



Baku 2015

1st EUROPEAN GAMES



Ministry of Culture and Tourism
Republic of Azerbaijan





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ELCHIN

Writer, 1943

AZERBAIJANI LITERATURE



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JN
Publishing house

j-42613



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Azerbaijani Literature

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These publications were printed by "KHAN" publishing house in the framework of "Introducing Our Writers to the World" project of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the occasion of "European Games 2015". The reference is necessary in case of extraction and replacement in e-resources.

The translated literary pieces of writers were extracted from "Modern Azerbaijani Prose" and "Azerbaijani Prose Anthology" publications.

ISBN: 978-9952-405-91-0

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Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan / 2015
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Elchin

Elchin, the People's Writer is one of the outstanding representatives of modern Azerbaijan literature, as well as prominent public figure and statesman.

He was born on May 13, 1943 in Baku, to the family of Ilyas Afandiyev, People's Writer, one of the leading representatives 20th century Azerbaijani literature.

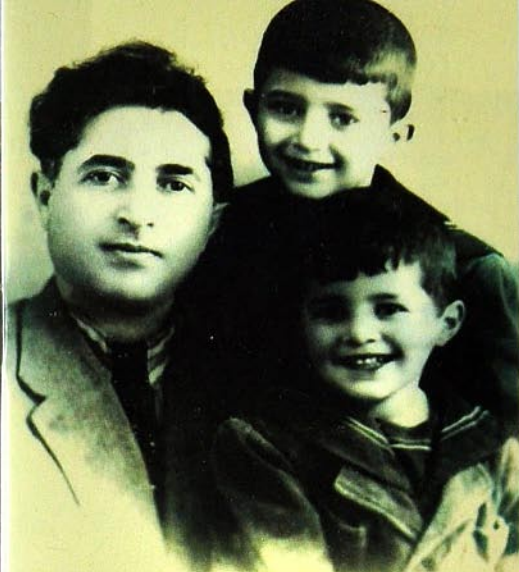
Elchin finished secondary school (1960), graduated from the philology department of Baku State University (1965) and completed post-graduate course of literature theory at the Institute of Literature named after Nizami of ANAS (1968). He obtained Ph.D. (doctor of philosophy) degree in the theme of "Literary Criticism of Azerbaijani Prose" and doctoral degree in the theme of "History and Modernity Problem in the Literature."

His first story was published in the newspaper "Azerbaijani youth" in 1959, when he was 16. The story collection "One of the Thousand Nights" was printed in 1966. Afterwards, he regularly appeared in periodical press with his short stories, stories, novels and literary-critical articles, his plays were staged in most theatres of Azerbaijan and abroad. Elchin translated a number of foreign literary pieces into Azerbaijani.



Elchin in 1947

He worked as a scientific researcher at the Institute of Literature named after Nizami of ANAS, as the chairman of Board of Directors of Azerbaijani Writers', as well as chairman of *Vatan* society, which ensures the cultural relations between Azerbaijan and compatriots living abroad.



*İlyas Afandiyev, Elchin and
Timuchin. 1949*



Elchin in 1949



Inauguration of II International Book Fair in Baku, Azerbaijan



Inauguration of III International Book Fair in Baku, Azerbaijan

The stories authored by Elchin were occasionally awarded "The Best Story of the Year" presented by Moscow's *Smena* and *Nedelya* magazines. He is the scriptwriter of 16 plays and approximately 10 films and author of stories "The Story of a Date", "Survival of Chicken", "Jug", "King's Destiny", "Have a Mercy on Me, Hunter...", "The Knife Like Arrow" and novels "Mahmud and Maryam", "White Camel" and "Death Sentence".



