İvan PAVLİİ[1]
Filologiya üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru
ABŞ-ın Dallas Beynəlxalq Universitetinin doktoru,
E-mail: pavliyler@gmail.com
https://doi.org/10.59849/2309-7949.2026.2.70

WHERE TWO RIVERS MEET: NURIYYA AND MAMZELLE AS LITERARY KINDRED SPIRITS

XÜLASƏ
İKİ ÇAYIN QOVUŞDUĞU YER: NURİYYƏ VƏ MAMZEL ƏDƏBİ "QOHUM RUHLAR" KİMİ

Bu məqalədə İlyas Əfəndiyevin *Söyüdlü arx* (1958) və Qabriyel Ruanın *Ces enfants de ma vie* (1977) romanları müqayisəli şəkildə təhlil olunur və əsərlərin birinci şəxsli qadın təhkiyəçiləri – Nuriyyə ilə Mamzel arasındakı diqqətəlayiq paralellər araşdırılır. Hər iki müəllif fərqli mədəniyyətlərə, dillərə və ədəbi ənənələrə mənsub olsa da və bu əsərlər arasında hər hansı birbaşa təsir əlaqəsi müəyyən edilməsə də, onlar davamlı emosional bağlılıq və etik immersiya ilə səciyyələnən heyrətamiz dərəcədə oxşar oxu təcrübəsi yaradırlar.

Bu fenomen oxucuların bədii dünyalara koqnitiv və emosional şəkildə daxil olmasını ifadə edən narrativ daşınma ***(narrative transportation)*** anlayışı əsasında nəzərdən keçirilir (Green and Brock 313). Hər iki roman birinci şəxsin məhrəm təhkiyəsi və kənd icmalarına gələn gənc qadın obrazları vasitəsilə güclü narrativ daşınma effekti yaradır; bu mühitdə baş qəhrəmanlar mənəvi formalaşma, emosional özünüidarə və özünüdərk proseslərindən keçirlər.

Mətnlərin dərin təhlili nəticəsində baş qəhrəmanların etik qavrayışında müşahidə olunan ortaq xüsusiyyətlər müəyyən edilir. Bunlara cəmiyyət tərəfindən kənarlaşdırılmış insanlarda gizli xeyirxahlığı görmək bacarığı, münaqişələr qarşısında cəsarətli mövqe nümayiş etdirmək, şəxsi istəkləri mənəvi məsuliyyət naminə qurban vermək, ənənəvi folklorun mənəvi-əxlaqi və emosional gücünü dəyərləndirmək, təbiətlə simvolik münasibət qurmaq və kənd icmalarına dərin emosional bağlılıq daxildir. Tədqiqatda iddia olunur ki, Nuriyyə və Mamzel oxşar mənəvi təxəyyül formaları

