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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF KAHLIL GIBRAN

General Editors: Suheil Bushrui, Susan Reynolds, and Henri Zoghhaib
(Oxford: Oneworld)

This groundbreaking series consisting of five volumes will be the first of its kind to include the entire creative output of Kahlil Gibran, including his English language works (books and articles), Arabic materials (which will appear in a new translation), letters, and artwork. Each of these volumes will have a detailed critical introduction and new material as well as full bibliographic details.

For the first time, Gibran's worldwide readership will have access to the range of his writings and artwork in a single, expertly produced collection.

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Volume I: The English Works

This volume will include a general introduction to "The Collected Works" and:

- A brief critical introduction to each of his English works:
 - *The Madman*
 - *The Forerunner*
 - *The Prophet*
 - *Sand and Foam*
 - *Jesus, the Son of Man*
 - *The Earth Gods*
 - *The Wanderer*
 - *The Garden of the Prophet*
- An appendix of materials published recently, as well as some unpublished articles in English
- This volume is estimated to be 880 pages

Volume II: The Arabic Works in Translation

This volume will have an introduction of material posthumously published and included in the appendix and:

- A brief critical introduction to each of his Arabic works in translation:
 - *Al-Musiqah* ("Music")
 - *'Ara'is al-Muruj* ("Nymphs of the Valley")
 - *Al-'Arwah al-Mutamarridah* ("Spirits Rebellious")
 - *Al-'Ajniha al-Mutakassirah* ("The Broken Wings")
 - *Dam'ah wa Ibtisamah* ("A Tear and a Smile")
 - *Al-Marwakib* ("The Processions")
 - *Al-'Awasif* ("The Tempests")
 - *Al'Badayi' wa al-Taray'if* ("Beautiful and Rare Sayings")
- This volume is estimated to be 800 pages.

Volume III: The Letters

This volume will be divided into two sections: one will include letters originally written in Arabic (translated into English), the second will include letters written in English:

- Letters to May Ziadeh
- Letters to Mary Haskell
- Miscellaneous Letters
- This volume is estimated to be 500 pages

Volume IV: The Artwork

This volume will include a critical introduction to the artwork, including Alice Raphael's introduction to *Twenty Drawings*. It will also include the artwork in *Twenty Drawings* as well as all the artwork in his major publications.

Volume V: A Supplement to the Collected Works

The World of Kahlil Gibran: A Pictorial Record of His Life and Work

This final volume can be used as a PowerPoint presentation, and could be available on a CD.

THE PROPHET: ANNOTATED EDITION

Edited with an Introduction by Suheil Bushrui
(Oxford: Oneworld)

Kahlil Gibran described *The Prophet*, his greatest work, as “the only thought in me that will make me worthy to stand in the light of the sun.” Infused with insight, hope, inspiration and a remarkable compassion for the human condition, this little book of teachings explores the inner journey – the yearning of the soul – for reunion with the Infinite. In language evocative of the English Romantics and the Sufis of Islam, Gibran interwove Arab and Christian influences to capture a glimpse of “the many things yearning for expression in the silent hearts of men and in their souls.” The clarity, universality, and timelessness of its themes, and the power of its poetry have assured its place as one of the great classics of our time.

The first annotated version of *The Prophet*, with dual Italian-English text, which I prepared, was published by Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli of Milan in 1993. *The Prophet* is now available for the first time as a fully annotated edition with an extensive and informative introduction as well as notes on the symbolism, the structure, and the various Arabic and English influences. This is a new edition which is much more elaborate and a complete revision in light of recent scholarship.

**‘MY SONG GAVE EYES TO THE BLIND, EARS TO THE DEAF’
THE LITERARY HERITAGE OF THE ARABS – AN ANTHOLOGY**

Editors: Suheil Bushrui and James Malarkey
In collaboration with: C. Bayan Bruss

From the Introduction to *‘My Song Gave Eyes to the Blind, Ears to the Deaf’: The Literary Heritage of the Arabs – An Anthology*:

