

KHLIL GIBRAN
IN A
SECONDARY ENGLISH CURRICULUM

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جبران خليل جبران

Gibran Kahlil Gibran

النبى

The Prophet

من لبنان

of Lebanon

ABSTRACT

This study has outlined a summary of selected authorities who advocate a response-oriented curriculum in literature. The ideas of these authorities were used to provide a rationale which underlies the lesson plans provided for the use of teachers who wish to use Kahlil Gibran in secondary English classrooms.

In addition, information has been given about the life, heritage, background, and works of Kahlil Gibran, the Lebanese-American poet and philosopher, to provide background information for teachers using Gibran in the secondary English classroom.

Moreover, a summary of the comments which have been made on Gibran's writings and an appreciation of Kahlil Gibran have been included in this study.

The lesson plans provided in this study are designed to elicit student response and have been based on the curriculum rationale of a response-oriented curriculum in English literature.

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No man can reveal to you aught
but that which already lies half-
asleep in the dawning of your
knowledge.

The teacher . . . gives not of
his wisdom but rather of his faith
and lovingness.

If he is indeed wise, he does
not bid you enter the house of his
wisdom, but rather leads you to the
threshold of your own mind.

. . . For the vision of one man
lends not its wings to another man
. . .

Kahlil Gibran,
The Prophet, pp.56-7

Education sows no seeds in you,
But makes your seeds grow.

Gibran, 1962, p.16

فا من رجل يستطيع ان يعين لكم شيئاً غير ما
هو مستقر في خبر معرفتكم وانتم غافلون عنه ،
اما العلم الذي يسير في ظل الربيع في طائر باقاعه وعريده ،
فهد لا يصاب شيئاً من حكمة ، بل انما يظن من ايمانه ووطنه وحجته
لأنه اذا كانه بالحقيقة حلياً فانه سر يترككم انه تدخلوا بيت
حكيمه ، بل يقودكم بالأمرى الى عتبة فلككم وحلمكم .
لأنه الوهم الذي يربط على رجل حارس يسير جناحه
لغيره .

جبرته حليل حيدته «النسي»

- ٥٩ -

Extract from "On Teaching", The Prophet.

(See page 1 of this study for the English version of this Arabic quotation)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Today, we consider the world we live in to be small indeed, as air travel has brought the remotest parts of our planet within the easy reach of all persons. Since many different races inhabit the earth, diverse cultures, religious beliefs, and political ideologies are found everywhere. In some countries, distinct cultures exist side by side. Particularly in Canada, where many different ethnic groups have settled, students are required to learn about other cultures and other peoples in order to understand them and to live harmoniously with them.

Since Kahlil Gibran is characteristic of the immigrant to the new world who meets a social environment which is at variance with that into which he was born, teachers and students may find his works both interesting and informative. Gibran's writings are a blending of two cultures: one Western, the other Middle Eastern; and he wrote in two languages: Arabic for Lebanon and the Middle East, English for the West. His themes are universal: goodness, beauty, love, and justice.

Because today many of our young people are concerned with their identity and are searching for answers as well as a way to live in a world beset by problems, the writings of Gibran may aid them in their search. Their dilemma today was Gibran's dilemma yesterday: to find a workable way of thinking, feeling, and coping with the world, the natural world as well as the unnatural, the man-made world of the city.

Gibran's works force the reader to think, to feel, and to examine man's relationships and his very existence. His simple, direct poetry and prose appeal directly and immediately to today's youth, and evoke an immediate response.

In a response-oriented literature curriculum, Gibran's core of human feelings as manifested in his writings has a place, for human behavior is itself a response, and he has spanned its full range in his beautiful poetry and prose. In his own words, Gibran has phrased his idea of response in this extract from his writings:

Art must be a direct communication between the poet's imagination and that of the reader. For that reason, I avoid so much as possible . . . too many details in order that the reader's imagination may roam far and wide. (Naimy, 1934, p.102)

Kahlil Gibran, then, is a literary figure admirably suited for study at the secondary level.

Need for the Study

The following points are suggested as reasons to justify a study of literature and of Kahlil Gibran for students at the secondary level.

First, all literature has value, its most important merit being its humanizing value, for it is a picture of life and life experience.

Second, certain educators today are concerned about the teaching of English literature which they hold has become a stagnated process dwelling upon English as a formal discipline, rather than as a study stressing the student's experience with the work (Squire, 1968). John Dixon, James Squire, James Moffett, and others, in their recent writings, have laid a stress upon response to literature, and suggest a response-oriented curriculum for the elementary and secondary school. The works of Gibran easily fit the response model.

Third, the authorities quoted above as well as others have made a case for the reader's relationship to literature and suggest that students be encouraged to approach the study of literature subjectively (Robinson, 1973).

Fourth, an interesting way to learn about countries and their people is through a study of their literature.

A study of the works of Kahlil Gibran not only presents the work of a man who lived in Eastern and Western tradition but also provides a mental comfort for the modern reader.

Fifth, Kahlil Gibran has become a popular poet among contemporary readers. Kanter (1972) holds that Gibran has outsold all American poets from Auden to Whitman and is known on every university campus. Ayn Rand and others speak through The Prophet.

The widespread interest in the writings of Gibran had its beginnings in the 1950s. Students on campuses and elsewhere seem to have found in Gibran's words an explanation of reality, a code of living perhaps, not only in the Middle East but in America as well. No one can say with any certainty how many Gibran followers there are, but Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated, New York, the publisher of Gibran's original works in English, reports that over four million copies of The Prophet have been sold in the United States alone, and that Gibran's books are selling at the rate of seven thousand per week. A spokesman for Knopf states that on college campuses, Gibran is quoted as often as Jesus and Ayn Rand (Ross, 1972).

It is apparent then that Gibran has fascinated our youth, despite the fact that he is not considered to be a great poet in the history of English literature. The fact

that he does exercise a fascination and students turn to Gibran on their own initiative, compels educators and teachers to turn their attention to him.

Sixth, since our young people are willing to read Gibran on their own time and to quote him readily, then educators and teachers are provided with an opportunity to interest students in great literature and its values by using Gibran as a starting point. Response to literature is already there; teachers need only to capitalize upon it by providing students with the opportunities and materials to carry their studies further.

Statement of the Study

The focus of the present study will be:

- a) a curriculum rationale designed for a study of Kahlil Gibran;
- b) a presentation of data about the heritage, life, and works of Kahlil Gibran;
- c) a sample unit lesson plan based upon a study of Gibran's masterpiece, The Prophet; and
- d) an appreciation of Kahlil Gibran.

Delimitations of the Study

In the present study, reference to and statements concerning Kahlil Gibran are designed for education, and they are made solely for this purpose. Except insofar as it is necessary for the purpose above stated, this study will not be concerned with a literary criticism of Gibran's works.

Plan of the Study

The following discussion presents a summary of the organization of this study:

CHAPTER I has attempted to provide an introduction, to establish the need for the study, to present a statement of the study, and to outline its delimitations.

CHAPTER II gives a summary of selected authorities who advocate a response-oriented curriculum in literature. The ideas of these authorities are used to provide a rationale for the construction of a unit plan for the study of Kahlil Gibran at the secondary level.

CHAPTER III examines the works, life, and personality of Gibran and gives a commentary on his personal background to provide an accessible reference on Gibran.

CHAPTER IV discusses The Prophet, Gibran's masterpiece in English, and sets out a unit plan for teaching The Prophet.

CHAPTER V provides an appreciation of Kahlil Gibran.

Imagination is the only creator; its nearest and clearest manifestation is art; yes, art is life, life is art.

Gibran, 1962.

Youth is a beautiful dream, on whose brightness books shed a blinding dust. Will the day ever come when the wise link the joy of knowledge to youth's dream? Will the day ever come when Nature becomes the teacher of man, humanity his book, and life his school? Youth's joyous purpose cannot be fulfilled until that day comes. Too slow is our march toward spiritual elevation because we make so little use of youth's ardor.

Gibran, 1950, p.55.

CHAPTER II

THE RATIONALE OF A RESPONSE-ORIENTED ENGLISH CURRICULUM

The work of literary man is related to all work (whatever the subject) where language is used to "structure" experience, bringing it into new order, and taking account of new elements (Dixon, 1967). In children's drama and stories as well as in adult fantasies, individuals often play with representational worlds in order to make them fit more closely to needs and desires that may be only partly conscious. Men "long for more lives" when they regret and celebrate the selves they might have been. Such activity is life-enhancing and life-directed. It involves the effort to find in experience more than persons thought they knew or valued. Such an effort is inevitably "imaginative". If an interest in literature is to inform and modify the encounter of students with life itself, the teacher must bring into a vivid relationship life as it is enacted and life as it is represented in literature (Dixon, 1967).

A response-oriented curriculum in literature advocates that the goal of teaching English literature in the secondary school is to extend and deepen the response of students to literature; that response to literature is highly individual and personal depending upon the student's life experiences as well as his literary experience; that

response to literature is active and not passive; and that the teacher should provide for experiences in literature which will develop personal response, permitting the student to be his own interpretative artist, thus engendering "growth through English" (Squire, 1968, p.12). It is this response-rationale that underlies the lesson plans presented in this study which will provide a guide for teachers using Gibran in the secondary classroom.

Gibran's own view of education relates very closely to the response-rationale as is evidenced by the following quotation from The Prophet:

No man can reveal to you aught
but that which already lies half-
asleep in the dawning of your
knowledge.

The teacher . . . gives not of
his wisdom but rather of his faith
and lovingness.

If he is indeed wise, he does
not bid you enter the house of his
wisdom, but rather leads you to the
threshold of your own mind . . .

. . . For the vision of one man
lends not its wings to another man
. . . (pp.56-57).

A Review of Selected Authoritative Statements

The following section summarizes selected statements about a response-oriented literature curriculum of English education, both American and British. These writings will

be used to establish the rationale underlying the lesson plans presented in Chapter IV.

Certain English educators (Burton, 1965) suggest that the structure of literature is to be found in its recurrent themes and modes and in its various forms and genres. All functions of literature could be subsumed under vicarious experience, but because literature is an ordering and a synthesizing of experience, it can give a dimension essential to maturity of mind: penetrating awareness of the human condition, sometimes gay, sometimes grave, that we call wisdom.

Burton (1965) suggests a rationale for teaching secondary English. He notes that students may not admit to reading for wisdom, but adolescents are engaged in the cradle-to-grave search for identity. Their greatest need is for the resources of mind and spirit necessary for coming to terms with experience. Literature has a unique capacity for revealing the truth of human experience. Burton further notes that in the struggle to grow up inherent in adolescents, literature can play a major role by giving students these benefits:

- a) an insight into the complexity of human nature, since growing up involves developing an understanding of human nature. Characters in good literature have faults as well as virtues.

- b) an awareness of the clash of values. What is the good life? What do people do with their lives? What do men live by and for? Literature reveals the revolt of some individuals against certain values in their culture. On the one hand, the adolescent is a rebel against adult authority and certain adult values, and on the other, a slavish conformist within peer culture. This conflict often furnishes themes for literature.
- c) awareness of the commonness of human drama. Tragic elements in experience provide a needed tempering of the spirit. Tragedy makes suffering bearable by making it understandable.
- d) awareness of the significance and beauty of everyday things. The criterion of an adult mind is perceiving significance and beauty in the humdrum. Small details described accurately are good training for the student, deepening and extending powers of perception.

John Dixon (1967) in Growth through English describes English as a quicksilver among metals: mobile, living, and elusive. He breaks down English into three separate categories: skills, cultural heritage, and personal growth. Dixon explains that the skills model applies only to the

minor elements of the total process and includes learning correct spellings, vocabulary, punctuation, comprehending and using longer and more complex sentences. This model omits vast areas in the study of English. Dixon further notes that the cultural heritage approach focuses not on the experience of the learner but on the experiences found in fiction. He suggests a personal growth model because that approach focuses upon the personal culture of the student, upon the experience which the student brings to literature. He holds that there is an interplay between the personal world of the student and the world of the writer.

According to Dixon (1967), the maturing student through literature can come to know himself, and grow to know other men, society, and the world in general. Since the world is constantly changing as people themselves and their relationships are constantly changing, literature helps them to make a representational inner world which they alter, extend, and reshape as individual experiences broaden.

Dixon further advocates that the teacher should draw from students their experiences rather than present experience to them. By sharing their experiences through talking and writing, students make their experiences real

to themselves by organizing those experiences and imposing order on the flux of reality. Students measure the validity of their work by sensing the response of teachers and others to it.

