ABSTRACT

The thesis is divided into five chapters excluding introduction and conclusion. Blake and Gibran are not compared in all the chapters but the main chapters thoroughly compare the works of the two writers. Their social, political, and economic context, their vision and worldview are also evaluated in comparison with each other.

In Chapter I of the thesis Blake and the context against which he wrote are discussed at length. The chapter discusses the inception of romanticism in England whose chief originator was Blake himself. This chapter deals with Blake, Blake’s writings and his other preoccupations. However its focus is on Blake as the originator of English Romanticism. It talks at length about how the Romantic Movement started and tries to define romanticism. This chapter tries to differentiate Romanticism from its preceding Enlightenment ideology and general eighteenth century literary culture. It traces the changes in the intellectual history from Enlightenment thought of 18th century to the Romantic thought at the close of d18th century and during the first half of d19th century. It is seen that the Romantic Movement was influenced by foreign philosophers and poets like Rousseau and Goethe. The chapter also introduces those writers who came before the Romantic Movement proper but contributed to its growth and can be called pre-romantics like James Thomson, William Collins, Thomas Gray, Robert Burns, William Cowper, William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, James Macpherson and Thomas Percy and tries to establish Blake as the originator and pioneer of Romantic Movement in England. Then some poems from Poetical sketches and Songs of Innocence and Experience are discussed in detail in order to see the
romantic themes employed by Blake. Examples from some of his other later works are also given.

Chapter II deals with Gibran, his life, his writings and his chief preoccupations as a writer. It traces Gibran’s evolution as a writer and the foreign influences he absorbed after migrating to US. This chapter focuses on Gibran’s contribution to Arabic romanticism and chief romantic qualities of his writings. It also talks about how Gibran was influenced by English romantics especially Blake whose influence on him was the greatest. It discusses Gibran’s childhood, his love of nature and his sensitiveness and the influence of his homeland Besharri on him as a man and a poet. It talks about his emigration to America in 1895 and how he interacted with Boston’s social and intellectual life and discovered its flourishing world of art and literature; how he met Fred Holland Day, who supported him greatly in his artistic endeavors, and Mary Haskell whose support and guidance and help with his English was very important for Gibran’s growth as a writer. The chapter also mentions how Gibran with the help of Day and Mary came under the influence of English language poets especially English romantics. Next, this chapter relates in detail the publication of his books from time to time and discusses the themes of his works, focusing on the romantic sensibility and elements and compares some of his prose poems with Keats an Shelley’s’ poems for his love of beauty, nature and innocence etc. This chapter tries to establish him as the pioneer of Arabic romanticism. It talks about how he introduced western romanticism into Arabic. He developed a new form called prose poem. He was interested in imagination, nature, childhood, love, beauty, liberty etc. like English Romantics. The chapter also discusses his social rebellion, mysticism, social reform, isolation, love of instinct and intuition and his immense contribution to Arabic literature and his innovations in Arabic literature.
Chapter III compares mystical thoughts which run through the works of Blake and Gibran. It talks about their difference as well as similarities as mystics living in different traditions. This chapter traces their development and evolution as mystics and the influences which helped them to evolve. The chapter establishes that the essence of their mystical thought was same though there were some minute differences. It starts with the definition of mysticism and talks about it in detail and how a mystic perceives himself or herself in relation to reality. Different mystics choose different paths to reach the same reality i.e., to experience divine consciousness, enlightenment and oneness with the one who contains all. Then the chapter discusses in detail about different schools of mysticism like Christian mysticism, Islamic mysticism, Sufism, Kabala, Gnosticism etc. It talks about how mystics have chosen poetry as a vehicle to convey their message because it is not easy to pass gnosis in any other medium. Then it tries to relate romanticism and mysticism and tries to establish Blake as the mystic proper and a supreme creator. It talks in detail about Blake’s mystic status and how Blake used himself as the instrument of the divine. How Blake spend his life for the purpose of revealing higher truths. His spiritual life was more important to him than his creative life. He was a visionary mystic. He was a poet mystic. It talks about how Blake influenced poets who came after him like Yeats but he greatly influenced Gibran. Gibran like Blake was a poet mystic. Then the similarities in Blake’s and Gibran’s thoughts are seen. Though Gibran was not a mystic proper but at moments he seems to be a mystic of higher order. How both used the gift of poetry to put through their gnosis. Blake’s search for spiritual truth is related by analyzing his poems and mystical thoughts focusing on the poems from *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Lines from ‘*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*’ are also quoted. In the same way Gibran’s prose poems are
analyzed for their mystical content. *The Prophet* is analyzed in detail. Each of Gibran’s work can be read and interpreted in the light of Blake’s mystic thought.

