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## French Impressions in Theatre Works of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan\*

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### ABSTRACT

Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan is among the second wave writers of Tanzimat literature which became more modern with the impact of Western civilization in 19th century. There are two major arts in the basis of Tarhan's writing life. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan held many offices abroad with a diplomat title. He also found the opportunity to get closely acquainted with the literature of the country in the places he held office and reflected these novelties into his own art, especially influenced by the Western literature. Following some of the Turkish writers like Şinasi and Namık Kemal, who took example from French literature in Tanzimat era, Tarhan got more closely acquainted with French literature by residing in France during his childhood and in the later years. This experience affected his literary identity and caused him to create works that carry French impressions. In the study, three works of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan that French influence was observed were discussed. These works are the works of author that are called Nesteren, Liberté and Sabr u Sebat. Abdülhak Hâmid was fascinated by the tragedy play he saw in Paris. It is observed that Tarhan's theatre Nesteren carries a lot of similarities with the founder of the French tragedy Pierre Corneille's play Le Cid. In Liberté, Tarhan dealt with the basic concepts of the French Revolution, such as nation, homeland, freedom, liberty, justice, and so on. His theatre Sabr u Sebat carries traces of the years in which Tarhan lived in Paris. In this play, the locations where the event took place were selected as Rumeli, Istanbul and Paris. In the study, document analysis and the results were analyzed by dramaturgical analysis.

**Key Words:** Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, theatre, France, French impression

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## **Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan' ın Tiyatro Eserlerinde Fransız Etkisi\***

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### **ÖZET**

Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, 19. yüzyılda Batı uygarlığının etkisiyle yenileşen Tanzimat edebiyatının ikinci kuşak yazarları arasında yer almaktadır. Tarhan'ın yazı hayatının temelinde iki sanat yer almaktadır. Bunlar şiir ve tiyatro sanatıdır. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, diplomat kimliği ile yurtdışında birçok ülkede görev yapmıştır. Görev yaptığı yerlerde, o ülkenin edebiyatını da yakından tanıma imkânı bulmuş, özellikle Batı edebiyatından etkilenerek bu yenilikleri kendi sanatına yansıtmıştır. Tanzimat döneminde, Fransız edebiyatını örnek alan Şinasi, Namık Kemal gibi Türk edebiyatı yazarlarının izinden giden Tarhan, çocukluğunda ve daha sonraki yıllarda Fransa'da bulunarak Fransız edebiyatını yakından tanımıştır. Bu deneyim Tarhan'ın edebi kişiliğine etki etmiş ve Fransız izleri taşıyan eserler kaleme almasına yol açmıştır. Çalışmada Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan'ın Fransız etkisinin görüldüğü üç eseri ele alınmıştır. Bu eserler yazarın kaleme almış olduğu Nesteren, Liberté ve Sabr u Sebat adlı eserleridir. Abdülhak Hâmid, Paris'te izlediği trajediye hayran kalmış, bu türde denemeler yaparak Nesteren adlı eserini yazmıştır. Tarhan'ın yazmış olduğu Nesteren adlı tiyatro eserinin, Fransız trajedisinin kurucusu Pierre Corneille'in "Le Cid" adlı eseri ile konusu bakımından büyük benzerlik taşıdığı görülmektedir. Liberté adlı eserinde, Fransız ihtilalinin de temel kavramları olan millet, vatan, hürriyet, özgürlük, adalet gibi temaları ele alan Tarhan, eserde bu kavramları kişileştirerek işlemiştir. Sabr u Sebat adlı eseri Tarhan'ın Paris'te yaşadığı yılların izlerini taşımaktadır. Bu tiyatro eserinde olayın geçtiği mekân Rumeli, İstanbul ve Paris olarak seçilmiştir. Çalışmada doküman analizi ve eserler üzerinde dramaturjik açıdan incelenmesi yapılarak sonuca varılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, tiyatro, Fransa, Fransız etkisi

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## INTRODUCTION

Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan is one of the most important poets of his period, with a wide body of writings, who contributed to Turkish literature in Tanzimat era in the fields of poetry and theatre. He was born and raised into an established, educated and wealthy family in Bebek district, in 1852. Father of Abdülhak Hâmid's grandfather, Mehmet Emin Şükûhî was married to Nefise, the daughter of Hâfız Hayrullah Mehmet Effendi, who was the chief physician to Mustafa III. After this marriage, medicine in the chief physician rank was passed into the family of Şükûhî Effendi along with the madrasa education, resulting in the following generations to study medicine as well. Poetry, as well as the study of medicine handed down from generation to generation, continued to live in the family for years. It is known that Mehmet Emin Şükûhî Effendi, Tarhan's grandfather Abdülhak Molla and his father Hayrullah Effendi were also "poets" (Dizdaroğlu, 1965: 3).

Abdülhak Hâmid's father Hayrullah Effendi was tutored by some of the best hodjas along with a good madrasa education. Studied in Süleymaniye Madrasa, he then went to Imperial School of Medicine in Galatasaray. He held several high-level positions, appointed to the Directorate of Public Schools on June 24th, 1854. The highest order of the state, Order of the Medjidie, third class was given to him for his services in this position. Hayrullah Effendi wrote his book "Yolculuk Kitabı" (The Book of Travel) narrating his Europe trip after going to hot springs in Europe to get a treatment on April 5th, 1863. He was appointed to the Tehran legation on January 21st, 1865 (Gürsoy, 2002: X). It is possible to say that like poetry, the theatre curiosity of Tarhan, who played a tremendous role in breaking the tradition of old poetry in Tanzimat era, also came from his family. Abdülhak Hâmid's father Hayrullah Effendi translated a play called Rothomago from French into Turkish and wrote a play called "The Story of Ibrahim Pasha to Ibrahim-i Gülşenî" (Hikâye-i İbrahim Paşa ve İbrahim-i Gülşenî) (Dizdaroğlu, 1965: 5).

