

OBITUARIES

**Alimurad Davudi (1922-1979 [kidnapped, presumed dead])
Professor of Philosophy, Bahá'í Administrator,
Probable Victim of State Execution**

Some twenty years after his kidnapping and probable execution by agents of the Iranian government, Alimurad Davudi's memory remains powerful in the minds and hearts of his many admirers. For those who heard his talks in Iran, the now available transcripts of his lectures provide another opportunity to "hear" Davudi's rhythmic and measured speech, always delivered with exceptional eloquence, despite his usual lack of any preparation. He was an outstanding Bahá'í administrator, a professor of philosophy at Tehran University, and perhaps the foremost intellect of his generation in the 500,000-strong Iranian Bahá'í community. Nasr, a well-known Iranian Islamicist at George Washington University, in his survey of philosophy in modern Iran, counted Davudi among a small number of first rate philosophers in that country.¹ Davudi's study of philosophy in a country where the practical sciences such as engineering and medicine were highly regarded said much about his courage and independence of mind.

Alimurad Davudi was born in 1922 in Shams-Abad, a 600-family village in Iranian Azarbaijan that was owned by his family and which he later inherited. His mother was the granddaughter of Fath Ali Shah and his father was the grandson of the military commander of Georgia. Both his parents were recipients of several letters from 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. At the age of 10, Davudi left Shams-Abad for Tabriz, the provincial capital, where he lived for 8 years. Davudi described his sober youth in an interview:

I didn't have much of a youth. This is not to advise the youth now not to enjoy their lives, but just to say that due to my temperament, I felt myself old much earlier than would be natural or necessary. Generally I did not feel a great sense of joy in those years and spent very little time on games and sports and entertainment. Instead I spent most of my time reading. I don't say this as a good thing, but as I was something of a recluse and didn't relate to people too easily, reading was a kind of refuge for me.... My only regret now is that I didn't serve the Bahá'í Faith much during my youth.²

On finishing high school, Davudi left for Tehran where he graduated from the teacher training college after three years studying education, literature and

¹ S. H. Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, edited by Mehdi Aminrazavi (London: Curzon Press, London) 1996.

² Quoted in *The Collected Works of Dr Ali-Murad Davudi* (Persian), Volume One, compiled and edited by Vahid Rafati, (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1987).

philosophy. He then taught Persian literature at various schools in different Iranian towns. In Zanjan, at the age of thirty-one, he married Malikih Afagh Iranpoor, who became a Bahá'í some twenty years later. They had three daughters and two sons. The young family spent their summer holidays at Davudi's ancestral village where he would see to the health and educational needs of the villagers by, for example, building public baths and schools.

In 1955, at the age of thirty-three, Davudi moved back to Tehran and began to study philosophy at Tehran University while working full-time as a school teacher. He spent one year in France to improve his command of French (which proved important for his later translations of French philosophical texts; see below). In 1964, he gained one of the first doctorates in philosophy ever awarded by Tehran University with a thesis on Aristotle and Descartes. He was then invited to join the university's faculty where he subsequently became a professor.

Davudi was elected to the Iranian Bahá'í community's national governing body (the National Spiritual Assembly or NSA) in 1973. He became its secretary (or its chief executive officer) one year later. This position entailed substantial travel throughout the country, leaving little time for his writing and lecturing. He once commented that he much preferred an academic life to an administrative life, but he nonetheless served the Bahá'í community tirelessly and accepted neither a salary for what was effectively full-time work nor reimbursement for expenses. In addition to his wide-ranging administrative responsibilities as NSA secretary, he played a key role in the development of Bahá'í literature in Iran, serving on both the national publishing and review committees. He also made a significant contribution to the deepening work of the community, co-supervising (with Badiullah Farid) the establishment of the institute for advanced Bahá'í studies in 1976, an initiative proposed by the Universal House of Justice to promote scholarship and research, especially among young Bahá'ís: "The training of a few talented youth with the capacity and ability to undertake research and acquire deep knowledge in the field of religious studies and mysticism is very important."² Davudi devised much of the institute's curriculum, including classes on philosophy and mysticism in which he encouraged the study of primary texts (rather than the prevailing preference for commentaries), especially by Islamic authors such as Attar, Tusi and Shabestari whom he believed provided a rich context for understanding Bahá'í mystical writings.

