

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

A national akyn, the unsurpassed singer and composer Kenen Azirbaev was born on June, 19th, 1884 in village Matibulak of present Zhambyl region of Almaty area. In 1957 he had moved to collective farm Kirovo then still Kordai region of Zhambyl area and till the end of life he had lived in this place. Kenen Azirbaev had died in 1976, having lived 92 years. The akyn's body had been buried in this place here again there is his house and a museum. Consequently say that Kenen is the poet of two areas. Now this place is called as «Kenen auly».

Kenen had been recognized as the great exhorter of national spirit: zhyrau and akyn, the folk singer and the performer of kuy, the singer and the composer, chronicler and the very important public person was born in the end of XIX centuries and he had left a huge multifarious heritage in gold fund of our people.

When Kenen Azirbaev in the age of ten years had taken his dombra in hands and had started to sing on the big festivals and holidays. The people had heard his well-known song "Boztorgai" ("Lark") when Kenen was only 13 years. The song which had impressed for people had been instantly scattered on all steppe. Young Kenen among Qazaqs and Qyrgyz had become known as «Boz dalanyn boztorgai» (the Lark of steppe). The song of young akyn «Koksholak» ("Gray-scanty") (it had been written by him the age of 16-17 years) had even more ennobled glory of Kenen. These are songs about the heart of young akyn who was against injustice.

The commemoration in honour of well-known Qyrgyz manap Shabden spent in 1904 had been an important event which had turned akyn's life and had opened to him a way to art's top. Erkebai Bazaruly had taken Kenen as akyn to this meeting. Erkebai Bazaruly was known as a person who had got his education in Russian language. Here young Kenen had beheld a great art of such masters of poetry as Jambyl, Kulmambet, Katagan, and Kalmyrza. Young akyn had sung his song «People, you listen to me!» before public.

The well-known Baluan Sholak had arrived from Saryarka in Semireche in 1914 and this event had become a way to the big art for Kenen. It was his second meeting with Baluan. This time Kenen with the well-known singer had travelled all vicinities of Semireche. Then Little Kenen had learnt 12 songs of the known singer. Baluan had taught him to perform some various ways to sing on a horse and to play the dombra very consummately.

K. Azirbaev is the ardent akyn-fighter. He had taken active part in the popular insurrection in 1916 year, which had been along Qazaq land. Akyn had participated in Ali Nurgojaev's revolt in Kordai. Kenen Azirbaev was a witness of some many events, being near to Ali and he had called the Qazaq people in struggle with his songs and poetry. The songs which were born these years such as «Attanyndar!», «Kairan elim, kaida?», «Bulbulga» have entered into gold fund of the Qazaq folk art. His well-known dastan "Batyr Ali" describing this important event of that time will be later.

Kenen Azirbaev had taken part in carrying out of agitation and propaganda work among the population during an establishment of the Soviet Power. Kenen

Azirbaev had closely cooperated with such ardent Revolutionaries-Bolsheviks as O.Jandosov, S.Seifullin, T.Ryskulov, K.Baribaev, and T.Bokin.

Kenen Azirbaev had been appointed as the chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of Kordai region in 1919-1922. Kenen had called the Qazaq people with his songs, and poetry for unity, for creation, for mastering in knowledge, in art for a new life. Such laudatory songs as «Shank etpe», «Jas ekpin», «Kolhoz ani», «Baldai bol» had been created during this period; all these works precisely have transferred a picture of that epoch.

Kenen Azirbaev together with a poetry colossus Jambyl had gone to Moscow for the first decade of the Qazaq art and the literature in 1936. Kenen Azirbaev had beheld rough applause for art of Qazaq singer Kulash. Kenen had become the witness here such historical event. Kenen Azirbaev had sung his well-known song «Jana zan» in the big Kremlin Palace. And in 1937 together with Jambyl Jabaev, Kenen had visited Caucasus where had participated in the anniversary concert devoted to the 750 jubilee of a poem of Georgian poet Shota Rustavelli “Jolbarys terisin jamyrgan batyr”.

Kenen Azirbaev had become a member of the Writers’ Union of the USSR in 1937. And in 1939 singer-composer K.Azirbaev had been recognized as a member of the Union of composers of the USSR. Kenen Azirbaev was the unique person of that time who had received to be a member of two Unions at once.

The Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 is a special theme in K.Azirbaev's creativity. Kenen at that time was at six-ten years' age. There was his song-appeal «Bizdin Otan jenedi” (“Our Native land will win”), written to the very first days of war in memory of the Qazaq people. Akyn spoke: «Who kept count to those songs, poetic works which were performed all night long in military camp, among soldiers, on the big actions. The most important thing is that my people have estimated the songs flowing with all the heart and hearts. This is the greatest happiness for akyn. There were such works as: «Jalgyz kainym”, “Kosh aman bol, Sholpanqul!”, “Suigenim-ai, kuigenim-ai”, “El Kuanysly”, “Jenis jylgy shattyk an», which have become as property of the people and carried out a huge historical mission.

Thereupon national akyn K.Azirbaev had been honored with award «an Honor Sign» on January, 1st, 1945. In 1947 Kenen Azirbaev was a guest of honor of 800-year-old anniversary of Moscow city and in honor of this date he had written a song «Moscow - the Hero».

75-year-old anniversary jubilee of akyn had been celebrated in Kordai in 1959. This anniversary had been headed by Sabit Mukanov, the known writer of the Qazaq people. Kenen Azirbaev again had been honored with the award «an Honor Sign» in honor of this anniversary.

