

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**IDEOLOGICAL-ARTISTIC AND TYPOLOGICAL
PECULIARITIES OF CHILDREN'S PLAYS AT THE
AZERBAIJAN STATE THEATER OF YOUNG
SPECTATORS**

Speciality: 6212.01 – Theater Arts

Field of science: Art History

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Baku – 2025

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance and the degree of scientific development of the topic. Theater art is an indicator of real life, a mirror of the material and spiritual state of society, and always reflects the way of life, cultural level of society. In this regard, the Bolshevik Russian state, which came to power in Azerbaijan in 1920, was interested in creating new theater groups that would consistently convey its successes, the economic and social development of the society it governed and keep the socio-political situation in reliable hands. The organization of the Theater of Criticism and Propaganda (1921), which was established as an alternative to the State Drama Theater founded before the Bolsheviks came to power in Azerbaijan and later transformed into the Baku Turkic Workers' Theater and then the Baku Children's Theater (1928-1929), was also intended to propagate the ideology of the state. The main task of the Children's Theater was to educate the younger generation on the principles of communist morality. This task continued from the opening of the theater until the January 20, 1990 massacre.

In this sense, it is especially relevant to research the creative path of the Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectators (ASTYS), which functioned under the ideological dictates of the Soviet state for more than sixty years, in terms of modern requirements and free from ideological influences.

On the other hand, theater studies and theater criticism during the years of the USSR, which controlled the theater's activities constantly and were forced to evaluate the theater's repertoire policy and the plays it staged within the framework of the socialist realism method, also had a serious influence on the work of the ASTYS and the formation of its ideological direction, which is of no small importance to study.

Of course, many valuable books, monographs and articles of various genres have been written about the ASTYS. "Nash teatr" ("Our theater")¹ collection of articles, A.Aliyeva's "M.Qorki adına

¹ Naş teatr / – Moskva: İskusstvo, - 1939. – 89 s.

Azərbaycan Dövlət Gənc Tamaşaçılar Teatrı (1927-1935-ci illər)” (“Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectators named after M.Gorky (1927-1935)”)², I.Karimov’s “Sovet Azərbaycanının Gənclər Teatrı” (“Youth Theater of Soviet Azerbaijan”), “Gənclik və gözəllik teatrı” (“Theatre of Youth and Beauty”)³, A.Salmanov’s “Gənclər teatrı və mənəvi tərbiyə” (“Youth Theater and spiritual education”)⁴, I.Rahimli’s “Azərbaycan Dövlət Gənc Tamaşaçılar Teatrı” (“Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectators”)⁵, as well as monographs among such works should be especially mentioned. These works, written in different years, are very valuable from the point of view of studying the work of the Theater of Young Spectators during Soviet period.

Besides these, numerous monographs have been written on the work of playwrights, actors and directors who have left a special mark in the history of the Theatre of Young Spectators (TYS). The work of art figures who played a major role in the formation and development of the theater has been investigated in the monographs such as I.Rahimli’s “Kəsişən paralellər” (“Intersecting Parallels”)⁵, dedicated to directors Zafar and Azerpasha Nematovs, A.Dadashov’s “Rejissorluğun üslub problemləri” (“Problems of style in directing”)⁶ about Jannat Salimova’s work, M.Asadli’s “Abdulla Şaiq və teatr: 1910-1958” (“Abdulla Shaig and the theater: 1910-1958”)⁷, V.Osmanli’s “Abdulla Şaiqin romantizmi” (“The Romanticism of Abdulla Shaig”)⁸, E.Babayev’s “Qəfəsdə yaşamaq həyat deyil”

² Əliyeva, Ə.Ə. M.Qorki adına Azərbaycan Dövlət Gənc Tamaşaçılar Teatrı (1927-1935-ci illər) / Ə.Ə.Əliyeva. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Teatr Cəmiyyəti, - 1961. - 63 s.

³ Kərimov, İ.S. Sovet Azərbaycanının Gənclər Teatrı / İ.S.Kərimov. – Bakı: ASSR EA-nın nəşri, - 1968. - 173 s.; Kərimov, İ.S. Gənclik və gözəllik teatrı / İ.S.Kərimov. - Bakı: Yazıçı, - 1978. - 93 s.

⁴ Salmanov, A.Ə. Gənclər teatrı və mənəvi tərbiyə / A.Ə.Salmanov. – Bakı: Maarif, - 1984. - 75 s.

⁵ Rəhimli, İ.Ə. Azərbaycan Dövlət Gənc Tamaşaçılar Teatrı / İ.Ə.Rəhimli. – Bakı: Təhsil Nəşriyyat-Poliqrafiya, - 2010.- 163 s.; Rəhimli, İ.Ə. Kəsişən paralellər / İ.Ə.Rəhimli. – Bakı: Çapaş, - 2010.-514s.

⁶ Dadaşov, A.Ə. Rejissorluğun üslub problemləri / A.Ə.Dadaşov. – Bakı: Elm və Təhsil, - 2010. - 240 s.

⁷ Əsədli, M.R.Abdulla Şaiq və teatr: 1910-1958 / M.R.Əsədli. – Bakı: Nurlan, - 2003. - 154 s.

⁸ Osmanlı, V.M.Abdulla Şaiqin romantizmi / V.M.Osmanlı. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti, - 2004. - 148 s.

(“Living in the cage is not life”), “Teatrda müasirlik axtarışları” (“Search for modernity in the theater”)⁹, etc., which is very important in terms of creating a general scientific picture of the historical path taken by the TYS. These works have also served as a useful source for studying the ideological-aesthetic, artistic-typological, genre-style peculiarities of the plays staged by the theater in different years, for revealing the creative directions and artistic qualities of the playwright, director and actors.

However, since the majority of the abovementioned works reflecting the history of the theater were written before 1980 (except for I. Rahimli’s book) and despite all the authors’ efforts, they were not free from the ideological influences of the period, they were unable to create a complete and objective historical picture of the difficult path that the TYS took until our country gained independence.