Perhaps Davudi's most important contributions to the Bahá'í community were his lectures and writings. He was a very popular speaker: his university classes attracted large audiences, and he devoted a great deal of his time to Bahá'í youth, running regular study classes in Tehran and at summer schools. I attended two summer schools for youth in Iran where Dr Davudi gave impressive talks on rational proofs for the existence of God and the concept of Godhood and manifestation in the Bahá'í writings. The youth, in return, admired him greatly. One of his pupils writes: "Students truly love him and regard him as their teacher. He is one of those rare teachers with whom, when the time comes for saying good-bye, many of the students are in tears."²

His rare gift for public speaking was described by Hooshang Mahmudi (also a member of the NSA of Iran who was himself kidnapped and presumed killed in August 1980 for being a member of that body). He frequently drove Davudi to the recording studio for his regular taped lectures that were subsequently distributed as cassette tapes to the Bahá'í community. Mahmudi recounts how Davudi was

normally informed of the subject matter of his talk for the first time on the way to the studio. He would then deliver a detailed and eloquent lecture without notes, from memory, and without any need to edit or retape any sections of the recorded talk.

Davudi had a distinctive and absorbing literary style reflected both in his talks and written work. In addition to Persian, the extensive use of Arabic quotations in his talks revealed his fluency in both languages. His superb literary skills were evident even in rudimentary NSA correspondence, while the annual reports written and read by him at national conventions were greatly appreciated by delegates for the beauty of their prose.

Davudi's lectures and writings on philosophical and metaphysical themes from a Bahá'í standpoint probably still remain unmatched in the Bahá'í world, and are rich and untapped resources for serious Bahá'í scholars. His essay on "Divinity and Oneness" and his talks on "The Station of Bahá'u'lláh" shed light on some of the foundational aspects of Bahá'í beliefs. His essays and lectures on life after death; the meaning of freedom; freewill and determinism; the station of man; prayer; the soul; philosophy; the study of history; science and religion; and non-involvement in politics are impressive examples of his ability to apply his substantial knowledge of western and Islamic philosophy and the Bahá'í writings to diverse areas of vital interest to Bahá'ís.

His writings on Bahá'í themes were published by Bahá'í journals in Iran or separately as booklets. His publications in the field of philosophy consisted primarily of translations into Persian of French philosophical works. Most of these were published by Tehran University Press and included works by L. Meynard, Emile Brehier and Etienne Gilson. He also published original articles in the journal of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities of Tehran University on the philosophy of Farabi, Avicenna, and the Greek philosophers.

After the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the society of Muslim students declared Dr Davudi "anti-Islamic" and "anti-revolutionary." He found it impossible to continue his work as a professor and resigned from his post. During this time, members of militant Islamic groups frequently gathered outside his house. In the midst of the escalating persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís, Davudi was the most visible member of the national body that had the task of representing the Bahá'í community and defending the rights of its members to the new government. As secretary of the NSA he also had to encourage the community through letters and talks to be patient and to act with wisdom, co-ordinate relief efforts, and do what he could to protect the community and mitigate its suffering.

He was aware of the danger he faced and had prepared himself for arrest and imprisonment. His daughter described the situation:

In April 79, a few months after the Revolution, I went to Iran and begged my father to go to the USA or Canada. He refused, saying that the Bahá'í youth in Iran needed him and he did not want to disappoint them. The phone would ring all day and night and he would talk to the friends, comforting and consoling them. He also received several phone calls from people who said that they were coming to arrest him. I cried so much. All my father did was to pack his pyjamas, razor, aftershave and prayer book in a small bag and kept it by his bed and waited. In all that time he didn't even look concerned. I cannot forget his smiles in those days.²

