

which contain his thoughts on matters such as culture and politics. He also wrote several essays.

Axundzadə was important also as a pioneer of Turkic alphabet reform. His first published proposal used a modified version of the Arabic script. During a visit to Istanbul in 1863, he presented it to the Ottoman authorities but without success. Later, Axundzadə created a new alphabet for Azerbaijani on the basis of the Cyrillic and Latin scripts, which influenced twentieth-century alphabet reforms.

Axundzadə also left a few poems. Some of these were written in Persian and some in Azerbaijani. The subjects of his poems are similar to those of his prose writings. Some resemble Axundzadə's prose texts in adopting the form of letters. One of Axundzadə's best-known poems is his Persian *Poema-ye şark dar-vaqāt-e Puşkin* ("Oriental poem on the death of Pushkin") of 1837. Axundzadə often adapted elements from the classical Perso-Turkic poetic tradition, including rhyme and metre. In an early phase of his poetic work, he even used the pen name Səbuhi ("The one belonging to the morning"). In many poems, however, he departed from this tradition in style and content, as in his *Yeni əlifba haqqında manzumə* ("Poem about the new alphabet") and his *Həvi-Abdürrəsul Xan* ("Satire on Abdürrəsul Xan"), which immortalises a Persian ambassador to France. In a way, Axundzadə thus also contributed to the renewal of classical Oriental poetry.

Axundzadə used the genre of narrative prose only once, in the story (*povest'* *Aldanmış kəvakib*) ("The deceived stars") of 1857, which criticises the traditional Iranian social and political order by means of an historical setting.

Mirzə Fətəli Axundzadə died on 10 March 1878, in Tiflis (Tbilisi), from a

heart ailment. He was buried in the city's Muslim graveyard, next to his friend Mirzə Şəfi Vəzəh.

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Note: ə in romanizations of Azerbaijani is usually rendered in library catalogs as ā or ä and x sometimes as kh.

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Azerbaijani literature (012416)
Azerbaijani literature

Azerbaijani (Azeri, Ādherī) **literature** is characterised by an idiosyncratic combination of influences from Turkic and European cultures that have shaped it for more than 600 years.

The definition of Azerbaijani literature is often contested, as the Azerbaijani language (Azeri) was virtually indistinguishable