The work of the Theater of Young Spectators was also widely covered in the periodical press and many articles and interviews contained interesting information about the work of the collective. J.Jafarov, I.Karimov, M.Allahverdiyev, A.Aliyeva, J.Safarov, A.Babayev, J.Mammadov, M.Alizadeh, I.Rahimli, E.Aliyeva, E.Babayev, A.Talibzadeh and others enriched our national theater studies with valuable articles and reviews about the theater’s plays, various actors and directors. Although these materials are of great importance for determining the repertoire policy of the theater, the theme, genre and style peculiarities of the plays, the creative principles of artists, as well as from a historical and factual point of view, unfortunately, some of them are not free from ideological influence.

In this sense, a comprehensive and systematic research of the history of the Theater of Young Spectators from the 1920s (A.Shaig’s play “Gözəl bahar” (“Beautiful Spring”)¹⁰ was performed on April 7, 1922) to 1991, when our country regained its state independence, is of particular relevance for our national theater studies. The reason why we

⁹ Babayev, E. Qəfəsdə yaşamaq həyat deyil. / E.Babayev. – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 2011. – 228 s. Babayev, E.A. Teatrda müasirlik axtarışları / E.Babayev. – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 2013. – 186 s.

¹⁰ Şaiq, A.M. Gözəl Bahar / A.M.Şaiq – Bakı: - TEAS Press, - 2018. - 199 s.

include only the period of the Theater's activity until 1991 in the dissertation is that since that year our country gained independence and entered a different formation, and like the whole cultural sphere, the TYS continued its work in different political-social, socio-cultural and ideological conditions and circumstances. In turn, this makes it relevant to include separately the work of the TYS during the period of Azerbaijan's independence in the research.

Research object and subject. The **object** of the dissertation is the creative path of the current Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectators, established officially in 1929, from the moment of its foundation until 1991. The **subject** of the research is the repertoire policy carried out, the sphere of theme, genre-style, ideological-artistic and typological peculiarities of staged children's plays in the ASTYS, which is an integral part of the Azerbaijani theater, over the years.

Research aims and objectives. The main aim of the research is to research the work of the ASTYS in 1922-1991 comprehensively, to study its creative directions, repertoire policy, thematic range of plays, genre-style, ideological-artistic and typological peculiarities, to create a historical picture and to determine its role in the development of the national theater. For this purpose, it is planned to fulfill the following scientific objectives:

- creating a picture of the formation period of the children's theater in Azerbaijan;
- determining the directions of the theater's creative searches during the formation period;
- reviewing the theater repertoire problem against the background of the political-ideological requirements of the period;
- studying the peculiarities of stage interpretation of works of national dramaturgy;
- assessing children's plays with myth-fairy motifs as carriers of national memory;
- studying the staging, theme, idea and genre features of original children's plays;
- studying the artistic and aesthetic principles of plays based on translated works;
- considering the problem of adoption of foreign children's plays

on the national stage;

- creating a historical picture of the creative path of the Theater of Young Spectator during 1929-1991.

Research methods. The problem studied in the dissertation was investigated with reference to the historical experience of the Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectators, the achievements of modern art history, cultural studies, pedagogy, psychology and sociology. As the main methodological basis of the research, the historical-chronological analysis method was used to observe the development dynamics of the problem during the study and to create a historical picture of the topic. The typological analysis method was referred in the research when discussing the themes, genres and styles of the plays that make up the TYSS's repertoire.

The works of prominent representatives of world and Russian dramaturgy such as W.Shakespeare, J.B.Moliere, F.Schiller, K.Galdoni, A.S.Pushkin, N.Gogol, M.Twain, J.Verne, V.Hugo, M.Gorky, B.Stowe, N.Ostrovsky, P.Malyarevsky, M.Shatrov, L.Cassili, S.Mikhalkov, S.Marshak, Y.Schwartz and others, classics of Azerbaijani literature such as N.Vezirov, A.Hagverdiyev, S.M.Ganizadeh, N.Narimanov, A.Shaig, S.S.Akhundov and other playwrights are discussed, the scientific and theoretical ideas written by national art critics such as J.Jafarov, Y.Garayev, I.Kerimov, M.Allahverdiyev, A.Aliyeva, I.Rahimli, M.Alizadeh, I.Israfilov, A.Talibzadeh, A.Dadashov, A.Valiyev, Y.Alioglu, M.Asadli and other authors regarding the Theater of Young Spectators are used and certain conclusions are included in the dissertation.

The main defended points reflect the important results of the research and are listed as following:

- The first works of children's drama in Azerbaijan appeared before the revolution based on the works by A. Shaig, and the national children's drama laid the foundations of the fairy tale genre;

- Although the main purpose of establishing the Russian branch of the Baku Children's Theater in 1928 and the Azerbaijani branch in 1929 was ideological, the work of the art center played a great role in the development of the national theater and the artistic, aesthetic and moral education of the younger generation;

- Translated works played a special role in the creation of children's theater in Azerbaijan, although the first children's play was staged based on the works of national dramaturgy, the repertoire was mostly based on translated works during the formation period;

- The government was increasingly interested in the production of stage plays about the lives of pioneers and Komsomol members since the establishment of the children's theater. The theater was named after the proletarian writer M. Gorky in 1936, which determined the political and ideological direction of the collective's work, and the plays served to educate the new generation in the spirit of communist morality.

- The main reason for turning to the fairy tale genre in national children's drama during the formation period was the desire of playwrights to convey their ideas about real problems to children through the language of various symbolic characters;

- The appointment of A. Shaig as the head of pedagogical work and A. Tuganov as the chief director at the theater created a major turning point in the work of the collective, the strengthening of the theater's relations with local playwrights expanded the theme range of the produced plays and enriched the repertoire;

- Original children's plays began to be produced at the TYS in the 1935-40s, and these works enriched the repertoire, created conditions for the development of the artistic qualities of directors and actors and activated the creative environment in the theater;

- A special period began in the creative life of the TYS since the 1950s, the theater took advantage of the little freedom gained politically and ideologically and managed to go beyond the strict requirements of the era by adding fairy-tale plays and original translated works to its repertoire.

- Special attention was paid to the selection and performance of original plays in order to participate more closely in the national-ideological struggle for freedom and independence in 1980s-1990s, and the theater tried to contribute to the independence of our people.

