CHAPTER IV

JIBRĀN KHALĪL JIBRĀN AND HIS LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS:

A. Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān: An outline of his life

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A. Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān: An outline of his life

Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān, the most influential writer of his generation in bringing about a revolution in modern Arabic literature, was born in 1883 in the small village of Bisharri in the northern part of Lebanon. His father, Khalil bin Jibrān was a shepherd. He had a little knowledge of reading, writing and simple arithmetic. He was inefficient in his work, and failed to make sufficient provision for his family. He was addicted to drink and the more this habit grew upon him, the more ill-tempered, quarrelsome, and rude on his wife and children he became.

Jibrān’s mother, Kāmila Raḥmi, was the daughter of a Maronite priest, and the widow of ʿAbd al-Salām Raḥmi. She was intelligent and enlightened, but had no education. Her voice was musical, and she sang Lebanese folk-songs well. In contrast with her husband, she was responsible, capable of self-sacrifice, indulgent to her children and ambitions for their children.¹

Kāmila conceived three children from her marriage with Khalil bin Jibrān. Besides Jibrān, she bore two younger daughters, Mariāna and Sulṭāna. All the time their father was wasting a good deal of his tiny and uncertain income on drink. So it was in an atmosphere of distressing poverty and of bitter quarrels
between an intimidated mother and a drunken father that Jibrān spent his early life. His love for solititude manifested early in childhood.

Jibrān received his first education at home. His mother, who could spoke Arabic, French and English, was his first tutor. She acquainted Jibrān with the famous Arabian old tales of Harun al-Rashid, *The Arabian Nights* and the *Hunting Songs* of Abu Nuwās. She created in him interest to develop his artistic sense for painting. The circumstantial event caused Jibrān to develop an interest for writing and drawing.

To escape from the financial burden and to break through the apathetic poverty, the family migrated to the United States in 1895 and settled in Boston where other Lebanese and Syrian emigrants had comprised a colony in Chinatown. Jibrān was admitted there in the public school of the district where he spent two years. During the two years of learning, Jibrān recorded the highest scores from among his U.S. classmates. His teachers saw in him the precocity of his talent. But life in America with its emphasis on material progress brought forth a strong reaction on Jibrān.

In 1897, Jibrān returned to Lebanon to learn his native language and become acquainted with Arabian erudition. He got admitted at the eminent Madrasa al-Hikma (مدرسة الحكمة) “School of Wisdom” in Beirut, where he studied a great deal of subjects such as international law, medicine, music and the history of religion. During the period of 1898, he started the literary and philosophical magazine *al-Haqīqat* (الحقيقة) “The Truth” ², in collaboration with two classmates,
Yūsuf Ḥuwayik and Bishāra Khūrī. Jibrān was the editor, the chief contributor, and the artist who illustrated it with designs and drawings.

A fact of great significance about Jibrān’s career at al-Hikma is that he was not a full-time student working for a degree, but concentrated on Arabic and French, and on developing his talents as a writer. The Arabic syllabus at al-Hikma included selections from ancient literature of all periods and wide reading in the writers of the revival, with special emphasis on al-Shidyāq, Marrāsh and Ishāq. Jibrān’s literary talents drew the attention of his Arabic teacher, Yūsuf Ḥaddād, who assigned to him a special list of books, among them the Bible and Nahj al-Balāgha (نهج البلاغة).

Jibrān had no previous knowledge of French, but within two years, he could be able to gain direct knowledge of French literature. Even before this, he read those French works which were available in translation. In these formative years, Jibrān’s talent for intellectual leadership manifested. He undertook to make drawings of the great Arabian thinkers he had studied in classes. He made sketches of the early Islamic poets and philosophers such as al-Farid, Abu Nuwās, al-Mutanabbi, al-Khansa, Ibn Sina and Ibn Khaldun.

Jibrān spent his summer vacations in Bisharri. His father, a complete drunkard, had increased his bitterness and had neither respect for his son’s talents nor any consideration for his feelings. A few weeks after his father’s arrival, Jibrān left his father’s house and went to the home of one of his aunts. At this time Jibrān fell in love with a neighbor’s daughter, Ḥala al-Ḍāhir, two years older
than himself and distinguished by beauty and nobility of birth. It was his first romance with Ḥala al-Ḍāhir whom he immortalized in his novel *The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المتكسرة) under the name of Salma. Jibrān proposed to marry her but was rejected by the father of the girl because she belonged to an aristocratic family. This bitter experience made him resent all his life and he reacted with disappointment and rage against the unjust social system and its traditions.

In 1899 Jibrān returned to Boston. This time he did not go back to school. He did return to Lebanon in 1902 as guide and interpreter to an American family, and this may indicate that he was passing through a phase of nostalgia, or of desire for travel as a romantic adventure. In 1903, Jibrān received a telegram from his brother which informed him that his sister Sulṭāna had just died from tuberculosis and his mother was seriously ill. Soon he hurried back to Boston and found his mother in hospital suffering from tuberculosis. In March of the same year Jibrān’s beloved half-brother died from the same plague, and three months later his mother died in hospital.

During these tragic years, Jibrān’s state of mind seems to be reflected in his early works, *Damʿa wa Ibitsāma* (دمعة و ابتسامة) “A Tear and a Smile” the collection of prose-poems which began to appear in different magazines in 1904, and *‘Arāʾis al-Murūj* (عرائس المروج) “Brides of the Valley” which appeared in book form in 1906. In these works we find Jibrān’s belief in sorrow and suffering as a means of purification in the divinity of man and in a world of dreams as an escape from the grim realities of life.
The death of his sister Sulțana shattered his belief and drove him to anguish. He exclaimed:

"My God died with Sulțana. How can I live without God?"\(^{16}\)

The loss of his mother was also depressing on his morale for he loved her immensely. The lines that he dedicated to motherhood in *The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المُكسرة) were inspired by his mother love:

"*The most beautiful word on the lips of mankind is the word 'Mother', and the most beautiful call is the call of 'My mother'.* It is a word coming from the depths of the heart. *The mother is everything – she is our consolation in sorrow, our hope in misery, and our strength in weakness. She is the source of love, mercy, sympathy, and forgiveness. He who loses his mother loses a pure soul who blesses and guards him constantly."\(^{17}\)

The misery of death left Jibrān alone with his sister Mariāna and he all by himself had to take care of her. The calamities left deep traces of sadness on Jibrān’s soul. Around this time Jibrān concentrated on painting, designing book covers and writing. He had a great capacity for work, besides his undeniable inborn qualities. In 1904 Jibrān held an exhibition of his collected paintings at the studio of Fred Holland Day, a renowned photographer. It seems unlikely that it had any marked consequences beyond bringing him into contact with Marry Haskell, a principal of a school, to whom Jibrān’s paintings appealed so much to her sense of beauty and mysticism. She became his first benefactress and lifelong friend. Mikhā’il Nua’ima describes her as slim, tall, graceful and unassuming.\(^{8}\)
His description of her appearance and his estimate of her age are confirmed by a photograph and a portrait by Jibrān, both now in his museum, which shows her as an old maid of middle age. Mary Haskell offered him the opportunity to display his paintings in her institution. It was she who financed him to study painting in Paris. In a letter he wrote to his friend, Amin Ghurayib, he personified Miss Haskell as a she-angel:

"who is ushering me towards a splendid future and paving for me the path to intellectual and financial success".

In 1904, Jibrān held an exhibition at Mary Haskell’s school where he met a young, beautiful and self-confident French woman named Emile Michel, nicknamed Michelin who taught French in Haskell’s school. Nu‘aima describes her as having good deal of beauty, charm, and physical attraction. She was young, impulsive and emotional. Jibrān himself never mentioned her to any of his friends, but we may infer their intimate relationship from the fact that he painted her portrait and also kept a photograph of her.

Jibrān expresses his belief in pre-ordained love. He thinks his relationship with Haskell and Michelin, destined to be so from all eternity. Jibrān says to Michelin:

"I knew you before your mother gave you birth... Never did life separate us except to bring us together again", and to Mary: "Do not say chance ... Life knows no chance ... Your life and mine are two threads in that eternal tissue, now running together, now moving apart, but always connected".
Jibrān’s life in general during this period, as reflected in his letters, was that of a dedicated young writer and artist who spent the day drawing and most of the night writing, enveloped in a mist of dreams and thoughts and a cloud of tobacco smoke, mingled with the scent of Turkish coffee. His ambition was great, as was his confidence in his power to realize it. We can also tell from these letters that he did very little outside his work, for he rarely writes of events, but almost always of his thoughts and aspirations.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1908 he published the book, \textit{al-Arūdh al-Mutamarrida} (الأرواح المتمردة) and was working on \textit{al-Ajnihat al-Mutakassira} (الأجنحة المتكشرة), and \textit{Falsafat al-Dīn wal-tada'yun} (فلسفة الدين والتدعون) which was never finished or published. In the same year he went to Paris, the “City of Arts” and the “Heart of the World”.\textsuperscript{15} There he met many artists, poets and writers from all over the world. He met again his old class-mate from \textit{al-Hikma} (الحكمة), Mr. Yūsuf Ḥuwayik, and the two became constant companions. Jibrān entered the Academic Lucien, where he worked under the supervision of Maitre Lawrence, but a few months later he expressed his hatred against the art of Maitre Lawrence and wanted to work independently to his own taste. Subsequently the two friends decided to take a studio of their own and share the expense of hiring a model.

Jibrān did not make much progress in the technique of drawing, however, for he found painting of less interest than literature. He took painting as a means of illustrating and expressing his ideas.
Jibrān had a strong tie of friendship with the distinguished sculptor Auguste Rodin, under whom he studied. Rodin found the great resemblance in writing, painting and biography between Jibrān and William Blake and one day he made a comment on Jibrān that he was the William Blake of the Twentieth Century.

During this period, it seems that Jibrān began to develop his personality, to practice self-advertisement and to create a legend around his name. At this time he was revising the autobiographical narrative in Arabic al-Ajnihat al-Mutakassira (الأنجحات المتكررة), which did not appear until 1912.

In 1910 Jibrān returned to Boston again. After his return, he began to suffer from pain of guilt. The favors Mary Haskell did on him had become a burden of responsibility on his shoulder. Finding no other way to repay back in gratitude, Jibrān proposed to Mary Haskell to marry her, though the idea in his mind was contemptible. But, Miss Haskell, understanding his state of mind, made clear that she preferred his friendship to bond of marriage.

In return of the moral and financial support he got from Miss Haskell, Jibrān dedicated to her memory many of his writings, such as The Broken Wings, the poem “The Beauty of Death” in A Tear and a Smile etc.
At this time, he must have been seeking a way of earning his living as he could not remain dependent on Miss Haskell’s subsidy forever. His book in Arabic won him fame but no money, and his art not yet recognized, could not provide a source of income. He therefore began to paint the portraits of people who were willing to pay for them. To be sure of success in this, he seems to have thought it advisable first to draw the portraits of some of the great men of his age, not for money, but for advertisement. He painted the portraits of many distinguished persons in Paris, such as Rodin, Debussy, Maeterlinck and many others.