[1]**İvan Pavlii haqqında qısa məlumat.** Dr. İvan Pavlii müqayisəli ədəbiyyat, mədəniyyətlərarası ədəbi əlaqələr və ədəbiyyatın etik-estetik aspektləri sahəsində tədqiqat aparan alim və müəllimdir. Onun elmi maraq dairəsinə Azərbaycan, ərəb və Avropa ədəbiyyatları arasındakı ədəbi əlaqələr, xristian ədəbi düşüncəsi, narrativ strukturlar və bədii mətnlərdə mənəvi dəyərlərin təqdimatı daxildir. O, filologiya və ədəbiyyatşünaslıq sahəsində elmi fəaliyyət göstərir və müxtəlif ədəbi ənənələri müqayisəli yanaşma əsasında araşdırır. Tədqiqatlarında xüsusilə mədəniyyətlərarası dialoq, ədəbi obrazların etik funksiyası, eləcə də bədii əsərlərin oxucu təcrübəsinə təsiri məsələlərinə diqqət yetirir. Pavlii Bakı Slavyan Universitetində dünya ədəbiyyatı ixtisası üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru (PhD) elmi dərəcəsi almışdır. Hazırda Kanadada yaşayır və ABŞ-ın Dallas Beynəlxalq Universitetində fəaliyyət göstərir. O, 2014-cü ildən Azərbaycan Müqayisəli Ədəbiyyat Assosiasiyasının, 2025-ci ildən isə Kanada Müqayisəli Ədəbiyyat Assosiasiyasının üzvüdür. Azərbaycan və türk dilləri ilə yanaşı, fransız, ərəb və qədim ibrani dillərini bilən Pavlii müxtəlif dillərdə bədii və elmi əsərlər yazır. Azərbaycan dilində qələmə aldığı "Zaxariyanın sevdiyi şeir" əsərində Molla Pənah Vaqifin "Görmədim" müxəmməsini dinlərarası və mədəniyyətlərarası baxış çərçivəsində bədii süjetə daxil etmişdir. O həmçinin Yunus Əmrədən seçilmiş parçaları ingilis, ukrayna və rus dillərinə poetik üslubda tərcümə etmişdir. Müasir ərəb nəsrinin dinlərarası və müqayisəli təhlili ilə bağlı araşdırmalarını beynəlxalq elmi konfranslarda təqdim etmiş və məqalələrdə dərc etdirmişdir. 2024-cü ildə elmi tədqiqat jurnalında ingilis dilində "İvan Bahryaniyin 'Sad Hetsimanski' ('Getsamani bağı') romanında və Azərbaycan ədəbiyyatında Stalin repressiyaları: həqiqət və uydurma" adlı məqaləsi çap olunmuşdur. Əsas tədqiqat istiqamətləri: müqayisəli ədəbiyyat; Azərbaycan və dünya ədəbiyyatları arasında ədəbi əlaqələr; ədəbiyyat və mənəviyyat; narrativ tədqiqatlar; mədəniyyətlərarası dialoq.

və oxucu immersiyası yaradan struktur baxımından yaxın narrativ strategiyalar sayəsində, tarixi təsirdən deyil, paralel bədii quruluşdan doğan ədəbi qohum ruhlar kimi çıxış edirlər.

Gördüyünüz kimi, "ənənəvi folklorun mənəvi-əxlaqi və emosional gücün"dən bəhs olunur və açar sözlərin içində "musiqi folkloru" yer alır.

Açar sözlər: müqayisəli ədəbiyyatşünaslıq, musiqi folkloru, narrativ daşınma, mənəvi təxəyyül, birinci şəxsli təhkiyə, kənd icmaları, qadın qəhrəmanlar, mədəniyyətlərarası müqayisəli təhlil

Introduction. After reading a literary work, we often experience a feeling similar to returning home after a journey. A novel leaves behind not only impressions but also a sense of having lived among its characters, shared their experiences, and briefly inhabited another world. This lingering effect resembles what media and literary studies describe as narrative transportation—the process through which readers become mentally and emotionally immersed in a fictional narrative world.

As Green and Brock explain in their study of media enjoyment, narrative transportation refers to the experience of being "emotionally involved in the narrative" (313), in which readers become deeply absorbed in the events, characters, and emotional dynamics of a story, often with measurable effects on attention, emotion, and belief formation. In this sense, reading is not merely the decoding of textual meaning but a form of experiential engagement in which the boundaries between lived experience and fictional world become temporarily permeable.

Against this theoretical background, it is striking that a comparable sense of immersion can arise from two novels that share no historical, linguistic, or cultural connection. I experienced such a response while reading *Söyüdlü arx* (*Willow Ditch*) by Azerbaijani writer Ilyas Afandiyev (1914–1996) and *Ces enfants de ma vie* (*Children of My Heart*) by French-Canadian author Gabrielle Roy (1909–1983). The authors belonged to different literary traditions, spoke different languages, and could not have influenced one another's work. Yet both novels produced a remarkably similar reading experience characterized by sustained emotional engagement and a strong sense of narrative transportation.