Scientific novelty of the research. Although the topic of the ideological-artistic and typological peculiarities of children's plays at the Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectator has been partially

touched upon in various articles and reviews, monographs and dissertations, it has not been systematically and comprehensively studied yet. In this regard, the problem posed in the dissertation becomes particularly relevant. The scientific innovations achieved in the dissertation are following:

- For the first time, the creative path of the Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectators from its establishment until 1991, its repertoire and the ideological, artistic and typological characteristics of its plays are studied systematically and comprehensively in the dissertation;

- The creative searches during the formation of children's theater in Azerbaijan, the problem of repertoire, the theme sphere and genre-style peculiarities of children's plays are comprehensively investigated in this study for the first time;

- The study also considers the structural problem of children's plays based on national dramaturgy, the staging of myth-fairy-tale motifs and original children's plays, their aesthetic characteristics;

- The artistic and aesthetic peculiarities of children's plays based on translated works are investigated;

- The problems of adaptation of foreign children's plays to the national stage are widely discussed.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The dissertation has scientific-theoretical and practical significance as a research work that studies the ideological-artistic and typological characteristics of children's plays systematically and comprehensively at the ASTYS for the first time.

The research work is of scientific and theoretical importance in terms of the complex, systematic study of the reasons for the establishment of this theater, the development path during 1929-1991, the samples of local and foreign dramaturgy included in the theater's repertoire and obtaining valuable scientific conclusions and results, highlighting the existing need for the creation of the first children's theater in Azerbaijan.

The dissertation, as a research that creates a broad historical picture of the Theater of Young Spectators in the period under consideration, can play a basic role in the preparation of educational

programs, study and methodological aids for relevant specialties of higher and secondary educational institutions of humanitarian direction, and can be useful as teaching material for master's and bachelor's students studying in the specialties of theater studies, directing, acting and literary work at the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Art. The points and conclusions, as well as the rich factual material in the dissertation can be used in future research.

Approbation and use. The main content and separate points of the dissertation have been interpreted in detail in the applicant's articles published in highly rated publications in Azerbaijan and abroad. The conclusions on the topic were presented at local and international scientific-theoretical conferences.

The name of the institution where the dissertation work was performed. The dissertation was completed at the Department of "Theater, Cinema and Television" of the Institute of Architecture and Art of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

The total length of the dissertation with a character indicating the length of the structural sections of the dissertation separately. The dissertation consists of an Introduction, three Chapters, six paragraphs, a Conclusion and a List of references. The "Introduction" part of the research work consists of 13.475 characters, the first paragraph "Creative searches of the theater during the period of formation" of Chapter I "The period of formation of children's theater in Azerbaijan (1922-1940s)" – 28.104 characters, the second paragraph "The repertoire problem of the theater against the ideological requirements of the time" – 26.591 characters, the first paragraph "Children's performances with myth-fairy tale motifs – as carriers of national memory" of Chapter II "Stage interpretation of national dramaturgy works" – 44.874, the second paragraph "Staging, theme, idea and genre features of original children's plays" – 34.621, the first paragraph "Issues of ideological-artistic staging of translated works" of Chapter III "Artistic-aesthetic principles of plays based on translated works" – 20.822, the second paragraph "The problem of adaptation of foreign plays to the national stage" – 36.049, the "Conclusion" – 12.390, and the total length consists of 217.118 characters.

GENERAL CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

The **Introduction** section of the dissertation deals with information about the relevance of the topic, its aims and objectives, object and subject, degree of development, scientific novelty of the research, theoretical and practical significance, methodological basis, approbation, structure and scope.

The Chapter I of the dissertation is called **“The period of formation of children’s theater in Azerbaijan (1922-1940s)”** and consists of two paragraphs. It is noted in the first paragraph, entitled **“Creative searches of the theater during the period of formation”**, that the theater came under the protection of the state after the proclamation of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic in 1918 and the foundation of the State Drama Theater (SDT) was laid. The SDT group, which served national and spiritual values since its inception, tried not to interfere in state politics by staging plays mainly on historical themes. Taking this into account, the state created the Baku Theater of Criticism and Propaganda as an alternative in 1921.

The children’s theater was created in Moscow shortly after V.I.Lenin’s speech at the youth congress. Children’s theaters were also organized in Leningrad (St. Petersburg), Kharkov, Kiev and Krasnodar after the first play, which was shown to the spectators in the winter of 1920. Of course, other central cities should join the process that had begun.

In this regard, staging Abdulla Shaig’s play **“Gözəl Bahar”** (**“Beautiful Spring”**) (1910), written before the revolution, as the first children’s play in the annals of Azerbaijani theater become a historical event. The play was staged for schoolchildren on April 7, 1922, as a daytime play on the stage of the State Drama Theater, directed by A.M.Sharifzadeh.

The SDT group staged two more children’s plays in 1927. Of course, the plays **“80-gün dünya səyahəti”** (**“80-day world trip”**) (17.02.1927) and **“Tom dayının koması”** (**“Uncle Tom’s shack”**) (03.11.1927) staged by A.Tuganov were additional tasks assigned to the director and the group. As can be seen, serious work was carried out in Azerbaijan to create a theater for children and youth in 1922-27.

The SDT group provided special services in this process. The drama circle of the pioneer organization, established under the “Caspian Sailors Club”, also distinguished for its work in the purposeful process. Staging the play “Fırtına” (“The storm”), adapted by the head of the Pioneer organization Latif Karimov and directed by young amateur actor Agadadash Gurbanov, was an interesting event for the children. The play was presented to the spectators on the stage of the Theater of Criticism and Propaganda on March 15, 1927. *“This was the first and most responsible play of the drama circle. The participants of the congress (VIII Congress of the Azerbaijani Komsomol – U.M.) adopted a decision unanimously on the organization of a children’s theater in Baku after the successful presentation of the play”*¹¹. The Russian branch of the Baku Children’s Theater was established by the decision of the Council of People’s Commissars of Azerbaijan on October 15, 1928, a year and a half after the play. The curtains of the Russian branch opened for the first time on November 6, 1928 with the play “Beşlər” (“The Five”) by A. Tuganov.

The Azerbaijani branch of the Baku Children’s Theater (BCT) was established in 1929. 15 of the schoolchildren who participated in the play “Fırtına” (“The storm”) passed the competition and became part of the group. The first work of the Azerbaijani branch of the BCT on the professional stage was the play “Qırmızı qalstuk əleyhinə” (“Against the red tie”) (January 30, 1930) staged by G.Cornelli. The Azerbaijani branch of the BCT had difficulty organizing its repertoire due to the lack of national dramaturgy in the early years and was forced to give preference to translated works.

