

LANGUAGE, CULTURE, COMMUNICATION**WORLDLY SIGNIFICANCE OF THEATERS:
YEREVAN STATE AZERBAIJAN DRAMA THEATER****Gulkhara Ahmadova**

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Summary

Historically and even now, the literary and cultural environment of Azerbaijan is known both in the East and in the West. As a result of the severe tragedies, deportations, and genocides inflicted on the people of Azerbaijan, scientific and educational institutions, state institutions, museums, natural monuments, and cultural centers created in our country have suffered as much as our people. Theaters were also forced to live the fate of refugees. Today Shusha Musical Drama Theater, Aghdam State Drama Theater, Fuzili State Drama Theater continue their activities in the field of refugees. All three theaters, which have a great tradition of Armenian influence, have undoubtedly struck a blow. The annals of the Theater, which went through a tumultuous journey and was repeatedly subjected to Armenian vandalism, is a part of the historical destiny of our compatriots in the ancient lands of Azerbaijan. The article discussed the history, activity, and post-deportation activities of the Yerevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater in exchange for all these processes. At the same time, attention was drawn here to the current situation of the Yerevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater and the works in the theater's repertoire. It was emphasized that the theater, which went through a difficult and turbulent path, goes on tours today, stages new plays, and gives successful performances. The article is dedicated to the ongoing processes related to the Yerevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater.

Key words: Yerevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater, Baku, deportation, refugee, Azerbaijan, culture, development, today, yesterday.

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1. Introduction

"The changes in the cultural life of Azerbaijan against the background of the social and political events that took place from the second half of the 19th century laid the groundwork for the transformation of the traditional folk theater into a professional secular theater. Since its inception, as the first center of professional theater art in the Eastern Islamic world, it has always devoted a large space to works with high ideas and deep social content in its rich repertoire. Azerbaijani theater developed on the basis of works of European and Russian classics and

Azerbaijani dramatists along two lines organically united with each other. These two directions created the unity of national and humanity, Eastern mentality, artistic specificity and European theater traditions in the Azerbaijani theater. This unity played an important role in the development of Azerbaijani culture and became its characteristic feature" (*Zumrud*, 2013).

Irevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater is remembered for interesting works in this regard. The history of the theater has been determined since 1882 with reference to various sources, historian-scientist Israfil Mammadov wrote about it extensively in his researches. The scientist writes that the history of the Azerbaijani theater in Irevan begins at least from 1880-81. In this regard, the newspaper "Psak" ("Wreath") published in Irevan published an extensive review entitled "Persian theater" on April 10, 1882, in its 7th issue. It is said in the article that for the sake of charity for poor students, the theater lovers from Irevan Turks performed Vasag Madatov Nazmin's play "Greed wins the Enemy" for the first time in the second half of 1881, and for the second time on April 2, 1882.

2. Main text

Let us emphasize that in 1880-1882, so in the early days of the theater's activity, performances were presented by amateur actors in Irevan. "In 1886, 23 years old gymnasium teacher Firudin Bey Kocherli organized a theater performance in Irevan. That play – M. F. Akhundov's comedy "Monsieur Jordan and the Dervish Mastali Shah" becomes a cultural event in the life of the people of Irevan, but F. Kocherli left Irevan in 1895. After that, 18 years old Yunis Nuri led the theater.

"Firidun bey Kocherli did great work in the education and progress of the people during his tenure at the Irevan Teachers' Seminary. The fundamental activity of the Irevan theater almost started with Firidun bey Kocherli. In 1886, Firidun Bey Kocherli organized a theater performance in Irevan. That performance – M.F. Akhundov's comedy "Monsieur Jordan and the Dervish Mastali Shah" has become a major cultural event in the life of the people of Irevan. F. Kocherli collected the works of Irevan poets and examples of folklore, and in his selected works, "Irevan poets", it is said in the article "Irevan poets" in the past: "The city of Irevan was the center of ulema, fuzela and shuera in the past, and although it produced great scholars and mujahids like Akhund Molla Muhammad Irevani, in recent times has been deprived of such virtuous and learned persons and accurate writers and good-natured poets..." (*Kocherli*, 2005, p. 215).

