

BAHA'I STUDIES REVIEW

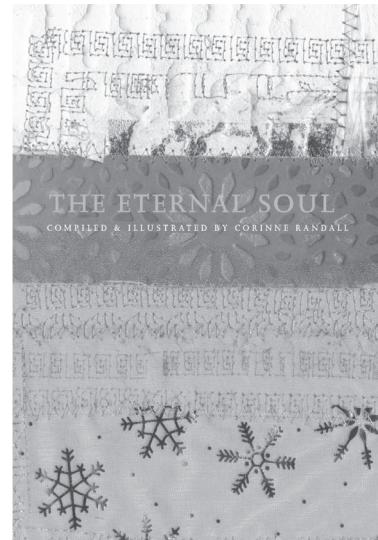
Volume 19, 2013

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The 1893 Russian Publication of Baha'u'llah's Last Will and Testament: An Academic Attestation of 'Abdu'l-Baha's Successorship

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Abstract

This study concerns the publication of a document that may well be unique in the history of religions: the written designation of a successor by the charismatic founder of a world religion. Mīrzā Ḥusayn-‘Alī (1817–1892), known as Bahā’-Allāh (more commonly, Baha'u'llah, 'Splendor of God'), prophet-founder of the Bahā'i Faith. In the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* ('Book of My Covenant'), Baha'u'llah designated his eldest son, 'Abbās Effendī, known as 'Abdu'l-Bahā (1844–1921), as successor. Baha'u'llah died on 29 May 1892 (at 3:00 a.m.) in Bahjī (near 'Akkā), Palestine (now modern-day Israel), and the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* was read aloud nine days later. In 1893, Russian orientalist, Aleksandr Grigor'evich Tumanski (1861–1920) published this document, in the original Persian, with Russian translation, together with a eulogy composed by the celebrated Bahā'i poet, Mīrzā ‘Alī-Ashrafi Lāhijānī, known by his sobriquet, 'Andalīb ('Nightingale'; d. 1920). Since 'Andalīb was an eyewitness to the events he describes, his eulogy may be treated as a historical source. Tumanski's scholarly publication of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* is discussed in the context of Russian scholarly and diplomatic interests. The present study is presented as follows: (1) Introduction; (2) Aleksandr Grigor'evich Tumanski; (3) Contents of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* and Brief Commentary; (4) 'Andalīb's Eyewitness Account of the Reading of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, 1892; (5) The St. Petersburg Edition of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*; (6) The Original Manuscript of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* and the *Textus Receptus*; (7) Textual Variants Between the St. Petersburg Edition of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* and the *Textus Receptus*; (8) The Cambridge Manuscript of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* in the E. G. Browne Collection; and (9) Conclusion: Contemporary-Historical Attestation of 'Abdu'l-Bahā's Successorship by Tumanski and other Russian Notables.

1. Introduction

On 29 September 1892, at a meeting of the Oriental Section of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society, Russian Orientalist, Baron Viktor Romanovich Rosen (1849–1908), announced the decease of the

Keywords

Baha'i Faith
 Baha'u'llah
 Abdu'l-Baha
 covenant
 successor
 Kitab-i 'Ahd
 Aleksandr Tumanski
 Baron Rosen
 Edward Granville
 Browne



Figure 1: Russian Orientalist, Baron Viktor Romanovich von Rosen (1849–1908) mentor of Aleksandr Grigor'evich Tumanski (1861–1920), and editor of the latter's 1893 publication of Baha'u'llah's 'Book of My Covenant' (*Kitāb-i 'Ahdi*). (Public domain.) Archived in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Undated photograph. Source: Rosensches Familienarchiv, Hamburg. Courtesy of Prof. Dr. Claus Freiherr von Rosen, Hamburg.

prophet-founder of the Baha'i Faith, Mīrzā Ḥusayn-‘Alī Bahā’-Allāh, known as Baha'u'llah ('Splendor of God', 1817–1892), who passed away on 29 May 1892 (at 3:00 a.m.) in Bahji (near 'Akka'), Palestine (now modern-day Israel). Rosen then read a paper¹ that he had recently edited for publication, written by his junior colleague and former student, Aleksandr Grigor'evich Tumanski (also Anglicized as 'Toumansky'; b. 23 September 1861; d. Istanbul, 1 December 1920). In this then-forthcoming article, which Rosen read aloud to his colleagues, Tumanski published, for the first time, the original Persian/Arabic text of Baha'u'llah's 'Book of My Covenant' (Persian: *Kitāb-i 'Ahdi*; Arabic: *Kitāb 'Ahdi*),² along with a translation into Russian.³ This text, translation and accompanying commentary appeared in the *Zapiski Vostochnogo otdeleniia Imperatorskogo Russkogo arkheologicheskogo obshchestva* (Proceedings of the Oriental Department of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society), which was the first Orientalist Russian academic journal (established in 1886).⁴ The 'Book of My Covenant' is the way Tumanski understood and translated the title into Russian.

Briefly, the historical origin of the Baha'i Faith (as the religion is now known internationally) may be summarized so: Generally, the Baha'i religion has its roots in Shi'i ('Twelver') Islam. Thus the Baha'i Faith is the daughter religion of Islam. To extend the familial metaphor, the Baha'i religion, after a period of time, emerged as an independent religion, just as a daughter matures and becomes fully independent of her parents. The immediate parallel that springs to mind is Christianity, which may be regarded as the daughter religion of Judaism, its apparent 'parent'. Both Christianity and the Baha'i Faith represent what Baha'i Orientalist, Alessandro Bausani, has termed 'secondary monotheisms'.⁵

In the history of religions, never has there been a clear document conferring successorship upon a designated leader after the death of the founder of the religion – that is, until the appearance of the Baha'i religion during the latter part of the 19th century. Religions tend to break into schisms for a variety of reasons, especially contests for successorship. Such leadership rivalries are fissiparous. It goes without saying that the demise of a charismatic religious figure typically precipitates a crisis – one that invariably results in contested claims and resulting schisms. Thus a leadership crisis arose in the immediate aftermath of the death of Baha'u'llah. Yet there is one important difference: Baha'u'llah left a document – his last Will and Testament, i.e. the *Kitāb-i 'Ahd* ('The Book of the Covenant'), also known as the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* ('The Book of My Covenant') – that clearly designates 'Abdu'l-Bahā (Abbās Effendī, 1844–1921, Baha'u'llah's eldest son, successor, expounder, and exemplar) as the one who should lead the Baha'i community:

The Will of the divine Testator is this: It is incumbent upon the Aghsān, the Afnān and My Kindred to turn, one and all, their faces towards the Most Mighty Branch. Consider that which We have revealed in Our Most Holy Book: 'When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root'. The object of this sacred verse is none other except the Most Mighty Branch ['Abdu'l-Bahā]. Thus have We graciously revealed unto you Our potent Will, and I am verily the Gracious, the All-Powerful. Verily God hath ordained the station of the Greater Branch (*maqām al-Ghuṣn al-Akbar*) [Muhammad-‘Alī] to be beneath that of the Most Great Branch ['Abdu'l-Bahā]. He is in truth the Ordainer, the All-Wise. We have chosen 'the Greater' after 'the Most Great' (*al-Akbar ba'd al-A'ẓam*), as decreed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.⁶

In this historic passage, which is of monumental importance to the future of the Baha'i religion, 'Abdu'l-Bahā is identified as the 'Most Mighty Branch' (*Ghuṣn-i A'ẓam*). Here, Baha'u'llah quotes a passage from the *Kitāb-i Aqdas* ('The Most Holy Book', 'revealed' (i.e. divinely inspired) in 1873) and glosses it as referring to none other than 'Abdu'l-Bahā.⁷ This is important since the *Aqdas* passage cited in the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* does not specifically designate 'Abdu'l-Bahā by name. On this point, see the discussion by Juan Cole.⁸ The present writers, however, question Cole's 'strict constructionist' approach to these two *Aqdas* passages as requiring that Baha'u'llah's 'successor had the narrow, specific function of interpretation of what was obscure'.⁹

Prior to the revelation and disclosure of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, the only implied reference to ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s successorship was made privately in a Tablet revealed 1 Sha'bān 1298 (= 29 June 1881) to ‘Alī-Muhammad Varqā (d. 1896), the prominent Iranian Baha’i renowned as a poet. In this 1881 Tablet, Baha’u’llah explains that the verse in the Aqdas first refers to ‘Abdu’l-Baha, and then to Muhammad-‘Alī.¹⁰ That this Aqdas text is non-specific in designating which one of Baha’u’llah’s sons would succeed him¹¹ may have been a purposeful ambiguity, in order to protect ‘Abdu’l-Baha from intrigues borne of jealousy, although this would inevitably develop.

This underscores the critical importance of the specificity of the successorship provision of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, as Adib Taherzadeh points out: ‘The only document that explicitly announced ‘Abdu’l-Bahā as the Centre of the Covenant of Bahā’u’llāh and the one to whom all must turn after His ascension was the *Kitab-i-Ahd* (The Book of the Covenant), which was published among the believers only after Bahā’u’llāh’s passing’.¹² Here ‘explicitly’, ‘Abdu’l-Baha, as successor, is not designated by name, but by the title, ‘Most Mighty Branch’ (*Ghuṣn-i A’żam*), understood by all Baha’is, without exception, as a clear reference to ‘Abdu’l-Baha. (Differences over succession arose as to other issues.) The heretofore implicit Aqdas passages had now been rendered explicit by the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*.

‘Abdu’l-Baha was the natural choice as Baha’u’llah’s successor, as confirmed by how readily the majority of Baha’is accepted ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s appointment and the authority that accompanied it. This illustrious son was Baha’u’llah’s trusted confidant, and had assiduously served as Baha’u’llah’s personal representative for decades. Although ‘Abdu’l-Baha erstwhile remained an exile and officially still a prisoner in Palestine under the Ottoman empire, Shahvar notes the remarkable fact that ‘Iranian and Ottoman government officials respected ‘Abdu’l-Baha and consulted him on important matters’.¹³ ‘Abdu’l-Baha was knighted by the British on 27 April 1920. In taking on the mantle of Baha’u’llah’s authority in leading the Baha’i community, ‘Abdu’l-Baha served as the charismatic (although not prophetic) leader of the Baha’i community, as well as its authorized interpreter and ideal exemplar of Baha’u’llah’s teachings.

When Baha’u’llah had passed away, ‘Abdu’l-Baha dispatched a telegram bearing the news, ‘The Sun of Baha has set’, to Sultan ‘Abdu’l-Hamīd, with a request for permission to bury Baha’u’llah at Bahji, which request was granted. Baha’u’llah was interred shortly after sunset, on the very day of his ascension.¹⁴ Soon after Baha’u’llah’s decease, in 1893 (the actual publication date of the 1892 volume of ZVORAO), Tumanski published the Persian text of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, as previously stated, thus providing an academic, historical-contemporary attestation of ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s successorship. This publication therefore has historical value, as well as intrinsic interest for academic Baha’i studies.

2. Aleksandr Grigor’evich Tumanski

Tumanski was a graduate of the School of Oriental Languages of the Asian Department of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, where he studied languages under M. A. Gamazoff’s instruction.¹⁵ As mentioned, he was Baron Rosen’s student. ‘Baron Rosen’, writes David Shimmelpenninck van der Oye, ‘saw himself as a member of the European scholarly community rather than a strictly Russian one’,¹⁶ and also had a Russian diplomatic agenda.¹⁷

By vocation, Tumanski ended his military career as a Major-General of the Russian army. While in Turkistan, he was engaged in Babi-Baha'i studies while he still had the rank of Russian Staff Captain. Throughout his own and Baron Viktor Rosen's publications, Tumanski is typically referred to as 'Captain', although Browne first refers to Tumanski as 'Lieutenant'. By avocation, Tumanski was an orientalist (Iranologist and Turkologist). He spoke eleven languages,¹⁸ and knew Persian, Arabic and Turkish. However, it would appear that vocation and avocation merged when Tumanski was officially 'charged with collecting information on the Baha'is'¹⁹ (at least in Persia) by his superiors, presumably under General Alexei Nicolaevich Kuropatkin (1848–1921), Governor-General and commander of the Transcaspian Region (1890–1898).

Tumanski belonged to an old Lithuanian aristocratic stock.²⁰ When he was a young captain in the Russian Imperial army, and while he was serving in the Turkmenistan (originally called Turkistan) region, namely in Ashgabat (i.e. Ashkabad/'Ishqābād, literally, 'City of Love'²¹), the young Russian orientalist came into close contact with the recently established Baha'i community there. Ashgabat (Turkmen: Aşgabat) is the capital and largest city of Turkmenistan (Persian for 'Land of the Turkmen'), a country in Central Asia. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Ashgabat was the site of a burgeoning Baha'i community,²² having attracted a steady influx of Baha'i immigrants, owing to 'Russia's provision of a safe haven for Iranian Baha'is in the Caucasus and Transcaspia/Turkistan'.²³ Tumanski's primary Baha'i contacts in Ashgabat were Mīrzā 'Abdu'l-Karīm-i Ardibīlī (known under the Russianized name of Asadov, for whom Baha'u'llah revealed a Tablet), Mīrzā Yūsif-i Rashtī and Ustād 'Alī-Akbar. These three Baha'is spent days and nights explaining the *Kitab-i Aqdās* to Tumanski, while he was translating that text for publication.

Tumanski became seriously interested in the Baha'i religion after reading an account of the murder, in broad daylight, of a prominent local Baha'i, Hājī Muḥammad-Ridā, in Ashgabat ('Ishqābād), on 8 September 1889, and of the extraordinary intercession by the Baha'is, on behalf of those convicted and sentenced, for clemency, as Moojan Momen recounts:

The second important Russian scholar was Capt. Alexander Tumanski (q.v.), who had, according to his own statements, first heard of the Bahā'ís through an account in Reclus's *Universal Geography*, which he had read while studying for the entrance examination to the officer's course in the military Oriental Languages Training Section. But it was in the winter of 1889–90, when he read an account of the martyrdom of Hājī Muḥammad-Ridā in 'Ishqābād and the manner in which the Bahā'ís had intervened on behalf of the murderers, that he determined to investigate the religion more closely. The following summer, he asked special permission to proceed to Transcaspia, and there met the Bahā'ís of 'Ishqābād. He names three Bahā'ís as having particularly helped him in his studies of the religion: Mīrzā 'Abdu'l-Karīm-i Ardibīlī (Asadov), Mīrzā Yūsif-i Rashtī and Ustād 'Alī-Akbar. In his later studies, Tumanski came into contact with the greatest of the Bahā'í scholars, Mīrzā Abu'l-Fadl-i Gulpāygānī, and was thus in a position to obtain the most detailed and accurate information regarding the new religion.²⁴

Diplomatic correspondence regarding this incident has been provided by Momen.²⁵ The key primary sources surrounding this event have been collected and translated by historian, Ahang Rabbani.²⁶ Mīrzā Abu'l-Fadl-i-Gulpāygānī, who had arrived on 15 July 1889,²⁷ was the spokesman for the Baha'i, and has written a history of the events surrounding the martyrdom of Hājī Muḥammad-Riḍā in 'Ishqābād.²⁸ The significance of the plea for clemency by the Baha'i is summarized by Rabbani:

The importance of this incident was profound. For the first time in the history of the nascent Bahā'i community, persecutors of its members had been publicly tried, found guilty and subjected to punishment under the law. Further, for the first time, the independence of the Faith from its Islamic roots had been clearly established and proclaimed by governmental officials acting on behalf of the state. ... From that time, the Bahā'i community won all the unfettered rights to practice their religion without restriction and under the government's protection.²⁹

Tumanski's own account of how he first became interested in Baha'i and Baha'i studies is certainly worth citing for its human interest. In the following narrative, note that references to the contemporary 'Babis' (followers of the Bab) actually refers to the 'Baha'i' (followers of Baha'u'llah):

In the summer of 1890, as a student of the Officers' courses under the Educational Department of Oriental Languages, I was required to go to the military training camp. Driven by the desire to practice my colloquial Persian in summer, as well as to get to know the Babis better, I requested that I might be allowed to go to the military training camp in the Transcaspian Region troops instead of the Krasnoye Selo.³⁰ The request was granted as a favor to me, provided that I went there at my own expense.

Much to my regret, I did not tell anybody of my intention to apply myself to Babi studies before my departure, and for this reason I had no opportunity to get acquainted with works by E. G. Browne. Even Baron V. R. Rosen's works became known to me thanks to I. F. Gotvald, whose cordial welcome in Kazan I remember with much appreciation.

The only way in which I can justify myself is that I was not aware of what exactly I was going to meet with in Ashkabad. I had obtained my first information about the Babis from the *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle* by [Jan Elisee] Reclus³¹ at a time when I was yet preparing for the entrance examination at the Oriental Languages courses. It was then that I was amazed by this religious struggle, which is possible in this age – if not in Europe, at least in Asia.

In winter 1889–90, a telegram was published in the newspaper, 'Novoye Vremya', which said that the four Shi'i Persians, who had been condemned to death by hanging by the military tribunal in Ashkabad for murdering a Babi, had their sentence mitigated at the request of the Babis themselves, their death penalty being changed into penal servitude for life. It was then that I decided to go to Ashkabad for the summer and made myself familiar with Prof. Kazembek's book: 'The Bab and the Babis' (SPb. 1865) as my preliminary guide. The reason why I did not tell anybody about my project was my not being sure if my trip would provide anything new in this field or not.

Furthermore, [I was wondering] what kind of Babis I would find in Ashkabad: knowledgeable in their own teaching or not – all this was obscure to me. Therefore I kept silent.

Having arrived in Ashkabad on 29 June 1890, I, without difficulty, became acquainted with the most interesting Babis. Due to their meritorious lifestyle, they [were] accepted by Russians most favorably. Some of the wealthiest Babis are even permanent members of the city public assembly. That is why making their acquaintance was not difficult at all. Seeing my desire to get to know their religious teaching better, three of them were trying to help me in it with eager rivalry³²

Tumanski first arrived in Ashkabad on 29 June 1890 (Julian calendar), which roughly corresponds to the 10–11 July 1890 by the Gregorian calendar. It appears from his letters that, on the whole, he spent six to seven years in the Transcaspian region. Tumanski's sojourn in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, is also noted in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, which states, in part: 'A Russian artillery lieutenant, Alexander Tounansky, having gone to Ashgabad with the object of visiting the Bābī [sic] colony there, has returned to St. Petersburg with many notes, photographs, and manuscripts. Several of the latter are described in the last issue of '*Collections scientifiques de l'institute des langues orientales*' at St. Petersburg (Part 2 for 1891).'³³

Jahangir Dorri notes that Tumanski lived in Central Asia from 1891 to 1895.³⁴ Dorri's date of 1895 should be revised, for Tumanski had traveled to Persia in 1894 – a trip arranged by Baha'is and sanctioned by the Russian authorities – to collect information about the Baha'is in Persia. Dorri, however, states that Tumanski 'made a trip to southern Persia with the purpose of carrying out reconnaissance of routes that lead from the Russian-Persian frontier to the Persian Gulf'.³⁵ Whatever his primary mission may have been, Tumanski left for Persia on 7 March 1894, according to the Julian calendar, which corresponds approximately to 19–20 March 1894. He was accompanied on his trip by his young wife, and his journey to Persia at that time was an adventure. According to Tumanski's correspondence with Rosen, he returned to Ashgabat around December 1895.

Not much is known about Tumanski's subsequent biography. From 1900 to 1905, Tumanski served as Russian vice-consul in Van, Turkey.³⁶ In 1908 and 1909, Tumanski was sent to Persia again. In 1911, he was appointed head of the officers' school of Oriental languages in Tiflis (Tbilisi), under the command of the Headquarters of the Caucasian Military Command. In March 1917, Tumanski retired from military service in at the rank of Major-General.³⁷ He left Russia after the 'October Revolution', when the Bolsheviks took over in 1917. According to Professor Akimushkin of St. Petersburg, Tumanski fled with his family into Turkey.³⁸ Tumanski was not considered by the ruling regime as one deserving notice. While living at Batum, he tried to emigrate to the United States to continue his studies in Arabic history and sought the assistance of American Bahā'is.³⁹ Tumanski died, in emigration, in the Prince's Islands (near Constantinople). After his death, his widow moved to Belgium. His descendants reside in Belgium.⁴⁰

However, research on Tumanski's secret correspondence regarding his investigations on the Baha'is of Persia has recently come to light.

Tumanski's primary military contact was General Kuropatkin, mentioned above.⁴¹ According to Soli Shahvar, Tumanski sent a 'secret report to General Kuropatkin, which he wrote after the completion of his tour of Iran (from 18 March to 15 November 1894)'.⁴² The secrecy of this information is indirectly attested by Tumanski's contacts with Baha'is in Persia, which were quite extensive,⁴³ although these contacts are nowhere mentioned in his lengthy travelogue.⁴⁴ Shahvar adds that 'Tumanski covered more than 3600 versts (1 verst=1.0668 km=0.6628 miles) on horseback in his tour of Iran'.⁴⁵

While he was in Ashkabad ('Ishqābād) in Russian Turkestan, Tumanski came into close contact with the Baha'i community there and, ever since, was keenly interested in everything concerning the Baha'is. Tumanski was the first to translate the 'The Most Holy Book' (al-Kitāb al-Aqdas, better known by its Persian title, Kitāb-i Aqdas) into a European language (Russian).⁴⁶ In his translation of that preëminent Baha'i text, Tumanski was assisted by the aforementioned Mīrzā Abu'l-Fadl Gulpāygānī (1844–1914), the greatest Baha'i scholar of the heroic era of the Baha'i Faith. It was in Ashgabad/Ishqabad where Tumanski met and befriended Abu'l-Fadl.⁴⁷ The latter dedicated a major work of his in honor of Tumanski, 'A Treatise for Alexander Tumansky', in which Abu'l-Fadl addresses Tumanski as 'My bosom friend'.⁴⁸ Tumanski recounts his first meeting with the celebrated Baha'i savant:

[P. 2/a] The most interesting of all the Babis is my friend whom I met last year, a Samarkand dweller, who came to Ashkabad for the sole purpose of helping me translate the Kitāb-i-Aqdas. [This is] Abu'l-Fadl-i Gulpāygānī, who is mentioned in the *Tarikh-i Jadid*.⁴⁹

In the Baron Rosen archives is an article by Tumanski – published on 9 July 1892 in the Russian daily newspaper, *Kavkaz* – on the ascension of Bahā'u'llah, in which Tumanski gives an unbiased account of the history of the Bahā'ī Faith and calls Bahā'u'llāh 'a prophet':⁵⁰

A report has been received the other day about the death of the Head of the Bābīs and their prophet, which occurred in Akka ... , Syria on 16 May [1892]. This is a remarkable person, who managed to attract about a million followers in different parts of Persia and accorded to Bābīsm the peace-loving nature which is now characteristic of the adherents of this religion. This teaching has made a proud Shi'i Persian, who accepts friendship only with his coreligionists and fully turns his back on people of other beliefs (*tabarra' va tavalla*), into a humble person, a Bābī, who considers everybody to be his brother.

Bahā'u'llāh, whose original name was Mīrzā Ḥusayn Nūrī, was born on 1 November 1817. He was a son of Mīrzā Buzurg Nūrī, the former minister (*vazīr*) of Fath Ali Shah. He spent his youth in his father's house, where constantly moving around cultured and educated people he displayed at quite an early age great mental capacity and a wonderful moral mindset.⁵¹

Kavkaz ('The Caucasus') was the official paper of the Caucasus, was published at Tiflis (now Tbilisi) and, as of a decade later in 1912, had a

circulation of about 10,000.⁵² Thus this obituary presumably reached a considerable audience at that time.

Returning to the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, the Persian text (with its few expressions in Arabic) was published by Tumanski in his 1893 journal article, ‘Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli’ (‘Baha’u’llah’s Last Word’).⁵³ Along with his Russian translation of that historic document, Tumanski offers an eyewitness account of the response to the news of Baha’u’llah’s passing (which took place on 2 Dhi’l-Qa’dih 1309 AH/29 May 1892 CE) in the Baha’i community in Ishqabad, and the reading of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, providing thereby a valuable contemporary-historical account of the manner in which the provision conferring successorship on ‘Abdu’l-Baha was communicated and received in the immediate wake of Baha’u’llah’s decease (reverentially referred to by the Baha’i faithful as the ‘ascension of Baha’u’llah’). Tumanski’s publication of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* in the 1892 volume of *ZVORAO* (1893) offers an independent attestation of the authenticity and purport of Baha’u’llah’s ‘Covenant’.

3. Contents of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* and Brief Commentary

In the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, Baha’u’llah declares that the purpose of his last Will and Testament was not to bequeath ‘earthly treasures’ (and ‘such cares as they entail’), but to perpetuate the ‘excellent and priceless Heritage’⁵⁴ that Baha’u’llah had established in his revelation and the religion he founded.

Baha’u’llah’s purpose was ‘to quench the flame of hate and enmity, that the horizon of the hearts of men may be illumined with the light of concord and attain real peace and tranquillity’.⁵⁵ Exhorting his followers to be noble in word and deed, Baha’u’llah addresses his followers as ‘the people of Bahā in the Crimson Book’ (*sahīfi-yi hamrā*).⁵⁶ Here, the ‘Crimson Book’ refers to the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* itself, as Shoghi Effendi (1896–1957, successor to ‘Abdu’l-Baha), explains:

Written entirely in His own hand; unsealed, on the ninth day after His ascension in the presence of nine witnesses chosen from amongst His companions and members of His Family; read subsequently, on the afternoon of that same day, before a large company assembled in His Most Holy Tomb, including His sons, some of the Bāb’s kinsmen, pilgrims and resident believers, this unique and epoch-making Document, designated by Bahā’u’llāh as His ‘Most Great Tablet’, and alluded to by Him as the ‘Crimson Book’ in His ‘Epistle to the Son of the Wolf’, can find no parallel in the Scriptures of any previous Dispensation, not excluding that of the Bāb Himself. For nowhere in the books pertaining to any of the world’s religious systems, not even among the writings of the Author of the Bābī Revelation, do we find any single document establishing a Covenant endowed with an authority comparable to the Covenant which Bahā’u’llāh had Himself instituted.⁵⁷

Abu’l-Fadl notes that the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* was ‘sealed ... with his [Baha’u’llah’s] own blessed hand and seal’.⁵⁸ The nature of this ‘seal’ is somewhat problematic, as will be discussed below.

The ‘Crimson Book’ is variously used, as it also refers to the *Kitāb-i Aqdas*, as Baha’u’llah states in the ‘Tablet of the World’ (Lawḥ-i-Dunyā):

'Whilst in the Prison of 'Akkā, We revealed in the Crimson Book (*dar ṣahīfa-yi ḥamrā' dar sijn-i 'Akkā nāzil shud*) that which is conducive to the advancement of mankind and to the reconstruction of the world'.⁵⁹ But Nader Saiedi sees a wider application of the term, 'Crimson Book':

If we examine this statement closely, we can see that while it certainly refers to the principles set forth in the *Kitāb-i Aqdas*, it can only be understood as a broader reference to the body of Baha'u'llah's teachings. Baha'u'llah cites five principles from the 'Crimson Book', but all five are written in Persian, whereas the *Aqdas* is in Arabic. The fifth principle, on the utmost importance of agriculture, is not discussed anywhere in the *Kitāb-i Aqdas*. Like 'Most Holy Book', the term 'Crimson Book' is sometimes a reference to the entire body of Baha'u'llah's writings, and sometimes to His Book of the Covenant, as 'Abdu'l-Baha has testified.⁶⁰

In the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, while continuing his theme of the primary purpose of his religion, Baha'u'llah writes: 'O ye that dwell on earth! The religion of God is for love and Unity; make it not the cause of enmity or dissension'.⁶¹ Kings are acclaimed as the symbols of God's power and wealth, and prayer ought to be made on their behalf. This statement, of course, should be understood in the context of an era in which most of the world was ruled by monarchs, who held sway as absolute potentates.

Baha'u'llah reiterates the need for unity: 'Conflict and contention are categorically forbidden in His Book'.⁶² Baha'u'llah then turns from diplomatic authority to spiritual authority by exhorting his followers to 'aid' those Baha'i 'trustees' designated as the 'the rulers and the learned among the people of Bahā',⁶³ who apply the laws and principles of Baha'u'llah enshrined in the 'Most Holy Book' (*Kitāb-i Aqdas*). The 'rulers' are understood to be the elected Baha'i councils that oversee and administer the affairs of the Baha'i community, while the 'learned' are those who are appointed for the purpose of protection and propagation of the Baha'i Faith.

Baha'u'llah then addresses his sons ('O ye My Branches!'): 'A mighty force, a consummate power lieth concealed in the world of being. Fix your gaze upon it and upon its unifying influence, and not upon the differences which appear from it'.⁶⁴ Shoghi Effendi explains that the 'mighty force' refers to 'the power for Unity which the Covenant possesses and radiates'.⁶⁵

In the next passage, cited at the beginning of this article, Baha'u'llah explicitly confers successorship on 'Abdu'l-Baha. This is certainly the most important pronouncement of the entire text. An early English translation of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* was undertaken by Ali-Kuli Khan,⁶⁶ although 'rather poorly translated from the original',⁶⁷ according to Shoghi Effendi. The authorized translation of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* currently used by Baha'i's is by Habib Taherzadeh,⁶⁸ except for the key passage on successorship, earlier translated by Shoghi Effendi:

It is incumbent upon the Aghsān, the Afnān and My kindred to turn, one and all, their faces towards the Most Mighty Branch. Consider that which We have revealed in Our Most Holy Book: 'When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root'. The object of this sacred verse is none other except the Most Mighty Branch ['Abdu'l-

Bahā]. Thus have We graciously revealed unto you our potent Will, and I am verily the Gracious, the All-Powerful.⁶⁹

After exhorting his sons, and his followers generally, to cultivate an ‘upright character’ and to show forth ‘pure and goodly deeds’,⁷⁰ Baha’u’llah then reinforces his prior emphasis on unity:

Say: O servants! Let not the means of order be made the cause of confusion and the instrument of union an occasion for discord. We fain would hope that the people of Bahā may be guided by the blessed words: ‘Say: all things are of God’. This exalted utterance is like unto water for quenching the fire of hate and enmity which smouldereth within the hearts and breasts of men. By this single utterance contending peoples and kindreds will attain the light of true Unity. Verily He speaketh the truth and leadeth the way. He is the All-Powerful, the Exalted, the Gracious.⁷¹

Baha’u’llah tells his readers to respect his sons and family, as well as the relatives of the Bab. Such courtesy and respect conduces to unity within the Baha’i community. With regard to the world at large, Baha’u’llah writes: ‘We further admonish you to serve all nations and to strive for the betterment of the world’.⁷² Baha’u’llah closes in stating that his revelation and laws are ‘conducive to the regeneration of the world and the salvation of the peoples and kindreds of the earth’.⁷³ This ‘salvation’ is both individual and collective salvation.

4. Eyewitness Account of the Reading of the Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī, 1892

How was the death of Baha’u’llah communicated to the surrounding Baha’i communities? The Baha’i community of Ishqabad affords an example of what probably occurred in many other Baha’i communities in the Near and Middle East at this time.⁷⁴ As mentioned, Tumanski first met the Baha’is of Ishqabad in 1890, and maintained friendly relations with them throughout the remainder of his life. It was natural that he would be informed of Baha’u’llah’s decease and be invited to the meeting of the Baha’is in Ishqabad, at which the announcement was made. Tumanski recounts:

Baha’u’llah’s Last Word

On June 24 this year [1892], the news of Baha’ullah’s passing in the morning of May 16 [1892] was received in Ashkabad. In the evening of June 24, Mirza Abdu’l-Karim, with whom the readers of these Memoirs are familiar, came to my place and announced that *[ān ḥadrat ṣu’ūd farmūdīh]*, ‘His Holiness hath ascended’ and that the title of the Head of the Babis belongs presently to ‘Abbās Effendī, Ghuṣn-i A’zam (عَصْنَ اَعْظَمْ). An emergency meeting of the Babis was called for Friday evening, June 26 [1892], of which they [the Babis], in accordance with the police regulations, duly informed the police in Ashkabad. Certainly, I also received an invitation.

The Babis own a small quarter on the Marw prospect in Ashkabad which is known among them as *[zamīn-i A’zam, ‘A’zam’s Land’]*.⁷⁵ In the middle of the quarter there rise the burnt brick walls of the yet incomplete Prayer House,

'Mashriq al-Adhkār' مشرق الاذكار. Right in front of it, there is a pretty, large water pool and a newly-built garden, yet lacking in shade. The Prayer House is surrounded by the houses of more important (lit. 'influential') Babis of Ashkabad.

As soon as I went in there, I found almost all the Babis of Ashkabad gathered. All of them had a very mournful look, some were even tear-eyed. Besides, the news of another death (this time in Bukhara) had arrived on the same day – namely that of the death of Fāḍil⁷⁶ فاضل an outstanding Babi, who was a companion of the Bab himself, and who had moved from Tehran to Ashkabad with his nephew – Shaykh Muḥammad-‘Alī about three months before. He intended to settle in Ashkabad for good, but two or three weeks ago happened to go to Bukhara on a business trip together with my co-translator of the *Kitāb-i Aqdas* – Mīrzā Abu'l-Fadl-i Gulpāygānī.

After a normal exchange of greetings and questions about each other's health accompanied by bows and turning the eyes in a special way, there began, in 'the most beautiful tuneful way' [bi-ahsan al-alhān] بحسن الالحان the reading of Baha'u'llah's Will – 'The Book of my Testament' [Kitāb-i 'Ahdi] كتاب عهدي presented below in the original from a transcript sent from Akka, and in [a Russian] translation. It was being read out by the above young man – Shaykh Muḥammad-‘Alī. When he finished reading, there ensued a long silence that was not broken by anybody except for the exclamations واه [vāh] and (الله يا الله [yā Allāh]).

After a short break during which tea, the *qalyan* [smoking pipe] and cigars were served, the Shaykh started to recite the eulogy written specially on this occasion. These verses, which I quote below, belong to a poet who is even more highly honored than Nabil, Rouha and Rouhani,⁷⁷ etc., namely to 'Andalib, whose real name is Ali-Ashraf Lahijani على اشرف لاهيجاني.

The evening party ended in eating the *pilau* [rice], which was set [sic, not served!]) in the balcony of one of the houses surrounding the Prayer House, and partly in the garden. By the way, most Babis, despite the decree of the *Kitāb-i Aqdas*, were eating with their hands, and only those few ones who bore me company were using spoons, forks and knives. Perhaps, the habit is stronger than كلامه على [kalimih-yi 'ulyā] 'The Loftiest Word' (of Baha'u'llah).⁷⁸

Tumanski describes 'Fāḍil' (Nabil-i Akbar),⁷⁹ the news of whose death, according to Tumanski, was received by the Baha'i's of Ashgabat on the same day as the news of the ascension of Baha'u'llah. Tumanski characterizes Nabil-i Akbar as 'one of the most prominent Babi figures, who was an associate of the Bab himself'.⁸⁰ Nabil-i Akbar's nephew was Shaykh Muḥammad-‘Alī Qā'inī (1860–1924), later designated as one of the nineteen 'Apostles of Baha'u'llah'.⁸¹

Baron Rosen had asked Tumanski to present his own account of the succession issue. This is an extract from Tumanski's reply:

They (Baha'i pilgrims from Ashgabat who had gone to Akka) arrived at Akka five days before the passing of حضرت (hadrat, i.e. Baha'u'llah) and stayed the whole time there. According to them, there has been no discord between the Aghsān (i.e. Baha'u'llah's sons) nor could there be any discord, for the order of the succession to the 'arsh, 'throne', i.e. Baha'u'llah) is firmly set in both the كتاب اقدس (Kitāb-i Aqdas) and in the Will and Testament. The first days



Figure 2: Mullā Muḥammad-i Qā'inī, known as Nabil-i Akbar (1829–1892). In 1890, he played a key role in establishing the Ashgabat Bahā'i community. News of his death reached those Bahā'is on the same day as news of Bahā'u'llah's ascension. The nephew of Nabil-i Akbar, Shaykh Muḥammad-‘Alī Qā'inī (1860–1924), read aloud the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* and ‘Andalib's poetic eulogy of Bahā'u'llah to the Bahā'is of Ashgabat on Friday evening, 26 June 1892. Both were later designated one of nineteen 'Apostles of Bahā'u'llah', Nabil-i Akbar was also honored as a 'Hand of the Cause of God'. Source: Bahā'i Media Bank. Courtesy of the Bahā'i International Community, Haifa, Israel.

following Bahā'u'llah's death, all the Babis (i.e. Bahā'is) held fast to the ordinances of the *Kitāb-i Aqdas* and finally on the ninth day gathered in the *qasr* (i.e. 'mansion' of Bahjī), where 'Abbas Effendi unsealed in their presence the envelope, sealed with Bahā'u'llah's seal, pulling out of it the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* and handed it to Bahā'u'llah's nephew, Majdu'ddin, to read it. In addition, the Babis use the family upbringing and the existing relations between its members as a proof that no discord would be possible [among them]. Muḥammad-‘Alī was in full harmony with the rest of the family members during the whole time they were in Akka.⁸²

Tumanski's accounts of the news of Bahā'u'llah's ascension, together with the designation of 'Abdu'l-Bahā as successor and new leader of the Bahā'i community, was followed by Tumanski's publication and translation of the *Kitāb 'Ahdī*.

5. The St. Petersburg Edition of the *Kitāb 'Ahdī*

In the co-author Youli Ioannesian's recent book,⁸³ there are two passages in Tumanski's correspondence with Baron Viktor Romanovich Rosen related

to Tumanski's endeavor to publish the Will and Testament of Baha'u'llah, and Ioannesian's footnoted comments on them:

Dear Viktor Romanovich,

[The inevitable] has finally occurred! The page has turned over آن حضرت صعود فرموده [ān ḥadrat ṣu'ud farmūdih].⁸⁴ 'Baha'u'llah has died'. These are the words in which the Babis of Ashkabad informed me of the passing of Behā. The news of his death which transpired in Bahji, in his قصر [qasr]⁸⁵ near Akka on the morning of 16 May, according to the old calendar, did not arrive in Ashkabad until 24 June. No letters, no telegrams; *tout cour*⁸⁶ the Will and Testament and the مرثیه [marthiyyih]⁸⁷ of the [Baha'i poet] 'Andalib',⁸⁸ enclosed [in this letter], were [P. 5/b] sent. I will send their translation and a brief introduction / in the next outgoing post. If there is a chance to publish them in the *Zapiski*, don't say no.⁸⁹

Tumanski does not disclose the identity of the person who told him of Baha'u'llah's passing, in the words quoted, in Persian, in Tumanski's letter, dated 3 July 1892, to Baron Rosen.⁹⁰

Baron Rosen subsequently edited and published Tumanski's article on the Will and Testament of Baha'u'llah, which comprises the Persian original text under the title: *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* ('The Book of My Covenant'), with a Russian translation.⁹¹ In this publication, Tumanski also presents, in full, the mournful elegy composed by the celebrated Baha'i poet, 'Andalib (d. 1920) – in the original Persian with Tumanski's own Russian translation – which he mentions in the letter above⁹² and explains that 'Andalib' is the title of the most venerable poet, Mīrzā 'Alī-Ashraf-i Lāhījānī.⁹³ It is interesting to note that Tumanski had personally met 'Andalib' in Ashgabat.

Tumanski published the text of 'Andalib's poem of 31 couplets⁹⁴ – which is at once, a lament of the loss of Baha'u'llah and a eulogy of his greatness – and provides a Russian translation.⁹⁵ A well-executed translation into English was undertaken by Ahang Rabbani, who introduces this eulogy in saying that 'Andalib 'composed the following eyewitness account of Bahā'u'llāh's passing':

He is the All-Powerful, the All-Mighty, the Beloved.

1. Oh, in life's cup the wine-pourer of the feast of decree
Poured life-ending venom instead of spirit-elating wine.
2. For every ache there is a remedy, for every trouble a solution,
Oh, for this remediless ache and this balmless trouble.
3. The eye of creation was stunned, the world's heart darkened,
Heart's orchard was withered, the nightingale of life silenced.
4. From this loss, the pillars of existence were dismantled,
From this loss, the eternal throne was crushed.
5. The waves of the surging Sea of Grace were stilled; instead,
Waves of grief's ocean gushed in the hearts and souls of the near ones.
6. The banner of the Most Excellent Names fell to the dust,
The lamentation of God's Party was raised to the high heavens.

7. The One by Whose Manifestation the Day of Resurrection dawned upon the world,
By the setting of His sun a commotion made the world to quake.
8. The One Who in the Sinai of nearness called, 'Behold, and thou shalt see',
Dismayed many a Moses by His roar, 'Never shalt thou behold'.
9. The Most Mighty Ocean sunk its Ruby Ship,
Whence a tempest of tears descended from the eyes of Noah.
10. Thus was the king of the visible world established upon the placeless throne,
Thus the Sun-like countenance became hid in the West of the eternal Holiness.
11. The ear was deprived of the song of the Nightingale of Paradise,
The eye was forbid the effulgence of the Sun-like countenance.
12. For nineteen days that heavenly Beauty was bed-ridden,
At the dawn of Saturday, second of Dhi'l-Qa'dah, He was veiled from us.
13. It was the sixteenth of the Roman month of Ayar,
It was the thirteenth of the month of 'Ażamat.
14. Of the Persian Naw-Rúz, seventy days had passed,
And of the Migration, one thousand three hundred and nine years elapsed.
15. Then it was this tragedy occurred, this loss appeared,
And the phrase 'Verily the Lord was hidden' became the mark of this tragedy.
16. With mine own eyes did I behold the clear morn of the Day of Resurrection,
As it surrounded the entire the land of 'Akkā.
17. As for the funeral 'Akkā's population entire, low and noble,
Gathered in Bahjī to express their faithfulness.
18. The Persian believers lamented fate's unchangeable decree,
And the native Arabs cried out, 'Oh our Lord, Oh our Lord!'
19. For the washing of the Sacred Body in the haram, the Most Mighty Branch
Stood at service solely out of His patience, resignation, and acquiescence.
20. His Holiness God's Most Mighty Branch spoke to the friends compassionately,
With a speech eloquent and enchanting.
21. No one should be disturbed since God has said,
In His Kitāb-i Aqdas for all creation:
22. O people, when the Sun of My Beauty has set,
And My heavenly Temple is hidden from all eyes,
23. All must arise for the triumph of My Cause,
Remain assured and raise its banner the world over.
24. There was a wisdom in My Manifestation, and a wisdom also in My disappearance,
None will this wisdom comprehend save God Himself.
25. Therefore must we become united in His Cause's spread,
We must become United both in outward seeming and within our hearts.
26. For teaching and triumph of the Faith we must be as one body,
Instill a new spirit by this Call into the temple of the world.

27. Eleven were the Disciples of Jesus Christ;
After the passing of God's Spirit, they gave healing to world's dwellers.
28. Praised be God at present our number is several thousand,
All enlightened by the effulgence and the Writings of Bahā'.
29. Thanks be God's that we are all beneath the Most Mighty Branch's shade,
The Branch of that Ancient Stock and the wave of that Ocean of Grace.
30. Remain constant and assured in this mighty Cause,
Patient in this tragedy, thankful in adversity.
31. 'Andalib regrets that ere this tragedy struck,
He did not drink a cup borne by death's angel!⁹⁶

This eulogy presents evidence that, in its very form, is rather unique. For, in this particular circumstance, poetry is a historical source, since 'Andalib was an eyewitness to the events that he describes in his poem on the ascension of Baha'u'llah, as Ḥabīb Allāh Afnān (1875–1951) confirms:

In the year AH 1309 [1891] 'Andalib, in the company of that illumined sage Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Ḥasan [Bazzāz], ... journeyed to the Holy Land to attain the sacred presence [of Baha'u'llah]. In the month of Sha'bān [1–29 March 1892], he arrived in 'Akkā where he tarried for some two months and where this servant met him and the aforementioned Ḥāfiẓ. While they sojourned in the Holy Land, the most great calamity of the Ascension of the Blessed Perfection occurred.⁹⁷

As previously indicated, 'Andalib is the *nom de plume* (sobriquet, pen name) of Mīrzā 'Alī-Ashraf of Lāhījān.⁹⁸ 'Andalib had met E. G. Browne in Yazd, during the latter's sojourn in Persia. Browne recounts, in some detail, what may be called, using contemporary Baha'i parlance, the first recorded Baha'i 'fireside'.⁹⁹ A Baha'i 'fireside' is an occasion where information about the Baha'i religion and its truth-claims is communicated to a 'seeker', i.e. someone who is seriously inquiring about this Faith. At the end of this meeting ground, recalls: 'As we were leaving the garden he took me by the hand and besought me to go to Acre ['Akkā] and see Beha for myself. "How noble a work might be yours", he said, "if you could become assured of the truth of his claim, in spreading the good news through your country!"'.¹⁰⁰ This Browne did, in 1890.¹⁰¹ 'Andalib had also composed a pamphlet for Browne, setting forth Christian proofs of Baha'u'llah's truth claims – a fact noted by a contemporary Christian missionary.¹⁰²

In couplet #31a, the date of May 16, 1892 for Baha'u'llah's death is given: 'It was the sixteenth of the Roman month of Ayar'. How is this to be reconciled with the universally accepted date of May 29, 1992? The answer is that May 16 is the date according to the Julian calendar (which was used in pre-revolutionary Russia). The difference between the Julian and the Gregorian calendars at that time was about 13 days. The original word here, in Persian, is 'Rumīyān'. So, a more exact translation would be 'the 16th day of the month of the Greeks'. For 'Rum' meant the 'Eastern Roman Empire', i.e. Byzantium (the name given to both state and culture of the Eastern Roman Empire in the middle ages), in which Greek was the *lingua franca*. Consequently, 'Rumi', for Persians, Arabs and Turks, implied

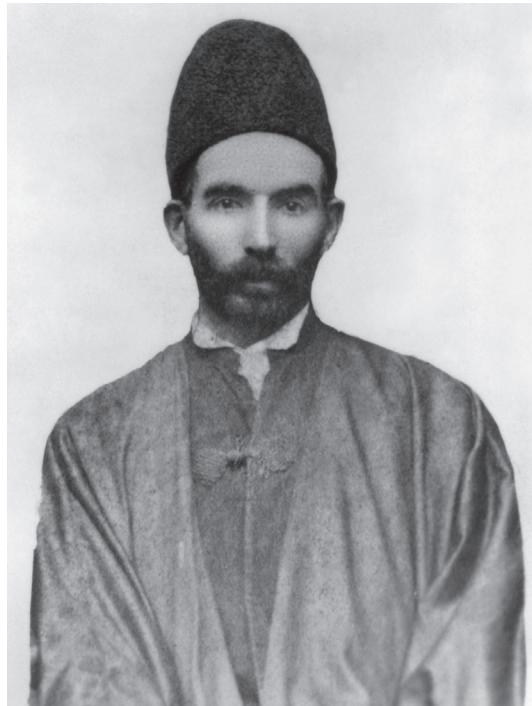


Figure 3: The celebrated Baha'i poet, 'Andalib, who was an eyewitness to the events surrounding Baha'u'llah's ascension. Undated photograph. Source: Baha'i Media Bank. Courtesy of the Baha'i International Community, Haifa, Israel.

'Greek', not 'Roman', in the modern European sense. The Greek month here must imply the Julian calendar month. Thus Tumanski translates the phrase in the poem as: 'It was the sixteenth day of the month of the Greeks, namely, of May'.¹⁰³

The dates can be reconciled by adding the 13-day difference between the Julian and Gregorian calendars: 16 May 1892 (Julian calendar) plus 13 days converts to 29 May 1892 (Gregorian calendar). Tumanski, throughout all his correspondence with Rosen, uses the Julian calendar, which was the official Russian calendar of the time. That 16 May 1892 is confirmed by Tumanski in his letter to Baron Rosen: 'The news of his death which transpired in Bahji ... near Akka on the morning of 16 May, according to the old calendar'.¹⁰⁴

It is noteworthy that, in his funeral oration at the Baha'u'llah's funeral, as recounted by 'Andalib, 'Abdu'l-Baha recites a passage from the *Kitāb-i Aqdas*, but does not declare the successorship provision of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, of the contents of which were disclosed on the ninth day following Baha'u'llah's the ascension. Evidently, wisdom dictated that the announcement of Baha'u'llah's designation of 'Abdu'l-Baha as successor was judiciously postponed, so as not to divert the focus from Baha'u'llah to 'Abdu'l-Baha during this period of grief and mourning. As to the succession provision of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* itself, the poet provides an independent, eyewitness attestation in verse 29: 'Thanks be God's that we are all beneath the Most Mighty

Branch's ['Abdu'l-Baha's] shade / The Branch of that Ancient Stock and the wave of that Ocean of Grace'.

A brief comparison of Tumanski's text and the received text follows.

6. The Original Manuscript of the of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī and the *Textus Receptus*

The original manuscript of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī is preserved in the archives at the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa. A facsimile of this holograph (i.e. a manuscript handwritten by the person named as its author), penned in Bahā'u'llāh's own hand, has not yet been published. Shoghi Effendi gives this description of the original manuscript:

The 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd' is, as you know, Bahā'u'llāh's 'Book of Covenant'. It is entirely written in His own handwriting. And in the light of the objections raised by some of the believers concerning the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā, it is highly significant to note that this Book of Covenant of Bahā'u'llāh bears neither signature, nor seal, nor any date. It was shown to the believers, and was read in their presence nine days after Bahā'u'llāh's ascension. The manuscript was in the possession of 'Abdu'l-Bahā all through His ministry, and after His passing it was found enclosed in His own will. These two precious documents, namely the book of Covenant of Bahā'u'llāh and the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahā have both been carefully preserved and are now in the possession of the Guardian.¹⁰⁵

This meeting took place in Bahā'u'llāh's tomb, on 7 June 1892.¹⁰⁶ Previously, it was related that the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī was 'unsealed'. This apparent contradiction is resolved by understanding that Shoghi Effendi's statement that this document bore no 'seal' most likely refers to Bahā'u'llāh's customary practice of affixing one of a number of special seals that variously identified Bahā'u'llāh as the author.

According to Bahā'u'llāh's granddaughter, Tuba Khanum, daughter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā, 'The Master sent to 'Akka for the box in which the Will of Bahā'u'llāh had been locked up for two years'.¹⁰⁷ This approximate period of 'two years' finds corroborating evidence in this oblique reference in the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* – Bahā'u'llāh's last major work: 'A word hath, likewise, been written down and recorded by the Pen of the Most High in the Crimson Book which is capable of fully disclosing that force which is hid in men, nay of redoubling its potency'.¹⁰⁸ Shoghi Effendi explains that the 'Crimson Book' here alludes to the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī,¹⁰⁹ and that the force that is hidden and man is 'the power for Unity which the Covenant possesses and radiates'.¹¹⁰

This identification has been confirmed by subsequent scholarship. According to the most recently published research (in German), Armin Eschraghi argues that, despite the fact that the term in question sometimes has a broader reference, 'Crimson Book', as it occurs in paragraph 57 of the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, is definitely a specific reference to the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī.¹¹¹ Eschraghi argues that the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* was completed at some time between March and July 1891.¹¹² Therefore the best hypothesis is that the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī was written sometime during the years 1890–1891.

Perhaps the fullest study of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī, prior to the present article, was published (in Persian) by Shapour Rassekh, a respected academic

and Baha'i scholar.¹¹³ Rassekh cites another Baha'i scholar, Asadullah Fadil Mazindarani, who reports that Baha'u'llah 'wrote and handed it [the Kitab-i 'Ahdī] to His Holiness Abdu'l-Baha forty days before He [Baha'u'llah] was seized with fever [of which] His confidants/kindred knew'.¹¹⁴ Rassekh, further relying on Fadil Mazindarani, relates that Kitab-i 'Ahdī 'was read out by Ghuṣn-i A'żam ['Abdu'l-Baha] to a group of believers nine (9) days after His [Baha'u'llah's] ascension'.¹¹⁵ Rassekh's point is perfectly in line with Shoghi Effendi's statement that the Kitab-i 'Ahdī was read aloud 'on the ninth day after His ascension'.¹¹⁶ Another Baha'i scholar, Shahrokh Monjazeb, states that this holographic (handwritten) Will and Testament was 'sealed away in a special box', which was entrusted to 'Abdu'l-Baha, who 'arranged for its public disclosure' nine days after the ascension (just as Rassekh, citing Fadil Mazindarani, has said).¹¹⁷

On the morning of the ninth day, the Kitab-i 'Ahdī was unsealed and read aloud by Āqā Ridā-yi-Qannād (a faithful companion who accompanied of Bahā'u'llāh in the latter's exile to 'Akka) – not by 'Abdu'l-Baha – before nine witnesses chosen from among Bahā'u'llāh's family and companions. Later that same day, the Will was read again, this time by Bahā'u'llāh's treacherous nephew, Mīrzā Majdī'd-Dīn (who, although son of Bahā'u'llāh's faithful brother, Mīrzā Mūsā, soon sided with Muḥammad-`Alī in opposing 'Abdu'l-Baha as rightful successor) before a company of resident believers and pilgrims in the Shrine of Bahā'u'llāh in the mansion at Bahji, Palestine (now Israel).¹¹⁸ Here, Monjazeb apparently relies on Adib Taherzadeh (who based his narrative on Nabil's unpublished account) who recounts:

On the morning of the ninth day after the ascension, in the presence of nine witnesses chosen from amongst members of His family and friends, this document in Baha'u'llah's own handwriting was read aloud by Āqā Ridā-yi Qannād, and in the afternoon of the same day it was read again by Mīrzā Majdī'd-Dīn in the Holy Tomb in the presence of a large number of friends.¹¹⁹

Baha'i doctrine distinguishes between the 'Lesser Covenant' (which Dr. Rassekh explains is 'like the one related to the obedience of the Baha'is towards His Holiness Abdu'l-Baha') and the 'Greater Covenant' that is 'concluded between the One True [God], the Manifestation of His Will and the World of Creation'. Interestingly, Dr. Rassekh states that the Kitab-i 'Ahdī relates to both the 'Greater Covenant' as well as the 'Lesser Covenant', in that 'it should be born in mind that the Book of My Covenant also covers the Greater Covenant'.¹²⁰ Rassekh elaborates on how the Kitab-i 'Ahdī relates to the Greater Covenant and expatiates on several kinds of 'covenant' that Baha'u'llah 'concluded with his believers'.¹²¹ On the succession provision, Dr. Rassekh elucidates the purport of the metaphorical phrase of in the Kitab-i 'Ahdī successorship provision, i.e. 'turn, one and all, their faces towards the Most Mighty Branch' ['Abdu'l-Baha], by invoking a different phrase in the Kitab-i Aqdas that has the same purport:

The meaning of 'turn your faces towards him': Baha'u'llah referring to Ghuṣn-i A'żam on one occasion uses the term: باو ناظر باشید: and on another phrases it as: توجهوا اليه.¹²² We know that both these expressions served as a pretext for covenant-breakers to misinterpret [the words] from which they inferred [the

meaning of] 'attending to' and 'observation'. Luckily, the *Kitāb-i Aqdas* leaves no room for doubt as to the meaning of 'gazing upon' and 'turning faces towards' as it says: 'O people of the world! When the Mystic Dove will have winged its flight from its Sanctuary of Praise and sought its far-off goal, its hidden habitation, refer ye whatsoever ye understand not in the Book to Him Who hath branched from this mighty Stock'.¹²³ Consequently, 'gazing upon' and 'turning faces towards' mean referring to the Center of the Covenant as the authoritative Interpreter of the Word of God.¹²⁴

Of course, not only is 'Abdu'l-Baha regarded as the unerring interpreter of Baha'u'llah's laws and teachings, but, in being named as Baha'u'llah's successor in both the *Kitāb-i Ahdī* and *Kitāb-i Aqdas*, oversaw the affairs of the entire Baha'i community, serving also as the 'Perfect Exemplar' of Baha'i virtues.

The Persian and Arabic text of the *textus receptus* is available online at <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/TB/tb-15.html>. As for its publication history, the text was privately published in Tehran (no date).¹²⁵ In America, the *Kitāb-i Ahdī* was published in the Persian section, the *Najm-i Bākhtar*, of the Baha'i serial, *Star of the West*, in 1920.¹²⁶ That same year, the Tablet was printed in Cairo in 1920.¹²⁷

7. Textual Variants Between the St. Petersburg Edition of the *Kitāb-i Ahdī* and the *Textus Receptus*

Browne's own account of how he first learned of Baha'u'llah's death – when he received news practically simultaneously from the Baha'is of 'Akka and from his Azali contact in Constantinople – is recounted as follows:

DEATH OF BEHĀ'U'LLĀH

Within the last few weeks[,] news of the death of Behā'u'llāh has reached me. I have not been able to ascertain the date of his decease, but of the fact itself there is no doubt, for it is confirmed by a letter written from Acre ['Akka] by his son, Mīrzā Badā'u'llāh, and dated Zī'l-Kā'da 29th, A.H. 1309 (June 25th, A.D. 1892). A portion of the letter I will here cite, with translation.¹²⁸

Strangely, the text of the letter that Browne translated is silent on the succession. Browne further comments that the very 'same news reached me on the same day from my Ezelī [Azalī] correspondent in Constantinople', in words that Browne characterizes as a 'laconic announcement of Behā's death'. Browne then relates that his Azalī contact reported that 'disputes had already arisen between two of Behā'u'llāh's sons, 'Abbās Efendī [sic] and Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī, as to the succession', and that 'Ākā Mīrzā Ākā Jān, Behā's amanuensis and special attendant, had given his support to the latter'.¹²⁹ In the same vein, in a letter dated 19 July 1892, Browne wrote privately to Rosen:

Have you heard that Behā is dead? I received the announcement simultaneously from one of his sons and from an Ezelī at Constantinople, so there seems to be no doubt about it. The Ezelī added that differences had already arisen about the succession between 'Abbās Efendī (sic) and his brother Muḥammad 'Alī, the candidature of the latter being supported by Ākā Mīrzā

Ākā Jān. Another schism would be a more fatal thing to the Bābī cause, but this ... may be a mere canard.¹³⁰

It was no canard. Muḥammad-‘Alī’s challenge to Abdu’l-Baha’s authority was real. In 1893, as mentioned, Tumanski published the Persian text of his manuscript of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, given to him by an undisclosed Baha’i, presumably from Ashgabat. The original manuscript, unfortunately, is no longer extant. As Browne himself notes, prior to Tumanski’s publication of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* in ZVORAO, Baron Rosen had written to Browne, informing him of the death of Baha’u’llah, which Rosen had learned of from Tumanski by the latter’s letter. Rosen enclosed the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*, along with ‘Andalib’s eulogy:

I learn from Baron Rosen that a short paragraph announcing the death of Behā'u'llāh [sic] appeared in the Russian newspaper called *Le Caucase*, published at Tiflis; and that the news was also conveyed to him by Lieutenant Tounansky [sic] in a private letter, in which were enclosed copies of Behā'u'llāh's [sic] testamentary dispositions (کتاب مهدی [Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī]) and an elegy on his death by the Bābī poet, 'Andalib (Mīrzā 'Alī-Ashraf of Lāhījān). Baron Rosen adds that Behī [sic] died on May 16 of this year (1892), but that the news of his decease did not reach 'Ishkābād until July 5th. The interesting documents forwarded by Lieutenant Tounansky [sic] are to appear in *Zapiski* [sic].¹³¹

Rosen’s letter to Browne is confirmed by Browne himself: ‘I must thank you very sincerely for the very interesting document you sent me, viz., the كتاب مهدی (which I had not previously seen), and the poems on Behā's death’.¹³² Here, Browne discloses that Tumanski sent Rosen a copy of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* and ‘Andalib’s elegy, for editing and publication in *Zapiski*. Upon close collation and comparison, it was found that Tumanski’s text is practically identical with the received text,¹³³ with a few minor variants, the most significant of which may be listed as follows:

Variant #1

a. Official Baha’i version (*textus receptus*, based on the Haifa original):

وَانْجَمْ أَوْ أَخْلَاقْ مُنِيرَةْ مُضِيَّةْ
(*va arjum-i ū akhlāq-i munīri-yi muḍī'ih*).

This phrase is officially translated as, ‘and his shining and resplendent character its stars’, with the translation of the full sentence as follows: ‘In the eyes of the All-Merciful a true man appeareth even as a firmament; its sun and moon are his sight and hearing, and his shining and resplendent character its stars’.¹³⁴

b. Tumanski’s version:

وَانْجَمْ أَوْ أَخْلَاقْ مُزِيَّةْ مُضِيَّةْ
(*va arjum-i ū akhlāq-i mīziy-yi muḍī'ih*).¹³⁵

In Tumanski’s version, the word corresponding to the word in the *textus receptus*, i.e. مُنِيرَةْ *munīrih*, is مُزِيَّةْ *mīzih*.¹³⁶ The word مُنِيرَةْ *munīrih* means ‘shining’, while مُزِيَّةْ *mīzih* denotes: ‘The act of putting, or setting apart, away, or aside; of removing, or separating’.¹³⁷ Thus Tumanski’s variant, *mīzih*, would alter

the translation of the phrase to ‘and his shining and distinctive character its stars’ – where the pronomial ‘this’ is omitted. Here, the variant, ‘distinctive’ (*mīzih*), does not significantly alter the meaning of the phrase.

Variant #2

a. Official Baha'i version (*textus receptus*, based on the Haifa original):

مقصود این مظلوم از حمل شدائد و بلايا و انزال آيات و اظهار بیتات اخmad نار ضغینه و بغضا بوده
(*maqṣūd-i īn mazlūm az ḥamīl-i shadā'id va balāyā va inzāl-i āyāt va iżhār-i bayyināt ikhmād-i nār-i ḥaghīnāh va baghḍā būdih*).

This text is officially translated as: ‘The aim of this Wronged One in sustaining woes and tribulations, in revealing the Holy Verses and in demonstrating proofs hath been naught but to quench the flame of hate and enmity ...’, with the rest of the sentence rendered as ‘... that the horizon of the hearts of men may be illumined with the light of concord and attain real peace and tranquillity’.¹³⁸

b. Tumanski's version:

مقصود این مظلوم را از حمل شدائد و بلايا و انزال آيات و اظهار بیتات اخmad نار ضغینه و بغضا بوده
(*maqṣūd-i īn mazlūm-rā az ḥamīl-i shadā'id va balāyā va inzāl-i āyāt va iżhār-i bayyināt ikhmād-i nār-i ḥaghīnāh va baghḍā būdih*).¹³⁹

Tumanski's Russian translation, rendered into English, is as follows: ‘The aim of this Oppressed One was to quench the fire of hatred and malice, sustaining afflictions and tribulations, sending down the verses and bringing forth “convincing arguments”’.¹⁴⁰ The difference between Tumanski's variant and the Baha'i *textus receptus* consists in the employment of the particle *-rā* after *mazlūm*, ‘Wronged/Oppressed One’ in Tumanski's version, which is a purely grammatical marker that does not affect the meaning of the phrase in any way.

Variant #3

a. Official Baha'i version (*textus receptus*, based on the Haifa original):

و از افق لوح الٰهی ننر این بیان لایح و مشرق
(*va az ufuq-i lawh-i ilāhī nayyir-i īn bayān lā'iḥ va mushriq*).

This text is officially translated as ‘From the dawning-place of the divine Tablet the day-star of this (*īn*) utterance shineth resplendent ...’, with the rest of the sentence as ‘... and it behoveth everyone to fix his gaze upon it’.¹⁴¹

b. Tumanski's version:

و از افق لوح الٰهی ننر بیان لایح و مشرق
(*va az ufuq-i lawh-i ilāhī nayyir-i bayān lā'iḥ va mushriq*).¹⁴²

Tumanski translates this passage so: ‘And from the horizon of the Tablet of God the Day-Star of “utterance” is sparkling and shining’.¹⁴³ Here, Tumanski's text is missing the word ‘this’ (*īn*). It would alter the translation as follows: ‘From the dawning-place of the divine Tablet the day-star of utterance shineth resplendent ...’. While the omission of the word ‘this’ is awkward, it does not alter the purport of this phrase.

Variant #4

a. Official Baha'i version (*textus receptus*, based on the Haifa original):

مذهب الهی از برای محبت و اتحاد است او را سبب عداوت و اختلاف منمایید
 (madhhab-i ilāhī az barāyi muḥabbat va ittihād ast ū-rā sabab-i ‘adāvat va ikhtilāf manamāyid).

Authorized translation: 'The religion of God is for love and Unity; make it not the cause of enmity ('adāvat) or dissension'.

b. Tumanski's version:

مذهب الهی از برای محبت و اتحاد است او را سبب اختلاف منمایید
 (madhhab-i ilāhī az barāyi muḥabbat va ittihād ast ū-rā sabab-i ikhtilāf manamāyid).¹⁴⁴

Tumanski's Russian translation, rendered into English, is as follows: 'The divine religion is intended for love and unity; make it not the cause of dissension'.¹⁴⁵ Here, Tumanski's text is missing the words 'enmity and' ('adāvat va).¹⁴⁶ It would alter the translation as follows: 'The religion of God is for love and unity; make it not the cause of dissension'. Thus, the difference between the variants consists in the omission of the word 'adāvat, 'enmity', in Tumanski's version, both in the Persian original and his Russian translation.

The close agreement of these two exemplars of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* is significant in that they go far in establishing, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the exact text of the all-important successorship section.

8. The Cambridge Manuscript of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* in the E. G. Browne Collection

An important manuscript of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* is archived in the E. G. Browne Collection at Cambridge. Co-author Christopher Buck ordered this manuscript from Near and Middle Eastern Department, Manuscripts and Printed Collections, Cambridge University Library, and a high-resolution, color digital scan was available for download on January 22, 2013.¹⁴⁷ The Cambridge manuscript of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* has been assigned the 'class-mark' of F. 25, and the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* itself appears on folio 370 verso and 371 recto of F. 25(9), Manuscript 8 (listed as 'Kitābu ‘Ahdī') of the E. G. Browne Collection.¹⁴⁸ It is an original manuscript.

The present writers soon recognized what appeared to be the distinctive hand of Mullā Zayn al-Ābidīn, surnamed Zayn al-Muqarrabīn, and sought confirmation from experts that this was indeed the case. The manuscript is definitely in the handwriting of Zayn al-Muqarrabīn. What is most distinctive about the penmanship of Zayn al-Muqarrabīn is that the text is elegantly simple and clear clearly written in the *naskh* script. The presumed date of the manuscript (1892) matches as well, for it is known that Zayn al-Muqarrabīn resided in 'Akka beginning in 1886. Previously Zayn al-Muqarrabīn had copied *A Traveller's Narrative*, which was given to Browne during his visit to 'Akka in 1890, along with a manuscript of the *Kitāb-i Īqān*, also in Zayn's hand.¹⁴⁹ Since Zayn al-Muqarrabīn routinely wrote colophons for longer works only, the Cambridge manuscript of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī* is

therefore without a colophon. While it was Zayn al-Muqarrabīn's practice to end a 'book' (*kitāb*) with a colophon – as he did with the over 50 copies of the *Kitāb-i Iqān*, *Kitāb-i Aqdas*, *Kitab-i-Mubīn*, etc. – he did not do so with the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* because it was not really a 'book' as such, notwithstanding its name, the 'Book of My Covenant' (*Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*).¹⁵⁰

In *Memorials of the Faithful*, 'Abdu'l-Baha writes that Zayn al-Muqarrabīn 'busied himself with writing down the sacred verses, ... taking down the Bahā'ī Scriptures with faultless care'.¹⁵¹ The original Persian says, 'kutub va alvāh bih kamāl-i diqqat sahīh marqūm minimūd', literally, 'He would transcribe the Books and Tablets correctly, with utmost precision'.¹⁵² The word *sahīh* ('sound', 'correct') is used here by 'Abdu'l-Baha. This word also means 'Complete, perfect, entire, sound; healthy; right, just, true, certain; authentic; certainly, truly'.¹⁵³ No other believer has 'Abdu'l-Baha singled out for such praise.

Any manuscript in the hand of Zayn al-Muqarrabīn, Bahā'u'llāh's most trusted scribe and distinguished as 'the most eminent of the transcribers of Bahā'u'llāh's Writings',¹⁵⁴ is considered by Baha'i authorities to be textually accurate and, therefore, definitively the *textus receptus*.¹⁵⁵ Since the Cambridge (i.e. Browne's) manuscript is textually identical with the official version and, consequently, and because Tumanski's/Rosen's version exhibits slight variants, it is clear that Browne's manuscript and Tumanski's are independent versions.

Due to the fact that the Cambridge University collection containing the correspondence of E. G. Browne has not been properly organized and catalogued, no 'finding aid' has been created to avail the contents of collection to scholars for research purposes. A finding aid is a research guide that provides detailed descriptions of a given collection's content, with a list of archival boxes and folder headings, with details about correspondence, photographs, etc. Consequently, Baron Viktor Rosen's letter to Browne, with news of 'the death of Behā'u'llāh', has not been located.¹⁵⁶ It is also not possible, at the current time, to determine whether or not a covering letter had accompanied the manuscript of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, in the hand of Zayn al-Muqarrabīn, that was sent from 'Akka, as was the case with Lawḥ-i Bishārāt, which was sent to Professor Browne by order of Bahā'u'llāh, with two cover letters and an anonymous inscription.¹⁵⁷ In this case, the order to send Browne a copy of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* would presumably have come from Bahā'u'llāh's successor, 'Abdu'l-Baha, although there is no direct evidence for this. In all probability, the Cambridge manuscript, in the hand of Zayn al-Muqarrabīn, must have been sent from 'Akka, at the express order of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

9. Conclusion: Contemporary-Historical Attestation of 'Abdu'l-Baha's Successorship by Tumanski and other Russian Notables

Tumanski's editing, publication and translation of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* was a publishing 'event' within the scholarly world at large. The immediate audience, of course, were Russian orientalists and other public intellectuals (not to mention a wider circle of interested readers) who could read Russian. Yet other scholars took note. For instance, the French savant, Cl. Huart, wrote that Bahā'u'llāh's 'last words have been edited by Toumanski (St. Petersburg, 1892)', further acknowledging that Bahā'u'llāh left 'his spiritual authority to his eldest son, 'Abbās Effendī, surnamed 'Abd al-Bahā'.¹⁵⁸

That Baha'u'llah's Kitāb-i 'Ahdī is designated as a 'Book' (*kitāb*) perhaps due to its weightiness, not its length, although a *kitāb* can be a work of any length. Two of its important themes are unity (i.e. social cohesion) and continuity (successorship). As for the Baha'i community, the former depends on the latter. Baha'u'llah's mission is to unify the world:

O ye that dwell on earth (*ay ahl-i 'ālam*)! The religion of God is for love and unity (*muhabbat va ittihād*); make it not the cause of enmity or dissension. ... We faintly would hope that the people of Bahā may be guided by the blessed words: 'Say: All things are of God'. This exalted utterance (*kalima-yi 'ulyā*) is like unto water for quenching the fire of hate and enmity (*nār-i daghīnā va baghdā*) which smouldereth within the hearts and breasts of men. By this single utterance contending peoples and kindreds will attain the light of true Unity (*nūr-i ittihād-i haqīqī*). ... That which is conducive to the regeneration of the world (*hayāt-i 'ālam*) and the salvation of the peoples and kindreds of the earth (*nijāt-i umam*) hath been sent down from the heaven of the utterance of Him Who is the Desire of the world.¹⁵⁹

Here, 'unity' is characterized as social 'salvation'. Key to this salvific mission of promoting human solidarity is the unity of the Baha'i community itself, which can serve as a model of concord only if free of major discord and irreparable schism. It is this communal cohesion that the successorship of 'Abdu'l-Baha preserves. Referring to the 'Book of the Covenant', Shoghi Effendi characterizes 'this weighty and incomparable Document' as 'an instrument divinely ordained, invested with indisputable authority, organically linked with the Author of the Revelation Himself' in order, in Weberian terms, to routinize Baha'u'llah's charisma and 'direct and canalize these forces let loose by this Heaven-sent process [of revelation], and to insure their harmonious and continuous operation after His ascension'.¹⁶⁰ In other words, the 'Book of My Covenant' operated to maintain the integrity of the Baha'i community under the able and enlightened aegis of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

That said, the Covenant is the linchpin and pivot of the Baha'i community and thus, by extension, the safeguard of the Baha'i project of world unity. The latter cannot exist without the former. Upon the centripetal force of the Covenant depends the centrifugal force of the widening circle of Unity. In that historic document, Baha'u'llah had explicitly designated his eldest son, 'Abdu'l-Bahā, as successor, and implicitly vested in this designee the additional authority and prerogatives of authorized interpreter and perfect exemplar of Baha'u'llah's teachings. The importance of this designation cannot be underestimated. The present integrity and future development of the Baha'i community absolutely depend on it.

