CHAPTER IV

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF JIBRAN KHALIL JIBRAN AND AMIN AL-RIHANI

Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani both were well versed and well educated in literary heritage. They started their primary education at their native lands. Jibran Khalil Jibran was brought and grown up in the lush region of his native village Bisharri. He proved to be a solitary and pensive child who relished the natural surroundings of the cascading falls, the rugged cliffs and the neighboring green cedars, the beauty of which emerged as a dramatic and symbolic influence to his drawings, education and writings. Being laden with poverty, he did not receive any formal education or learning; his education was limited to regular visits to a village priest who doctrined him with the essentials of religion and the Bible, alongside Syriac and Arabic languages. On the other hand, Amin al-Rihani took his basic education in a French missionary school. In America, Amin al-Rihani was sent to a school where he learned the rudiments of the English language.

Recognizing the inquisitive and alert nature of Jibran Khalil Jibran, the priest began teaching him the rudiments of alphabet and language, opening up to Jibran the world of history, science and language. At the age of ten, Jibran fell off a cliff, wounding his left shoulder, which remained weak for the rest of his life ever since this incident. To relocate the shoulder, his family strapped it to a cross and wrapped it up for forty days, a symbolic incident reminiscent of Christ's wanderings in the wilderness and which remained etched in Jibran's memory. On the other hand Rihani's father and uncle, having established themselves as merchants in a small cellar in lower Manhattan, soon felt the need for an assistant who could read and write in English. Therefore, the boy was taken away from school to become the chief clerk, interpreter and book keeper of the business.

In America Amin al-Rihani made an acquaintance of American and European writers. He eventually became familiar with the writings of Shakespeare, Hugo, Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, Whitman, Tolstoy, Voltaire, Thoreau, Emerson Byron etc. Amin al-Rihani had a natural talent in eloquent speaking. In 1895, the teenager became carried away by stage fear and joined a touring stock company headed by Henry Jewet (who later had his theatre in Boston).[1] During the summer of the same year, the troupe became stranded in Kansas City, Missouri and so the prodigal son returned to his father. However, he returned not to rejoin the business, but to insist that his father give him a regular education for a professional career. They agreed that he should study law. To that end, he attended night school for a year and passed the Regents Examination. In 1897 Amin al-Rihani entered the New York Law School. A lung infection interrupted his studies, and at the end of his first year, his father had to send him back to Lebanon to recover.[2]

Immigration to the United States of America:

On June 25, 1895 with the family members, Jibran Khalil Jibran embarked on a voyage to the American shores of New York. The Jibrans settled in South End of Boston city, which at the time hosted the second largest Syrian community in the United States of America following New York. On the other hand Amin al-Rihani was one of the youngest talents who migrated to the United States of America and settled there down permanently. At the age of eleven, his father sent his son, Amin al-Rihani, with his brother to New York in 1888. After one year, Rihani followed them.[3]

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[1]. Rihani, Albert, Where to Find Amin Rihani, Beirut, *The Arab Institute for Research and Publication*, 1979

[2]. Ibid

[3]. Ibid

Jibran Khalil Jibran moved to New York in 1912 with the encouragements of Mary and his friend Amin al-Rihani who had already moved there and for whom Jibran had done the illustrations in his book *The Book of Khalid* Jibran, too was convinced that a wider audience awaited him.

Life in the United States of America:

Growing up into another impoverished period, Jibran was to recall the pain of the first few years, which left an indelible mark on his life and prompted him to reinvent his childhood memories, dispelling the filth, the poverty and the slurs. However, the work of charity institutions in the poor immigrant areas allowed the children of immigrants to attend public schools and kept them off the street. Jibran was the only member of his family to pursue scholastic education. Lateron in his life, Jibran was to champion the cause of women's emancipation and education and surround himself with strong-willed, intellectual and independent women. On the other hand Amin al-Rihani was a young man of wealth and reputation in the United States of America. He never faced any difficulties as Jibran did around his whole life.

In New York Jibran cultivated his contacts and was introduced to dealers of the galleries of art. He exchanged visits with Mary who remained his financial, intellectual, and emotional support for the most part of his life. Mary, indeed, saw Jibran as a higher person with prophetic qualities. In 1913, she encouraged him to move to a bigger studio so that he would be able to work more comfortably, and she paid his rent.

The Broken Wings, which was published in Arabic in 1912 and dedicated to Mary Haskell, increased Jibran's fame in the Arab world.

Then the Arabic newspaper *Al-Funun* (The Arts), created in 1913, furthered his literary career. Its editor Nasib Arida, a close friend of Jibran, published his poems, prose-poems, essays and parables including a collection entitled *A Tear and a Smile* which won him further public acceptance. Through *Al-Funun*, Jibran also met Mikhail Nu'aima, another Lebanese immigrant writer who was to become his closest friend. Jibran expanded his influential acquaintances of painters, poets, and playwrights. He became a popular member of the Poetry Society where he sought favorable reception of his English writing by English-speaking readers. Jibran would read his parables that would become *The Madman* and *The Forerunner*, and then later pieces that would make *The Prophet*. Among other members of the Poetry Society was Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, a sister of Theodore Roosevelt and an established poet. She who had described his read pieces from *The Madman* as destructive and diabolical stuff…contrary to all forms of morality and true beauty became a fan of Jibran and an admirer of his writings.[1]

Jibran Khalil Jibran also met the novelist and poet James Oppenheim who led him to become a member of the advisory committee of *The Seven Arts* (1916). This was a widely acclaimed literary journal which published Jibran's work along with other prominent writers like Sherwood Anderson, D. H. Lawrence, and Eugene O'Neil. It was therefore a vehicle for Jibran's success in the English-speaking world; especially that he was the first immigrant to join its board.

Jibran was also developing as an artist. He started to work with wash drawings but remained faithful to a symbolist style that focused on naked human bodies delicately intertwined and for which Jibran became

[1]. *Chapel Hill Papers*, March 14, 1915

famous, even though his paintings have received much less attention than his literary works.

On the other hand, Returning to Lebanon Amin al-Rihani began teaching English in a clerical school in return for being taught his native Arabic language. Amin al-Rihani had first become familiar with Middle Eastern poets in 1897. Among these poets was Abul Ala al-Ma'arri, whom Amin al-Rihani discovered to be the forerunner of Omar al-Khayyam. In 1899 he returned to New York, having decided to translate some of the quatrains of al-Ma'arri into English. The first version of the translation was published in 1903. He began writing in English, becoming, according to Lebanese historian Samir Kassir, "The first Arab to publish in English without at the same time renouncing his own language".[1] During this period, he joined several literary and artistic societies in New York, such as the Poetry Society of America and the Pleiades Club, and also became a regular contributor to an Arabic daily newspaper, *al-Huda* published in New York. He wrote about social traditions, religion, national politics and philosophy. Thus, he began his extensive literary career, bridging two worlds. He published his first two books in Arabic in 1902 and 1903.[2]

In 1905, Amin al-Rihani returned to his native mountains. During an ensuing six years period of solitude, he published, in Arabic, two volumes of essays, a book of allegories and a few short stories and plays. Amin al-Rihani, who was influenced by the American poet Walt Whitman, has introduced free verse to Arabic poetry. His poems in this new style were published as early as 1905. This new concept flourished in the Arab world and continued to lead modern Arabic poetry after al-