Although written within distinct cultural contexts, the two works share notable structural and thematic affinities. Both are twentieth-century novels narrated in the first person by young female protagonists who, after completing their education, are sent to remote rural communities to begin their professional lives. In these unfamiliar settings, both Nuriyya and Mamzelle encounter social isolation, moral challenges, and unexpected opportunities for personal growth. The village, in both cases, functions not merely as a geographical backdrop but as a transformative space in which ethical perception, emotional maturity, and human relationships are tested and reshaped.

Afandiyev's heroine is named Nuriyya—a name derived from Arabic meaning "radiant" or "luminous," which already suggests her symbolic function within the narrative. In Gabrielle Roy's novel, the narrator remains unnamed and is referred to simply as Mamzelle ("Miss"), a designation that emphasizes both her social role and her narrative anonymity. Despite this difference, both figures are marked by an inner luminosity expressed through their perceptions, choices, and interactions with others.

Söyüdlü arx, first published in 1958 and set in 1950s Azerbaijan, follows Nuriyya, a recent graduate of the Theatrical Institute in Baku (today the Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts), who is assigned to work in a rural cultural center despite her artistic aspirations. *Ces enfants de ma vie*, published in 1977 and available in Alan Brown's English translation as *Children of My Heart*, is set in 1930s rural Canada and follows Mamzelle as she begins her first teaching position in a prairie village school. Although their professional roles differ, both heroines move along a comparable trajectory: education → rural village → urban or professional center

More importantly, they undergo a parallel moral trajectory characterized by the development of compassion, courage, self-restraint, and a deep sensitivity to the dignity of others. This study argues that Nuriyya and Mamzelle function as literary kindred spirits whose resemblance cannot be explained by direct influence or cultural transmission alone. Rather, their parallel representation suggests that distinct literary traditions – and the folklore embedded within them—may generate comparable forms of ethical imagination and narrative experience.

The following analysis examines this convergence through several interconnected dimensions: the heroines' ability to recognize goodness in socially marginalized individuals, their courageous responses to conflict, their sacrifice of personal emotional desires in favor of ethical responsibility, their symbolic relationship with nature, their appreciation of the ethical and emotional power of traditional music and folklore, their attachment to rural communities, and finally, the realization — sometimes symbolic — of formative dreams at the conclusion of their narratives.

1. Seeing Goodness Where Others See Failure. Both Nuriyya and Mamzelle consistently resist the social logic of collective judgment, which tends to define individuals through reputation rather than lived complexity. In both novels, village communities function as spaces where moral categorization is already established: certain individuals are labeled as morally deficient, socially disruptive, or inherently untrustworthy. Against this background, the heroines' ethical stance is not neutral but counter-cultural, requiring interpretive resistance to dominant social perception.

Nuriyya repeatedly refuses to accept the ready-made narratives circulating in Güney gishlag village about certain individuals. When confronted with negative judgments about Nazkhanim, she does not reinforce or even passively accept them, but instead responds with open inquiry and interpretive hesitation.

Agabeyim tells her, "If I were in your place, I would throw that Nazkhanim out of work." (Afandiyev, 71)[1]

Nuriyya responds, "Why?" Agabeyim explains that Nazkhanim is "a worthless person" whose only occupation is dancing and joking. Nuriyya replies, "So what? She is simply a cheerful woman." (Afandiyev, 72)

A similar mechanism operates in Mamzelle's perception of her student named Médéric. Initially, she is exposed to a constructed image of him shaped by

[1] All translations from Azerbaijani in this article are my own.

repeated warnings and institutional prejudice. This narrative framing becomes so dominant that it begins to shape even her own imagination. Yet the moment of direct encounter destabilizes this mediated image. Although Médéric behaves aggressively in class, Mamzelle does not fully convert this behavior into moral essence. Instead, she suspends judgment, noting the disproportion between external action and perceived inner vulnerability.