"Since 1896, performances in the Azerbaijani language have been regularly performed in Irevan. In the pre-revolutionary years, amateurs staged many well-known plays in the region. Early staged plays: "Dursunali and Ballibady" (1893), "Kirt-Kirt" (1893), "Hajı Kara" (1894), "Evli iken subay" (1899). These plays were staged in small venues and were not covered by the press. In 1909, the great artist Huseyn Arablinski performed in the Irevan theater with the plays "Bakhtsiz javan" (A. Hagverdiyev) and "Nadir Shah" (N. Narimanov). In 1912, under the direction of Zulfugar Hajibeyov, the plays "O olmasin, bu olsun", "Alli yashinda javan", "Kerbalai Shukur khalcha satan" were performed in the Irevan theater. Popular performances such as "Arshin mal alan" and "Mashadi Ibad" were in the permanent repertoire of the theater" (*Erdogan*, 2023, p. 57).

As a result of Dashnak attacks (1918), the theater management and a group of actors had gone to the city of Khoy, Iran, and after the establishment of the Soviet government in 1922, they returned and continued their activities with determination. The revival and development of the theater was led by Bala Efendiyev, Akbar Rzayev, Rza Sheykhzade, Abbasali Akhundov, Zakir Shahbazov, Ashraf Yusifzade, Kazim Ziya, Nasib Efendiyev, etc. It is related to the name

of national cultural fanatics. Bala Efendiyev's wife, Fatma Efendiyeva, appeared in the theater as the first female actress and set an example for all Azerbaijani ladies. At the same time, let's note that Ms. Fatma was the first director of the Irevan Turkish Women's Club at that time. Later, Akbar Rzayev brought his wife Firangiz on stage together with Fatma. Bala Efendiyev held a responsible position as a party worker in Irevan in 1921-1928.

This created fertile conditions for activity there. On March 15, 1928, by the decision of the Armenian government, the mobile Irevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater was established. The formation of the troupe was led by the old actor Yunis Nuri and the chief director Mkrtych Janan. They also invited several actors and actresses from Baku. The grand opening of the theater took place on April 14. Later, "Irevan theater included Jafar Jabbarli's play "Sevil" in its repertoire in 1929. In 1931, Uzeyir Bey Hajibeyli's "Mashadi Ibad" (January 22), Sultanmajid Ganizade's "Akhsham sabri kheyir olar" (February 13) vaudeville and Yujin O'Neill's "Qaraagajlar altinda mahabbat" (Love Under the Sycamores) November 16), the play "Gizil ekin (Golden sow)" was included in the repertoire. The premiere of Jalil Mammadguluzade's tragicomedy "Olular" (The Dead)" took place on February 22, 1932, the production directors of the play were Janan and Rza Sheykhzade" (*Azizoglu, 2017, p. 4*).

From 1933, translated works – "Khatabala", "Zoren izdivaj" by Mammadali Nasir, "Arshin mal alan" by Uzeyir bey Hajibeyli were presented in a new format. In connection with political-ideological issues, cultural, artistic, and weak plays with no historical strength were also included in the repertoire. This was a moral blow to the theater. For this reason, the theater had to play "Inji (Pearl)" and such ideologically spirited performances.

Starting from 1934, seven new plays were prepared, "Almaz" by Yusif Yulduz Jafar Jabbarli, "Haji Kara" by Mirza Fatali Akhundzade of Bakhshi Qalandarli, "Mashadi Ibad" by Uzeyir bey Hajibeyli, "Greedy (Tamahkar)" by Suleyman Sani Akhundov, "Peri jadu (The Fairy Witch)" by Abdurrahim bey Hagverdiev. , Mammadbagir Karakhanov and Ali Zeynalov Shirvanzade's staged "Namus". "Being forced to do so, the theater preferred small-scale translations for regional tours. On the other hand, the Armenian government pressured the theater to include these works in its repertoire. Performances of vaudeville-comedy and sentimental dramas brought a vague atmosphere to the creative climate of the art center. On the other hand, such attempts led the collective to the monotony of the subject, took it away from genre searches and faced creative difficulties for the actors. The translated and modified one-act plays "Ganli vadi (Bloody Valley)", "Muqaddas sadet (Holy Bliss)", "Son kebin", "Brave Nesir" found their way into the repertoire" (*Azizoglu, 2017, p. 7*).

In 1935, the play "Olular (The Dead)" made a memorable performance in the history of Irevan theater. The play directed by Isfandiyar Huseynov (under the artistic direction of Bakhshi Qalandarli) received better reviews (April 9). At that time, the famous Armenian, Russian and Georgian actors of Irevan competed with each other for the performance of the "Olular (The Dead)" play, which became a real sensation, and the wonderful scene of Dagestani and Nuri.