This anthology, *‘My Song Gave Eyes to the Blind,’* (to quote lines from al Mutanabbi) reveals a world of thought and feeling largely unseen and unheard in the English-speaking world. We include a wide-ranging sample of Arabic literature across virtually all genres of poetry and prose. These selections will appeal to the student of Arab culture and history as well as to the general reader who seeks acquaintance with gems of Arab thought and composition from classical times to the present. Other anthologies differ by exclusive emphasis on classical or modern Arabic literature, on either poetry or drama, or on women writers (e.g., Khouri and Algar, 1984; Manzalaoui, 1977; Jayyusi and Allen, 1995; Jayyusi, 2003; Irwin, 2006; Boullata, 1978, 1982; Arberry, 1967; al-Udhari, 1986; Jayyusi, 1991; Asfour, 1992; O’Grady, 1992; Handal, 2001; Denys-Johnson, 2006; Starkey, 2006; Tresilian, 2008; Badawi, 2006).¹ Wider in scope are various anthologies spanning the Islamic world (e.g., Nicholson, 1922; Kritzeck, 1984).² However, of necessity these anthologies leave out many important Arabic works including those of Christian and Jewish Arabs. Two other collections may be mentioned that are similar to ours in scope: Irwin, 2000 and Cachia, 2002.³

Despite inevitable overlap, the above works differ considerably from the present collection concerning the choice of material and the quality of the translations. We stand by our own selections; yet we would not wish to dissuade the reader from perusing other anthologies. Whichever be the first sally into the extensive reaches of Arab literature we pray that the reader will have a far longer journey, continuously enlightening and invigorating, for as advised Robert Browning: “since Arab lore / Holds the stars’ secret — take one trouble more / And master it!”⁴

¹ Khouri Monah A. and Hamid Algar, *An Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984
Manzalaoui, Mahmoud (ed.) *Arabic Writing Today; The Drama*, Cairo, Egypt: ARCE, 1977

Jayyusi, Salma and Roger Allen, *Modern Arabic Drama: An Anthology*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995.

Jayyusi, Salma, *Short Arabic Plays: An Anthology*, Northampton, MA: Interlink Books, 2003.

Irwin, Robert. *The Penguin Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature*, London, UK: Penguin Books, 2006

Boullata, Kamal, *Women of the Fertile Crescent: Modern Poetry by Arab Women*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994.

Arberry, Arthur J. *Modern Arabic Poetry: An Anthology with English Verse Translations*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1967 [original edition, 1950]

al-Udhari, Abdallah, trans., *Modern Poetry of the Arab World*, Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1986.

Asfour, John, *When the Words Burn: An Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry 1945-1987*, Dunvegan, Ontario: Cormorant Books, orig, 1988, revised edition 1992

O’Grady, Desmond. *Ten Modern Arab Poets: Selected Version*. Dublin, Ireland: Dedalus Press, 1992

Handal, Nathalie, ed., *The Poetry of Arab Women: A Contemporary Anthology*, Northampton, MA: Interlink Books, 2001

Johnson-Davies, Denys. *The Anchor Book of Modern Arabic Fiction*. New York, NY: Anchor Books 2nd edition, 2006

Starkey, Paul. *Modern Arabic Literature*, Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006

Tresilian, David. *A Brief Introduction to Modern Arabic Literature*, San Francisco, CA: Saqi Books, 2008

Badawi, M.M. ed. *Cambridge Modern Arabic Literature*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; 2006

² Nicholson, R. A. *Translations of Eastern Poetry and Prose*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1922,

Kritzeck, James [editor], *Anthology of Islamic Literature*, U.S.A. Pelican Books 1964.

³ Cachia, Pierre. *Arabic Literature – An Overview (Culture and Civilisation in the Middle East)*, New York, New York: Routledge Curzon, 2002

Irwin, Robert. *Night and Horses and the Desert: An Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature*, Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2000.

⁴ Browning, Robert. *Sordello*, UK: J.M. Dent and Company, 1902.

In some ways the problems of producing an anthology on Arabic literature are those that face an anthologist of any great literary tradition. To the perennial quandary of what to include and what to omit should be added the matter of available and effective translations as well as the criterion of introducing what in many cases will be a new culture to a wide audience with a need to provide, however imperfectly, a taste of the range and depth of the literature in question. Choosing from the extant corpus of belles-lettres in the Arabic language however poses problems peculiar to this field; they include questions of classification which are concerned with the larger issue of Arab identity, and more specifically with Arab lineage, language, history and culture. Anthologists have not infrequently ducked such matters by adopting an Islamic starting point that takes as its base pre-Islamic Arabic poetry and the Qur'an then branches out to take in the various literatures which these have inspired – Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu et al. Such a stance certainly underlines the pre-eminence of Arabic as the language of the Islamic revelation but by its multiple focus sacrifices not only the distinctive qualities of Arabic culture but also the perspective of growth, flowering, decay and rebirth of one of the world's greatest literatures.