I Congress of Azerbaijani scientists



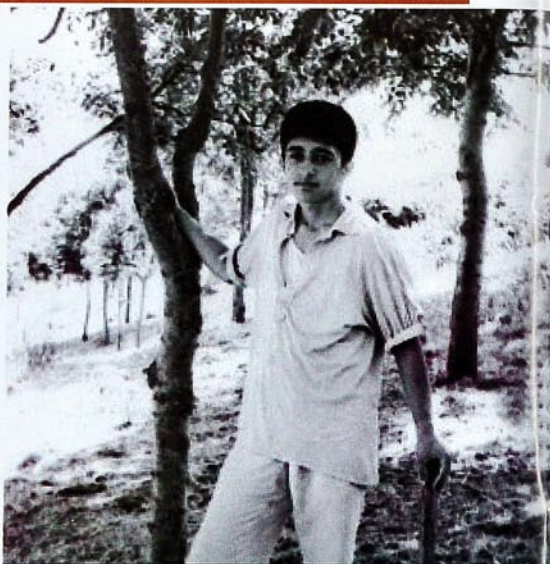
A scientific conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Ilyas Afandiyev, Elchin's father and great playwright of Azerbaijan in BSU



Shusha, 1950. Ilyas Afandiyev, Elchin and Timuchin



1954. Ilyas Afandiyev, Elchin and Timuchin



Elchin. Summer, 1957. Fuzuli



1959. Elchin with his relative



Elchin with his daughter, diplomatic official Gunay Afandiyeva



Elchin with Nargiz Pashayeva, the rector of Baku branch of Moscow State University named after Lomonosov, correspondent member of ANAS

The books of "Tale Of Nightingale" (1983), "Mahmud and Maryam" (1984), "Five Minutes and Eternity" (1984), "White Camel" (1985), "Death Sentence" (1989), "Last Morning of Life" (1993), "Mad Ran Away Madhouse" (1996), "First Love of Baladadash" (2000), "Banner Bearer" (2003), "Karabakh Shikasta" (2009) and etc., as well as ten-volume "Selected Pieces" (2005) were published. His stories and novels were translated into English, Russian, French, German, Spanish, Turkish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Arabian, Persian, Chinese, Czech, Slovakian, Polish, Croatian, Georgian, Lithuanian, Moldavian, Turkmenian, Uzbek, Kazakh, Tajik, Serbian and etc. languages. Nearly 100 books in different languages have been published. The total circulation of books is more than five million.



Elchin with his daughter Gunay and Turkish writer Yashar Kemal



Elchin in inauguration of the artist Maryam Alakbarli's individual exhibition



Elchin in the scientific conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Ilyas Afandiyev in BSU



The delegation headed by vice-premier Elchin visited Serbia and participated in the inauguration of "Saint Petka" church in Novi Sad



Elchin in the ceremony where Tahir Salahov, the People's Artist of Azerbaijan and well known master in the world, is awarded officer degree of "Honorary Legion" by the order of President of France.



The day of wedding Elchin and Nushaba khanum



Ilyas Afandiyev, Elchin and Nushaba khanum. 1973



*Elchin, Nushaba khanum
and their daughter Gunay. 1974*

Elchin participated in various scientific, literary, public and political conferences, symposiums, congresses, meetings and official state negotiations in up to 40 countries.



Aysu, Elchin, Gunay, Humay and Nushaba khanum

He was the deputy at Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan.

Presently, Elchin is Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Republic. He is the professor of Baku State University, as well as chairman of a number of State Commissions, authoritative local and international literary organizations.

Appreciative statements about Elchin:

"Elchin's literary works closely cohering with our people's history, destiny and literary heritage and personifying our near and remote past occupies a special place in 20th century Azerbaijani literature".

*Heydar Aliyev
Nationwide leader of Azerbaijani people*



Heydar Aliyev, the ex-president of Azerbaijan Republic presents the Order of Glory, the award of People's Writer Ilyas Afandiyev to his son Elchin Afandiyev



The 100th anniversary of Ilyas Afandiyev, Elchin's father and great playwright of Azerbaijan was celebrated in UNESKO

1-42683



Elchin with Anar, Azerbaijani writer



Elchin meets Romanian premier in Azerbaijan

"I've read the novels "Mahmud and Maryam" and "White Camel" by Elchin in German, but "Death Sentence" in Turkish. To my mind, the latter has a worldwide value. Elchin is one of the few modern writers that I highly appreciate."

