CHAPTER - III

CHAPTER-III

Jibran's Contributions to the Philosophy

3:1(i) An introduction to his philosophical works

As an oriental who wrote his most celebrated work in the major language of the Western World, Jibran's style and philosophy is characteristic of the East in general and of the Arab in particular. His constant inspiration was his own heritage, which coloured his English and exercised in an escapable hold over his mind, its insistence being upon the wholeness of visionary experience and the perpetual availability of another realm of being. In all his work he expressed the deep felt despire of men and women for a kind of spiritual life that readers the material world meaningful and imbues it with dignity.[129]

"He was one of those rare Writers who actually transcend the barrier between East and West, and could Justifiably call himself-though a Lebanese and patriot- a citizen of the world.

His worlds went beyond the evocation of the mysterious East but endeavoured to communicate the necessity of reconciliation between Christianity and Islam, spirituality and materialism, East and West; Jibran in his work and his life refuted kip-lings often-Quoted line,

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[129] -Suheil Bushrui and Joe Jenkins, *'Khalil Gibran: Man and Poet'*, Oxford: One World, 1998, P-1

written in 1889, 'Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.'"[130]

Jibran settled in Boston's south end, at the time the second largest Syrian/Lebanese-American community in the United States, due to a great calamity to his family in the land of Lebanon. And he was registered as Khalil Jibran, due to a mistake at school. Jibran's mother, along with his elder brother Peter, wanted him to absorb more of his own heritage rather than just the Western aesthetic culture he was attracted to. So at the age of fifteen, Jibran returned to his home-land to study at Maronite run Preparatory school and higher education institute in Beirut called Al-Hikma. He started a student literary magazine with a classmate and was eleted "College Poet."

Art and Poetry

Jibran held his first art exhibition of his drawings in 1904 in Boston, at day's studio. During this exhibition, Jibran met Mary Elizabeth Haskell, a respected headmistress ten years his senior. The two formed an important friendship that lasted the rest of Jibran's life. Though publicly diserect, then correspondence reveals an exalted intimacy. Haskell influenced not only Jibran's personal life, but also his Career. She introduced him to charlotte teller, a journalist and Emile Michel, a French teacher, who accepted to pose for him as a model and became close friends. In 1908, Jibran went to study art in Paris for two years. While there he met his art study partner and lifelong friend youssef Howayek. While most of Jibran's early

[130] -Ibid. P-2

writings were in Arabic, most of his work published after 1918 was in English. His first book for the publishing company Alfred A. Knopf, in 1918, was the Madman, a slim volume of aphorisms and parables Written in biblical Cadence somewhere between poetry and prose. Jibran also took part in the New York Pen League, also known as the "immigrant Poets" (al-Mahjar), alongside important Lebanese – American authors such as Ameen Rihani, Elia Abu Madi and Mikhail Naimy, a close friend and distinguished master of Arabic literature, whose descendants Jibran declared to be his own children, and whose nephew, Samir, is a godson of Jibran's.

Much of Jibran's Writings deal with Christianity, especially on the topic of spiritual love, but his mysticism is a convergence of several different influences.

Christianity, Islam, Sufism, Hinduism and theosophy, he wrote; "You are my brother and I love you. I love you when you prostrate yourself in your mosque, and kneel in your Church and pray in your synagogue. You and I are sons of one faith the spirit."[131] Juliet Thompson, one of Jibran's acquaintances, reported several anecdotes relating to Jibran; she recalls Jibran met Abdul Baha, the leader of the Baha's faith at the time of his visit to the United States, circa 1911-1912. Barbara Young, in "This Man from Lebanon; A study of Khalil Jibran", records Jibran was unable to sleep the night before meeting 'Abdu'l Baha who sat for a Pair of portraits. Thomson reports Jibran saying that all the way through writing of 'Jesus, The son of Man', he

[131] -Wikipedia free Encyclopedia (available on 5/12/12)

thought of 'Abdu'l Baha. Years later, after the death of 'Abdu'l Baha, there was a viewing of the movie recording of 'Abdu'l Baha-Jibran rose to talk and in tears, proclaimed an exalted station of 'Abdu'l Baha and left the event Weaping.

His poetry is notable for its use of formal language, as well as insights on topics of life using spiritual terms. Jibran's best known work is 'The Prophet', a book composed of twenty six poetic essays. The book became especially popular during the 1960's with the American counter culture and new age movements. Since it was first published in 1923, the Prophet has never been out of print. Having been translated into more than forty languages, it was one of the bestselling books of the twentieth century in the United States.

One of his most notable lines of poetry in the English speaking world is from *'Sand and Foam' 1926*, which reads; 'Half of what I say is meaningless, but I say it so that the other half may reach you.' This line was used by John Lennon and Placed, though in a slightly altered form, into the song 'Julia' from the Beatles' 1968 album the Beatles (a.k.a 'The while Album')

Political view

Jibran was by no means a politician. He used to say; "I am not a Politician, nor do I which to become one" and "Spare me the political events and power struggles, as the whole earth is my home land and all men are my fellow Country man." Jibran called for the adoption of Arabic as a national language of Syria, considered from a geographic point of view, not as political entity. When Jibran met 'Abdu'l Baha

in 1911-12, who travelled to the united states party to promote peace, Jibran admired the teachings on peace but argued that "Young nations like his own" be freed from Ottoman control. Jibran also wrote the famous "Pity the Nations" poem during these years which was posthumously published in the garden of the Prophet.

When the Ottomans were finally driven out of Syria during World War I, Jibran's exhilaration was manifested in a sketch called "Free Syria" which appeared on the front page of al-Sa'ih's special "Victory" edition. Moreover, in a draft of a play, still kept among his papers, Jibran expressed great hope for national independence and progress. This play, according to Khalil Hawi, "defines Jibran's belief in Syrian nationalism with great clarity, distinguishing it from both Lebanese and Arab nationalism, and Showing us that nationalism lived in his mind, even at this late stage, side by side with internationalism."

His Legacy

Jibran died in New York City on April 10, 1931, the cause was determined to be cirrhosis of the liver and tuberculosis. Before his death, Jibran expressed the wish that he be buried in Lebanon. This wish was fulfilled in 1932, when Mary Haskel and his sister Mariana purchased the Mar Sarkis Monastery in Lebanon, which has since become the Jibran Museum. The words written next to Jibran's grave are "a word I want to see written on any grave, I am alive like you,

and I am standing beside you. Close your eyes and look around. You will see me in front of you ....."[132]

Jibran willed the contents of his studio to Mary Haskell. There she discovered her letters to him spanning twenty three years. She initially agreed to burn them because of their intimacy, but recognizing their historical value she showed them. She gave them, along with his letters to her which she had also saved, to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Library before she died in 1964. Excerpts of the over six hundred letters were published in "Beloved Prophet" in 1972.

Mary Haskell Minis (she wed Jacob Florance Minis in 1923) donated her personal collection of nearly one hundred original works of art by Jibran to the Telfair Museum of Art in savannah, Georgia in 1950. Haskell had been thinking of placing her collection at the Telfair as early as 1914. In a letter to Jibran, she wrote "I am thinking of other Museums –the unique little Telfair Gallery in Savannah, Ga, that Gari Melchers chooses pictures for, there when I was a visiting child, form burst upon my astonished little soul" Haskell's gift to the Telfair is the largest public collection of Jibran's visual art in the country, consisting of five oils and numerous works on paper rendered in the artists lyrical style, which reflects the influence of symbolism. The future American royalties to his books were willed to his home town of Busharri, to be "used for good causes."

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[132] -Internet source-available on 5/12/12 as *'Biography of Khalil Gibran'*

Jibran's Philosophical Writings

In Arabic

Nubthah fi Fan Al-Musiqa (1905)

Arais al Muruj (1906)

Al-Arwah al-Mutamarrida (Spirits Rebellious, 1908)

Al-Ajniha al-Mutakassira (Broken Wings-1912)

Dam'a Wa Ibtasma (A Tear and a Smile, 1914)

Al-Mawakib (The Processions, 1919)

Al-Awasif (The Tempests, 1910) al-Bad'I' Wall Tarai'f (The new and the Marvelous, 1923)

In English

The Madman (1918)

Twenty Drawings (1919)

The Forerunner (1920)

The Prophet, (1923)

Sand and Foam (1926)

Kingdom of the imagination (1927)

Jessus, The son of Man (1928)

The earth Gods (1931)

Posthumous, in English

The Wanderer (1932)

The garden of the Prophet (1933)

(Completed by Barbara Young)

Lazarus and his beloved (play-1933)

Beloved Prophet, The love letters of Khalil Jibran and Mary Haskell and her private Journal (1972, edited by Virginia lti'ler).

In the previous point it has been already mentioned that Khalil Jibran has written many of his literary works based on philosophical thoughts. Among them only a few works will be discussed elaborately.

3:1(ii) Jibran's Philosophy

The-Prophet

And *'The-Prophet'* is more beautiful, nearer, more revealing, more marvellous in conveying reality and in sweetening consciousness-than ever---The English, the style, the wording, the music-is exquisite, Khalil-just Sheerly beautiful. This book will be held as one of the treasures of English literature. And in our darkness we will open it to find ourselves again and the heaven and earth within ours elves. Generations will not exhaust it, but instead, generation after generation will find in the book what they would fain be-and it will

be better loved as men grow riper and riper. It is the most loving book ever written."[133]

'The-Prophet' is Jibran's literary and artistic masterpiece. It remained during the 20th century America's bestselling book, after *'The Bible'*. As of 1998 it has sold 9,000,000 copies in North America alone.[134] The book is said to be testimony to the genious of Jibran.

Before *'The-Prophet'* was born, Jibran told Mary Haskell of his aspiration to satisfy the spiritual hunger of the World; "The World is hungry, Mary, and I have seen and heard the hunger of the World; and if this thing is bread it will find a place in the heart of the World, and if it is not bread it will at least make the hunger of the World deeper and higher."[135]

Although there are critics like Najjar who argue that Jibran's idealistic symbolic message of Balancing Eastern spirituality and western material progress did not relieve human suffering around the world[136], readers have found themselves returning to the Prophet's pages to reabsorb its Wisdom. Its beloved poetry is commonly read at wedding, baptisms, and funerals throughout the World. The 'Chicago Evening post literary Review' said of *'The Prophet'*-

"Truth is here: truth expressed with all the music and beauty and idealism of a Syrian .... The Words of Jibran brings to ones ears the

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[133] -Barbara Young, *'This man from Lebanon'*, New York: Knopf, 1945, P-102

[134] -Water field, Robin, *'Prophet The Life and Times of Khalil Gibran'*, New York; St. Martin's Press, 1998, P-257

[135] -*Beloved Prophet*, 'The love letters of Gibran and Mary Haskelled', Virginia Hilu, NY Knopf, 1972, P-264

[136] -Nada Najjar, *'The Space in between The ambivalence of Early Arab-American Writers'*. University of Toledo, 1999, P-156

majestic rhythm of Ecclesiastes.... For Khalil Jibran has not feared to be an idealist in an age of cynics. Nor to be concerned with simple truth where others devote themselves to mount bank cleverness –The twenty eight Chapters in the book form a little Bible, to be read and loved by those at all ready for truth."[137]

The book presents Jibran as a writer of Prophetic vision who shares his spiritual sensitivities with his readers. It portrays the journey of a banished man called 'al-Mustafa', which in the Arabic language means the chosen one. As he prepares to go back to 'the isle of his birth', he wishes to offer the Orphalese, the people among whom he has been placed, gifts but possesses nothing. The people gather around him, and Almitra, the mistress, asks him to 'give us of your truth' and the man's spiritual insights in twenty six poetic sermons are his gift.

