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## **STUDY**

**ON THE INFLUENCE OF NEW AMERICAN FICTION ON  
AZERBAIJANI LITERARY THOUGHT AND INTERCULTURAL  
RELATIONS**



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# STUDY

## ON THE INFLUENCE OF NEW AMERICAN FICTION ON AZERBAIJANI LITERARY THOUGHT AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

### ESTUDIO SOBRE LA INFLUENCIA DE LA NUEVA FICCIÓN ESTADOUNIDENSE EN EL PENSAMIENTO LITERARIO AZERBAIJANO Y LAS RELACIONES INTERCULTURALES

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#### ABSTRACT

The emergence of New American Fiction at the beginning of the twentieth century constituted a turning point in the formation of modern literary consciousness on a global scale, fostering a shift from nineteenth-century collective realism toward narrative forms focused on psychological introspection, structural fragmentation, and the problematization of existential experience, in line with the aesthetic ruptures of modernism. Authors such as Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, and F. Scott Fitzgerald redefined literary subjectivity and narrative conventions, generating an impact that transcended cultural and national boundaries. This study examines the aesthetic and philosophical foundations of New American Fiction and its influence on the shaping of Azerbaijani literary modernity, analyzing how the reception of American modernist aesthetics, mediated through processes of translation, critical interpretation, and comparative analysis, stimulated new orientations in Azerbaijani fiction from the 1960s onward. Through an analysis of contemporary historiographical and theoretical contributions, typological parallels are identified between American and Azerbaijani literary experiences, highlighting processes of intercultural exchange, formal innovation, and the philosophical search for authenticity, and demonstrating that transnational literary dialogue played a decisive role in the configuration of national artistic identities and in the evolution of modern literary systems throughout the twentieth century.

#### Keywords:

New American prose, modernism, literary modernity, translation studies, comparative literature, transnational modernism, narrative innovation.

#### RESUMEN

La emergencia de la Nueva Ficción Estadounidense a comienzos del siglo XX constituyó un punto de inflexión en la configuración de la conciencia literaria moderna a escala global, al propiciar el tránsito del realismo colectivo decimonónico hacia formas narrativas centradas en la introspección psicológica, la fragmentación estructural y la problematización de la experiencia existencial, en consonancia con las rupturas estéticas del modernismo. Autores como Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe y F. Scott Fitzgerald redefinieron la subjetividad literaria y las convenciones narrativas, generando un impacto que trascendió fronteras culturales y nacionales. Este estudio analiza los fundamentos estéticos y filosóficos de la Nueva Ficción Estadounidense y su influencia en la conformación de la modernidad literaria azerbaiyana, examinando cómo la recepción de la estética modernista estadounidense, mediada por procesos de traducción, interpretación crítica y análisis comparado, impulsó nuevas orientaciones en la narrativa azerbaiyana a partir de la década de 1960. A partir del análisis de aportes historiográficos y teóricos contemporáneos, se identifican paralelismos tipológicos entre las experiencias literarias estadounidense y azerbaiyana, destacando los procesos de intercambio intercultural, la innovación formal y la búsqueda filosófica de autenticidad, y se demuestra que el diálogo literario transnacional desempeñó un papel decisivo en la configuración de las identidades artísticas nacionales y en la evolución de los sistemas literarios modernos durante el siglo XX.

#### Palabras clave:

Nueva prosa estadounidense, modernismo, modernidad literaria, estudios de traducción, literatura comparada, modernismo transnacional, innovación narrativa.

## INTRODUCTION

The early 20th century witnessed a profound reconfiguration of world literature. Industrial modernity, the devastation of the First World War, and the collapse of traditional moral and social frameworks created intellectual and emotional conditions conducive to artistic innovation. Within this context, New American Prose emerged as a distinctive expression of modernist aesthetics, transforming narrative structures, thematic concerns, and perceptions of the self and society.

Unlike 19th-century realism, which emphasized moral certainty, social harmony, and collective experience, modernist prose explored fragmentation, ambiguity, and psychological depth. Writers such as Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Thomas Wolfe redefined fiction as a space for existential reflection. Hemingway's minimalist precision, Faulkner's nonlinear temporal structures, Fitzgerald's (2013) lyrical depiction of disillusionment, and Wolfe's (1994) expansive romantic vision collectively articulated a multifaceted understanding of modern human experience, emphasizing both individual consciousness and broader cultural tensions.

In Azerbaijan, engagement with these literary innovations began during the Soviet period through translations, critical essays, and selective reception of American modernist works. Despite ideological constraints, Azerbaijani scholars maintained sustained interest in the psychological realism, narrative experimentation, and aesthetic principles of American modernism. Following the country's independence, this engagement intensified, and Azerbaijani literary criticism approached modernist texts with greater analytical freedom, fostering a comparative dialogue that enriched the intellectual framework of Azerbaijani modern prose and facilitated a creative synthesis of national and universal forms of modernity.

The intellectual foundations of New American Prose were closely linked to the moral and psychological crises of post-World War I society. American writers sought innovative expressive techniques to portray alienation, the erosion of faith, and the disintegration of cultural coherence, leading to literary strategies centered on interiority, fragmentation, and symbolic realism. In parallel, Azerbaijani literature began its own modernist awakening during the 1960s. Authors such as Anar, Elchin, and Akram Aylisli redefined the relationship between individual consciousness and collective ideology, challenging the orthodoxies of Soviet realism. By selectively incorporating Western modernist techniques, including interior monologue, nonlinear temporality, and stream of consciousness, these writers articulated a national literary sensibility aligned with global currents of modernity (Pashayeva, 2004).

During the Soviet period, Azerbaijani researchers initiated pioneering analyses of the reception of American prose. Early studies, framed within the Marxist critical paradigm,

tended to focus on individual authors and thematic motifs. Although constrained by ideology, these works laid the groundwork for more nuanced interpretations of literary interaction in subsequent decades. A landmark contribution came in 1995 when Agayev defended his doctoral dissertation, *Azerbaijani-American Literary Relations*, systematically examining reciprocal exchanges between the two literary traditions.