Kenen Azirbaev had taken part in XXV World Congress of researchers of east folklore, passed in Moscow with assistance of Muhtar Auezov in 1960. K. Azirbaev had performed a fragment from the epos «Kobylandy batyr» «Taiburyldyn shabysy» before the big public very skilled. In the autumn of the same year he together Muhtar Auezov had participated in the 160-year-old jubilee of the great democrat-singer of the Qyrgyz people of Togolokmolda. Muhtar

Auezov highly appreciating the akyn's natural talent whose voice, and art had submitted huge public, once he had in all sincerity told: «Keneke, you have become famous not only the silver voice, but also that you the wise singer, the eloquent orator, the expert on an antiquity. We are infinitely grateful to you that thanks to your talent the whole world has learnt about art of our people».

K.Azirbaev had been given an honorary title «the National poet of the Qazaq Soviet Socialist Republic» on February, 8th, 1961.

90-year-old akyn's anniversary jubilee had been celebrated at republican wide – ranging level in 1974. The representatives of neighboring countries as Uzbekstan, Qyrgyzstan, Kara-Kalpak had come to this holiday. George Markov, the first secretary of board of the Union of writers of the USSR in his speech had noted: «the Soviet readers put a name of Kenen Azirbaev in one number with names of the greatest coryphaeus of national literature such as Suleimen Stalsky, Jambyl Jabaev. Kenen is named the modern Jambyl, second Jambyl». Shyngys Aitmatov deeply estimating akyn's career has told: «the Qyrgyz people consider you as the father, the akyn, the Top of art». In honor of the given anniversary Kenen Azirbaev had got the highest award - Lenin's award.

Akyn's heart had stopped at the age of 92 years on April, 12th in 1976. His body had been buried in his native village. The literary-memorial museum had been opened under the special governmental order in this place in 1981.

A big anniversary holiday has been organized in honor of the 100 anniversary of Kenen Azirbaev in 1984. The Republican competition of akyn had been held in drama theatre named M.Auezov. This action had become the historical event which had affected revival of art as aitys, on a new vector of development of the given genre which in the course of time began to lose the popularity. The solemn meeting had been held in Almaty in the Republic Palace on June, 6th. The meeting had been opened by the First President of our country N.A. Nazarbaev then he was the Chairman of the council of ministers of the Qazaq Soviet Socialist Republic. Nursultan Nazarbaev has noted in his speech: «There was no event in people life where the voice where the bright talent of Kenen Azirbaev would not be shown would not sound. His magnificent immortal songs are sounding today without stopping». Undoubtedly it was the appreciation, a high recognition of akyn's great talent.

Akyn has left a rich written heritage. Ten dastan, more than hundred songs, thousand poetic-epic works, aitys, seven kuy and other records about life of legendary historic figures have been passed in. people's property. Akyn's songs and poetry are continuously being published in the press. They are «The collection of poems» (1947), dastan "Bатыр Али" (1951), «Songs and dastan» (1953), "Songs" (1955), «Songs of my life» (1961), «the Collection of works» (1967), «Secret of legends» (1969), «the Selected works» (1974), "Kenen Azirbaev". (There are poems, texts of songs, dastan, 4 volumes, 1984), «Songs of mountains and steppes» (1984)).

100, 110, 120-year-old anniversary jubilees are continuously celebrated. And 125-year-old anniversary of akyn has been celebrated on the scale of our Republic in 2009. It was the highest honor rendered for akyn after country's independence.

The publishing house «Oner» has published the 4-volume full of akyn's composition under a series «Gasyrlar uni» («the Voice of centuries») in honor of the given anniversary. "The Photo album" devoted to akyn's life has been published for the first time.

Only the most important events had been published in this short review of a vital and creative way of Kenen Azirbaev. The fullest information on life, creativity, public work of akyn, about works, research works devoted to K. Azirbaev, about his native country, a family tree and about his children can be got on this site.

Baqytjan Kenenuly

The explanatory note

Akyn- the poet-improvisator and the singer at Turkic speaking people of Central Asia, in particular, at Qazaqs, Qyrgyz and Qaraqalpaqs. Akyn at the same time were executors of works of oral national creativity. Akyn read verses drawlingly under sounds of qobyz, (dombra) – stringed instrument with the triangular or oval corps, and three strings.

Kuy is an instrumental play, rather small on sounding time (2 - 4 minutes), but very deep under the content and perfected under the form, with a difficult rhythm and developed melody which reflect both some genre lines, and the certain logic of musical thinking. It used in culture almost by all Turkic qypshaq tribes, basically at Qazaqs and Qyrgyz. Kuy is played on different national tools (stringed, wind and plucked). In most cases kuy is performed on plucked instrument of these people: dombra at Qazaqs and qomyz at Qyrgyz. In the XX-th century in the Qazaq culture experiments as well on choral execution of kuy have been held.

Aitys - song competition of Qazaq akyn, the improvised poetic dispute - one of traditional forms of oral national poetry.

Dastan (from the Persian word "destan" (Farsi: داستان), which means "story" - epic work in folklore or the literature Near and Middle East and South East Asia. Usually dastan is folklore or literary processing of heroic myths, legends and fantastic plots.

Dastan describes fantastic and adventurous situations, in it quite often complicated plot, a little hydrolyzed events and idealized heroes.

In the western literary criticism the term «dastan» usually is not used.