In 1912, Jibrān moved to New York, where he settled down till the end of his life, at No.51 West Tenth Street, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues and on the outskirts of Greenwich Village proper. In the same year he published the autobiographical narrative al-Ajnihat al-Mutakassira (الأجنحة المنكسرة) which was the story of his first love in Lebanon.

Before and after the First World War, Jibrān’s reputation began to increase in gradual process. He held many exhibitions in various galleries of the east coast. On the other hand he produced a vast literature almost in all its genres such as short essays, novels, poems, stories and so on. Finally, Jibrān’s fame spread both in the Middle East and in the United States after the publication of The Prophet in 1923.

In the same year of his returning to New York, Jibrān fell in love with a female writer May Ziādeh, a Lebanese of origin, lived in Egypt. May’s home was
meeting place of the Egyptian intelligentsia where often Jibrān’s publications were subjects of philosophical conversation. May introduced herself to Jibrān writing him a letter of admiration. Jibrān fell in love even though he never met her except by correspondence. Their relationship was revealed through some letters published by May after Jibrān’s death. When The Broken Wings first appeared in Arabic, Jibrān presented May Ziādeh with a copy of his novel and asked her to comment on his thoughts expressed on marriage and love. Her reply on May 12, 1912, did not totally approve of Jibrān’s philosophy of love. On the contrary, she remained in all her correspondence quite critical of a few of Jibrān’s Westernized ideas. Nevertheless, he had a strong emotional attachment to May Ziādeh till his death. In 1928, a few years before his death he wrote her:

.... “I wish I were sick in Egypt or in my country so I might be close the ones I love. Do you know, May, that every morning and every evening I find myself in a home in Cairo with you sitting before me reading the last article I wrote or the one you wrote which has not yet been published.”19

Turning to the world situation, Jibrān’s new outlook, first expressed in al-Mawākib (المواكب), which appeared in 1918, coincided with the proclamation of peace. Perhaps the relief from the long strain and anxiety had a deep effect on him. At this time he began to address a new public, for although he never completely gave up writing in Arabic, his major works after 1918 were almost all in English.
In New York, Jibrān met several emigrant writers from Lebanon. Early in his student life at al-Ḥikma (الحكمة) Jibrān had shown a capacity and a taste for intellectual leadership and he devoted his entire life to art and literature. The Arab writers in America who met him must have seen in him the qualities of what a man of letters should be and one after another was attracted by his reputation. One of them, ‘Abd al-Masiḥ Ḥaddād, when asked what impression Jibrān made on him at their first meeting in 1910, replied:

‘It was like the awakening of spring in a barren ... land ... and what I felt towards Jibrān was felt by all members of the Pen Society. That is why we decided after Jibrān’s death that we would not elect another Chieftain. That sacred flame whose light guided us on the shores of the Hudson shall guide us still until Death wraps us in his Cloak’.20

The other writers who were similarly drawn into his orbit were Mikhā’il Nu‘aima, Nasib ‘Ariḍa, Rashid Ayyūb, Nadra Ḥaddād and Iliya Abu Mādi. In 1920 the writers organized themselves into a literary society, which they named al-Rābiṭa al-Qalamiyya (الرابطة القلمية). Jibrān was elected president and Mikhā’il Nu‘aima became secretary. The purpose of ‘The Pen Association’ was to make Arabic literature free from its traditional shackles.

He published a book of Twenty Drawings in 1919 and The Forerunner (السابق) in 1920. During the next three years or so he was working on his masterpiece The Prophet.
Jibrān had never been physically strong, but his health was good enough to endure hard work and many responsibilities until 1921. His health suddenly began to fail. He felt such severe palpitations in his heart that at times he would almost choke, and be hardly able to climb the stairs of his studio. Yet he did not change his habits and did not allow his heart to rest.

Another woman came to his life in 1923. It was Mrs. Barbara Young who after listening to the reading of an excerpt of The Prophet in the Church St. Mark’s in New York, decided to let Jibrān know about her admiration for him. In his reply he invited her to visit him in his studio. From there on Mrs. Barbara kept on going to his studio. While Jibrān was still alive, she would go to some distant city, lecturing on Jibrān’s thoughts and paintings. In her biography of Jibrān she repeatedly defined her relation as ‘friendship’. In 1944 she published the now famous biography This Man from Lebanon, in which she described the personality of Jibrān she knew during his last seven years.

Jibrān continued to write as industriously as before. The pain of his illness could not paralyze his hand. In 1926 Sand and Foam (رمل و زيد) appeared, Jesus the Son of Man (بيسوع ابن الإنسان) in 1928, and The Earth Gods (اللهة الأرض) in 1931, two weeks before his death; The Wanderer (التناثر) was also ready for print. He left The Garden of the Prophet (حديقة النبي) unfinished, which was completed by Mrs. Young and appeared posthumously in 1933. Five days before his death he said to Mrs. Young, “I have the disease of work”.
Khalil Jibrān died at 11 O’clock in the evening on Friday, April the 10th, 1931. Jibrān was not buried in America but his remains were taken, to meet his wish, to Lebanon and laid down in the old deserted monastery of Mar-Sarkis in Wadi Kadisha. Here in the following pages the literary contribution of Jibrān will be dealt in details.
B. Literary Contributions of Jibrān:

Before going to discuss the contribution of Jibrān, a chronology of his works has been shown:

1. *Al-Mūsīqā* .................................................. 1905
2. *The Brides of the Valley* (عرائس المروج) ...................................... 1906
3. *Spirits Rebellious* (الأرواح المتمردة) ..................................... 1908
4. *The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المتكررة) .......................................... 1912
5. *A Tear and a Smile* (دمعة و ابتسامة) ........................................ 1914
6. *The Madman* (المجنون) ....................................................... 1918
7. *The Processions* (المواكب) ..................................................... 1918
8. *The Tempests* (العواصف) .................................................... 1920
9. *The Forerunner* (السابق) .................................................... 1920
10. *Iram Dhāt al-‘Imād* (أرام ذات اليمام) ........................................ 1921
11. *The Prophet* (النبي) .......................................................... 1923
12. *Sand and Foam* (رمل و زبد) ............................................... 1926
13. *Jesus the Son of Man* (يسوع ابن الإنسان) ................................ 1928
15. *The Wanderer* (الثالثة) ....................................................... 1932
16. *The Garden of the Prophet* (حديقة النبي) .................................. 1933
17. *Secrets of the Heart* .............................................................. 1947
18. *The Nymphs of the Valley* ..................................................... 1948
19. *The Voice of the Master* .......................................................... 1959
The table mentioned above shows his Arabic work as well as his English work.

Though Jibrān played a crucial role in the lives of “The Pen Association” (الرابطة القلمية) poets in North America and the intellectual leadership he exerted on the members of “The Pen Association” (الرابطة القلمية), yet his fame as an outstanding writer of Arabic and English came to be recognized only after his death. He is probably the most widely known Arab author outside the Arab world but his fame spread all over the world after the publication of his masterpiece *The Prophet* (النبي) written in English, which has been translated in more than twenty languages of the world. He had made significant contribution to literature in the Arab world for his works written originally in Arabic. In the early prose works he provided the themes and ideas to the members of “The Pen Association” (الرابطة القلمية) and thus he became a source of inspiration to them in later years. He was the single most important influence on Arabic poetry and literature during the first half of twentieth century. Perhaps without him, the story of modern Arabic poetry would have been quite different.
Jibrān’s works may be grouped under the following headings:

1. Short Stories:
   (i) *Brides of the Valley* (عرائس المروج)
   (ii) *Spirits Rebellious* (الأرواح المتمردة)
   (iii) *The Wanderer* (التائه)
   (iv) *Secrets of the Heart*

2. Novels:
   (i) *The Prophet* (النبي)
   (ii) *The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المنكسرة)

3. Prose Poems:
   (i) *A Tear and a Smile* (دمعة و ابتسامة)
   (ii) *The Procession* (المواكب)

4. Poems and Parables:
   (i) *The Madman* (المجنون)
   (ii) *The Forerunner* (السابق)

5. Play:
   (i) *Irām, City of Lofty Pillars* (إرم ذات أعمدات)
Since the space does not allow to deal with all the works of Jibrān and hence here an attempt has been made to discuss elaborately on the following works of Jibrān:

1. *The Prophet* (النبي)

2. *Brides of the Valley* (عرايس المروج)

3. *The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المتكسرة)

4. *The Procession* (المواكب)

1. *The Prophet* (النبي):

*The Prophet* (النبي), Jibrān’s masterpiece, was published in 1923 which had been translated in more than twenty languages of the world. Jibrān had long mediated on it and rewrote it three times before it was finally published. It brought him great fame and in the minds of his public both in America and elsewhere he was identified with the ideal character of his creation. Jibrān’s philosophy build on love, reached its climax in *The Prophet* (النبي).
The book did not express his total view of life, only dealing with the relation of man to man, as it was intended to be the first of a trilogy dealing also with the relation of man to nature and to God.24

*The Prophet*, who is called al-Muṣṭafa, one of the titles of Muḥammad, is like both the latter and the prophets of Israel in his claim that he is not speaking but spoken to and used as a mouthpiece. On one occasion al-Muṣṭafa says to his audiences: “Was it I who spoke? Was I not also a listener?”

قال المصطفى: "و هل كنت أنا الذي أتحدث أم أكن أنا أيضا مستمعا؟"

The people ask questions on the aspects of life such as love (الحب), marriage (الزواج), children (الأطفال), giving (العطاء), eating and drinking (المأكل و المشرب), work (العمل), joy and sorrow (الفرح و الحزن), houses (البيوت), clothes (اللباس), buying and selling (البيع و الشراء), crime and punishment (الjni की श्रेष्ठता), Laws (القوانين), freedom (الحرية), reason and passion (العقل و العاطفة), pain (الألم), self-knowledge (معرفة النفس), teaching (التعليم), friendship (الصداقة), talking (الكلام), time (الزمن), good and evil (الخير و الشرر), prayer (الصلاة), pleasure (المتعة), beauty (الجمال), religion (الدين), and death (الموت) and al-Muṣṭafa answers them all with sermons. All the sermons of the Prophet move round one dimension of human reality i.e., the authentic social relations.

Jibrān’s belief in the prophet’s role as a distributor of social wisdom and a deliverer is like theirs. His life is really an allegory which explains the mystical, pantheistic view of life and death.
Al-Muṣṭafa, a stranger in the city of Orphalese, had been waiting there for twelve years “for his ship to return and bear him back to the isle of his birth”.

From the top of the hill he sees his ship returning through the mist “and his joy flew far over the sea”\(^{27}\), yet while he is descending the hill sadness comes upon him, for he is leaving the people who have loved him. Still he is ready to go; he looks at the vast sea and calls it “sleeping mothers who alone are peace and freedom to the river,”\(^{28}\) and sees himself as a stream flowing round the last bend before it reaches the ocean. Then he goes down to the city.