James Squire (1968) in Response to Literature, a monograph of the Dartmouth Conference, states that human experience should take place in the classroom, thereby implying that education is an integral part of living. He says of the English classroom:

It is the place--there is no other in most schools--wherein the chief matters of concern are the particulars of humanness--individual human feeling, human response, and human time, as these can be known through the written expression (at many literary levels) of men living and dead, and as they can be discovered by student writers seeking through words to name and compose and grasp their own experience. English in sum is about my distinctness, and the distinctness of other human beings. Its function . . . is to provide an arena in which the separate man, the single ego, can strive at once to know the world through art, . . . The instruments employed are the imagination, the intellect, and texts or events that rouse the former to life. And to repeat, the goal . . . is to expand the areas of the human world--areas that would not exist but for art--with which individual man can feel solidarity and coextensiveness. (p.36)

The potential meaning of experience is not always clear at once--it needs to be experienced again through talking. Thus, a new role in relation to experience may

be adopted--the role in a sense of being a spectator of the experience. In literature, this role becomes a link between the student and the artist (Dixon, 1967). The imagination of both the reader and the artist plays an important role in the sharing of an artistic work. James Squire (1968) has set out this idea succinctly as follows:

The experience of life that literature provides enables a child to digest new thoughts, take in new feelings, and adopt new attitudes . . . understanding is a form of knowledge although it cannot be objectively measured . . . its vitality depends on the imaginative power of the author . . . and on our capacity as readers to test it against our own sense of experience. (p.56)

Although children come to school with a limited amount of social experience and the situations they are able to cope with are also limited, from their earliest years their simplifications of role and interaction and the ritual style of their speech lend themselves to a symbolic presentation of life. Therefore, improvisation is one of the best aids to learning, for enactment and gesture are natural to young people (Moffett, 1968).

The individual student will discuss the experience that will make sense to him, and the process of internalization will be developed and extended by writing. Private work takes its meaning from what has gone before, and writing assignments need a background of discussion and

shared experiences if they are to elicit response from students. Classroom discussion needs to be probing, exploratory, tentative, seeking to push back the boundaries of experience as it affects the individual student, so that the writing which he does later is both imaginative and individualistic, that is, related to his own individual response and what is necessary for him to make the experience real (Dixon, 1967). Britton (in Squire, 1968) supports Dixon's view:

The areas in which language operates in English lessons is the area of personal experience, the area involving relations with other people, with the identity of the individual, with the relation between ego and environment, . . . Personal experience as it operates through language in the English class thus has a quality not to be found in other areas . . . The themes of literature are the human themes; they are the relationships between man and his environment, those in which emotion is part of what is afoot. Thus it is here that all knowledge can come together for the individual. (pp. 55-56)

Through the teacher, students can be led to appreciate an author's style and form, and his choice of words. Particularly in the teaching of poetry, the teacher needs to have a sensitivity to words and their use which can be conveyed to students. The important thing is the experience about which the poet has written. If the work itself is good, students should have no difficulty

entering into that experience, recognizing it as universal, and appreciating the form and language of the particular piece under the guidance of the teacher (Dixon, 1967). In the following extract from Response to Literature, members of the Dartmouth Conference suggest that experience with literature should be entered into by students:

Recognition that English activities should be designed to enable the pupil through language to represent internally those experiences that are of moment to him implies that much of the talking, listening, writing, and reading is to be focused . . . upon personal experience . . . thus enabling the pupil to explore his own reaction and attitude to the topic. We see that the reading of literature is operational, in that each reader must himself recreate what he reads . . . the idea of literature as contributing to the sensitivity and responsibility with which individuals live through language. (p.56)

In making things real, language cannot help but give them value and meaning, and literature invites the reader into ways of evaluating certain aspects of life as he experiences them. It is usual, more often than unusual, to recognize oneself in a poem or piece of literature, to find a personal identification within it. This particularized response is primary and confirms the affective experience to be found in literature. Response is a thing of the individual's own making, an activity in which he is his own interpretative artist. The essential talk that springs

from literature is talk about experience, and in a classroom where talk explores experience literature is drawn into the dialogue (Dixon, 1967).

Members of the Dartmouth Conference further explain the identification process in this way:

Considered as perennial patterns of human behaviour which recur in evershifting historical variations, the archetypal images of experience can amplify the student's power to explain his own world, to bridge its inner and outer dimensions. Much of the appeal of myth derives from the fears and fantasies every child experiences, as part of the way he defines himself. Literature is perhaps one of the best ways we have of coping with the tensions of identity, those problems of the 'me and not me'; the agonies of growth are made bearable, even productive, through the vicarious enactment of them in the child who hears and reads nursery rhymes, fairy tales, and myths. (pp. 56-57)

Since the ultimate purpose of literary education in high school is to deepen and extend responses of young people to literature of many kinds, it is important to perceive literature as a human experience both for the reader and the writer, and to know that when it really works, it can have all the power and impact of life experience itself (Squire, 1968).

Response to literature is not passive but active. It is largely internalized and can involve the full play of the human personality, rational powers, emotional reactions,

and ethical commitments. Purves (1968) provides the following list to suggest the full range of response to literature:

- a) engagement: an internalized emotional response which involves a personal commitment and is present in most mature readers, and to a lesser degree in children and adolescents;
- b) perception: responses having to do with the acquisition of meaning, of basic understanding of what the work means and how it means;
- c) interpretation: generalized responses through which the reader relates the work to human experience or to other literary experience;
- d) evaluation: those responses in which the reader judges the worth of the literary work in relation either to personal or external criteria.

A sense of literary form must grow from within, taking into account the individual's past experience (Squire, 1968). Therefore, response to literature is highly personal and is dependent to a considerable degree upon the background of experience in literature and in life that a reader brings to any literary work (Squire in Maloney, 1971). Age and maturity seem to affect responses of an individual far more than intelligence and reading ability. Other factors can also affect responses, such as sex differences, social and

cultural differences which may have a unique or uncertain impact on the work in highly individualistic ways (Squire in Maloney, 1971).

Response includes not only the immediate response but the later effects. Because it includes a degree of accepting or rejecting values and emotional attitudes which the work offers, it will influence, perhaps greatly, future appraisals of behavior and feeling. Most of the values people have are culturally derived. Therefore, in entering the world of literature, readers are offered a flow and recoil of sympathies that accord with their culture pattern (Squire, 1968).

Curriculum Criteria

The basic objectives of a teacher should be to lead students to experience literature as a powerful way of knowing life. All literature is about man in four relationships: man and his gods, man and the natural world, man and other men, and man and himself. Out of these grow the archetypal themes or central myths of human experience. Using archetypes to organize literature, Northrop Frye (1962) lists four modes of approach to literature: romantic, comic, tragic, and ironic, based on the nature of the predicament of the hero or protagonist. This modal

approach enriches the study of literature since it illuminates the human condition.

Burton (1974) continues Frye's statement, noting that students should deal with these relationships and these archetypal themes or myths as they study literature. Formal units on these are not needed but some recognition of their existence is necessary. He further suggests that some attention should be given to form and to literary devices since these are what distinguish the study of literature from the study of other sciences.

Once teachers have determined the concepts they want to develop, then they are ready to select the materials appropriate for students (Burton, 1974). In presenting these concepts, Mallory (in Kahn, 1974) suggests that an English curriculum should be:

- a) not only cognitive but affective, based on ends and consequences with learning experiences that examine value systems and value goals;
- b) process oriented, that is, concerned with all ways of knowing, apprehending, and dealing with the world;
- c) student-centered, that is, structured around student needs, flexible, responding to shifting interests, yet holding consistent important learning and intellectual skills and processes;

d) open-ended to lead students from the classroom to the world outside, to present opposing points of view and alternative solutions to complex problems of existence in the real world.

Because of the humanizing effect of literature, developing a love of literature is one of the chief goals of teaching. The focus should be the value of literature for the student. Value direction aids in determining the personality and nature of adolescent experiences. Self-evaluation leads to self-education (Kahn, 1974).

Since students are being encouraged to approach the study of literature subjectively, questions designed by teachers might be aimed to draw from students their own experiences and their own reactions to the work being studied. Teachers may find that encouraging students to read on their own and to talk about the selections they have read may produce a greater interest in literature. Selections made by students will reveal their interests, likes and dislikes, and will aid the teacher to know them better. Encouraging students in this manner will give them the opportunity of developing their imaginations, their creativity, and provide them with an opportunity to examine values in literature, particularly human values, thus enabling them to become more tolerant and more open-minded.

Talk in the classroom provides them with the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings with others, thereby deepening their understanding of literary experiences. The teacher should convey that he is able to receive and respect significant engagements with experience and encourage students to trust their own responses.

Above all, the supreme relevance of literature is to develop character, imagination, creativity, and responsiveness to life (Squire, 1968), to mature students in human values with the primary concern for growth of the individual (Dixon, 1967; Kahn, 1974).

The World of Literature

The previous section has noted that a fundamental purpose in the teaching of literature is to nurture the personal response of the reader. But this line of reasoning has inherent limitations. The study of literature, for example, is a basic process in human existence. The following section outlines the argument that the study of literature not only allows the reader to escape from the real world but also to create the vision of a new world, thereby overcoming the limitations of reality (Frye, 1963). It might be argued, then, that the study of literature may be justified as a means to introduce students to a heritage of ideas and a means to examine critically the world of daily life.

The world of literature is a world in itself identifying the human world with the natural world, a world where there is no reality except that of the human imagination and a vivid reminder of life's experiences. But in that very vividness, there is something unreal because the true realities in literature are larger and more intense experiences than anything human beings can reach except in their imaginations (Frye, 1963).

There are two halves to literary experience:

- a) imagination which produces a better or worse world than the one humans usually live in; and
- b) emotions which separate the world into a half which people like or desire and a half which they dislike or reject.

Literature is a concrete world of immediate experience, a world that men try to build up and enter at the same time because readers relate pieces of literature to each other. The power of detachment in the imagination enables it to remove experience just out of reach of belief and action, and causes a tremendous increase in dignity or exhilaration. Literature gives experiences that stretch the human being to the heights and depths of what the mind can conceive. This action of the mind encourages tolerance (Frye, 1963).

The humanizing aspect of literature is one of its most positive influences in the development of a well-balanced

mind, helping the individual to cope with and rise above the mundane and materialistic influences of every day living. Literature is an organ of human life translating perceptions into feelings and emotions (Frye, 1963).

Throughout history, people have placed a value on literature which is above the value placed on other things. Something deep within the individual compels him to cherish the work of the writer and the poet. Men are literature-creating and literature-consuming animals (Carlsen, 1974).

Carlsen (1974) suggests that readers find in literature a variety of rewards, including:

- a) an unconscious absorption in the imaginary world and action on the page, escaping momentarily from real life to live in a more exciting and more splendid world than their own. A good reader experiences this involvement and finds it to be an experience of value.
- b) learning about people, other times, and other places. The avid reader is filled with information, bits and pieces of unrelated facts. A student may learn the same things from factual texts but not so indelibly. Literature fills in personal experience.
- c) suddenly meeting oneself, encountering situations similar to a person's own, rediscovering emotions and relationships. Literature echoes life

experiences. Although the person may glorify his individuality and uniqueness, he finds comfort in discovering that he is not alone, that others live and feel as he does.

- d) projecting unsolved dilemmas of human life; those things which trouble men deeply and have troubled men throughout the ages. Literature seldom solves these dilemmas or offers explanations. Rather, it represents a living situation and then throws the reader back upon himself. There is a constant uncertainty about reality and its true nature. Stories of people and what they have experienced record something significant about what it means to be a human being. Literature is very close to philosophy.
- e) providing aesthetic pleasure. Satisfaction is to be found in the contemplation of a well-made object which gives a sense of inner harmony. Perhaps this is the deepest and most important reward of all. No one can say exactly how it operates, but it is there, and it operates even though it cannot be defined.

No matter how much experience men gather in life, they can never get the dimension of experience that the imagination gives--only literature and art can do that (Frye, 1963).

Summary

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that literature is a human art treasured by men since the dawn of civilization. Its merits include aesthetic as well as didactic rewards; its humanizing elements involving both the intellect and the emotions provide men with insights into life experiences which they would not otherwise be able to come to know.

In addition, it has been shown that a response-oriented curriculum in literature suggests that the aim of teaching English literature in high school is to extend and deepen the responses of students to literature; that response to literature is individual and personal depending upon the student's experiences in life and literature; that response is active and not passive; and that teachers should provide for experiences in literature which will develop individual response.

Moreover, classroom activities should focus upon eliciting from students their personal responses. Students should be encouraged to trust their own responses, and teachers should respect significant engagements with experience objectively. The study of literature should help to mature students by bringing them in contact with as many varied life experiences as is possible to prepare them to face life in the world outside the classroom.

Literature can and should enrich students emotionally and intellectually by developing their imaginations, increasing their knowledge, and aiding them in establishing moral and ethical values. This rationale underlies the activities suggested in the unit plan which is outlined in Chapter IV of this study.

جبران خليل جبران

Gibran Kahlil Gibran

Lebanon, among Western poets, is an imaginary place, whose real existence vanished with the passing of David, Solomon, and the prophets, as the Garden of Eden was hidden through the fall of Adam and Eve. Lebanon is a poetical expression and not the name of a mountain.

Gibran, 1966, p.2.

Gibran is two men; one is awake in darkness, the other asleep in light.

(Young, 1945, p.90)

CHAPTER III

GIBRAN KAHLIL GIBRAN: HERITAGE AND BACKGROUND

Kahlil Gibran, the Lebanese mystic, poet, and philosopher, has achieved fame on both sides of the Atlantic, a fame which is steadily growing in both East and West. His books have been translated into more than twenty languages (Sheban, 1965), and his renown is world-wide.

Gibran's admirers have translated his Arabic works into English, his English works into Arabic. Often, however, the translations have been like transporting an automobile into a country without roads or like training a horse to travel expressways. To understand and justify some of Gibran's writings, a reader must study the unusual environment which influenced the dual Gibran (Sheban, 1965).

