# "BABEŞ-BOLYAI" UNIVERSITY OF CLUJ-NAPOCA FACULTY OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY DOCTORAL SCHOOL "HISTORY. CIVILISATION. CULTURE."

### SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS

## CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN AND ROMANIA

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**Keywords:** Azerbaijan and Romania, international relations, cultural relations, cultural organizations, Romanian literature in Azerbaijani, Azerbaijani literature in Romanian, Romanian travellers in Azerbaijan, travel notes from Romania, Azerbaijani musicians, Romanian painters.

#### INTRODUCTION

In the modern political world Romania and Azerbaijan are considered befriended countries and close economic partners. We can talk about relations of friendship between Romania and Azerbaijan in various fields since the 50s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however there is documented evidence, even though it is scarce, that the relationship between the two countries began in the classic medieval age. Uzun Hasan (1468-1503), the head of the state Aggoyunlu had relations with Stephen the Great (1433-1504) of Moldavia, the implementation of which is attested during the time of the Safavid dynasty (1501-1736). These relations have an important place in the history of Azerbaijani diplomacy<sup>1</sup>.

We note that the participation of the Moldavian lord, Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723) in the military campaign of Peter the Great in the Caspian Sea province is considered the first cultural contact between the two countries. In 1722 D. Cantemir printed the "Manifest" of czar Peter I. for the local population in several languages including the Azeri language. We provide details on this event in Chapter 1.

It should be noted that after the collapse of the USSR, Romania was the second country after Turkey to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1991. The first Azerbaijani embassy in Eastern Europe began operating in 2001 in Bucharest. According to some sources, the two countries signed an agreement of 56 political, economic and humanitarian provisions<sup>2</sup>. It is, however, interesting to see that political relations between Azerbaijan and Romania are based on *cultural relations*, which have been established since the early 50s within the USSR. Therefore, in this thesis we intend to show as many aspects of the relations between Romania and Azerbaijan as possible, dating from their early mentioning and up to the present day. We could not cover the period up to the Second World War, given the restricted access to sources that could provide quantitative information on the development of bilateral relations between Romania and Azerbaijan.

After the war, the relations between the two countries were directly supervised by Moscow. During the communist regimes, both closer ties and less close relations of Moscow's satellite states, as well as the breaking of these relations have depended on the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See: Mahmudov, Y., *Azərbaycan Diplomatiyası*. *Ağqoyunlu və Səfəvi dövlətlərinin Avropa ölkələri ilə əlaqələri* (XV-XVII yüzilliklər), Ed: Təhsil, Bakı, 2006

http://mfa.gov.az/files/file/Azerbaycan - Ruminiya munasibetleri 08.09.2014.pdf - accessed on 24.05.2016

duration of relations between politicians. In the last 10 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the history of both countries was marked by major political reforms that contributed to large changes in the evolution of domestic and foreign policy. International relations were conducted from a quite different perspective, although a new period has begun in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The reason why I chose to investigate cultural relations between Romania and Azerbaijan is based on my passion for both literature and culture in general, as well as the fact that I encountered throughout my research, i.e. the lack of studies in this field. Thus, cultural relations between Azerbaijan and Romania are an unpublished topic that has not been investigated until now. Unfortunately, in neither of the two countries has there been any kind of special research that would address the topic from a scientific perspective. Given the special role of cultural relations in the time of strengthening of the political and economic relations between the two countries, we found it necessary to conduct a study on "Cultural relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Romania".

The source material upon which our research is based mostly comprises the Soviet period, during which the most intense cultural relations between Romania and Azerbaijan took place. Information on the relations between Romania and Azerbaijan were found in the works of Azerbaijani authors: Elmira Huseynova, Gullu Memmedova, Hacı Hacıyev, Bahadur Bilalov, Musa Gasîmlî, to name just a few<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, the modern or post-Soviet period raises numerous issues, given the small number of studies concerned with cultural relations between Romania and Azerbaijan in this period.

On the Romanian side, there are numerous studies about the political relations between the USSR and Romania. In some works researches of issues on cultural and humanitarian relations between two countries can be found. A separate work about the relationships of different Union Republics with Romania is a very rare case.

əlaqələrdə (1946-1990), Avtoreferat, Bakı, 1992.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See:Гусейнова, Э., Участие Азербайджанской ССР в научно-культурных связях СССР с социалистическими странами Европы (1959-1965 гг.), Автореферат, Баку, 1975); Мамедова, Г., Литературеые связи Азербайджана с Молдовой (40-е – 80-е годы XX века), На правах рукописи, Баку, 1991; Гаджиев, Г., Участие Советского Азербайджана в международном экономическом, научно-техническом и культурном сотрудничество СССР (1966-1980 гг.), Баку, 1991; Билалов, Б., Деятельность Азербайджанского Общество Дружбы и Культурные связи с зарубежными странами по осуществлению сотрудничества с народами стран восточной Европы (1958-1999 гг.), Автореферат, Баку, 1992; Qasımlı, М., Azərbaycan beynəlxalq mədəni

The studies conducted so far in Romanian on cultural relations between the two countries complement existing studies referring mostly to the Soviet period<sup>4</sup>. Authors like Fahri Kerimli, Hamza Kerimli, Tebriz Garayev, Elhan Sayadov, Samire Imanova, supported by various education and research institutions in Azerbaijan investigated Romania's relations with post-Soviet states and the states of the Caucasus. These works mostly deal with energy security and unfinished military conflicts.