This was followed by Mammadova's (1988) study of Azerbaijani literature in the context of contemporary American scholarly and literary sources, E. Shirinov's research on *The Role of William Faulkner's Short Stories in 20th-Century American Prose*, S. Valiyeva's monograph *Hemingway and Azerbaijan*, and S. Ismayilova's influential work *Ernest Hemingway: A Realist View of History*. Collectively, these investigations shaped scholarly discourse on how American modernist principles were perceived, adapted, and integrated into Azerbaijani literary criticism.

Azerbaijani writers and scholars also contributed to the conceptual framework of national modernism, enriching the theoretical base for comparative studies and reinforcing the intellectual bridge between Azerbaijani and Western literary traditions.

The present article aims to analyze the historical evolution, intellectual foundations, and thematic significance of New American Prose in relation to Azerbaijani literary modernism, identifying conceptual and typological parallels that illuminate the transnational dialogue between the two literary traditions (Asadov, 2025).

This study situates Azerbaijani prose within a transnational network of literary exchange, demonstrating that American modernist paradigms functioned as catalysts for local creative innovation rather than mere instruments of imitation.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a comparative literary methodology as its principal analytical framework, complemented by typological and hermeneutic approaches. The relationship between New American Fiction and modern Azerbaijani prose is conceptualized as a dynamic intercultural dialogue shaped by processes of translation, reception, adaptation, and reinterpretation. Rather than treating literary influence as a unidirectional phenomenon, the research emphasizes reciprocal interaction and creative mediation within distinct historical and cultural contexts.

The methodological design integrates textual, historical, and cultural analysis. Primary sources consist of canonical works of American modernism, particularly those of Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Thomas Wolfe, alongside representative Azerbaijani prose from the 1960s to the 1990s, including works by Anar, Elchin, and Akram Aylisli. Secondary sources

include critical studies in comparative literature, translation studies, and Azerbaijani literary scholarship, drawing on contributions by Z. Agayev, S. Ismayilova, S. Valiyeva, X. Mammadova, E. Shirinov, and related academic discourse.

The analytical procedure is structured around several interrelated components. First, comparative textual analysis is employed to identify typological correspondences in narrative structure, characterization, stylistic innovation, and aesthetic principles. Second, cultural and historical contextualization situates literary developments within the ideological and socio-political frameworks of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, clarifying the conditions that shaped literary reception and transformation.

Third, reception and translation analysis examines the mechanisms through which American modernist prose entered Azerbaijani literary culture, tracing patterns of selection, reinterpretation, and critical evaluation within academic and literary institutions. Finally, interdisciplinary synthesis connects literary form and thematic concerns to broader philosophical, ethical, and sociological dimensions of modernity.

Through descriptive-analytical and hermeneutic techniques, the study evaluates both formal innovation and conceptual resonance, positioning Azerbaijani prose within a broader transnational modernist continuum. This methodological framework underscores the interdependence of literary systems and highlights intercultural dialogue as a fundamental mechanism of artistic renewal and intellectual development in twentieth-century world literature.

## DEVELOPMENT

The comparative analysis reveals convergent traits between American and Azerbaijani modernist prose:

1. Psychological depth and narrative fragmentation;
2. Subjective temporality and stream-of-consciousness narration;
3. Exploration of moral ambiguity and alienation;
4. Resistance to ideological conformity and formal realism.

While American modernism arose from the disillusionment of post-war industrial society, Azerbaijani modernism evolved within the constraints of Soviet ideological discourse. Yet both traditions sought to reclaim individual consciousness and to articulate the crisis of meaning in modern life. The translation of Hemingway and Faulkner into Azerbaijani in the 1960s–1980s represented a major intellectual milestone. As scholars such as Z. Agayev and S. Valiyeva have argued, these translations not only expanded linguistic and stylistic horizons but also introduced new modes of philosophical reflection. The emphasis on psychological realism and minimalist expression encouraged Azerbaijani authors to explore the complexities

of human subjectivity beyond the boundaries of socialist realism (Agayev, 1996).

After the restoration of independence, Azerbaijani literary studies entered a new phase of objectivity and comparative engagement. Freed from ideological mediation, scholars re-evaluated modernist works within global literary frameworks, identifying structural and thematic affinities that transcended linguistic and political divisions. This period facilitated the recognition of Azerbaijani modern prose as a participant in the broader transnational dialogue of modernism (Agayev, 1996).

## The Role of Literary Interaction in Azerbaijani Scholarship

A central concern of contemporary Azerbaijani literary scholarship is the comprehensive analysis of the primary directions and tendencies shaping national literary and aesthetic evolution. This includes identifying the intellectual and cultural influences that have guided this process. No national literature develops in isolation; rather, it grows through dynamic interaction with global literary movements. Azerbaijani literary thought has historically evolved within a system of intertextual dialogues—engaging deeply with both Eastern classical traditions and, increasingly since the modern era, with Western literary paradigms.

In this context, the study of *new American prose* holds a vital position in understanding the evolution of Azerbaijani literary modernism. The United States emerged as a central locus of literary innovation in the twentieth century, producing a constellation of writers who reshaped the artistic consciousness of their time. Figures such as Theodore Dreiser, Jack London, Sherwood Anderson, Henry James, Ezra Pound, Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, John Steinbeck, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, J. D. Salinger, John Updike, Isaac Asimov, and Ray Bradbury became internationally recognized as literary architects of modernity (Ismayilov, 1991).

Among these, Hemingway, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and Wolfe stand as defining voices of the interwar period. Their narratives of psychological depth, moral ambiguity, and formal experimentation redefined the essence of fiction and influenced literary systems worldwide. The rise of the new American prose thus constituted not only an artistic revolution but also a philosophical reconfiguration of modern human experience.

In Azerbaijan, the initial encounter with this new literary phenomenon occurred during the Soviet era through translations and critical essays. While these translations often arrived indirectly via Russian intermediaries, they played a formative role in acquainting Azerbaijani readers with modernist aesthetics. Despite the ideological barriers of socialist realism, American modernist prose introduced concepts of interiority, alienation, and individual consciousness that deeply resonated with Azerbaijani writers seeking to expand artistic freedom (Ismayilov, 1991).