The renaming of the Baku Children’s Theater on June 18, 1936 and the *“naming of the theater after the great proletarian writer Maxim Gorky at the request and initiative of the group”*¹² meant actually a direct presentation of the ideological direction in the group’s work. In 1937, the appointment of A.Tuganov as the theater’s chief director and A.Shaig as the head of the pedagogical department strengthened the

¹¹ Əliyeva, Ə.Ə. M.Qorki adına Azərbaycan Dövlət Gənc Tamaşaçılar Teatrı (1927-1935-ci illər) / Ə.Ə.Əliyeva. - Bakı: Azərbaycan Teatr Cəmiyyəti, - 1961. – 63 s., s. 4

¹² Əliyeva, Ə.Ə. M.Qorki adına Azərbaycan Dövlət Gənc Tamaşaçılar Teatrı (1927-1935-ci illər)/Ə.Ə.Əliyeva. - Bakı: Azərbaycan Teatr Cəmiyyəti, - 1961. – 63 s., s. 16

theater's creative search, its connection with schools and its pedagogical function further. *"Thanks to Abdulla Shaig's active attitude to events, his connection with playwrights and his assistance to the theater's young creative group, the repertoire of this theater was enriched with ... interesting works"*¹³.

Besides increasing schoolchildren's interest in theater, the TYS also implemented a number of interesting organizational reforms during its formation, one of which was the division of the spectators into age group. An important innovation was the consideration of children's age in the selection of repertoire, which made the issue of writing new plays relevant. The contradictions that attracted attention in the theatrical process and the increase in ideological pressure made the situation of the children's theater difficult in those years. However, despite all the difficulties, TYS tried to expand its work constantly. One of the interesting innovations in the work of the group was the feedback boxes in the lobby to increase children's love and interest in the theater. The group knew the ideas and opinions of spectators about the theme and idea of the plays they performed through these feedback boxes.

So, the creative searches of the theater were based on serving the ideological principles of the state during its formation until 1941, and this manifested in the organization of the repertoire, the theme sphere of the works, the ideological and artistic staging of the plays, the upbringing of children and adolescents in the spirit of communist morality, etc.

It is stated in the second paragraph **"The repertoire problem of the theater against the ideological requirements of the time"** that although the history of the national children's theater began with fairy tale-play, the group had to give preference to translated works due to the lack of works of national dramaturgy in the early years and it tried to form and assert itself with the help of such works. As mentioned above, the first play of the Azerbaijani branch was the play *"Qırmızı qalstuk əleyhinə"* ("Against the red tie") (30.01.1930), translated from Russian.

¹³ Əsədli, M.R. Abdulla Şaiq və teatr: 1910-1958 / M.R.Əsədli. – Bakı: Nurlan, - 2003. - 154 s., s. 62

Trying to overcome the repertoire problem, director G. Cornelli began to write plays for the theater, although he did not know the Azerbaijani language well. Despite the shortcomings, his play “Pambıq verək” (“Let’s give cotton”) (10.09.1931) was remembered for its relevance for its time and skillful performance of actors. This play was followed by new, but also thematically similar stage plays, such as “Pambıq dostları” (“Cotton friends”), “Pambıq yanır” (“Cotton Burns”), “5 illiyi 2 il yarıma” (“5 years in 2 years and a half”) were staged.

The play “Küçələrdə” (“On the Streets”) (J.Jafarov and M.Shamil) (15.10.1933), staged by G.Cornelli, was one of the first national original works staged by the theater and the beginning of its successes in searching for a repertoire. *“This play, which promoted true friendship and comradeship among children, encouraged them to be educated and cultured and fostered hatred for the parasites who despised public property, presented the hard and unbearable life of street children with natural and realistic scenes”*¹⁴. Although the play, theme of which was topical and idea was interesting, was short in length, but it aroused interest because of the seriousness of the problem it raised.

As you can see, the very names of the plays showed their theme sphere and how seriously the theater adhered to the ideological doctrine of the time.

Following the play “Nərgiz” (“Nargiz”), the repertoire included interesting original plays such as “Ayaz” (M.M.Seyidzadeh), “Xasay” (“Khasay”) (A. Shaig), “Qızıl quş” (“Golden Bird”) (M.M.Seyidzadeh), “Partizan Məmməd” (“Partisan Mammad”) (S. Rahman and A. Isgandarov), “Arsenal” (G. Musayev), “Babək” (“Babek”) (A. Yusioy), “Azad” (A. Abbasov), “Ramiz” (A. Yusioy), “Seyran” (A. Atayev and A. Ahmadov), “Eloğlu” (“Eloğlu”) (A. Shaig), the theme sphere, ideas, genre and stylistic peculiarities of which also corresponded to the creative style of the theater and the requirements of the time.

¹⁴ Kərimov, İ.S. Sovet Azərbaycanının Gənclər Teatrı / İ.S.Kərimov – Bakı: ASSR EA-nın nəşri, - 1968. – 173 s., s. 33

The theater sometimes allowed ideological deviations. For example, the theme and idea of the play “Azad” by A. Abbasov (25.12.1940) did not actually correspond to the principle: “everything is beautiful” that became the norm for literary and artistic creativity of that time. Although the theme of the play was relevant, its idea did not correspond to the dictates of the time. Of course, the critics of the time did not like the idea of the play, which was directed by K. Hasanov.

However, the theater’s repertoire was based on plays that promoted lofty feelings such as patriotism, heroism, tolerance, honor and courage. The staging of such plays on the eve of the war increased the children’s fortitude and tolerance against the hardships of war.

The theater staged 75 children’s plays in 1930s-1940s, of which 32 were translations, 34 were national and 9 were works of classical drama.

When it comes to the repertoire of the theater during its formation, it is necessary to take into account the time factor first of all. Children’s theater, which is an integral part of Azerbaijani theater, was experiencing the problems of the people and society as a living organism and tried to embody these problems on stage from the very first day of its establishment.

