



Research Article

An analysis of the factors contributing to the popularization of A. Babayev's Song 'Nazende Sevgilim'¹

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Abstract

This article examines the song "Nazəndə Sevgilim" by the renowned Azerbaijani composer Andrey Babayev. The performance of the song by Azerbaijani and Turkish artists is studied here. The song is performed in the study by several singers. The first performer of the song, the Azerbaijani and USSR People's Artist, world-famous singer Rashid Behbudov, is introduced in the article. The article touches on the creative works of Andrey Babayev and his career as a music lover and composer. Although he is not originally Azerbaijani, but from another nation, the article highlights the contributions of the great composers he studied under, such as U. Hajibeyli and G. Garayev, in his development as a composer. The article not only discusses the work of Andrey Babayev but also comments on many composers and singers who have made a name in Azerbaijani pop music. Their contributions to pop music, the signatures they added to it, and their creativity are emphasized. Information is provided not only about "Nazəndə Sevgilim" but also about other lyrical songs like "Bakılı Qız," "Pıçıldaşın Ləpələr," "Özünə Qurbanam," "Alagöz," and many others. The article also highlights the life and work of the lyricist of "Nazəndə Sevgilim," İslam Safarlı.

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Introduction

Estrada is a genre of music that incorporates various forms of art, such as music, illusion, dance, speech, and circus movements. The emergence of Estrada music in Azerbaijan dates back to the mid-20th century. In 1956, the Azerbaijan State Estrada Orchestra (ADEO) was formed, followed by the "We Are from Baku" estrada ensemble in 1957, the Azerbaijan Television and Radio Estrada Orchestra in 1960, the "Qaya" quartet (which later became a vocal-instrumental ensemble) in the 1960s, the Azerbaijan State Song Theatre (ADMT) in 1968, and the Azerbaijan State Estrada-Symphonic Orchestra (ADESO) in 1975. These institutions played an important role in the development of Azerbaijani estrada art. In the years following the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945), the influence of opera singers like Rauf Atakişiyev and Lütfiyar İmanov contributed to the rise of the artistic level of estrada. The creative works of Rashid Behbudov, Müslüm Maqomayev, and Polad Bülbüloğlu enriched estrada music. The "Bakıpayızı" festival, created by Tofiq Quliyev in the 1980s, played a significant role in the emergence of a new wave in Azerbaijani pop music (Web 1)

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Shovkat Alekberova, Gulgala Mammadov, Mirza Babayev, Oktay Agayev, Flora Karimova, Elmira Rahimova, Yalchin Rzazade, Ilhame Guliyeva, Mubariz Taghiev, Huseynağa Hadiyev, Akif Islamzade, and others have actively contributed to the promotion of estrada songs. Today, there are many famous artists performing in the estrada genre: Aygun Kazimova, Zulfiyya Khanbabayeva, Brilliant Dadasova, Faiq Agayev, Samir Baghirov, Roya Ayhan, and others.

The estrada genre emerged and began to develop in Azerbaijan in the mid-20th century. The composers and singers mentioned above have contributed to the development of Azerbaijani estrada music. Each of them created a unique school and left a legacy in Azerbaijani musical culture. Before discussing Andrey Babayev, the author of melodic songs and lyrics, and his very famous song "Nazəndə Sevgilim," I would like to mention the names and works of more contemporary Azerbaijani composers.



Photo 1. Raşid Behbudov (Web 2)

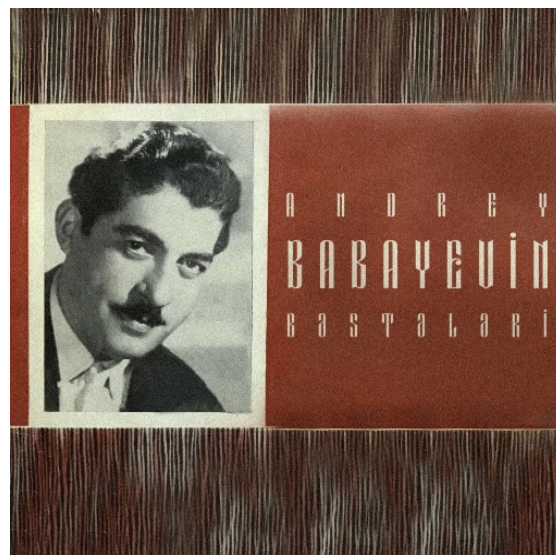


Photo 2. Andret Babayev (Web 3)

