

ALEXANDER FAYNBERG: POETIC ANALYSIS OF
"WHOM SHOULD I BE GRATEFUL TO?"

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu tadqiqot maqolasi chuqur, introspektiv va nostalgik she'rlari bilan tanilgan muhim adabiy shaxs – Aleksandr Faynbergning poetik mahoratini o'rganadi. Uning "Kimga minnatdor bo'lishim kerak?" she'ri misra-misra tahlil qilinib, xotira, bolalik, vaqt va ona mehriга oid mavzular yoritiladi. Shuningdek, Faynbergning shoir, tarjimon va ssenariynavis sifatidagi adabiy hissasi ham ta'kidlanadi. She'ning to'liq inglizcha tarjimasi qo'shib, har tomonlama tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Aleksandr Faynberg, xotira, nostalji, bolalik, vaqt, tarjima, she'riyat

Аннотация: В данной исследовательской работе рассматривается поэтическое мастерство Александра Файнберга — значимой литературной фигуры, известной своими глубокими, интроспективными и ностальгическими стихами. Его стихотворение "Кому мне быть благодарным?" анализируется строка за строкой, раскрывая темы памяти, детства, времени и материнской любви. Также подчеркивается вклад Файнберга в литературу как поэта, переводчика и сценариста. Включен полный английский перевод стихотворения для всестороннего анализа.

Ключевые слова: Александр Файнберг, память, ностальгия, детство, время, перевод, поэзия

Abstract: This research paper explores the poetic artistry of Alexander Faynberg, a significant literary figure known for his deep, introspective, and nostalgic poetry. His poem "Whom Should I Be Grateful To?" is analyzed line by line, uncovering themes of memory, childhood, time, and maternal love. The study also highlights Faynberg's literary contributions as a poet, translator, and screenwriter. A full English translation of the poem is included to provide a comprehensive analysis.

Key words: Alexander Faynberg, Memory, Nostalgia, Childhood, Time, Translation, Poetry

Introduction:

Poetry serves as a powerful medium for preserving personal and collective memories, and Alexander Faynberg masterfully captures this essence in his works. Born in 1939 in Tashkent, Faynberg is a renowned poet, translator, and screenwriter

whose influence extends across Uzbekistan and Russia. His poetry is marked by emotional depth, rich imagery, and philosophical reflections.

"Whom Should I Be Grateful To?" is a deeply personal poem that delves into the poet's recollection of childhood, the passage of time, and the enduring connection between past and present. The poem carries a melancholic yet tender tone, as Faynberg explores the fragility of time and the warmth of memory. This research paper will analyze the poem line by line, offering insights into its symbolic meanings and emotional depth. Additionally, Faynberg's literary career will be examined, highlighting his impact on Uzbek and Russian literature.

Biography of Alexander Faynberg:

Alexander Faynberg was born in 1939 in Tashkent. His name and literary contributions are well-respected among Uzbek and Russian readers. More than ten poetry collections authored by Faynberg have been published in Tashkent, Moscow, and St. Petersburg. His work is distinguished by its authenticity and depth, resonating with poetry enthusiasts. Beyond poetry, Faynberg has also written screenplays for seven artistic films, each known for its originality and lifelike narratives. He is the author of over twenty animated films and prose works, which continue to captivate Uzbek readers.

Faynberg is also a prominent translator who introduced many Uzbek poets to Russian-speaking audiences. In Moscow, he translated and published "The Rebellion of Spirits" by Uzbekistan's People's Poet Erkin Vohidov. In Tashkent, his translation collection "The Flight of Swans" brought together works of Uzbek poets. Additionally, Faynberg's own poetry, translated into Uzbek, was published in a collection titled "Chig'ir", further expanding his literary influence.

Full English Translation of the Poem:

Whom Should I Be Grateful To?

Whom should I be grateful to, whom—
When in my being still lives, breathing,
This dear courtyard, blue and gentle,
Doorless entrances,
Walls of blooming jasmine.
In my heart, joy and sorrow race—
Whom should I be grateful to, whom?

