

UOT 792(100)

**Narmina Aghayeva**  
*PhD (Art Study), Associate Professor*  
*Institute of Architecture and Art of ANAS*  
*(Azerbaijan)*

*nermine2014@mail.ru*

---

## THEATER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AZERBAIJAN AND TURKEY

**Abstract.** The article deals with the history of Turkish-Azerbaijani theater relationships, which began at the beginning of the 20th century. When the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey is celebrated in 2023, the historical and contemporary period of cultural relationships is brought to attention at the junction of two centuries. It is known that the comedies by M.F. Akhundzadeh, who is known as the first playwright of the whole East, had a significant influence on the creation of theater art in Turkey as well as in many countries. And Writer Namik Kemal created the European-style Turkish literature for the first time in Turkey and made this style popular. Turkish plays such as Namik Kemal's "Homeland or Silistra", "Akif Bey", "Poor Boy", "Gulnihal", Rza Zeki Latifbeyov's "In Old Turkey", "Mehkemeyi-Kubra" ("Great Court"), Vahid Lutfi's "Najibey", Mahammad Ehsan's "Jovdet Bey", Nazim Hikmet's "In Turkey", "Strange Man", "Skull", "Fame or the Forgotten Man", "The First Day of the Holiday" were successfully performed on our national stage. It is noted that the comedies by prominent dramatist Elchin: "My husband is mad", "Madhouse refugee", "My favorite crazy" and others had an influence on the contemporary stage of development of theater relationships between the two countries.

**Key words:** tour performances, theater relationships, dramaturgy, N.Kemal, Elchin.

**Introduction.** The history of theater relationships between Azerbaijan and Turkey began since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The comedies by M.F.Akhundzadeh, who is known as the first playwright of the whole East, had an influence on the creation of theater art in Turkey as well as in many countries. Writer Namik Kamal, who created the European-style Turkish literature in Turkey for the first time, made this style popular. Namik Kamal's life and struggle aim was to show national identity and values to his people, to give them a love of freedom, and especially to make them love their Motherland that they would consciously die for it, which was kneaded with the blood of their ancestors.

**The interpretation of the main material.** Namik Kamal found a new tool that will show the love of the Motherland, the love of the nation, national morality and heroism to the people more vividly – dramaturgy and theater. Namik Kamal shared his thoughts about this art in his articles and letters, especially in his article entitled “Theatre”, and tried to explain its importance. Namik Kamal proved with his thoughts “A nation's beautiful speaking power is in its literature, and the most vivid expression of literature is in the theater”; “Because the theater appeals to the eye and the ear during telling a story, it influences with two means at once”; “The theater is a means of entertainment. But it is the most useful of entertainments”; “Theatre is like love. It makes a person cry, but there is another pleasure in the violent effects it gives” [7, p. 7] that he was one of the lovers of Turkish drama and theater. The works of such a theater devotee was a great basis for the foundation of Azerbaijan and Turkey theater relationships.

The defense movement that started in Turkey in 1908 also influenced on the cultural field. It was at such a time that the brave actors of the Azerbaijani theater began to enrich their repertoire with interesting examples from the national dramaturgy as well as from the Turkish dramaturgy.

The performances based on Namik Kamal's works “Homeland or Silistra”, “Akif Bey”, “Poor boy”, “Gulnihal”, which were written with endless love and enthusiasm for the country and became a symbol of Namik Kamal's dramatist character, Rza Zaki Latifbeyov's “In old Turkey”, “Mehkemeyi-Kubra” (“Great Court”), Vahid Lutfi's “Najibey”, Tahsin Nahid's “Huznavar”, Mohammad Ehsan's “Jovdat Bey” showed the increasing professionalism and artistry of Azerbaijani theater workers clearly year by year.

