CHAPTER-VI

Comparative Analysis with Ameen-Rihani's Contemporaries

Ameen Rihani was the father founder of immigrant literature. His contemporaries were Khalil Gibran, Mikhail Nuaima Ilia Abu Madi, Nasib Arida, Rashid Ayyub etc. They were contributed to the immigrant literature in various ways of writings. Different writing style, thinking, motivation and subject matters were distinguished it among them. The writing style of Khalil Gibran was not in one direction. It touched all boundaries of modern writing style he imagined smoothly and sometimes he wrote on deeply events. He indicated now and then the mankind with phrase idioms, examples, symbols and spiritual sermon. His style was drastic and difficult by and by he wrote philosophical meditational poetry; sometimes he expressed his inner feelings with the music of prose poetry with his pure attractive words. Mikhail Nuaima's style was not influenced by the eastern movement, but his touch was soft on listening, short in meter and various rhymed was followed the Russian literature. His poetry was influenced by the western literature free from American, English or France literature. That reason was when he was in Byltafa University he studied deeply the writings of Tolstoy. In result of the study Nuaima's started his writing on philosophical mediation, social

and psycho analysis.[1] The writing style of Ilia Abu Madi was distinct Arabic. His early writing poetry was near to the Abbaside poetry style and laterally charged in to easy formation of interpretation. He was a middle man of symbolic he did not sank deeply like Khalil Gibran but his thinking was influenced by the east nature depended on the mankind and person. Sufi poet Nasib Arida was one of the freedom movements like Ameen Rihani and Khalil Gibran. His writings was simple beautiful in harmonious style full of sad and anxiety. Nasib continue his writings created new subjects neither imitating other nor lost his personality and his literature was not stopped in outside and discord but it breaded into a vast meaning.[2] Rashid Ayyub was the fifth of New York Pen League who contributed many poetry in immigrant literature . He was expert in poetry, stern in criticism attended to every interesting rhythm. His sap of the poetry was expressed in three words; Love, anxiety and Wine which were full of agony and pessimism. Musical echo of elegance, sensitive and simplicity were the characteristics of his poetry. " Ameen Rihani created a new style between English and Arabic where he comprised every knowledge and information, from history to geography, economic to social, coloured with logical description.

Rihani's writing style was easy in sentence pattern, clear in meaning free from constraint and imitation arranged with peculiarity and spontaneously. Ameen Rihani was observed as a prominent critic of immigrant literature "Your Poets" (Antum Shuara) was the

valuable contribution of modern Arabic literature. He fiercely criticized therein the woeful and spineless state of Arabic poetry. His influence on later generations of Arab poets was largely structural, especially as regards unity of theme and vision of a piece into shorter or longer stanza. His use of short sentences, repetitive phrases and invocations was in a manner not unlike the Holy Quran and of images and metaphors taken from nature, was also influential, as were his less successful attempts to charge his Poetry with emotion . He made a highly significant contribution to the development of modern Arabic poetry through his early literally activity in the United States, which was an inspiring example to the young immigrant talent around him and by helping to establish the Romantic trend and rebelling against the old, outmoded ways. Khalil Gibran's, output was wide and varied. His interest in the teaching of the Bible, Torah and Buddhism, and in the personality of Christ, Mohammad and Ali were to have a far-reaching influence on his writings. They also helped him acquire a calm and philosophic resignation to life and fate in the face of poverty, sickness and death that had earlier turned him into a rebel. Equally important was Gibran's exposure to the culture of Europe. The impact of the movement of Art for Art's sake and of European music was seen in all his works.[3] In writing of history of Gibran's art, his own letters on the subject and on his stay in Paris were indispensable and many of them have not been published. His book on Gibran's year in Paris, however has to be read with care, since

although friendly, he seemed sometimes ambivalent about Gibran; possible some feeling of professional jealousy was involved, since Gibran's prodigious talent may have proved daunting for him, Gibran did steal the show and upstaged every colleague who came within measurable distant of him. such as Ameen Rihani and Mikhail Nuaima. Most daring among the writers who liberated Arabic from its startle form. Ameen Rihani combined prose with the art of the painter, the sculptor, the music and the poet. With his artistic background he paints with the pen and his expression became pictorial filled with life. Verily it was shown in his general and travelling literature .This was real absolute description reflected his inner feelings and personal activities and liberal view. Ameen Rihani's pictorial literature was mostly rhetorical flourished and depicted the feelings of society, worldly material life and spiritual life.