It should be stressed that this anthology is the very first representative sample of all Arabic literature, ancient and modern, in English translation. Each item was originally translated either because the translator was fascinated by the subject or for ulterior motives. In both cases the interest of the English-speaking world in Arab culture was the most significant factor and it is perhaps true to say that outside Europe no other culture has so fascinated the English mind.

In this volume, therefore, the aim is not necessarily to select the best translations but to encompass as wide a spectrum as possible, showing the variety of different approaches and styles of translation over a period of some four hundred years from the 17th century to the present day.

Every item included has been taken from another source and reproduced intact (with individual spelling, orthography, etc.) apart from certain academic footnotes which were felt to be unnecessary in this context. I make no apologies whatsoever for omitting anything that others may deem essential to include - no anthology can claim to be perfect - and the omissions I have made were all carefully considered. Furthermore, the volume is inspired not by any racial, nationalistic or religious consideration but by the universal spirit and noble values which lie at the heart of Arabic literature and Arabic civilization.

TEMENOS ACADEMY LECTURE

“THE SACRED IN LITERATURE – ‘SAGES STANDING IN GOD’S HOLY FIRE’: THE POET AND SPIRITUALITY”

Professor Bushrui gave this lecture on Tuesday, 9 June 2009 at the Royal Asiatic Society. Similar to previous years, this lecture was very well-received, and the decision was taken by the Temenos Academy to publish the paper as one of its major publications.

Abstract:

In sacred literature we discover humanity’s awareness of the relationship with the divine and its powerful experience of a yearning for the spiritual. Inspired poetry uses ordinary words in extraordinary ways that produce intimations of that eternal Word that sustains all things. The idea that the writing of true poetry requires a spark of something like divine possession is widespread in many civilizations. In its most extreme form, this can lead to the poet being seen as temporarily or permanently mad; we may remember the German poet Friedrich Hölderlin, who spent many years in confinement after losing his reason in 1806 at the age of 36, as well as John Clare, the English peasant poet whose lifelong struggle with adversity and oppression reduced him to insanity and caused him to end his days in an asylum in 1864. We may also recall Robert Graves’s description of Sappho in his collection of essays *The Crowning Privilege*⁵, pressed beyond the bounds of sanity by the double burden of incarnating the Muse and expressing her divinely-inspired utterances. Indeed, the inspiration of the poet is so powerful and all-consuming as to appear positively dangerous.

This is in no small part bound up with the magical function of language. The ancient Druids, for example, acted not only as guardians of the sacred traditions of the Celts but as poets and teachers of an oral tradition too powerful to be trusted to writing because of the power which it gave its possessors to curse and blight as well as to bless and fructify. It might seem bizarre at first sight to claim common ground for Arabic and Irish literature, but both these cultures share an awareness of the ‘lawful magic’, known in Arabic as *Sihir halal*, which resides in the music and texture of words and transcends their immediate meaning. This becomes clear in the passages from the Holy Qur’an: So when the truth came to them from us they said:/this is surely clear enchantment.⁶

Yeats expresses the same vision:

And I would have all know that when all falls
In ruin, poetry calls out in joy,
Being the scattering hand, the bursting pod,
The victim’s joy among the holy flame,
God’s laughter at the shattering of the world.⁷

Elsewhere in the same poem, expressing the religious quality of all true poetry, Yeats describes it as “one of the fragile, mighty things of God” — a concept close to the Arabic term *iʿjaz* (language miraculously wrought), applied only to the Holy Qur’an itself as the highest literary expression.

These glimpses of the sacred transcend the boundaries of time and space, culture and tradition and find further expression when Yeats’ imagination enables him to enter the ‘holy city of Byzantium’ - not the city of the impetuous young, driven by their senses, but a home of sages, ‘singing-masters of my soul’, prophets and teachers of a higher wisdom, true poets surrounded and inspired by ‘God’s holy fire’.

⁵ London: Cassell & Co, 1955.

⁶ The Holy Qur’an, X:76.

⁷ W.B. Yeats, “The King’s Threshold” in *Collected Plays of W.B. Yeats* (London: Macmillan, 1960), p. 114.