The name of the singer Rashid Behbudov, who is engraved in golden letters in the history of Azerbaijani art and music culture, stands out. He remains relevant today as a classical artist. His voice gained international recognition in world music. Rashid Behbudov, who laid the foundation of Azerbaijani estrada music in the 20th century, performed many works by classical composers. His renditions of Tofiq Quliyev's romances "Qızıl Üzük" (lyrics by Rasul Rza) and "Sənə də qalmaz" (lyrics by Rasul Rza) are still loved and listened to by the Azerbaijani people. Behbudov was born in 1915 in Tbilisi into the family of the renowned Shusha singer Məcid Behbudov. During the Soviet Union era, he was awarded the title of People's Artist of the USSR. Andrey Babayev wrote the song "Nazəndə Sevgilim" specifically for Rashid Behbudov, and he was the first to perform it.



Photo 3. Elza İbrahimova (Web 4)



Photo 4. Cover of Elza İbrahimova's book 'Songs for F-No' (Web 5)

Many composers have an undeniable presence in Azerbaijani estrada music. For example, one of the first composers to bring the tango rhythm into Azerbaijani estrada music was Elza Ibrahimova. World-renowned artists such as Tikhon Khrennikov, Georgi Sviridov, Otar Taktakishvili, Cövdət Hacıyev, Qara Qarayev, Niyazi, Murad Kajlayev, and Arif Məlikov have spoken highly of Elza Ibrahimova's talent and her original creative style. Elza Ibrahimova composed works in various genres. Among her compositions, ranging from songs to operas, are prelude and variation series for piano, "Sonatina for Piano," "Scherzo for Violin and Piano," "One-movement Quartet for Two Violins," a four-movement "Trio for Piano," symphonic poems, oratorios, vocal-instrumental chamber works, and music written for various performances. All these works, in which the professional musician put her heart, are characterized by deep meaning and high artistic quality. The composer wrote the opera "Yanan Laylalar," reflecting the tragedy of Karabakh, based on a mugham, with the libretto by Ramiz Heydar, and the opera "Afət" based on the eponymous work by Hüseyn Cavid. She dedicated the "Requiem" to National Hero Salatin Əsgərova, the son of the National Poet Xəlil Rza Ulutürk, and National Hero Təbriz Xəlilbəyli. She also created several beautiful works on the theme of war, such as "20 Yanvar," "Qarabağ," "Şəhid Qardaş," and "Səngərlər." Elza Ibrahimova's composition "Neftçilər Himni" dedicated to the 130th anniversary of the Azerbaijani oil industry further confirms her rich imagination



Photo 5. Polad Bülbüloğlu (Web 6)



Photo 6. Tofiq Quliyev (Web 7)

Elza Ibrahimova's series of preludes and variations for piano, 'Sonatina for Piano,' 'Scherzo for Violin and Piano,' 'One-movement Quartet for Two Violins,' a four-movement 'Trio for Piano,' symphonic poems, oratorios, vocal-instrumental chamber works, and the music she composed for several performances are characterized by deep meaning and high artistic quality. Undoubtedly, the song genre holds a special place in Elza Ibrahimova's music world. Even people without musical knowledge have listened to, loved, and hummed her songs. Works like 'Bilməzdim,' 'Gecələr Bulaq Başı,' 'Ey Vətən,' 'Qurban Verərdim,' 'Gəl Barışaq,' 'Mehribanım,' 'Yoxluğunu Bilə-bilə,' 'Mən Sənin Yanına Qışda Gəlirdim,' 'Sən Yadıma Düşəndə' are as familiar to the people as folk songs.

Results

Musical Features of the Song 'Nazənde Sevgilim'

The song 'Nazəndə Sevgilim' has a melancholic and unusual melody. The lyrics and music of the song are incredibly smooth. The song consists of a whole tandem. 'Nazəndə Sevgilim' is written in a lyrical tempo, Andante rhythm. It is composed in A minor, i.e., in la minor. It has a waltz character and is composed in 4/3 rhythm. The first verse begins with the use of syncopation. The beginning of the score is calm, performed in P (piano) dynamic, and gradually the volume increases, replacing it with F (Forte) in the chorus. The song has a melancholic melody. The music is composed in Azerbaijani mugham (mode). Anyone who listens to this song might not realize that the author studied under the school of U.Hajibeyli. Not only U.Hajibeyli but also Andrey Babayev worked side by side with other great composers like Fikrat Amirov, Rauf Hacıyev, and Gambar Hüseynli.