A few days before his disappearance he told one of his relatives that "I have not suffered much for Bahá'u'lláh. I have not even been slapped on my face for the Faith. I hope that I have a chance to attain this honour."²

A glimpse into the character and devotional attitude of Dr Davudi can be discerned from the account of his visit to the house of the Bab in Shiraz soon after its partial destruction in 1979 by the government authorities. He had asked for arrangements to be made for him to be taken there. At this stage, the house had already been severely damaged, its roof caved in, walls broken and doors and windows smashed, with piles of rubble and debris in every room. As Davudi approached the stairs leading to the upper room where the Bab had declared himself to Mulla Hussein, he removed his shoes, climbed the stairs and, with great reverence and unconcerned with the state of the building, simply sat on a heap of broken stonework, surrounded by the debris, and prayed.

On 11 November 1979, while out for a walk alone in a park near his home in Tehran, Davudi was kidnapped. The newspaper *Liberation Front* reported the incident with the headline, "Dr Davudi, University Professor, is Kidnapped." He was never seen again. The Iranian government has denied any involvement in his disappearance, but three revolutionary guards later admitted that Dr Davudi had indeed been kidnapped on the order of the government.

*Novin Doostdar*³

³ In writing this article I have relied heavily on the three volumes of essays and transcribed and edited talks of Dr Davudi produced by Dr Vahid Rafati. Dr Rafati has rendered the Bahá'í world a tremendous service in compiling these volumes, which also contain a substantial amount of biographical material on the life and works of Dr Davudi.

James Heggie (1915-1992)**Teacher, Administrator, Compiler of Bahá'í writings**

James Heggie was a teacher, administrator, and scholar of the Bahá'í Faith. In his childhood Jim's family migrated from Scotland to Canada in search of a better life. When he expressed interest in a young woman who did not meet the approval of his family, Jim was handed a one-way ticket to visit relatives in Australia. While the intention was that he would forget the lass while earning his fare home, Jim decided to stay in the antipodes, and rarely saw his family again. He was 20 when he arrived in Sydney and 22 when he encountered the Bahá'í teachings through Oswald Whitaker in 1937. At the age of 26, having completed his studies in chiropractic at B. J. Palmer's Chiropractic college in Davenport, Iowa, he met the Faith's leader, Shoghi Effendi, while serving with the Australian Army in the middle east; and at the age of 32, the year of his marriage to Merle Brooks, he was first elected to the national spiritual assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia and New Zealand. He served on the national spiritual assembly for all but a few years from then until 1972, including many years as national secretary. He died in 1992.

The Bahá'í community

In 1937 the Sydney Bahá'í community had fifteen members, including Clara and Hyde Dunn, who had brought the Faith to Australia in 1920. On occasion Jim visited the Dunns, assisting Hyde, who was by then advanced in years, and almost blind, with his papers. Jim was also a regular guest of Oswald Whitaker.

I had actually attended a meeting or two of some weird nature, and was associated with a Christian Scientist when in July I found myself in need of the service of an optometrist - and so by chance I called in to the George Street shop of Alex Hale, to find Mr. O. Whitaker who not only prescribed the necessary spectacles but also attracted me so that I'd always call on him to say hello and talk a little (though it meant waiting perhaps an hour to do so). After a few weeks I was invited to a youth meeting at Mr. Whitaker's home where I first heard the word Bahá'í. The following weekend when I visited the George Street shop I told Mr. Whitaker I wasn't interested in religion and he said that it didn't matter and that we'd talk of 'science', for he was wonderfully informative, so that soon I came to realize that my disbelief was not against religion but against the inadequate church doctrines.⁴

Other small Bahá'í groups existed in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, and Auckland, and together numbered approximately 100. Of Bahá'ís his own age, Jim recalled:

In 1937 there were three Bahá'í youth, Lucy Trueman and Merle Brooks in Adelaide and myself in Sydney (though I didn't meet them

⁴ Undated memoir in the possession of the author.

until I returned from Palestine in 1942). In Sydney there were three Bolton children, in Adelaide two Dobbins children, and at Booleroo South Australia, two Brooks, all of whom continued in the Faith - three other children of Bahá'ís did not continue as Bahá'ís.