Heinrich Fischer
German turkologist

"Elchin possesses perfect modern narrative style, he presents his hero's inner monologue virtuously."

Svetlana Aliyeva
Russian critic



From the family album of Elchin



"The creative world of both Elchin and Anar has substantially benefited by their fathers' – classics of 20th century Azerbaijani literature Rasul Rza and Ilyas Afandiyev – activity besides the literary environment they were brought up in."

Chingiz Aytmatov
People's Writer of Kyrgyzstan



The III Baku International Book Fair



*Elchin in individual exhibition of artist
Maryam Alakbarli*



"Elchin is quite interesting writer who perfectly and successfully analyzes the values of world literature and experience in this field... The director David Perry went into rapture at the play "Shakespeare". He was the producer of this play staged successfully in Avantgarde Theatre of London. Elchin's ironically and paradoxically expressed attitude to the bygone history was very interesting to English spectators."

*Ian Pyertdy
English Literary critic, translator*



The 130th anniversary of Huseyn Javid, the great poet and playwright, was solemnly celebrated in the State Academic National Drama Theatre of Azerbaijan.

"Elchin gained fame as one of the leading personalities of our modern prose, drama, and criticism who dedicated more than 40 years of his respectable life to the literature".

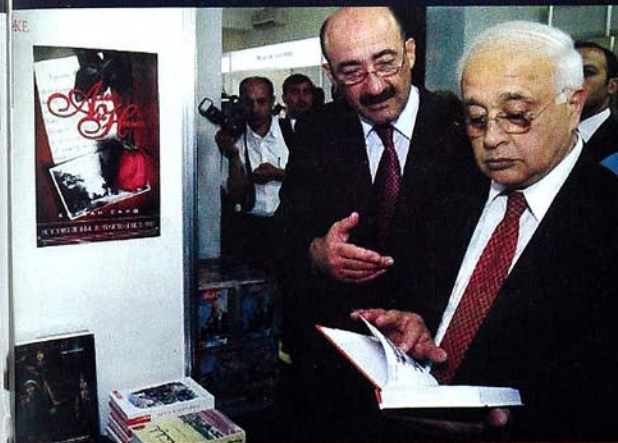
*Anar
People's Writer*

"This great writer used such a descriptive style that as if you are looking at a perfect piece of art painted by skillful artist."

*Tahir Salahov
People's Artist*



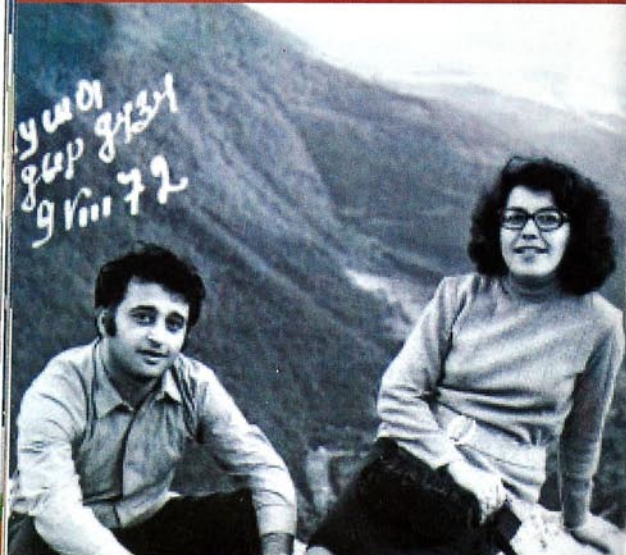
A photo from individual exhibition of Maryam Alakbarli



Elchin Afandiyev and Abulfaz Garayev, the Minister of Tourism and Culture of Azerbaijan Republic