As a wise sage and man of great vision, 'Al-Mustafa' teaches moral values, the mysteries of life, and timeless wisdom about the human experience: marriage, children, friendship, pleasure, death-----He, for example, calls for balancing heart and mind, passion and reason, and for giving without recognition because the giver's joy is his reward.

Al-Mustafa describes the yearning of the soul for spiritual regeneration and self fulfillment. He teaches that man's purpose in his life is a mystic guest towards a Greater self, towards God hood and

[137] -Barbara Young, *'This Man from Lebanon'* New York: Knopf, 1945, P-61

the in finite. He talks about "Your larger selves"[138] and pictures" together stretching our hands unto the giver."

Then at the end of the book Al-Mustafa closes his farewell address saying: "A little while, a moment of rest upon the Wind, and another Woman shall bear me."[139] This image reflects a romantic vision of eternal rebirth, reincarnation, and a continuity of life. It evokes the unity of Being which Jibran believes in rather than fragmentation. Al-Mustafa's soul, hence, will return again to its mystical path towards a greater soul.

The prophet's words are lucid and beautiful, powerful and inspiring in such aphorisms as "work is love made visible", "Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding." "The soul unfolds itself, like a lotus of countless petals", and "Thought is a bird of space, that in a cage of words may indeed unfold its wings but cannot fly."[140]

Bushrai remarked that the secret of the book's success is "Jibran's" remarkable ability to convey profound truth in simple yet incomparably elegant language."[141] Yet, this is no surprise; simplicity and delicacy of language are distinguishing aspects of Jibran's Writings. In his sermon on Joy and Sorrow Al-Mustafa says-

"When you are Joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you Joy. When

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[138] - Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Dr. Sarwat Okasha, Da'ral Ma'arif Misr-1911, P-91
[139] -Ibid. P-96
[140] -Ibid. PP-28, 52, 55. respectively
[141] -Suheil Bushrui B. *'Khalil Gibran of American'* The Arab American Dialogue, 1996. P-4

you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight."[142]

The positive and optimistic teachings of the book are appealing. Al-Mustafa strongly believes in the power of the human soul. He speaks with a tone that is consoling and filled with hope and compassion for humanity, seen to be in need for self realization. Speaking of God and Evil, Al-Mustafa has this to say-

"You are good when you are one with yourself, yet when you are not one with yourself you are not evil.

For a divided houses is not a den of thieves; it is only a divided house.

And a ship without rudder may wander aimlessly among perilous isles yet sink not to the bottom."[143]

Jibran also beautifully combines his Romantic thoughts of nature with his teachings. In his sermon on Reason and Passion, for example, he writes-

"Among the hills, when you sit in the cool Shade of the white poplars, Sharing the peace and serenity of distant fields and meadows-then let your heart say in awe. "God moves in Passion."[144]

Critics agree that *'The Prophet'* is partly autobiographical, Mary often said to the inspiration for Al-Mitra, and Africa or New York for the city of Orphalese. The twelve year wait Al-Mustafa experienced

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[142] - Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Dr. Sarwat Okasha, Da'ral Ma'arif Misr-1911, P-29
[143] -Ibid. P-64
[144] -Ibid. P-51

before returning home from the land of the Orphalese seems to equal Jibran's own twelve year stay in New York City.

In regard to Al-Mustafa's departure for the land of his birth and his gratefulness to the people who have given him his "deeper thirsting after life"[145],it reflects Jibran's everlasting dream to go back to his homeland and his gratefulness to the country which he made his home for the last twenty years of his life.

While creating the prophecy of Al-Mustafa, Jibran undoubtedly considered his own experience as an "exotic Easterner" living in America and his interest in teaching Eastern spirituality to the west, Bushuri and Jenkins emphasize the image of the wise man coming from the East and argued: "the idea of a stage dispensing wisdom among the people of a foreign land no doubt appealed to Jibran."[146]

The book apparently also draws on Jibran's readings, thoughts, and contemplations through the year. It is inspired by biblical literature, Christian and Sufi mysticism, Buddhism, Hinduism---But we can also trace the influence of the Romantics and transcendentalists.

Talking about *'The Prophet'* Mary Haskell promised Jibran that "in our darkness and in our weakness we will open it, to find our salves again and heaven and earth within ourselves."[147]

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[145] -Ibid. P-88

[146]-Suheil Bushrui B. and Joe Jenkins, *'Khalil Gibran: Man and Poet'*, Oxford: One World, 1998, P-99

[147] -Sana Mecharek, *'Khalil Gibran and other Arab American Prophets'*, The Florida State University, 2006, P-28

Mikhail Nuima added: "such books and such men are our surely that humanity, despite the fearful dissipation of its incalculable ever gives and resources, is not yet bankrupt."[148]

'The Prophet' seems to reflect Jibran's efforts to unite various faiths and religions. Jibran himself declared that *'The Prophet'* wrote him instead of him writing *'The Prophet'*.[149] Behind Al-Mustafa's global vision of a harmonious universe healed by the power of love and unity, there is an underlying theme of the unity of all religions and the essential oneness of humanity. Jibran communicates a universal humanist massage and truth relevant to all cultures and times.

Jibran's reputation in the Western world rests on his masterpiece *'The Prophet'*. He is looked up to as a master of philosophy whose teaching is immortal. The fame of 'The Prophet' in terms of its worldwide readership, however, his shadowed the fame of Jibran's earlier Arabic writings through which he had already established a literary name for himself as a distinguished writer in Arabic.

Finally, in the prophet east and west meet in a mystic union unparalleled in Modern literature. Inspired by the vision of Blake, the bible, Buddhism, Hinduism, the Romantics, popular American schools of thought, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Friedrich Nietzsche, Ameen Rihani and Christian and Sufi mysticism, the prophet provoked the critic Claude Bragdon to write of its "extraordinary dramatic power, deep erudition, lighting like intuition,

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[148] -Bushrui and Gotch, *Gibran of Lebanon!* New papers Beirut, 1945, P-9
[149] -Daoudi MS. *The meaning of Khalil Gibran*, Secaucus: Citadel Press, 1982, P-99

lyrical lift and metrical mastery with which massage is presented, and the beauty, beauty, beauty, which permeates the entire pattern, with which everything he touches seems fairly to drip, as it were."[150]

The objectives of this thesis mainly depend on this poetic novel *'Al-Nabi'*. In the last two chapters, its theme and style as well as analytical study also will be there.

The Broken Wings

First published in 1912, *The Broken Wings (Al-Ajnihah al-Mutakassrah)* is one of Khalil Jibran's early experimental cum philosophical works through which he sought to reform the Arabic literature and culture. In a manner unknown in traditional Arabic writing, it is free from rhetorical flourishes but more importantly, it debates the issue of the oppressed Arab woman in the Middle Eastern society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth countries.

The novella was, naturally, attacked by conservatives, but overall it received a wide vogue and favourable reviews in the Arab world which at the time was thirstly for new ideas. It even boosted Jibran's literary career. According to Jibran himself, The Broken Wings was welcomed as "a wonderful work of art", "perhaps the most beautiful in modern Arabic," and as "a tragedy of subtlest simplicity."[151]

It is Jibran's longest sustained narrative, written in the tradition of "Romeo and Juliet" and based on oriental settings and images.

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[150] -Khalil Gibran *'Jesus, the son of man'*, New York, 1928, P-2

[151] -Sana Mecharek, *'Khalil Gibran and other Arab American Prophets'*, The Florida State University, 2006, P-29

Inspired by his own first love and bitter experience in his home village Busharri, *The Broken Wings* gives the taste of the bittersweet, of the beauty and pain of young love. It is an alive and profound story characterized by beautiful prose and evocative imagery, a tale of passion doomed by the restrictions of society and the power and greed of the clergy.

From another romantic perspective, Jibran once again describes the beautiful nature in North Lebanon which fined his imagination and stirred his homesickness up to his death. In the 'Forword' we see him rejoicing in spiritual exaltation from remembering "those valleys full of magic and dignity", and "those mountains covered with glory and greatness trying to reach the sky."[152]

Young Khalil is introduced to Faris Karama, a wealthy widower, and immediately falls in love with Selma Karama's only child. Selma is equally attracted to Khalil. But a powerful priest, who is after the family's fortune, puts pressure on Faris Karama and demands Selma's hand for his nephew Mansoor Bey. Despite Selma's protests, her father accepts the match and sends his daughter to a loveless life.

With Faris death, Mansoor Bey Takes over Selma's in heritance and begins to waste it in gambling and other thoughtless spending. Meanwhile, Selma resumes her chaste relationship with Khalil. But when Mansoor Bey becomes suspicious, he demands that Selma gives him an heir. She chooses to confine herself to her new life and thinks

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[152]-Khalil Gibran, *'The Broken Wings'* trans. Anthony R. Ferris, New York: Citadel Press, 1957, P-18

of her future infant as a guide out of the unhappiness that imprisons her. Selma's baby dies minutes after birth and she follows him because of work health. Khalil finds himself alone in agony by Selma's tomb.

Jibran's narrator delicately paints his feelings when describing the blossoming of his love. He talks about Selma's unparalled beauty and virtue, her sweetness and nobility of spirit; she lives inside him as a "supreme thought, a beautiful dream, an overpowering emotion."[153]

He believes in the transcendental power of Romantic love and in its ascendancy over tradition. For him, true love is a supreme way of achieving self-realization and is the noblest of human attainment. It becomes a spiritual accord that brings him heavenly inspiration, for through Selma eyes he sees the angles of Heaven looking at him.[154]

Selma, however, tells her beloved that the true nature of a woman's soul is a mixture of love and sorrow, affection and sacrifice.[155] Her understanding of the situation is deeper and more complicated. Unable to overcome the values of her society, she chooses commitments to her father and unloving husband over running away to Khalil's love, and so "She sacrifices true love for social customs. She prays: help me, my lord, to be strong in this deadly struggle and assist me to be truthful and virtous until death."[156]

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[153]-Ibid. P-52
[154]-Ibid. P-20
[155]-Ibid. P-105
[156]-Ibid. P-77

Powerless and resigned, she is convinced that "a bird with broken wings cannot fly in the spacious Sky."[157] For water field, the *'The Broken Wings'* of the title are" the wings of love on which the young couple first explore the exalted domain of love, only to find themselves brought abruptly down to earth by harsh realities."[158]

Jibran's narrator also sees himself as a wounded bird, but takes a stronger stance against convention, male chaurinism, and corruption of the Lebanese aristocracy. His criticism is especially harsh when it comes to the heads of religion whom he accuses of maintaining the oppression of woman. He says; "the Christian Bishop and the Moslem imam and the Brahman priest become like a sea reptiles who clutch their pray with many tentacles and suck their blood with numerous mouth."[159]

Jibran sympathetically describes women in his native Lebanon as victims of a despotic patriarchal system. They are prisoner of social expectations and are treated as a commodity to be purchased, like in the case of Selma whose function was to take her father's riches to a husband who treated her like another possession. Jibran draws attention to "the miserable procession of the defeated" and "innocence defiled."[160]

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[157]-Ibid. P-114
[158]-Water field, Robin, *'Prophet: The life and Times of Khalil Gibran'*, New York; St. Martin's Press, 1998, P-60
[159]-Khalil Gibran, *'The Broken Wings'* trans. Anthony R. Ferris. New York: Citadel Press, 1957, P-62
[160]-Ibid. P-84

He urges Selma to liberate herself from the chain of social norms and to run away with him from a world of suffering, or what the calls "Slavery and ignorance"[161] to another world across the oceans where real freedom and personal independence can be found."[162]

In *'The Broken Wings'*, Jibran is not just as story teller but a culture analyst and a reformer who seeks to correct the wrong. Najjar writes "that Jibran's purpose for that story was to satirize in order to reform is evident in his frequent didactic intrusions by which he introduces his dissenting views regarding the condition of the Arab woman."[163]

The story, however, illustrates Jibran's attempts at approaching universal truths. He reflects on the meaning of the human existence and portrays himself as a champion of women and of the values of human freedom and dignity. For Shahid, Jibran's works that speak of woman[164] have a ring of modernity about them as they deal with issues that are still burning and being addressed in our times.