When he enters into the city all the people come to him and request him not to be separated from them, but he is to go. He proceeds with them towards the great square in front of the temple. A seeress named Almitra comes out of the temple and al-Muṣṭafa looks at her with great tenderness, for it was she who had first sought him out and believed in him. She says to him:

“Tell us all that has been shown you of that which is between birth and death”.\(^{29}\) After that she asks him to speak of love.

In Jibrani philosophy, love occupies the most important place. In Jibrân’s doctrine, love is the core of human life and the divine supreme law that should guide us and sustain natural law. In his opinion the true essence of
existence is “love”. Love is the very essence of nature, man, and the historical events. The world is guided by the principle of love.

The Prophet teaches that distance and the lapse of time increase love. By being far away from the beloved, the lover learns more to appreciate his partner, and ceases to take him or her for granted. The Prophet says, “Love knows not its own depth until the hour of separation.”

For a person to know if he is really in love, he should try for a while the bitter test of separation. The prophet speaks wisely:

“Who among you does not feel that his power to love is boundless? ... And is not time even as love is, undivided and paceless?”

Jibrān develops his theory of love for the departed souls. In his opinion, death does not separate the lover from the beloved. For Jibrān love proves philosophically the immortality of the soul. Love makes us develop a universal consciousness. The wisdom of the prophet as revealed in his sermons, is the belief in the Greater Self. It is this ‘universal love’, related unrestrictedly to the whole of Being, that binds the individual to accept with resignation the sufferings, ridicules and rejections that his enemies inflict upon him. After all, love is not rosy, its ways “are hard and steep”.

“For even a love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is he for your pruning.”
In Jibrān’s opinion, to love is to be willing to undergo self-sacrifices. The responsibility that accompanies love will sometimes cause you headaches and verily love is the tears of painful joy. Once again the Prophet al-Mustafa says:

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 would you.
And when he speaks to you believe in him,
Though his voice may shatter your dreams
As the north wind lays waste the garden.

Jibrān says that love lessens the yoke of freedom and responsibility. He even sees love giving more freedom than limiting the self.

“And thus your freedom when it loses its fetters becomes itself the fetter of a greater freedom.”
Jibrān is not advocating an absolute freedom of doing. He know that man extremely limited in his physical actions. The only type of freedom he accepts is in thinking.

Jibrān advocates the kind of 'giving' other than the material goods. The Prophet, al-Muṣṭafa preaches that giving of oneself is a far more superior type than the giving of possessions. In respect of giving he says:

"You give but little when you give of your possessions.
It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."

In the Prophet's opinion, it is easy to give of one's overabundant wealth, yet, the truly meritorious act is that of making oneself available to others.

Furthermore, Jibrān estimates that pleasure is only at best a by-product, because itself it lacks the depth and the height of a concrete goal. The Prophet says:

Pleasure is a freedom, song,
But it is not freedom ..... 
It is depth calling unto a height.
But it is not the deep nor the high. 
It is the caged taking wing,
But it is not space encompassed.
As regards good and evil, Jibrān denies that there is any evil in human actions, or that man is capable of evil for evil. Evil is never apprehended for, in and through itself. He maintains that evil is but a desire invested with the features of good. The Prophet says:

Of the good in you I can speak, but not of the evil.

For what is evil but good tortured by its own hunger and thirst? ...

You are good in countless ways, and you are not evil when you are not good,

You are only loitering and sluggard.

Jibrān illustrates how love works in the intimate relationships of marriage, parenthood and friendship. He describes marriage as the union of two bodies with one soul, or two souls in one body. The success of good
marriage lies in the practice of mutual respect and in the ability to help each other. The prophet in respect of marriage says:

Love one another, but make not a bond of love:

Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.

Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,

Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

And stand together yet not too near together:

For the pillars of the temple stand apart,

And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

\[
\text{ليحب أحد كما الآخر ، وللناتجلا من الحب قيدا:}
\]

\[
\text{بل اجعلاه بحرا متفقا بين شواطيئ رواحكم.}
\]

\[
\text{و ليملا أحد كما كأس رفيقه ، وحذار أن تشربا من كأس واحدة.}
\]

\[
\text{غنبنا وارقصنا وامرحا معا ، و لكن لبخل كل إلى شأنه ،}
\]

\[
\text{فإن أوتر القيدية مشدودة على افتراف. و إن خفقت جميعا بلحن واحد.}
\]

\[
\text{و لنتهجنا مما سكين ، ولا تتلاصقا:}
\]

\[
\text{فإن أعدمة المعبد على انفصال تقوم ،}
\]
In respect of children, Jibrân advises the parents to express their love in self-sacrifice, and not to be oppressive. In this regard the Prophet says:

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

قد تحبونهم حبكم و لكن دون أفكاركم  ٣٩
فلم أفكارهم. و لقد تأوون أجسادهم لا أرواحهم،
فأرواحهم تسكن في دار الغد، و هيهات أن تلموا به و لوفي خطرات أحلامكم. ٤٠

Further, on friendship, Jibrân thinks that a true friend is one to whom you may go when you are sad, in joy or I need without preconditions to repay him back. On friendship the Prophet says:

Your friend is your needs answered.
He is your filed which you sow with love
and reap with thanksgiving.

.... you come to him with your hunger,
and you seek him for peace.

....

And let there be no purpose in friendship save
the deepening of the spirit.

At the end Prophet’s farewell words again invoke the image of the stream coming down to the sea, thus giving his departure the meaning of death. But he promises to come back again, for to him death is "a moment of rest upon the wind", after which his "longing shall gather dust and foam for another body" and another woman shall bear him. Further, he said: "Life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one".

The basis and essence of the wisdom of the Prophet, as revealed in his sermons is the belief in the Greater Self. It is not the personal God of the ancient prophets, or the Angel of God. In his solitude he was a hunter, and tells the people: "I hunted only your larger selves that walk the sky."
All these selves will finally come to realize that they are one when they are fulfilled in perfection: “Like a procession you walk together towards your godself.”

Jibrān considers ‘love’ the chief virtue, for without it the individual cannot expand his self into a greater self which includes all humanity.

The Prophet’s expression are like a song of praise of man and life. He is a vision of pure light which sees nothing but the good in man and life.

*The Prophet* (النبي) is purely and simply an expression of healthy minded optimism. He attained in *The Prophet* to an optimistic vision of life in which his personal efforts count for more than the influence of popular currents of thought upon him. In the Prophet Jibrān specifically condemns civilized life during and after bestowing blessings on life. Jibrān has attained his zenith among the international scholars with the publication of *The Prophet* (النبي).

Out of all works of Jibrān, *The Prophet* (النبي) is the most famous and probably the most profound as well. He dives deep in the ocean of life and surfaces with timeless pearls of wisdom on all matters of importance, be it love, friendship, marriage, children, life or death etc. His language is amazingly simple, yet extremely forceful and direct. One will be simply thrilled by his discourses. Jibrān has attained his zenith among the international scholars with the publication of *The Prophet* (النبي).
2. *Brides of the Valley* (عرائس المروج):

‘Arā′is al-Murūj (عرائس المروج) is Jibrān’s one of the first good collections of Arabic short stories which was published in America as early as 1906. It contains three stories, such as *John the Madman* (بوحنا المجنون), *Martā al-Bāniyya* (مرتا البانية) and *Dust of the Ages and the Eternal Fire* (رماد الأجيال و النار الخالدة). The themes of these stories are related to life and social problems in Lebanon.

Jibrān portrays the true picture of the political corruption of the church in the short story *John the Madman* (بوحنا المجنون). It is the story of a shepherd boy who passed his time between the fields, which were full of beauty and wonder, and the book of Jesus, full of light and the living spirit.

When reading the Gospel, he had to be careful that his father should not see him, because he had been forbidden it. This was “because the priests did not allow the simple in mind to probe the secrets the teachings of Jesus. If they did so, then the church would excommunicate them.”

After each visit to the church John returned home with a depressed spirit, because the teachings of the priests were different from the percepts he found in the Gospel and the life of the faithful was not the beautiful life of which Jesus spoke. At home and among his companions John remained silent; absorbed in thought and the contemplation of nature.

The conflict in his mind between the teaching of Jesus and those of the priests was brought into the light when he came into direct conflict with the monks of the wealthy monastery of Elisha in North Lebanon. When he deep in
thoughts of Jesus and of nature “the while Yuhanna suffered with the God-man in agony of body and was exalted with Him in spirit.”  

When he rose from his place, he found that the oxen he set free had strayed into the pastures of the wealthy monastery. John was imprisoned because his oxen had devastated the plantations of the convent and consequently was forced by the priests to repay the damage. John entreats the monks and their superior to forgive him in the name of Jesus, but they twist the teachings of Christ to justify treating John with a cruelty and hypocrisy, while he seems to imitate Christ, fighting them with the teachings of the Gospel.

John ends his reading the sermon of Jesus on charity and forgiveness by accusing the monks exploiting the poor. He was not released until his parent handed over to them some amount of wealth as compensation and his parents witnessed John in front of the people that he was mad.

John again tries to challenge the authority of the priests and arouse the people against them by a long sermon on true Christianity and the rights of man. In a strong voice John cried:

“Behold thou, O Jesus, who sittest within the circle of light on high. . . . .

Look O good Shepherd, for the weak lamb Thou didst carry on Thy shoulder is torn to pieces by wild beasts. . . . . those who set upon thrones in Thy name heed not their cries. Neither is the weeping of the bereaved heard by those who preach
Thy words from pulpits. .... Come then, O Jesus, a second time, and drive out from the temple those who trade in religion."51

Although most of the people were moved by what he said, but some did not like to listen because they had never heard such things from their fathers and forefathers. On the other hand some believed that he was possessed by an evil spirit.

The monks seized John and handed over to the police. They took him to the Governor’s palace for trial. When interrogated, he did not utter a single word, "for he remembered that Jesus too was silent before his persecutors."53 So John was again imprisoned, and then released.

The news of his madness became wide spread and he became more alienated from people and absorbed in nature. In his loneliness he pities his people, and weeps over their fate.

Jibrān represents him as imitating Christ. John alone fights against the authority of the Maronite Church. Jibrān represents John as the God of love, forgiveness, kindness, and compassion, and John is detached from every political favoritism. Jibrān portrays John the Shepherd boy in a highly idealized, romantic manner, and the rural scenes serve as a celebration of the rustic idyll.

Another most moving narrative in ‘Arā‘is al-Murūj (عُرَائِش المُروْج) is Martā al-Bāniyya (مرتاة البدنية), related to the life and social problems in Lebanon. Jibrān
describes the plight of sixteen years old innocent poor orphan girl, Martha who disappears from her native village of Bān in the North Lebanon.

Martha was brought up in the village way of life, which is full of innocence and purity. She is deceived and reduced by a rich man from the town. After he had satisfied himself of her body he went away leaving her in pregnant and she was compelled to sell her body to buy food for herself and her child.

In the autumn of 1900, the author heard of this story from the child, who was selling flowers in the street of Beirut. He asked the child to take him to his mother, who was on her death bed. The author consoled her with a humanitarian sermon of Jesus, so that she might die in peace. He said:

"Ay Martha, you are a flower crushed beneath the feet of the animal that is concealed in human being. . . . Take comfort, Martha, in that you are the flower crushed and not the foot that has crushed it."