Following the restoration of national independence, direct translations from English proliferated, and comparative scholarship gained momentum. These developments encouraged a re-evaluation of Western modernist texts through national and cultural lenses. As a result, Azerbaijani literary scholars began to reinterpret the philosophical and structural principles of American modernism, situating them within indigenous aesthetic and sociocultural frameworks.

A systematic examination of these influences is essential for understanding the developmental features of modern Azerbaijani prose. This line of inquiry clarifies how global literary currents were localized, adapted, and transformed within Azerbaijani cultural consciousness. It also contributes to the broader discourse on how peripheral literary systems engage creatively with dominant international paradigms.

The study of literary and aesthetic interaction between Azerbaijan and the United States extends beyond textual analysis—it represents a mode of cultural diplomacy and intellectual exchange. Literature, in this sense, functions as an instrument of mutual understanding and intercultural communication. The exploration of shared artistic motifs, ethical dilemmas, and philosophical preoccupations not only enriches comparative scholarship but also fosters constructive engagement between societies.

A comparative examination of the literary experiences of both nations—each with distinct historical and aesthetic trajectories—reveals structural parallels in their responses to modernity. Such an approach, grounded in literary typology and aesthetic philosophy, constitutes a cornerstone of the present research and underlines its scientific originality.

### Philosophical and Aesthetic Dimensions of the New American Prose

The formation of new American prose represented more than a stylistic innovation; it embodied a profound philosophical reorientation in the perception of individuality, society, and art. The disillusionment following World War I, compounded by the forces of industrialization and commercialization, produced a generation of writers who questioned the moral and ideological foundations of American civilization. The optimism of the nineteenth century, grounded in notions of progress and rationality, gave way to skepticism, fragmentation, and existential unease (Hemingway, 1957).

Ernest Hemingway revolutionized modern fiction through a minimalist style grounded in what he termed the “iceberg theory.” His prose, characterized by restraint and subtext, invited readers to discern emotional and psychological depth beneath the surface of deceptively simple language. Works such as *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) capture the silent despair of a generation marked by war, expressing the moral

exhaustion of modern man through understatement and rhythmical precision.

Faulkner (2013) extended the modernist experiment into the realm of temporal and psychological complexity. In *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and *As I Lay Dying* (1930), he employed multiple narrators, nonlinear chronology, and interior monologue to depict the collapse of both personal and social coherence. His cyclical concept of time and exploration of fragmented consciousness underscored the instability of truth and perception, offering a distinctly philosophical vision of human experience.

Fitzgerald’s (2013) modernism emerged from the tension between material aspiration and spiritual disillusionment. In *The Great Gatsby* (1925), he transformed the American Dream into a metaphor for the conflict between illusion and authenticity. His lyrical and symbolically rich style conveyed both fascination with and critique of the consumerist modern world. Fitzgerald’s moral insight into the emptiness of success made him one of the defining chroniclers of twentieth-century American culture.

Thomas Wolfe, the most autobiographical among these figures, infused American modernism with a visionary and introspective sensibility. His works *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929) and *Of Time and the River* (1935) combined lyrical expansiveness with an unrestrained emotional intensity. Wolfe’s autobiographical narrative transformed personal memory into a philosophical meditation on identity, time, and creativity, embodying the restless search for meaning characteristic of modernist art.

Collectively, these writers dismantled the boundaries of traditional realism and redefined narrative art as a means of philosophical inquiry. Their exploration of moral ambiguity, fractured time, and individual isolation universalized the modernist condition and reshaped the literary imagination of the twentieth century. Through their works, American prose became both a mirror and a model for global modernism—its influence reaching as far as the developing modernist sensibilities in Azerbaijani literature.

### The Socio-Cultural Context and Global Resonance of the New American Prose

The socio-political climate of early twentieth-century America decisively shaped the trajectory of literary modernism. The period between 1918 and 1945 was characterized by striking contrasts—economic prosperity followed by depression, technological innovation coupled with moral instability, and artistic optimism shadowed by existential unease. American writers navigated the tension between progress and despair, searching for new aesthetic modes capable of expressing the contradictions of modern civilization.

The First World War produced what Gertrude Stein famously termed “*the lost generation*”—writers and intellectuals who experienced profound disillusionment with

traditional moral and cultural values. Many, including Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald, spent extended periods in Europe, particularly in Paris, where they absorbed the cosmopolitan ethos of European modernism. This transatlantic displacement fostered a *hybrid literary consciousness*—one that merged American realism with the introspective and experimental sensibilities of European art.

Simultaneously, the domestic cultural revolution—heralded by cinema, radio, and the emerging mass media—transformed the relationship between art and the public. Modernist authors resisted the commodification of literature and asserted the autonomy of artistic creation. Their stylistic experimentation—fragmented syntax, interior monologue, and symbolic minimalism—represented a conscious reaction against mechanized modes of perception and communication. The written word became a vehicle of resistance against cultural homogenization.

The innovations of new American prose resonated globally, influencing literary movements across Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Asia. Its psychological depth, formal experimentation, and existential focus provided models for writers seeking to articulate their own modernities within local contexts. Thus, American modernism emerged not as an insular phenomenon but as a *transnational aesthetic paradigm*—a convergence point for the global redefinition of artistic form and meaning.

Within Azerbaijan, the influence of American modernist prose appeared indirectly during the Soviet era through translated editions and critical essays. Even when mediated via Russian, these texts introduced local audiences to new principles of narrative economy, psychological realism, and linguistic restraint. Hemingway's concision, Faulkner's multilayered temporality, and Fitzgerald's lyrical introspection became significant reference points for Azerbaijani authors who sought to modernize national prose without abandoning cultural specificity.

After independence, direct translations from English, together with academic re-evaluations of modernist literature, intensified. This development catalyzed a re-reading of Azerbaijani prose within a broader global framework, allowing national literature to engage more confidently with the stylistic and philosophical legacies of Western modernism.