The abovementioned Turkish dramas were one of the most played plays in the repertoire during the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. Jafar Jabbarli, the prominent Azerbaijani playwright, also wrote the plays “Anvar Bey or the Conquest of Edirne” (directors S.Ruhulla, A.M.Sharifzadeh) and “Trablis War or the Star” (director A.Ivanov) about the events taking place in Turkey, the Turkey-Russia, Balkan and Tripoli wars. These plays were performed in Baku, Ganja, and also in the Istanbul “Darulbedaye” Theater [1, p. 298] during the tours of the Azerbaijani theater to Turkey. It is known that there was great interest in the operas and operettas by genius Uzeyir Bey in Turkey at the beginning of the 20th century. The Turkish press devoted many articles to the plays “Leyli and Majnun”, “Arshin mal alan” (“The Cloth peddler”), “Mashadi Ibad”.

It is appropriate to draw attention to a fact that is new for the history of Azerbaijani theater. After the fall of the Republic in 1920, Sattar Guldur (he starred in the first Turkish movie “Luxury life” directed by Muhsun Ertogrul), a young Azerbaijani actor, who immigrated with his family from Ganja to Kars, laid the foundation of the Azerbaijani theater in Kars, and worked for the development of culture with his theatrical activity in difficult conditions for a long time. Sattar Guldur is our great value who brought Azerbaijani culture and Azerbaijani theater to Kars. Sattar Guldur and his wife Gulperi were engaged in artistic activities in the Kars Turkish Center, Kars People’s House and Kars People’s Education Center during 1920-53. Sattar Guldur turned Kars into a city where pianos are played. He staged the works “O olmasin, bu olsun” (“If not that one, then this one”), “Arshin mal alan” (“The cloth peddler”) with his troupe of amateurs and described the culture of Azerbaijan. When Great Ataturk came to Kars, he watched these performances several times, which were directed and acted by Sattar Guldur [2]. Besides Azerbaijani works such as “Koroglu”, “Leyli and Majnun”, “Asli and Karam”, “O olmasin, bu olsun” (“If not that one, then this one”), “Young at fifty years old” and “Shahsanam”, he worked as a director and actor in Turkish plays such as “A turban is overturned”, “Pause”, “Come on Suna Himmet’s Son”, “Tolerance”, “Fireplace”, “Piece of stone”, “Lord of Istanbul” and “Before the ice thaws” in this art path, which started with “Arshin mal alan” (“The cloth peddler”) in 1924 [2].

Turkey has given many valuable people to the world at times. But the world recognized this country with two great personalities – Mustafa Kemal

Ataturk and Nazim Hikmet in the 20th century! Genius Nazim Hikmet did Ataturk's work of modernizing Turkey, opening it to the world, destroying the environment of ignorance and building a new modern world in its place through poetry and art.

Nazim Hikmat's plays began to make their way to Soviet theaters and at the same time to Azerbaijani theater starting from the 1950s. The famous Chilean poet and public figure Pablo Neruda said, "This is Nazim who turned the voice of the Turk into the voice of all humanity" [3].

Nazim Hikmet, who brought free verse to Turkish poetry, had a strong influence on modern Turkish literature. Nazim Hikmet's coming to dramaturgy was drawn by life itself. His works have been translated into the languages of many peoples of the world, and his plays have been staged in several countries. His plays "In Turkey" (National Drama Theater, directed by A. İsgandarov) and "Strange man" (National Drama Theater, directed by T. Kazimov; İrevan Theater, directed by S. Aliyev; Nakhchivan Theater, directed by Asgar Asgarov), "The skull" (Ganja Theater, directed by Karim Sultanov, Nakhchivan Theater, directed by Kamran Guliyev), "Fame or the forgotten man" (National Drama Theater, directed by Nasir Sadigzadeh; Hasanaga Salayev), "The first day of the holiday" (Sumgait Theater, directed by Rovshan Almuradov; Nakhchivan Theater, directed by Veli Babayev) were united by a humanist idea about the moral value of a human. Nazim Hikmet's conclusion as a dramatist was that a human should use his skills and abilities for the sake of the progress of mankind and for the benefit of society.