Chapter III presents background information about Gibran to assist the reader of his works to understand Gibran more completely. The following discussion provides data about Gibran's heritage, his biography, and his works. These data are used to construct the unit plan presented in Chapter IV. It must be noted, too, that no attempt is made to present a critical, literary analysis of Gibran's works, although one section of this chapter will summarize the comments which have been made about Gibran's writing.

Much of the information for this chapter has been obtained from the following references. First, Barbara Young has written a book on Gibran, This Man From Lebanon (1945), and a preface to a translation of part of his Arabic works in Prose Poems (1934). She was Gibran's secretary for the last seven years of his life and knew him well. Second, Mikhail Naimy, having been Gibran's lifelong friend, was pressured after Gibran's death to write A Biography of Kahlil Gibran (1934), published in Arabic. Third, Anthony R. Ferris (1959, 1960, 1962), an American-Lebanese, has translated most of Gibran's Arabic works, and has prefaced these with introductions which contain information about Gibran's life and times. Fourth, Kahlil Gibran, Gibran's godson and namesake, has given a comprehensive but brief summary of Gibran's life in the introduction to Lazarus and His Beloved (1973), a recently discovered work. Fifth, George Kheirallah, translator of Gibran's The Procession (1958) into English verse, and Joseph Sheban in Mirrors of the Soul (1965) have both given supplementary information about Gibran in these works. Sixth, Brother Andrew Dib Sherfan, O.F.C., author of The Nature of Love (1971) which explores Gibran's philosophy of love, contributes invaluable information about Gibran himself. Seventh, Martin L. Wolf in a lengthy preface to A Treasury of Kahlil Gibran (1952) discusses Gibran and his writings.

Information about the Middle East and the Arab world has been obtained primarily from the following sources: George E. Kirk, author of A Short History of the Middle East (1960); Desmond Stewart and the Editors of Life in their publication The Arab World (1962).

The writer of this report acknowledges the above works as primary sources for information about Gibran and the Middle East. To facilitate reading, only specific references and quotations have been cited in this chapter.

The Middle East

Historical Overview of the Middle East

In our shrinking modern world, the Middle East has assumed an importance which it has not enjoyed since the discovery of America. The Arab-Israeli conflict has focused the eyes of the world upon the Middle East. Yet, the Middle East has always been important, and in our present age remains important for three very good reasons. Politically and strategically, it is the gateway to three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. Economically, it possesses vast oil resources. Culturally, it is the birthplace of the world's three great monotheistic religions: Christianity, Mohammedanism, and Judaism.

The peoples of the Western world in general know little about the Middle East and its peoples, although our Western civilization was cradled on the banks of the Euphrates and the Nile. Often, the peoples of the Middle East are pictured as being illiterate and dirty, and as having no cultural background. Few persons are aware of the great civilization which once flourished in the area with Bagdad as its capital, nor are they aware that Bagdad was a centre of learning, culture, and extravagant beauty during the reign of Haroun el Raschid. Haroun el Raschid, whom many consider to be a fictional character taken from the Arabian Nights, was in fact the ruler of the Islamic World in the Ninth Century, A.D.

If legend and myth surround the reign and name of Haroun el Raschid, it is because he is representative of the Golden Age of Islam which reached its zenith in the Ninth Century, A.D. The Arab Empire was the greatest the world has ever known, stretching from within sixty miles of Paris to the heart of China. When Europe was living through its Dark Ages, both poetry and science flourished at Bagdad. The contributions to modern civilization by the Arabs and other peoples of the Middle East have been significant: algebra and the alphabet being only two of them.

The rise of the Ottoman Empire from 1453 to 1683 and the destruction of the Arab Empire in the Fifteenth Century

by the Turks obscured the Middle East for centuries. Oppressed and overshadowed by Turkey, the Middle East lay as if hidden behind an iron curtain. It was not until Napoleon invaded Egypt and Ferdinand de Lesseps built the Suez Canal that the Middle East began to emerge into the light of world history once more.

When the Arab Empire collapsed, the Arabs slept under the rule of Turkey for nearly four hundred years. During World War I, the British encouraged the Arabs to shake off the yoke of the Ottoman Empire, challenging them to match the rest of the world in civilization and progress. The Arabs are still in search of union; until now, they have succeeded in agreeing on only one point: to disagree.

The Middle East has always been distinguished by poets, writers, and philosophers whose writings in Arabic have been preserved. Their writings remain largely untranslated because Arabic is extremely difficult to translate and its nebulous meanings make it an extremely difficult language for the Westerner to learn. The Arabic alphabet consisting of twenty-nine letters looks like a series of dots and curls, and as if to confound the Westerner further, Arabic is written from right to left. (The reader is directed to the title pages which are numbered pages 2 and 30. These pages are illustrative of Arabic writing).

The cultural heritage of the Middle East is predominantly Moslem since over ninety-eight per cent of the peoples of the Middle East are followers of Islam. Because the Koran, the holy book of the Moslems, is considered to be the Word of God as given to the Prophet Mohammed, the Arabic of the Koran is held to be sacred by the adherents of Islam. For this reason, literary Arabic has remained virtually unchanged since the Seventh Century, and the Koran remains the paradigm for written Arabic to this day.

Although Kahlil Gibran was a Maronite Christian, brought up in the traditional teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, his early education was in Arabic. Arabic studies always include a study of the Koran and the great Arabic writers, both Islamic and pre-Islamic, for instance, Abu Nuwas, Al Ghazali, Avicenna, Al Maary, Averroes, Al Farid, Mutanabbi, and others. Therefore, Gibran was influenced by their thought, particularly by Avicenna, philosopher and poet, whom Gibran greatly admired.

Amid the turmoil of conquests, downfalls, and rivalries, Lebanon was the only area in the Middle East untouched by any foreign power. United in their Roman Catholic Faith under Saint Maroun, the Lebanese fought the

early heresies that threatened the Christian world, and thus they have always been in sympathy with the West rather than with the East.

Gibran's Lebanon

Gibran Kahlil Gibran, the poet, philosopher, artist, and mystic, known as "The Prophet of Lebanon" was born in Bsharra in 1883. Bsharra is a small village which clings to the slope of the Holy Mountain in Lebanon below the Cedars of God--Arz e Rubb-- yet high above the Sacred Valley --Wadi Khadisha. Lebanese tradition holds that the ancient cedars were planted by Christ when He lived on earth.

Lebanon, which meant so much in Gibran's life, is a narrow picturesque, mountainous strip of land, stretching a little more than one hundred miles along the east coast of the Mediterranean, between Palestine (now Israel^{*}) to the south and Syria to the north and east. A biblical land, symbol of purity and immortality, full of tradition, superstition, and myth, it was the home of the Phoenicians of antiquity. The word Phoenician means believer in immortality. The Phoenicians, forefathers of the Lebanese, were excellent sailors and were noted for the moral and

*The Arab nations do not recognize the existence of the State of Israel.

and spiritual revelations made by their poets, seers, and prophets.

About 1700 B.C., the Phoenicians invented the first truly phonetic alphabet from which all modern alphabets derive, and are said to have been the first to perfect the art of making glass. They have made other great contributions to knowledge in mathematics and astronomy.

The word Lebanon which means white alludes to the constant snow that remains on the summit of Lebanon's mountains during the greater part of the year. A natural island in the featureless plains of the Middle East, Lebanon enfolds a startling variety of scenes within its coastal plain, its two ranges of mountains, and its Bekaa Valley. Lebanon is the geographical and spiritual centre of the Middle East.

Lebanon today is an independent republic with a population of 2,500,000 people. At the time Gibran was born, Lebanon was part of the vast Ottoman Empire, then on the verge of collapse. Turkey, at that time, was being referred to as "the sick man of Europe" (Trueman et al, 1969, p.369). Turkish officials supervised the collection of taxes but paid little attention to the inhabitants. The rulers were feudal lords, both political and ecclesiastical, often drawn from the natives themselves. During the Arab and Turkish conquests of the area, many Christians

fled to the Lebanese mountains which were too treacherous and impregnable to be assaulted by any army, and where they were able to preserve their religion, a tiny island of Christianity in an ocean of Islam.

Ancient Lebanon was a pagan holy land, its chief shrines associated with Adonis--Thummuz--and Venus--Astarte. The Phoenicians who inhabited the country at that time were Semites who lacked the obsession with righteousness of the Arabs or Hebrews. Claude Bragdon (Kunitz and Colby, 1955) explains that the Lebanese are as different from the Syrians as the Scotch Highlander is different from the Lowlander, being a Nordic and not a Semitic race. Cleanliness, contentment, and hospitality are the heritage of the Lebanese.

Lebanese mythology holds that Adonis had his origin in Lebanon where he roamed the Lebanese hills and mountains before the Greeks claimed him for Mount Olympus, which he always deserts in spring to return to Lebanon. Gibran never forgot the cedars in the paradise of God, and never forgot the gods who lived and played in that paradise. Gibran's memories of Lebanon stayed with him all his life, and were reflected in his work. Specifically, he states:

The things which the child loves remain in the domain of the heart until old age . . . I am one of those who remembers those places regardless of distance and time. (Gibran, 1966, p.12)

After World War I, Lebanon became a mandate of France, and received its independence shortly before the outbreak of World War II.

Of all the countries in the Middle East where Islam is the prevailing faith, Lebanon is the only one with a Christian majority. The Maronites are the largest religious denomination in Lebanon and consider themselves descendants of the earliest Christians. The Maronite Church is an Eastern rite of the Roman Catholic Church, and until approximately fifty years ago, its priests were permitted to marry before ordination. The Church is named after its patron saint Mar Maroun who died about 400 A.D. after he had established his church in the Sacred Valley at a time when there was intense and bitter strife among the sects of the Catholic Church. The Church liturgy, rather than being conducted in Latin or the vernacular, uses the ancient Syriac (some hold it is Aramaic which was the language of Christ), and is full of pomp and ceremonial ritual.

The people of Lebanon now speak Arabic. This is not the language of their ethnic background for, up until the Seventh Century, it was the language of the Arabs alone. Arabic spread over the area in which it is now spoken as a result of southern invasions and conquests which followed upon the rise of Islam after the death of the Prophet

Mohammed. The language of the Lebanese, like that of other peoples conquered by the Arabs, gave way to the language of the ruling minority.

Arabic

Arabic is the most important Semitic tongue, and is one of the world's principal languages. Approximately 121 million people speak Arabic today (1975 World Almanac).

The letters of the Arabic alphabet are an adaptation from the Aramaic which in turn comes from the Phoenician. All the letters are consonantal, vowels being signs inserted above and below the letters. The majority of words have only three consonants. Peculiarly, there are neither quotation nor punctuation marks in Arabic. The end of a sentence is marked by what is called a glottal stop (Tritton, 1955, p.17).

Arabic can be divided into two forms: classical or literary Arabic--al lughat al fus'ha--and spoken Arabic--al lughat al amiyya. Written Arabic is the same everywhere the language is used. When a journalist writes or an orator broadcasts, he uses the same tongue reverting to a formal Arabic idiom as different from the language he uses with his family and friends as Chaucer differs from modern English. The use of Arabic in this way imposes a strain on Arabic-speaking people, not all of whom have been educated

to understand classical Arabic. The speaker or writer on these occasions often sings (in speaking, a sort of chant) what he has to say. Sometimes what he says on these occasions bears little resemblance to what he truly feels.

Although the classical language is the same for all Arabic-speaking people, the spoken language has differences even in the most common terms. The word palm (of the hand) for a Lebanese is dast, for an Egyptian kaf, and for some others cuff. Therefore, persons from one Arabic-speaking country can rarely understand the spoken language of persons from another, and indeed these verbal differences sometimes occur from town to town and even from village to village, so that people must communicate in the classical language to understand and to be understood. A person may be able to speak the popular language and still be unable to speak, read, or understand al fus'ha.

Like other languages, Arabic carries within it a whole series of built-in judgments and attitudes. Since it is the language of the Koran and Mohammed, the Prophet of God, Arabic not only unifies the Arab world, but also shapes and molds that world; therefore, it has an even greater effect upon its speakers than other languages have on their speakers. A Westerner finds it impossible to speak Arabic with any fluency without becoming Arabized to a certain extent.

The translation of Arabic into English presents a continuing problem for scholars. Not only does the pronunciation of Arabic vary throughout the Arab world, but also several of the twenty-nine letters of the alphabet represent sounds for which the English language has no exact equivalent. Thus, so common an Arabic name as Mohammed has been variously spelled in English as Mohamed, Muhammad, and Mehemet. None of these gives the exact equivalent of the Arabic pronunciation.

Arabic, both written and spoken, is a forceful language with a prolific vocabulary of pregnant words of fine shadings and meanings, and is a language full of symbolism and metaphor. Many words are built from one root word varying only slightly in spelling and pronunciation, so that an understanding of a root word provides an intuitive awareness of a word derived from that root. Furthermore, every word has hundreds of synonyms.

Arabic is a language of delicate tones and finely shaded meanings, a warm and musical language, the sound of which can easily move its listeners to tears or joy. It has an extraordinary richness and precision, fit for the subtlest philosophical and scientific shades of thought, wise sayings, or historical narration.