She listened to what the author said and her face lighted up with solace. The author wanted to know from her hidden secret of her sad spirit. After moving a silence she said:

"Yes, I am oppressed. I am the prey to the animal in men. I am a flower trodden under foot ... O Justice who are hidden, concealed behind these terrifying images, you, and you alone, hear the cry of my neglected heart."
Jibrān portrays Martha's sad fate in a beautiful manner and exhibits his humane feelings imitating Jesus. He beautifully depicts the true picture of the exploitation prevailed in the then North Lebanon and the streets of Beirut.

3. The Broken Wings (الأجنحة المتكسرة):

*The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المتكسرة), an autobiographical narrative in Arabic published in 1912, is the story of Jibrān’s first love in Lebanon. In a letter he wrote to his friend, Amin Ghurayib “This book is the best one I have ever written.”

It tells the story of a woman tied by marriage to a man whom she cannot love because her whole being belongs to her true lover who happens to be a young, poor man, full of dreams and beliefs, with sad, contemplative eyes and an eloquent tongue.

The story that Jibrān narrates is the story of his first love when he was a young student at al-Hikma. Salma Karāmi, the young girl with whom he was in love, was the only daughter of Faris Karāmi, a wealthy man who lived in the outskirts of Beirut. There was love between the two at first sight, so strong that they thought of themselves as one.

One day Fāris Karāmi invited Jibrān to dinner at his home. When they finished their dinner, Fāris Karāmi was summoned by the town Bishop Bulus Ghālib, not to discuss the problems of the poor or the widows and orphans, but to ask the hand of his daughter for his nephew Manṣūr Bey Ghālib. In Lebanon, no man could oppose and disobey his religious head. Fāris Karāmi was forced to
resign himself to obeying. Thus Manṣūr Bey Ghālib and Salma were married against the wills of the girl and her father. The nephew, Manṣūr Bey was an irresponsible man and the uncle bishop was most avid to inherit the wealth of Salma’s father.

After marrying Salma, he neglected her and her father and prayed for his death so that he could inherit the old man’s wealth.

For the last time before her wedding, Jibrān promises to love her eternally.

Salma likens her love for him to a mother’s love of her only child.

Jibrān and Salma were confident in the certainty that their love was pure, spiritual and innocent. They continued to meet secretly in a temple of Christ, where Salma dedicated her life to the God of suffering. The sisterly emotion does not prevent Salma, after her marriage, from embracing Jibrān. Jibrān says:

“She took in my neck with her smooth arm and kissed my lips a long. Deep and burning kiss which awakened life in my body.”
There are plenty of pathetic scenes in the narrative. To her tragic life is added the sorrow of not having any child. In a scene Jibrān beautifully describes Salma’s sorrow in the following manner. He says:

“I saw that those eyelids which were, a few days ago, smiling like lips and moving like the wings of a lark have sunk deep, have hardened and have darkened with the shades of suffering and pain.”

Her husband wanted to have a child to carry on his name and reputation which made him hate Salma in spite of her beauty and sweetness. Finally, Salma bears a child but dies after its birth and Salma also died on the same night.

Lastly, her funeral, which Jibrān attends, standing alone with none to console him as if Salma and her child meant nothing to him. Jibrān then describes how he drops down on Salma’s grave and weeps inconsolably for her.

The narrative is full of observations, comments and speculations. In this narrative Jibrān puts some observation about Nature which throws light on his beliefs regarding the relation between Nature and the individual. To him nature is a living being is always evident. Nature is the mother of all living beings, which owe obedience to her.
To Jibrān Nature is many things, and among them is the pervading spirit of love which is manifested in all natural things. In expressing this he used the imagery of erotic and maternal love, especially the image of embracing.

The imagery of maternal love is applied to nature in *The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المنكسرة). In respect of the maternal love of Nature, Jibrān says:

"Everything in nature bespeaks the mother. The sun is the mother of the earth. And this earth is the mother of the trees and flowers . . . And the mother of all things in existence is the eternal, universal soul which is full of love and beauty."

*The Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المنكسرة) is written in beautiful prose which dwells more on the picturesque than the narrative aspect. It is a series of fleeting gestures rather than explanations. The style is simple, spontaneous and almost lyrical, with concise expressions and graceful metaphors.

In 1918, Jibrān published *al-Mawākib* (المواكب), a long poem of over two hundred lines ever written by him in rhyme and metre. In this philosophical dialogue Jibrān tries to analyze human society, its laws, rules and customs. In society Jibrān observes a general falsehood of living that leads the people from the truth, elating some persons, humiliating others.

It consists of two voices, each following its own metre. The first voice in the metre *al-basīt*, is of an old man who has seen the twists and turns of life. The second in *majzu‘ al-ramal*, is of an innocent youth who seems to represent nature and is simple and pure unlike the philosopher sage. It proceeds from stanza to stanza in the form of a dialogue. It communicates a dialogue between a *Youth* full of vigor, an optimist, a believer in the native goodness of man and worshipper of nature where he dwells, and an aged *Sage* who lives in the city and suffers through man-made laws, traditions, inheritances and corruptions.

*Youth* and *Sage* discuss freely their respective experiences about life. The two argue about subjects like good and evil, knowledge and freedom, cruelty, death and eternity. *Sage* comments that nothing but evil and misery are created in the city by human society, while youth insists that only by leading a life close to the heart of Nature can one find true pleasure and contentment. The only law to which the youth abides is that of Nature.

*Sage*:

Justice on earth would cause the Jinn.
To cry at misuse of the word,
And were the dead to witness it,
They'd mock at fairness in this world.
Yes, death and prison we mete out
To small offenders of laws,
While honor, wealth, and full respect,
On greater pirates we bestow . . . .

Youth:

In Nature there is no justice
Nor is there a punishment.
When the willows cast their shadow
O'er the ground without consent,
No one hears the cypress saying,
'This act is versus law and right!'
Like the snow, our Human Justice
Melts from shame in warm sunlight!
Give me the flute and let me sing,
For the song is justice of the souls. 70
The world of the *Sage* is full of all kinds of dualism. His wisdom takes the
dualism of good and evil, spirit and body, as a standard, the result of long
experience of society. The *Youth* on the other hand believes in the oneness of
spirit and body. He symbolizes innocence unspoiled by any of the amoral tricks
of the social laws.

Jibrān recommends a return to nature where simplicity is supreme. Lastly
the *Sage* avows that if youth was granted to him, he would choose to run wild
and free in nature.

*Sage:*

The good in man should free flow,

As evil lives beyond the grave;

While time with fingers moves the pawns

Awhile then breaks the knight and knave.

Say not, “There goes a learned man”

Nor, “There a chieftain in dignified”

The best of man are in the herd.

And heed the shepherd as their guide.

*Youth:*

In the forest no one shepherds,
Nor the flocks are called apart,
Spring and Winter are not rivals,
Each in season plays its part.
Give to me the reed and sing thou!
For the song shepherds the mind
And the reed’s plaint is more lasting
Than the ranks of humankind.

From this argument between *Youth* and *Sage*, Jibrān’s approaches to life, death, and religion are revealed. Jibrān endeavors to focus attention upon a
simple formula for better life. He urges the people to unchain themselves from the clattering shackles of society and avail themselves as far as possible, of the natural freedom and tranquility of rural existence.

In *al-Mawākib* (المواكب), Jibrān experiments in form where he uses two metres and rejects the strict continuity of the *qaṣīda* (قصيدة) and its pattern of monorhyme.

Besides the above mentioned works which have been dealt elaborately, here mention may be made of the rest of Jibrān’s works briefly. They are as follows:

*Al-Mūsīqa* (الموسيقى):

*Al-Mūsīqa* (الموسيقى), an essay on music, was the first work of Jibrān which was published in book form in New York in 1905. His treatment on the subject alternates between rhapsodic speculations about the mysterious effects not only of music proper but also of the uttered and half uttered words of love. He ends with two incantations, songs in praise of music and musicians.

*Spirits Rebellious* (الأرواح المتمردة):

In the next collection of short stories, *al-Arwāh al-Mutamarrida* (الأرواح المتمردة), Jibrān rails against civilized society and its systems of laws which so often become instruments of injustice and oppression rather than the guarantee of individual rights and liberties *Khalil al-Kāfīr* (خليل الكافير) is the story of a shepherd
in a monastery. He is depicted as imitating Jesus and as a primitive man. He was strong enough to rebel against both religious and political authority.

Khalil, an orphan of seven, was taken by the village priest to the wealthiest monastery in Lebanon, Deir Kizhaya. There he worked as a cowherd. At the age of fifteen he was asked to take the vow of poverty, virtue and obedience, without understanding its meaning or significance. He had to eat dry vegetables and water, while the monks ate palatable foods and drank the finest wine. He had to sleep on a stone slab in a dark and cold room by the shed, while they lived in luxury from the charity they extracted from the poor.

Through long meditations in the fields on the teachings of Jesus, he became conscious that the monks and priests were violating the teachings of the Book which made them monks and priests. One day, being intoxicated with the heavenly wine of these teachings, Khalil stood bravely before the monks and criticized their wrong deeds. For this he was whipped and imprisoned in a dark cell for forty days.

After coming out of the prison he repeated his exhortation to the monks, and this time he was driven out of the monastery on a stormy night. He reached the borders of the village of Shaykh ‘Abbās, where he cried out for help and fell down in the snow. A widow, Rāhil, and her daughter Maryam rescued him and gave him shelter.

Father Ilyās, the village priest informed Shaykh ‘Abbās, the governor of the village that the head priest had expelled rebellious young man from the
monastery of Kizhaya, who had taken refuge at the house of Rāḥil, and told him that this stranger might pollute the obedient faithful with rebellion and heresy if he was not sent away.

Shaykh ‘Abbās sends his servants for Khalil in the night, to be judged as a criminal by himself and Father Ilyās. The residence of Shaykh Abbās was crowded with the villagers who were waiting curiously, but Khalil managed to draw the support and sympathy when Shaykh ‘Abbās asked him, “Who are your father and mother and relatives, and where were you born?” and he answered, looking at the people, “The oppressed poor are my clan and my relatives, and this vast country is my birthplace.” Uttering a long sermon on tyranny and obedience, religion as distinct from priest craft, and the rights of men and citizens, he managed to awaken the people to their rights and stir up in them willingness to revolt against the Governor and the priest, especially by saying, “I select you now as my jury, because the will of the people is the will of God.” The villagers stood firm behind Khalil and prevented Shaykh ‘Abbās from punishing him.

The political and clerical power having been defeated, Khalil left the place, followed by the crowd. When they reached the church-yard, the moon was just rising, Khalil looked at them with love and in that moment they became the symbol of all oppressed peoples for him. Moved by the sight, “he stood like a prophet listening to the cries of the ages,” and like the roar of the ocean he uttered a long hymn of prayer raising hands toward the heaven, which expresses
the sufferings of the whole Arab people from the Nile to the Euphrates through ages of oppression, and then he gives particular attention to the sorrowful history of Lebanon and Syria.