Chapter II of the dissertation, entitled **“Stage interpretation of national dramaturgy works”**, is investigated in two paragraphs. The first paragraph of Chapter II is called **“Children’s performances with myth-fairy tale motifs – as carriers of national memory”**. It is stated in this paragraph that fairy-tale plays at the Theater of Young Spectators have always aroused the interest of the spectators, especially small children. Because fairy tale plays play an important role in the worldview of children, in their national and spiritual upbringing. Children see characters familiar to them from fairy tales and they understand the play more quickly and clearly in such plays. This makes them even happier and increases their interest in the theater. Children witness the struggle between good and evil in the real life in the example of symbolic characters in fairy tale plays and believe that good will win in the end no matter

what. Professor I.Karimov stated rightly that *“Fairy tale plays staged at the Youth Theater play an important role in shaping the worldview of the spectators, especially small children and in their artistic and aesthetic upbringing. The main repertoire for small children is fairy tales. The fairy tale forms an initial idea of good and evil forces in children, familiarizes them with the past, culture, customs and traditions of the nation, and their social struggle. Fairy tales are classics for children”*¹⁵.

It is no coincidence that the first work of national children’s dramaturgy, founded in 1910 in Azerbaijan, and the first children’s play was the play “Gözəl Bahar” (“Beautiful Spring”) written in the fairy tale genre by A.Shaig. Gozel Bahar, a symbolic character in the play, was presented as a symbol of the rich Novruz – national awakening, revival, the sun warming and awakening the earth.

The reason why local playwrights turned to the fairy tale genre in the years after the establishment of Soviet power was the desire to express their views on existing problems in symbolic language. The main purpose of the fairy tales and plays written by A.Shaig, M.M.Seyidzadeh, A.Demirchizadeh, A.Abbasov, A.Yusifov, Kh.Alibayli, I.Joshgun and other playwrights was to serve human and national values. The staging of such plays with myth-fairy tale motifs, as carriers of national memory, increased interest in national culture, literature and history in the worldview of the younger generation and activated the process of deeper understanding of mental values.

The interesting ideas and heroic pathos in the fairy-tale plays “Nərgiz” (“Nargiz”), “Ayaz”, “Qızıl quş” (“Golden bird”), “Eloğlu” (“Eloğlu”), “Qaraca Çoban” (“The black shepherd”), “Fitnə” (“Fitna”), “Qaraca qız” (“The black girl”) and other fairy-tale plays staged in 1935-50 were interesting in terms of the romantic presentation of national-mental and cultural-spiritual values, historical-ethnic issues. The high ideas in the plays played a great role in transmitting the qualities of the characters, such as fighting

¹⁵ Kərimov, İ.S. Sovet Azərbaycanının Gənclər Teatrı / İ.S.Kərimov. - Bakı: ASSR EA, -1968. - 173 s., s. 101

spirit, patriotism, truthfulness, courage, and fearlessness to the memory of the youth.

It is impossible not to notice the ideological difference between the fairy tale plays written after 1950 and those written in the previous years. The relative reduction of ideological pressure allowed directors to act more freely from this period onwards, which was clearly reflected in the idea of the performances. As a result, besides pure fairy tale plays such as “Məlik Məmməd” (“Melik Mammad”), “Aqil və Sərvinaz” (“Agil ve Sarvinaz”), “Ana laylası” (“Mother lullaby”), etc., plays with political messages, sometimes directly and sometimes with subtext, such as “Bir saatlıq xəlifəlik” (“One hour caliphate”), “Tülkü məhkəməyə gedir” (“The fox goes to court”), “Yanmış planetin sərvətləri” (“The treasures of the burnt planet”), “Nəsrəddin” (“Nasreddin”) were also included in the repertoire in those years.

The interest shown by children in the new fairy-tale plays included in the theater’s repertoire in the 1970s-80s showed that this interesting genre has always occupied a special place in the development of the artistic and aesthetic taste and intellectual level of children and young spectators. Fairy tale and myth plays such as “Gün aydın, əlahəzrət” (“Good morning, your majesty”), “Tülkü məhkəməyə gedir” (“The fox goes to court”), “Söhrab və Rüstəm” (“Sohrab and Rustam”), “Aycan” (“Ayjan”), “Zəncirlənmiş Prometey” (“Chained Prometheus”), “Sirli dəyirman” (“Mysterious mill”) were staged in original production and delighted middle-aged and older children.

The serious influence of time can be clearly seen in the themes and ideas of fairy tale plays staged for children in the 1980s-1990s. Staging ideologically interesting plays such as “Qar qız” (“Snow Maiden”), “Çal-oyna” (“Play and dance”), “Bir parça Vətən” (“A piece of Homeland”), “Ağ div, qara div” (“White giant, black giant”), “Cücələrim” (“My Chickens”) attract attention among the fairy-tale plays in the repertoire of these years. Values such as homeland, nation, honor, mercy and loyalty, which were the idea of the mentioned plays, conveyed to young viewers what is wrong and right in the real life they live.

Besides human characters, we see animal and allegorical characters in myth-fairy tale-themed plays. A. Shaig showed the ways of the struggle for freedom in the example of the Sun, Wind, Storm, Swallow, Blizzard and other allegorical characters he created in the play “Gözəl Bahar” (“Beautiful spring”). The authors expressed their attitude to the real problems of the time through symbolic characters in the plays “Tülki məhkəməyə gedir” (“The fox goes to court”), “Xoruz” (“The rooster”), “Dovşanın ad günü” (“The rabbit’s birthday”), “Sehirli xalça” (“Magic carpet”), “Qar qız” (“Snow maiden”), “Cücələrim” (“My Chickens”), “Açıl, bənövşəm, açıl!” (“Open, my violet, open!”) and others, which enriched the repertoire of the TYS.

So, the authors, who summarized and presented the real political and social problems of the world on the example of human, animal, bird, plant, flower and other allegorical characters, tried to instill the habits of judgment and high ideals in the young generation through the epic power of the fairy tale.

The second paragraph of Chapter II is called **“Staging, theme, idea and genre features of original children’s plays”**. The TYS served to educate children and adolescents in the communist spirit, which was the main ideological direction of the state, from the very beginning of its work. The cultural development of the Azerbaijani people was constantly under control during this period. The artistic councils created in theaters approached the theme-idea and genre-style characteristics of plays very seriously during the Soviet era. In this sense, children’s theater was no exception.

