **"Issues of Female Self-Awareness in Azerbaijani Literature"**, examines the evolution of gender identity in Azerbaijani literature from the late 19th century to the

⁷³ Wells, H.G. A Modern Utopia: [Electronic resource]. – Feedbooks, – 1905. URL: <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/6424>

⁷⁴ Gilman, Ch.P. The Herland Trilogy. / Ch.P.Gilman. – USA: Start Publishing LLC, – 2012. – p.77.

⁷⁵ Ağabəyli V.E. Müasir dövrdə feminist utopiyası // World Women Conference-V International Conference, – Baku: IKSAD Yayınevi, – March 7-8, –2023, – s. 207-217.

early 20th century, along with the shifts in the artistic portrayal of women's issues. In his works such as “Musibati-Fakhraddin”, “Daldan atılan dash topugha dayar”, “Adi var, ozu yokh”, “Yaghishdan chıkhdıq, yaghmura dushduk”⁷⁶ N.Vazirov critiques religious superstitions, polygamy, early marriage, and physical violence against women. He condemns mullahs and radical religious figures, highlights the problematic marriages between older men and young girls, and emphasizes the lack of voice and authority for women. Furthermore, he addresses the confinement of women to headscarves, their upbringing in ignorant and superstitious families, and their lack of education, while also advocating for the promotion of science and education.

In the works of J. Mammadguluzadeh, particularly in “Kohna dardim”, “Danabash kandinin ahvalatlari”, “Pirverdinin khoruzu”, “Taza khabar”, “Rus kizi”, “İki ar”, “Olular”⁷⁷ economic dependence, illiteracy, and radical religiosity are highlighted as significant factors that restrict women's rights. He addresses the ignorance prevalent in society, the early marriages of girls, and lawlessness through the character of Iskandar in “Olular”. This work explicitly reveals gender issues, the division of gender roles, and the disenfranchisement of women. From birth, girls are conditioned solely for domestic responsibilities such as marriage, housekeeping, and childcare, with none of the beauty found in nature intended for them.

From the perspective of gender studies, J. Mammadguluzadeh's works, including his article “Kohna dardim” and “Kiyamat”, “Eydi-Ramazan”⁷⁸ written after the October Revolution of 1917, hold significant importance. Following the revolution, the issue of equal rights for Azerbaijani women was brought to the forefront. In “Kiyamat”, Mammadguluzadeh depicts the societal response to the revolution, particularly the attitudes of men who dominate various fields. He illustrates how bright and empowered women shed their headscarves and confidently voice their demands for rights and address

⁷⁶ Vəzirov, N. Əsərləri. / N.Vəzirov. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, – 2005. – 304 s.

⁷⁷ Məmmədquluzadə, C. Əsərləri: [4 cildə]. / C.Məmmədquluzadə. – Bakı: Öndər nəşriyyatı, – I c. – 2004. – 664 s.

⁷⁸ Məmmədquluzadə, C. Əsərləri: [4 cildə]. / C.Məmmədquluzadə. – Bakı: Öndər nəşriyyatı, – I c. – 2004. – 664 s.

their issues in front of men. These women reject their veils, expressing their grievances about being confined behind the curtain, living as prisoners in harems, and enduring subservience to men while suffering oppression. They criticize their lives under the hijab, which they equate with imprisonment. The mullahs who enforce veiling and subjugation do not acknowledge the sins of narrow-minded men who scrutinize their brother's wives, friends' wives, and close relatives, yet they condemn women to a life of concealment. Mammadguluzadeh analyzes both female and male characters, illustrating his intention to challenge the prevailing dominance of men. He portrays men as anxious about the emergence of women who seek equal status in economic and social spheres.