Classical Arabic, in which the Koran is written, is still used on formal occasions and in writing, and has

remained practically unchanged throughout the past twelve hundred years, although in recent years there has been a strong admixture of Western influence. The Koran, which is the cornerstone not only of the Moslem religion but also of Arabic literature, had a great influence on the literary development of Arabic style.

Arabic writers have always had a freedom to express themselves as they wished. They have set their own conventional patterns and no amount of criticism nor outside pressure has diverted them from their task. Arabic tradition contains an enormous body of epic and lyric poetry and more brilliant Arabian Nights than the one already translated, as well as a precious store of mystical philosophy.

Joseph Gollomb (in Young, 1945) states that the sonnet was known in Arabic long before it appeared in Europe, and that this poetic form was copied by the Italians from the Arabs by way of Spain. The Petrarchan form which is based upon the quatrain tends to support Gollomb's statement. The quatrain is a popular verse form in Arabic and was used by Omar Khayyam, the Persian poet, who lived in the Eleventh Century. Persian is sixty per cent Arabic.

Because of its extensive vocabulary and the fact that an Arabic-speaking person can easily express a thought in at least twenty different ways and sometimes in many, many more,

Arabic lends itself particularly to the writing of poetry.

The Lebanese inherit a rich love for poetry and literature, probably a legacy from their Phoenician and Chaldean forebears. Poetry is the prized possession of the people, even among the illiterate. Poets and even readers of poetry are held in high esteem.

Gibran wrote almost half his works in his native Arabic which he loved. Even to the end of his life, he continued this "sweet exercise" (Sherfan, 1971, p.21). Many times during the writing of his work in English, the poet broke into a flood of Arabic because he could not find an English word that conveyed the exact meaning of what he wanted to express, there being as he said, ". . . fifty words in Arabic to give expression to a thought or word (here he was speaking of the word 'love'), while in English there is only one" (Sherfan, 1971, p.21).

Very often Gibran complained of his inadequacy to express all his thoughts in English although he was placed on a list of the six top writers of his day; this list included Joseph Conrad (Young, 1945, p.37; Sherfan, 1971, p.21). Throughout his life, Gibran read aloud from Arabic for the sheer pleasure of the sound. He criticized the inadequate translation of the Bible into English for he was familiar with every nuance of the Aramaic language which Christ had spoken.

To his readers of Arabic, Gibran brought the simplicity of English expression, a refreshing freedom of thought, and a frankness which demanded reform. In Arabic, his style and concepts were revolutionary. To his readers in English, he brought the poetry, traditions, sagacity, and philosophy of the Middle East, the great sweep of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Gibran's songs were of the earth; he loved his fellow man to whom he carried the torch of freedom for all peoples alike. His writing, though simple, is singular, reflecting his philosophy and unique expression.

The Life of Kahlil Gibran

Lebanese Society

Kahlil Gibran was reared in a typical Lebanese family who lived in one of the small villages on the Holy Mountain in Lebanon. Lebanese families are normally very close knit, filial love and devotion being the rule rather than the exception. The Lebanese have a great love for cleanliness and virtue and are usually deeply religious. Children do not need to be urged to practise the Fourth Commandment for they are taught obedience and respect for both parents and elders from infancy.

Lebanese society is largely matriarchal although the man remains "lord and master" of the family and his every

whim is catered to immediately and efficiently. The mother looks after the home and the children. Even after her children are grown up, the mother advises and "bosses" them, sons and daughters alike.

In Lebanon at the turn of the Century, a daughter did not leave home until she married or entered a convent. She was not expected to work to earn her living as she was provided for by her father until she came of marriageable age, at which time she was expected to marry. Her life at home was a preparation for the married state: she learned to cook, sew, look after the home, and care for children. When she married, she entered her husband's home and normally lived with his family under the watchful eye of her mother-in-law. She was expected to be and to remain virtuous; indeed, no opportunity if preventable was afforded her to be otherwise.

In the traditional customs of Lebanon, male children are regarded more highly than female children. The birth of a boy calls for a celebration, girls meriting little, if any, fanfare. Boys are held to be heirs who will carry on the family name and traditions, while girls are considered to be inferior to their brothers, temporary possessions who will become part of another family. Parents without male children often express their regret, and some go so far as to believe they have incurred the wrath of God or are victims of a malevolent fate.

The Lebanese woman is her father's daughter, her husband's wife, or her son's mother. She is named in this fashion as she enters each of these stages of her life, never for a moment having an identity of her own, although this is slowly changing. She never lives alone, but always makes her home with her nearest male relative though he be a cousin fifty times removed.

Lebanon's marriage customs, like the country, dated back to antiquity. Parents for centuries had arranged the marriages of their children. Too often, girls were forced to marry men old enough to be their fathers and even grandfathers for political reasons, for wealth and position, or at the whim and fancy of any man in whom the parents stood in awe. Lebanon during the early 1900s was a Theocracy, and its clergy, as well as being spiritual advisers to their flocks, were money lenders, landlords, arrangers of marriages, and political figures, whose word was law. No one dared disobey a priest in any matter nor would a daughter dare to disobey her father nor a woman her nearest male relative. Although by far the greater majority of clergymen were devout and holy men, many were corrupt.

This was the society and culture into which Kahlil Gibran was born in 1883. Gibran had a great respect for women and early recognized their subservient role in Lebanese society. Through his writings, he was largely

responsible for the emancipation of women in his own country and in other countries of the Middle East.

Gibran's Early Life

Gibran's mother Kamila, an intelligent, poised, and soft-spoken woman, noted for her beauty and musical ability, was the daughter of a Maronite priest, Father Estephan Rahma. She had been widowed in Brazil shortly after the birth of her son Peter, and had returned to her father's home in Lebanon. One day, when she was singing in her father's garden, Gibran's father heard her, fell in love with, and married her despite the fact that it was most unusual for a woman, who had been married or who was not a virgin, to acquire a husband in Lebanon.

Gibran's father was a handsome and charming ne'er-do-well, very fond of arrack, a very potent Lebanese alcoholic beverage made from grapes and anise, and he was a dealer in sheep. Sheep dealing is a lucrative business in Lebanon as lamb is the most important meat staple. Gibran had two younger sisters, Sultana and Marianna.

In 1895 when Gibran was twelve years old, his family emigrated to the United States and settled in Boston. Peter had been anxious to come to the New World to seek his fortune in the land where the streets are paved with gold. However, in 1897, when Gibran was fourteen, he returned to

Lebanon to study, partly because he had a burning love for the Arabic classics and wished to pursue his studies in his native land, and partly because his mother was anxious to remove him from an entanglement he had made with an older woman.

He attended Madrassat al Hikmat--the School of Wisdom--in Beyrouth, and found a good friend and teacher in his philosophy professor, Father Joseph Haddad, ". . . the only man who ever taught me anything" (Young, 1945, p.117). At Madrassat al Hikmat, he studied a variety of subjects outside the prescribed curriculum: English, medicine, law, religion, and music.

While still a student, Gibran met and fell in love with a beautiful Lebanese girl, Selma Karamy, who at twenty was to him the embodiment of all the best qualities and virtues of womanhood. Although Selma returned his love, her father had already promised her in marriage to another man, a marriage arranged by the Bishop of Beyrouth who wanted Selma for his nephew because of her father's wealth and position. Within two years of her marriage, Selma died in childbirth, and Gibran was inconsolable. Of his love for Selma he later wrote, "Love gave me a tongue and tears" (Gibran, 1957, p.17).

While he attended Madrassat al Hikmat Gibran wrote his first article entitled "Music" which attracted the

attention of the Arabic world. Before he was twenty, he had published in Arabic the largest and most comprehensive volume of his poetry and prose consisting of seven books, mostly prose poems, which displayed mystical vision, metrical beauty, and a simple and fresh approach to life. Among these is his famous "The Life of Love" which compares marriage to the four seasons of the year.

His prose poems, a form of writing of which he was distinctly the originator in his mother tongue, created a school of writing that caught the vivid and sensitive imagination of the poetic and scholarly East, and of which he is recognized as the father throughout the Arabic-speaking world (Young, 1934, p.viii).

Gibran As a Young Man

He completed his studies at Beyrouth in 1901 and graduated with high honors. He then travelled throughout the Middle East and Europe remaining for a time in Paris to study art.

Selma's death provoked him to write in Arabic a bitter and ironic work entitled Spirits Rebellious made up of four short stories in which he attacked the age-old Lebanese marriage customs and condemned in unheard-of-language the evils of Church and state administration then prevailing in Lebanon. Gibran's audacity was quickly brought to the

attention of the Church Fathers, and just as speedily he was excommunicated from the Church. The actual date of publication of this work is not known, but the book was ceremoniously burned in the marketplace in Beyrouth in 1901. Automatic exile from Lebanon followed his excommunication. He left for ever the country that he loved. He had no alternative but to return to his family in America.

On arrival in America, he found that his younger sister Sultana had died of tuberculosis and that his step-brother Peter was suffering from the last stages of the disease. Soon after, Peter died; in March of the following year, his mother passed away. For a time he shared an apartment with his younger sister Marianna in Boston, but found it difficult there to do any creative work.

Early in 1904, he had twenty drawings to offer but no gallery would receive his mystical little paintings. He finally exhibited them later in the same year at a private gallery in Boston which burned down while his paintings were on exhibit. Although he worked vigorously at writing, Arabic prose and poetry yielded little or no money. What little he earned came from his drawings and paintings. However, the art exhibit in Boston proved to be a turning point in his literary and artistic career. His paintings attracted the attention of the Headmistress of the Cambridge School for Girls, Miss Mary Elizabeth Haskell,

and she later financed him for three years to study in Paris.

In 1908 because of Mary Haskell's aid, he went to Paris and studied at Academie Julien and at Ecole des Beaux Arts, where he became a pupil of Auguste Rodin. Shortly before he left France, he learned of his father's death in Lebanon.

In the spring of 1910, he returned to Boston, but later in the same year, he moved to New York and took up residence at 51 West Tenth Street, a studio building for artists, where he lived the rest of his life.

Gibran in America

Once in America, Gibran began to improve his English and to write prolifically in Arabic. He grieved for Selma and delved deeply into philosophy and mysticism. Deprived of his religion, he embraced no other but searched his own soul for God. His attacks against the Church and Lebanese conventions grew stronger and attracted the attention of the world to the sordid conditions then prevailing in Lebanon. His war on conventions was really a war for recognition.

During his early years in New York, he began writing poems under the heading of "A Tear and a Smile" in an Arabic-American newspaper The Immigrant, and published at his own expense what is considered to be his masterpiece in Arabic, a small book of poetry entitled The Procession.

Shortly after, he followed it with The Broken Wings, an autobiographical account of his romance with Selma.

In 1919, Gibran blazed his way into English literature with The Madman, partly a translation from the Arabic and partly written directly in English. During this period, he wrote many short works in Arabic which were later gathered together in one book The Tempests.

In 1923, at age forty, Gibran published The Prophet, his masterpiece in English. He had first conceived the idea for the book while he was studying in Beyrouth and had re-written it several times in Arabic. It found immediate and lasting favor and is a modern English classic of surpassing beauty and moral grandeur.

By this time, Gibran had adopted English as his sole medium of expression. In 1926, he published a small book of aphorisms, Sand and Foam, which is the only book of its type in the English language.

Gibran is supposed to have had three mystical experiences, in one of which he claimed to have seen and spoken with Christ. In 1926 with a sudden insight into the personality of Judas, he decided on impulse to write Jesus the Son of Man. He commenced in November and the work continued for eighteen months. In 1931, the year of his death, The Earth Gods was published.

Death of Gibran

As far back as 1922, Gibran had begun to suffer pain from an illness which the doctors could not diagnose. Now he felt it was bronchitis, now rheumatism, now a disease of the heart. Between attacks at varying intervals, he would find himself quite normal. It was not until 1928 that X-rays finally revealed he had cancer of the liver. Following the diagnosis, he became more lonely, more homesick, and suffered great pain. He kept the nature of his illness from his friends, his secretary Barbara Young, and from his younger sister Marianna, his only remaining relative. All during the period of his illness, he had moments of great inspiration and often worked throughout the night falling exhausted into bed in the morning.

He died on Friday, April 10th, 1931, at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York. His body lay in state for two days and was later shipped to Lebanon for burial. His dying request had been that he be buried in a crypt of his childhood Church of Mar Sarkis.

When Gibran's body arrived at Beyrouth, never had such a reception been given to any man, living or dead. The President of Lebanon and his ministers, members of the High French Commissariat and ranking officers of the French Admiralty, Christians, Mohammedans, and Jews were at the quayside to meet the ship. The ecclesiastical pageantry

was beyond description. Hundreds of priests and bishops of every denomination under Eastern and Western skies were in solemn attendance: Maronites, Christians, Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Mohammedans, Shiites, Sunnites, Druzes, Jews, and others. From all the villages and hamlets along the route from Beyrouth to the Church of Our Lady of the Cedars, hundreds of people came in tribute and to escort the body to its final resting place. From Beyrouth to Tripoli and up the Holy Mountain, ancient Maronite rites were carried out.

