



Birdsong: Fifty-Three Short Poems

Rumi , Coleman Barks (Translator)

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Several writers are currently doing collaborative translations of Rumi's poetry, but none of them have anywhere near the publication record, the popularity, or the following of these done by Coleman Barks. Approximately 250,000 of his volumes have sold in the last 12 years, including, along with the Maypop editions, the ones published by Threshold, Copper Beech, and now the enormously successful Essential Rumi from HarperCollins.

Birdsong: Fifty-Three Short Poems Details

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Author : Rumi , Coleman Barks (Translator)

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Nvd says

How can one review these masterpieces of spiritual poetry that stood the test of time for 7 centuries?
"SUPERB" is all I can say...

Devi Nilasari says

Rumi adalah penuh makna dimana kita dapat mempelajari hakikinya kehidupan. "Pelajarilah kata-kata bijak yang diucapkan oleh orang-orang bijak dan terapkanlah dalam kehidupanmu sendiri. Hidupkanlah kata-kata itu – tetapi jangan kamu pameran"

Orang bijak adalah dia yang mencintai dan mengagungkan Tuhan. Kebaikan manusia terletak pada pengetahuannya dan perbuatannya, bukan pada warna kulitnya, agamanya, rasnya atau keturunannya. Karena itu ingatlah, temanku, putra padang pasir yang memiliki pengetahuan adalah lebih merupakan bagian dari kemuliaan bagi sebuah negeri daripada pewaris tahta, jika ia menjadi dungu. Pengetahuan adalah kebenaran sejati dari kebangsawananmu, tidak peduli siapa ayahmu dan apa warna kulitmu.

Pengetahuan adalah satu-satunya tiran kekayaan yang tidak bisa dirampas. Hanya kematian yang bisa memadamkan lampu pengetahuan yang ada dalam dirimu. Kekayaan sejati dari sebuah negeri tidak terletak ada emas dan perak tetapi dalam pengetahuannya, kearifannya, dan tidak akan pernah menghinatimu. Karena pengetahuan adalah mahkotamu. Dan pemahaman adalah pegawaimu; ketika mereka bersamamu, kamu tidak dapat memiliki harta yang lebih berharga selain mereka.

Tuhan telah menganugrahkan untukmu intelegensi dan pengetahuan. Janganlah kamu padamkan kasih sayang-Nya dan jangan biarkan lilin kearifan mati dalam kegelapan napsu dan kesalahan. Karena seseorang yang bijak mendekati manusia dengan obornya untuk mengurangi jalan umat manusia.

Sedikit pengetahuan yang dilaksanakan jauh lebih berharga daripada banyak pengetahuan tapi tidak digunakan.

Jika pengetahuanmu tidak mengajarimu nilai segala sesuatu, dan tidak membebaskanmu dari belenggu materi maka kamu tidak akan pernah mendekati singgasana kebenaran.

Jika pengetahuanmu tidak mengajarimu untuk menghilangkan kelemahan dan penderitaan manusia dan tidak membimbing para pengikutmu di atas jalan yang benar, kamu sungguh merupakan seorang yang tidak berharga dan akan tetap demikian hingga Hari Kiamat.

Pelajarilah kata-kata bijak yang diucapkan oleh orang-orang bijak dan terapkanlah dalam kehidupanmu sendiri. Hidupkanlah kata-kata itu – tetapi jangan kamu pameran perbuatan-perbuatan itu dengan menceritakannya karena dia yang mengulangi apa yang tidak ia pahami adalah tidak lebih baik dari seekor kedelai yang ditimbun buku-buku.

Joel says

i cannot say enough of Rumi.

a must read...especially if you're a lover.

this is actually my most recent aquisition of his work.

Deborah Palmer says

Beautiful sensuous, gorgeous... One of the most erotic and spiritual books I have ever read. Union between a man and a woman is the highest expression of praise to God! We honor Him with out bodies.

Sherri says

40th Birthday gift from Jennifer Vail

Bethtub says

SUch a dreamboat. It is like meditating with my eyeballs.

Eric Steere says

I am amazed these things were created.

Michael says

best book of poetry in the world

Ann Viveros says

My first book of Rumi. Thank you Valerie.

Aida says

The most amazing book of poetry I have ever read.

Alexis Weight says

This book was pretty much my introduction to Rumi's poetry. I LOVE Rumi now. He is one of my favorite poets. The translations are simple, yet beautiful.

Mudassir says

I know that my not liking the book as much as most people like Rumi's poetry reflects my own inability to truly appreciate poetry. I plan to read it again at some point, when I feel that I understand poetry better insha Allah!

Aimee says

My favorite collection. And Coleman Barks is my favorite translator of Rumi poems.

Jen says

Although my sister and her partner (who I consider intelligent readers of poetry) have enjoyed Rumi for years, I have avoided him, probably because he has become so popular he seems like a fad. And though what I say about my sister and her partner is true, they are also seekers of spiritual wisdom in ways that I am not and I associated Rumi with nuggets of spiritual wisdom more than poetry--without actually reading any of his work.

Ok, so there is my initial statement of prejudice. I also find I'm going to have to separate my experience of the poems in this book with the method by which they were written.

Response to poems:

I enjoyed many of them. Fifty are presented. Yes, some are more wisdom nugget than poem but many are simply poems, responses to the world (a bit too often about love), wisdom or not.

Sometimes I call you wine, or cup,
Sunlight ricocheting off those,
or faintly immersed in silver.

I call you trap and bait,
and the game I'm after, all
so as not to say your name.

Juxtaposition of opposites and questioning of opposites is common in his poetry.

One who does what the Friend wants done
will never need a friend.

There's bankruptcy that's pure gain.
The moon stays bright with it
doesn't avoid the night.

A rose's rarest essence
lives in the thorn.

So some of them are Koan-like, some of them simply seem like poems, and some are more explicit nuggets of wisdom. The more I read, the more I was reminded of Dickinson with her twists within short poems and her humor, or Cavafy, perhaps because of the emphasis on love, and even Whitman because of the persistent message to embrace life. And of Guiseppi Ungaretti's very brief poem:

I hear a dove
from other floods

But . . .

Skepticism about the way they were written:

At the end of the introduction, there's a little note that these are reworkings of the translations of another person. And then I read a bit more thanks to wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coleman_...). I'm going to be a poor scholar and assume what is written there is essentially correct.

So it seems to me that Barks is an interpreter of translations rather than a translator. So when I'm reminded of Dickinson, is that because of Barks' American processing of Rumi? Or Barks' love of Dickinson? Because the example of direct translation is not at all brief, is more Whitmanesque in style though not at all Whitmanesque in subject matter and its preference for vagueness. So is the koan-like quality a product of Barks and his assumptions about what Eastern and/or religious poetry should be like, not Rumi?

It raises a lot of questions. I feel in the end that I don't know much about the poetry of Rumi, but I like Barks' poetry that was inspired by Rumi (but processed with such a heavy load of American preferences and ways of thinking that it's likely something entirely different from Rumi).

The wiki entry indicates that Barks received an honorary doctorate from the U. of Tehran. I'm not even sure what to think of that. Does that mean that they feel his poetry is an accurate representation of Rumi--or sufi thought--or are they simply honoring him for making one of their own more popular in the English-speaking world?

I'll be curious to hear if anyone else has a more informed perspective on this.

Ummu says

Versi Indonya judulnya : Musyawarah Burung ...bagus banget...karyanya Rumi mendunia..yang paling terkenal ya Masnawinya..sedang Musyawarah Burung, sastra banget.