In this chapter, we examined the evolution of feminist literature and the emergence of women's writing through the works of V. Woolf, E.M. Forster, D.H. Lawrence, J. Rhys, A. Murdoch, D. Lessing, A. Carter, M. Drabble, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. These authors deconstruct traditional gender roles, challenge existing norms, and present new alternatives for women. Through their exploration of gender identity, they reveal the social constructs surrounding these identities. In Azerbaijani literature, we analyzed the portrayal of women's issues in the works of N. Vazirov and J. Mammadguluzadeh. While it is true that Western women faced rights and economic dependency issues, the plight of Eastern women during this period was significantly harsher. Beyond being subjugated and deprived of rights, they were often cloistered and veiled, lacking knowledge of the world around them. This confinement resulted in physical ailments, mental weakness, and a perception of themselves as mere household objects.

Overall, our analyses and conclusions from this chapter have been published in the articles titled "Unique Standpoints of the Distinctive British Feminist Writers of the 20th Century: Regarding Gender Concerns" as well as "Exploring Gender Concerns in Literature: Examining the Pioneering Azerbaijani Writer's Perspectives on Gender in Comparison to Western Authors"⁷⁹.

⁷⁹ Aghabayli, V.E. Unique Standpoints of the Distinctive British Feminist Writers of the 20th Century. Regarding Gender Concerns // – Slovak Republic: Path of Science: International Electronic Scientific Journal (Traektoriâ Nauki), – 2024.

Chapter V, titled “**Changing Dynamics of Gender Identity in Contemporary English and Azerbaijani Literature**” is divided into four sections.

The first section, “**Binary Gender Standards in English Fiction: Identity and Difference**”, explores the notable shifts in gender identity within both British and Azerbaijani literature today. It examines the diverse and non-binary representations of gender found in the works of contemporary authors.

Following the third wave of feminism, women achieved significant social and economic independence, diminishing the necessity for Western writers to address issues of women’s oppression, inequality, and sexual freedom. As a result, queer literature began to emerge in the contemporary period. While the concept of the third gender was introduced in V.Woolf’s “Orlando”, a prominent trend in contemporary British literature is the exploration of gender variability and non-binary identities.

Works like A. Smith’s “How to be Both”⁸⁰ and J. Winterson’s “Frankissstein”⁸¹ challenge conventional gender categories, inviting readers to rethink established norms and explore diverse forms of gender identity beyond binary frameworks.

Although each novel adopts a distinct approach, both contribute to the broader literary conversation about the changing nature of gender identities in the 21st century. The authors of “How to be Both” and “Frankissstein” employ intricate representations of gender fluidity and non-binary identities, encouraging readers to empathize with various gender experiences while simultaneously questioning societal norms surrounding gender.

The women’s narratives in B.Evaristo’s novel “Girl, Woman, Other” serve as the work’s foundation, representing the “voices” of

№3, vol.10, – p. 4007-4016; Aghabayli, V.E. Exploring Gender Concerns in Literature: Examining the Pioneering Azerbaijani Writer’s Perspectives on Gender in Comparison to Western Authors // – Cuba: Universidad Y Sociedad, “Repensar las publicaciones desde un nuevo saber”, – 2024. vol.16, num.2, – p. 331-338.

⁸⁰ Smith, A. How to be Both / A.Smith. –London: Kindle Edition, –2014. –376 p.

⁸¹ Winterson, J. Frankissstein: A Love Story. / J.Winterson. – London: Vintage Digital, – 2019. – 344 p.

women marginalized or overlooked by prevailing political structures. In this society, the protagonists are stigmatized for their differences, which uniquely define each of them. Despite the vulnerability stemming from oppression, they embrace their differences, finding new spaces to explore their identities and understand the world. Evaristo illustrates the processes of invisibility, stigmatization, and alienation faced by women, demonstrating that, *“Writing and literature offer the potential for change, serving as a springboard for diverse ideas and as a precursor to social and cultural life”*⁸².

The second paragraph, titled **“The Manifestation of Non-Traditional Gender Identity in English Literature”**, explores “Queer” literature, the issue of third genders in fiction, and the representation of dual gender identities in literary works.