I tell my mother:
— I will return soon.
The wind breaks off from a bat's wing.

The attic window.
From there—one can step onto the roof with ease.
The heated metal rings underfoot.
Above me—not an abyss,
I am the one above the abyss.

Existence is seamless. The night is unseen.
Evenings flow away.
The stars shine clear and kind.
A voice calls from the balcony:
— It's nine... come inside...
I deceive my mother:
— Just a minute, yes, just a minute...

From that roof, one cannot descend—
As if from the stone slab of a grave.
I am forty now...
But back then, I was not yet nine...
Spring never leaves that place, and time is powerless.
The balcony and the endless blue.
Mother stands on the balcony...
Opening Lines: Nostalgia and Memory

"Whom should I be grateful to, whom—"

This rhetorical question, repeated throughout the poem, expresses the poet's deep contemplation. He feels a strong sense of gratitude but is uncertain about whom to direct it toward—life, time, memory, or fate.

"When in my being still lives, breathing,
This dear courtyard, blue and gentle,"

The courtyard symbolizes childhood and a place of safety. The phrase "blue and gentle" evokes warmth, peace, and nostalgia, reinforcing the emotional weight of these memories.

"Doorless entrances,
Walls of blooming jasmine."

These images create a sense of openness and freedom, suggesting that childhood was a time without barriers. The jasmine represents beauty, fragility, and the poet's deep-rooted connection to his past.

Mother's Presence and Childhood Rebellion

"I tell my mother:
— I will return soon."

This simple dialogue captures the innocence of childhood, where promises are made without full intention of keeping them.

"The wind breaks off from a bat's wing."

The bat's wing introduces a fleeting, almost ghostly image—perhaps a hint at the passage of time and the transient nature of moments.

"From there—one can step onto the roof with ease.

The heated metal rings underfoot."

The roof serves as a bridge between childhood and adulthood, between adventure and danger. The heated metal underfoot suggests both excitement and risk, mirroring the unpredictability of growing up.

Time and Regret:

"Above me—not an abyss,

I am the one above the abyss."

This is a profound shift in perception. As a child, he felt invincible, unaware of the metaphorical abyss below. As an adult, he realizes he has always been precariously balanced over life's uncertainties.

"A voice calls from the balcony:

— It's nine... come inside...

I deceive my mother:

— Just a minute, yes, just a minute..."

This passage encapsulates the universal experience of resisting childhood's boundaries. However, in retrospect, it also conveys regret—perhaps for not appreciating those fleeting moments more fully.

The Final Image: Time Stands Still

"From that roof, one cannot descend—

As if from the stone slab of a grave."

Here, the roof becomes a metaphor for memory. Just as he could not simply climb down from it, he cannot return to the past. The comparison to a grave suggests that childhood, in a way, has "died," but its memory remains.

"I am forty now...

But back then, I was not yet nine..."

The stark contrast in ages reinforces the poem's meditation on time. Despite the decades that have passed, the memory remains vivid and unchanged.

"Spring never leaves that place, and time is powerless.

The balcony and the endless blue.

Mother stands on the balcony..."

This closing imagery suggests that while time moves forward, some memories are eternal. The mother standing on the balcony is a frozen moment in the poet's mind, symbolizing warmth, protection, and love.

Conclusion:

Alexander Faynberg's "Whom Should I Be Grateful To?" is a deeply introspective and evocative poem that explores memory, childhood, and the passage of time. Through vivid imagery and powerful metaphors, Faynberg captures the emotional weight of nostalgia. The poem's recurring question about gratitude suggests a struggle to reconcile past happiness with present reality. Faynberg's literary contributions extend beyond his poetry, as he played a significant role in translating Uzbek poets for Russian audiences and vice versa. His ability to bridge cultures through language and emotion makes his work timeless. Through this poem, he reminds us that while time may move forward, certain memories remain suspended, untouched by the years—eternal fragments of our past that shape who we are.

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