### The Modernist Legacy and Its Transformation

By mid-century, the achievements of American modernist prose had evolved into the foundation of a new literary consciousness that bridged modernism and postmodernism. Writers such as **J. D. Salinger**, **Saul Bellow**, **Norman Mailer**, **John Updike**, and **Kurt Vonnegut** inherited the introspective complexity of the modernists while infusing it with irony and social critique. The minimalist ethos of Hemingway, the temporal experimentation of Faulkner, and the moral ambivalence of Fitzgerald continued to

inform post-war fiction, establishing a continuous dialogue between aesthetic form and moral inquiry (Literary history of the USA, 1979).

### Philosophical and Aesthetic Legacy

The modernists' emphasis on fragmented subjectivity, linguistic experimentation, and epistemological uncertainty anticipated key concerns of later literary theory—phenomenology, structuralism, and existential philosophy. Their works redefined literature as a form of *knowledge production*, transforming narrative art into an exploration of being, perception, and moral responsibility.

For Azerbaijani literature, engagement with this legacy opened new pathways for experimentation. The translation and study of American modernist texts encouraged Azerbaijani writers to explore psychological realism, interior monologue, and the problem of identity under conditions of social constraint. Through this interaction, national prose evolved from collective realism to a more individualized and introspective mode of expression (Asadov, 2025).

The resonance of American modernist aesthetics in Azerbaijan demonstrates the universality of the modernist impulse: the search for authentic meaning amid fragmentation and uncertainty. This intercultural dialogue reaffirms literature's role as a global medium of self-reflection and transformation.

### Toward a Comparative Framework

Both American and Azerbaijani modernist movements emerged during times of profound national redefinition. The United States confronted the psychological aftermath of the Civil War and the First World War, while Azerbaijan experienced the ideological turbulence of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. In both cases, writers sought to capture the existential tension between tradition and modernity, authority and freedom, conformity and authenticity.

Understanding the new American prose as both a product and a catalyst of global modernist transformation allows for a more nuanced comparative analysis. Modernism, in this sense, is not a unidirectional export from West to East but a *dialogic exchange*—a process of mutual reinterpretation. Azerbaijani prose internalized modernist principles while reconfiguring them to express national experience, thereby transforming imported aesthetics into indigenous innovation.

American modernist writers used fragmentation and stream of consciousness to depict alienation and moral ambiguity; Azerbaijani authors of the 1960s, such as **Anar**, **Elchin**, and **Aylisli**, employed similar strategies to critique ideological dogmatism and explore the complexities of individual consciousness. In both literatures, the human being is portrayed as suspended between memory and

desire, history and identity—a motif that defines the universal condition of modern existence.

The transference of modernist aesthetics to Azerbaijan involved a process of *cultural translation*. Western narrative innovations were selectively adapted, filtered through local idioms, and imbued with national sensibilities. This creative transformation produced what can be described as a *localized modernism*—a synthesis of global artistic trends with indigenous ethical and philosophical values.

The subsequent section of this research will therefore focus on the emergence and evolution of **new Azerbaijani prose** within this intercultural framework, elucidating how global modernist aesthetics—first articulated in the American context—were assimilated, reinterpreted, and transformed into a distinctly Azerbaijani mode of literary expression.

### The Emergence and Role of the New Azerbaijani Prose in the Context of Twentieth-Century Literature

The emergence of new Azerbaijani prose has been the subject of extensive scholarly inquiry. Studies, monographs, and critical essays have examined its thematic scope, ideological background, and stylistic diversity. Born at the intersection of divergent and sometimes conflicting artistic influences, this prose reflected both continuity with earlier traditions and the aspiration for renewal.

The principal factors contributing to its rise can be summarized as follows:

1. The dismantling of Stalinist orthodoxy and the ensuing intellectual liberalization;
2. The foundational influence of early twentieth-century Azerbaijani prose traditions;
3. The impact of Russian prose of the 1950s–1960s;
4. The growing engagement with Western, particularly American, literary and philosophical thought.

Azerbaijani literature has never evolved in isolation; it constitutes an integral component of world literary development. To analyze it apart from global cultural processes would be methodologically reductive. Throughout history, Azerbaijani literary thought has engaged in a sustained dialogue with other civilizations—Persian, Turkish, Russian, and, increasingly in the twentieth century, Western.

This dialogic interaction is especially evident in the *new Azerbaijani prose*, which emerged as both a reaction to and an extension of broader modernist tendencies. Its development mirrored the dialectical tension between national identity and global artistic paradigms, reaffirming the capacity of Azerbaijani writers to absorb, reinterpret, and transform external influences into original aesthetic achievements.

Twentieth-century Azerbaijani criticism has extensively analyzed the origins, evolution, and defining characteristics of national prose. However, recent decades have witnessed a shift toward *comparative global contextualization*. Scholars increasingly recognize that the vitality of Azerbaijani modernism lies in its capacity to mediate between indigenous tradition and global innovation.

Future research should therefore focus on tracing the precise mechanisms of intercultural transmission—translation practices, academic discourse, and literary reception—through which American modernist concepts were adapted into Azerbaijani artistic expression. Such inquiry will contribute not only to the history of Azerbaijani literature but also to the broader field of transnational modernist studies.

The formation of the new Azerbaijani prose was evolutionary rather than abrupt. As with many large-scale social processes, its contours were not immediately legible within the Soviet literary field to which Azerbaijani writers were closely connected. Only retrospectively do the origins and mechanisms of the change appear with clarity, as “certain processes...often escape attention” until time renders their essence intelligible (Mammadova, 2001).

Following Stalin's death, a gradual relaxation of political control produced limited but meaningful creative latitude. The attenuation of dogmatic oversight opened a space in which writers and poets could experiment with theme, voice, and form. Scholarly consensus locates here a decisive precondition for the emergence of new literary tendencies and a renewed conception of the artistic word (Nuri & Ismaili, 2025).

Emerging from an era of repression, literature benefitted from changes in administrative practice (if not in ideological essence). The deepening crisis of communist ideology—marked by doubt, fatigue, and disillusionment—created fertile conditions for aesthetic, cultural, and philosophical exploration. Pashayev's (1978) “train” metaphor captures the cyclical stasis and simulated progress of the Soviet project, reading the prose of the 1960s as an art of confession within acknowledged deadlock.