[1]. Kassir, Samir, *Histoire de Beyrouth*, Paris, Fayard, p.394

[2]. For details please see, Imangulieva, Aida, Jibran Rihani & Naimy translated by Robin Thomson, Inner Farne Press, Oxford, 2009, p. 86

Rihani's death in 1940 and throughout the second half of the 20th century. Additionally, he lectured at the Syrian Protestant College presently American University of Beirut and in a few other institutions in Lebanon and the Arab World, as well as in the cities of Aleppo, Cairo, Damascus, Jerusalem, and others. He also worked, along with other national leaders, for the liberation of his country from Turkish rule. In 1910 Amin al-Rihani published his famous collection of poems *al-Rihaniyyat*, the book that established him as a forward thinker and a visionary. As a result of *al-Rihaniyyat,* the Egyptian media hailed him as *The Philosopher of Freike*. During this same period of mountain solitude *The Book of Khalid* was also written and was later published in 1911 after he returned to New York. The illustrations for this book, which was the first English novel ever written by a Lebanese or Arab, were provided by Khalil Jibran. A reception was held in honour of Amin al-Rihani for the release of *The Book of Khalid* and the president of the New York Pleiades Club crowned him with a laurel garland.

Political and Intellectual Activism:

After the outbreak of World War I, Jibran's political activism increased. He worked with the Syrian-Mount Lebanon Volunteer Committee, advising Syrian residents in the United States on how to join the French army involved in the war, and advocating Arab independence from the Ottoman Empire. This goal, Jibran maintained, should be achieved through revolution rather than patience which he called *The Oriental Poison*[1] Jibran also conducted fund-raising activities after the war to help his starving people in Lebanon in addition to writing political articles. His two war poems of 1916 reveal a bitter tone of an angry

[1]. Bushrui Suhail, *Khalil Jibran of Lebnan,* Gerrarda cross :Colin smythe 1987, p. 134

young man; *Dead are My People* mourned his dying countrymen and *In the Dark Night* appealed for help from the West. His English book *The Madman*, published in 1918, included a famous short prose-poem entitled *Defeat, My Defeat* in which Jibran converts his failure into a sharp sword.

> In your eyes I have read
> That to be enthroned is to be enslaved,
> And to be understood is to be leveled down,
> And to be grasped is but to reach one's fullness
> And like a ripe fruit to fall and to be consumed.
> Defeat, my defeat, my deathless courage,
> You and I shall laugh together with the storm,
> And together we shall dig graves
> For all that die in us,
> And we shall stand in the sun with a will,
> And we shall be dangerous.[1]

On the other hand, during the period between 1910 and 1922 Amin al-Rihani became remarkably involved in the literary life while continuing to pursue productive political engagements. On the literary level, he continued writing and publishing in English and Arabic. Among the books he published during that period were: *The Lily of Ghore*, a novel in English, and rewritten in Arabic, describing the oppression of the woman represented by Mariam during the Ottoman Empire; *Jihan*, a novel in English about the role of Middle eastern women during the World War I, *Al-Luzumiyat*, translation of the Arabic poetry of al-Ma'arri into English with al-Rihani's introduction highlighting the significance of this poet to the Western mind, *The Path of Vision*, essays in English on East and West, *A Chant of Mystics*, poems in English, *The Descent of*

[1]. Jibran, Khalil Jibran, *The Mad man* : His Parables and poems New York, Knopt, 1918, p. 68

Bolshevism, political analysis in English on the Arab origins of the socialist movements, New Volumes of *Al-Rihaniyyat*, philosophical and social essays in Arabic.[1]

From 1915 onwards, Jibran's writings started to reflect a more universal and metaphysical discourse. Jibran, indeed, developed what Waterfield refers to as an Evolutionary Philosophy.[2] He started to preach the role of poets and artists in developing human consciousness and helping the human soul in its journey towards a higher order, a more divine realm. Jibran always thought of himself as a poet. He told Mary once: "Better a poor thought, musically said, than a good thought in bad form". [3] From the 1920s, he adopted the role of poet-as-prophet, confirming Josephine and Mary's thought of him as a messianic figure. Jibran eventually became a mystical and isolated hermit especially that he had already called his studio in New York the Hermitage. In a sense he isolated himself from society on the strength of his idealism.

Jibran's short story *Al-Awasif*, published in 1920 and translated as *The Tempests*, celebrates withdrawing from society and civilization and joining the natural world. The book criticizes humanity and advises it to seek self-transcendence towards a divine stage. Likewise, his famous volume of pictures entitled *Twenty Drawings* and which was published in 1919 reflects this philosophy. Jibran started writing in English, and Mary was his main consultant. *The Madman* (1918) was his first book originally published in the English language. Writing in English definitely increased English-speaking readers' recognition of Jibran's

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[1]. Baki, Wassef. *Amin Rihani and His Role in Modern Literary*, Renaissance, Nouri Library, Damascus, 1968.

[2]. Waterfield, Robin,*The Life and Times of Kahlil Jibran*, London, The Penguin Press1998, p. 195

[3]. M.H. Journal, April 21, 1916

abilities as a writer, since now they started reading his original work rather than a translated one.

Critics argue that *The Madman* represents a turning point in Jibran's career; also in terms of the writing style the sense of pessimism and irony in its reflects Jibran's own disenchantment following the war. The book embraces the Sufi notion of the poet as an isolated figure whose madness is a sign of wisdom. For Jibran, the madman in his book was only weapon in this strangely armed world.[1]

In 1922 al-Rihani traveled throughout Arabia, meeting and getting better acquainted with its rulers. He was the only traveler at that time, European or Arab, to have covered that whole territory in one trip. He acquired an invaluable and first-hand account of the character, vision and belief of each of these rulers. He developed a friendship with Ibn Sa'ud, ruler of the desert kingdom that would soon become the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Between 1924 and 1932 he wrote and published six books in English and Arabic related to the three trips he made to Arabia. These accounts were a considerable critical and public success. London publishers released a circular on al-Rihani's travel books as having been best sellers. He is considered by some scholars as a major figure in the intellectual development of Arab nationalism. In his writings on national issues, he emphasized the importance of a secular state and a secular education pointing that there must be no minorities or majorities, but only equal citizens. Al-Rihani placed the greatest priority on the spread of nationalist and pro-unity feeling among the masses, and argued that rulers would have to follow.[2] During that time, he also published another four books in Arabic, and delivered numerous speeches in Lebanon, the Arab

[1]. Beloved prophet. The love letters of Jibran and Mary Haskell, Virginia Hilu, NY Knopf, 1972, p. 89

[2]. Ibid

world, the East and West Coasts of the United States, and in Canada ranging in topics from social reform to politics, Pan-Arabism, East and West cohesion, poetry and philosophy. Amin al-Rihani also participated in the Arab American movement championing the Arab Palestinian cause. Much of this activity focused on countering the rising influence of the American Zionist lobby, which supported a separate Jewish state in Palestine. He met with various United States officials in this regard and during the 1920s and 1930s was active on behalf of the Arab American, Palestine Anti-Zionism Society (later renamed the Arab National League). Al-Rihani publicly debated leading figures in the American Zionist movement and published numerous articles critical of political Zionism. During the last eight years of his life, Amin al-Rihani wrote the remainder of his books, continued to be active in his political, literary and philosophical endeavors and maintained close contacts with several political leaders, poets, writers, scholars and artists. Samir Kassir points out to al-Rihani's role in bringing Beirut into intellectual contact with its cultural environment as well as the wider world.[1]

Kitab Khalid and Al-Nabi: A Comparison

The book of Khalid of Amin al-Rihani is published in 1911 and it is the first English book written by an Arab writer. In English he was able to reach a vaster readership, and in his writings he constantly defended the right of the Arab world to live with dignity, freedom and independence. He was never tired of explaining the historical contribution of the Arab people and constantly proclaimed their desire to reach an understanding with the Western democratic world in order to build a global society and a better future. On the other hand The Prophet of

[1]. Kassir, Samir, Histoire de Beyrouth, Paris, Fayard, p.394

Jibran Khalil Jibran, published in 1923 was the most famous book written by an Arab and immediately received favorable reactions.