Mikhail Nuaima believed in the immortality of the soul after its liberation from the body. Birth and death were two chains in the never ending chain in life. His touch was musical and light, almost like a faint whiff of air with nothing hard on granting. His poems move from tune to tune rhythm all in calmness[4]

As a pioneer of revolutionary movement of Arabic literature, Ameen Rihani's contributions were mentionable. In the part of nineteenth century Eastern Arabs were introduced with European and Francis writers and Critic like Victor Hugo, Saint Beof etc. among the reformers of modern period. In England, romantic natural

philosophical poet Word Sorce, Byron and Shelley etc. were leading the reformative movement. The movement in Europe especially in French influenced with the socio-political disturbance made the French revolution which changed their individual and social miserly life. In Egypt the literary movement was derived by three reformative poets: Ahmad Shauqi, Hafiz Ibrahim and Khalil Mitran. In the first Phase of twentieth century they changed the classical writing style and prosody of modern Arabic by their dramatic poetry, that was the renaissance of modern Arabic literature. That was the modification of subject matter of Arabic literature, before organizing the "The pen league of New York", Ameen Rihani's matter of traditional poetry that beginning with the ancient events, creeping on movements of the house. He recommended to the poets-

حرروا صناعتكم من قفانبك

"وسائق الاظعان" ان عندكم اليوم الطيارات لتسوقوا

النجوم"

5

Rihani wanted to live a worldly and material life where he criticized the precious style of praise and emotion and choose the mentioned poetry like the philosopher Abul Ala-Al-Marri, Ibn Sina,

Mutanabbi and Ibn Al-Farid. So he wrote on humanism national or social life which reflected the spiritual oneness and common anxiety of mankind When Ameen Rihani seedling the revolutionary on traditional poetry, the pen league of New York, followed his steps and continued his movement. The chief of the pen league Khalil Gibran was representative, blower of the trumpet and nourishing parson of the soul. The life of Khalil Gibran was a revolution itself. His revolution was started with all social surroundings and traditional bindings which were not permitted him to outburst, travel and freedom. As is well known, he pioneered almost all the literary genres which he and his collegues introduced into Arabic, such as the essay, the short story, the novel, and the drama, thus relieving Arabic literature of its medieval look and endowing it with all the aspects of contemporary western literature.[6] In poetry, he wrote in the traditional idiom of classical Arabic prosody and in that of free verse. Khalil Gibran declared-

الشعر يا قوم روح مقدسة متجسدة من ابتسامة تحيي القلب
او تنهيدة تسرق من العين مدامعها اشباح مسكنها النفس
وغداؤها القلب ومشربها العواطف وان جاء الشعر على
غير هذه الصور فهو كمسيح كذاب نبذة اوقى

Mikhail Nuaima continued the movement of Arabic with modern Arabic style, According to him life and literature was part and parcel where literature was wide like a deep life reflected one another. He praised the new modern literature free from traditional writings said-

"ادركنا ـ بفضل الغرب ـ ان نظم الشعر ممكن في غير الغزل والنسيب والمدح والهجاء والوصف والرثاء والفخر والحماسة"لذالك اطربنا نغمة بعض شعرائنا الحديثين الذين تجاسروا ان يتعدوا هذه الحدود المقدسة"

8

Mikhail Nuaima laid out his definitions of modern poetry; "Poetry is the literature of mind and the poet is the translator of mind"[9] When the literary reformative movement was started on reptile and weakness of Arabic poetry, Nuaima adhered him to that subject reviewed corner to corner and secret thing came out his "Hums Al-jufun" full of the matter came to his mind, philosophical meditations and ascetic Sufi thinking. Sometimes Mikhail Nuaima praised the nature inclined to ideal, spiritual without mentioning material and sensuous. According to him nature is living creature heard responding him and he whispered to it as he the reply of creature and he also answered the questioning of nature by his

whispering. His poetry was imaginary whispering between him and his mind, him and his surrounding nature.