Jibran's other earlier stories also touch on similar native themes and classify him as a rebel against old culture. In *The Bridal couch* in *spirit Rebellions*, Jibran depicts an oppressive patriarchal system that caused bloodshed; Laila is traped by her father's social ambitions and is misled by the society's lies. On the evening of the wedding to an arranged husband, Laila sees her beloved Saleem and asks her to go

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[161]-Ibid. P-113
[162]-Ibid. P-114-115
[163]- Nada Najjar, *'The Space in between: The Ambivalence of Early Arab American Writers'*, University of Toledo, 1999, P-168
[164] -Shahid, Irfan, 'The Inaugural Farhat J. Ziadeh', *'Khalil Gibran between Two millennia'*, University of Washington, 2002, P-15

back to her new husband. She stales him to death and then kills herself over his body after she gives a sermon on life and love.

In 'Rose al Hani', another narrative in 'spirits Rebellions', we meet Rose as another victim Selma Karama, She breaks her social image of a good wife when she leaves her husband to live with her beloved. Rose tells the narrator the story of her bitter past, but at the same time she seems to tell the story of plight of the Arab woman in general. She says; "It is a tragedy written with the woman's blood and tear's which the man reads with ridicule because he cannot understand it, Yet, if he does understand, his laughter will turn into scorn and blasphemy that act like fire upon her heart."[165]

A Tear and a Smile

Another famous philosophical work of Khalil Jibran is *'A Tear and a Smile' (Dam' al wa Ibtisamah)*, first published in 1914. It is an anthology of his youthful, writings in the Arabic-speaking 'Émigré' newspaper *Al-Mohajer* (The immigrant.) Jibran's column, *'Tears and Laughter'*, attracted a wide attention from his readers both in the Arab world and among the Arab literati in America.

The book contains 56 poetic prose pieces close to the aphoristic, and illustrated with 4 of Jibran's paintings. In a beautiful and splendid language, the poems, stories, and parables included exhibit the youth's world of imagination, his self reflective thoughts and romantic philosophy of life and death, which although at the

[165]-*A Treasury of Khalil Gibran*, Martin L. Wolf, New York, 1951, P-186

burgeoning stage, is quiet insightful and universally appealing. Jibran's reflections in *'A tear and smile'* are especially pleasing to those sensitive and emotional souls which are his most fervent admirers.

As the title evokes, the book is a mixture of tears and smiles, mourning and celebration of a wounded lover and solitary poet. But the tears seem to be much more abundant than the smiles. The poet lives in agony and longing for his beloved, for a restoration of beauty in the world, and for a peace of mind, but is convinced that human life is a world of suffering to be lived through until death.

Jibran, indeed, sings of the glory of his tears[166] and the beauty of sorrow. He tells us that a person experiences Joy only if he or she has experienced sorrow. Tears have illuminated his heart and mind, they have given him sight and deeper knowledge of life, "A tear to purify my heart and give me understanding of life's secrets and hidden things."[167] In other times, however, the poet seeks transcendence. In "Have Mercy my soul", for example, he asks his soul how long she will continue to torment him.

Jibran strikingly expresses a romantic fascination with death. For him death Marks the end of suffering and becomes a life giver, a transcendental and eternal world where the spirit rests in timelessness. In *'A poet's Death is His Life'*, the dying youth addresses death as

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[166]-Khalil Gibran, *'A tear and a smile'* trans. H. M. Nahmad, New York, 1972, P-48
[167]-Ibid. P-3

'sweet' and 'beloved' friend[168] which alone can set his soul free from the sorrow of the world and take him to a greater life.

In addition to *'A poet's life is His Death'*, other selections in the book like *'A poet's voice'* and 'The poet' suggest a familiar emphasis on the prophetic role of the poet and, chronologically speaking, these pieces seem to anticipate Jibran's ripened philosophy in the later years of his career.[169]

Jibran portrays the poet as the one who brings society to a state of harmony and sacrifices his life for the redemption of humanity. In his homeland he is in exile, a stranger in a strange land because his people undervalue his teachings and fail to see his virtues.

The poet is a visionary and unlike the rest of human kind, clear and universal perceptions are his gift, he is the one who bears ripe fruit for the hungry souls and is capable of opening people's eyes into eternity and enlightening generations. For Jibran the poet is a "Singing bird"[170], 'A shining light unconquered by the dark' and even an "Angel sent by the Gods to teach man the way of Gods".[171]

The poet lives somewhere between a real world and a transcendent world. He is the final stage in the evolution of man which he describes as a process from descent into the material world to alienation to a return to the spiritual universe. Hence he reveals his

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[168]-Ibid. PP-19-20
[169]-Sana Mecharek, *'Khalil Gibran and other Arab American Prophets'*, The Florida State University, 2006, P-33
[170]-Khalil Gibran, *'A tear and a smile'* trans. H. M. Nahmad, New York, 1972, P-134
[171]-Ibid. P-81

passionate belief that men are capable of discovering their inherent divinity because humanity is the spirit of divinity on earth.[172] He emphasized the deeper power of the soul, for true light comes from within man.

Jibran rejoices in feelings of self fulfillment through a mystical union with God who is "the ocean of love and Beauty."[173] He invites us to a contemplative life rather than the comfort of materialism. He opens 'The play round of life' saying;

"A minute moving among the patterns of Beauty and the dreams

Of love is greater and more precious than an age filled with splendor

Granted by the weak to the strong."[174]

Jibran accomplished transcendence also through union with nature. In several of the selections he expresses an aesthetic and spiritual affinity to the valleys and the flowers, the shore and the wind. In 'Meeting', for example, he describes the glorious valley of the Nile and its magical cedars and cypress trees. He associates nature not only with beauty but with purity and friendship. He tells us that nature's sweet words and tender smile fill the spirit with Joy.[175]

The hard edge to the book, however, represents Jibran's frustration and anger with the corruption of humanity. In bitter and ironic tones, he describes a world that glorifies power and the pursuit of richness

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[172]-Ibid P-191
[173]-Ibid P-4
[174]-Ibid. P-120
[175]-Ibid P-113

rather than human values. He expresses his sympathy with the poor and the wretched who are being exploited and abused by the rich and the powerful.

In the same mode as *'The broken Wings'*, Jibran rejects orthodoxy and organized religion. He attacks priests for he believes they embody falsehood, immorality, and evil. He writes; "I beheld priests, sky like foxes, and false messiahs dealing its trickery with the people."[176]

In his famous poem *'A vision'*, Jibran reemphasizes his concern for individual freedom in society. He uses an allegory between a caged bird and a caged human heart that laments the imprisonment of men by convention and civilization. The human heart reflects Jibran's criticism of the oppressiveness of manmade laws which he believes strip the human being of his life and essence.

From a biographical point of view, it is probable that Jibran's relationship with Josephine Peabody at the time inspired his thoughts in the book. This probability seems consistent with water field's argument that the poets painful love for Josephine created "the melancholy habits and wounded eyes of the Romantic hero."[177]

We can also find a paralled to the feelings of alienation and dissatisfaction with human kind in Jibran's own life. Nadeem Naimy sees that book as a bridge between a first and a second stage of Jibran's career, the poet's longling for his homeland evolved into

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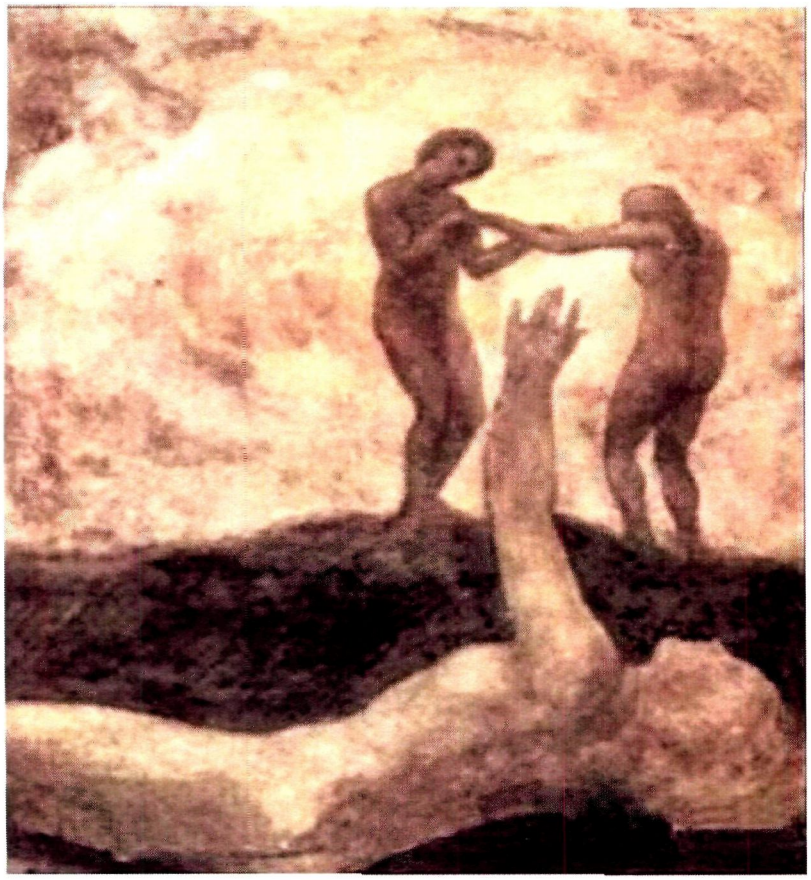
[176]-Ibid. P-40

[177]-Water field. Robin, *'Prophet The life and times of Khalil Gibran'*. New York. St. Martin's Press. 1998. P-88

rebellion against humanity in general. Naimy points out that the tears in *'A Tear and smile'* are those of Jibran the misfit rather than of the rebel in Boston, singing in an exceedingly touching way of his frustrated love and estrangement, his loneliness, homesickness and melancholy.'[178]

[178]-Nadim Naimy *'The mind and thought of Khalil Gibran'* Journal of Arabic literature, 1974, P-59

Jibran's philosophy through art



In the 'Prophet' translated by Arunmoni Choudhury has been included this Art of Jibran in the Chapter marriage. According to him, through this Picture, Jibran instructed to the human society to maintain distance between husband and wife, although they with remain together forever.[179]