Previous chapters have highlighted the limitations of Showalter’s analysis of the feminist literary canon. While her observations regarding the “Female” phase may be relevant for the period between 1920 and 1980, they fail to encompass the advancements brought about by the third and fourth waves of feminism, as well as the rising influence of “queer” theory since the mid-1990s. “Queer” theory addresses the experiences of third genders, gays, lesbians, and homosexuals, examining their sexual, sociological, intellectual, and political traits, while also tracing their historical and cultural evolution to argue for the normalization of these identities.

This paragraph examines works that highlight the diversity of queer narratives, such as A.Hollinghurst’s “The Line of Beauty”⁸³, J.Winterson’s “Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit”⁸⁴, S.Waters’ “Tipping the Velvet”⁸⁵, and O.Wilde’s “The Picture of Dorian Gray”⁸⁶, among others. These texts explore a wide range of queer experiences in 21st-century British literature, focusing on non-traditional gender identities

⁸² Evaristo, B. *Girl, Women, Other*. / B.Evaristo. – London: Hamish Hamilton, – 2019. – p.57.

⁸³ Hollinghurst, A. *The Line of Beauty*. / A.Hollinghurst. – London: Pan Macmillan, – 2014. – 339 p.

⁸⁴ Winterson, J. *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. / J.Winterson. – Grove Press, – 1985. – 176 p.

⁸⁵ Waters, S. *Tipping the Velvet*. / S.Waters. – London: Virago, – 1998. – 472 p.

⁸⁶ Wilde, O. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. / O.Wilde. – Penguin Classics, – 2000. – 304 p.

and the intersections of female, male, and other gender identities, sexuality, and religious expectations. These narratives offer a profound reflection on the complexity of gender roles, identity, and the acceptance of individual authenticity.

As observed, in the literary landscape of the 21st century, the concepts of stigma, shame, and rigid thinking that defined much of the 20th century are increasingly being replaced by an appreciation and critical exploration of gender, sexual diversity, and identity.

In the third paragraph, titled **“New Female Images in Azerbaijani Literature”**, it is noted that although Azerbaijani literature has traditionally adopted a more conservative stance on gender roles, the unique cultural context of the 20th and 21st centuries has seen a gradual shift in literary representations of gender identity. The works of J.Jabbarli, Y.V.Chamanzaminli, H.Javid, and other Azerbaijani writers are explored for their influence on modern gender roles. Y.V.Chamanzaminli, in stories such as “Arvadlarimizin hali”, “Qanlı göz yaşları”, “Arvadlarimizin məişətindən”, “Musalman arvadının sarguzashtları”, “Qumarbazın arvadı”, “Ana və analıq”, “Toy”, “Namussuz”, “Uch geca”⁸⁷, critiques early marriage, consanguineous marriage, arranged marriage, and the lives of uneducated girls. He also addresses issues such as the beating of women, dropping out of school to marry, and the lack of rights for girls and women, depicting the turbulent lives of Azerbaijani women and the challenges they face.

Jafar Jabbarli, a leading feminist writer in 20th-century Azerbaijani literature, centered his works around the challenges faced by women. Many of his stories bear female names, reflecting his dedication to advocating for the freedom, education, and empowerment of Azerbaijani women. Jabbarli highlighted the struggles and oppression experienced by women while emphasizing education as the key to escaping a life of subservience. In stories such as “Gular”, “Gulzar”,

⁸⁷ Çəmənzəminli, Y.V. Arvadlarımızın həli. / Y.V.Çəmənzəminli. – Bakı: Orucov qardaşlarının elektrik mətbəəsi, – 1913. – 36 s.; Çəmənzəminli, Y.V. Qanlı göz yaşları: Arvadlarımızın məişətindən. / Y.V.Çəmənzəminli. – Bakı: Orucov qardaşlarının elektrik mətbəəsi, – 1913. – 32 s.; Çəmənzəminli, Y.V. Əsərləri: [3 cildə]. / Y.V.Çəmənzəminli. – Bakı: “Avrasiya-press”, – I c. – 2005. – 360 s.; Çəmənzəminli, Y.V. Əsərləri: [3 cildə]. / Y.V.Çəmənzəminli. – Bakı: “Avrasiya-press”, – III c. – 2005. – 440 s.