What Tumanski has done is to provide independent attestation of this signal event in the history and phenomenology of religions – a clear designation of successorship by the charismatic founder of a world religion. There were other contemporary-historical attestations of 'Abdu'l-Baha's successorship by other Russian notables as well, such as this interesting statement by Vladimir Petrovish Rogge, Privy Counsellor and Governor of Baku, dispatched on 17 December 1896:

Beha Ulla [Baha'u'llah] drew up for the followers of the 'Babi' sect the instructions known by the title 'Kitāb-e Ehdī' [Kitāb-i 'Ahdī], in translation, 'The Charter

of My Testament', and besides that he also wrote several other books of moral-religious content. ... In the Transcaspian Region, where there are rather a lot of followers of the 'Babi' sect, it has been established by means of statistical data that these sectarians are almost never brought to court accused of crimes. In general, they are distinguished by remarkably strict fulfillment of the exhortations of their late leader of Beha Ulla [Baha'u'llah], set forth in the book 'The Charter of My Testament', which contains exclusively admonitions on the observance of all good qualities. At present, the leader of all the Babis is the son of Beha Ullah [Baha'u'llah], Abbas Efendi Gusne Aazem [Ghuṣn-i A'żam], who of his own will stayed on to live in Akka, and this city has become sacred for the Babis.¹⁶¹

Another scholar, Evgenii Eduardovich Bertels (1890–1957), was a prominent Russian and later Soviet orientalist specializing in Iranian Studies, clearly recognized the purport of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*:

He [Baha'u'llah] left a Will before his decease, titled *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, whose text and translation were published by A. G. Tumanski. ... He [Baha'u'llah] quite clearly and explicitly appointed in this Will his oldest son (Ghuṣn-i A'żam, the 'Most Great Branch'), 'Abbās Effendī, titled 'Abdu'l-Bahā, his successor and vicegerent. However, Bahā'u'llāh's second son, Muḥammad-ʻAlī (Ghuṣn-i Akbar, the 'Greater Branch'), went against his father's will, so clearly expressed, and chose to disobey his brother.¹⁶²

Here, Bertels not only acknowledges Tumanski's publication of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, but demonstrates his own knowledge of the immediate aftermath, in which 'Abdu'l-Bahā's half-brother, Muḥammad-ʻAlī, rose in opposition to 'Abdu'l-Bahā, thereby violating the terms of the successorship provision of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, in which Muḥammad-ʻAlī's right to succeed 'Abdu'l-Bahā depending entirely upon accepting the latter's rightful office. Bertels, in his estimate of the leadership capabilities of 'Abdu'l-Bahā, further wrote:

'Abdu'l-Bahā – being fully aware of the need for the teaching to be further developed that it might preserve its vitality – symbolized the progressive trend. On the contrary, Muḥammad-ʻAlī was inclined towards conservatism, as he held onto the literal meaning of his father's words; although this conservatism should apparently be considered as an outward means for keeping [him in the position of] authority, otherwise his disrespectful attitude towards the Will and Testament of his father would seem absolutely unexplainable. However, like Subh-i-Azal, he did not receive support in the wide circles and therefore has no significance for the history of Behaism.¹⁶³

It would be fair to say that Russian Orientalist, Ignaty Yulianovich Krachkovsky (1883–1951), was Baron Rosen's most prominent successor in Arabic studies. During the Soviet era, Baha'i studies was not encouraged. Notwithstanding, Krachkovsky had a good knowledge of Baha'i history. Moreover, he met 'Abdu'l-Bahā during his trip to Palestine. Like Bertels, Krachkovsky had an equally high regard for 'Abdu'l-Bahā's leadership abilities:

'Abdu'l-Bahā headed the movement [Baha'i community of the time] upon his father's death. After the Turkish revolution of 1909, he no longer had to

stay confined to Akka without permission to leave it; he undertook long trips around Europe and North America delivering speeches in various Protestant churches and at public gatherings of Paris, London, Edinburgh and the United States. Upon his return to Palestine, he settled down in Haifa at the foothills of Mount Carmel and, owing to the fascinating qualities of his outstanding personality, had great influence over people from all nations and adherents of all religions as well as all the social classes of the population. This was most clearly attested at his funeral, November 29, which was attended by all the dwellers of the city of Haifa and the neighboring areas. ... His whole being and manners had a sense of inner grandeur and a great spiritual power, which deeply impressed everybody even those who had but a chance meeting with him.¹⁶⁴

Evidently, Bertels, like Krachkovsky, in stark contrast to Edward Granville Browne, had a superior grasp of the legitimate lines of succession in early Baha'i history, and takes Browne to task for publishing a highly tendentious tract written by Mirza Javad Kazvini, a partisan of Muḥammad-‘Alī:

The issue of this schism gave rise to abundant literature both in the East and in the West especially among the Baha'is in America, where the number of followers of this teaching has recently grown considerably. However, the great majority of these books are completely unknown to wide public in Europe, therefore it is a pity that one of the best experts on Behaism, the English prof[essor] E. Browne has published a polemical treatise by a follower of Muḥammad-‘Alī named Mirza Javad Kazvini in his book, which came out in 1918 under the title, *Materials for the Study of the Babi Religion*. Of course impartiality requires that the scholar should listen to both parties, but the publication of a pamphlet of the party which is obviously wrong without documents speaking in favor of its opponents would create an extremely unfavorable prejudice against the right party.¹⁶⁵

This is quite a telling criticism of Browne's bias. As Bertels states above, in 1918 Browne translated and published the highly tendentious 'history' by Mīrzā Javād Qazvīnī, whose account of the reading of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī nine days after Baha'u'llah's 'ascension' (Baha'i honorific for this historical event and its annual commemoration) presents 'Abdu'l-Baha as publicly disclosing the contents of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī, while privately concealing certain passages contained within it.¹⁶⁶

In his narrative of the reading of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī, while acknowledging the important fact that the Kitāb-i 'Ahdī 'was given to him ['Abdu'l-Baha] by Baha'u'llah', Mīrzā Javād Qazvīnī notes that 'Abdu'l-Baha had asked one of the nine companions present on this occasion – Aqa Riza of Shiraz – to read Baha'u'llah's Will and Testament aloud 'down to the place concealed by the blue leaf [of paper] whereupon 'Abbas Efendi said to the persons above mentioned, "Verily a portion of this book is concealed for a good reason, because the time doth not admit of its full disclosure".¹⁶⁷

Later that same day, the Will was read again, this time by Majdu'd-Din Efendi – to Baha'u'llah's other sons, to the relatives of the Bab who were present, to the 'exiles' and those Persian Baha'i expatriates then residing in Akka – down to the 'place concealed by the blue leaf'. This 'blue leaf'

is a red herring, since the content of the successorship version is not in dispute.

New information has reached the authors in response to a research request regarding this and other allegations surrounding the original text of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahdī*. According to a Memorandum to the Universal House of Justice (27 February 2013), enclosed in a reply letter (same date) from the Universal House of Justice to co-author, Christopher Buck, transmitted by email, 3 March 2013, the Research Department states:

The *Kitāb-i ‘Ahd*

Christopher Buck, in an email letter dated 24 November 2012, has requested a facsimile of the original *Kitāb-i ‘Ahd* and has raised several questions in connection with an article he is writing on the subject. In particular, he asks whether a reference to the second wife of Bahā’u’llāh has been omitted in the translation and whether a reference to Mīrzā Ḥāj Jān has been omitted in the published version of the original text. He is additionally interested in any other information regarding its transmission history, circumstances of revelation, editing and publication which are not available in published accounts. We offer the following response.

Regarding the provenance and history of the holograph of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahd*, the following explanation is given in a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi:

The *Kitāb-i ‘Ahd* is, as you know, Bahā’u’llāh’s Book of His Covenant. It is entirely written in His own handwriting. And in the light of the objections raised by some of the believers concerning the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, it is highly significant to note that this Book of the Covenant of Bahā’u’llāh bears neither signature, nor seal, nor any date. It was shown to the believers, and was read in their presence nine days after Bahā’u’llāh’s ascension. The manuscript was in the possession of ‘Abdu’l-Bahā all through His ministry, and after His passing it was found enclosed in His own Will. These two precious documents, namely, the Book of the Covenant of Bahā’u’llāh and the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahā, have both been carefully preserved and are now in the possession of the Guardian. (From a letter dated 25 September 1934)

The holograph of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahd* is now preserved in the Archives at the Bahā’ī World Centre. No further information as to the circumstances of its revelation, editing or publication is currently available to us that cannot be found in published accounts. As can be seen from a comparison of the English translation authorized by the Universal House of Justice with the published Persian text, a reference to the wife and family of Bahā’u’llāh (*‘haram va āl allāh’*) has been rendered collectively as ‘members of the Holy Household’.

The holograph of the *Kitāb-i ‘Ahd* contains a passage in the nature of a postscript praising Mīrzā Ḥāj Jān, directing the friends to show respect to him and expressing the hope that he join ‘Abdu’l-Bahā in upholding the standard of loyalty. The postscript was not included as part of the Will by ‘Abdu’l-Bahā when He circulated it during His lifetime, and this approach was continued by Shoghi Effendi. The House of Justice, likewise, has decided not to circulate it.¹⁶⁸

Prior to his 1918 publication of *Materials for the Study of the Bābī Religion*, Browne had translated the following excerpt from the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, with commentary:

Bahā'u'llāh died on May 16, 1892, leaving four sons and three daughters. Differences as to the succession arose between the two elder sons, 'Abbās Efendi (also called 'Abdu'l-Bahā, 'the Servant of Bahā, and Ghuṣn-i A'żam, 'the Most Mighty Branch') and Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī (called Ghuṣn-i Akbar, 'the Most Great Branch'). Bahā'u'llāh left a testament, entitled *Kitābu' Ahdī*, which was published, with some introductory remarks and a Russian tr., by Lieut. Tumanski in the *Zapiski* of the Oriental Section of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society, viii. (1892). In this important document he says:

'God's injunction is that the Branches (Aghṣān), and Twigs (Afnān), and Kinsfolk (Muntasabīn) should all look to the Most Mighty Branch (Ghuṣn-i A'żam, i.e. 'Abbās Efendi). Look at what We have revealed in my (sic) Most Holy Book (Kitāb-i-Aqdas): "When the Ocean of Union ebbs, and the Book of the Beginning and the Conclusion is finished, then turn to Him whom God intendeth (*man arādahu'llāh*), who is derived from this Ancient Stock". He who is meant by this blessed verse is the Most Mighty Branch: thus have we made clear the command as an act of grace on our part. Verily, I am the Bountiful, the Gracious. God hath determined the position of the Most Great Branch (Ghuṣn-i Akbar, i.e. Mīrzā Muḥammad-'Alī) after his position. Verily, He is the Commanding, the Wise. Verily, we have chosen the Most Great after the Most Mighty, a command on the part of One All-knowing and Wise. ... Say, O Servants! Do not make the means of order a means of disorder, nor an instrument for [producing] union into an instrument for [producing] discord ...'

Thus far, then, it would appear that, in face of so clear a pronouncement, no room for dissension was left to Bahā'u'llāh's followers. But almost immediately, it would seem ... the old struggle between what may be described as the 'stationary' and the 'progressive' elements broke out. 'Abbās Efendi apparently claimed that the Revelation was not ended, and that henceforth he was to be its channel. This claim was strenuously resisted by his brother Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī and those who followed him.¹⁶⁹

Browne's translation of this key passage from the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* shows a clear recognition of Bahā'u'llāh's explicit designation of 'Abdu'l-Bahā, whom Browne had earlier acknowledged as Bahā'u'llāh's 'spiritual successor' and 'accredited successor', in 1903.¹⁷⁰ Notwithstanding, Browne reproduces the accusation leveled by Mirza Muhammad-'Alī that 'Abdu'l-Bahā laid claim to revelation, in direct defiance of a clear statement in the Most Holy Book that another Manifestation of God (i.e. a theophany or prophet of God) would not appear for at least 1,000 years. Without proof, Browne further states: 'The dispute has been darkened by a mass of words, but in essence it is a conflict between these two sayings, viewed in the light of the supernatural claim – whatever its exact nature – which 'Abbās Efendi did and does advance'.¹⁷¹ For a scholar who was otherwise careful and disciplined regarding primary sources, Browne's uncritical acceptance of this false charge, without any supporting documentation from 'Abdu'l-Bahā himself, was tendentious in the extreme.

On three occasions (December 18 and 19, 1912, in London, and March 9, 1913 in Paris) Browne and his wife met 'Abdu'l-Baha and tried to broach the subject of Browne's writings, which 'Abdu'l-Baha was disinclined to discuss.¹⁷² There is the clear implication here that Browne intended to apologize to 'Abdu'l-Baha for this most unfortunate and unacceptable misrepresentation of the facts. In his obituary of 'Abbas Effendi', Browne, once again, unambiguously acknowledged the successorship of 'Abdu'l-Baha:

The death of 'Abbas Efendi, better known since he succeeded his father, Bahā'u'llāh, thirty years ago as 'Abdu'l-Bahā, deprives Persia of one of the most notable of her children and the East of a remarkable personality, who has probably exercised a greater influence not only in the Orient but in the Occident than any Asiatic thinker and teacher of recent times. ... One of the most notable practical results of the Bahā'ī ethical teaching in the United States has been, according to the recent testimony of an impartial and qualified observer, the establishment in Bahā'ī circles in New York of a real fraternity between black and white, and an unprecedented lifting of the 'colour bar', described by the said observer as 'almost miraculous'.¹⁷³

This may have served as a tacit apology on the part of Browne to 'Abdu'l-Baha. One should bear in mind that Bahā'u'llāh favorably mentioned Browne in a Tablet, the facsimile of which was published as the frontispiece in Edward Granville Browne and the Bahā'ī Faith, with the passage of interest translated by H. M. Balyuzi as follows:

Your letter was sent to the Supreme Threshold by Afnān [Hājī Sayyid 'Alī Afnān], on whom be My glory. The youth [Edward Granville Browne] mentioned therein attained Our presence. Although this Wronged One had not consorted for many years past with people from foreign lands, We received him on several occasions. Portents of sincerity could be discerned on his visage. We beseech God to aid him in such undertakings which would be conducive to the effacement of mischief and the promotion of the betterment of the world. He is the Hearing, the Prayer-Answering God. Afnān will write and give you details.¹⁷⁴

Unfortunately, Browne fell prey to the perfidious 'mischief', mendacity and fraud that Mirza Muḥammad-'Alī had perpetrated on Browne and, by extension, his reading public. Balyuzi rightly mentions the fact that Browne had, in his possession, a copy of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, which he references as 'F. 66',¹⁷⁵ which probably should be corrected to read 'F. 25'. Had Browne the depth of understanding that Tumanski possessed regarding the terms of succession set forth in the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*, Browne would have been better informed as to the problem inherent in Muḥammad-'Alī's rival claim, as this provision clearly requires: 'We have chosen 'the Greater' [Muḥammad-'Alī] after 'the Most Great' ['Abdu'l-Baha] (*al-Akbar ba'd al-A'zam*), as decreed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed [Bahā'u'llāh]'. Even granting that Browne had properly appreciated Bahā'u'llāh's designation of 'Abdu'l-Baha as successor, there remains the problem of his uncritical acceptance of accusations that the latter had laid claims to divine revelation which, in numerous letters to the Bahā'ī world, 'Abdu'l-Baha took pains to strenuously disclaim. Furthermore, it would appear that the critical distinction between 'revelation'

(*wahy*) and 'inspiration' (*ilhām*), along with the related distinction between the 'Most Great Infallibility' and 'conferred infallibility', was completely lost on Browne.

By contrast, Tumanski clearly understood the successorship provision of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*. Why this difference? In addition to his superior knowledge of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* – having edited and translated this text for publication – there is credible evidence (even if not conclusive), that Tumanski may, in fact, have declared himself to be a Baha'i. This evidence comes from Haji Mirza Haydar Ali Uskui, who, by profession, was a photographer and merchant, and was one of the most prominent Baha'i's in the northwest province of Azerbaijan. In his 'History of Faith in Azerbaijan', Uskui writes:

Meeting with Tumanski

At the time of constitutional riots in Tabriz, I moved to Uksu and stayed there for 10 months. After this time a prayer was revealed from the Holy Land for the cessation of hostilities in Azerbaijan. It was carried via Jinab-i Aqa Muhammad Uskui.

Following the arrival of Aqa Muhammad in Tabriz the riots suddenly stopped. About 5,000 Russian troops came to Tabriz to enforce security. On the third day [of the arrival] we returned to Tabriz.

I visited Nicolas. We discussed the Russian intervention and he said: 'They have camped near [the locality] of Aji. Tumanski is also here'.

I said: 'It would be great to meet Tumanski if possible. We know each other. About 18 years ago following the martyrdom of Haji Muhammad Reza [in Ishqabad] in 1307, Tumanski came from St. Petersburg to investigate the Baha'i Faith. There he started to translate the *Kitab-i Aqdas* to Russian. I was there when he declared his faith in the Blessed Cause'.¹⁷⁶

This evidence that Tumanski declared himself a Baha'i cannot have been official, given the fact that, in Tsarist Russia, it was forbidden for Russian Orthodox Christians to convert to non-Christian religions, as Momen notes: 'There was also no attempt made to convert Russians, since Russian law made it a capital offence for a Russian citizen to convert from Christianity'.¹⁷⁷ So, if Tumanski did declare himself a Baha'i, it must have been done informally, i.e. in an unofficial way. In any case, Tumanski rendered important services to the Baha'i community in Ishqabad, which Balyuzi describes as 'the home and the refuge of a large, progressive, thriving Bahā'ī community'.¹⁷⁸ One of his most significant contributions was his assistance in arranging for the construction of the very first Baha'i temple: 'Captain Tumanski gave valuable assistance to this community, particularly when it was engaged in building the first Bahā'ī House of Worship (Mashriqu'l-Adhkār) in the world'.¹⁷⁹

Significantly, the closing line of Tumanski's article, published on 9 July 1892 in the newspaper, *Kavkaz*, gives a clear, contemporaneous and correct interpretation of the successorship provision in the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī*: 'His oldest son, Mirza Abbas [Abbās Effendī] who is titled *Ghuṣn-i A'ẓam* (the 'Most Great Branch'), is, according to Baha'u'llah's repeated instructions and his last Will, recognized at present to be the Head of the Babis'.¹⁸⁰ This public declaration of the testator's (i.e. Baha'u'llah's) intent by an independent scholar, who published this historic

document in the original Persian and provided a Russian translation as well, and in so short a time after the 29 May 1892 decease of the prophet-founder of what was to emerge, in the course of its subsequent expansion and institutional development, as a new world religion, is remarkable. Tumanski's later publication, in the 1892 ZVORAO (1893), of the *Kitâb-i 'Ahdî* – within around one year after Baha'u'llah's death – provides contemporaneous attestation of a historic document that may well be unique in its function and purpose (i.e. explicitly designating and conferring successorship) considering the fact that, in the history of religions, never has there been a clear document conferring successorship upon a designated leader after the death of the founder of a world religion, prior to the successorship provision *Kitâb-i 'Ahdî*, which provision exists in splendid isolation. Because of this designation, 'Abdu'l-Baha is reverently referred to by Persian-speaking Baha'is as 'His Holiness, the Center of the Covenant' (*hadrat-i markaz-i mîthâq*). The 'Centre' keeps the line of succession straightforward and the circle of unity of the Baha'i faith-community unbroken.¹⁸¹

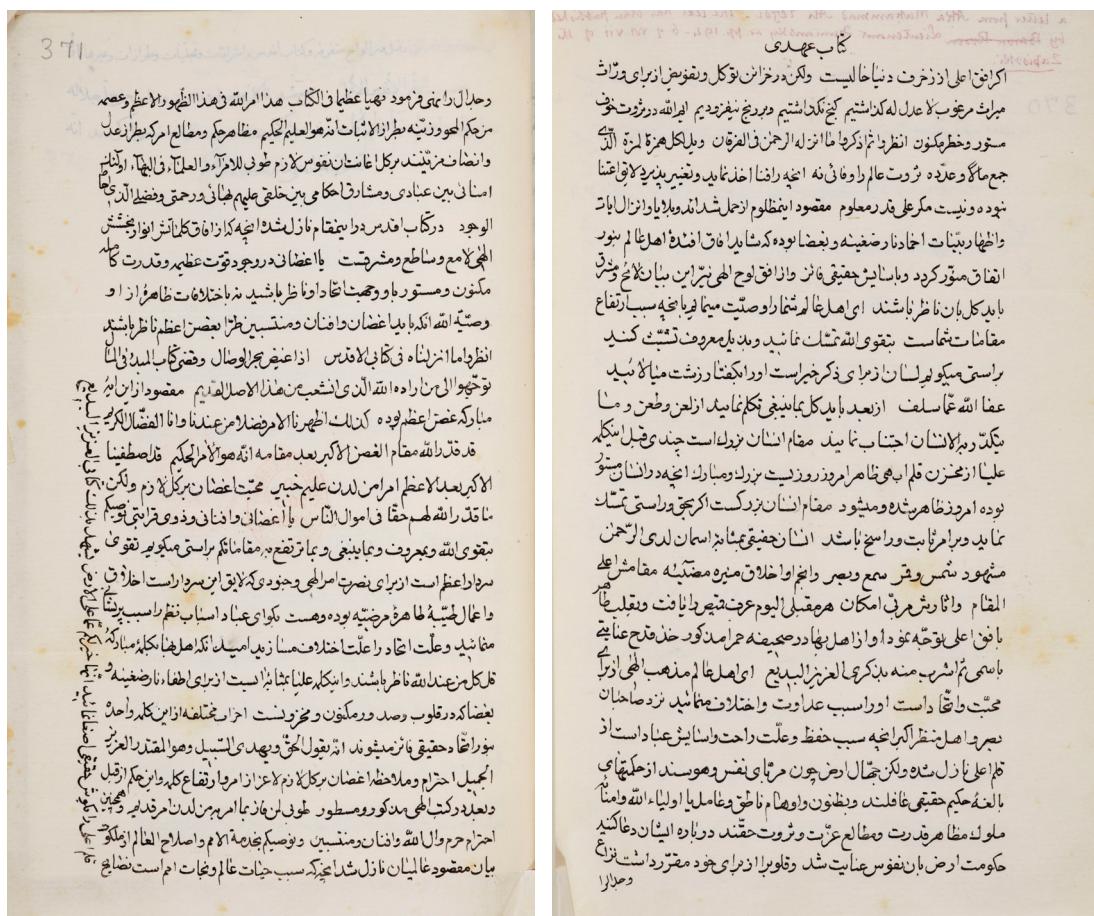


Figure 4: Folio 370 verso and 371 recto of F. 25(9), Manuscript 8 (listed as 'Kitābū 'Ahdi') of the E. G. Browne Collection. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

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Suggested citation

Christopher Buck and Youli Ioannesyan, 'The 1893 Russian Publication of Baha'u'llah's Last Will and Testament: An Academic Attestation of 'Abdu'l-Baha's Successorship', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 3–44. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.3/1>.

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Endnotes

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18. Jahangir Dorri, 'Toumanskiĭ, Aleksandr Grigor'evich', *Encyclopædia Iranica* (2009), online edition. Accessed 22 November 2012.
19. Shahvar, *The Forgotten Schools*, p. 66.
20. Youli A. Ioannesian, 'Baron Rosen's Archive Collection of Bābī and Bahā'ī Materials', *Lights of 'Irfān*, Vol. 8, Wilmette, IL: Irfan Colloquia, 2007, pp. 11–34 [12].
21. Momen, *The Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions*, p. 296.
22. For the early history of the Bahā'ī community of Ashgabat, see Ustād 'Alī-Akbar Bannā Yazdī, *Tārīkh-i 'Ishqābād* ('History [of the Bahā'is of] of Ashgabat'), Iranian National Bahā'ī Archives (INBA) vol. 94, p. 407, unpublished. Online at <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/arabic/vol4/banna/ashgabat.htm>. This author was a builder/architect (who supervised the initial construction of the Bahā'ī House of worship in Ashgabat (the first major Bahā'ī temple in the world) and a Bahā'ī martyr. However, the text is silent on the 26 June 1892 reading of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdi and 'Andalib's poetic eulogy of Bahā'u'llāh to the Bahā'īs of Ashgabat. The author says that he took a copy of the Kitāb-i 'Ahdi from Ishqabad (Ashgabat) to Mashhad soon after the ascension of Bahā'u'llāh to read to the Bahā'ī friends there, who had not yet been apprised of the ascension. Id., p. 344. Online at: <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/arabic/vol4/banna/e344.gif>. Reference courtesy of Omid Ghaemmaghami, Ph.D.
23. Shahvar, *The Forgotten Schools*, p. 70.
24. Momen, *The Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions*, 41. See also idem, 'The Bahā'ī Community of Ashkhabad: Its Social Basis and Importance in Bahā'ī History'. *Cultural Change and Continuity in Central Asia*, ed. Shirin Akiner, London: Kegan Paul, 1991, pp. 278–305.

25. See Momen, 'Events in 'Ishqābād (1889–90)', *The Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions, 1844–1944*, pp. 296–300.
26. Ahang Rabbani, *Ponder Thou upon the Martyrdom of Hājī Muhammad-Ridā: Nineteen Historical Accounts, Witnesses to Bābī and Bahā'ī History*, vol. 5 (2007).
27. Rabbani, *Ponder Thou upon the Martyrdom of Hājī Muhammad-Ridā*, 42, n. 41.
28. See Gulpāygānī, Ahang Rabbani, translator, 'Mirza Abu'l-Fadl Gulpaygani's 'The Martyrdom of Mīrzā Muḥammad-Ridā', *Translations of Shaykhi, Babi and Bahā'ī Texts*, vol. 4(3), April 2000, online at: <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/trans/vol4/mrida.htm>; and Mīrzā Abu'l-Fadl-i Gulpāygānī, *Tafsīl-i Shahādāt Hājī Muḥammad-Ridā dar 'Ishqābād* ('Eyewitness Account of the Martyrdom of Mīrzā Muḥammad-Ridā of 'Ishqābād') in Ruhu'llah Mihrabkhani, *Zindigānī-yi Mīrzā Abu'l-Fadl-i Gulpāygānī*, Tehran: Bahā'i Publishing Trust, 1978, pp. 171–189, and idem, *Tafsīl-i Shahadat Hājī Muḥammad-Ridā dar 'Ishqābād* ('Eyewitness Account of the Martyrdom of Hājī Muḥammad-Ridā of 'Ishqābād'), 22 pages, unpublished, n.d. Also see http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/authors/gulpaygani/AbulFadl_Tafsil_Shahadat_Haji_MuhammadRida_dar_Ishqabad_handof_AbulFadl.pdf. See Momen, *The Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions, 1844–1944*, pp. 298–289, quoting a dispatch from British Legation in Tehran regarding the murder.
29. Rabbani, *Ponder Thou upon the Martyrdom of Hājī Muhammad-Ridā*, 1.
30. A small town near St. Petersburg.
31. See Élisée Reclus, *La Nouvelle Géographie universelle, la terre et les hommes*, 19 vols. (1875–94); English translation, *The Earth and Its Inhabitants* (1878–94).
32. See A. G. Tumanski, Dva poslednikh babidskikh otkroveniya ('Two Recent Babi Revelations'), *Mémoires de L'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg* Science, Vol. VI, 1891, St. Petersburg, 1892, 314–315. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan.
33. 'The Bābis' [sic] in 'Notes and News', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1892, p. 169.
34. Dorri, 'Toumanskiï'.
35. Dorri, 'Toumanskiï'.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ioannesyan, 'The St. Petersburg 19th-Century Orientalist Collection', p. 76.
39. Graham Hassall, 'Notes on the Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions in Russia and its Territories', *Journal of Bahā'ī Studies* 5(3), 1992, pp. 41–80, citing 'U.S. National Bahā'ī Archives. Helen S. Goodall papers. 3/27'. On the Bahā'i community in Russia, see Nancy Ackerman and Graham Hassall, 'Russia and the Bahā'i Faith: A Historic Connection', in *The Bahā'i World, 1998–99: An International Record*, Haifa: Bahā'i World Centre, 2000, pp. 157–192.
40. Youli A. Ioannesyan, 'Baron Rosen's Archive Collection of Bābī and Bahā'ī Materials', *Lights of 'Irfān*, Vol. 8, Wilmette, IL: Irfan Colloquia, 2007, pp. 11–34 [12].
41. Kuropatkin is mentioned by Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 300.
42. Shahvar, *The Forgotten Schools*, 210, n. 80, citing 'Report of Staff-Captain A. Tumanski, subordinate to the Commander of the troops of the Transcaspian Region regarding his journey to Persia (18 March to 15 November 1894)' (secret), n.p. (probably Ashgabat), n.d. (probably end of November–beginning of December 1894), Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv, Moscow, coll. 1396, series 2, file 1856, qtd. in Soli Shahvar, Boris Morozov and Gad Gilbar eds., *Bahā'is of Iran, Transcaspia and the Caucasus, Letters of Russian Officers and Officials*, Vol. 1, International Library of Iranian Studies (Vol. 27), London & New York: I.B.Tauris, 2012.
43. See Soli Shahvar, 'The Bahā'i Faith and Bahā'i Communities in Iran and Transcaspia, 1844–1914', in Shahvar et al., *Bahā'is of Iran, Transcaspia and the Caucasus*, vol. 1, 'for a detailed analysis of Russian interests in Bahā'i migration to Transcaspia as well as the reasons for their migration to those territories'. Shahvar, *The Forgotten Schools*, 212, n. 105.
44. A. G. Tumanski, 'Ot Kaspiiskogo moria k Khormuzskomu prolivu i obratno. 1894 g', *Sborn. mater. po Azii* 65 (1896), pp. 1–124.

45. Shahvar, *The Forgotten Schools*, 211, n. 84.
46. Aleksandr Grigor'evich Tumanski, *Kitāb-i-Aqdas. Svyashennyshaya kniga sovremennych babil'dov* ('The Kitāb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book of the present-day Babis. Text, Translation, Introduction, Supplements'), *Mémoires de L'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg Science*, VIII Serie, Vol. 3. (St. Petersburg: Royal Academy of Sciences, 1899). Tumanski's introduction is quite lengthy.
47. Graham Hassall, 'Notes on the Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions in Russia and its Territories', *Journal of Bahā'ī Studies* 5(3), 1992, pp. 41–80, citing H. M. Balyuzi, *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahā'ī Faith*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1980 [1970], 66. See also Balyuzi, id., pp. 66–67, n. 3.
48. Mirza Abul-Fadl Gulpaygani, 'A Treatise for Alexander Tumansky', *Letters and Essays, 1886–1913*, translated and annotated by Juan R. I. Cole, Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1985, pp. 43–83 [43].
49. Tumanski, letter dated 28 February 1892, sent from Ashkabad, Deposit: 777/Inventory: 2/Unit: 458. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan.
50. Ioannesyan, 'Baron Rosen's Archive', p. 16.
51. Article by Tumanski in the newspaper, *Kavkaz*, № 180, 9 July 1892, in Baron Rosen's 'Baron Rosen's Archive', 18, Deposit: 777/Inventory: 2/Unit: 460. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan. The article has no title. It is introduced as a 'report' from an Ashkabad 'correspondent', signed by Tumanski. See also Ioannesyan, 'Baron Rosen's Archive Collection of Bābī and Bahā'ī Materials', *Lights of 'Irfān*, Vol. 8 (2007), 16. Online at: http://irfancolloquia.org/pdf/lights8_iemannesyan.pdf.
52. United States. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, 'Foreign Publications', in *Factors in Foreign Trade: Language, Currency, Weights and Measures, Postal Rates, and Parcel Post Facilities*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1912, p. 129.
53. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', ZVORAO 7, 1892–1893, pp. 193–203.
54. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 219.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid. 220. Persian text online at <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/TB/tb-15.html>.
57. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, Wilmette, IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1979, p. 238.
58. Mirza Abul-Fazl [sic], 'His Holiness Abdul-Baha' From The Baha'i Proofs', *Star of the West* 11(14), 23 November 1920, p. 237. See also: Mirza Abul-Fazl Gulpaygan [sic], *The Baha'i Proofs*, trans. from the Arabic by Ali-Kuli Khan, 3rd edn., Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1983 (1st edn. 1902).
59. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Lawh-i-Dunyā (Tablet of the World)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, 89. Persian text online at : <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/TB/tb-7.html>.
60. Nader Saiedi, *Logos and Civilization: Spirit, History, and Order in the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh*, Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, pp. 229–230.
61. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 220.
62. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 221.
63. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 221.
64. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 221.
65. Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, p. 17.
66. Bahā'u'llāh, *Three Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh (Tablet of the Branch, Kitāb-i-'Ahd, Lawh-i-Aqdas), the appointment of 'Abdu'l-Baha as the interpreter of the teachings of Bahā'u'llāh, the Testament of Bahā'u'llāh, and His message to the Christians*, Chicago, 1918.
67. Shoghi Effendi, Letter of 10 January 1935, *The Light of Divine Guidance*, Vol. 1, Hofheim, Germany: Baha'i Verlag, 1982, pp. 65–66.
68. Bahā'u'llāh, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, trans. Habib Taherzadeh, Wilmette, IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1988, pp. 219–223.
69. Translated by Shoghi Effendi in idem, *The World Order of Bahā'u'llāh*, Wilmette, IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1991, p. 134.

70. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 222.
71. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 222.
72. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 223.
73. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh*, p. 223. See also Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 238–240.
74. See Momen, 'The Baha'i Community of Ashkhabad', pp. 278–305.
75. Tumanski: 'According to the Babis, this piece of land derives its name from someone named A'zam, to whom it once belonged'.
76. Tumanski: 'I will give a more detailed account of this man when occasion presents itself'.
77. Tumanski: 'My previous assumption as to Rouha and Rouhani being identical is absolutely unfounded, though I have not yet been able to collect any exact data on the issue, cf. *Collect. Scientif.* VI, 251, note'.
78. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', 196–196. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan.
79. Minou Foadi, 'Nabil-e Akbar', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, writes of Nabil's significant role in establishing the Baha'i community of Ashgabad: 'So, in 1890, he left for Ashkabad, in the company of his nephew Shaikh Mohammad-'Ali. He was arrested in Sabzavār on the way to Ashkabad, but the governor of the city was so impressed with him that he helped him escape. Nabil settled in Ashkabad, continued his missionary activities, and contributed to the establishment of a large, resourceful Bahai community there'.
80. Ibid., 193–194. See also Tumanski's letter dated 1 February 1893.
81. See Minou Foadi, 'Qā'eni, Shaikh Mohammad-'Ali', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.
82. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan, *The Development of the Babi/Baha'i Communities: Exploring Baron Rosen's Archives*, London and New York, Routledge, 2013, p. 173.
83. Youli A. Ioannesyan, *The Development of the Babi/Baha'i Communities: Exploring Baron Rosen's Archives*, London and New York, Routledge, 2013.
84. 'His Holiness has ascended' (Persian).
85. 'Mansion' (Arabic/Persian).
86. 'Briefly' (French).
87. 'Elegy, in which the death of a saint or a martyr is lamented' (Persian).
88. 'Nightingale' (Persian).
89. Tumanski to Rosen, letter dated 3 July 1892, sent from Ashkabad, Deposit: 777/Inventory: 2/Unit: 458. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan.
90. Ibid., p. 193.
91. A. G. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Bahaulli' ('Baha'u'llah's Last Word'), *Mémoires de L'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg Science*, Vol. 7 (1892–1893), St. Petersburg, 1893, pp. 193–203. The Russian name of this academic periodical which was edited by Baron Rosen is: *Zapiski Vostochnogo Otdeleniya Rossiyskogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshestva* (ZVORAO).
92. Ibid., pp. 199–203.
93. Ibid., p. 194.
94. Ibid., pp. 199–200.
95. Ibid., pp. 201–203.
96. 'Andalib, 'Divān-i 'Andalib', Tehran: Mū'assihīyī Millīyī Matbū'āti Amrī, 1968, pp. 471–474, trans. Ahang Rabbani, in Habib Allah Afnān, *The Genesis of the Bābī-Bahā'ī Faiths in Shirāz and Fārs*, trans. Ahang Rabbani, Leiden: Brill, 2008, 118 [n. 218]–119. Couplets numbered by the present writers, to align with Tumanski's text.
97. Afnān, *The Genesis of the Bābī-Bahā'ī Faiths in Shirāz and Fārs*, trans. Ahang Rabbani, pp. 117–118.

98. Readers may be interested to know that 'Andalib's grandson, Siavash Shadravan (son of 'Andalib's daughter), lives in Houston.
99. Edward G. Browne, *A Year Amongst the Persians: Impressions as to the Life, Character, & Thought of the People of Persia, Received during Twelve Months' Residence in that Country in the Year 1887-8*, London: Adam and Charles Black, 1893, pp. 396-397.
100. Browne, *A Year Amongst the Persians*, p. 397.
101. See Edward G. Browne, ed. and trans., ['Abdu'l-Bahá], *A Traveller's Narrative Written to Illustrate the Episode of the Báb*, 2 vols. Cambridge University Press, 1891, 2, pp. xxix-xl; and Christopher Buck and Youli A. Ioannesian, 'Bahá'u'lláh's Bishárát (Glad-Tidings): A Proclamation to Scholars and Statesmen', *Bahá'i Studies Review* 16, 2010, pp. 3-28 [24-25]. Persian translation published in *Payám-i-Bahá'í*, No. 371 (October 2010), pp. 51-57, No. 372 (November 2010), pp. 14-18, No. 373 (December 2010), pp. 35-45 and No. 374 (January 2011), pp. 28-30.
102. See Moojan Momen, 'Early Relations between Christian Missionaries and the Babi and Bahá'i Communities', *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'i History*, Vol. 1, ed. idem, Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1982, pp. 49-82 [70], and idem, *The Bábí and Bahá'i Religions*, 86, n., citing Rev. W. A. Rice (Christian Missionary Society), 'A Babi Pamphlet', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, 53, August 1902, pp. 564-573.
103. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Bahaulli' ('Bahá'u'lláh's Last Word'), 201. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesian.
104. Tumanski to Rosen, letter dated 3 July 1892, sent from Ashkabad, Deposit: 777/Inventory: 2/Unit: 458. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesian.
105. Shoghi Effendi, 'Letter of 25 September 1934', *The Light of Divine Guidance* (Volume 1), Bahá'i Publishing Trust of Germany (Bahá'i-Verlag), 1982, p. 62.
106. John Walbridge, 'The Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh', *Sacred Acts, Sacred Space, Sacred Time*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1996, p. 243.
107. Tuba Khanum, 'Chapter IV: The Passing of Bahá'u'lláh', in 'The Spoken Chronicle of Tuba Khanum, daughter of 'Abdu'l-Bahá', in Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway*, London: Bahá'i Publishing Trust, 1940, pp. 106-115.
108. Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, trans. Shoghi Effendi, Wilmette: Bahá'i Publishing Trust, 1988, p. 32.
109. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 238.
110. Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, comp. Gertrude Garrida, New Delhi: Bahá'i Publishing Trust, 1973), p. 17.
111. Armin Eschraghi, ed. and trans., Bahá'u'lláh, *Brief an den Sohn des Wolfes – Lauh-i Ibn-i Dhi'b*, Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2010, pp. 383-385, 516-517.
112. Eschraghi, *Brief an den Sohn des Wolfes*, pp. 383-385.
113. Shapour Rassekh (Shápür Rásikh), 'Mujmalí darbárih-yi Kitáb 'Ahdi', *Mahbúb-i 'Álam*, 'Andalib', Editorial Board of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, 1992-93, pp. 534-549. Dr. Rassekh has a Ph.D. in sociology – formerly a professor at the University of Tehran and former Iranian Secretary of State for Economic and Social Planning – has served as a consultant to UNESCO.
114. Rassekh, 'Kitáb 'Ahdi', 534, citing Asadullah Fadil Mazindarani, *Asrār al-Tauhíd*, s.v. 'Ahdi [Covenant]. Translated from the original Persian by Youli A. Ioannesian.
115. Rassekh, 'Kitáb 'Ahdi', 534, citing Asadullah Fadil Mazindarani, *Asrār al-Tauhíd*, s.v. 'Ahdi [Covenant]. Translated from the original Persian by Youli A. Ioannesian.
116. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 238.
117. Shahrokh Monjazeb, 'Kitáb-u-'Ahdi (The Book of My Covenant): Bahá'u'lláh's Will and Testament', *Course Notes on The Will & Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, Furútan Academy: Vancouver, Canada, 2005, p. 1.
118. Monjazeb, 'Kitáb-u-'Ahdi', p. 1.
119. Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. 4: Mazra'ih and Bahjí, 1877-92*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1988, pp. 419-420.

120. Rassekh, 'Kitāb 'Ahdī', p. 535. Translated from the original Persian by Youli A. Ioannesyan.

121. Rassekh, 'Kitāb 'Ahdī', p. 538.

122. Both phrases, in fact, are rendered in English as: 'turn your faces towards him'.

123. Bahā'u'llāh, *The Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, 82 (para 174).

124. Rassekh, 'Kitāb 'Ahdī', p. 535. Translated from the original Persian by Youli A. Ioannesyan.

125. Bahā'u'llāh, Kitāb-i 'Ahdī, first photomechanical reproduction, Tehran, n.d.

126. Bahā'u'llāh, Kitāb-i 'Ahdī, in Najm-i Bākhtar, *Star of the West* 13(14), 23 November 1920, pp. 248–247 (Persian section, 1–2, since Persian is read in the reverse direction from English), ed. Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi. Online at : <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/vol4/starwest/SW111401.gif> and <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/vol4/starwest/SW111402.gif>. Courtesy of Behrooz Ghaemmaghami, 9 December 2012.

127. Bahā'u'llāh, *Majmū'ayi matbū'ayi alvāhi mubārakayi ḥadrati Bahā'u'llāh*, ed. Muhyi alDīn Sabrī. Sa'āda Press, 1338 A.H. [1920], pp. 399–403. Online at : <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/baha/M-R/M/matbuih/misr.htm>. Reprinted, Wilmette: Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1984 [1978].

128. Browne, 'Death of Bahā'u'llāh', in 'Catalogue and Description of 27 Bābī Manuscripts', pp. 706–710 [706].

129. Browne, 'Catalogue and Description of 27 Bābī Manuscripts', p. 709.

130. Browne to Rosen, letter dated 19 July 1892, Deposit: 777/Inventory: 2/Unit: 44, pp. P 13/a–14b. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan, *The Development of the Babi/Baha'i Communities*, pp. 172–173.

131. Edward Granville Browne, 'Catalogue and Description of 27 Bābī Manuscripts'. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society [JRAS]* 24 (1892), 1893, pp. 433–99 and 637–710 [710], n. 1.

132. Browne to Rosen, letter dated 9 October 1892, Deposit: 777/Inventory: 2/Unit: 44, p. 18/b. Translated from the original Russian by Youli A. Ioannesyan.

133. Bahā'u'llāh, Kitāb-i-'Ahd, Persian text online at <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/TB/tb-15.html>.

134. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, Wilmette, IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1988, p. 220.

135. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 195, line 11.

136. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 195, line 11.

137. Edward William Lane, *Arabic English Lexicon*, London: Williams and Norgate, Book I, part 7, 2748.

138. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, 219.

139. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 194, line 31.

140. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 197, lines 196–197.

141. Bahā'u'llāh, 'Kitāb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)', *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed After the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, p. 219.

142. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 195, lines 2–3.

143. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 197, lines 3–4.

144. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 195, line 14.

145. Tumanski, 'Poslednee slovo Baha-ulli', p. 197, line 27.

146. Although the official Baha'i translation here is 'or', the Persian word 'va' literally means 'and'.

147. Special acknowledgment is here given to Mr. Gilbert Hakim, founder and CEO of SCC Soft Computer in Clearwater, Florida, who, on January 13, 2012, generously funded the cost of this digital scan (Invoice N1668), through his agent Kristin Perla, who contacted Ms. Lynda Unchern of Imaging Services at Cambridge University Library, who then processed the order on receiving payment for the cost of this digital reproduction.

148. Yasmin Faghihi, Head of Middle Eastern Department, Manuscripts and Printed Collections, Cambridge University Library, Personal communication, 5 December 2012. See also Fihrist: Islamic Manuscripts Catalogue, online at : <http://www.fihrist.org.uk/profile/work/22a7ef26-3bf7-42b4-a82a-8db13dc2food>.

149. H. M. Balyuzi, *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahā'ī Faith*, London, George Ronald, 1970, p. 54.

150. The authors owe a debt of thanks to Ramzi Zeine and Dr. Vahid Behmardi, experts in the handwriting of Zayn al-Muqarrabīn, for making this positive identification. Personal communication, 31 January 2013. Thanks also to Iskandar Hai, MD (New York), for independently verifying that this Cambridge manuscript of the *Kitāb-i 'Ahdī* is indeed in the hand of Zayn al-Muqarrabīn. Personal communication, 28 January 2013.

151. 'Abdu'l-Bahā, 'Zaynu'l-Muqarrabīn', *Memorials of the Faithful*, Wilmette, IL: Bahā'i Publishing Trust, 1971, p. 153.

152. Provisional translation by Omid Ghaemmaghami, Ph.D., personal communication, 27 February 2013.

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181. The present authors acknowledge the valuable research assistance of Omid Ghaemmaghami, Ph.D.; Necati Alkan, Ph.D. (Germany); Armin Eschraghi, Ph.D. (Germany); and Mr. Behrooz Ghaemmaghami.

Negotiating Survival: A History of the Babi and Baha'i Faith in Shiraz (1844–1921)

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Abstract

In 1844 in Shiraz, Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad took the title of the Bab and founded a movement that was years later transformed by Baha'u'llah into the Baha'i Faith. Thus Shiraz has been at the heart of the Baha'i Faith from its inception. In this article, the history of the Babi and Baha'i Faith in Shiraz during the Qajar era is surveyed. The Baha'is of Shiraz were mainly from among the traders and skilled artisans of the city, but included some from among the wealthy merchants and prominent citizens of the city. Particular emphasis is placed on the manner in which, because of the persecutions to which they were subjected, the Baha'is of Shiraz were forced to negotiate a path between the various factions that held power in Shiraz: the political and religious leadership of the city.

Fars is the principal province of south-east Iran. The west side of the province is taken up with the southern end of the Zagros mountains and is the principal area of the large and powerful Turkish-speaking Qashqa'i tribe. The east half of the province is drier and a tribal confederation called the Khamsih was formed here by the government in 1861 mainly to counter-balance the strength of the Qashqa'is. In the south, the Zagros mountains fall away to a plain which is the coast of the Persian Gulf. The province is very dry, especially in its eastern half but agriculture is possible with the help of irrigation. Cereals, vines, cotton, opium, grains and fruit were grown.

The capital of the province of Fars is Shiraz, the native city of the Bab and also of many famous poets, mystics, and philosophers, such as Hafiz, Sa'di, and Mulla Sadra. This city was for a brief time in the eighteenth century the capital of the founder of the Zand dynasty, Karim Khan Vakil, who built many of the large public buildings of the present city. It is situated on what became the main trade route of Iran in the nineteenth century, 935 km south of Tehran, 500 km south of Isfahan and 300 km north-east of Bushihr. Its population was estimated at 35–40,000 (including about 2,000 Jews) in 1850.¹ According to a census carried out in about 1885, it had a population of 53,607 (25,284 males, 28,323 females),² although most estimates from the second half of the nineteenth century give lower figures (20–25,000);³ it was estimated to have a population of 60,000 in 1905 and had 170,660 in the 1956 census. Shiraz was particularly well-known for its faction-fighting which also occurred more frequently here than in other towns.⁴ On certain days of the year, it was customary for the *pahlavāns* (champions) and members of the *zūr-khānihs* (gymnasia) of each faction

Keywords

Shiraz
 Afnan
 the Bab
 Baha'i
 Baha'u'llah
 religious persecution
 constitutional
 revolution

to lead the men of that quarter out into the streets and do battle with the rival faction. The eleven quarters of the town were divided into two factions: five Ni`mati quarters (in the west of the city) and five Haydari quarters (in the east) with a Jewish quarter that was not counted as either.⁵ The city was famous for its textiles and crafts, especially silver and inlaid work.

The main source for the history of the Baha'i Faith in Shiraz is the account written by Mirza Habibu'llah Afnan. It was prepared in response to the general request that went out in the 1920s from Shoghi Effendi for a recording of local Baha'i histories. The Central Spiritual Assembly of Iran forwarded this request to the local spiritual assemblies and the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Shiraz asked Mirza Habibu'llah Afnan to prepare a history for Shiraz and Fars. The chronicle written by Afnan covers events up to 1909 and is evidently unfinished in that it ends somewhat abruptly.

Shiraz during the Ministry of the Bab

Shiraz witnessed the birth of the Babi movement. The Bab was born and brought up in the city. He first declared his mission to Mulla Husayn Bushru'i there on the eve of 23 May 1844, the event which both Babis and Baha'is looked to as the start of their calendar. The first disciples of the Bab, the Letters of the Living, gathered in Shiraz in the summer of 1844 until they were sent out by the Bab to spread the news of his claim. The Bab himself left on pilgrimage to Mecca on 10 September 1844 (26 Sha`ban 1260), returning to Bushihr on 15 May 1845. He then sent ahead of him his leading disciple, Quddus, who brought to Shiraz the Bab's instruction that there was to be an addition made to the call to prayer (*adhān*). When Mulla Sadiq Muqaddas tried to carry this out, he, Quddus, Mulla 'Ali-Akbar Ardistani, and Mulla Abu-Talib were seized, severely beaten and expelled from the city.⁶

The governor of Shiraz, Husayn Khan, sent for the Bab in Bushihr and he was arrested on the Bushihr to Shiraz road. Back in Shiraz in June 1845, the Bab was set free with his uncle Sayyid 'Ali as guarantor. After a short time, he was summoned to the Masjid-i Vakil, the principal mosque in Shiraz, to make a public recantation. His words on that occasion were sufficient to satisfy the authorities but he did not say anything that would contradict his later full claim to be a Manifestation of God. In any case, it must have been a strange sort of recantation since a considerable number of the Babis of Shiraz date their conversion from hearing the Bab on that day. From further afield a number of others who had heard of his claims came to investigate, among the most important of whom was Sayyid Yahya Darabi Vahid, who was asked by Muhammad Shah to investigate the matter, and the representative of Mulla Muhammad-'Ali Hujjat, one of the religious leaders of Zanjan. On 23 September 1845 the Bab was rearrested on the orders of the governor but because of the outbreak of cholera in the city was able to leave for Isfahan. After the departure of the Bab, his family members were persecuted by the authorities, despite the fact that none of them, except his wife, were Babis, while the Babi community kept a low profile.⁷

Matters were made much worse by the Babi upheaval in the town of Nayriz in 1850 which recurred in 1853. Following each of these two episodes, a number of the Babis of Nayriz were brought as prisoners to Shiraz and

some of their womenfolk and children remained in Shiraz.⁸ Also after the Babi upheaval in Zanjan, the family of Hujjat, the Babi leader there, was brought to Shiraz and housed with a local dignitary, Abu'l-Hasan Khan Mushir ul-Mulk. After the attempt on the life of the shah in 1852, Aqa Muhammad Hadi Isfahani, a resident of Yazd who had fled to Shiraz after his father's house had been looted as a punishment for being one of the Babi companions of Vahid, was arrested and executed by the governor.⁹

The Afnan Family

Among the prominent Baha'is of Shiraz were the members of the Bab's own maternal family, who took on the name given to them by Baha'u'llah, the Afnans. The founders of the Afnan family were the three maternal uncles of the Bab and their paternal cousins, the two brothers and one sister of the wife of the Bab. The whole family lived in the Bazār-i Murgh quarter of Shiraz. The three maternal uncles were: Haji Sayyid Muhammad (d.1293/1876), who was an important merchant in Shiraz and Bushihr; Haji Sayyid 'Ali (1212/1797– executed 1850), who was in Shiraz and whose only son died young; and Haji Sayyid Hasan 'Ali (d. ?), who was in Yazd. The two brothers of the wife of the Bab were Haji Mirza Sayyid Hasan Afnan Kabir (c.1810-1310/1892), who was in Yazd and later in Beirut and Akka, and Haji Mirza Abu'l-Qasim Saqqa-khanihi (d. Rabi I 1305/Nov.–Dec. 1887), an important merchant of Shiraz. The sister of the wife of the Bab was Zahra Khanum (d. Oct. 1889), who was married to a cousin of the Bab's father.¹⁰

Khadijih Bagum, the wife of the Bab, had been a follower of her husband and subsequently became a Baha'i. She was the only member of the family who was a Babi in the early 1850s. She then succeeded in converting, in about 1854, Aqa Mirza Aqa (c. 1842 – 20 Nov. 1903), the twelve-year-old son of her sister, Zahra Bagum. His given name was Muhammad and he was named Nuru'd-Din by Baha'u'llah.¹¹ His home in Shiraz was, in later years, to become a major centre of Baha'i activities and the place where travelling Baha'i propagandists would stay. His mother and father were the next to be converted.¹²

After the conversion of his own family in the late 1850s, Aqa Mirza Aqa set about trying to convince Haji Sayyid Muhammad, the uncle of the Bab, the senior member of the family. He protested that it seemed to him unlikely that the promised Qa'im had been his nephew. Aqa Mirza Aqa politely pointed out to him that his words were the exact ones used by Abu Lahab, the uncle of the prophet Muhammad. Taken aback by this, Haji Sayyid Muhammad agreed to travel to Baghdad (on the pretext of a pilgrimage to the shrines in Iraq and a meeting with his sister, the mother of the Bab, who had taken up residence in Iraq) and meet Baha'u'llah, a trip which was undertaken in 1861. Haji Sayyid Muhammad returned from the journey a convinced Babi (although his younger brother Haji Sayyid Hasan 'Ali, a resident of Yazd, who had accompanied him refused to meet Baha'u'llah and was not converted at this time), bringing with him Baha'u'llah's *Kitab-i Iqan* which had been written in answer to his questions. After this, Aqa Mirza Aqa concentrated on the younger generation of the family. The sons of Haji Sayyid Muhammad, Haji Muhammad 'Ali (1240/1824–1313/1896) and Haji Mirza Muhammad Taqi, and Haji Sayyid Mahdi, the son of Haji Sayyid Hasan 'Ali, went to Baghdad and met Baha'u'llah, as a result of

which they were converted.¹³ Next to be converted were two of the sons of Saqqa-khanihi, the brother of the Bab.

The Afnans were an important family of wholesale merchants (*tujjār*) in Shiraz and during the nineteenth century, they spread members of the family to form an extensive international trading network. They had members of the family stationed at Bushihr (the Bab himself and Haji Sayyid Muhammad, the maternal uncle of the Bab); Yazd (Haji Mirza Hasan 'Ali, Haji Mirza Sayyid Hasan Afnan Kabir and Haji Mirza Muhammad Taqi Vakil ud-Dawlih, son of Haji Sayyid Muhammad); Bandar 'Abbas (Mirza 'Ali, son of Saqqa-khanihi); Tehran (Haji Sayyid Muhammad, son of Vakil ud-Dawlih from 1311/1893); Shanghai (Haji Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali, son of Haji Sayyid Muhammad, and Mirza Ibrahim, son of Saqqa-khanihi); Beirut (Afnan Kabir and his sons); Istanbul (Aqa Sayyid Ahmad, son of Afnan Kabir); Alexandria and Port Sa'id (Aqa Mirza Aqa, son of Zahra Khanum, and his sons, c. 1296/1879–1319/1901); Ashkabad (Aqa Sayyid Ahmad, son of Afnan Kabir, Haji Mirza Mahmud, son of Vakil ud-Dawlih, and others); and Bombay (Haji Sayyid Mirza and Sayyid Muhammad, sons of Afnan-i-Kabir, Haji Sayyid Mahmud, son of Vakil ud-Dawlih, and Mirza Ibrahim, son of Haji Abu'l-Qasim and other members of the family for varying lengths of time), where the family had set up a company of general merchants and commission agents under the company name of Messrs. Haji Sayed Mirza and Mirza Mahmood Co. Also associated with this Afnan network were other Baha'i merchants such as the two brothers Haji Sayyid Hasan and Haji Sayyid Husayn Nahri in Isfahan, 'Ali Haydar Shirvani in Tehran, and Haji Ghulam-Husayn Tajir Yazdi in Mashhad. Through this network, they imported sugar from Russia, tea from India and porcelain from China. They exported tea to Central Asia and were also involved in exporting opium from Iran to India and China¹⁴, until Baha'u'llah forbade this. They suffered some losses as a result of this but there were other factors creating an unfavourable trading situation. The European powers had arranged favourable terms for their merchants which together with the fact that these merchants did not face the same extortions and corruption that Iranian merchants faced from governors and government officials meant that Iranian merchants were increasingly unable to compete with the large European trading houses.¹⁵ Therefore, the Afnan family, alongside many other merchant families in the 1870s, diversified into purchasing large estates in areas such as Istahbanat, either farming this themselves or becoming landlords.¹⁶

Apart from the importance to Baha'u'llah of the adherence of these close relatives of the Bab, the Afnan family was important for the local prestige that they brought to the Baha'i community in cities such as Shiraz and Yazd, where, as a major wholesale merchant family, they were among the notables of each city. Because of this, they were able to be of considerable assistance to the Baha'is, protecting some from persecution, assisting those who were poor or who had lost everything in the persecutions, giving employment to some (at least one of the Nayriz women Babis who came to Shiraz destitute found employment in the home of the Afnans¹⁷), providing some of the Baha'i retail merchants in the bazaar with capital or favourable terms (when Mirza Abu'l-Hasan Bazzaz returned to Shiraz having had to leave after the 1283/1866 persecution, Aqa Mirza Aqa gave him a small shop in the bazaar and some capital to make a fresh start¹⁸),

financing and accommodating travelling Baha'i propagandists to come to Shiraz and increase the number of Baha'i's there, making available large homes and gardens where the Baha'i community could meet and otherwise supporting the Baha'i Faith financially. They were careful, however, to protect their public image and to fend off the frequent accusations that were directed towards them by the more fanatical elements of the population. They would sponsor *rawdih-khānīs* (recitations of the sufferings of the Imams) and *dastihs* (groups performing ritual mourning processions during the Muharram period) and made generous donations to the coffers of the leading clerics in their quarter of the city.

Individual members of the Afnan family were also responsible for significant projects such as the building of the first House of Worship in the Baha'i world in Ashkabad and the establishment of the first Baha'i printing and publishing company, the Nāṣirī Press, which was established in Bombay and began to publish Baha'i books from about 1882–3 onwards.

The Claim of Baha'u'llah

Although Baha'u'llah was, before his open declaration, held in high regard in Shiraz as a result of the *Kitab-i-Iqan*, which was widely circulated among the Babis¹⁹, Sayyid 'Abdu'r-Rahim Isfahani, who had met Baha'u'llah in Baghdad, reports that when he raised the possibility that Baha'u'llah might be the one promised by the Bab (He whom God shall make manifest), at a meeting of the Shiraz Babis held in the home of Aqa Mirza Aqa Rikab-saz, this was such a heresy in the estimation of his audience that he was physically attacked and had to be shielded by his host.²⁰

The first to bring the news of Baha'u'llah's claim to Shiraz was Nabil Zarandi in the autumn of 1866.²¹ He stayed with Aqa Mirza Aqa Afnan, whose son records that one day, Nabil asked Aqa Mirza Aqa to convene a gathering of all of the Babis of the town and for them to bring whatever they had in the way of Babi writings. They met at the house of Mirza 'Abdu'l-Karim. After tea, Nabil looked at all of the writings that they had brought and divided these into three piles. Then he addressed the gathering, lifting one pile and saying, these are the writings of the Bab. He put down that pile respectfully and lifted another pile, the writings of Baha'u'llah, saying that these are the writings of He whom God shall make manifest. He proceeded to quote verses from the writings of the Bab saying that He Whom God shall make manifest would come soon and should be accepted by all Babis, while those who oppose him are only fit for [hell]-fire. And as he said this, he then lifted the third pile, the writings of Azal, and said that therefore this third pile is only fit for the fire and he threw them into the fire. This caused an uproar in the room. Sayyid Muhammad the uncle of the Bab was furious and leapt to his feet, shouting: 'What sort of game are you playing? What is this all about? Do you think faith is like clover that you harvest one day and it is gone the next?' Aqa Mirza Aqa calmed him down, saying that there must be good reason for Nabil's action and that Sayyid Muhammad had himself at first rejected the Bab until Baha'u'llah had produced the *Kitab-i-Iqan* for him. It was agreed that this was a matter that required more study and consideration and the meeting dispersed.²²

Nabil left Shiraz after this meeting but Khadijih Bagum, the wife of the Bab and Aqa Mirza Aqa accepted Baha'u'llah's claim immediately, while

some of the family such as Haji Sayid Muhammad took a little more persuading. In the same year, Haji Muhammad Ibrahim Muballigh, who was related by marriage to the family and resident in Yazd, visited Shiraz, at which time he succeeded in converting all of the remaining members of the Afnan family in Shiraz, except Haji Abu'l-Qasim, the brother of the wife of the Bab. Haji Muhammad Ibrahim then returned to Yazd and converted Haji Mirza Hasan 'Ali, the youngest uncle of the Bab and Afnan Kabir, the brother of the wife of the Bab and their families with the help of Mulla Muhammad Nabil Akbar Qa'ini and Mulla Sadiq Muqaddas.²³ After a year in Yazd, Nabil Akbar went on to Shiraz where he converted Haji Abu'l-Qasim. The last of the family to convert was the mother of the Bab who became a Baha'i in Karbala where she was living, shortly before her death in 1299/1881.²⁴

The family of Hujjat Zanjani also converted and it was not long before all of the Babis in Shiraz had become Baha'is. Only a certain Shaykh Muhammad Yazdi clung to Azal (although he had previously been a supporter of Baha'u'llah), and he faced such hostility that he left for Yazd.²⁵

Sayyid 'Ali, the son of Afnan Kabir, asked his aunt, Khadijih Bagum, the wife of the Bab to arrange for his marriage to Furughiyih, a daughter of Baha'u'llah. The latter agreed to do this on condition that, if successful, Sayyid 'Ali take her with him to Akka – she longed to go and it was not possible for a woman to make such a long journey without a male relative as escort. Although she was successful in arranging the marriage, Sayyid 'Ali let down his aunt and left from Yazd for Akka via Ashkabad leaving her behind in Shiraz. She died shortly afterwards on 29 Dhu'l-Hijjah 1299/11 November 1882.²⁶

The House of the Bab in Shiraz

Khadijih Bagum, her sister and her sister's family remained very close over the years and were all involved in the fate of the House of the Bab in Shiraz which Baha'u'llah came to designate as a place of pilgrimage. After the martyrdom of the Bab in 1850, the mother of the Bab, who had lived there, retired to Karbala, while Khadijih Bagum had felt unable to live in the house and had moved to the house of Haji Sayid 'Ali the executed uncle of the Bab (his wife was her half-sister). The house of the Bab was put in the care of a Muslim, who effectively took possession of it and sold it on to someone else. As a result of this and of earthquake damage, the House of Bab had fallen into disrepair. Haji Sayid Muhammad was persuaded by Aqa Mirza Aqa, then still a boy, to reacquire the house and repair it. There was then a succession of Baha'i caretakers: 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, then Haji Abu'l-Hasan Bazzaz and then Mulla Aqa Buzurg Zarqani. During this time there were further earthquakes in Shiraz and the house suffered further damage.²⁷

When in 1288/1871, Munirih Khanum, who was to become the wife of 'Abdu'l-Baha was proceeding to Akka, she spent 15 days in the company of Khadijih Bagum in Shiraz. At this time, the latter sent a request to Baha'u'llah that the House of the Bab be repaired so that she could live there again. Baha'u'llah gave instructions that the house should be repaired in accordance with Khadijih Bagum's wishes. Since Khadijih Bagum could not bear to have the house exactly as it had been in the time of the Bab, considerable alterations were made in the course of the repair. This repair work

was finished by 1290/1873. However, all the activity and the re-occupation of the house aroused inimical elements in the city and they reported this to the governor Farhad Mirza Mu'tamad ud-Dawlih. Two of the retinue of the governor, Abu'l-Hasan Khan Munshi-bashi and Mirza Zaynu'l-'Abidin Khan 'Aliyabadi were Baha'is and brought news of this to the Baha'i community, whereupon it was decided that the house should be left untenanted for a few months until the commotion died down.²⁸

After the death of Khadijih Bagum in 1882, her sister Zahra Khanum moved into the house and in 1302/1884, Baha'u'llah gave the custodianship of the House of Bab to Zahra Bagum and her descendants.²⁹ Zahra Bagum lived in the House of the Bab for seven years until her own death in 1307/1889. At this time, Baha'u'llah summoned her son Aqa Mirza Aqa and his family to Akka. Leaving behind their second son, Mirza Jalal, to look after the House of the Bab, they left for Akka on 24 Safar 1308/9 October 1890.³⁰ In late 1311/early 1894, Aqa Mirza Aqa returned to Shiraz via Iraq, where he met with Mirza Hasan Shirazi, the foremost Shi'i religious leader of the time, who was his paternal relative.³¹

Shortly after his return to Shiraz, Aqa Mirza Aqa went off to Abadih where he remained until 1316/1898. At this time, he went to visit 'Abdu'l-Baha in Akka, after which he stayed for a time in Port Sa'id where his sons, Mirza Buzurg and Mirza Habibu'llah, were established as merchants. Then on the instructions of 'Abdu'l-Baha, the whole family returned to Shiraz, where they arrived in 1319/1901³². In 1903, Abdu'l-Baha sent instructions for Aqa Mirza Aqa to rebuild the House of the Bab in accordance with its original design at the time of the Bab (as noted above, the wife of the Bab had made major alterations). This was in the midst of the disturbances caused by the reform movement (see below) and several of the senior Baha'is of Shiraz advised postponing this project in view of the adverse conditions. But Aqa Mirza Aqa insisted on pushing ahead in view of 'Abdu'l-Baha's express instructions. Under the supervision of Aqa Mirza Aqa Mi'mar-bashi, the work was started on 8 August 1903. The existing structures were pulled down and the foundations of the original building were found. Then the building was reconstructed from these original foundations. This rebuilding and restoration caused much opposition particularly from Sayyid Muhammad Kaziruni, a mujtahid who lived opposite the house. One day, he had threatened to come with a mob to destroy the house but died that same night from an attack of colic. Aqa Mirza Aqa insisted upon the urgency of the work and so some 50 labourers were employed on the project. Within two months all the essential foundational work for the rebuilding of the house according to its original design had been completed. The work of rebuilding was almost complete when, in October of that year, Aqa Mirza Aqa fell ill and he died on 17 November 1903. It was providential that the Baha'is had pressed on with the rebuilding of the House of the Bab since only Aqa Mirza Aqa recalled the original lay-out and design of the house.³³

The Persecution of the Baha'is in Shiraz (1866–1892)

One of the main sources of problems for the Baha'is of Shiraz over many years was the long-standing enmity between the families of Mushir ul-Mulk and Qavam ul-Mulk. This enmity was partly due to the natural rivalry and competition for power between two prominent local families, but also

partly due to the historical phenomenon of faction-fighting in Iranian cities (between the Haydari-khanīh faction and the Ni`matī-khanīh faction). `Ali Muhammad Khan the second Qavam ul-Mulk (1829–13 December 1883) belonged to an established family of Fars notables, usually called the Hashimiyyih family, who were extensive landowners and who had held the post of kalantar (mayor) of Shiraz in the family since 1812 (in 1801, the family had been almost wiped out on the orders of Fath-`Ali Shah).³⁴ They were a leading family of the Haydari-khanīh and also head of the Arab and Khamsih tribes. Abu'l-Hasan Khan Mushir ul-Mulk (1811–1 December 1883) was the *vazīr* (official responsible for the collection of taxes) of the province of Fars for thirty years from 1262/1846.³⁵ His was a leading family of the Ni`matī-khanīh.

The Afnan family lived in the Bazar Murgh quarter, one of the Haydari quarters of Shiraz, and were thus seen to be allied to the leader of the Haydari-khanīh, Qavam ul-Mulk. As a consequence, the Baha'is incurred the enmity of Abu'l-Hasan Khan Mushir ul-Mulk, the head of the Ni`matī-khanīh. Despite the fact that one of the latter's wives, the daughter of Hujjat Zanjani, was a Baha'i, Mushir ul-Mulk took advantage of the alliance of the Afnans with the Haydari faction to discomfit his rival. In 1283/1866, he produced a lengthy list of 'Babis', headed by members of the Afnan family, and gave it to Sultan-Murad Mirza Hisam us-Saltanih, the new governor. The production of the list by Mushir ul-Mulk was calculated to embarrass Qavam ul-Mulk who as Kalantar (mayor) was responsible for public order and for controlling the enemies of the state. Qavam ul-Mulk, however, persuaded the governor that it would be unwise to arrest such a list of prominent citizens on no evidence. He even reminded the governor of an occasion when they had together attended a large meeting (*majlis*) on the night of 'Ashura at the house of Mirza Abu'l-Qasim Afnan Saqqakhanihi at which many of the poor of the quarter were fed and given presents. As mentioned above, the Afnans were careful to maintain an outward appearance of orthodoxy.³⁶

The attitude of the Qavam ul-Mulk and Mushir ul-Mulk families towards the Baha'i community over the rest of the nineteenth century was to have many twists and turns since it was based more on political expediency than conviction. Mirza Habibu'llah Afnan records in his narrative history of the Baha'i Faith in Shiraz that on one occasion in 1903, he had a private conversation with Muhammad Rida Khan, the third Qavam ul-Mulk (1851–1907), the son of `Ali Muhammad Khan Qavam ul-Mulk.³⁷ The latter asked him about his visit to Akka and his meeting with Baha'u'llah. Afnan recounted for him the words of Baha'u'llah, spoken in 1891, commanding the Qavam ul-Mulk family for the fact that they had not opposed the Baha'i Faith and had even supported it on occasions. Qavam ul-Mulk had been pleased with this.³⁸ As we shall see however, the friendship of the Qavam ul-Mulk family towards the Baha'is, since it was based on political expediency, was fickle. Moreover, towards the end of his life, Mushir ul-Mulk's enmity towards the Baha'is was moderated under the influence of Sayyid Isma'il Azghandi and Mulla Muhammad Manshadi (whose daughter he married), and it is said that he even became a Baha'i and wrote to Baha'u'llah.³⁹

The enmity between Mushir ul-Mulk and Qavam ul-Mulk was not the only source of problems for the Baha'is of Shiraz. One of the important clerics of the town, Shaykh Husayn Nazim ush-Shari'a (d. Oct. 1884), known to Baha'is and other inhabitants of Shiraz as *Zālim* (the tyrant),⁴⁰

had been an enemy of the Baha'i since the time of the Bab, while another cleric Sayyid 'Ali Akbar Falasiri (1256/1840–Aug. 1901) carried on the persecutions once the former died. These clerics were countered to some extent by Shaykh Abu Turab, the Imam-Jum'ih (d. 1272/1855), and his son and successor, Haji Shaykh Yahya (d. 1919), who tried to mitigate the effects of these persecutions as far as they could.⁴¹ This division may reflect to some extent rivalry and animosities that existed between the various groups of ulama in Shiraz. Shaykh Abu Turab is, for example listed among the clerics who signed a judgement supporting Mirza Hasan Fasa'i in his suit against Shaykh Husayn Zalim.⁴²

It was Shaykh Husayn who was responsible for the execution of three Baha'i in February–March 1875. Aqa Mirza Aqa Rikab-saz (stirrup-maker) was active both in spreading the Baha'i Faith and in transcribing the scriptures. His wife denounced him as a 'Babi' to Shaykh Husayn, who was at first reluctant to accept her word as Rikab-saz was one of his own retinue. However, when Rikab-saz refused to curse the Bab, Shaykh Husayn beat him and arrested him. Mushir ul-Mulk used the opportunity of the commotion resulting from this arrest to produce his list of Baha'i again and the governor Hisam us-Saltanih ordered their arrest. More than ten traders, clerics and others were arrested, including Mulla 'Abdu'llah Fadil, Mulla 'Abdu'llah Baka and Mirza Muhammad Khan Baluch. Most of these were released through the intercession of various dignitaries, but there remained three whom Shaykh Husayn insisted should be executed. He wrote a *fatvā* for their death and they were strangled in the presence of the governor. These were the afore-mentioned Mirza Aqa Rikab-saz and two tailors, Mashhadi Nabi and Muhammad Ja'far.⁴³

In 1879, when news arrived in Shiraz of the execution in Isfahan of the Nahri brothers, Sultan ush-Shuhada and Mahbub ush-Shuhada, there was much talk in the town of a general movement against the Baha'i. This was during the governorship of Farhad Mirza Mu'tamad ud-Dawlih, who was much opposed to the Baha'i Faith. A meeting of the leading Baha'i was held and it was decided that Aqa Mirza Aqa who was the only person well known as a Baha'i should leave. Within 24 hours he was on his way to Bushihr and thence to Bombay.⁴⁴

It was the *mujtahid* Sayyid 'Ali Akbar Falasiri who was responsible for an episode that occurred in 1305/1887. One of the servants of Muhammad Qasim Khan Bayda'i, a prominent Baha'i, who had been governor of Kazirun from 1292/1875 for three years⁴⁵ and then of Bihbihan for a few years, stole a couple of boxes from his strong-room. One was full of jewels which she hid, the other was full of writings which she threw out. This latter box was found by the wife of a local official, Mirza Muhammad Rida Mustawfi, who realising that they were Baha'i scriptures took the box to Falasiri. The latter rushed to the Masjid Vakil, the principal mosque of the town, and raised a hue and cry against Bayda'i. The latter went to the governor, Uvays Mirza Ihtisham ud-Dawlih, with whom he was on friendly terms.