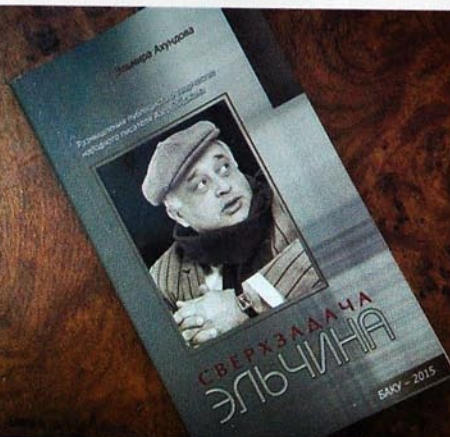
Elchin Afandiyev



*Elchin and Nushaba khanum in Shusha, Jidir Duzu
(Horse Race Plain)*

"While reading Elchin's 'Death Sentence', I relived my past days full of misery, scare and anxiety. I wondered thinking of his age. The reason of my surprise was how he could describe those ruthless and terrible years in such a persuasive way. All these stories are the result of his personal overlook. Applaud to Elchin's literary magic and power of talent!"

Bakhtiyar Vahabzadeh
People's Poet



One of the books written about Elchin

"Elchin is one of the leading lights of 20-21st century transition period in Azerbaijani literature. He deservedly served his people and whole world with his true and rich literary treasure."

Budag Budagov
Academician



The 100th anniversary of Ilyas Afandiyev, Elchin's father and great playwright of Azerbaijan was celebrated in UNESCO

"Through the leading public positions Elchin served Azerbaijani culture in the broadest sense of the word with great competence and energy, kindness and purposeful activity as well."

*Tophig Guliyev
Composer*

Yellow Bride

A Short Story

Translated by Aytan Aliyeva and Aynura Huseinova and edited by Betty Blair

Then a heavy rain began to pour. This rain washed the dust and sand off everything - the slab stones of the mountains, the green slopes, the green branches of the scattered trees, bushes, and precipitous cliffs that extended out over the ravine. Below the ravine was a river flowing with snowy white foam.

Then one sound filled this expansiveness that had no beginning and ending. It was as if that foamy river flowing at the bottom of the ravine, those mountains, those dark green slopes all began to sing the lyrics to this melody

You don't braid the end of your hair,
They will not let me marry you.
I wish I had the chance to see
The face of my beloved
Oh, what can I do?
Oh, what can I do?
Yellow Bride

Then the heavy rain would stop,
evening would fall, and all these
places would get dark, but that sound
- that music - would still linger on:

Along this valley,
Bring back the sheep, shepherd
I wish I had the chance to see
The face of my beloved
Oh, what can I do?
Oh, what can I do?
Yellow Bride

There was nothing attractive about the kebab house known as Autumn Rain - except for its name. During Soviet times there had been a little car repair shop in one corner of the eight-storied building that was located in the 3rd Micro District of Baku. After the Soviet Union collapsed, some people took ownership of this shop and turned it into a Kebab House.

True, this Kebab House served delicious kebabs. But the residents of the building were put out by the smoke, the smell of kebabs, and rowdiness of the customers. The only pleasant thing about Autumn Rain was the mournful sound of the clarinet that was occasionally played there. When that happened, silence reigned. The sound of that clarinet evoked such deep feelings within the residents that they forgot the smell of kebab, the smoke, the loud, ill-mannered customers - at least, for a little while.

...

On that beautiful spring day, clarinet player Fatulla woke up early as usual, crawled out of bed and went to wash his face. His wife Firuza leaned her head out of the kitchen as if she were waiting for him.

"Fatulla, are you up?" she asked and then added, "I have something to tell you. Take a bath, then..."