“Dilbar”, and works like “Arvadlar deyirlər”, “Hurriyyati-nisvanchilara protesto”, “Kishilar deyirlər”, “Kizlardan kishilara protesto”⁸⁸ he consistently called for women’s rights, education, and liberation.

His 1928 play “Sevil”⁸⁹ is regarded as the first feminist work in Azerbaijani literature and a symbol of Eastern women’s progress and freedom. Through the character of Sevil, Jabbarli portrays the transformative journey of a passive, submissive, and uneducated Azerbaijani woman rising to become an intellectual, symbolizing a path of hope and empowerment for Azerbaijani women.

The happy ending in “Sevil” does not revolve around the conventional expectation of marriage or reuniting with Balash. Instead, it highlights the life a woman builds independently, emphasizing economic freedom and self-confidence. By staging the play in 1928 and featuring an Azerbaijani woman publicly removing her headscarf, Jabbarli not only advocated for the liberation of Azerbaijani women but also set a precedent for the emancipation of women across the East.

In his later work “Almaz”⁹⁰, Jabbarli portrays a courageous, educated, and resilient female protagonist. The play critiques the mullahs, who, under the guise of religion and Sharia law, subject women to physical, sexual, and psychological violence for years. These figures, desperate to maintain their authority, manipulate religious doctrines to control people’s minds and preserve outdated traditions.

These analyses highlight a significant distinction between Jafar Jabbarli’s works and those of earlier writers. In the earlier literature, female characters are often depicted as veiled, struggling to break free from this constraint, with a focus on calls for education and schooling. However, in Jabbarli’s works, the female characters are already

⁸⁸ Cabbarlı, C. Hekayələr. Dilara. / C.Cabbarlı. – Bakı: Gənclik, – 1970. – 112 s.; Cabbarlı, C. Hürriyyəti-Nisvançılara protesto: [Elektron resurs]. 23.05.2017. URL: https://az.wikisource.org/wiki/H%C3%BCrriy%C9%99ti-Nisvan%C3%A7%C4%B1lara_protesto ; Cabbarlı, C. Qızlardan kişilərə protesto: [Elektron resurs]. 25.05.2017. URL: https://az.wikisource.org/wiki/Q%C4%B1zlardan_ki%C5%9Fil%C9%99r%C9%99_protesto

⁸⁹ Cabbarlı, C. Əsərləri: [3 cildə] / C.Cabbarlı. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dövlət Nəşriyyatı, – I c. – 1968. – 410 s.

⁹⁰ Cabbarlı, C. Əsərləri: [4 cildə] / C.Cabbarlı. – Bakı: “Şərq-Qərb”, – III c. – 2005. – 368 s.

educated and unveiled, yet they continue to face social inequality and a lack of rights. Jabbarli emphasizes the importance of economic freedom for these women. Moreover, in contrast to the father figures in the works of M.Jalil and Y.V.Chamanzaminli, many of Jabbarli's father figures express a desire to see their daughters educated.

Huseyn Javid, who opposed the enslavement of women in 20th-century Azerbaijani literature, emphasized that religious dogma, Sharia law, and Islam have historically legitimized and defended women's subjugation. In his literary works, the issue of women's rights is portrayed with both urgency and uniqueness. From the start of his writing career, Javid showed a keen interest in women's issues through poems such as "Kadin", "Kiz maktabinda", "Sharg kadini", "Varamli kiz", "Pamba charshaf", "Daniz parisi", "Get", "Qamar", "Bir kizin son faryadi"⁹¹. In his poem "Sharg kadini", he vividly depicted the hardships faced by women in a society dominated by religious superstition, feudal morality, and ignorance, where outdated customs and traditions persist. He attributed the root of women's suffering to the prevailing social norms and rules that denied them their rights and autonomy.

