

Jau saulutė leidžias **The Sun is Setting**

Music: Darius Polikaitis

Lyrics: Tomas Žičkus

At first glance, the lyrics would appear to be a simple poem, a quickly drawn sketch: evening arrives, the sun hides behind the clouds, laborers return home after a day's work, birds and forest animals are going to sleep. Quiet and peacefulness everywhere. But why is a dark cloud obscuring light from the sun?

It becomes clearer if we take a closer look at the poet's life. Tomas Žičkus was born in 1844 and was a revolutionary participant in the uprising of 1863. He was a poet and member of the "Aušrininkai" society. The society was formed by a group of patriotic intellectuals at the end of the 19th century. They were motivated by love of their homeland. Members were often graduates of the Marijampolė and Šiauliai high schools, Veiveriai teacher's seminary, or the diocesan seminaries in Žemaitija and Seiniai. There were also doctors, lawyers, and university students who were studying or graduated from the universities in St. Petersburg and Moscow.

The "Aušrininkai" society sought to organize and arouse the Lithuanian population, to put a halt to the Polonization of the country, and actively resist russification. They understood the nation to be a community including all walks of life – rich and poor, peasants and nobility. Their primary focus was to promote the usage of the Lithuanian language. Their newspaper ("Aušra") began publishing in Lithuania Minor in 1883. "Aušrininkai" helped establish the Lithuanian language as the official spoken and written language of the nation.

So the "dark cloud" can be seen to represent the historical oppression and repressive attempts to eliminate the Lithuanian language.

Tomas Žičkus

- Poet, member of the "Aušrininkai" society, participant in the uprising of 1863, book smuggler.
- Born 1844, died 1929