

Buko Davidov Katalan



This is a photo of my father, Buko Davidov Katalan. It was taken in the town of Kazanlak, on Sukkot, in 1924. My father was born on 7th September 1902 in the town of Kazanlak. He is the first-born son of the Katalans. He finished Boy's High School in Plovdiv, he was an atheist and a communist. Before 9th September 1944 he was imprisoned several times, for example in the Stara Zagora Prison in 1935-1936 for a couple of months and in 1941-1942 in Kazanlak as a political prisoner under the Law for the Protection of the Nation. He was fluent in Spanish, French, Russian and German. He also spoke excellent Turkish and loved the Latin proverbs. At home we read

Dostoevsky and Chekhov in Russian, as well as Yesenin, Poe, Heine, Zweig, Meyerhold and Stanislavsky. There was even an Italian Bible. My father was a Bohemian - he was fond of drinking with friends, of laughing and joking. He maintained a friendship with Chudomir [Dimitar Hristov Chorbadijski alias Chudomir (1890-1967) - a well-known Bulgarian humorist] until the end of his life. Chudomir visited our home very often, they played backgammon and talked about books, poetry, painters and theater. He staged some plays at 'Iskra', a chitalishte [cultural center] in Kazanlak. My father was a member of the Bulgarian Communist Party but he was expelled in 1963 in Kazanlak because he stood up for a friend of his, an ex-military officer named Slavov. Later my father was invited to join the Party but he refused, he was very grieved.