The governor managed to trick Falasiri into giving him the box and took the opportunity to make it clear to Falasiri that he would brook no disorder in the town.⁴⁶

Having been frustrated on this occasion, Falasiri took full advantage of the opportunity presented to him a few months later in August 1888,

when there were confrontations between the Baha'is and the Muslims in Sarvistan. Sayyid 'Ali Mushir us-Sadat was the main opponent of the Baha'is in Sarvistan. His cousin was the wife of Aqa Murtada Sarvistani, a Baha'i dyer, who prior to his conversion by Mirza Ashraf Abadihi been much opposed to the Baha'i Faith. Due to persecution and imprisonment when he became a Baha'i, Sarvistani moved to Shiraz. Mushir us-Sadat had Sarvistani arrested and taken before the Falasiri, who had him beaten and sent to the governor, Sultan Uvays Mirza, Ihtisham ud-Dawlih (later became Mu'tamad ud-Dawlih), to be imprisoned. Then Mushir us-Sadat forced Sarvistani's wife to marry him and had Karbala'i Hasan Khan and his brother Karbala'i Sadiq Khan arrested and brought before Falasiri. One source states that accusations were made that one of them had burned a Qur'an and the other had made his wife sleep with someone else.⁴⁷ These are typical of the sorts of accusations that have been frequently concocted against the Baha'is throughout Iran up to the present day. In 1307/1889, Falasiri gave a *fatwā* (verdict on a point of religious law) for the death of one of the prisoners, Karbala'i Hasan Khan, and he was poisoned the same night. Four months later Karbala'i Sadiq was killed. Aqa Murtada Sarvistani remained in prison.⁴⁸

Falasiri also waged campaigns against Christians and Jews in Shiraz at this time and his confrontational stand against the government over the Tobacco Régie in April 1891 led to his exile to Iraq for a short time. During this exile, he was responsible for urging Sayyid Jamalu'd-Din 'al-Afghani' to write to Mirza-yi Shirazi, the leading cleric of the Shi'i world, urging the latter to declare himself against the Tobacco Régie.⁴⁹ Falasiri then went on to Samarra, where he used his close relationship to Mirza-yi Shirazi (he was the latter's son-in-law) to further advance the campaign against the Tobacco Régie. If, as has been suggested, the *fatwā* of Mirza-yi Shirazi banning the use of tobacco (the event which more than anything else caused the collapse of the Régie) was forged,⁵⁰ Falasiri must be a prime candidate for being the person who did this or was closely involved.

As a result of these activities and the incompetence of the Iranian government, far from Falasiri's exile being a cause of his humiliation, he returned to Shiraz with great glory and honour, in an even more powerful position to interfere with political matters. Among the things that he did with his newfound power was to obtain the signatures of five of the clerics of Shiraz, including Shaykh Muhammad Tahir 'Arab, Mulla Ahmad Mahallati and Mirza Hidayatu'llah Dast-Ghayb for a *fatwā* for the death of Aqa Murtada Sarvistani. This *fatwā* was presented to the governor Muhammad Taqi Mirza Rukn ud-Dawlih, and Sarvistani was publicly blown from a cannon outside the artillery barracks in Shiraz on 4 October 1892.⁵¹

Rukn ud-Dawlih's governorship was already very unpopular due to his injustices and corrupt practices and the people were also still agitated over the episode of the Tobacco Regie. Sarvistani's execution triggered widespread discontent throughout the town. The British consular agent in Shiraz reported that, a few days later, a group of people attacked a policeman in the town shouting 'Ask the governor why he blew an innocent man from a cannon? What sort of governing is this?'⁵² Mirza Muhammad 'Ali Mujtahid who had refused to sign the *fatwā* wrote to Falasiri: 'Sayyid, do you know what you have done? As a result of the sound of that canon today, you

have become the cause of half of the town becoming Babis. What a service you have rendered the noble religion of Islam! And indeed, a large number of people became Baha'is having had their attention first drawn to the Baha'i Faith by witnessing the execution of Aqa Murtada Sarvistani.⁵³ Rukn ud-Dawlih was dismissed as governor some five months after the execution of Sarvistani.

The Baha'i Community during the Late Nineteenth Century

During the early 1860s, the number of Babis in Shiraz was gradually increasing. During the above-mentioned visit of Haji Muhammad Ibrahim Muballigh to Shiraz, apart from members of the Afnan family, some 50–60 members of the Khayyat (tailor) clan of Kazirun were also converted. This led to an uproar in the town and Haji Muhammad Ibrahim had to depart, returning to Yazd, where he converted the members of the Afnan family there.⁵⁴ After Haji Muhammad Ibrahim, Nabil Akbar came to Shiraz and stayed for 13 months leading to further conversions.⁵⁵ It is clear from the names of Baha'is given by Mazandarani that many of the Baha'is of Shiraz were from the mercantile and artisan classes – the bazaaris. Among these names, designations such as *bazzāz* (cloth-seller), *khayyāt* (tailor), *'abā-dūz* (cloak-maker) and *rikāb-sāz* (stirrup-maker) indicate this.⁵⁶

Following the threat of persecutions and the departure of Aqa Mirza Aqa in 1879 (see above), there was a lull in Baha'i activities in Shiraz, but after a time, with the emergence of a new generation of leading Baha'is and the arrival of travelling Baha'i teachers such as Mirza Asadu'llah Isfahani and Haji Mirza Haydar 'Ali, activities were resumed.⁵⁷ The former, who visited for two months at the end of 1882, encouraged the Baha'is to put into effect the instructions of the Kitab-i-Aqdas and set up an assembly of consultation (*majlis-i shawr*). However, there is no evidence that this lasted for any length of time. In 1306/1888, the poet 'Andalib of Lahijan moved to Shiraz, married, settled and became the main Baha'i propagandist in Shiraz. E.G. Browne visited Shiraz in 1888 and describes his interactions with the Baha'i community.⁵⁸

Among the prominent Baha'is of Shiraz during the time of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha, some of whom were influential in the town and could protect their fellow-Baha'is, were Muhammad Husayn Mirza Mu'ayyad us-Saltanih, a grandson of Tahmasp Mirza Mu'ayyad ud-Dawlih, who was head of the telegraph department in Shiraz from December 1897 to 1905;⁵⁹ Mulla Muhammad Husayn (d. 1878), who had met the Bab and who became a tutor to the children of the Afnan family; his son Mirza Aqa Khan Bashir us-Sultan (1281/1864 – 28 July 1924; the progenitor of the Bashir-Ilahi family), who was in charge of the post office in Yazd, then in Bushihr, then in Shiraz in charge of the whole province of Fars for seven years, and finally he went to Tehran;⁶⁰ Ja'far-Quli Khan Amir-Panjeh Mu'azzam ul-Mulk, who was in charge of the troops stationed in Shiraz; Ahmad-Quli Khan Sarhang; Shaykh 'Ali Mirza, a nephew of the Imam-Jum'ih; Mulla 'Abdu'llah Fadil Zarqani; Muhibb-'Ali Mirza; 'Ali Muhammad Khan Muvaqqar ud-Dawlih (who was the Foreign Office agent in Shiraz); Haji Abu'l-Hasan Bazzaz (d. Aug. 1902); his son Mirza Muhammad Baqir Khan (the progenitor of the Dihqan family), who was a close confidant of Qavam ul-Mulk; and Mirza Husayn Khan Mu'tamad

ud-Divan. The last named was also a close confidant of Muhammad Rida Qavam ul-Mulk, until they fell out in about 1903. Although 'Abdu'l-Baha tried to effect a reconciliation, they remained at odds. When in 1325/1907, Zill us-Sultan was appointed governor of Fars, the members of the Qavam ul-Mulk family were in exile and so Mu'tamad ud-Divan was appointed as head of and had financial responsibility for (*abwāb jam'i*) the 'Arab and Khamsih tribes. He set out with a considerable force to collect the taxes due. However, the family and supporters of Qavam ul-Mulk plotted against him and on the way, he was shot and killed by 'Askar Khan, one of the *kalantars* of the 'Arab tribe.⁶¹

When Mirza Muhammad 'Ali, the half-brother of 'Abdu'l-Baha, brought his rebellion against 'Abdu'l-Baha into the open, a number of the Afnan family sided with him. Among these was Sayyid 'Ali Afnan, a son of Haji Mirza Hasan Afnan Kabir, who was a son-in-law of Baha'u'llah and lived at Bahji where Mirza Muhammad 'Ali was headquartered. His sister Bibi Jan Bigum, who also lived at Bahji, and his two brothers Sayyid Muhammad and Haji Sayyid Mirza, who ran the Bombay office of the Afnan trading company and who had been closely associated with Mirza Muhammad 'Ali when the latter visited India, sided with him but later the last named repented of this. Apart from these members of the Afnan family, there was Mirza Husayn Shirazi, who had accompanied Haji Mirza Haydar 'Ali on some of his travels in Iran and arrived with him in Edirne in about 1867 and was sent with him to Egypt by Baha'u'llah. Here they were arrested in the winter of 1867–8 and exiled to Khartum for some eleven years, as a result of which he was generally known as Khartumi. He returned to Iran and lived for a time in Shiraz, where E.G. Browne met him in 1888. He was a skilled calligraphist and in about 1889, he went to Bombay to assist with the production of Baha'i books there. A copy of Baha'u'llah's *Kitab-i Aqdas* in his hand-writing was published there in about 1890. Also in Bombay for the same purpose was Mirza Muhammad 'Ali the son of Baha'u'llah and when he began plotting against 'Abdu'l-Baha a few years later after the passing of Baha'u'llah, Khartumi followed him.⁶² Although they were from Shiraz, none of these partisans of Mirza Muhammad 'Ali lived in Shiraz at this time, but they undoubtedly still maintained contacts with the Baha'is in Shiraz and would have tried to use their influence. There is, however, no indication that they were successful in this.

In early 1896, Mirza Mahmud Furughi arrived in Shiraz from India. Two of his fellow-travellers alerted the religious leaders of the town to the arrival of a distinguished Baha'i and soon afterwards news reached them of animated Baha'i meetings at which Furughi was speaking. Furughi was arrested and held at the home of Tufangdar-Bashi (head rifle-man). Eventually the governor permitted Furughi to depart for Abadih.⁶³

Haji Abu'l-Hasan Mirza, Shaykh ur-Ra'is, a Qajar prince, settled in Shiraz in 1895. At first, the clerics welcomed him, for although he was a member of the Qajar family, he had undergone a religious education. He gave addresses in the shrine of Shah Chiragh and the Masjid-i Naw and was such an excellent orator that soon he was attracting large crowds, which did not please the clerics quite so much since this was having an effect on their audiences. Shaykh ur-Ra'is continued however to establish himself in Shiraz, marrying two of his daughters to sons of Shiraz notables,

one to Mirza Abu'l-Qasim Fakr ul-Ashraf, the son of Fakhr ud-Dawlih, and one to the son of Haji Ahmad Khan Kuranni. A bejewelled cane was even bestowed upon him by the shah in February 1897 and a great feast was held to mark this occasion.⁶⁴ At first the Baha'is were unsure what to make of him since it was said that he was a Baha'i. Soon however, they realised that his preaching was in fact covertly conveying the Baha'i message and that in his private classes, he was converting a number of his students. Soon there collected around him a coterie of Baha'i clerics including Mulla 'Abdullah Fadil.⁶⁵

As early as September 1897, Shaykh ur-Ra'is was being accused of being a 'Babi'. On this occasion, the son of one of the *mujtahids* of Shiraz, Shaykh Muhammad Tahir 'Arab, accused him of this from the pulpit of the Shah Chiragh Mosque. The following night, supporters of Shaykh ur-Ra'is beat this man. Then a group of clerics went to the governor Mirza Asadu'llah Khan Nazim ud-Dawlih and demanded the expulsion of Shaykh ur-Ra'is, saying that if the governor did not expel him, they would do the job themselves. The governor calmed them down by saying he would see to the matter within ten days. But ten days later it was Nazim ud-Dawlih himself who was dismissed and was leaving Shiraz.⁶⁶ On another occasion in May 1900, a *rawdih-khān* who was a sayyid of Sarvistan, began to accuse Shaykh ur-Ra'is of being a 'Babi' in the course of his preaching. Shaykh ur-Ra'is accused the Imam-Jum'ih of putting this man up to do this but the Imam-Jum'ih denied this.⁶⁷

The Baha'i Community during the Early Twentieth Century

On 8 January 1901, at the end of the month of fasting (Ramadan), a mob led by a mulla attacked the house of one of the prominent Baha'is, Mirza Jalal Va'iz Zarqani. As he had been forewarned, he was hiding in a neighbour's house but the mob looted and ransacked his house and dragged his wife before Sayyid 'Ali Akbar Falasiri. They wanted to forcibly marry her to a Muslim. Zarqani appealed to the governor Abu'l-Fath Mirza Mu'ayyad ud-Dawlih but he did nothing. So Zarqani fled to Abadih and sent a telegram to the government in Tehran. The Prime Minister Amin us-Sultan replied that a new governor Malik Mansur Mirza Shu'a` us-Saltanih (1880–1920, son of Muzzafaru'd-Din Shah) was on his way and would deal with the matter. Shu'a` us-Saltanih collected Zarqani in Abadih and arrived in Shiraz determined to set things right. He gave orders that the cleric who had led the mob should be executed and the other clerics involved should have their ears cut off. However, with the intervention of Shaykh ur-Ra'is, these sentences were moderated and the principle culprit was exiled from Fars. Zarqani's wife was freed and his property returned.⁶⁸

Upon his arrival in Shiraz as governor in February 1901, Shu'a` us-Saltanih imposed his authority on the town and soon there was more order and calm in the town than there had been for years. The Baha'is felt more confident and 'Andalib and Mirza Jalal Zarqani began a vigorous campaign of teaching the Baha'i Faith.⁶⁹ This, however, provoked a reaction from the clerics. At this time, the country was in the throes of mounting demands for reforms and there were disturbances in many parts. In Shiraz, those who wanted to raise some agitation in favour of reforms found themselves in league with a number of the clerics who were alarmed by the

teaching campaign of the Baha'is and also with those elements in the town who profited from disorder. They had their head-quarters in the shrine of Shah-Chiraz and in the Masjid-i Naw and included such clerics as Mirza Ibrahim Mujtahid Mahallati. The supporters of the governor were headquartered in the telegraph office and included Shaykh Yahya the Imam-Jum'ih. Since the governor and Shaykh ur-Ra'i's were both Qajars and close to each other, their opponents found it convenient to accuse both the governor and Shaykh ur-Ra'i's of being 'Babis'. The clerics gathered at the Masjid-i Naw issued a *fatwā* declaring Shaykh ur-Ra'i's to be an unbeliever and deserving of death.⁷⁰ Despite his previous support of the Baha'is, Muhammad Rida Khan Qavam ul-Mulk now found it opportune to be the leader of the opponents of the governor and thus the instigator of this anti-Baha'i campaign.⁷¹ Part of the reason for Qavam's opposition to the governor was that the latter had laid claim to the Bazar-i Vakil and properties in that vicinity which Qavam considered to be his.⁷²

The opponents of the governor forced the shops in the bazaar to close and put a crowd of women onto the streets chanting slogans: 'We don't want a Babi governor'. This situation lasted for four months and the Baha'is were under constant pressure throughout this time. Eventually on 10 March 1902, a telegram came from Tehran recalling the governor to Tehran and he left on 18 April.⁷³ At this point, Qavam ul-Mulk put out the word that their objective had been the dismissal of the governor and there should be no further action against the Baha'is.⁷⁴ The new governor was Ghulam Rida Khan Asaf ud-Dawlih⁷⁵ and, on 10 August 1902, instructions came from Tehran that Shaykh ur-Ra'i's was to leave for Karbala. He obtained permission to go by way of Isfahan and left on 26 August.⁷⁶ On another occasion in 1320/1902, when the ninety-year-old Haji Abu'l-Hasan Bazzaz was passing near the house of Falasiri, some of the latter's students seized him. They took him before Falasiri who personally beat him with his walking stick to such an extent that he died a short while later.⁷⁷

The next governor, Mirza Ahmad Khan Qajar 'Ala ud-Dawlih (1852–1911), was firm in imposing order on the town. When, in the summer of 1903, news arrived of the anti-Baha'i pogroms in Isfahan and Yazd, he acted swiftly to try to suppress any similar action in Shiraz. Despite his efforts however, some of the clerics managed to rouse the populace and there was a commotion in the town. One of the leading clerics of the town, Mirza Ibrahim Mahallati, put out a written proclamation that anyone who manages to lay hold of a 'Babi' and kill him would have done an act of great religious merit (*thavāb-i 'azīm*).⁷⁸ The governor gathered several of the leading local officials. Among those present were Qavam ul-Mulk, his son Habibu'llah Khan Biglar-bigi, Muhammad Husayn Mirza Mu'ayyad us-Saltanih and Ja'far-Quli Khan Amir-Panjeh, and consulted with them. The result of this meeting was that the leading Baha'is were advised either to leave town or remain at home. Mirza Nasru'llah Bihishti Malik ul-Mutakallimin, who at this time was a Baha'i but later joined the Azalis in agitating for the Constitutional Revolution, had been expelled from Isfahan and had been openly preaching about the Baha'i Faith in Shiraz for four or five months at this time. He was expelled from the town by the governor. Qavam ul-Mulk and his sons did their best to keep matters calm.⁷⁹

The uproar in the town increased, however, and the bazaar was closed

for four days. Word spread that on the fifth day, which was a Friday, there would be a general massacre of the Baha'is as had occurred in Yazd. The governor reprimanded Mahallati and then sent for Shaykh Yahya the Imam-Jum'ih and asked him to intervene. The latter, who, as noted above, had always done his best to maintain peace in Shiraz and protect the Baha'is, summoned all of the people of Shiraz to Friday Prayers in the Masjid-i Vakil in Shiraz. The people gathered fully expecting Shaykh Yahya to issue a *fatwā* against the Baha'is, thus initiating a massacre. Instead, Shaykh Yahya, summoning all of the gravitas of his position and his more than eighty years of age and tapping the respect and affection that the people had for him, preached a sermon designed to pacify the populace. He pointed out that the Qur'an says that if someone greet a Muslim with the word 'Salām', no Muslim has the right to say that that person is not a Muslim (Qur'an 4:94). He then went on to argue that this means that, provided a person behaves as a Muslim, no Muslim has the right to call that person an unbeliever. He therefore went on to declare that: 'In our Shiraz, we have no Babis.' And he got the crowd to repeat this declaration after him three times. After that he urged the people to go to the bazaar and open up their shops and go about their business which they did.⁸⁰

As the demands for reform gathered momentum, however, conditions in Shiraz deteriorated and the Baha'is suffered. People took to carrying sticks and guns around with them and there were gunshots by night and uproar during the day. At the slightest pretext they would close the bazaar. This eventually led to the dismissal of 'Ala' ud-Dawlih and the reinstatement of Shu'a' us-Saltanih in 1322/1904. For a time, the latter was able to maintain order in the town but once again the enmity of Qavam ul-Mulk brought about a coalition of forces against him. Once again the streets of Shiraz resounded to slogans accusing the governor and all of his staff of being 'Babis'.⁸¹

In the event, the pretext that the clerics chose for action was that a Jew had built his house higher than a Muslim. They gathered the mob in the Masjid-i Naw and urged them to attack the Jewish quarter. The Jewish quarter was situated not far from the Masjid-i Naw but between the two lay the House of the Bab and the Baha'is realised that the clerics would almost certainly take the opportunity to destroy the House of the Bab as they proceeded towards the Jewish quarter. Ja'far-Quli Khan Amir Panjih, a Baha'i who was in charge of the troops stationed in Shiraz, had been ordered by the governor to defend the Jewish quarter. He sent one of his servants, Mirza Husayn, who was a Baha'i to the mob in the Masjid-i Naw to warn that if they approached the Jewish quarter he would order his troops to fire upon them. He had set himself up on the roof-top of the house of Mulla Rabi'a, a Jewish merchant, from which the House of the Bab was visible. As the mob approached, Ja'far-Quli Khan could observe some of them proceeding across the roof-tops. They reached the House of the Bab and began to throw stones at the group of Baha'is who had gathered in the house. Ja'far-Quli Khan gave order for a volley to be fired and once the mob saw that he was serious about his task, they dispersed. However, the bazaar remained closed for three months until the governor was dismissed.⁸²

At first, no-one was willing to take on the post of governor because of the disordered state of the town but after three months, 'Ala' ud-Dawlih

agreed to take on the task again. He entered the town with troops and restored order. In particular, he was firm towards the clerics allowing them no opportunity to cause any mischief. As a consequence, there were some eighteen months of peace for the town and for the Baha'is. As soon as the governor could sense that the mischief-makers were once again gathering strength, however, he immediately resigned.⁸³

Again, no one could be found to take on the governorship, so eventually, Qavam ul-Mulk was appointed. At first he was able with his local knowledge to control the various factions and trouble-makers. However, the Nuri clan had always been opposed to Qavam ul-Mulk and they now led the rising opposition to the governor. The Nuris had also been enemies of the Baha'is dating back to the days when several of them led the government forces against the Babis of Nayriz. Once more there was daily abuse and molestation of the Baha'is but now it was worse because, in the past, when it had been directed against the then governor, Qavam ul-Mulk had usually been on the side of those opposing the governor and therefore had been able to mitigate the attacks on the Baha'is to some extent but now it was directed against Qavam ul-Mulk himself. Because one of the main members of Qavam ul-Mulk's staff, Mirza Muhammad Baqir Khan (Dihqan), was a Baha'i, the mischief-makers were now saying that the Baha'is are trying to seize power and lead all of the Muslims astray and make them Baha'is. Eventually matters deteriorated to the point that Qavam ul-Mulk was dismissed and Ghulam-Husayn Khan Ghaffari was appointed governor in late 1906.⁸⁴

In the midst of these troubles, the Baha'is were faced with an additional problem when a certain Darvish 'Ali pretended conversion to the Baha'i Faith and then used his knowledge of the community to publicly denounce individual Baha'is. He would stand, for example, outside the shop of a Baha'i and shout obscenities and curses at the Baha'i. He would extort money from individual Baha'is threatening to denounce them and then obtain money also from Muslims as a reward for his actions. His activities went on for four years.⁸⁵

Events following the Constitutional Revolution

It was at this juncture in 1906 that the Constitutional Revolution succeeded and Muzaffar ud-Din Shah signed the Constitution. Immediately political parties and societies (*anjmans*) were created, some supporting the Constitution and some opposing it. Both sides accused the Baha'is of being among their opponents. Shortly after the Constitution was signed, Muzaffar ud-Din died and Muhammad 'Ali Shah came to power determined to annul the Constitution. He summoned Qavam ul-Mulk to Tehran and made him one of his key supporters. On his return, Qavam ul-Mulk began to work against the Constitution. Secret meetings were held and societies formed. Groups of people began to form calling themselves *mujāhidīn* to defend each side. The clerics were also split, some supporting the Constitution and some opposing it. But whichever side they were on, in their preaching, they came increasingly to attack the Baha'i Faith, each side saying the *mujāhidīn* of their opponents were all Baha'is. Those opposing the Constitution would preach in the pulpits cursing the Baha'is and saying that they were the cause of the Constitution, that it was a fundamental teaching of theirs

and that peace would never return to the country and Islam would not be safe until this 'evil and unbelieving sect' were rejected and defeated. The supporters of the Constitution would claim that the Baha'is are the defenders of autocratic government and that they should be extirpated so that the supporters of the autocracy would be frustrated and the foundations of Constitutionalism be firmly laid.⁸⁶

It was at this time that Qavam ul-Mulk showed his fickle nature. Although he had recently, while in Tehran, contacted 'Abdu'l-Baha through Mirza Hasan Adib and professed friendship⁸⁷, he now turned against the Baha'is. On one particular Thursday, he summoned all of the notables, guild masters and people of Shiraz to the Masjid-i Naw. He then addressed them saying that it was necessary for them to know the source of these ideas of Constitution that had been foisted upon them. He then produced a copy of Baha'u'llah's book, the *Kitab-i Aqdas*, and proceeded to quote from it the passages that speak of the affairs of Iran being put into the hands of the people (*jumhūr un-nās*).⁸⁸ He then asked them whether they really wanted to bring about the constitutional government that Mirza Husayn 'Ali [Baha'u'llah] had promised his people. Did they not realise that everything they did to promote this matter brought upon them the curse of God and His Messenger?⁸⁹

The supporters of the Constitution who were in the audience were not content to allow such assertions to pass unchallenged and they got up and replied, saying that Qavam ul-Mulk was merely trying to confuse and mislead people. The leading constitutionalists met afterwards and discussed what to do. Haji 'Ali Aqa Dhu'l-Riyasatayn (d. 1336/1017), who was a Sufi Ni'matullahi Shaykh with the Sufi name of Vafa-'Ali Shah,⁹⁰ stated that he was well-informed about the Baha'i community and was sure that they were not involved in any political affairs.⁹¹ Habibu'llah Afnan states that Dhu'l-Riyasatayn had attended Baha'i meetings and had read several Baha'i books.⁹² However, the party of Qavam ul-Mulk spread rumours to the effect that two of the leading Constitutionalists, Shaykh Muhammad Baqir Istahbanati and Dhu'l-Riyasatayn himself were Baha'is. Then on 13 April 1907, a certain Ni'matullah Burujirdi shot Qavam ul-Mulk dead with a revolver. Since the assassin was killed on the spot by Qavam ul-Mulk's retinue, it was not possible to question him and ascertain his motives. Therefore, a rumour went around that it was the Baha'is who had assassinated Qavam ul-Mulk. Then shots were fired during the funeral of Qavam ul-Mulk and immediately afterwards two of the leading Constitutionalists Shaykh Muhammad Baqir Istahbanati and Sayyid Ahmad Mu'in ul-Islam were killed by the men of Qavam ul-Mulk, who then went around saying that the Baha'is had got their just punishment. Thus the Baha'is came to be blamed for every untoward event that occurred. After the two sons of Qavam ul-Mulk were exiled, there was some improvement in the public security but the Baha'is continued to suffer, especially when a party called Ittihad-i Islam was set up specifically to attack the Baha'i community.⁹³

There were at this time two important developments for the Baha'i community. The first was the arrival of instructions from 'Abdu'l-Baha strongly prohibiting any involvement in political parties and political manoeuvrings.⁹⁴ This led to some problems for the Baha'is since some of the better informed supporters of the Constitution naturally expected

the Baha'is to help them. The second was the arrival of instructions for the election of the local assembly of Shiraz. This was elected on 16 June 1907 and met in the house of the uncle of the Bab which now belonged to the Baha'i community. The members of the first assembly were: Mirza Aqa Khan Bashir us-Sultan; Aqa Mirza Muhammad Baqir Khan (Dihqan); Aqa Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Afnan, Aqa Mirza Aqa Afnan, Haji Mirza Buzurg Afnan, Haji Mirza Habibu'llah Afnan, Mirza 'Ali Ashraf 'Andalib, Aqa Mirza Ali Muhammad Khan Muvaqqar ud-Dawlih, Haji Mirza Husayn 'Ali Yazdi 'Umumi.⁹⁵ As can be seen from this list, four of the members of the Assembly are named Afnan and a fifth, Muvaqqar ud-Dawlih was an Afnan on his mother's side while the last named was married into the Afnan family. The Assembly immediately took full charge of all Baha'i affairs in Shiraz and, among the matters which it concentrated upon in its early years was to ensure that 'Abdu'l-Baha's injunction that the Baha'is should withdraw from all political involvement was carried out. Also at about this time, the house where the Bab was born was purchased by 'Ali Muhammad Khan Muvaqqar ud-Dawlih along with an adjacent house which was made into a meeting-house for prayers (*Mashriq ul-Adhkār*).⁹⁶ Surprisingly, in view of developments elsewhere, no Baha'i school was established in Shiraz. Bashir us-Sultan did set up a school but there is no indication that this was a Baha'i establishment. The latter was also the main intermediary for communications with 'Abdu'l-Baha.⁹⁷

In 1909, Muhammad 'Ali Shah was deposed and the new regime appointed Asaf ud-Dawlih as governor. He was a weak governor and the affairs of the Fars fell into chaos. The powerful Qashqa'i tribe under its leader Sawlat ud-Dawlih had at first sided with the Constitutionalists, mainly because his arch-rival Qavam ul-Mulk, head of the Khamshih confederation of tribes, had sided with the shah. Then when the Bakhtiyari tribe came out strongly in favour of the Constitutionalists, Sawlat ud-Dawlih formed an anti-Constitutionalist alliance with Shaykh Khazal of Muhammarah. The Baha'is suffered during this period of chaos but despite this, as a result of the arrival of two travelling Baha'i propagandists Tarazullah Samandari and Mirza 'Ali Akbar Rafsanjani, activities in the Baha'i community were at a high level and many were converted at this time.⁹⁸

In about 1909, an illiterate Baha'i by the name of Hidayat of Sarvistan, a patcher, in conjunction with Amru'llah of Bavanat claimed that 'Abdu'l-Baha had died and had appointed them jointly as his *khalfih* (successor). A number of people followed them until in early 1920 when a number of pilgrims from Abadih came to Shiraz on their way back from visiting 'Abdu'l-Baha. As a result the falsity of these two men's claims became clear to their followers.⁹⁹

In about 1900, there were some 120-150 Zoroastrians in Shiraz, mostly working in the Zoroastrian trading houses there; five of them were Baha'is. At this time Ardishir Hizari (1885-1981) of Yazd came to work for the Jahāniyān Company. He was an active Baha'i and used to take his friends to the teaching meetings that were held at the home of Muhammad Baqir Dihqan and in the rear of the shop of Muhammad Hasan Bulurfurush. By about 1909, there were 25 Zoroastrian Baha'is in Shiraz.¹⁰⁰

During World War I, the Baha'is of Shiraz heard that conditions were very hard for 'Abdu'l-Baha and the Baha'is of Haifa and 'Akka. They decided

to send Mirza Fadlu'llah Banan, who was an employee of the British consulate to 'Akka with 3000 *tumans* in order to ameliorate the conditions there. Banan travelled in 1915 via Bombay and Alexandria and succeeded in accomplishing this mission despite the dangers. Banan was able, because of his influential position in the British consulate, to protect the Baha'i's. On one occasion, Muhammad Baqir Hushyar, who had just become a Baha'i, went to the mujtahid Shaykh Ja'far Mahallati and publicly challenged him to respond to the *Kitab-i Iqan*. Mahallati had Hushyar arrested but Banan used his influence with the governor, 'Abdu'l-Husyan Mirza Farmanfarma, to have Hushyar released. Banan tried to get a Baha'i girls' school started in Shiraz, but the opposition to this was too great. He began a magazine called *Fārs*.¹⁰¹

In the late 1910s and early 1920s, the head of the post office in Shiraz was a Baha'i, Muhammad Rida Mirza of Isfahan (d. 1924). When a mob attacked one of the employees of the post office who was a Baha'i, Mirza Nasru'llah Jahrumi, as he walked through the bazaar in about 1921, Muhammad Rida Mirza closed the post office and the telegraph office. The merchants and business community were in uproar as they could not function without these but Muhammad Rida Mirza refused to re-open until the governor Husayn-Quli Mirza Nusrat us-Saltanih punished the main attacker, saying that government officials must be free to walk about the city without being attacked. Eventually, the governor ordered the arrest of the main attacker and his beating in the main square of the town in front of the citadel on Friday when large crowds would be present. As the *farrāshes* beat him, the man pleaded with Muhammad Rida Mirza first in the name of the king but he paid no attention; then in the name of the souls of the prophets and still he paid no attention; finally in the name of 'Abbas Effendi ('Abdu'l-Baha) and promising not to attack the Baha'i faith again; at this Muhammad Rida Mirza ordered the *farrāshes* to stop.¹⁰²

The protection of the Baha'i's in Fars by powerful individuals who were not Baha'i's continued. Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Dastghayb, one of the prominent clerics of the town, is reported to have been a believer in the Bab and an admirer of 'Abdu'l-Baha and to have come to believe in Baha'u'llah also at the end of his life.¹⁰³ Other clerics were, however, opponents of the Baha'i Faith. Sayyid Abu Talib Mujtahid wrote a refutation of the Baha'i Faith, *Tālibiyih dar Radd-i Bābiyyih*. After Mirza Munir Nabilzadih, who was visiting Shiraz, demonstrated to him the errors in this book, Sayyid Abu Talib raised a disturbance in the town in December 1920-January 1921 that forced Nabilzadih to leave. Indeed at one stage a mob gathered planning to storm the governor's residence and then carry out a general massacre of the Baha'i's. But when the gendarmes fired a volley into the air, the mob dispersed.¹⁰⁴ It was probably also during this episode that a plan was made by some of the criminal elements of the town to attack and loot the shop of Aqa Muhammad Hasan Bulurfurush. The Baha'i's heard of this and ten of the Baha'i youth stood in the corners of the square in which this shop was. When the mob arrived, they charged the mob with sticks and stones and dispersed it thus saving the shop from attack.¹⁰⁵

It is difficult to form an estimate of the number of Baha'i's in Shiraz. In 1920, it was being said that about one-third of the population of the town was Baha'i, which would mean 20,000 people.¹⁰⁶ This is too high a figure

but since there were no membership criteria, it may well have represented the total number of those attending Baha'i meetings or otherwise demonstrating that they were favourable towards the Baha'i Faith. Cole follows a statement by Bémont, who states that she was told by a leading Baha'i, presumably in the 1950s or 1960s when she did her research for her book, that the Baha'i community of Shiraz was the largest Baha'i community of Iran, larger than Tehran, but this is not a credible statistic.¹⁰⁷ By that time, there had been major migrations of Baha'is from all parts of Iran to Tehran and the numbers there were far greater than in Shiraz. In about 1935, there were some 500–600 Baha'is in Shiraz. They were spread throughout the city but a large number lived in Sa'diyeh, the district around the tomb of the poet Sa'di.¹⁰⁸

Suggested citation

Moojan Momen, 'Negotiating Survival: A History of the Babi and Baha'i Faith in Shiraz (1844–1921)', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 45–68. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.45/1>.

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Endnotes

1. Abbot in Abbas Amanat (ed.), *Cities and Trade: Consul Abbott on the Economy and Society of Iran, 1847–1866*, Oxford Oriental Monographs no. 5, London: Ithaca Press for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Oxford University, 1983, 175; the report states 400–500 families of Jews, from which I have estimated 2,000 people. Thompson (1868) estimated the population of Shiraz as 25,000 with 1,500 Jews (in Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Iran 1800–1914*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1971, pp. 28, 32).
2. Mirza Hasan Fasa'i, *Fārs-nāmih*, 2 vols. in 1, lithograph, 1314/1896, reprint: Tehran, [1965], p. 22.
3. Fredy Bémont, *Les Villes d'Iran: des cités d'autrefois à l'urbanisme contemporain*. 3 vols. Paris: Privately published, 1969–1977, 2:152.
4. Abbot reported weekly clashes in 1850 (Amanat, *Cities and Trade* 88, pp. 175–6).
5. Fasa'i, *Fars-Namih*, p. 22.
6. Although the account by Nabil [Zarandi], *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabil's Narrative of the Early*

Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation. Wilmette, IL: Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1970, pp. 145–6) states that only two Babis were punished and expelled from the city and Hasan Balyuzi (*The Bāb*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1973, pp. 77–8) reports three, a report of this episode that appeared in *The Times* of London on 1 November 1845 states that there were four Babis involved and Mirza Husayn Hamadani (*The Tārīkh-i-Jadīd or New History of Mirza 'Alī Muhammad the Bāb*, trans. E.G. Browne, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893, p. 202) names the fourth individual.

7. On the period of the Bab in Shiraz, see Habibu'llah Afnan, *Tarikh Amr dar Fars*, photocopy of mss., in Afnan Library), 1–115; trans. in Ahang Rabbani, 'The Bab in Shiraz: an account by Mirza Habibu'llah Afnan' *Bahā'ī Studies Review*, 12, (2004) pp. 91–127 and in Habibu'llah Afnan, *The Genesis of the Bābī and Bahā'ī Faiths in Shirāz and Fārs*, trans. Ahang Rabbani: Leiden: Brill, 2008, hereinafter *Genesis*, pp. 3–48; Nabil, *Dawn-breakers*, pp. 50–96, Abu'l-Qasim Afnan, 'Ahd-i A'lā: *Zindigānī-yi Hadrat-i Bāb*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2000, pp. 29–71, 116–155; 142–98; Abbas Amanat, *Resurrection and Renewal: The Making of the Babi Movement in Iran 1844–1850*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989, pp. 109–254.
8. Asadu'llah Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhūru'l-Haqq*, 9 vols., vol. 3, Tehran, n.d. and vol. 8 (Parts one and two), Tehran: Mu'assasih Milli Matbu'at Amri, 131–32 B.E. Other volumes in mss., hereinafter ZH, 4:110.
9. Fasa'i, *Fars-namih*, 2:45.
10. Details of members of the Afnan family can be found in Muhammad 'Ali Faizi, *Khāndān-i Afnān, Sadrih-yi Rahmān*, Tehran: Mu'assasih Milli Matbu'at Amri, 127 BE/1970, and in Amanu'llah Shahidiyan, *Mansūbān-i Astān Ṭal'at A'lā, Khāndān-i Afnān*, Bundoora, Aust.: Bahā'ī Distribution Services, 2009.
11. See also Hasan M. Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahā'īs in the Time of Bahā'u'llāh: with some Historical Background*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1985, pp. 216–36.
12. Faizi, *Khandan Afnan*, pp. 197–200.
13. According to ZH 4:211, these four were converted first by Bahā'u'llah in Baghdad and returned and persuaded their uncle to meet Bahā'u'llah in Baghdad.
14. Faizi, *Khandan Afnan* 95; Mirza Sayyid Muhammad, the son of Haji Mirza Muhammad 'Ali, resident in Shiraz, was known as Mirza Aqa Taryaki – *taryak* being Persian for opium. See also Fasa'i, *Fars-namih* 2:45, where it is stated that most of the trade in opium from Isfahan, Yazd and Fars that went to China went through Mirza Muhammad 'Ali Afnan in Hong Kong.
15. Willem Floor, 'The Merchants (*tujjār*) in Qājār Iran' *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 126 (1976) 101–135, see pp. 112–3.
16. Fasa'i, *Fars-namih* 2:45.
17. Afnan, *Tarikh*, p. 195 (*Genesis* 83).
18. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 216–17 (*Genesis* 89).
19. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 164–5 (*Genesis* 69–70).
20. Anon., *Tarikh Amri Isfahan*, photocopy of ms. in Afnan Library, 8; 'Ata'u'llah Rahmani Najafabadi, 'Sharhi-i Ahvāl-i Aqā Sayyid 'Abdūr-Rahīm Isfahānī (mulaqqab bih Ismu'llāh ur-Rahīm)', *Andalib*, year 23, no. 89 (2005), pp. 68–74, see p. 71.
21. Vahid Rafati, 'Nabil-i A'zam-i Zarandi', *Khūshih-hā-i az Kharman-i Adab va Hunar* 7 (1996) pp. 29–57, see pp. 35–6; ZH 6:571–2, p. 855.
22. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 168–174 (*Genesis* 71–4); the account of Nabil in Shiraz in 'Azizu'llah Sulaymani, *Maṣābiḥ Hidāyat*, vol. 10, unpublished typescript, pp. 613–5, is not so dramatic.
23. ZH 6:788–9; Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahā'īs*, p. 229.
24. Faizi, *Khandan Afnan*, pp. 20–24; Shahidiyan, *Mansuban*, pp. 18–21.
25. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 174–7 (*Genesis* 74–5).
26. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 235–41 (*Genesis* 96–8); Hasan M. Balyuzi, *Khadījih Bagum*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1981, pp. 34–5; 'Abdu'l-Hamid Ishraq-Khavari, *Rahīq-i Makhtūm*. 2 vols., Tehran: Mu'assasih Milli Matbu'at Amri, 130 B.E./1973, 1:339–46.
27. Faizi, *Khandan*, pp. 204–6.

28. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 225–30 (*Genesis* 93–4); Faizi, *Khandan*, pp. 206–7.
29. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 252–4 (*Genesis* 103). For the tablet of Baha'u'llah making this appointment, see Afnan, *Tarikh*, p. 253 (*Genesis* 103); Faizi, *Khandan* 203.
30. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 297–307 (*Genesis* 120–23).
31. For an account of this meeting and Shirazi's profession of his secret allegiance to the Baha'i Faith see Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 323–50 (*Genesis* 127–134); Balyuzi, *Eminent Baha'is*, pp. 251–60.
32. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 350–51, 409–11, 416 (*Genesis* 134, 151–2).
33. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 465–82 (*Genesis* 170–82); Faydi, *Khandan* 208–14; ZH 7:215–6, 8a:541–3.
34. George P. Churchill, *Persian Statesmen and Notables: Biographical Notices*, Confidential publication, Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1906, pp. 22–4.
35. Mahdi Barmand, *Tārikh-i Rijāl-i Irān*, 6 vols. Tehran: Zavvar, 1347/1968–1351/1972, 1:39–40.
36. ZH 6:8578; Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 184–190 (*Genesis* 79–81).
37. Barmand, *Tarikh*, 3:401–403.
38. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 439–50 (*Genesis* 160–64).
39. Haji Muhammad Tahir Malmiri, *Khāṭirāt-i Mālmīrī*, Langenhain, Germany: Lajnih Nashr Athar Amri bih Zaban Farsi va 'Arabi, 1992, pp. 96–7.
40. The Baha'is were not the only people to regard Shaykh Husayn as 'Zālim' (tyrant). Mirza Hasan Fasa'i, the author of the *Fars-namih*, the best known Qajar history of Fars province (which has been partly translated into English), takes up much of the first two pages of the first part of this history recounting Shaykh Husayn's appropriation of the village of Sahlābād in 1872, which belonged to Fasa'i, an act which he elsewhere calls a *Zulm* (tyranny or injustice, see *Fars-namih* 2:24, p. 44).
41. Afnan, *Tarikh*, p. 213 (*Genesis* 88); Balyuzi, *The Bāb*, 69, 233n.1.
42. Fasa'i, *Fars-namih*, 1:1–2.
43. ZH 5:134–6; 6:85861; Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 191–219 (*Genesis* 82–90). Although ZH gives the date of this episode as 1288/1869, and this is what is implied in Afnan, *Tarikh*, I have taken the date from an entry in the British Consular agent's reports recording the execution of three Babis without however naming them; *Vaqāyi'-yi Ittifaqiyih* (ed. 'Ali Akbar Sa'idi Sirjani) Tehran: Nashr-i Naw, 1361/1982, 26. The error in the Baha'i reports may have arisen because it was remembered that the episode fell during the governorship of Hisam us-Saltanih. The latter had two terms of office as governor of Fars, however. 1869 would have fallen in the first term (1866–70) and 1875 during the second (1873–5). Matters are made even more confused by the statement in Zil us-Sultan's memoirs that Aqa Murtada was brought before him and he ordered the execution (Zil us-Sultan states that this execution was the first time that he had acted against the Baha'is). Zil us-Sultan was governor of Fars in between the two terms of Hisam us-Saltanih. He states that it was Shaykh Mahdi and Haji Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Mahallati who wrote the *fatvā* for the execution of Aqa Mirza Aqa Rikab-saz (Mas'ud Mirza Zil us-Sultan, *Khāṭirāt Zil us-Sulṭān* (ed. Husayn Khadiv-Jam), 3 vols., Tehran: Asatir, 1365 Sh/1986, 1:324–5).
44. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 231–33 (*Genesis* 95–6).
45. Fasa'i, *Fars-namih*, 2:75.
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47. *Vaqāyi'- Ittifaqiyih*, pp. 317–8.
48. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 278–82, 296–7 (*Genesis* 119–20, 111–3).
49. Daniel Tsadik, *Between Foreigners and Shi'is: Nineteenth Century Iran and its Jewish Minority*, Stanford Studies on Jewish History and Culture, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007, 132–7; Barmand, *Tarikh* 2:430–33; Nikki Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din 'al-Afghani'*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, 342–55; Nikki Keddie, *Religion and Rebellion in Iran: The Iranian Tobacco Protest of 1891–1982*, London: Frank Cass, 1966, pp. 67–73.
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52. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, p. 416.
53. Afnan, *Tarikh*, p. 313 (*Genesis* 125); ZH 5:373–4, 6:874–6.
54. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 179–81 (*Genesis* 76–7).
55. Afnan, *Tarikh*, p. 184 (*Genesis* 79).
56. ZH 6:855–6, 861; see discussion of this in Juan Cole, 'Religious Dissidence and Urban Leadership: Bahais in Qajar Shiraz and Tehran', *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* 37 (1999) pp. 123–142.
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60. ZH 6:865–7, 8a:563; 'Abdu'l-Husayn Bashir-Ilahi, 'Sharh-i Hāl-i Mutasā'id ila Allāh Mīrzā Āqā Khān Bashīr-Ilāhī', *Āhang-i Bādī* Year 29, no. 325 (Mar.–Apr. 1974/131 BE) 38–46. Nasir Bashir-Ilahi, *Alvāh Nāzilih bih A'zāz-i Mīrzā Āqā Khān Bashīr us-Sūlṭān mulaqqab bih Bashīr Ilāhī*. Ellicott City, MD: privately published, 2010.
61. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 562–5 (*Genesis* 205–6).
62. Haji Mirza Haydar 'Ali Isfahani, *Bihjat us-Šudūr*, Hofheim: Bahā'ī-Verlag, 2002, 46, 64, 89–90; Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahā'īs* 121, 238–250; Browne, *Year* 360–9; Browne, *Selections* 74–83.
63. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 350–60 (*Genesis* 135–6); ZH 6:84–5.
64. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, p. 521.
65. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 314–23 (*Genesis* 125–7); *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih* 659; ZH 8a:210–13; Juan Cole, 'The Provincial Politics of Heresy and Reform in Qajar Iran: Shaykh al-Rais in Shiraz, 1895–1902,' *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 22/1&2 (2002) pp. 119–129.
66. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, pp. 533–4.
67. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, p. 608.
68. ZH 7:141.
69. Afnan, pp. 416–7 (*Genesis* 1152).
70. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, p. 665.
71. Afnan, pp. 428–30 (*Genesis* 156).
72. Bamdad, *Tarikh*, 4:156.
73. Reports of Haydar 'Ali Khan Nawwab, British agent in Shiraz, *Shiraz News* for 5–12 March, dated 12 March 1902, and for 17–24 April, dated 24 April 1902; in British Public Records Office document PRO FO 248 773. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih* 664–5.
74. Afnan, pp. 430–432 (*Genesis* 157–8).
75. Cole states erroneously that this was Mirza 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Khan Shirazi Asaf ud-Dawlih, an old enemy of Shaykh ur-Ra'is ('Provincial Politics of Heresy and Reform' 124), but he had died in 1887 and the title had been transferred; Bamdad, *Tarikh* 2:315. Afnan gives the name correctly (*Tarikh* 568, *Genesis* 207).
76. Report of British Agent in Shiraz, *Shiraz News* for 7–15 August, dated 15 August 1902 and for 20–28 August, dated 28 August 1902. PRO 248 773; *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, pp. 680–81; ZH 8a:214.
77. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 425–7 (*Genesis* 155–6).
78. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, p. 707; Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 433–8 (*Genesis* 157–60).
79. *Vaqayi' Ittifaqiyih*, p. 708; Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 451–5 (*Genesis* 164–5); ZH 7:211–4.

80. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 455–61 (*Genesis* 165–9); ZH 7:214–5.
81. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 510–4 (*Genesis* 186).
82. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 514–20 (*Genesis* 186–9).
83. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 520–24 (*Genesis* 190–91).
84. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 525–29 (*Genesis* 191–3).
85. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 501–9 (*Genesis* 183–5).
86. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 529–37 (*Genesis* 194–6).
87. *Intishārāt Lajnih-yi Millī-yi Maḥfaẓih-yi Ḵāthār va Ārshīv-i Amr* (photocopied collection of the manuscripts in the National Baha'i Archives of Iran) 84:336–7.
88. *Kitab-i-Aqdas*, v. 93.
89. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 537–41 (*Genesis* 196–8); Mr Hasan Balyuzi stated in an interview on 23 June 1977 that part of the reason for this action of Qavam ul-Mulk was his enmity towards Mu'tamid ud-Dīn (see above).
90. Bamdad, *Tarikh* 6:137.
91. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 542–44 (*Genesis* 198–99).
92. Afnan, *Tarikh*, p. 557 (*Genesis* 203 and n. 326).
93. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 542–55 (*Genesis* 199–202).
94. Afnan, *Tarikh*, p. 556 (*Genesis* 202–3).
95. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 560–61 (*Genesis* 204–5).
96. *Intishārāt Lajnih-yi Millī-yi Maḥfaẓih-yi Ḵāthār va Ārshīv-i Amr* 52:424–5; 84:337, 418; ZH 8:574.
97. Bashir-Ilahi, 'Bashir-Ilahi'.
98. Afnan, *Tarikh*, pp. 568–9 (*Genesis* 207).
99. Yazdi, Miñāhaj ul-Ahkām, published as vols. 5–6 of *Intishārāt Lajnih-yi Millī-yi Maḥfaẓih-yi Ḵāthār va Ārshīv-i Amr*, 1:234. There were evidently a few left by December 1920 whom Munir Nabilzadah persuaded of the error of their viewpoint, 'Azizu'llah Sulaymani, *Maṣābiḥ Hidāyat*. Vol. 4, Tehran: Mu'assisih Millī Matbu'at Amri, 118 BE/1961, 258.
100. Suhrab Faridani, *Dūstān-i Rāstān: Tārīkh Hayāt va Khadāmat-i Bahā'iyyān-i Pārsī*, Hofheim: Bahā'i-Verlag, 2002, 110; Habib Hizari, 'Jinab-i Ardishir Hizari' *'Andalib*, year 18, no. 70 (Spring 1999) 40–43, see 40–41; Parivash Samandari Khoshbin, *Taraz Ilāhī*, vol. 1, Hamilton, Ont.: Mu'assasih Ma'ārif Bahā'i, 2002, 1:302–3.
101. City Etemad, Biography of Fadullah Banan (communicated 10 September 2011).
102. ZH 8a:139; Abu'l-Qasim Afnan, 'Dāstān-i Kutak Khurdan-i Mirza Naṣru'llāh Jahrumī.' *Payām-i Bahā'i* no. 182 (Jan. 1995) 37–40, see pp. 39–40.
103. Interview Mr Hasan Balyuzi on 29 August 1979.
104. Sulaymani, *Masabih* 4:258–9; ZH 7:323.
105. 'Andalib', vol. 22, no. 88 (2005) pp. 6–8.
106. This figure is reported by Walter Smart (d. 1962), Oriental secretary at the British Legation in Tehran, in the course of a meeting he had with Mirza Ishaq Khan Haqiqi. While the figure may have come from Haqiqi, Smart who was well-informed about Iran, does not dispute it. Public Record Office FO 248 1279, file 'Bahais', paper 29.
107. Bémont, *Les Villes d'Iran* 2:152; see Cole, 'Religious Dissidence', p. 123.
108. Interview Mr Hasan Afnan in London on 23 June 2004.

Shoghi Effendi and the Baha'is of Australia and New Zealand, 1922–1937

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Abstract

Shoghi Effendi's letters were a major inspiration for the early Baha'is of Australia and New Zealand. The present paper summarizes the main themes and concerns of these letters during the period from 1922 through to 1937.

Keywords

Baha'is of Australia
 and New Zealand
 Shoghi Effendi's
 letters

Chronology

- c.1912 Margaret Stevenson becomes the first New Zealand Baha'i.
- 1920 The Dunns arrive in Australia (Sydney).
- 1922 First Australian Baha'is. First Baha'i activity in New Zealand.
- 1923–25 Initial establishment of local assemblies in Australia.
- 1924 Martha Root's first visit.
- 1925 First pilgrimage by Baha'is from Australia and New Zealand to the Baha'i World Centre. *Herald of the South* started.
- 1926 Auckland local assembly established.
- 1931 Keith Ransom-Kehler's visit.
- 1934 National Spiritual Assembly established.
- 1936 *Bahá'í Quarterly* established. Siegfried Schopflocher's visit.
- 1937 Yerrinbool property opened as future summer school site.

1. Prologue

As yet there have been few studies of Shoghi Effendi's early letters to the Baha'i world although they have obvious value in understanding the developments within the Baha'i world during the interwar period. The present paper is intended as one of a series of studies of these letters.¹

There are a total of 150 letters for the 1922–1937 period from Shoghi Effendi or one of his secretaries in the compilation *Messages to the Antipodes*.² From an academic standpoint, this is the most useful of the compilations of his messages so far assembled in that it both clearly differentiates the passages originally penned by Shoghi Effendi and by his secretaries, and identifies the name of the secretary responsible for each of the letters. It is also excellently footnoted. Unfortunately, as with all the presently available compilations, we do not have copies or summaries of the letters received from the Australian and New Zealand Baha'is to which these letters are largely replies. This obscures one element of context, but in most cases, it does not seem to prevent us from understanding the concerns that Shoghi Effendi wanted to convey, nor the context in Australia and New Zealand as he perceived it.

It will be noted that with the exception of a few letters written entirely by Shoghi Effendi, most of the letters take the form of a reply to a received letter by the secretary followed by a brief postscript from Shoghi Effendi, adding to, amplifying or emphasizing certain points in the secretary's letter. There are only a few letters without such a postscript. The secretaries commonly state that Shoghi Effendi had 'instructed' or 'directed' them to say such-and-such, and it seems obvious that Shoghi Effendi had almost always read and approved the secretary's reply as well as the received letter or letters. There is only one instance of a letter dealing with a substantive issue in which it seems possible that a secretary may have given his own answer rather than that of Shoghi Effendi (See section 7, below).³ To avoid confusion, I have generally indicated which passages come from secretaries rather than directly from Shoghi Effendi.

The paper is divided into the following sections: The beginnings of Baha'i activities in Australia and New Zealand and the early growth of local Baha'i communities (section 2); the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly (3); the Dunns (4); the *Herald of the South* (5); indigenes (6); and racial prejudice (7).

2. Beginnings

2.1. **The first Baha'is.** Australia and New Zealand developed as British settler colonies during the nineteenth century, achieving the status of semi-independent British Dominions in 1901 and 1907 respectively. There was a lone Baha'i in New Zealand as early as c.1912 (Miss Margaret Stevenson (1865–1941) in Auckland), but systematic Baha'i activities only began with the arrival of pioneer Baha'i teachers in Australia – John Henry Hyde Dunn (1855–1941) and his wife Clara (1869–1960) – in April 1920. Of British origins, the Dunns (see section 4 below) had become Baha'is in the United States, deciding to move to Australia in response to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's call for international missionary expansion of the Baha'i Movement in *The Tablets of the Divine Plan* (1916–17). Already in his sixties, Hyde worked as a travelling salesman, using his mobility as a means of presenting the Faith throughout Australia (by July 1923 he had visited 225 towns). With Hyde speaking to groups such as the Theosophists and New Thought movement, and weekly meetings at the Dunns' home, a widespread circle of seekers became interested in the Baha'i teachings.

The first Australians to become Baha'is – both late in 1922 – were Oswald Whitaker, a Sydney optometrist, and Effie Baker, a Melbourne photographer and model maker. There were soon sufficient Baha'is to form spiritual assemblies in four of the state capitals, Melbourne, Victoria (December 1923); Perth, Western Australia (July 1924); Adelaide, South Australia (December 1924); and Sydney, New South Wales (April 1925). A Baha'i group was also established in Brisbane (Queensland) and there was a lone Baha'i in Hobart (Tasmania) for a while. The Dunns also visited New Zealand in December 1922 – January 1923, making contact with Margaret Stevenson, and helping to establish a Baha'i group in Auckland (an assembly was formed in 1926).⁴ Clara Dunn maintained 'a continuous stream of correspondence' to encourage and nurture the new Baha'is, a crucial contribution given the fewness of their numbers and their widespread geographical dispersal.

2.2. Early letters. Shoghi Effendi appears to have first established communications with the Baha'is in Australia on 19 December 1922, cabling the Dunns that he was 'Awaiting lovingly glad tidings of the Australian Friends', and the next day writing to thank the Australian Baha'is for their news (presumably a cabled response to his enquiry), expressing his joy that the 'Voice of God' had been raised in 'that far-away continent', and had attracted 'such a promising number of ardent and faithful lovers of Bahá'u'lláh'.

He offered them – 'My dearest co-workers in that distant land' – his 'heartfelt love and sympathy'; the assurance of his 'unfailing assistance' in 'the great work of service to mankind' which was now 'so gloriously unfolding itself' to their eyes; and his prayers that 'the seeds of faith and loving fellowship' that they were now casting in 'the soil of hearts' might germinate 'and swell the ever increasing number of the valiant hosts of Bahá'.

He eagerly awaited news of the extension of their activities, the widening of their correspondence 'with the various spiritual centres throughout the world', the plans they contemplated for the spreading of the Movement, and the means they would use to speedily execute their plans. Australia, he noted, was 'remote from the turmoil and restlessness of a weary world' (AUS 1).

In subsequent letters to the Baha'is of Australia and New Zealand in the early months of 1923, he exalted that such a 'deep and widespread interest' in 'the truths of this glorious Revelation' had been awakened in their land, and urged them to do all they could to establish a number of Baha'i centres in that distant and 'promising continent'. They should 'scatter over that vast continent', 'establish themselves in various localities', and then travel in the vicinity of each of these centres to endeavour to attract 'the most able' and 'enlightened' of people to the Faith. Whenever possible, they should also travel to the Islands of the 'South Seas' to attract many souls. He prayed that their energy would never slacken, their faith and courage never fade, and that they would advance 'steadily and peacefully' to attain their hearts' desire (AUS 14–16).

The expansion of the Faith in Australia and New Zealand pleased Shoghi Effendi greatly. Writing to the Dunns on Shoghi's behalf in April 1925, J. E. Esslemont reported that few things had contributed more to Shoghi Effendi's happiness over the past couple of years than the progress of the Faith in Australasia. 'We' (presumably Shoghi, Esslemont, and the Haifa Baha'is) anticipated even better progress in the future as the new Baha'is whom the Dunns had been training and teaching themselves became active workers for the Cause (AUS 24–25).

Again, in a letter of December 1925, Shoghi himself referred to his 'dearly-beloved and self-sacrificing brothers and sisters' in a land which held 'so great a promise for the future'. He had followed the progress of their activities 'with keen interest', 'ever-increasing confidence', and 'a deep sense of pride and gratitude' (AUS 35). Again, in 1926, Shoghi referred to his 'brightest hopes for the future awakening of promising New Zealand' (AUS 42), and to Australia's future as 'one of the most important centres in the Baha'i world', for it was both materially and spiritually 'rich with many & varied possibilities' (AUS 48). Writing on his behalf, Ruhi Afnan referred to the New Zealanders' 'breadth of mind and lack of traditional drawbacks',

which showed better prospects than many other places (AUS 46), and to the newness of the country making the Australians more receptive to new ideas – such that the Cause could spread very rapidly there if it was properly presented (AUS 48), whilst in a 1927 letter to New Zealand written on Shoghi's behalf, Ethel Rosenberg referred to minds being more open in newer countries, and the people 'more ready and willing to receive this great message' (AUS 49).

2.3. A definite quickening of pace occurred in 1924–25, with Martha Root's⁵ first visit to Australia and New Zealand (late June–mid November 1924); the first pilgrimage from the Antipodes to the Baha'i World Centre (a group of five: Margaret Stevenson, Sarah Blundell and her children, Ethel and Hugh, from New Zealand, together with Effie Baker from Australia for three weeks in the Spring of 1925); and the publication of a new Baha'i magazine, *Herald of the South*, by Bertram Dewing in New Zealand from September 1925 (see below).

Root's visit was marked by her customary dynamism. Often giving two lectures a day – five on one day in Wellington and a total of some 95 during her whole visit – she contacted a great variety of groups (including the inevitable Spiritualists, Theosophists, and Esperantists). She also gave her first ever radio broadcasts (in Perth and Melbourne), and in Auckland had extensive contact with socialist groups.⁶ As in her talks in other parts of the world, she sometime spoke about the Baha'i teachings and sometimes directly about the Faith, as well as speaking on more general issues. Writing early in 1924, in anticipation of her arrival, Shoghi Effendi expressed the hope that meeting and collaborating with Root would stimulate and advance the work of the Baha'is, fortify their spirit, and reinforce their endeavours to penetrate new fields that had not yet been explored, wherein they might achieve 'signal victories' (AUS 20), a prescient comment given Root's successful use of radio during her visit.

As to the pilgrims, Shoghi wrote in March 1925 that they had arrived safely in Haifa, and would, he trusted, return to 'their respective fields of labour' with 'fresh enthusiasm and renewed vigour, determined to do their utmost for the spread and ultimate triumph' of the Cause (AUS 23; see also AUS 25, 26). Apart from inspiring its participants, the pilgrimage visit had one unexpected consequence: Effie Baker decided to return to Haifa after a visit to Britain, thereafter working as custodian of the newly established Western Pilgrim House until 1936, and acting as a conduit of news and advice from Shoghi Effendi to her homeland.

The enthusiasm of this period apparently encouraged the Dunns to think that it might be possible to establish a national spiritual assembly for Australia and New Zealand. This was not yet to be. The new Baha'is were for the most part middle-aged women drawn from the 'cultic milieu' of the 'metaphysical movements' (alternative new age movements), who drifted in and out of various groups, and were suspicious of 'dogma and ritual', as well as of strict definitions of Baha'i membership: thus of some 149 individuals who became sufficiently involved in the Faith to be considered Baha'is up to 1934, only half (74) were still members in that year (see Table 1). In this context, it was difficult to create stable organizational structures, and all of the early Australian local assemblies subsequently lapsed, to be

| Community | 1934 membership (approx.) | Aggregate nos. to date (approx.) |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Australia | | |
| Adelaide | 19 | 49 |
| Brisbane | 3 | 3 |
| Hobart | 3 | 3 |
| Melbourne | 5 | 26 |
| Sydney | 28 | 35 |
| Perth | 4 | 13 |
| New Zealand | | |
| Auckland | 12 | 20 |
| Totals | 74 | 149 |

Table 1: Antipodean Baha'i numbers up to 1934. Source: Hassall, 'Baha'i Faith in Australia', p.6. Note: In the absence of definite criteria of membership prior to 1934, the figures are approximate, and include those who were 'closely associated' with the Baha'i Movement as well as definite members. They are calculated from individual and assembly correspondence.

reformed later when the Baha'is had developed a greater understanding of Baha'i administrative concepts: Adelaide in 1929, Sydney in 1932, Perth in 1936, and Melbourne effectively not until 1948.⁷

2.4. General encouragement and guidance. Shoghi Effendi clearly wanted to build carefully on the foundation that had been established. Writing in March 1925, he encouraged each of the newly elected local spiritual assemblies to initiate a 'well-conceived' campaign of teaching within its own province, and to do their utmost 'to protect the interests and extend the sphere of the Cause'. It was now of paramount importance to advance the teaching work, by whatever means was available, so that the number of dedicated Baha'is, who would 'give their unreserved allegiance to the Cause' and 'consecrate their lives' in service to Bahá'u'lláh, would increase. The Baha'is should also consult as to whether it was 'feasible and practicable' to elect a joint national assembly for the two countries. If it was, the election should take place during the Ridván period. He enclosed a copy of his general letter on administration to assist them in the running of their assemblies (AUS 23). He hoped that it would also be possible to establish assemblies in the other state capitals. If it was possible, the Dunns should revisit all the centres where they had already taught 'in order to water the seedlings that have taken root and to sow fresh good seed in the prepared ground'. They should also visit Brisbane (AUS 24–25, on Shoghi's behalf).

Writing in June 1925, Shoghi Effendi was delighted to learn of the continuing intention to form a national assembly in 1926 (AUS 35), but seems to have expressed no regrets when the assembly was not formed (with only a small number of Baha'is scattered across a vast continent, and the Baha'is

themselves new in the Faith, the formation of an assembly at so early a date would have been a quite remarkable achievement). Instead, he offered his encouragement, expressing the hope (in 1928) that the Dunns would be able to continue to give the established local assemblies their parental care and guidance, 'for they surely still need it'. Then, with new local assemblies formed; an increase in the understanding and study of the teachings and mission of the Faith among the individual Baha'is; and 'with the fruits of sober enthusiasm and mature thought', he hoped that the Dunns would be strengthened and spared to help establish the national assembly (AUS 53, on Shoghi's behalf). He wished that 'promising and progressive Baha'i centres' would be established in all the large towns and cities of Australia, and the country become 'a leading torch-bearer for the spiritual regeneration of man and for the establishment of universal brotherhood in the world' (AUS 54, on Shoghi's behalf). Pending the formation of the national assembly, the Australasian Baha'is should keep in close contact with the Dunns, seeking their advice and opinion, as they were the 'loving parents' and 'guiding star' of the community (AUS 52 [1927]).

2.5. A definite impetus towards a more structured Baha'i community was **Keith Ransom-Kehler's visit to Australia and New Zealand in 1931**.⁸ This had a double impact: the conversion of a number of very active new Baha'is, and an enormous deepening of the Baha'is' knowledge of the 'Administrative Order'.⁹ In New Zealand, she also made effective contact with some groups of Maoris (see below). Amongst those who became Baha'is as a result of her visit were Stanley and Mariette Bolton in Sydney, and Hilda Brooks in Adelaide. (the future first secretary of the national spiritual assembly when it was formed in 1934).

After Ransom-Kehler's visit, Shoghi Effendi wrote to Hyde Dunn that the Australian Baha'is had needed someone to come and stimulate them a little. This she had surely done, and it was now very necessary not to let that enthusiasm subside and cool down. As their father, Hyde should see that the lamp she had kindled was kept burning (AUS 68). To another Baha'i he voiced his prayer that 'the scope' of their activities might be widened, and the foundations of Baha'i institutions 'in that remote corner of the world' consolidated (AUS 69). To the Sydney Baha'is he expressed his hope that the Australian Baha'is would now 'unitedly strive to spread the Message', would not let any obstacle hinder 'their onward march', and continue to be animated by the devotion and sincerity which had hitherto animated their activities (AUS 70, on Shoghi's behalf). He hoped that their numbers would 'daily increase', and that they would become 'the source of inspiration and hope and guidance to all the people of that continent' (AUS 72, on Shoghi's behalf).

3. The formation of the National Spiritual Assembly

3.1. **Shoghi Effendi provides general guidance.** By November 1932, the idea of forming a joint national assembly for the two countries was again under active consideration. Shoghi Effendi entrusted the task of coordinating the preparatory work to the Adelaide local assembly (BW5: 128), and expressed his delight at the possibility that the national assembly would at last be formed: the time had come, he believed, for the Baha'is to organize them-

selves into a 'solidly-united administrative body', and so increase the efficiency and success of their teaching work. He hoped that it would soon be possible to form the assembly, and thus coordinate the efforts of the various local assemblies. The local assemblies needed to consult together about the practical issues involved first, however. Most particularly, they had to consider whether it would be possible to ensure the successful functioning of a national assembly, making sure that its members would be able to meet regularly; direct the national committees as well as the local assemblies and groups under their jurisdiction effectively; establish a national Baha'i fund; hold annual conventions; and coordinate the various branches of Baha'i activity 'with efficiency, harmony & vigour' (AUS 78-79).

He was confident that great results would be achieved through their 'perseverance, enthusiasm and devotion', but they should not be in a hurry. It was not an easy matter to form a national spiritual assembly – 'incalculable difficulties' were involved. The Australian Baha'is should therefore proceed 'slowly and carefully', and act 'with great caution and wisdom', so that they did not jeopardise the best interests of the Cause. They should follow the example set by the American Baha'is as closely as possible in their attempt to 'widen and consolidate the nascent institutions of the Faith in their land', asking the advice of the American national assembly, and keeping in 'close and constant touch with its members', most of whom were highly experienced in matters related to the 'actual functioning' of Baha'i administrative institutions. They should also study *Bahá'í Administration*, the compilation of Shoghi Effendi's early letters to the American Baha'is, many of which dealt with administrative matters, as this was 'an indispensable book for a thorough understanding of the spirit as well as the form' of Baha'i administration, and 'upon its study much of our understanding of the Cause depends'. Both their local and national administration should follow the principles embodied in the assembly by-laws and declarations of trust adopted by the Americans (AUS 85-86).¹⁰

Writing to the Sydney local assembly in June 1933, he asked them to concentrate their efforts during the year on the essential means for the establishment of the national assembly. The assembly would become one of the 'national pillars' of the supreme, universal, and 'world-embracing' Universal House of Justice promised in the Baha'i writings. Its formation would give new impetus to the development of the Cause in their land (AUS 86-87). Again, in December, his secretary wrote to the Adelaide assembly expressing Shoghi's 'inexpressible joy' at learning of the steadfastness, loyalty, devotion, and sacrifice with which the Australian Baha'is were working to establish their national assembly. When formed, it would coordinate and unite the teaching as well as the administrative activities of the Baha'is (AUS 90).

3.2. Preparations. Preparation was evidently not easy, the Adelaide assembly writing to Shoghi Effendi early in February 1934 concerning the various difficulties that the Baha'is were experiencing. In reply, Shoghi stated that they should not consider establishment of the assembly as an 'impending obligation'. It was an important step, and should be taken only when circumstances were favourable. They should not take any definite action unless they saw that their plan could be carried out. He was 'fully conscious' of

the obstacles that impeded the attainment of their goal, and prayed that ['Abdu'l-Bahá's] spirit would enable them to overcome them. As to practicalities, as the number of Baha'is in Australia and New Zealand was relatively few, the number of delegates should be small (9 or 19 rather than 95). These should be elected to represent the localities in which local assemblies were currently established on a basis of proportional representation (AUS 92).

By later in the same month, however, the Baha'is appear to have overcome their misgivings, Shoghi writing enthusiastically to Clara Dunn of his joy that the 'historic decision' had been made. It marked a 'turning point' for that 'far-away continent'. His gratitude for 'this latest expression' of the spirit of determination, courage, and 'whole-hearted loyalty' which so powerfully animated the Australasian Baha'is, and which would, in the years to come, enable them to forge ahead in their efforts to establish and expand the administrative order in their continent. It was a new and momentous step which they had been inspired to take. It would surely bring them into closer and deeper contact with the Baha'is in the rest of the world by providing them with the opportunity to discharge more powerfully and effectively their manifold and sacred responsibilities for the international promotion and safeguarding of the Faith. The formation of every new national assembly was a step forward in the evolution of the Baha'i administration, and not until the formation of a sufficient number of national assemblies could there be any hope for the future expansion of the Cause. The entire Baha'i world welcomed the decision of the Australasian Baha'is, and were deeply grateful for the spirit that had prompted it. He prayed that the blessings of Bahá'u'lláh would assist the deliberations of their first convention, and advised that in the conduct of their convention and other administrative matters, they should follow the American pattern subject to due consideration of local differences (AUS 93).