Chapter IV is a comparative study of Blake’s and Gibran’s social rebellion, social protest and social reform. It deals at length with Blake’s and Gibran’s development as social critics. They both abhorred injustice of all kinds. They stood for the poor and the week. They were severe critics of Orthodox Church and tyrant state. Blake and Gibran, though born in different countries and contexts, had strong affinities with each other. This chapter discusses in detail how Gibran came under the influence of Blake’s revolutionary vision, and how he like Blake abhorred stale social customs and stood in rebellion against the institutions of state and church. Both stood for woman’s emancipation and liberation. The religious beliefs of both Blake and Gibran were at odds with the common people as well as with religious authorities. It analyses in detail some important passages from the works of both writers for their revolutionary and rebellious content and compares them with each other in order to see the similarities as well as the impact of Blake on Gibran. It shows that Blake and Gibran were actively involved in the political development of their times. The chapter gives a detailed analysis and comparison of Blake’s *Vision of Daughters of Albion* and Gibran’s *Broken Wings* and how both stood for the rights of woman and criticized false morals of the society. A detailed study of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and Gibran’s “John the Mad Man” and “Cry of the Graves” is made. Blake’s *America, a Prophecy* and Gibran’s “My Countrymen”; Blake’s *Tiriel* and Gibrans “Kahlil, the Heretic” are also compared and analyzed. Some poems from *Songs of Innocence and Experience* are compared to Gibran’s “Decayed Teeth”, “Slavery” and “Narcotics and Dissecting Knives”.
Chapter V of this thesis discusses the style, use of prosody, symbols and myths employed by these two writers. It talks at length about Blake’s use of myths and symbols. This chapter talks about Gibran’s use of symbols and his deft use of language. However it is found that there are not many similarities in their style or use of myths and symbols. Gibran’s works can be compared to Blake’s songs in their style but there is no comparison when it comes to the Blake’s prophetic works. It talks in detail about the relation of myths and symbols with poetry in general and romantic poetry in particular. Blake invented his own mythology and used fresh symbols. The chapter talks in detail about the mythic world and symbolic characters created by Blake and it nuances and subtleties. Blake had to take recourse to these myths and symbols because it was not possible otherwise to present his gnosis. Then some poems from Songs of Experience are analyzed stylistically for their grammar, prosody, metaphors, structure etc. Gibran style and use of symbols is also discussed in detail. It is said that though Blake and Gibran had many similarities in terms of subject matter and themes of their works but their styles didn’t match except for Blake’s earlier works especially Songs of Innocence and Experience have the simplicity of diction and melody which we find throughout in Gibran’s writing. The influence of Blake, Bible and Nietzsche on Gibran’s style is discussed in detail. Gibran contribution to Arabic literature in terms of style is highlighted. Then some passages from The Prophet are analyzed stylistically.

The thesis is concluded on the note that Blake and Gibran can be compared to many other romantic and mystics. The result of this thesis indicates that a certain amount of time and academic consideration might be given for the development of research into the relationship between the literatures of the west and the east in order to promote mutual understanding, peace and harmony because literature, to a great
extent, encompasses all the facets of social, political, economic, cultural, ethical and spiritual fabric of the society. That will also help in appreciating and understanding literatures across cultures without any prior consideration for language and nationality.