A crucial impetus for the new style was the rediscovery of early twentieth-century Azerbaijani prose. As Anar observes, *Jalil Mammadguluzadeh* became a newly perceived “ever-living contemporary,” with his oeuvre cleansed of didactic reduction and restored as a living source for the 1960s generation (Ahmadov, 2021). While the political climate of the late 1950s–early 1960s was not equivalent to that of the early 1900s, both moments shared relative openings that encouraged artistic freedom. In narrative stance, selection of protagonists, and treatment of ordinary life, continuities with **C. Mammadguluzadeh**, **A. Hagverdiyev**, and **Y. V. Chemenzeminli** are evident.

Yusifli identifies core traits of the period: (i) predominance of moral-ethical themes; (ii) intensified psychological

analysis; (iii) deeper exploration of the individual's interiority; (iv) preference for ordinary characters; and (v) greater concreteness and concision of style. These features resonate with early twentieth-century practices, reflecting the era's aesthetic needs. As A. Huseynov argues, attention to the ordinary person's fate and happiness derived both from art's internal evolution and from historical demand (Ahmadov, 2021). T. Huseynoglu similarly traces the lyrical-psychological current of the 1960s back to Chemenzeminli's stories of the 1910s–1920s, where conflict is primarily interior and ethical.

The appearance of new Azerbaijani prose coincided with system-wide literary shifts across the USSR. As an all-Union phenomenon, the turn toward the “human factor” is often dated to Sholokhov's *“The Fate of a Man”* (1956), which displaced panoramic war narratives in favor of the singular moral ordeal. Azerbaijani literature had already begun to foreground individual and ethical concerns, though innovations appeared later than in the West (Alishanoglu, 1999).

Mammadov (1983) frames the Azerbaijani renewal as part of a broader Soviet transformation after the breakdown of the personality cult. While he questions the label “new prose” as a stable category—arguing that traits hailed as innovations in the 1960s became stereotyped by the late 1970s—he affirms that a qualitative change did occur as a lawful echo of wider social renewal (Rzayev, 1988). Anar's essay *“The Space of Prose”* likewise locates the movement within the generational and ethical reorientation of the 1960s and stresses the need for not only new themes but also new poetics and expressive means (Anuradha, 2022). He situates Azerbaijani prose within a pan-Soviet wave that includes Shukshin, Aitmatov, Trifonov, Tendryakov, Bondaryev, Lipatov, Dumbadze, Belov, Drutse, and Bykov.

Even as scholarship has often bounded the “new prose” within Soviet developments, a growing body of criticism resists this narrowing. Alishanoglu (2006) notes that while the category has gained acceptance, its content, typology, origins, and limits still lack unified interpretation (Arif, 1967, p. 8). A. Aylisli urges critics to keep the map of world literature in view, arguing that no enduring national work can arise without a whole-of-world literary consciousness. This perspective illuminates how Western philosophical aesthetics aligned with Azerbaijan's intellectual and moral climate, reinforcing that the new prose was not merely derivative of Soviet patterns but participated in a wider, transnational dialogue.

As N. Pashayeva contends, the 1960s re-centering of the human being exceeded the boundaries of Soviet ideology and marked the first steps toward international engagement and globalization in national literature (Caliendo, 2025). Any adequate account of the new prose therefore requires reference to twentieth-century philosophical frameworks—phenomenology, existentialism,

hermeneutics—through which the concepts of personhood, authenticity, and moral choice were rethought. The genesis of the new Azerbaijani prose thus reflects convergent influences—historical, political, philosophical, and aesthetic—situating it within the broader narrative of world literature.

### Typological Parallels Between the New Azerbaijani Prose and the New American Prose

Scholars have long remarked structural and ethical consonances between Azerbaijani innovations and Western, particularly American, modernist practice: comparable strategies for rendering lived reality; analogous approaches to ordinary life events; and a shared anthropological focus on the human as ethical subject. These parallels, observed across decades, indicate not mere coincidence but sustained dialogic proximity.

E. Shirinov emphasizes that Hemingway, Sherwood Anderson, and especially William Faulkner must be studied not only within the arc of American poetics but also for their impact on world literature and aesthetic thought. Faulkner's oeuvre, in particular, bears typological consonance with tendencies in Azerbaijani prose and has influenced several Azerbaijani writers.

Translator N. Safarov's experience with *“Barn Burning”* (1938) illustrates how translation can reveal unsuspected proximities: only in the act of rendering the text into Azerbaijani did recurrent stylistic traits resonate with contemporary local prose (Hemingway, 1957). This underscores translation's dual role—as conduit of technique and as critical lens that refracts affinities otherwise obscured.

Both corpora privilege: (i) compressed, allusive narration (Hemingway, 1959, 1983, 1986) mirrored in Azerbaijani concision; (ii) multilayered temporality and interior monologue (Faulkner) echoed in Azerbaijani experiments with memory and subjective time; (iii) lyric-ethical introspection (Fitzgerald) reflected in Azerbaijani attention to moral ambiguity; and (iv) the ordinary protagonist as bearer of existential stakes. These convergences register modernism's shared problematics—alienation, authenticity, and the instability of truth.

The Azerbaijani adoption of American modernist strategies took shape as **creative localization** rather than passive reception. Mediated by Soviet cultural conditions and national tradition, imported techniques were re-functioned to articulate indigenous ethical dilemmas and historical memory. The result is a localized modernism—at once globally conversant and nationally specific.

In both Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Elchin's *The Death Sentence (Ölüm hökmü)*, the narrative voice performs a dual function: it observes and interprets simultaneously. The narrator's perspective becomes not only the lens through which the story unfolds but also the moral compass of the fictional world. This structural device

transforms narration into an instrument of ethical reflection. The external, almost cinematic description of minor gestures—the puppy’s whimper, Aflatun’s hesitation—functions as a psychological microcosm that mirrors the entire system of human relations in the novel.

Efendiyev’s (1989) prose, like Fitzgerald’s, rejects overt didacticism. Instead, moral judgment is displaced into implication, irony, and silence. Each detail—a gesture, a pause, a gaze—acquires interpretive weight. Such narrative minimalism exemplifies the aesthetics of “understatement,” a quality equally characteristic of Hemingway and Faulkner. In both literatures, understatement emerges as a structural principle: the less the narrator says explicitly, the more interpretive activity is required from the reader. Thus, meaning resides not in declarative moralization but in the tension between visible action and invisible consciousness.