In his Will, Gibran left the proceeds from his royalties to his hometown of Bsharra where a museum has been set up in his honor. Some of his original paintings and manuscripts are on exhibit the year around.

The Personality of Kahlil Gibran

Barbara Young (1945) in the introduction to This Man From Lebanon describes Gibran as a great man who was also simple in his tastes, who was never quite at home on this planet, and who burned with a flame of a tireless passion of divine life. She states:

No facts, no assembly of facts, no recital of incidents and experiences can give any true conception of the reality of Gibran. He was one of those rare gestures of the Mighty Unnameable Power, and in his voice and in his being were vested an authority not to

be confounded with mere human excellence,
for he was never wholly and entirely of
this world. (p.vii)

Kahlil Gibran was a delicate boy with chestnut hair, high forehead, and large wondering limpid eyes which arrested the attention of the beholder so that observation seldom went beyond them. As a child, his mother would weave for him tales of Haroun el Raschid and of all the Arabic wonderland. Early in Gibran's life, his mother said of him, "My son is outside psychology" (Young, 1945, pp.vii, 145), for he was unpredictable and difficult, tender over a broken flower one moment and the next raging like a young lion because of some imposing of authority upon him. He said years later, over and over again:

I was not a nice boy, but it was because
I was restless. I felt strange and lost.
I could not find my way. But my mother
knew it, though I never told her. I did
not need to tell her. (Young, 1945,
p.145)

Gibran's mother had watched him from the early days of his childhood when he sat brooding over a book by Leonardo da Vinci. She had stood by to quiet his small fury when something did not please him. He was a boy of moods as he later became a man of moods, and during these spells he often sought the Monastery of Mar Sarkis.

As a boy he spent most of his time reading, writing, or drawing. If the other children succeeded in engaging him in conversation, he would tell them strange stories

which they could not understand and which led them to believe he was an odd child. There was in him from early childhood a passion for storms. There was something in him, he said, that was released, unharnessed, and set gloriously free by a storm. He was rather timid and unsociable, shy, reticent, almost shrinking. He shunned the company of his friends and neighbors in order to be left alone to devote himself to reading and meditation.

Gibran's life was an example of the belief in the authority of the great mind. His own keen mind led him to open a new road for himself. In the world of Gibran's imagination, reason and understanding prevailed, and superstitions and fantasies melted like ice in the sun. For Gibran, knowledge was man's only riches.

Gibran revolted against law, religion, and customs. He advocated a society peaceful and mystical: a Utopia full of love and eternal happiness for which the world lacks the formula and procedure. In his youth, he had conceived the universe as being perfect and devoid of evil. He pictured a joyous world free of suffering, a world that abhorred corruption. For the people of such a world, the mind would be the only lamp to illuminate the dark path of ignorance, and this lamp would be kept eternally lit. Justice and wisdom lived side by side in that paradise of his conception, and unity and good will prevailed among men.

But after he found out that the heaven he had fashioned was different from mundane reality, he felt disappointed and embittered.

Gibran lamented the conditions he found in the real world. His sorrowing songs became a beautiful and soothing melody. In his poetry, "this beloved son of Lebanon" (Ferris, 1960, p.9) projected a bewildered inner self, and reflected the wealth and philosophic depths of his knowledge both in his Arabic and English writings.

The West knows him as a man of vast spiritual vision and dream, a gentle person, loving and beloved, with a priceless sense of humor and a divine gift for friendship. In the East, they know the other Gibran, several of him. They know the man who was steel in velvet and a sword in silk, the man whose bold Spirits Rebellious angered the Church and stirred the empire of the Turk, the Gibran who in his brief life created a definite literary style and originated a school of expression previously unknown to the Arabic tongue, and who has been for many years the pattern for young Arabic writers who call him their father and their master.

There was a side to this many-sided being that was like a child. There were few who saw this puckish and enchanting aspect. It would show itself occasionally in a flash, usually after long hours of creative work when weary with

the burden of his own genius, he would throw it off like a garment. He would grin and say he would make an American verse: a ragged piece of doggerell with a bite of humor.

Gibran once wrote, "Would that someone would make up my mind for me in all things of everyday life. I am so busy . . . that I have no time to choose between this and that" (Young, 1945, p.59). Yet, he often exhibited the most whimsical and delightful persistence concerning the smallest details.

Gibran's tempers were famous, but infrequent. Only an extreme of injustice could provoke his anger. He had an intolerance for hypocrites only, but all other types of wrong-doing he could accept as being either explainable or stupid.

His mental world, its range and depth, was inexplicable by any standard of scholarship that is known. He could converse not only intelligently and brilliantly on any topic with any man, but exhibited a particular knowledge that even specialists in their own fields could not surpass. Once for a jest, he dictated to three secretaries at one time in three languages and on three different subjects.

Gibran loved to work and hated to let one moment pass without working. In the days when he could not work during his illness previous to his death, he found his idleness ". . . more bitter than quinine and more severe than the

teeth of a wolf" (Gibran, 1959, p.27). Barbara Young (1945, p.vii) describes him as "the tireless one".

He hated man-made laws and abhorred the traditions of his ancestors. He felt his hatred was due to his love for the sacred and spiritual kindness that should be the source of every law on earth, ". . . for kindness is the shadow of God in man" (Gibran, 1959, p.28). He had an extraordinary compassion and understanding. He detested the philosophy of procrastination which is typical of the East, and expressed his frustration with certain Lebanese and Middle Eastern attitudes.

Gibran never married and lived a strangely single and and separate life although he had a multitude of contacts from beggars to royalty. Barbara Young (1945) states:

There was a sense, impossible to define clearly, in which he was always and for ever alone as a few and only a few men who have walked this planet have been.
(p.45)

Gibran was keenly conscious of his loneliness and yearned for the peace of Wadi Khadisha and the Monastery of Mar Sarkis during all the years he spent in America. He believed he had built his own prison in New York, and referred to his studio which he had named "The Hermitage" as "my little cage" (Young, 1945, p.68).

He felt himself to be an alien to this world, and symbolically expressed a spiritual hunger and a desire to

fulfill an undefined dream. In 1911, in a letter to Mikhail Naimy, his life-long friend, he wrote, ". . . my soul is hungry and thirsty for some sort of nourishment, but I don't know where to find it" (Gibran, 1959, p.37). He often wanted to repudiate the world and expressed the notion that no one really understood him. Writing to Mikhail Naimy on a later occasion, he confided that he felt he had been cursed at birth, and that something important was missing from his life (Gibran, 1959, p.73).

His life in terms of time was a short life, but he neither lived nor thought in terms of time. A word constantly on his lips was, "We have eternity" (Young, 1945, p.3). It was his creed and it directed his life. Gibran did not use the word "reincarnation" nor did he believe in the purification process through many lives, but he had an utter belief in what he called "the continuity of life" (Young, 1945, pp.viii, 94). It was his profound certainty that the life that is the human spirit has lived and shall live timelessly; that the bonds of love, devotion, and friendship shall bring together these endlessly born beings, and that animosity, evil communications, and hatred have the same effect of reassembling groups of entities from one cycle to another. Indifference acts as a separating influence. Those souls who neither love nor hate, but

remain entirely self-contained as regards one another, meet but once in the pattern of the ages.

These were his beliefs, this was his faith, changeless as day and night, and as forthright. He belonged to no sect, but from his earliest years his passionate devotion was given to Jesus. He was intensely religious but neither an organized nor an orthodox Christian. He was what might be called a Christian mystic, for mystic he was in the perfect and perfected sense. It was in the world of the spirit that Gibran truly lived his life.

Brother Andrew Dib Sherfan, O.F.C. (1971) in The Nature of Love summarizes the nature of Gibran's life and personality as follows:

The whole life and attitude of Gibran can be summed up as being a life of frustration stemming from his inability to liberate himself from man-made laws, and to liberate his brothers for whom he had a genuine compassion. His doctrine has something of mysticism, realism, and hallucination . . . He attributed to himself a kind of prophetic mission . . . to save his fellowmen from the slavery of man-made laws . . . (p.31)

It appears then that Gibran was an unusual human being of great sensitivity and scholarship, with a boundless capacity for love. Furthermore, he seems to have been an idealist who wanted to create a perfect world in which mankind could live in happiness.

The Literary Works of Kahlil Gibran

The works of Kahlil Gibran will be presented in the chronological order of their date of publication in English. All his Arabic works have been translated into English and although these were written either previous to or simultaneously with his English works, they will be given in the order of publication in English. Most of Gibran's works have been through numerous reprints. Some of the reprints fail to carry the date of original publication or the date of the source of the material, particularly the Arabic editions whose front pages carry only the year of reprint. Therefore, it is difficult to determine exactly when some of Gibran's works were first published in Arabic, but an approximate date as nearly accurate as possible will be given as each work is presented.

The literary works of Gibran show that he was concerned with the human condition, the destiny of man, and the inexplicable "why" of his being, a subject which has intrigued philosophers and thinkers since the beginning of time. He stressed that few things in life have real importance, and reminds his readers that if human relationships are wrong, no other factors in life can matter.

Original Works in English

The Madman published in 1919 introduced Gibran to English readers. A small book of only seventy pages, it is the product of the poet's youth and early manhood. It is an expression of the passionate inner life not yet restrained and controlled by the vaster wisdom and compassion of Gibran's later works. Here for the first time, Gibran registers fully his sense of that aloneness which remained with him always even to the end. The Madman contains parables of fine irony and also certain intimations of disillusion and a sharp bitterness against life. The young poet cries out through the madman whose masks have been stolen. The parables contained herein show Gibran in rebellion against hypocrisy, blindness, and stupidity. The conflict in his self, within his seven selves of which he writes, is still going on.

The parable is a form of story peculiar to the East, very ancient and yet very telling. It was Gibran's chosen method of driving home a truth. The form is as unailing as it is effective.

The Forerunner, published in 1920, is again in part a translation from Arabic and in part written directly in English. A slim volume of only sixty-four pages, it contains both parables and poetry. In this work, Gibran ridicules those who think they are the only persons who

know truth. He employs satire in the old Oriental way disguised within the parable. He attempts to show that each individual alone is responsible for his own destiny. In this work is included the superb poem "Love" with its few lines almost all in words of one syllable, a stark and beautiful confession of yearning.

The Prophet, published in 1923, is the most famous of Gibran's works in the English-speaking world. Its major themes centre on life, death, and rebirth, and it is concerned with man's relationship to his fellow man. This work will be the subject of Chapter IV of this study, and will be discussed at greater length in that chapter.

Sand and Foam appeared in 1926. A man walks on the seashore where the tide effaces his steps and the wind goes with the foam. The book is unusual in English as it contains only brief sentences which are really odds and ends of Gibran sayings. His treatment of the realities is of the simplest. In this work, he says:

Oh Lord, let me be the prey of the lion,
before you let the rabbit be my prey.
(p.8)

Jesus the Son of Man, published in 1928, is an attempt to show Christ through the consciousness of his immediate contemporaries, enemies and friends alike. Gibran uses seventy-seven characters, each of whom comes alive in simple and spiritual language. Although he denies the

divinity of Christ, this book has been referred to as "The Gospel according to Gibran" (Young, 1945, pp.33, 109). His main theme is brought out by the last character in the work, a man from Lebanon, obviously Gibran himself, who lives in the Twentieth Century and who criticizes the churchmen and their rituals which according to him are for their honor and not for Christ the Crucified.

The Earth Gods, published in 1931, was the last of Gibran's works to be published while he was living. This work summarizes Gibran's philosophy: man is anxious to be nearer the gods. In Gibran's philosophy, man is food for the gods. Here he presents three earth gods; one who is weary from aeons of ruling, one who is ambitious still to rule, and one who has discovered that there is love upon the earth and that it is more to be desired than is ruling any planet. It is the magnitude of its concept that gives to this poem its epic quality. This is perhaps a book for the mystic, for the poet, or for the dreamer of vast dreams.

The Wanderer, published posthumously in 1932, weaves fifty tales of the very fabric of Eastern thought and phraseology. There is nothing of the West in any line of it. It was as though with his life drawing to a close, Gibran's native mood and atmosphere occupied his being and thought so completely they pervaded every word he wrote. There is a return of the irony of The Madman, a pungency

that bespeaks weariness in the face of stupidities, a theme running through many of Gibran's works.

The Garden of the Prophet, the book on which Gibran was working at the time of his death, was put together by Barbara Young and published in 1932. It is a sequel to The Prophet and is concerned with the relationship between man and nature. There is a quality of extreme gentleness, of unearthly compassion about this work, which manifests itself in the poet's love for the dewdrop, for the falling snow, and for the stone in the path.

Translations from Arabic

The four stories of Spirits Rebellious were completed when Gibran was twenty-five. Translated into English by H.M. Nahmad, the book was published in 1948. They take the form of sermons or parables. The first story, "Rose of Sympathy" is a tale of an unhappy woman who leaves her rich husband to live in poverty with another man. He portrays a young girl married against her will, as was largely the custom, to a man much older than herself for whom she feels neither respect nor affection. The second story, "The Bridal Bier" tells a simple tale of a wedding feast begun in joy and ending in sorrow. Its setting is a small village in Northern Lebanon in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century. Again, Gibran paints another unhappy girl forced

into marriage by custom and tradition. On her wedding night, she murders the man she wanted to marry and kills herself. The third, "Khalil the Heretic" is an attempt to awaken men to the presence of evil in their midst and bids them to cast away their chains and live as free men of God. "The Cry of the Graves" is a tale of oppression of the weak at the hands of the strong, the crushing of a people's liberty by a tyrannous authority, and the condemning of innocent men.

