

Mukhtar and Shakarim meetings and fates

Life and work of outstanding personalities is an intrinsic part of our history; it would seem that a 160 years period of national historical science could not have left 'blank pages' in the biographies of historical personalities, nevertheless lots of facts wait for study.

Mukhtar Auezov (1897-1961) and Shakarim Kudayberdiyev (1858-1931), famous Kazakh writers, had a long personal contact, which influenced both of them. During long conversations with wise Shakarim, young Mukhtar drew wisdom of folk knowledge and took notes for his future novel about Abay. Shakarim enjoyed communication with keen, energetic and talented writer. Mukhtar inspired; Shakarim supported, tutored, and counseled.

In public, their paths crossed in 1917, during staging of 'Yenlik Kebek'. There are reasons to believe that serious creative communication of these great men started with staging of the play. Later both of them became involved into the same historic process: both men became members of the Alash' movement, trying to preserve the idea of reviving national autonomy and both of them became witnesses of the catastrophic collapse of nomadism. Shakarim was the oldest and most authoritative member of the movement, while Mukhtar Auezov because of his youth could not hold serious post in Alashorda.

Both men contributed to "Saryarka" newspaper, an organ of Alashojda government. Auezov wrote articles about burning issues, in his turn Shakarim wrote about judicial problems.

After final establishment of Soviet government in Semipalatinsk, Shakarim moved to a lone place in Ken-Konys area, at that time Mukhtar Auezov had been making successful political career, but it lasted only till 1922, when he was expelled from Bolshevik party and entered Central Asiatic Turkestan university in Tashkent; there he finally managed to publish Shakarim's poem "Leili i Medzhnun". It was written in Kazakh with Arabic script.

In 1924 Shakarim lost his anchoretic dwelling, because Soviet regime took his lands and house, so he had to move to his native aul. In summer, Mukhtar Auezov visited him. At the time, Mukhtar was preparing first full collected works of Abay. He was collecting poems, which had not been published before, and was checking texts. Shakarim helped young writer in spite of age difference. They spent days, recovering teacher's poems. Collected works had been finished in a year, but they were published only in 1933. Perhaps that summer Mukhtar got an idea about writing great fiction work about Abay. During following years he kept visiting Shakarim and had long talks about the poet.

Shakarim dreamt about solitude and in summer 1925 he built a new house Sayat-Kora; here he worked a lot, inspired by recent stories of Mukhtar, published in "Tan" journal. Auezov was a chief editor of this journal and published his own stories in it. In Sayat-Kora Shakarim finished tragedy "Adil and Maria", but this tragic novel was not published, because Auezov had to leave for Leningrad to finish studying. Nevertheless every summer Mukhtar Auezov kept spending some time in Shakarim's aul, now he had a definite goal: collecting information for his future novel.

In 1930 Auezov was arrested and charged with relations with 'Alka' organization, as a result he had to spend 2,5 years in Almaty jail. At the period of great famine in 1931, after revolt in Karaul, Shakarim was declared its organizer and enemy of the Soviet government! he was killed in Chingistau Mountains by Soviet officers.

It is doubtless, that M. Auezov could have told and written many interesting facts about Shakarimi he had stored scripts and letters of his friend, but during the years of Stalin's rule, rehabilitation of Shakarim's name and work was impossible. Even in his novel 'The Way of Abay', M. Auezov could not include Shakarim in the novel under real name, he had to give him pseudonym of 'Shubar' and endow his character with negative traits.

For two decades both men followed same path, shared ideas, inspired each other, appreciating works of brother of the quill. They did not gave in to political pressure. The elder perished from Cheka officials' bullets, while symbolically, the younger was released to create genius works for both of them.

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