Nazəndə sevgilim, yadıma düşdün

Sözləri: İslam Səfərli

İfa edib: Rəşid Behbudov

Musiqi: Andrey Babayev



Figure 1. Notation of the song 'Nazende Sevgilim' (Web 9)

Lyrical Content of the Song 'Nazende Sevgilim'

The lyrics of the song belong to Azerbaijan's national poet Islam Safarli. Islam Safarli was born in 1923 in Shakarabad village, Babek district of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. He voluntarily participated in the Great Patriotic War (Soviet Union; 1941-1945). During the war, he wrote poems such as 'Dedicated to Our Army,' 'Literary Youth,' 'Thirteen,' 'Be Sure, Father!,' 'Double Willow,' 'New Flowers,' dedicated to Hero of the Soviet Union, Major General Həzi Aslanov, 'We Do Not Want a Third War,' and others. These poems were inspired by the deep marks left in his memory during the war. The theme of war also appeared in the young poet's poems. His notable poems include 'Night of Trial,' 'Love of the Czech Girl,' 'Injured Song,' 'Spark,' 'Island of Storms,' 'Treasure,' 'Alesker,' 'First Secretary,' 'Human Turmoil,' 'Two Sisters,' 'Gate of Honor,' 'Abseron Bed,' etc., which left a strong impact and were memorable. (Web 8)

His songs, such as 'Baku, Good Morning,' 'Delicate Smile,' 'I've Broken a Heart,' 'Come Visit Us,' 'Baku Girl,' 'How Long Will It Stay,' 'Mother,' 'The Girl with Black Eyes,' 'Doctors in White Coats,' 'I Wander in My Youth,' 'Moonlit Nights,' and hundreds of others, became popular and are still loved and listened to as classics.

To immortalize the name of Islam Safarli, one of the ships sailing on the Caspian Sea was named 'Islam Safarli.' Andrey Babayev composed a beautiful lyrical song for his poem 'Baku Girl,' which is still sung with love and enjoyed by a wide audience. Below is the Azerbaijani version of the song.

Table 1. The lyrics of the song 'Nazende Sevgilim'

Azerbaijan Language	English Language
Dəydi saçlarıma bahar küləyi, Nazəndə sevgilim, yadıma düşdün. Hərənin baxtına bir gözəl düşər, Sən də təkə mənim adıma düşdün, Nazəndə sevgilim, yadıma düşdün... Sənsiz dağ düşünəçixdım bu səhər, Ötdü qumru kimi gur şələlələr. De, niyə yalqızsan, sordu lələlər, Qövr etdi nişgilim, yadıma düşdün... Nazəndə sevgilim, yadıma düşdün...	The spring breeze touched my hair, Nazende, my love, you came to my mind. A beautiful woman falls to each one's fate, But you alone fell to mine, Nazende, my love, you came to my mind... This morning, I climbed the mountain without you, Great waterfalls flowed like a river. Tell me, why are you alone, the flowers asked, My sorrow was stirred, you came to my mind... Nazende, my love, you came to my mind...

Language and Expression

The language of the song 'Nazende Sevgilim' is written in simple Azerbaijani Turkish. Turkish artists perform this song without translation. The distinctive features of Azerbaijani Turkish can shape the character of the song.

Popularity and Influence of the Artist in 'Nazende Sevgilim'

As mentioned earlier, the song 'Nazende Sevgilim' is a melancholic melody written specifically for Rashid Behbudov. The success of the song is undoubtedly related to the performer. If a song has a beautiful and melancholic melody, and the performer sings it beautifully, gently, correctly, neatly, and skillfully, then the song is sure to succeed. Therefore, the primary reason for the success of this song is indeed due to the great artist, Rashid Behbudov, who had a beautiful voice.