Tarhan's first trip to France was with his elder brother. Paris days with his brother Nasuhi Bey and later on with Hayrullah Effendi left a mark in Abdülhak Hâmid's works. He served as a diplomat in Paris later on his life and wrote about his memories here in his works.

## METHODOLOGY

In this study, document analysis and literature search were done in order to prove the French influence of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan in theatrical works. In the literature review, the personal life and works of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan were researched and the interaction between his works and the works of French literature authors he was influenced by was attempted to be revealed in the light of the data obtained. The works in the dramaturgical study were examined in detail within the terms of subject, characters, location, event and storyline and the French influence on them has been identified.

### 1. Life of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan

Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan was born in Bebek, in 1852. Not receiving a formal education, Tarhan was tutored at home along with his elder brother. Among his tutors were Evliya Hodja, Selim Sabit Effendi and Hodja Tahsin Effendi. Tarhan attended a neighbourhood school when he was five, however he expressed his dissatisfaction with the experience in these words: "I don't know why they sent me to the neighbourhood school, as if I was a neighbourhood child" (Enginün, 1986: 9). He went to Hisar Junior High School after leaving this one. When the childhood years of Abdülhak Hâmid are examined, it is seen that he was not educated in a serious and continuous discipline, that he got bored of the schools he attended and left his education undone, even though he came from a strictly educated family.

Traveling with his father and brother beginning from the early ages, Tarhan went to Paris in 1863 August with his brother Nasuhi Bey, Hodja Tahsin Effendi and Servant Omer Agha. From Istanbul to Paris, he saw different places, met many people got the chance to learn about their culture in this trip (Enginün, 1986: 10). Abdülhak Hâmid was astonished by what he saw when he arrived in Naples with his brother and other companions. This memory shows itself in his later works. After Tarhan asked, bewildered about the scene, his servant told him it was a forest fire.

Hodja Tahsin Effendi answered his question claiming, “both hell and heaven lie beneath the earth,” and answered the question of “when and where will we see heaven” as “we will see it when we arrive in Paris” and told this couplet (Enginün, 2013: 36):

“Paris’e git bir gün evvel, akl u fikrin var ise,  
Âleme gelmiş sayılmaz gitmeyenler Paris’e!”  
(Go to Paris right away, if you have good sense,  
Not yet born, those who haven’t been there!).

He stayed with his brother in a temporary apartment arranged for them after arriving in Paris. Touring the city, Abdülhak Hâmid saw the Tuilleries Palace, Louvre Museum, Paris panorama over Arc de Triomphe, Panthéon, Notre Dame and Madeleine Churches and Versailles Palace (Enginün, 2013: 45). Here, he was also able to follow the art scene closely with his brother. Reminiscing going to the theatre many times in Paris in his memoires, Tarhan writes seeing the battle play of “Historique de Marengo”, getting bored and not wanting to go back again (Enginün, 2013: 45). Settling and staying in Monsieur Le Prince apartment building for fifteen days, Tarhan and his brother later on lived in another apartment in Rue du Bac (Enginün, 2013: 47).

Abdülhak Hâmid enrolled in “Ecole National”, a school under the administration of Monsieur Hortous, after going to Paris. He attended this his boarding school in Paris approximately for one and a half years. However, the life here was dull to him because it was a boarding school (Özdemir, 1997: 12). He writes about this troublesome period in his memoirs as “I, the youngest Turk, was in the juniors’ class. I used to sleep along with eight other children my age at nights.” (Enginün, 2013: 48). Having lived a wealthy family life, Tarhan was displeased with staying at this school, wanted to throw himself out of the window a couple of times in the rooms of Yahya Effendi and Refik Bey, who were among his schoolmates, but abandoned the idea thinking that his parents in Istanbul would be very upset with the news (Enginün, 2013: 48).

Abdülhak Hâmid did not receive a continuous education throughout his life, abandoned the school he attended due to boredom. He enrolled to a day school when the boarding school life in Paris came too intense for him. He expressed a sadness after leaving the boarding school life, where he was getting used to eating and staying together with his friends, which began to seem more fun to him (Enginün, 2013: 49).

Paris ambassador at the time, Mustafa Reşid also took care of Abdülhak Hâmid, took him out to town as well as his brother Nasuhi Bey and Hodja Tahsin (Enginün, 1986: 43).

Abdülhak Hâmid got used to the enchanted atmosphere of Paris, talked about his experiences in detail in his memoires. Mentioning Boulevard Saint-Michel, Boulevard Sébastopol, Quai Voltaire, Quai d’Orsay and Place de la Concorde piazzas at length in his memoires, Tarhan described the places that impressed him in detail. Champs-Élysées, the famous boulevard of Paris, especially made a great impact on him, the Parisian scenery took place in his theatre plays and poems (Enginün, 2013: 39). Hayrullah Effendi also went to Paris a few months after the move, thus went away the distressed days of Tarhan and they

made many unforgettable memories there. Living in Rue du Bac street with his brother, Abdülhak Hâmid moved to an eight-room apartment in Rond Point du Champs-Élysées street on Matignon Avenue after Hayrullah Effendi arrived (Enginün, 2013: 50).