In Rihani's translation of classical Arabic poetry into English, he was working an already opened seam, even if his notes and commentary were highly original. But in his own poetry he was breaking new ground in an even less compromising manner. He deliberately attempted "to introduce Arabic words into his writings" and made few concessions (unlike Khalil Gibran who was simple and direct) to facilitate the creation of new readership.Use of only two rhymes over more than one stanza is rarely attempted in English poetry, but repetition of just a single rhyme is a common feature of Arabic poetry and Rihani adopts both schemes. The difficulty Rihani had establishing a common terrain between East and West can be seen from reception of his poetry.

In the field of wording, composing and prosody of modern Arabic literature, the new reformation of Ameen Rihani was "prose poetry".Perhaps most important of all; he was the first consciously to write Prose Poetry in Arabic, earning himself the Arabic title of "Father of Prose Poetry" Ameen Rihani expressed his view in his book.

يدعى هذا النوع من الشعر الجديد vers libres بالافرنسية و

بالانكليزية free verse اى الشعر الحر او بالحرى المطلق

وهو اخر ما اتصل اليه الارتقاء الشعرى عند الافرنج

،وبالأخص عند الأمريكيين والانكليز ،فملتن وشكسبير

الـلـقـاء الشعر الانكليزى من قيود القافيةو ولت و تمن (Walt Whitman) الأميركي مطلقة من قيود العروض كالاوزان الاصطلاحية و الابحرو العرفية، على ان لهذا الشعر المطلق وزنا جديدا مخصوصا،و قد تجيئى القصيدة فيه من ابحر متنوعة۔

وولت وتمن هو مخترع هذه الطريقة و حامل لوائها وقد انضم تحت اللواء بعد موته تثير من شعراء اوروبا العصرين ۔وفي الولايات المتحدةاليوم جمعيات "وتمنية" ينضم اليها فريق كبير من الادباء المغالين بمحاسن شعره الجلية المتخلقين باخلاقه الدمقرطية المتشعين لفلسفته الأمركية اذ ان شعره لا تنحصر مزاياه۔ بقالبه الغريب الجديد فقط بل فيه من الفلسفة و التصور ما هو اغرب و اجد

10

Translation "This kind of poetry is called if French "Verse Libres", and in English "Free Verse"— i.e., poetry which is free from regular prosody. This kind of poetry has recently become popular among American and British poets. Shakespeare was the first to

liberate English poetry from traditional rhymes, and later Walt Whitman liberated it from regular rhythms. However free verse has its own original rhythm, and indeed, it may have several rhythms

Walt Whitman was the creator and leader of free verse. After his death, his poetry influenced several modern poets in America and Europe. Nowadays in America these exist several Whitman societies, which include literary men who are genuinely saturated with his poetry, his democratic thought, and philosophy. Whiteman's Poetry not only represents this original and peculiar form, but it also carries more original and peculiar philosophy and imagination than its form.

Khalil Gibran's "نثر الشعر" Prose poetry was different from Rihani's prose poetry, which style was prosical mostly poetical spirit in hard sympathy and after in imagination and rhythm, metaphorically abundant. This style was well known as "Gibranic style"[11] Prose poetry was not imaginary but it was new effort stand with some imitation of European poetry. Prose poetry had a distinguish place that period of creating which brought out new idioms of philosophical, knowledge and social. It means of everlasting meaning and good result without following the rules. Ameen Rihani's example of prose poetry were "الثورة" "ريح الصموم" "فؤاد" "داود يتغنى ويتغالى" etc

