

Gilman Salakhov's Role and Importance in Azerbaijani Music Culture

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Azerbaijani music has been created and polished by the people for centuries, and reflects the people's spiritual strength, desire for freedom, ideas, and hopes. Azerbaijani music has been passed down from generation to generation, lived in oral traditions, and has always been distinguished by its antiquity and rich culture. Many concepts have emerged in the musical-aesthetic-concepts of antiquity and the Middle Ages, and categories of aesthetic analysis of music have been formed. Music and musical aesthetics have historically been widespread, and have shaped various socio-cultural forms in a forward-looking way. The rich musical heritage created in different periods since ancient times are undoubtedly a proof of the genetic talent inherent in every generation of the Azerbaijani people. Our national musical instruments, adapted to the emotional color, rhythm, tempo and art of Azerbaijani folk music, have passed a long historical development and brought many aspects of traditional music performance and creativity to the present day. They are one of the elements that connect the future of our musical culture with the past. Traditional music and musical instruments, which are still played today, reflect the main features of Azerbaijan's national musical thinking and artistic creativity. Information on komuz and kilkomuz, the ancestors of stringed and plectrum musical instruments in the origin and development of Azerbaijani folk musical instruments, is also found in examples of oral folk art, in the all-Turkic monument "Kitabi-Dada Gorgud". According to written sources, 88 musical instruments, including 32 string and 23 wind instruments, were widely used in Azerbaijani performing arts. Information about this is found in the chronicles of ancient historians, in the works of medieval thinkers Safiaddin Urmavi, Abdulgadir Maragayi, Dervish Ali Changi, Qatran Tabrizi, and others on musicology.

Keywords: music, culture, Song and Dance Ensemble, kamancheh, concert

Introduction

Numerous types of percussion, wind and stringed instruments, which date back to long before our era, have developed and improved throughout history and formed the basis of our national musical treasury. Pearls of this treasure have served the cultural development and creative activity of our people for centuries, adorned its life and traditions (Alasgarov & Abdullayeva, 1996, p. 47). The role of the genius composer, publicist and public figure Uzeyir Hajibayli in the development of musical instruments, which has a prominent place in the history of the 20th century Azerbaijani national music, is unparalleled. He characterized the national musical instruments, gave their classification and sound sequence, and determined the prospects for future development.

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There have been people who have a special place in the development of our musical culture history, one of whom is Gilman Salakhov, a prominent composer, conductor, artistic director of the Azerbaijan State Song and Dance Ensemble, Honored Art Worker, who graduated from the genius Uzeyir Hajibayli School.



Figure 1. Gylman Salakhov.

Gilman Salakhov was born on March 16, 1906 in the village of Balakhani. His father Balamammad was an entrepreneur. He had oil fields in Zabrat and Sabunchu. As Gylman was the only son born after six daughters, his father built a three-story house in his honor in the city, behind the present-day Nizami metro station, on Zargarpalan Street. At the age of three years, Gylman and his family moved into the house and began living in the city. As a child, Gylman got acquainted with our genius composer Uzeyir Hajibayli, who laid the foundation of Azerbaijani music culture. Gylman's uncle, a tarplayer Aganasim, who lost his father at an early age, took him to Uzeyir Bay, and said that he had a strong sense of music. Uzeyir Bay also advised him to study the cello in the class of Leopold Rostropovich (Mstislav Rostropovich's father). After studying in that class for a year, Uzeyir Bay saw that it was difficult for a child to play this instrument and gave him his kamancheh in his office. Gilman Salakhov's love for kamancheh later enabled him to study kamancheh at the Azerbaijan State Turkish Music School founded by Uzeyir Bay and the Baku Secondary Specialized Music School named after Asaf Zeynalli (now the College of Music). In 1927, when he was a student, Ahmad Bakikhanov created the ensemble "Soloists" inside the school. Gilman Salakhov played the kamancheh in that ensemble.



Figure 2. The first Azerbaijani folk instruments orchestra. 1932 - from left to right Uzeyir Hajibayli, Said Rustamov, Alovzat Sadigov, Gylman Salakhov, Bahram Mansurov, Khosrov Malikov.