Hayrullah Effendi frequently went to the theatre with his son Abdülhak Hamid during his stay in Paris and mentioned them in “The European Travel Book” he wrote. There are some detailed depictions of many theatre buildings of Paris in his book; Théâtre Odéon, Théâtre Vaudville, Théâtre Italie, Théâtre Palais Royale are among these theatres described in The European Travels (Gürsoy, 2002: 141). Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan wrote about Hayrullah Effendi going to theatre often in his memoirs. He mentioned having dinner at a restaurant in Champs-Élysées with his father after school and then going to the theatre, mostly “Theatre Châtelet”. He wrote seeing “Rothomago” in this theatre, and that his father liked the play very much, so much that he translated it and partially included it in his book “The European Travels Book” (Enginün, 2013: 51). In his work, Hayrullah Effendi mentioned that he went to the theatre many times, however he could not include each of them in his travel book, writing “One of the plays I saw in Paris is this Rothomago, another one is Les Pillules de diable.. One of them (in other theatres as well) is the story of a Spanish King and a seraskier... Even though I saw other strange plays and symbolic stories as well, the idea of translating and describing them all in detail was abandoned since they could not have been included in this book” (Gürsoy, 2002: 159). Financial troubles began for Hayrullah Effendi and his sons after a year in Paris, elder brother Nasuhi Bey returned to Istanbul because of this, the servant began working and Hodja Tahsin Effendi had to reside in the legation. Abdülhak Hâmid had to be removed from school as a result of financial difficulties. Understanding that his removal from the school had its source in narrow circumstances, Tarhan described the situation as “I have finally been removed from school. Supposedly, an education of one and a half years was enough. However, in all fairness, this was an economic measure” in his memoirs (Enginün, 2013: 52). Hayrullah Effendi and his son Hâmid stayed in an apartment with a servant and a maid. Abdülhak Hâmid mentioned that his diamond ring, his pocket watch and chain may have been pawned or sold in his memoirs. Hâmid and Hayrullah Effendi returned to Istanbul after staying in Paris for a while due to financial problems (Enginün, 1986: 15).

Tarhan was enrolled to a French class in order for keeping his French alive after returning from Paris. He mentioned going to the French class at Robert College in Bebek (Enginün, 2013: 60). He was admitted to the Ottoman Porte Translation Office (Bâb-ı Âli Tercüme Odası) when 14 and went to Tehran due to his father’s job afterwards. Abdülhak Hâmid returned to Istanbul 1866, after his father passed away due to a heart attack in Tehran. Holding many offices after returning to Istanbul, Tarhan worked in the Finance Office (Maliye Kalemî) and then State Council Editorial Office (Şûrâ-yı Devlet Mektubî Kalemî). These years correspond to a period when the literary and political works of Şinasi and Namık Kemal were becoming popular. “Macera-yı Aşk”, Tarhan’s first work he wrote at 21 and later on “İçli Kız” were influenced by Namık Kemal (Dizdaroğlu, 1965: 6). In 1874, Abdülhak Hâmid got married to Fatma Hanım from Pîrî-zade’s at his brother Nasuh Bey’s house in Edirne (Parlatır, 2014: 15). Two children, Abdülhak Hüseyin and Hâmid were born from his marriage to Fatma Hanım (Enginün, 1986: 19).

Abdülhak Hâmid was sent to France as the second clerk of Paris Embassy in June 10th, 1876 and thus began his second stay in Paris (Parlatır, 2014: 17). This time as a diplomat, he benefited from all the opportunities Paris offered. The theatres, entertainment venues Tarhan went to, beautiful women he saw and Paris streets were included in the works he wrote later on. He returned to Istanbul after being dismissed from his post in Paris, wanted to go back to Paris on business however his request was denied. He was appointed to Berlin Embassy and he accepted the position first, but then decided to resign. After this, he held offices as the Consul of Poti, Consul of Golos in Greece and Consul General of Bombay.

When his wife passed away on April 21st 1885, he dedicated himself to literature (Parlatır, 2014: 19). He was appointed as Chancellor in London Embassy, but dismissed because of his work “Zeynep” (Dizdaroğlu, 1965: 10). Abdülhak Hâmid was reinstated to his post with the permission of Abdulhamid II and lived in England for twenty-eight years (Enginün, 1986: 35).

In 1890, Tarhan got married to Nelly Cleaver in London. He was appointed as London Embassy Deputy Undersecretariat in 1894 and Lahey Ambassador in 1895 (Parlatır, 2014: 20). Disliking the city of Lahey, Abdülhak Hâmid spent most of his time in London, having a lengthy affair with Florence Ashley, whom he met there. He became London Embassy Undersecretary in 1897, then was assigned as Brussels legation in 1906. His wife Mrs. Nelly died of tuberculosis in 1911 (Parlatır, 2014: 21). After her passing, Tarhan went to Istanbul and married Cemile Hanım there. They got divorced twenty days later and he returned to London (Enginün, 1986: 39). Abdülhak Hâmid got married to Lüsyen Hanım in that same year, on May 6th, 1912 (Parlatır, 2014: 21). He returned to Istanbul after being dismissed from his post in 1912, was elected the vice president of the upper house (Meclis-i Âyân). He went to Budapest with his wife Lüsyen Hanım at the end of World War I and moved on to Vienna. He got divorced from his last wife, Lüsyen Hanım in 1920. After seven years of marriage with the Italian count Duc de Soranza, Lüsyen Hanım left and got back together with Tarhan (Enginün, 1986: 40). Commemorated as the only “Grand Poet” (Şair-i Azam) of Turkish literature, Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan passed away in Istanbul on April 13th, 1937 (Enginün, 1986: 40).