“TOURATH AL-INSANIYYAH AL-ROUHI”

Arabic translation of *The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race*

Tourath al-Insaniyyah al-Rouhi is the first book in Arabic that studies almost all the world religions and spiritual traditions - both divine and non-divine, and surveys man's yearning for the Ultimate Reality, from the early beginnings of the attempts of the first people (Native Americans, Africans, Norsemen, and others) as well as the great religions in today's world. While each chapter in the English edition had the benefit of a thorough review by a staunch believer in the tradition concerned, most of these religious traditions have never been thoroughly studied or even translated into Arabic. Therefore, it was necessary to invent terminology that would be applicable to all. Furthermore, it was important to treat each tradition in its own right as a separate, independent tradition, yet at the same time make sure that the commonalities that are shared with all other religions are clearly emphasized and demonstrated. The Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, and Shinto traditions were extremely challenging and required a great deal of research in Arabic literature and theology as well as early philosophical treatises by Ibn Rushd, Al-Ghazzali, Ibn Arabi, Avicenna, and others. The final result is a text that is certainly not perfect, but is extremely accurate, unbiased, and is consistently respectful of each tradition included.

The evaluations of reviewers of the Arabic translation have been very encouraging and uplifting. Mr. Mohamed Ghuneim, one of the most distinguished translators in the Arab world, offered this assessment of the book:

“Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review the book project *The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race*. I believe the book incorporates a wealth of information and encompasses a heritage, which for centuries has enriched the souls and warmed the hearts of diverse human races. I also believe that the 'Arab library' is lacking in faithful and objective translations of the human spiritual heritage such as this one and a book like this would be a useful and appreciated contribution to 'Arabic book shelves' everywhere. Libraries and archives around the world are teeming with books, studies, essays and treatises dealing with faith and religion in one way or another. But rarely do I see anything like *The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race*. Embracing for the first time, in my opinion, a wide range of major faiths and religions (both old and new), this one volume is a truly comprehensive presentation. I am very pleased to have been selected to contribute to this important undertaking. And I would be honored to help bring such a book into the light.”

It is expected that the book will be published by the end of 2010.

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON KAHLIL GIBRAN

Organized by The George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace at
The University of Maryland

In collaboration with

The International Association for the Study of the Life and Works of Kahlil Gibran

8-11 December 2011

In a world where anger, disintegration, corruption, disorientation and anarchy are the order of the day—Kahlil Gibran stands on his own, as one of those rare writers who actually transcend the barrier between East and West, emphasizing the importance of reconciling reason and passion, of balancing the physical with the spiritual, of perceiving the divine order that is inherent in all things on earth and in heaven, and conforming to its bidding.

Through further research and study, these and other values enunciated in Gibran's work can continue to inspire many, touching their lives in countless ways and giving them comfort, hope and joy.

The Second International Conference on Kahlil Gibran entitled "The Poet of the Culture of Peace and the Meeting of East and West" is being planned by the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace. The conference will focus on discussions directly related to Gibran's life and work with particular emphasis on recent research, translations into new languages, and the preservation and enhancement of the legacy of Kahlil Gibran throughout the world. In addition to an assessment of Gibran's contribution to twentieth century literature, the conference will examine the works of his contemporaries, Ameen Rihani and Mikhail Naimy, as well as present Gibran's art and artistic contributions, which have long been neglected.

This contributes to the organizational mission of Chair by concentrating on the dialogue of civilizations, inter-religious understanding, and the resolution of conflict on a variety of different levels.

Every geographic community represented by conference participants will benefit: Lebanon and the Arab world, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Spain, Italy, Romania, Ethiopia, China, India, North America, South America, Ireland, and Japan.

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The First International Conference on Kahlil Gibran was a groundbreaking event that took place at the University of Maryland, College Park from 9-12 December 1999. It was indeed an international, multicultural gathering that drew in 150 participants with representatives from Algeria, Australia, Canada, Egypt, England, France, Guadeloupe, Ireland, Kuwait, Lebanon, the People's Republic of China, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States.

"This seminal conference was the first of its kind to be convened anywhere. Its organizers, members of the Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace Project, have been working diligently to enrich the educational experience of scholars studying East-West relations, to contribute to the discourse of analysts interested in conflict resolution, and to provide a greater understanding of Gibran's contribution to cross-cultural communication and the universal values he championed."

It is hoped that the Second International Conference on Kahlil Gibran will take us to even higher realms of promoting peace. Gibran triumphantly combined and reconciled diverse influences in his work, and in so doing, he stands as a symbol of the unifying vision, a vision capable of embracing the world in both its hemispheres; a vision capable of securing and respecting the rights of all in every walk of life; a vision capable of releasing the peoples of the world to lead a new life free from acrimony and conflict. It is this

vision that has resonated among peoples of diverse cultures and brought them together in appreciation of his art. His major work, *The Prophet*, has inspired millions and has taught them how to live and love. Through literature and the arts, Gibran resolved cultural and human conflicts and developed in the reconciliation process a unique consciousness, one that transcended the barriers of East and West and still retains its potency today.