Khalil and peasants went away leaving him to the trials of conscience, which brought him to madness and a dreadful death.

In the spring of the same year Khalil and Maryam were married and settled in the village to share a life of love, equality, freedom and happiness with the peasants.

Jibrān’s aim was not only the partition of the feudal estates among the peasants, but also the transformation of the Maronites into Protestants. He frequently invokes the Gospel, and the quotations from it which are scattered all over the pages of the story are clear evidence that Jibrān’s imaginary village will be religiously organized according to the spirit and the letter of the New Testament.

Soon after its publication, al-Arwāh al-Mutamarridda (الأرواح المتمردة) was burnt in the market place of Beirut, and Jibrān was excommunicated by the Maronite Church for writing it.

A Tear and a Smile (دمّة و ابتسمة):

Dam’a wa Ibtisāma (دمّة و ابتسمة), a collection of prose poems was published in 1914 by Naṣīb ‘Arīḍa, in which Jibrān expressed his romantic rebellion against the social and religious practices of his time in a new diction
and a captivating style which came to be known as "The Jibranian style" (أسلوب الجبراني) and diction. Jibrān’s ideas are expressed with greater force and foremost among these are the vision of corruption and unhappiness which civilized society brought to men whom the author imagines to be innocent and virtuous in their natural pastoral states. Needless to say, the city, which is the highest form of the civilized condition, is the source of most of the evil and unhappiness:

"Why do you lament, oh pure stream?" and it replied, "Because I am going against my will to the city where men despise me and exchange me for the juice of the vine, and make use of me to transport their filth. How should I not lament when soon my purity will become filth and my clearness squalor?"77

_Dam’a wa Ibtisāma_ (دمعة و ابتسامة) dwells on universal problems such as man’s conflict with fate and the theory of the transmigration of souls. The soul has a separate existence above the impurity and adulteration of the body. The typical romantic view of the poet is as a prophet like figure, an enlightened individual who is not in harmony with the rest of the society which is incapable of his vision and insight. Thus the role of the despised and rejected individual is transferred to the poet who sees more clearly and deeply than other men. Jibrān’s method was, on the whole, to reach a general conclusion or moral through a general observation of life or of typical characters, without reference to any specific time or place.78
The Madman (المجنون):

*The Madman* (المجنون), a collection of poems and parables, was Jibrān’s first publication in English appeared in 1918. Jibrān’s Madman asserts a relation of cooperation between man and God concerning Creation. The Madman is none other than the Mad God transplanted from his lonely existence in the valley of death to another, equally lonely, at the heart of society and culture. As this is the loneliness of madness, it gives him freedom, and he is safe from being understood. Madness is freedom because the Madman has thrown away his masks and faces the sun with his face naked. His madness is only in the eyes of others, from whom he deviates in his right and just and logical doings.

The Madman believes in reincarnation that he has passed through before his present incarnation. In his first life, he spoke to God addressing ‘Master’, whose slave he was, and therefore God made no answer. Next he worshipped Him as the Creator, and thought of himself as a piece of molded clay; then as a Father, calling himself His son, but God was displeased by both these conceptions of Himself, and made no answer. At last he spoke to God, saying:

“My God, my aim and my fulfillment; I am thy yesterday and thou art my tomorrow. I am thy root in the earth and thou art my flower in the sky, and together we grow before the face of the sun”.79

Then God answered, whispering ‘words of sweetness’ in his ear, and enfolded him like ‘the sea that enfoldeth a brook’. After this he saw God in ‘the valleys and the plains’.80 It is almost certainly what the Mad God meant by man’s
worship of his own self that worship is a prayer offered to man's own greater self, which is God Himself conceived of as the ultimate realization of man's future perfection. This perfection can only be attained by those who believe in reincarnation, since it is impossible to reach it in one life-span.

In the parable *My Friend*, the Madman admits his ironic hypocrisy to a friend who knows nothing of his heaven and hell, or of his secret laughter at truth, beauty and righteousness of his real. He masks his madness and he is not his friend, though he walks hand in hand with him.

In *The Wise Dog*, wisdom is made out to be prayer to dead form, which turns out to be a revelation of trifling egotism and desire for profit. The wise Dog tells some cats who are praying for a rain of mice that it is written 'that that which raineth for prayer and faith and supplication is not mice but bones'. In *The Blessed City*, wisdom and the knowledge of reading has brought everyone in the city of the title to live according to the Scripture. All the inhabitants of the city have plucked out their right eyes and cut off their right hands, for according to Scripture it is more profitable for one member to perish than for the whole body to be cast into hell. In the city "there is none whole save such as are yet too young to read the Scripture and to understand its commandant".

There are other parables and poems in *The Madman* which deal ironically with the laws and ordered life of society. In the parable *The Two Cages* a caged sparrow addresses a caged lion as his 'brother prisoner'. Imprisonment
made the lion weak and brought him down to equality with the sparrow. Probably, Jibrān intended the cage as a symbol of the oppressive laws of society.

There are some other parables concerned with the liberation of the self. The parables *When my Sorrow was Born* and *When my Joy was Born* tell rather of the extinction of joy and sorrow, in his self, and of a life beyond both. In *The Crucified* he asks to be crucified himself. He asks men to remember only that he smiled. He answers to the questions of men and says:

“Remember only that I smiled. I do not atone - nor sacrifice - nor wish for glory; and I have nothing to forgive”.$^{83}$

He is not a Christ, but only desires to be freed from the prison of normal life. Death becomes the burial of an old self and the acquisition of a new and a greater one.

Jibrān was constantly attracted with the metaphor of madness. It came very easily to his mind and was applied indifferently to love, rebellion, religious faith and thought. It is the revolt against the conventional wisdom and ways of thought and life. The Madman aspired to destroy civilization, especially traditional religion, and worship himself. He expresses the negative as well as the positive aspects of his doctrine.

*The Tempests* (العواصف):

Jibrān published his prose work *al-Awāṣif* (العواصف) in 1920. In this narrative Jibrān expresses his concept of society and civilization and his despair
of reforming them. He describes the withdrawal of Yusuf al-Fakhri from society to a life of complete isolation in a hermitage in North Lebanon. The author meets the hermit and tries to find out the secret of his reclusion through a discussion with him. The author tries to defend society and civilization against his attacks. The reasons he gives for becoming a recluse are:

"I left man because I found that the wheel of my soul was turning one way and grinding harshly against the wheels of other souls. I left civilization because I found it to be an old and corrupt tree, strong and terrible, whose roots are locked into the obscurity of the earth and whose branches are reaching beyond the cloud; but its blossoms are of greed and evil and crime, and its fruit is of woe and misery and fear... They died disappointed, persecuted and torn".84

He also compares society to a sick man who kills his physician, and then closes his eyes and say, "He was a great physician".85 The faith makes him pessimistic and misanthropic, and so he sees no progress in history and does not believe that a group of men who live by the Spirit and by the truth will ever arise in the future. We may say that he is living in his hermitage for these ultimate realities.

Later he says that it came to him as a sudden thought, which he calls "an awakening in the spirit" and "a flame that suddenly rages within the spirit".86 It was the awakening which made him turn away from society and made him wonder to say, "Am I a stranger among them, or is it they who are strange to this earth, built by Life who entrusted me with the keys?"87 Then he became silent
and was unable to reveal any more about this awakening, because one who
knows it cannot reveal it by words.

After this the author returns to society with that spiritual awakening of
which Yūṣuf al-Fakhri revealed and he feels that the spiritual awakening is the
most essential thing in man’s life, and it is the sole purpose of being.

The Forerunner:

Jibrān’s next book in English after The Madman (المجنون) was The
Forerunner (السابق), which was published in 1920. It is also a collection of his
parables and poems. With The Forerunner (السابق) Jibrān becomes more
mysterious and more of a mature philosopher. He mainly devoted it to the
explanation and expansion of his theory of reincarnation and evolution of the
individual self. In his introduction, he defines man as a forerunner and addresses
thus:

“You are your own forerunner, and the towers you have built are but the
foundation of your giant-self. And that self too shall be a foundation”.

He asserts that nobody is to be blamed for our ‘being’ and ‘having’, but
ourselves. This may be called self-actualization. This process never ends for the
tomorrow is always stretched out there, untouched. He asserts that man’s life is
timeless, saying. ... “for yesterday was death conquered and tomorrow was birth
pursued”. To him the process of death and rebirth never ends: “And always
shall we be the beginning”.
Jibrān’s other belief, in the expansion of the self by aspiration, is expressed in the poem *Out of my Deeper Heart* where he speaks of his faith as a bird that flew skywards, which at first ‘it was but like a swallow, then a lark, then an eagle, then as vast as a spring cloud, and then it filled the starry heavens’.91

The same idea is also expressed in another poem, *Beyond my Solitude* where he discerns and desires for his freer self, which is beyond his burdened self. There are other poems and parables in the collection which express the same beliefs. However, the poem *The Last Watch* is worth to be mentioned here, because it bridges all the phases, including the culmination of the coming phase in *The Prophet*. In this poem Jibrān looks back to his early indulgent love of mankind and how it was misunderstood, and then he says that in the rebellious mood that followed he was hiding his love with a semblance of hatred and disguising his tenderness as bitterness. Now he knows “that love humiliated in its nakedness is greater than love that seeks triumph in disguise”.92

*Irām, City of Lofty Pillars* (إرام ذات العماد):

*Iram Dhat al-'Imād* (إرام ذات العماد) was published in 1921, a year after *The Forerunner*. It is a play, in which Jibrān chiefly asserts the oneness of spirit and body. In this play a woman character, Āmina al-‘Alawīya is described as an authentic mystic. She asserts that mystical experience is available to all, since everyman can desire and desire until desire removes the mysterious veil from his eyes and “he who sees his real self sees the truth of real life for himself, for all
humanity, and for all things". She further declares the naturalness and availability of mystical experience, saying that many have reached “the city of God before us without walking on cubit, and they reveled in its beauty and brightness without sorrowing in body or spirit”.

Jibrān makes the mystic Āmina al-'Alawīya speak of: “I entered the Golden City with my body, which is merely an earthly manifestation of my greater spirit ... with my body concealed within my spirit ...” She could say this because of her idealistic belief that all seen or unseen on the earth is spiritual only. From her sayings it is now understood that man through desire towards “Absolute Reality” can remove the mysterious veil’ from his eyes and perceive his self and he who perceives his self perceives the truth of real life.

_Sand and Foam_ (رمل و زبد):

Jibrān’s next book _Sand and Foam_ (رمل و زبد) published in 1926 is a collection of maxims and aphorisms, some of which were remarks Jibrān made to Mrs. Young and some were jotted down by him on scraps of paper. Each of these sayings could be used for intellectual meditation. The sentiments expressed in them belong chiefly to the doctrine of _The Prophet_.

_Jesus, the Son of Man_ (يسوع ابن الإنسان):

Another important work of Jibrān is _Jesus, the Son of Man_ (يسوع ابن الإنسان) which was published in 1928. In this book Jibrān speaks of Jesus in behalf
of seventy seven persons who saw him. The last man who speaks of Jesus in the book is *A Man From Lebanon* who lives in the twentieth century.