The stone placed in front of the stage in the play "Strange man" is a very interesting detail. Nazim saw this stone as an obstacle in the way of humanity. One of the characters jumps over the stone, one pulls it aside, one puts his foot on it and ties his shoelace, and finally one of the characters of the work wants to lift the stone and carry it away. This is an example of Nazim Hikmet's innovation. The attitude of all the characters to the stone – an obstacle on the path of humanity reveals their characters.

These plays, which have been performed in different theater stages of Azerbaijan in different years, confirmed that the national theater of Azerbaijan also presented Nazim Hikmat as its native child to audience like M.F.Akhundov, H.Javid, J.Jabbarli.

The somewhat interesting period of Azerbaijan and Turkey theater relationships began since the 1960s. Already in recent years, several new

works of Turkish dramaturgy – Rashad Nuri Guntakin’s “From lips to the heart”, Orkhan Kamal’s “Strange girl”, Aziz Nesin’s “Taurus monster”, “Come here”, “Lonely women”, Sadig Shendel’s “Bloody Nigar” and other plays on the stage of Azerbaijani theaters gave a push to the further strengthening of cultural relationships between the two countries. Another important branch of this push has gained a wider scale due to the mutual tours [6, p. 143] and artistic cooperation.

Vagif Ibrahimoglu, the Azerbaijani director, received an invitation from Turkey and staged U. Hajibeyli’s “Arshin mal alan” (“The Cloth peddler”) [6, p. 154] at the Ankara State Opera and Ballet Theater in 1985, and this performance was shown more than 150 times in that theater. About four years later, Vagif was invited by the Ministry of Culture of Turkey once again, he presented another work by Uzeyir Hajibeyli, the operetta “O olmasin, bu olsun” (“If not that one, then this one”) [6, p. 155], to Turkish art lovers at the Ankara State Opera and Ballet Theater.

Rashad Nuri Guntaki’s novel “From lips to the heart” was staged in Nakhchivan Theater (staged by Maila Muradkhanli) and Aghdam Theater (staged by Isa Akhundov) during these years, and a year later, Azerbaijan State Academic Drama Theater’s plays “Our strange fate” and “Lovers’ meeting in hell” (Ilyas Efendiyev) were shown in Turkish theaters at the invitation of the Turkish World Research Foundation.

Intensive development in the field of theater relationships has been observed since the early 90s. Turkey’s Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality City Theater came to Azerbaijan on tour for the first time in May 1991 and staged three performances (Akram Rashid Ray and Jamal Rashid Ray’s “Luxury life”, Billy Russell’s “One woman” and Raymond Fitzsimons’ “Actor Kin” plays) in Ganja, Sheki and Baku, and composer Suleyman Alasgarov’s operetta “Millionaire’s beggary son” was staged at the Ankara State Opera and Ballet Theater under the name “Rich dad’s poor son” in 1992.

More serious and systematic work began to be done in this field during the period after the restoration of Azerbaijan’s national independence. Theater relationships weakened a bit due to the political and social processes in Azerbaijan during the first years, but a revival began in this direction towards the end of the 90s, and it became important by the establishment of the International Organization of Turkic Culture “TURKSOY”, founded by the ministers of culture of the Turkic republics. The ideas put forward

a century ago by the prominent thinker Ahmet Bey Agaoglu, who saw the national and cultural renaissance in the Turkic unity, and M.A. Rasulzadeh, who approached Turkism from the principle of local and national autonomy, came true.

Azerbaijani and Turkish theater relationships have developed more closely than other Turkic-speaking theaters. So, the collectives of the Academic Drama Theater, Baku Municipal Theater, State Pantomime Theater, and Ganja State Puppet Theater performed a series of plays in Erzurum, Sivas, Kayseri, Izmir and Ankara in Turkey since the first years of the country's independence.

Prominent dramatist Elchin Efendiyev's work had a significant influence on the modern stage of development of theater relationships between the two countries.