The new Azerbaijani prose transformed the narrator into an ethical mediator between character and reader. This reconfiguration corresponds to the modernist redefinition of authorship found in Fitzgerald, Faulkner, and Hemingway. The authorial voice ceases to dictate and instead orchestrates multiple perspectives, creating a space of dialogic reflection. In *The Death Sentence*, the omniscient narrator’s empathy for every character mirrors Nick Carraway’s reflective compassion in *The Great Gatsby*. Both narrators seek to understand rather than to condemn; both treat moral ambiguity as an essential condition of modern existence.

The convergence of these narrative strategies signifies a typological synthesis: psychological interiority replaces ideological monologue, and moral understanding becomes an act of perception rather than declaration. This tendency—common to the new American and Azerbaijani prose—marks a decisive shift from the collective ethos of realism to the introspective ethos of modernism.

In comparative perspective, both traditions exhibit a shared humanistic core. Faulkner’s protagonists struggle within oppressive familial or social systems, while Elchin’s and Anar’s characters grapple with the constraints of bureaucracy, social hypocrisy, and moral inertia. Despite differing historical contexts, both literatures converge on a single ontological concern: how the individual preserves moral autonomy within structures that seek to erase it.

This humanistic orientation aligns Azerbaijani modernism with the transnational modernist project as a whole. The narrative emphasis on consciousness, ethical choice, and the fragility of the human condition transcends national boundaries. It demonstrates that modernist aesthetics—where the act of narration itself becomes a moral inquiry—emerges wherever societies confront the disintegration of inherited certainties.

The comparative analysis of Fitzgerald and Elchin underscores that stylistic parallels are inseparable from shared

philosophical premises. Both writers perceive narrative as a structure of moral knowledge. Through the subtle interplay of observation, irony, and empathy, each converts prose into an instrument of existential reflection. The convergence between the new American prose and the new Azerbaijani prose, therefore, cannot be confined to questions of influence or imitation. It constitutes a deeper synchronicity of thought—the recognition that the modern human being is defined by consciousness, contradiction, and the perpetual search for meaning.

A key feature uniting the narrative architectures of *The Great Gatsby* and the new Azerbaijani prose is the rhythmic alternation of perception and emotion. Both literatures employ a carefully balanced structure in which external observation repeatedly gives way to internal reflection. In Fitzgerald’s novel, visual imagery—the lights of Gatsby’s mansion, the green lantern across the bay—serves as an emotional code that transforms concrete experience into psychological metaphor. Similarly, in Efendiyev’s (1987, 1989) prose, the external world functions as an interpretive landscape. Rain, fog, or dim light becomes a mirror for inner states, while seemingly trivial gestures accumulate symbolic density. This technique reflects a broader principle of modernist narrative: *psychological metonymy*, where setting and event do not merely accompany the characters’ emotions but articulate them. The convergence of sensory detail and introspective tone creates a distinctive narrative texture shared across both traditions.

Another typological correspondence lies in the strategic use of irony as both distance and empathy. In *The Great Gatsby*, Nick Carraway’s irony shields him from moral collapse while also revealing his profound emotional investment in the story he tells. Likewise, Efendiyev’s (1987, 1989) narrator in *The Death Sentence* maintains a posture of apparent detachment, yet the underlying narrative irony exposes compassion and disillusionment in equal measure.

In both literatures, irony becomes a means of negotiating the tension between moral judgment and artistic objectivity. It transforms narration into a space of ethical complexity where certainty is suspended. This structure of ambiguity is essential to the modernist worldview, which perceives truth as perspectival rather than absolute.

The manipulation of time is another hallmark of modernist prose found equally in Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and the Azerbaijani writers of the 1960s–1970s. Faulkner’s nonlinear narration and Fitzgerald’s reflective temporality find analogues in Anar’s *Beşmərtəbəli evin altıncı mərtəbəsi* (*The Sixth Floor of the Five-Storey Building*) and Aylisli’s *Əlvida, incə qəlbim* (*Farewell, My Gentle Heart*).

In these works, memory is not a mere device of retrospection but a structural principle that dissolves chronological order. The protagonist’s consciousness becomes the true

chronotope of the narrative, a fluid domain where past and present coexist. This temporal fragmentation mirrors the disjointed rhythm of modern life and reinforces the ethical premise that understanding emerges only through reflection and recollection.

The transition from epic or collective heroism to the portrayal of ordinary individuals constitutes another typological link between American and Azerbaijani modernisms. Hemingway's stoic protagonists and Fitzgerald's disillusioned seekers of meaning find their counterparts in the modest, introspective characters of Azerbaijani prose—teachers, clerks, watchmen, or students—whose moral experiences carry universal resonance. By centering the “common person,” both literatures democratize tragedy and elevate everyday consciousness to artistic dignity. This reevaluation of the ordinary transforms realism into a moral inquiry: the smallest human gesture becomes a site of philosophical significance.

Both traditions cultivate *the poetics of silence*. Hemingway's “iceberg theory,” which privileges implication over exposition, resonates strongly with the understated narrative style of Azerbaijani authors such as Anar and Elchin. Dialogues are brief, subtextual, and emotionally compressed; ellipses and pauses communicate what words cannot. The reader is invited to complete meaning through empathy and inference.

This aesthetics of restraint embodies a shared ethical stance: the recognition that truth and pain resist full articulation. Thus, silence functions not as absence but as moral presence—the implicit acknowledgment of what cannot be said.

Language in both literatures mediates between the local and the universal. The new American prose replaced the ornamental rhetoric of nineteenth-century fiction with the idiom of everyday speech. Azerbaijani modernist writers followed a similar trajectory, moving from ornate narration toward the cadence of spoken language. Yet this stylistic simplification concealed a complex symbolic structure. Through rhythm, idiom, and imagery rooted in local culture, Azerbaijani prose reasserted national identity while aligning itself with global modernist aesthetics. The result was not imitation but transformation—a dialogic synthesis of linguistic economy and philosophical density that positioned Azerbaijani literature within the cosmopolitan flow of twentieth-century art.