"My tongue was itching… but I controlled myself and went back to my lesson as if nothing had happened." (Roy, 113–114)

What is crucial in both cases is that moral perception is reconfigured through direct presence rather than mediated discourse. This shift is closely aligned with narrative transportation itself: just as readers are immersed in a perspective that reshapes judgment, both heroines undergo an internal "re-immersion" into the lived reality of others, which overrides social narration.

Later, both Nuriyya and Mamzelle move beyond passive reinterpretation toward active ethical recognition of hidden talent. Nuriyya's decision to integrate marginalized villagers into meaningful cultural activity reflects an understanding that moral rehabilitation is not exclusion but re-placement within a meaningful structure (Afandiyev, 212). Similarly, Mamzelle's discovery of Médéric's sensitivity and intellectual curiosity reframes him not as a disciplinary problem but as a misaligned form of potential (Roy, 135–136).

Thus, in both novels, moral perception is not a fixed faculty but a dynamic process of narrative re-reading of human character.

2. Fearless Actions. Another defining similarity between Nuriyya and Mamzelle is their ability to act courageously in situations that demand moral strength. Courage in both Nuriyya and Mamzelle is not presented as exceptional heroism but as a sustained ethical orientation toward uncertainty, risk, and social pressure. Their fearlessness is not absence of fear, but a refusal to allow fear to determine moral action.

Nuriyya explicitly articulates her ethical opposition to cowardice, framing fear as a moral deficiency rather than a psychological condition: "I hate cowards. I have never complained about my fate. Cowardice is a misfortune." (Afandiyev, 80) This distinction is important: fear is not simply something to be overcome, but something that can distort ethical judgment if it governs action. Her decision to continue walking toward the village after losing her money exemplifies this principle. The physical act of walking into increasing darkness becomes a narrative embodiment of ethical persistence rather than mere endurance: "I did not know how many kilometers it was from there to Güney gishlag. But gathering all my strength and courage, I continued walking." (Afandiyev, 9)

More significantly, Nuriyya's confrontation with Saadat reveals a complex form of moral courage that does not rely on aggression or defense. Instead, she refuses to mirror hostility, even under direct threat. Her composure destabilizes the expected script of conflict, where fear or retaliation would normally structure response.

Saadat's aggression is driven by jealousy and suspicion. Believing that her husband Murad loves Nuriyya, she regards the younger woman as a rival and

seeks to force her out of the village through intimidation. The scene therefore contrasts two fundamentally different moral responses to fear: Saadat allows fear of losing her husband to become aggression, whereas Nuriyya refuses to let fear determine either her actions or her interpretation of another person.

Saadat tells her: "If you want to live, move out of here. I give you one day. … Now I am ready for anything, do you hear me? Anything!" (Afandiyev, 184–185)

Nuriyya's response is calm: "I believe you, Saadat khanum."

Saadat notices that there is no fear in Nuriyya's voice and says: "No, I do not feel fear in your voice…"

Nuriyya answers: "Why do you need me to have fear? You cannot achieve anything by frightening me. What is death for us, for you and me? … Because I love him just as you do." (Afandiyev, 184–185)

Her courage here comes from her willingness to accept suffering while remaining faithful to what she considers morally right. She does not defeat Saadat through hostility but through honesty and compassion. She even decides to transform a threatening confrontation into a moment of trust:

"Saadat khanum, if you promise honorably that what is said here will remain a secret between us until death, and that you will tell nothing to your husband, I will tell you everything that happened." (Afandiyev, 185)

Nuriyya redefines courage as emotional control combined with interpretive openness toward the other.

Mamzelle's courage operates in a similarly understated register. Her decision to accompany Médéric into the mountains and to accept morally ambiguous invitations exposes her to both physical danger and social judgment. Yet she repeatedly reframes risk not as threat but as part of experiential understanding.

When she accepts the invitation of Médéric's father, Rodrigue Eymard, to visit his house, her landlady warns her:

"Don't you get there! … Since his wife left him Rodrigue Eymard is like a madman. For the love of heaven, don't go into that house." (Roy, 138)

Her decision exposes another form of courage: the courage to trust her own moral judgment rather than simply follow public opinion.