Not long after Jim became a Bahá'í, preparations commenced for the visit of Martha Root, a travelling Bahá'í teacher. He attended her lectures in Sydney, and in Honolulu in August 1939 was the last Australian Bahá'í to see her, shortly before her death.

The Australian and New Zealand Bahá'í communities were not only small in numbers but were relatively unfamiliar with each other, as the costs of travel and the vast distances between the major centres inhibited regular contact. Although the first national convention was held in Sydney in 1934, the national body was elected by correspondence during the war years when travel for non-military purposes was impossible.

Meeting Shoghi Effendi

Jim volunteered for the Australian Army's medical corps, knowing that volunteers had a choice of field of service, and anticipating that a posting somewhere in the middle east would enable him to visit the Holy Land and meet Shoghi Effendi. The decision was a conscious one; a colleague had offered to sign papers that would have exempted him from service (on the grounds that his services were essential to a business), but Jim was intent on meeting the Guardian. According to Jim's memoir:

My first project upon joining the army was to take steps to get sent to the Middle East where after several months of army training (in the medical corps) I arrived late November. We couldn't get leave for a full month so it wasn't until just before Christmas 1941 that I got to Haifa on three days leave. After some difficulty I was able to contact the Bahá'ís, finding the Guardian just before dark inspecting the terracing of the Bahá'í gardens on Mt. Carmel and arranging to meet him the next morning. But that evening I was taken to the Archives by the Guardian's brother. Rúhíyyih Khánum welcomed me the next morning at the house of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and sat in at the interview with the Guardian. The first of many. I was the first westerner to visit Haifa for over two years, and as I'd just recently been to Wilmette the Guardian asked of many of the friends, especially of Hyde Dunn, who'd died early in the year. I was able on that occasion to visit 'Akká and Bahjí and the Garden of Ridván. I asked if it was possible to get a Bahá'í ring-stone as well as some photos of recent date of Haifa and the offer of any Bahá'í book I desired; as the only one I hadn't read was the recently published Epistle to the Son of the Wolf I chose that book. Also I had an invitation to stay at the Western Pilgrim House on my next visit - which was a month later. This time I made the acquaintance of Sutherland Maxwell who was staying in Haifa at the time, had a number of interviews with the Guardian, one of which was of over an

hour, and again visited 'Akká and Bahjí. This time I met the father of Shoghi Effendi who had rooms at Bahjí. The Guardian liked to meet the young Bahá'ís and to talk to them – they certainly felt the impact, and for a life time. I couldn't tell anyone what the feelings were that I went through during those visits to the Guardian but they established a direction and planted a seed that has never ceased to grow. I was the first male believer from Australia that the Guardian had met, before that he's only met three others – Effie Baker in 1925, Clara Dunn about 1933, and Ethel Dawe in 1938 on her return from England.

Soon after these visits Jim received a letter written by the Guardian's secretary: "He was very happy indeed to meet you, and feels that if you are an example of the Bahá'í youth of Australia, they will render the Cause many valuable services."⁵ A day later Shoghi Effendi expressed similar sentiments when writing to the Australian and New Zealand national assembly:

A few days ago Mr Jim Heggie came to see the Guardian. He was able to visit all the shrines and archives as well. Shoghi Effendi was delighted with him; he found him devoted, full of faith and zeal, and very well read in the teachings. He feels that if this is a sample of the Bahá'í youth of Australia, there is, indeed, a wonderful future ahead of that country!⁶

These few lines had a significant impact on Jim, who felt that they implied he should remain in Australia and not consider returning to Canada.