## **2. Works of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan**

Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan found a way around the language barrier in literature with his “arbitrary tongue” in his works, carrying Turkish literature beyond borders. He created a personal style with the subjects he dealt with and life experiences he conveyed in his works. Tarhan usually talked about the places he lived in and saw, the beautiful women who came into his life. When examining the life of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, it can be seen that his undisciplined, unprincipled and messy life reflects itself in his works. This language he used in his works caused many researches to make different speculations. In his work, Asım Bezirci expresses his thoughts on Tarhan’s language as inconsistent and complex, linking his usage of Arabic and French words in his works to having lived abroad for a long period: “Perhaps since he lived in foreign countries for a long time, he is devoid of the taste, overtones, beauty and grace. It is too ancient and too elaborate for the public and the current generation to understand.” (Bezirci, 2000: 65-66). Writing life of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, who produced many works, can be approached in two segments; first as poetry, second as theatre works. We see that poetry becomes more prominent in Tarhan’s artistic life. Creating a new and poetic style, Abdülhak Hâmid, created a new poetry compared to his predecessors and was named the “Grand Poet” (Şair-i Azam) of his period. For this reason, it is certain that he was known for his poetry and gained a good ground in Turkish literature rather than his theatre works.

Abdülhak Hâmid resided in many places due to his diplomatic assignments and carried his experiences from foreign countries to his theatre plays. His observations and experiences in the East and the West created a rich content for his works of art. As Nihat Sami Banarlı said, “Abdülhak Hamit is a prolific and powerful poet who has a better understanding of Western literature in his poems among the characters brought up during this second period of the Tanzimat period. (Banarlı, 1997: 925).

He also found the opportunity to get closely acquainted with the literature of the country in the places he held office and reflected these novelties into his own art, especially

influenced by the Western literature. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan had the opportunity to get to know the literature of the country he lived in while he was on duty abroad and reflected these novelties into his own art, especially influenced by the Western literature. Following some of the Turkish writers like Şinasi and Namık Kemal, who took example from French literature in Tanzimat era, Tarhan was influenced by French literature by residing in France for some time.

As with his theatre works, Tarhan expressed his in his poems, as well as in theatrical works, Tarhan conveyed his own impressions, and in Turkish literature, he included in his works the individual subjects which were not used much before. For example, it is known that he wrote his poems “Ölü” and “Makber” upon the death of his wife Fatma Hanım. Tarhan's first work, 'Sahra', is a product of his years in Paris. The poems written by Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan are, respectively published in his books: Sahra (1879), Makber (1885), Ölü (1885), Bunlar Odur (1885), Divaneliklerim Yahut Belde (1885), Hacle (1885), Kahpe Yahut Bir Sefilenin Hasbihali (1886), İlham-ı Vatan (1916), Validem (1913), Bâlâdan Bir Ses (1912), Garam (1923) (Enginün, 1986: 41).

In some of the poems written by Abdülhak Hâmid, France was also mentioned. Many of these poems are found in his work Belde yahut Divaneliklerim, which consists of poems written in Paris and İstanbul. Sixteen out of the seventeen poem titles in the book are composed of French and Parisian names. In his poems in this work, it is observed that Tarhan often included French words and some of his poems have been rhymed with French words. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, who has written many works with his unique and unconventional structure blending the Western and the Eastern world, gave twenty-four of his forty works in the theatre genre.

### **3. Plays of Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan**

Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan has been one of the most frequently studied an written poets by researchers about his works due to his innovations in Turkish literature. The innovations he brought to Turkish poetry made him a pioneer in the destruction of the old poetry tradition, and this led to him being known as the “Grand Poet” of the Turkish Literature. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan gave twenty-four of his forty works in the theatre genre. As in his poems, Tarhan wrote theatre works in his own style, which was caused by his noncompliant personality.

During the Tanzimat period, writers of Turkish literature turned to the West, and they attempted to create a new literature based on Western author's works and literary genres. After the proclamation of the Tanzimat Edict, theatre plays of foreign writers were performed in the Turkish theatre, which followed the footsteps of the West, and foreign actors played in the performances. In this period, Turkish writers started to write Turkish plays in order to form the identity of Turkish theatre. It is seen that the literature in which writers of Turkish literature were influenced during the Tanzimat period is largely French literature. Looking at the writers of Turkish literature in the Tanzimat period, it is observed that the foreign names they take as examples are mostly French writers. The number of French writers attract attention among the names Abdülhak Hâmid was influenced by, as well as following figures such as Şinasi and Namık Kemal. The influence of the Eastern works as well as the West is observed in the works of Abdülhak Hâmid. Residing abroad with his father, seeing important countries in Europe in early childhood, Abdülhak Hâmid had to live in many countries due to his profession later in his life, he had the opportunity to get to know East and Western literature there. It is not possible to say precisely which of the French writers Tarhan studied and what extent he was influenced. However, based on his memoirs and the names in his letters, it is possible to determine the accuracy of the effects. Abdülhak Hâmid's poems show the influence of the important names of the East. But it is not possible to say this Eastern

influence in his works for his theatre plays. Abdülhak Hâmid even expressed this in his memoirs. “When I was in Tehran, I had never known any of the Persian order of poets I only knew of Sâdi, Hâfız and Kâani. I had nothing to do with European literature and writers.” (Enginün, 2013: 80)

Abdülhak Hâmid's meeting with Western writers was based on the advice of Namık Kemal. Namık Kemal and Abdülhak Hâmid met for the first time in the Translation Office when Tarhan was only ten or twelve years old. In his memoirs, Tarhan stated that he did not remember this encounter. They met with Namık Kemal for the second time in the Ebüzziya Tevfik printing press. But these encounters with Namık Kemal were short-term and coincidental interviews. In his memoirs, Tarhan explained that after these encounters Namık Kemal was going to visit him while he was sitting in Vefa and Kemal did not recognize him and his writings, and when he said that he was appointed to Paris for office, he recommended a few libraries to go in Paris and books to read. (Tansel, 2005: 11). For a long time, he exchanged letters with Namık Kemal about the works he wrote and got advice from him. Namık Kemal regarded the theatre as a means of entertainment and used its ideas as a way of bringing it to a wider audience. However, it is not possible to mention such a theatre concept in the theater works written by Tarhan who was following the footsteps of Namık Kemal.

Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, who is known as the Grand Poet of Turkish Literature, has more theatre pieces than his poems. The fact that Abdülhak Hâmid had come from an educated family which took interest in arts and literature and that he had learned the place of Western culture had a great impact on his works. The reform movement brought by the Tanzimat Edict to the political and social life caused the concepts such as rights, justice and liberty to enter literature and this environment has paved the way for the movement of Abdülhak Hâmid in the selection of subject in his works. Abdülhak Hâmid has a total of twenty-five theatre plays, along with the unfinished work named “Kanuni'nin Vicdan Azabı”. In 1873, Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan published his first theatre play named Mâcerâ-yı Aşk. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan has twenty-four theatre plays. Tarhan's written and published works are as follows: Eşber, Sardanapal, Nazife, Tezer yahut Melik Abdurrahman- Salis, Abdüllahü's-sagîr, Yabancı Dostlar, İlhan, Turhan, Tayflar Geçidi, Ruhlar, Arziler, Nesteren, Liberte, Cünûn-ı Aşk, Hakan, Duhter-i Hindû, Tarık yahut Endülüs Fethi, İbn Musa, Zeynep, Finten, Yâdigâr-ı Harb, Sabr u Sebat, İçli Kız, Mâcerâ-yı Aşk.

For a poet who came to the forefront with his poems rather than theatre works in Turkish literature, the number of his theatre plays too much for a poet. A writer who has written so much work in the theatre genre is undoubtedly expected to have a definite understanding of theatre. However, when we look at Tarhan's works, it is seen that his scattered and arbitrary life is reflected in his works and he does not aim to determine a certain theatre understanding. Abdülhak Hâmid's first theatre play is Mâcerâ-yı Aşk. Tarhan wrote after his second work, Sabr u Sebat, that he wrote all the theatrical works not to be played, but to be read. In his work Duhter-i Hindû, he wrote this clearly: “With every flaw, let me admit that: Duhter-i Hindû does not accept the rules of the theatre practice, even when some detailed dialogues are followed, it becomes totally unpleasant. This is because I imagine the imagination is imagined, I do not think whether it will cause a difficulty in watching during writing, and I do not deem it to reduce the degree of mythical performances to the degree of dismal performances of the actors.” (Karaburgu, 2010: 21)

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar also criticized Abdülhak Hâmid's insistence on writing a piece of the theatre for his reading, not for staging, rather than accepting the first condition of his work: “He says he hasn't written his plays to play. Not to play is not to accept the first condition. Write not to play is to challenge all the prizes that make this art to all the principles of the theatre. Nâmık Kemal, who is more novice than himself, writes for the stage. He accepts a spectator audience and its assistance; he works for them. Similarly, he doesn't think



about how the smooth and fluent way of speaking affects the scene and how the actor will carry it. But he regarded theatre as theatre. The theatre work, which is not written for the theatre or suspected to be played, should at least be written as a poem and should have an individual character above it. However, this does not exist in the works of Hâmid either.” (Tanpınar, 1988: 588 - 589).

In the works of Abdülhak Hâmid, the influences of local and foreign writers are based on the subject, characters and some motifs. The authors he was influenced by can be examined under two categories as local and foreign. The names that Abdülhak Hâmid was most influenced by in Turkish literature were undoubtedly Namık Kemal and Ziya Pasha. In his memoirs, Tarhan mentioned about the foreign writers he had been influenced by: Pierre Corneille, Jean Racine, Victor Hugo, Molière, Voltaire, Lamartine, Alfred de Musset, Nicolas Boileau, Lord Byron and William Shakespeare (Enginün, 2013: 56).

Abdülhak Hâmid, who had an opportunity to get to know the literature of the country where he worked, added these innovations, especially to the West, to his artworks. Following the footsteps of Tanzimat literature artists such as Şinasi and Namık Kemal who took the example of French literature, Tarhan remained under the influence of this literature because of his time in France. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan's theatrical works carry traces of the French influence and traces of Paris where he lived for a while, and the same effects show themselves in his poems. The fact that Tarhan was educated among first-generation writers of Turkish literature who were influenced by French literature, that he produced works by taking samples from them and that he went to France at a young age and served there in later years played a big role in influencing him to be influenced by French literature. Tarhan, who lived in Paris for some time due to his duties, had the opportunity to learn about French literature both by reading and going to the shows. The theatre performances he went with his brother and father in Paris as a child, and the plays he had the opportunity to see while on duty, had left new impacts in directing his works. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan's play “Nesteren” was the first product of his artful days in Paris. Tarhan was fascinated by the tragedy he watched in Paris and began experimenting with it. As a result of these experiments, he wrote “Nesteren” and this theatre play was published in Paris. Nesteren was disliked because of its subject in the Ottoman Palace and caused Tarhan to be dismissed. It is claimed that Abdülhak Hâmid's in “Nesteren” was inspired from the play “Le Cid” by Pierre Corneille, founder of the French tragedy. Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, who took example of and followed the first-generation writers of the period, built its works around and included the themes of nation, homeland, freedom, independence and justice, as in Tanzimat period Turkish literature with a French literature influence. In his work “Liberte”, it is seen that these concepts are frequently used, and given the French names to his heroes. In his work called Sabr u Sebat, the inspiration of which is from his daily life, Abdülhak Hâmid conveyed the impressions of Edirne and Paris years. In this work, it is seen that the subject is determined as Rumeli, İstanbul and Paris. Tarhan's work "Eşber", which he wrote in Paris's return is also suggested to be written with French influence, and his work is compared to the famous play "Berenice" by Racine, the French tragedy writer.