Khalil Gibran did not turn his direction of writing into prose poetry, it was founded in Rashid Ayyub's poetry collection "Agani-Al-Darwish" Three prose poetry was "Wadi Al-Jama Jami", "Al-Aa'ma", Al-Darwish". But his poetry was free from some

bindings and it was interpreted by his imagination as he wished. Nasib Arida had a poem of prose poetry, influenced by the creation of Ameen Rihani, like other, prominent member of New York Pan League Arab immigrants had liberal thinking which was reflected on their literature. They contributed to literature different sides of prose, poetry, novel and stories etc. First step was taken by Ameen Rihani and Khalil Gibran and after that their comrades wrote on various subjects. Khalil Gibran stepped his story writing in New York in 1912 by "Al-Ajnaha Al-Mutakassarah" and "Al-Aasifa" published in Pen league of New York in 1921, his another stories was "Arais Al-Marruz" came to light in 1906 and "Al-Arwah Al-Mutamarridah" published in 1908. Mikhail Nuaima wrote his Arabic drama " Al-Aaba Wa Al- Banun".In 1917. Ameen Rihani wrote his drama sand stories in both English and Arabic language. He wrote before World War I two Arabic stories "Zambaqa Al-Ghour" and "Kharij Al-Harim" and wrote his life story named "The Book of Khalid" in English in storical style and wrote another drama "Wijdah" written in English. Ameen Rihani's two Novels were written about the life of Eastern Arabi and their political disturbance, national and social conditions "Kharij Al-Harim" reflected how the Alman administrated in the direction of Eastern Arabic in Turkish Empire. Latterly he described the propaganda for Arabic veiled women who were followed the veil and go out to the factory in native working without fail. Rihani was different from his friend Khalil Gibran because he

continued his struggle his movement of Arab nationalism. He gave solution in the way of essays, writing articles and travelling books, all these movements inspired on tranquility of native land and nation in Eastern Arabic. In that field he contributed his writings and ended his life with travelling and composing who was a real seeker of Arab Unity.

Among the many influences of Ameen Rihani in prose poetry, no single one should perhaps be given more weight than Walt Whitman. He mostly followed the style of Whitman. Rihani's sought to naturalize the practice of free verse in Arabic, citing Whitman as his inspiration in his introduction to his own volume of prose poems " Hutuf Al- Awdiyah" (Hymns of the Valley), he praised Whitman as his leader of free verse. It is perhaps no surprise that when Rihani chose to translate one particular poem by Whitman into Arabic, he chose "To Him that was crucified ("Uka Al-Maslub") which expresses a similar exaltation of the poet as prophetic figure and asserts the brotherhood of such "unacknowledged legislators of the world," as Shelley put it, no matter what their origin.

Whiteman sought to express poetically how the human mind can achieve a sense of peace or reconciliation through either contemplation of the vast panorama of activities or contemplation of change and renewal in nature. It is not surprising of them, to find Rihani doing much the same thing in his early experiments with prose poetry.

The first of these experiments to be published, "Al-Hayat Wa-Rihani", Ameen al Mount. Aw Al-Kharif wa-Ghiyab Al-Shams Fi Lubnan," (Life and Death: Fall and Sunset in Lebanon), appeared in October 1905 in the leading Egyptian periodical of the day, Al-Hilal. It was later republished virtually unchanged as one of the selections included in "Hymns of the valleys".[12]

One can scarcely underestimate the impact on audience of the day of this poem, so unlike anything they had ever experienced before in the tradition of Arabic Verse. But for that small coterie equipped to appreciate it, the high standards of craftsmanship it displayed would no doubt have been impressive. Rihani clearly took great care presenting telling details of description is chronicling the speaker's reaction first to an autumn storm and then to the sun setting from a vantage point in the hills of Lebanon just below Md. Sinan.

He also used repletion of lines in evoking the image of nightingale (or, to use its, Arabic name, a bulbul) Warbling in its cage as a leitmotif that neatly divides the poem into six unequal segments. The nightingale image relies on the traditional equation of birds with human souls found in literature from the Mediterranean religions. Rihani uses it effectively at the end of the poem to express the poets' sudden transition to a new level of awareness when he describes the bird flying free from its cage, thus providing an analogue for his soul's triumph over the despair it felt at the imminence of death.