Family and career

Jim returned from Palestine in 1942 and in 1943 was posted to Buna in New Guinea. At the end of the war he returned to New South Wales. Stanley W. and Mariette Bolton, who had also graduated from Palmer College, employed Jim in their chiropractic business. As already noted, Jim married Merle Brooks in 1947. Merle continued her career as a teacher of English and music, and raised their children Jennifer, Adrian and Christopher. In 1948 the Heggies moved to Brisbane to work toward the formation of the first assembly there. They later returned to Sydney, where they helped establish a local assembly in Hunters Hill. In 1960 Jim established his own chiropractic clinic in Parramatta, where he remained until retiring from full-time practice in 1987.⁷

Promoting the Bahá'í Faith

⁵ 25 December 1941, *Messages to the Antipodes* (Mona Vale: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1997) 178.

⁶ 26 December 1941, *Messages to the Antipodes* 178-180.

⁷ At which time Jim passed the practice to Christopher Heggie.

In addition to work, Jim became much involved in Bahá'í teaching activities. Jim was an effective teacher of the Faith, especially in the 1940s, when there were few new Bahá'ís in any one year. He was able to teach actively during his army years:

Wherever I was in the army I was able to speak of the Faith and thus caused many hundreds to hear of Bahá'u'lláh. The first to respond and accept the Faith was a young farmer near Warwick, Queensland. The only other, one in my hospital unit who became a Bahá'í in Buna, New Guinea in 1943. No doubt the first New Guinea believer. In fact it was my presence in New Guinea for two and a half years and that of Jim Chittleborough in Milne Bay that allowed the Guardian to state in *God Passes By* the opening up of those areas of the Faith.

In 1946 Jim was appointed to the regional teaching committee for the states of New South Wales and Queensland, and was elected secretary. In 1948 he commenced service on the national teaching committee, and was frequently a speaker at firesides and public meetings.

The national spiritual assembly

In 1947 Jim was elected to the national assembly, and elected secretary. That year also marked the commencement of Australia's first six-year plan. The national assembly negotiated a number of transitions in the 1940s. Hilda Books of Adelaide, (Merle Heggie's aunt), had been secretary of the national assembly from its establishment in 1934 until 1944, when it was decided that the secretary should work from the newly acquired national Bahá'í centre at 2 Lang Rd, Paddington, in Sydney. Dulcie Dive was elected to the position, and transferred her residence from Auckland.

Jim was not elected to the national assembly in 1951-52, but was re-elected in 1953, the year the ten-year plan commenced. Six members of the assembly elected that year pioneered to Islands in Asia and the Pacific, and at a by-election in January 1954 Jim was once more elected secretary. He subsequently served on the national assembly every year until 1972, except for the year 1969; in that year, however, national assembly member John Davidson was appointed as an auxiliary board member and Jim was elected as his replacement in a by-election.

Each year from 1954 until 1967 (except 1957-59) Jim served as secretary of the national assembly. As an administrator of Bahá'í institutions, therefore, Jim played a vital role during the years of the ten-year and the nine-year plans. In these years Bahá'í communities were established in all the neighbouring islands of the Pacific, the house of worship was built in Sydney, and large-scale systematic proclamation activities were implemented.

In 1955 he received a letter from Shoghi Effendi asking the national assembly to commence plans, in the strictest confidence, for the construction of a house of worship in Sydney. Detailed investigations into the design, and the costs of construction had to be undertaken before they were announced to the community in the Guardian's 1957 convention message. For nearly two years Jim and his fellow members of the national assembly laboured on these plans in secret, as Shoghi Effendi did not want the community to be disappointed should they have to be

postponed for whatever reason. Between 1957 and 1961 Jim remained closely involved in the construction work. Likewise, for the three decades following the dedication of the house of worship, from 1961 until his passing, both Jim and Merle devoted themselves its support. For at least a decade Jim printed the programmes for Sunday services. Dressed always in a dark suit, he stood at the entrance to the temple prior to the Sunday services (in earlier years held at 3pm and more recently, at 11am), with a stern yet kindly face, handing programmes to visitors.