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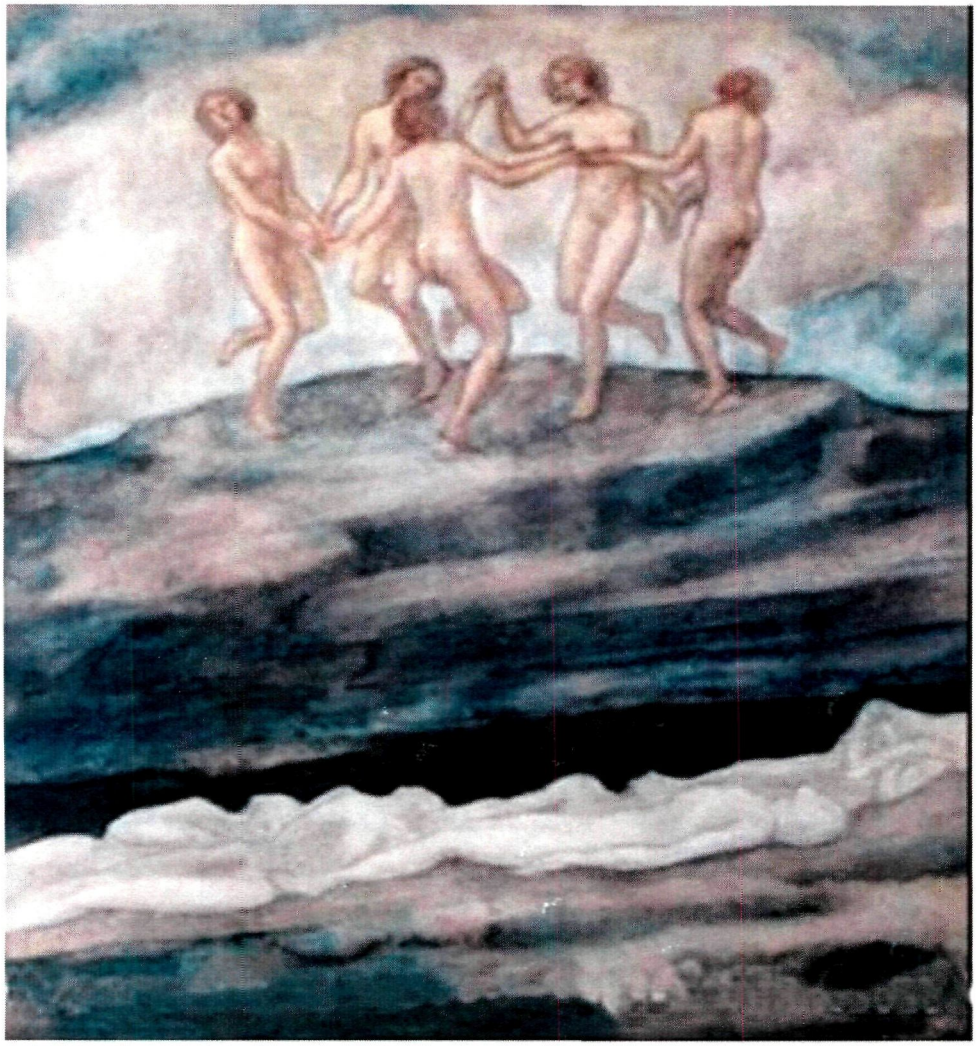
[179]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, translated by, A Assamese writer Arunmoni Choudhry, 1st edition: 1995, Arif Road, Kolkata-700067, P-10



According to Jibran

You who roamed distracted in

The byways of proliferous

Religions and Roved the valleys of countrary Doctrines.[180]

[180]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, translated by, A Assamese writer Arunmoni Choudhry, 1st edition: 1995, Arif Road, Kolkata-700067, P-16

You who found the freedom

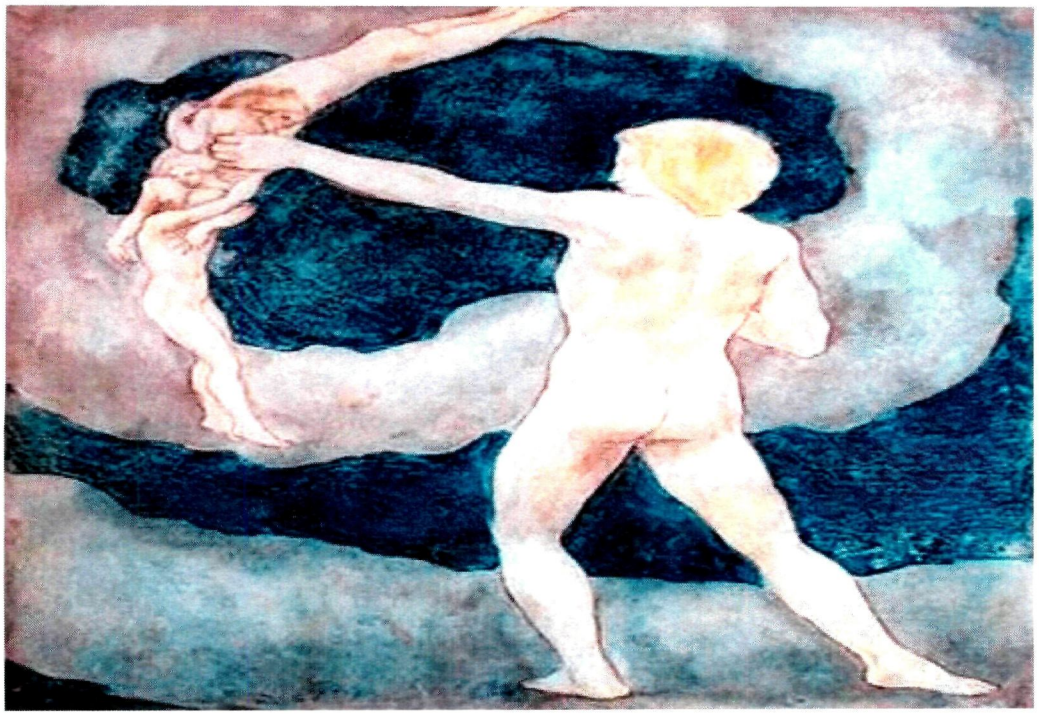
To disbelieve preferable to

The chains of submission and

The arenas of denial safer

Than the redoubts of Obedience.[181]

[181]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, translated by, A Assamese writer Arunmoni Choudhry, 1st edition: 1995, Arif Road, Kolkata-700067, P-71



Jibran's Word-

Then turn in repentance unto it,

For it draws your hearts nigh to

The throne of woman, who is the

Mirror of your feelings;

And it is the trainer of your souls

In the realm of nature, which is

Where your lives originated.[182]

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[182]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, translated by, A Assamese writer Arunmoni Choudhry, 1st edition: 1995, Arif Road, Kolkata-700067, P-12

You who are lost in the night of idle

Talk and drowned in the abyss of

False imaginings, know that in

Beauty is a reality that extinguishes

Doubt and prevents skepticism, a

Dazzling light that safeguards you

From the gloom of falsehood.[183]

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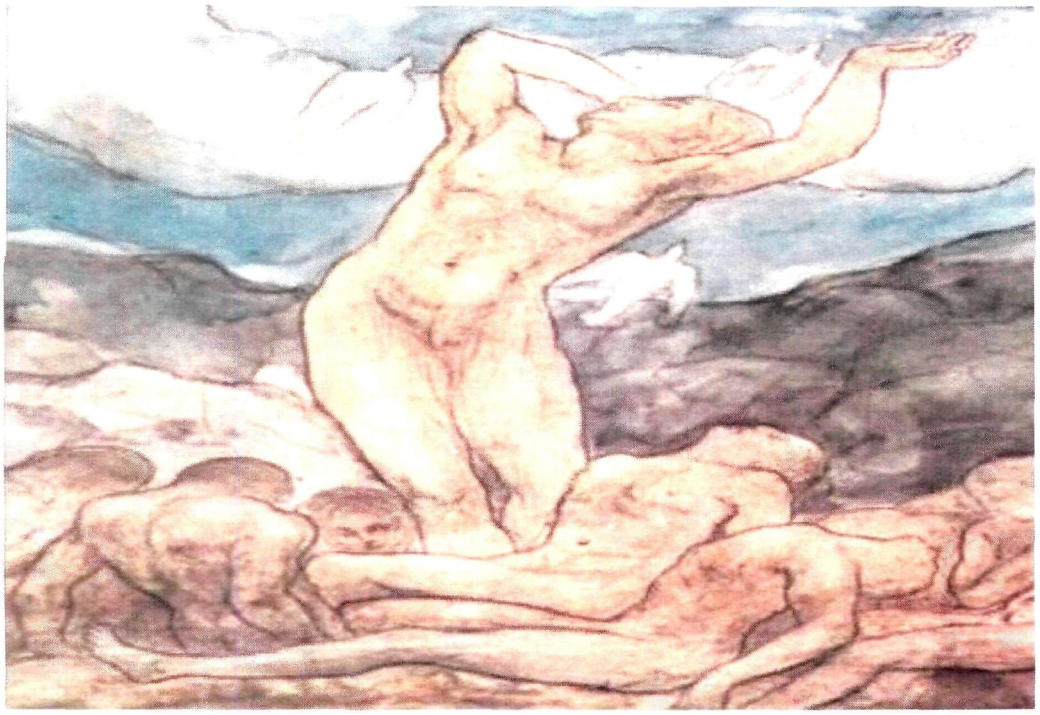
[183]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, translated by, A Assamese writer Arunmoni Choudhry, 1st edition: 1995, Arif Road, Kolkata-700067, P-3



Contemplate the

Wakefulness of spring and

The advent of the morn,

For beauty is the lot of

Those who contemplate.[184]

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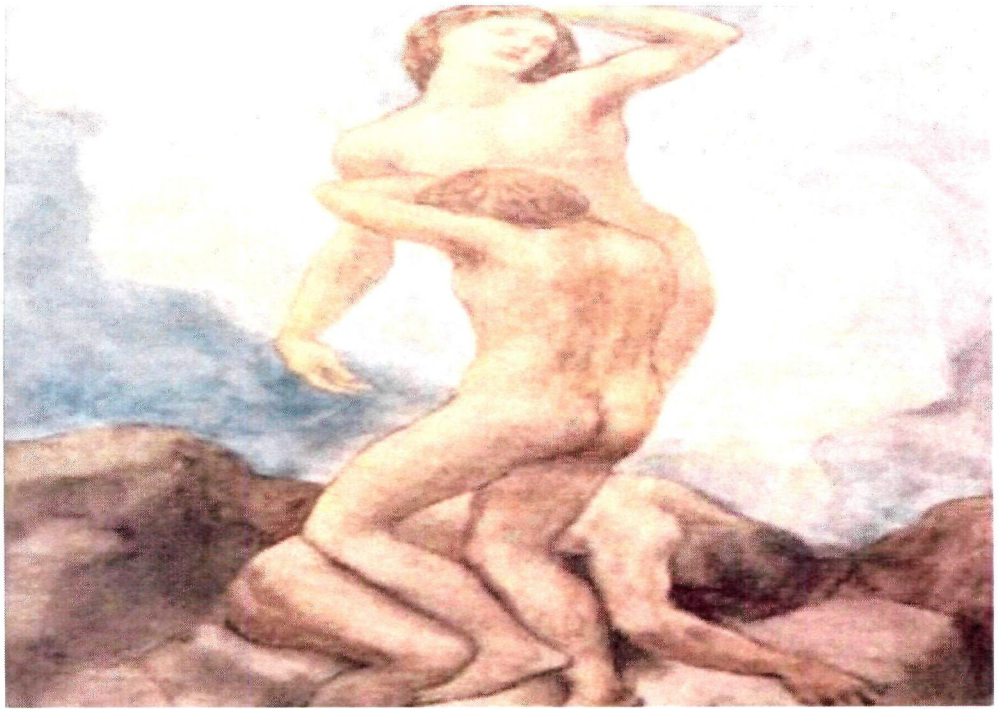
[184]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Dr. Sarwat Okasha, Da'ral Ma'arif Misr-1911, P-140