Nymphs of the Valley, translated by H.M. Nahmad and published in 1948, is one of Gibran's earlier Arabic works written before Spirits Rebellious. In the work, Gibran attacks those who are in authority, ecclesiastical as well as political, and who make laws but do not observe them, these themes being similar to those of Spirits Rebellious. He ridicules laws and traditions.

The Broken Wings, translated by Anthony R. Ferris and published in English in 1957, is an exquisitely tender story of a love that beats desperately against the taboos of Lebanese tradition, a theme used in his earlier work. The difference here is that this work is autobiographical. With great sensitivity, Gibran describes his youthful passion, a love doomed by social conventions. He portrays the exalted happiness and infinite sorrow of his relationship with Selma and at the same time probes the spiritual meaning of

human existence with profound compassion. He envelops the story in a poetic prose full of magic and majesty, and empties his heart of its desire, pain, and loneliness. Gibran wrote this novel originally in Arabic about 1912.

The Procession, considered Gibran's masterpiece in Arabic, was written in 1919 and has been translated into English by Anthony R. Ferris as a prose work in 1952 and as a poem in English by George Kheirallah in 1958. Gibran's motive for writing this play-poem appears to be that having observed a general falsehood of living which leads men from the truth, his theme is that no individual can experience a fullness of life if greed is his goal. To illustrate his precepts, he chooses two metaphorical characters: the first is Age represented by a bent old man who has suffered from tradition, wealth, and corruption. He wanders into a field to meditate. There he meets Youth, symbolized by a handsome, robust young man whose eyes have looked only upon God's fields and whose ears have listened only to the singing of the birds and the whispering winds.

They discuss freely their respective conceptions of life, Age commenting that only evil and misery dwell in the world of human society, while Youth insists that in the fields one can find true pleasure, contentment, and God-given joy. From this debate between Age and Youth, Gibran's approach to life, death, and religion are revealed.

He does not hold that everyone should abandon human society for the countryside but he shows that life can acquire a rich wholesomeness when one comes close to God in nature. A melancholy sadness emanates from the old man but the youth is lively and full of joy.

The translator of The Procession, George Kheirallah (1958), said of this work:

The poem represents the unconscious autobiography of Gibran: Gibran the sage, mellowed beyond his years, and Gibran the rebel, who had come to believe in the unity and universality of all existence and who longed for simple, impersonal freedom, merged in harmony with all things. (p.54)

This work conveys the basic philosophy of Gibran which reached the peak of expression in his later work The Prophet.

The Voice of the Master, a collection of essays on life and love, probably written while Gibran was a student in Beyrouth, has been translated into English by Anthony R. Ferris and published in 1958.

Kahlil Gibran: A Self-Portrait contains Gibran's letters to friends around the world. These letters were written in Arabic between 1904 and 1930, and have been translated by Anthony R. Ferris and published in 1959. They reveal Gibran's personality and some of his beliefs.

Thoughts and Meditations, Spiritual Sayings, and Secrets of the Heart, translated by Anthony R. Ferris, belong to the earlier work of Gibran and were written while

he lived in Lebanon. They are collections of Gibran sayings of one or two sentences and short parables, reflecting Gibran's thoughts and recurrent themes.

A Recent Discovery

The one-act play, Lazarus and His Beloved published in 1973, was discovered in 1972 among the effects of Gibran's sister after her death in that year. As she could neither read nor write, she was unaware of its existence. Gibran wrote the play when he was forty-six years old at a time when worldwide hunger for The Prophet was beginning to stir and he knew he was dying. Concern for the terrible adventure is evident in the play where the author openly flirts with and is ultimately seduced by death. Through the biblical character Lazarus, Gibran comes to terms with his approaching end, symbolically considers a reprieve, and then rejects this earth, this "winter" (Gibran, 1973, p.7).

Summary

Every piece of Gibran's writing is tempered by a humanitarian ideal, a humanitarian gentleness, and a feeling for the common man runs through all his very personal and unique poetry.

In his writings, Gibran has blended the philosophies of East and West. His style is simple although it reflects his

mysticism. Gibran worshipped beauty and love, both of which are also reflected in his work.

Throughout his writings, Gibran's themes are recurrent. He rebelled against law, tradition, and custom, and in particular, he condemned arranged marriages by parents. Gibran suggests a great discontent, particularly in his Arabic writings. He was a man trapped in secret conflict, torn between the two worlds in which he had lived, two worlds so diverse they are separated by more than the Atlantic Ocean, separated in philosophy, culture, political structure, and ideals.

The destiny of man fascinated Gibran and occasionally, his view of the world tends toward but does not embrace pantheism. Goodness, beauty, and love are Gibran's major themes in his English works. For Gibran, love is always tinged with sorrow. He loved tears and had a profound compassion for suffering. In his major work The Prophet Gibran brings together his major themes as well as the themes of life, death, and rebirth.

Comments on Gibran's Writing

The sustained and growing appeal of The Prophet has baffled literary critics (Ross, 1972; Kanter, 1972) since its publication in 1923. No one is able to account for

its growing popularity on literary grounds since Gibran's writings do not fall wholly within Twentieth Century tradition.

Kanter (1972) suggests that during any complex epoch, and our present age is indeed complex, solutions must be simple; that the harder the time, the softer is its literature. He holds this is the reason for Gibran's continuing appeal today.

Kahlil Gibran cannot be considered a great poet in the history of English literature for he brought nothing new to English literature. Barbara Young (1945) states that there is nothing new to be said; that everything has already been said.

Sherfan (1971) states that the reader who is unaware of the destructive points of Gibran's doctrine might easily be seduced by his soft and thrilling way of saying things. To the religious Catholic, Gibran may seem heretical because of his attacks on the Church and his denial, in his later works, of the divinity of Christ. Gibran, however, was concerned with the social problems of his day and with the plight of his fellow countrymen in the Middle East. Although his philosophy will not bear close scrutiny--he made the soul part of God--in his words one can find many important insights into human thought and behavior.

Gibran can be criticized not only because of his philosophy but also on literary grounds as well. Although he is a master of metaphor and simile, much of the imagery he employed is subjective, as is evidenced in the Introduction to The Prophet. Despite the fact he lived in the Twentieth Century, his style of writing is reminiscent of Keats and Shelley, both of whom he admired. Gibran's attitudes remain personal and temperamental, yet his poetry is authentic Nineteenth-Century Romanticism carried into the heart of the Twentieth Century.

Summary

Kahlil Gibran was born in Lebanon in 1883 in the town of Bsharra on Lebanon's Holy Mountain. He emigrated to the United States with his family in 1895, but returned to his native land in 1897 to pursue his studies in Arabic. Gibran was a Maronite Christian, the grandson of a Maronite priest. While he was in Lebanon, his writings angered the Church and the State, and he was excommunicated from the Church and exiled. He returned to America, where he lived the greater part of his life. He died in 1931.

His major work in English, The Prophet, has become a classic. He is known on every university campus, and today's youth appear to have found his writings fascinating. Gibran preaches a gospel of love.

The facts presented in this chapter on Gibran's life, heritage, and works are given to provide a fund of information for teachers who might present Gibran in a secondary class. This information forms a basis for the unit plan developed in Chapter IV.

النبی

The Prophet

Poetry is the inevitable word in
the inevitable place.

Gibran
(Young, 1945, p.124)

The mission of art is to bring out
the unfamiliar from the familiar.

Gibran
(Naimy, 1934, p.100)

CHAPTER IV

THE PROPHET IN THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

This chapter discusses and sets out a unit plan for teaching certain chapters of The Prophet. The unit plan presented here is based upon the response rationale set out in Chapter II of this study.

Throughout The Prophet, Gibran repeatedly rejects material things and stresses the importance of human feelings, emotions, and relationships. These same ideas are important to the Human Equality Movement of today which will be discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

The Prophet

Background and Influences

Supposedly, The Prophet is a subjective creation with Gibran as Almustafa, the Chosen and the Beloved, veiled in symbol and metaphor (Naimy, 1934). Barbara Young (1945) states that if you would have the autobiography of Gibran's spirit, you may read it in The Prophet.

Gibran's style reached its zenith in The Prophet; the language flows smoothly. The work is the very essence of Gibran's being as well as his masterpiece (Naimy, 1934). Its cadences are reminiscent of the King James Version.

Written in the style of Nietzsche's Thus Spake Zarathustra, the work is far in substance from Zarathustra, although there are certain parallels. Nietzsche carried the image of Zarathustra from his youth as Gibran did with Almustafa. Zarathustra and Almustafa are both prophets and poets concerned with human values and virtues. Nietzsche chose the Persian name for his mouthpiece because he felt prophets came from the East. Almustafa is Arabic for the chosen one.

Zarathustra is the superman, the incarnation of the ideal friend and the ideal philosopher, who preaches Nietzsche's gospel to the world. We find in Gibran's Almustafa essentially the same sort of being created to preach Gibran's gospel. The style of both works is similar, but while Nietzsche holds that "God is dead", we find in Gibran a profound belief in the existence of God and the soul, and a beautiful chapter on prayer. The precepts of Almustafa are designed to create an ideal world, a utopia.

Structure

The Prophet is divided into twenty-eight chapters, two of which are an Introduction, "The Coming of the Ship", and a Conclusion, "The Farewell". The first part of the

work is concerned with the themes of love and death; the last part with the themes of death and rebirth.

The introduction and the conclusion are full of the subjective metaphors characteristic of Gibran. There is a great deal of symbolism. The City of Orphalese is probably representative of New York where Gibran lived for twelve years. Ielool is Arabic for September. "The isle of his birth" appears to be a wish-dream symbol for Lebanon and acts as a double symbol since Almustafa is thinking of death symbolized by the words, "the coming of his ship" and "The Farewell". Gibran's belief in the "continuity of life", a kind of reincarnation, is revealed quite forcibly in the Conclusion by the words:

Forget not that I shall come back to you. A little while, and my longing shall gather dust and foam for another body.

A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind, and another woman shall bear me. (p.95)

The twenty-six chapters between the Introduction and the Conclusion deal with specific topics, in each of which Gibran gives his advice, words of wisdom, or words of consolation. These are spoken through Almustafa, the prophet of the East. The subjective metaphors noticeable in the Introduction and Conclusion are almost entirely missing from these chapters, although Gibran employs imagery throughout.

Instructional Plans

The Prophet is too long a work to be covered completely in the classroom as teachers cannot possibly cover all the topics Gibran deals with. The students may want to read some of the material on their own or want to re-read what has been covered in class. The number of chapters which the teacher will be able to handle in the classroom will depend upon the amount of time that can be devoted to a study of The Prophet. The following unit plan is set up for use by teachers over a period of approximately two weeks.

Overview of Unit Plan

The following chapters from The Prophet are suggested as a guide for teachers in classroom teaching:

Instructional Objectives:

- a) an appreciation of Gibran's masterpiece.
- b) an appreciation of human relationships and their value.
- c) an understanding of the use of imagery, words, mood, tone, and symbolism.
- d) an evaluation of the meaning of virtue in one's own life.

Selection of Suggested Topics:

- Day 1 -- General Introduction to The Prophet and Gibran.
- Day 2 -- Introduction to The Prophet ("The Coming of the Ship"). Suggested topics for lesson plans as all these and more can be brought out from the Introduction:
- Day 3 -- a) imagery
- Day 4 -- b) symbolism
- Day 5 -- c) mood or tone
- Day 6 -- d) themes of love and death
- Day 7 -- "On Love"
- Day 8 -- "On Children"
- Day 9 -- "On Giving"
- Day 10 -- "On Eating and Drinking"
- Day 11 -- "On Friendship"
- Day 12 -- "The Farewell"--themes of death and rebirth.

General Lesson Plans

The following notes provide an abbreviated lesson plan for Day 2, the Introduction to The Prophet, and a detailed lesson plan for Day 11, the chapter "On Friendship". In addition, one or two questions or activities are suggested for the other topics selected above.

Lesson for the Introduction to The Prophet: Day 2

Unit Title: "The Coming of the Ship", Introduction to
The Prophet.

Instructional Objectives: (Outlined on page 83 of
this study).

Suggested Questions:

1. Whom is the speaker addressing? What is the occasion for this particular utterance?
2. What is the setting in time and place? Is the setting an imaginary one?
3. By studying the imagery and symbolism in the Introduction, forecast what will follow in the rest of The Prophet.
4. What examples of figurative language can you find, and how do they contribute to the effect?
5. What are the main themes?
6. What are some of the human values discussed in The Prophet?
7. What things do human beings value: wealth, material things, virtue, moral and religious values?

Assignments:

1. In the Introduction, how many instances of subjective metaphors can you find? What effect do they create?
2. In the Introduction, Gibran has used many symbols. Can you find these symbols and are you able to suggest meanings for them?