Rihani's novel in English, The Book of Khalid, illustrated by Khalil Jibran, was the forerunner of the latter's most famous work, The Prophet. It is a philosophical and largely autobiographical work which represents a passionate plea for the reconciliation of the material and the spiritual of East and West, of Christianity and Islam. Like many a pioneering endeavor it achieved little success in itself having perhaps as many defects as virtues. Yet this extraordinary book remains possibly the most complete account in English of the modern liberated Arab. Rihani's protagonist, an irreverent and at times blasphemous young Arab from Baalbek named Khalid, follows a circular path which takes him from Lebanon to America and finally back to the Middle East. His westward journey which he undertakes with a companion named Shakib, is compared to the way of the cross that the voyage to America is Via Dolorosa of the emigrant and the Port of Beirut the Verminous Hostelries of Marseilles, the Island of Ellis in New York are the three stations thereof. The three sections of the book correspond to the three levels of the spiritual quest for awareness; hence the dedication to my Brother, my Mother's Nature and my Maker God.

The Book of Khalid, for all its flaws, remains an unjustly neglected work, having a message of continuing relevance as we move closer to the 21st century. The influence it exercised on other Arabs is more important than its success or otherwise as a novel, a literary form with which Rihani did not feel fully at ease. He was, nonetheless, a master of several other forms, and of all his works, his three travel books perhaps best encapsulates his special talent as a writer and communicator.

In spite of the fact that most scholars in English and Arabic have mentioned a kind of relationship between the two writers, very few not to say none of them, have drawn up a comparative study between the two major works of the Arab-American literature: *The Book of Khalid* of Amin al-Rihani and *The Prophet* of Jibran Khalil Jibran. It is significant, at this point, to trace a series of similarities and differences between these two monumental works written in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The prophetic characteristic of the two heroes i.e. Khalid and al-Mustafa paves the way for both of them to discuss with their audience basic issues of a universal and substantial nature. Both Khalid and al-Mustafa preaches among the people of a new city, a city that could possibly make their dreams a reality. Both are ill-tempered and do not hesitate to burn books, pictures and other items to express their anger and dissatisfaction. While Khalid burns pamphlets and book[1] as a sign of refusing conventionalism, the Prophet talks about burning laws and pictures[2] as an attempt to obtain liberation from traditions. Both bid farewell to their cities of prophecy-making, New York and Orphanage, going back to their homeland.[3] Both Khalid and al-Mustafa had their disciples who were at the same time their interviewers and their best listeners and pupils. In that sense Al-Mitra played a similar role to that of Shakib. Both introduced and interrogated the prophet Khalid and the prophet al-Mustafa. What common issues were discussed by both prophets? What were their common concerns? In reviewing both texts it could be pointed to several similar topics dealt with in both the works. It is being tried to cut down the list to eleven. These common topics are:

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[1]. Rihani, Amin.The Book of Khalid. 1911, pp. 58-74
[2]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1966, pp. 37, 48
[3]. Rihani, Amin. The Book of Khalid. 1911, p. 38 and Jibran, Kahlil Jibran, The Prophet, New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1966, pp. 93-95

suffering, friendship, soul, truth, knowledge, democracy, falsehood, solitude, work, love and the desert. In the flow of these topics the first book i.e. *The Book of Khalid* is considered as a guide. For Khalid, suffering is the result of crucified hopes and dreams and one should be prepared for this kind of crucifixion: he says

> You pass into the Paradise of your dreams. If they are crucified the gates of the said Paradise will be shut against you. As a result, when you dream you are in *Jannat* (Paradise). You must be prepared to go through *Jahannam* (Hell) the following day.[1]

This confrontation of dream and reality that ends up with suffering and pain is expressed in *the Prophet* when al-Mustafa says that your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding. Much of your pain is self-chosen. It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self. Both recognize the role of unpleasant feelings in shaping man's perceptions and insights. Describing the friendship of Khalid and Shakib, the Histoire Intime highlights the ethical standards of this relationship. It says: "One would never permit himself an advantage which the other could not enjoy or a pleasure in which the other could not share".[2] *The Prophet* sees in friendship a similar level of ethics where all thoughts, all desires, all expectations are born and shared with joy that is unclaimed and in the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures.[3]

Comparing these two definitions of friendship, a short statement could link both very closely: friendship is the act of sharing with joy. A condition of unexampled friendship is a complete oneness as expressed in the chapter entitled *The Cellar of the Soul*, while according to al-Mustafa

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[1]. Ibid, p. 31
[2]. Ibid, p. 46
[3]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1966, pp. 58-59

your friend is your needs answered. If friendship unites, as Khalid explains, each partner answers the needs of the other, as the Prophet expresses. It is obvious that one concept leads to the other. The first prophet's perception helped shape the second prophet's comprehension. Both Khalid and the Prophet believe in the power of the soul. Khalid asserts that the power of the soul is doubled by the object of its love, or by such labor of love as it undertakes. This labour of love or act of love that supports the power of the soul is highlighted in The Prophet by drawing words of power of the soul for the soul that walks upon all paths. The soul walks not upon a line, neither does it grow like a reed. The soul unfolds itself, like a lotus of countless petals.[1] In this belief both Khalid and al-Mustafa attempt to discover each their own soul and shape their own foresight. When it comes to truth, both prophets try to put this concept on the prism of reality where the variations and variables lead one to see the different sides of a truth. Khalid says that of a truth, many attractions and distractions are here. Likewise the Prophet carries on, twelve years later, by saying: Say not I have found the truth, but rather, I have found a truth. Both prophets, in spite of their eastern mystic background, attempt to unfold the reality of this concept to find out that there is a truth to every little aspect of life and that it is unreal to replace a certain truth by the ultimate universal one. On the other hand, both prophets express their immediate need for knowledge. While Khalid asks for a few of the fruits of knowledge, the Prophet goes further in this image and sees that your ears thirst for the sound of your heart's knowledge. Both prophets realize the significance and role of knowledge in their mission. Both of them seek the intellectual self-support that enriches prophecy and highlights its efficiency and effect. In a more accurate comparison we notice that the first prophet asks for while the