3.3. The new National Spiritual Assembly. The first convention of the Baha'is of Australia and New Zealand was accordingly held during 15–18 May 1934 in Sydney, and their first national spiritual assembly elected (BW6: 23). Only three local assemblies existed at this point (Adelaide and Sydney in Australia, and Auckland in New Zealand), and the nine delegates were equally apportioned amongst these, as follows: Miss Hilda Brooks, Mr. Robert Brown, and Mrs. Silver Jackman from Adelaide; Mr. Hyde Dunn, Mrs. Jane Routh, and Mr. A. Ostwald Whitaker from Sydney; and Mrs. Emily Axford, Miss Ethel Blundell, and Miss Margaret Stevenson from Auckland. Seven of the delegates were elected onto the national assembly, the newly-elected assembly members being:

Mr. Percy (Perce) Almond (Adelaide, treasurer)
 Miss Ethel Blundell (Auckland)*
 Miss Hilda Brooks (Adelaide, secretary)*
 Mr. Robert Brown (Adelaide, chairman)*
 Mr. Hyde Dunn (Sydney)*
 Mrs. Silver Jackman (Adelaide)*
 Mrs. Charlotte Moffitt (Sydney)
 Miss Margaret Stevenson (Auckland)*
 Mr. A. Ostwald Whitaker (Sydney, vice-chairman)*

*Delegates

Shoghi Effendi cabled that he was 'inexpressibly gladdened' at the holding of the convention, and assured the delegates of his 'abounding gratitude' as well as his prayers and love (AUS 95). To the Adelaide assembly he wrote of his joy to learn of this 'momentous step'. The Australasian Baha'is would surely be 'reinforced by the hosts of the Kingdom', and deserved 'the praise and admiration' of their fellow Baha'is throughout the world. The foundations of the Universal House of Justice were now being laid in their country through their devoted efforts, and constancy, cooperation, unity, and 'steadfast adherence to the spiritual and administrative principles of the Faith' were essential (AUS 95).

3.4. Initial guidance. In July, Shoghi wrote his first letter to the secretary (Hilda Brooks) of the newly-formed national spiritual assembly, expressing his joy and gratitude at reading her letter, and his 'grateful appreciation' at the efforts that had gone into making the convention such a successful and promising meeting. The formation of the assembly was a triumph which would inevitably bring about 'a renewed and deeper spiritual consciousness' among all the Australasian Baha'is. He hoped and prayed that the assembly would soon be able to extend and further consolidate its national and international activities. He wished to be sent copies of the minutes of their meetings, and urged them to keep in close touch with their sister national assemblies around the world (AUS 96).

He wrote separately to the Dunns, describing the formation of the assembly as the fruition and crown of their efforts, and asking to be sent three copies each of the photographs of the convention delegates and the members of the newly elected national assembly for display in the mansion of Bahí, as evidence of the tremendous and unsurpassed progress achieved by the Faith in 'those far-off lands'. He reminded them – and through them the members of the national assembly – that the convention should be held during the Ridván period, and not 15 May as had been the case with their first convention. He prayed continuously that they, together with the assembly members who were their collaborators would gain through God's unfailing guidance and love a fresh and 'ever-increasing stimulus' to their 'collective endeavours' (AUS 97).

Writing to the national assembly again in October 1934, Shoghi assured them of his constant prayers for the extension of their activities so that the 'splendid era' they had inaugurated might redound to the glory and honour of the Most Great Name [Bahá'u'lláh]. He was proud of the manner in which the Baha'is of Australia and New Zealand had arisen to discharge 'their sacred and pressing responsibilities'. Surely, great triumphs were in store for them if they persevered in their 'mighty task'. He hoped that through divine confirmations the work of the assembly would serve to give an increasing impetus to the progress of the faith in Australasia (AUS 99).

Again, in January 1935, he wrote to the national assembly expressing his joy and admiration at the efforts of the Baha'is to spread the Cause and consolidate its administrative institutions. He urged them to persevere, remain united, not relax their determination, and 'strive with all their might to extend the scope of their meritorious activities' (AUS 102). In April, he expressed his pleasure at how the assembly was functioning, almost a year after its first formation. It was making steady progress, and

was wisely and effectively adjusting itself to 'the general conditions and specific requirements' of the region. Problems which had seemed like insurmountable obstacles a year previously had now been partly or completely resolved. The assembly had vindicated its ability and power to function as a well-organized and united body, this despite facing 'manifold difficulties' (unstated in the letter) which only 'the all-conquering spirit of the Faith' could overcome – difficulties, indeed, which had threatened to undermine the very foundations of the assembly. He fully approved the decisions the assembly had made regarding specific matters (again unstated), and urged the assembly to take the necessary steps to achieve legal incorporation as soon as it had adopted its own Declaration of Trust and bylaws (AUS 103–4). In May, he wrote how he was deeply touched by the evident devotion, incessant activity, and 'undeviating loyalty' of the Australasian Baha'is. Through their 'high endeavours', they had laid the foundations of the Baha'i Administrative Order in their continent, and were seeking to rear the institutions of Bahá'u'lláh's 'World Order' on that basis. He prayed that Bahá'u'lláh would 'increasingly sustain', guide, and bless their 'meritorious' and 'historic' activities (AUS 106).

3.5. Into the Assembly's second year. Writing to the newly-elected national assembly in June 1935, Shoghi congratulated its members on the success of the community's second convention, and prayed that the assembly would increasingly grow in unity and strength over the years, and would demonstrate its capacity to cope with the 'manifold problems and difficulties' which it would inevitably have to confront as it forged ahead in its 'slow but steady progress towards the firmer establishment of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order' throughout the Antipodes. He was grateful and indebted to the Australasian Baha'is for their 'splendid achievements' in Baha'i teaching and administration (AUS 106–7).

In September, he wrote of his pleasure at receiving the assembly's detailed report, and learning of the good order, efficiency, and, above all, 'perfect spirit of unity and fellowship' with which the assembly's meetings were conducted. The few other obstacles they faced would disappear in time: the foundation had been firmly laid down, and the work was henceforth bound to develop and expand. 'The Beloved' [presumably 'Abdu'l-Bahá] was surely watching over and blessing their accomplishments, plans, methods, efforts and services. Shoghi would continue to pray for the 'consolidation and uninterrupted expansion' of their activities. They should never relax or despair. They had raised and nurtured a 'tender plant', and ultimately it would gather beneath its shadow 'the whole of that far-off and promising continent'. He approved the decision to appoint special correspondents to keep records of Baha'i activities in Australia and New Zealand for the *Bahá'í World* volumes: it was a vitally important task, and needed to be performed with 'thoroughness, efficiency and vigour'. Their assembly was 'the furthest pillar of the Universal House of Justice' (AUS 107–8). Writing to Clara Dunn in March 1936, he expressed his delight at the assembly's 'steady progress' (AUS 111, on Shoghi's behalf).

3.6. Activities. A gradual extension of the assembly's activities is discernible over the next few years. Following its establishment, the assembly had

taken charge of publication of *The Herald of the South* magazine (see 4, below), the importance of which Shoghi Effendi continued to emphasize. In April 1935, the assembly sent its first contribution to Shoghi Effendi for the Baha'i international fund (see below). In April 1936, Shoghi directed the attention of the assembly to the importance of teaching – ‘the cornerstone of its activities’, and ‘the sole basis on which the administrative structure can flourish’ – and called for a ‘strenuous, systematic and continuous’ teaching effort to be now made at both the individual and collective level. He also asked the assembly to begin sending him detailed reports of the activities of its local assemblies (AUS 112).

Meanwhile, he wrote to Hyde Dunn of the paramount importance of the teaching work, and the need for it to be systematically, constantly, and energetically conducted by both individual Baha'is and their assemblies (AUS 114). In June he reminded the assembly of the necessity of taking the preparatory steps to secure legal incorporation as this would give it more stability, as well as an added influence, particularly in the eyes of the general public. The local assemblies should also seek official recognition (AUS 116).

Also in 1936, the national assembly determined to issue a regular newsletter every three months. Shoghi Effendi was delighted with this proposal, stating that it could render ‘a unique and much needed help’ to the national assembly’s efforts to establish the Baha'i administrative system and make its institutions function more effectively. It would keep the Baha'is well-informed about Baha'i events and developments, and would help to consolidate their ‘organic unity’ by bringing them within the ‘full orbit’ of the assembly’s jurisdiction. The bulletin should also be used to consolidate the foundations of the local assemblies (AUS 117). After receiving the first issue of the newsletter (the *Bahá'í Quarterly*, dated October 1936), Shoghi expressed his satisfaction. It was a new step for the further consolidation of the administration in their countries. He hoped that it would ‘fully serve its purpose’ by intensifying ‘the spirit of cooperation between the national assembly and all the local assemblies, groups, and isolated Baha'is. If properly utilized, it could be of ‘inestimable value’ by further enhancing the Baha'is’ knowledge and understanding of both the principles and actual functioning of the administration of the Faith, and by maintaining – or better, intensifying – their desire to promote and safeguard the interests of the Faith. He appealed to every Australasian Baha'i to make full and continued use of the newsletter, and to consider it as ‘a most effective means’ to their closer fellowship and deeper understanding of their duties and responsibilities as builders of Bahá'u'lláh's New World Order (AUS 121. On Shoghi's behalf).

3.7. Siegfried Schopflocher's visit (1936).¹¹ Again in 1936, the veteran Canadian Baha'i, Siegfried Schopflocher visited New Zealand and Australia as part of a tour which also took him to India and the Near East. Shoghi described Schopflocher as one of the most distinguished of the Western Baha'is, and had asked the national assembly to arrange for him to visit all of the Baha'i communities (including those in New Zealand if possible), making every effort to ensure that his visit was as productive as possible. It was a splendid opportunity for them to enrich their experiences in the Faith (AUS 118–19).

The visit was productive, with Schopflocher addressing public meetings as well as talking with the Baha'is about aspects of Baha'i administration

and the importance of Baha'i community life (BW7: 41–42). Writing to Baha'is in New Zealand and Australia in December, Shoghi expressed his pleasure at the reports he had received of the warm welcome which had been given to Schopflocher, this being evidence of the 'strong ties of fellowship' which united the Baha'is throughout the world. He hoped that the visit would serve to 'stimulate afresh' their energies (AUS 122, 123. On Shoghi's behalf). To the national assembly, he later wrote that he hoped that the spirit released by the visit would long sustain the Baha'is in their 'heavy task' of expanding the foundations of the Baha'i administrative order throughout the continent (AUS 125). To the Dunns, he wrote that Schopflocher's own report indicated that 'wonderful progress' had been achieved in Australasia, an achievement to which they had contributed a 'unique & exemplary' share (AUS 124).

3.8. Another development in 1936 was the initial planning of what was to become a **Baha'i Summer School at the village of Yerrinbool**, south of Sydney. This was the brainchild of Stanley and Mariette Bolton, who wished to use their property there for this purpose, and who raised the possibility with Shoghi Effendi. Replying in December 1936, Shoghi expressed his delight at the suggestion. Their intention was splendid and 'highly praiseworthy'. It was a 'magnificent plan' and an 'historic work'. They should submit the plan to the national assembly for its consideration and approval before making a definite start, however (AUS 123).

The national assembly evidently approved, and in May 1937, an official ceremony was held to 'open' the property. Writing to Hyde Dunn, Shoghi expressed his particular joy at this development. It was 'clear evidence' that the community was alive and progressing satisfactorily. He wished the Baha'is to help in whatever way they could to further this institution, which, if maintained and developed, could be of invaluable help in teaching the Cause (AUS 129). To Stanley Bolton, he expressed his joy at an initial meeting held at the school, and offered his 'hearty congratulations' to all those involved in establishing and running it, particularly the members of the Summer School Committee. This was a new national institution for them – a 'notable and historic step'. He hoped and prayed that the Baha'is would continue to support it, so that it would 'develop and flourish', and become a centre for 'intense and nation-wide teaching activity'. They should realize that it was their responsibility to maintain it and assist in its development. Future generations would 'befittingly extol' the work they had 'so nobly and splendidly initiated' (AUS 130).

3.9. **Expansion.** Baha'i expansion in Australasia at this time was painfully slow, with only a few new believers each year. The fewness of the number of Baha'is, however, meant that even such small gains were significant, as in March 1937, when Shoghi Effendi wrote to the national assembly of his pleasure at learning of two newly-enrolled Baha'is in Sydney (AUS 127), or other messages in which he welcomed the news of the enrolment of a single Baha'i, or the interest of a particular individual in the Faith. Nevertheless, there was a gradual extension in the number of localities in which Baha'is resided, rising to fourteen (10 in Australia, 4 in New Zealand) by 1937 (Table 2). The Perth Baha'is also formed a new local spiritual assembly in

| Year | Australia | New Zealand | Total |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------|
| 1925 (BYB1 ¹²) | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| 1928 (BW2) | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| 1930 (BW3) | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 1931 (BW4) | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 1933 (BW5) | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| 1935 (BW6) | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| 1937 (BW7) | 10 | 4 | 14 |

Sources: BYB1: 102–103; BW2: 182–3; 3: 217–18, 222; 4: 271, 273; 5: 426, 430; 6: 507, 510; 7: 556. Note: The list of localities supposedly possessing local assemblies seems inaccurate and is not included here.

Table 2: Growth in the number of Baha'i localities in Australasia.

1936, raising the number of local assemblies to four. Of the Australian localities in 1937, 2 were in New South Wales, 4 in South Australia, 3 in Victoria, and 1 in Western Australia. The Baha'is who had formerly lived in Queensland and Tasmania were no longer listed as being there, and as yet there were no Baha'is in the remote and sparsely populated Northern Territory.

3.10. The problem of distance. One continuing problem for the Australasian Baha'is was the difficulty and expense of travel. Australia is a large land mass (7,692,300 sq km / 2,969,228 sq mi, including Tasmania), and most of its population lived (as they live now) in a series of small coastal pockets surrounding the major cities. Thus in the southeast, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane are each about 500 miles distant from the next, and in the 1930s, this entailed train journeys of a day and a half to travel from one state capital to the next. Perth in the far west was 1,350 miles from Adelaide by sea, and its Baha'is thus largely isolated from the rest. To travel from New Zealand to Sydney was a four-day journey across the Tasman Sea (BW7: 26, 159).

These realities of distance had a major impact on the newly-developing national community and administration. Baha'is in the various local communities were not able to visit other Baha'is easily, and it was not until the late 1930s, for example, that members of the national assembly travelled from other centres to Melbourne and Brisbane to give public talks – the first in those cities since the early visits of the Dunns (AUS 78n). In these circumstances, correspondence and the circulation of *The Herald of the South* and the *Bahá'í Quarterly* had a particular importance in developing a broader sense of 'national' Baha'i identity. Similarly, the national assembly initially held only one week-long meeting each year, and for the rest of the time worked mainly by correspondence between its members. Again, after the first national convention in 1934, the inability of Baha'is to afford delegate's travelling expenses meant that the next national convention was not held until 1937, annual elections for the national assembly in the interim being conducted by post. Both the 1934 and 1937 conventions were held in Sydney as this was the easiest Australian city for the New Zealand delegates to travel to (BW7: 159).

The impact of distance was particularly severe for the Baha'is of Perth, who elected delegates for the national convention between 1937 and 1942, but had insufficient funds for travel expenses.¹³ Shoghi Effendi addressed this issue directly in November 1936: the fact that an assembly or community was financially unable to defray the expenses of its delegate or delegates was not a sufficient reason to deprive it of its 'sacred right of participation' in the national election and other convention activities. Every assembly had this right, no matter how poor it was. There could be no compromise with this principle. It was absolutely essential that the Baha'is understand and faithfully apply this principle, and it was the duty of the national assembly to ensure that it was carried out (AUS 120, on Shoghi's behalf). To the Perth Baha'is themselves, he later wrote of his 'keen appreciation and abiding gratitude for their self-sacrificial labours for the Cause'. He prayed that the obstacles they faced in sending a representative to the convention would be removed, and in particular that the financial position of the local Baha'is would gradually improve, enabling them to participate in this important national gathering (AUS 126, on Shoghi's behalf). In the event, it was not possible for them to attend, and in March 1937, Shoghi expressed his regret that full attendance at the convention would not be possible due to the long distances between the various centres (AUS 127).

3.11. Identity. As in other Western communities, the early Australasian Baha'is often inclined towards an 'inclusivistic' rather than 'exclusivistic' understanding of their religion¹⁴. Indeed, with much of the initial focus of the Dunns' teaching activities being directed towards members of the various 'new age' movements, such attitudes were particularly well established. Thus, many of the early Baha'is had ambiguous religious identities or multiple religious memberships, and there was a resistance by some both to stricter definition of Baha'i membership and a more organized form of community life. By the 1930s, Adelaide had become the most 'administration-minded' of the local assemblies, and proposed the adoption of an application form for Baha'i membership: the Auckland assembly initially objecting that this would only mark the beginning of 'dogma and ritual'.¹⁵ In the event, Shoghi Effendi approved the proposed form (AUS 85), but the question clearly remained controversial amongst the Australasian Baha'is, Shoghi subsequently advising that the issue be left for the national assembly to decide when it was elected (AUS 92). 'Inclusivism' was particularly well entrenched in the Melbourne Baha'i group – initially one of the largest – Ransom-Kehler complaining after a visit in October 1931 that some of those serving on the 'so-called' local assembly were not Baha'is at all, one leading Baha'i thinking that orthodox Christians working in their churches were of just as much value as the Baha'is in establishing the Kingdom of God, a view she clearly found incompatible with being a 'real' Baha'i. The next year, one of the local Baha'is reporting that only 'two or three' were left, the others having disassociated themselves because they felt that 'they could not give an assurance of love and loyalty in all things to the Guardian'.¹⁶ After the national assembly was formed a strict 'enrolments' procedure was instituted, would-be Baha'is having to associate with the community for a full year before the local assembly met with them to determine whether they

were sufficiently well-versed in the teachings and laws to be admitted as a voting member.¹⁷

3.12. Donations. Shoghi Effendi often praised the Australasian Baha'is for their financial contributions to the international fund in Haifa. Several of the local assemblies had early established the habit of sending off contributions to Haifa for various projects (e.g. the completion of the Western Pilgrim House; help for the Baha'is in Iran), and the national assembly continued this tradition. Thus in May 1935, Shoghi acknowledged a contribution of twenty pounds sterling, writing to Silver Jackman (the then national treasurer) of his loving appreciation of the spirit that had led them to make this donation. He prayed that God would abundantly reward them for their self-sacrifices in this connection (AUS 105). In May 1936, he acknowledged the receipt of another twenty pounds, writing that he well realized what sacrifices had been made in order to send it: The Australian and New Zealand Baha'is were few in numbers, and they were now bearing many expenses to maintain the Dunns (the assembly also faced financial difficulties with the *Herald of the South*). Their spirit of heroism and self-giving was wonderful. It would stand as landmarks in the history of the Faith in their countries, and attract the blessings and confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh like a magnet (AUS 114–15).

3.13. Shoghi Effendi's continuing encouragement. In May 1936, Shoghi again noted how much he appreciated the evidences of the Australasian Baha'is' devotion, steadfastness, and loyalty and his gratitude for their determination to persevere and overcome all the obstacles in their path (AUS 115). In June, he praised the national assembly members' 'incessant efforts' for the Faith, expressing his pride at what they were doing (AUS 117). In September, he again wrote of his pride in their achievements, particularly as he knew the circumstances under which they laboured. Their pioneering work was arduous and 'highly meritorious'. Their fidelity, diligence, and perseverance were dear to his heart (AUS 118). In November, he noted that the 'foundations' which the assembly was now laying 'with such assiduous care and exemplary loyalty' constituted a service that was 'truly historic' and 'highly meritorious in the sight of God. He felt deeply indebted to them for 'such splendid achievements' (AUS 120–21). In February 1937, he wrote congratulating the members of the assembly and its committees on the 'marvellous progress thus far achieved'. Also expressing his delight at the progress of the national assembly secretary's activities and her 'splendid achievements in both the teaching and administrative spheres of Baha'i service' (AUS 126). In April 1937, he cabled his 'heartfelt congratulations' and 'ardent loving prayers' to the participants, and a few days later his immense appreciation at the 'magnificent spirit' animating the convention (AUS 129).

Writing to Hyde Dunn in May 1937, Shoghi stated that he was 'most satisfied' with the condition of the Faith in Australasia, and cherished the 'highest hopes' for the future of its Baha'i community. It was true that their numbers were small and their material resources limited, but it was a cause for rejoicing that the Faith had at last been 'firmly and permanently established' there; that with the passing of every year (even every month) 'some definite progress' was achieved; and that, despite internal and external

opposition, the community was slowly but steadily ‘forging ahead’, confident in the divine confirmations and guidance of Bahá’u’lláh (AUS 129, on Shoghi’s behalf). In August, he wrote to the national assembly that he was delighted with ‘the manifold evidences’ of progress achieved by the Baha’is under its direction. He was proud of what the Australian and New Zealand Baha’is had accomplished, highly approved of their plans and projected enterprises, felt grateful for the spirit that animated them, and cherished bright hopes for the extension of their activities. They had achieved much, both in the teaching and administrative work. The assembly had provided ‘wise and effective leadership’, and had functioned with a remarkable loyalty and efficiency ever since its inception. The success of the most recent convention indicated the steady consolidation of the assembly and the loyalty and attachment it had awakened among the body of the Baha’is. He hoped that this confidence and the assembly members’ own sense of their heavy responsibilities for the extension and consolidation of the Baha’i work would be further deepened during the coming year (AUS 131).

4. The Dunns

Hyde and Clara Dunn occupied a unique role in the Australian Baha’i community during its formative period as pioneer teachers and ‘spiritual parents’ of the Baha’is.¹⁸ Their parental role – and their age – was explicitly recognized by the Baha’is’ habit of calling them ‘Father’ and ‘Mother Dunn’ (This was presumably derived from the Dunns themselves, who followed the old-fashioned English habit of referring to each other as ‘Father’ and ‘Mother’). In Western Baha’i history, this central role of particular individuals within a Baha’i community is unusual, the only ready comparison that comes to mind being the initial role of Ibrahim Kheiralla in the early American Baha’i community up until the time of his defection from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (i.e. 1894–1900).

Hyde had been born in London in perhaps 1855 (different dates are given). As a young man he worked as a salesman, and later migrated to the United States with his first wife, Fanny. He became a Baha’i in Seattle in about 1905, after hearing the pioneer Baha’i teacher Nat Ward Fitzgerald, and himself became a dedicated Baha’i teacher. Clara had also been born in London (1869), and had migrated to Canada with her family when she was still a baby. Married as a teenager, she was soon widowed. Entrusting her infant son to an elder brother to care for, she migrated to the state of Washington to work. She was first introduced to the Baha’i Faith by Hyde in 1907. The couple married in 1917, following the death of Hyde’s first wife, and in 1919, determined to follow ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s call to travel to teach the Faith. They arrived in Sydney on 10 April 1920, and after an initial period of ill-health and financial difficulty, Hyde was able to get work as a travelling salesman for a local milk company (shortly taken over by Nestlé). Outperforming the other salesmen, he was promoted to work at the interstate level, and thus travel much more widely.

The Dunns together attracted large numbers of people to become interested in the Faith, and were the primary teachers of those Australians who became Baha’is in the 1920s. Hyde finally retired in 1933, at the age of 77. He served on the newly-established national spiritual assembly during its first year of existence, but early in 1935 had a stroke, after which he had

to greatly curtail his Baha'i activities. He died in Sydney on 17 February 1941, aged 85, and was posthumously designated as a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi on 26 April 1952.¹⁹ Clara resumed travelling to visit the Baha'is throughout Australia after Hyde's death, initiating what was effectively a 'second chapter' of her Baha'i activities. She was appointed a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi as one of the second contingent, announced on 29 February 1952.²⁰ She died on 18 November 1960, aged 91.

Shoghi Effendi was enormously impressed by this elderly couple who had embarked on such a challenging new path at an advanced age, and then pursued it with enormous dedication and significant success, and during Hyde's lifetime he repeatedly heaped praise on them both for what they were doing. Thus, writing of the Dunns in a general letter to the Baha'is of Australasia in March 1923, Shoghi praised their 'marvellous energy', 'unwavering determination' and 'devoted labours' to spread the Baha'i teachings (AUS 14), whilst in other letters of the period he stated that they were blessed and assisted by the power of the Holy Spirit (AUS 16), and 'faithful and untiring pioneers of the Cause of God' (AUS 20). They were the 'indefatigable spiritual parents' of the Australian and New Zealand Baha'is; they had displayed a 'magnificent spirit of fidelity and devotion' in the propagation and consolidation of the Faith 'in those remote corners of the earth'; their 'memorable services' were graven upon Shoghi's heart, and stood as 'a remarkable testimony of the undiminished potency of the creative power of Bahá'u'lláh' (AUS 22). It was always an 'indescribable joy' to receive their letters, and learn of the 'marvellous progress' of their work. Their 'cherished names' were graven upon his heart 'in letters of gold', and the memory of their 'unremitting and selfless labours' was an inspiration to him. Their 'exemplary devotion' and 'unrivalled services' were being abundantly rewarded by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and by 'He' [Bahá'u'lláh] who loved and guided them, who would surely bless them 'ever more richly than before'. He assured them of his 'profound affection', 'ardent prayers', and 'heartfelt gratitude and appreciation' (AUS 26). They were his 'most precious' and 'unforgettable' fellow-workers. The 'sweet savours' of a letter from them refreshed his soul and eased the burden that often weighed heavily upon him. They were always close to his heart, ever the object of his prayers, and his 'constant companions in spirit'. Their services, 'indefatigable efforts', and 'exemplary achievements' were graven upon his heart (AUS 35).

When Clara was severely ill (1925), Shoghi assured Hyde that he loved her dearly, and offered his fervent prayers for the recovery of one to whom he was 'eternally grateful'. He also offered continued prayers for Hyde's 'happiness, good health & success' (AUS 37). A year later, when Clara had recovered, he replied to a letter from her, expressing his joy at hearing from her after such a long silence. Her 'beautiful shining example' and 'restless tireless selfless efforts', together with 'the splendid activities' of her 'spiritual children' throughout Australasia were an inspiration for him. He prayed that she and Hyde might be kept happy and safe under 'His' [Abdu'l-Bahá's?] protection, and their 'magnificent career of exemplary Service' might be extended in scope and deepened in influence, and they might achieve their heart's desire (AUS 47). Again, in 1927, Shoghi wrote that he continued to pray from the bottom of his heart for their 'success,

welfare & spiritual advancement' – that 'health, strength & joy' be abundantly bestowed upon them so that they might continue their 'unsurpassed pioneer service' to the Cause. Their names, their services, and their 'high endeavours' were graven upon his heart. Their example was truly inspiring. Their collaboration lifted 'a considerable part' of Shoghi's burden from his shoulders. Their zeal and constancy hastened him in his work. They were 'tenderly remembered' by him when he visited the Baha'i Shrines, and the Haifa Baha'is hungered for the welcome news of their 'admirable achievements' (AUS 51).

In 1928, he wrote that their letters, with their joyful news, were a source of 'abiding joy, strength & consolation' for him in his work. He admired the spirit of faith and constancy that animated them in their endeavours. They would surely 'be abundantly and increasingly blessed' by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and their names remembered for ever with 'gratitude, admiration & pride'. The rising Baha'i generation would extol and magnify their achievements. They occupied an abiding place in the hearts of Bahiyyih Khánúm and himself (AUS 53). Again, in 1929, Shoghi wrote of his admiration for the Dunns' 'unwavering constancy' and 'unflinching determination' to carry on the 'sacred work' entrusted to their charge. They were often in his thoughts, and he trusted that 'the Beloved' [Abdu'l-Bahá] would graciously assist them to bring their 'unexcelled and historic mission' to a glorious and successful conclusion (AUS 54). Their services were steadfast and splendid, and were keenly appreciated by him. He prayed that they might be strengthened in their work, enabling them to render memorable services, and – in his secretary's words – 'live to see with human eyes' the fruits of their selfless endeavours, courage, self-sacrifice, and 'above all' their 'unflinching faith even at the darkest moments' (AUS 55). Similarly, in 1930, he wrote that a letter from them always imparted joy and strength to his heart. They were 'heroic and glorious pioneers' of the Baha'i Cause, and in the future, countless lips would utter their names with veneration and praise. Their memory was immortal. They should always be happy (AUS 57–58). He prayed for their good health, happiness, success, and spiritual advancement (AUS 59). Again, in 1931, he stated that their services had endeared them to the Baha'is of East and West as well as to himself. The record of their glorious work was imperishable. He prayed that 'Abdu'l-Bahá would protect, sustain, cheer and bless them (AUS 60). They were both so dear and near to him. The memory of their accomplishments, and 'above all' the consciousness of the spirit that animated them, was a source of inspiration to him (AUS 61).

In 1927, a plan was mooted for some of the Australasian Baha'is to finance a pilgrimage to Haifa for the Dunns. Asked by the Dunns to comment on the advisability of this plan, Shoghi stated that it was a matter entirely for the donors to decide after prayerful meditation and consultation. He welcomed and endorsed whatever decision they made (AUS 52). Finally, it was arranged that Clara only would make the pilgrimage in April 1932 (Hyde had not yet retired), Shoghi eagerly welcoming her projected visit, and regarding it as a well deserved bounty after 'such a splendid record of unstinting and exemplary service', but regretted the inability of Hyde to accompany her (AUS 61). He eagerly awaited the opportunity to meet her (AUS 63). After she had finally arrived in Haifa, Shoghi wrote to Hyde how

very much they missed him, and reiterated his loving invitation to Hyde to come 'for we all long to meet you face to face & congratulate you in person upon the magnificent services you have rendered to the Cause. Again, he praised the Dunns' 'continued & self-sacrificing endeavours'. He also urged the necessity of Hyde taking good care of his 'precious health' in light of his 'strenuous & high endeavours' (AUS 68). Whatever the future might have in store for us, it was necessary to persevere 'under all circumstances', and never allow any form of depression to cloud 'our vision of the future glory of the Cause of God' (AUS 70).

In 1933, Shoghi again wrote of his 'pleasure & satisfaction' at receiving letters from Hyde. He deeply valued his services, and above all the spirit that animated them. He assured Clara of his 'keen & abiding appreciation of her constant and self-sacrificing labours'. Hyde was 'the father' of the Australian Baha'i community, and deserved the credit for most of what had been achieved. Shoghi hoped that he would continue to render distinguished service to the Faith (AUS 79–80).

The culmination of the Dunns' initial efforts was achieved in 1934 with the election of the national spiritual assembly. Shoghi wrote to Hyde that he fully shared his joy, gratitude, and deepest satisfaction at the 'fruition' of his 'arduous', 'historic', and 'exemplary' labours. His 'magnificent work' for the Cause had now been crowned. The 'supreme concourse' glorified and extolled the endeavours which he and Clara had 'so devotedly and heroically exerted'.²¹ Future generations would magnify their great and unforgettable achievements. Shoghi was deeply thankful and proud of all that they had done. He prayed that God would continue to light the path they were destined to follow (AUS 93–94).

Early in 1935, Hyde had a stroke, and was confined to bed, being nursed by his wife and by Stanley and Mariette Bolton. Shoghi expressed his distress at learning of the illness of such a 'precious', 'dearly-beloved', and 'magnificent' pioneer of the Faith. He offered prayers at the Shrines for his recovery, welfare, success, and happiness. Hyde had set 'an unsurpassed example' to future generations who would serve the Cause throughout the world. Shoghi's gratitude to the Dunns knew no bounds, and his affection for them was beyond description. The concourse on high was proud of their 'eminent and unforgettable accomplishments'. Clara should, of course, resign from the local assembly to have more time to take care of her husband, if that was necessary, but if possible she should remain on the assembly (AUS 104–5).

In September, Shoghi wrote to the national assembly that he was 'grieved beyond words' to learn that Hyde was growing so weak physically, and asked them to assure the Dunns of his prayers for Hyde's recovery (AUS 108). By early 1936, Hyde's condition had improved somewhat, Shoghi writing to Clara of his relief at the news concerning his 'much-loved and illustrious friend', and assured them both of his prayers. Hyde had tasted 'the first fruits' of his devoted labours and 'historic services'. Future generations would reap the harvest and gather the 'rich fruits' which his pioneer work in the 'Divine Vineyard' would have produced (AUS 110–11). By April, Hyde was well enough to consider resuming his Baha'i activities. Shoghi was overjoyed, but counselled against the ambitious teaching plan which Hyde had proposed (AUS 113–14).

Shoghi's praises continued over Hyde's final years. In January 1937, he expressed his joy at receiving messages from the Dunns. They were often in his thoughts, and he prayed for them daily. His heart smiled with gladness and gratitude when he recalled their services, devotion, and perseverance, and their love for the Cause, which they were 'still serving with such exemplary faith & fidelity' (AUS 124–25). In May, he prayed that 'the Beloved' would bless Hyde's efforts, guide his steps, enable him to 'still further ennable' the record of his 'unique' and 'superb' services, and aid him to realize his 'highest wishes' in the service of the Faith (AUS 130). In January 1939, he wrote to Clara that she and Hyde – his 'dearly-loved, distinguished & unforgettable co-worker and brother' – had together accomplished so much, and had worked 'devotedly and magnificently' for the promotion of the Faith (AUS 143). In March, he wrote to Hyde, again stating how his heart rejoiced whenever he heard from him: his heart was 'inexpressibly gladdened' when he read his letter. He felt proud and thankful when he thought of Hyde and what he had done. Future generations would appraise his accomplishments and extol the spirit that had prompted him in his 'historic labours'. Hyde should be happy and grateful to have lived to have seen the 'glorious harvest' which it had been his 'incomparable privilege' to gather and offer to the Faith after many years of 'tireless' and 'pains-taking' effort on his part. Whilst his advanced age and its 'attendant ailments and disabilities' meant that he was no longer able to take as active a share in the work as he wished, his 'very presence' was in itself a 'valuable asset' for the Australian Baha'i community, and as such surely compensated for any lack in what he could do. He should therefore take 'the utmost care' of his 'dear self', preserve his health, and avoid any activity that would tire him. He should always be assured that he was in Shoghi's thoughts and prayers. Shoghi also prayed for those who were caring for Hyde (AUS 151–52).

Also in 1939, Shoghi forwarded to the Dunns a copy of his recently published book, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, in which he extolled the audacity, consecration, tenacity, self-renunciation and 'unstinted devotion' of those pioneers who had abandoned their homes and forsaken 'their all' to hoist the banner of Bahá'u'lláh in the uttermost corners of the globe.²² As his secretary explained, Shoghi had sent them this gift as a token of 'abiding appreciation' of their 'long-standing' and 'historic' services, and as a recognition of and tribute to the 'unique' and 'magnificent' services they had rendered in teaching. The book would inspire and guide others to follow in their footsteps and emulate their noble example (AUS 152).

Shoghi's tributes following Hyde's death were fulsome. In February 1941, he cabled the Australian and New Zealand national spiritual assembly that he was 'Inexpressibly grieved' at the loss of this 'heroic pioneer', whose 'outstanding achievements' and 'exemplary spirit' shed an 'imperishable lustre' over the annals of the Formative Age of the Faith. The 'Concourse on High' extolled his virtues, magnified his accomplishments, and welcomed his admission into their ranks. The Baha'is should hold memorial gatherings for him. Shoghi also sent fifty pounds as his contribution for a tomb for Hyde (AUS 163–64).

Notifying the American Baha'is of Hyde's death, Shoghi reported that he both sorrowed in their loss, and participated in their rejoicing at the triumph Hyde had won. His 'magnificent career' as a 'veteran warrior' of

the Faith reflected 'the purest lustre' of the 'world historic mission' of the American Baha'is. He joined three other heroes from the American Baha'i community (Keith Ransom-Kehler, Martha Root, and May Maxwell) whose dust attested to 'the first vital sparks' of the American Baha'is' spiritual dominion. They too should hold a memorial gathering (in the Wilmette temple) 'befitting the rank of Australia's spiritual conqueror'.²³

To Clara, Shoghi expressed his 'overwhelming sorrow' at the loss of Hyde, whom he characterized as being 'that great-hearted', 'high-minded', and 'exemplary' disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He also rejoiced, however, at Hyde's elevation 'to so exalted a seat among the immortals in the Abhá Kingdom', and his reunion with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whom he had served so lovingly, valiantly, effectively, and long. He was the 'spiritual conqueror' of Australasia, and by his spirit, example, and accomplishments would continue to inspire the rising generation not only in Australasia, but throughout the Baha'i world. The memory of his deeds would shed 'imperishable lustre' on the annals of the first Baha'i century. Hyde was a 'noble and exemplary soul' who had gone to reap his 'everlasting reward' in the presence of 'our Lord Bahá'u'lláh'. Shoghi had loved, trusted, and admired Hyde greatly, and now deeply felt his loss. Hyde had left behind him a 'wonderful harvest', which was the fruit of his and Clara's 'united and untiring service'. She had every reason to rejoice that the two of them were so united in this life at such a time in history when they could dedicate their lives 'to such a glorious Cause' (AUS 165–66).

To one of the Australian Baha'is, Shoghi wrote of Hyde as a 'great and immortal soul', whose work would inspire the rising generation to arise and follow 'his glorious example' (AUS 165). Writing later to the national assembly, Shoghi described Hyde as having been a 'great leader' and a 'stalwart upholder' of Bahá'u'lláh's new World Order in Australasia. His influence would continue to live, and the example he had set would inspire the rising generation 'to perform deeds as great and brilliant' as those which would 'ever remain associated with his name'. From his 'exalted station', Hyde would intercede on their behalf. Future Baha'i historians would acclaim Hyde as Australia's 'spiritual Conqueror', and the Baha'is should strive to emulate him (AUS 168). His services had been 'truly remarkable', and had added a 'golden page' to the history of the Formative Age of the Faith. Together with Clara, his whole-hearted response to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's call; their 'quiet and unassuming sacrifices for the Cause; the wisdom and permanence' with which he had laid the foundations of the work in Australasia; and the 'faithful love' with which they had tended 'the growing institutions of the Faith' had constituted a landmark in the victorious progress of the Cause (AUS 167, on Shoghi's behalf). In *God Passes By* (1944), Shoghi referred to Hyde as 'great-hearted and heroic' (GPB 308).

5. *The Herald of the South*

Bertram Dewing, a new Baha'i in Auckland, wrote to Shoghi Effendi in April 1925 with the news that he proposed to establish a Baha'i magazine for Australia and New Zealand. Shoghi offered encouragement, stating that he would follow its development 'with keen interest', and assuring him of his desire 'to help and promote its interests to the fullest possible extent'. Dewing's 'charming letter' had truly gladdened his heart. He assured him of his 'love,

appreciation and fervent prayers', sent two photographs of the Shrine of the Báb and nearby gardens, and suggested the title of the magazine. Dewing would be able to get international news from the copy of the Haifa assembly circular letter which was already sent to the Dunns (AUS 31–32).

After the first issue of the new magazine appeared (dated September 1925), Shoghi expressed his joy at the news of 'this new and notable Baha'i enterprise', a service 'so lovingly and spontaneously rendered' by the Australasian Baha'is. He assured Dewing of his 'steadfast prayers for the speedy expansion and consolidation of this youngest of all Baha'i magazines', and of his 'earnest endeavour' to enable it to attain the 'high standard worthy of the bearer of such a noble message'. The author and publisher should include both matters that were 'strictly Baha'i in character' and topics of 'a humanitarian, ethical and religious nature'. Thus, the readers 'while witnessing to the liberal and broad-minded attitude of the Baha'i Cause', might also receive their full share of inspiration which 'only a clear and direct statement of the Divine Message' could impart. Although the new magazine's 'voice' was still feeble, it joined its sister Baha'i journals in raising the call of the new day of God. Perseverance was required, and the endeavour made to 'reach every circle and every home', so that the light it bore might, in the fullness of time, 'illuminate with its healing rays the uttermost corners' of Australasia (AUS 35–36).

In subsequent letters, Shoghi offered further encouragement, expressing the hope that *Herald of the South* would continually progress, and add to its importance in attracting the attention of people to the Faith – contributing 'its destined share to the progress and consolidation of the Cause of God'. Any difficulties that were encountered should be borne patiently – awaiting that 'the future should give us our reward' – because a good periodical that was fully representative of the Baha'i spirit and teachings was 'the greatest help' which the Movement could have in establishing itself in a country. Dewing should regularly send him a copy ([1926] AUS 45).

Shoghi Effendi had 'great hopes' for the magazine, and trusted that the editor would be 'guided and strengthened in his noble undertaking' (AUS 46). He prayed for its 'steady development and growing influence', that its voice would grow in strength and power, and its pages 'increasingly reflect the dynamic spirit of the Faith', and mirror forth the 'ever-expanding activities' of the Baha'is in Australasia and 'distant lands'. Those involved in its production should try from the outset to maintain a high standard for its articles. These should be 'broad in view, clear in style, and scholarly in their development of the different subjects'. The general public should be able to find it a paper 'fully worthwhile to read and meditate upon'. He hoped that its readership would increase, and urged the Baha'is to persevere in their efforts, not letting obstacles dampen their goal and determination. They should rest assured that 'the Power of God' which was reinforcing their efforts would, in the end, triumph and enable them to fulfil their cherished desire (AUS 46–47). He read the magazine with 'deep joy and thankfulness', and continually prayed that the 'invincible power of Bahá'u'lláh' would add to their present possibilities, 'extend the sphere' of the magazine, and enable them 'individually and collectively, to mirror forth the beauty and the power of this Divine Revelation' (AUS 49). Again, in September 1931, Shoghi wrote that the *Herald* was 'the most effective instrument as yet devised for the spread of the Cause in that land'. He cherished the brightest

hopes for it. The spirit of Bahá'u'lláh would assuredly 'inspire its promoters' and 'reinforce their efforts' (AUS 61–62).

As the magazine developed, a wider circle of Baha'is in Australia as well as New Zealand became involved in its production. When Dewing left New Zealand for a while (in the late 1920s), overall responsibility for the *Herald* was taken over by the Adelaide local assembly. At various times, there were difficulties in securing sufficient funding to produce the magazine, and in 1932, there was a suggestion to temporarily have it published in Canada in recognition of promised financial support from May Maxwell in Montreal. This idea was strongly rejected by Shoghi Effendi, who stressed the importance of continuing to have the *Herald* produced in Australasia, the continent to which it belonged. To move it elsewhere would be contrary to the interests of the Cause: those who wanted to support it would not be limited by geographical boundaries. There was also discussion as to whether it should be produced in Australia or New Zealand. In response, Shoghi stated that he wished the local Baha'is to make that decision, remembering that it was always with cooperation and consultation that the interests of the Cause were furthered. Whatever was decided, the Baha'is in both countries should participate in the work, and consider the magazine as representing all of them (AUS 68–69). An international Baha'i youth section was added after Dewing's return in 1932 (BW5: 128).

Following the establishment of a national spiritual assembly for Australia and New Zealand, the *Herald* came under its aegis, and was managed by a committee appointed by the assembly. In May 1935, Shoghi Effendi wrote to the national treasurer that he was very pleased at the improvement in the standard of the magazine, and at how effectively it was being used by the Baha'is in their teaching work. He advised that the editors should try to make it as interesting and stimulating to non-Baha'is as possible. Specifically, more emphasis should be laid on the number and quality of articles, and that these should cover a wide range of social, religious, and humanitarian topics, and not just focus on specifically Baha'i subjects. The science section was doubtless important, and had a particular appeal to young people and newcomers. The Esperanto section was very useful, and added greatly to the international character of the magazine (AUS 105). Again, in April 1936, he informed the national assembly that he was encouraging all English-speaking Baha'is worldwide to contribute articles as often as possible, and was specifically asking the American Baha'is to respond (AUS 112). Apart from getting enough material of a high literary standard, the national assembly evidently also faced financial problems in continuing publication, Shoghi urging them to continue with the magazine despite these problems, and not to feel discouraged. He valued their self-sacrificial and sustained efforts in this regard (AUS 118).

The original series of the *Herald* was continued until July 1960 (volume 28). It then went out of production for a few years until about 1964, continuing then until 1970 (volume 34). An entirely new series was started in 1974.²⁴

6. Indigenes

As far as is known there was no attempt by the Australian Baha'is to contact the Aboriginal population until the 1950s. By contrast, a number of contacts were made with the **Maoris** in New Zealand from the 1930s

onwards, Shoghi Effendi encouraging the Baha'i's to teach them. Thus, to one of the New Zealand Baha'i's, his secretary wrote how wonderful it would be if 'the Cause' could enter the ranks of the Maoris and give them 'a new life and spirit'. The Faith was not only for highly civilized people, but for 'backward races', who would thereby obtain 'true social and intellectual equality with those who are at present their rulers and superiors'. The benefits which 'civilized' people might obtain from being Baha'i's could not be fully appreciated at this early stage in the Faith's development, but the benefits for people like the Maori would be much greater. It was difficult for them to gain genuine equality through legal enactments and secular education, but through the Baha'i teachings, members of the different races would consider themselves as 'true brethren and co-workers in the Faith of God' (BW5: 127).

The first contacts seem to have been made by Keith Ransom-Kehler, who during her visit in 1931, made a special point of visiting Maori villages (Whakarewarewa and Orakei) and speaking of the Baha'i teachings to groups who had gathered in her honour. To these she emphasized the Baha'i teachings of the unity of all humankind and the unity of religions. She also stated that the Baha'i ideal of unity did not entail the loss of Maori cultural distinctiveness. In a unified humanity, each people would achieve their own highest development (BW5: 133–34). Shoghi Effendi was delighted when he heard of these contacts, having already encouraged the New Zealand Baha'i's to secure a translation of Esslemont's book into Maori, so as to enable 'some real work' (of Baha'i teaching) to be started among them. (AUS 64). In 1932, he instructed that a 'prompt translation' be made (AUS 66), but this proposal was rejected by the New Zealand Baha'i's on the grounds that: (1) most of the Maori could read and speak English better than they could their own native language; (2) it might not be possible to convey the true meaning of the Baha'i writings in the Maori language; and (3) it was difficult to find a translator who would understand the spirit of and letter of the Baha'i teachings and was a good Maori-English scholar. Instead, they produced a pamphlet which was translated into Maori by G. G. Paul and others (BW5: 134). 'Te Whakatikenga Pahai' ('The Baha'i Cause') was published in 1933,²⁵ Shoghi expressing his deep appreciation of the work (AUS 84, 101).

7. Racial prejudice

The unofficial immigration policy of the Australian government from the establishment of the country in 1901 until the late 1960s was to confine immigration to Caucasians and exclude non-whites. This was the 'White Australia Policy', and was designed to preserve the racial composition and way of life of the original British and Irish settlers. The policy excluded Pacific Islanders and Africans, but was most particularly directed at Asians, who were regarded as a potential threat, with large numbers of would-be migrants in nearby countries who, if admitted, could easily come to outnumber white Australians and take away jobs by accepting lower wages. For this latter reason, the policy was supported by the trade unions. The policy was progressively dismantled in the late 1960s. A 'Dictation Test' was employed from 1902 until 1958 to exclude unwanted would-be migrants. Based on a similar test in Natal (1897), it consisted of administering a test

in an unfamiliar European language to non-Europeans and those deemed political undesirables (e.g. Gaelic for the anti-fascist Egon Kisch in 1934).

In 1925, one of the new Australian Baha'is evidently asked Shoghi Effendi to comment on the **White Australia policy**. Esslemont replied on Shoghi Effendi's behalf. The letter is unusual, in that it does not have any counter-signature from Shoghi himself (the letter is dated April 1925 when Shoghi appears to have been in Haifa).²⁶ It is a robust attack on racism, Esslemont emphasizing that Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá had taught the necessity of abolishing all racial and national prejudices, and of equal justice for people of all races. Thus, the White Australia policy of excluding Asian immigrants on grounds of race found no justification in the Baha'i teachings. To the contrary, it was clearly unjust for whites to annex a country previously exclusively inhabited by coloured people and then proceed to forbid the admission of coloured peoples, particularly so in a country like Australia, which was both so large, and in some areas so much better suited for coloured rather than white people. Undoubtedly it was true that a country with a relatively high standard of living and culture would suffer if it freely admitted people who were used to a lower standard and allowed them 'unrestricted rights of commercial and industrial competition', and this problem would continue even if all racial prejudice was abandoned.

The Baha'i solution was to educate people of both races in the Baha'i teachings. The whites had to cease to regard themselves as 'superior', and abandon the concept that skin colour provided any legitimate index of the superiority of one group of people over another (there were many good coloured people, and many bad whites). They had no innate right to exploit, take advantage of, or even exterminate others on the basis of 'the survival of the fittest'. They must adopt a policy of even-handed justice towards all. Both white and coloured races had an equal right to live and have access to suitable land on which to live. In practice, that land might vary, with different groups being given preference to the lands which were most suited climatically to their health and well-being (whites to cooler areas; coloured people to warmer areas). Again, 'backward' races had to be educated, their latent talents developed, and their standard of living and culture raised as much as possible. If this occurred, then their characteristics which others found objectionable would disappear. Nor were the 'advanced' races free from objectionable characteristics, such as 'commercial greed, love of domination, materialistic conceptions, [and] want of spirituality'. By true education and religion, these characteristics also had to be got rid of.

With such education of all races, then questions such as coloured immigration into Australia would be determined by an impartial and representative international tribunal which would decide what was best in the interests of humanity as a whole (considering population pressures and the suitability of particular areas for settlement), and not simply by those who had seized territory, and then dictated to the rest of the world who would be allowed admission to it.

All such questions could be satisfactorily solved only through the application of *all* Baha'i principles, in this case, this included: the abolition of racial and national prejudices; the necessity for universal education; the establishment of a universal league of nations that would have supranational authority; the replacement of international power politics by impartial

arbitration; the introduction of an international language to promote international understanding; and the replacement of materialism and selfish greed by true religion and mutual love. The ideas of the oneness of God, of religion, and of humanity had to be instilled in the minds of children throughout the world, such that when a generation grew up that was thoroughly imbued with these ideals, the solution of the economic and political problems which now caused so much misery, strife, and bloodshed would become easy. In the meantime, compromise was necessary to modify political and economic affairs so as to advance justice for all, and move away from the exclusive advantage of any one group. For Esslemont (he was here at pains to emphasize that his remarks were his own opinions), the solution of the world's vexatious problems lay in the growth of the Baha'i movement. The steady trend of public opinion worldwide towards acceptance of the Baha'i principles was also encouraging (and was one of the clearest proofs of Baha'u'llah's prophethood), the White Australia policy being but one of the 'backward eddies' in this forward current (AUS 27–29).

Suggested citation

Peter Smith, 'Shoghi Effendi and the Baha'is of Australia and New Zealand, 1922–1937', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 69–96. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.69/1>.

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Endnotes

1. The first two papers in the series are of his letters to the Baha'is of India and Burma during the 1920s and 1930s. See Peter Smith, 'Shoghi Effendi's letters to the Baha'is of India and Burma during the 1920s'. *Baha'i Studies Review*, 13, 2005, pp. 15–40; and Peter Smith, 'Shoghi Effendi's letters to the Baha'is of India and Burma during the 1930s'. *Baha'i Studies Review*, 17, 2011, pp. 47–86. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1386/bsr.17.47_1.
2. *Messages to the Antipodes: Communications from Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'í Communities of Australasia*, ed. Graham Hassall, Mona Vale: Bahá'i Publications Australia, 1997. All references to this volume in the text are abbreviated to 'AUS'. It replaced two earlier volumes: *Arohanui: Letters from Shoghi Effendi to New Zealand*. Suva: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1982; and *Letters from the Guardian to Australia and New Zealand, 1923–1957*. Sydney, NSW: National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia, 1970.
3. The letters by John Esslemont (April – May 1925 [AUS 23–34]) are far more 'personalistic' than the rest, and there is one letter by him – to Major Norman MacLeod, dated 19 April 1925 – which deals with a substantive issue (racial prejudice) but lacks a confirmatory postscript by Shoghi Effendi (AUS 26–29).

4. On the history of the Baha'i Faith in Australia and New Zealand see the successive volumes of *Bahá'í World* (here abbreviated to 'BW'): BW4: 83–85; 5: 123–34; 6: 23; 7: 26–27, 41–42, 71–73, 159–60 and the various articles by Graham Hassall on Australia: 'The Baha'i Faith in Australia, 1920–1963'. Paper presented to the Second Baha'i History Conference, Los Angeles, August–September 1984'; 'Outpost of a world religion: The Bahá'í Faith in Australia, 1920–1947'. *Journal of Religious History* 16:3 (1991), pp. 315–38; and 'Outpost of a world religion: The Bahá'í Faith in Australia, 1920–1947'. In *Bahá'ís in the West*, ed. Peter Smith. Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions, Vol. 14. Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 2004, 201–226. For more recent developments see Hassall, 'The Baha'i Faith in Australia, 1947–1963'. *Journal of Religious History*, 36:4 (2012), pp. 563–576. Steve Cooney has kindly alerted me to a preliminary study of the New Zealand Baha'i by Joan Camrass, *Resolute Advance: A History of the Bahá'í Faith in New Zealand, 1912–2001*, Auckland: Viking Press 2001. See also David Brown-Carr, 'The Australian-New Zealand Bahá'í Connection: The First 75 Years' in *75 Years of the Bahá'í Faith in Australasia: Proceedings from the 1995 National Bahá'í Studies Conference*. N.S.W.: Bahá'í Studies Conference (1995) Sydney. Roseberry, NSW, Association for Bahá'í Studies – Australia: 7–28).
5. Martha Root (1872–1939) was an American Baha'i who travelled widely to promote the Baha'i religion. See M. R. Garis. *Martha Root: Lioness at the Threshold*. Wilmette, Ill.: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1983, pp. 186–195; Barron Harper, *Lights of Fortitude: Glimpses into the Lives of the Hands of the Cause of God*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1977, pp. 112–22. There is a brief summary in Peter Smith. *A Concise Encyclopedia of the Bahá'í Faith*, Oxford: Oneworld, 2002, p. 298.
6. Unknown to the Baha'is, Root was under security surveillance in Australia during both her 1924 and 1939 visits. The details of the surveillance are unknown as the relevant file was later lost or discarded.
7. Hassall, 'Outpost' in *Baha'is in the West*, p. 207.
8. Keith Ransom-Kehler (1876–1933) was a prominent American Baha'i. See Harper, *Lights*, pp. 99–109; also Smith. *Concise Encyclopedia*, pp. 288–89. Ransom-Kehler was in Australia between September and November 1931 (Hassall, 'Outpost'). Her brief visit to New Zealand was probably made after this. By the end of December, she was back in Sydney ready to sail to India (AUS 64). I assume that the reference to her being in New Zealand in 1930 (BW5: 133) is erroneous. Certainly, there is no reference to her visit in the Auckland assembly report for the period (BW4: 85).
9. On the early Baha'i Administrative Order see Peter Smith. *The Babi and Baha'i Religions: From Messianic Shi'ism to a World Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, pp. 120–22.
10. Shoghi Effendi. *Baha'i Administration*. New York: Baha'i Publishing Committee, 1928.
11. On Siegfried Schopflocher (1877–1953) see Harper, *Lights*, pp. 384–90; also Smith, *Concise Encyclopedia*, p. 306.
12. What became *The Bahá'í World* was initially called the *Bahá'í Year Book*, v.1 (1925–1926). New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1926, acquiring and retaining its new title from volume 2 onwards.
13. Hassall, 'Outpost'.
14. Smith, *Babi and Baha'i Religions*, pp. 109–10, 112–13, 181–84.
15. Hassall, 'Baha'i Faith', p. 3.
16. Hassall, 'Hyde and Clara Dunn and the Victorian Baha'is'.
17. Hassall, 'Outpost'.
18. On Hyde Dunn see Graham Hassall, 'The Baha'i Faith in Australia, 1920–1934: Some Notes on John and Clara Hyde-Dunn'. *Baha'i Studies Bulletin*, 1983, 2:1, pp. 8–31; BW9: 593–97; Harper, *Lights*, pp. 60–71. On Clara see BW13: 859–62; Harper, pp. 349–61.
19. AUS 321; Universal House of Justice, *The Ministry of the Custodians: An Account of the Stewardship of the Hands of the Cause*. Haifa: Baha'i World Centre, 1992, xxii.
20. Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World, 1950–1957*. 2nd ed. Wilmette IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1971, p. 21.
21. The 'Supreme Concourse' (*malá' al-a'lá*) is a term used by Baha'is for the gathering of holy souls in the angelic spiritual realm.



22. Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*. Rev. ed. Wilmette IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1963, p. 7.
23. Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to America: Selected Letters and Cablegrams Addressed to the Bahá'ís of North America, 1932–1946*. Wilmette IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1947, p. 45.
24. William P. Collins, *Bibliography of English-Language Works on the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths, 1844–1985*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1990, p. 174.
25. Anonymous (1933), *Te Whakatikenga Pahai Te Aonga Ake o Te Ra Hou* [The Bahai Cause, the Dawn of a New Day]. Auckland, N.Z., M. Smethurst.
26. Shoghi Effendi normally added a postscript to outgoing letters written on his behalf. I wonder whether in this case he may have wished to distance himself slightly from the answer on account of the necessarily political nature of the question: clearly racism is condemned in the Baha'i teachings, but this is a comment on the approved policy of an existing government.



Dreams and their Interpretation in the Baha'i Religion Some preliminary remarks¹

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Abstract

This paper provides an outline of the importance of dreams and their interpretation in the Bahá'í Religion. After some general remarks on dreams, dreams and dream interpretation in Islam will be discussed, since they provide an archetype for the Bahá'í context. Statements on dreams by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá will be examined. Finally, a dream interpretation by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Ottoman Turkish that contains significant Islamic elements, will be commented on and a provisional translation of it appended.

Keywords

dreams
dream interpretation
sleep
inspiration
revelation
dream classification

Introduction

Dreams are a universal phenomenon and dream interpretation is an ancient and universal practice. There are books and scrolls extant on the subject, dating back to Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Ancient Greeks and the Romans. In available sources from Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, in the *Iliad* of Homer, also in the Old Testament and in pre-Islamic Arab peoples, dreams are sources of divination, that is, predictions of future events. In some indigenous cultures dreams are identical with reality or are believed to be fulfilled. In Ancient Greece, dreams were used to provide cures for ailments through divine power. The Greeks called this practice *egkoimesis*, and the Romans *incubatio*. Dream incubation is commonly associated with the cult of Asklepios but is apparently still an institution in the Mediterranean. Perhaps the most famous book on dream interpretation is by the Greek Artemidoros of Ephesos, called *Oneirocritica* (from Greek *oneiros*, 'dream').²

Overall, messengers and prophets of God have received their first revelations, inspirations, commands or glad-tidings through dreams and visions, sometimes through angels or other intermediaries such as Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Muhammad, the Mormon 'prophet' Joseph Smith or the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. Also, scientists claimed to have solutions for intricate problems or inventions, in their dreams.

Dreams and their interpretation in Islam

During the period of classical Islam (9.-14. centuries A.D.) dream interpretation, among the ancient sciences, was passed on to Islam through translations of Greek and Roman classics. Dreams (sing. *ru'yá*) and their interpretation (*ta'bír*) have had a central place among Muslims.³ Countless

books on dream interpretation in the Middle East are offered – and even online interpreters and digital dream encyclopaedias on the internet.⁴ Still popular in the Islamic world is also the practice of *istikhára*⁵ ('the search for the good') for invoking dreams in order to arrive at a solution of a problem. It is moreover noteworthy that *ta'bír*⁶ was utilised for political claims and legitimization of rulers,⁷ the legitimization of the four Sunni schools of law (*madháhib al-arba'a*),⁸ or as a means to evaluate *ahádith* (Islamic traditions, sg. *hádith*).⁹

With respect to dreams and *ahádith* as a source of authority in Islam, it can be said that so-called 'legitimizing-edifying dreams' were utilized for decision-making, the establishment of preferences, and the approval of ideas. The same type of dreams offered guidelines for right conduct, thoughts and reactions in definite situations in the daily lives of Muslims. 'Legitimizing-edifying dreams' also had an important function in disputes among the Sunni *madháhib* through the way the four jurists were presented in dreams, how these should be understood with regard to the jurists' influence and status in the Islamic *umma* (community), and their value and trustworthiness as the founders of eponymous schools of law.¹⁰

The revelation of the Qur'an (Q.) itself commenced with a vision or a dream in which the angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad (Sura 96), which is also transmitted in a *hadíth*: 'The commencement of the Divine Inspiration to God's Apostle was in the form of good righteous (true) dreams in his sleep.'¹¹

The Qur'an itself contains some passages about dreams and their interpretation. The most famous is in the story of Joseph, 'the best of stories' (*ahsan al-qasás*, Q. 12:3) in the *Súrat Yúsuf* (12. Sura). As in Genesis, all three dream episodes of Joseph are mentioned. The purpose of these is to show that dreams and their proper interpretation are a sign of God's favour. The most significant episode is when Joseph tells his father about his own dream of 'eleven stars and the sun and the moon were prostrating themselves before me.' In the Old Testament this means that Joseph's eleven brothers and his father and mother will one day bow down before him and this will infuriate his brothers. In the Qur'an it is said that his father warns Joseph not to tell his dream to his jealous brothers because of their intentions to kill him. His father's statement 'Thus will thy Lord choose thee and teach thee the interpretation of events' (*ta'wil al-ahádith*) (Q. 12:6) alludes to a later episode during Joseph's imprisonment in Egypt when he is asked to interpret the dreams of two men (12:36–42). With these dreams coming true the Pharaoh realises Joseph's ability to interpret dreams and asks him to interpret two dreams of his own after being displeased with his advisors, who admitted that they are not knowledgeable about dream interpretation and labelled the Pharaoh's dreams as 'confused/jumbled dreams' (*adgháth ahlám*, Q. 12:44). Joseph expounds the king's dreams as predictions of his land's future welfare and thus pleases him. As a result, the king awards Joseph by making him his personal servant. Both in Genesis and the Qur'an Joseph's piety and his ability to interpret dreams are a sign of his nearness to God.¹²

Another crucial Qur'anic as well as Biblical episode is that of Abraham's sacrifice of his son, which is Isaac in Genesis and Isma'il in the Qur'an. Abraham receives God's command to sacrifice his son in a dream (*manám*).

After telling his son about this, both surrender themselves to God's will (*fa-lammá aslamá*, Q. 37:102–105). This in itself is utter humility and absolute trust and at the very heart of the Islamic faith: a 'muslim' is someone who entirely submits him/herself to God's will (*islám*). Apart from this, another aspect is worth noting here. Although there is no indication that Abraham's dream was divine in origin, he and his son readily accepted it as such.¹³ Nevertheless Qur'an interpretations emphasise that Abraham saw this dream three times before being certain that it is from God. After the first night he wondered whether his dream is divine or satanic. The subsequent night he had the same dream and knew that it was a divine command. After seeing the dream for the third time, Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son. According to Qur'an commentators Abraham's hesitation is not in agreement with the *hadíth* that dreams (*ru'yá*) of prophets are equal to revelation (*wahy*). Hence, if a prophetic *ru'yá* is *wahy*, there is no room for Abraham's hesitation. Also, that Abraham asks his son what he thinks about the sacrifice is in the opinion of some commentators a contradiction.¹⁴

Four words stand for dreams, visions and sleep in the Qur'an: 1. *ru'yá* appears six times (12:5, 12:43, 12:100, 17:60, 37:105, 48:27); 2. *manám*, occurs four times (8:43, 30:23, 37:102, 39:42); 3. Then there is *bushrá*, meaning 'good-tidings' or 'good news,' which is used once as 'dream' (10:64). While these three terms signify good dreams, the word *hulm* that occurs twice in the Qur'an, means bad dream and is used in the expression *adgháth ahlám*, that is, 'confused/jumbled dreams' (12:44, 21:5). Six of all these references deal with the biblical figures Abraham and Joseph; the other references relate to central Islamic issues like the conquest of Mecca that was revealed to Muhammad in a dream prior to the event itself (Q 48:27). For the interpretation of these qur'anic verses the commentators utilise Islamic sayings in canonical *hadíth* collections. They deal with the authority of dreams and their use as a means of legitimization. Many interpretive principles are found in the sayings, referring to the practice of dream interpretation, and therefore guide dream practices in contemporary Muslim countries.

Dreams in Islam are usually divided into three categories: 1. True dreams which come from God and are part of revelation or prophetism; 2. Deceitful dreams which are the whisperings of Satan or demons; 3. Dreams which are the result of man's nature that are not dangerous but also do not bear a significant message.¹⁵ There are other classifications of dreams. The theologian al-Razi (d. 1210) suggested the following: 1. There are dreams with a message and become reality, such as Muhammad's dream about his conquest of Mecca; 2. Dreams whose message is realised in the opposite way, like Abraham's dream: he was asked to sacrifice his son but in reality he sacrificed a lamb; 3. Dreams that demand for interpretation, such as the dreams in the Sura of Joseph.¹⁶ Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406), the great Muslim learned, on the other hand, talks about 1. Clear dream visions which are from God; 2. Allegorical dreams from the angels, which need to be interpreted; 3. 'Confused dreams' from Satan, which are futile.¹⁷ The differentiation between 'true dreams' and 'confused dreams' is based on the *hadíth* '*ru'yá* is from God and *hulm* is from Satan.' As noted above *hulm* denotes bad dreams also in the Qur'an. Dreams are also an integral part of major and minor Islamic *hadíth* collections.

Dreams in the Babi and Bahá'i Religions

There are Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá classifying dreams into several categories. He endorses some of those categories as a kind of inspiration or foreseeing of what will happen in future. In other Tablets he has given interpretation to believers' dreams at the request of Bahá'ís that had such experiences.

The Bab's Revelation commenced with a vision. The Bab dreamt that He drank Imam Husayn's blood. In a passage in which Shoghi Effendi talks about the first revelations of major prophets we read:

The circumstances in which the Vehicle of this newborn Revelation, following with such swiftness that of the Báb, received the first intimations of His sublime mission recall, and indeed surpass in poignancy the soul-shaking experience of Moses when confronted by the Burning Bush in the wilderness of Sinai; of Zoroaster when awakened to His mission by a succession of seven visions; of Jesus when coming out of the waters of the Jordan He saw the heavens opened and the Holy Ghost descend like a dove and light upon Him; of Muḥammad when in the Cave of Ḥirá, outside of the holy city of Mecca, the voice of Gabriel bade Him 'cry in the name of Thy Lord'; and of the Báb when in a dream He approached the bleeding head of the Imám Husayn, and, quaffing the blood that dripped from his lacerated throat, awoke to find Himself the chosen recipient of the outpouring grace of the Almighty.¹⁸

Bahá'u'llah, as well, received His first revelation in the Siyáh-Chál through a vision. In a well-known passage He says: 'One night, in a dream (*dar 'ālam-i ru'yā*), these exalted words were heard on every side...'¹⁹ He regards sleep and the fact that we can dream as 'phenomenon', which is 'the most mysterious of the signs of God amongst men (*āyat al-a'ẓam bayna 'n-nās*), were they to ponder it in their hearts.' He adds that events in a dream during the sleep (*tará fi nawmika*) that become realised 'after a considerable lapse of time' (lit.: *ba'da sana aw sanatayn aw azyad*, 'after a year or two or more')²⁰ or 'after the lapse of many years' (lit.: *ba'd az bīst sanih aw azyad*, 'after twenty or more years').²¹

Elsewhere, Bahá'u'lláh talks about a dream of His own, in which He beheld the Prophet Muḥammad. This dream serves as a confirmation of the removal of the Islamic *jihád*, of 'holy war' and His mission of peace:

One day I saw in a dream that I associated with His Holiness, the Apostle (Muḥammad), may the souls of all else but Him be sacrificed for His sake. Words were revealed and utterances were made manifest from that Dawning-Place of God's Book. Thereupon He said: 'Previously I had said: 'Paradise is beneath the shades of swords (*al-jannatu tahta ziláli 's-suyúf*).'²² However, if I were manifest in these days, I would say: 'Paradise is beneath the shade of the tree of friendliness and compassion' (*al-jannatu tahta ziláli sidrati 'l-ulfati wa 'r-rahma*). Upon hearing this blessed and exalted Word, I declared: 'May the souls of all men be a sacrifice unto Thy loving-kindness, tender mercy and bounty!' Subsequently, the Ocean of utterance spoke that which the Pen was unable to reveal and the ink not capable to make manifest. When I woke up from my sleep I have found Myself filled with gladness for a time, in such wise that it was beyond description.²³

'Abdu'l-Bahá, speaking of the immortality of the spirit/soul, reiterates the realisation of dreams. He also states that a problem or question, which

one cannot resolve in this ‘world of wakefulness is solved in the world of dreams (*‘álam-i ru’yá*)’ or ‘the world of sleep’ (*‘álam-i khwáb*). When man is asleep he does not any distance or dimension as in this material world but he embraces the East and the West, and travels ‘in the twinkling of an eye’.²⁴ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá differentiates between two kinds of visions or dreams, which He calls ‘spiritual discoveries’ (*iktisháfát-i ruháníyyih*). The first one is ‘the revelations of the Prophets (*ru’yá-yi anbiyá*)’, and the spiritual discoveries of the elect (*iktisháfát-i ruháníyyih-i asfiyá*).’ According to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá those of the Prophets are not dreams (*ru’yá-yi anbiyá khwáb níst*) but ‘spiritual discoveries (*iktisháfát-i ruháníst*) and have reality (*haqíqat*)’ since it occurs in the state of wakefulness and not during a sleep.²⁵

The second sort of ‘spiritual discoveries’ in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s categorisation are ‘made up of pure imaginations’ (*awhám-i şirf*), which appear to ‘simple-hearted people’ as having a reality. In this situation the minds of men discover truths, ‘and from this thought and discovery signs and results are produced. This thought has a foundation’. However, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá compares these to ‘the waves of the sea of imaginations; they have no fruit, and no result comes from them. In the same way, man sees in the world of sleep a vision which becomes exactly realized; at another time, he sees a dream which has absolutely no result.’²⁶

What we mean is that this state, which we call the converse and communications of spirits, is of two kinds: one is simply imaginary (*awhám-i mahd*), and the other is like the visions (*ru’yáhá*) which are mentioned in the Holy Book, such as the revelations of St. John and Isaiah and the meeting of Christ with Moses and Elias. These are real, and produce wonderful effects in the minds and thoughts of men, and cause their hearts to be attracted.²⁷

At another instance, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá classifies dreams into three categories: 1. *ru’yá-yi şádiqih*, ‘true dreams’: they are as bright as the morning sun and do not need interpretation (*ta’bír*). They come to pass in the same manner as it was seen but most of the people do not achieve this; it needs a heart rid of all attachment and there must not exist idle thoughts in the mind; 2. *ru’yá-yi ta’bírí*, ‘interpretive dreams’: these are idle thoughts from the heart or mind and need interpretation. Idle thoughts must be separated from spiritual discoveries. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains thus: if you add any colour to a white cloth, it will accept it; but if you add blue to a yellow cloth, it will become green and the truth is distorted. In order to have the true colour, one needs to remove the added colour. 3. *adgháth ahlám*, ‘confused dreams.’ If man is involved in strife and contention during the day and these events appear to him in his dreams, these cannot be interpreted and are no discovery. Finally, He adds that in the sight of the Prophets *ru’yá* is part of *waḥy*, in which they see a celestial figure who tells them to say or to do things.²⁸

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s *Ta’bír* in Ottoman Turkish

As in the case of some other Tablets which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá wrote in Ottoman Turkish,²⁹ this Tablet was also in all probability written to an Ottoman official.³⁰ He addresses the recipient with ‘his excellency’ (*zât-i ulyâlari*). In the first part of this Tablet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá provides a short exegesis (*tafsír*) of a hadith to the same person.³¹

The second part is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s interpretation of the following ‘true dream’ (*rüyâ-yi sâdik*): the person saw himself in the holy Ka’ba, the centre

of the Muslim pilgrimage in Mecca. He moreover dreamed of the prophet Muhammad riding a camel (*deve*), and Muhammad was casting a sheltering shadow with his hand (*pençe*) on a flock of sheep. However, only ten chosen sheep were particularly protected.

'Abdu'l-Baha explains what the 'Ka'ba,' 'Muhammad,' 'camel,' 'hand,' the 'flock of sheep,' and the 'ten sheep' stand for. He concludes by assuring his recipient that Muhammad has blessed him by revealing to him this dream.

What is interesting is that 'Abdu'l-Baha interprets this dream in favour of the Ottomans by saying that Sultan Abdulhamid II. and the Islamic *umma* were victorious over their enemies, the Greeks. In particular, the Muslim martyrs of the (first) Greco-Ottoman War of 1897,³² who died for the 'religion and state' (*din ve devlet*) receive his special blessings. Here 'Abdu'l-Baha also acknowledges the first three caliphs Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman as rightly guided and among the ten companions of Muhammad whom He had promised paradise.

Provisional Translation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *ta'bír*

As regards the interpretation of thy true dream (*rüyâ-yı sâdîk*): thou hast seen thyself in the holy Ka'ba. According to interpretation, the Ka'ba is an impregnable stronghold and divinely safeguarded and protected. For it is a threshold of protection and safety and a refuge and asylum for all beasts and birds.

Thou hast also seen His Holiness, the Prophet (Muhammad) in thy dream. According to the holy tradition 'Who hath seen Me in a dream, he indeed hath beheld the truth' (*Man ra'âni fa-qad ra'â al-haqq*),³³ to see the blessed perfection, our Lord the Prophet (pbuh)³⁴ in a dream, there is no doubt that it is a real vision and true dream that hath come to pass (*müsâhede-i hakîkî ve rü'yet-i vâkîî*). To behold our Lord indicateth attainment of gladness, bounty and blessings.