When Gilman Salakhov graduated from music school, Uzeyir Bay advised him to stay in school and open a kamancheh class with notes and teach here. Gylman does not disobey his master, hides in his heart the desire to continue his education at the conservatory, and begins his pedagogical activity. Thus, from 1932 to 1952, he taught kamancheh at the Baku Secondary Music School named after Asaf Zeynalli (now the College of Music) and developed a curriculum.

At the beginning of the 20th century, our genius composer Uzeyir Hajibayli turned folk music into notes, and in 1931, he created the first-note Azerbaijan Folk Instruments Orchestra under the Radio Broadcasting Committee. Along with Gilman Salakhov, members of the orchestra included Said Rustamov, Alovzat Sadigov, Bahram Mansurov, Khosrov Malikov, and others. In addition to continuing his pedagogical activity, Gilman Salakhov played the kamancheh in the orchestra, and also worked as the editor-in-chief of music in the Radio Broadcasting Committee (Hajibayli, 1965, p. 14). Fortunately, a vivid picture of his life remains in a newsreel from those years. In this newsreel covering Azerbaijani art, Gilman Salakhov accompanied 75-year-old Jabbar Garyaghdiloglu on the kamancheh, and Gurban Pirimov accompanied the percussion mugham "Heyrati" as a tar player.

Composer Agabaji Rzayeva's sister, kamancheh player Rugiyya Rzayeva, recalled those years:

In 1926, when Radio Broadcasting started in Baku, a lot of space was given to musical numbers. The performers were accompanied by a trio of tar, kamancheh and dayereh. In this trio, Khosrov Malikov mainly played on tar, Gilman Salakhov played on kamancheh, and Khalig Babayev played on the dayereh. (Rzayeva, 2001, pp. 117-119)



Figure 3. From left to right Jabbar Garyaghdiglu on drums, Gurban Pirimov on tar and Gylman Salakhov on kamancheh.

Gilman Salakhov was considered one of the best kamancheh players in the country in the thirties and is remembered as the best performer of “Shushtar”, “Dugah”, and “Yetim Segah” mughams. He works as a soloist and concertmaster in various ensembles (Abdullazade, 1996, p. 168).

In fact, the choir led by Uzeyir Bay was conducting. The great composer's wife, Maleyka khanum, often said: “Gylman Salakhov was Uzeyir Bay's most educated, most talented and most loyal student”. One of the reasons for Gilman Salakhov's closeness to Uzeyir Bay was that they were neighbors. They often left the philharmonic hall together and walked to Polukhin Street.

Miraculous songs and dances, ashiq tunes, subtleties of mugham art were performed by famous Azerbaijani performers and singers. Out of this need, in 1936, Uzeyir Hajibayli created the “Song and Dance Ensemble” at the Azerbaijan State Philharmonic named after M. Magomaev. In 1938, Uzeyir Hajibayli appointed his assistant conductor, choirmaster, kamancheh player Gilman Salakhov as the artistic director of the ensemble. Gilman Salakhov, who started working as the art director of the Song and Dance Ensemble, played a great role in the further development, recognition and popularity of this ensemble. He went to the regions of Azerbaijan, selected talented young performers and dancers, attracted them to this ensemble, and devoted his strength and energy to the prosperity of this ensemble day by day (Hajibayli & Guliyev, 1959, p. 11).

Prominent music researcher Firudin Shushinsky wrote:

Gylman Salakhov spared no effort and ability to develop folk music traditions. He had a great contribution to the organization of musical theater performances, the revival of wedding festivities, one of the ancient and poetic traditions of Azerbaijan, on the stage. (Chamenli, 2014, p. 113)

As an artistic director, Gylman Salakhov took into account all the specifics of the ensemble, he composed songs and duets for the harmonious functioning of both the choir, solo and dance groups, and worked day and night to enrich the repertoire. He learned folk songs and folk dances from the people's speech and wrote music sheets: *Alimda Sazın Gurban*, *Ay Gozal*, *Galma*, *Muleyli*, *Gashangi*, *Turacı*, *Lala*, *Gazaghi*, etc. can be shown.

