

Then a Christian Fell in Love with Ali (p.b.u.h)

This article is an interview with George Jordac, the author of "Ali, the Voice of Human Justice" done by a group of Iranian authors, among them Reza Amir Khani.

An Interview with George Jordac

The house of George Jordac is located in Al-Hamra district. The Christian place in North West of Beirut. Beirut is an exhibition of different nations and religions. It's interesting that a country of 1000 mc and 6 million people has registered 18 official religions. I was always thinking that what a Lebanese character is like? What characteristics from a Lebanese personality?

How can such a small country be so news-making and progressive in culture? What else but language does relate this country in which there is no sign of Arabs to other Arab countries?

62. Safinah

George Jordac, the famous Lebanese author, is well-known to all Ali's lovers of the world by his book, "Ali, The Voice of Human Justice".

The study of George Jordac on Ali's life is not just a research about the life and characteristics of Imam Ali (p.b.u.h); it is the story of someone's love to the soul of a great and superhuman character.

The house of George Jordac is in Al-Hamra district, the Christian place in North West of Beirut. Beirut is an exhibition of nations and religions. It is interesting that a country of 1000 mc and 6 million people has registered 18 official religions.

I was always thinking that what a Lebanese character is like? What characteristics make a Lebanese personality?

How can such a small country be so news-making and progressive in culture? What else but language does relate this country in which there is no sign of Arabs to other Arab countries?

The author whose over 1,000,000 volumes of his book has been sold in the Shia world should live in such a place.

George Jordac's house was situated in an old building in a middle-class Street. Alhamra house was a flat of about 100 m, replete with newspapers, books and brochures.

G. J.: "I was born in 1896 in Morjaoon village", located in south of Lebanon. A village which its inhabitants have the literature propensity just like other villages around it. In Lebanon to be from a village is a sign of loyalty. I'm from Morjaoon. Morjaoon consists of 2 words "Morj" and "oyoon" (springs), the place in which the springs come in to the land! Our village was full of springs and I had a happy childhood. I ran away from school every day and went to one of these

springs. The school principal and teachers were always looking after me - the naughty, and always-running- child - and every day complained about me to my family. In my family, only my brother, Foad Jordac, supported me."

R.A.: The famous Foad Jordac?

G. J.: Yes, my older brother, Foad Jordac, was a poet and bibliophile, and very interested in reading. He attracted me to this way. Whenever my mother and father, teacher or school principal complained, he defended me and said to me "Out of school, you will learn more!"

The fact is that after perceiving my interest and hard working in reading literature, one day, he gave me a heavy book as a gift and said: "All literature of Arabs is summarized in this book..."

R.A.: Nahajal Ballaghe?!

G. J.: Yes, I took Nahjil balaghe with me and ran away from school and sat by a spring, while leaning on a rock, drowned in the sea of Nahjol balaghe.

R.A.: So, this book made you know Imam Ali (p.b.u.h)?

G. J.: No! I was only fascinated by Imam Ali's literary language and not his personality. Do not forget that we were Christians and lived in a Christian village; we were not so much interested in Imam Ali! Though, whenever we had some guests, my brother, Foad, recited some poems, praising the commander of Faithful (Imam Ali), and that helped me!

R.A.: How could you become closer to the perfect personality of Imam Ali?

G. J.: When I entered university, I studied Arab literature and Arab's philosophy and later I taught them.

Again in both of these fields, literature and philosophy, I found Ali (p.b.u.h) a great person.

I made up my mind to do a serious research on this character, from Eghad and Taha Husain to Shia's scholars. I read whatever written about Imam Ali (p.b.u.h). Reading these books, I understood that all were discussed about his Walayah (Islamic jurisprudential guardianship), his rightness and rightlessness, and his great personality has been lost in these arguments. They stucked to the Caliphate issue to the cost of not perceiving Ali's illuminate face.

They saw Ali's government ship but his humane character is neglected. I did not satisfy. (I can't quench my thirst knowing him.) So, I scrutinized his great and exceptional personality. I came back to the Marjaiyoon spring's side and to my childhood's Nahjol balaghe!

I wrote all my books about Imam Ali in this way... .

R.A.: Professor! Please tell us about the first books, "Ali, The Voice of Human Justice".

G. J.: You may think that it is published by the help of Muslims! But it is wrong! While I was writing, the editor -in-chief of Alresale Magazine came and asked me to give it to him to make parts of it published in continuous issues.

I did not accept, but after watching his persistence on his demand, finally I gave him two parts of it.

Immediately, after its publication, the Bishop and hermits of Kermelyeh tribe (from Christian Marooni branch) said: "I myself will publish this book with my own financial resources", naturally I became very happy.

R.A.: And then Muslims found you, yes?

G. J.: No! Actually, first Christians learned about the book and came to me surprisingly and happily. They said: "you honor the Arabs!" They collected money to pay the cost of the

book's publication to me. I said: "I didn't publish this book with my money and the chairman of Karmiye's hermits did it.

They went to the chairman.....He said: "No, I did not do that. The money of its publication came from the priests and hermits who pray here. Go and give this money to poor people."

Much later he said to me: "I love Imam Ali and out of his blessings, our poor people also gained prosperity".

R.A.: Professor! What did Muslims do at last?

G.J.: First, Ghasem Rajab –owner of a school in Baghdad–took the book and carried the book around the holy shrine of the Commander of the Faithful people; after him, some Shia brother republished this book again and again.

R.A.: Have you ever been to Najaf?

G.J.: No! I haven't been there! But I went to Karbala two times for delivering speech. I did pilgrimage of Imam Husain, his son... .

R.A.: Professor Jordac asked us "do we know Le Martin?"

I said: "Yes!" and he continued that he had found a book from Le Martin in one of the Paris's book stores about your prophet and the book was very old and precious. Unfortunately, Muslims don't search for these things. For example, no Muslim ever tried to translate the book "Ali and Al-Sorat Al-Ferinsiyyah"(Imam Ali and the French Revolution) into French. Is not translating such a book a service to Islam? Should the Christians translate this book? If does not the book "Imam Ali and Arabs nationality" which is clearly states how Imam Ali started from nationality issue and without resorting to nationalism got to humanism, deserve some research? **I believe that Imam Ali's place is higher than Christ.**

I'm fascinated with his great humanistic personality. We were Christians and naturally we have no belief in Imam Ali's Imamat. (And we are very surprised what a kind of disbelief it is that he didn't mention Ali's name without adding Imam title before it!) I was brought up in a Christian family, which has no belief in these things. But let me tell you a funny story of my life. My father was a mason. He sold his works to the other villages; he kept two stones (rocks) in the house and worked on them for two years. Then, after finishing his work, he hung them on the house's entrance.

R.A.: What was written on them?

G.J.: He laughed and answered: "No generous man is but Ali (p.b.u.h), and no sword is but Zolfaghar."

R.A.: And this is Ali. Therefore, it is not surprising that even those who do not even believe in God keep a picture of Imam Ali with respect. It is not surprising that in Maroni's church there is a prayer that by making a little change in its word order, it will become very similar to Dua Komeil.

It is not surprising that Michal Naeemeh in his foreword to the Jordac's book wrote: "This is the picture of the greatest alive men of Arabs after the prophet". It is no surprise