Furthermore, our Lord (pbuh) hath been envisioned riding a camel (*deve*). In the science of dream interpretation (*ilm-i tâbir*) the camel standeth for the enemy. This vision is a sign for the victory over and subjugation of the extremely rancorous and malicious (lit. 'vindictive as a camel') enemies and adversaries by the centre of the caliphate, the exalted Sultan Abdulhamid Khan (II.) and the late lamented *umma* (Tr. ümmet) of Muhammad.

And it has been revealed (*inkîşâf*) in the dream that our Lord (pbuh) hath cast a sheltering shadow with His blessed hand (*pençe*) upon a flock of sheep.³⁵ The flock of sheep is the *umma* and the hand signifieth the 'five People of the Cloak' (*Hamse-i Âl-i Abâ*),³⁶ whose grace and blessings hath been vouchsafed unto the whole *umma*.

Moreover, thou hast seen that His blessed and sanctified hand hath cast its shadow only upon ten sheep of the flock. Those ten sheep are the 'Ten who have been brought good news' (*Aşere-i Mübeşsere*)³⁷ who ...³⁸ are the manifestations of the sublime grace of the People of the Cloak. However much the mass of the *umma* is blessed by the grace of the sanctified hand like unto that flock of sheep, only the ten who have been brought good news have fully attained unto the special bountiful gifts and found shelter beneath the extended shadow of the 'five People of the Cloak.' In addition, the flock of sheep, which hath been specially chosen by our Lord (pbuh)

for sacrifice, represents the martyrs of the *umma*. This is the recent battle. These are the martyrs of the Greek War (*Muhârebe-i Yunan*) who readily laid down their lives for the religion and the state (*din ve devlet*), may God bless them and be pleased with them. That these visions were revealed unto thine excellency, shows the liberal effusions and favours of our Lord (pbuh) unto thee. Peace be upon thee.‘Abbas

Latinised Text of the Tablet

Gelelim gördüğünüz rüyâ-yı sâdikin tâbirine: kendinizi Kâbe-i Mükerreme’de görmüşsünüz. Tâbirce, Kâbe, hisn-i hasîn ve savn-i himâyet-i İlâhiye’dir. Zîra, dergâh-i emn ü emân ve kâffe-i vuhûş ve tuyûra melce ve penâhtır.

Bir de Hazret-i Risâlet-penâh Efendimizi rüyâda görmüşsünüz. ‘Beni gören Hakkı görmüş olur’ hadîs-i şerîfinin fehvâsında, Cemâl-i bâ-kemâl-i Nübüvet-penâh, aleyhi’s-selâti ve’s-selâm, Efendimiz Hazretlerini görmek, müşâhede-i hakikî ve rüyet-i vâkîî olduğu şüphesizdir. Efendimizi müşâhede etmek, husûl-i inşîrâh ve husûl-i feyz ü berekete delâlet eder.

Bir de bir deveye Efendimiz, aleyhi’s-selâti ve’s-selâmın bindikleri müşâhede buyrulmuştur. İlîm-i tâbirde, deve düşman demektir. Bu rüyâ, merkez-i hilâfet-i seniyyeleri olan es-Sultân Abdülhamîd Hân efendimiz hazretlerinin ve ümmet-i merhûme-i Mustafâvîlerinin şedîdül-bağzâ deve kineli olan âdâ ve husemâya gâlib ve kâhir olacaklarına delâlet eder.

Bir de, Efendimiz aleyhi’s-selâti ve’s-selâmın bir sürü koyuna mübârek pençeleriyle sâye saldıkları rüyâda inkişâf olunmuştur. O koyun sürüsü ümmettir ve ol mübârek pençe Hamse-i Âl-i Abâ’dır ki bütün ümmete feyz ü bereketleri şâmil olmuştur.

Bir de, mukaddes ve mübârek pençelerinin sâyesi koyun sürüsünden ancak on koyuna saldığını görmüşsünüz. O on koyun Aşere-i Mübeşsere’dir ki eğer ziyâde feyz-i celîl-i Âl-i Abâ’ya mazhardırlar. Sâir ümmet o koyun sürüsü gibi her ne kadar pençe-i mukaddesin berekâtından feyz-mend iseler de, fakat hasâis-i mevâhibe tamâm ile naîl olan zill-i memdûd-i Hamse-i Âl-i Abâ’ya sıginmış bulunan Aşere-i Mübeşsere’dir. Bir de Efendimiz aleyhisselâmın tarafından kurbanlığa tahsîs olunmuş olan koyun sürüsü şühedâ-yı ümmettir. Bu yakında gazevât-i ahîredir. Din ve devlet uğrunda cân-fedâkârâne bezl-i hayat eden şehîdân-ı Muhârebe-i Yunân’dır; aleyhimi’r-rahmet ve’r-rîdvân. Ve o müşâhedât zât-ı ulyâlarına inkişâf olduğu cihetle aleyhi’s-selât ve’s-selâm Efendimiz size bir teveccûhât-ı feyz-âyât-ı saâdetleri olduğuna delâlet eder. Ve’s-selâm. Abbas

Suggested citation

Necati Alkan, ‘Dreams and their Interpretation in the Baha’i Religion Some preliminary remarks’, *Baha’i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 97–105. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.97/1>.

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Endnotes

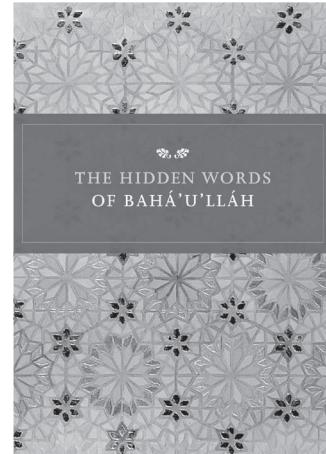
1. Reprinted with permission. Originally published as Necati Alkan, Dreams and Their Interpretation in the Baha'i Religion : Some Preliminary Remarks. *Online Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 1, pp. 171–179, 2007.
2. For a general discussion of dreams, see e.g. the entry 'dream' *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *The Encyclopaedia of Religion* (ed. Mircea Eliade); for the general Islamic context, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (EI², 2. edition), s.v. 'Ru'yā'; *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān* (EQ), s.v. 'Dreams and Sleep'; Orhan Hançerlioğlu, *İslam İnançları Sözlüğü* (İSS, 'Dictionary of Islamic Beliefs,' Istanbul 1994²), s.v. 'Rüyā'.
3. Seminal works on dreams in Islam are: Helmut Gätje, 'Philosophische Traumlehren im Islam', in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 109 (1959), 258–85, and Gustave E. Grunbaum/Robert Cailliois, *The Dream and Human Societies* (L.A./Berkeley, 1966); Leah Kinberg, *Morality in the Guise of Dreams: Ibn Abī d-Dunyā, A Critical Edition of the kitāb al-manām* (Leiden et al., 1994); Annemarie Schimmel, *Die Träume des Kalifen: Träume und ihre Bedeutung in der islamischen Kultur* (München, 1998); Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *A History of Muslim Dreaming and Foreknowing: Dreams and Visions in the World of Islam* (London, 2015).
4. See, e.g., the websites <http://www.edreaminterpretation.org/islamic-dream-interpretation/>, <http://www.myislamicdream.com/> and <http://www.islamic-dreams-interpretation.com/>.
5. EI² s.v. 'Istikhāra'; ISS, s.v. 'İstihāra'; Schimmel, pp. 40–41.
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7. Leah Kinberg, 'Literal Dreams and Prophetic ḥadīths in Classical Islam: a comparison of legitimization', in *Islam* 70 (1993), pp. 279–300.
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10. These founders are Abu Ḥanīfa (d. 767), Malik b. Anas (d. 795), Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855), and Muḥammad b. Idris ash-Shāfi'ī (d. 820).
11. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* (SB), Volume 9, Book 87, Number 111; e.g. online at The Academy for Learning Islam, <http://hadith.academyofislam.org/>; where necessary, 'Allah' in following ahádīth is replaced by 'God'.
12. Leah Kinberg, 'Dreams and Sleep', in EQ, vol. 1, A-D (Leiden et al. 2001), 546–53; Kelly Bulkeley, 'Reflections on the Dream Traditions in Islam', in *Sleep and Hypnosis* 4:1 (2002), pp. 4–14.
13. Bulkeley, p. 6.
14. Kinberg, *Dreams*, p. 547.
15. Gätje, *Traumlehren*, pp. 249–50.
16. Kinberg, *Dreams*, p. 547.
17. Bulkeley, *Reflections*, p. 10.

18. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, Bahá'í Publishing Trust: Wilmette 1944 (1979²), p. 92.
19. Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* 21; *Lawh-i Khítáb bih Shaykh Muhammad Taqí Isfahání* (*Lawh-i Ibn-i Dhi'b*), Bahá'í-Verlag: Hofheim BE 138/1983–84), 15; online at the Bahá'i Reference Library, <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/ESW/>.
20. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, ch. 79, pp. 151–52; *Muntakhabat az Athári Hadrat-i Bahá'u'lláh* (Bahá'í-Verlag: Hofheim BE 141/1985–86), pp. 102–103.
21. Ibid, pp. 162/108.
22. A *hadíth*; see *Şahih Bukhári*, Volume 4, Book 52, no. 73: 'Know that Paradise is under the shades of swords.'; cf. Volume 4, Book 52, no. 2: 'Once God's Apostle (during a holy battle), waited till the sun had declined and then he got up among the people and said, "O people! Do not wish to face the enemy (in a battle) and ask God to save you (from calamities) but if you should face the enemy, then be patient and let it be known to you that Paradise is under the shades of swords.''; online at The Academy for Learning Islam.
23. From the *Lawh-i Tabíb*, provisional translation, *Má'idih-yi Ásmání*, (ed. 'Abdu'l-Hamid Ishraq-Khavari), vol. 8, Tehran 129 BE/1972–73, p. 78.
24. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 227/ *Mufáwadát-i 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Mişr 1339/1920, 2 edition by Mir'át Publications 1998), 160. [Electronic], cf. *Khitabat Hadrat-i 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, vol. 2, Bahá'í-Verlag: Hofheim BE 127/1970–71, p. 14.
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30. *Majmú'a-yi Alwáh wa Munajáthá-yi Turki* (Mu'assasa-yi Millí-yi Matbú'át-i Amrí, BE 127/1970–71), pp. 142–46.
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33. *Man ra'áni fa-qad ra'á al-haqq*; cited in Ibn Sírín, *Tafsír al-Ahlám*, p. 7, www.al-waraq.net.
34. 'peace and salutation be upon Him'.
35. Or, 'hath protected with His blessed hand...'.
36. '... the five 'People (or Companions) of the Cloak' (*Ahl al-Kísá* or *Ashab al-Kísá*), a name which derived from the famous occasion when Muhammad took 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn under his cloak and described them as members of his family, an event of immense significance for Shi'ism'; Ian Richard Netton, *A Popular Dictionary of Islam*, Curzon Press: London 1992, 81, s.v. 'Fatima'; Momen, *Shí'i*, p. 14.
37. Netton, 18: 'Tradition portrays the Prophet Muhammad promising Paradise to ten of his followers. The names on the received lists vary but they usually include the Rashidun.'; Netton, s.v. 'al-'Ashara al-Mubashshara'. These are usually the first four Caliphs Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, 'Ali, and 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf, Abu 'Ubayda, Talha, Zubayr, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, and Sa'd ibn Zayd; see, Hançerlioğlu, *İnanç Sözlüğü*, p. 35.
38. The text says *eğer ziyade* ('should more') but this does not make sense.

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The Bahá'í Contribution to Cosmopolitan International Relations Theory¹

Nalinie Mooten Ottawa, Canada²

For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine.³

Abstract

This paper, which is based on various extracts of my doctoral work, will scrutinize cosmopolitanism within IR theory; present the Bahá'í model; and correlate it to a cosmopolitan approach in IR. Bahá'í thinking, on the one hand, represents a strong reinforcement of the cosmopolitan tradition of thought, underlining its validity and necessity, and on the other hand, centres on the concept of the 'oneness of humanity' in its belief-system, delineating a rearticulation of ethical cosmopolitan roots.⁴

Keywords

International Relations theory (IR theory)
 cosmopolitanism
 world order
 Bahá'í
 global politics
 political theology

Introduction to IR and to the Theme of Cosmopolitanism⁵

There is no such thing as a perfect theory embodying the final truth, for the truth which it is supposed to embody is in fact a thousand truths which constantly grow and change.⁶

Crawford shares the view that no intellectual field today suffers more 'from the ambiguity of its subject matter, or the contestability of its theories' than International Relations.⁷ This ambiguity can be explained by 'the age of transition'⁸ in which many claim we live, or by the complex, and thus kinetic nature, of world politics in our times. Germane to this idea is that many processes working below or beyond the limited territory of the modern nation-state are challenging its ethos and so the very foundation of International Relations, thus contributing to a growing sense of 'bewilderment'. This sense of bewilderment, which denotes a notion of change in international politics, refers to the weakening of the powers of the nation-state due to the presence of extra-national forces, such as the question of human rights, the environment, the rise of violent extremism, an unprecedented displacement crisis, modern slavery and the global economy. This perplexity is, furthermore, linked to these global forces that destabilise the nation-state in its traditionally secure, self-sufficient, and unquestioned authority. Hence, scholars and politicians refer to the complexity of human interactions and relations, which foster a sentiment of confusion.⁹ As Paul and Hall claim, 'World politics in the twenty first century is likely to be more

complex than in previous eras'.¹⁰ In Rosenau's eyes, such complexity has emerged from the increasing interdependence and interaction of societies, and, therefore, the transnationalisation of world affairs, which brings with it challenges for theorising IR.¹¹

The existing sense of perplexity also arises from the fact that the diversity of political thought in the discipline is sometimes prone to bring manifold contradictory assumptions (especially within traditional orthodox IR theory) about human and political behaviours, which are not easily reconciled. These contradictory views are found in the two mainstreams of thought in International Relations, one known as realism or the classical tradition, and the other as liberal internationalism. Some – maybe too simply – would say that realism is a pessimistic view of IR, and others that liberal internationalism is the optimistic voice of the subject.¹² If we take the view that liberal internationalism is in strict opposition to realism, it is possible to describe liberalism as an optimistic and progressive viewpoint that considers human nature either as good or as having the potential to overcome its evil components. Liberal internationalism is, however, not the only possible channel through which one can find a voice to express the dissatisfaction with a static/sceptic worldview. Indeed, Persram notes that there is simplicity in the account that there are many theories '**but really only two**' about the 'world'.¹³ [Emphasis added] Beyond 'utopia'¹⁴ and reality we find critical theories, including cosmopolitan democracy, critical international theory, feminist approaches, postcolonialism, or postmodernism, which offer 'emancipatory' views, and call for the reconceptualisation of a world centred upon the fixity of the nation-state and power relations. Since realism offers a myopic vision, which emphasises short-term interests and the inevitability of conflict, I choose to concentrate on the 'optimistic' and 'emancipatory' voices of IR, which assert that change in international affairs is possible.¹⁵ This relates to the idea that the realisation of the 'good life' is not to be locked up within bounded units¹⁶ and is a concern of the main approach scrutinised in this work: cosmopolitanism, or the cosmopolitan tradition. This tradition is used in two ways in this paper: firstly, as a description of the world around us, in particular, the development of transnational processes, and secondly, as a prescriptive or normative view of 'what the world should look like'.

This paper, which is based on various extracts of my doctoral work, will scrutinise cosmopolitanism within IR theory; present the Bahá'í model; and correlate it to a cosmopolitan approach in IR. Bahá'í thinking, on the one hand, represents a strong reinforcement of the cosmopolitan tradition of thought, underlining its validity and necessity, and on the other hand, centres on the concept of the 'oneness of humanity' in its belief-system, delineating a rearticulation of ethical cosmopolitan roots.¹⁷ This principle reflects the sameness (which does not correspond to homogeneity, but instead draws on a commonality shared by humanity) of all human beings across the globe. In other words, it emphasises that humanity constitutes one race and a single people. To underline the non-homogenising effects of the oneness of humanity, Bahá'í writings always mention the latter 'with its corollary of unity in diversity'.¹⁸ The Bahá'í model is not only based on the ethics of oneness, but also on a recommended scheme of global governance that gives practical expression to this principle. Accordingly, the Bahá'í cosmopolitan model supports the idea of moving away from an obsession

with state sovereignty, and embraces the broader and more inclusive level of humanity that denounces unjustified division. Bahá'í views add force to the argument that the nation-state, as the primary unit of IR, has had its day, and thereby highlight the need to include more flexible non-state actors. Robert Cox has expressed the same idea when he avers that the state is just one of the forces that shapes the present world, and admittedly not the most important one.¹⁹ The oneness of mankind, thus, needs to be recognised as international politics have accepted the naturalness of political divisions, and a system based on the spatial nature of the world. This principle is useful in highlighting the artificiality of the concept of a closed, homogeneous, and ethically deficient, nation. To another extent, it will be contended that as a sacred approach with origins in the East, the Bahá'í model can significantly contribute to a growing Western secular cosmopolitan approach whilst expanding its focus, thereby demonstrating the universality of the tradition.

The Nation-State as the Denial of the Oneness of Humankind

Conceived of as an end in itself, the national state has come to be a denial of the oneness of mankind, the source of general disruption opposed to the true interests of its peoples...²⁰

As humankind is a natural unit, cosmopolitanism questions the nation-state, a divisive unit, as the principle actor in IR. In this way, cosmopolitanism challenges the notion of the natural permanency of a world community structured around divided national communities with forever distinct and unvarying populations. In a teleological sense, the nation-state is, thus, problematic on the grounds that it divides the human race, whose 'reality' is one, and whose consequent aim is to reside in a world 'polity'. Benedict Anderson views the nation-state as an 'imagined' and 'limited' community as 'no nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind': 'the nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations'.²¹ Likewise, Eric Hobsbaw notes that nationalism, child of mother nation, represents an exclusive concept, 'nationalism... excludes from its purview all who do not belong to its own nation, i.e. the vast majority of the human race'.²² Since the nation-state divides the human race, and oftentimes constructs aggressive and divisive borders, it cannot be the supreme or final expression of human relationships on the planet, as this would constitute a denial of our integral oneness. The nation-state embodies a citizen-alien relationship that excludes all those who do not reside within, whilst the cosmopolitan ideal ensures that all should have access to human rights (albeit with reference to specificity)²³ enshrined in a cosmopolitan law, which are not dependent on a spatial and limited unit for its application.

Indeed, how can humanity find its natural home in a unit that has given rise to xenophobia, genocide, or nationalism? The notion that the unit of the political state needs a homogeneous cultural nation has, as a consequence, led to excessive exclusivity and jingoistic intolerance. This idea has also encouraged the suppression of what is perceived as threats to a homogeneous community, and which ironically represents a completely illusory

notion, a 'myth' or 'artefact'²⁴ due to the increasing cultural heterogeneity of its population that is caused by migration, diaspora, or multiculturalism. In this regard, the Aristotelian notion of a good life locked within a polis can no longer serve its purpose, and must be transposed onto a more inclusive cosmopolis. Undeniably, the breakdown of the nation-state system entails new conceptions of equality in terms of gender and race, thereby confirming that the oneness of humankind, which works towards the inclusion of vulnerable groups and the recognition of a diversified and yet single human race, should be given greater attention in world affairs.

Here it is important to mention that feminist or postcolonial theories that work toward 'equal rights' promote the idea of the deconstruction of dichotomies such as superior/inferior, male/female²⁵ (with 'female' having here an inferior status). They mention the 'political presence of newly empowered subjects' underlining diversity, multiculturalism, and environmentalism.²⁶ Azza Karam notes, 'Emancipatory futures are inextricably linked to making the connections between local events and global ones, and doing so through resistance and accommodating difference, thus sharing in the kaleidoscope of power'.²⁷ These paradigms also contribute to refining the cosmopolitan project not as a 'totalising' universal project, but as one that seeks to unite and restore dignity,²⁸ while preserving an enriching diversity. Booth referred to this revised cosmopolitanism as 'sensitive universalism'.²⁹

Additionally, the nation-state represents a 'problem' in present day politics, as it is a confined unit that is given primary importance by IR through realist ideology, while its sphere of jurisdiction and influence have been rendered obsolete by more global processes. The nation-state, a particularistic unit, cannot solve problems which are increasingly global, and which, likewise, demand global solutions. Indeed, there is enmeshment and interweaving of processes in terms of economics and culture³⁰ that cannot be locked within territorial confines. Globalisation, new technologies and the global and instant accessibility of information have transformed the way peoples interact with each other, becoming more integrated and closer than was hitherto possible thereby challenging state sovereignty. The latter, as a case in point, asserts principles of non-intervention that weaken claims to humanitarian intervention, strengthening the dichotomy between us/them and inside/outside. Human solidarity cannot be created within solidified borders: it has to be diffused through porous borders and an inclusive attitude of mind, i.e. a *denkungsart* that is advocated by cosmopolites. Accordingly, the nation-state cannot be treated as the ultimate unit within IR theory.

The Etymology and Evolution of Cosmopolitanism

The etymological root of 'cosmopolitanism' finds its origin in the word 'cosmopolis' made up of the words 'cosmos' (universe) and 'polis' (city). The original Greek definition of 'cosmopolis', thus, refers to the universal city of humanity, which requires dwellers to give meaning and life to its existence. The universal city, henceforth, goes hand in hand with a notion of citizenship, and to be more precise, world citizenship. It is also possible to trace the etymological roots of cosmopolitanism to the word 'cosmopolite' which means 'citizen of the world'. This latter meaning is derived from the ancient Greek 'kosmos' (world or universe) and 'politēs' (citizen). Thus, it is extremely relevant to correlate these two interpretations to the word

'cosmopolitan', one being a political and emotional habitat, or universal city, and the other being the more personal, and not yet legalised affiliation to that sense of belonging, or world citizenship. The Stoics, who conceived of the whole universe as a home for world citizens, conveyed this idea in their teachings. 'After all the etymology of cosmopolitan points to the ancient Greek word of the *polis*, and its members the *politeis*'.³¹

Cosmopolitanism highlights the limitedness of political communities (the *polis* was criticised by Stoicism), which now correlates to the inadequacy of 'reasons of state' or 'reasons of political communities', when their fates are entwined.³² Cosmopolitanism developed from being merely ethical, to more political in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, and present forms of cosmopolitanism make use of both ethical and political arguments, especially with regard to an 'unequal globalisation' which must be brought under control if all are to share in its benefits.

Cosmopolitanism has three main principles: individuals (not states) represent the basis of political communities; the equal moral worth of all human beings; and the importance of developing principles which can all be shared with respect to differences.³³ 'This larger, open-ended, moral perspective' Held notes, 'is a device for focusing our thought, and a basis for testing the intersubjective validity of our conceptions of the good. It offers a way of exploring principles, norms and rules that might reasonably command agreement'.³⁴ In other words, cosmopolitanism starts from a human perspective, rather than a state or a particular perspective, and positively asserts that as humans we share commonalities and the propensity to build peaceful societies.

Various strands of the tradition can be found in Stoic cosmopolitanism, liberal cosmopolitanism (Enlightenment and modern cosmopolitanism), and critical cosmopolitanism (a revisionist cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment), and share important points of convergence. They are projects of universal emancipation, targeted firstly at the promotion of 'universal community' (ethical and/or political), the eradication of war, the protection of human rights and the environment, the alleviation of world poverty, and the safeguarding of cultural diversity. The project can be regarded as an attitude of mind (a feeling of belonging to a universal society of mankind, and not exclusively to one's nation-state), and as the desire to create 'world citizenship' institutions such as a global parliament, or an assembly of world citizens at the United Nations (**UN**). The history of these ideas is portrayed in Derek Heater's *World Citizenship and Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought*. Cosmopolitanism contains various strands such as a legal cosmopolitanism (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, or the International Criminal Court (**ICC**)), political cosmopolitanism (a global parliament, world government, or global governance), and moral cosmopolitanism, on which these two former notions are said to rest. As contended in this paper, these three 'cosmopolitanisms' are interdependent.

Cosmopolitan thinking began with an ethical and philosophical ideal of 'world citizenship' embracing the whole cosmos or universe (and not only the world), and was characterised by the interplay of ideas, namely the ideas that the *polis* was not a self-sufficient and perfect socio-political unit, that moral considerations sustained by a system of natural law was

essential, and that human beings, despite all their variations, constitute a single human species. This ancient cosmopolitanism eventually took another form in the Middle Ages, being transferred to ideas of universal 'religious' empires based, as was the case with Christianity, on a Christian version of a universal Roman Empire (thoughts of World Empire, however, rarely extended beyond Christian lands).³⁵ With the demise of the idea of 'universal empire' that accompanied the emergence of an international system composed of confined states, a 'Westphalian system' of world order emerged in which new ideas were conceived to sustain the concept of a religious service to humankind. Even with the rise of states, the cosmopolitan ideal found its niche in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment in secular programmes that were devised to appease relations between states, and which often represented embryonic plans for the United Nations or the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Most of them were, however, dominated by the fallacious notion that these relations were condemned to be between states or between heads of states, and (except for the notable exception of Crucé) were mostly governed by European schemes and the Christian religion. In addition to Crucé's ingenuity, Kant conceived of 'a third level', namely a cosmopolitan law sustained by world citizens that applies to the world as a whole, and not only to civil and international levels.

Cosmopolitanism has, thus, been the interplay of ideas of world citizenship and world state, the latter being predominant in the Middle Ages and Enlightenment, and the former being prevalent in ancient times, in 'Kantian' Enlightenment, and especially in the twentieth century (namely with critical theories such as cosmopolitan democracy). The cosmopolitan ideal has moved from an idea of moral cosmopolitanism, to expansionism based on the rights of rulers, and finally to the notion of the respect of peoples based on their rights and duties in the cosmopolis. As such, 'It is highly unlikely that a renewed medieval Roman Empire would have made provision for any effective citizenly participation in the imperial political system.' Cosmopolitan democracy theorists argue that global institutions should be governed by world citizens, and highlight the nation-state's limitations as it hinders the practice of global democracy and global values. The protection of human rights advocated by most cosmopolitans represents an activist cosmopolitanism.

Current cosmopolitanism can be illustrated by the inclination (Linklater calls it a 'moral anxiety') to show solidarity with 'foreigners' on the grounds of a common humanity, due to forced migration induced by civil wars or the environment, suffering, starvation, poverty, in other words, a human duty to respect and protect human rights and justice. Indeed, cosmopolitanism undermines the nation-state by intervening beyond its limits, and by diluting the notion of 'foreigner', as it propounds the idea that morality does not end at national boundaries. Cosmopolitanism challenges the predominance of the nation-state on many fronts: firstly, as a result of our global and technological age, and secondly, due to the incapacity of the nation-state to foster morality beyond its boundaries (i.e. caring for 'foreigners' is not as relevant as caring for fellow-citizens). Furthermore, the reality of human oneness calls into question the discriminatory divisions fostered by the nation-state (the nation-state is most of the times a safe haven for citizens, but treats non-citizens in less 'significant categories' such as immigrant, refugee or alien, i.e. it creates an other). No longer a philosophical speculation, or we might say an 'ideal',

cosmopolitanism has become tangible as testified by numerous non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the movement of peoples and ideas across borders, and the reality of dual and multiple loyalties and citizenships.

International organisations and a supranational unit such as the European Union (EU), and other regional bodies demonstrate the inadequacy of the nation-state, and the advantage to unite not only for common benefits, but also for increasing understanding and communication across porous borders. The rise of populism across the world with its corollaries of anti-European and anti-immigrant sentiment, the recent planned exit of the UK from the European Union 'Brexit' are at odds with a political cosmopolitanism that transcends enclosed nostalgic forms of national communities. Yet, cosmopolitanism constitutes a reaction against material global interdependence, the impotence of the nation-state to satisfy our needs (functionalism), and the rejection of discriminatory prejudices based on gender, race, class, or nation (a reiteration of the oneness of humankind). A more mature form of cosmopolitanism, namely a more sensitive cosmopolitanism, wishes to be identified with the constituency of the human species. Furthermore, the twentieth century has seen decolonisation (notwithstanding that the pernicious effects of slavery and colonisation have continued socio-political and psychological repercussions on the body of mankind), and technological and communications revolutions (globalisation), which if managed in an inclusive way, offers inviting conditions for the realisation of a cosmopolis.

It is also relevant to note that the term 'cosmopolitan' is presently used to define the reduction of state sovereignty in cases where other institutions collide with the nation-state's powers to decide.³⁶ Indeed, Mary Kaldor, who speaks in favour of 'cosmopolitan theory' and transnational democracy, does not envisage the occurrence of a world state or government, but rather the surpassing of state sovereignty in certain instances. Cosmopolitans argue that the ever-increasing presence and participation of a global civil society, as manifested in the growing number of NGOs or intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), and locally based grassroots social movements, constitute the upcoming signs of a political cosmopolitan reality testifying to the moral and economic interdependence of humanity. Indeed, cosmopolitan political reality now comes from the grassroots rather than from the top, implying that the people, who consider themselves as world citizens should be the true decision-makers. '[World] citizenship operates both 'vertically' and 'horizontally'. For example, a world citizen may wish to concentrate on campaigning for the reform of the UN or supporting organisations devoted to relieving world poverty'.³⁷

Numerous theories have been devised towards an international political system in the forms of federalism, functionalism, or cosmopolitan democracy, which although differing in their manifold aspects, reflect the need for a cosmopolitan political agenda. Thus, cosmopolitanism is not solely a theory; rather it encompasses all of the theories of International Relations that transcend the nation-state (with or without questioning its existence): a cosmopolitan tradition rather than a theory of IR.

Realism, Liberal Internationalism, and Critical Theory

Realism – realpolitik, power politics – can be traced back to the Greek historian Thucydides in the fifth century BCE, or to Renaissance diplomat,

historian and playwright Macchiavelli, and later with 20th century figures such as Morgenthau or E. H. Carr, mostly influenced by the American critic and theologian Reinhold Niebuhr.³⁸ Realist IR is the most 'anti-cosmopolitan' strand of IR theory. Indeed, the unbridgeable gulf between domestic and international politics is a central theme in realist thought, whereas cosmopolitans envisage a form of world political organisation (not necessarily a world government) with universal moral principles.³⁹ Cosmopolitanism, hence, comes as the antithesis or critique of realist IR (the latter being one of the many theories of IR),⁴⁰ and therefore it is essential to review the characteristics of realism.

Several aspects of realist theory can be contrasted with the cosmopolitan tradition. More importantly, realists believe in the irreconcilability of the domestic and international spheres, whereas cosmopolitans envisage the pacifying of international relations through the promotion of the concept of 'humanity', thereby dismissing the relevance of a sound dichotomy between 'domestic' and 'international'. Realists emphasise the anarchic nature of international politics, which is opposed to the sovereign and secure character of the state, the basic unit of analysis in realism. The absence of anarchy in the domestic realm provides for the possibility of progress and security. By contrast, the international is characterised by the 'endless competition for power and security in the world of states'.⁴¹ Hence, the international system is doomed to be controlled by power politics, which promotes little prospect for change and peace, and which, accordingly, impedes the imagining of a 'post-sovereign' system. In brief, cosmopolitans view international politics as a unified sphere in which the division between the domestic (internal) and international (external) should be reconciled. Indeed, for the cosmopolitan, the domestic and the international spheres are artificial divisions in the face of a common humanity, whereas the realist sees them as fixed in the realm of anarchy. For cosmopolitans, this flawed division prevents the fostering of the means by which a 'post-sovereign' world can be imagined, constructed, and improved upon, whereas for realists, this contention is fallacious as the world is divided along permanent and antagonistic boundaries.

Although the study of International Relations was born within 'idealism' after World War I (WWI), it 'had been effectively refounded after World War II on realist premises, and has exerted its dominion as a paradigm in International Relations'.⁴² With the liberal internationalists claiming that people had a genuine desire for peace, and that the power of world opinion would sustain the Wilsonian League of Nations, it was then easy, with the examples of Mussolini and Hitler, to describe these ideas as simply wrong.⁴³ Liberal internationalism was held to have false perceptions about human nature, and was perceived as a flawed world outlook. In the 1930s, Reinhold Niebuhr reflected on these matters, and argued that liberals exaggerated 'the capacities of collectivities of humans to behave in ways that were truly moral'.⁴⁴ This statement, thus, supports the realist view that morality is unattainable between collectivities, and stands opposed to the cosmopolitan belief that peaceful societies are attainable.

In the twentieth century, realism has had a great impact on International Relations as an academic subject, but has also influenced many American politicians (for example Kissinger), and can be said to have greatly shaped 20th century world politics. Donnelly remarks, 'Realism should not be

ignored. But it should not be allowed to shape the study and practice of International Relations, as it has for so much of the past half-century'.⁴⁵ It was mostly E. H. Carr, with *The Twenty Years' Crisis: an Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, who reshaped the discipline along more realist lines at the end of World War II, taking into account what he regarded as the 'neglected' factor of power. Carr stated that this work was 'written with the deliberate aim of counteracting the glaring and dangerous effect of nearly all thinking, both academic and popular, about international politics in English-speaking countries from 1919 to 1939 – the almost total neglect of the factor of power'.⁴⁶ To another extent, at that time, his aim was to discredit the other paradigm of International Relations, which he named utopianism.⁴⁷ Carr criticised the normative character of liberal internationalism, and its neglect of 'power' as a crucial factor in IR. Liberal internationalists, on the contrary, stressed the concepts of morality and altruism in global politics.

Realism, with the experience of the inter-war years, remained the main paradigm of International Relations, especially at the height of the Cold War and Super Power competition. However, realism did not go unchallenged, and was criticised in the seventies by proponents of the 'complex interdependence paradigm'.⁴⁸ As a response, this paradigm was discredited and opposed by the proponent of neo-realism, Kenneth Waltz, who claimed that the notions of interdependence were extravagant.⁴⁹ Kenneth Waltz's main claim is centred on the belief that states operate in a self-help system (or in an anarchical international system), where no higher form of authority prevails. Moreover, they are only preoccupied with their own welfare and security, and regard other states as potential threats. This self-help system forces them to adjust their power, and to be constantly aware of the power position of other states, which gives rise to a balance of power regulating world affairs in an anarchical system.⁵⁰ Whereas Morgenthau in 'traditional realism' (as Waltz named it) argues that power is rooted in human nature, 'Waltz points to the anarchical condition of the international realm which he claims imposes the accumulation of power as a systemic requirement on states'.⁵¹ The latter treats the international system as a separate domain, whereas the former relies on reductionism. The main ideas of neo-realism are, thus, that anarchy and the distribution of power between states define the international system (as they shape state behaviour), and that states would not abandon egoism and self-interest for international order.

What is here relevant, especially in relation to cosmopolitanism, is that like realism, neo-realism still concentrates on the nation-state as the main unit. This state-centric view is in opposition to cosmopolitan views, which criticise the idea of the nation-state as a permanent and principal fixture of the international system, and which promote a normative international order where human values and acts of cooperation can prevail. There has been, nonetheless, an attempt to render realism more 'normative'. The English school of realists and rationalists has stressed the importance of international society or a world of states as opposed to universal categories such as humanity or sub-state entities.⁵² Although the English school is often seen as part of realism and recognises conditions of anarchy,⁵³ it 'acknowledges that the sense of belonging to the community of humankind has left its civilizing mark upon the state and international relations'.⁵⁴ This

school of thought stresses the concept of international society: 'the English school of International Relations shares with realist/neo-realist theorists the importance of anarchy, war, and balance of power, but only as ideas that shape political practice, rather than as laws of nature or unchanging phenomena deeply embedded in the international system'.⁵⁵ International society can be depicted as sharing normative standards and rules, in the form, for example, of international law. International society, based on a system of states, can still share common aims, rules of conduct, and organisations – thus blending realist aspects with a more normative outlook.

Realism, Human Nature and the Centrality of Territorially Organised Entities

Realism, even if it acknowledges the potential for change, confirms that it occurs within the limits of the struggle for power enshrined in a static human nature. Gilpin notes that realism is distinguished by its 'pessimism regarding moral progress and human possibilities'.⁵⁶ Human nature is viewed as inherently pugnacious, is egoistic at its core, and leads to immorality and conflict in international affairs. Morgenthau, for example, observed, 'the conflict-ridden international arena' is the consequence of 'forces inherent in human nature' and that 'the *animus dominandi*' or a natural will to power characterises human beings. Machiavelli expresses human nature as 'insatiable, arrogant, crafty, and shifting, and above else malignant, iniquitous, violent, and savage'.⁵⁷ In the early twentieth century, Niebuhr in his *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) has greatly influenced the realist movement and main realist writers, such as Morgenthau and E.H Carr. Niebuhr took the original sin as the explanation for an evil human nature. In his eyes, 'the ultimate sources of social conflicts and injustice are to be found in the ignorance and selfishness of men'.⁵⁸

Change, from the realist perspective, can, thus, either be cyclical or stagnant, whereas from the liberal viewpoint, it follows a unilinear evolution towards progress, whether this is ethical or material.⁵⁹ Moreover, realists uphold that since relations between states are sustained by order, a balance aimed at preventing war between nations should prevail, whilst liberals see the necessity of a system of collective security in order to sustain peace. Realists rely, firstly, on clearly defined units represented by states, which are at the centre of their political theory, and secondly, on the notion of sovereignty, which 'defines what the state is'.⁶⁰ With the emergence of new actors, realists recognise that the nation-state is not the only actor on the international scene, but nevertheless, hold that it is the most important one. Indeed, this view is found in the words of neo-realist, Stephen Krasner (1976): 'In recent years, students of International Relations have multinationalized, transnationalized, bureaucratized and transgovernmentalized the state until it has virtually ceased to exist as an analytic construct. This perspective is at best profoundly misleading'.⁶¹ Neo-realists such as Waltz regard states as the 'unitary actors with a single motive – the wish to survive'.⁶² This point is also stressed by Griffith, 'Realism conjures up a grim image of international politics. Within the territorial boundaries of the nation-state, politics is an activity of potential moral progress ... beyond the exclusionary borders of sovereign presence, politics is essentially the realm of survival rather than progress'⁶³ – a view that denies the cosmopolitan

contention that the international realm does not have to be characterised by recurrence, fixity, conflict, and power politics.

It is often put forward that realists see the world as it is and 'idealists' as it should be. It can also be argued that realists only rely on the present, whilst 'idealists' wish to change the latter. In this way, realism seems to be 'stuck' with present events. Furthermore, with the demise of the Cold War, realism has lost its appeal. It is a theory functioning within defined limits: it is taken aback by the occurrence of sudden and unexpected events. Theory should, however, seek to predict and find solutions to the world's problems, rather than lay down a set of negative facts about the reality of human nature, and the presumed ensuing impasse in which world politics finds itself. Indeed, if this were so, there would not be much point writing about International Relations theory as the only contemplation would be the image of a gloomy world doomed to remain static. Realism focuses on present facts, rather than on their development over time, as testified by its attachment to the nation-state system. Accordingly, it focuses on temporality, rather than evolution. Booth states, 'the realist tendency to privilege the short term can lead to a kind of myopia in which broader problems are not detected until it is too late to do anything about them'.⁶⁴ Miller also shares the view that 'it is wrong to assume that the only reality is that which presents itself for today or tomorrow'.⁶⁵ Recently, cosmopolitanism underlines that the conservative nature of realism has neglected the logic of change, the existence of plural actors in world politics, and has been an obstacle to the creation of an alternative world order.⁶⁶

Cosmopolitanism and Current IR Theory

In the last three decades or so, IR has taken on a new turn, a 'post-positivist' turn, no longer centred upon a state-centric theory, namely that of realism, and allowing for the (re-)emergence of normative International Relations theory, which emphasises the potential transformation of the world through criticism of power politics. This has propelled IR theory into a 'new' perspective, and opened the way for alternative views that are no longer regarded as unfounded, but instead as an enrichment of IR. The rationale underlying theoretical inquiry is no longer solely problem-solving (safeguarding the status quo by legitimising power relations), but more critical (having the imaginative potential to anticipate alternative models of world order). The last two decades or so have seen a clear rejection of positivist assumptions and a return to the normative side of the discipline (how the world ought to be), founded after WWI upon liberal internationalism or 'idealism'. It is held that the IR theorist can no longer be totally detached from the object of enquiry (feminists call this 'embedded knowledge'), and that theory helps construct the world, and is not outside of it (constitutive theory). Robert Cox notes, in this context, that theory often 'precedes and shapes reality' indicating that theorists cannot stand outside the political and social world they examine.⁶⁷

Cosmopolitanism, as a normative approach, can be found in different forms in many theories in normative IR. It can be liberal, critical, feminist, green, or even postmodern. However, what is certain is that it cannot be realist. Political liberalism is 'a universalist doctrine and so is committed to some notion of a universal community of mankind which transcends

identification with and membership of the nation-state community' it 'has faith in the capacity of human beings to solve seemingly intractable problems through collective action'.⁶⁸ Cosmopolitanism is enshrined in contemporary liberalism as 'liberals have offered a conception of community and identity which spans the entire planet'.⁶⁹ Its normativity surpasses liberal internationalism, however. It can be found in critical theories, and in some aspects of postmodernism.

Critical theory argues that counter-hegemonic forces challenge prevailing institutional and political arrangements. These counter-hegemonic values are transnational in nature and based on 'an alternative set of values, concepts and concerns, coming from organisations like Amnesty International, Oxfam, and Greenpeace'.⁷⁰ Postmodernists also reinvent International Relations along a new ethic with 'others'. This postmodern cosmopolitanism, as it is here argued, is based on a new 'solidarity with others'. 'Postmodernists want to rethink the basis . . . for notions of morality and ethics, so that they are sensitive and responsive to differences'.⁷¹ The label 'critical' is sometimes referred to as feminist, postmodernist and critical international theories, and the term 'critical' shall be employed in this sense in this paper, in other words, as a body of thought in IR which questions the fixity of the prevalent order. This body of thought, thus, intends to 'denaturalise' notions of strangeness and territoriality, which have become increasingly familiar. As Seyla Benhabib observes, 'The dogmatism of knowledge is shown to be the dogmatism of a way of life'.⁷²

The days when realism reigned supreme over IR have drawn to a close. Cosmopolitan approaches are increasingly gaining ground, as together they make a strong case for the validity and contemporary necessity of cosmopolitanism. They highlight growing interactions that strip borders and exclusive political communities of any sound coherence and meaning that they might have enjoyed in the past.

The Bahá'í Faith as a Cosmopolitan Model

The Bahá'í Faith and Bahá'í cosmopolitan thinking originate from Asia, most particularly nineteenth century Persia, and have, as such, a non-Western origin, unlike most known cosmopolitan perspectives in IR. Heater notes, 'Turning to modern times, several writings advocating a world community or a formalised world constitution were produced in Asian countries in the nineteenth century. Of the Asian texts, we may particularly cite the teachings of the Persian prophet Bahá'u'lláh (b. 1817), the originator of the Bahá'í Faith (which has also attracted many adherents in Western countries)'.⁷³

Indeed, cosmopolitan principles constitute the core of the Bahá'í Faith as 'the universality of humankind, including the social and political oneness, are fundamental principles of the Bahá'í Faith'.⁷⁴ The Bahá'í writings, no less than earlier prophetic religions, concern themselves with governance.⁷⁵ Some Bahá'í writers underline that it is a novelty that the founder of a world religion advocates global federation as a means to accomplishing world unity. 'Bahá'u'lláh brought, for the first time in religious history, explicit teachings about the need for an international federation capable of harmonizing the affairs of an interdependent world and bringing about world peace'.⁷⁶ This call for global governance could be explained by the global intent and character upon which the Bahá'í Faith bases its principles.

For its adherents, however, what some might call ‘Bahá’í ideas’ are not just the enunciation of certain principles, and the attempt at their practical realisation, nor a mere political philosophy that is relevant to cosmopolitan ideas, but rather a whole new divine revelation that answers to the social and spiritual needs of an ever interdependent humanity. In contrast to ‘secular’ cosmopolitan trends, the Bahá’í writings rely on a historical process that is divine in nature, hence finding several references to the intervention of ‘God’, (or what some political philosophers such as Kant called ‘The Hidden Plan of Nature’),⁷⁷ and underline some certitudes about some aspects of the future. However, it is noteworthy that cosmopolitanism, in the Bahá’í ethos, is not just a vague appeal to human brotherhood, but contains clear guidelines on the elaboration of a system of global governance and peace in our times.⁷⁸ It is this peace programme, which at its core revolves around the consciousness of the oneness of mankind, and which calls for more integrated global organisations, that shall be examined.

Origins of Bahá’í World Order Themes

The Bahá’í Faith is centred upon three main figures – The Báb (1819–1850), Bahá’u’lláh (1817–1892), and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1844–1921) – who, for the first stage of its development guided the Bahá’í community at large. These three figures are not just the leaders of the Faith: for its members, the Báb is a herald-prophet, who along with bringing a whole new message to nineteenth century Iran (the religion He founded is referred to as the Bábí Faith) ushered in the start of a new religious cycle and announced the arrival of the founder-prophet of the Bahá’í Faith, Bahá’u’lláh. Bahá’u’lláh appointed His son ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to guide the community after His passing.⁷⁹ The writings of these three figures constitute the Bahá’í sacred scriptures, as Hindus look to the Vedas and Bhagavad-Gita, Christians look to the Bible, or Muslims to the Koran. Interestingly, and in accord with their beliefs, Bahá’ís consider the aforementioned Holy Scriptures, along with those of the main religions, to be divine in origin, hence refusing to think of their Faith in superior and different terms, but just as a further element in the revelation of the divine process.⁸⁰ Indeed, Bahá’u’lláh enjoins all to ‘Consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship’.⁸¹ As Udo Schaefer notes, ‘Such a belief necessarily results in the rejection of exclusivism whereby one religion is regarded as the sole bringer of salvation ... The reconciliation of religions is a major goal of Heilsgeschichte (salvation), because it is the foundation of “world wide reconciliation” called for by Bahá’u’lláh, and which is the prerequisite for lasting world peace’.⁸²

‘Abdu’l-Bahá designated His grandson Shoghi Effendi Rabbani as the interpreter of the writings, and five years after Shoghi Effendi’s passing away in 1957, the Universal House of Justice, the first international permanent institution of the Bahá’í Faith, came into being. This event signalled the start of a new governance system within the Bahá’í community that was no longer based on a single figure. Along with the sacred scriptures of the Faith, the writings and statements of Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice constitute the official guidelines and literature of the Faith. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá interpreted and clarified the writings of Bahá’u’lláh, and Shoghi Effendi further elucidated the principles of world order that rest on the firm foundation of the oneness of humankind. Shoghi Effendi gave this

principle considerable attention during his 'mandate' as Head of the Bahá'í Faith from the time of his designation as Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith in 1921 to his passing away in 1957.⁸³

Bahá'u'lláh's message of world order and peace is mainly expressed in a series of letters sent to the world secular and religious leaders.⁸⁴ Most of the statements of 'Abdu'l-Bahá were pronounced during His travels to Europe and Northern America between August 1911 and June 1913. During this journey, 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'warned of an imminent world war and the forces of social dislocation that such a conflict would unleash and elaborated Bahá'u'lláh's principles of global concord'.⁸⁵ The writings of Shoghi Effendi on the matter are enfolded in a series of letters entitled the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh written between 1929 and 1936. Indeed, the theme of world order, which he clarifies and expands upon, represents the bulk of his works.

More recently, world order themes are enclosed in the statements of the Universal House of Justice and those of the Bahá'í International Community (BIC). The history of the statements provided by the BIC goes back to the participation of the Bahá'í community with international organisation bodies: the Bahá'í Faith is an active member of the United Nations in the form of the Bahá'í International Community that was registered as a Non-Governmental Organisation in 1948. The involvement of the Bahá'í community with international organisations does not, however, start at this particular point in time, but in 1926, when at the League of Nations headquarters in Geneva an International Bureau was established to serve in League activities. The BIC represents the Bahá'í Worldwide Community, and, as an NGO, is an association of democratically elected national representative bodies called 'National Spiritual Assemblies'. Subsequently, the Bahá'í International Community gained consultative status with ECOSOC, UNICEF, and UNIFEM, has working relations with the WHO, and has worked closely with the UNEP, the UNHCR, UNESCO, and the UNDP.⁸⁶ Among the main goals and activities of the BIC we can find the areas of grassroots participation in sustainable development; advancing the status of women; the education of children; developing a consciousness of world citizenship; the prevention of drug abuse; the elimination of racism; and the promotion of human rights education.⁸⁷ The BIC statements that deal with the Bahá'í view of world order reflect the teachings of the sacred scriptures, and propose both a theoretical and practical foundation on which to base the Bahá'í ethos of international organisation.

A System of Planetary Organisation

The fundamental conviction in the organic oneness and unity of the diversified elements of humanity is the basis of the belief-system found in both the theoretical and practical aspects of the Bahá'í Faith, and supports its corollary teachings. The requirement of the delineation of a new socio-political system to work along the lines of this assertion is not only a moral corollary, but also a timely and adjusting necessity. For Bahá'ís, this explains that what they believe to be the new divinely sent message has clear universal ramifications and a global intent.⁸⁸ Bahá'ís maintain that Bahá'u'lláh's starting Revelation in the mid-nineteenth century (1863) and His arrival in this point of history are consistent with a trend of unification and globalisation of world structures that demand corresponding governing bodies.⁸⁹

Because the Bahá'í Faith is of a religious nature, the intervention of God in history is a given: following the belief in the organic unity of mankind, God sends 'messengers' according to the needs of the times, and whilst the 'spiritual' message (such as the development of human virtues) does not alter, the social content of each messenger evolves consistent with the needs and requirements of the time.⁹⁰ According to this statement, we encounter one of the main tenets of the Faith, namely the belief that there is only one religion, which is revealed from age to age, and whose social content must be adapted to the evolving and changing nature of society.⁹¹ This new vision of religion is explained by Shoghi Effendi in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, 'religious truth is not absolute but relative ... Divine Revelation is progressive, not final'.⁹² Here we discern a belief in a directional purpose in history: history is not left to itself or to haphazard events, and although the idea of change is paramount ('Abdu'l-Bahá for example stated that, 'creation is the expression of motion' or 'that old ideas and modes of thoughts were fast becoming obsolete')⁹³ the latter does not necessarily follow smooth patterns. 'Bahá'ís anticipate that the coming of age of humanity and the emergence of world order will be achieved in evolutionary stages replete with strife and chaos'.⁹⁴ The Bahá'í model of history, hence, simultaneously follows a cyclical and evolutionary content: humanity is on an ever-progressive line composed of cyclical trends of rise and fall leading to its ultimate global unity in all human spheres.⁹⁵

According to the BIC, 'Bahá'u'lláh asserts an opposing interpretation of the historical process' with its evolution operating similar to the different stages in the life of an individual, passing through the various stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence, and maturity.⁹⁶ The present stage of human evolution is now amenable to the acceptance of the permanent principle of the oneness of humanity, and its practical realisation in institutional terms, which will ultimately lead to the unification of mankind. Indeed, the Bahá'í Faith identifies global unity as the essential goal of human history.⁹⁷ Shoghi Effendi explains that the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, '... stands identified with, and revolves around, the principle of the organic unity of mankind as representing the consummation of the whole process of human evolution'.⁹⁸ As Laszlo and the BIC explain, '... disunity (stands) as a prelude to, and not as a contradiction of unity'.⁹⁹ 'The wars, exploitation, and prejudice that have marked immature stages in the process should not be a cause of despair but a stimulus to assuming the responsibilities of a collective maturity'.¹⁰⁰ The tumultuous world condition is regarded as

A natural phase in the organic process leading ultimately and irresistibly to the unification of the human race in a single social order whose boundaries are those of the planet. The human race, as a distinct organic unit, has passed through evolutionary stages analogous to the stages of infancy and childhood in the lives of its individual members, and is now in the culminating period of its turbulent adolescence approaching its long-awaited coming of age.¹⁰¹

Hence, for Bahá'ís, the unification of the world does not constitute a utopian goal to be striven for but not to be achieved, or a 'matter of choice'; rather, it represents the next inescapable stage in the social evolution of mankind, however unpersuasive contemporary world events appear to

be.¹⁰² Alongside the trend towards maturity lies the underlying concept that the system of human organisation has evolved from family, tribe, city-state, and the nation.¹⁰³ The conflicts that plague humankind can be compared to the various crises in adolescence that are necessary to assume the responsibilities of adulthood. Refusing to accept the implications of a new stage of planetary organisation can, thus, only lead to drawbacks and crises that belong to a precedent stage of human evolution, namely that of a world structure based on the nation-state. In this respect, Janet Khan observes:

Associated with this changing reality (increasing interdependence of a now global society) there is a growing recognition that present day values, world-views, and administrative structures that were functional and adaptive in the age of self-sufficiency and unfettered national sovereignty, are proving inadequate to meet the challenges posed by the new stage of human history that is emerging.¹⁰⁴

The Bahá'í cosmopolitan ethos is also grounded in the belief that the international community should intervene in the affairs of a state, namely in the case of gross human rights violations. The Bahá'í World Centre cites, for example, the breakthrough made in international law following the occurrence of WWII, and the trial of Nazi leaders for crimes committed against humanity. This meant, according to Bahá'í thought, that 'the fetish of national sovereignty had its limits'.¹⁰⁵ This acknowledgement explains the favour with which the Bahá'í community welcomed the creation of the ICC.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, this can justify that the Bahá'í community could approve of, and lend its support to the idea of a global federation that endorses macro-policing actions against governments that threaten to commit genocide against their own peoples.¹⁰⁷ Charles Lerche describes the Bahá'í model of human rights as a cosmopolitan model, as the human being stands at the centre of IR, and not at its margins. The BIC, furthermore, observes that, 'since the body of humankind is one and indivisible, each member of the human race is born into the world as a trust of the whole'.¹⁰⁸

In this regard, as testified by the example of human rights, the nation-state merely constitutes a transitional stage in the development of humanity, and has to be transcended by a more encompassing political entity. The state cannot be the highest authority in globalised conditions. Its destiny is merely 'to build the bridge from local autonomy to world unity'.¹⁰⁹ In this regard, Shoghi Effendi wrote that, 'Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving to a climax'.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, emphasis in Bahá'í thought is not placed solely on states or leadership, but on peoples. The principle of collective trusteeship demands that the diverse cultures of the peoples of the world, which are essential to their identity, be protected under a system of national and international law.¹¹¹ In 1947, the BIC underlined this crucial point, 'Both state and people are needed to serve the strong pillar supporting the new institutions reflecting the full and final expression of human relationships in an ordered society'.¹¹²

If Bahá'ís believe that the unification of mankind is the next stage of its evolution, they do not believe that it will be an easy undertaking, nor that it will occur without hindrances. Although there is recognition of a trend towards global unity, there is similar recognition that barriers 'stand in the

way of its achievement.¹¹³ Such barriers include: the numerous prejudices based on gender, class, race, nation, religion; 'degree of material civilization; the lack of educational opportunities and communication among peoples';¹¹⁴ civil conflicts, global terrorism, and other destructive processes that do not have any positive effects on the development of society at all levels. The idea that simultaneous negative and positive forces are at work constitutes an integral part of the Bahá'í belief in a dual process intended to bring about world unity. Indeed, the hindrances to global unity are identified by Bahá'ís as 'disruptive forces', and those that have a positive influence on global processes are identified as 'integrative forces'. This dual phenomenon is part of a process that implicates the confusion now prevailing in human affairs. Indeed, this process calls for visions of world unity that Bahá'ís believe are constructive in nature, and it also reposes on opposing forces, which refuse to move beyond national sentiments.

Shoghi Effendi referred to 'simultaneous processes of rise and fall, of integration and disintegration, of order and chaos, with their continuous and reciprocal reactions on each other'.¹¹⁵ The Universal House of Justice notes that the disintegration process can be identified with the numerous religious, political, racial or tribal conflicts taking place in several parts of the globe; the sudden collapse of civil order that has paralysed several countries; religious fundamentalism;¹¹⁶ the epidemic of terrorism as a political weapon; and among other great disasters, the surge of criminal networks.¹¹⁷ Among integrative forces we can find, for example, the call raised in favour of an International Criminal Court; world conferences;¹¹⁸ the realisation that nations are interconnected in the world of trade and finance (a condition that Shoghi Effendi identified as necessary for the development of an organic unified world); and related global aspects that call for a more efficient system of global governance. These two forces, as described by Shoghi Effendi, although clearly opposed in nature, will inevitably lead to the 'unity of the human race and the peace of mankind'.¹¹⁹ In the face of this dual process, peace, Bahá'ís believe, will emerge in stages, and will be characterised by a growing consciousness of world citizenship.¹²⁰

The great differentiation of the Bahá'í Faith is also to be encountered in the statement about the reality of human nature that Bahá'u'lláh claimed is fundamentally spiritual. 'Spiritual' in this sense does not literally mean 'religious', as we would usually think of the term, but is akin to the formulation of a 'global ethic', morality in human affairs, and 'human values' in the field of global politics. Schaefer identifies that without 'a world ethos, without a minimal consensus concerning durable values, irrevocable standards and fundamental moral attitudes, it is impossible to imagine a "new global order", as envisaged and so urgently enjoined upon by Bahá'u'lláh in the nineteenth century'.¹²¹ The presence of ethics¹²² is congruent with the idea of a divine polity being reflected in temporal affairs, and more importantly, it denotes that the relation between the two spheres is a practical one, and not a vague description of a world that is out of reach. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states, 'The spiritual world is like unto the phenomenal world. They are the exact counterparts of each other. Whatever objects appear in the world of existence are the outer pictures of the world of heaven'.¹²³ 'Abdu'l-Bahá mentions that heavenly attributes can be compared to the solidarity of mankind or the perfection of justice.¹²⁴ The characteristics of this divine polity are, thus,

the reflection of high requirements in the governing of human and international affairs, which accounts for the reference of 'spirituality' in the Bahá'í writings. There is, for example, a reflection of what is physical reality (the global interdependence of nations), and what Bahá'u'lláh considers to be the spiritual reality of the oneness of humankind (the brotherhood and sisterhood of all human beings).¹²⁵

The BIC writes of the nature of the body of thought of Bahá'u'lláh: The mainspring of Bahá'u'lláh's message is an exposition of reality as fundamentally spiritual in nature, and of the laws that govern that reality's operation. It not only sees the individual as a spiritual being, a 'rational soul', but also insists that the entire enterprise that we call civilization is itself a spiritual process, one in which the human mind and heart have created progressively more complex and efficient means to express their inherent moral and intellectual capacities.¹²⁶

For Bahá'ís, laying the foundations of a global society that reflects the oneness of humanity is a 'central spiritual issue' facing all the various peoples of the world.¹²⁷ In brief, the manner in which the foundations of a system of global governance are established, depends, to a certain degree, on infusing a moral sense in its socio-economic and political structures.

Bahá'u'lláh's Exhortation to Political Peace: Framework of the Bahá'í Vision of World Order

The cosmopolitan trait of the Bahá'í Faith starts with the words of the Báb,¹²⁸ Who along with proclaiming the concept of progressive revelation,¹²⁹ wrote that, 'We have created you from a tree and have caused you to be as the leaves and fruits of the same tree, that haply ye may become a source of comfort to another ... It behooveth you to be one indivisible people'.¹³⁰ The analogy of the 'tree' representing humankind, and the diverse nations and peoples being the 'leaves and fruits' are later re-echoed in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh: 'Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. Deal ye one another with the utmost love and harmony, with friendliness and fellowship...'.¹³¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá also used images found in nature to elucidate the idea of the oneness of humankind, as it is depicted in the Bahá'í image. This is tantamount to stating that the world of nature does not differ from the 'reality' of the oneness of humankind in the human world. Alluding to the great tree of the human family, 'Abdu'l-Bahá states, 'For mankind may be likened to the branches, leaves, blossoms, and fruits of that tree'.¹³² He also explains that this image corresponds to the solidarity of the human race.

W. Kenneth Christian notes that, 'The chief principle of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings is 'the oneness and wholeness of the human race.' This is the pivotal point of all that He taught... To achieve the unity of the human race was Bahá'u'lláh's compelling life purpose'.¹³³ Indeed, such a statement is confirmed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá ('The basis of the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the unity of mankind')¹³⁴, Shoghi Effendi¹³⁵ and by the statements of Bahá'u'lláh himself. 'Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self ... It is incumbent upon every man, in this Day, to hold fast unto whatsoever will promote the interests, and exalt the station, of all nations and just governments'.¹³⁶ Bahá'u'lláh's message aims at the creation of a universal society between nations, the abolition of war, and the foundation of universal peace.¹³⁷ 'Love for humanity is a central value in the hierarchy of

values. All actions should be directed towards the well-being of humankind, its welfare having absolute priority over all particular interests'.¹³⁸ Likewise, Janet A. Khan notes that Bahá'u'lláh's teachings are intended to encourage 'global unity and world order'.¹³⁹

In line with the conception of a world vision, Bahá'u'lláh speaks of 'just' governments, a concept which was elucidated in the various letters that He sent to the major monarchs,¹⁴⁰ rulers, and religious leaders between 1867 and 1873. These statements represent His advice to the temporal and religious leaderships. In the *Súriy-i Mulúk* (Tablets to the Kings), He addresses all of the monarchs, as He calls on them to abide by the principles of justice and unity, to disarm, to move away from tyranny and oppression, to care for the poor and downtrodden, and describes the accumulation of riches from the peoples by sovereigns as 'grievous injustice'. 'Peoples' are to be a crucial concern of the leadership. Bahá'u'lláh states in the *Súriy-i-Mulúk*: 'Do not lay burden on your subjects...The poor are the trust of God in your midst, safeguard the rights of the downtrodden'.¹⁴¹

The Universal House of Justice says of the *Súriy-i-Mulúk*:

It introduces some of the great themes that were to figure prominently in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh over the next two and a half decades: the obligation of ...civil authority to institute the reign of justice, the necessity for the reduction of armaments and the resolution of conflicts among nations, and an end to the excessive expenditures that were impoverishing these rulers'.¹⁴²

The idea of morality in human affairs is underlined, as well as the notion that temporal government must reflect divine virtues (such as showing justice, and discarding oppression and tyranny) in the management of their affairs and the treatment of the peoples.¹⁴³ In the address to Queen Victoria, Bahá'u'lláh praises the Queen for abandoning the practice of slavery on both men and women, and also for abiding by the formulation of a democratic tenet in her government – a point that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was to emphasise in His treatise *The Secret of Divine Civilization* in 1875.¹⁴⁴ Bahá'u'lláh further expounds the principles that constitute the first stage of world peace for Bahá'ís, the Lesser Peace, a political peace among the nations of the world with a reference to the principle of collective security that He was among the first to expound and elaborate on.¹⁴⁵ He writes, 'Be united, O kings of the earth... Should any one among you take up arms against another, rise ye all against him, for this is naught but manifest justice'.¹⁴⁶ Bahá'u'lláh also enjoins leaders to 'take counsel together' in a convened international gathering, to show concern for the whole of mankind, and to reflect upon the design of a world political community. He also calls for the reduction of armaments to the extent that they will only be required for internal or self-defence purposes.¹⁴⁷ Bahá'u'lláh stated, 'O Rulers of the earth! Be reconciled among yourselves, that ye may need no more armaments save in a measure to safeguard your territories and dominions'.¹⁴⁸

Referring to the contents of these Tablets, Shoghi Effendi explains, 'the application of the highest principles in human and international relations are forcibly and insistently made, and the abandonment of discreditable practices and conventions, detrimental to the happiness, the growth, the prosperity and the unity of the human race, enjoined'.¹⁴⁹ The system of

collective security propounded by Bahá'u'lláh asserts that political agreements alone are not sufficient to support it.¹⁵⁰ It must stand on a stronger moral consciousness of human values, and in particular, must be grounded in the oneness of mankind. Bahá'u'lláh's counsels to the leaders of His time, which represent the kernel of His exhortation to the Lesser Peace, are at the heart of Bahá'í views on global governance, and constitute the basis of further elaborations provided by His successors and by the BIC.¹⁵¹

The Century of Light

The vision of a system of international interdependence, and the need for interlocking governance underlined by the oneness of humankind have also been expounded by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who advocated that a *sine qua non* condition for universal peace was universal suffrage, and Who elucidated the writings of Bahá'u'lláh.¹⁵² Of religious, racial, patriotic, or political prejudices, He said that they were the destroyer of the body politic inasmuch as all people have a single and common origin.¹⁵³ More interestingly, 'Abdu'l-Bahá called the twentieth century 'the century of light', and records of His statements that international peace would indeed occur in this century were reported in various papers of the early twentieth century.¹⁵⁴ This pronouncement has been sometimes mistaken as being congruent with Him stating that the Lesser Peace in the twentieth century would be a reality. Nonetheless, when 'Abdu'l-Bahá called the twentieth century 'the century of light', or when he referred to the twentieth century as the century of international peace, He alluded to a process of peace that started in the twentieth century, and not to events that took place during that time.

It is fascinating to see that He denoted the potentialities of the twentieth century as containing the embryo and the impetus for the creation of international peace, and the creation of corresponding pending global institutions and outlook. The BIC notes, 'The attainment of peace in the political realm is discernible through the workings of a process that can be seen as having been definitely established in the twentieth century amid the terror and turmoil that have characterised so much of this period'.¹⁵⁵ The twentieth century had unleashed the capacity for international peace and a global era. In 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words, 'Inasmuch as this is the century of light, capacity for achieving international peace has been assured'.¹⁵⁶ The Bahá'í World Centre explains that this image refers to the growing 'acceptance of the principle of oneness and its implications' and that 'the physical unification in our time and the awakening aspirations of the mass of its inhabitants have at last produced the **conditions that permit achievement of the ideal**, although in a manner far different from that imagined by imperial dreamers of the past'. [Emphasis added]¹⁵⁷ It is relevant to see that the twentieth century has witnessed a breakthrough in international thinking, as it has witnessed the birth of 'representative global institutions, including the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies'.¹⁵⁸ 'Abdu'l-Bahá declared that the 'unity of nations' would happen in the twentieth century, meaning that the peoples of the world would have developed a certain consciousness of world solidarity, essential to the establishment of a political union.¹⁵⁹ The Universal House of Justice clarifies that 'the unity of nations can be taken as that unity which arises from a recognition among the peoples of the various nations, that they are members of one single family'.¹⁶⁰ One of the

core teachings of 'Abdu'l'Bahá is that the oneness of humankind stands as the primary principle regulating human life and reality; the main difference is that its realisation is now at hand due to the progress in technology, transport, and communication. As 'Abdu'l'Bahá states:

In this day, means of communication have multiplied, and the five continents of the world have merged into one... In like manners all the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, have become increasingly interdependent... Hence the unity of all mankind can in this day be achieved.¹⁶¹

'Abdu'l'Bahá further reflected the writings of His father as He called for altruistic concerns and the welfare of humanity as a whole, rather than particularistic ones.¹⁶² He also clearly defined cosmopolitanism, as it is enshrined in Bahá'í thinking, stating that some wars are 'caused by purely imaginary racial differences; for humanity is one kind, one race and progeny habiting the same globe...These boundaries and distinctions are human and artificial, not natural and original'. Furthermore, He asserts, 'This earth is one home and native land. God has created mankind with equal endowment and right to live upon the earth. As a city is the home of all its inhabitants although each may have his individual place of residence therein, so the earth's surface is one wide native land or home' for everyone.¹⁶³ There is an argument in 'Abdu'l'Bahá's writings for the grounding of a spiritual, physical, and intellectual cosmopolitanism. There is the allusion that all human beings were created by one 'Great Being', as part of a spiritual bond between human beings, a spiritual cosmopolitanism: 'racial assumptions and distinctions are nothing but superstition...All mankind are the children of one Father';¹⁶⁴ the intellectual explanation that there is no biological difference between human beings and that we are all part of the same human species, 'we are one physical race, even as we are of one physical plan of material body',¹⁶⁵ and the intellectual grounding that physical borders are simply artificially created boundaries, and not a natural state of affairs, 'Racial prejudice or separation into nations... is unnatural and proceeds from human motive and ...ignorance'.¹⁶⁶ 'Abdu'l'Bahá also mentioned the organic evolution of humanity that is enshrined in all the fields of human science, including politics. He states, 'The world of politics is like the world of man; he is seed at first, and then passes by the degrees of the condition of embryo and foetus... the political world in the same way cannot instantaneously evolve from the nadir of defectiveness to the zenith of perfection'.¹⁶⁷ Accordingly, the idea that the political realm must pass through different degrees before it can be functional is here alluded to; likewise, an appropriate system of global governance will gradually evolve to become increasingly efficient.

Human Nature and Peaceful World Order: An Alternative Image

According to 'Abdu'l'Bahá, the aim of the creation of men and women, who have been given the endowment of the intellect and understanding, is not targeted at destruction, but rather constitutes a means by which a peaceful society can emerge.¹⁶⁸ He stated, 'I hope that you will use your

understanding to promote the unity and tranquillity of mankind...¹⁶⁹ Bahá'í belief dwells on the fact that 'men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization'.¹⁷⁰ The purpose in creating humankind is, thus, the achievement of its full potential to do good, and to promote the evolution of society.¹⁷¹ In this statement, we come across the premise of the Bahá'í idea of human nature, which is not imprisoned in the narrow confines of being inherently either 'good or evil', but constitutes an image that asks for endeavour and accounts for the free will of human beings. For Bahá'u'lláh, each individual represents a 'supreme talisman' and a 'mine rich in gems of inestimable value.' This potential must be developed through proper education, with which each person can optimise the ability to practice 'free will'.¹⁷² Individuals are not left to themselves with a fixed nature.

'Abdu'l-Bahá calls these two sides of human nature the 'lower' and 'higher' natures.¹⁷³ This image of human nature can also be captured in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Noble have I (God) created Thee, yet thou hast abased thyself. Rise then unto that for which thou was created'.¹⁷⁴ Human beings have to 'endeavour' to let their 'higher nature' dominate: human nature is, thus, a matter of choice. By acting on their lower nature, human beings allow disasters in civilisation, which occur on the grounds that the purpose of creation is not being fulfilled, or that the nobility intended for creation is being ignored. Human reality is that of the 'higher nature'. The Bahá'í concept of human nature portrays, thus, a positive, rather than a negative, image. The complexity of human nature is explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá:¹⁷⁵ 'Man is the highest degree of materiality, and at the beginning of spirituality – that is to say, he is the end of imperfection and the beginning of perfection... Not in any of the species in the world of existence is there such a difference, contrast, contradiction, and opposition as in the species of man'.¹⁷⁶ In parallel, it is important to make the paramount point that in the Bahá'í image, lower nature is not real, as it is not part of human reality. Evil is the absence of good, as darkness is the absence of light, and in this way, it is crucial to state that the 'lower nature' constitutes an absence of the 'higher nature'.¹⁷⁷ The creation of humankind is reminiscent of a higher nature, leaving no doubt as to the nobility of creation. Gollmer explains:

The Bahá'í Faith does not have a dualistic image of the world with distinction between believers and infidels,¹⁷⁸ good or evil, saved or unsaved. Its principle is that of unity: metaphysically as the unity of God, the Creator of all human beings and his universal mercy; practically as an ethical standard in all dealings with the people and nations of the world and as a responsibility for the preservation of creation.¹⁷⁹

Since the capacity for a higher nature does exist, and the attainment of this higher nature is the aim of creation, Loni Bramson-Lerche remarks, 'With regard to the capacity for aggression, the Bahá'í teachings differ sharply from the opinions of the 'realist' school of political science'.¹⁸⁰ Hence, this certainly explains why the Bahá'í literature on the subject is often defined as 'utopian', when in fact it claims that human beings were created for a nobler purpose than that of unceasing conflict. Danesh Hossein describes the Bahá'í model of world order as one that asserts the 'fundamental

nobility of every human being and the ultimate victory of the human spirit'.¹⁸¹ The possibility of achieving a peaceful society is also justified by the fact that the individual is a 'social being' in need of 'cooperation and association'.¹⁸² It is noteworthy that the capacities for building a peaceful society are greater in our age than they were in previous ages, leading us back to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's reference to the twentieth century as 'the century of light'.¹⁸³ Indeed, Bahá'u'lláh notes that our age is the day '... in which all that lay latent in man hath been and will be made manifest'.¹⁸⁴

The Universal House of Justice maintains that a 'paralysis of will' and 'a paralysing contradiction' have prevailed in human affairs due to the inherent belief in the aggressiveness of human beings. Accordingly, the Universal House of Justice asserts that this has generated self-imposed obstacles to the creation of a just and peaceful social system. The international Bahá'í body recognises, on the one hand, the longing of people for peace and the 'apprehensions tormenting their daily lives', and on the other hand, it challenges the conflicting statement that human beings are inherently selfish and aggressive and incapable of achieving a peaceful and dynamic social order.¹⁸⁵ The need to reassess mankind's true nature is, thus, crucial when thinking of the possibilities that exist within the international community to achieve a more peaceful order. The Promise of World Peace states:

As the need for peace becomes more urgent, this fundamental contradiction which hinders its realization, demands a reassessment of the assumptions upon which the commonly held view of mankind's historical predicament is based. Dispassionately examined, the evidence reveals that such conduct, far from expressing man's true self, represents a distortion of the human spirit. Satisfaction on this point will enable people to set in motion constructive social forces which, because they are consistent with human nature, will encourage harmony and cooperation instead of war and aggression.¹⁸⁶

This statement can be linked to the Bahá'í belief that humankind passes through different stages leading to world unity, one of which is an immature stage replete with war, strife, and exploitation.¹⁸⁷ The paralysis of will 'rooted in a deep-seated conviction in the quarrelsome of mankind' has hindered world leaders to move beyond the notion of national sovereignty, and meet the challenge of establishing an appropriate world institutions and world mechanisms for the achievement of peace.¹⁸⁸ Henceforth, in the Bahá'í model, all efforts that aim at relieving some of the world's problems cannot be solely pragmatic; they have to be raised to the level of principle. In this regard, the Universal House of Justice states, 'the primary challenge in dealing with issues of peace is to raise the context to the level of principle, as distinct from pure pragmatism. For, in essence, peace stems from an inner state supported by a spiritual or moral attitude, it is chiefly in evoking this attitude that the possibility of peace can be found...'¹⁸⁹ This inner attitude grounded in the view that human beings are and were created to be noble, stand at the basis of the Bahá'í image of human nature, and the centrality of the individual and human relationships in a multilayered governance scheme. It, furthermore, disposes of the idea that world order schemes can be founded on political concerns only, without any reference to evoking the moral attitude that lies at the basis of the true reality of the individual.