On Love

1. Gibran has compared love to many things. What are they? Do you agree or disagree with any or all of them?
2. Gibran paints an emotionless world for those who do not love wholeheartedly, and paints for lovers a world of deep emotion and awareness. What is your opinion? Does love sharpen the senses and awareness?
3. How do Gibran's ideas on love compare with today's "pop" songs?

On Giving

1. Recall the story of the Good Samaritan. Can you find similar ideas in Gibran?

2. Gibran holds:

You give but little when you give of your possessions.

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

- a) What does Gibran mean? How does this quotation fit in with the Christian myth? Christmas has become very commercial and materialistic. Discuss with reference to Gibran. How does the sacrifice of Christ at Calvary fit in with Gibran's ideas of giving?
- b) Read James Russell Lowell's "The Vision of Sir Launfal" as a concrete experience on the nature of giving. Refer to the two meetings of Sir Launfal and the leper. How do each of these meetings compare with Gibran's ideas and with each other? The following quotation from "The Vision of Sir Launfal" is relevant:

Not what we give, but what we share,
 For the gift without the giver is bare;
 Who gives himself with his alms feeds
 three--
 Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me.

On Eating and Drinking

1. The philosophy of Omar Khayyam is "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die". Compare or contrast with Gibran.

On Children

This chapter from The Prophet is an ideal one for discussing personal identity and the aims of the Human Equality Movement. The reader is referred to page 102 of this study for a general discussion of this topic.

The Farewell

1. What are Gibran's ideas on death and rebirth?
2. What are your ideas?
3. What ideas do you have on reincarnation?

Lesson Plan "On Friendship": Day 11

The teacher may be well advised to choose this section for the classroom. Secondary students today are interested in love and friendship, and this chapter from The Prophet should prove to be of interest to them.

For the convenience of teachers, "On Friendship" from The Prophet is set out as Table I, and for the interest of teachers this passage has been provided in Arabic as Table II.

Subject:

"On Friendship" from The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran.

Type of Poem:

A longer poem in free verse giving an explanation of friendship.

TABLE I

"ON FRIENDSHIP", A QUOTATION FROM THE PROPHET

And a youth said, Speak to us of Friendship.

And he answered saying:

Your friend is your needs answered.

He is your field which you sow with love and reap with
thanksgiving.

And he is your board and your fireside.

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

When your friend speaks his mind you fear not the "nay"
in your own mind, nor do you withhold the "ay".

And when he is silent your heart ceases not to listen
to his heart;

For without words, in friendship, all thoughts, all
desires, all expectations are born and shared, with
joy that is unacclaimed.

When you part from your friend, you grieve not;

For that which you love most in him may be clearer in
his absence, as the mountain to the climber is
clearer from the plain.

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

For love that seeks aught but the disclosure of its
own mystery is not love but a net cast forth; and
only the unprofitable is caught.

And let your best be for your friend.

If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know its
flood also.

For what is your friend that you should seek him with
hours to kill,

Seek him always with hours to live.

For it is his to fill your need, but not your emptiness.

And in the sweetness of friendship let there be
laughter, and sharing of pleasures.

For in the dew of little things the heart finds its
morning and is refreshed.

الصداقة

ثم قال له شاب : هات حديثاً عن الصداقة .

فاجاب وقال :

ان صدقك هو لقايتك حاجتك .

هو حقلك الذي تزرعه بالمحبة وتحمده بالشكر .

هو مائدتك ووقوفك .

وذلك تأتي اليه حاجاً ، وتسمى ورده صدقاً

فاذا اوضح لك صدق فكرتك فقد تحشى ان تصرح بما في

فكرتك من النفي او ان تحتفظ بما في ذهنك من الازجاب .

لأن الجبل يبدو للمتأمل له أكثر وضوحاً وكبراً من

السهل البعيد .
واذا صحت صدقك ولم يتكلم فقد ينقطع قلبك

عن الاصغاء الى صوت قلبه .

لأن الصداقة لا تحتاج الى الالفاظ والعبارات في انما

جميع الوفاء والرحمة والتمنيات التي يشترك الاصدقاء

بفزع عظيم في قطف قمارها اليانعات .

وان خارقاً صدقك فهو مخزونه على فراقه

جبران خليل جبران "الن

لأن ما تنقشه فيه ، أكثر من كل شيء سعة ، ربما
 يكون في حين غيابه أوضح في عين محبته منه في حين حضوره
 ولا يمكن لكم في الصداقة من غاية ترجوها غير أن تزيدوا في

عقل نفوسكم .
 لأن الحكمة التي لا رجاؤا ، سوى لئف الظالمين
 اسرارها ، تبت حبة ، بل هي شبكة تلقى في

بحر الحياة ودينتك إلا غير النافع .

ولكن أفضل ما عندك لصديقك

فإن كان مجرد به أن يعرف خبر حياتك ،

فالأجدر بك أيضاً أن تطهر له مدعا .

لأنه إذا ترجى من الصديق الذي نفس إليه لتقن معصاة الله

المعدودة في هذا الوجود .

فأحسن بالأجرى إلى الصديق الذي يمدد الأملك ولياليك .

لأن له وحدة قد أعين أن يملح حاجتك ، ولا تزلزلك ويؤسرك .

ولكن مكره الإزعاج والذات المتبادلة مرفوضاً فوق حدود الهدنة

لأن القلب مجرد صباحه في الذي الهام بالضمير ، فنبش واستعد قوة
 جبراً خليل جبران « النبي »

Objectives:

- a) to examine a longer poem.
- b) to pick out the characteristics of true friendship.
- c) to acquaint students with poetry written by a man with a dual cultural background (Lebanese and American).
- d) to bring students to an understanding that human nature is essentially the same the world over.

Preparation:

Distribution of copies of the chapter "On Friendship".

Pictures of friends from magazines, and so forth, including pets, which the teacher may place around the classroom for observation by students with the intention of having them pick out the qualities that seem characteristic of friends, and give their impressions and feelings about friendship.

Introduction:

Time could be given to each student to formulate his own definition of friend.

Presentation:

The poem should be read by the teacher to the class. Then an examination of the poem, line by

line, should be undertaken to elicit student understanding and response.

Suggested Questions:

1. Have you understood the poem?
2. Do you agree with Gibran's ideas on friendship?
3. Would you like to have a friend like the one he describes?
4. Do you think that Gibran's statements about friendship have universal application?
5. Do you consider pets to be real friends?
6. Gibran states: "Your friend is your needs answered. Does this suggest perhaps that we choose friends who have the qualities we lack, or qualities that we admire? What qualities do you look for in a friend?"
7. "And he is your board (table) and your fireside./For you come to him with your hunger and you seek him for peace". What is the hunger Gibran speaks of?
8. In the first two lines of the second stanza, Gibran suggests you may not always agree with your friend. Can true friendship survive disagreements? Have you had disagreements with friends? What happened afterward?

9. The next lines suggest that friends may share many things in silence. It has been said that if two people could not be happy sitting together for half an hour without speaking, they could never be friends. What is your opinion of this idea? Have you had any experiences of this kind?
10. Usually separations cause sorrow. Gibran holds the opposite view stating that the things you love about your friend may be clearer in his absence. Can you recall an adage that says the same thing (Absence makes the heart grow fonder)? Do you agree or disagree? You may be able to cite instances from your own experiences to show that both notions are true. What do you think is the reason for friendships waning or increasing during an absence?
11. Gibran's "purpose in friendship" is a "deepening of the spirit". What is he suggesting? (Refer to Table III of this study).
12. The next two lines about love are interesting. Note the symbolism of "a net". Discuss this idea in the light of our modern-day propensity for amassing possessions.

13. In the third stanza, Gibran gives advice on how to treat your friend. What is his advice? What would be yours?
14. In the selection as a whole, do you think Gibran has given a good description of friendship?
15. Have you a good friend or a best friend? What do you like most about your friend? What do you dislike?
16. Write a composition about your friend or one you would like to have.

Related Activities

Teachers may choose from these activities.

1. "David" by Earle Birney. In this poem, we find a picture of two friends. Do Bob and David have any of the characteristics which Gibran cites for friendship? Do they vary from it?
2. In "The Merchant of Venice", we find two friends Antonio and Bassanio. They are quite different from the friends in Birney's poem, and Shakespeare conceived them centuries before, yet there are similarities. Can you pick out similarities in characteristics with Gibran? Under Gibran's definition, could they be considered to have been real friends?

3. In "A Tale of Two Cities", we have a very different situation. Sidney Carton loves Lucy and he takes her husband's place at the guillotine so that he may preserve her happiness. Discuss this friendship.
4. Students gather a collage of pictures of friends. Students use snapshots to display a friendship mural in class.
5. 5. Students may write an essay, short story, or play about friendship using Gibran's theme.
6. The teacher may wish to compare Gibran's notion of friend with the ones set out in Table III:
 - a) the traditional notion which has come down through the ages of a friend being an alter ego or "another I", and/or
 - b) discuss Gibran's notion in the light of the view held by contemporary philosophers.
7. Refer to Hardy's poem "The Man He Killed". Can you find a line in "On Friendship" that seems to parallel Hardy's notion? One possibility would be, "And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit".

TABLE III

THE TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY NOTIONS OF FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is a long-standing theme in both literature and philosophy. Plato wrote two Dialogues on friendship, "The Symposium" and "The Lysis". Moreover, Cicero wrote a treatise on friendship, and Zeno describes a friend as the other ego. Numerous stories of the ancients use friendship as the theme. In the Middle Ages, Chaucer created Palomon and Arcite, and in Shakespeare's day Damon and Pythias are classic examples of friends. A great many more examples of classic friendships exist in both philosophical and literary writings throughout history.

A key notion in the structure of friendship was that of the alter ego by which the relationship between friends was likened to the love one has for oneself; Aristotle (McKeon, 1941) states:

. . . The marks by which friendships are defined seem to have proceeded from a man's relations to himself. . . . and he wishes to live and be preserved, . . . For existence is good to the virtuous man, and each man wishes himself what is good, . . . And such a man wishes to live with himself; for he does so with pleasure, . . . and he grieves and rejoices, more than any other, with himself; . . . these characteristics belong to the good man in relation to himself, and he is related to his friend as to himself (for his friend is

another self), . . . the extreme of friendship is likened to one's love for oneself. (pp.1081-2)

Aristotle lists certain qualities characteristic of friends: virtues which belong to the good man. His theory of hylemorphism attributes to humans both essence and existence. Qualities, virtues, and accomplishments, indeed all those things by which a person can be described belong to that person's essence. But without existence, essence has no reality. The classical definition of friendship is bound up with the essence of beings since it dwells upon personal attributes.

When the particular qualities of a person are seen to represent the ultimate motive for friendship, albeit though they are the highest qualities of humankind, some of the mystery and wonder of loving encounter is lost. On the other hand, Aristotle's notion of the alter ego has formed the basis for deepening the notion of friendship.

Contemporary philosophers, particularly Martin Buber (1958) and Father Robert Johann, S.J. (1959), have added a new dimension to the classical concept of a friend as an alter ego. These philosophers lay the stress upon existence as well as upon essence.

Martin Buber held that, "All real life is a meeting" (Editors of Time, 1965, p.56). To Buber, man achieved his authentic existence only in loving encounter with God and

and his fellow man. He called this relationship I-Thou, in contrast with I-It, where individuals deal with one another as objects. In his major work, I and Thou, Buber (1958) states:

If I face a human being as my Thou and say the primary word I-Thou to him, he is not a thing among things, and does not consist of things.

Thus human being is not He or She bounded from every other He and She, a specific point in space and time within the net of the world, nor is he a nature able to be experienced and described, a loose bundle of named qualities. But with no neighbour, and whole in himself, he is Thou and fills the heavens. This does not mean that nothing exists except himself. But all else lives in his light. (p.8)

In the light of Buber's I-Thou relationship between persons, it is the existence of persons that enables friendships to develop regardless of the qualities or essences that make them individual beings. Even in a chance meeting with a stranger, Buber's notion of intersubjectivity allows for a genuine I-Thou relationship. When that unique gift to the world which is the existence of a person (never to be duplicated again), is seen to be the value to be loved, there arises the possibility of the loving encounter with all men--not just Aristotle's good man.

Father Robert Johann, S.J. (1959) in an analysis of Buber's I-Thou relationship, supports Buber's views. He states:

. . . direct love of another implies the reciprocity of two selves, I and Thou; how it is the presence to me in the thou of the same value I love in myself--
 . . . that permits me to love him as I love myself. However, to understand properly the communion of I and thou in love, we must realize that it is not simply a question of being able to love another as myself but rather that only insofar as I love another do I really love myself. (p.41)

When I love directly . . . I discover a new existence Here for the first time I am open to Value in all its infinity and mystery. . . . The only way to fathom the depths of the value which I am in myself is to turn towards and be open to that same value where it exceeds the bounds of my proper subjectivity. I cannot really love myself without loving other selves. (p.43)

. . . the presence of a thou brings to me such an enrichment, I by my love for the thou would bring him no less. . . . I in my turn become a thou to him. In my presence to him . . . he can . . . discover in me a 'second self' . . . (p.44)

A being is therefore good, first of all and immediately, by its existence, by its reality, not by its essence. (p.50)

For the information of teachers, the relevant lines in Gibran's "On Friendship" from The Prophet are:

And let there be no purpose in friendship
 save the deepening of the spirit.
 For love that seeks aught but the
 disclosure of its own mystery is not
 love but a net cast forth: . . .
 (p.59)

Gibran's concept of friendship, therefore, goes beyond the classical notion of the alter ego or another self, and

relates to the act of existence which is unique with each individual. This is the "mystery" of the person, not bounded "within the net of the world" (Buber, 1958, p.8). Gibran's "purpose in friendship" is "the deepening of the spirit", a seeking to find value in oneself through other selves. The implication here would appear to be that Gibran has broadened the classical notion of friendship and has embraced the present-day notion of alter ego as encompassing both the essence and existence of the individual.