TYS, like other theaters, was experiencing a period of repertoire searches after World War II. *“The repertoire of the Youth Theater can be divided into three parts according to the theme: classical works, modern works and fairy-tale-fantasy”*¹⁶ in these years.

Writers such as M.S. Ordubadi, S. Rustam, S. Rahman, M. Jalal, M. Huseyn and M. Ibrahimov established a creative connection with

¹⁶ Kazım, Z. Gənc Tamaşaçılar Teatrının xüsusiyyətləri və tələbləri. // “Ədəbiyyat” qəzeti. - 1946, 31 yanvar

children's theater in the 1940s-1950s, which helped enrich the theater's repertoire with original plays with topical problems that served national and spiritual interests. The variety of genres, styles and themes of the staged plays helped the theatre to overcome the repertoire crisis.

The inclusion of original plays such as "Arsenal", "Seyran", "Babək" ("Babek"), "Ramiz", "Odlar içində" ("In the fire"), "Eloğlu" ("Eloğlu"), "Azad", "Çətin dərə" ("Difficult valley"), "Vətən" ("Homeland"), "Tərən" ("Tarlan"), "Ana" ("Mother"), "Qaraca qız" ("The black girl"), "Fitnə" ("Fitna"), "Dədə Qorqud və Qaraca Çoban" ("Dede Gorgud and the black shepherd"), "Sevinc" ("Sevinj"), "Bahar nəğməsi" ("Spring Song"), "Qayğı" ("Care"), "Səadət uğrunda" ("For the sake of happiness"), "Yeniyyətmlər" ("Teenagers"), "İbrət" ("Lesson"), "Dərsdən sonra" ("After the lesson") in the repertoire strengthened the creative atmosphere of the theater in those years.

The 1950s-1970s are a special stage in the creative life of the TYS. The theater demonstrated a more independent position in terms of ideological and stylistic issues in the performances staged in these years than in previous years. The original ideas in interesting stage works such as "Tülkü məhkəməyə gedir" ("The Fox Goes to Court"), "Komsomol poeması" ("Komsomol Poem"), "Bizim ev, bizim məktəb" ("Our home, our school"), "Qonşular" ("Neighbors"), "Etibar" ("Trust"), "Əlvida Hindistan" ("Farewell India"), "Ürək yanarsa" ("If the heart burns"), "Dan ulduzu" ("Dawn star"), "Rübailər aləmində" ("In the world of rubais"), "Dağ seli" ("Mountain flood"), "Zəng səsləri" ("The sounds of the bell") have played a great role in shaping the modern youth's outlook on life.

The plays of classical works such as "Dilin bəlası" ("The disaster of the tongue"), which were among the original plays – "Şimal küləyi" ("North wind"), "Sənin yaşıdların" ("Your peers"), "Aydınlığa doğru" ("Towards enlightenment"), "Keçən ilin son gecəsi" ("Last night of the last year"), "Söhrab və Rüstəm" ("Sohrab and Rustam"), "Əlvida Hindistan" ("Farewell India"), "Yolda" ("On the road"), "Mənim nəğməkar bibim" ("My songster aunt"), "Unutmayın" ("Don't forget"), "Həyatın astanasında" ("On the

threshold of life”), “Yadımdamı” (“Do you remember”), “Sınaq pillələri” (“Trial steps”), “Dan ulduzu” (“Dawn star”), “Komsomol poeması” (“Komsomol poem”), “Ana laylası” (“Mother’s lullaby”), “Məhəbbət novellası” (“Love novel”), “Bir sahilin adamları” (“People of a shore”), “Şəhərli oğlan” (“City boy”), “Sağlıq olsun...” (“We’ll see...”), “Sənin dostun, düşmənin” (“Your friend, your enemy”), “Qızaran üfüqlər” (“Red horizons”), etc. staged in the 1970s-1980s, played a special role in the development of the moral upbringing of the younger generation.

The processes taking place on the national ground in the 1980s-90s also influenced on literary and artistic work. The falsity and one-sidedness of the state’s ideological propaganda were already obvious. The history, literature and culture of the Azerbaijani people were subjected to unjust violence at the end as in the beginning of the 20th century. The repetition of political and ideological processes confirmed once again that the Soviet government had done more harm than good to the national interests and culture of the people during the seventy years. The treacherous propaganda campaigns and other bloody events committed by the Armenians to occupy new lands were reflected in the TYS collective’s work.

The repair works in the theater during 1983-90 could not reduce the scale of the ideological struggle against the trampling of the nation’s rights in the collective’s work. Despite experienced difficulties, the collective expressed its ideological attitude to the political-social and socio-economic problems of the time, by staging a number of original plays. The plays staging during these years, such as “Sənin dostun, düşmənin” (“Your friend, your enemies”), “Qızaran üfüqlər” (“Red horizons”), “Azad çoban” (“Free shepherd”), “Sən nə üçün yaşayırsan?” (“Why do you live?”), “Gəl qohum olaq” (“Let’s be relatives”), “Qar qız” (“Snow maiden”), “Danabaş kəndinin məktəbi” (“School of the Danabash village”), “Fudziyama dağında qonaqlıq” (“A party on mount Fujiyama”), “Qonşu qonşu olsa, kor qız ərə gedər” (“If neighbors are good, a blind girl marries”), “Sabah çoxdan başlanıb” (“Tomorrow has begun long ago”), “Pillələr” (“Stairs”), “Yuxulama” (“Don’t sleep”),

“Ərizə” (“Application”), “Ruhlar qapını döyür” (“Spirits are knocking on the door”), “Yazığam, sevmə məni” (“I’m poor, don’t love me”), expressed their attitude to the contradictions of the time. These plays no longer glorified Soviet ideology, but promoted the principles of socio-political activism in national-historical issues and solidarity in ideological-moral issues.

The Chapter III of the dissertation, entitled **“Artistic-aesthetic principles of plays based on translated works”**, consists of two paragraphs. The first paragraph of this chapter is called **“Issues of ideological-artistic staging of translated works”**.

Baku Children’s Theater, which began operating in Russian and Azerbaijani branches in 1928-29, based its repertoire on translated works in the early days of its existence. Although the repertoire of national dramaturgy increased over time, interest in translated works did not decrease.