The Artist's Recognition

The performer of the song determines its fate. In the performance of the great artist Rashid Behbudov, 'Nazende Sevgilim' crossed the borders of the country and entered the world stage. Among Turkic-speaking nations, the closest language to Turkish is Azerbaijani, as we know. For this reason, the song quickly spread and became popular. This popularity remains relevant today. The song is still loved and passed from mouth to mouth, not only by Azerbaijani performers but also by Turkish artists.

Historical and Social Conditions

"'Nazende Sevgilim' was composed by Andrey Babayev in 1956. This period came after the end of the Great Patriotic War, and the people were beginning to recover. However, the 15 republics of the Soviet Union, united with a strong voice, were making bold steps in the fields of art and culture. In such a time, the friendship of the nations was very important. Indeed, the victory in the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) was partly due to the friendship between the nations. There is very little information in the media about Andrey Babayev, a prominent Azerbaijani composer. However, his composition 'Nazende Sevgilim' remains a prominent song in world estrada music today. Many of his works are widely recognized, such as 'Baku Girl,' 'Whispers of Lips,' 'Nazende Sevgilim,' and other lyrical songs, all composed in the national spirit.

Andrey Babayev was of Armenian descent but lived in Baku and was a student of the famous composer Qara Qarayev. Despite his short life (41 years), he created many masterpieces.

Andrey Babayev was born in 1923 in the village of Agbulak, in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. He passed away in Moscow in 1964. In 1950, he graduated from the Azerbaijan State Conservatory, studying under Qara Qarayev. In 1958, he was awarded the title of Honored Artist of the Azerbaijan Republic. He was the author of cantatas like 'October' (1947), 'Song about the Party' (1954), 'Eagle's Fortress' (1957), 'Baghdasar Dayi' (1964), and many symphonic works and songs, as well as two suites for the Azerbaijani folk instruments orchestra, and music for films.

Andrey Babayev's work is based on Azerbaijani folk music. His song 'Who Came, Who Left' remains popular to this day. He also worked with melodies from Tajik, Turkmen, Hindi, and other folk music traditions. In fact, Andrey Babayev is recognized as an opera composer in Azerbaijani music culture. He studied under the great composer U.Hajibeyli and the prominent composer Qara Qarayev at the Azerbaijan State Conservatory. It was from them that he learned the basics of Azerbaijani national music, mugham, and other classical genres.

Cultural Connections

In an interview, the director of U.Hajibeyli's house-museum, Serdar Fərəcov, says: 'It is no coincidence that in the 1930s-1940s, people with a love for music came to Baku, having heard only the name of Üzeyir bey, without even seeing his face. This also applies to Fikrat Amirov, Hacı Khammamedov, Asaf Zeynalli, and, including Andrey Babayev. Üzeyir bey took all of them under his wing. Andrey Babayev was a very talented person. He lived only 41 years. He played the tar beautifully. Initially, the composer, who was a student of Üzeyir bey, was loyal to his teacher's musical ideas. It is no coincidence that later, when he was studying for postgraduate education in Moscow under the supervision of Dmitri Shostakovich, he emphasized in his documents that he was a student of Üzeyir bey.' (Aytac, S, 2024).



Photo 7. Andrey Babayev (Web 10)



Photo 8. İslam Səfərli (Web 11)

The Artist's Style and Influence

Many of Andrey Babayev's popular songs formed the core of the repertoire for famous artists such as Polad Bülbüloğlu and Rashid Behbudov. Songs like 'Bir Qız Gördüm' (Я встретил девушку), 'Sevgilim' (Любимая), 'Alagöz,' 'Bakılı Qız,' 'Özünə Qurbanam,' 'Pıçıldaşın, Ləpələr,' 'Sevdiyim, Ləblərin Yaquta Bənzər,' 'Bulaq Üstə Gədan Gözəl,' 'Küsüb Getdi,' and other melodies are loved and widely listened to.

Andrey Babayev's song 'Nazende Sevgilim' was met with special love and affection when performed by the USSR People's Artist Rashid Behbudov. This song soon gained popularity not only in Azerbaijan but also beyond its borders. Turkish artists began paying attention to the song, and it was performed by several Turkish artists. Neşe Karaböcek, Gülden Karaböcek, İnci Çayırılı, Muezzez Ersoy, Figen Genç, Nalan Altınörs, Mine Çeçeli, Sibel Can, Bengü, and others each performed the song in their own unique style. The song evokes different feelings with each rendition. The way the song is performed by both Turkish and Azerbaijani artists gives it a distinct flavor. The song, in terms of Azerbaijani folk music, national spirit, and scientific perspective, has a melody that is knowledgeable and neatly composed, characterized by maqam-intonation.