When we look at the twenty-four theatre works of Abdülhak Hâmid, three of his works have come to the fore with influences from the French literature, subject, place and heroes. For this reason, we have deemed it appropriate to take these three works under the spotlight. The works that we will focus on are “Liberte”, where he personified French concepts as characters, “Nesteren”, which he was influenced by Corneille’s “Le Cid” and “Sabr u Sebat” where he chose Paris as the setting in the fourth part of the play.

### 3.1. Nesteren

Abdülhak Hâmid wrote his theatre work *Tarhan Nesteren* in Paris and published it there. This work, published in 1877, is the sixth theatre work of Tarhan. Abdülhak Hâmid, one of the second-generation writers of Turkish literature during the Tanzimat period, followed in the footsteps of prominent figures such as Şinasi, Namık Kemal and Ziya Pasha, who were among the first-generation writers of this period and thus reflected on these works. It can be said that there are two important influencing factors in the verse of this theatre. These were the work of “*Tartuffe*”, which was simplified by Ziya Pasha and was the recommendation of Namık Kemal. Ziya Pasha tried the free metre and rhyme in the translation of the *Tartuffe*, but this trial did not succeed. Impressed by this experiment of Ziya Pasha, Tarhan wanted to try it once more. Namık Kemal, who influenced Abdülhak Hâmid, suggested this method as follows: “Writing poetry in pure Turkish is impossible for anyone these days. You have so much enthusiasm for words, once you encourage yourself to write something with our rule of thumb! You'll see how bright it will be...” (Tansel,1967: 433).

After writing *Nesteren*, Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan sent the work to Recâî-zâde Mahmut Ekrem and Namık Kemal for their comments. His work has not been widely appreciated and caused some criticism by the two authors. Tarhan defended this new way of expression he tried within his work in his letter to Ekrem and Kemal like this: "I wish to create a rhyming genre in our language other than prose and poetry". Tarhan, who is in search of a new way of narrative wrote; "Let's say each line should not exceed fifteen syllables, and then we write a rhyming line around ten to fifteen syllables, and if we do not call it the main measure but the mukaffâ and müeccâ or eliminate the rule of ten to fifteen syllables and call it bare mukaffâ? How would that be?" (Parlatır, 2014: 228).

In his article “How Did I Write My Works?”, Abdülhak Hâmid stated that “*Nesteren*” was inspired by the Turkish-Russian war: “In fact, I took his inspiration from the war of 1877, which began with victories and ended in defeat. I was writing with the excitement of a fierce victory in the sad pages of this work about how Chipal-i-Hint came to daru-l harb with his viziers and threatened the throne of the enemy ruler, the Russian tsar had was ruling his army, which was occupying our country. *Nesteren*, which is a legend in in appearance, is also a tale of that history. Or it is a myth written under that historic nightmare” (Enginün, 1994: 425).

In his next letter to Ekrem, Abdülhak Hâmid talked about this new way of expression again, this time giving an example from French literature and linking “An rimes” in French literature with his words: “There is another way other than –An prose- An vers- in French, that is -An rimes-. When I was in Paris, I doubted that I couldn't judge whether it was the same as – An vers-... Whatever it is, (You are working on a genre other than in Turkish) you say.

It isn't it my job to bring something new, but what if it is a matter of course? Even if it is a new creation, could it be called mukaffâ or müheccâ; something more compared to prose? If you ask me, we should limit the syllable number to fifteen. Therefore, it would be nice if we called something written in that (counted syllable) way mukaffâ only.” (Parlatır, 2014: 229).

Abdülhak Hâmid's works in the theatre of the Turkish writers and the French writers in France for a period of time because of the influence of the French classical writers can be seen first. Especially Pierre Corneille is one of the top writers of this classic writings. He wrote *Nesteren*, which he had written in Paris, under the influence of Corneille's “*Le Cid*”. Both of the works are similar in many ways. The similarity between *Nesteren* and *Le Cid* is explained by Tarhan as follows: “As I explained in the introduction, this work is reflected in me from the French poet Corneille's *Le Cid* theatre. But not as a complete reflection of him, nor an opposite, perhaps an inspired version. It is a different work, not a Turkish adaptation.

Although the subject is as close to it in some degree, it is different in description.” (Enginün, 2013: 425).

For Nesteren, who resembles *Le Cid* in many ways, Tarhan mentioned the close similarity between these two works in the essence of his theatre play called *Eşber*. Abdülhak Hâmid stated this in his preface to *Eşber*: “... The most soulful place and the most alive part of *Eşber* is this curtain; it belongs to Horace; Nesteren, as is the case of *Le Cid*. With this projection, we can determine how close or far away the meaning is to the source, or the extent to which these two shadows are so important to their owners. I'm not claiming to resemble that great French poet. I haven't seen these Corneille creations called *Horace* and *Le Cid* on stage. I read them while I was in Paris, wrote and printed *Nesteren* there, and wrote *Eşber* on returning from Paris, while I was in Istanbul. (Enginün, 2000: 26).