There was a certain simplicity in the staging of the translated works “Qırmızı qalstuk əleyhinə” (“Against the red tie”), “Vur-qur” (“Shoot-build”), “Bazar davası” (“Market fight”), “Pambıq verək” (“Let’s give cotton”), “Bu çoxdan olmuşdur” (“This has been a long time”), “Beş illiyi iki il yarıma” (“Five years in two and a half years”), “Təkbaşına gəzən pişik” (“A cat walking alone”), “Daşqın” (“The flood”), “Uzaq yollarda” (“On long roads”), “Seryoja Streltsov” (“Seryozha Streltsov”), “Balda” (“In honey”), “Hazır ol!” (“Get ready!”), “Zorən təbib” (“Willy-nilly doctor”), “Müfəttiş” (“Inspector”), “Qığılıcımda” (“In the spark”) and other works in the early years of the creation and formation of the children’s theater. At the same time, although there were similarities in design and music, the plays staged by some directors were distinguished by their uniqueness.

Plays such as “Polad necə bərkidi?” (“How the steel was tempered?”), “Onun dostları” (“His friends”), “Volodya Dubinin”, “Sənin deyil, mənim deyil, bizimdir” (“Not yours, not mine, but ours”), “Şehirli güvəc” (“The magic pot”), “Mayın əvvəllərində” (“Early May”), “Xüsusi tapşırıq” (“Special assignment”), “Ağbəniz” (“White-faced”), “Tom dayının koması” (“Uncle Tom’s shack”) staged in the Russian branch of the theater were translated and

staged in the Azerbaijani branch.

Qualities such as building a new society, friendship, loyalty and struggle were promoted in the translated works staged in the 1950s-1960s. These ideas were also reflected in plays such as “Əbədi gecənin sirrləri” (“Secrets of the eternal night”), “Turp” (“Turnip”), “Pavlik Morozov”, “Qoğal evi” (“Flat cake house”), “Meşə gölü sahilində” (“On the shore of the forest lake”), “Ərköyün oğlan” (“The naughty boy”), “İki veronalı” (“Two from Verona”) and “Qavroş” (“Gavroche”). The successful staging of the abovementioned plays show that the theater’s collective treated translated works as seriously as original works. The majority of these plays were adapted to the national-spiritual values and ethical-aesthetic worldview of the Azerbaijani people.

The TYS’s repertoire paid special attention to the inclusion of classical works in the 1960s. This attention to foreign classics was also obvious in the appeal to highly ideological works such as “Romeo and Juliet”, which served to increase the ideological and aesthetic richness of young people. In parallel, the theater’s repertoire also included translated works such as “Əxlaqa görə sıfır” (“Zero for morality”), “Azadlıq adası” (“Island of freedom”), “İnqilab naminə” (“For the name of the revolution”), “Qavroş” (“Gavroche”), “Oğlum Volodya” (“My son Volodya”), all of which were remembered as interesting plays of the theater.

Several successful plays based on foreign drama were staged at the TYS in the 1970s-1980s. Children were invited to patriotism, friendship and peace in such plays as “Sükut divarı” (“The wall of silence”), “İki qayın ağacı” (“Two maple trees”), “Pin və Qvin” (“Pin and Gwin”), “Yelkənlər üzərində nəğməli külək” (“The singing wind on the sails”), “Dörd əkiz haqqında nağıl” (“The fairy tale of the four twins”), “Bumbaraj” (“Bumbarage”).

The reason for the relative decrease in the number of translated works in the Azerbaijani branch in the mentioned years was the expression of the increase in works of national children’s drama. The collective no longer experienced the repertoire problem as in the previous times. Local playwrights wrote plays on various themes, genres and ideas and presented them to the theater.

The foreign plays such as “Buratinonun səfehlər ölkəsində macəraları” (“Buratino’s adventures in the land of fools”), “Öz adamımızdır, dil taparıq” (“He is are our man, we will find a language”), “Öz kefinə gəzən pişik” (“The cat wandering at its own pleasure”), “Tap, tapış...” (“To charge”), “Yelkənlər üzərində nəğməli külək” (“The singing wind on the sails”) that were staged at the theater in the 1980s-1990s were memorable plays in terms of their production plans and acting. The abovementioned plays provided an opportunity for children and adolescents to become closely acquainted with the interesting artistic pearls of world literature.

Paragraph II of Chapter III is called **“The problem of adaptation of foreign plays to the national stage”**. As mentioned in the paragraph, the theater, which always approached seriously to translated works, as well as to the translation of children’s plays based on world myths and fairy tales, tried to increase the richness of children’s thinking and familiarize them with the national cultures of different peoples by preserving the completeness of the idea and artistic-aesthetic merits of these artistic materials. The theater always paid special attention to the issue of adapting foreign dramaturgy works to our national stage. The directors tried to solve the features of the characters of the works translated into the Azerbaijani, their worldview and attitude to social and moral problems in the context of our national and moral values. Although the theater’s service to the principles of socialist realism made directors’ work more difficult, it could not extinguish the national spirit in their work: *“... although it is difficult to avoid the propaganda function of socialist realism, which aggravates inevitably and petrifies the style of artists, there were not a few directors who emphasized the renewal of the structure in their work, and were subjected to repressions and expelled from the country in the last years of the Soviet Union at that stage”*¹⁷.

Azerbaijani theater gained great experience in the process of

¹⁷ Dadaşov, A.Ə. Rejissorluğun üslub problemləri / A.Ə.Dadaşov.– Bakı: Elm və Təhsil, - 2010. – 240 s., s. 238

searching for new forms and styles by turning to translated works at the beginning of the 20th century. This experience was used in the Azerbaijani branch of the TYS and successes were achieved at the initial stage in the process of searching for forms-styles. It can be said that the repertoire was mainly built on translated works in previous years. Translations such as “Qırmızı qalstuk əleyhinə” (“Against the red tie”), “Vur-qur” (“Shoot-build”), “Uzaq yaylaqda” (“On the far pasture”), “Pambıq dostları” (“Cotton friends”), “Qaralar və ağlar” (“Blacks and whites”), “Təkbaşına gəzən pişik” (“A cat walking alone”), “Əfilər” (“Venomous”), “Bazar davası” (“Market fight”), “Ağ vadi” (“White valley”) provided the repertoire problem of the theater partially in the early years.