Among the few Romanian studies reflecting Romanian-Azerbaijani relations is the work of Stamate Marius Gerald "Romania's Relations with the Countries South of the Caucasus (1991-2001)", which presents Romania's relations with the countries of the eastern Caucasus area. One of the works our research was based on is the study of Luminița Letiția Constantin, "Tools of Cultural Agitation between 1944 and 1954. ARLUS, Russian Book Publishing and Book Policies" (2009). In this study, the author addresses the important role played by ARLUS (Romanian Association for Closer Ties with the Soviet Union) in Romanian social life.

As the title of the thesis suggests, the cultural relations between Azerbaijan and Romania and the humanitarian relations between these two countries make up the *dissertation topic*. Therefore, by this study we intend to contribute to the perception and quantification of the spiritual wealth of these two countries, to the awareness of the obstacle represented by the disappearance of national freedom that is so intensely defended by people in the age of rapid globalization and to the revealing of mutual bilateral relations between the two countries, which have friendly relations in spite of the distance between them.

The main aim of this paper is to show the importance of exploring and knowing the history and current culture of the two countries, as these countries have a very close relationship. Bilateral relations between the two countries are exceptional, and this favours the sustainable and fruitful development of cultural relations. Although the Republic of Azerbaijan and Romania do not have common borders, nor can we argue

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See: Kerimli, H., Substantiation of investment decision in the oil industry, Universitară, Bucureşti, 2009; Kerimli, F., Relațiile dintre Republica Azerbaidjan și România (1993-2004), Top Form, Bucureşti, 2010; Garayev, T., Relațiile Romaniei cu statele din Caucazul de Sud, Top Form, Bucureşti, 2014; Саядов, Э., Азербайджанская культура в системе международных духовных отношениях (1980-1990), На правах рукописи, Баку, 2003; İmanova, S., Rumıniya-Azərbaycan münasibətləri (1991-2011-ci illər), Avtoreferat, 2014.

that they have shared a common history from ancient times until today, the not too distant socialist past and modern economic gains offer them an important contact area. Given these underlying issues of bilateral relations, the need for the research of bilateral-relation-development between the two countries and the two peoples is imperative.

The methodology used in developing this thesis was based on the identification of published and unpublished sources and the decryption, transliteration, separation of the information, the translation, processing and comparison with other sources, the scientific processing of the subject matter. The thesis "Cultural Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Romania" present the history of cultural relations between the two countries based largely on unpublished materials. Since the theme is a unique research initiative both in cultural and scientific, and in the diplomatic area, the research results obtained by implementing the methodological approaches described will constitute a veritable methodological basis for future research.

For developing this thesis several sources were used belonging to funds of the Babeş-Bolyai University Library, the National Library of Azerbaijan M.F. Akhundzade, the State Library of St. Petersburg, the Romanian Academy Library - Bucharest, the Azerbaijan Academy Library, the Romanian Academy Library - branch Cluj-Napoca. Moreover, online sources of the catalogues of the libraries in Moscow and Iaşi were accessed and works of the personal archives of translators, researchers and artists from the two countries in question, Azerbaijan and Romania, were investigated.

This thesis contains four chapters. Chapter I, *Cultural relations as a part of bilateral relations*, provides information on Culturology, the dissemination of culture in the world, starting with the analysis of expansion as a general matter and going on to its particular aspects; moreover, the stages of development of cultural relations between Azerbaijan and Romania are handled here. In this chapter we provide a presentation of organizations through which cultural relations were carried out. Chapter II, *The role of the publication of volumes as a strategy to promote cultural heritage*, provides an analysis of the books published on literature, history, folklore etc., printed in Romania and Azerbaijan in the time of cultural relations between the two countries. Chapter III, *The role of the artistic elites in the strategy of amplifying Romanian-Azerbaijani cultural relations* details the relations between musicians, painters, actors, singers, as

well as relations in education and sports. Chapter IV, called *The contribution of civil society representatives to humanitarian relations* begins with the processing of travel notes gathered in the two countries. In the investigation process a series of notes about the voyages of writers, journalists, students, engineers, doctors etc. were selected and processed. Several books and articles have been written on this topic.

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#### **Oral inquiries**

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Mr. prof. dr. Nevzat Yusuf Sarigol, turkologist, translator of Azerbaijani literature.

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