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Writing in Dialogue

Azam Abidov

Poets are the flute which makes God's voice audible.
(From my diary)

I hear changes in my heart; it is like a leaf trembling in the wind. I search the people around me, their souls. If someone is unhappy in my surroundings, if there is war, terrorism and misunderstanding, I consider myself to blame. Probably, I think, poets must teach humanity, mercy and love. When I write something I always think that my writings will be read not only by Uzbek readers but also by all people of the world. Of course, it is impossible to teach someone how to love. But when I write, I try to create lines in such a way that readers will be able to take something new from my writing. I hope that because of my poems, people will better their lives, feelings and understanding. At least, I hope that after reading my poems, people will start to think about their existence, the Creator, why a human being comes to this world and why he passes away, and come to penitence. I write poetry because it is the only way convenient to my heart and the way to understand people, and to uplift their souls.

When I began to write at school, writing was simply an imitation of other poets. I used to learn by heart long poems and my teachers always appreciated my expressive readings. After returning from the international camp "Artek," a friend of mine inspired me to write poems like his own. Actually, writing poetry became serious work for me when I fell in love at age 18, when I started to feel what love is. A lot of poems I wrote were dedicated to this everlasting topic.

I looked for happiness, wanted to be a happy man; I wanted the world to be pure and fresh. Then I was greedy for my time, I thought that life is given once and what is given only once is called VALUE. I was like a bird then, all the seasons fitted to me. I tried to find myself, but I couldn't understand myself. I looked for freedom as a bird. I wrote about love and considered that all loveless people die from lack of love. I wished to be a king and at the same time, a slave. I said to my beloved not to love me, because I could lose the love.

Later, I began to work on a series called "Poems of faith." I seek new rhyming and original form in order to enter the heart of readers more deeply. I believe in God, and I am sure we did not come to this world just for passing away. This is why I chose to write about faith and belief. I try to summarize the essence of living and for this I use wise sayings, legends, and exemplary stories from religious books.

Once I wrote:

When we are born, the world doesn't weep,
Maybe, at the end, the Sun will only cry.
My soul in the earth, I can never keep,
And it every time wants to fly.

If before I wrote about love for the beloved, now I write about nature, people, and creatures, but this is also connected with love, which comprises so many miracles. Poetry

readers in my surroundings are exacting. First of all, they pay attention to an idea in the poem. A poem is requested to include a pleasant rhyme, rhythm and passion. I should say something new in every new poem. Many people want the feelings in the poem to be sad; a main hero in the poem should suffer. A lot of people asked me to write “a poem of disaster,” and wished their personal calamity to be in the poem. Often, I have to write more about calamity than happiness and joy. There is another point, too. I write for myself, for my heart, for its pleasure, and many readers see in my poems themselves, the feeling they looked for. Therefore I write what I think, what I feel and what I see. I wrote a poem called “Sacrifice,” in which I expressed that all of my body was cut into slices and sacrificed. People around me took all of my body-parts; unfortunately, none took my heart. I wrote that I am a man that knows nothing, and there is a question mark at the end of my wisdom and wit, my life is just a deposit given to the other world and all I know is that living is to laugh inside the grave... I wrote that I am very happy, because none around knows of my misfortune...

Uzbek Poetry has a big heritage. Poets inherited many classical traditions. More than 80 percent of poets in Uzbekistan write with rhyme and melody. But the feelings within the poems are different, you may write about motherland or love, mother or beloved, but to be successful with your poetry, you must say something new about these things; you have to be able to see a new side of the topic. The main point is not the subject you write about, but the originality in how you express that subject. However, there are also Uzbek poets who write free verse and they are becoming famous, Uzbek readers are gradually getting accustomed to read free-verse poetry. Readers want rhyme and melodic poetry because they like to learn poems by heart, to delight and console themselves. It is not surprising that many readers can read by heart more than 5,000 lines of rhyming poetry as I do.

In some extent, Poetry is the following:

P – passion
O – originality
E – ethics
T – tune
R – rhyme
Y – youthfulness

When translating Uzbek rhyming poetry I have tried to save all poetic structures, including rhyme. In the Uzbek language you can use any kind of inversions and a line you write is understandable. For instance, you can write: I Love You (Men Seni Sevaman), you can say: Love I You (Sevaman Men Seni) and You Love I (Seni Sevaman Men). All of them have the same meaning. Unfortunately, English grammar does not permit this. Therefore, the first book of English translation of my own poems was not a good translation. However, gradually I am becoming successful in rhyming English translation too. “Tunes of Asia,” the translation book of contemporary Uzbek poetry is the evidence. After all, Rome Was Not Built in a Day.