People's Artist of Azerbaijan Amina Dilbazi was one of the dancers who entered the Azerbaijan Song and Dance Ensemble at a young age. Amina Dilbazi has been a soloist of a Song and Dance Ensemble since 1936 and a leader of a dance group in different years and has organized many dances.

Gylman Salakhov wrote "Naz elama" and "Gavalla rags" dances especially for Amina Dilbazi. Gylman Salakhov's daughter writes about this in her memoirs:

Mrs. Amina was a soloist of the song and dance ensemble led by my father. They were connected by a very strong collaboration. In fact, they were family friends; Mrs. Amina often came to see us with Mr. Jevdet and spent most of the holidays with us. My father Gilman Salakhov wrote many dances for Amina. The most famous of them is the "Gavalla rags" dance, with which Amina khanum conquered almost the whole world.

Amina Dilbazi and the ensemble toured the People's Republic of China, the People's Republic of Mongolia, the Central Asian Republics, and other countries. In 1959, the Azerbaijan State Song and Dance Ensemble under the leadership of Gilman Salakhov performed successfully at the 10-day Decade of Azerbaijani Literature and Art in Moscow. In that decade, Amina Dilbazi performed Gylman Salakhov's "Lyric" dance. *The Soviet Culture* newspaper wrote about this on June 4, 1959. After returning from the decade, Amina Dilbazi was awarded the honorary title of People's Artist of the Azerbaijan SSR.

In 1938, the Decade of Culture and Arts of the Republic of Azerbaijan was held in Moscow. During this decade, the Song and Dance Ensemble also performed successfully. Due to these successful performances, the ensemble was later given the State Status and renamed the "Azerbaijan State Song and Dance Ensemble". In 1939, at the suggestion of Uzeyir Hajibayli, Gilman Salakhov (as a kamancheh player) became the laureate of the first All-Union Performing Competition in Moscow. In 1940, Gilman Salakhov was awarded the honorary title of Honored Art Worker of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on June 13, 1958, by the decision of the in 1938, the Decade of Culture and Arts of the Republic of Azerbaijan was held in Moscow. During this decade, the Song and Dance Ensemble also performed successfully. Due to these successful performances, the ensemble was later given the State Status and renamed the "Azerbaijan State Song and Dance Ensemble". In 1939, at the suggestion of Uzeyir Hajibayli, Gilman Salakhov (as a kamancheh player) became the laureate of the first All-Union Performing Competition in Moscow. In 1940, Gilman Salakhov was awarded the honorary title of Honored Art Worker of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on June 13, 1958, by the decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR, the ensemble was named "Honored Collective of Azerbaijan".

In 1942, the epic *Dada Gorgud* was prepared in the genre of choreographic performance based on the libretto of A. Demirchizade. The music of these musical performances, which belonged to G. Salakhov and J. Jahangirov, had a great influence on the soldiers on the front, the spirit of chivalry and crazy style of performance. During the Great Patriotic War, the composition "Dada Gorgud" became a new stage in our dance history. Dancers—Azerbaijani heroes impressed the enemy with their impressive rhythms and dances, rhythmic melodic words, knightly anthem and wonderful games, instilled in our soldiers the fighting spirit and courage to achieve victory over the enemy as soon as possible. Dances of "Dada Gorgud" separate battle scenes were developed in a modern form and aroused a new attacking spirit in the warriors. In December 1944, during the

in the heat of the war, a decade of Azerbaijani literature and art was held in Georgia. On December 22, *Dawn of the East* newspaper reported on the successful performance of the composition "Dada Gorgud" by the Azerbaijan State Song and Dance Ensemble, which arrived in Georgia.



Figure 4. 10-day Decade of Culture and Arts of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Moscow 1959—from right to left Amina Dilbazi, Gylman Salakhov, Tofiq Guliyev.