The plays “Pavlik Morozov”, “İki Veronalı” (“Two from Verona”), “Qavroş” (“Gavroche”), “İnqilab naminə” (“For the sake of the revolution”), “Romeo and Juliet”, “Ovod”, “Bumbaraj” (“Bumbarage”) were met with great interest and sympathy by young spectators among the translated works staged for the older age group on the stage of the TYS in the 1960s-1970s. In general, staging such difficult works for teenagers required courage in itself. Of course, staging the complex themes of the plays in front of young people, artistically telling them that love and affection are above all desires against the background of the events in the play and making teenagers understand the duty to protect love was a difficult and interesting task.

The translated works produced on the stage of the Theater in the 1970s-90s were completely different in meaning and ideology from the foreign works staged in the early years of the theater. While the translated works staged during the formation period served unambiguously to propagate Soviet ideology, special attention was paid to sensitively revealing the characters’ personalities in the plays staged in the 1970s-90s and adapting them to the national stage.

As a result, despite the difficulties the Theater of Young Spectators faced on its creative path for nearly 60-year (1929-1991), it generally had a rich and diverse repertoire. Besides staging valuable works of our national children’s drama, the theater’s staff also turned to world drama and staged regularly plays of selected

works of Russian and world playwrights, rendered invaluable services in the development of the national theater, in the spiritual improvement of the younger generation and in the formation of their worldview.

The main points are summarized in **the Conclusion** section of the dissertation and the following conclusions are drawn:

- The first works of children's drama in Azerbaijan were the fairy tale play "Gözəl Bahar" ("Beautiful Spring") (1910), created before the revolution, based on the works by A. Shaig;

- Despite the fact that the main purpose of the creation of the Russian branch of the Baku Children's Theater in 1928 and the Azerbaijani branch in 1929 was ideological, the work of the art center also played a great role in the development of the national theater and the artistic-aesthetic and moral upbringing of the younger generation;

- Although the first children's play ("Gözəl Bahar" ("Beautiful Spring"), 07.04.1922) in Azerbaijan was staged based on the work of national dramaturgy, the Azerbaijani branch of the Children's Theater opened its curtains with a translated work ("Qırmızı qalstuk əleyhinə" ("Against the red tie"), 30.01.1930), and the basis of its repertoire was translated works during its formation period;

- The government paid special attention to the staging plays about the lives of pioneers and Komsomol members, who were the future of the communist state, and the plays served to educate the new generation in the spirit of communist morality since the establishment of the Children's Theater;

- The renaming of the theater in 1936 and its naming after the proletarian writer Maxim Gorky determined the direction of the collective's political and ideological work;

- The main reason for appealing to the fairy tale genre in national children's drama during the formation period was the desire of playwrights to convey their ideas about real problems to children through the language of various symbolic characters;

- The appointment of Abdulla Shaig as head of pedagogical affairs and Aleksandr Tuganov as the chief director at the theater in 1937 created a major turning point in the work of the collective and

the strengthening the theater's ties with local playwrights expanded the theme sphere of the plays and enriched its repertoire;

- Original children's plays began to be staged at the TYS in the 1935-40s and these plays enriched the repertoire, created conditions for the development of the artistic qualities of directors and actors and developed the creative environment in the theater;

- A special period began in the creative life of the TYS starting in 1950, the theater took advantage of the little freedom gained in a political-ideological sense and managed to go beyond the strict requirements of the time by adding fairy-tale plays and original translated works to its repertoire.

- Children became eyewitnesses of the material and spiritual integrity of the world on the works of foreign plays staged on the stage of the Children's theater and understood that people have the same cognitive-emotional feelings, desires and aspirations, regardless of their national, racial and class stratification;

- Special attention was paid to selecting and staging original plays to participate more closely in the national-ideological struggle for freedom and independence, and the theater contributed to our people's independence in the 1980s-1990s.

**The main content of the dissertation is reflected in the
following scientific works:**

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2. Müstəqillik dövründə Azərbaycan teatrının inkişaf istiqamətləri // - Bakı: AMEA Memarlıq və İncəsənət İnstitutu. İncəsənət və mədəniyyət problemləri, - 2016. № 4 (58), - s.117-121.
3. Bakı uşaq teatrında 1930-1935-ci illərdə hazırlanan tamaşaların mövzu, janr və üslub xüsusiyyətləri // - Bakı: ADMİU. Mədəniyyət dünyası, elmi-nəzəri məcmuə, // - 2016. XXXII buraxılış, - s. 39-46.
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6. Uşaq nağıl-tamaşalarında insan, heyvan və alleqorik personajlar – mifdən reallığa doğru // - Bakı: ADMİU. Elmi əsərlər, // - 2018. № 25, - s. 59-65.
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10. The role of translated works in the repertory policy of the Azerbaijan State Theatre of Young Spectators (1930-1970s) // Czech Republic, Ostrava: Klironomy Journal, // - 2023. – s.31-39.
11. The time factor in the creativity of the Theater directors of Young and Audiences // Bakı: AMEA İncəsənət və Mədəniyyət problemləri, - 2023. №2, - s. 98-105.

12. Gənc nəslin mənəvi-estetik tərbiyyəsində milli nağıl – tamaşaların rolu // Almaty Kazakhstan; Endless light in Science, - 2023. ISSN 2709-1201, - s.101-104.
13. The role o translated works in the repertory policy of the Azerbaijan State Theatre of Young Spectators (1930-1970s) // Ostrava: Tuculart Edition, European Institute for Innovation Development; Culture and Arts in the Context of World Cultural Heritage. Klironomy, - 2023. 2 (8), - s.31-39.



The defense will be held on 25 april 2025 at _____ at the meeting of the Dissertation council FD 2.35 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts.

Address: Baku, AZ 1065, Inshaatchilar ave., 39.

Dissertation is accessible at the Library and Information Center of the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts.

Electronic version of the abstract is available on the official website of the the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts.

The abstract was sent to the necessary addresses on 18 march 2025.

Signed for print: 11.03.2025

Paper format: A5

Volume: 44.500

Number of hard copies: 20