She said these words in such a way that gave Fatulla a slight, but perceptible, heartache. There was some sort of helplessness and humility in her voice. While he was washing his face, such a man as Fatulla could hardly hold back the tears. In his heart, he cursed the world, because lately he had been thinking about his wife when she was young, without

even knowing the reason why. At that time, she had two dark black braids that were as thick as her wrists and which almost reached to her ankles. Now her gray hair was dyed dark red with henna. At that time she had been such a slender and beautiful girl. It was as if she challenged both the Sun and Moon that she was brighter than they were. All the young boys in their block were interested in this girl with the braids. But among so many young boys, that girl with the braids had chosen Fatulla, who now was washing his face with an ache in his heart.

She had not chosen Fatulla to become her voice that sounded so helpless now - after 30 years, and to wear the same clothes to each of the five wedding parties that had been held in their apartment block one after another, to...

Fatulla could hardly keep from throwing the soap in his hand against his reflection in the mirror...

All right...

Stop...

The others are in worse situations than you are...

Fatulla had been a dark, curly haired, self-confident youth who used to sit in the shade of the mulberry tree that was in front of their yard doors playing nard. He would beat all young boys of their block at this game under the secret glances of the block girls, passing along the street or looking down on them from the windows. That the girl with braids chose him was as natural as the old men sitting there in the shade of the old mulberry tree on hot, exhausting summer days. It was

only natural. There was nothing strange about this. Fatulla, with his good looks and noble manners, deserved that girl. But even at that time, the girl's father, hat maker Jafar had insisted on his daughter marrying a guy who played zurna.

Fatulla had come from a long line of musicians. His great grandfather, his grandfather, and his father were all famous balaban players in Baku. Fatulla, himself, had played balaban when he was a child. Balaban had come to mean as much to him as water and air. He couldn't do without it. But when Jafar had dug in his heels, Fatulla had given up playing balaban and switched to clarinet.

For Jafar, it seems the clarinet was worthy of more respect than the balaban and, therefore, he agreed to allow his daughter to marry Fatulla.

Exactly 36 years had passed since then.

During all those years, Fatulla had played that clarinet at so many wedding parties and ceremonies. That clarinet had earned the living for one big family - Fatulla, his wife and their five daughters. That clarinet had brought up those girls, enabled them to study and to marry.

During the Soviet times, there weren't so many musicians as there are now. But after its collapse, so many singers and musicians appeared that one wondered where were all these people had come from? How could independence give birth to so many musicians? And all of them were more electricians than musicians, because they were engrafting musical instruments to electricity and were making such noise, and wearing such strange clothes that in the end the only place left for Fatulla was the kebab

house. The clarinet that used to make so much money for Fatulla now was dependent upon a few customers, who frequented the kebab house.

Rinsing the soap off his face, Fatulla didn't raise his eyes to look at himself in the mirror - this gray-haired, fat man whose moustache had turned snow white. But that moment it was as if the mirror had turned into a magnet and Fatulla's eyes turned into iron and the mirror began to attract his eyes.

You should look at me!

You should look at me!

...

Norwegian Martinus Asbjørnsen had been working for about seven years as an assistant to the chief accountant of one of the oil companies in Baku. Though he loved Ibsen very much, he knew the Baku antique brokers better than the heroes of Ibsen. When he examined an antique and could sense its high profit, he got more joy than when listening to the music of his favorite composer Grieg.