The Oneness of Humankind and Institutional Cosmopolitanism

Shoghi Effendi wrote that, '...the principle of the Oneness of Mankind, the cornerstone of Bahá'u'lláh's...dominion implies nothing more nor less than the enforcement of His scheme for world unification'.¹⁹⁰ The oneness of humankind, which entails its unity, has its corollary in the socio-economic and political spheres: it propounds that unity is the principle regulating all spheres of human life, including the socio-political realm. As such, the principle is not fated to remain only on ideological and emotional levels, with no institutional and practical implications. If it were the case, the principle would remain on the level of theoretical good wishing.¹⁹¹ Shoghi Effendi further explained that unless the efforts of world leaders were directed towards giving thought to this system of global governance that was now based on global, rather than national structures, they were bound to encounter setbacks. Shoghi Effendi states:

The oneness of mankind...is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one family. It does not constitute merely the enunciation of an ideal, but stands inseparably associated with an institution...adequate to...demonstrate its validity, and perpetuate its influence. It implies an organic change in the structure of present day society... it constitutes a challenge, at once bold and universal, to outworn shibboleths of national creeds – creeds that have had their day...It calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarisation of the whole civilised world...¹⁹²

Although it implies the need for unity, the oneness of humankind does not suggest that uniformity is a relevant consideration in its application. On the contrary, the machinery that can best incarnate this principle must be made to reflect the diversity inherent in the human family, and in all the aspects of human life. The Bahá'í Faith is a firm believer in the oneness of humanity, if only sustained by a strong corollary of the preservation and flourishing of diversity. Not only the diversity found in the different shapes and colours of the human family, but also the diversity of thought and opinion. In this instance, 'Abdu'l'Bahá noted, 'All are seeking truth, and there are many roads leading thereto...Do not allow difference of opinion, or diversity of thought to separate you from your fellow men'.¹⁹³ The principle of 'unity of diversity', which stands at the basis of the Bahá'í Faith as an inherent element of the oneness of humankind, does not simply constitute a theoretical and ethical aspect; it constitutes, for Bahá'ís, a gift of beauty to mankind, which has been misused for hatred and conflict.¹⁹⁴

Indeed, the oneness of humankind and unity in diversity, which stand at the very heart of the principles that have shaped the whole process of life are, thus, not just to be applied to the individual, but to the governance system, and have to be the guiding thrust behind the machinery that can best serve the interests of humankind in its structural aspects. It is significant that, in this instance, the Bahá'í Faith upholds the principle of federalism, or that of the commonwealth,¹⁹⁵ when considering a new system of global governance.¹⁹⁶ The BIC, therefore, underlines, '...one of

the time-tested models of governance that may accommodate the world's diversity within a unified framework is the federal system'. The BIC further observes, 'Federalism has proved effective in decentralizing authority and decision-making in large, complex, and heterogeneous states, while maintaining a degree of **overall unity and stability**'.¹⁹⁷ Another model worth examining is the commonwealth, which at the global level would place the interest of the whole ahead of the interest of any individual nation'.¹⁹⁸ [Emphasis added].

Moreover, these systems of governance were promoted by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who emphasised in 1912 that centralisation was most likely to encourage despotism and that it was, thus, urgent to find ways to discourage its practice as a system of governance.¹⁹⁹ Here, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's recommendation was further elaborated by Shoghi Effendi. Explicitly, when providing one of the possible examples of 'some form of political unity', as enshrined in the Bahá'í writings, Shoghi Effendi mentioned a 'World Federal State', whilst he acknowledged that its realisation was most likely to be tortuous and induced by sufferings.²⁰⁰ He, furthermore, explained that 'the establishment of a world commonwealth, a world federal system liberated from... war... in which Force is made the servant of Justice' was the consequential institutional form of the unity of mankind.²⁰¹

Shoghi Effendi, as early as 1954, described the world as a global neighbourhood ('needs of a world already contracted into a neighbourhood') when advocating the option of a world federal government to counteract 'anachronistic conceptions' or the 'obsolescent doctrine of absolute sovereignty'.²⁰² Indeed, world federalist thinking advocated world federal government, especially in the inter-war years and after WWII, to do away with the outdatedness, and the ill foundation of state sovereignty.²⁰³ In Bahá'í thought, this world federal government devoid of 'anachronistic conceptions' would be a major step towards the establishment of the Lesser Peace and the unification of mankind.²⁰⁴ The main organs of the world federal government would comprise a world parliament or legislature that is able to create a code of enforceable international law previously universally agreed upon; a world executive, backed by an international force, which would 'carry out the decisions arrived at and apply the laws enacted by the world parliament'; and a world tribunal, whose decisions and judgment would be binding on the parties and applicable to all disputes arising in the universal system. Alongside these main organs of the world federal government, a number of umbrella organisations, including 'a complex transnational network of individuals, private organisations and international agencies' functioning with autonomy.²⁰⁵ (Significantly, the BIC defines the global governance system as a sum of intricate relationships between individuals and groups who determine how they manage common international concerns, underlining the importance of the input of the global citizenry).²⁰⁶ This institutional form provides the possible format that can embody the words of Bahá'u'lláh, frequently cited as the 'motto' of the Bahá'í Faith, 'The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens'.²⁰⁷

Significantly, Shoghi Effendi was not prescriptive when he advocated federalism or the commonwealth as two possible models of world governance, but it is relevant that the BIC reiterated, as soon as 1995, that federalism was a useful structure for some form of global government. In this

regard, according to Bahá'í thought, while bearing in mind that federalism is considered the most favourable form for the management of diversity and decentralisation in a global governance system, it is reminiscent that this vision of a world federal government, although a clear destiny in the Bahá'í vision of a future global order, does represent a long-term and drastic project as things now stand.²⁰⁸ The Bahá'í model calls for incremental steps to be taken in order to reform international institutions, and move towards a new system of global governance. Accordingly, it contains a transformationist paradigm:²⁰⁹ the nation-state is in a period of change, and will eventually cede some of its influence to world political arrangements. Changes in the political arena will not happen unexpectedly and incoherently, but as a result of expediency and urgency following both the will of peoples and world leaders. The new generation of world federalists has adopted a step-by-step approach, rather than the maximalist approach of the realisation of a world federal government: for example, they advocate UN democratisation through an assembly of world citizens, or have worked for the establishment of the International Criminal Court.

The Lesser Peace, or Bahá'í Programme for a Political Unity of Nations

Bahá'ís believe that peace will come in stages, the first of which concerns a political peace among nations: the 'Lesser Peace'. The Lesser Peace relates to what 'Abdu'l-Bahá named 'unity in the political realm', and is explained by Shoghi Effendi as a 'unity which politically independent and sovereign states achieve among themselves'.²¹⁰ The second stage, the 'Most Great Peace', refers to the social, spiritual, and political unification of mankind, a peace in which spirit and humanity would be infused into the political peace. Daniel Wheatley notes:

The Bahá'í writings show our self-perception and identity as being one of the major areas of difference between the Lesser Peace and the Most Great Peace. It is only in the Most Great Peace when a man shall travel to any city on earth, and it will be as if entering his own home. The Lesser Peace will see the end of war between nations...but it will not necessarily be accompanied by feelings of universal humanity...²¹¹

The political peace, the most immediate peace,²¹² has been mentioned by Bahá'u'lláh when He wrote to the rulers, kings, and religious leaders of His age, and was further expounded by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. The formulation of a world government based on a federal system of governance and decentralisation is crucial to the Bahá'í model of governance, as it seeks to maintain decision-making at appropriate levels, and functions according to the principle of subsidiarity. The latter represents an element of the 'Lesser Peace', the term Bahá'u'lláh used when elaborating on the concept of collective security.²¹³ Wheatley details:

As well as calling for disarmament,²¹⁴ Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi laid down guiding principles for a global legislature, international weights and measures, a supreme tribunal, a global peacekeeping force... Shoghi Effendi expands upon the practical necessities of the Lesser Peace.

This includes the creation of a global executive, a global legislature, an international armed force in crisis management, a world taxation system, a global currency, global communications networks²¹⁵ and a supreme international tribunal...‘Abdu’l-Bahá also speaks of the organisation necessary ... in terms of a ‘Parliament of Man’ and a ‘Supreme Tribunal’.²¹⁶

The Supreme Tribunal was also defined by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as a ‘Highest Court of Appeal’, an ‘International Tribunal’, the ‘Great Council’, or an ‘International World Conference’.²¹⁷ This tribunal, which would have abiding jurisdiction in international affairs only, would need to be set up so as to prevent war, and would be composed of representatives from each nation of the world, whose election would be based on using some form of population criteria. This election would need to be confirmed by the cabinet, the upper house, and the president of the nation, and should have at its basis the sanction of the peoples of the world. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá made the following suggestion as to a future world court in the late nineteenth century:

A Supreme Tribunal shall be established by the peoples and governments of every nation, composed of members elected from each country and government. The members of this Great Council shall assemble in unity. All disputes of an international character should be submitted to this Court, its work being to arrange by arbitration everything which otherwise would be a cause of war. The mission of this Tribunal would be to prevent war.²¹⁸

This vision of a world judicial system is part of Shoghi Effendi’s elaboration of the Bahá’í vision of a future world order. Shoghi Effendi explains that the statement of Bahá’u’lláh regarding His elaboration of collective security are none other than the demand for ‘the curtailment of unfettered national sovereignty’ and that of a system of a world commonwealth of the nations of the world or the formulation of a system of world government, whose main organs have been above mentioned.²¹⁹ Shoghi Effendi details his thoughts, reminiscent of the call for a ‘World Federal State’:

Some form of a world super-state must needs be evolved, in whose favour all the nations of the world will have willingly ceded every claim to make war, certain rights to impose taxation and all rights to maintain armaments, except for purposes of maintaining internal order within their respective dominions. Such a state will have to include within its orbit an international executive adequate to enforce supreme and unchallengeable authority on every recalcitrant member of the commonwealth; a world parliament whose members shall be elected by the people in their respective countries and whose election shall be confirmed by their respective governments; and a supreme tribunal whose judgement will have a binding effect even in such cases where the parties concerned did not voluntarily agree to submit their case to its consideration. A world community...in which the fury of a capricious and militant nationalism will have been transmuted into an abiding consciousness of world citizenship – such indeed, appears, in its broadest outline, the Order anticipated by Bahá’u’lláh...²²⁰

It is to bear in mind, however, and as briefly mentioned, that this picture of world order represents in the words of the BIC, and of the Bahá’í World Centre,

'a long-term picture of a global society' and a '**radical restructuring** of the administration of the affairs of the planet'. [Emphasis added]²²¹ In IR, the use of the very term 'world government' can seem far-fetched, outdated, and out of touch with a plural global governance system advocated in the new conditions of world (dis)order. To some, a 'world government' already exists in the form of unilateralism in international politics and/or the deficit of global democratic input in financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF). To others, 'world government' implies the prevalence of political security issues over socio-economic ones. It is essential to stress that the Bahá'í approach differs from those conceptions of world government. Indeed, we can anticipate why the Bahá'í model, which is holistic and based on grassroots values, calls for the principle of 'subsidiarity' and 'decentralisation' in international affairs. Indeed, with centralisation, or the process by which decisions are taken away from those affected by them, people lose their ability to shape their own destiny, and are deprived of the dignity to choose for themselves.

We can discern that the problem with the phrase 'world government' can be one of terminology (i.e. the world government that Bahá'ís believe in does not take the form and rigidity of the world government that is being currently criticised in IR). Indeed, the 'world government' referred to by the Bahá'í writings is not a centralised, undemocratic, and ineffective governance machine. Rather, it is a pyramidal structure, which respects lower levels of governance. In parallel, the BIC promotes the view that in development paradigms, the maxims 'small is beautiful' and 'think globally, act locally' are adequate to tackle economic issues²²² as people feel that they can control their destiny. Here sovereignty, meaning the respect for lower levels of governance, is necessary. As the late Professor Claude Ake observes, 'sovereignty has done little to prevent the majority of countries in the global south being subject to policies **imposed** on them by global financial institutions.'²²³ [Emphasis added] Indeed, cosmopolitanism does not necessarily equate to the idea of 'bigness' and inefficiency. As Indian writer Arundhati Roy states, 'The further and further away geographically decisions are taken, the more scope you have for incredible injustice.'²²⁴

Geoffrey Robertson, in view of the growing importance of global corporations as global actors, contends that it is imperative that international legal mechanisms be created for states and multinationals 'to provide resources, which are available to them ... for basic rights of health, education and social security'.²²⁵ More significantly, he maintains that 'human rights auditing', i.e. the process by which ethical reports are produced on behalf of multinationals, should become human rights principles, and not merely 'a public relations exercise'.²²⁶ Shoghi Effendi, who referred to a world parliament as a global law making body, conceived it in cosmopolitan terms, insofar as it would intend to 'satisfy the needs' of all peoples.²²⁷ The second and third generations of human rights define these socio-economic needs as rights. In relation to the latter, David Held also alludes to the idea of a global parliament which would monitor the accountability of global corporations to deal with their social failures. The ICC, which does not as yet include corporate responsibility, has, however, started meaningful and innovative work in implementing human rights on non-state actors, i.e. on human beings.

There is no doubt, for Bahá'ís, that the elaboration of a system of world government is a radical undertaking as things now stand. More importantly,

this system of world government would not come into being without the approbation of the members of the human race, who would have developed a strong sense of world citizenship that would have replaced 'a militant nationalism'. In highlighting these aspects, Shoghi Effendi, in 1931, made it absolutely clear that the intentions latent in the words of Bahá'u'lláh do not aspire to replace the existing local or national structures by international ones, nor to substitute our existing loyalties for other ones, but rather seek to supplement humanity with the international structures and loyalties that are necessary to the flourishing and development of society. Similar to the federalist tradition, the Bahá'í ethos does not intend to replace lower levels of governance and lesser loyalties, but rather seeks to complement them with the requirements of an interdependent world. It does not call for a vague attachment to the world as a whole, but for evolving and multiple loyalties from the grassroots to the whole. Shoghi Effendi notes:

Far from aiming at the subversion of the existing foundations of society, it (the meaning of Bahá'u'lláh's intent) seeks to broaden its basis...with the needs of an ever-changing world. It can conflict with no legitimate allegiances, nor can it undermine essential loyalties. Its purpose is neither to stifle the flame of a sane and intelligent patriotism in men's hearts, so essential if the evils of excessive centralization are to be avoided... It calls for a wider loyalty, for a larger aspiration that has animated the human race. It insists upon the subordination of national impulses and interests to the imperative claims of a unified world. It repudiates excessive centralisation on the one hand, and disclaims all attempts at uniformity on the other. Its watchword is unity in diversity.²²⁸

The Bahá'í call is based on the belief that it is absolutely necessary to abandon theories that seek to 'deify the state', that are only materialistic in their aspects,²²⁹ that promote the interests of certain members of the human race to the disadvantage of others, and that do not attempt to adjust themselves to the needs of an increasingly cosmopolitan age. Accordingly, the Universal House of Justice writes:

...all too many...ideologies, alas, instead of embracing the concept of the oneness of mankind, and promoting the increase of concord among different peoples, have tended to **deify the state**, to subordinate the rest of mankind to one nation, race or class, to attempt to suppress all discussion and interchange of ideas, or to callously abandon starving millions to the operations of a market system that all too clearly is aggravating the plight of the majority of mankind, while enabling small sections to live in a condition of affluence scarcely dreamed of by our forebears.

[Emphasis added]²³⁰

There is no denial that one of the most firm calls launched by the Bahá'í community is the abandonment of theories and ideas that are standing in the way of the realisation of humankind as one body, that are viewing all of humankind as an interdependent family, and that are still insisting upon nationalistic and divisive claims. It is suggested that we abandon parochial notions, such as racism, which in its extreme can lead to genocide, or nationalism, that has persisted and demonstrated its pernicious effects

on the body of humankind. If racism or nationalism cannot generate the prosperity of humankind, it is here suggested that we now start shaping our institutions, our efforts, and our world-view on a more encompassing and humane dimension. Shoghi Effendi embodied this all-important statement in his writings:

The call of Bahá'u'lláh is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices. If long-cherished ideals and time-honoured institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulae have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine.²³¹

Unity, Diversity and Continuity

It is crucial to state that Bahá'í appeals, which promote a federal structure and decentralisation, only call for additional structures to global governance, and do not advocate the abolition of the nation-state system, as they view governance in an evolutionary, and not adversarial base.²³² In this light, Katirai observes, 'While systems founded on an adversarial base may regard compromise as essential because two positions are mutually exclusive, those founded upon an evolutionary base see each stage as a precursor to the next higher and more complex one.'²³³

The Bahá'í Faith, thus, presents the image of a transformationalist, and not hyperglobalist model, which signifies that it recognises that the nation-state is in a period of transition, and not about to be extinct. The Bahá'í stance in relation to global governance is clearly between the insinuations of hyperglobalizers, who affirm that the nation-state is going to disappear due to transnational processes and the global economy,²³⁴ and between statist statements, which put forward that the nation-state is not going to be even slightly challenged by the processes of globalisation.²³⁵ Moreover, the Bahá'í Faith highlights the idea of a 'turning point' in international affairs, or a transition between national sovereignty and world unity, which many international theorists recognise.²³⁶ The proponents of cosmopolitan democracy, likewise, although not advocating a federal solution, admit that the fate of the nation-state is outside of its hands. Heater notes, 'The political scientists who have devised the concept of cosmopolitan democracy and those of like mind are sometimes dubbed 'transformationalists... they reject the interpretation of the 'hyperglobalists' who foresee the trend of globalization as involving the complete collapse of the nation-state'.²³⁷

Shoghi Effendi did not hesitate to point out the anachronism of the nation-state, as he clearly contended that the leaders of human institutions '...in utter disregard of the spirit of the age, are striving to adjust to national processes, suited to the ancient days of self-contained nations...'²³⁸ More recently, Peter Drucker argues that the nation-state is no longer the self contained unit that it used to be in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Indeed, for Drucker, the obsolescence of the nation-state demands the creation of institutions, which would 'overlap national boundaries and serve transnational social and economic needs'.²³⁹ Toulmin argues that the new age is characterised by adaptability and diversification instead of the old age of stability and hierarchy. The nation-state is currently unable to respond to our needs, and should be complemented by more global institutions. '... We are learning that in an evolving world, institutions must be adaptable to deal with evolving human problems'.²⁴⁰ Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed that the era of the unity of nation had given way to the era of the unity of the world. Indeed, for Bahá'ís, the times surrounding each religious dispensation are distinguished by a particular theme, the current one being the unity of humankind. In the evolutionary religious context with which the Bahá'í Faith views all aspects of human life, including social and political aspects, Shoghi Effendi explains that the main theme surrounding the Christian era was that of the individual, and that the era of Islam had been marked by the thematic of the unity of the nations.²⁴¹

Due to the nature of its evolutionary and non-adversarial approach, the Bahá'í Faith recognizes that the continued evolution of Christianity and Islam (which does not mean that their messages are questioned; rather it highlights an intrinsic link between religions) signifies that the adoption of a world vision complements individual and national concerns. The present religious theme, thus, is characterized by world unity, as the era of the self-sufficiency of nation-states has come to an end. Bahá'u'lláh refers to the love of one's country as still being a valid, yet insufficient and outdated, notion. He said, 'It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but it is his who loveth the whole world'.²⁴² While Bahá'ís do advocate 'a universal way of life',²⁴³ universal institutions, and the consciousness of world citizenship, they do not seek to diminish sane patriotic feelings, and the love that one individual may have for his or her culture, language, traditions, provided they do not become more important than wider, more global, concerns. U Thant, Secretary General of the UN from 1962 to 1971, embodied this image as he stated, 'I do not criticize national pride. National pride is natural. I say only that the sense of belonging to the human community must be added to, and become dominant over other allegiances'.²⁴⁴ The Bahá'í image of world order is grounded in a holistic, rather than partial world-view, and takes its main insight from the principle that what is of benefit to the whole is of benefit to the part, as humankind is viewed as 'one organically whole entity'.²⁴⁵ From this principle stems the consequential ideas of continuity, unity, and complementarity. The love of one's country is contained in the love of the world as the whole, continuity depicts different stages from the part to the whole (from the family unit to the world), and all of the parts are contained and act interdependently in this greater whole.

The Bahá'í vision contains some convictions about the future of humankind, due to its intrinsic religious character; namely Bahá'u'lláh envisions the inevitability of world peace, but warns that this phase will not come unhindered. Bahá'ís are confident, despite all of the world turbulences – which they consider to be a transitional step from a system of national sovereignty to a world commonwealth of nations – that peoples of vision and insight will lead humanity to world peace.²⁴⁶ In its 1985 statement, *The Promise of World Peace*, the Universal House of Justice explains that flaws in the

international system are partly due to the fact that state sovereignty has remained intact, and that this status quo impedes the adoption of relevant solutions to the threatened collapse of the international economic system, the spread of international anarchy and terrorism, or the inability of sovereign nation-states to prevent war.²⁴⁷ This report proclaims that due to ‘unfettered national sovereignty’, and the attachment to old patterns of behaviour, the path to world peace could be possibly horrifying. The statement reads, ‘Whether peace is to be reached only after unimaginable horrors precipitated by humanity’s stubborn clinging to old patterns of behaviour, or is to be embraced now by an act of consultative will, is the choice before all who inhabit the earth’.²⁴⁸ Furthermore, the House of Justice promotes the idea that ‘love of humanity’ does not leave out ‘love of one’s country’, and that ‘unbridled nationalism’, which distinguishes itself from ‘a sane patriotism’, must be superseded by a love for humanity in general.²⁴⁹ Shoghi Effendi explains that all that the call raised by Bahá'u'lláh implies and proclaims, is:

The insufficiency of patriotism, in view of the fundamental changes effected in the economic life of society and the interdependence of the nations, and as the consequence of the contraction of the world, through the revolution in the means of transportation and communication – conditions that did not and could not exist either in the days of Jesus Christ or of Muhammad. It calls for a wider loyalty, which should not, and indeed does not, conflict with lesser loyalties. It instils a love which, in view of its scope, must include and not exclude the love of one's own country. ... It does insist, however, on the subordination of national considerations and particularistic interests to the imperative and paramount claims of humanity as a whole, inasmuch as in a world of interdependent nations and peoples the advantage of the part is best to be reached by the advantage of the whole.²⁵⁰

'The Great Assemblage': Foundation of Global Governance and the Lesser Peace

The process of the growing consciousness of world solidarity – which, in Bahá'í thought, constitutes an element and aspect of the twentieth century – was referred to by 'Abdu'l-Bahá as 'the unity of nations'. The latter is to gradually shed its reflection in the political domain, the Lesser Peace. Indeed, Bahá'í thought maintains that the growing sense of world consciousness can be associated with certain organisational developments in the political domain.²⁵¹ The 'unity of nations' will, thus, be a crucial stage in the development of a political peace among nations. Bahá'u'lláh expounded on the Lesser Peace in the letters He sent to the major rulers of His age, and advised them to reduce their armaments, and develop a system of collective security. 'O rulers of the earth! Be reconciled among yourselves, that ye may need no more armaments save in a measure to safeguard your territories and dominions...Be united... Should anyone among you take up arms against another, rise ye all against Him, for this is naught but manifest justice'. In another passage, Bahá'u'lláh referred to the Lesser Peace as a gathering of world leaders, at which a system of security, unity, and concord among the nations would be devised. 'The time must come when the imperative necessity for the holding of a vast, an all embracing assemblage of men will be universally realised. The rulers and

kings of the earth must needs attend it, and, participating in its deliberations, must consider such ways and means as will the lay the foundations of the world's Great Peace among men'.²⁵²

Shoghi Effendi explains that, 'The principle of collective security He unreservedly urges; recommends the reduction in national armaments; and proclaims as necessary and inevitable the convening of a world gathering at which the kings and rulers of the world will deliberate for the establishment of peace among the nations'.²⁵³ This call, reiterated more recently by the Universal House of Justice and the BIC, now addresses itself to the heads of nation-states, who have at this time become the highest-ranking decision-makers, as well as to the global citizenry, who participates and gives input (heard or unfortunately unheard) to these decisions.²⁵⁴ The Lesser Peace will, thus, be characterised by the delineation of a global order that comprises institutions and laws to which nation-states abide, and endowed with the means with which collective decisions can be enforced, while being substantially supported by civil society organisation and participation.²⁵⁵ The Bahá'í vision only endorses a programme of global governance if it obtains a consensus from the peoples of the world, nation-states, international organisations, and NGOs, in brief all the major stakeholders.²⁵⁶ This consensus is 'the essential ingredient of any successful system of global governance. It is the cornerstone of the Lesser Peace and the fruits of the 'Great Assemblage' of the leaders of the nations called by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, wherein the foundations of a new global order and the unity of the nation-states will be laid as the Lesser Peace'.²⁵⁷ This consensus would be based on the global acceptance of common core values, and the establishment of a general treaty or international constitution, which would distinguish itself from old 'cosmopolitan' notions of world conquest, or universal conquests for personal and authoritarian designs, which did not have at their basis the principle of true justice, and the normative equality of peoples and nations.²⁵⁸

The call to world leaders to establish the Lesser Peace and obtain from it the sanction of the peoples of the world have been raised by Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Universal House of Justice, and the Bahá'í International Community. Bahá'u'lláh called for the convocation of a 'vast all-embracing assembly'; 'Abdu'l-Bahá advocated for this assemblage to make of Peace the cause of universal consultation, underlining that it should seek to establish a union of the nations of the world and establish a binding treaty; at the present time, the Universal House of Justice highlights that this convocation is 'long overdue'. The BIC summons 'a convocation of world leaders... to consider how the international order might be redefined and restructured to meet the challenges facing the world', with significant participation and input from civil society. The BIC suggests that this summit, which they propose could be called the 'World Summit on Global Governance',²⁵⁹ could draw on the experience underlying various successful UN conferences.²⁶⁰ In particular, the Millennium People's Forum, held by the United Nations in May 2000 and co-chaired by the BIC, was the first of its kind in UN history to be a channel for civil society to forward discussions and ideas to the General Assembly.²⁶¹ Likewise, the BIC recently praised the process of crafting the UN's 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and associated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) involving a 'Global Conversation' in which over eight million people from 193 countries took part – a process

which the BIC defines as 'unprecedented in human history'.²⁶² One of the foundations of peace is that peoples would gradually come to recognise their common destiny (which is also enshrined in the principle of oneness) and would, from this premise, have the will to act together, at least in matters vital to their concerns.²⁶³ In the context of the Lesser Peace, an integrative process is characterised by growing global cooperation. World conferences, the creation of the League of Nations and the United Nations, the increasing number and participation of NGOs, and the strengthening of regional organisations (such as the EU) are identified as a momentum towards the Lesser Peace.

One of the outcomes of this World Summit, 'Abdu'l-Bahá specified, would be the enunciation of a treaty binding on governments. In particular, all states and nations would have to submit to a body of contract, in which clear principles of international relations and laws are laid down, and consequential agreements and obligations would be ascertained and binding.²⁶⁴ (These also include, as stated, worldwide disarmament, the delineation of international borders and frontiers, the submission of disputes to binding arbitration or judgement by a world court, and a 'system of collective security to ensure that international treaties are not violated'.)²⁶⁵ The steps leading to the Lesser Peace, according to the Universal House of Justice, are part of this 'integrative process' articulated by Shoghi Effendi, and comprise the features that can be identified as stages towards global unity.

The various world conferences are part of this process that testifies to 'an emerging unity of thought in world undertakings'.²⁶⁶ Recently-retired UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon chose the title 'One Humanity: Shared Responsibility' for the report of the World Humanitarian Summit that took place in Istanbul on 23–24 May 2016. The BIC considered the title of this report to be an affirmation of the oneness of humanity'.²⁶⁷ Indeed, the 'promptitude and spontaneity with which these government leaders have been acting together in responding to a variety of world crises in different parts of the world', 'the cries...for attention to be given to the feasibility of achieving some form of global governance', 'the greater involvement of the United Nations', or 'the call raised for an international criminal court to be established' are some of the signs that Bahá'í contemplate as prerequisites for the Lesser Peace.²⁶⁸ In addition, the Universal House of Justice identifies important and auspicious steps to world order which have gradually included the creation of the League of Nations, followed by the United Nations whose formation corresponded with the process of the ending of nation-building characterised by the independence of numerous nations. The Universal House of Justice also identifies their involvement with older nations in matters of mutual concern. The international body elaborates on a number of steps that have been taken towards the elaboration of world order: The consequent vast increase in cooperation among hitherto isolated and antagonistic peoples and groups in international undertakings in the scientific, educational, legal, economic and cultural fields; the rise in recent decades of an unprecedented number of international humanitarian organisations; the spread of women's and youth movements calling for an end to war; and the spontaneous spawning of widening networks of ordinary people seeking understanding through personal communication.²⁶⁹

The House of Justice subsequently proposes that the numerous groups that have come together in the form of regional organisations to co-operate in matters of common interest, such as the Association of South East Asian Nations, the African Union, the European Union, or the international congresses that testify to an urge to unity, are reflective of this trend. Mentioning the integrative and disruptive processes, the Universal House of Justice concludes, 'Together with the opposing tendency to warfare and self-aggrandizement against which it ceaselessly struggles, the drive towards world unity is one of the dominant, pervasive features of life on the planet during the closing years of the twentieth century'.²⁷⁰

The Bahá'í International Community's Views on International Organisations: Precursors of Global Institutions

The BIC recognises that the world is not ready for this system of planetary government, and takes an incremental approach to the reform of the international landscape that it recognises has grown in complexity since 1945. As early as 1955, the first decade review of the UN charter, the BIC proposed some guidelines for the reform of the United Nations Organisation,²⁷¹ based on the vision articulated by Bahá'u'lláh during His lifetime. These suggestions have been endorsed by the BIC thirty years later, although further expounded and complemented – a sign that not much has changed in regards to the functioning of the UN in the last thirty years. In accordance with its evolutionary mindset, the Bahá'í International Community does not call for UN abolition, but for its reform. The Bahá'í image of world order, furthermore, recognizes the transitional period delineating present times. This transition from a world based on national sovereignty to a system of global governance, set around international institutions that will develop into global institutions centred on humanity rather than nation-states, has been termed a 'turning point'.²⁷²

Highlighting the Bahá'í support for these organisations, the Universal House of Justice notes, 'The tentative steps towards world order, especially since World War II, give hopeful signs. The increasing tendency of groups of nations to formalize relationships which enable them to co-operate in matters of mutual interests...prepare the path to world order'.²⁷³ While recognising the great achievements of the United Nations, and being active observers of the organisation of the League of Nations, Bahá'í statements seek to reform organisations that embody a world vision while still based on the dated principle of national sovereignty. The BIC accordingly notes, 'Each attempt [the League of Nations and the United Nations] sought to address emergent recognition of global interdependence while preserving intact state sovereignty above else'.²⁷⁴ This does not signify that these organisations are not valued by the Universal House of Justice and the BIC; rather, the Bahá'í bodies contend that international organisations should become more global. Indeed, the Bahá'í International Community considers that the intricate agglomerate of institutions and relationships governing the international system, including the defunct League of Nations and the contemporary United Nations, point toward the recognition of an interdependent humanity, and a more adequate future global governance system. *Per se*, 'Often the United Nations most avowed critics have been its most avid supporters'.²⁷⁵ Although the League of Nations and the United Nations are far from being

perfect bodies, they represent international processes and organisations, which will eventually become more global. Shoghi Effendi wrote in 1936:

Though the great outcry raised by post-war nationalism is growing louder and more insistent every day, the League of Nations is as yet in its embryonic state, and the storm clouds that are gathering may for a time totally eclipse its powers and obliterate its machinery, yet the direction in which the institution itself is operating is most significant. The voices that have been raised ever since its inception, the efforts that have been exerted, the work that has already been accomplished, foreshadow the triumphs which this presently constituted institution, or any other body that may supersede it, is destined to achieve.²⁷⁶

Moreover, despite all its failures, the League represented the first proper attempt by the nations to 'assume collective responsibility' and 'collective action'. Consistent with the Bahá'í proposition that there is a progression in all aspects of international relations and history in general, the League of Nations, followed by the perfected United Nations, are processes that will eventually lead to a more complete and cosmopolitan system needed for the organisation of the planet, namely the long-time picture of a world federal state or world commonwealth of nations based on a cosmopolitan model – where not only states, but peoples are crucial elements. Both the federal and commonwealth models represent alternative routes to world order that would be increasingly centred on humanity, rather than nation-states. According to Shoghi Effendi, the process, which launched the League of Nations, represented the attainment 'to that stage at which the oneness of the whole body of nations will be made the ruling principle of international life'.²⁷⁷ Indeed, Bahá'ís assign a very important role to international organizations as regards their potential to participate in a new design of global governance. Lepard remarks, '...the history of international organisation has reflected a steady evolution towards higher and higher forms of unity and towards the development of a new awareness that the diverse peoples of the earth together constitute a single world community'.²⁷⁸ Moreover, the idea of process contains a powerful element of optimism, which considers punctual failures (such as the League of Nations or the refusal for an economic unity in Europe) as an impetus towards an improved structural form. As Shoghi Effendi wrote:

The fierce opposition which greeted the abortive scheme of the Geneva Protocol; the ridicule poured upon the proposal of a United States of Europe which was subsequently advanced, and the failure of the general scheme for the economic unity of Europe, may appear as setbacks... And yet, are we not justified in driving fresh encouragement when we observe that the very consideration of these proposals is in itself an evidence of the steady growth in the minds and hearts of men?²⁷⁹

We can now notice that each of these institutions has been realised, although ridiculed, and then hailed as failures.

Ethical Reforms

Part of the suggestions of the BIC relating to UN reform is based on a reconsideration of human values, and a new starting point for building a

new system of global governance. The most important ethical consideration in review is the interdependent relationship existing between the individual and the international community, meaning that the individual unit is a responsibility of the world community as a whole, in which national citizenship or artificially constructed states are absolutely irrelevant. Individual human beings, who are the units that make up humanity, must be protected regardless of artificially constructed states. This is an important aspect of human rights, as these rights originate from the body of mankind as opposed to national communities that often impede their realization. This notion can be found in Thomas Paine's words 'my principles are universal. My attachment is to all the world, and not any particular part'.²⁸⁰ Thomas C. Walker explains, 'For Paine, there was a unity between the individual and mankind. Particular national attachments should carry little weight with enlightened men and women'.²⁸¹ The BIC reiterates this point. Since the body of humankind is indivisible, 'each member of the human race is into the world as a trust of the whole'.²⁸² This relationship represents the foundation of human rights, and is an important consideration for reforms to be brought into the international system. Additionally, discussions about the international order must include the generality of humanity, and not only sections of people, usually leaders in all fields of human knowledge. This discussion should involve men and women at the grassroots levels, and should lead to a self-reinforcing process and growing awareness of world citizenship.²⁸³ Finally, reforms pertaining to the United Nations, and other international institutions, can only be envisaged in the light of their future role in the international system. If criticism outweighs praise of the United Nations, it is necessary, according to the BIC, to view the United Nations, not in its present form, but with an 'evolutionary mindset' i.e. with the view of how it might operate within the future international order, and the possible achievements and benefits it might be able to provide.²⁸⁴

This cosmopolitan basis is linked to more practical measures to reform the UN body whose functioning operations have remained unchanged for the last fifty years. Indeed, Bahá'í suggested reforms are very much in line with the reforms brought by the Commission of Global Governance.²⁸⁵ Among many others, a point of common venture would be the call for the adoption of new values along with the development and reform of the international system. The BIC describes the report of the Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*, as 'one of the most balanced and thoughtful' which 'argues for the widespread adoption of new values, as well as structural reforms in the United Nations system'.²⁸⁶ The adoption of new values should not just be a theoretical grounding, but according to the Bahá'í viewpoint ought to be enshrined in a Bill of Rights. In 1955 the BIC stated, It is recommended that the United Nations adopt a Bill of Rights, which guarantees to every individual freedom of speech, of the press, of religion, and of thought, as well as freedom from racial and religious discrimination, freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, equality of sexes, equality before the law, equality of opportunity, and other such basic rights.²⁸⁷

The Commission on Global Governance re-echoes this wish by underlining the necessity of elaborating a global Charter of civil society. 'We...urge the international community to unite in support of a global ethic of common rights and shared responsibilities. In our view, such an ethic – reinforcing

the fundamental rights that are already part of the fabric of international norms – would provide the moral foundation for constructing a more effective system of governance'.²⁸⁸ Referring to rights and responsibilities such as a secure life; equitable treatment; participation in governance at all levels; equal access to information; equal access to the global commons; the promotion of equity, including gender equity; and the preservation of humanity's cultural and intellectual heritage; the Commission goes on to state, 'We believe this list of rights and responsibilities in the minimum basis for progress in building a more civil global society... Over time, we hope that these principles could be embodied in more binding international document – a global Charter of Civil Society –...'.²⁸⁹

In 1947, a Bahá'í declaration on Human Rights (soon followed by a Bahá'í statement on Women's Rights) was submitted to the United Nations. After becoming an accredited NGO at the United Nations in 1948, the BIC sent a letter to former Secretary General, Mr Dag Hammarskjold in 1955, which included proposals for the revision of the UN Charter.²⁹⁰ In the 1955 statement, the BIC put forward several suggestions regarding UN reform, as it highlighted that 'real sovereignty is no longer vested in the institutions of the national state because the nations have become more interdependent', ...'that the existing crisis is moral and spiritual as well as political;' ...'and that the existing crisis can only be surmounted by the achievement of a world order representatives of governments as well as the nations of mankind.'²⁹¹ As well as underlining the erosion of national sovereignty, and placing emphasis on moral aspects of governance, this statement joined the advocacy of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá when They called for a more adequate representation of 'peoples' in governance, in addition to 'governments'. Both are complementary when it comes to decision-making in the international community. The basis of these considerations was to stand at the heart of practical reforms that demanded the timely readjustment of the modus operandi of the UN. In this respect, the Bahá'í International Community suggests a body of proposals relating to the operation of the main organs of the United Nations. These entail suggestions for the reforms of the legislative, executive, and judicial functions of the UN.

The BIC deplores the lack of a cosmopolitan ingredient within the structure and functioning of international organizations. Indeed, most of these failures are due to the fact that the United Nations represents an assemblage of nation-states, which often strive to maximise their self interests. Accordingly, the BIC remarks, 'The United Nations lacks not only the clear authority but also the requisite resources to act effectively in most instances. Accusations of the United Nations' failures are in fact indictments of member-states themselves'.²⁹² Similarly, the report of the Commission on Global Governance remarks:

When governments or people speak of reform of the United Nations, they address a process of change that has to begin in national behaviour, not on the banks of the East River in New York. National behaviour is a product of national decision-making and national policies: it is here that strengthening of the UN must begin. Worthwhile reforms of UN structures ought to be pursued, and we propose several in this report, but the greatest failings of the UN have not been structural: they have been collective failings of the member-states... The point cannot be made more emphatically.²⁹³

Structural Reforms: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Functions of the UN

In an earlier passage, it was noted that the Bahá'í view of history is a progressive one, namely one that passes through different stages. The collective life of humanity has, thus, been compared with the life of an individual going through childhood, adolescence, and maturity. As this view concerns the common life of humanity as a single body, it applies to international organizations, and their constant improvement. The League of Nations could, hence, be compared to the embryonic stage of the life of international institutions, and Bahá'í reforms concerning the international system are intrinsically linked to the view that evolution is a feature of human life. As such, international organizations are thought to lead to ever-closer integration in the life of humanity, founded upon the growing recognition of the oneness of humankind. The realization of the oneness of humankind, an ethical foundation, is linked to giving more means of enforcement to the main organs of the United Nations, which are to safeguard the individual from abuse and injustice, and to advance the process of peaceful change. Bahá'ís, thus, view the improvement of the UN as a move towards the goal of human history, i.e. global unity.²⁹⁴ Structural reforms are also enshrined in the belief that human nature is not inherently aggressive, that transformation is possible, and that the physical integration of humankind is a mirror of the oneness of mankind, as discussed above.

Insofar as, in the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the individual is 'in need of cooperation and association',²⁹⁵ his or her well-being is better served through operations which can optimise this human need, which due to the global stage in which we find ourselves, take the form of intricate global cooperation. Morality and ethics, as it was underlined, are the reflection of more global cooperative and practical efforts, reflected in the proposal for retaining independent functional organizations, which promote global integration, and international peace.

Thus, Bahá'í practical reforms keep in line with promoting a vision of unity sustained by the principle of oneness, seek to maintain and reinforce the spirit of collaboration in an interdependent and single humanity, and stress the importance of the participation of peoples in world affairs. In brief, Bahá'í practical reforms are linked to the more theoretical views of the Faith, as they seek to enhance more peaceful relations central to the vision of human integration and oneness, developed by Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi. It has been argued that the normative basis of the oneness of mankind is also thoroughly linked with the notion of breaking away from the concept of state sovereignty, which by underpinning the centrality of states, fails to recognize the fact of global interdependence, and limits international affairs to an outdated state-centric view. Since 'the anarchy inherent in state-sovereignty is moving to a climax',²⁹⁶ the United Nations must demonstrate the ability to disregard this concept. This theoretical background is reflected in the suggested reforms for the three main organs of the UN, which are the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the International Court of Justice. The reforms of the UN, as proposed by the BIC, are in line with the vision of Shoghi Effendi, when he referred to the very long-term vision of a world federal government. Namely, he mentioned that the world parliament should create binding law, that an

international force should back up the world executive, and that the world tribunal should have binding decisions on the parties and on all disputes that may arise in the international system. Shoghi Effendi, furthermore, noted that the world parliament should be elected by the peoples, and that the supreme tribunal should have 'a binding effect even in such cases where the parties concerned did not voluntarily agree to submit their case into consideration'.²⁹⁷ This is reflected, as we shall see in the next section, in the more incremental reforms of the three main organs of the UN.

Starting with the General Assembly, the BIC identifies its main failures with the 'undue weight to state sovereignty and a mix of anarchy and conservatism' as well as its inability to enforce sanctions.²⁹⁸ It, henceforth, calls for a more representative General Assembly, indeed, one that would represent more accurately both the peoples and nations of the world. This call is reminiscent of the advocacy cited in the writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1875, '... it would be preferable if the election of non-permanent members of consultative assemblies ... should be dependent on the will and choice of the people...'²⁹⁹ Indeed, unlike people's acceptance of national and local legislative bodies, international legislative bodies are likely to entice suspicion insofar as they are not adequately represented.³⁰⁰ Additionally, the resolutions of the UN should have the force of law, and be endowed with provisions and sanctions, so that they can address the needs of an increasingly interdependent humanity more efficiently, and abandon certain paralysing aspects of state sovereignty. The BIC states:

In a reformed United Nations, the legislative branch and its voting structure will need to represent more accurately the people of the world as well as nation-states. Second, General Assembly resolutions are not binding unless they are separately ratified as a treaty by each member state. If the current system, which places state sovereignty above all other concerns, is to give way to a system which can address the interests of a single and interdependent humanity, the resolutions of the General Assembly – within a limited domain of issues – must gradually come to possess the force of law with provisions for both enforcement and sanctions. These two shortcomings are closely linked inasmuch as the majority of the world's people, suspicious and fearful of world government, are unlikely to submit to an international institution unless it is itself more genuinely representative.³⁰¹

These reforms are suggested so as to promote the image of a single and interdependent humanity, which constitutes the more normative principles of the Faith that have been reviewed previously, and the emphasis that Bahá'u'lláh placed on 'peoples' in His recommendations on a global governance system, or the equivalent of a global civil society. For the short-term reforms of the GA, the BIC proposes five measures. Firstly, it suggests that minimum requirements should be raised and determined by the way a government conducts itself towards its peoples:

Without an unshakeable commitment to regular and periodic elections, universal participation by secret ballot, freedom of expression, and to other such human rights, a member state stands in the way of the active and intelligent participation of the vast majority of its population in the affairs

of its own communities. We propose that there should be consequences for member states violating these standards. Similarly, nations seeking recognition should be denied membership until they openly espouse these standards or make recognizable efforts to move in that direction.³⁰²

The demands for a more democratic representation within the General Assembly, and for raising minimum requirements for membership (this would include, for example, a commitment to human rights) are regarded as foundational in the operations of the General Assembly. Violations of human rights in national systems are most certainly bound to have negative effects on the international system as a whole, as they impede on citizenry participation, which is crucial to the flourishing of international society. The Bahá'í Faith holds no dogmatic views on how population differences would be handled, as long as they are part of a fair system. What is suggested is changing the 'one state, one vote' principle of the General Assembly into 'some form of proportionate representation', which would make the General Assembly a more equal partner with the Security Council.³⁰³ In a letter in 1942, Shoghi Effendi explained that even though 'Abdu'l-Bahá provided a clear vision of global governance, these concerned more fundamental principles than a rigid formula:

Though it is premature to try and endeavour to foresee on what basis various nations would be represented on any international council, or in any international form of government, it is clear from the Bahá'í standpoint that it could only be carried out on the basis of true justice; and justice does not imply one race having a preponderating vote over some other race's representatives, and thus being in a position to dominate them.³⁰⁴

Other proposals relating to the legislative function include the setting up of an International Commission in order to study the question of international boundaries instead of relegating the problem to the World Court. The latter commission would serve as a study-ground and as a practical agency for the assessments of threats against various civil groups, and the results of its research would serve as a warning system for growing tensions among various groups.³⁰⁵ The 1995 report of the BIC deplores the way in which nation-states were initially arbitrarily designed, a situation that has led to many conflicts, and which highlights the need for a more genuine general reassessment and agreement on national borders. 'In order to establish a genuine community of nations **in the long run**, it will be necessary to settle finally all disputes among borders. This research would serve that end'.³⁰⁶ [Emphasis added] This measure aims at providing a short-term remedy for ethnic conflicts, as these conflicts also have to be tackled at the level of principle, that is, by promoting global values that would seek to efface hatred and exclusiveness in the very long-term. If like Mitrany, we could say that this would bring about discord, according to the Bahá'í view, this is a short-term measure (as with most proposals that relate to UN reforms) that could provide a basis upon which ethnic conflicts could be brought to appeasement. As boundaries were mostly arbitrarily designed (the boundaries of the majority of the nations are identical with the boundaries of colonial states established by the European powers), the Bahá'í view contends

that there should be an authority to settle boundary disputes adequately. It is in the light of this recognized hindrance to peace and security that the latter proposal is made. That the Bahá'í ethos does not seek to do away with groupings such as the nation-state is mirrored in this BIC proposal, and in the call for reassessing international borders for greater security, and as a preventive measure against conflicts. More importantly, there is recognition that boundaries are artificial and imagined, but since they exist, there must be short-term mechanisms to deal with them.

Anderson's observation that nations are no more than 'imagined communities' that require considerable social and political engineering to propagate, echoes 'Abdu'l-Bahá's much earlier description of nations and peoples as 'limited unities' which are 'imaginary and without real foundation'.³⁰⁷ 'The artificial and arbitrary nature of national boundaries, coupled with insufficient mechanisms for handling boundary disputes, has been one of the major sources of inter-national conflict in the past two centuries'.³⁰⁸ Indeed, the Bahá'í model rests on a long term vision, which through intermediary steps, sets to achieve a real unity among peoples. In a time of ethnic hatred, a more adequate reconfiguration of boundaries would serve as a 'warning system'. Though like David Mitrany, the Bahá'í ethos seeks to render frontiers 'meaningless', it is more in a sense of feelings, attitudes, and principles. It is clear that the Bahá'í Faith does not simply base its commitment to peace on ideological commitments either. It seeks to promote an active peace, not only based on a political basis, but on the release of the powers of the individual; a new conception of human relationships; the reduction of the gap between extremes of wealth and poverty; and the promotion of sustainable development measures. More importantly, world citizenship education is viewed as a long-term preventive measure against ethnic-based conflicts.

Consciousness of the oneness of humanity, if taught to the next generation, could protect it from ethnic and religious conflict and encourage processes of collaboration and conciliation. It could generate a desire to base decisions on just principles and lead to the development of laws that are 'universal in both character and authority'.³⁰⁹

As regards financial arrangements, which are a great impediment to the successful conduct of UN operations, the BIC underlines that voluntary arrangements would never be sufficient, and suggests that an expert task force should be established to search for new solutions. The BIC adds, 'In studying alternatives, the Task Force should be mindful of several fundamental principles. First, there should be no assessments without representation. Second, in the interest of fairness and justice, assessments should be graduated. Third, mechanisms for encouraging voluntarily contributions should not be overlooked'.³¹⁰ In addition to these proposals, the BIC, in line with the writings of Bahá'u'lláh³¹¹ and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, calls for an Expert Commission to be appointed in order to make a commitment to 'an auxiliary international language and script', whose aim would be to 'facilitate the transition to a global society through better communication'. Moreover, reflecting the need for greater global integration, the BIC promotes the establishment of a Commission for the development of an international

currency.³¹² In view of the federal mindset that the Bahá'í International Community is endowed with, and the weight it gives to the diversity of peoples and the protection of minorities, such a statement does not imply the demise of any culture or language, but rather seeks to supplement the existing world languages. This Bahá'í reform suggests that unity could be structurally realized through the input of an expert task force, which would study and seek to implement a universal auxiliary language. 'Such a move', the BIC states, 'would go far toward promoting a spirit of unity'.³¹³ This is an aspect of the Bahá'í view that theory (unity) and practice (in this case the devise of a universal language) are interrelated; indeed, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of treading the spiritual path with practical feet'.³¹⁴

In addition, the BIC holds the view that the Security Council 'suffers from an inability to take decisive action'. Hence, the BIC makes four suggestions for the short term. It proposes 'as a transitional step, measures be introduced to curb the exercise of the veto power to reflect the original intention of the Charter'.³¹⁵ Other measures to strengthen the decision-making role of the Security Council and its enforcement powers include the creation of an International Force under the command of the Security Council and Secretary General financed by the General Assembly, whose personnel would come from all parts of the world. 'If properly implemented, this Force would also provide a sense of security that might encourage steps towards global disarmament, thereby making possible an outright ban on all weapons of mass destruction'.³¹⁶ The BIC adds, in line with the counsels of Bahá'u'lláh to the sovereigns of His time, that states should only need armaments for internal security, and for their own defence.³¹⁷ Other proposals related to the strengthening of the Security Council include furthering the concept of collective security to local problems (a concept of human security), as many local threats are 'the result of the complex breakdown of the present-day global order'. 'These threats include but are not limited to international drug trafficking, food security, and the emergence of new global pandemics'.³¹⁸ The value of oneness touches upon the centrality of human rights, and the demand for more solid action to tear apart the concept of state sovereignty. Collective action is not only required in the case of military aggression, but also in the case of human aggression within the state (genocide), and other problems occurring as the result of the breakdown of the global system. Former Secretary General Kofi Annan observed 'the collective interest is the national interest ...when we read the Charter today, we are more than ever conscious that its aim is to protect human beings, not to protect those who abuse them'.³¹⁹ Annan's 'Global Compact' and the emerging norm of a 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) are part of a wider global urge to usher durable changes.

In addition, if the international system is to be based on the normative principles of 'unity in diversity', the concepts of the veto and of the permanent membership in the Security Council clearly jeopardise principles of equality and fairness. The oneness of mankind also justifies that Bahá'í reforms have been suggested as early as 1955 as regards removing the veto and permanent membership in the Security Council, and the importance of democracy in international relations. Laszlo remarks that international organisations are bodies that are not truly global, but international: they still operate within the climate of state sovereignty and self interest as

opposed to the global interest.³²⁰ ‘Such arrangements’, Katirai states, ‘are not just bad governance but in dire contradiction to what the Commission on Global Governance calls the ‘principles of universality and the equality of member-states’ that so many, including the nation-states, presume should underlie international undertakings’.³²¹

The BIC, as briefly noted, recognises the great importance of functional-styled executive organisations such as the WHO or UNICEF, bodies with which it closely works. Moreover, the creation of these organisations coincides with the vision of the ‘century of light’, as it refers to ‘the growing acceptance of the principle of oneness and its implications’. For ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, physical integration would advance ‘the conditions that permit achievement of the ideal’ (universal peace), as these organisations are a ‘reflection’ of the ‘consciousness of world solidarity’, crucial to the prelude of the Lesser Peace.³²² Not only do functional organisations embody effectiveness, but they are also based on the moral need for collective action that supports the unity of mankind and the prosperity of its peoples. The BIC positively remarks, ‘As an international organisation, the United Nations has demonstrated humanity’s capacity for united action in health, agriculture, education, environmental protection, and the welfare of children’.³²³ Additionally, mentioning the independent organisations in the UN family, and as part of the suggested reforms it proposed, the BIC notes that these successful executive functions (WHO, UNICEF, The UPU, or the ILO) should retain and reinforce their independence.³²⁴ These proposals emphasise the functional mindset of the BIC, as they call for expert task forces to search for appropriate solutions. These functional organizations have demonstrated the capacity for ‘united action in health, agriculture, education, environmental protection, the welfare of children’ as well as the ‘collective moral will to build a better future’.³²⁵ Morality and ethics are here another example of the reflection of more global cooperative and practical efforts, which are found in the proposal for retaining independent functional organisations, which promote global integration, and consequently international peace.

Finally, the importance of the judicial function of the UN is underlined. ‘In any system of governance, a strong judicial function is necessary to moderate power of the other branches and to enunciate, promulgate, protect and deliver justice... no lasting world civilization can be founded unless it is firmly grounded in the principle of justice’.³²⁶ Emphasising the positive elements of the International Court of Justice created in 1945, such as the diversity of a varied international judicial panel, the BIC calls for the extension of the Court’s jurisdiction and suggests that other organs of the United Nations, not only member states, be given the right to bring cases before the Court. This suggestion is reflective of cosmopolitan propositions that states cannot be the sole actors in international relations and law. As well as expanding the Court’s jurisdiction, the BIC calls for the expansion of issue areas such as international terrorism and drug trafficking. Without doubt, proposals that involve the subject of the International Court of Justice require that it should deliver legally binding decisions. The crucial place of the theme of ‘justice’ in Bahá’í thought justifies its support for the creation of bodies such as the ICC that places human rights over state interests. ‘Justice’, the BIC states, ‘is the one power that can translate the

dawning consciousness of humanity's oneness into a collective will through which the necessary structures of global community life can be confidently erected'.³²⁷ Clearly, practicing justice is another facet of the ethical, normative, and cosmopolitan principles of the Faith based on humanity, and not on states. In light of the 'ethical' and 'spiritual' nature of the Bahá'í Faith, these practical measures to reform the United Nations are not, however, sufficient. The BIC recognises the crucial importance of releasing the powers latent in the individual, and providing development paradigms not only with a material, but also a moral and spiritual dimension.³²⁸ The BIC also seeks to instil a closer relationship between peoples and their international organisations in order to invalidate the dichotomy between them and us.³²⁹ Furthermore, the encouragement of the greater participation of women in international affairs – who, in Bahá'í eyes, have an essential role to play in the establishment of Universal Peace – and the promotion of a more just system of global economic justice are important aspects of the BIC institutional reform programme. The BIC, thus, notes:

Bahá'u'lláh announced the arrival of the time, foretold, in all of the world's scriptures, when humanity would at last witness the uniting of all peoples into a peaceful and integrated society. He said that human destiny lies not merely in the creation of a materially prosperous society, but also in the construction of a global civilization where individuals are encouraged to act as moral beings who understand their true nature and are able to progress towards a greater fulfilment that no degree of material bounty can provide.³³⁰

The Bahá'í Approach and Cosmopolitan IR

By way of conclusion, I will now highlight some of the similarities, and yet essential dissimilarities of form between IR and the Bahá'í approach, and how the latter can lend support to a growing cosmopolitan IR. Indeed, Bahá'í principles seem to be closely linked to the negatively labelled 'idealist' ('Wilsonian' IR), or neo-idealist (Held, Falk, and Archibugi call for the democratisation of international structures, and global civil movements) branches of IR. Indeed, idealists (as they came to be pejoratively called) promoted the ideals of the League of Nations, the concept of collective security, world citizenship, education, disarmament, an international police force, and arbitration. In addition, the respect for human rights, the alleviation of poverty, and the rule of law are strong features of this conceived order. If, however, the 'idealist' or 'liberal' branch of IR can be criticised for being too universalising, Bahá'í principles emphasise the need for diversity in unity. In other words, as we are 'one human family' (oneness), we have different viewpoints, and sometimes grow to adopt different values (diversity), but we are still able to collaborate, and care for each other.

In this respect, and in order to illustrate the inclusiveness of the Bahá'í perspective on cosmopolitanism, it can also be said that the latter represents a departure in sacred thinking as it does not rely on a believer/infidel dichotomy, but rather stresses the importance of tolerance and philanthropy. Bahá'u'lláh noted that it was indispensable that the peoples of the world '... observe tolerance and righteousness, which are two lights amidst the darkness of the world and two educators for the edification of mankind.'³³¹ By proclaiming the oneness of humanity, Bahá'u'lláh, in addition, dissolved

the dichotomy between believer and infidel. He wrote, 'There can be no doubt whatever that the peoples of the world, or whatever race or religion, derive their inspiration from one heavenly source...'³³² 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in this regard, notes that there is no justification to account for one's own belief as 'light and all others as darkness'.³³³ Bahá'í thinking, therefore, moves away from division (religious beliefs are not a condition to be excluded from the cosmopolis) towards ideas on unity based on the premise that human beings, regardless of gender, race, religion, and class form part of the same, yet diverse, human family. Denominations cannot preclude our common humanity.

It is also relevant to the cosmopolitan tradition that the Bahá'í model does not concentrate on 'events', but rather on the notion of 'process'. Interestingly, it is this focus on events, which discredited the 'idealist' and more normative branch of IR, and promoted the realist tradition through the arguments of the failure of the League of Nations, and the advent of WW2. The Bahá'í model, by focusing on process, sees that 'integrative and disruptive' forces work in opposition to each other, but will eventually lead to peaceful human and state relations. In the very long run, the numerous organizations of civil society and the other organizational consequences flowing from the interdependence of nations can foster cosmopolitan values, and override parochial and conflict-ridden values without undermining the local level and grassroots initiatives often led by women in the so-called developing world. Bahá'í political scientist W. Andy Knight, referring to world disorder as 'disruption' and 'disintegration', writes, 'what is clear from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi is that world disorder is a prerequisite for the ushering in of World Order...'.³³⁴ This very concept can be linked to this phase of 'transition' and 'transformation' acknowledged by various IR theorists cited at the beginning of this paper.³³⁵ Martin Shaw, likewise, underlines the concept of 'global transition', and propounds the idea that catastrophes (disintegration) often represent a stimulus for transformation: 'the gains in the development of international law enforcement have been responses to some of the worst, genocidal episodes among many crimes against humanity, in which millions have suffered'.³³⁶

However, the acknowledgment of acute crises does not equate to ignoring, belittling, or blindly accepting the traumatic effects of the disintegration process on the body of humankind and the human suffering this generates. Rather, these conditions call for a process of increased awareness and informed engagement that reinforce the caring ethos of world citizens. W. Andy Knight goes on to state:

Civil wars and internecine violence exploded in places like Afghanistan, Cambodia, Rwanda, the Former Yugoslavia, Bosnia, and Columbia. The debacle in Somalia, followed by a genocide in Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in Serbia and Kosovo, and the politically-motivated slaughter in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Mozambique, and the continued violence in the Middle East, Chechnya, Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Zimbabwe, parts of Central and Latin America, and Asia indicated a persistent adherence to a culture of violence in the latter part of the twentieth century... To this can be added longstanding

and continuing problems of unchecked population growth, crushing debt burdens, barriers to trade, transnational crime, drug trafficking, the trafficking in women and children, poverty, famine, natural and man-made disasters, political oppression and corruption, the spread of HIV/AIDS, SARS, Mad Cow Disease...³³⁷

More recently, the ongoing civil war in Syria represents one of the worst humanitarian crises the world has known with dire consequences for its civilian population, approximately 5 million of whom have been forcibly displaced in neighbouring countries and other regions. Ongoing political fragmentation in Libya and crises in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Turkey, Nigeria (with Boko Haram), and/or South Sudan – among others – constitute considerable challenges in global politics that compound acute human suffering. The choice of employing cosmopolitanism was, firstly, made in consideration of the ‘reality’ of the oneness of mankind, but also on the grounds that particularistic theories have failed or are failing to manage current world affairs as they foster the politics of human suffering. In addition to its views on IR, Bahá’í ethical cosmopolitanism could be said to represent a contribution to post-positivist, and normative thinking, while retaining the spirit of criticism,³³⁸ and cosmopolitanism in modernity. Bahá’í views contribute to reinforcing the ‘sensitive turn’ taken by cosmopolitanism, which stresses diversity, in the sense of abandoning a domineering and homogeneous universalism. Indeed, Bahá’í views have been anticipatory of the new ‘sensitive’ turn promoted by critical international theory, feminist theory, or postmodernism from the last two decades of the twentieth century onwards.³³⁹ Already in the midst of the nineteenth century Bahá’u’lláh, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the early twentieth century, had promoted the deconstruction of ‘otherness’ as a means to bring about the unity of mankind, and the solidarity of the human race. In the 1910s, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá deplored how the notions of otherness impeded the realisation of the oneness of humankind, and hence the achievement of an unbounded global community. He stated, ‘See ye no strangers.... for love and unity come hard when ye fix your gaze on **otherness**’. [Emphasis added]³⁴⁰ Lately, these anticipatory views have been advanced in new critical IR theories, with the aim of fostering inclusiveness, and deconstructing strangeness and otherness. In particular, critical international theory holds that, by promoting divisions, the division between inside and outside alienate peoples from one another, erects barriers of strangeness, and directly infringe on more peaceful relations.

Bahá’í views relate, and are not entirely dissociated from the ‘mainstream’ cosmopolitan tradition.³⁴¹ Like the latter, they are concerned with the promotion of the common good, the need for more global and peaceful forms of communities, and they seek to discredit the view that human nature is inherently belligerent.³⁴² Bahá’í views promote global values, the ethos of world citizenship, and the improvement of international institutions (like the United Nations), global institutions (like the International Criminal Court), and the idea of consultation amidst diverse communities. Bahá’í international thinking, indeed, connects to the branch of IR that is concerned with regional and global integration, world order, communities of fate, functional organisations, and the unity of mankind. It calls for the creation of a political, economic, and social system, which will distribute the

benefits of interdependence fairly, and not to the advantage of the powerful, thus avoiding extremes in wealth and poverty (here the emphasis is on 'creation'). Indeed, although the interdependence of nations is a cosmopolitan aspect (in the form of globalisation, as a case in point), the Bahá'í view upholds that it is not sufficient for bringing international prosperity in a natural harmony of interests. Bahá'ís, like cosmopolitans such as Richard Falk and David Held point to the much darker side of globalisation. The democratisation and accountability of global institutions is an important facet of this issue, as has been discussed, with the mounting importance of global civil society. The Bahá'í perspective is, in this sense, not idealistic, but rather normative: 'It proposes pursuit of change in desired directions through both intellectual and social engagement and not through intellectual idealization alone'.³⁴³ World order will not simply usher better conditions due to conditions of global interdependence, but global will and intervention, and unprecedented efforts are required. W. Andy Knight clarifies that although the Bahá'í view upholds that peace is 'inevitable', it does not view it as 'an ephemeral thing out there that will somehow fall from heaven into the laps of humanity...' ³⁴⁴ In order to be universal and sustainable, peace requires 'a fundamental transformation of world order'.³⁴⁵

Where Bahá'ís depart from IR theories, cosmopolitan or not, is that for Bahá'ís, IR theories are the result of speculation, worked out by the human mind. By contrast, they believe that Bahá'í principles do not flow from an activity of the human mind, but are the result of a fusion of reason (to search and choose principles) and faith (to trust the reality of principles that are beyond the speculations of the human mind).³⁴⁶ World order is, therefore, the amalgamation of elements of human agency (we decide to intervene) and more revelational elements that belong to a non-human and more mystical plan (even if we decided not to intervene, the unity of humanity remains an aspect of a divine plan for mankind). Human agency can decide upon the means and rapidity by which to achieve a process of unity, but this process has already been set in motion. Bahá'í views are, thus, essentially different, in the sense that they have been advocated by a world religion, which asserts the spiritual nature (ethics) of cosmopolitanism, and not only its material side, i.e. global, technological, and physical interdependence. The Bahá'í model reflects the concerns of the secular cosmopolitan approach, and at the same time remains a non-secular approach: the spiritual destiny of mankind lies in its unity. In this way, the Bahá'í model offers a reconciliation between the more ethical views of cosmopolitanism propounded from ancient times to the Enlightenment, and more recent material approaches propounded, for example, by Mitrany's functionalism.

The Bahá'í model could represent a basis for highlighting the relevance to the welfare of humanity of fulfilling both, basic material needs, and those of a spiritual/ethical nature, animated by an ethos of oneness.³⁴⁷ Material goals are essential (for example, everyone should have the basic human rights to food and shelter) to fulfil the real purpose of humanity, which is 'spiritual' in nature. The reality of humanity is 'spiritual' in the sense that human beings potentially reflect the virtues of a 'higher nature', an aspect given to the whole of mankind, and not only to privileged categories. (This justifies the notion that achieving the unity of humanity does not represent a utopian goal). In turn, the oneness of humankind is both a 'material'

(biological/scientific) and a 'spiritual' principle (value-laden), which can assist the reinvention of IR along more inclusive parameters. The Bahá'í approach has, thus, reinforced cosmopolitanism through the exposition of a reality that reflects a 'spiritual' principle of oneness, and whose direction is geared towards a cosmopolitan path. As Cheshmakh Farhoumand-Sims and Charles Lerche note, 'In our rapidly globalizing era, relevant models of peace building must envision humanity as a collective whole rather than contending parts, be based on global ethics and more fully incorporate the inward, spiritual dimensions of human experience.'³⁴⁸ Here the Bahá'í model of world order can make interesting inroads into International Relations theory, as the reality it describes is not linked to imposition, but rather to emancipation. Emancipation from the bounds of the limitedness of bounded communities, emancipation from overly materialist views which promote inequalities, and emancipation from discrimination based upon the 'unreal' dichotomies of race, class, gender, age etc.... This order, furthermore, to be justifiable, has to be created through human agency and consent, which is supported by the assistance of a not fully comprehensible divine and mysterious Being ('God').

We can also note that the Bahá'í approach assists in giving cosmopolitan 'purpose' to IR, by advocating the need for a level of principle (the oneness of humanity), and privileging the value of unity. The Bahá'í Faith, through the principle of the oneness of humankind, can lend new lenses to IR on how we can possibly view the world. It builds the bridge between the concept of unity, which is now criticised by postmodernism, because of the ideas of totality, domination, and homogenisation, and the concept of diversity of opinions, ethnic characteristics, gender, which can reinforce, and not threaten that unity. Indeed, Bahá'í views reinforce cosmopolitanism by asserting that diversity has been created to contribute to the 'quality' of unity, and that both are not irreconcilable. They assert possible avenues of communication to reach the stage of common understanding, tolerance, awareness of multiplicity of thinking that reinforces the idea of a 'unity', which is the result of manifold aspects, and not only that of a domineering, same, and imposing element.

Moreover, the 'level of principle' asserts the possibility of solving jingoism, xenophobia, and nationalism (the antitheses of cosmopolitanism) at a spiritual level, and as a basis for unity. This is not only dealt with at a mere theoretical level, but also at a very practical one. 'Principles' can serve as a basis for action and transformation; likewise, it can be argued, theories should serve the welfare of humanity, and should exist for a practical purpose. When people recognize the need for unity through the argument of the validity of the oneness of humankind, they are able to deconstruct images of strangeness propounded by the way the world is shaped (that is a world of divided jurisdictions of sovereign states). The way we look at the world when defined by the oneness of humankind, has the potentiality of transforming parochialism into cosmopolitanism. This shows how the level of principle can assist in promoting cosmopolitan attitudes.

Through this reality of oneness, we can construct an alternative way of building the world, not only because it is possible to do so (a post-positivist view), but because it reflects spiritual/divine reality. The Bahá'í Faith creates another level for the realm of the 'possible' in IR, as opposed to asserting

the inevitability of the division of the world into the domestic and international spheres. More importantly, Bahá'í views are not only concerned with deliberating philosophically upon possible ways of looking at the world, but they also impart the will to act upon principles, which can give meaning to action, and which can foster the unity of humanity. Moreover, the spiritual/ethical/divine aspects of the Bahá'í Faith can assist in demonstrating the nature of the non-spatiality of our allegiances. The unity of humanity, in the Bahá'í Faith, reveres a non-spatial view of the world, through the 'spiritual' nature of its principles. It belongs to a non-territorial sphere that collapses ideas of inbred division in creation. IR can, thus, be provided with a new basis for defining human solidarity, as the result of the mystical propensity linked to our nature, which shapes the 'reality' of the unity of the species.

Finally, Bahá'í cosmopolitan views revolve around the non-statist turn in IR, which refuse to treat the nation-state (as well as realism) as a focal point of the discipline, and thereby provide a more ethical and spiritual starting-point for debating cosmopolitanism; for destabilising dichotomies that feed discrimination; and for imagining a world community that is conscious of its oneness. In the words of Shoghi Effendi, theories, including IR theories should constantly adjust to new global world conditions:

The call of Bahá'u'lláh is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices. If long-cherished ideals and time-honoured institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulae have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine.³⁴⁹

The Bahá'í model of world order suggests a transformation in IR, that would reflect flexibility in its approach, the opening of new cosmopolitan avenues, not simply because these reflect the 'reality' of the oneness of mankind, but also because they are of use to the welfare of humanity. Henceforth, theories are not just there for their own sake, but as a prescriptive means, to foster the transformation of a world community conscious of its indivisible oneness. The way we look at the world is based on a conception of 'reality' that goes beyond our own minds, where human beings remain principal actors in determining how their world can be constantly improved upon.

Suggested citation

Nalinie Mooten, 'The Bahá'í Contribution to Cosmopolitan International Relations Theory', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 107–70. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.107/1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1386-bsr.19.107/1).

