

Tributes to Kahlil Gibran

(Chronological order)

Surprisingly, the mysticism that characterizes much of Gibran's writing is found not in his poetry, where it would be granted a great latitude of expression through the very nature of poetic freedom, but in his prose stories exclusively. This feature of his works is not a deterrent to reader interest, for his depth establishes itself at a level of complete lucidity to all who endeavor to find it, and his frequent voyages into the field of mysticism supplement with spiritual argument the percepts of his earthly discourses.

Martin L. Wolf,

"The immortal writings of Khalil Gibran", in, Bushrui, Suheil B., *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 98.

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Whenever Gibran sat down to write, and whenever he thus justified some transcendent and impelling dream, a great weight was lifted from his soul. He was before all things a writer who represented a new school in the land of his immigration. It is true that his relations and countrymen took pride in his writings and growing reputation, but his family and his people lived far away. He could not directly experience the effect of his writings upon them. Perhaps this did him a disservice in his writing, for he desired to be publicly acknowledged as a man of outstanding fame no matter where he lived, in the same way that he stood in such high repute with those among whom he did not live. All the same, these aspirations were to be realized, and it was Mary who did it for him.

Sarwat Okasha,

"Introduction to the Prophet", in, Bushrui, Suheil B., *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 147.

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The theme of Gibran's books is one with his major interest. And his major interest in life. He aims to discover some workable way of feeling, thinking, living, which shall lead toward mastery - how to serve the forces which enslave us until they are by us enslaved. Such, I take it, is his purpose, his "message", but having said so much I should be remiss not to call attention to the extraordinary dramatic power, deep erudition, lightning-like intuition, lyrical lift and metrical mastery with which that message is presented, and the beauty, beauty, beauty, which permeates the entire pattern, with which everything he touches seems fairly to drip, as it were.

C.F. Bragdon,

"A modern prophet from Lebanon", in , Bushrui , Suheil B. , ... , *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 25.

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How profound is that irony of Gibran's about the lovers of freedom "who wear their freedom as a yoke and a handcuff"? Have we not seen here souls more chained to their idea of freedom than a prisoner is limited in his cell? The most terrible chains are those that gnaw at the soul. I wonder has the East many more poets to reveal to us? If Europe is to have a new renaissance comparable with that which came from the wedding of Christianity with the Greek and Latin culture it must, I think, come from a second wedding of Christianity with the culture of the East. Our own words to each other bring us no surprise. It is only when a voice comes from India or China or Arabia that we get the thrill of strangeness from the beauty, and we feel that it might inspire another of the great cultural passions of humanity.

George Russell,

"Kahlil Gibran", in, Bushrui, Suheil B. , ... , *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 31.

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In the endeavor to explain, or at least to suggest the significance of Jesus in the universe, Mr. Gibran has to resort to imagery, which evidently is an endeavor by means of line and shadow to

express the inexpressible. Like William Blake himself, he is striving to define the unseen in the forms which are visible to the eyes. The Christ of the three years proves to be, after all, no more fathomable than the Christ of the eternities.

P.W. Wilson,

“A comparative study of Walter Russel Bowies the master and Kahlil Gibran’s Jesus, the son of man”, in, Bushrui, Suheil B., ..., *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 165.

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For Kahlil Gibran was that rare phenomenon, a mystical philosopher, and a mystical philosopher who was also a poet; a mystical philosopher who expressed himself with a flowing perfection of language that can only be termed biblical and with a depth of insight and wisdom that harks back to the most profound occult love of the East. In the pages of his books there is an unworldliness reminding one of Gautama and the philosophers of the *Upanishads*.

Stanton A. Goblentz,

“Gibran’s companion to the Prophet, in, Bushrui, Suheil B., ..., *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 180.

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Having reached the depths Gibran should have become *very still*. Yet far from becoming still, he went on making more and more circles, because he had reached the depths *with his imagination* only, his heart and will lagging far behind. Like Moses, he was allowed to see from afar the Promised Land, but not to live in it; to taste its milk and honey in hope, not in fact. Or like a sea diver who touches the bottom for few fleeting moments and is then pulled up to the surface with a rope.

Mikhail Naimy,

“Share in heaven and shares in earth”, in, Bushrui, Suheil B., ..., *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 82.

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For it is a world of original creation that unfolds itself, a world visibly composed of mountains, scanty vegetation and sky; with feeling of solitariness, sometimes of desolation, and always, even in contracted space, with suggestion of a margin of immensity. But it needs only a little familiarity with the things seen to realize that there is symbolled here a world of the spirit.

Barbara Young,

“A mist carved into an image”, in, Bushrui, Suheil B., ... , *Kahlil Gibran, Essays and Introductions*, The Gibran International Festival 23-30 May, 1970, The Rihani House, p 38.

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