"On April 14, 1928, Moliere's play "Zoren tabib" was staged by actor Yunis Nuri and director Mkrtych Janan. The same year, the theater received state status and began to operate. Along with Y. Nuri, actors such as Mammadbagir Garakhanov, Zarik Teryan, Kazim Ziya, Gafar Haggı, Ismayil Dagestanli, Ali Zeynalov, Nvard Alikhanyan, Jamil Aliyev, and directors such as Bakhshi Galandarli and Ali Shahsabahli worked in the theater. In 1935, the theater was named after the famous playwright Jafar Jabbarli. Playwright's play "Aydin" was successfully played on the stage of the theater at that time. Beginning in 1948, the process of forced resettlement of the Azerbaijani population living in Irevan and its surrounding regions to Azerbaijan had its effect on the theater, and in 1949 the theater was moved to Basarkechar district of

Goycha district. After one year of activity there, the work of the theater was stopped and instead a folk theater was organized on that base" (Tragedies of 1948-1953 and 1988-1991 years, 2016).

In 1967, as a result of the efforts of intellectuals, Yunis Rzayev, the first secretary of the Basarkecher district party committee, and Shikhali Gurbanov, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, the Irevan State Azerbaijan Drama Theater named after J.Jabbarli was re-created (or restored) by the decision of the government and moved to the capital city of Irevan.

Hard days continued after the deportation. Spontaneity and action have arisen. The moral monument to the theater was heavily affected by this tragedy. In 2012, the theater collective, which regularly communicates with the people of Lachin, performed in front of the settlers with the scriptwriter Hidayat's play "Vatandan agirdi vatanin yuku... (The burden of the motherland is heavier...)" in the next season, and presented the play dedicated to the forced deportation of our compatriots from Western Azerbaijan, the current Republic of Armenia, at the end of the 20th century.

"In the play staged with the participation of People's Artist Tamilla Abdullayeva, Honored Artist Vagif Karimov and other young actors, the unimaginable misfortunes brought upon our people by the Armenians who settled in our historical lands from time to time were reflected" (*C. Cabbarlı adına İrevan Dövlət Azərbaycan Dram Teatrı 130-cu mövsümündə laçınlıların qonağı olmuşdur*, 2012).

"President İlham Aliyev's decrees on holding the 125th anniversary of the Irevan Azerbaijan Drama Theater on August 30, 2006, and the 125th anniversary of the Ulukhanli school of Irevan district on December 29, 2006, are of great importance in the development of our national and moral values" (*Aliyev*, 2021).

Since 1989, the theater troupe continues to operate in the theater studio of the Azerbaijan Drama Theater in Baku. In 1994, the theater was given state status again. On October 16, 2007, by order of the president, the jubilee of the theater was celebrated at the Azerbaijan State Musical Comedy Theater in Baku. Irevan State Azerbaijan Theater continues its performances in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Dagestan and Turkey. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of National Leader Heydar Aliyev, the play "Nurlu omrun anları (Moments of a bright life)" by the creative team of the Irevan State Azerbaijan Theater named after Jafar Jabbarli is currently being received with interest in many regions of Azerbaijan.

In 2023, in the Zagatala District Cultural Center, Yevlakh City Cultural Center branch, in the City Creative House, Mingachevir State Drama Theater, on the stage of the Tartar Regional Cultural Center, in the event hall of the Culture Center operating under the authority of the Kurdamir Regional Cultural Department, Beylagan Regional Representation, in Ujar, Imishli, etc. The poet-playwright İftikhar's performance "Nurlu omrun anları (Moments of bright life)" was presented to the district community.

İftikhar Piriye is the production director, artist and music composer of the play. "Honored artist" Esmiralda Shahbazova, Niyamaddin Safaraliyev, Natig Haziye, Sevinj Huseynova, Bahruz Jabarzadeh, Arzuman Tarverdi, Guney Aliyeva, Parvin Dadashova, Khadija Mammadova, Sevinj Bakhtiyar and Zaki Fataliyev participated in the performance. The actors conveyed the memorable moments of the genius leader's life to the audience with poetic expressions. Their speeches were met with applause.

3. Conclusion

The theater also goes on foreign tours. The historical drama "Konullar mulkunun sultani-Sheykh Nizami Ganjavi (Sultan of Hearts – Sheikh Nizami Ganjavi)", which embodies the life and creativity of the great Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi by the honored cultural worker, doctor of philosophy on art studies İftikhar Piriyeu, was performed on the stage of the Provincial Musical Drama Theater of Samarkand, one of the oldest cities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, staged in the production of the Honored Artist of Azerbaijan Sarvar Aliyev " (*Nizami Gəncəviyə həsr olunmuş tamaşa Özbəkistan səhnəsində*, 2023).

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