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Endnotes

1. Reprinted with permission of the author. Originally published in the Online *Journal of Bahá'i Studies*, 1:1, 2007, pp. 4–70.
2. Ph.D. from Republic of Ireland, University of Limerick.
3. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, Wilmette: Bahá'i Publishing Trust, p. 42.
4. This implies the reiteration of the oneness of humankind and universal ethical values. The Stoics stressed the oneness of humankind and the unity of life, and 'undermined the assumed natural political divisions between Greek and barbarian'. (Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought*, New York: St Martin's Press: 1996, p. 202).
5. Throughout this paper the initial IR will be used to designate International Relations Theory.
6. Anwar Hussein Syed, *Walter Lippman's Philosophy of International Politics*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), p. 18.
7. Robert Crawford, *Idealism and Realism in International Relations: Beyond the Discipline*, (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 1.
8. The concept of the 'age of transition' has been expressed by diverse authors such as: Ervin Laszlo, *The Inner Limits of Mankind: Heretical Reflections on Today's Values, Culture and Politics*, (London: OneWorld Publications, 1989); Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970); David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, (Cambridge: Polity, 1995); or James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Global Interdependence: Essays on Transnationalisation of World Affairs*, (London: Frances Pinter Publishers, 1980).
9. 'Conceivably we are so confused that even the fact of change perplexes us. Conceivably the forms of world politics have undergone alteration while the underlying structures continue essentially unmodified'. (James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Global Interdependence*, p. 12).
10. T.V. Paul & John Hall, *International Order and the Future of World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 11.
11. James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Global Interdependence*, p. 1.
12. See Ian Clark, *The Hierarchy of States: Reform and Resistance in the International Order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, 49–66 and Robert Crawford, *Idealism and Realism*, p. 73.
13. Nalini Persram, 'Coda, Sovereignty, Subjectivity, Strategy', in Jenny Edkins, Véronique Pin-Fat & Nalini Persram (eds), *Critical Perspectives on World Politics*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999, p. 165.
14. Since E.H. Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis* in 1939, a label has been put on liberal international writers as 'utopian' or 'idealists'. This body of thought has, thus, been denigrated since the inter-war period. 'It is widely held that this critique had a devastating impact on the discipline'. (Peter Wilson, 'The Twenty Years' Crisis and the Category of Idealism in International Relations', in David Long & Peter Wilson (eds), *Thinkers of the Twenty Years' Crisis: Inter-War Realism Reassessed*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 1).
15. In this paper, it will be implicitly contended that beliefs can shape and influence our conduct. In other words, in IR, the adoption of a positive and optimistic vision, and

the belief that peoples and states are fully able to use the faculty of reflection (belief) enhance the chances of building a more just and equitable world order (conduct/ behaviour).

16. Richard Devetak, 'The Project of Modernity and International Relations Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 1995, 24:1, p. 38.
17. This implies the reiteration of the oneness of humankind and universal ethical values. The Stoics stressed the oneness of humankind and the unity of life, and 'undermined the assumed natural political divisions between Greek and barbarian'. (Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought*, New York: St Martin's Press: 1996, p. 202).
18. Bahá'í International Community, 'Global Action Plan for Social Development', Contribution to the first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations World Summit for Social Development, January–February 1994.
19. Robert Cox in: Richard Devetak, 'Critical Theory', in S. Burchill & A. Linklater (eds), *Theories of International Relations*, (2nd ed.), Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001, p. 169.
20. Bahá'í International Community, 'A Bahá'í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights', February 1947.
21. Anderson Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1991, p. 7.
22. Hobsbawm in: Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in the Global Era*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995, p. 9.
23. For instance, children's rights or women's rights will vary in their formulations whilst still part of a broader human rights regime.
24. See Eric Hobsbawm, 'Inventing Traditions', in Eric Hobsbawm & T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
25. Azza M. Karam, 'Feminist Futures', in Jan Pieterse Nederveen (ed.), *Global Futures: Shaping Globalization*, (New York: Zed Books, 2000), p. 184.
26. Braidotti, in: *Ibid.*, p. 177.
27. Azza M. Karam, 'Feminist Futures', p. 185.
28. 'A local community with open boundaries, mutual responsibility...and no will to racial classification is the political key to human dignity, worth, and freedom'. (Kate Manzo, 'Critical Humanism: Postcolonialism and Postmodern Ethics' in: David Campbell & Michael J. Shapiro, (eds), *Moral Spaces: Rethinking Ethics and World Politics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, p. 177).
29. Ken Booth, 'Human Wrongs and International Relations', *International Affairs*, 1995, 71:1, p. 119.
30. With the movement of peoples across borders, culture is also carried across borders, which challenges the notion that culture can be kept 'safe' in a particular 'home'.
31. Ulrich K. Preuss, 'Citizenship in the European Union: a Paradigm for Transnational Democracy?', in D. Archibugi, D. Held and M. Köhler (eds), *Re-imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998, p. 145.
32. David Held, 'From Executive to Cosmopolitan Multilateralism', in David Held & Mathias Koenig-Archibugi (eds), *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003, p. 168.
33. David Held, *From Executive to Cosmopolitan Multilateralism*, p. 168.
34. *Ibid.*
35. Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government*, p. 182.
36. Daniele Archibugi, 'Principles of Cosmopolitan Democracy', in D. Archibugi, D. Held & M. Köhler (eds), *Re-imagining*, p. 216.
37. Derek Heater, *World Citizenship: Cosmopolitan Thinking and its Opponents*, London: Continuum, 1992, p. 5.

38. Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 4.
39. Andrew Linklater 'Rationalism', in S. Burchill and A. Linklater (eds), *Theories of International Relations*, London: Macmillan Press, 1996, p. 93.
40. These include Liberal Internationalism, the English School, Feminism, Marxism, Critical Theory, Postmodernism and Green Politics.
41. Andrew Linklater, *Rationalism*, p. 93.
42. Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, p. 28. The origin of the dissimilarities between the two perspectives can be found in the 'first great debate' between the realists and the 'idealists', which was centred on the possibility of the pacification of international society through a sense of moral obligation to human beings in the world. (Andrew Linklater *Rationalism*, p. 93.) In this debate, cosmopolitan concepts such as collective security, the rule of law, and peace are contrasted with the realist terms 'balance of power', 'anarchy', and 'sovereignty'. (At that time, cosmopolitan IR can be related to liberal internationalism.)
43. Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, Basingtoke: Palgrave, 2001, p. 27.
44. Ibid.
45. Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, p. 5.
46. In Ibid., p. 27.
47. For Carr, 'utopianism' refers to liberal internationalism. Peter Wilson, *The Twenty Years Crisis*, p. 2.
48. Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997, p. 41. In the seventies, Keohane and Nye, who introduced the notion of 'complex interdependence' and the presence of multiple international factors, presented a substantive alternative to realism.
49. Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, p. 30.
50. Ibid., p. 47.
51. Scott Burchill, *Realism and Neo-Realism*, p. 78. The systemic level relates to theories that conceive of causes operating on the international level, in addition to national and individual levels. Reductionist theories, for Waltz, only operate on the national and individual levels. (Ibid., p. 92).
52. Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, p. 52.
53. Wight, in a very realist fashion, contended that the domain of international relations is 'incompatible with progressivist theory'. Martin Wight, in: A Linklater, *Rationalism*, p. 94.
54. Andrew Linklater, Ibid.
55. James E. Dougherty & Robert L. Pfaltzgraff jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey* New York: Longman, 2001, p. 168.
56. Gilpin in: Mastanduno, Michael, *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies after the Cold War*, New York: Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. 20.
57. Machiavelli in: Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, p. 23
58. Ibid., p. 48
59. Lucian M. Ashworth, *Creating International Studies: Angell, Mitrany and the Liberal Tradition*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999, 16.
60. Barry Buzan, *Anticipating the Future*, London: Simon & Schuster, 1998, p. 388.
61. Stephen Krasner, in: Michael Mastanduno, *Unipolar Politics*, p. 21.
62. Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, p. 52.
63. Martin Griffith, *Realism, Idealism, and International Politics: A Reinterpretation*, London: New York: Routledge, 1992, p. ix.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., p. 9.

66. Scott Burchill, *Realism and Neo-Realism*, p. 90.
67. Scott Burchill, 'Introduction', in S. Burchill and A. Linklater (eds), *Theories*, 1st ed., p. 2.
68. Jill Steans & Lloyd Pettiford, *International Relations: Perspectives and Themes*, Edinburgh: Pearson Education, 2001, p. 54.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Seyla Benhabib, in: Richard Devetak, 'Critical Theory', p. 161.
73. Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government*, x.
74. Phyllis Sternberg Perrakis, 'Bahá'í Universalism', *Dialogue and Universalism*, Warsaw University and Polish Academy of Sciences, 1996, 6, (11–12), p. 17.
75. Graham Hassall, 'Contemporary Governance and Conflict Resolution: A Bahá'í Reading', January 2000.
76. Brian Lepard, 'From League of Nations to World Commonwealth', in Charles Lerche (ed.), *Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order*, London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991, p. 72. See also Foad Kadri, *Global Governance and the Lesser Peace*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1981, 9, and Nalinie Mooten, Interview with Daniel Wheatley, conducted via Email, 10 February 2003.
77. Kant: in Hofman, David *The Renewal of Civilization*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1981, p. 37.
78. 'As indicated by its many social teachings, the religion of Bahá'u'lláh is not just concerned with the spiritual development of the individual. Its broad sweep includes a wide range of social principles and teachings that aim to carry forward humanity's collective life on the planet' (Moojan Momen, *The Bahá'í Faith: A Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1999, p. 63).
79. Whilst the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are regarded as 'Messengers of God', 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in the eyes of Bahá'ís, is a perfect exemplar of their teachings.
80. See Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh: Selected Letters*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991, p. 119.
81. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1983, p. 95. This and other statements have inspired the Bahá'í International Community to be pro-active in the Inter-Faith dialogue.
82. Udo Schaefer, 'Bahá'u'lláh's Unity Paradigm: A Contribution to Interfaith Dialogue on a Global Ethic', *Dialogue and Universalism*, 1996, 6 (11–12), pp. 27–28.
83. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, 'In this wondrous Revelation, this glorious century, the foundation of the Faith of God and the distinguishing feature of His law is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind'. Bahá'í World Centre Commissioned by the Universal House of Justice, *Century of Light*, New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 2001, p. 49) 'It was this vision, for the 36 years of the Guardianship that provided the organising force of Shoghi Effendi's work'. (Ibid.)
84. Peter Khan, 'Introduction', in: *Peace More Than an End to War*, xii.
85. Ibid., xii. Both the statements of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá relating to world order themes are complemented by other writings they produced.
86. Bahá'í International Community, 'History of Active Cooperation with the United Nations', 2002.
87. Ibid.
88. The Universal House of Justice writes, 'Bahá'u'lláh's principal mission in appearing at this time in history is the realisation of the oneness of mankind and the establishment of peace among the nations...' (The Universal House of Justice, Letter: Unity of Nations and the Lesser Peace, 19th of April 2001, Internal Document).
89. The first permanent organisations that cut across national boundaries, such as the International Telegraphic Union and the Universal Postal Union, appeared subsequently in 1865 and 1874.

90. Bahá'u'lláh, in this regard, stated, 'Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and centre your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements'. (Bahá'u'lláh, *Cleanings*, p. 213).
91. Bahá'ís call this phenomenon 'progressive revelation'.
92. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 58.
93. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982, p. 140.
94. Janet Khan, 'New Vision, New Values: The Emergence of A New World Order', *Dialogue and Universalism*, 1996, 6 (11–12), p. 82.
95. 'Bahá'ís see human life as evolutionary and perceive the rise and fall of civilizations as part of an evolutionary progression from family and tribes to city-states and nations'. (Peter Khan, 'Introduction', xi) This view of rise and fall leading upward also appears in Toynbee's view of history. Toynbee notes 'The single, finite movement from a disturbance to a restoration of equilibrium, is not enough if genesis is to be followed by growth... there must be an élan which carries the challenged party through equilibrium into an overbalance which exposes him to make a fresh challenge and thereby inspires him to make a fresh response in the form of a further equilibrium ending in a further overbalance – and so in a progression which is potentially infinite'. (Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, (Vol. I), London: Oxford University Press, 1935, p. 128)
96. Bahá'í International Community, 'Who is Writing the Future', February 1999. See also Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 164).
97. Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 13.
98. Shoghi Effendi, in: *The Bahá'í World* (Vol. III), *Appreciations of the Bahá'í Faith*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1941, p. 5.
99. Ervin Laszlo, 'Science and Prophecy', *Dialogue and Universalism*, 1996, Vol. 6 (11–12), p. 91.
100. Bahá'í International Community, *Who is Writing the Future?*
101. The Universal House of Justice, 'The Promise of World Peace', in: National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, *Peace: More Than An End To War: Selections From The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and the Universal House of Justice (Compilation)*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1986, p. 5.
102. *Ibid.*
103. Shoghi Effendi explains the concept of a trend toward global unity as follows: 'Unification of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation building has come to an end'. (*Ibid.*, 202)
104. Janet Khan, *New Vision, New Values*, p. 77.
105. Bahá'í World Centre, *Century of Light*, p. 73.
106. The call raised by the international community to establish the ICC is clearly one that responds to Bahá'í expectations for the fulfilment of greater justice. (The Universal House of Justice, Letter: *Unity of Nations and the Lesser Peace*.)
107. Nalinie Mooten, Interview with Daniel Wheatley, Conducted Via Email, 10 February 2003.
108. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point for All Nations*, (New York: United Nations Office, 1995), p. 4.
109. Bahá'í International Community, in Charles Lerche, 'Justice as a Theme in The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, in Charles Lerche (ed.), *Toward the Most Great Justice: Elements of Justice in the New World Order*, (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1996), p. 9.
110. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 202.
111. Bahá'í International Community, in C. Lerche (ed.), *Toward the Most Great Justice*, p. 10.
112. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
113. Janet Khan, 'New Vision, New Values', p. 82.

114. Ibid.

115. Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1990), p. 72.

116. The Universal House of Justice contemplates that the surge of religious fanaticism testifies to the break up of human values, which were brought by religions themselves. (See The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, 8).

117. The Universal House of Justice, Ridvan message, April 2000, internal document.

118. Among others, the World Summit for Children in New York in 1990, the UN Conference on the Environment in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and subsequently in 1993 and 1995, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, or the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

119. Ibid.

120. The House of Justice notes that the concept of world citizenship has emerged as a direct result of the 'contraction of the world into a single neighbourhood through scientific advances and of the indispensable interdependence of nations'. (The Universal House of Justice, 'The Promise of World Peace', p. 13).

121. Udo Schaefer, *Bahá'u'lláh's Unity Paradigm*, p. 30.

122. 'It is now the time in the history of the world for us to strive and give an impetus to the advancement and development of inner forces – that is to say, we must arise to service in the world of morality...' ('Abdu'l-Bahá, in *Peace: More Than An End To War*, p. 235).

123. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 10.

124. Ibid., p. 8.

125. Moojan Momen, *The Bahá'í Faith*, p. 63.

126. Bahá'í International Community, *Who is Writing the Future?*

127. Ibid.

128. French Historian Nicholas described His writings as 'powerful and enlightened liberalism'. (John Huddleston, *The Earth is but One Country*, Leicester: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976, p. 141).

129. Comparing the sun to the divine revelations, The Báb wrote, 'the process of the rise and setting of the Sun of truth, will thus, indefinitely continue- a process that had no beginning, and will have no end'. (The Báb, in: The Universal House of Justice, *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1976, p. 87).

130. Ibid. p. 129

131. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 288.

132. 'Abdul'Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 16.

133. W. Kenneth Christian, 'Introduction', in: Ibid., xi.

134. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1995), p. 36.

135. Shoghi Effendi identifies the oneness of humankind as 'the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve.' (Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, 42).

136. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 95.

137. Udo Schaefer, *Bahá'u'lláh's Unity Paradigm*, p. 24.

138. Ibid.

139. Janet Khan, *New Vision, New Values*, p. 79.

140. Although there is a high station in the Bahá'í writings regarding 'kingship', the latter is endorsed if fulfilling several conditions, including the rejection of absolute monarchy, and the endorsement of a republican form of government. (See Ulrich Gollmer, 'Bahá'í Political Thought', in Udo Schaefer (ed.), *Making the Crooked Straight: A Contribution to Bahá'í Apologetics*, (trans G. Schukelt) (Oxford: George Ronald, 2000), pp. 449–450).

141. The Universal House of Justice, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 2002), pp. 36–37.

142. *Ibid.*, p. iv.

143. The link between divine and temporal leaderships, in the Bahá'í Faith, relates to the belief that temporal leadership must reflect moral (divine) virtues. 'A just king is the shadow of God on earth'. Bahá'u'lláh (Súrih-i-Haykal) in: *Ibid.*, p. 112.

144. 'It would be preferable if the election of non-permanent members of consultative assemblies in sovereign states should be dependent on the will and choice of the people'. ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1990, p. 24.)

145. Bahá'u'lláh was also among the first to evoke the phrase 'New World Order': '...the prevailing Order appeareth to be lamentably defective... Soon will the present-day order be rolled up and a new one spread out in its stead'. (Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 7 & 216.)

146. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

147. Bahá'u'lláh, in: The Universal House of Justice, *Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, 90 & 93 and *Gleanings*, p. 249.

148. Súrih-i-Haykal, *Summons of the Lords of Hosts*, p. 93.

149. Bahá'u'lláh, in: *Ibid.*, p. 72.

150. '...the abolition of war is not simply a matter of signing treaties and protocols; it is a complex task requiring a new level of commitment to resolving issues not customarily associated with the pursuit of peace. Based on political agreements alone, the idea of collective security is a chimera'. (The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 14).

151. This vision of a system of collective security shall be later expounded when looking at the writings of Shoghi Effendi, the Universal House of Justice, and the Bahá'í International Community.

152. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 134.

153. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

154. For example the Montreal Daily Star in 1912.

155. Bahá'í International Community, *Peace Among the Nations*, London: Bahá'í Information Office, 1999, p. 1.

156. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 121.

157. Bahá'í World Centre, *Century of Light*, pp. 9 & 91.

158. Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 48.

159. The Universal House of Justice, Letter: *Unity of Nations and the Lesser Peace*.

160. *Ibid.*

161. Abdu'l-Bahá, in: Bahá'í World Centre, *Century of Light*, p. 7.

162. '... May all your attentions centre in the welfare of humanity...' ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 54).

163. *Ibid.*, pp. 118 & 287.

164. *Ibid.*, pp. 299 & 468.

165. *Ibid.*, p. 299.

166. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

167. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 107.

168. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 33.

169. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

170. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 214.

171. 'The purpose of the creation of man is the attainment of the supreme virtues of humanity ...the purpose of man's creation is, therefore, unity and harmony, not discord and separateness'. ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 4.)

172. Loni Bramson-Lerche, 'An Analysis of the Bahá'í World Order Model', in C. O. Lerche (ed.), *Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order*, (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991),

p. 4. 'The reality underlying this question is that the evil spirit, Satan or whatever is interpreted as evil, refers to the lower nature in man'. ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1968, p. 77.)

173. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 55.
174. Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* – Part I from the Arabic, (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1985), p. 9.
175. Bahá'u'lláh quotes the Koran when He states, 'Man is My mystery, and I am his mystery'. (*Peace: More Than End To War*, p. 227.)
176. 'Abdu'l-Bahá in: *Peace: More Than An End To War*, pp. 38–39.
177. 'Evil is non-existent; it is the absence of good; sickness is the loss of health; poverty the lack of riches'. ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 78.)
178. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states, 'Let us never say, 'I am a believer and he is an infidel''. ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 152.)
179. Ulrich Gollmer, *Bahá'í Political Thought*, p. 443.
180. Loni Bramson-Lerche, *An Analysis*, p. 4.
181. Hossein B. Danesh, *Unity: The Creative Foundation of Peace*, Toronto: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1986, p. 118.
182. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 35.
183. Similarly, Toynbee views the point of a civilisation's decline as the point at which a rejuvenating 'higher religion' emerges.
184. Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh: Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988, p. 219.
185. The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 5.
186. Ibid.
187. See also Kant, 'Idea For A Universal History With A Cosmopolitan Purpose', in: Hans Reiss, *Kant: Political Writings*, p. 44.
188. The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 11.
189. Ibid., pp. 14–15.
190. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 36.
191. 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated, 'What profit is there in agreeing that universal friendship is good, and talking of the solidarity of the human race as an ideal?' 'Abdu'l-Bahá further explained that unless these principles were transformed into the world of action, they would be of no use. ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 3).
192. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 43.
193. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 44–45.
194. See 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 295.
195. The commonwealth model takes a more confederal form than the federal model. The federal model has a rule of law, which operates from the federal centre, whereas the commonwealth model can issue sanctions when, for example, human rights are not respected. The commonwealth/confederation model has no legal force over member-states.
196. Tellingly many grass-roots socio-economic development programmes have proved very efficacious without the need for a central authority to control them, which demonstrates that a governance model certainly does not have to resemble a Hobbesian style government. (Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 13.)
197. Here the use of the term 'overall' is interesting. Many federal states encounter internal separatist movements. (See Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, Canada: Penguin, 1993, pp. 172–3.)
198. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 7.

199. '...to cast aside centralisation which promotes despotism is the exigency of the time'. ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 167.) It is here helpful to state that global federalism has been influenced by the transformation of the United States at the end of the eighteenth century from a confederal to a federal model. The latter initiated the idea of the individual as a subject of world law.

200. Shoghi Effendi, in: Helen Bassett Hornby (Compiled by), *Lights of Guidance: A Bahá'í Reference File*, New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1994, p. 130.

201. *Ibid.*, p. 436.

202. Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1999, p. 126.

203. Advocates of a world federal government included: Auguste Forel, Auguste Schvan, and Paul Otlet (during the First World War), Bertrand Russell and Oscar Newfang, Rosika Schwimmer, Maverick Lloyd (in the inter war years). During the Second World War, federal advocates consisted of Ransome, Beveridge, Zilliacus, Culberston and Adler. (Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government*, pp. 110–112.)

204. Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, p. 126.

205. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

206. Daniel Wheatley, 'Global Governance: Has a Paradigm Shift in World Government Theory Brought The Lesser Peace Closer?' in Babak Bahador & Nazila Ghanea (eds), *Processes of The Lesser Peace*, (Oxford: George Ronald, 2002), p. 244.

207. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 250.

208. Bahá'í World Centre, *Century of Light*, pp. 91–92.

209. Daniel Wheatley, *Global Governance: Has a Paradigm Shift*, p. 237.

210. Shoghi Effendi, in: Bahá'í World Centre, *Century of Light*, p. 128.

211. Nalinie Mooten, Interview with Daniel Wheatley, Conducted Via Email, 10 February 2003.

212. The Most Great Peace refers to a very distant future, as it is part of an eschatological promise.

213. The occurrence of a World Federal Government is, according to the BIC, 'the inevitable destiny of humankind', but it does, however, 'represent a long-term picture of a global society'. (Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 6).

214. 'Abdu'l-Bahá held the view that it was essential that disarmament, which was so crucial to the development of international peace, happened simultaneously, as partial disarmament would only cause other nations to be suspicious and increase their armaments as a result. (In: The Universal House of Justice, *Peace*, p. 20).

215. Shoghi Effendi wrote in 1936, 'A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity'. (Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203).

216. This vision is alluded to in the statements of the Bahá'í International Community, namely in *Turning Point For All Nations*. See also J. Tyson, *World Peace and World Government: A Bahá'í Approach*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1986, 57 & Daniel Wheatley, *Global Governance: Has a Paradigm Shift*, p. 229.

217. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in: *Peace: More than an End to War*, pp. 199–203.

218. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 161.

219. 'We see you adding every year unto your expenditures and laying the burden thereof on the people whom ye rule; this verily is naught but grievous injustice.... Be reconciled among yourselves, that ye may need armaments no more save in a measure to safeguard your territories and dominions...Should any one among you take up arms against another, rise ye all against him, for this is naught but manifest justice'. (Bahá'u'lláh, in: Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 40.)

220. *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41.

221. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, 6 and Bahá'í World Centre, p. 91.

222. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point for All Nations*, p. 24.

223. Ake in: Charles Lerche, *Everything That Rises Must Converge*, p. 256.

224. Arundhati Roy, *The Chequebook and the Cruise Missile: Conversations with Arundhati Roy* (interview by David Barsamian), London: Harper Perennial, 2004, p.15.

225. Geoffrey Robertson, *Crimes Against Humanity*, p. 522

226. Ibid.

227. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 203.

228. Ibid., p. 41.

229. The Universal House of Justice highlights the link between purely materialistic doctrines and the belief in the inner aggressiveness of man: 'Most particularly, it is in the glorification of material pursuits at once the progenitor and common feature of all such ideologies, that we find the roots which nourish the falsehood that human beings are incorrigibly selfish and aggressive'. (*The Universal House of Justice, The Promise of World Peace*, p. 9.)

230. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

231. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 42.

232. Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 23.

233. Ibid.

234. See for example, Keichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State*. London: Harper Collins, 1995.

235. Hirst and Thompson think that the processes of globalisation have not perturbed sovereign nationhood to the slightest. (See Daniel Wheatley, *Global Governance, Has A Paradigm Shift*, p. 236).

236. See Lazslo, Toulmin, Held or Rosenau.

237. Derek Heater, *World Citizenship: Cosmopolitan Thinking*, p. 152.

238. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'llah*, p. 36.

239. Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*, p. 7.

240. Ibid., p. 192.

241. See Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day Is Come*, p. 196.

242. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 95.

243. In 1955, Shoghi Effendi enjoined Bahá'ís to 'achieve a universal consciousness and a universal way of life', in Jan T. Jasion (ed.), 'The Universalism of the Bahá'í As Reflected In the Writings of Shoghi Effendi', *Dialogue and Universalism*, 1996, 6 (11-12), p. 105).

244. In: Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 15.

245. Moojan Momen, *The Bahá'í Faith*, p. 63.

246. Peter Khan, *Introduction*, p. xi.

247. In the words of Bahá'u'lláh, 'signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appears to be lamentably defective'. (Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 216.)

248. The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, 3. This image can be found in the writings of Kant, who thought that nature would eventually lead us to reason and peace. In the Bahá'í approach, we have a choice between reason and nature to attain peace. If not attained by 'an act of consultative will' (reason), peace will be realised by 'unimaginable horrors' (nature).

249. Ibid., 13. An 'unbridled' nationalism is exclusive and aggressive (defines itself against an ethnic 'other', and can lead to genocide) while a 'sane' patriotism relates to a sense of belonging to a local/national community, itself part of a wider cosmopolitan community, to which one still belongs.

250. Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 200.

251. The United Nations can be regarded as one of the world organisational developments.

252. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, p. 249.

253. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1999, pp. 216–218.

254. Bahá'u'lláh, in His time, appealed to 'kings and rulers', while more recently the Bahá'í International Community calls on the heads of nation-states to consider the convocation of a world gathering. (Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 4.)

255. More importantly, the Universal House of Justice does not believe that a system of collective security will work if only based on political agreements and protocols. It can only work with a strong moral foundation.

256. Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 2.

257. The Lesser Peace, being the term used by Bahá'ís, to depict a political unity of nations.

258. 'During...long evolutionary process... as ever larger and more diverse populations came under the control of one or another system of government, the temptation of universal empire repeatedly seized the imaginations of the Caesars and Napoleons during such expansion'. (Bahá'í World Centre, *Century of Light*, p. 91.)

259. The Commission on Global Governance also summoned such a summit, which it called a 'world conference on governance'. (Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*, p. 351.)

260. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 4.

261. Daniel Wheatley, *Global Governance: Has a Paradigm Shift*, p. 245.

262. Bahá'í International Community, 'Summoning Our Common Will: A Bahá'í Contribution to the United Nations Global Development Agenda', October 2015.

263. These values of common concern comprise the elimination of prejudices based on class, gender, race, level of economic and material development, and the right of all to an education, training, and socioeconomic development. (Ulrich Gollmer, *Bahá'í Political Thought*, p. 431.)

264. Ibid., p. 431.

265. Ibid. and Brian Lepard, 'From League of Nations', 91. Shoghi Effendi did not call for a rigid system of collective security, but for a flexible and elastic system. (See Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 191) In this way, the projection of a global order, in the Bahá'í viewpoint, '...does not contain a fixed, static model... It does not present specific future events, but rather presents a vision calling to action, providing guidance for the creation of a more peaceful future...' (Ulrich Gollmer, *Bahá'í Political Thought*, p. 431.)

266. 'Abdu'l-Bahá also refers to 'a unity of thought in world undertakings'. The Bahá'í World Centre elucidates that this alludes to 'programmes of social and economic development, humanitarian aid and concern for protection of the environment and its oceans'. (Bahá'í World Centre, *Century of Light*, pp. 127–128.)

267. Bahá'í International Community, 'Rising Together: Building the Capacity to Recover from Within', May 2016.

268. The Universal House of Justice, Letter: *Unity of Nations and the Lesser Peace*.

269. The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 4.

270. Ibid., p. 21.

271. Among these proposals were included the gradual removal of the veto, the references to permanent members, the elimination of the term 'enemy' in any article of the UN Charter, and the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

272. Precisely, the Bahá'í International Community entitled its 1995 document on Global Governance 'Turning Point For All Nations'.

273. The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 11.

274. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 2.

275. Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 72.

276. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 191. 'Abdu'l-Bahá looked down upon the Versailles settlement, which to Him was only capable of bringing about an even fiercer

war. Even if the League of Nations had been brought into being and represented a breakthrough in the concept of collective security, it represented the beginning of a long process of international organisations that would eventually lead to the Lesser Peace. However, it was not an effective collective body as such. (See Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 30.)

277. *Ibid.*, p. 193.
278. Brian Lepard, *From League of Nations*, p. 79.
279. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 44.
280. Thomas C. Walker, *The Forgotten Prophet*, p. 60.
281. *Ibid.*
282. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 4.
283. *Ibid.*
284. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
285. The BIC also mentions the early work of the lawyers Glenville Clark and Louis B. Sohn, *World Peace Through World Law*, and indicates that this work represented a 'milestone', and was among the 'first solid proposals' in its early advocacy of the abolition of the veto power in the early 1950s. The BIC also quotes works such as the 'Stockholm Initiative', *Common Responsibility in the 1990s* and Benjamin Ferencz's work *New Legal Foundations for Global Survival*. (*Ibid.*, p. 23).
286. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
287. Bahá'í International Community, in: Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 124.
288. Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*, p. 56.
289. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
290. In: Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 67.
291. *Ibid.*
292. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 7.
293. Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*, pp. 227–228.
294. *Ibid.*
295. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 35
296. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 202.
297. *Ibid.*
298. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 8.
299. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 24.
300. This also explains the suspicion shown towards the discussion, for example, of a world government.
301. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 8.
302. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 8.
303. Jeffrey Huffines, 'Bahá'í Proposals', in B. Bahador and N. Ghanea (eds), *Processes*, p. 19.
304. Shoghi Effendi, in: Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 97.
305. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 9. This proposal is reminiscent of the call made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to have a binding treaty that would, among other things, be entitled to fix international borders in a more fitting manner.
306. *Ibid.*
307. 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of the oneness of humankind and the artificiality of boundaries.
308. Graham Hassall, *Contemporary Governance*.
309. *Ibid.*

310. Ibid.

311. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, pp. 249–250.

312. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 10.

313. Ibid., p. 9.

314. Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1956, p. 210.

315. In this regard, the BIC states, 'The original intention of the UN Charter in conferring veto power on the five Permanent Members was to prevent the Security Council from authorizing military actions against a Permanent Member or requiring the use of its forces against its will. In fact, beginning with the Cold War, the veto power has been exercised repeatedly for reasons that relate to regional or national security'. (Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 11.)

316. Ibid.

317. Ibid.

318. Ibid.

319. In: Rod Rastan, 'An International Legal', in B. Bahador and N. Ghanea (eds), *Processes*, pp. 206 & 208.

320. Ervin Laszlo, *Science and Prophecy*, p. 99.

321. Foad Katirai, *Global Governance*, p. 77.

322. Ibid.

323. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 2.

324. Ibid., p. 12.

325. Ibid., p. 2.

326. Ibid.

327. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 12.

328. 'Development should not be confused with the creation of an unsustainable consumer society... Education is the best investment in economic development... Because of the spiritually damaging nature of dependency, schemes which focus solely on redistributing material wealth are doomed to failure in the long run'. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 15.

329. See Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*, pp. 226–227.

330. Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point For All Nations*, p. 22.

331. Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 36.

332. The Universal House of Justice, 'To the World's Religious Leaders'.

333. Abdu'l-Bahá, in H. Holley (ed.), p. 348.

334. W. Andy Knight, *The New World (Dis)order? Obstacles to Universal Peace*, Paper Presented to the annual Association of Bahá'í Studies (ABS) Conference, Alberta, (3–6 September 2004), p. 17.

335. See, for example, James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Global Interdependence: Essays on Transnationalisation of World Affairs*, London: Frances Pinter Publishers, 1980.

336. Martin Shaw, 'Globality', p. 172.

337. W. Andy Knight, *The New World (Dis)order? Obstacles to Universal Peace*, pp. 12–3.

338. In the Bahá'í Faith, this delineates the importance of thinking independently from cultural heritage and traditions.

339. These theories proclaim that discrimination on the basis of race, class, gender... do not serve the welfare of humankind. Their cosmopolitanism is enshrined in restoring a sense of denied dignity to members of the human race.

340. Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, *Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 24.

341. Ibid.
342. Kant stands as an exception to this, as he upheld human nature to be essentially warlike.
343. Graham Hassall, *Contemporary Governance*.
344. W. Andy Knight, *The New World (Dis)order? Obstacles to Universal Peace*, p. 1.
345. The basis of faith, for Bahá'ís, lies in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh as a new 'divine' revelation for our global age.
346. It bears restating that the basis of faith, for Bahá'ís, lies in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh as a new 'divine' revelation for our global age.
347. In this sense, the oneness of humankind is useful in highlighting the artificiality of the concept of a closed and homogeneous nation, and the divisive and insufficient aspects of a material cosmopolitanism, concepts which are both ethically deficient.
348. Cheshmak Farhoumand-Sims & Charles Lerche, 'Perspectives on Peace Building', in C. Lerche (ed.), *Healing the Body Politic*, p. 22.
349. Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 42.

The Bab in the World of Images

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Abstract

This paper traces the history of the portraits drawn of the Bab, the founder of the Babi religion. The dramatic success of the Bab in attracting a large number of followers from different social strata generated a great deal of interest in him. His reformist ideas captured the imagination of Shi'ites and Europeans alike. His movement was soon a subject of enquiry by orientalists, academicians, politicians, missionaries, merchants and others alike. Over time, several artists – mostly unknown to date – decided to render portraits of him. Of these, only one actually met the Bab: Aqa Bala Bayg of Shishvan, the chief painter of Qajar Prince Malek-Qasim Mirza (1807–62), the governor of Urmia (Orumiyeh) who hosted the Bab for a brief period in 1848. While the works of other artists were based on imagination, Aqa Bala Bayg's original sketch of the Babi leader was rendered through a series of face-to-face meetings with the young prophet. He later produced multiple other copies from his original. Thus, Aqa Bala Bayg's work appears to be the only genuine images of the Bab left to posterity. Nonetheless, the story of the Bab, the artist from Shishvan, and the Qajar prince who hosted the Bab has not been fully examined. This will be a focus of the current research. We will also explore the intriguing possibility that one or more actual photographs of the Bab might exist. Additionally, we will attempt to reconcile the at times contradictory historical accounts of the various copies of the Bab's portrait, drawn by Aqa Bala Bayg. Finally, we will briefly discuss the works of other unknown artists who have produced imaginary portraits of the Bab and conclude with suggestions for further inquiry.

Keywords

Bab
Babi
images
Malek-Qasim Mirza
Qajar

The six-year ministry (1844–50) of Sayyid 'Ali-Muhammad Shirazi (1819–50), the founder of the Babi religion, was eventful and tumultuous. His meteoric rise to fame caught the dual centres of power in 19th-century Persia – the government and the ecclesiastics – by surprise. The two soon joined forces in suppressing the nascent movement. The imprisonment of the Bab in remote areas of northwest Persia was a pivotal piece in the government's plan to isolate the Bab from the general populace, fearing mass conversions and widespread upheavals. However, the Bab's captivity only added to his enigma and increased his popularity. The severe restrictions imposed on him meant that few people outside of the Bab's inner circle of followers, certain government officials, and members of the clergy had personal access to him. Yet, this did not quell the desire of the masses to seek his presence. Among those who eventually succeeded in having a series of personal sessions with the Bab was an obscure artist from the village of Shishvan – located on the banks of Lake Urmia in northwest Persia – who eventually left to posterity what are, to this day, the only authenticated portraits of the young prophet of Shiraz.

There are other alleged images of the Bab in circulation today that the present article will address, but no actual photographs have surfaced. Interestingly, the question of whether any pictures of the Bab were ever taken remains open. The art of photography was introduced to Persia in the early 1840s. The first two cameras reached Persia as gifts to Muhammad Shah (1808–48), the King of Persia, a couple of years before the Bab declared his mission. One was sent to the King on behalf of Queen Victoria (1819–1901) of the United Kingdom, the other from Tsar Nicholas I of Russia (1796–1855), reflecting the Anglo-Russian rivalry for influence in Persia.¹ These cameras were daguerreotypes.² However, other Qajar notables soon came to own daguerreotype cameras as well. They included Malek-Qasim Mirza (1807–62), the governor of Azerbaijan, who later became the governor of Urmia and hosted the Bab for ten days in June–July 1848 before the Bab's transfer to Tabriz for his trial. Malek-Qasim Mirza came to own his camera a year earlier in 1847.³ His obvious interest in photography is evident not only from a picture he took of himself with his own daguerreotype camera, but also from the fact that in 1850 – the year of the execution of the Bab – the Mirza actually became the first Persian in history to give a photographic album to someone. The recipient was his young nephew, Nasir'id-Din Shah, the new King of Persia who had succeeded Muhammad Shah in 1848.⁴

Thus, since the Mirza already owned his camera when he hosted the Bab and gave away an album of photographs in 1850, it is in the realm of possibility that he took one or more pictures of the Bab in 1848.⁵ That scenario becomes even more likely when we consider the incredible popu-



Figure 1. Self-portrait of Malek-Qasim Mirza holding a watch in his hands to measure the exposure time. Copyright: Chahryar Adle.

larity of the Bab, Malek-Qasim Mirza's personal interest in photography, and the fact that the prince was among a handful of individuals in the entire country who owned a camera at the time.

It was during the Bab's ten-day sojourn in Urmia in June–July of 1848 that the artist from Shishvan was allowed to draw what eventually became the only authenticated portrait of the Bab. If the young prophet allowed a relatively unknown artist to draw a portrait of him over a period of three sessions, he likely would not have objected to his distinguished host taking one or more pictures of him. Persians had a long tradition of rendering human images, particularly in miniature form. In fact, they admired the miniature as a precious form of art and considered it to be of significant cultural value. Therefore, neither the Bab nor his host would have felt any cultural or religiously motivated aversion to photography, an art that approximated miniature paintings.

The Enlightened Governor

The Qajar government's initial plan was to transfer the Bab from the Chihriq Castle to Tabriz via the city of Khoy, but they were afraid of possible rescue plans by the Babis.⁶ Therefore, the officials changed the route to take the Bab to Tabriz through the smaller town of Urmia, about 80 miles northeast of Tabriz. The Bab arrived in Urmia sometime in June–July 1848.⁷ During these ten days, he was under the protection of Malek-Qasim Mirza – the governor of Urmia, the 24th son of Fath-'Ali Shah (1772–1834), and paternal uncle of the former king, Muhammad Shah. The prince's stars were on the rise as a promising politician. He soon struck a friendship with his nephew and the future king, Prince Nasir'id-Din Shah, as well. However, the suspicious prime minister, Haji Mirza Aqasi – who, following Muhammad Shah's illness, 'found himself in the midst of a power struggle with a number of officials and notables', including Malek-Qasim Mirza – accused the young prince of conspiracy and banished him from the capital.⁸

In September 1848, the prince was appointed to the prestigious post of the governorship of Tabriz, the historical seat of Qajar heirs to the throne. However, nine months later in June 1849, another Qajar prince – Hamzeh Mirza – became the governor of Azerbaijan and effectively demoted Malek-Qasim Mirza to the governorship of Urmia.

Malek-Qasim Mirza had a European education and was very fond of European culture and customs. He was educated under the tutelage of the French Madame de la Mariniere. Persian and European sources are unanimous in their praise of the Mirza as a cultured and kind-hearted man. Iranian historian Homa Nategah provides the following description of Malek-Qasim Mirza, quoting European and Persian personalities who came to know the governor:

The other prince who was educated under the same woman [the French Madame de la Mariniere] was the Shah's uncle, Malek-Qasim Mirza, the governor of Urmia. All testify that Malek-Qasim Mirza knew French to perfection. It was he who encouraged the opening of European-style schools in Persia, brought westerners to Urmia, and amazed Europeans with his western customs and behaviour. All Europeans who have passed through Iran during this period have made mention of his knowledge and his support for education. His fame spread beyond Persia into the Ottoman territories.

Flandin wrote that the Mirza was 'one of the most prominent men of the orient, from his noble thoughts and his vast knowledge to the attention he paid to European-style education. He knows six languages: French, in which he was fluent, as well as English, Russian, Turkish, Arabic, and Hindi... He is one of the staunchest supporters of European-style educational institutions.'⁹

Comte de Sercey wrote, 'incidentally, this Prince [Malek-Qasim Mirza] spoke French very well.¹⁰ Like many other sons of Fath-'Ali Shah, he too had learned French from the French woman [Madame de la Marinere]. He had a lot of interest in anything western. What a good-natured and kind-hearted man he was. No matter how much I say of this kind, young Prince, I have not said enough. My memories of him are among the best ones that I will take with me from Iran.'

Haji Mu'in as-Saltaneh Tabrizi [Baha'i historian] writes that Malek-Qasim Mirza had comprehensive knowledge of medicine and provided treatment to the poor for free.¹¹ While riding on horseback in regions under his command, he was often stopped and asked to visit the sick. Without any concern for outward appearances or his position, he would go to visit the patient alone, comfort the family, and generously provide food and medicine for the patient.¹²

In his report about Malek-Qasim Mirza, Coste writes, 'No Asian personality was as enamoured by our European arts, customs, and temperaments [as him].¹³ During his tenure as Urmia governor, he transformed the town into Iran's paradise.¹⁴

The enlightened Mirza was also an ally of Manuchehr Khan Mo'tamed ad-Dawleh, the governor of Isfahan who himself had hosted the Bab from September 1846 to February 1847.¹⁵ Malek-Qasim Mirza lived in the nearby village of Shishvan on the eastern side of Lake Urmia with his family. When the Bab arrived in Urmia, the prince received him with respect and took him straight to the Governor's Court (Persian: *dār al-hokūmeh*), which was known as the Four Towers Building (Persian: *emārat-i chāhār burj*) – a reference to the four large towers built in the four corners of the walled, rectangular building. Below is a view of a small part of the yard:

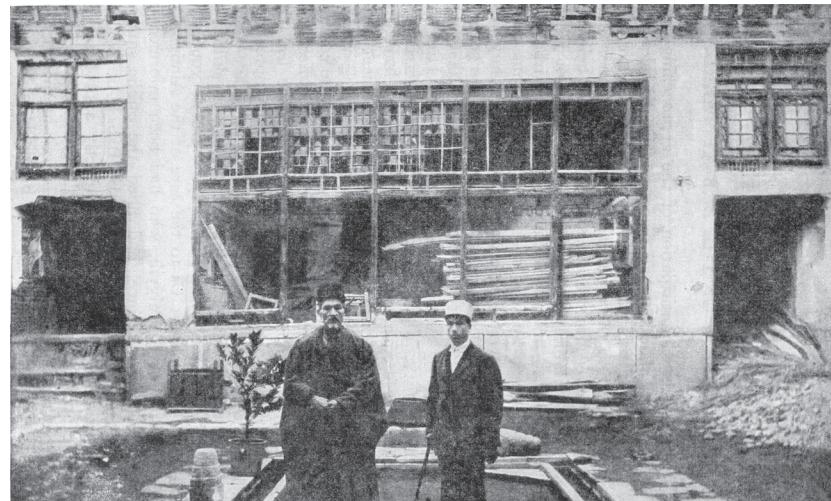


Figure 2: The Governor's Court in Urmia; the 'X' on the top right shows the upper room (Persian: *bālā-khāneh*) occupied by the Bab during his stay.¹⁶

Malek-Qasim Mirza's liberal upbringing and the great respect he had for the Bab led the governor to be remarkably lax with his distinguished guest. He allowed complete freedom of association to the Bab during those ten days. This allowed the young prophet to receive and return visits of some of the Shi'i clerics and notables of the town, which included a small number of Babis including one of the local Letters of the Living, Mulla Jalil Urumehi, as well as Mulla Husayn Dakhil Maraghe'i, whose descendants later inherited copies of the genuine portrait of the Bab.¹⁷ See pages 177–178 below. Another person who succeeded in meeting the Bab was the governor's chief painter.

The Painter from Shishvan

The Four Towers building was decorated with paintings of Fath-'Ali Shah and other Qajar nobles. Some or all of these paintings might have been rendered by Malek-Qasim Mirza's chief painter, a local artist from his hometown of Shishvan, known as Aqa Bala Bayg.

Aqa Bala Bayg was allowed to have a series of three sessions with the Bab, who was around 28 years of age at the time.¹⁸ It is not entirely clear if the artist was already a Babi or even knew of the exact nature of the Bab's claims when he first met him.¹⁹ It is also unclear whether the plan for an audience with the Babi leader was conceived by Aqa Bala Bayg, the governor or through another intermediary.²⁰ When the meeting took place, apparently, it was the Bab who planted the seed of a painting in the mind of the artist. Balyuzi notes that over thirty years after those eventful days in Urmia, when Aqa Bala Bayg met Varqa in Tabriz and became a follower of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i religion, he revealed the details of his encounter with the Bab to Varqa:

On his [Áqá Bálá Bag's *sic*] first visit, as soon as the Báb noticed him, he gathered his 'aba around Him, as if sitting for His portrait. The next day He did the same [thing]. It was then that Áqá Bálá Bag *sic* understood it to be a signal to him to draw His portrait. On his third visit, he went to the residence of Malek-Qásim Mírzá with the equipment of his art. He made a rough sketch or two at the time, from which he later composed a full-scale portrait in black and white.²¹

On the surface, Varqa's details quoted by Balyuzi appear to contradict other versions of the event. For instance, Mu'in – who also met the artist when Aqa Bala Bayg was an elderly man – states that the painter told him he sought the Bab's permission to draw him and the young prophet granted his wish.²² Fadil Mazandarani, another renowned Baha'i historian, as well as Ishraq-Khavari, an eminent Baha'i scholar, also quote Mu'in's version of the story.^{23,24} Other historians Abu'l-Qasim Afnan and Muhammad-'Ali Faizi agree with Mu'in's version without giving a source.^{25,26} However, a closer look reveals that Varqa's version of the story is not necessarily in conflict with the other eyewitness account, namely Mu'in's, which other historians either use or confirm. Mu'in's reference to Aqa Bala Bayg seeking the Bab's permission might simply be an indication of the sign of the artist's respect for the Bab. In other words, even in Varqa's version of the story where the Bab encourages the artist to draw him, Aqa Bala Bayg would likely still have

sought the Bab's permission as a sign of respect for the highly venerated guest of the governor.

Interestingly, while Faizi's version confirms the artist's three sessions with the Bab, his details of what went on during the sessions are somewhat different from Varqa's:

In three sessions, he would gaze intently upon the Bab's face in the latter's room. Aqa Bala Bayg would then leave the room and gradually complete the sketch. Each time the artist entered the room, the Bab would put on his cloak, sit down, pull up his sleeves, and place his hands upon his knees.²⁷

Varqa's Great Discovery

Sometime after the execution of the Bab, Aqa Bala Bayg completed the unfinished drawing into a full-scale black-and-white portrait and made several other sketches based on the first one.²⁸ However, the violent execution of the Bab; the massacre of August 1852, which witnessed the fall of many notable Babi heroes and heroines, including the popular poet of Qazvin – Qurrat al-'Ayn – and Sulayman Khan; and the ensuing bloodbath that engulfed the Persian Babi community must have forced Aqa Bala Bayg to keep the news of his precious relics a secret for some thirty years, until he came into contact with Mirza 'Ali-Muhammad Varqa (d. 1896). Varqa was a native of Yazd and a staunch follower of Baha'u'llah. In the early 1880s, Varqa decided to take up residence in Tabriz, where he eventually came to know Aqa Bala Bayg and succeeded in converting him to the Faith of Baha'u'llah. It was then that the artist revealed his great secret to Varqa. Excited by this incredible discovery, the latter wrote to Baha'u'llah and informed him of the existence of the portrait. Varqa also asked Baha'u'llah to verify whether or not Aqa Bala Bayg's portrait was an accurate depiction of the Bab's face, which he confirmed.²⁹ Baha'u'llah also showed the portrait to Mirza Sayid Hasan, 'the Great Afnan' (Afnān-i Kabīr) – the brother of the wife of the Bab – who also confirmed the resemblance.

The discovery led to a number of communications between Baha'u'llah and Varqa, in which references to the painting exist. The initial one seems to have been made in 1882 where, according to Balyuzi, Baha'u'llah directed Varqa to instruct Aqa Bala Bayg to make two copies of the image in water-colour.³⁰ One was to stay with Varqa, and the other was to be sent to the Holy Land via Haji Mulla 'Ali Akbar Shahmirzadi (1842–1910) – known as Haji Akhund – who was making a stop in Tabriz on the way to 'Akka. The Haji obtained the copy and successfully delivered it to Baha'u'llah. Today, that copy is preserved in the International Baha'i Archives in Haifa, Israel.³¹

Sometime between 1882 and February 1888, Varqa sought Baha'u'llah's permission to ask Aqa Bala Bayg to make seven additional copies for future Houses of Worship. Baha'u'llah must have agreed. In a letter dated 16 February 1889 – written in Varqa's own handwriting and evidently addressed to Aqa Bala Bayg – Varqa quotes Baha'u'llah's consent and asks Aqa Bala Bayg to produce seven more copies of the portrait so they could be sent to seven cities in Persia.³² However, it appears that Aqa Bala Bayg started the renderings but passed away before he was able to finish all of them.

Six years later, in 1895, Varqa and his son Ruhu'llah were both arrested outside Zanjan. All the writings and precious materials in their possession,

including his watercolour copy of the Bab's portrait, fell into the hands of the governor of Zanjan, 'Ala'ud-Dawleh. Eventually, the governor decided to listen to advice from others and, instead of killing the Baha'i prisoners in Zanjan, he transferred them to Tehran along with their possessions that could be used as evidence against them. Therefore, Varqa was allowed to take an inventory of his possessions, box and lock everything and keep the key until he arrived in Tehran, escorted by government officials. This was in April 1896. There, Hajib'ud-Dawleh³³ – the king's head servant, who eventually killed his two Baha'i captives in a brutal manner – confiscated the Bab's portrait and submitted it to Nasir'id-Din Shah. It is not known what the king did with the painting.³⁴

Additional copies from Aqa Bala Bayg

Fadil Mazandarani notes that multiple copies from Aqa Bala Bayg's second reproduction were produced, but they were all approximations and only the first two were the most accurate renditions.³⁵ In 1902, six years after the execution of Varqa and his son, another copy of the drawing was found by Sayyid Assad'u'llah Qumi, who later accompanied 'Abdu'l-Baha during his western travels. Qumi found the copy in the household of the granddaughter of Dakhil-i Maraghe'i while visiting the city of Khoy in north-west Persia. This must be the same copy that Balyuzi refers to as the *original* black and white, which Qumi sent to 'Abdu'l-Baha.³⁶ However, Faizi believes that what Qumi found was simply another copy of the painting.³⁷ According to him, this copy was given by Aqa Bala Bayg's son, Mirza Mahmud, to Mirza Ali Asghar, the son of Mulla Husayn Dakhil-i Maraghe'i. It remained in Maraghe'i's household until about 1902 or 1903, when Sayyid Asad'u'llah Qumi found it and informed 'Abdu'l-Baha. The latter instructed Qumi to ask for it from Dakhil Maraghe'i's granddaughter. She consented and gave the copy to Qumi, who put it in a special box in the city of Khoy and sent it to 'Abdu'l-Baha in Palestine via Mirza Yusef Khan Vahid-i Kashfi. Faizi's account agrees with Mu'in's.³⁸ Ishraq-Khavari also uses Mu'in's account for this story.³⁹

Nonetheless, 'Abdu'l-Baha seems to have paid special attention to this particular drawing, which raises the question as to whether the drawing was just another copy or the original black-and-white rendering by the artist, as claimed by Balyuzi. In two separate tablets sent to Dakhil's granddaughter via his son, 'Abdu'l-Baha profusely thanks her for the decision to send the drawing to him. Here is a provisional translation of the first tablet:

He is God! O Handmaid of God, glad tidings! Your gift was accepted at the Holy Land and is with 'Abdu'l-Baha. It brought boundless appreciation. We are very pleased with you for sending such a sacred gift to us. It was placed in the Holy Room [Baha'u'llah's room] and 'Abdu'l-Baha [often] looks upon that radiant portrait. Salutations and praise be upon your daughter, the steadfast leaf, and assure her of divine bounties.⁴⁰

'Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas

The second tablet was sent because, evidently, the first one was never received by Maraghe'i's daughter.⁴¹ The following is a provisional translation of the second tablet:

He is God! O steadfast leaf! Your great gift was received through Mirza Yusef Khan. Our eyes were illumined upon beholding that radiant portrait and our hands were honoured with receiving that magnificent present. I inhaled the fragrant odour of the drawing, kissed it, and placed it upon my brow. Upon receiving that distinguished gift, we immediately wrote and sent a letter to express our joy. It is evident that you did not receive that letter. Know that if you had offered all that is on earth, along with its most precious gems, they would not have been received with as much pleasure. This servant cannot befittingly reciprocate your present; therefore, I entrusted your reward to the Lord of the world. God willing, His grace and bounty will compensate. My hope is that you will be abundantly rewarded for this righteous deed in the Abha Kingdom. Convey our greetings to your daughter, and tell her that you are the descendant of Dakhil, that renowned eulogist for the Prince of Martyrs.⁴² Now it is your turn to gain fame amongst women for your love of the advent of the Blessed Beauty as the return of Husayn. Praise and salutations be upon you.⁴³

'Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas

Faizi notes that after the passing of Aqa Bala Bayg, another completed drawing and one unfinished sketch were found among his possessions. The completed one was coloured by Mirza 'Ali Ashraf, a skilled artist, and remained in the Maraghe'i household. Baha'i often used to visit Maraghe'i's house to see the painting posted on a wall during Baha'i holy days until 1936, when Shoghi Effendi instructed the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran to ask for the drawing. Aqa Husayn – the grandson of Dakhil-i Maraghe'i – was asked to submit the painting to the Tabriz Local Spiritual Assembly, which at the time had jurisdiction over the small town of Maragheh. The Tabriz Assembly then sent the painting to Iran's National Spiritual Assembly which, in turn, sent it to Shoghi Effendi. That copy, too, is now preserved at the International Baha'i Archives in Haifa, Israel.⁴⁴ It is possible that these last two copies found in Aqa Bala Bayg's possessions after his passing were among the seven that Varqa had asked him to draw for the future Houses of Worship. However, Aqa Bala Bayg might have died or become incapacitated before he was able to finish the second one. This would also explain why there are no records of the other five paintings requested by Varqa. The fate of the unfinished sketch is not yet clear.⁴⁵

Other images purported to be of the Bab

The rapid success of the Babi religion and its enormous potential for reform in the Muslim world quickly aroused the interest of many outside Persia. Western travellers, merchants, diplomats and missionaries took notice and began to write about the nascent movement. Within 18 months of the Bab's prophetic announcement, on 1 November 1845, *The Times* of London became the first western newspaper to publish an article on the new religion.⁴⁶ Early works on the movement were often erroneous and portrayed the Babis as revolutionary communists and anarchists. However, the publication of Arthur Comte de Gobineau's book *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale* in Paris in 1865 began to change that.⁴⁷ His work was done so well that it attracted a number of other European intellectuals, including E. G. Browne of Cambridge, who eventually became the most prolific western writer and researcher of the Babi religion.

The oldest image found to date that is attributed to be that of the Bab is a line drawing by an unknown artist who rendered the image sometime before May 1873.⁴⁸ There is a letter dated 6 May 1873 from M. Baumgarten, who appears to have served as the Russian consul in Shahrud, which makes a reference to this drawing.⁴⁹ Baumgarten was in regular correspondence with another Russian official, F. A. Bakulin, who served as secretary-dragoman at Astarabad and Tabriz and eventually became consul at Astarabad, where he remained until his death in 1879. Bakulin kept an archive of materials related to the Bab and his movement, among them an album of drawings that included the aforementioned image. He likely obtained many of his archival materials, including the line drawing, from Baumgarten. In 1912, about 33 years after his passing, Bakulin's family decided to present his archival materials to the Russian orientalist Valentin Zhukovskii. Five years later in 1917, Zhukovskii published Bakulin's materials in an article titled 'Russian Imperial Consul F. A. Bakulin in the History of the Babi Studies'.⁵⁰ The article included the aforementioned line drawing, which is a crude and grotesque depiction of the scene of the execution of the Bab and his follower, Mirza Muhammad-'Ali Zunuzi, known as Anis. The image has a French inscription, 'The Remains of the Bab and His Disciple Shot at Tabriz'.⁵¹ However, the work is clearly a Muslim forgery and cannot be considered a serious work of art by a professional. It is also highly unlikely that this image is the artwork drawn by the artist who was taken to the execution scene by the Russian Consul in Tabriz, as it contradicts the detailed description of that painting by a Babi eyewitness – a certain Haji 'Ali-'Askar – who claims to have seen that painting:

An official of the Russian consulate, to whom I was related, showed me that same sketch on the very day it was drawn. It was such a faithful portrait of the Bab that I looked upon! No bullet had struck His forehead, His cheeks, or His lips. I gazed upon a smile which seemed to be still lingering upon His countenance. His body, however, had been severely mutilated. I could recognize the arms and head of His companion, who seemed to be holding Him in his embrace. As I gazed horror-struck upon that haunting picture, and saw how those noble traits had been disfigured, my heart sank within me. I turned away my face in anguish and, regaining my house, locked myself within my room. For three days and three nights, I could neither sleep nor eat, so overwhelmed was I with emotion. That short and tumultuous life, with all its sorrows, its turmoils, its banishments, and eventually the awe-inspiring martyrdom with which it had been crowned, seemed again to be re-enacted before my eyes. I tossed upon my bed, writhing in agony and pain.⁵²

Zhukovskii himself considered the line drawing in the Bakulin papers to be a later rendition and a Muslim work. The style is clearly Persian, not European. The artist even confused the remains of the two bodies and mislabelled the supposed body of Anis as that of Sayyid Husayn, probably thinking that it was the Bab's secretary and not Anis who was executed with him. The Bab's name is also noted as Sayyid Muhammad-'Ali instead of Sayyid 'Ali-Muhammad. These types of errors are hardly expected of a professional artist who visited the scene of the execution shortly after the event, when the memories of the young prophet and his companion were still fresh in the minds of the general public. Additionally, the drawing depicts

street dogs devouring the Bab's flesh, which – according to Zhukovskii, too – is the strongest evidence yet for its anti-Babi nature.

The explanatory note over the second dead body [in the drawing] says: 'Siyyid Husayn, the son of Aqa Siyyid 'Ali Zunuzi'. A person bearing such a name and executed with the Bab in Tabriz in fact never existed ... Siyyid Husayn ... was the Bab's well-known amanuensis and secretary, who recanted his teacher [the Bab] right before the execution ... Gobineau assures [the reader] that Siyyid Husayn's recantation was feigned and sham ... In view of such assurance one is justified to assume that in the explanatory note in question two different individuals are conflated – Siyyid Husayn and Aqa Muhammad, the son of Aqa Siyyid 'Ali Zunuzi, both of whom were the Bab's favorite disciples.

This fact may serve as an indirect indication that the drawing was made after a certain period of time had elapsed since the execution when a confusion of the names of the acting figures could have occurred in people's minds. It [the drawing] was most likely made by an orthodox Shi'ah and not by a Babi, since in the latter's case such confusion as well as such presentation of the subject with the dogs seem highly incredible. Another important issue involved is the fact that in the explanatory note over the first dead body the Bab's name is given as 'Muhammad 'Ali' while in fact he was usually known as 'Ali Muhammad'. All these factors coupled together should serve as strong evidence against considering our drawing to be a copy of the picture drawn by the artist brought by the Russian consul if he was Persian at all or if the information provided by the 'Traveller's Narrative' in this regard is really true.⁵³

Shi'is believe that dogs would not eat the flesh of 'holy imams' as their bodies are not composed of the same substance as that of ordinary people.⁵⁴ By adding flesh-devouring dogs to the execution scene, the artist is attempting to discredit claims of holiness for the Bab. At the same time, the drawing is also trying to corroborate the accounts found in official court histories of the Qajar period that fabricated the story of dogs eating the remains in an attempt to explain away the missing bodies after the execution.

Some thirty years after the publication of Zhukovskii's article containing the Muslim fake image, the Persian-born and raised A. L. M. Nicolas – who was both a French consul in Persia and an author – published the first professionally acceptable artwork purported to be that of the Bab. Like Browne, Nicolas was also impacted by Gobineau. His book *Seyyed Ali dit le Bab* (Paris, 1905) became the first work by a western author dedicated entirely to the Bab, his movement and his teachings. The preamble to his book has an image that is supposedly of the Bab, but the portrait does not seem to be an authentic representation.⁵⁵ Close examination of Nicolas's image and Aqa Bala Bayg's rendition of the Bab reveals conspicuous differences in facial features, including the eyes, eyebrows and the mouth. Aqa Bala Bayg's portrait also shows the Bab to be closer to his actual age of 29 and clearly younger than the person depicted in Nicolas's image. The artist and date of the image in Nicolas's book remain unknown.

In 1923, eighteen years after the first edition of Nicolas's work, a variation of that image decorated with roses and nightingales⁵⁶ appeared in the first volume of Avareh's *Kawākib ad-Durrīyyah* (Cairo, 1923). In the caption under the image, Avareh confirms that the portrait was shown to 'Abdu'l-

Baha who, after comparing it to the original drawing by Aqa Bala Bayg in Haifa, declared this was not the Bab.⁵⁷ The motive behind Avareh's inclusion of a variation of Nicolas's image in his book was likely to dispel the rumours that this was a genuine portrait of the Bab.

Among other orientalists and scholars who were soon attracted to the Babi movement was Professor E. G. Browne of Cambridge University and the Persian-born Mirza Alexander Kazem-Beg, Professor of Persian Literature at St Petersburg University in Russia, who began to examine and publish on the new religion. Astounding acts of heroism and the exemplary fortitude of Babi martyrs who faced inhuman cruelty at the hands of their captors added further fuel to the fire of interest in the Bab and his movement. For an account of some of these acts of heroism, see the letter from Austrian officer, Captain Von Goumoens, who was in the employment of the Persian government in the 1850s and was an eyewitness to the Babi massacre of August 1852 in Tehran. The officer was so revolted by what he saw that he resigned his post and left Persia.⁵⁸

A few years after Nicolas's book, two publications by the Armenian author Sarkis Mubājīyān (Atrpet) (1860–1937) appeared with significant materials on the Bab's religion. Atrpet's book *Imamat' : Patmakan Hetaghōtūt'iwn* [Imamat: An Historical Survey] was published in Armenian in 1906.⁵⁹ The Russian version of the same book, *Imamat: Strana Poklonnikov Imamov* [Imamat: The Country of the Worshippers of the Imams], appeared three years later in 1909. The second half of this book was dedicated entirely to the Babis and Baha'is. This book has the distinction of being the oldest work containing a large number of photographs and drawings purported to be those of the Bab and some of the most prominent Babi figures, including Sulayman Khan, Tahereh, and Zaynab – known as Rustam-'Ali – who dressed up as a man and fought in the Zanjan urban revolt of 1850. In 1910, Atrpet published another book titled *Babizm i Bekhaizm: Opyt Nauchno-Religioznago Izsledovaniia* [Babism and Bahaiism: An Experience in Scientific and Religious Studies] that included many of the same photographs and drawings. However, in all likelihood, these photographs and drawings are fabrications or imaginary artworks. The drawing from the scene of the Bab's execution is of high quality but historically inaccurate.⁶⁰ According to various chronicles, Anis was executed with him, but there is no sign of him in Atrpet's alleged execution drawing. He must have obtained this particular drawing from its owner, N. V. Khanykov – the Russian consul-general in Tabriz who was at that post during the Bab's execution in 1850 and took an artist with him to render a painting of the scene. Although this particular execution drawing is not the one described by Haji 'Ali-'Askar in Nabil's account, it is possible that both works were done by the same professional artist that Khanykov took to the execution scene. Unlike the Muslim line drawing of Persian origin, this portrait – though historically inaccurate and drawn from imagination – is clearly European in style and of much higher artistic quality.

The exact details of how Atrpet obtained the other images are not known. Evidently, he had travelled to Tabriz to gather materials for his *Babism and Bahaiism* and came to know Jalil Khu'i, an ally of Jamal Burujerdi. Burujerdi was an influential Baha'i teacher who by this time had broken ranks with 'Abdu'l-Baha and joined forces with 'Abdu'l-Baha's arch-nemesis and

half-brother, Mirza Muhammad-'Ali. According to a letter from an ad hoc committee of the Research Department at the Baha'i World Centre, Jalil sold the photographs and drawings to Atrpet.⁶¹ It is not known how Jalil came to own these materials.⁶²

More recently, other images based on the fabricated portrait of the Bab in Atrpet's books have surfaced. For instance, in his 'Early Shaykhí Reactions to the Báb and His Claims', Denis MacEoin includes a portrait that seems to be loosely based on Atrpet's image.⁶³ A close examination of the two works shows a general resemblance, but differences in facial features are sufficiently pronounced to conclude that Atrpet's and MacEoin's images, while similar, are not identical. Also, whereas Atrpet's portrait only shows the upper part of the body, MacEoin's is a full-body image of the subject sitting in a traditional Middle Eastern posture.

Interestingly, MacEoin identifies the image in his work to be that of Sayyid Kazim Rashti (1793–1843), the Shaykhi leader and not that of the Bab.⁶⁴ The caption to the left of the image labels the subject as 'His Holiness the Point', a title widely believed to be held by the Bab. Nonetheless, many Shaykhis felt the title also applied to their leaders, namely Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kazim, as *the point of knowledge*.⁶⁵ The caption on MacEoin's image appears to be a later addition, though.⁶⁶ The subject's posture in MacEoin's image is similar to the one adopted by the Bab in Aqa Bala Bayg's genuine rendition. However, the artistic styles of the two artworks are completely different. While Aqa Bala Bayg employs the old Persian miniature style, the artist rendering the MacEoin image uses a much more realistic style, so much so that even the lines on the hands of the subject can be seen. The same realistic style can be observed in Atrpet's image. Most recently, two other portraits that are mirror images of each another have surfaced on the Internet. They appear to be based on MacEoin's. The artist and date of these works also remain unknown.

Sculpture of the Bab in Baku, Azerbaijan

The only known sculpture purported to be of the Bab that is prominently displayed at a public site is the one found in Baku, Azerbaijan. This artwork, which depicts the face of the Bab, decorates the Presidium of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences building in Baku. However, the sculpture hardly resembles the Bab, due to the Venetian-Gothic style adopted by the Polish architect I. K. Płoszko who constructed the building. The sponsor was Aqa Musa Naghiev (1849–1919), a Baha'i and an oil tycoon who gathered his riches quickly during Baku's oil boom of the early 20th century. Initially built as a huge palace, the building has a striking resemblance to the Palazzo Contarini del Bovolo in Venice. It subsequently became known as Isma'iliah to commemorate Naghiev's son, Isma'il, who died prematurely of tuberculosis. In 1918, a year after the Bolshevik Revolution, the palace was burned down, but it was restored during the Soviet period. Today, it houses the Presidium of National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan.⁶⁷ Additionally, Naghiev built the largest hospital in Baku in 1912 and was 'a patron and guardian of one of the largest secondary technical schools for men'.⁶⁸ He also had grand plans for funding a Baha'i House of Worship in Baku that was to be as magnificent as the one in 'Ishqabad, but he never followed through.⁶⁹

Conclusion

The popularity and enigma of the Bab and his movement led several unknown artists to leave imaginary portraits of him to posterity. However, since none of them were contemporaries of the Bab or had personal encounters with him, their artworks resulted in approximations that did not entirely capture the characteristics of his figure. This becomes clear from a close examination of the only authentic portrait of the Bab with the other works. The Shishvani artist, Aqa Bala Bayg – who had a series of three personal encounters with the Bab – has the unique distinction of leaving to future generations the only genuine portraits of the young prophet. He appears to have been asked to produce anywhere from 12 to 14 copies of the portrait. Of these, five copies – four complete and one incomplete – have thus far been identified:

1. **Original sketch (June–July 1848):** The black-and-white ink and pen drawing sketched out during face-to-face sessions with the Bab and completed later. More than likely, this is the artwork found in 1902–3 by Sayyid Assadu'llah Qumi in Khoy and sent to 'Abdu'l-Baha in Haifa.
2. **Watercolour copy one (early 1880s):** Rendered at Baha'u'llah's instruction via Varqa. Intended for Baha'u'llah and delivered to him through Haji Akhund.
3. **Watercolour copy two (early 1880s):** Done for Varqa at Baha'u'llah's instruction. Confiscated by Qajar government officials in Tehran during Varqa's captivity in 1896 and presented to Nasir'id-Din Shah shortly before his assassination. The fate of this copy remains unknown.
4. **Copy four:** Found among Aqa Bala Bayg's possessions after his passing. Coloured by Mirza 'Ali Ashraf and preserved at the Maraghe'i household until 1936, when Shoghi Effendi asked for it. This copy is also currently preserved at the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa, Israel.
5. **Copy five:** Incomplete sketch found at the same time and place as copy four. No source clearly mentions the location of this copy – but it, too, is probably kept at the Baha'i World Centre.

Invitation to further inquiry

The authors suggest further inquiry into the following areas:

Date of Aqa Bala Bayg's passing: While we know the artist survived at least through 1887, finding the exact or approximate date and location of his passing could provide further clues as to where additional copies of these drawings might exist. This is assuming that the artist was able and engaged in reproducing more copies for future Houses of Worship, following Varqa's request. If copies four and five in the above list proved to be different from the copies intended for 'one or two chosen friends' mentioned to Varqa by Baha'u'llah, then the artist could have drawn a total of seven images – assuming old age or death did not prevent him from continuing his work. However, if he was able to also draw the seven copies for the Houses of Worship prior to his passing, he could potentially have produced a total of 12 to 14 copies (depending on whether copies four and five in the above list were the same or different from the ones meant for 'one or two chosen friends').

Apparent discrepancy in the number of commissioned copies: We suggest a side-by-side comparison of Baha'u'llah's tablet to Varqa dated March 1887 with Varqa's letter dated 16 February 1889. Baha'u'llah's tablet, which is quoted in Varqa's letter, permits Aqa Bala Bayg to draw two to three additional copies: one for Varqa and one to two for 'one or two chosen friends'. However, in the same letter, Varqa asks Aqa Bala Bayg for seven more copies, presumably for future Houses of Worship. Varqa, a dedicated follower, would clearly not go against Baha'u'llah's instructions. Therefore, a close examination of the two documents could provide clues on the source of the discrepancy in the number of copies Varqa asks Aqa Bala Bayg to draw.

The location of copy 5: An inquiry should be put to the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice about this copy to ascertain its current whereabouts.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their deep appreciation to Dr Mojan Momen for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper. They are also grateful to Dr Youli Ioannnesyan for sharing his 2009 correspondence with the

A Visual History of Āqā Bālā Bayg's Copies of the Bab's Image

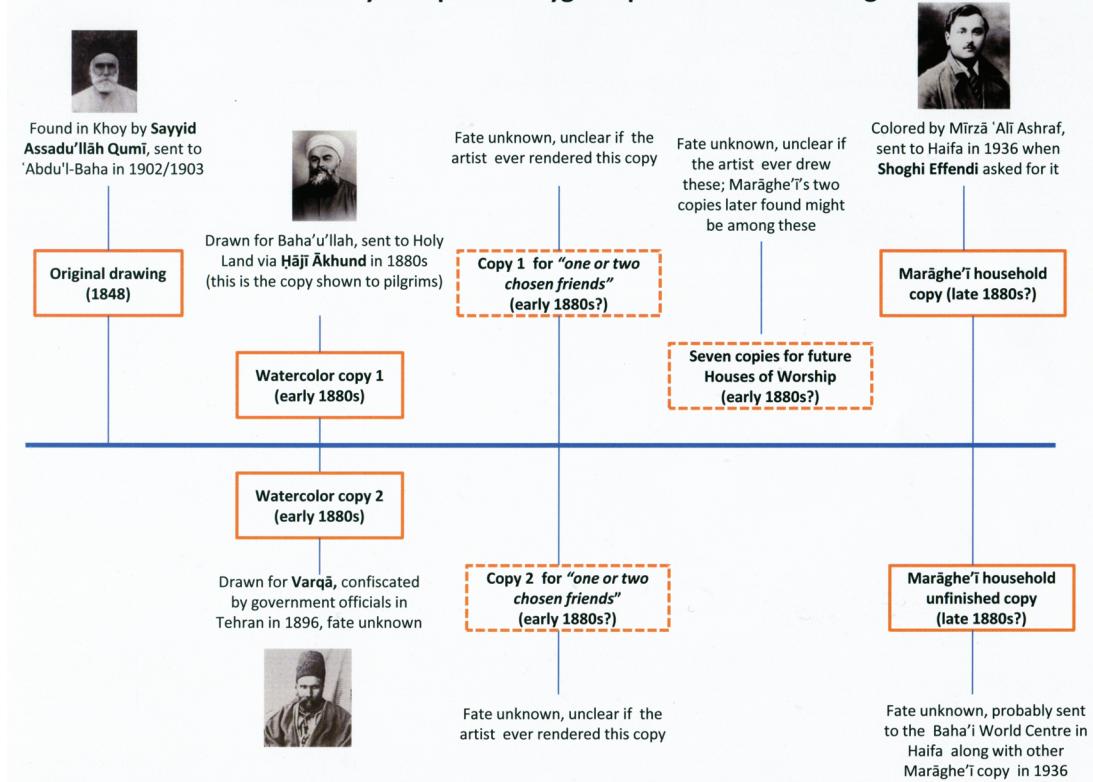


Figure 3: A Visual History of Aqa Bala Bayg's copies of the Bab's image.