Observe the meekness of the child,

The gracefulness of the youth, the

Power of the mature, and the Wisdom of the aged;

Beauty is the charm of those who watch.[185]

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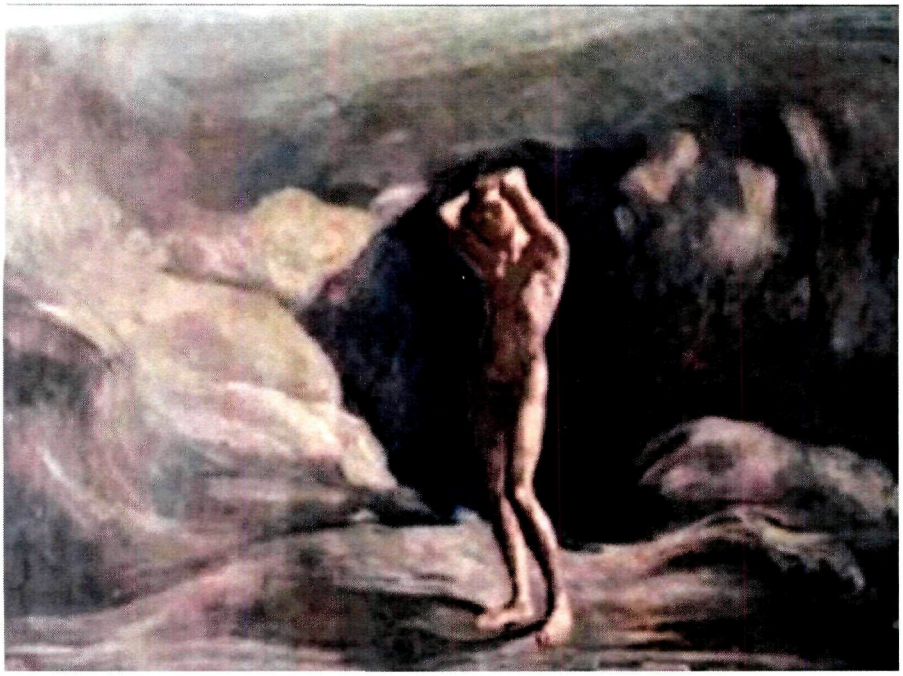
[185]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, translated by, A Assamese writer Arunmoni Choudhry, 1st edition: 1995, Arif Road, Kolkata-700067, P-30



Hallow the body as a temple

To comeliness and sanctify the

Heart as a sacrifice to love;

Love recompenses the adorers.[186]

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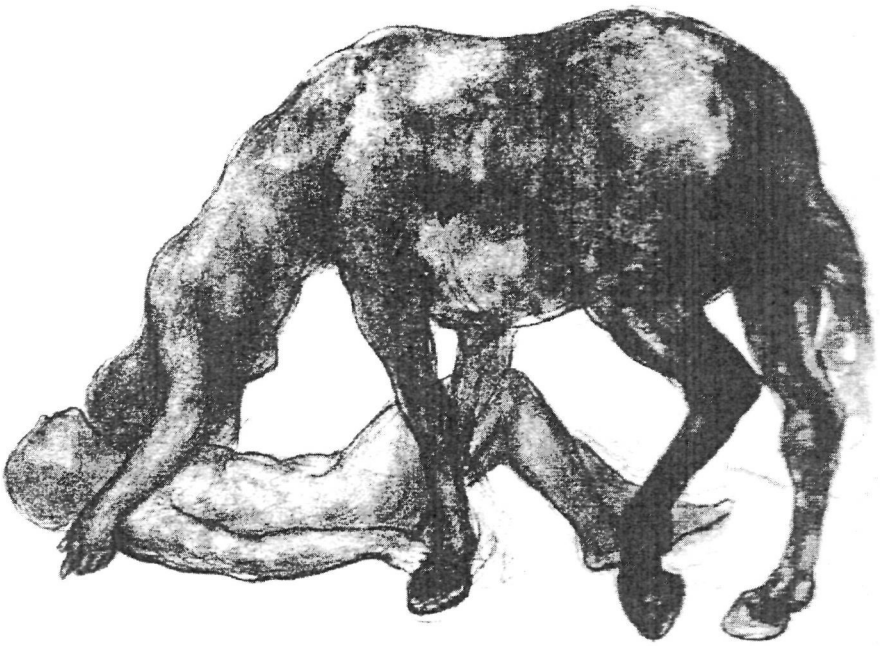
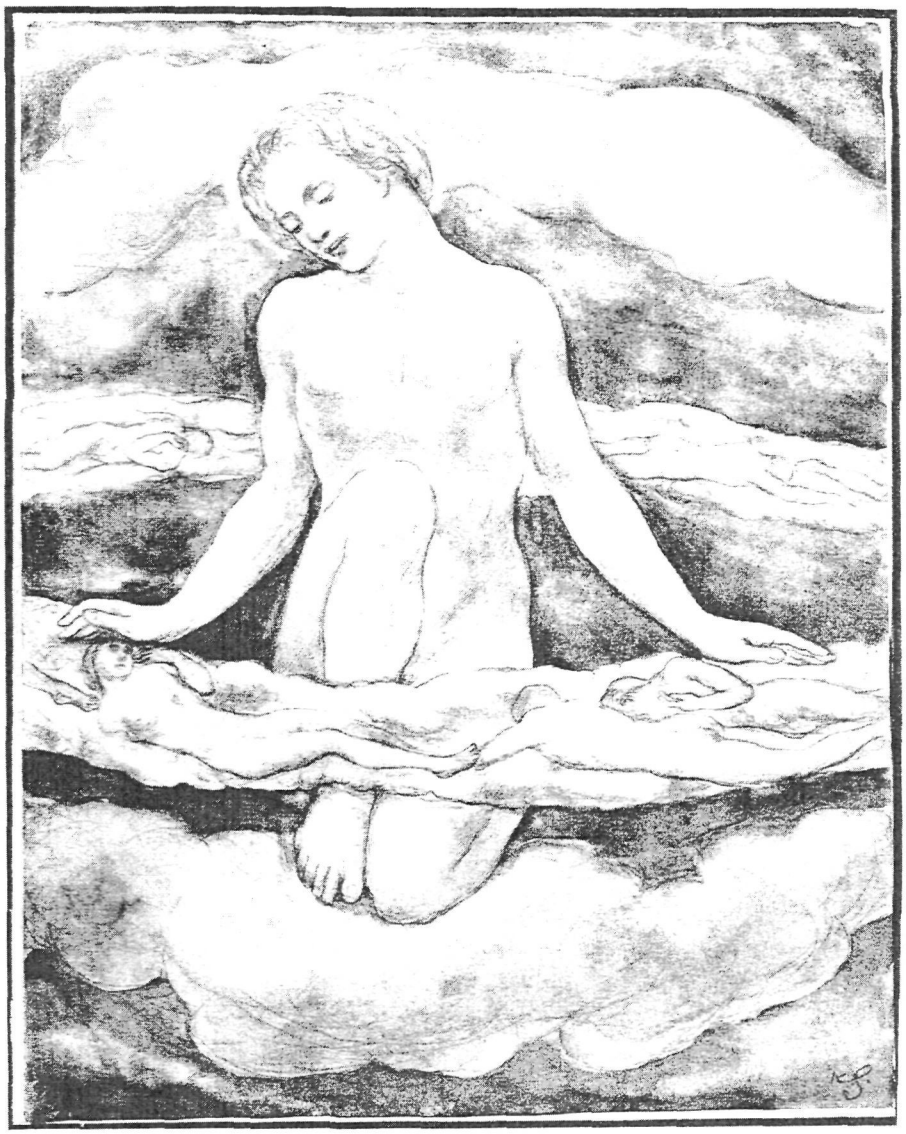
[186]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, translated by, A Assamese writer Arunmoni Choudhry, 1st edition: 1995, Arif Road, Kolkata-700067, P-61



Wash drawing from the centaur series. (Photo)[187]

[187]-Khalil Gibran, His life and World Jean Gibran and Khalil Gibran, P-299



"Nude Figure Kneeling among Clouds", watercolor (Courtesty Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift Mrs. Mary Haskell Minis.)[188]

[188]-*Khalil Gibran, His life and World Jean Gibran and Khalil Gibran, P-400*

The Philosophy of Khalil Jibran is also visible in his Letters to Beloved Mey Ziyadah and Mary Haskell. For instance, to important Letters are arranged Bellow.

These letters are from Mikhail Naimy's Khalil Gibran: A Biography, 1964.

Letter 15-(Boston-New York) Thursday Evening (1921).

Brother Mischa,

Having read the last number of the Damascus Arrabitah's magazine, and reviewed the previous ones, I am convinced that between us and them lies a deep gulf; we cannot cross to them, or they to us. No matter how hard we try, Mikhail, we cannot free them from servitude to literary trinkets. Spiritual freedom comes from within, never from without; you know that better than any man. Do not attempt to awaken those whose hearts, for some hidden wisdom, God has put to sleep. Do for them what you like, and send them what you like, but don't forget that you shall cast a veil of doubt and suspicion upon the face of our Arrabitah. If we have any power, it lies in our independence and aloofness. If we must co-operate with others, let it be with people who are our peers, and who say what we say. I believe that Abbas Mahmoud Al-Akkad-(A well known Egyptian writer-Author) though one man- is nearer by far to our tastes and literary inclination than anything that came out, or may yet come out, of the Damascus Arrabitah. As a worker in Arrabitah I submit- and submit gladly- to the voice of the majority. But I, as an individual, do not and cannot con-cur in any literary and artistic agreement with that

Damascus group who would weave royal purples out of mucous materials.

I was affected, and very deeply, by what you told me of Saba. (N. Arida's brother-Author) I wish I could do something for that friendly and loyal young man. "But the eye is far of sight, while the arm is short of reach."

You have done well to stir up Rasheed, Nadrah and Nasseeb a little. If we go on delaying the Anthology of Arrabitah will remain in some pocket of the ether until 1923, or 1924! Send me- and this is not an order-six copies of the anthology and debit my account for the amount; else draw on me!

My health, Mischa, is better than before. The doctors tell me that if I give up all kinds of work and exertion for six months, and do nothing but eat, drink and rest, I should be again my normal self! Allah, help me, Mischa!

So you are on the verge of madness. This is a piece of news magnificent in its fearfulness, fearful in its magnificence and beauty. I say that madness is the first step towards divine sub-limation. Be mad, Mischa. Be Mad and tell us of the mysteries behind the veil of "reason". Life's purpose is to bring us nearer to those mysteries; and madness is the surest and the quickest steed. Be mad, and remain a mad brother to your mad brother Jibran.

Letter 17-(Boston-New York) 1922.

Brother Mischa,

Saba's passing away affected me deeply, tremendously. I know that he has reached the goal, and that he is now immune to all things we complain of, I also know that he has obtained what I wish every day and every night to obtain. I know all that; yet strange to say that such knowledge on my part is powerless to remove that lump of sorrow now dangling between my throat and my heart. What may be the meaning of that lump?

Saba had hops he wished to have fulfilled. His share of hopes and dreams was equal to the share of any of us. Is it because he left before his hopes blossomed forth and his dreams came to fruition that we feel that heavy lump in the heart? Am I not, as I sorrow for him, sorrowing in fact for some dream of my spent youth which failed of realization? Are not sorrow, regret and grief but phases of human selfishness?