Elchin's work "My favorite madman" was staged in the capital theater in Ankara, Turkey under the name "Madhouse refuge", which was directed by Fuad Raufoglu, Professor of Konya University, and Zamina Hajiyeva, in 1998. This was the first play from Azerbaijani drama that was staged in the Turkish State Theater. The actors and actresses of the Ankara State Theater coped skillfully with this complex play. Soon after, the comedy "My husband is crazy" was successfully staged in Erzurum, Kars, Erzinjan, Konya, Antalya, Alanya, Adana, Ankara's Sinasi and Kichik Theaters.

Famous stage masters such as Tunj Yildirim, Shenay Unsel, Abdullah Indir performed in the play, which was directed by the famous Turkish director Ensar Gilinç. Elchin's work "Hello, I am your uncle" gained fame with the high professionalism of famous Turkish actors on the stages of the abovementioned state theaters. Turkish press and CNN, CTV, TRT-1, NTV channels gave extensive reports about the performances. Elchin's play "Murderer" was presented under the name "Murder under the stars", which was directed by our compatriot director Malahat Abbasova, at the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality City Theater in 2006, and at Turkey's famous Muhsun Ertogrul Stage in Istanbul in 2007.

Elchin shared his impressions about his performances as following: "I am glad that my comedies were understood by Turkish art lovers and were received with great sympathy. I am proud to work for the cultural relationships between the two countries" [4, p. 131].

Irevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater, which is one of the ancient art centers of Azerbaijan, is in the focus with its wider activities in the

new era of cultural relationships between the two countries. A. Nesi's "Taurus Wolf", Turgut Ozakman's "Fireplace", Tunjer Juchenoglu's "Blind battle", Zihni Papagch's "Epic of the Genocide Monument", Nazim Hikmet's "Strange man" were played with great success during the years of independence.

Another interesting theater event in the theater relationships between Azerbaijan and Turkey was the staging of a special play – the historical-chronological drama "The First sound of the Republic" by Turkish authors Demet Chizmeli and Barish Pinar in the framework of the project "Chanakkale Victory" at the Irevan Theater in 2018, when the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey was celebrated. The characters of the great leader Mustafa Kamal Atatürk (actor N. Haziyev), the founder of the Republic, and Kazim Garabekir (actor A. Arshadli) were revived on the stage of the Irevan Theater in the performance for the first time.

**Conclusion.** The history notebook with the words "The first sound of the Republic" on the stool and the candles in front of the stage in the background of Mustafa Kemal's eternal posture in the final scene of the play are presented in a deeply philosophical concept.

This is how Irevan Theater celebrated the victory of Chanakkale with the play "The first sound of the Republic". The victory of Chanakkale is not only the history of the liberation victory of the Republic of Turkey, but also the history of solidarity and unity of the great Turkic unity and the call to unite under one flag. Indeed, the miracle of theater as a source containing national and spiritual values is able to carry out the work of assimilation and promotion of the common cultural heritage with great success. From this point of view, the role of theater art in the artistic-aesthetic realization of wide possibilities is irreplaceable for ensuring the cultural unity of Turkey and Azerbaijan in the modern era.

**Key words:** tour performances, theater relationships, dramaturgy, N.Kamal, Elchin.

## REFERENCES

1. Azərbaycan teatrının salnaməsi. – Bakı, 1975.
2. Atatürkün hüzurunda "Arşın mal alan" – Bir aktyorun həyat hekayəsi. Teleqraf.com. 19.09.2020.

3. Babayev A. Nazim Hikmətdən söz açmaq mənim üçün həmişə bəxtiyarlıqdır. // 525-ci qəzet, 2017, 16 sentyabr.
4. İftixar. Müstəqillik dövrü teatrımızın inkişafında Elçin dramaturgiyasının mövqeyi. – Bakı, 2013.
5. İftixar. İrəvan Azərbaycan teatrının tarixi. – Bakı, 2023.
6. Kərimov İ. Azərbaycan-Türkiyə teatr əlaqələri. – Bakı, 2000.
7. Vətən, yaxud Silistrə. – İstanbul, 1969.