Jim's departure from the Australian national assembly is intriguing. He had attended the international convention in Haifa in 1973, and having been encouraged in his work by Hugh Chance and Ali Nakjavani, he announced at the subsequent Australian national convention shortly afterwards that he would be moving to Haifa to continue his indexing. However, he had perhaps acted too quickly, as he was subsequently informed that he should continue his work from Australia. Perhaps he was happy to have this news spread. In any case, relief from the burden of national assembly service would allow him to pursue his other activities.

Jim's character

Jim was an intensely practical man whose character was frank and down-to-earth. He showed little desire for material wealth, or for any form of status. As his youngest son Christopher explains:

Dad was offered a commission (having reached the level of Staff Sergeant) but declined as he preferred to remain with his men. This was viewed with askance by some, but dad had absolutely no pretensions to that form of leadership, military or civil.⁸

He had dry sense of humour that he spread throughout his time-consuming tasks. At one time, when writing to Shirin Fozdar about her travel in Australia he mentioned that Frank Wyss had obtained a three-month visa that allowed him to go to the remote Cocos Islands:

Mr Frank Wyss left Friday by plane for Cocos and can stay for two months without permission - he'll have to apply for an extension from the island. As there is no accommodation it will be necessary for him to camp on the island. He took a tent and food with him. I fear he will find it very quiet...⁹

At another time he wrote to Alvin Blum in the Solomon Islands with news of efforts to settle the difficult post of Loyalty Islands:

We have a Mr Shapur Suhaili ... in Sydney at the moment on his way to

⁸ Chris Heggie, November 1999.

⁹ 6 June 1955. 0025/0007. Australian national Bahá'í archives.

New Caledonia. He is trying to crack Loyalty: anyway, we'll see what things are like when he gets there.¹⁰

Scholarship

Study of the Bahá'í teachings has been an integral part of the life of the Australian Bahá'í community since its inception. In addition to providing study and deepening activities at community level, summer schools at Yerrinbool commenced in 1938 and contributed to an emerging ethos of systematic learning. Jim Heggie's contribution to this tradition was to move beyond personal study to the production of texts for use by a wider audience. In an age before computers, and in which the Bahá'í writings were gradually appearing in print in English, his principal contribution was the production of indexes and concordances that facilitated systematic study, and in some cases brought together passages thematically. He stated in a 1985 memoir:

Though Bahá'í literature was very limited, we had the *New Era*, *Gleanings*, *The Hidden Words* and *Some Answered Questions*, I found myself learning a new language and toying with such words as Manifestation, Omniscient, Omnipotent. I found myself confirmed in Bahá'í belief long before I met any of the members of the Sydney community, at that time of fifteen members...

In the 1940s he also learnt Braille, and commenced producing Bahá'í books for the blind.

Through the 1940s into the 1960s Jim provided information on the Bahá'í Faith for a number of publications. In the 1950s, for instance, he assisted the Rev. E. H. Vines (Minister of St. Margaret's Presbyterian Church at Turramurra, and Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales) with information about the Bahá'í Faith for the 1958 edition of his study in comparative religions, *Gems of the East*. He subsequently wrote an entry for *The Australian Encyclopaedia*, published by the Grolier Society in 1962.

While studying in North America 1939-41, Jim became friends with Gertrude Struven. Each month she came to Devonport to speak at public meetings he organised as part of an effort to establish a local assembly in the city. Mrs Struven had written a manuscript on Islam that had not made it into print. Whatever the reason for this, she impressed on Jim the significance of the study of Islam for Bahá'ís, and he embarked on one of his life-long interests. His *Qur'anic Study* index, produced in 1946, was authorised by the Australian national spiritual assembly for distribution in 1957. His undated work *Muhammad and Islam: A Bahá'í Qur'anic Study* includes a 38-page essay introducing Islam's key teachings and history, Islamic references found in the Bahá'í writings and in the Bible, and a note on the history of the Imamate.

Jim accomplished his projects by rising early, and spending some time in his study before departing for work. On evenings and weekends he combined these

¹⁰ NSA to Blums, 20/4/55, "ATC of the NSA of Australia and New Zealand" – Honiara.

projects with other administrative and community activities, and regular attendance on Sundays at the house of worship.