The setting and the barolic evocation of the poet's voice as a means to triumph over the finally of death and false peace evoke many similar tableaux in Whitman's work, especially the last section of his most famous poem, "Song of Myself" Where he used a similar sleight of hand to equate himself with a bird that represents the power of nature to renew itself.

"The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me, he complains of my gab and my loitering,

I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,

I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.....

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,

If you want me again look for me under you boot-soles failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,

Missing me one place search another,

I stop somewhere waiting for you". [13]

In his later poetry Whitman more after combines this view of nature as the ground for the search for true peace with a vision of joining with all mankind ("I am large, I contain Multitudes") to achieve a similar effect. We find a comparable development in Rihani's prose poems, which culminate in the vision he creates for " Ana Al-Sharq"("I am the East"). This poem, like his first, found a wide audience in its day. This time in the newspaper Al-Ahram (Cairo, February15, 1922),too, was re-published in the collection Hymns of the Valleys.

Here the poet directly addresses a "Young man of the West", who becomes in the course of the poem, another who must both educate the poet and be educated by him. The first attitude he adopts, however, is that of the teacher.

انا الشرق

قد جئتك يا فتى الغرب رفيقا

في جيوبي و في يدي اشيا من حقول النفس و من جبالها

و اشياء من اغوار الحياة

و اشياء ترضي الانسان و لا الله

عندي ما يسكن نفساك المضطربة و ينعشها

عندي ما يشفي قلبك من امراض التمدين ،،

14

Translation.

"I am the East

I approached you, son of the West, as

A companion,

My pocket and hands are filled with

Material

Made from the fields an mountains of

The soul,

And from the depth of life:

Things which are approved by man and God,

And things which are not approved by man and God

I have what may cool and refresh your Confused soul

And what may cure you heart from the ills of Civilization"

Here the speaker emphasizes the ancient knowledge that he-as embodiment of the East-is in a position to impart to the Westerner. This material that he holds in his "hands and pockets" will restore, he asserts, the balance in the Westerner's life that has been lost, which was resulted in his great being affected by "the ills of civilization". In the next section of the poem, the "East" will make even greater claim, cataloguing for the reader a whole range of voices, some of which express contradictory points of view. This prophetic, ever ecstatic language, while powerfully knit together in its rhythmic incantations, also telegraphs a more disturbing message of its own turbulent reluctance to be enclosed within boundaries, verging occasionally ever on anarchy. This is one of the most interesting sections of the poem, in its strong echo of the work of Whitman and his school of American poetry. It powerfully evokes Whitman's own catalogues of the many voice of American life and his strong identification with those who do not walk in the halls of power. Rihani's here weaver together a tapestry similar to the one which allowed Whitman to

express, over and over again ("but especially in Song of Myself"), the transcendent vision of hard-won harmony that "is not choose or death-it is form, union , plan-it is external life-it is Happiness." [15] Those multiple voices, in Whitman or Rihani, cannot easily be reduced to a single, consistent message-and in fact the attempt to tame them would probably destroy them,

In the final section of the poem, the "East" seems momentarily to turn outward, seeking what the "son of the west" can offer to him in turn to help him return to life, Vitality and freedom. The new ideas about religion, politics and self-expression through literature brought by the west seem at first to convey an intoxication promise of renewal and hope for freedom Rihani said in last stanza.

I am the East.

I have philosophies and religions

Who would exchange them for aircrafts ?