The Human Equality Movement and Gibran

Rather surprisingly, Gibran has not devoted any part of his English writings to women. In comparison, a good segment of his Arabic work deals with woman's subservient role in society, and with her emancipation. To study Gibran's attitude toward women, the student must turn to Gibran's Arabic works, for instance, Spirits Rebellious and The Broken Wings.

Gibran's attitude to women was born out of rebelliousness and frustration when he lost Selma Karamy to another man in an arranged marriage. He personally considered arranged marriages an evil to society, and he also blamed the clergy for the part they played as marriage brokers.

The Human Equality Movement, popularly called Women's Lib, is a predominant theme in the works of Kahlil Gibran. It appears that Gibran was ahead of his time in recognizing the basic faults of today's society. He saw that the life of the city, technology, and materialism were destroying human relationships. In his teens, he was aware that woman's beauty and body were sold to the highest bidder in the sexual market in complete disregard of her feelings and emotions. This was particularly true in Lebanon. The vicious inequality of man and woman was the subject of his strongest literary attacks (Wolf, 1952).

Today's materialism has alienated people so that there is a lack of valid and meaningful human relationships. The concern of the Human Equality Movement is with this lack. Technology has created too many material diversions. People are concerned with things rather than with other human beings. The Movement aims to have people give far less importance to material things and more importance to human beings, feelings, and emotions. Both men and women must have a concern for each other.

Gibran was appalled by the lack of personal freedom for women. Reference is made to his short story "Rose of Sympathy" in Spirits Rebellious. The woman in the story refused to give her heart, soul, and body for material wealth, and exercised her personal freedom of choice, an aim of the Movement.

Women's lack of identity also concerned Gibran. In The Prophet, Gibran gives an identity even to children. To parents he cries:

Your children are not your children.
 They are the sons and daughters of Life's
 longing for itself. . . .
 And though they are with you, yet they
 belong not to you. . . .
 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. (p.17)

Gibran's writings manifest that he was concerned with finding a workable way of thinking, feeling, and living, leading to a mastery of life, an aim of the Movement. The Movement holds that when women are free from oppression, men will also be free. This freedom will lead to a freer, more humane society for every person.

In teaching the chapter "On Children" from The Prophet, teachers may be well advised to link the theme with the aims of the Human Equality Movement. Teachers may also find that the "Women's Kit" available at Saint Mary's University Library may serve as an excellent background resource.

Summary

This chapter has presented a discussion of The Prophet and outlined a unit plan based on this work. The writer of this report hopes that these suggestions may be utilized in senior high school classrooms.

Poets are unhappy people, for no matter how high their spirits reach, they will still be enclosed in an envelope of tears.

Gibran, 1957, p.41

If a man understands himself, he understands all people.

Gibran, 1962

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study has been concerned with a response-oriented literature curriculum for the secondary level with the primary intention of putting the major work of Kahlil Gibran The Prophet in the secondary classroom. Toward this end, Chapter II has provided a rationale for a response-oriented literature curriculum based on selected authorities in the field, and Chapter III has been devoted to a study of Kahlil Gibran. Chapter IV outlines a unit plan for teaching Gibran's masterpiece The Prophet. This final chapter will provide an appreciation of Gibran.

An Appreciation of Kahlil Gibran

One cannot fail to recognize in Gibran the strong expression of a passionate urge to improve the lot of suffering, exploited humanity, an impulse that fired his mind and heart from childhood (Wolf, 1952). When he was very young, Gibran had looked upon the heads of state and religion as truly the pillars of society. He expected them to provide examples of justice and wisdom. He assumed the privileges of plenty which they enjoyed was their due for the noble services they rendered people, and he imagined

that this was the reason people yielded them honor and obedience (Ferris, 1960).

This was the light in which Gibran looked upon rulers and their luxurious lives and failed to see how they exploited people. When he began to perceive the realities of life, he saw the rich abusing the poor who lived under despotism and in slavery. That which Gibran called tyranny masked itself under the name of politics. It was then that Gibran began to express his feelings through scorching articles in Arabic newspapers, books, and magazines (Ferris, 1960).

Gibran felt that people were chained by custom and tradition, and were living in the ruts trodden by their ancestors, unable to follow the light of their own minds, the dictates of their hearts, nor free themselves from superstitions. Gibran felt he had a message to give the world to improve mankind's suffering. His message emanates from the painful soul-searing knowledge of man's inhumanity to man, drawn from a poignant memory of what his eyes had seen and his ears had heard in his close observance of the perpetual human tragedy (Wolf, 1952).

Gibran's verbal tapestry is woven into a living fabric of timeless universal truths often given in the captivating literary form of the parable. His sentiments comprise one enormous theme: wealth, power, and material

things do not compensate for the heart's bereavements. The bonds of common brotherhood without demarcation, no less than family and personal ties, must be strengthened if people are to meet competently the challenge of progress and even of survival (Wolf, 1952).

Gibran drives these teachings forcefully to the heart; they persist in agitating the heart to complete accord. Gibran's rich sincerity is aimed to awaken deep emotional and spiritual feelings (Wolf, 1952).

Gibran was a champion of human rights, particularly the rights of women. He waged a long and bitter struggle to strengthen the recognition of youth's freedom of action in love and to abolish the ancient marriage customs of the Middle East. Gibran's doctrine is kindness, brotherhood, and charity, and he requires but a few words to transmit his thoughts (Wolf, 1952).

Gibran's mysticism goes deeper than that of the average writer and is more notable in his prose writings. He speaks of love as being something beyond the understanding of man. The following extract from his writing is an example:

Love has become a halo whose beginnings is its end, and whose end is its beginning. It surrounds every being and extends slowly to embrace all that shall be. (Sherfan, 1971, p.38)

Gibran was quite committed to love to the end of his life. Although he does not reject the idea of a development in love, he stressed clearly that love is a special mysterious and divine call (Sherfan, 1971). He condemned man-made laws as being against the essence of love which is divine and not to be interfered with. Gibran complains about the poverty of human knowledge to express the details of this exchange between two hearts, and finds human language is inadequate to express everything that his heart utters and feels (Sherfan, 1971).

In other passages he insists on the cruelty of love and calls it savage because it plants a flower and uproots a field, revives us for a day and stuns us for an age (Gibran, 1962, p.58). He seems to imply that love is revengeful. With one hand it offers pleasure and with the other sorrow, which means that love is sorrow, and sorrow is love.

Gibran places woman at the summit of the world. She illumines the world and seems to be responsible for man's genius and achievements. He holds that association with women is essential for man's development. He compares woman to light. Gibran is always the victim of his imagination for the woman he loves is an ideal (Sherfan, 1971, p.62). In his writings, there is no instance in which Gibran speaks of love without lamenting the sorrow

and bitterness that are mingled with it. This seems to stem from his Oriental background; most love songs of the East contain a constant complaint by the lover for not being loved enough, for not receiving enough attention and affection (Sherfan, 1971, p.81).

Gibran considers the mother as the essential person of the home and the one who most influences the children. He seems to relish in the idea that children mirror the mother. For Gibran, the mother is the source of love, mercy, sympathy, forgiveness, and understanding. Everything in nature speaks of mother to Gibran. He carries the concept of mother even to God, as is borne out in the following extract from his writing:

Most religions speak of God in the masculine gender. To me He is as much a mother as He is a father. He is both the father and the mother in one; and Woman is the God-Mother. The God-Father may be reached through the mind or the imagination. But the God-Mother can be reached through the heart only--through love. (Gibran, 1952, p.94)

In respect to friendship, Gibran adopts the Christian position that a person in society should share his life with others despite their faults, mistakes, or failings. He clearly stresses the importance of understanding and compassion in interpersonal relationships.

Gibran took a weirdly beautiful approach to life, never completely revealing the full purpose behind his abrupt and tense changes in thought and style. He employs the laiciest and tenderest language as in these quotations from The Prophet:

Love has no desire but to fulfil
itself.

But if you love and must needs
have desires, let these be your desires:
To melt and be like a running
brook that sings its melody to the night.
To know the pain of too much
tenderness . . . (p.13)

and

. . . like seeds dreaming beneath the
snow, your heart dreams of spring . . .
(p.80)

In contrast are the bitter and angry outpourings found in Spirits Rebellious, for instance, the words of the priest addressed to the people who gathered about the lifeless bodies of the bride and her lover in the story "The Bridal Bier":

Cursed are the hands that touch these
blood-spattered carcasses that are soaked
with sin. And cursed are the eyes that
shed tears of sorrow upon these two evil
souls. Let the corpse of the son of
Sodom and that of the daughter of
Gomorrhah lie in this diseased spot until
the beasts devour their flesh and the
wind scatters their bones. Go back to
your homes and flee the pollution of
these sinners. Leave before the flames
of hell sting you, for he who remains
here shall be cursed and excommunicated
from the Church and shall never again
enter the temple to join the Christians
in offering prayers to God. (Gibran,
1952, p.355)

Gibran had a style all his own, flavored with ancient wisdom and mysticism, a delicacy of mind with a vast and simple insight. He blends the philosophy of East and West. This blending is often disconcerting to the Western mind (Wolf, 1952). He gives the impression that the emotions he is expressing are too big for his soul and have been wrenched from him reluctantly. In a broad segment of his writings, he worships the poor, the meek, the downtrodden, and brings down heavens of wrath upon exploiters, bad rulers, and grasping officials, ecclesiastical as well as political (Wolf, 1952).

Gibran is characterized by a loneliness, an aloneness which makes him stand apart from other human beings. This personal quality makes itself felt in his writings and lends a poignancy to everything he wrote (Wolf, 1952).

Sherfan (1971) comments that Gibran's fame comes from the fact that he wrote many things which were said by his predecessors concerning love, freedom, oppression, slavery, and man-made laws, but the point which makes him appealing is that he attributes a touch of passing divinity to man and makes him feel the pinch and urge of love. For Gibran love is ". . . lord and master of us all; we are but obedient servants. Whoever disobeys love, disobeys God. For love is the only God" (Sherfan, 1971, p.31).

Happiness is never achieved without pain and suffering. Gibran seems to have a Nietzschean attitude in this respect which also reflects on Jesus, Whom he considered to be the Superman, a Superman Who laughed and was above pain, and Who was born naturally from a woman. Religion for Gibran was a union with God which was quite above Church and man-made laws. Recognizing the traditions and ethos of religion, Gibran urged prudence, temperance, courage, justice, love, mercy, and self-negation.

Gerald Heard (Kunitz and Colby, 1955) states in respect of Gibran's writings:

. . . but he helps many people if not to translate and construe, at least to transpose their experience. (p.361)

Wolf (1952) holds that it is Gibran alone who stands at the summit of all that is fascinating, terrible, and beautiful in Arabic literature. Gibran's thoughts are ageless, and the real, the essential Gibran will live on and grow through the centuries (Wolf, 1952).

Concluding Remarks

This study has been made in the hope that teachers will use Gibran in the secondary classroom. If students can be made aware of the contributions of the Arab world to modern civilization and the position of Lebanon and the Arab States in the Middle East, then they should be able to understand and appreciate Arab animosity to Israel.

To date, Western propaganda has been very unkind to the Arabs and very much pro-Israeli. The sources of the conflict are a matter of history and cannot be discussed here. However, if one delves into the history of World War I and the promises made by Britain to the Arabs, then one can easily recognize that the creation of the State of Israel by the United Nations was an injustice to the Arabs, particularly to the Palestinians.

This act has caused the Arab nations to change their attitude to the Western world, an attitude that had been pro-Western for many decades. With the energy crisis, Western propaganda is slowly being modified in favor of the Arabs. To any thinking person with a sense of justice and armed with the facts leading to the conflict in the Middle East, Western propaganda seems not only outrageous but an affront to the Arabs. Knowledge of the facts alone, not war, is needed for a solution of the problems in the Middle East.

A need exists for further study and research in this area. On a level with Gibran's desire to bring to the world his strong but simple philosophy of life and death, was his desire to give impetus to the previously neglected and unrecognized contribution of Arabic literature (Wolf, 1952). This desire cannot be realized until the works have been translated into Western languages.

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APPENDIX A

DETAILS OF RECORDING OF GIBRAN'S POETRY

PHONOGRAPH RECORD

FTS-3044 Stereo

VERVE FORECAST

MUSIC AND GIBRAN

A Contemporary Interpretation

by Rosko

with John Berberian Ensemble

Side One

The Speechless Animal

The Story of a Friend

Introduction to The Broken Wings

Side Two

Perfection

At the Door of the Temple

A Glance at the Future

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

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