The journey with Médéric becomes especially significant. During a winter storm, their horse loses its way and falls into a ditch, placing them in danger. Yet Mamzelle does not experience fear in the ordinary sense. Instead, she sees the moment almost spiritually:

"I gave myself up to the dream of leaving this life. I saw us safe, escaped from evil, from tarnished heredity, from the distortion of self that one fears perhaps more than anything else in the pride of youth." (Roy, 149)

This snowstorm episode is narrated not in terms of panic, but of perceptual transformation, where danger is absorbed into a broader sense of existential stillness.

In both narratives, courage is closely tied to narrative perspective. Because both novels use first-person narration, the reader is transported into a consciousness where fear is not dramatized externally but processed internally as ethical

decision-making. This reinforces the effect of narrative transportation: courage becomes something the reader experiences from within, not merely observes.

3. Sacrificing Personal Feelings. The theme of sacrifice in both novels is not simply romantic renunciation but a deeper ethical reorganization of emotional life. Both Nuriyya and Mamzelle encounter affective attachments that must be reinterpreted through moral constraint.

In Nuriyya's case, the relationship with Murad is marked by emotional intensity but also ethical impossibility. The central tension lies not in absence of feeling, but in the recognition that feeling alone cannot justify action. Her decision to redefine Murad as a "brother-like" presence is not a denial of emotional truth, but an ethical reclassification of that truth within social reality. Because the narrative is filtered through Nuriyya's consciousness, readers experience this ethical transformation not as an external moral lesson but as an internal emotional struggle.

In one conversation, she tells Murad: "We must listen to the voice of our hearts and conscience and continue our path patiently. Then sooner or later the truth will appear. Do good, throw the fish into the sea; even if the fish does not know, God will know." (Afandiyev, 125)

This reframing allows her to preserve moral coherence while acknowledging emotional continuity.

Importantly, this sacrifice is not immediate but iterative: it requires repeated acts of self-interpretation, where desire is continuously re-evaluated against ethical consequence. The proverb she invokes ("throw the fish into the sea…") becomes a narrative articulation of delayed moral reward, suggesting that ethical action is not immediately visible but structurally oriented toward long-term meaning.

Mamzelle's experience of attachment to Médéric follows a parallel structure, though it remains more implicit. Her emotional responses are filtered through pedagogical and social roles, making desire difficult to name directly. Yet the narrative reveals moments of emotional intensity that are immediately restrained through ethical reflection.

"Médéric had still not appeared since that feverish first day of spring that had awakened him to the needs of nature. I was deeply sorry for him, but found it wise that he should stay away. Yet I wanted nothing so much as to see him again before my departure." (Roy, 165)

What distinguishes her experience is precisely this tension between recognition and refusal to fully articulate desire.

In both cases, sacrifice is not suppression but transformation of emotional structure. It is a shift from possessive attachment to ethical responsibility. This transformation also reinforces narrative transportation: readers are not simply told about restraint but are made to inhabit its emotional cost.

4. Relationship with Nature. Nature in both novels functions as more than setting; it operates as an interpretive medium through which ethical and existential meaning is articulated. Both Nuriyya and Mamzelle experience natural environments not as passive landscapes but as active participants in emotional and cognitive transformation.

For Nuriyya, nature is marked by a sense of presence that exceeds material description. Even in childhood, her interaction with the natural world is characterized by intuitive openness and emotional resonance. Describing the suffering of her early years after becoming an orphan, she recalls:

"Yet my little heart, silently singing wordless songs, lived with an unknown hope; it welcomed the rising morning sun, the blooming spring flowers, and the cool winds coming from the mountains on warm summer evenings with joy and admiration." (Afandiyev, 15)

This relationship is not sentimental but perceptual: nature becomes a site where meaning is felt before it is understood. The recurrence of the term "unknown" in her descriptions suggests a mode of experience that resists rational closure and instead gestures toward transcendence.