It is unfortunate that this question

Remains all too relevant today, nearly"

A century after the poet first posed it. Walt Whitman attempted to expose the cant redactions within a philosophy, so widespread, in the United States before the Civil war, that called for individual liberty and freedom while at the same time permitting slavery, and his poems on these subjects still make for uncomfortable reading today so to do Rihani's writings on the questions of whether domestic principles are evenly a projected into both the societies. American and

Middle Eastern where he lived and worked continued to challenge our most cherished assumption is about us. This is, of causes, one of the most important functions of great art.[16]

Ameen Rihani's travelling literature was depicted the real events of his practical experience of habitual activities traditions, evils, sitting, assembly, speaking manners of many inhabitant. He described the travelling events by hair and eye with mentioning the country.Rihani was able to succeed tin reflecting his pictorial literature in his creative prose poetry. He said in his poem " Maba'di Fi Wadi"

(My Temple in the Valley)

ايدا امي الطبيعة_ جئت اجدد معك امال الحياة سرورها

جئت اجدد عهدي ايماني مع كلأالحقول وزهورها

جئت اردد تحت هذه الافنان الخضراء

ابتهال ابنائك الاتقياء

وقفت على ضريح الشتاء ليلا

فشاهدت هناك مشهدا جليلا

شاهدت ربةالربيع الثقيل جبين ابيها_،،

17

Translation:

"Yes, Mother Nature!
With you I renew life's hopes and rapture.
With the priories, their flowers and pastures,
I restore my row and faith
And came again, under you greenery, to sing;
The joy of your pure offspring.
I stood at the deathbed of winter at night
To behold the glorifying sight
of the goddess of spring
Kissing her father's fore head"

As has already been pointed out, Ameen Rihani, the romantic and mystic that he was, also a writer, firmly committed and fiercely patriotic what is more, as a literary artists, he was equal to the magnitude of the problem that Lebanon presented. He is still alive today as a cultural analyst, a special ,and a political reformer, because the problems he addressed at the beginning of the century have persisted, even have grown worse, much worse, as their size and dimensions have grown and multiplied, especially after the long civil war. Rihani had foreseen all the consequences of sectarian and denominational strife, and the plight of the country during the civil war could only confirm his apprehensions at their worst. The tragedy of this war is indeed a tribute to Rihani's perspicacity and diagnostic power.[18]

NOTES

1. Nadira, Jamil, Siraj, Shuara Al-Rabita Al-Qalamia, P-314, Egypt, 1955.
2. Naouri, Isa, Adab Al-Mahjar, P-393-394, Egypt, 1959.
3. Nadira, Jamil, Siraj, Shuara Al-Rabita Al-Qalamia, P-293-294, Egypt, 1955.
4. Naouri, Isa, Adab Al-Mahjar, P-381, Egypt, 1959.
5. Rihani, Ameen, Antum Al-Shuara, P-89, Beirut, 1933.
6. Salma Kh. Jayyusi, Trends and Movements in Modern Arabic Poetry : P-91-107, Vol-I, Pub-New York, 1991.
7. Gibran, Khalil, Dama' Wa Ibtasamah, P-61,
8. Nua'ima, Mikhail, Al-Ghirbal, P-83, Beirut, 1978.
9. Nua'ima, Mikhail, Al-Ghirbal, P-92, Beirut, 1978.
10. Rihani, Ameen, Al-Rihaniyat, Vol-II, P-183, Beirut,1910
11. Maqdisi, Anis, Al-Ittajahat Al-Adabiah Fi-Al-Aalam Al-Arabia Al-Hadith, P-197, Vol.-II, Beirut, 1973.
12. Rihani, Ameen Hymns of the valleys, Translated works By Naji Queijan, P-4-10, Beirut, 2002.
13. Whiteman: Walt. "Song of Myself" Leaves of Grass, Sect: 16, P-44, New York, 1973.
14. Rihani, Ameen, Hutuful Al-Awadiah, Beirut, 1955.
15. Whiteman: Walt. "Song of Myself" Leaves of Grass, Sect: 50, P-88, New York, 1973.
16. Nauo'ri : Isa: Adab Al-Mahjar, P-138, Pub-Egypt, 1959.
17. Rihani, Ameen, Al-Rihaniyat, Vol-II, P-218, Beirut,1910
18. Nauo'ri : Isa: Adab Al-Mahjar, P-140-145, Pub-Egypt, 1959.