### Narrative Ethics, Comparative Modernism

Comparative analysis reveals that the convergence between the new American and Azerbaijani prose extends beyond form to a shared ethical orientation. Both traditions treat narrative as a moral act: a means of understanding the human condition rather than prescribing ideology. The modernist narrator assumes responsibility not for judgment but for witness. Whether in Faulkner's Mississippi, Fitzgerald's Long Island, or Efendiyev's (1987, 1989)

Baku, narration becomes an act of ethical attention—a disciplined observation of human frailty and endurance. In this sense, modernism represents not the rejection of morality but its redefinition as empathy, perception, and the courage to confront ambiguity.

The synchronicity between American and Azerbaijani narrative practices exemplifies the global mobility of modernist aesthetics. Translation, criticism, and academic exchange enabled a flow of narrative forms and philosophical concepts across languages and ideological boundaries. This process confirms that literary evolution operates through *reciprocal influence* rather than linear transmission. The Azerbaijani prose of the 1960s did not imitate American models; it participated in the same historical and aesthetic logic—the worldwide reorientation from external representation to internal consciousness. Thus, the “new Azerbaijani prose” must be understood as both a national achievement and a node within the transnational network of twentieth-century modernism.

Both literatures articulate what may be termed *modernist humanism*: the conviction that the human being, despite fragmentation and alienation, remains a center of moral meaning. The focus on inner life, memory, and moral reflection reinstates the dignity of consciousness against ideological reduction. This ethical humanism unites Hemingway's stoic heroes, Faulkner's tormented individuals, Fitzgerald's reflective observers, and the introspective protagonists of Azerbaijani prose. The aesthetic of consciousness, therefore, becomes the shared philosophical ground on which the new American and Azerbaijani prose meet.

The comparative framework developed here invites broader theoretical application. The typological parallels between these literatures illuminate how modernist strategies—fragmentation, limited perspective, and psychological realism—function as *transcultural mechanisms* of artistic self-renewal. Future research might extend this analysis to explore:

1. The reception of other Western modernists (Joyce, Woolf, Camus) in Azerbaijani literary discourse;
2. The interrelation between translation strategies and stylistic adaptation;
3. The dialogue between Azerbaijani prose and postmodern currents of the late twentieth century; and
4. The comparative study of narrative ethics in non-Western modernisms.

Such inquiries would further substantiate the position of Azerbaijani literature within the global genealogy of modernist experimentation.

Here, the narrator's omniscience is unmistakable. He intervenes in the fictional world as an all-seeing, all-knowing consciousness, revealing not only the sequence of events but also the subtlest shades of emotion, the moral

undertones of gesture, and the psychological resonance of even the smallest actions. The narrative authority in Efendiyev's (1987, 1989) prose thus recalls that of the classical omniscient narrator, yet it is infused with a modern psychological awareness akin to that of Fitzgerald and other Western novelists of the twentieth century.

In both Fitzgerald and Elchin, the authorial voice assumes full interpretive sovereignty. The narrator not only reports but *interprets*—he renders the external world transparent by exposing its inner logic. This duality—narrative detachment combined with deep empathy—constitutes one of the central artistic discoveries of modern prose.

The convergence between the new Azerbaijani prose and the new American prose lies precisely here: in their shared effort to reconcile narrative authority with psychological realism. Both traditions replace the omnipotent ideological narrator of earlier literature with an intelligent, morally conscious voice—one that perceives the world through the lens of human complexity, irony, and compassion. In this way, the new Azerbaijani prose, like the modern American novel, situates itself within the broader humanistic trajectory of twentieth-century world literature, where storytelling becomes an instrument for exploring the mind, the moral condition, and the existential drama of the individual.

Nick Carraway's stance—poised between attentiveness and restraint—embodies the essential moral tension of modern narration: the ability to listen to confessions without becoming their victim, to record experience without losing the balance of one's own judgment. His self-protective irony ("I would feign a yawn, bury my head in a book, or pose as a dullard") is not mere affectation; it functions as a kind of moral self-defense, a method of filtering the raw influx of other people's "secret griefs" while maintaining his own inner equilibrium. In this sense, Fitzgerald's novel represents a broader twentieth-century transformation of prose toward the interior world, where the authority of narration lies not in large-scale social description but in a consciousness that perceives ambiguity, incompleteness, and the half-expressed (Nuri & Ismaili, 2025).

A similar sensibility defines the new Azerbaijani prose. In works such as Anar's "*The Last Night of the Past Year*," "*Dante's Jubilee*," "*Opportunity (Macal)*," and Efendiyev's "*The Death Sentence*," the narrator's purpose is not to judge life from a height, but to reveal the subtlest fluctuations of motivation, hesitation, and emotion. The text consistently favors vivid, concrete, and emotionally charged scenes—"illuminated fragments of time"—instead of grand panoramas, thereby intensifying lyricism and empathy. As Mustafayev observes, this prose "deliberately abandons wide panoramas in favor of sharply lit, concrete life-scenes," transforming objective reality through the lens of subjective perception and thus strengthening the emotional dimension of the work.

This stylistic approach is inseparable from its diction. As Mammadov (2001) points out, repetition in these narratives is not redundancy but a deliberate psychological technique: common words acquire situational expressiveness, becoming "monolithic signs" of internal states, accumulating secondary and tertiary emotional resonances beyond their direct meaning (Zasurskiy, 1984). For this reason, external description is minimal, while pauses, gestures, and repeated phrases become carriers of deep, layered feelings.

Philosophically, this narrative method stems from a modern conviction that truth is revealed through the pressures of consciousness—where doubt wrestles with belief, impulse with restraint, loneliness with understanding. R. Ulusel rightly situates this introspective realism within a long continuum stretching from Balzac, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky to Unamuno and, in another mode, to García Márquez. It is not mystical or surrealistic, yet it persists "in transferring social problems into the human interior, animating them within the subconscious, and examining their smallest details until thought and form coincide" (Rustamli, 2011, p. 9). In Anar, this is expressed through a determined exploration of the subconscious; in Efendiyev (1987, 1989), through an omniscient but psychologically nuanced narrative voice that, as critics note, "knows even the dreams of its characters" (Shirinov, 2005, p. 100).