For the first time in the Soviet Union, in 1958, the Azerbaijan State Song and Dance Ensemble visited China with a big concert program. The ensemble, which has performed 42 concerts in China, performed not only Azerbaijani songs and dances, but also Chinese folk songs and dances. Among the members of the ensemble were People's Artist of the Republic of Azerbaijan Rubaba Muradova, and among the dancers were People's Artists Boyukagha Mammadov, Alibaba Abdullayev, Amina Dilbazi, and Roza Jalilova. The ensemble, which toured China for three months, was extremely successful. Azerbaijani folk dances, established in the national spirit, were met with great love by the Chinese people. Gilman Salakhov's dances "Nalbaki", "Lyrical dance", and "Naz elama" won the sympathy of the Chinese audience. Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of China Joy En-laem personally attended the concert and met with all members of the ensemble (including Gylman Salakhov) and asked the additional ensemble to stay in China for 10 days. The Chinese newspaper *Jemin Gibao* daily published detailed information about the activities of the ensemble. From there, the ensemble was invited to the neighboring country, the People's Republic of Mongolia, where they gave successful concerts for 20 days. After returning from the tour, articles about the ensemble's successful performances were published in the newspapers "True", "Communist", and "Baku Worker": "Azerbaijan State Song and Dance Ensemble impressed the Chinese audience with its national music and dances". Their speech gave an impetus to the strengthening of Sino-Soviet friendship.

Gylman Salakhov tried his hand at composing, despite the ensemble's complex and intense work. He is the author of the famous "Nalbaki" dance.



Figure 5. Music sheets of Nalbaki dance.

In addition, he wrote “Sevgilim”, “Turacı”, “Lala”, “Gavalla rags”, “Naz elama”, and “Gashangi” dances. Amina Dilbazi traveled all over the world with “Gavalla rags” and “Naz elama” dances. Amina Dilbazi and People’s Artist of the USSR Mahmud Esembayev danced in the film *I Will Dance!* (1962) directed by People’s Artist of Azerbaijan, prominent director Tofiq Taghizade. Gylman Salakhov was also known for his music for the Azerbaijan Folk Instruments Orchestra, such as the “Bulag bashinda” suite, “Bir bagchanin chicaklari”, and “Azerbaijan toyu”. His songs “Konul verdim” and “Birdanasan” were also popular in those years. People’s Artists of Azerbaijan Alibaba Abdullayev and LeilaBadirbayli both performed the dance of “Birdanasan” and sang with the choir:

A keepsake from my mother;
I have a ring on my finger;
Let me give it to you;
Be for me Nigar...



Figure 6. While ensemble members are on tour in China.

People's Artist of Azerbaijan Leila Badirbayli wrote in her memoirs:

The dance "Birdanasan" that I played in the most beautiful age of my life will never be erased from my memory. The topic here was very interesting. It was a very funny and interesting playful dance. So here we were both singing and dancing. Although I did not have a voice, it looked very interesting against the background of Alibaba. These first steps later connected us more to our art of dance. (Abdullayeva, 2015, p. 151)

Dances are one of the most widespread and ancient genres of Azerbaijani folk music and folklore. The fact that the art of dance has a centuries-old history is due to the emergence of "yalli", which is one of the main branches of our folk dances. There are many sources about the deep roots of "yalli" in Azerbaijan. Thus, rock carvings in Gobustan, images of people dancing around the circle on Mount Gamigaya in Ordubad, human figures playing yalli on various objects found during archeological excavations, as a result of years of research by historians and scientists. Gilman Salakhov also addressed the yalli dance—one of the oldest examples of ceremonial dance in Azerbaijan. His "yalli" is a two-part yalli. This dance, which was first created under the name "Yalli", was composed by Alibaba Abdullayev. After the establishment of the Chinar folk dance ensemble at the Azerbaijan State Medical Institute named after N. Narimanov in 1959, a new structure was given to the yalli by the head of the ensemble, People's Artist, choreographer-dancer Amina Dilbazi. At first, it was called "Nakhchivan Yallisi", and then was named "Baku Yallisi" (Bahmanli, 2018, p. 87).

I

Andante

II

Vivo

Figure 7. Music Sheets of “Baku Yallisi”.

In addition, Gilman Salakhov is the author of the dance “Goychayi”. He wrote this dance for the performance of a dance group in the late 1950s. For the first time, the melody of the game was used by the famous dancer-choreographer Alibaba Abdullayev in the dance composition “Friendship”. The melody of the dance is 6/8 measure; the note is written in allegro tempo (Bahmanli, 2019, p. 54).



Figure 8. Music Sheets of "Baku Goychayi".