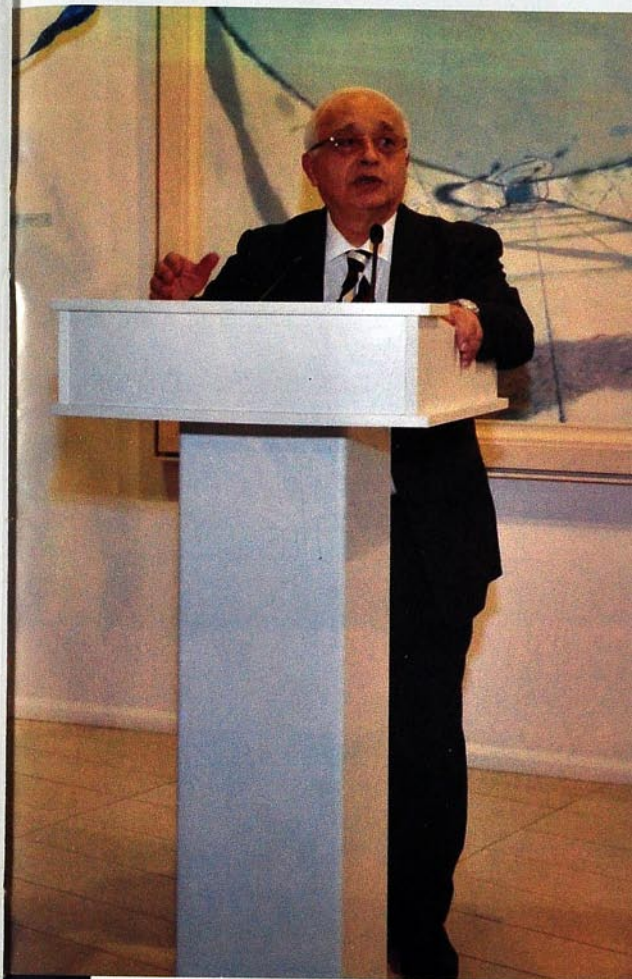
True, now residents and brokers were not the same as they were about five-six years earlier. They had awakened. After the collapse of Soviet Union, the borders were opened, so foreigners who came to Baku used to buy antiques - Azerbaijani carpets, jewellery, bronze works and even paintings of contemporary artists for almost nothing. And then they would sell them abroad for 10 to even 100 times more. Or they would create rich and valuable personal collections for themselves at very low cost. That was the situation five or six years ago. Then new

brokers appeared on the scene, the prices went up, but still, no matter how high the prices went, and how conscious the residents became, the prices of Eastern antiques in Azerbaijan were much cheaper than in Europe and the U.S.

Of course, this wouldn't last long. One had to take advantage of such opportunities. Indeed, if it had continued this way, after a few years nothing would have been left in Azerbaijan. But that was a problem of the future; let the people of that time and the Azerbaijani people themselves deal with such a problem.

By nature, Martinus Asbjørnsen was a smart, bright, efficient person. At the same time, he was very observant. First, he created a rich and expensive personal collection of Azerbaijani carpets and carpet goods. But soon he realized that one should not be satisfied with a personal collection and should start a business so he began to work conscientiously. In the course of several years, he learned both the official, as well as the illegal, sides of this business very well and made good money.

Both he and his friends would never have imagined that the Soviet Union would collapse one day and that its disintegration would bring them success. This short, bald, pot-bellied man would be so lucky in a country that had been unknown up until its collapse.

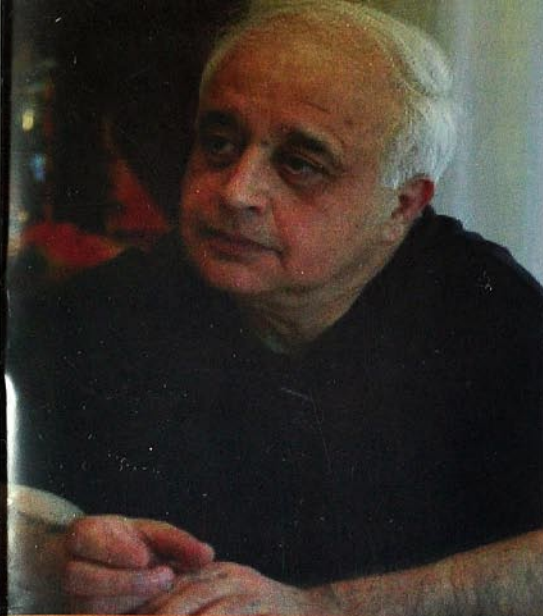




Elchin with his daughter Humay, 1977



Elchin



Elchin Afandiyev

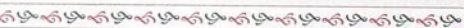




The premier of Montenegro is in official visit to Baku



Elchin is at the worktable



ELCHIN



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