[1]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York. Alfred A. Knopf 1966, pp. 55

second prophet thirsts for. The first prophet looks for the fruits of knowledge while the second prophet looks for the sound of your heart's knowledge. This could be one of the keys to understanding both prophets i.e. The Book of Khalid and The Prophet. The first looks concretely at knowledge as such, while the second looks at it symbolically. The first talks about the knowledge of the mind and the second talks about the knowledge of the heart. A rational, pragmatic and enlightened prophet has paved the way for an emotional, spiritual and foresighted prophet. Both prophets meet in their perspective on democracy and freedom. Both highlight the moral values directly attached to these social and political concepts. Khalid tries to reverse the pattern and says: "Instead of canvassing and orating for Democracy's illustrious Candidate and the Noble Cause. One ought to do a little canvassing for Honesty and Truth among Democracy's leaders".[1] Isn't the Prophet, on the other hand, canvassing the moral values of freedom and democracy by asking: "How can a tyrant rule the free and the proud, but for a tyranny in their own freedom and a shame in their own pride".[2] Both prophets agree that fear is against freedom and democracy. For Khalid, we obey either from reverence and love, or from fear. We are either power-worshippers or cowards, but never, never traders. Al-Mustafa carries on with a similar idea of fear, suggesting that if it is a fear you would dispel, the seat of that fear is in your heart and not in the hand of the feared. If we want to describe freedom according to both prophets, then it is that fearless act characterized by ethics and moral values. Both prophets were concerned about determining falsehood or good and evil as part of their focus on moral values. To Khalid what is unlawful by virtue of the Divine Law the wealth of all the Trust Kings of America cannot make lawful. This

[1]. Rihani, Amin. *The Book of Khalid*, 1911, p. 106
[2]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York, Alfred A. Knopf 1966, pp. 48-49

boldness is expressed in al-Mustafa's words: you are good when you walk to your goal firmly and with bold steps. Both prophets are seeking for the giant virtual self that could play the role model in facing difficulties. "In your longing for your giant self", says al-Mustafa, "lies your goodness and that longing is in all of you". Virtue to both prophets is the oil painting with which you draw your good self and the path through which your vision is clarified and your goal is achieved.

Solitude is another common ground between Khalid and al-Mustafa. Disappointed, distraught, diseased, excommunicated, crossed in love, but with an eternal glint of sunshine in his breast to open and light up new paths before him, Khalid. Suddenly disappears. But where he lays his staff, where he spends his months of solitude, neither Shakib nor our old friend the Sandomancer can say.[1] This state of solitude is similarly described by the second Prophet as a means to discover ourselves and meet our immediate needs:

> Appease your hunger with our bread and quench your thirst with our wine. In the solitude of their souls they said these things. But were their solitude deeper they would have known that I sought but the secret of your joy and your pain. And I hunted only your larger selves that walk the sky.[2]

It is quite striking how both prophets draw a line from loneliness and isolation to spacious sky. In his solitude Khalid sees the pine tent too narrow at times for its crowded guests; but beneath the surface there is room for every root, and over it, the sky is broad enough for all. Later on, al-Mustafa addresses his audience saying: You have sung to me in my aloneness, and I of your longings have built a tower in the sky. It is as if

[1]. Rihani, Amin. *The Book of Khalid*, 1911, p.181
[2]. Jibran, Khalil, The Prophet, New York, Alfred A. Knopf 1966, pp. 90-91

both prophets considered and experienced solitude and loneliness as the spiritual highway to the above where only the sky is the limit. When it comes to work, both prophets designated for it a certain value system without which work becomes meaningless. It is honesty and perfection with Khalid, and an act of love with al-Mustafa. The first prophet notices that the voice within me asked if I were honest in my peddling. What is the difference between the jewelry you passed off for gold and the arguments of the atheist-preacher? Are they not both instruments of deception, both designed to catch the dollar? Khalid does not hesitate to give one answer to these questions: Honesty should be the cardinal virtue of the soul. Al-Mustafa, for his part, looks at work from a similar perspective equally labeled under a parallel value system called the love of life. In keeping yourself with labor, he says, "You are in truth loving life. When you work with love you find yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God".[1] When labor is characterized with honesty and love then one might reach perfection and so thoroughly the work is done according to Khalid. It is remarkable how both prophets once again use the same image, a temple this time, as a place of refuge while discussing their notion of work and labour. Khalid confirms that everyone's life at certain times is a Temple, an Hermitage, or a Vineyard everyone take refuge either in God, or in Solitude, or in work. And of a truth, work is the balm of the sore mind of the world".[2] While the first prophet considers work as an act of the mind, the second prophet looks at labor as an act of the soul, but again using the symbol of the temple. To al-Mustafa Work is love made visible. And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at

[1]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1966, pp.25-26
[2]. Rihani, Amin. *The Book of Khalid*, 1911, p.109

the gate of the temple to take alms of those who work with joy.[1] Once again, when both prophets show their concern about the same universal issue, one deal with it pragmatically, the other theoretically. One would ask, at this point, what is the meaning of love according to the two prophets? The first prophet experienced a difficult love story with all its ups and downs; the second prophet gave a special sermon on love and both prophets used this word frequently in their talks and narratives. Both recognize the difficulties that come together with this beautiful experience. According to Khalid "To be truly, deeply and piously in love, one must need to hate himself for, would he be always inviting trouble would he be always bucking against the dead wall of a Democracy or a Church, if he did not sincerely hate himself if he were not religiously, fanatically in love-in love with Najma, if not with Truth?".[2] In spite of this trouble that love may invite, the second prophet asks people to follow the path of love, even its hard path: "When love beckons to you, follow him, though his ways are hard and steep. And when his wings enfold you yield to him, though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you, for even as love crowns you so shall he crucifies you".[3] To use a common language for both prophets, for both of them love cannot be attained without fighting it. Both of them suggest the sweet-and-sour taste that comes with love.

Finally, it is quite interesting to find out that both prophets used the notion of the desert as a metaphor for an exhausted yet cheerful and courageous human being. Now, in this austere delicacy of the desert, where is the softness of pure sand, Khalid is perfectly happy. Here are joys manifold for a weary and persecuted spirit. Al-Mustafa, later on,

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[1]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1966, p.28
[2]. Rihani, Amin. *The Book of Khalid*, 1911, p.109
[3]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York. Alfred A. Knopf 1966, p.11

asks: “And what desert greater shall there be, than that which lays in the courage and the confidence, nay the charity, of receiving?” Going through the experience of intellectual immigration and facing the challenge of creating a multicultural identity was, most probably, a good background for having and dealing with common universal concerns. However, if the first prophet delivered the sermon of the real identified superman and his great city, the second prophet conveyed the discourse of the ideal superhuman and his imaginative city. This observation would lead us to highlight some of the contrasts in the two works.

Perhaps the first comparison between Khalid and Jibran was the one made by a friend of both, Charlotte Teller. On December 13th 1911, Charlotte wrote to Mary Haskell says:

> To be quite frank Khalil has never made me feel Syria, the book of Khalid, does and yet how much more I feel Rihani because of his stiletto-like satire and humor. Rihani's personality has suddenly become large enough to conceal most of the rest of Existence. His pain is powerful.[1]

This comparison highlights two major points in the author of The Book of Khalid where Charlotte Teller finds him differing from Jibran. These points are: The self and national identities as revealed in The Book of Khalid were never brought to light by Jibran when addressing himself to the West. The ironic and caricaturist style expressed in The Book of Khalid was less felt in Jibran’s diction and sentence structure. One might ask, if these statements were written in 1911, seven years before Jibran ever wrote and published in English and twelve years before he published The Prophet, with what was Miss Teller comparing The Book of Khalid? My guess is that she was comparing al-Rihani’s work with Jibran’s

[1]. Jibran, J. and K. Jibran His Life and World, 1974 p.228

personality as she knew him during that period. However, Miss Teller seems to be right in highlighting these two differences.