During moments of crisis, nature becomes a stabilizing force that reorganizes emotional experience. Walking through landscapes or observing gardens does not resolve her dilemmas but reorients her within them.

"The leaves shining like emeralds in the sunlight, the unripe green fruits among them… I felt within myself, like someone recovering from illness, a new desire to live and to love nature." (Afandiyev, 27)

Nature functions here as an ethical rhythm rather than a solution.

Mamzelle's engagement with nature similarly intensifies perceptual awareness. The mountain episode with Médéric transforms landscape into an expanded field of emotional and sensory experience, where scale, silence, and distance produce heightened self-awareness:

"How can I ever forget that sight? Even today when that memory returns, my soul swells with contentment and happiness." (Roy, 130)

The encounter with the trout, when she places her hand into the cold water and a trout gently enters her palm, further deepens this dynamic, as tactile interaction with living nature produces a temporary dissolution of boundaries between self and environment:

"I was just as ecstatic as Médéric." (Roy, 133)

This experience becomes one of the deepest memories connecting her with Médéric. When she later wishes to see again "my companion of the hills," she is not simply remembering a person; she is remembering a moment when human beings, nature, and mystery seemed united.

In both novels, nature is closely linked to narrative immersion. It functions as a parallel to transportation itself: just as readers are absorbed into narrative worlds, characters are absorbed into natural worlds that reshape perception. This parallel reinforces the ethical dimension of immersion as both literary and existential.

5. The Ethical and Emotional Power of Folklore. In their relationships with rural communities, both Nuriyya and Mamzelle discover the profound ethical and emotional power of traditional music. Although the traditions represented in the two novels differ in genre—Azerbaijani mugham in *Söyüdlü arx* and Ukrainian folk songs in *Ces enfants de ma vie*—both function as expressions of cultural memory capable of shaping moral perception and emotional experience. In both narratives, folklore is not presented merely as artistic performance or ethnograp-

hic background, but as a living force that enables the characters to understand themselves and others more deeply.

For Nuriyya, this experience is embodied in *Segah*, one of the principal modes of Azerbaijani mugham. The music becomes an interpreter of her own inner life, articulating truths that she herself cannot easily express. During a village concert that she organizes, she asks a young man to perform *Segah*. As she listens, the music seems to speak directly to her:

"*Segah* … said that, like all people, you also have the right to seek your own happiness. But you are too late. He already belongs to another. To reclaim your happiness would require another person's suffering and tears. But, poor Nuriyya, you would never wish that. She is a mother. And a mother is the dearest and most sacred of all beings on earth. You could never bear to inflict such suffering upon her, because she is a mother… You are strong. Since childhood you have learned to carry the heavy burden of sorrow. In the difficult days of your life you never complained about your fate. You are resilient. Such is the rule of life: it always places heavier burdens upon those who are able to bear them." (Afandiyev, 139)

The performance also profoundly affects the audience. When the music ends, the listeners remain silent, so deeply moved that they forget even to applaud. To dispel the emotional stillness, Nuriyya cheerfully jokes that they must have enjoyed *Segah* so much they forgot to clap, whereupon the audience seems to awaken from a dream and bursts into applause (Afandiyev, 139). The scene demonstrates that the music's emotional power extends beyond Nuriyya herself, creating a shared communal experience.

Rather than simply accompanying emotion, the mugham interprets it. It gives ethical form to Nuriyya's inner conflict by transforming personal suffering into a meditation on compassion, sacrifice, and responsibility toward another human being. The music functions almost as an interior moral voice, leading her toward self-renunciation rather than self-assertion.