George Ronald has published *An Index of Quotations from the Sacred Writings*¹¹ and *Bahá'í References to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*.¹² But most of Jim's projects remain unpublished in book form: *Bahá'í Scriptural Index*;¹³ *Index to the Writings of Shoghi Effendi*;¹⁴ *Index, God Passes By*;¹⁵ *An Index of Quotations from the Writings of Shoghi Effendi*;¹⁶ *An Index of Quotations from the Bahá'í Sacred Writings, Vol II*; Indices to "*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*", "*Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*", and "*Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*"; an "*Index to Promulgation of Universal Peace and Star of the West*"; *Some Studies, Vol I, II, III*; and an *Index to the Compilation of Compilations*.¹⁷ In November 1991, Jim compiled 57 quotations under the title "Spiritual Aspects of Health." Some of these projects were reproduced by Gestetner and sold by the Bahá'í Book Committee. MacEoin also lists *Messages from the Guardian Taken from Bahá'í News*.¹⁸

These works are far more creative and useful than the terms "Index" and "Compilation" imply. Those that are compilations draw together Bahá'í writings on a theme in insightful ways, and those that are indexes find subjects in their content that may not be apparent on a first reading. Thus Heggie's indexes and compilations in fact offer original insights into the meanings that the texts convey. Although many feel that compilations have been superseded by the power of the computer, an alternative view is that compilations continue to be useful "because they are the product of long hours of intellectual activity in matching texts to subjects. The keyword searching that one does on computer databases does not necessarily retrieve everything relevant or exclude everything irrelevant."¹⁹

Jim could not have imagined having a large audience for his work when he first commenced these studies, and so he adopted the habit of binding a small number of volumes for presentation as gifts, mostly to family, but also to a few fortunate friends. That Jim Heggie has left a legacy of indexes and concordances, rather than essays and commentaries, indicates another of his defining characteristics: a casual conversation with him would include precise references concerning the topic in the Bahá'í writings. As a scholar, Jim was singularly interested in mastering the content

11 James Heggie, *An Index of Quotations from the Bahá'í Sacred Writings* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1983) 811pp.

12 James Heggie, *Bahá'í References to Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1986).

13 n.p. [Australia], n.d. [1971].

14 n.p. [Australia], 1972. This was also titled "Bahá'í Concordance Vol II."

15 n.p. [Sydney, N.S.W.]: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia, 1976.

16 n.p. [Australia], n.d. [1984].

17 *Compilation of Compilations* (Mona Vale: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1991).

18 Comp. James Heggie. [Australia], 1972, 97 pages. Listed in Denis MacEoin's "The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions: an annotated bibliography," at <http://www.bahai-library.org/books/biblio/>

19 Ralph Wagner, Westfield State College Library, posted to Bahai-Studies on 21 February 2000.

of the “Creative Word” rather than commenting on it. He never lost the zeal that Shoghi Effendi had identified during those three fateful interviews in Haifa.

At his passing the Universal House of Justice cabled:

DEEPLY DISTRESSED LEARN PASSING JAMES HEGGIE WHO
RENDERED OUTSTANDING SERVICES CAUSE BAHAUILLAH IN
ANTIPODES OVER FIVE DECADES HIS DEVOTED
ENDEAVOURS MANY YEARS MEMBER NATIONAL SPIRITUAL
ASSEMBLY AUSTRALIA INCLUDING LENGTHY PERIOD
SECRETARY CONTRIBUTED ESTABLISHMENT SOUND
ADMINISTRATIVE FOUNDATION NATIONAL COMMUNITY.
LOVINGLY RECALL HIS CONSTANT DEDICATION TEACHING
CAUSE HIS ENTHUSIASM STUDY WRITINGS FAITH HIS
SCHOLARLY WORKS VARIOUS ASPECTS TEACHINGS ...

*Graham Hassall*²⁰

²⁰ I thank Christopher Heggie and Merle Heggie for providing helpful information.