To elaborate on the self-identity and the national concern we can easily refer to three main chapters in The Book of Khalid. These are chapters V, VI and VII. The third one discusses respectively Union and Progress, Revolutions within and without and A Dream of Empire. The Book of Khalid's Union and Progress tour in Lebanon, Syria and Arabia is bound to have more than a political significance; the days must soon unfold the ideas of Khalid. These political concepts are not found in the discourses of al-Mustafa. To The Book of Khalid a political revolution must always be preceded by a spiritual one, that it might have some enduring effect.[1] The concept of revolution al-Mustafa speaks nothing about, and his attitude towards revolution is far beyond the wise, calm, inspiring attitude of al-Mustafa. When it comes to the dream of an Empire, Khalid's enthusiasm and clear vision are manifested in these words: "Out in those deserts is a race which is always young. With my words and your love and influence, with our powers united, we can build an Arab Empire".[2] This kind of a dream is totally absent in al-Mustafa's words and vision. The national identity that the first prophet carried was exchanged for a general human identity with the second prophet.

The sarcasm, wit, irony and sense of humor in Khalid that was often expressed in almost every chapter of the three books of the work is not found in the solemn, earnest, peaceful and straightforward sermons of al-Mustafa. Khalid draws keen caricatures of people surrounding him like second-hand Jerry, or Father Farouche and others. The reader can discover more differences than those which Miss. Teller had pointed out

[1]. Rihani, Amin. *The Book of Khalid,* 1911, p.290
[2]. Ibid, p.303

in 1911. It is obligatory to mention here two more before ending this paper. The suffering of Khalid is the real, continuous, deep and human suffering that al-Mustafa did not know. Khalid's personality is dramatic, growing through the experience of emigration and always ready for intellectual, emotional, and spiritual confrontations, while al-Mustafa's personality is stagnant where the same features are alike whether at the beginning or at the end of his mission. Khalid went through pain and suffered in the *Via Dolorosa*, *The Howdaj of Falsehood*, *and The Stoning and Flight* as well as in other phases of his life. Al-Mustafa, in his one sermon on pain, says: "Much of your pain is self-chosen".[1] The reader can easily notice that Khalid's suffering is not paralleled by al-Mustafa's pain which he talked about but never experienced. Al-Mustafa, on the other hand, discussed issues that were never part of Khalid's concerns such as *Eating and Drinking*, *Houses*, and *Clothes*.

Finally, the language of the first prophet carries two main characteristics that are not to be found in the language of the second prophet. Khalid's English language, first of all, carries with it many expressions and words that are directly and purposely borrowed from the Arabic language, such as *Al-Fatihah, Allah, billah, Jannat, Jahannam, aymakanen-kan, ya Muhtaram, mojadderah, Im-Hanna, ya habibi, howdaj, kaimkams, masnad, medjidi, Kaaba, awafy, mafsudin, inkhitaf, kulmakan, sidr, amirs, sheikhs, Tammuz, seraj, dastur, mutafarnejin, Barr'ush-Sham, jubbah, Al-Khatimah, and wassalamu aleik*. This made the spectrum of this prophet expand to the East and the West, where both can almost touch[2] in the text itself maybe for the first time in English literature. Also, Khalid's English language is a sophisticated one, able to challenge the native speakers in order to reach them and create Khalid's

[1]. Jibran, Khalil. The Prophet, New York, Alfred A. Knopf 1966, p.52
[2]. The Nation, March 21, 1912

own audience with full confidence and credibility. One can find some justification for saying that the prophecy of Khalid paved the way for the prophecy of al-Mustafa. Both had common universal concerns related to knowledge, truth, freedom and love. Both addressed themselves to the City of their vision or imagination. Both prophets are the result of the emigration experience and the multicultural theme of world literature. Both brought prophecy from the East and addressed themselves to a Western and international audience. However, the first prophet expressed himself in a novel form in what is considered the first Arab-English novel of its kind, while the second prophet expressed himself in a series of sermons on different subjects.

The first prophet identified himself with rational, pragmatic, and universal visionary philosophy, while the second prophet associated himself with mysticism, utopia and worldwide human welfare. Both were seeking the bright future of their communities and of mankind at large. While we are bidding farewell today to the 20th century we are, at the same time, looking forward to bringing together the disciples of both prophets and preaching to the nations of the 21st century a rational idealism and a post-modern practical mysticism. The message is carried only when striving for the new Superman of the coming century and of the coming Great City whether we call it New York, or Beirut.

Democracy, Peace, Culture and Society:

Democracy, peace, culture and society are the pivotal elements of comparison between Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani. Both Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani are the true torch bearers of culture, democracy, peace and society. Here, an attempt is made to look on these particular paradigms as al-Rihani and Jibran tried their level best

to manipulate justice in culture, democracy and peace throughout their works whether in English or in Arabic.

Jibran Khalil Jibran was among a younger generation of the Arab-American writers who contributed to the ongoing Arabic literary renaissance. This movement had started by the end of the 19th century with revivalist figures in the Arab world like Butrus al-Bustami, Khalil Mutran and Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad, among others who were attracted to Western poetry and particularly English Romanticism. Living in the American environment undoubtedly helped the Arab-American literature in their quest to revolutionize the classically conservative Arabic literature. In a way, they reflected the culture of freedom they found themselves in. They freely developed new styles whereas their counterpart modernizers in the East had to moderate them. The Arab-American modernists were highly influenced by Western cultures in attempting to reform the traditional use of Arabic language and applying new ideas to Arabic literature. They developed the prose-poem and also introduced Western themes like romanticism, individualism, humanism, and secularism. It is interesting that Amin al-Rihani was a pioneer of this revolution before Jibran, but *Al-Mahjar* (Pen League) writers turned to Jibran's own ideas and experimentation with language as a source of inspiration. His literary beliefs shaped the views of colleagues.

For hundred years, Turkish oppression, cultural death and fear ruled the Middle East. Freedom was a gift and luxury only afforded by those who immigrated in search of it to distant lands. The Napoleonic conquest of Egypt and Mohammad Ali's rebellion against the sultanate was the first sparks to trigger Arab Renaissance and nationalism. European Christian missionaries' schools opened in Lebanon and Egypt to feed souls hungry for knowledge and freedom. As a result, democratic

principles began to bloom in a somewhat shy cultural outburst at home and abroad.

Thousands of Arabs, and more specifically Lebanese and Syrians, took up the search of a new life that would offer them recognition, self-respect, freedom and success; hence there was the birth of groups of scholars, painters, philosophers, poets and journalists such as Jibran Khalil Jibran, Mikhail Nu'aima, Amin al-Rihani and many others. These scholars wasted no time and spared no effort in their search for knowledge, self actualization and fame. Their souls displayed loyalty to their new homeland, but their hearts remained deeply rooted in their ancestral countries. They experienced in their new home freedom, liberty, justice, respect, culture and peace as they were exposed to the writings and thoughts of great Western scholars such as J.J. Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu, John Locke, Thomas Carlisle and many others. Al-Rihani and Jibran Khalil Jibran's views, definition and perception of the modern socio-economic system as they based it on a triangular concept beginning with education and culture, leading to the formation of democratic institutions and practices, and culminating in human development and peace.