Mamzelle encounters a comparable experience through Ukrainian folk songs. She discovers that one of her youngest pupils, six-year-old Nil, possesses an extraordinarily beautiful voice. Learning that he has inherited Ukrainian songs from his mother, she invites him to sing before the class. His performance produces an immediate emotional transformation:

"I was no longer in despair about my future. Nil's singing had turned my heart inside out like a glove. Now I was confident about life." (Roy, 42)

Whereas *Segah* primarily illuminates Nuriyya's inner moral conflict while also deeply moving the surrounding community, Nil's songs consistently demonstrate their transformative power through the healing they bring to those around him. When Mamzelle later brings the boy to sing for her mother, who has become despondent after breaking her hip, the songs restore not only her spirits but even her determination to walk again. Astonished by this therapeutic effect, Mamzelle introduces Nil's singing to residents of an old people's home and later to patients in a psychiatric hospital, where his performances again bring comfort and emotional renewal. She therefore affectionately calls him "my little healer" (Roy,

48). The culmination comes when Mamzelle visits Nil's home and listens as he and his mother sing together:

"Their voices began together, one a little hesitant at first but quickly convinced by the stronger of the two. Then they flew upward, harmonizing as they rose in a strangely lovely song, one of life as it is lived and life as it is dreamed. Under that immense sky it took your heart and turned it round and turned it over, as a hand might do, before leaving it an instant, with due gentleness, to the freedom of the air." (Roy, 53)

In both novels, traditional music transcends aesthetic enjoyment and becomes an agent of ethical transformation. *Segah* leads Nuriyya toward a deeper acceptance of sacrifice and compassion while also drawing the listening community into a shared emotional experience. Ukrainian folk songs likewise awaken hope, restore emotional wholeness, and strengthen communal bonds. Although emerging from distinct cultural traditions, both forms of folklore are portrayed as preserving and transmitting values that cannot be communicated through ordinary discourse alone.

This parallel also reinforces the central argument of the present study. Just as first-person narration transports readers into the inner worlds of Nuriyya and Mamzelle, folklore transports both heroines into deeper modes of ethical understanding. In each novel, traditional music becomes a privileged medium through which emotional experience is intensified, moral insight is clarified, and relationships are renewed. Folklore therefore functions not merely as a cultural marker but as an essential component of the narratives' ethical imagination, contributing significantly to the immersive reading experience that characterizes both works.

6. Attachment to the Villagers and the Pain of Departure. The final phase of both narratives reveals a paradoxical emotional structure: professional advancement coincides with emotional loss. Rather than simple upward mobility, both heroines experience departure as a form of ethical rupture.

Nuriyya's farewell to the village community is marked by emotional excess that exceeds formal speech. Her expression of gratitude becomes a moment of narrative intensity in which social bonds are revealed as deeply affective rather than merely professional. During her farewell concert, she tells the villagers:

"At the time of separation, a person's heart becomes tender. If I have hurt any of you, please forgive me. I have nobody except you, my dear friends in the audience." (Afandiyev, 219)

The village is not left behind as a completed stage but as an emotionally integrated space that continues to exist within memory.

Mamzelle's departure similarly destabilizes the distinction between professional duty and emotional attachment. Her description of students as internalized parts of herself suggests that identity has become relational rather than autonomous:

"They were mine, and would be mine even when I had forgotten their names and faces, remaining a part of me as I would a part of them, by virtue of the most mysterious possessive force in existence, one that sometimes even surpasses the bond of blood." (Roy, 167)

The emotional difficulty of leaving is not resolved through rational justification but through recognition of irreversible affective integration.

In both cases, the village functions as a formative narrative space that cannot be fully exited. This structure also reinforces the logic of narrative transportation: just as readers do not fully "leave" a narrative world after reading, the heroines do not fully leave the worlds they inhabit.

7. Dreams That Were Once Lost Come True. The conclusion of both novels reconfigures the notion of fulfillment by transforming linear aspiration into complex realization. Neither narrative ends with simple achievement but with a reinterpretation of what fulfillment means.

Nuriyya's trajectory is marked by apparent displacement: her initial aspiration for theatrical life is redirected into rural work. However, this displacement becomes generative rather than obstructive.