I must not go back to New York, Mischa. The doctor has ordered me to stay away from cities and city life. For that reason I have rented a cottage near the sea and shall move there with my sister in two days; there I shall remain until this heart regains its orderly course, or else becomes a part of the higher order. Yet do I hope to see you before this summer is over-how, where, and Whem? - I do not know. But the thing must be arranged some way or another.

Your thoughts on "renouncing" the world are exactly like mine. Since long ago I have been dreaming of a hermitage, a sall garden, and a

spring of water. Do you recall Youssof El-Fakhry? (The Principal character in Jibran's Arabic story "The Tempest".-Author) Do you recall his dark thoughts and his bright awakening? Do you remember his views on civilization and the civilized?

I say, Mikhail, that the future shall find us in a hermitage on the edge of one of the Lebanon gores. This deceptive civilization has strained the strings of our spirits to the breaking point. We must depart before they break. But we must remain patient and fore bearing until the day of departure. We must he patient, Mischa.

Remember me to the brethren and say to them that I love them, and long to see them, and live in thought with them. May Allah protect you, and watch over you and keep you for your brother Jibran.

3:1(iii) Philosophical Metaphor used by Jibran

Metaphors on life and death

The first chapter of the prophet deals with the metaphorical concept of death as a journey:-

Al-Mustafa, the chosen and the beloved, who was a down unto his own day, had waited twelve years in the city of Orphalese for his ship that was to return to bear him back to the isle of his birth. And in the twelfth year, on the seventh day of Ilool, the month of reaping, he climed the hill without the city walls and looked seaward; and he beheld his ship coming with the mist. But as he descended the hill, sadness came upon him, and he thought in his heart: how shall I go in

peace without sorrow? Nay, not without a wound in the spirit shall I leave this city.[189]

Al-Mustafa, the protagonist of the book, is leaving the city in which he has resided for twelve years. The journey he is about to embark on is a voyage and the vehicle of departure is a ship, however, Jibran is not talking about any kind of physical journey; he is talking about a journey to death. Why do we interpret this passage as "Death is a journey?" First, Al-Mustafa is returning to the Isle of his birth. For most of us, birth and death are equally mysterious as nobody really knows what happens, i.e. where our soul is, before we are born and after we die. The place we are at before birth and the place we are at after death are sometimes considered to be one and the same. Therefore dying is like returning to the place of one's birth. Lakoff and Turner express similar thoughts when they write 'There are many possible final locations' some of which are conceived of as places from which one began. One such place of beginning and final return is home. We come, almost literally, from our mothers lap, and we also come from earth. Dying, then, can be returning to earth, and metaphorically to one's mother's lap."[190]

Secondly; returning to one's place of birth will bring back memories of one's child hood, maybe even recollections of one's whole life up to the present moment. This can be compared with the moment before dying, when people generally are thought to reminisce over their lives. Therefore, going back to the isle of one's birth is reminiscing

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[189]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Dr. Sarwat Okasha, Da'ral Ma'arif Misr-1911, P-1

[190]-Metaphors in the Prophet by Khalil Gibran Emma Andersson Palola, P-13

about one's life, which implies that one is getting closer to death. Even if Al-Mustafa has been waiting for the ship, i.e. been prepared to die, he can't leave the city, his life, without suffering emotionally. This is a common feeling one experiences when departing on a journey. Al-Mustafa has already began his journey towards death, thus 'Death is departure'. He also has a destination for his journey, this *'Death is going to a destination'*. These two metaphors are constituent of the encompassing metaphor "Death is a journey." Emily Dickinson expresses a similar opinion towards the notion of death in her poem 'Because I could not stop for death'. The person in the poem is taken on a journey to death, and even though she does not reminisce in detail about her life, she briefly reviews the different stages of life, from child hood to old age. In addition, the character is busy with her life that she feels that she does not have the time to stop her activities to go on the trip, even though she knows the inevitability of the journey: "Because I could not stop for death-he kindly stoped for me."[191]

Moreover, Dickinson personifies death in her poem, as does Jibran. The sailors of the ship, which Al-Mustafa calls 'sons of my ancient mother', have come to take him back with them. They are personifications of death, summoning Al-Mustafa to escort him to the isle of his birth.

According to lakoff and Turner there are three types of personifications of death within western culture. The first of which is

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[191]-*Ibid. P-13*

death as an assistant, who helps the traveler, i.e. the dying person, to reach the goal of their journey. This assistant acts with civility and courtesy. The other personification is of death as an executor, who puts to affect the sentence of death. The third way to personify death is as an adversary, who we have to complete against in order to stay alive. Jibran's personification of death as a sailor is in accordance with the first of these three examples of conventional conceptual Metaphors.

Death is a sea/ocean and life is a river/stream

In passage-1, Jibran talks about Death as a sea or a boundless ocean and life as a river and a stream. Where lies the resemblance between life and river, death and a sea? Well, rivers are easily observed from their banks. We can see the life the river holds and carries in it and its waves, ripples and flowing movement. Also, we can swim and bath in the river. The sea, on the other hand, is only visible to the horizon and after that it is unknown. We can't see further into the sea itself before we are already there, and even if it is true that we can explore the see to a certain extent as we can swim in it, just as we can swim in the river, the depths of sea are not as easily explored as the usually Shallower river. The same is true about life and death. We can observe and understand life when alive, death, on the other hand is something unknown to us. We do not know much about death in life, and it is not until we are about that we can explore death in greater depth. It is true that in real life we can explore the sea further when

travelling on it by boat, but then, from a metaphorical perspective, we are already dead.

Al-Mustafa says, "Yet I cannot tarry any longer. The sea that calls all things unto her calls me, and I must embark." He implies that is death which calls him, for when death calls, we can't struggle to stay alive, but we have to let go of life and leave it, our experience of the physical world and of death tells us that people who die do not come back, and that all living things eventually die.

Further on in the book, Jibran comes back to describing life as a stream: in your longing for your giant self lies your goodness: and that longing is in all of you. But in some of you that longing is a torrent rushing with night to the sea, carrying the secrets of the hillsides and the songs of the forest.

And in others it is a flat stream that loses itself in angles and bends and lingers before it reaches the shore.[192]

Jibran says that the stream on the way to the sea or the shore symbolizes people leading, their lives towards the moment of dying and death. He explains that we return to death just like the river returns to the sea, and that the current can be either rapid or slow depending on the variation of personalities and the different intentions of the people leading their lives. Jibran implies that people are boundless drops in life as well as in death. When we die we merge with the other drops of the boundless ocean.

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[192]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Dr. Sarwat Okasha, Da'ral Ma'arif Misr-1911, P-84

The boundlessness refers to the belief that all of us are intimately connected to one another in life as well as in death.

Death as a sea is also seen from another perspective in the following line where the villagers talk to Al-Mustafa: "Let not waves of the sea have spent in our midst become a memory."[193] People are separated by life and death, just as waves of the sea separate ships from land, or land from land, dead people become memories as there is often nothing else that vividly will bring their presence back to those who are still alive.

Death is a Mother and life is a child

Jibran describes death as a Mother. As previously stated, life is seen as a river and a stream, and death as a sea. If death than is also considered a mother, then life must be a child of death. Thus, life is a child, Mother are known for their nurturing, their maternal Instinet and as a source of wisdom. Children can always come back to their mother to seek comfort, just as a river and the stream always run back to the sea. Jibran writes at the end of the book: "And these are my mariners, who have heard the choir of the greater sea, they too have heard me patiently. Now they shall wait no longer, I am ready. The stream has reached the sea, and once more the great mother holds her son against her breast."[194] In a utopian way, a mother is seen as somebody one can go to have a moment of peace and freedom from the world outside, thus death is also equated with peace and freedom,

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[193]-Ibid. P-9
[194]-Ibid. P-120

the latter of which I will return to further on in the essay. Moreover, the playful currents, mischievous ways and splashing water of a river and a stream can be compared with the liveliness of a child, whereas the calmness of a sea can be compared with a mother.

Lakoff and Turner express birth as coming from our mother's lap and hence from earth, and death as returning to the same as we are buried in earth. The underlying belief here is mother earth. Jibran's perspective is slightly different as his underlying belief is Mother Sea. He also sees birth as coming from our mother's lap but he focuses on the amoniotic fluid which we live in prior to our birth, strangely, there is one element missing from each of these points of view. Just as lakoff and Turner's explanation of being born from earth may seem strange, it could be argued that Jibran's conception of death as returning to the sea is equally strange. As we start our life surrounded by amniotic fluid in our mother's womb and take our find rest buried in the soil of a cemetery, logically we come from the sea and proceed to earth, not the other way around.

Jibran points out that just as there is a strong connection between seas and river's, mothers and their children, so there is a strong connection between life and death. Within western culture, death is not seen as something positive and is considered to be a state which should be delayed for a long as possible. As previously explained, westerners personify death as an assistant, an executor or an adversary. Jibran, on the other hand, personifies death as a mother and life as a child. Even

if mothers can be considered assistants to their children, they do play many more roles in their children's lives.

A mother is, for instance, also a guide and a counselor. The relationship between a mother and her child is also more profound from an emotional respective, than the relation between an assistant and a receiver. Thus, Jibran elaborates the conventional conceptual metaphor where death is seen as an assistant, as he enhances the conventional mappings with an uncommon attribute. In western culture, life is never personified, which makes Jibran's metaphor of life as a child entirely unconventional.

Life is sowing and death is harvesting

In passage-1, Al-Mustafa is returning during lelool, the month of reaping, which suggests that he is about to reap what he has sown in life, i.e. he will get the reward (or the punishment) for the thoughts he has had and the actions which he has performed. Thus, 'Life is showing' and 'death is harvesting' this thought is exemplified once more further on in the same chapter: "If this is the day of my harvest, in what fields have I sowed the seed, and in what unremembered seasons?"[195] Death is the time when one reaps what one has sown in life. Events are remembered and one's experiences of love, fear, happiness, sorrow, etc, will be dealt with and processed. Even that which one does not remembered will be recalled and contemplated over. It is hence the experiences and actions of life which are sown

[195]-Ibid. P-7

and reaped, thus people's actions are plants and dying involves reaping these plants.

Life is a journey (Towards a common Goal)

It is when your spirit goes wandering upon the wind,

That you, alone and unguarded, commit a wrong unto others

And therefore unto yourself.

And for that wrong committed must you knock and wait a

While unheeded at the gate of the blessed.

Like the ocean is your god-self; I remain forever undefiled.

And like the ether it lifts but the winged.

Even like the sun is your God-self;

It knows not the ways of the moleour seeks it the holes of the Serpent.

But your God-self dwells not alone in your being.

Much in you is still man, and much in you is not yet man,

But a shapeless pigmy that walks asleep in the mist searching

For its own awakening.

And of the man in you would I now speak.

For it is he and not your God-self nor the pigmy in the mist that

Knows crime and the punishment of crime.

Oftentimes have I heard you speak of one who commits a

Wrong as though he were not one of you, but a stranger unto

You and an introder upon your world.

But I say that even as the holy and the righteous can't rise beyond the highest which is in each one of you, so the wicked and the weak can't fall lower than the lowest which is in you also.

> And as a single leaf turns not yellow but with the silent knowledge of the whole true,
>
> So the wrong order can't do wrong without the hidden will of you all.
>
> Like a procession you walk together towards your God-self, you are the way and the way fares.
>
> And when one of you falls down he falls for those behind him, a caution against the stumbling stone.