In his play "Maral"⁹² and the drama "Afat"⁹³, Huseyn Javid urged women to actively defend their rights, highlighting that equality could only be achieved through education and progress. As an advocate of progressive ideas, Javid believed that education and knowledge would empower women to become valuable contributors to society. He saw a woman's true beauty not in external traits such as appearance or wealth, but in her education, intellect, and personal development, a sentiment he also expressed in his poem "Qiz mektebi".

In the final paragraph, titled **"A Contemporary View of the Gender Problem in Azerbaijani Literature"**, gender roles and female characters in the works of I.Efendiye, S.Gadirzadeh⁹⁴, as well as Azerbaijani women writers associated with the Eastern Woman

⁹¹ Cavid, H. Əsərləri: [5 cildə] / H.Cavid. – Bakı: Lider nəş., – I c. – 2005. – 256 s.

⁹² Cavid, H. Əsərləri: [5 cildə] / H.Cavid. – Bakı: Lider nəş., – II c. – 2005. – 352 s.

⁹³ Cavid, H. Əsərləri: [5 cildə] / H.Cavid. – Bakı: Lider nəş., – III c. – 2005. – 304 s.

⁹⁴ Qədirzadə, S. Təbəssümün mükafatıdır. Hekayələr, povestlər, komediyalar. / S.Qədirzadə. – Bakı: Yazıçı, – 1981. – 454 s.

magazine and contemporary women writers are analyzed through the lens of gender studies. Characters such as Farida and Farida's mother in Efendiyev's "Mahv olmuş gundaliklar", Sariya in "Korpusalanlar"⁹⁵, and Sarikoynak in "Sarikoynakla Valehin naghili" are portrayed as women who resist patriarchal traditions. They do not succumb to male dominance; instead, they emphasize the significance of freedom – economically, socially, and psychologically – as a key factor for women's happiness.

Additionally, this paragraph examines the contributions of notable Azerbaijani women in literature and their perspectives on gender issues. These include S.Akhundzade, Azerbaijan's first female playwright and director; S.Alizade, the first Azerbaijani woman novelist; K.Alibayova, regarded as one of Azerbaijan's first feminists; and influential figures such as G.Malikova, A.Sultanova, M.Dilbazi, N.Rafibeyli, A.Babayeva, X.Hasilova, A.Jafarzadeh, X.Alibeyli. The works and activities of contemporary writers like A. Masud, Bani, Birce, A.Alizade, and N.Kamal are also analyzed, highlighting their engagement with gender issues in modern Azerbaijani literature.

Overall, our analysis in Chapter V reveals significant changes in the dynamics of gender identity within both English and Azerbaijani literature. In English literature, there is a noticeable shift away from traditional binary standards regarding gender identity and a challenge to the notion of fixed identities. This is accompanied by artistic representations of non-traditional gender images and a redefined gender landscape. In contrast, Azerbaijani literature highlights the portrayal of female characters who are educated, economically independent, and free-thinking, often depicted without headscarves. The emergence and development of literary paths for women writers are also crucial for understanding gender perspectives in this context.

Our findings and conclusions in this chapter are presented in the thesis and articles titled "The Study of Gender Identity in Literary Translation (Based on English and Azerbaijani Literature)" and "Perspectives on Gender Identity in Modern British and Azerbaijani

⁹⁵ Əfəndiyev, İ. Seçilmiş əsərləri: [7 cildə] / İ.Əfəndiyev. – Bakı: "Çinar-Çap" nəşriyyat-poliqrafiya müəssisəsi, – III c. – 2002. – 624 s.; Əfəndiyev, İ. Seçilmiş əsərləri. / İ.Əfəndiyev. – Bakı: Kitab klubu, Çinar Çap, – 2015. – 536 s.