Let's look at what composer Sərdar Fərəcov once said: *'It is impossible to say that Andrey Babayev's music is Armenian because he was trained by Azerbaijan's great composers. His music was Azerbaijani music. There is no such music in Armenia. Which Armenian could write 'Nazende Sevgilim'?' (Web 11).*



Video 1. Rəşid Behbudov - Nazende Sevgilim

A video of the first performer, Rashid Behbudov, performing 'Nazende Sevgilim'.

Nazende Sevgilim and its Social and Cultural Context

Ramazan Khalilov, the creator of the house-museum of U.Hajibeyli and former assistant of Üzeyir bey at the Conservatory, says: 'So, in the early 1960s, Andrey Babayev was invited to Yerevan to meet with Armenian composers. After returning from there, he appeared very sad. When Ramazan asked about the reason, Andrey Babayev explained it as follows: "There, I was called a 'catholikos' and told, 'You are becoming very famous, we are proud of you, but why should your surname remain Babayev? Cut your ties with Azerbaijan and become Babayan.' I responded that I had been raised by Üzeyir bey, I grew up alongside Fikret Amirov, Rauf Hacıyev, and my friends are Azerbaijanis. I have written songs for many Azerbaijani poets. I have only seen good things there." (Web12)

'Composer Andrey Babayev spoke Azerbaijani at a high level. You can see how well he knew Azerbaijani to compose such beautiful songs. Could any other Armenian composer write such music? For example, Khachaturian could not write such songs. In Andrey Babayev's music, you can hear the traditions of Üzeyir Hajibeyli, Fikret Amirov, and Qəmbər Hüseynli. Andrey Babayev benefited from the environment created by Üzeyir bey. Even if a thousand Armenian composers came, they could not write one of Andrey Babayev's songs. They neither received that training nor experienced that environment. Andrey Babayev was a true Azerbaijani composer. Look how close he was to the world of Eastern music, having composed music for films in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan,' says Sərdar Fərəcov in an interview."

Let's listen to the song 'Nazende Sevgilim' performed by Turkish singer İnci Çayırılı.



Video 2. İnci Çayırılı - Nazende Sevgilim

As you can hear, this performance differs from others. İnci Çayırılı is an artist who performs in Turkish classical music. Her performance is sung in a style similar to Turkish makam. Let's also listen to the performance by Figen Genç:



Video 3. Figen Genç - Nazende Sevgilim

Figen Genç performed this song in her own unique way. Over time, performances change and are reflected in new interpretations. This performance is presented in a new arrangement within the framework of modern estrada music. The younger generation particularly loves and accepts this version.

Azerbaijani artist Çinare Melikzade:



Video 4. Çınare Melikzade - Nazende Sevgilim

The young Azerbaijani singer Çınare Məlikzadə performs this song with great emotion and passion. The song is performed in the estrada genre. Here too, the arrangement is reflected in a different style. We can say the same for the performance by Abbas Bağirov. In this performance, the arrangement also follows the estrada interpretation. This performance manifests itself in a unique way." (Web 13).

Conclusion

We would like to bring to your attention that in Turkey, the song 'Nazende Sevgilim' is performed as Turkish classical music. Within Turkish classical music, songs such as 'Sevmekten Kim Usanır', 'Kimseye Etmem Şikayet', 'Ada Sahilleri', 'Kadehin de Zehir Olsa', 'Fikrimin İnce Gülü', 'Duydum Ki, Unutmuşsun', 'Veda Busesi', 'İstanbul Sokakları', 'Mevsimler Yas Tutup', 'Gizli Aşk Bu, Söyleyemem Derdimi Hiç Kimseye'-in addition to these, 'Nazende Sevgilim' is also accepted as a Turkish classical song.

In an article published in 2017 by the newspaper 'Haberci', Mitat Çelik writes in his article 'Reşid Behbudov, Nazende Sevgilim, Murat Karahan': 'Reşid Behbudov's role in the worldwide recognition of Azerbaijani (P.S. Azerbaijani) folk and songs is very significant. In this regard, his contribution to our culture cannot be denied. Especially, the song 'Nazende Sevgilim,' which is always associated with his name, is on everyone's lips.' (Mitat Çelik, 2017).