Jibrān has always been attracted by the majesty of Jesus’ teachings and by the mystery of his life. As Jibrān had no attachment for organized religion, he never meant to speak of the Jesus of the Christian, but of the Jesus of Nazareth, the man who had a mother and a father. His real concern is to make the image of Jesus accessible to the human. Jibrān attempts to tell of Jesus’ words and his deeds as told and recorded by those who knew him. The book contains the fictitious impressions and opinions of Jesus’ disciplines, and enemies, and also of his mother and other members of his family.

Jibrān makes a large number of characters in *Jesus, the Son of Man* and through their opinion of Jesus he endeavors to portray His total personality. Jibrān shows Him as something like the Prophet, and also puts into His mouth the doctrine of Jibrān’s own creation. This book is also permeated with the belief in reincarnation, which attributed both to Jesus and to Jibrān who makes a personal appearance in the epilogue. Jibrān depicts Jesus as a son of man and believes in reincarnation. Jibrān’s aim in describing the life of Jesus is to change our attitude toward this extraordinary man, Jesus, who had successfully developed to its peak the divine personalities of love and compassion that God encompasses within our nature. The point he meant to get across to us is that the supernatural is implanted within each man, and it comes to each individual to realize the divinity of his nature.
Jibrān’s explanation of the miracles performed by Jesus is based on an idealistic belief in the power of the mind over the body which reduces physical diseases to disorders of the mind or the spirit. He says:

“Perchance blindness is but a dark thought that can be overcome by a burning thought. Perchance a withered limb is but idleness that can be overcome by energy”.

In spite of Jibrān’s extravagant quotation from the Gospels, he is as unorthodox as possible in his idea of Christ. No matter how unorthodox Jibrān’s presentation may be, it is still sincere and genuine, since it is based on his real beliefs about the nature of Man and his relation to God.

The Earth Gods (Aleha al-ard):

Jibrān’s next book The Earth Gods (Aleha al-ard), published in 1931 is a poem spoken by three characters, the First, Second and Third Gods, who are all concerned with the destiny of their godhead and the destiny of man. These gods represent three tendencies in man’s nature, but magnified. The first God is weary of his power, of the constant recurrence of a life which brings him nothing new, and therefore desires annihilation. The second God still enjoys his power over man and playing with his destiny. The third God, who is the youngest of the three, and indeed still a youth, believes that love is the only fundamental reality in life. The love he means is not universal and pantheistic, but particular; the love of man for woman. The poem ends on this note: “Let love, human and frail,
command the coming day. In spite of the assertion of the triumph of love, the prevailing tone of the poem is one of gloom and reflection on death as the only deathless reality.

*The Wanderer* (التائه):

Jibrān’s last book, *The Wanderer* (التائه) was finished shortly before his death and was published posthumously in 1932. It is a collection of his parables and sayings. The Wanderer is described as a man with “a veil of pain upon his face”, and the tales, or rather the parables, he tells, and his sayings, as “born out of the bitterness of his days”. Jibrān’s thoughts and ideas in *The Wanderer* have already been reflected in his previous works.

*The Garden of the Prophet* (حديقة النبي):

*The Garden of the Prophet* (حديقة النبي) appeared under Jibrān’s name in 1933, two years after his death. Jibrān had often spoken of it and in a letter, dated March, 1929 he wrote to his friend, Mikhā’il Nu‘aima, Jibrān said: “But as to the writing of *The Garden of the Prophet* (حديقة النبي) it is definitely decided, but I find it wise to get away from the publishers at present”. Mrs. Barbara states that “the various pieces were practically complete” but as “no arrangement had been planned, however, and the thread of story... was missing,” with great hesitation she assumed the responsibility of supplying these.
The plot of *The Garden* is related to that of *The Prophet* by means of the chief character, who is the same in both, and by its connection with the author's own life. In *The Garden of the Prophet* (حديقة النبي) one of the companions of the Prophet on his homeward journey asks him to tell them about the city of Orphalese where he has stayed for twelve years. The Prophet responds with a speech which Jibrān used to call 'The Nine Pities'. The theme is scornful pity for the fate of Lebanon, which is reflected in the following quotation:

“Pity a nation that wears a cloth it does not weave, eats bread it does not harvest ... pity the nation divided into fragments, each fragment deeming itself a nation.”

The mood is one of darkness and pre-occupation with death. It is Jibrān’s farewell to life, and expresses his longing to dissolve into nature. At the end of *The Garden of the Prophet* (حديقة النبي) he says: “O Mist, my sister, my sister Mist, I am one with you now. No longer am I a self. The walls haven fallen”.

The remaining collections of Jibrān’s works were published posthumously. They are as follows:

*Secrets of the Heart*, published in 1947, is an amalgamation of short stories; *The Nymphs of the Valley* (1948); *The Voice of the Master*, published in 1959, speaks of the death of the prophet Almuhtada and gives an account of the teachings of the Master; *A Self Portrait*, published in 1959, is a collection of his private letters which he wrote to his closest friends; *Thoughts and Meditations* (1961); *Spiritual Sayings* (1962); and, *Beloved Prophet*, published in 1972, is a
collection of Jibrān’s letters to Haskell, and also this book contains Miss Haskell’s private journal about Jibrān’s life and personality.

In short, Jibrān combined art with his life and most importantly he was the devoted artist whose main concern is the expression of thought in words, rather than in life by action. Jibrān is greeted today by all the commentators of Modern Arabic belles-lettres as an innovator in Middle Eastern literature. He showed the Arabs how to break away from classical rhymed poetry and to feel free with the rhythm. To the Westerners, he is a lived example, as to how to make a philosophy a pleasant literature.\textsuperscript{104}

Through his works Jibrān declared his revolt against the West by means of the spirit of the East. It is evident from the following quotation:

“He declared his revolt against the West by means of the spirit of the East, just as before he had declared his revolt against the backwardness of the East, drawing his inspiration from what is pure in the spirit of the Western renaissance.”

Jibrān was a literary genius, and was able, even through his prose poem, to revolutionize Arabic poetry. For his outstanding contribution to modern Arabic literature, Jibrān enjoys an international reputation and because of his English writings, he became the most widely known Arabic author outside the Arab world.
C. Impact of Foreign Literature on Jibrān’s Work:

The impact of European culture is seen on Jibrān’s art work, poetry and philosophy. The impact of the Reformers, of Balzac, Rodin, and William Blake, of the movement of Art for Art’s sake, and of European music is seen in all his works. Jibrān’s paintings reflect the impact of the Paris schools, Academic Julien and Ecoles des Beaux Arts, and especially, that of his teacher Auguste Rodin under whom he studied in 1908 in France.

Jibrān had early come under the influence of Indian thought, and it may be that Emerson had been his guide. Therefore he learnt of the belief in the unity of all religions and the many ways to truth. But, although his expression of the belief in the unity of all religions may sound Emersonian, the religions which Jibrān names show that he was concerned mainly with the religions of the Arab world.

The source of Jibrān’s idea of universal love was the Gospel, though he might have found in Indian thought. He must have also found confirmation for this tendency in Rousseau and thinkers of the French Revolution, as both advocated internationalism and the brotherhood of man, and made some attempt to reconcile them with nationalism, like Jibrān.

In his later writings he came to identify God with the Universal Soul, and the latter with the Greater Self of the individual; thus his theory of existence approximates to that of Emerson and of Hinduism, where everything can be
explained by the *atman* of the individual and the Universal Soul of the Hindu or the Over-Soul of Emerson.

Rousseau's revolt against atheism and materialism and his idealized version of deism which is combined with theism all find echoes in Jibrān, who speaks of the 'earthly man' and his laws, of God and the ideal universal Law of Nature. Rousseau's initiation of the cult of a new kind of sensibility, his romances and poetical prose had no less impact upon Jibrān. Jibrān must have made acquaintance first with Rousseau at secondhand, through the English romantics and his study of Ishāq and Marrāsh at *al-Hikma*. Jibrān was fond of reading Rousseau's works during his stay in Paris which is known by his appreciative reference to Rousseau in a letter of 1908. Jibrān was immensely inspired by Rousseau when he undertook his criticism of society. Jibrān often expressed in his letters his admiration for Rousseau. And every time he dreamed to return for a second time to Paris, he related his desire to be "enlightened by the social studies ... in the capital of capitals of the world where Rousseau ... lived". Rousseau's impact can best be seen in *The Procession* (المواكب). Jibrān attacked with the same vigor the institutionalized society, and developed his logic of the evils of civilization on the same line as Rousseau. The other Romantics who may have influenced Jibrān on the subject of Nature and society can only be those who had inherited Rousseau's ideas and emotional tone.

It has been found that Jibrān's firm belief in the Gospel is partly Protestant. This is because he adopted such elements of Protestantism as were
compatible with his Rousseauism, and discarded those that were not. The only truly Protestant principle in his Christianity is that of individual liberty to interpret the Scriptures and to uphold its authority against that of Church. This must have been inspired by religious life in America and by the Protestant movement in Lebanon which was initiated by American missionaries. He may have had the atheists of Europe in mind as well as the secular tendency among the Arab nationalists of his time.

In Jibrān’s doctrine, where God is believed ‘to be either Love or nothing’, pre-ordained love between male and female is given a metaphysical origin of absolute unity in Him. Mr. Ralph Tymms considers that a similar belief is one of the features of the love-gospel pronounced by the German Romantic playwright Zacharias Werner and traces it back to Plato. Werner and Jibrān make a similar use of this idea. The theme of the story Madja' al-ʿArūs and its concluding scene are almost identical with those of Werner’s play Wanda, in which the heroine kills her lover and then kills herself. Werner uses the same theme in other plays where he emphasizes, just as Jibrān was to do, the miraculous nature of the meeting between two halves of the same heart of the predestined lovers. Two other German Romantic writers, Novalis and Kleist, express the same belief. Most probably Jibrān would have read these German writers in translation.

Jibrān was early acquainted with German romantic literature and with William Blake, and later came under the influence of some occult movement in America. Jibrān was in line with some obscure ways of thought in that country
which are not far from occultism. Particular Romantic ideas must have caught Jibrān’s imagination and found their way into his early works. The manner in which he expresses the death-wish in the poem *Yawm Mawli* (The Day of My Birth) is borrowed from Keats: “I love death, and entitle it with sweet names”.110

In the poem *al-Nafs*, he speaks of how God created the soul and said to her: you cannot taste happiness “except that you forget the past and heed not the future”.111 This idea is also believed to be borrowed from Shelley’s ‘To a Skylark’ where he speaks of the sadness that comes from our restlessness:

“We look before and after
And pine for what is not...”112

The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche has a great impact on Jibrān’s thoughts and style of expression. Jibrān had read Nietzsche since he was twelve or thirteen. Jibrān had a high respect for Nietzsche. He would call him: “the loneliest man of the nineteenth century and surely the greatest”.113 Jibrān wrote his books, *The Madman, The Forerunner. The Prophet* and *The Tempests* being inspired by Nietzsche. Jibrān learnt from Nietzsche how to convey his ideas in a messianic overtone, and at the same time using a flammatory style for criticizing the organized religion and the social establishment.