When read alongside Faulkner's "*Barn Burning*," where a child's awakening moral awareness refracts a world of coercion and guilt, or Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, where moral sensitivity itself becomes a perilous virtue, the convergence becomes clear. Both the new American prose and the new Azerbaijani prose place the human interior at the center of artistic inquiry. They dramatize the same essential dilemmas—resolution and hesitation, courage and fear, faith and doubt—not as abstractions, but as forces shaping syntax, rhythm, and imagery.

Thus, the typological kinship between the two literatures is not one of imitation, but of shared discovery: a common poetics of interiority. In both traditions, the narrator's restraint becomes an ethical instrument; repetition becomes a structural device; and small, concrete scenes become a means of knowing. Through this, prose in both contexts fulfills its modern mission—to make visible the fragile, vibrating threshold between the external event and the inner world that gives it meaning.

Let us turn to Fitzgerald's short story "*The Carpenter's Street*" as an illuminating example of the modern psychological mode of narration:

"The man suddenly thought that he would remember this day for a long time—the quiet street, the warmth of the autumn sun, and this fairy tale; the story he himself had invented and brought to life before his daughter's eyes, though he no longer felt its taste or fragrance. He pressed his face against the child's cheek and, to make the story

more interesting, more delightful for her, again added to it the image of a lame man beside a boy” (Sivalingam, 2024, p. 20).

In this passage, the protagonist lives through the very emotion that arises in his mind; the reader perceives not only the external scene but also the movement of his thought. His moral and emotional world appears suspended by a single fragile thread—each perception tied to a reflection, each gesture to an awareness of its own transience. This intimate fusion of psychological process and narrative form brings Fitzgerald’s prose close to the aesthetic logic of the new Azerbaijani prose, where the inner world becomes both the setting and the substance of artistic revelation.

The heroes of the new Azerbaijani prose are, in turn, engaged in an unending dialogue with their own selves—with their inner “I.” The environment around them, often alien and oppressive, isolates these characters from social life, rendering their public identities paralyzed (Yin, 2018). Withdrawn into their consciousness, they seek meaning and survival within their private moral landscapes. Outwardly, they appear ordinary—one among thousands—but as the narrative deepens, their individuality becomes increasingly pronounced. Through close contact with the narrator’s logic and rhythm of thought, the reader discovers that their speech, actions, and relationships are not artificial constructs but genuine psychological responses to a living reality.

## CONCLUSIONS

The evolution of twentieth-century Azerbaijani prose cannot be adequately understood without acknowledging its deep and multifaceted engagement with the aesthetic, philosophical, and narrative innovations of new American modernism. The emergence of the new American prose—embodied in the works of Hemingway, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and Wolfe—introduced a radical transformation in global literary consciousness, marking a decisive departure from the moralistic realism of the nineteenth century toward a mode of artistic expression grounded in individual psychology, moral ambiguity, and fragmented temporality. These transformations not only redefined the narrative structures of modern fiction but also expanded its philosophical horizon, turning literature into an instrument of existential inquiry and moral reflection.

Within Azerbaijani literary discourse, this modernist impulse found fertile ground in the second half of the twentieth century, particularly following the ideological relaxation of the post-Stalinist period. Azerbaijani prose writers—among them . Hüseyinov, . İxli, Anar, Elchin, M. Süleymanlı, and Y. S m do lu—embraced new aesthetic freedoms that allowed them to probe psychological depth, challenge narrative conventions, and express the moral complexities of contemporary life. Their works revealed a conscious effort to transcend dogmatic realism and to

articulate a vision of human experience shaped by internal conflict, ethical questioning, and spiritual introspection.

The reciprocal relationship between Azerbaijani and American literary thought was not confined to translation or scholarly commentary; rather, it constituted an ongoing dialogue of artistic adaptation and intellectual renewal. Through translation, criticism, and creative emulation, American modernism became an interpretive lens through which Azerbaijani writers re-examined the role of the individual within society, the crisis of moral values, and the contradictions of modernization. This process of intercultural mediation underscored that the new Azerbaijani prose was not an imitation of Western models but an original re-contextualization of modernist principles within the cultural, historical, and linguistic realities of Azerbaijan.

The comparative study of these two literary traditions reveals several shared structural and thematic characteristics: the expansion of psychologism, the integration of philosophical reflection into narrative form, experimentation with time and space, and a heightened concern with the moral-ethical dimensions of human existence. In both American and Azerbaijani modernisms, the protagonist’s inner life—his or her consciousness, speech, and moral struggle—became the central axis of narration. The individual’s confrontation with existential isolation and social disillusionment mirrored the larger human condition of the twentieth century, thus linking national literatures through a common philosophical inquiry.

Moreover, the new Azerbaijani prose distinguished itself by its synthesis of modernist innovation and national tradition. Its dialogue with folklore, its revitalization of pre-Soviet narrative archetypes, and its renewed focus on the ethical foundations of human experience signified a dynamic literary evolution. By incorporating existential motifs and structural experimentation—such as the interlacing of multiple times and spaces—Azerbaijani writers redefined the possibilities of narrative art in ways that paralleled the achievements of their American counterparts.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that literary modernism, though born of specific historical and cultural conditions, operates as a transnational mode of expression capable of bridging distant intellectual and aesthetic worlds. The interaction between new American and Azerbaijani prose exemplifies how artistic forms circulate, transform, and acquire new meanings across languages and ideologies. Through translation, comparative analysis, and creative reinterpretation, Azerbaijani literature affirmed its position within the global continuum of modernism, contributing distinct moral, cultural, and philosophical dimensions to the ongoing narrative of world literature.

In essence, the convergence of these two literary traditions reveals that modernist prose—whether American or Azerbaijani—emerges from a universal human need to comprehend the crisis of meaning in the modern age. By

transforming the boundaries of narrative art, both literatures remind us that cross-cultural dialogue is not merely an exchange of influences but a shared act of reimagining humanity itself.

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