Later, the author Mitat Çelik talks about the prominent performer of this song, Murat Karahan. Before discussing Murat Karahan, he talks about the history of the song. However, his statements do not reflect the truth. The author of the article writes: 'The composer of the song 'Nazende Sevgilim' is Azeri Bekirov. Who Bekirov is, remains a mystery. If you try to research him, you won't find any information other than that he is Azeri.'

We would like to emphasize that, as mentioned earlier, the music of the Azerbaijani song 'Nazende Sevgilim' was composed by Andrey Babayev, and the lyrics were written by İslam Safarlı. Both are prominent figures in Azerbaijani arts.

The song 'Nazende Sevgilim' was performed by Murat Karahan, the tenor soloist of the Ankara State Opera and Ballet. Murat Karahan was a student of the late masters of Turkish opera, Suna Korad and Pekin Kırgız, and graduated from Bilkent University. He has achieved great success by performing leading roles in more than 10 works in some of the most prestigious opera stages in Europe, including the Bolshoi Theatre.



Photo 9. Murat Karahan within the circle of artists
(Web 14)

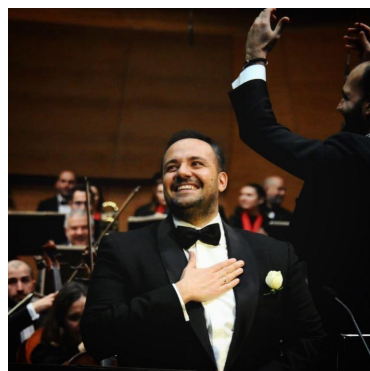


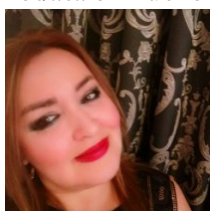
Photo 10. Murat Karahan (Web 15)

Murat Karahan, in September 2022, performed in Aspendos Ancient Theatre as part of the Aspendos Born Again events, together with the famous Italian tenor Placido Domingo, accompanied by the Limak Philharmonic Orchestra. In October 2022, he performed two concerts with the famous soprano Kristine Opolais at the CSO Ada Ankara Concert Hall and Istanbul AKM Opera Hall. In the same month, he participated in the '3 Tenor Concert' in Diyarbakır and Istanbul. In November 2022, he performed at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris as part of the Turkish and Azerbaijani Permanent Missions Concert. In December, he performed the lead role in Tosca at the Ankara State Opera and Ballet stage," says the Hürriyet newspaper (Web14). Now, let's listen to Murat Karahan's performance of 'Nazende Sevgilim.



In this research, the song 'Nazende Sevgilim' has been chosen as an example from the perspective of popular music. In Azerbaijani popular music, the factors influencing the popularization of this song have been examined. Specifically, I identified the cultural transfer concept and key codes in terms of its popularization in Turkey. Based on this study, other songs can also be examined. Further research could be conducted with different research types."

Biodata of Author



Assoc.Prof. SehranaKasimi, Leading Researcher of the Department of History and Theory of Music at the Institute of Architecture and Art of ANAS, Candidate of Art History, Associate Professor. Since 1996, she has worked at the College of Music and the Republican Art Gymnasium at the Azerbaijan National Conservatory. Since 2000, she has been a senior lecturer, associate professor, and head of the Department of Social Sciences at the Pedagogical Institute. She has received honorary awards such as 'Golden Pen,' 'Khan Gizi Natavan,' 'Influential People's Intellectual,' 'Heydar Zirvesi,' 'İlhamla İleri,' and others. She is the author of scientific monographs including Musical Culture of Azerbaijan in the Context of East and West (2015), Periods of Cultural Development of Caucasian Albania (2018), Periods of Cultural Development of Azerbaijan (Az., 2021), and Periods of Cultural Development of Azerbaijan (Eng., 2022). She has authored more than 110 scientific articles both in the republic and abroad. She has participated in major national and international scientific conferences, festivals, and symposiums, and in 2022, she was elected a full member of the TURON Academy of Sciences (Uzbekistan).

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