Abdülhak Hâmid, as with many of his theatrical works, discussed the theme of love in *Nesteren*. The subject of *Nesteren* is in Kabul. The main place in the work was determined as a palace in Kabul. There is no detailed information about this palace, where the story unfolds. In *Nesteren*, a love story which grows and ends with the influence of the power struggle between the two brothers has been studied. Kuzali Gazanfer, who is a disliked ruler by the people, is the brother of Behram, the heiress loved by the people. *Nesteren* and Hüsrev, the children of these two brothers, fell in love with each other. Gazanfer told Behram to leave the country, and Behram refused to accept his request. The dispute between them gained a different dimension when Gazanfer slapped Behram. Behram, upon this slap, tells his brother Hüsrev to kill Gazanfer who was the ruler of Kabul to avenge that. One night, Hüsrev enters his chambers while Gazanfer and Nesrin are asleep and invites Gazanfer to a duel. Hüsrev wins this duel. Seeing that Gazanfer died, Nesrin takes on this murder. However, Hüsrev accepted this crime in a public court. The court dismissed the decision to hang Hüsrev on the merits of his work for the country. *Nesteren* learned that the man she loved was his father's killer and told Bender to kill Hüsrev to kill him. In return, *Nesteren* promised to marry Bender. *Nesteren* is uncertain about getting the man she loves killed. Bender, who is going to kill Hüsrev, does not kill Hüsrev but wounds him. After a while Hüsrev goes to military service and takes the promise that *Nesteren* will marry him if he returns in victory with this war. After Hüsrev's victorious return from the war, *Nesteren* and Hüsrev got married. *Nesteren*, plotting of killing Hüsrev on the first night of their marriage, drinks poison and dies. Seeing *Nesteren* dead, Hüsrev kills himself with the dagger.

In Corneille's *Le Cid*, the event takes place in Spain. Daughter of a Spanish family, Chimène's lover Rodrigue summons the father of her lover, Chimène, to avenge her father's insult by the father of her lover. Rodrigue, who made this duel by his father's force, kills his lover's father in the duel. Chimène wants her lover Rodrigue to die to avenge her deceased father. Meanwhile, Rodrigue was called by the name *Cid*, because he had rescued the country from the Maghribs. Chimène goes to the king, seeking justice. The king tells Rodrigue's father who was with him, that Chimène loves Rodrigue, and that he will prove it soon. He tells her that Rodrigue overcame them, but he was killed because of the wounds he had received. Chimène, who has heard the news, faints with grief. Then the king tells her that Rodrigue is alive and that she must no longer have the feelings of hatred and vengeance against him. Chimène, who does not give up her decision, asks the king to announce in the kingdom that if he kills Rodrigue, he will marry the winner. Meanwhile, Don Sache, who came to them and fell in love with Chimène, said that he wanted to enter into this duel with Rodrigue. Chimène agrees. Rodrigue, who is aware of this duel, goes to Chimène's house. He tells her “I look forward to that happy moment I'm going to hand over my life to you... I won't blow back the blows of your sword. I'm going to open my stomach, thinking that you are the one who is taking my life.” saying that he will lose this duel on purpose (Corneille, 2009: 79-80). Chimène regrets the words of Rodrigue, saying that it is a task for her, she will not give

up this decision, so he must win the duel. "... For the love I have for you, at least, protect yourself, don't leave me to Don Sache... What more do you want to tell me to succeed my duty or to silence myself? If your heart still beats for me, win this fight which the prize is Chimène" (Corneille, 2009: 82).

After the duel, Don Sache takes the sword to Chimène. Chimène doesn't allow him to speak and thinks of Rodrique to be dead, asks the king to give up the marriage decision she made. Upon Chimène's request, the King tells him that Rodrique has not died. Don Sache tells him that when he dropped his sword, Rodrique did not shed blood, saying that the result of this duel must remain unclear. The King tells Chimène to marry Rodrique and sends Rodrique to battle as the head of the army. Rodrique goes to war saying: "Even if I have to endure being away from away from her eyes, at least I can hope now, I am happy" (Corneille, 2009: 94).

As observed, Tarhan's Nesteren and Corneille's Le Cid are more similar in subject and nature. The love of two young people is discussed in this work. The common point in both works of art is that the dispute between the fathers of two young people who are in love with each other results in death and as a consequence, the issue of taking revenge. Both of the works end with a happy ending.

### **3.2. Sabr u Sebat**

Sabr u Sebat is the second work written by Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan. The date of the first edition of the work is uncertain. Ömer Faruk Akün, as a result of his research, has revealed that Sabr u Sebat was published in 1875. (Akün, 1967: 119). Abdülhak Hâmid wrote Sabr u Sebat on the advice of Ahmet Vefik Pasha. Vefik Pasha had read Tarhan's first work Mâcerâ-yı Aşk and saw his ability, then suggested to him to write a national and local theatre play. Abdülhak Hâmid followed this advice but received criticism from Ahmet Vefik Pasha for using so many proverbs and idioms in Sabr u Sebat. "...He had read my first work Macera-yı Aşk and with a little bit of disposition towards a child author he saw some childishness in my writing, he found and showed me words like "well done, my God" etc. as an example. And he boldly advised me to read a national work by betting on the morality and nationality of our nation. Sabr u Sebat is the keepsake of that advice. (Enginün, 2013: 91).

Sabr u Sebat carries the traces of the days of Abdülhak Hâmid in Edirne and Paris. The events take place in three different locations in the play. The places where the subject is unfolded are Rumeli, Istanbul and Paris respectively. Abdülhak Hâmid preferred the venues where the event took place indoors in Sabr u Sebat. The reason why Sabr u Sebat chose indoor places was the idea of staging the work. For this reason, Tarhan stated that Sabr u Sebat is the most suitable play of his for staging. In the first act, the place is located in a mansion in Rumeli. In the second act, the place was chosen as a village coffee house in Rumeli. In the third act, the event takes place in the city of Münim Effendi. In the fourth act of the work, the venue was chosen as Paris. In the fifth act, the event still takes place in Istanbul at Münim Effendi's house. The characters are Mehmet Bey, Madmazel Soltikof, Raksat, Münim Effendi, Müyesser Bey and Mehmet Ağa.