Gilman Salakhov and maestro Niyazi together wrote a work entitled "Bir bagchanin chicaklari". Currently, this work is stored in the Gold Fund of the Sound Library of Azerbaijan Broadcasting Closed Joint-Stock Company.

Accompanied by Gilman Salakhov on kamancheh, he took part in concerts, public holidays, and festivities in the regions of Azerbaijan with such famous singers as Khan Shushinsky, Zulfi Adigozalov, Said Shushinsky, Rubaba Muradova, Shovkat Alakbarova, Tukazban Ismailova, and others.

In 1959, Moscow hosted the second 10-day Decade of Culture and Arts of the Republic of Azerbaijan. People's artists of the republic, dancers Amin Dilbazi, Roza Jalilova, dancer Alibala Abdullayev and composer Tofiq Guliyev, led by the artistic director of the State Song and Dance Ensemble Gilman Salakhov, also performed this decade. In the same decade, Khan Shushinsky, Shovkat Alakbarova, Sarah Gadimova sang "The Karabakh Tragedy". The ensemble was greeted with thunderous applause for a successful performance in this decade.

Gylman Salakhov worked day and night to create the "The girls playing the saz" ensemble under the auspices of the "Song and Dance Ensemble" for the further development of the ensemble. Soloists of the ensemble—Rahila Hasanova, Elmira Rahimova and others performed with their repertoire on tours in cities and regions. They also sang "Ashiq song" and "Ashiqvari" songs written by Gylman Salakhov to the words of Ashigh Mammad.

Gilman Salakhov, composing songs for the poems of Mammad Rakhim "Konul Verdim" and Soltan Dadashov "Birdanasan", established a creative activity with them.

Gylman Salakhov also continued his teaching career. He was one of the first teachers to teach kamancheh in the music class at the Music College named after Asaf Zeynalli. His students were Honored Artists of the Republic of Azerbaijan Talat Bakikhanov, Hafiz Mirzabayov, Rugiyya Rzayeva (Agabaji Rzayeva's sister), Firuz Alizade and others. One of his students, Rugiyya Rzayeva, wrote about her teacher:

Gilman Salakhov taught his students not only to play kamancheh correctly, how to properly keep the kamancheh on the knee, how to moving fingers on a kamancheh strings, the position of the arm relative to the arm of the kamancheh, and most importantly, how the player should slide the bow's hairs onto the strings, while simultaneously moving his other hand's fingers on the strings tuning the sound. Gilman Salakhov was distinguished by one feature from other masters of this instrument, since he carefully held the bow on his hand, and the other wrist rubbed against the strings, moving it back and forth, like a dancer's wrist, so the sound of the instrument sounded sad and heartbreaking. (Rzayeva, 2001, pp. 117-118)

In addition to all this, Gilman Salakhov suffered from heart disease. He died in hospital on October 12, 1974, of heart failure. After his death, a special corner was set aside in the Ahmad Bakikhanov House Museum to immortalize the memory of Gilman Salakhov. Gylman Salakhov's kamancheh, manuscripts, personal belongings and photos are kept in that corner. The people of Azerbaijan do not forget their artisan, they come to the museum to commemorate him, and they commemorate the immortal Gilman Salakhov.

I also visited the National Archives of the Republic of Azerbaijan to get acquainted with the archives of Gilman Salakhov, got acquainted with his personal archive, obtained manuscripts and necessary information. In addition, I met his children and filmed their memories of their fathers.

The people of Azerbaijan are happy that the school of such a genius composer as Uzeyir Hajibayli, the founder of our musical culture, is still alive and will live in the memory of our people.

Summary

In the early 20th century, the founder of Azerbaijani music Uzeyir Hajibayli in 1936, the year created Song and Dance Ensemble. He gave this ensemble to his assistant Gylman Salakhova appointing him head of the Song and Dance Ensemble. Gylman Salakhov 25 years and led the team that brought him the status of State Ensemble. In addition to the fact that Gylman Salakhov is the artistic director of this encamble, he also wrote "Gavalla rags" and "Naz elama" especially for Amina Dilbazi, National Artist of Azerbaijan and USSR. Amina Dilbazi who was considered the princess of our dance scene, conquered the whole world these dances.

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