When the Baku Drama Theater company arrives to perform in that district, and Nuriyya attends as a spectator, the actress performing Gültakin in Jafar Jabbarly's *Aydin* suddenly becomes ill, and Nuriyya is asked to replace her. Then her own suffering allows her to portray the character with extraordinary emotional depth:

"I was Gültakin! I was sacrificing myself for my greatest love. I was dying with the happiness of a suffering love, smiling and loving." (Afandiyev, 215–216)

Thus her eventual recognition by theatre professionals does not negate earlier loss but incorporates it into a revised understanding of artistic identity.

Mamzelle's resolution is more symbolic than institutional. Her relationship with Médéric does not culminate in conventional reunion, yet the final scene reconfigures absence into presence through memory and perception.

When they last parted in the classroom, she said to Médéric, "I'd like to find again, before you leave school, if you have to leave – I'd like to find my companion of the hills. Will I ever see him again, Médéric?" (Roy, 165) At that time, he didn't reply but ran away from her.

The reappearance of Médéric as her "companion of the hills" at the end of the novel suggests that fulfillment may occur at the level of narrative consciousness rather than external reality.

As she leaves on the train, she sees Médéric riding toward her:

"Médéric had been quick to find me as I half leaned out. High in the air he raised what his hand was holding… then with great accuracy hurled it through the window unto my lap. It was an enormous bouquet of field flowers." (Roy, 170–171)

Their eyes meet, and she recognizes the same person she had known in the hills:

"Under his battered hat his face seemed attentive, serious and loving, as on the day – a century ago! – when the trout in the icy water had let themselves be caressed and he asked: 'There's a mystery everywhere, don't you think?'" (Roy, 171)

In both cases, dreams are not simply realized or denied; they are transformed through narrative experience itself. This transformation mirrors the reader's own experience of narrative transportation, where meaning persists beyond closure and continues to operate within memory.

Conclusion. The comparative reading of Ilyas Afandiyev's *Söyüdlü arx* and Gabrielle Roy's *Ces enfants de ma vie* reveals a sustained convergence in the representation of moral development, emotional perception, the ethical significance of folklore, and narrative experience across two culturally and historically distant literary traditions. Despite the absence of direct influence or shared literary context, both novels construct remarkably similar figures of ethical subjectivity in Nuriyya and Mamzelle—young women whose encounters with rural communities become the site of profound personal transformation.

This study has argued that these parallels are not merely thematic coincidences but reflect deeper structural affinities in narrative construction. Both novels employ first-person narration to produce a heightened form of narrative transportation, drawing readers into ethically charged experiential worlds in which judgment, empathy, and emotional restraint are not externally described but internally lived (Green and Brock 313). The resemblance between the two heroines is therefore inseparable from the resemblance in reading experience itself: both texts generate immersive narrative environments that align moral perception with subjective consciousness.

From the perspective of comparative literary studies, this convergence suggests that literary similarity does not necessarily depend on historical transmission or intertextual influence. Instead, it may arise from structurally comparable narrative strategies that organize ethical experience across distinct cultural systems. Nuriyya and Mamzelle thus function as literary kindred spirits—figures whose affinity emerges not from contact or lineage, but from parallel articulations of moral imagination within different literary traditions.

Ultimately, this juxtaposition invites a broader reconsideration of how fiction produces ethical meaning. Rather than being confined to culturally specific frameworks, narrative form—together with the expressive resources of traditional folklore—can generate recurring patterns of empathy, responsibility, and moral insight across linguistic and geographical boundaries. The meeting of Nuriyya and Mamzelle—like two rivers converging from distant sources—therefore points not to influence, but to a shared human capacity for narrative immersion and ethical understanding.

BİBLİOGRAPHY

Afandiyev, Ilyas. 2024. *Söyüdlü arx*. Baku: Qanun Nəşriyyatı.

Green, Melanie C., and Timothy C. Brock. "Understanding Media Enjoyment: The Role of Transportation Into Narrative Worlds." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79, no. 5 (2000): 701–721.

Roy, Gabrielle. 2000. *Children of My Heart*. Translated by Alan Brown. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart. Original work published as *Ces enfants de ma vie* (1977).