Ay and he falls for those ahead of him, who, though faster and surer of foot, yet removed not the stumbling stone.[196]

Jibran speaks of crime and punishment in this chapter, which is why he starts out by explaining that human beings are composed of three different parts; the shapeless pygmy, the man and the God-self. He

[196]-Ibid. PP-50-54

implies that the shapeless is that part of every person which is longing to break the fetters to enjoy the greater freedom of being human, just as the human part of us longs to break the fetters to enjoy the greater freedom of being the God-self. This is explained in other terms further on in the book: "And when the shadow fades and is no more, the light that lingers becomes a shadow to another light. And thus your freedom when it loses its fetters becomes itself the fetter to a greater freedom."[197] According to Jibran, the shapless pygmy represents the more primitive part of ourselves while the God-self represents the more developed and enlightened part. The part of us which Jibran refers to as 'man' stands between these two opposites. It could be argued that one of the purposes of the journey of life is to free ourselves of our more primitive characteristics and the goal of the journey is to merge with our God-self. The procession towards the goal is a mass procession; all people are on the way towards the same destination. Life is thus not only a journey, but also a journey towards a common goal.

Jibran writes that on the road of life there are impediments which people might stumble on. Impediments on the road are symbols for difficulties in life, however, it is indicated that human beings are not only those who travel on the road, but they are also the road itself. Jibran explains that the impediments on the road represent problems which we create both for ourselves and for others, but in the same way that we create the bumps on the road, we create its smoothness. He states that we are all responsible for helping our fellow man on the

[197]-Ibid. PP-93-94

road of life. We have to eliminate the causes to the problems which we ourselves have encountered, so that other people will not have to experience the same difficulties. And when we happen to have problems, we involuntarily warn others of making the same mistakes. Jibran believes that people on the road of life are intimately connected to one another. It is by no means possible that some one can do something wrong without the acceptance of the others. We consist of both good and bad parts, and all of us have the responsibility of turning ourselves and others into the God-self.[198]

In another passage of the book, Jibran writes: "And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over-prudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?" Here, 'the holy city' is the goal of the journey, i.e. the goal of life. The pilgrims are the people travelling on the road of life towards the goal. The dog is also travelling towards the goal, but he is busy burying bones which he thinks him /will find and gnaw at later. Jibran advises us to concentrate on what is important here: to keep on the road, and travel on it in order to reach the 'holy city', we should not act like the dog, which focuses on petty things.

Life is to work (together to reach a common goal)

> You work that you may keep pace with the earth and the soul of the earth.

[198]-On conceptual metaphors in the Prophet by Khalil Gibran, P-20

For to be idle is to become a stranger unto the seasons, and to step out of life's procession that marches in majesty and proud submission towards the infinite.

When you work you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music.

Which of you would be a reed, dumb and silent, when all else sings together in unison?

Always you have been told that work is a cause and Labour a misfortune.

But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth's further dream, assigned to you when that dream was born,

And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life,

And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's in most secret.

But if you in your pain call birth an affliction and the support of the flesh a curse written upon your brow, then I answer that naught but the sweat of your brow shall wash away that which is written.

You have been told also life is darkness, and in your weariness you echo what was said by the weary.

> And I say that life is indeed darkness save when there is urge,
>
> And all urge is blind save there is knowledge.
>
> And all knowledge is vain save when there is work,
>
> And all work is empty save when there is love;
>
> And when you work with love you bind yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God.[199]

Passage-2

In previous section we saw that Jibran conceives life as a journey, with the destination of the journey as a common goal for everyone. In the passage above, he speaks about work as one of the most important purposes for reaching that goal. In other words; the goal of the journey of life is to merge with the God-self, and this is done through working. Jibran explains how we have indoctrinated to believe that work is a curse and a misfortune. However he also explains that it is one's own outlook on work which decides the way one experiences it. If one thinks that work is a misfortune, then nothing will make it less than a misfortune. Those who do not work at all are not participating in "the fulfillment of the destiny of earth," which means that they are not working in unity with the rest of us. Jibran asks who would not want to be a part of that work and procession when everyone else participates. Each of us has a specific task to carry out during our lifetime and this task should be performed with love. Through work

[199]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Dr. Sarwat Okasha, Da'ral Ma'arif Misr-1911, PP-35-37

we love life. If we can't work with love, we will have to learn the lesson through working very hard. Thus, life is a journey and that journey involves work.

Life is a giver and life is a Receiver

You give little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give. For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear you may need them tomorrow? And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over prudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?

There are those who give little of the much which they have-and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire makes their gifts unwholesome.

And there are those who have little and give it all.

These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and their coffer is never empty.

There are those who give the joy and that joy is their reward.

And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.

And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mind fullness of virtue; they give as in yonder valley the myrtle breaths its fragrance into space. Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes he smiles upon the earth.

And is there aught you would withhold? All you have shall someday be given;

Therefore give now, that the season of giving may be yours and not your inheritor's.

See first that you yourself deserve to be a giver, and an instrument of giving.

For in truth it is life that gives unto life-while you, who deem yourself a giver, but a witness.

And you receivers-and you are all receivers- assume to weight of gratitude, test you lay a yoke upon yourself and upon him who gives. Rather rise together with the giver on his gifts as on wings;

For to be overmindfull of your debt is to doubt his generosity who has the free hearted earth for mother, and God for father.[200]

The key to understanding this section lies in the lines; 'For in truth it is life that gives unto life-while you, who deem yourself a giver, are but a witness.' Life bestows its gifts unto life, thus life is a giver. Furthermore, life gives in order to be able to continue to live, for life that does not give dies, thus 'keeping is dying'. Life gives as well as it receives, therefore 'Life is a Receiver'. People who are alive are filled with life. Since life is both a giver and a receiver, people become instruments through which the force of life flows. Therefore, 'people are instruments of giving and receiving.' Jibran says that we should

[200]-Ibid. PP-26-31

neither be afraid of giving, nor ashamed of receiving.[201] This is further exemplified in on other passage of the book-"Go to your fields and your gardens, and you shall learn that it is the pleasure of the bee to gather honey of the flower, but it is also the pleasure of the flower to yield its honey to the bee.

For to the bee a flower is a fountain of life, and to the flower a bee is a messenger of love,

And to both, be and flower, the giving and receiving of pleasure is a need and an ecstasy."[202]

Giving and receiving are hence two sides of the same coin. Without giving there is no receiving and without receiving there is no giving. Neither the fruit, nor the flower would exist without their respective counterparts.

In this poem, Jibran goes to great lengths to demolish societal attitudes and rituals of giving and receiving. He explains how most of us have ulterior motives when giving. As people are used as instruments for the transactions of life, the giving is in various different ways. Life can give recognition; a concrete example is giving non-anonymously to charity. Life can also give with mindfulness of virtue, i.e. following society's rules or the guidelines of a religion. It can also give with Joy; when a gift is given through Joy the pleasure of the giver lies in the knowledge that the person receiving the gift will appreciate it. When a gift is given with pain, the

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[201]-On conceptual Metaphors in the Prophet by Khalil Gibran by-Emma Andersson Palola, P-24
[202]- Khalil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Dr. Sarwat Okasha, Da'ral Ma'arif Misr-1911, P-94

regret and angst of having to give will remain after the gift has been delivered. The emotions we experience when giving are important lessons that we learn form. In this way, life gathers knowledge about itself. The best gift is to give of our selves, and the best way to give is to accept that anyone can be receivers of our gifts. Jibran says that we should be like the myrtle, the cattle and the fruit trees, which do not care if they give to the deserving or undeserving. Life gives regardless of who or what is the receiver, since all that lives deserves to be a receiver. As soon as we decide who is more deserving of our gifts, then we are automatically imposing the burden of debt on to the receiver. Jibran explains how the receiver should be able to accept the gift without any of the negative emotions which would be included if the gift were given with ulterior motives. He expresses how we in receiving should share the confidence and courage of the bee, without feeling indebted to the giver, knowing that we too are beneficial to the giver.

Jibran advises us not to keep things because we think we might need them tomorrow. It is better to give now in the present, instead of waiting and letting our heirs give instead. In death all of our worldly possessions change ownership, which means that keeping them during our life is purposeless.

Life is Darkness and Death is light

Jibran uses the metaphor 'LIFE IS DARKNESS' to describe life: 'Life is indeed darkness save when there is urge' In the very same line, Jibran states that life can be light as well. The question whether life is light or darkness depends on one's own outlook. In order for life to be perceived as light, there are certain prerequisites which have to be met; the work we carryout in life has to be based on knowledge and a strong need. It also has to be performed with love. In other words: to be able to see life as light, one has to have a purpose in life. Jibran returns to the metaphor of life as darkness in another passage further on in the book-

"This would I have you remember in remembering me"

That which seems most feeble and bewildered in you is the strongest and most determined.

Is it not your breath that has erected and hardened the structure of your bones?

And is it not a dream which none of you remember having dreamt, that builded your city and fashioned all there is in it?

Could you but see the tides of that breath you would cease to see all else,

And if you could hear the whispering of the dream you would hear no other sound.

And if you could hear the whispering of the dream you would hear no other sound.

But you do not see, nor do you hear, and it is well.

The veil that clouds your eyes shall be lifted by the hands that wove it,

And the clay that fills your ears shall be pierced by those fingers that kneaded it.

> And you shall see
>
> And you shall hear.
>
> Yet you shall not deplore having known blindness, nor regret having been deaf.
>
> For in that day you shall know the hidden purposes in all things,
>
> And you shall bless darkness as you would bless light.[203]

Here, Jibran writes that life is darkness and death is light. The blindness and deafness of life is contrasted to the clarity of vision and hearing of death. To Jibran, life is being visually and auditorily restricted. When we die, we will be able to see and hear clearly, but until than we will remain in darkness. Jibran says, however, that once we can see and hear, we will still not regret having been blind and

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[203]-*Ibid. PP-118-120*

deaf since when we die, the purpose of our temporary limitations during life will be revealed to us.

'Life is darkness and death is light' are closely connected to 'death is a dawn', which is another metaphor used by Jibran. In passage I, it says that Al-Mustafa was a dawn unto his own day. At the beginning of the book it is not clear how a dawn and a day can be connected to death. However, in the same passage, Al-Mustafa is talking about dying, so there can hardly be another interpretation of 'dawn' than that they are connected to death. This interpretation is supported further on in the same chapter: "And he heard their voices calling his name, and shouting from field to field telling one another of the coming of his ship. And he said to himself; shall the day of parting be the day of gathering? And shall it be said that my eve was in truth my dawn?"[204]

People who know that someone is dying gather around that person to hear what they have to say or just to be around as support as well as bidding farewell. The people of the village understand that Al-Mustafa is having the physical world and in their eyes, the onset of death is seen as an evening, thus 'death is an Evening'. In Al-Mustafa's perspective though, the onset of death is a dawn, thus 'death is a dawn.' At dawn, the day starts a new, which suggests that Jibran looks upon death as a beginning. This is exemplified further on when Al-Mustafa is talking about death:

"There are no graves here.

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[204]-Ibid. PP-4,6

These mountains and plains are a cradle and a stepping-stone.

When ever you pass by the field where you have laid your ancestors,

Look well there upon, and you shall see yourselves and your children

Dancing had in land.

Verily you often make merry without knowing."[205]

Jibran denies that graves exist, Death is a beginning for him, and it is a cradle where we are born again. It is also a steping-stone for the next level of our progression. We should not look at our ancestors graves with heavy hearts, but instead rejoice in the knowledge that they gave us and our children life.