### *Nərminə Ağayeva (Azərbaycan)*

#### **AZƏRBAYCAN VƏ TÜRKİYƏ TEATR ƏLAQƏLƏRİ**

Məqalədə XX əsrin əvvəllərindən başlanan Türkiyə-Azərbaycan teatr əlaqələrinin yaranma tarixi haqqında araşdırmalar təhlil edilir. 2023-cü il Türkiyə Cümhuriyyətinin yaranmasının 100-cü ildönümünün qeyd edildiyi zamanda mədəni əlaqələrin tarixi və çağdaş dönəmi iki əsrin qovuşduğu zamanda diqqətə çatdırılır. Məlumdur ki, Bütün Şərqi ilk dramaturqu kimi tanınan M.F. Axundzadənin komediyalarının bir çox ölkələrdə olduğu kimi, Türkiyədə də teatr sənətinin yaranmasına əhəmiyyətli təsiri olmuşdur. Türkiyədə isə ilk dəfə Avropasayağı türk ədəbiyyatını yaradan və bu üslubun sevilməsinə səbəb olan yazıçı Namiq Kamaldır. Namiq Kamalın “Vətən, yaxud Silistrə”, “Akif bəy”, “Zavallı cocuq”, “Gülnihal” əsərləri, Rza Zəki Lətifbəyovun “Köhnə Türkiyədə”, Məhkəməyi-Kübra”, Vahid Lütfinin “Nacibəy”, Məhəmməd Ehsanın “Cövdət bəy”, Nazim Hikmətin “Türkiyədə”, “Qərribə adam”, “Kəllə”, “Şöhrət və ya unudulan adam”, “Bayramın birinci günü” kimi türk pyesləri milli səhnəmizdə uğurla oynanıb. Qeyd olunur ki, iki ölkə arasında teatr əlaqələrinin müasir inkişaf mərhələsinə görkəmli dramaturq Elçinin komediyaları: “Mənim ərim dəlidir”, “Dəlixana qaçqını”, “Mənim sevimli dəlim” və digərləri əhəmiyyətli təsir göstərmişdir.

*Açar sözlər:* qastrol tamaşaları, teatr əlaqələri, dramaturgiya, N.Kamal, Elçin.

### *Нармина Агаева (Азербайджан)*

#### **AZƏRBAYDŽANSKO-TURECKIE TEATRƏLNE SVYƏZI**

В статье анализируется история турецко-азербайджанских театральных связей, берущих свое начало с первых лет XX века, а так-



же акцентируется внимание на исторический и современный период турецко-азербайджанских культурных связей на стыке двух веков в год, когда отмечается 100-летие со дня образования Турецкой Республики. Известно, что комедии М.Ф. Ахундзаде, которого называют первым драматургом Востока, оказали значительное влияние на становление театрального искусства во многих странах, в том числе в Турции, где писатель Намик Кемаль, являющийся основоположником турецкой литературы европейского стиля, сделал этот стиль популярным. На сцене национальных театров страны успешно были осуществлены постановки произведений Намика Кемаля «Отечество или Силистрия», «Акиф-бей», «Бедный мальчик», «Гульнихал», а также пьесы «В старой Турции» Рза Заки Латифбекова, «Мехкетеи-Кубра », «Наджибей» Вахида Лютфи, «Джовдет-бей» Мухаммеда Эхсана, пьесы Назим Хикмета «В Турции», «Станный человек», «Череп», «Слава или забытый человек», «Первый день праздника». Отмечается, что комедии выдающегося драматурга Эльчина «Мой муж чокнутый», «Беженец из сумасшедшего дома», «Мой любимый сумасшедший» и другие оказали значительное влияние на современный этап развития театральных отношений между двумя странами.

**Ключевые слова:** гастрольные спектакли, театральные связи, драматургия, Н.Кемаль, Эльчин.