Jibran considered himself as a spokesman of both cultures. He admired America's achievements and its values of individualism, dynamism, and freedom, while he also praised the Arabs' contributions to the world, but advised them to evade the past and build one's own future, and to adapt the good aspects of Western civilization instead of blind imitation. Jibran appealed to the new generation of Arab Americans to be proud of both their Eastern and their Western backgrounds. In his famous poem *I Believe in You*, Jibran writes:

> I believe that you have inherited from your forefathers an ancient dream, a song, a prophecy, which you can proudly lay as a gift of gratitude upon the lap of America. I believe you can say to the founders of this great nation, Here I am, a youth, a young tree from the hills of Lebanon, yet I am deeply rooted here, and I would be fruitful". Barbara Young recorded Jibran's impact on the Arab-American community saying: "To the younger generation of his countrymen, those born in the West of parents who had grown up on their native soil, Jibran was one of the elect of God. They went to him in their perplexities, and he met their problems with quick understanding and divine gentleness that won their undying gratitude and devotion." She added: "I have never entered one of these restaurants without hearing some mention of him, without someone knowing, and saying,' You are the friend of Jibran'?[1]

Waterfield, however, argues that the cultural dualism Jibran experienced made him act out different roles among his Western friends of literary circles and his Syrian compatriots. The first were often radicals and socialists, whereas the latter were rather nationalists. He describes Jibran as a chameleon who adapts himself to the demands of both worlds[2] Nevertheless, it could be argued that Jibran balanced both the Eastern and Western sides of his identity and came to resolve his cultural division. Mostly in his early Arabic writings, such as *The Broken Wings* and *A Tear and a Smile*, Jibran perfectly blended his being an exotic Easterner with being a wounded Romantic. But, broadly speaking, he harmoniously merged his mystic beliefs in a sense of continuity among various faiths and in an inner, personal experience of the divine with his Romantic

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[1]. Young, Barbara. This man from Leban: A Study of Khalil Gibran New York, Knopf 1945, p.135,139

[2]. Waterfield, Robin.*The Life and Times of Kahlil Gibran*, London: The Penguin Press1998, p.149

ideals of universal love and unification of the human race. As a firm believer in the *Divine Unity*, his work addresses the common and the universal. This can be traced to the Poet-Prophet image that Jibran started to evolve into in the 1920's. For Waterfield this Romantic fusion of poet and prophet was undoubtedly Jibran's best opportunity for bringing the East and West together. This is because Jibran is known in the Arab world mostly as a sensitive poet, whereas to his English speaking readers, he is rather a wise philosopher, a prophet.[1]

On the other hand, Amin Rihani is a man of many cultures, thoughts and visions; he researched, read and travelled, and actually lived the principles he believed in, proclaimed and fought for. Rihani admired the writings of John Locke, Thomas Carlisle, and the philosophers of the French revolution who proclaimed and fought for human rights, basic human freedoms and the sovereignty of the people. He shared the thoughts of Edmond Burke, Charles Edion and Herbert Spencer as well as of other American, Russian and English scholars such as Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Tolstoy, and Huxley, and some of Arab scholars such as Abul Ala al-Ma'arri, Ibn al-Rumi, Al-Hallaj and others. He viewed the American constitution as the most humanly perfect political document known in man's history. These convictions turned al-Rihani into a defender and fervent disciple of democratic principles and a resolute promoter of culture and peace.

He compared the Middle Eastern political systems with those of Western Europe and the United States. His findings were disheartening and disappointing. He consequently devoted his time, energy and life to educating and leading the Arab people into the path of socio economic and political modernization.

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[1]. Ibid, p.238

Al-Rihani admired the technological development of the western art and legal system although he strongly criticized and rejected its materialistic and capitalistic drives and practices.

In his book *Path of Vision*, al-Rihani studies both worlds, East and West. He sees the basic weaknesses of eastern life whereby the Easterner continues to live in slavery unwilling to seek freedom. For al-Rihani, if the Easterner does not free himself from religious fear and stupid wilted traditions that destroy his mind and soul, he will be living in the world but not part of it. He can see what goes beyond the mountain, but is unable to see what goes on before his eyes. This is what makes him blindly submissive to authority because submissiveness and mutiny both originate from religion and fundamentalism. As a result he often opposes oppressors but very seldom opposes tyranny itself.[1] Al-Rihani believed that the solution to these conflicts could only be achieved in a state of economic-cultural and political development, since prosperity and ultimate peace have two major, equally important and inseparable prerequisites to be achieved. First to promote culture and to educate the people; second to apply the principles of real democracy and these two prerequisites form the basic angles of the equilateral pyramid culminating with its third angle, namely development and ultimate peace, co-operation and happiness for mankind.

What al-Rihani promoted and called for almost a century ago, the Arab world of today is in greater need of attaining. Rihani's writings desperately apply to our present Middle Eastern societies and cause him to stay alive through his thoughts as he diagnosed the problems and prescribed the solutions.

[1]. Al-Rihani, Amin Path of Vision, The Oriental Heritage VI, pp.117-118

For al-Rihani the one who is governed must understand his rights and his duties toward his country and the fellow citizens; it is consequently imperative that every citizen must be cultured, educated and knowledgeable of the truth. To apply the social contract concept declared by J. Rocker and J.J. Rousseau, the citizen must light his candle and search for the truth. The same is also found in the writings of Jibran Khalil Jibran as well.

To begin such a search, however, al-Rihani clearly distinguishes in most of his writings between the cultured man and the man who has been given an academic degree. He declared:

> I prefer the honest and truthful ignorant person to the corrupt scientist. I prefer the simple transparent soul to the learned one who only knows what is muddy and dark. An honest shoemaker is preferable to a wicked prince... Today, we are in greater need of true science that will educate the souls, elevate the mind and preserve the moral values.[1]

For Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani true education teaches tolerance, freedom, respect of others and true democracy. It rejects any form of violence, prejudice, fanaticism and oppression. They knew how painful and damaging ignorance is for the people, as they will be kept in darkness and slavery and under oppression. He opposes those leaders who claim to be from the people and only claim to serve the people when in fact they exploit these slogans to further oppress the people. He wonders how a man could claim being from the people when he is blind and has sold his soul, his people and his country for personal gains.

[1]. Al-Rihani, Amin Al-Qawmiyyaat, Vol. 2, Beirut, Dar Al-Jeel, 1987, p.50

Both Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani praised technology that has brought to humanity the telephone, electrical equipment and modern transportation, but in his opinion such technology is not able to develop the county's culture and soul. It might help the monarch become more despotic and more fanatic. It does not necessarily educate him in the art of government.

Education and culture cannot be limited to specifically selected subjects or issues treated and presented to the reader from a very subjective, often narrow-minded and prejudiced point of view.

For both Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani, true education cannot be subjected to censorship by ignorant, narrow-minded and self-appointed judges. True education is above censorship. It is the true expression of freedom, culture and democracy. Education is the light that flows from the Eternal Truth. The people must be exposed to all types of cultures and writings so that they may learn to scrutinize, analyze and enjoy acquiring information to reach a better understanding not only of their own cultures but of those surrounding Muslims in the west prefer Muslims and so consequently peacefully coexist with others and develop.