Literature”⁹⁶.

The conclusions drawn from the research conducted in this dissertation are summarized in the **Conclusion** section as follows:

Examining the positive and negative transformations in Western literature influenced by the waves of feminism reveals that feminist movements have facilitated the emergence of gender studies, the establishment of women’s literature, feminist literary criticism, and the development of a rich literary landscape. This represents the positive aspect of these changes. In societies that previously neglected to consider or discuss gender discrimination, feminism has brought the issue to the forefront. In the initial phase, the focus was on women’s rights and freedom, which were articulated through literature as a means to address women’s concerns. In the subsequent phase, women in literature began to confront men, advocating for their superiority and demanding access to education, voting rights, and social, economic, and psychological freedoms.

By the third phase, writers believed that the issues raised in earlier stages had been addressed, shifting the focus from feminism to a broader perspective of gender - emphasizing the human experience. Consequently, both men and women began producing works that significantly contributed to the development of women’s prose in Western literature. Following this democratic evolution, discussions around the third gender emerged, leading to the creation of Queer literature, a rejection of binary standards in gender identity and differences, and the exploration of non-traditional gender norms in fiction.

In Azerbaijani literature, the portrayal of women presents a contrasting narrative. While Azerbaijani women are depicted in epics as warriors on horseback and hunters, they later appear as enslaved individuals sold from one palace to another in subsequent literary works. A similar depiction is found in English literature, such as in “The

⁹⁶ Ağabəyli, V.E. Bədii tərcümədə gender identikliyin tədqiqi (İngilis və Azərbaycan ədəbiyyatı əsasında) // “Tərcüməşünaslığın müasir problemləri” mövzusunda Respublika elmi konfransının materialları, – Naxçıvan: – 30 yanvar, – 2024, – s. 64-69; Aghabayli, V.E. Perspectives on Gender Identity in Modern British and Azerbaijani Literature // – Riga: Baltic Journal of Legal and Social Sciences (Baltijas Žurnāls), – 2024. №1, – p. 232-240.

Canterbury Tales” and “Oroonoko”. Eventually, literature begins to portray more imaginative female characters, with both English and Azerbaijani literature reflecting this shift around the same time.

In the 19th century, British women writers often adopted male pseudonyms to avoid societal condemnation, whereas Azerbaijani female writers like Khurshidbanu Natavan, Gonchebayim, and Agabaeyim Agha organized literary gatherings and engaged in creative endeavors. However, the circumstances in Azerbaijan differed significantly from those in the West, primarily due to the influence of religion and Sharia. While feminist advocates for women's education and freedom in Western literature were predominantly women, notable male writers in Azerbaijan, such as M.F.Akhunzade, N.Vazirov, J.Mammadguluzade, Y.V.Chamenzaminli, and J.Jabbarli, also championed these issues.

Although Azerbaijani women gained the right to vote about a decade earlier than their British counterparts, artistic works reveal that women's problems remained unresolved, as economic and psychological freedoms had not yet been attained. J. Jabbarli's works, particularly “Sevil”, emerged as a symbol of women's revival in Azerbaijan, representing a model of self-discovery and a pathway to economic independence. Following this, women's prose began to flourish in Azerbaijan, reflecting themes of social, economic, psychological, and sexual freedom in contemporary literature.

In summary, our analysis leads us to the following conclusions:

- While gender identity is predominantly shaped by the social and cultural contexts, feminist theories and movements have significantly contributed to the development of women's language and literature. The works of scholars such as S. Bouvar, E. Showalter, W. Wolf, S. Gilbert, and S. Gubar demonstrate the emergence of an independent feminist philosophy and literary criticism, leading to the flourishing of feminist literature and the creation of a distinct feminine language and style by women writers.

- The literary contributions and persona of A. Behn have garnered considerable recognition among feminist scholars. She stood out for her critical perspective on women's status in his time, highlighting the necessity of acknowledging female individuality. Similarly, M.