Raksaver, the Circassian maiden in the play, is bought by Münim Effendi. Raksaver falls in love with Mehmet, the son of the mansion where she was bought. After learning that his son had a relationship with the concubine taken home, Mehmet Effendi was sent to his uncle. His uncle wants Mehmet Bey to marry his own daughter, but Mehmet Bey does not want to marry him because he likes Raksaver. Mehmet Bey, who does not want to marry his uncle's daughter, is dismissed from his uncle's mansion for this reason. Zehra, the daughter of Mehmet Bey's uncle, is married to Müyesser Bey who was educated in Paris. Mehmet Bey, who was expelled from the mansion, becomes a dervish for a while, travels around Rumelia,

after a while returns to Istanbul and is adopted by his father's close friend Sheikh Esadullah. Sheikh Esadullah leaves all his assets to Mehmet Bey. Mehmet Bey then settles in Paris with his inheritance where he becomes owner of a venue under the name of Count de Bînam. After Mehmet Bey's daughter Zehra dies, her husband, Müyesser Bey, goes to Paris. Count de Bînam (Mehmet Bey) returns to Istanbul after he learns that his father has become ill and leaves his shares and all his possessions to Müyesser Bey. Returning to Istanbul, Mehmet Bey loses his father, but also, he is united with Raksaver.

### **3.3. Liberte**

Abdülhak Hâmid's theatre play *Liberté* was serialized in 1913 in the journal *Türk Yurdu*. In the play, the issue of the expulsion of Mithat Pasha to Europe after the first Constitutional Period was discussed. Abdülhak Hâmid wrote the theatre called *Liberté* after Mithat Pasha was dismissed and exiled. Tarhan stated that this work was written because of the expulsion of Mithat Pasha as follows: "When we received the news of the expulsion of Midhat Pasha, we, the delegation of the delegation, were very resentful and went to the ambassador Sadık Pasha to give us our resignation. Sadık Pasha wanted to delay us by saying "wait, let's see what happens next" and became the governor of the Danube next day. Even though we couldn't hold on to the idea of resigning all together, I couldn't defeat my anger. I started writing this *Liberté* to denounce the cruelty, if not seek revenge." "Again, at the time when I was in charge of writing at our Paris embassy, When I was in charge of writing in our Paris embassy, I started writing this *Liberté*, which came to me as liberty because I was very sad when Midhat Pasha was exiled from the grand vizier..." (Enginün, 2013: 432).

*Liberté* is a verse which is written allegorically in style. *Liberte* is an allegorical work, so there is no information about time and place. Abdülhak Hâmid wrote this work in Paris and in this book, he personified the French concepts. He preferred to write the names of the people in *Liberté*, especially in French. Tarhan uses these concepts in his work and also uses the basic concepts of the French Revolution. The names used in the characters of the work are as follows with their Turkish equivalents: Despote: Tyrant Ruler; *Liberté*: Freedom, independence; Nation: nation, people; *Libéral*: free-minded; *Haine Intrigue*: grudge, hatred; *Trahison*: treason, disloyalty; *intérêt*: Self-interest, behoof; Ignorance: Ignorance, illiteracy; Ambition: Ambition, Press: to print, press; Instrument: tool, instrument; Intime: Private, personal, intimate.

The work is based on the love of a young girl named *Liberté* and her lover Nation, a young man. *Liberté* wants to escape from the palace with her boyfriend Nation and shares this idea with Intime. This love between the two teenagers is heard, and the ruler thinks this is the work of the *Libéral*. The expulsion of the *Libéral* is therefore on the agenda. In the second act, *Liberté* and Nation meet at the palace's dungeon, and the monarch who sees them tells *Liberté* to stay away from Nation. In the third act, the Applicant requests *Libéral* *Liberté* from the ruler Despote for his son Nation. The ruler calls his youngsters to decide. *Liberté* and Nation appear before the ruler and the ruler allows them to marry and orders three days for the wedding to last. Upon this decision, Nation and *Liberté* leave the presence of the sovereign. Meanwhile, Les Enspire shouts, "Long live the Liberal...! since the union of the lovers is provided. Then, "How dare he" shouting the ruler Despote, he cannot endure it and goes away saying "I gave *Liberté* to Nation; but I won't give the reign to Liberal". Liberal exits with the last word, "I have a reputation in history, favoured by the public, long live Nation and *Liberté*".

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Among the second wave artists of Tanzimat literature, Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan followed the footsteps of the first wave writers of Tanzimat literature Şinasi, Namık Kemal and Ziya Pasha. Among the reasons of the French influence seen in his works are the fact that he followed and took advice from writers like Şinasi and Namık Kemal, who were influenced by French literature writers of the French literature. Besides, the fact that Tarhan discovered French culture at a very early age and served there later caused him to adopt French literature. Abdülhak Hâmid, who was in search of a new way of expression, once again took the French literature as an example, and showed this in his play “Nesteren” which he wrote in Paris, inspired by Corneille's “Le Cid”. The effect of the Paris years when Tarhan went to a young age appears in the “Sabr u Sebat”. In the play Sabr u Sebat, the setting was selected as Rumeli, Istanbul and Paris. Another work by Abdülhak Hâmid Tarhan, in which the French traces are seen, is Liberté. In the work, it is seen that Abdülhak Hâmid especially created the characters by using the basic concepts of the French Revolution and personifying them.

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