They warn that if the government fails to wipe out the fortresses of ignorance, soon ignorance itself will destroy the walls of the government. They even call upon the Christians, Muslims and followers of other religion to set aside their differences, open up their minds, and free themselves from their prejudices and blind fanaticism. Let the government build schools where all the children would grow together in love, respect, and unity he pleaded. Rihani was not an atheist and anti-religious. Just on the contrary, he believed in the most sublime doctrine of love, fraternity, freedom, coexistence and peace. He rejects religious practices and teachings if they lead to violence, blood, destruction and

oppression of the people. He refers to the crusades and other religious wars in these words. They spilled human blood in rivers in the name of religion; they destroyed the sources of life and the monuments of civilizations in the name of religion. They covered the earth with human bones in the name of religion. They filled the sky with poison and darkness in the name of religion. They reproduce and live under tyranny and misery in the name of religion.

Both of Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani were influenced by the eminent Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore, whom they met and shared with the literary pursuits. Jibran Khalil Jibran met Rabindranath Tagore in December 1920, and he was given a stern lecture on this subject, as Jibran subsequently reported to Mary Haskell:

> You know Tagore has talked about America as a money-grabbing land without a vision. I tried to say that spirit may be manifested in machinery, that material and spiritual are not opposed, but that spirit is in all of life and in everything.[1]

However, the ambivalence which Jibran still felt about the West is evident from a letter which he wrote barely a week later to Mikhail Nu'aima. Upset by the delayed publication of one of his works due to problems with a printing press, he complained: "The West is now a machine, and everything in it is tied to the machine".[2] Yet at the same time Mary Haskell records his view of America and the newly re-publicized Soviet Russia as the joint exemplar of a new consciousness grounded in the search for goodness and reality. However homesick Jibran may have been, and despite his variously expressed with to go back to Lebanon, and withdraw from this civilization that runs on wheels,

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[1]. Bushrui, S. B., Beloved prophet. The love letters of Gibran and Mary Haskell, Virginia Hilu NY Knopf 1972, p.337

[2]. Naimy, Mikhail, Khalil Jibran: *His Life and work*, Second Printing, Khayats, Beirut, 1965, p.19

he was never slow to declare his appreciation for the nation which had taken him to its bosom. One of the letters which he wrote to May Ziadah, a Cairo based Lebanese writer with whom he maintained a remarkable twenty year literary and love relationship entirely through correspondence, contains a witty and perceptive passage written in June 1919. The Americans are a mighty people, indefatigable, persistent, unflagging, sleepless and dreamless. If they hate someone, they kill him with indifference; if they love someone, they smother him with kindness. He who wishes to live in New York should keep a sharp sword by him, but in a sheath full of honey; a sword to punish those who like to kill time, and honey to gratify those who are hungry.[1]

On the other hand, Amin al-Rihani also met Rabindranath Tagore, who also calls for education and self-emancipation of tribal people as he wonders how the people can live in dignity when their main objectives are to blindly cling to their old and rotten traditions and superstitions. As a result they feel no responsibilities for the present and no tropes for the future.

Al-Rihani strongly relates oppression and tyranny to ignorance, which in turn produces discord, weakness, fanaticism and blind submission. Ignorance is the cause of the basic socio-economic and political ills in Eastern societies. Without ignorance, tyranny would not have existed. Without ignorance there would be no national division, national weakness, religious fanaticism and slavery under foreign occupiers.[2]

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[1]. Bushrui, S. B., Beloved prophet. The love letters of Gibran and Mary Haskell, Virginia Hilu NY Knopf 1972, p.23

[2]. Al-Rihani, Amin *Al-Nakabaat* Historical and Political Stances. Beirut, Dar Al-Jeel 1991, p.212

Culture, by contrast, makes man understand his basic political rights. Those rights are granted him by God himself as the greatest gifts to the community of brothers sharing and caring for one another and the surrounding environment. Those gifts are those of free choice, equality and freedom. In all known religions on this earth the ten basic commandments call for the respect and honor of other human beings as a result the gravest sin man commits against God is in fact a sin committed against another human being. While love and tolerance generate compassion, security and happiness, extremism generates greeter extremism. This process as in the Hegelian analysis is based on the principle of thesis and antithesis. Rihani wants the Christian, the Muslim, the Jew and others above all to truly know and understand the spirit of their religions and then to live that spirit of love, mercy, peace, mutual assistance and respect for human rights. This would be the ultimate education and culture leading to democracy and peace. Without this knowledge there is no justice and equality among people.

Jibran Khalil and Amin al-Rihani call upon their fellow human beings to wake up and make themselves free through culture, he insisted even to start a politically non violent revolution if needed. Najib Trad, a Lebanese scholar contemporary to al-Rihani, supported the latter's views as he declared in Paris, on June 25th 1925 in reference to Lebanon.

> We are not a nation and have no country; rather we are a mixture of religious factions. As long as we remain as such, a man like Rihani who embodies the freedom of thought and national principles is more useful to us than thousands of deputies who represent religious factions and trends. The seeds he sows in their words will penetrate the conscience of future generations to produce freedom and independence.[1]

[1]. Ibid, p. 242

In case of peace Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani left no stone unturned. The result from the union between education and political literacy, as well as the strict application of democratic rules and systems, will lead to peace at home and abroad.

Through education man will discover the beauty and perfection of humanity's heart and soul. The education will lead him to understand and tolerate his neighbours regardless of colour, race, sex, religion or beliefs and will afford him or her necessary respect and cooperation through transparent, honest and peaceful means. Violence and warfare, no matter what their causes or motives might be, are illegal, immoral and unjustified not to be tolerated by literate and democratic men. It is inconceivable that brothers could so ruthlessly and savagely murder each others for a handful of dirt, the dream of vainglory or the serving of God. Both parties the victor and the victim are actually losers. The behaviour, the obsession with violence and destruction of those who do not share one's beliefs and taboos, is far from rationality and civilization and can only is characterized as shear madness and evil.

Rihani proclaims that all humans belong to one nation. He prophetically foresees the creation of a World Government providing development, prosperity, security and peace for all mankind. In the future he declares there will be one university, namely that of arts, literature and true knowledge along with one universal religion based upon divine fatherhood and universal brotherhood.[1]

Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani both call for a universal world unity and religious unity under the roof of equality, freedom and peace. They consequently believe that the materialistic, rational West and

[1]. Al-Rihani, Amin *Al-Qawmiyyaat*. Vol. 2, Beirut .Dar Al-Jeel, 1987, p. 63

the spiritual East shall meet, throwing away ignorance, corrupt and superficially old traditions and practices, and replace them with the wealth of rationalism and technology along with the wealth of the spirit to reach the highest levels of freedom, democracy and peace. They warn and assert that the political systems in the East will remain underdeveloped if religious evolution and modernization do not materialize. Political and religious developments are twin sisters and must evolve together.

Peace is the magic vocabulary all humans continuously spell out, and yearn to live under its wings. In all known religions peace is given by God to humans as the most precious gift since it will help create beautiful art, science, prosperity and love.

Amin al-Rihani quiet eloquently described the ills of war and specifically of World War I as he travelled from one country to another. He vividly describes, the hunger, pain, suffering and savage degradation humanity reached.[1]

To Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani being a Syrian, a Muslim, a Christian, a Jew or a Druze are only names and references, but the real family name of all peoples is humanity. They yearn for the day when all humans can live in harmony and love following the teachings of Christ, the spirit of the holy Quran, and the example of Ghandhi, Mother Theresa, Martin Luther and many others, with a harmony and respect that go beyond the human relationship to the respect of the environment in its vegetarian and animal kingdoms. Nations canonry survives through peaceful relations, cooperation and exchange of ideas and goods.