Mīkhā‘īl Nu‘aima, in his biography of Jibrān singles out passages which he thinks bear the imprint of Nietzsche as being representative of the whole, in order to prove that all impact of that philosopher’s thought carried Jibrān...“off his feet... leaving him much embittered against the world”.114 In the introduction
of Jibrān’s works, Nu‘aima takes Jibrān’s idea of Jesus as being modeled on Nietzsche’s superman. Jibrān was very much attracted by *Thus Spake Zarathustra* of Nietzsche.

Nu‘aima has shown Jibrān’s debt to Nietzsche as displayed in one of the later poems in Arabic, *Nafsi Muthqalah bi Athmāriha*, in which some of the imageries bear the unmistakable mark of his influence. Some other reminiscences of Nietzsche may be indicated, for example in *The Madman*, where the “Perfect World” of “complete laws” is contrasted ironically with the Madman himself, who is “a human chaos” reminding us of Nietzsche’s assertion that “one must still has chaos in one, to give birth to a dancing star”. Again, Jibrān speaks of his Prophet as a “dawn unto his own day” and Zarathustra says of himself, “am I . . . . mine own cockcrow in dark lanes”. The Zarathustrian symbols of the serpent and the eagle also occurs, in a much modified form, in *The Prophet*.

William Blake also played an important role in Jibrān’s life. Blake had a formative influence on him. Jibrān followed the path of Blake in becoming a “poet of the Bible”. Blake, who was deeply touched by the life and teachings of Jesus, believed that in this world we could perceive the direct manifestation of the Divine presence, if we took away the scale of our eyes. The man of the world creates polarities, social class differences, moral disparities, and speaks in double language logic. Blake stresses this point in his two well-known metaphysical poems *The Little Blake Boy* and *The Tiger*. Jesus for Blake and Jibrān is a
lived exemplar who realized the Christian enlightenment, by perfecting through self-discipline and inner struggle his human and divine nature.

According to Nu’aima, Jibrān was acquainted with Blake before Nietzsche, yet he does not say anything of Blake’s influence. Subsequent critics found that Jibrān’s only borrowing from him was the belief in the oneness of soul and body which is expressed in a later work, al-Mawakib. Jibrān may have been acquainted with the cult of romantic poetry in all its forms, but the two worlds in his poem correspond more or less with those of Blake’s Songs of Innocence and Experience. According to Blake the innocent world of the child is a harmonious one, because to him “unorganized innocence: an impossibility”. It is also a world of wholeness, owing to child’s primitiveness, for he believed, as Mr. Mark Shorer has observed, that a “primitive intelligence enjoys a subject-object wholeness that intellectual discrimination splits into subjective and objective”. The same wholeness and harmony are the basic qualities of the world of Jibrān’s Youth.

Jibrān’s Old Man, though he has many distinctive qualities of his own, and some taken from the author’s earlier writings, especially al-Awasif and The Madman, bear the mark of Blake’s world of experience. In one place Jibrān says: “And death on earth, to the son of earth is final’ meaning that he dissolves into the earth; Blake says, ‘Whatever is born of Mortal Birth must be consumed with the earth’.” If Blake’s ‘whatever’ includes man with other creatures, his meaning and Jibrān’s are the same.
Blake’s vision of Man is almost that of Jibrān. John Murry observes: ‘Blake wants to vindicate the universe and he is vindicating it, as all true mystics are bound to do, by ignoring the problem of evil’. It is exactly this that Jibrān was doing in *The Prophet*.

In his later writings he came to identify God with Universal Soul, and the latter with the Greater Self of the individual; thus his theory of existence approximates to that of Emerson and of Hinduism, where everything can be explained by the *atman* of the individual and the Universal Soul of the Hindu or the Over-Soul of Emerson.

Jibrān believed in a Greater Self, which is identical with an impersonal Absolute Reality. This comprehends all things and exists in essence within each thing, and this system may be termed monistic pantheism. This belief is common to Emerson, Hinduism, Buddhism Blake and some Moslem mystics. According to Jibrān, the evolution of the self through reincarnation and its expansion by aspiration are the means to the realization of the Greater Self. Neither the Moslem mystics nor Blake believe in reincarnation, therefore Jibrān must have absorbed this either directly from Hinduism or Buddhism or indirectly through Emerson or the popular cults.

In the process of expansion of the self, or self-realization, Jibrān comes nearer to the healthy minded optimism of Emerson, American Hinduism, New Thought and other popular cults. This may account for the great popularity of
The Prophet, which is purely and simply an expression of healthy minded optimism.

As regards the form of Jibrān’s narratives, the critics such as H. M. Nahmad, the translator of ‘Arā’is al-Murāj and al-Arwāh al-Mutamarridah, Šalāḥ Labaki, Dr. Suhayl Idris and Dr. Najm, observed Jibrān’s didactic purpose in writing them. But to assign them to any literary genre, the most appropriate is, as Dr. Idris suggests, the romantic type of narrative or romance. This need not be a fable, but rather means a narrative which permits of explicit didacticism, cares little for characterization, action or plot, and may be poetical in style. This was the narrative form employed by Rousseau, Chateaubriand, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Hugo, Lamartine, Goethe, Navalis and many other romantics.

Jibrān may also have been influenced by the long poems of Shelley, Keats and Wordsworth, but his narratives are closer to those of the first group.

Though the traces of the language of Ishaq and Ibrāhim al-Yāziji may be detected in Jibrān, he still belongs without any doubt to the Christian literary tradition, and owes a great deal to the language of the Protestant version of the Bible and the artistic part of Marrāsh’s language. The influence of the biblical style in Arabic on that of Jibrān has been noticed by many before. A proof of Jibrān’s debt to the language of the Bible is provided by his lavish quotations from it, which do not stand out in any way from the texture of his style. Jibrān’s improvement on the language of the Bible and Marrāsh was in the direction of
refinement and in a new way of using words such as we see in the European Romantics, making possible the expression of some delicate emotions and tones.

Some of the Romantics, such as F. Schlegel, Novalis and Hugo all produced their own collections of epigrams, and Jibrān may have been influenced by their example.

Finally, it may be added that Nietzsche, Blake, the Bible and Buddhism were not the only foreign impacts on Jibrān, but Rousseau, Hugo, Novalis, Lamartine, Shelley, Wordsworth, Emerson and many others, who have provided Jibrān with some insights. In spite of all this Jibrān was, and still is, famous for the peculiar qualities which made "The Jibrani style" (الأسلوب الجبراني) and he has his own place in the Arabic literature.
D. Style of Jibrân's writing:

After an indepth study of the works of Jibrân, now it is time to examine the beauty that lies in his writing, his language, the elevated expression like a true artist.

At the inception Jibrân showed the Arabs how to break away from classical rhymed poetry and to feel free with the prose poem. He must have been well acquainted with all the genres defined and used in European literature, yet he confined himself to rhymed metrical verse, the narrative, the prose poem, the essay, the parable and the epigram. His first work was an essay on music entitled al-Mūṣiqâ (الموسيقى) which can be called independent genre.

All his later works which appear to take the form of an essay, a dissertation or an article are of the same nature, for he employs the same poetical style and the same method of treatment whether the subject be language, as in "Lakum Lughatukum wa li Lughati" (لكم لغتكم و لي لغتي), or the political life of Lebanon, as in "Lakum Lubnānukum wa li Lubnānī" (لكم لبنانكم و لبني لبناناني). In his narratives Jibrân constantly uses the poetical prose (الفقرة الشعرية) for all the characters’ utterances, which are either lyrical rhapsodies or rhetorical sermons. He regarded poetical prose as an element of beauty which would soften his explicit didacticism and make it more acceptable. The poetical element in his later narratives became more and more marked.

Among his three books of narratives such as 'Arâ'îs al-Murûj (عراش السروج), al-Arwâh al-Mutamarrida (الروح المتعرجة) and al-Ajdâhât al-Mutakassira
(الأجنحة المتكررة), the latter is poetical through and through. Before its publication Jibran eliminates the unpoetical elements and keeps the style at a high poetical level. The character of the heroine Salma is drawn in such a manner as to meet Jibrān’s aspiration after the ideal woman who could offer him mother’s sympathy and be at the same time his sister-soul. The poetical idealization is also evident in his description of her beauty as “strange as a dream or a vision or a divine thought.”

As regards language, Jibrān prefers the ordinary level of language. Jibrān himself said on the subject that to him words are like “bodies” which have no value in themselves, for all their value is in their meaning which is the “spirit” which animates these bodies.

فأ لكلمات عند جبران أشبه "بأجسام" لا قيمة فيها إلا في ذاتها، بل تكون قيمةها الفعلية معناها و هو

الأروح، الذي ينفخ الحياة في تلك الأجساد.  

This means that to him words or language are a means to an end, and therefore he rejects with contempt the belief in language as an end in itself held by the traditionalists of his time.

Jibrān’s contributions lay in the determination and consistency with which he applied his opinions about language to his actual usage. The words and their orders which he uses are all familiar, to the exclusion of the archaic and the highly classical. For example, he uses the familiar word Ṭahānānām (نحم) “bathed”, instead of its equivalent Istahamma (استحم), which was used by the traditionalists and established by the authority of lexicographers. Most of those
who defended Jibrān, and all those who attacked him for this and several other mistakes, some grammatical and some linguistic appealed for justification to ancient traditions instead of arguing on the principle of the evolution of language.

Though traces of the language of Ishāq and Ibrahīm al-Yāzījī are found in Jibrān, he still belongs to the Christian literary tradition, and owes a great deal to the language of the Protestant version of the Bible and the artistic part of Marrāsh’s language. The basic characteristic of the rhythm and construction of his style are typical of the Biblical style in Arabic. His lavish quotations from the Bible prove Jibrān’s debt to the language of it. Jibrān’s improvement on the language of the Bible and Marrāsh was in the direction of refinement and in a new using of words as seen in the European Romantics. Jibrān says that “the only means for the revival of the language is in the heart of the poet, on his lips and between his fingers.”

Jibrān himself was able to extend the scope of Arabic, simply by means of familiar words, which were unknown to regions before. His choice of familiar speech was based on principle and was not as many critics have thought, due to carelessness and lack of proficiency in the traditions of the language.
As regards the rhythm of his style, it is found that parallelism in various forms is one of its chief characteristics. The most common of these is antithetical parallelism, which is used more profusely in his Arabic than in his English writings. In his early writings a large number of statements are found which are antithetically balanced. For example, Jibrān says, "I would rather die of longing than live in boredom."  

Another example of parallelism of the same type, but where the similarity of structure is closer, is as follows:

"I am the human heart, I was imprisoned in the darkness of society's laws until I weakened, I was fettered with the chains of illusions until I agonized and I was neglected in the corners of civilization's deception until I died."

There is a close likeness of sound between the words at the beginning and the end of these clauses: Hubistu (حبيست), Du'iftu (ضفت), Iftadartu (احتضرت), Uhmiltu (أملت) and that they rhyme with each other.  