Wollstonecraft asserted that education is essential for achieving women's liberation.

– The themes of female courage and free-thinking can be traced back to the work of M. Ganjavi in Azerbaijani literature during the twelfth century, predating similar expressions among female writers in English literature. In contrast to W. Wolfe's lament that English society was unable to treat women with the same empathy that elevated W. Shakespeare, Meh sati Ganjavi emerged in Azerbaijani literature as a contemporary of Nizami Ganjavi.

– During the "Feminine" stage from 1840 to 1880, women writers such as S. Brontë, E.Brontë, J.Eliot, and E.Gaskell often chose to publish under male pseudonyms due to societal pressures. They conformed to male values by emulating male styles and refrained from engaging in discussions regarding women's roles in society.

– In the works of X.Shirvani, I.Nasimi, and M.P.Vagif, women are represented as divine beings, reflecting their beauty and charm. In contrast, M.F.Akhundzadeh's writings resonate more closely with reality, sharply critiquing the illiterate mullahs who manipulate Sharia laws for their own benefit, thus perpetuating the ignorance of girls and women.

– During the 19th century in Azerbaijan, intellectual figures such as Khurshudbani Natavan, Gonchabayim, Govhar Khanum, and Gamar Sheyda, despite not being able to organize women's movements or protests like their Western counterparts, played crucial roles in advancing women's creativity and promoting enlightenment through literary gatherings. These gatherings represented significant steps toward women's liberation and empowerment.

– During the "feminist" period from the 1880s to the 1920s, a new direction emerged in English literature with the contributions of women writers. While these authors challenged the traditional portrayals of female characters by male writers and critiqued the broader literary canon, they were unable to present an alternative approach.

– In the works of J.Mammadguluzade, which hold significant value for gender studies, themes such as women's education, advocacy for schooling, opposition to early marriage, and criticism of polygamy and exploitation of women are prominently addressed.

– In the subsequent “Female” period of the 1920s, women in English literature shifted their focus from fighting against men to self-discovery and creative expression. This evolution led to the emergence of a distinct literary category known as “women's literature”, separate from that of their male counterparts.

– V.Woolf’s work explores the quest for female identity and the complexities of self-awareness. In the writings of J.Jabbarli, the emphasis is placed on the notion that a woman’s complete freedom - achieved by shedding the veil and gaining an education - is intrinsically linked to her economic independence. As literature progresses, the importance of a woman’s emotional freedom, in addition to her physical, psychological, and economic liberation, becomes increasingly recognized.

– While the development of gender studies in literature has been viewed as a pathway to addressing women’s issues through social, economic, and psychological liberation, the 21st century introduces the challenge of the third gender, paving the way for the emergence of “Queer literature”.

The key findings of the dissertation are presented in the following articles and theses authored by the researcher:

1. Bədii mətn genderin sosioloji və psixoloji vəziyyətinin representasiyası kimi // “Azərbaycan əlyazmaları dünya kitabxanalarında” mövzusunda V Beynəlxalq elmi konfrans, – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – 30 noyabr, – 2020, – s.47-49.
2. Gender Representation in Postcolonial Literature // – Bakı: “Risala” elmi araşdırmalar jurnalı, – 2020. №1 (18), – p.67-73.
3. Gender Aspects of Culture // Akdeniz Zirvesi 3. Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Kongresi, – Girne: UBAK Publications, – 17-18 Ekim, – 2020, – p.97-104.
4. Feminist ədəbi tənqid // “Klassik Azərbaycan ədəbiyyatı və incəsənətinin milli özünütdəqiqdə və Mərkəzi Asiyadakı mədəni tərəqqidə yeri” adlı Beynəlxalq elmi konfransı, – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – dekabr, – 2020, – s.150-152.