Life is winter and Death is spring

"In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond;

And like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring.

Trust the dream, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity."[206]

In Jibran's perspective life is the season of cold and darkness, during autumn the plants wilt and the trees shed their leaves and, so, in winter the landscape is desolate. The winter is often perceived as long because of the cold weather and darkness. Winter is the season when

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[205]-Ibid. P-113
[206]-Ibid. P-101

trees, plants and animals gather strength for spring and the next surge of life. Spring, in contrast to winter, is the season when light and warmth return. Nature awakens and the plants and animals, which have been dormant, start to fill up with new every. Spring symbolizes the first step of a natural cycle, where nature is revived after apparently having been 'dead'. This is the season of optimism and hope. Jibran conceives 'Death as spring.' This is further exemplified at the end of the book-

'And like the seasons you are also,

And though in your winter you deny your spring,

Yet spring, reposing within yon,

Smiles in her drowsiness and is not offended.'[207]

When alive, we feel immortal and do not want to waste our time thinking about death, death is something which happens to other people, not to us, in other words, we deny the fact that we will one day die. However, Jibran says that death is not offended by this.

Death is Freedom

The metaphors 'Life is a Dream, death is a deeper dream and death is an awakening' of passage 1 can be analyzed further when talking about the concept of 'Death as freedom.' Apart from the brief presentation of the concepts in passage1, they are partially explained further on in the book, where Al-Mustafa is talking about freedom:

[207]-Ibid. PP-111-112

"And when the shadow fudes and is no more, the light that lingers becomes a shadow to another light. And thus your freedom when it loses its fetters becomes itself the fetter to a greater freedom."[208] Death is seen as freedom, but life is also seen as freedom, though a more restricted one. When the fetter of life breaks, i.e. when one dies, the bigger fetter of death takes over. In addition, Jibran explains death as freedom in two other passages in the book. In the first chapter he writes "And you, vast sea, sleeping mother, who alone are peace and freedom to the river and the stream."[209] Where he outright assigns death the characteristics of peace and freedom. At the end of the book he explains, "And what is it to cease breathing but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?"[210] Dying is then to free oneself in order to seek the company of God.

Life and death are one

"You would know the secret of death.

But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life?

The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day cannot unveil the

Mystery of light.

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[208]-Ibid. PP-93-94
[209]-Ibid. P-4
[210]-Ibid. P-102

If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, upon your heart wide unto the body of life,

For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one."[211]

Once again, Jibran compares life to darkness and death to light; life to a river and death to a sea. Jibran explain that life and death are two sides of the same coin. Just as light and darkness are connected to each other so are life and death. The transition between light and dark is very subtle; at what point does light become darkness and when does darkness become light? Exactly when is the river still a river and not the sea? Even in what we call darkness, there may still be a bit of light, just as there may be a bit of darkness in what we call light. The river and the sea blend into each other at the estuaries and so life and death also blend.

In the passage, Jibran compares the owl's knowledge about darkness to our knowledge about life. Jibran writes that the owl's inability to perceiver light is similar to our inability to understand what death is about. In order for us to comprehend death we need to expand our conceptual and perceptual boundaries, just as the owl needs to expend its physical boundaries to be able to perceive light. There is, however, a breaking point between the balance of light and darkness as one state goes over to the other. Because of this, there is only so much light that the owl can conceive before being blinded, just as we are restricted from fully understanding death while alive.

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[211]-*Ibid. P-101*

Death is an honour and life is the gathering of knowledge

> Your fear of death is but the trembling of the shepherd when he stands before the king whose hand is to be laid upon him in honour.
>
> Is the shepherd not Joyful beneath his trembling, that he shall wear the mark of the king?
>
> Yet is he not more mindful of his trembling?"[212]

Jibran sees death as the ultimate promotion. Death is likened to a king and the dying person to a Shepherd, which means that just as the king reigns over the lives of the Shepherds, so does death reign over the lives of people. Jibran puts across the thought that we should not look upon death as a tragedy, it is an experience we should look forward to and be grateful. However, even if the dying person is about to receive a reward, he or she still recognizes and also focuses on, their fear of dying. Nevertheless, to be chosen for death is an honour and we should receive the honour with gratitude. The mark of the king can be interpreted as a token of the Shepherd's courage of journeying through life as the goal of the journey is to be rewarded by. Thus all of our steps on the road of life are towards the promotion of death, in which lies the recognition of the accomplishments in our lives. One of these accomplishments in the gathering of knowledge, as explained in the following passage:

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[212]-Ibid. PP-101-102

"Wise men have come to you to give you of their wisdom. I came to take of

Your wisdom:

And behold I have found that which is greater than wisdom.

It is a flame spirit in you ever gathering more of itself,

While you, heedless of its expansion, be wail the withering of your days.

It is life in quest of life in bodies that fear the grave."[213]

The phrase 'Life in quest of life' symbolizes the gathering of knowledge and the curiosity and search for knowledge. Hence, one of the purposes of life is the accumulation of knowledge: 'Life is the gathering of knowledge.' Al-Mustafa says that knowledge is greater than wisdom. Wisdom is stagnated knowledge which does not gather more of itself while knowledge, and the search for knowledge, is an ever expanding quest, Jibran further explains this concept in another passage-

> "You have given me my deeper thirsting after life.
>
> Surely there is no greater gift to a man than which turns all his aims into parching lips and all life into a fountain.
>
> And in this lies my honour and my reward,

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[213]-Ibid. PP-112-113

That whenever I come to the fountain to drink I find the living water itself thirstly.

And it drinks me while I drink it."[214]

Jibran likens life to water which implies that 'Life is a fluid which can be drink. This is the same as the metaphor 'life is the gathering of knowledge discussed above as life and knowledge are equated. In the same way as Al-Mustafa shares his knowledge with the villagers (i.e. drinks the water) so do they share their knowledge with him (i.e. they drink him). The goals in life and the curiosity and search for knowledge are likened to parching lips. To find the same curiosity and search for knowledge aimed at yourself is an honour and a reward. However since we cannot readily understand the gathering of knowledge, we focus on our growing older and the approaching moment of death, which is something that we would like to avoid altogether. Nevertheless, in after life death needs the knowledge that we have gathered during life. Knowledge is what we drink and take with us, thus life is the gathering of knowledge.

Jibran's metaphors on love

"When love beckons to you, follow him,

Though his ways are hard and step.

And when his wings enfold you yield to him,

Though the sward hidden among his pinions may wound you,.

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[214]-Ibid. P-114

And when he speaks to you believe in him,

Though his voice may shatter your dreams as the north wind lays

Waste the garden."[215]

But if in you fear you would seek only love's peace and loves

Pleasure,

Then it is better for you that you cover your nakedness and pass out of love's threshing-floor,

Into the season less world where you shall laugh, but not all of your

Laughter, and weep, but not all of your tears.

And think not you can direct the course of love, for love, if it finds you worthy, directs your course.[216]

Love is a Journey and love is a guide

Jibran explains that to experience love to go on a journey and it is love itself who is the guide of the journey. The roads that love leads us on might be difficult and painful, but we should follow them even if we know we may get hurt. Jibran uses the parallel of wings as a tender example of an embrace, an embrace which may lead to a stabbing in our side. Furthermore, the promises that love makes and the voice he speaks with may all be pretence and the truth may devastate us. For every encouragement to yield to love, Jibran

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[215]-Ibid. P-11
[216]-Ibid. P-16

reminds us of its dangers and potential pain and suffering. At the same time he still tries to put across that these should not deter us from loving, for if we are not prepared to accept both the good and the bad sides of love we will not live a life as rich and rewarding as we otherwise would have. Love shows us the way to enlightenment and helps us learn the lessons of life. However, we have to remember that we are not the ones who decide the destiny of our love, but it is indeed love that decides our destiny. This can be compared to the work of a guide; it is the guide who decides the best route for the people he or she leads, not the other way around. We should follow the guide and trust his judgement. At the end of the journey we will reach goal which is to be presented to God with all the knowledge we will have gathered during our journey. As explained in the section 'Life is a journey' and 'Life is a work', the goal of the journey is to urge with the God-self. In this passage it is clarified how we will urge with it, God will eat the bread made of our knowledge and experience of love.

Love is a sovereign and love is a Gardener/Farmer/Baker

Jibran personifies love in three distinct ways. Firstly, he describes love as a guide on the journey of love, as discussed in the previous section. Secondly, Jibran sees love as a king or an emperor, i.e. a sovereign, as they have the power to both crown and crucify people. People who stand under the reign of a sovereign are conscious of the fact that they may be both crowned and crucified depending on their actions. Thirdly, Jibran personifies love as a garden/farmer/baker. The

gardener not only plants, he prunes them as well. He does not-do this out of spite but because he wants his. Plants to grow in the best way possible, the same is true of love. Love is also a farmer who harvests the crop, and a baker who makes bread out of the harvest for God. The baker delivers the best bread which has gone through the processes of being gathered, threshed, sifted, ground, kneaded and finally baked. In other words, turning ourselves over to the will of love will prepare us with the knowledge and experience that God needs in after life-we will have to go through a process of maturing and developing in order to be refined. Jibran explains outright that 'love is a threshing-floor' and that 'to love is to undergo a baking process.' We are vulnerable when we love someone and the more we open ourselves, the more we are likely to get hurt by the person we love. As said before, if we cannot accept that love may hurt us emotionally then we should not undergo the baking process, but rather step aside.

Jibran's perspective on the Issue of children

Khalil Jibran's perspective on the issue of children is that a child's parents should learn not to be so controlling. A child has to learn from his or her mistakes, so a parent can not try to prevent their children from doing things. They are not always there, so their child may be doing those things regardless.

A parent's child is a gift from God. As mentioned in lines five and six, "They come through you but not from you", "And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you." This quote means that we

are all God's children. We belong not to a being on earth. Rather we belong to the man above. Some parents full to realize this, what they also full to realize is that although children may not act like it, they are capable of thinking for themselves. 'You may give them your love but not your thoughts', 'for they have their own thoughts.' Parents need to realize that when it comes to a child's thoughts and points of view, all the child needs from his or her parent is never ending support. Parents need to let their children go 'swift and far.' This can only be done by supporting them and not by thinking for them.

Parents also need to realize that sometimes they just try too hard. They try too hard to make their kids be like them. In some situations all that does is cause children to be distant from their parents. All this will lead to is a never ending chain of events. The more the parents try to their children be like them, the more distant their child may become. As Khalil Jibran stated is the book *'Al-Nabi'*, "You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. When a parent tries to live their life through their children and make their children be like them, they are living in the past, life moves forward not backwards. We must not live for yesterday. Instead we should always live for today and tomorrow.

The misconception that most parents have is that if they live their lives through their children, then their children's life will be perfect. They sometimes think that if they don't act in such a manner then they are doing something wrong. By acting like this all they are really doing is holding their children back. This does not please God at all;

God's love for parents is at its most when they allow their children to accomplish being successful on their own. As mentioned, 'For even as he loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable'. The bow which is talked about is symbolic of the parent. The arrow represents the child. What is meant by this quote is that parents cannot go everywhere with their children. They have to allow their children to go out and explore the world on their own. They may worry about them but they have to realize that if their child makes a mistake it up to him or her to fix it and learn from it. They have to live their life. Parents should also know that they should not feel like they have failed with their children by not being there every single step of the way. God loves them for being happy that their children are living their life and going swift and far in doing so.