[1]. Ibid, pp. 116-117

Concept of Love:

Jibran Khalil Jibran remarks that it is wrong to think that love comes from long companionship and persevering courtship. Love is the offspring of spiritual affinity and unless that affinity is created in a moment, it will not be created for years or even generations.

From the ancient time, people were accustomed with love, faith, death etc. If we go through human history, we will find many scholars, litterateurs and philosophers who wrote many valuable books on this theme. Among the most outstanding philosophers, we may mention the name of Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani who attracted by love throughout their writings.

Both Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani's view of the divine was consistent with the tradition of American transcendentalism. When they spoke of God their description were indistinguishable from what they had to say about nature or about the best in human nature. They spoke of God with the same reverence with which he spoke of human worth and dignity, as if there were, in fact, no difference between the two. They want to prove that all things in this creation exist within soul of the prophet and all things in the prophet exist in creation; there is no border between this two.[1]

Concept of love is one of the major factors of Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani's writings. *Al-Musiqa* (The Music, 1905), *Ara'is al-Muruj* (Brides of the Valley, 1906), *Al-Arwah al-Mutamarridah* (Spirits Rebellious, 1908), *Al-Ajniha al-Mutakassirah* (The Broken Wings, 1912), *Dam'a wa Ibtisama* (A Tear and A Smile, 1914), *Al-Mawakib* (The Processions, 1919), and *Al-Awasif* (The Tempests, 1920), are some of the

[1]. Ibid

examples of Jibran Khalil Jibran's books written on love. On the other hand, *Al-Makari wa al-Kahin* (The Muleteer and the Monk,1904), *Al-Rihaniyyaat* (The Rihani Essays, 1910), *Al-Nakabaat* (Disasters,1928), *Antum al-Shu'ara'* (You the Poets, 1933), *Wafa al-Zaman* (Faithful Time, 1934), *Hutaf al-Awdiya* (Hymn of the Valleys, 1955), *Rasa'el Amin al-Rihani al-Arabia* (The Arabic Letters of Amin Rihani,1959), *Qissati Ma'a May* (My Story with May, 1980), *Wasiyati* (My Will, 1982), *The Book of Khalid*, 1911, *The Path of Vision*,1921 etc. are some of the examples of the books of Amin al-Rihani written on love.

Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani personify love in three distinct ways. Firstly, they describe love as a guide on the journey of love. Secondly, love as a king or an emperor, i.e. sovereign and thirdly, love as a gardener.

Love is a guide to an endless journey:

According to Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani love is an endless journey to the human life as he explains that to experience love is to go on a journey and it is love itself who is the guide of the journey. The roads that love leads to might be difficult and painful, but one should follow them and even embrace, an embrace which may lead to a stabbing in. They encourage the readers to love of its dangers and potential pain and suffering. At the same time they still try to put across that it should not deter the readers from loving, for if the readers are not prepared to accept both the good and the bad sides of love then they will not live a life as rich and rewarding as the reader 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 round. We should follow the guide and trust his judgment. At the end of the journey we will reach our goal which is to be presented to God with all the knowledge we will have gathered during our journey. Jibran's work *The Broken Wings* is one of the finest examples of its kinds.

This concept consists of several elements which are mapped between the source and target domain, for example travelers of a journey are the lovers of the relationship, the vehicle is the relationship itself, the destination is the purpose of the relationship, the distance travelled is the progress made and the obstacles along the way are difficulties encountered in the relationship. Moreover, Jibran and Rihani explain the element to their love as a journey metaphor: a guide who leads us on our way through life. Even if the guide may lead us through pain and suffering, he knows the route we will have to walk in order to fulfill our destiny and reach the goal.[1]

Love is a gardener and a sovereign feeling:

As the philosophers of love, Jibran and Rihani point out that the gardener not only grows 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 possible way. The same is true of love. According to Jibran and Rihani 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

[1]. Jibran, Khalil Jibran. The Prophet, 12th edition, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p.42

needs in afterlife. We will have to go through a process of maturing and developing in order to be refined.

Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani explain 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.

Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani took the raw materials for stories from the villages where the villas used to dwells. Human society accustomed with love. Without love, faith and believe a society never been formed. So, Jibran recreates his love in village life. It is wrong to think that love comes from long companionship and persevering courtship. Love is the offspring of spiritual affinity and unless that affinity is created in a moment, it will not be created for years or even generations.

Image of Death:

Both Jibran Khalil Jibran and Amin al-Rihani experienced death as the true and final aim of human lives. There is some truth in the old saying that there are only two things you can count on in life: death and taxes. Everyone experiences death. Death and dying are an inevitable part of human life which Jibran and Rihani portray in their writings.

In Paris, Jibran learned of his sister Sultana's death in April 1902. Soon after his return to America, family tragedies succeeded. In March his half-brother Peter also follow the way of Sultana. Then in June of the same year his beloved mother also died of cancer. Jibran received a lot of sympathy from Josephine, and their relationship became deeper and deeper. They exchanged letters and he showed her his drawings. The young man was so in love with Josephine, he considered her a guiding

light in his life as an artist. But this love was one-sided; Josephine saw him rather as a friend or fellow artist. She continued to introduce him to interesting people because she believed he was a genius, and even a prophet. But after Josephine's marriage, the two were not close friends anymore. Jibran was still a dependent of Fred Holland Day. In 1904, he had his first exhibition in his mentor's studio, and it was very successful. His drawings, which presented a transcendental metaphysical vision, made a profound impression on influential members of Boston Society, and some of his pieces were sold. During the exhibition, Jibran met Mary Haskell, a wealthy woman and the principal of a private school in Boston. She was impressed by his talent and interested in his work.[1]

Likewise Amin al-Rihani too had experience of death when he lost his parent, brother and sister. Rihani points that some people know ahead of time when their death will occur. Terminal illnesses, when diagnosed ahead of time, allows a person to set his or her affairs in order, make relationships right, and say goodbye to loved ones. In these cases, every person involved has a chance to gradually adjust and make peace with death, as much as possible. However, not everyone has this chance. Many deaths occur suddenly. Death can, and often does, strike without warning. No one is promised tomorrow. The only thing we can count on is today. Many people around the world turn to religion to answer questions about death and the afterlife, especially when someone is facing his or her own mortality. Strangely, even a brief glance at many of the world's religions reveals that many theologies glamorize death, promising rewards in the afterlife, including increased understanding of God and the universe and even, in some cases, supernatural powers that were unavailable during the mortal life. Death often seems more attractive than being alive.

[1]. Naimy, 1964, p. 59

But the reality of death is that it should be avoided at all costs. Death is the worst thing to ever happen in all of existence. On the other hand life is a precious gift we are unable to recreate once it's gone. The truth about death lays plain the harshness of the grave … but also the true beauty of the life we already have. We invite you to learn more about this topic, and hope you better appreciate your life as a result. Indeed, death is a grand mystery. Throughout time, every major religion, philosophy, and spiritual train of thought has sought to explain this mystery. It is a subject that touches the life of every man and woman, uniting the entire human race under a cloud of inevitable mortality. The rich and the poor alike meet the same end; the black and the white both go to the grave; the powerful and the humble all leave this planet eventually.

Both Jibran and Rihani opined that the mystery of death is so profound that, despite the millennia of religious doctrine, mythology, scientific research, and the many theories and explanations that exist on the subject, people today are more confused than ever about it. Even within individual religious groups there is often a stark difference of opinion on the nature of death.