Parallelism, one of the characteristics of Jibrān's writings, is also present in his English writings. It is also found in his first English work The Madman. He never uses words quite so lavishly in his English writings, even in The Madman, where he is most rhetorical and vehement.
One aspect of Jibrān’s Arabic style is the excessive use of adjectives, as in *al-Ajnihat al-Mutakassira* (الأجنحة المتكسرة), where he says . . . “and she kissed my lips a long, deep and burning kiss.”

The marked style of Jibrān’s writings is imagery. His works are full of particular images. In this regard, the following description of Salma’s sorrow may be quoted here:

“I saw that those eyelids which were, a few days ago, smiling like lips and moving like the wings of a lark have darkened with the shades of suffering and pain.”

Jibrān had an unusual gift for language and a painter’s eye for the secrets of light and shade. Many of his images are like some of his parallelisms, simply constructed out of sharp oppositions and painted in black and white. He could endow the art of word-painting with a sense of mystery.

Jibrān has some structural images which really do contain visions of life, such as the image of life as processions in a poem which bears the same title, *al-Mawākib* (المواكب). It is a vision that the poet is describing something he really saw in his mind’s eye. The images used in *al-Awāṣif* (العواصف), shows a deeper vision and a stronger imaginative power than his previous works.
In *The Madman* (المجنون) Jibrān used various kinds of symbols, such as the sea, the greater sea and in a third the tree whose root is man and whose blossoms are God. In *al-Mawākib* (المواكب) the symbol used for the same idea was the forest, the pipe or flute.

Jibrān’s use of epigrams was wide enough. He wrote the entire book, *Sand and Foam* (رمل و زبد) in epigrammatical style. His later works such as *The Prophet* (النبي) and *The Earth Gods* (الجنة الأرض) are extremely epigrammatical in style. His Arabic work *al-Mawākib* is also highly epigrammatical. *Irām Dhāt al-‘Imād*, one of his later works in Arabic is partly epigrammatical.

Influenced by the romantic narrative form and the Christian literary tradition, Jibrān introduced a new literary form in a new diction and a captivating style, which became known as “The Jibrani style”. Jibrān was able to revolutionize Arabic poetry through his prose poems.

During his time Jibrān set the example as how to combine prose with poetry and vice-versa. In depth his writings are poetical, though the verses are prose. The strophes have rhythm and rhyme. The poets and creative writers of his generation were greatly influenced by his style and most of the Arabic writers from the East accepted and followed this style. In respect of his style Nādira Jamīl Sirrāj says:

"و أعجب الناس بأسلوب جبران الخيالي و نظريته التأملية و عاطفته المتقدمة (كذا المقدمة) من خلال نثره الشعرى الرقيق، و سرعان ما أخذ بعض الشباب من المهاجرين في تقليده و الأنتان بروحه الشعرية التي نفحها فيهم فاستجابوا لها".

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Jibrān was the most daring among the writers who liberated Arabic from its sterile form. He combines prose with the art of his painter, the sculptor, the musician and the poet. With his artistic background he paints with the pen and his expressions became pictures with life.¹⁴⁴

Jibrān deploys his words and phrases as a means towards a rhythmic progression. In his compatriots a tune appropriate to the emotional content and meaning emerges. His shading of prose with sound effects makes it very close to poetry.¹⁴⁵ He displayed a completely new sensibility and a new kind of creativity, and opened windows on a different kind of world.

Jibrān occupies for himself a unique place in the Arabic literature. To the Arabs he showed them how to break away from classical rhymed poetry and to feel free with the rhythm.
E. Views of the Critics:

The poet, the philosopher, the artist Jibrān has been assessed by the critics and some of their views are as follows.

Jibrān is the most widely known Arab author outside the Arab world because of his English writings particularly The Prophet, which is considered to be his masterpiece. Jibrān was an outstanding literary figure who was a poet, writer, artist, painter as well as a philosopher.

A group of scholars at a leading American university made a comment on Jibrān as:

"Gibran could write timeless truths in a way that makes the reader feel he is taking a walk in a quiet wood, or bathing in a cool stream; it soothes the spirit. But he could also write with a scorch like fire".146

Jibrān is hailed today by all commentators of Modern Arabic belles-lettres as an innovator in Middle Eastern literature. About Jibrān ‘Isā al-Nā‘ūri says:

الواقع أن أمثال جبران - و ليست لدينا ألوفا مثل جبران - هم مفاخر لهذه الأمة ، و خير دعاية لها

أمام عيون الغربيين و ضمائرهم العمياء ، لأنهم يفهمون أن العرب ليسوا جمعهم رعاة إبل و سكان خيام،

و لكن يرغمون الغربيين عن إحناء الرؤوس أمام عبقريتهم و عظمتهم و تقوفهم ، فمن الظلم أن نتهم هؤلاء

بالعوق و التنكر لأنمهم ، و هم من أطم مفخرها و رسالتها إلى العالم - 147

Jibrān created the legend which was tended and augmented by his followers and admirers. He was considered a prophet-poet and a gifted painter. About Jibrān’s life and upbringing, his intimate friend Mr. Claude Bragdon says:
"He was what is called in East a ‘fortunate’ birth, for he was brought up in an atmosphere of love, beauty and abundance. Not only were his people affluent and cultured, but his mother’s family, from far back, was the most musical in all the countryside."148

He lived on as a symbolic figure, enveloped by the legend he himself had initiated among the Lebanese and Arabs. The success of his English writings seemed a kind of national victory, or rather a spiritual conquest of the West by the East. Many Americans respect the greatness of Jibrān and consider him the greatest American thinker. It is evident in the following quotation:

"Did you know, compatriots of Gibran, sons of his nation and his language, that many of the Americans … who held fast to the matter (material) of life and sought after the dollar … had at last bowed their heads to the genius of Lebanon and gone down on their knees before the greatness of Gibran’s spirit and beliefs."149

Jibrān’s spiritual writings in English furnished with proof that the Lebanese came from a better race and had higher aims in life. Martin L. Wolf, in the preface of “A Treasury of Kahlil Gibran”, says about the writings of Jibrān in the following manner:

“A surprising aspect of many of the writings in this, the largest and most comprehensive volume of Gibran’s works ever published, is found in the fact that he was scarcely twenty years old when they were composed and set loose upon the world. In the light of his youth, these works establish unquestioned
achievement in literary and philosophic artistry, since they would have been
classics coming even at an age of experienced wisdom and mellowness of years.
There is broad vision and justifiable anger with respect to religious injustice in
*John the Madman*; exquisite beauty of thought and language in his series of
*Seven Songs*; enormous maturity of understanding in *The Life of Love* and
*Madame Rose Hanie*; keen invention of plot and element of surprise in *Satan,*
one of the truly original and different forms of literary development to appear in
many years; tear enriched distress in *The City of the Dead* and *Contemplations of
Sadness*; mystical strength surpassing William Blake in *Ashes of the Age* and
*Eternal Fire*; heartfelt pain and bitterness in *The Crucified.*

Mrs. Barbara Young's book, *This Man from Lebanon,* gives a more vivid
and detailed account of Jibrân's childhood and of the last seven years of his life.
She tells about Jibrân in the foreword, "this book ... is a simple story of the great
man as I found him during the seven years that immediately preceded his
death." She also described Jibrân as:

"one of the rare gestures of the Mighty Unnamable Power, and his voice
and his being were vested an authority not to be confounded with mere human
excellence."

Jibrân had enthusiastically created a literary enterprise which he had
called *The Seven Arts* (الفنون السبعة), essentially an organ of poetry. Although it
was a short-lived proposition, it served as the instrument which carried Jibrân's
name to various art organizations and made him well-known among the English literati. As Nādira Jamīl Sirrāj says:

Jibran's works greatly influenced the Western authors, his contemporary writers and poets of the Arab world, and the immigrants of the North and South America. Regarding the influence of Jibran's writings on the literati of the different part of the world, Nādira Jamīl Sirrāj says:

Jibran showered the publication with many works which were to become internationally known. He does not write poetries and prose poems simply for literary and artistic reasons, but also, his literature is his style for conveying his philosophical ideas. Jibran is unique for combining Middle Eastern and Western ideas.

Jibran possessed some peculiar qualities which enabled him to introduce a new style in Arabic literature which came to be known as "The Jibranian style" (الأسلوب الجبراني). Mr. Claude Bragdon gave the definition of Jibranism as follows:

"The character and depth of his influence upon the entire Arabic world may be inferred from the fact that it gave rise to a new word Jibranism. Just what
this word means English readers will have no difficulty in divining, mystical vision, material beauty, a simple and fresh approach to the ‘problem’ of life ... extraordinary dramatic power, deep erudition, lightning like intuition, lyrical life, metrical mastery, and Beauty which permeates the entire pattern in everything he touches."

Jibrān may be called an existentialist of equal caliber as some of the right wing of existentialism. His existentialism is mystical. He is a mystic because he explores the spiritual aspect of reality.\textsuperscript{156}

After the publication of \textit{Spirits Rebellious}, it was burnt in the market place of Beirut and Jibrān was excommunicated from the Church and exiled from the country. His attacks grew stronger and he drew the attention of the entire civilized world. Years later his exile was remanded, and the Church embraced him without conciliation on his part.

A mourner who witnessed the Jibrān funeral procession in 1931, states that the ecclesiastical pageantry of the event was beyond description. Hundreds of priests and religious leaders, representing every denomination under Eastern and eastern skies, were in solemn attendance. Included were Maronites, Catholics, Shiites, Jews, Protestants, Mohammedans, Greek Orthodox, Sunnites, Druzes, and others. And to render complete Jibrān’s restoration to the fold of religion, he was buried in the grotto of the monastery of Mar Sarkis, his childhood church.\textsuperscript{157} In this regard Nādira Jamīl Sirrāj’s comment may be quoted here:
After the publication of his masterpiece *The Prophet*, many people in the United States accepted his mission. Many of Jibrān’s American admirers and followers in Britain and Lebanon found that most of them were ill adjusted to life, and bewildered by its complexities, lacking the strength of nerve and mind, and that they found a welcome escape route in Jibrān’s primitivism, disguised, as it is, in the shape of prophecy and oracular wisdom.\textsuperscript{159}

In the present pursuit of higher learning in Arabic writings, no author of higher learning in writings, no author of the East offers greater reward than does Khalil Jibrān, for he stands alone on the summit of all that is fascinating, terrible and beautiful in *sufi* literature.\textsuperscript{160}

The refined sensibility of the pure poet in him and his gift for language in Arabic enabled him to occupy his own place in the Arabic literature of his time, and because of the fact that Jibrān was better qualified than any of his contemporaries to refine the language and introduce the prose poem.

Jibrān, the great philosopher and poet is remembered as one of the most read and respected authors of the twentieth century by both Eastern and Western cultures alike. His drawings and paintings that are both enchanting and haunting have been established in the capitals of the world. The genius and
versatility of Jibrān is unaccountable and his fame spread far and wide including
the East and the West. He could attain that place what could not be attained by
the writers of the Arab world.

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