5. Bədii ədəbiyyatda feminizmin sosial-siyasi ideologiyası // – Bakı: AMEA, M.Füzuli adına Əlyazmalar İnstitutu, Filologiya məsələləri, – 2020. №12, – s.230-239.
6. Gender sosiallaşması gender identikliyinə dərk olunma prosesi kimi // – Bakı: “Risalə” elmi araşdırmalar jurnalı, – 2020. №2(19), – s.179-187.
7. Bədii ədəbiyyatda qadın və kişi üslublarının identikliyi və fərqi // – Bakı: Gənc Tədqiqatçı elmi-praktiki jurnal, – 2021. c. 7, №1, – s.195-201.
8. İngilis ədəbiyyatında feminist utopiyasının başlanğıcı // – Bakı: Filologiya və Sənətsünaslıq, – 2021. №1, – s.171-177.
9. Nizami yaradıcılığında gender məsələləri // Nizami Gəncəvinin anadan olmasının 880 illiyinə həsr edilən Respublika Gənclər konfransının proqram və materialları, – Bakı: Elm və təhsil, – 7 oktyabr, – 2021, – s.136-140.
10. George Eliotun əsərlərində qadın özünüdərk məsələləri // Bursa 1st International Scientific Research Congress, – Bursa: Academic Sharing Platform Co. Publication, – December 18-19, – 2021, – s.77-84.
11. Emili Brontenin “Uğuldayan aşırım” romanında gender məsələləri // – Bakı: “Risalə” elmi araşdırmalar jurnalı, – 2021. №2 (21), – s.28-35.
12. Tomas Hardinin əsərlərində “Yeni Qadın” və Feminist perspektivlər // 3rd International Congress of Khazar Scientific research, – Bakı: IKSAD Publication, Khazar University, – January 7-9, – 2022, – s.553-558.
13. Ceyn Austenin “Qürur və Qərəz” əsərində gender məsələləri // Gənc Tədqiqatçıların V Respublika Elmi-praktik konfransı, – Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti, – 15 aprel, – 2022, – s.23-25
14. Virciniya Vulfun əsərlərində gender tədqiqatlarına modernist yanaşma // – Bakı: AMEA, M.Füzuli adına Əlyazmalar İnstitutu, Filologiya məsələləri, – 2022. № 14, – s.294-303.
15. Bədii ədəbiyyatda müharibə mövzusunun genderoloji xüsusiyyətləri // – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dillər Universiteti, Dil və Ədəbiyyat, – 2022. c. 12, №1, – s.46-55.
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 18. Müasir dövrdə feminist utopiyası // World Women Conference-V International Conference, – Bakı: IKSAD Yayınevi, – March 7-8, – 2023, – s.207-217.
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 22. Din və gender məsələlərinin bədii ədəbiyyatda əksi // – Bakı: Bakı Qızlar Universiteti, Elmi əsərlər, – 2023. c.16, №3 (55), – s.153-160.
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 24. Investigation of Gender Identity in the Literary Works of Prominent Medieval Azerbaijani Authors // – Tashkent: Golden Scripts – Oltın Bitiglar, – 2023. vol. 4, – p.97-108.
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 26. Bədii tərcümədə gender identikliyin tədqiqi (İngilis və Azərbaycan ədəbiyyatı əsasında) // “Tərcüməşünaslığın müasir problemləri” mövzusunda Respublika elmi konfransının materialları, – Naxçıvan: Naxçıvan Universiteti nəşriyyatı, – 30 yanvar, – 2024, – s. 64-69.

27. Spekulyativ ədəbiyyatda gender məsələləri: Anjela Karter yaradıcılığı // – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dillər Universitetinin Elmi Xəbərləri (humanitar və ictimai elmlər), – 2024. №1, – s.39-44.
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31. Unique Standpoints of the Distinctive British Feminist Writers of the 20th Century. Regarding Gender Concerns // – Slovak Republic: Path of Science: International Electronic Scientific Journal (Traektoriâ Nauki), – 2024. vol.10, №3, – p.4007-4016.

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