Research Department of the Universal House of Justice regarding Valentin Zhukovskii's archival materials, his invaluable insights on the relationship between Bakulin and Baumgarten, and his translation of relevant Zhukovskii passages. They also wish to offer their gratitude to Dr Omid Ghaemmaghami for suggesting this research and for providing additional materials for the study and to Steve Cooney, BSR's editor, who made numerous suggestions that led to significant improvements in the quality of this paper.

Suggested citation

Bijan Masumian and Adib Masumian, 'The Bab in the World of Images', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 171–90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.171/1>.

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Endnotes

1. Chahryar Adle, 'Daguerreotype', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, vol. 6, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1993, pp. 577–8. Online at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/daguerreotype-the-first-practical-photographic-process-introduced-into-persia-in-the-early-1840s-shortly-after-its-officia>.
2. Named after the French painter Jacques Daguerre (1787–1851), who developed the process and presented it to the French Academy of Science in 1839. The process involved exposing, through the lens of a camera, a silver-coated copper plate sensitized by iodine, then developing the image with vapour of mercury.
3. Chahryar Adle with Y. Zoka, 'Notes et documents sur la photographie iranienne et son histoire I. Les premiers daguerréotypistes. C. 1844–1855/1260–1270', *Studia. Iranica*. 12/2, 1983, p. 262.
4. Adle, Daguerreotype.
5. After Urmia, the Bab was taken to Tabriz for his trial. Following the trial, he was returned to the Chihriq Castle. See p. xxix of Moojan Momen, *The Babi and Bahá'i Religions, 1844–1944: Some Contemporary Western Accounts*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1981. In *Hadrat-i Nuqtah Oulā* (Baha'i Verlag), Muhammad-Ali Faizi notes that the Bab's stay in Urmia lasted ten

days. See prominent Baha'i historian Mirza Assadu'llah Fadil Māzandarāni's *Tārīkh-i Zuhūr al-Haqq* (2:228).

6. Mazandarani, Fadil. *Zuhūr al-Haqq*, 2:228. Digitally republished, East Lansing, Michigan: H-Bahai, 2000, 9 Vols., <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/index/diglib/mazandi.htm>. Accessed 21 March 2016.
7. The exact date of his arrival in Urmia has not yet been determined. He arrived in Tabriz for his trial sometime in July 1848. Two years later, on 19 June 1850, the Bab was taken back to Tabriz, this time for execution.
8. Abbas Amanat, 'ĀQĀSĪ, HĀJJĪ MĪRZĀ ABBĀS ĪRĀVĀNĪ', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 2, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986, pp. 183–8. Online at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/aqasff-ujuli-mnsz-adras-ivxni-ca>.
9. Jean-Baptiste Eugène Napoléon Flandin (1809–89), French orientalist, painter, archaeologist and politician, is famous for his paintings of Qajar-period monuments, landscapes and social life. He came to know Malek-Qasim Mirza during his Persian travels. Flandin and his partner, architect Pascal Coste, were made a laureate of the Institut de France and joined the embassy of Édouard Comte de Sercey to Persia (1839–41). In their travels through Persia, Coste and Flandin provided what can be regarded as the most comprehensive representations of architectural renderings and details, monumental plans, large tomb reliefs and picturesque views of the Qajar period (cf. Jean Calmard, 'Flandin and Coste', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, vol. 10, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1999, pp. 35–9. Online at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/flandin-and-coste>).
10. Comte de Sercey was sent to Persia as ambassador extraordinary by Louis Philippe in 1839–40.
11. Muhammad Mu'in as-Saltaneh Tabrizi was a Baha'i historian whose *Tārīkh-i Amr*, completed in the 1920s, provides some fresh information on Azerbaijan. An online copy of this rare history is available here: <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/arabic/vol4/muin/muin.htm>. Muhammad Mu'in al-Saltanih. *Tarikh-i Amr*. [History of the (Babi) Cause]. MS in private hands. Published in digital facsimile. Lansing, Mi.: H-Bahai, 2000.
12. as-Saltaneh Tabrizi, Muhammad Mu'in. *Tārīkh-i Amr* 187.
13. Pascal Coste, French architect and Flandin's partner in their joint travels in Persia (see note 9 above).
14. Homa Nategh, *Iran dar Rāhyābī-yi Farhangī: 1834–1848*, Vincennes: Khavarān, 1990, pp. 1–5, 106 (quoted in Abu'l-Qasim Afnan's 'Ahd- A'lā, Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2000, pp. 601–2).
15. Amanat, 'ĀQĀSĪ'.
16. Zarandi, Nabil. *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabil's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahá'í Revelation*. New York, NY: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1932, p. 310.
17. Mazandarani, *Zuhūr* 2:230. Later that year, Mulla Jalil was killed during the Shaykh Tabarsi upheaval.
18. Faizi, Muhammad-'Ali. *Hadrat-i Nuqtay-i Úla: The Life of the Báb*. Hofheim-Langenhain: Bahá'í-Verlag, 1987, p. 368.
19. Mu'in (189) – who met the artist – says that Aqa Bala Bayg was already a Babi when he met the Bab. Mazandarani also quotes Mu'in's version in his *Tārīkh-i Zuhūr al-Haqq* 3:48. But Afnan notes that Aqa Bala Bayg was neither a Babi nor aware of the Bab's revelation when he met the latter (cf. Afnan, 'Ahd- A'lā 313). Here, Afnan might be quoting a later volume of Mazandarani's *Zuhūr* (6:13) in which another eyewitness, Mirza Sayyid 'Ali Oskouī – who also personally met Aqa Bala Bayg in Seysan in 1887 – is quoted as saying that the artist was not a Babi when he drew the Bab and later became a Bahá'i via Varqa.
20. In a talk given by Darius Shahrokh, he notes that Aqa Bala Bayg was among the crowd who flooded the house of the governor to have a glance at the 'miracle worker' [the Bab], after the latter had managed to tame and ride the governor's unruly horse. Malek-Qasim Mirza had asked the Bab to ride his wild horse, evidently to test the Bab's powers (Darius Shahrokh, *Varqā and Son: The Heavenly Doves* 11). The transcript of Shahrokh's talk is available online at: http://bahai-library.com/shahrokh_varqa_son.
21. H.M. Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá'ís in the time of Bahá'u'lláh: With Some Historical Background* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1985), p. 87. The transliteration of diacriticals in this passage are as published in H.M. Balyuzi's book.

22. Mu'in, *Tarikh-i Amr*, p. 189.
23. Mazandarani, *Zuhur* 3:48.
24. Ishraq-Khavari, Abdu'l-Hamid. *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif Bahā'ī* 1:11. 16 vols. Digitally republished, East Lansing, Mi.: H-Bahai, 2001. Online at: <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/arabic/vols/dairih/1/1dairo11.gif>.
25. Afnan, 'Ahd-i A'la', p. 313.
26. Faizi, *Nuqtay-i Úla*, p. 368.
27. Ibid. From this description, it appears that, during each session, the artist did simple line drawings in the presence of the Bab and completed the details later. He used a drawing technique known as *siah-qalam*, or 'black pen', which involved laying down a preliminary drawing in red or black ink that would later be painted over. (cf. Bernard O'Kane, 'sīāh-qalam', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Online Edition, 2009, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/siah-qalam>).
28. At this point, none of the drawings were in colour yet.
29. There appears to be some ambiguity as to whether Bahā'u'llah and the Bab ever met. In Browne's edition of Mirza Husayn Hamadani's *Tarikh-i Jadid* (Cambridge University Press, 1893, 217), it is noted that Bahā'u'llah was among many people who met the Bab at Khanluq near the village of Kulayn, some 30 kilometres south of Tehran. Thus, the supposed meeting would have taken place when the Bab was on his way from Kashan to Tehran (in March 1847) before Haji Mirza Aqasi, the prime minister, persuaded Muhammad Shah to redirect the Bab to the castle of Maku. In a tablet to Varqa, Bahā'u'llah appears to confirm a meeting of some sort between the two at that time. Here is a provisional translation of the relevant passage found in Ishraq-Khavari's *Māideh-yi Āsmānī* 4:154: 'He who heralded the light of divine guidance, that is to say the Primal Point – may the souls of all else but him be sacrificed for his sake – in the days when he was journeying to Maku, attained to outward seeming the honour of meeting [Bahā'u'llah], albeit concealed from all.'

However, in a tablet to a believer from Shiraz, 'Abdu'l-Baha clearly states that this meeting did not physically take place (see Nosratu'llah Muhammad-Husayni, *Hadrat-i Bab* 319). Bahā'u'llah's own reference that the meeting was 'concealed from others' appears to confirm this. Early Bahā'i historian 'Abdu'l-Husayn Ayati, known as Āvāreh, notes that the start of this rumour was attributed by some to Haji Mirza Jani, whereas in reality, Jani's *Nuqtatu'l-Kaf* is silent on this issue (cf. *Kawākib ad-Durrīyah* 1:96). In the introduction to *Nuqtatu'l-Kaf*, Browne states that Bahā'i historian Mirza Husayn Hamadani added the reference to this meeting in his *Tarikh-i Jadid* (217). According to Muhammad-Husayni (*Bab* 319), there is also a note in 'Abdu'l-Baha's own handwriting on vol. 1, p. 96 of the original copy of Avareh's *Kawākib ad-Durrīyah* where he reiterates that 'there was definitely no physical meeting [between the Bab and Bahā'u'llah]' (provisional trans.).

30. Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá'ís* 87. Balyuzi's source for allowing only two watercolour copies is not clear. Faizi (*Nuqtay-i Úla* 369) and Afnan ('Ahd-i A'la' 313–4) cite excerpts from a tablet of Bahā'u'llah to Varqa that allows copies to be made for Varqa and 'one or two of the chosen friends'. Provisional translation: 'We allow a limited number of portraits of that beautiful personage to be drawn for you [Varqa] and one or two of the chosen friends.'
31. Here again, Mu'in's version (*Tarikh-i Amr* 189) of the details is somewhat different from Balyuzi's. Mu'in claims the original was already with Aqa Bala Bayg's son, Mirza Mahmud in 1882, and that was the copy that Haji Akhund took to 'Akka. Mirza Mahmud was a secretary and scribe for Imam Quli Mirza – the successor to Malik Qasim-Mirza. If this is true, the artist must have done so while still living. In 1887, Mirza 'Ali Oskou met him in Seysan (Mazandarani, *Zuhur* 6:13). Mazandarani (ibid., 3:48) also confirms that Haji Akhund took the original drawing, not a copy, to 'Akka. However, his source for this is probably Mu'in's own history. Balyuzi (*Eminent Bahá'ís* 87) believes that Haji Akhund's was a watercolour copy and that the black-and-white original was discovered later by Assadu'llah Qumi and sent to Haifa in 1902. The current color copy on display at the Bahā'i International Archives in Haifa has the following inscription underneath it: ۱۲۶۶ م.ع. آقا بala در بل او رمی کشیده شد سنه ۱۲۶۶ ('This work by the lowliest servant, Aqa Bala, was drawn in the city of Urmia in the year 1266 AH [1850 AD]').
32. Faizi, *Nuqtay-i Úla*, pp. 369–70 and Afnan, 'Ahd-i A'la', pp. 313–4. To protect believers, Varqa names the cities in the cryptic language prevalent among the early Babis and Bahā'ís that identified locations by a key letter or two in the name of the city. Thus, Tehran would be

identified as 'The Land of Tā' or Yazd would be 'The Land of Yā'. The destinations for the additional copies were Qum, Tehran, Khorasan, Yazd, Isfahan, Shiraz and Kashan.

33. Arabic, lit. 'Chamberlain of the State'. This was the title given to the Shah's chief steward. The position was held by Jafar Quli Khan from October 1892 and he lost it when Muzaffar ad-Dawleh came to the throne, i.e. shortly after the martyrdom of Varqa. Jafar Quli Khan was then given the title of Muin us-Sultan.
34. Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá'ís* 92. Mazandarani (*Zuhur* 6:13) quotes Mirza Haydar-Ali Oskouei that Varqa's copy of the Bab's painting was confiscated by Nayeb as-Saltaneh. Without giving a source, Shahrokh (*Varqā and Son* 12) claims that 'Abdu'l-Baha had predicted that Varqa's copy will be found in the future and returned to his descendants.
35. Mazandarani, *Zuhur*, 3:48.
36. Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá'ís*, p. 87.
37. Faizi, *Nuqtay-i Úlá*, p. 370.
38. Mu'in, *Tarikh-i Amr*, p. 190.
39. Ishraq-Khavari, *Dairat al-Maarif* 1:11.
40. Faizi, *Nuqtay-i Úlá*, p. 371.
41. 'Abdu'l-Baha must have kept copies of his letters to believers. That would explain why a copy of a potentially lost tablet was still available to him and is extant today.
42. Imam Husayn, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad and third in the line of Shi'i imams. Dakhil's poetic rendering of the sufferings of Imam Husayn in Turkish, *Kitab-i Dakhil* (*Kulliyāt al-Jadid*), was published in Tabriz in 1889 and was highly regarded. It was also the first publication by a follower of Baha'u'llah, excluding 'Abdu'l-Baha. Thanks to Dr Moojan Momen for providing this reference.
43. Faizi, 'Ahd-i A'la, pp. 371–2.
44. Ibid. p. 372. Faizi's sources for his narrative were oral accounts by Varqa's son, Mirza Valiyu'llah Khan, at the intercontinental Kampala conference held from 23–28 January 1958, as well as an unspecified written account by Dr Dakhili, the great-grandson of Dakhil-Maraghe'i.
45. Copies of Aqa Bala Bayg's portrait of the Bab are not available to the general public. The Universal House of Justice considers viewing the image a privilege. During pilgrimage, Baha'is can see a colour copy of the original in the Baha'i International Archives in Haifa. In addition, on rare occasions, copies may be seen by Baha'is outside of Haifa. In a letter dated 12 July 1973 by the Universal House of Justice, the international governing body of the Baha'is to their National Spiritual Assembly in Panama, it is noted that 'The portraits of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh should be shown infrequently and on very special occasions, such as a special observance connected with an event intimately associated with the Forerunner or Founder of our Faith ... we feel that the privilege of displaying these very precious portraits should not be abused.'
46. For the text of the article, see Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, pp. 69–70.
47. Moojan Momen, 'Scholarship on the Bahá'í Faith', <http://www.momen.org/relstud/schol.htm>.
48. V. A. Zhukovskii, *Rossiiskii imperatorskii konsul F.A. Bakulin v istorii izuchenii a babizma* (Petrograd: Tip. Akademii nauk, 1917). Published in the periodical 'Zapiski Vostochnogo otdeleniya (Imperatorskogo) Rossiiskogo arkeologicheskogo obshchestva', 24, 1–4, pp. 33–90. (Proceedings of the Oriental Department of the [Imperial] Russian Archeological Society), henceforth abbreviated as ZVORAO. The authors are indebted to Dr Youli Ioannesian for this reference and the line drawing. They are also grateful to Soussan Shahriari for obtaining copies of the pages containing Zhukovskii's drawing and his discussion of the image, and similarly to Joshua Harris for translating portions of Zhukovskii's account into English and to Charles Bonds for reviewing that translation.
49. This letter was found by Dr Youli Ioannesian.
50. ZVORAO, vol. 24, pp. 33–90.
51. See Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, p. 43.

52. Zarandi, *The Dawn-Breakers* (trans. Shoghi Effendi), p. 518.

53. Zhukovskii, *Bakulin*, pp. 46–7. Translation from the original Russian by Dr Youli Ioannesyan. Here, Zhukovskii is referring to 'Abdu'l-Baha's reference in *A Traveler's Narrative* (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1980, p. 27) that the morning after the execution, the Russian consul took an artist with him to the execution scene so he could record a faithful rendition of what he saw.

54. See Siyyid Kazim-i-Rashti, *Risāliy-i Uṣūl-i Aqāyid*, Tehran: Lajniy-i-Milliy-i-Mahfaziy-i-Āthāri-i-Amrī, 133 B.E. (1976–7), pp. 241–2. 'Abdu'l-Baha refers to this Shi'i belief in *A Traveler's Narrative* 2:45. Note that Browne's translation of the relevant passage is inaccurate. He has rendered 'javareh' as 'wounds', but it actually means 'predatory birds or animals'. Authors' note: These references are found in the letter of 17 June 2009 from the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice to Dr Youli Ioannesyan.

55. Louis Alphonse Daniel (A. L. M.) Nicolas, *Seyyed Ali Mohammed dit Le Bab. Les religions des Peuples Civilisés*, Paris: Dujarric & Cie, Editeurs, 1905 (original publication date). Digital copy is available on H-Bahai: Lansing, Michigan, 2004: <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/diglib/books/K-O/N/LeBab/LeBab.htm>. William Miller also reproduced Nicolas's image on page 17 of his polemical work, *The Bahá'í Faith: Its History and Teachings* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1974).

56. The 'rose and nightingale' (Persian: *gol o bolbol*) is a popular literary and decorative theme in Persian literature and art. Together, they represent the lover and beloved par excellence. 'The rose is beautiful, proud, and often cruel, while the nightingale sings endlessly of his longing and devotion.' Adding this theme to the purported image of the Bab is the artist's way of representing the Bab as the rose – or the Beloved – and his followers as nightingales, or lovers. cf. Layla S. Diba, 'Gol o Bolbol', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, vol. 11, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2001, pp. 52–7. Online at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gol-o-bolbol>.

57. Provisional translation of the image caption on p. 36: 'Some believed this portrait was that of the Bab, which was based on the black ink and pen drawing [by Aqa Bala Bayg]. However, after the black ink and pen drawing was seen in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha, it became clear that this was not the Bab's portrait, as the Bab would have been younger and better-looking and his turban would have been much smaller. More recently, it has been accepted that this is the portrait of Sayyid Kazim Rashti, the son of Aqa Sayyid Qasim Tajir Hariri who, according to oral accounts, was a merchant in Rasht.'

58. The captain's letter to a European friend depicts, in gruesome details, the degree of savagery inflicted by Persians of different social strata on the Babi martyrs and the incredible fortitude exhibited by the followers of the Bab in the face of inordinate cruelty at the hands of their killers. A copy of this letter can be found in Peter Avery's *Modern Iran* (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1965, pp. 60–2) and H. M. Balyuzi's *Bahá'u'lláh: The King of Glory* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1980, pp. 84–6).

59. Thanks to Steve Cooney for pointing out this edition of Atpet's book to us.

60. A copy of this image appears in a Russian article titled *Babidskiye Vosstaniya v Mazanderane, Zendzhane i Neyrize* [Babi Uprisings in Mazandaran, Zanjan, and Nayriz], published in the sixth volume of the Russian encyclopedia *Vsemirnaya Istoryia* [World History] in 1959. The text of the article is available online here: <http://historic.ru/books/item/foos/zo000036/st355.shtml>.

61. Atpet's interactions with Jalil Khu'i might have contributed to his negative view of the Baha'is. For example, see a translation of his article that appeared in the Armenian periodical *Sourhandag*. It denied that the Baha'is played any significant role in the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905–11. A translation of this article can be found in ALM Nicolas, 'Le Club de la fraternité' *Revue du Monde Musulman*, vol. 13, Paris, 1911, pp. 180–4 (quoted in Momen's *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions* 39). Additionally, there is also a tablet from 'Abdu'l-Baha in which he is evidently referring to the fabricated image of the execution scene: 'The photograph thou hast sent is not that of His Holiness, the Báb. A contemptible person hath given it to that hapless Russian author and even taken from him a sum of money in return for lies and slander. Announce this to all the friends' (With permission from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom, from private correspondence dated 10 May 2015 between them and the Department of the Secretariat).

62. Jalil Khu'i was the recipient of Bahá'u'lláh's Ishrāqāt (Splendours) tablet. 'Abdu'l-Baha tried to dissuade him from association with Jamal and Mirza Muhammad-'Ali, but to no avail.

His Lawh-i Hizār Baytī (Tablet of One Thousand Verses) was addressed to Jalil and focused on the importance of the Baha'i covenant.

63. Denis MacEoin, 'Early Shaykhí Reactions to the Báb and His Claims', in Moojan Momen (ed.), *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1982) 1:2. In the same year, this image also appeared in M. S. Ivanov's book, *Antifeodalniye Vosstaniya v Irane v Seredine XIX Veka (Anti-Feudal Uprisings in Iran in the Mid-19th Century)*, Moscow: Nauka, 1982, p. 90.
64. The same image now appears as Sayyid Kazim in other sources, including the entry for him in Wikipedia: despite the fact that Shaykhis use a different image for him at the entrance to their Kermanshah religious centre: <http://alabrar.info/images/mashayekh/-2.jpg>. The authors learned about this Shaykhí mosque through correspondence with a Baha'i who lives in Kermanshah. Another somewhat similar image of Sayyid Kazim is found in Moojan Momen's *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1985, p. 191.
65. The concept of *Point* or *Nuqteh* is based on a Muslim tradition that says 'Knowledge is a single *point* that the ignorant have multiplied' [added emphasis]. This tradition appears to be linked to another tradition attributed to Imam 'Ali, who is believed to have said, 'All of the knowledge of all the holy books is in the Qur'an, and all of the knowledge of the Qur'an is in the *Fatiha* [the first sura], and all of the knowledge of the *Fatiha* is in the *Basmala* [i.e. the invocation *Bismi'llāhi'r-Rahmāni'r-Rahīm*], and all of the knowledge of the *Basmala* is in the letter *ba*, and all of the knowledge in the *ba* is in the point [*Nuqteh*] under the *ba*, and I am that point' [added emphasis]. Through the ages, many Muslim texts – including Isma'ili, Nuqtavi and Shaykhí texts – have discussed this concept. For an example of a Shaykhí text, see pp. 91–6 of Sayyid Kazim's *Sharh Qasida Lamiyya Li-'Abd al-Baqi Effendi*. Lithograph, n.p., Tabriz, n.d.
66. The caption appears to have been written on a rectangular piece of paper and superimposed onto the image. If there was genuine intent to identify the person in the portrait, the artist could have done so on the image itself without needing to do it on a piece of paper. The addition could not also be considered an artistic style intended to enrich the artwork.
67. Igor S. Zonn, et al., *The Caspian Sea Encyclopedia*, London and New York: Springer Heidelberg Dordrecht, 2010, p. 317.
68. Ibid.
69. For references to Naghiev's story in Persian Baha'i sources, see Dr Habib Mu'ayyad, *Khatirat-i Habib*, vol. 1, Tehran: Mu'assasah-i Milli-i Matbu'at-i Amri, 118 B.E. (1962), pp. 6–7. Digitally republished, East Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 2007 (<http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/authors/muayyad/muayyad.htm>) and Parivash Samandari Khoshbin, *Taraz-i Elahi*, vol. 1, Muassasah-i Maarif Bahai, Ontario, 2002, 226–7. Digital copy available at: <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/o/TI1/ti1-252.html>.
'Abdu'l-Baha believed Naghiev could have been a source of great accomplishments as a Baha'i. However, Naghiev's procrastination prevented him from doing more. After the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, all his wealth was confiscated. For Persian references by 'Abdu'l-Baha to Naghiev, see 'Abdu'l-Hamid Ishraq-Khavari, *Ganjineh-yi Hudud va Ahkam*, Tehran: Muassasah-i Milli-i Matbuati Amri, 134 BE (1978), 104. Digital copy available at: <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/c/GHA/gha-113.html#pg104>.

Translation

Baha'i Studies Review, Volume 19 © Intellect Ltd 2013
Miscellaneous. English language. doi: 10.1386/bsr.19.191/7

Baha'u'llah as fulfilment of the theophanic promise in the Sermons of Imam 'Alí ibn Abí Tálib. Translation of al Ṭutunjiyya, Iftikhár and Ma'rifat bin-Nurániyyat¹

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Abstract

In the traditions of the Twelver Branch of Islám or Imámí Shi'ism in particular, three sermons of Imám 'Alí stand out as pivotal in their contribution to the Bahá'í writings. These are known as the sermons of Ṭutunjiyyih [the Gulf], Nurániyyat [Recognition through Luminousness], and Iftikhár [Glorification]. They hold tremendous theological importance, and, down the centuries, have had a magnetic effect on Shi'ih religious thought. The author of the book that contains these three sermons, Ḥafiz Rajab al Bursi (died 1411 CE), held a very high view of the station of the Imams. Likewise these texts were highly valorized by Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kazim, Sayyid 'Alí Muhammad, the Bab and Mirza Husayn 'Ali, Baha'u'llah respectively.

Keywords

Baha'u'llah
'Alí ibn Abí Tálib
al Ṭutunjiyya
Rajab Bursi
Esoteric Shi'ism

Translator's Introduction

The Founders of world religions, in Baha'i discourse, the Manifestations of God, relate their claims and their utterances to the language and beliefs of the peoples to whom they come.² Thus Jesus Christ stated at the outset of his mission: 'Think not that I have come to destroy the Law and the Prophets. I have not come to destroy but to fulfil.'³ The Qur'án repeatedly states that it confirms the Gospel and the Torah, affirming that the Prophet's advent has been mentioned in the Torah and the Evangel. The Bábí and Bahá'í Revelations are also intimately related to their Islamic background and their Judaeo-Christian heritage. As the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, says,

[The Bahá'ís] must strive to obtain from sources that are authoritative and unbiased a sound knowledge of the history and tenets of Islam, the source and background of their Faith, and approach reverently and with a mind purged from pre-conceived ideas the study of the Qur'án which, apart from the sacred scriptures of the Bábí and Bahá'í Revelations, constitutes the only

Book which can be regarded as an absolutely authenticated repository of the Word of God.⁴

But what is most remarkable is the frequent reference to particular verses, particular traditions (hadiths), particular tropes of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. For example, there are many references to the messianic passages of Isaiah. The passages of Matthew 24 and St John's reference to the Comforter and the Spirit of Truth are frequent in Baha'u'llah's writings.⁵ From the Qur'an we have multiple references to the 'Meeting with God' on the Day of Judgement, such as Surah 29:5

Anyone hoping to meet God, (should know that) such a meeting with God will most assuredly come to pass. He is the Hearer, the Omniscient.⁶

In the traditions of the Twelver Branch of Islám or Imámí Shi'ism in particular, three sermons of the Imám 'Alí stand out as pivotal in their contribution to the Bahá'í writings. These are known as the sermons of *Tutunjiyyih* [the Gulf], *Nurániyyat* [Recognition through Luminousness], and *Iftikhár* [Glorification]. They hold tremendous theological importance, and, down the centuries, have had a magnetic effect on Shi'ih religious thought. The author of the book that contains these three sermons, Hafiz Rajab al Bursi [died 1411 CE], held a very high view of the station of the Imams,⁷ highly evocative of the position held by Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kazim,⁸ the precursors of the Bábí Cause at a later century. At the time of the Safavi renaissance of Shi'ih Islam, Bursi was considered to have exaggerated views of the station of the Imams.⁹ But the writings of Shaykh Ahmad-i-Ahsa'i and Siyyid Kazim Rashti also accorded a very high station to the Imams. The Imams are referred to as '*Mazaahir*', the 'manifestations of God's names and attributes,' by Shaykh Ahmad in his *Sharh az-Ziyarat*.¹⁰ In this regard Husayn the Son of the Imam 'Ali is addressed to in the Tablet of Visitation revealed by Bahá'u'lláh for him¹¹ as the One through Whom the Command of the Letters 'B' and 'E' came to be realised. He is also referred to as the Mystery of Revelation in the World of God's Dominion [*jabarut*]. As far as one can ascertain both the Báb¹² and Bahá'u'lláh affirm in their writings the validity of these traditions which have their provenance in Bursi.

In the *Kitáb-i-Iqán* Bahá'u'lláh, in expounding the twin cardinal principles of the Unity of the Prophets and infinity of the Revelatory Process adduces as evidence references which are to be found only in Bursi. Bahá'u'lláh's Writings thus affirm the importance and legitimacy of these utterances of the Imam 'Ali.

Two important quotations from Bursi which Bahá'u'lláh cites in the *Kitab-i-Iqan* and which again emphasize the point of the reliability of Bursi as a narrator are the following (see italics):

Furthermore, among the 'veils of glory' are such terms as the 'Seal of the Prophets' and the like, the removal of which is a supreme achievement in the sight of these base-born and erring souls. All, by reason of these mysterious sayings, these grievous 'veils of glory,' have been hindered from beholding the light of truth. Have they not heard the melody of that bird of Heaven,¹³ uttering this mystery: *'A thousand Fatimihs I have espoused, all of whom were the*

daughters of Muhammad, Son of Abdu'llah, the 'Seal of the Prophets?'"¹⁴ Behold, how many are the mysteries that lie as yet unravelled within the tabernacle of the knowledge of God, and how numerous the gems of His wisdom that are still concealed in His inviolable treasures! Shouldst thou ponder this in thine heart, thou wouldest realize that His handiwork knoweth neither beginning nor end. The domain of His decree is too vast for the tongue of mortals to describe, or for the bird of the human mind to traverse; and the dispensations of His providence are too mysterious for the mind of man to comprehend. His creation no end hath overtaken, and it hath ever existed from the 'Beginning that hath no beginning'; and the Manifestations of His Beauty no beginning hath beheld, and they will continue to the 'End that knoweth no end.' Ponder this utterance in thine heart, and reflect how it is applicable unto all these holy Souls.

Likewise, strive thou to comprehend the meaning of the melody of that eternal beauty, Husayn, son of Ali, who, addressing Salman, spoke words such as these: 'I was with a thousand Adams, the interval between each and the next Adam was fifty thousand years, and to each one of these I declared the Successorship conferred upon my father.' He then recounteth certain details, until he saith: 'I have fought one thousand battles in the path of God, the least and most insignificant of which was like the battle of Khaybar, in which battle my father fought and contended against the infidels.'¹⁵ Endeavour now to apprehend from these two traditions the mysteries of 'end,' 'return,' and 'creation without beginning or end.'¹⁶

What these traditions have in common is their use of the language of the World of Command ['Alam-i-Amr], to attribute the workings of the Will of God [His Primal Will] to the World of Creation. Bahá'u'lláh,¹⁷ on the strength of these traditions, states that this World of Command is sanctified above plurality:

Similar statements have been made by 'Alí. Sayings such as this, which indicate the essential unity of those Exponents of Oneness, have also emanated from the Channels of God's immortal utterance, and the Treasures of the gems of divine knowledge, and have been recorded in the scriptures. These Countenances are the recipients of the Divine Command, and the day-springs of His Revelation. This Revelation is exalted above the veils of plurality and the exigencies of number. Thus He saith: 'Our Cause is but one.'¹⁸ Inasmuch as the Cause is one and the same, the Exponents thereof also must needs be one and the same. Likewise, the Imáms of the Muhammadan Faith, those lamps of certitude, have said: 'Muhammad is our first, Muhammad our last, Muhammad our all.

(أولنا محمد وأوسطنا محمد وآخرنا محمد)¹⁹

The Particularity of the Sermon of the Gulf²⁰

One reference stands unique in that Bahá'u'lláh Himself calls it the *Quṭb*, or 'Pivot,' around which 'all the glad tidings of the past revolve.'²¹ That is in a passage from a sermon that was delivered by the Imam 'Ali²² called the 'Sermon of the Twin Gulfs,' the '*Khuṭbah*' of '*Tutunjiyyah*'.

The title *Tutunjiyyah* itself is a reference to the passage wherein the Imam says: 'I am the One that standeth upon the Two *Tutunjs* [Gulfs].' As expounded

below, Siyyid Kazim explains that these two gulfs represent the Gulf of Prophethood and the Gulf of Wilayat, or Imamate. This narration was referred to by Henri Corbin in the following terms as the '*prone sur ou entre deux golfs*':

L'Imám veut dire qu'il est le Pôle (qutb) qui domine les deux golfs et détermine la courbe de leur cercle respectif. Il est celui par qui se manifeste la Miséricorde et par qui se manifeste son antithèse. 'C'est en lui que se produit la différenciation des choses; c'est de lui que procèdent l'origine de la bonté et l'origine de la damnation; c'est par lui que prend réalité la différence de l'une et de l'autre'.²³

'The Imám means to say that he is the Pole (qutb) who rules the two gulfs and determines the curve of their respective circles. It is he through whom Mercy is manifested, and through whom is manifested its antithesis. 'It is in him that is produced the differentiation of things; from him it is that the origin of beatitude and the origin of damnation both proceed. It is through him that the difference between them becomes real.'

Additionally, Bahá'u'lláh, in a Tablet starting with the words 'the essence of praise...'²⁴ exalts the Sermon under our consideration as the 'blessed sermon of Tutunjiyyah' and refers to it as having shone forth from the 'dayspring of absolute sanctity and guardianship'. He says that it has not been commented on in the wondrous Persian tongue and that the purpose of the Imam 'Ali in this sermon has been the announcement of the Promise 'Anticipate ye the Advent of Him Who was the speaker with Moses on Mount Sinai.' Bahá'u'lláh then goes on to say that this promise is the Pivot [qutb] around which all wisdom and utterance revolve.²⁵

With this precise promise, Bahá'u'lláh affirms, all the peoples have been vouchsafed the glad tidings of the Manifestation of God. Bahá'u'lláh then goes on to say that in this day the Speaker of the Mount is manifest and that the Speaker gives call to this utterance 'Verily I am God.'²⁶

The Sermon of the Twin Gulfs is important for Bahá'í studies on several grounds. It shows how in the pre-Bábí/Bahá'í Era various hermeneutic approaches were needed to overcome the various objections that were raised to its high theophanic claims, and that these interpretative efforts have continued to be needed. Also, as Bahá'u'lláh asserts in the Tablet of Jawhar-i-hamid ('The Essence of Praise') and the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, the Tutunjiyyah is a source text for the claims of Bahá'u'lláh to be the Speaker on Sinai.²⁷

The Commander of the Faithful (Imam Ali) – peace be upon him – moreover, saith in the Khutbiy-i-Tutunjiyyih: 'Anticipate ye the Revelation of Him Who conversed with Moses from the Burning Bush on Sinai. Husayn, the son of Ali – peace be upon him – likewise saith: 'Will there be vouchsafed unto anyone besides Thee a Revelation which hath not been vouchsafed unto Thyself – A Revelation Whose Revealer will be He Who revealed Thee. Blind be the eye that seeth Thee not!'

Similar sayings from the Imams – the blessings of God be upon them – have been recorded and are widely known, and are embodied in books worthy of credence.²⁸ Blessed is he that perceiveth, and speaketh the pure truth. Well is it with him who, aided by the living waters of the utterance of Him Who is

the Desire of all men, hath purified himself from idle fancies and vain imaginings, and torn away, in the name of the All-Possessing, the Most High, the veils of doubt, and renounced the world and all that is therein, and directed himself towards the Most Great Prison.²⁹

Siyyid Kazim and the four approaches of the divines before and during the time of the Babi/Bahá'í Revelations

Siyyid Kazim Rashti showed great respect for this Sermon and wrote a very large commentary on it, which is one of his longest works.³⁰ He says that the *Tutunjiyyih* is the pre-eminent instance of the Wisdom that 'Not everything that a man knoweth can be disclosed nor can everything that he can disclose be regarded as timely, nor can every timely utterance be considered as suited to the capacity of those who hear it.'³¹ He divides the *ulama* into four different groups in relation to this sermon and, interestingly, this subdivision was germane to all religious classes in the fervour of millennial expectation.³²

- A. The first group rejects the likes of these traditions and has dropped them from the viewpoint of credibility, saying that these traditions are based on a single line of narration (*akhbaar aḥaad*) and thus cannot be the basis of law or action. These traditions, they say, all are in the book of Bursi and since the latter was charged with extreme views in his day this should militate against their acceptance. Another reason they would be unacceptable in that they attempt to elevate the contingent above the level of contingency. They appear also to assert divine Lordship of a created being necessitating also that the Godhead devolves divine powers to the created being all of which would contravene the Qur'anic text which says: 'is there any Creator other than God? Show me then what they have created. He is the One Who has created you Who will put you to death and will resurrect you. Does He have any partners?'³³
- B. The second position that Siyyid Kazim in his celebrated *Sharh* mentions existed with regard to the hermeneutics of this Sermon. This position suggested one should remain non-judgmental about it on the grounds that these types of utterance exist but that human minds cannot comprehend them.
- C. The third position in regard to these sermons is the position held by the monists and the admirers of Ibn Arabi in Shi'ih Islam such as Mullá Muhsin Fayd. Fayd-e-Kashani says: 'When the effulgences of the Essence of God (*dhat*) overpower any one such that person's entity, actions, attributes are all obliterated in the rays of oneness with the Divine Essence in this state he will see himself one with all Essences. In this state the light of the distinguishing mind becomes subsumed under the Light of Pre-existent Essence and all contingency is lifted up'. Then Fayd-e-Kashani says: 'This explains the utterance of 'Ali in the Sermon of the *Tutunjiyyah*: 'I am the First Adam and the First Noah'.'
- D. The fourth group – and Siyyid Kazim Rashti considers himself of this group – are those who accept this essential belief: namely they recognize the one being as having many 'stations' and these 'stations' are the 'treasures' of that entity's existence. 'God says: 'There is nothing of which We do not have that thing's treasures [*khazaa'in*]'³⁴ 'Our

First is Muhammad, Our Last is Muhammad, Our all is Muhammad.' Siyyid Kazim states that his hermeneutic principle is the verse of the Qur'án: 'Creation has many modes [*atwár*] of existence.'³⁵ These include a mode of brevity and expansion; a mode of simplicity and the mode of complexity; and modes of imagination and abstraction. As to the first group, i.e. those who attributed the sermon to the heresy of extremism, Siyyid Kazim says their views are hasty and erroneous inasmuch as there are many similar utterances that are universally accepted by the Shi'ites. Examples are the prayer of the month of Rajab included in all Shi'ite anthologies; acceptance of the innumerable references to the Imams as 'Hand of God, the Eye of God, Whose utterances are of God'; and the traditions of the two Jabirs.³⁶ The same argument applies to the second group who are hesitating in regard to their acceptance. As to the monistic Sufistic explanations, here too Siyyid Kazim and indeed before him Shaykh Ahmad dispute pantheistic conclusions because rationally their arguments would entail alteration and transformation in the essence or Dhat of God and this position is untenable.

The Báb quoted the famous verse of the Ḥutunjiyyah regarding the anticipation of the Speaker of Sinai in his Seven Proofs.³⁷

In the writings of Mirza Abu'l-Fadl the Sermon of the two Gulfs is referred to frequently but this matter has not been discussed previously. Thus in his *Fara'id*³⁸ he writes that the sanctified reality of the Most Great Spirit is single and one and it does not ontologically (Ontology is the philosophical study of the nature of being, becoming, existence or reality as well as the basic categories of being and their relations.) become plural or multiple because the 'Mirrors' are multiple nor should it epistemologically (Epistemological, pertaining to epistemology, a branch of philosophy that investigates the origin, nature, methods, and limits of human knowledge) be allowed to become so.

An overview of the Sermon of the Gulf

In this Khutbah, the Imam asserts belief in the divine unity and that there is no deity but the One God and the Prophethood of Muhammad, but adds the necessity of loyalty to the Imamate as the repository of salvation. In this context, the Imam 'Ali makes a series of statements all commencing with the pronoun 'I': 'I am the First. I am the Last. I was with Noah. I am the Builder. I am the destroyer. I am that Agent whereby Jesus spoke in His Cradle. I am the Word through Which all things were consummated.' Bahá'u'lláh has explained that these utterances refer to the World of Command or Revelation ('Aalam-i Amr).³⁹ In one of his tablets, Bahá'u'lláh says that the utterances of the Sermon were taught to Imam 'Ali by the Messenger of God (Muhammad) [*tilka kalimatun 'allamahu Rasul'ullah*], so that although Ali utters these statements in fact it is the Prophet who utters them.⁴⁰

In this tablet, Bahá'u'lláh says:

Verily My Name 'Ali gave you the glad tidings and announced to you the Advent of this Day: He said, and His Word is the Truth: Anticipate ye the Advent of the Speaker of Sinai. I swear by God: This is He. And this Announcement was taught to 'Ali by the Messenger of God.⁴¹

The key verse of prophecy that the Manifestation to be anticipated is the Speaker on Sinai, is understood from the Bahá'í writings to be a clear reference to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh as at once the 'essence, the promise, the unifier, and the reconciler'⁴² of all previous revelations, inasmuch as all the previous Faiths are understood to have spoken of the coming of the 'Lord of the Vineyard',⁴³ the meeting with God, and the like. In unnumbered passages Bahá'u'lláh claimed his utterance to be the 'Voice of Divinity, the Call of God Himself'⁴⁴ and his era the 'Day that hath seen the coming of the Best-beloved Him Who through all eternity hath been acclaimed the Desire of the World.'⁴⁵

Bursi's Three Theophanic 'Sermons': A Translation

Translation of the Sermon of the Gulf⁴⁶

The sermon (*Khuṭbah*) [delivered by Imam 'Ali] which is designated That of the Gulf (*al-Tutunjiyyah*) has an exterior level (*zahir*) which is elegant (*aniq*) and an interior level (*batin*) which is deep ('*amiq*). Let him who reads it beware lest he think ill of it for therein something of the sanctity of the Creator (*tanzih al-Khaliq*) is reflected which no one of the creatures can bear. The Commander of the Faithful [Imam 'Ali] delivered it between Kufah and Medina. He said:

Praise be to God Who hath rent asunder the firmaments⁴⁷ (*al-ajwaa*) and opened the atmosphere (*al-hawa*) and suspended the vast expanses of the universe⁴⁸ and caused the Splendour (*diyaa*) to shine, and quickened the dead and caused the living to die. I give Him praise such praise as shone and became uplifted, a praise that was radiant and effulgently luminous, a praise that ascendeth to heaven in its sending there and which goeth to the high sphere (*jaww*) unto its equinoctial summit (*i'tidaaluhu*). He created the heavens without pillars (*bila da'aaim*) and set them upright without supports.⁴⁹ He then adorned the heavens with light-giving planets and caused to be imprisoned in the spheres many a dark cloud. He created the oceans and the mountains upon the collision of concomitant ever-flowing currents: He opened their gates and their mighty waves were huge! I give praise unto Him and to Him all praise is due. I testify that there is no God but Him and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger and that God chose him from the Supreme Company and sent Him unto the Arab peoples and He was appointed – He that was truly guided Himself – to guide others – He was indeed Talismanic and of the essence (*hulaahilan Telasmiyyan*). Muhammad raised up the evidences and sealed the Messages and Moslems obtained sight from Him. God manifested His Religion through Him, may the salutation of God be upon Him and His Pure Family.

People! turn ye repently unto My faction (*shi'ah*) and adhere to a pledge of fealty to Me. Remain steadfast and persevering in the Faith with the best certainty. Adhere steadfastly to the Successor of your Prophet in Whom resides your salvation and in Whose love on the Day of Resurrection is your safe haven! In Me resides the Hope and I am the One to be hoped for. I am the One that standeth upon the Two Gulfs! (*tutunj*) I am the One that looketh unto the Twin Rising-Places [or 'Orients']⁵⁰ and the Twin Setting

Places [or 'Occidents'].⁵¹ I truly did see with My own eyes [the Bounty of] God and the Paradise! And this was as the seventh Heaven was moving in its orbit and there in the great surging seas were the stars and their own orbits. I saw also the earth rolled up as a short garment would be rolled up and it was within a shell on the right sided Gulf which faces the East and the Twin Gulfs.

Further out there are the Twin Bays (*khalij*) of water as if they are to the left of the Twin Gulfs and I saw that the Circle that embraces these and the Paradise and all that there is therein were naught but a ring on the finger of Thy Lord. And in truth I saw the Sun when it was setting and it was like unto a bird that seeketh its nest. And if it were not for the friction of the head of Paradise and the mixing up of the Twin Gulfs and the Music of the spheres all that are in heavens and the earth would hear the ebullition of heat caused by the Sun's descent into the Black water – and that is the Warm Fountain.⁵² I know of the wonders of God's Work what no one knows but God and I know what has been and what will be and what has been in the First Sprinkling with those who preceded the First Adam.⁵³ All was disclosed (*kushifa*) for Me⁵⁴ and I knew and all was taught Me and I have learnt.

So hearken and do not raise a clamour. Were it not for My fear that you might say: 'Ali has become possessed or apostatised from His Faith' I shall disclose unto you what and whereat they are and what you shall encounter on the day of Resurrection. All that knowledge was entrusted unto Me and thus I knew and the knowledge of all this was hidden from all the Prophets except the Lord of this Dispensation (*Shari'ah*)⁵⁵ of yours (Peace be upon Him and His Family). He taught Me His knowledge and I taught Him My knowledge.

Verily We are the Warners from immemorial times and We shall be unto everlasting Warners from God.⁵⁶ Through Us will perish He that is going to perish and by Us have obtained salvation all that have obtained salvation and you shall not encompass that ability that is Ours. By the righteousness of Him Whose power causeth the seed to germinate⁵⁷ and Who breatheth the spirit of life into all things, by Him Who alone hath power and grandeur! To Me have the winds and the air and the birds of air been conquered; the world and all that is therein was presented to me but I turned away from it. I turned upside down the world and it was tilted away from Me. How can subsequent events overcome Me?

I know all that is above the supreme Paradise and that which is below the seventh Ocean, that which is in the highest heavens and that which is between them and that which is below them. All this knowledge is derived from an all-embracing knowledge and not from chronicled knowledge. I swear by the Lord of the Great throne! If I wished I could inform you of your forefathers and all your predecessors as to where they were, and from whom they were and where they are now and how they came to be where they are! How many of you are eating the property of his brother and is drinking of the fountainhead of his father and yet he longeth for him and wishes that they were with him!

O would that you knew! O would that ye knew! When that which is hidden be manifest and that which is in the breasts were attained and conscience were to disclose its hidden things, I swear by God you will have returned to clay, and you will have had your 'returns,' and how many signs there are

between these 'returns' how many those that have died or that have been slain. (I know those that are in the claws of birds and those that are in the belly of beasts and all mankind are between those that have already gone and those that are being urged on). And if it were to be revealed to you all that is with Me from time immemorial unto the end that has no end you shall truly see many and wondrous events, many strange handiworks and all that I comprehend.

I am the Master (sahib) of the First Creation before the First Noah, and if you were to know what was between Adam and Noah of wondrous events that I wrought and of nations that I caused to perish. And the true Word of Thy Lord was fulfilled in them and evil is that which they worked! I am the Master of the First Flood!⁵⁸ I am the Master of the Second Flood!⁵⁹ I am the Master of the Deluge of Iram!⁶⁰ I am the Master of the Secret Mysteries! I am the Lord of 'Ad and its gardens!⁶¹ I am the Lord of Thamud and its wondrous signs! I am the One that destroyed it, I am the One that caused the Earthquakes! I am the One that caused their Return and their Perdition! I am the Builder of those civilisations and their Destroyer! I cause their Expiry and I cause them to be quickened! I am the First and the Last! I am the External and Manifest⁶² and I am the Internal and Hidden! I am with the Cycle (kawr) before the Cycle began! I am the Companion of the Dispensation (dawr) before the Dispensation started! I was with the Pen before the Pen and I am with the Tablet prior to the Tablet being revealed! I am the Lord of the First Pre-existence! I am the Lord of Jabulqa and of Jabulsa! I am the Master of Highest Stage (rafraf) and of Bahram! I am the One Who organised existence when there was no heaven as you have them now nor earth as you know it now!

The Son of Suwairama said: 'Are you, are you indeed that One?!" 'Ali replied: 'I am, I am that One! There is no other God But God Who is My Lord and the Lord of all created things. Unto Him belongs the Creation and the World of Revelation (*amr*). He it is Who has ordained all matters in His Wisdom and heavens and earth are upraised in His Power. Methinks the weak ones amongst you are saying; 'Is this not the son of Abu-Talib Whom the forces of Syria had overshadowed yesterday and He would not go out to fight them and sent them Muhammad and Ibrahim?' But truly and assuredly I shall fight Syria many times and I shall slay them many times. I shall fight their armies at Siffin and I shall bring a new life unto the believer until that thirst for justice in my chest be allayed. I shall fight for 'Ammar Yassir and for Uways of Qaran many times. Let none say when? How? and in what manner? and with whose assistance? How shall it be when you shall see the Master of Syria saweth men with saws and cutteth them with trowels? But I shall make him taste a painful retribution.

But rejoice now for the cause of all creation reverts unto Me on the morrow. Let not this claim appear extravagant inasmuch as We have been vouchsafed the knowledge of all fates and of all tribulations. and the knowledge of interpretation and of the Revelation and the decisive Discourse (*Faslu'l-Khitab*) and knowledge of all future calamities and catastrophes. There is nothing whose knowledge escapes Us. This is truth and I shall see this One [pointing to Husayn, Peace be upon Him] when His Light shall flow forth of His eyes and I shall be present with Him a lengthy time that shall witness earthquakes and eclipses. They that are believers will revolt in

His company from every corner. I swear by God! If I wished I would tell you of their names every one of them and their descent from both parents, until the Day of whose time is promised.

Then 'Ali said: 'O Jabir! You are with the Truth now and you shall be with the True One hereafter and in that true Cause you shall die. O Jabir! When the Bell shall cry loud, when the stupor of the Nightmare shall enshroud men, when the Cow shall speak, on that day there shall happen wondrous, exceedingly wondrous Events, when the Fire shall be ignited in My sight, when the Banner of the House of 'Uthman shall appear in the Black Valley, when Basra shall be thrown into confusion and they shall seek to conquer each other and each party shall seek the other, when the armies of Khurasan shall begin to move, and when Shu'ayb the son of Salih of Tamim shall be followed in Taliqan, and Sa'id of Shusha shall be obeyed in Khuzistan, and the banner shall be raised up by the Amalekites of the Kurds, and the Arabs shall seek victory over Armenia and the Slavs, and Heraclitus shall submit to the patriarchs of Sinan in Constantinople, anticipate ye then the Revelation of the Speaker of Mount Sinai.⁶³ This will appear with manifest signs visible unto all, clearly perspicuous to them.

O but how many a wondrous sign I seek not to mention and how many indications I have left undivulged! for I cannot find one who can bear them. I am the One Who ordered Satan to bow down Adam!⁶⁴ I am the One Who raised Idris⁶⁵ to a high station. I am the Agent whereby Jesus was enabled to speak in His cradle while yet a Babe! I am the One who flattens the valleys and Who sets the Earth to order and I am the One Who has divided it into five parts, namely, land, sea, mountains, built, and unbuilt. I am the One Who separated the Red Sea from Tarjim, and separated Aqim from Him. I separated all from all! I am Tirathia, Janbutha, Barhilion, Aliuthoutha.⁶⁶ I bring out of the Ocean that which is stored in it that it shall be cleared away by the horses and men. Take from it what you desire and leave what you wish to leave.

He then gave 'Ammar-ibn-Yassir 12000 men who loved God and His Apostle and each had 12000 battalions of angels to support them saying: Rejoice for you are the best of brethren to each other for after this there shall be a star (tarfatan) through which ye shall know some of the expounded matter. The Mysteries of Evidence shall become clear to you when Bahram and Keyvan (stars) shall rise together and become conjoined with exactness. When shakings and earthquakes shall succeed each other swiftly and banners shall be lifted up from the shores of Oxus to the Desert of Babylon know ye then that I am the One Who causeth the winds the blow, I am the One Who lifts your oppressions!

I am the Master of the Mount Sinai! I am that Manifest Light! I am that Perspicuous and dazzling Evidence (that light of which an infinitesimal part was disclosed unto Moses) and all that was vouchsafed unto Me by God the Lord Of Glory.

I am the Master of the Gardens of eternal delight! I am the One that causeth the Rivers to flow from the Water that emanates from the divine current, and other Rivers which are of milk, and Rivers of pure Honey, and Rivers that flow with wine, a delight unto those who partake. I am the One that hath overshadowed hell when it was made to blaze and have overlooked its several compartments: firstly the Hell of Sa'ir when it blazeth forth then the Hell of Saqar and its fire and lastly the nethermost Hell which

has been preserved for the transgressor all of these have been preserved in the Valley of Desolation. Again I swear by the Lord Who bringeth Dawn, He Who is the Lord of all creation! Within it is kept eternally both Jibt and Taghut and their servants and whomsoever disbelieveth in the Lord of this world and the Kingdom on high.

I am the Maker and Sustainer (sani') of all the Regions of this world by the Command of the One Who is the All-Knowing the All-Wise. I am the Word through Which all things are consummated and through which the Universes are brought into being. I am the One Who has made the regions of the earth to be four and the islands to be seven: the Region of the South to be the Depository of all Bounty, the Region of the North to be Powers and Sovereignty, the Region of Sheba to be the Seat of earthquakes, and the Desert Region to be the Seat of many a catastrophe. So Woe unto the cities from those transgressors who will come to destroy and pervert justice. Woe shall be when calamities come to transpire from that Government of eunuchs, imbeciles, and effeminate rulers. On that Day all Regions will bring forth false claimants claiming falsehoods. Oh! On that Day expect eagerly your Supreme salvation and you shall see men accepting it by troops.⁶⁷ On that Day God will make of the gravel of Najaf treasures of gold and all of that will be sprinkled where the believer shall step his foot on it and with that same dust of gold the unbeliever and the hypocrite shall be exchanged and bartered. Then shall the value of red ruby be as nothing and similarly other jewels and pearls. This shall be a most evident sign and when it shall transpire the Light of God shall shine and His Glory (*sat' baha'ihi*) shall be effulgent and all that you wish for shall be made manifest and all that is your highest desire shall become apparent.

O You who in your desires resemble cattle and the beasts of the field! How shall it be with you when the banners of the sons of Kenan shall come upon you and also that of 'Uthman the son of 'Anbatha in the battle fields of Syria? Know truly that shall never be discerned by one related to Umayya or to 'Ady.'

Then He wept loudly (the salutations of God be upon Him!) and later exclaimed; 'O alas for the nations! Soon shall some hypocrites say that 'Ali claimed Lordship (*rububiyyat*) for Himself but you should bear witness thus: "Ali truly is a created Being, a Servant, nourished of divine sustenance and he that denies this let him be accursed of God.'

Imam 'Ali then descended and said; 'I take refuge unto him Who hath the Kingdoms of earth and Heaven! I seek succour from Him Who possesses all Power and Grandeur, all Sovereignty and Authority from all that I fear and pray to avoid!' O people! None shall utter these words but when tribulations and calamities befall him the same will God dissipate through this prayer.'

Jabir said: 'Only those Words?' and the Imam 'Ali added thereunto another thirteen words⁶⁸ and left.

Translation of the 'Sermon of Iftikhár'⁶⁹

The Imám 'Alí said:

I am the brother of the Messenger of God and the Heir to His knowledge, the treasury of His wisdom, and the Companion of His secret. There is not a letter revealed by God in any of His Books whose intention does not point towards me. He hath vouchsafed unto me the knowledge of what was

from eternity and what will happen unto the Day of Resurrection. To me hath been vouchsafed the knowledge of past and future generations and their genealogies. And to Me hath been given a thousand keys to a thousand doors. The knowledge of the destinies of all things hath been granted unto me. All these Gifts shall continue to flow through my Appointed Successors (wasi's) as long as day is followed by night and night followed by day and until all things return to God. For verily, He is the True Inheritor of all things.

Unto me, too, hath been vouchsafed the Path, the Balance, the Banner, and the Kawthar. I am the one who shall face the children of Adam on the Day of Judgement and shall bring them to account and shall direct them to their habitations. And verily, I am the punishment of fire meted unto the damned. These are the bounties of God unto me. And should anyone deny that I shall return after the Return,⁷⁰ or deny that I shall come back after the Raj'at,⁷¹ or should anyone reject the truth that I shall appear again, even as I have done from the beginning that hath no beginning or even unto the end that hath no end, he, verily, hath denied the truth of all of Us. And verily I say unto you, he who denies any one of Us, hath denied God. I am the one who hath summoned you; I am the companion of your prayers and invocations. I am the Lord of retribution, and I am the Master of the signs and the Lord of the wondrous symbols of guidance. I am cognisant of the mysteries of creation; I am the One who brought the iron unto Men.⁷² I am forever new and forever pre-existent, the One who brought the Angels from out of their habitations, the One who pledged an everlasting covenant with your spirits on the dawn of creation and Who, on that day, asked, through the will of God, the Self-subsisting, these words: 'Am I not your Lord?' I am the Word of God [Kalimat'u'lláh] which hath been uttered in the world of creation, the Object of the covenant that hath been promised in the prayers and salutations which lie in the reality of all created things. I am the name that hath been invoked by orphans and by widows, the door to the city of knowledge and the refuge of patience and forbearance. I am the upraised flag of God, the companion of the banner of divine praise, the Lord of infinite bounty and of infinite grace. But should I tell you all that I am, you would doubtless disbelieve Me. For I am also the slayer of oppressors, the treasury of divine favours in this world and of the next. I am the master of the believers, the guide of those who seek the way. The truth is Mine and certitude is at My side. Leadership is Mine and the righteous shall follow Me. I am the first to acknowledge faith, the Cord of God that shall not be broken, the One who will raise the world to justice even as it hath been brought low by oppression. I am the companion of Gabriel and the archangel Michael is beside Me. I am the tree of guidance, and the essence of righteousness. I shall gather together the world of creation through the Word of God that gathers together all things. I give life unto humanity and I am the treasury of all divine commands. To Me hath been given the Luminous Pen and the Crimson Camel.⁷³

I am the gate-keeper of certitude, the Commander of the Faithful, the friend of Khidir. I am the One who shall conquer Syria and destroy the arrogant. I have existed throughout the past, and, verily, I have never uttered a falsehood. Through a word from Me, truth hath been separated from error, for I speak through divine inspiration and know of the stars and constella-

tions. God hath commanded me to ordain their orbit and vouchsafed unto me their knowledge. With Me are the saffron and crimson coloured flags and I shall remain concealed until the time shall come for My manifestation in a great Cause. Then, shall I grant and withhold as I wish. None can describe Me except Myself, for I shall protect the faith of my Lord. I am the One Whom my Cousin chose, Who was present when His sacred remains were shrouded. I am the Guardian appointed by God, the Most Merciful God, the companion of Khidr⁷⁴ and Aaron, and the friend of Moses and Joshua, the son of Nun. I am the Lord of Paradise, He Who hath caused the rain to fall and the earth to quake and the sun and moon to be eclipsed. I am the Object of the creation of multitudes and it is I who shall slay those who do not believe.

Verily, I am the leader of the righteous, the Sacred Fane frequented by all, the upraised firmament, the fathomless ocean. I am the Holy of Holies, the pillar that supports humanity. I am the Possessor of the Greatest Cause. Is there anyone who can speak beside Me? I am fire itself. At a single Word of God, at one utterance of the Prophet, I would put within you My sword's length and send you hurrying unto your next abode. I am the meaning of Ramadán and the night of Qadr⁷⁵ mentioned in the Mother Book. My utterance is decisive, for I am the Súrah of Praise.⁷⁶ I am the purpose of prayer itself, whether at home or when travelling. I am the purpose of fasting, and the sacred anniversaries in the months of the year. I am the Lord of Resurrection and Judgement, the One who can remove the yoke that lies heavy on the people of Muhammad. I am the Gate through which all shall pass who worship God; I am His worshipper, and one created by Him. I am both the witness and the One witnessed to, the possessor of the green canopy, He Whose name is mentioned in the heavens and the earth, Who is the travelling companion of the Messenger of God throughout the heavens, for with Me is the Book and the sacred Arc. I am the One who befriended Seth, the son of Adam⁷⁷ the companion of Moses and Irám, and all metaphors and analogies pertain unto Me. Who indeed is there to compare with Me? For I am the heaven-sent rain that causeth each blade of green to grow, the Lord of this nether realm Who brings forth the rains when all have lost their hope in its downpour. I am He Who summoneth the mighty lightning and causeth the ocean to rise and swell, the One who speaketh to the sun and causeth the stunning trumpet to blast forth. I am the refuge of all that have obeyed God, and verily, God is my Lord and there is no other God but He. For falsehood offers illusions, but truth giveth thee everlasting sovereignty.

I shall soon depart from amongst you, but be watchful and aware; be on your guard against the tests and tribulations caused by the 'Ummayyds and their worldly powers. And after they shall pass away, the kingdom will revert to the 'Abbasids⁷⁸ who will bring both sorrow and happiness to mankind. And they shall build a city called Baghídád, which shall be between the Tigris and the Euphrates. Woe betide men in those latter days, for amongst them will rise the oppressors among My people, who shall build palaces for themselves and courts and tabernacles. For they shall seek supremacy through intrigue and impiety. Two score and two kings shall rule among the children of the 'Abbasids, after whose reign shall come to pass the Most Great Tribulation on the surface of the earth. Then shall the True Qá'im rise up once more. Then shall I show My Face amongst men, and it shall

be as luminous as the face of the moon amid the other stars. But note well the ten signs associated with my coming. The first sign shall be the inversion of banners on the highways of Kúfa;⁷⁹ the second, the abeyance of true worship and the prescribed prayers; the third, the end of true pilgrimage. The fourth sign shall be an eclipse in the lands of Khorásán,⁸⁰ the gathering of constellations and the appearance of comets in the sky. There shall be chaos and confusion, massacre, pillage and robbery in the world. Many other signs shall there be too, surpassing all these signs, among which is the sign of wonderment. But when all these signs have passed away, then, verily, shall the Qá'im Himself arise in truth.

O people, sanctify the Lord your God from all similitudes, for every reference to Him fails, and whosoever tries to limit the Creator by description or comparison hath verily disbelieved in His Book, which is the Book of God's Own Utterance.

Then He⁸¹ said: How great the blessedness of those who love Me and who sacrifice their life in My path and who get exiled because of Me! They truly are the repositories of God's knowledge, nor shall they be put to fear on the Day of the Great Terror.

I am the Light of God, Who can never be extinguished; I am the Mystery of God that can not be concealed.

Translation of Sermon of Ma'rifat bin-Nurániyyat⁸²

This is that which Salmán⁸³ and 'Abú Dharr⁸⁴ related of the utterances of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alí – Peace be upon Him!' Alí said:

He whose acceptance of my guardianship is based on external reality more than internal truth, he is that one 'whose balances will be light'⁸⁵ Those whose scale will be light, their souls will be in perdition⁸⁶ O Salmán! The faith of no believer will attain perfection unless and until he recognizeth Me with luminousness. If he attaineth unto this, then he hath truly attained faith; he is the one whose heart is tested with true faith, whose breast is dilated in true Islám and whose faith is based on discernment. He who is convicted of shortcoming in this cognition – he will be a doubter, immersed in disbelief.

O Salmán! and O Jandáb!⁸⁷ In truth, recognition of Me in luminousness is the recognition of God (*Ma'rifat Alláh*) and Recognition and knowledge of God is indeed knowledge of Me; this is what is meant by sincere devotion.⁸⁸ Mankind was not ordered by God to seek naught except to attain unto this unity (*tawhid*). They were commanded to worship but One God.⁸⁹ And they have been commanded no more than this: 'To worship God, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith), to establish regular prayer; and to practice regular charity; and that is the Religion Right and Straight.'⁹⁰

'Worshipping God' is belief in Divine Unity. 'Sincere devotion' and 'being true in Faith' (*haneef*) is confession of the Prophethood of the Prophet. 'Establishing Prayer' is my Guardianship and Friendship (*waláyat* or *wiláyat*) He who pledges fealty and friendship unto Me hath truly established the obligatory prayer. Yet, this matter is hard, exceedingly hard! 'Regular charity' in the above verse is confession to the Imámate. All this is the true religion.⁹¹

The Holy Qur'án hath testified that true Faith is recognition of divine unity and confession to both the Prophet and the Imámate. He who

attaineth unto both hath fulfilled his faith. A true believer is the one who does not reject any matter pertaining to Us, for God Himself hath dilated His Breast such that He may accept all. He will not doubt or be mistrustful. He who cavileth why and wherefore becometh a disbeliever. We are, verily, the Cause of God (*Nahnu Amru'lláh*)!

O Salmán! O Jandáb! Verily, God hath made me His Trustee over His creation and His Vicegerent on His earth, in His territories, and over His servants. He hath given Me what no artist can depict and no man of understanding can truly comprehend. If thou wert to know Me in this fashion, thou shalt attain unto true belief (*imán*).

O Salmán! God, exalted be He saith: 'Nay, seek God's help with patient perseverance and prayer: it is indeed hard except to those who bring a lowly spirit.' 'Patient perseverance' is Muhammad and 'Prayer' is my *Wilayat*. Thus, that is why God hath declared it is hard. He doth not reveal the Two⁹² are hard. In truth, My Guardianship is perplexing only to those who bring a lowly spirit. These latter are they who have sought discernment using the light of My guidance.

O Salmán! We are the Mystery of God (*Sirru'lláh*) that shalt not remain hidden. We are His light that shalt never be extinguished, His Grace that is expected from none other save Him. Muhammad is our first, Muhammad our last, Muhammad our all!⁹³ He who recognizeth Us in this regard hath, in truth, consummated his Faith.

O Salmán, and O Jandáb! Muhammad and I were the Light that was voicing forth the divine eulogy before any other reality started to praise Him. We were the cause of illumination unto all creation. This one Light was divided by God into two portions, the Chosen 'Mustafa',⁹⁴ and His Vicegerent, 'Murtada',⁹⁵ and vouchsafed unto creation. God, exalted be His Glory, said to each half, 'Be Muhammad!', 'Be 'Alí'!⁹⁶ It is thus that the Prophet said: 'I am from 'Alí and 'Alí is from Me. None can give forth My Trust but Myself and 'Alí.'⁹⁷ This refers to our unity in the worlds of Light and Spirit. Similar is this divine utterance: 'and If He dieth or is slain.'⁹⁸ 'Dieth' refers to the passing away of the Prophet. 'Slain' refers to the martyrdom of the Successor,⁹⁹ for the Two are one Entity, one Signification and one Light. Their unity is in purpose and attributes. They are different in Their corporeal entity and their Names. But in the world of spirit, They are One Spirit. In Spirit, He said, 'Thou art the Spirit within My Limbs.' In the world of bodies, He saith: 'Thou art of Me and I am of Thine. Thou shalt inherit after Me.'

Again, there is the Divine Utterance: 'Send ye blessings on Him and salute Him with all respect.'¹⁰⁰ 'Sending blessings on Him' refereth to Muhammad. 'Salute Him' refers to the Successor. No benefit shall accrue unto thee if thou sendest blessings unto the Messenger and His Message if they are not coupled with saluting His Successor in His *Wiláyat*.

O Salmán! O Jandáb! Muhammad was the One speaking and I was the One silent. Inevitably, in every Dispensation, there is the One Who speaketh and the One Who is silent.¹⁰¹ Muhammad is the Master of Ingathering¹⁰² and I am the Master of Resurrection.¹⁰³ Muhammad is the Warner¹⁰⁴ and I am the 'guide.'¹⁰⁵ Muhammad is the Lord of Paradise and I am the Lord of the Return. Muhammad is the Lord of the Pool¹⁰⁶ and I am the One entrusted with the Banner.¹⁰⁷ Muhammad is the Lord of the Keys¹⁰⁸ and I am the Lord of Paradise and Fire. Muhammad is the Lord of Revelation and I am the

Lord of Inspiration. Muhammad is the Lord of signs and I am Master of the miracles. Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets¹⁰⁹ and I am the Seal of the Successors.¹¹⁰ Muhammad is the Master Who raised the Call and I am the One entrusted with both the Sword¹¹¹ and Sovereignty. Muhammad is the Most Generous Prophet and I am the Straight Path. Muhammad is the One mentioned in the verse as 'most kind and merciful'¹¹² and I am the One alluded to as 'Most High, Most Great.'¹¹³

O Salmán! God, exalted be He, saith: 'He causes the Spirit to descend upon any Servant He willeth.'¹¹⁴ This Spirit but descends unto the One entrusted with the Command and the Decree. I give life to the dead. I know what is in the heavens and what is on the earth. I am, in truth, the Perspicuous Book.¹¹⁵ I give life unto the dead and with Me is the knowledge of all that is in the heavens and the earth. I am the Perspicuous Book. O Salmán! Muhammad is the Upraiser of the Proof,¹¹⁶ and I am the Proof of the One True God unto His creatures. It is this Testimony that empowered the Spirit of God¹¹⁷ to ascend unto heaven. I am the One who enabled Noah to sail his Ark. I was present with Jonah in the belly of the Whale.¹¹⁸ I argued with Moses in the sea.¹¹⁹ I caused earlier peoples to suffer loss; I bestowed the knowledge of the Prophets and Saints and Their Decisive Utterance unto them. With Me is the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad completed. I caused rivers and oceans to flow and caused fountains to burst forth. I caused the world to be revolutionized and I bring about the Chastisement of the Day of Overshadowing Gloom.¹²⁰ I am Khidr Who taught Moses.¹²¹ I taught David and Solomon.¹²² I am Dhul Qarnayn.¹²³ I am the One who raised the Firmament¹²⁴ and flattened the Earth.¹²⁵ I am the Summoner from a near Place.¹²⁶ I am the Creature on the Earth.¹²⁷ The Prophet addressed Me saying: 'O 'Alí! Thou art the One endowed with the Two stations. Thou art present both in the Beginning and the End.' O Salmán! The One slain with Us will not die. The One Who is in Occultation from amongst Us is never absent. None can compare with Us. I am the One Who spoke through the Utterance of Jesus when He was still cradled.¹²⁸ I am Noah. I am Abraham. I am Sálih Who possessed the She-Camel as His Sign.¹²⁹ I am the One Who causeth the Commotion.¹³⁰ I am also the Trembling.¹³¹ I am the Protected Tablet¹³² and in My possession is all Its Knowledge. I appear in Appearances¹³³ as God willeth. He that seeth Them seeth Me. He that seeth Me seeth Them. In all truth, We are the Light of God that changeth not and His effulgence that is not extinguished. O Salmán! The honour of every Sent One is through Us, but do not call us Lords; praise Us as thou willeth. Salvation and Perdition both are effected through Us.

O Salmán! He that believeth in all truth as I have expounded it is truly a believer whose heart hath been tested and proven. He that doubteth and hesitateth, he hath reneged on the Faith, although outwardly he sayeth that he believes in the *Wiláyat*.¹³⁴ I, and the Guides of My Family, the Imáms, are the Hidden Mystery of God¹³⁵ and His Guardians.¹³⁶ Our Cause is One, Our Mystery is One and Our Unity is absolute. If thou maketh distinctions, thou wilt be among the ones lost. We appear and have Our Manifestation in every age as the All Merciful willeth. All woe betide the One Who denieth Us! None shall gainsay these except the one whose heart, eyes and hearing are sealed.

O Salmán! I am as the Father of every believer. I am the Catastrophe.¹³⁷ I am the Approaching Calamity. I am the Inevitable. I am the Impending One.¹³⁸ I am the Deafening Trumpet Blast.¹³⁹ I am the Supreme Test. We are the Signs, the Significances and the Countenance of God¹⁴⁰ When My Name was written on the Throne, It attained Its Serenity. When It was inscribed on the firmaments, They were upraised. When written on the Earth, It was adorned. When It was inscribed on the Wind, It carried with It fruition. When written on the Lightning, It caused it to shine. When written on the Oasis, It brought nourishment. When inscribed on the Light, It caused it to be Luminous. When inscribed on the Clouds,¹⁴¹ It generated Their Outpouring Grace, and when inscribed on the Thunder,¹⁴² it made the Thunder quiescent. That Name caused the Night¹⁴³ to be deep in its darkness, and when inscribed on the Day,¹⁴⁴ It made It luminous and radiant.¹⁴⁵

Suggested citation

Khazeh Fananapazir, 'Baha'u'llah as fulfilment of the theophanic promise in the Sermons of Imam 'Alí ibn Abí Tálib. Translation of al Ṭutunjiyya, Iftikhár and Ma'rifat bin-Nurániyyat', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 191–213. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.191/1>.

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Endnotes

1. Republished with permission of the author, original published in OJBS: Online Journal of Baha'I Studies, 1:1, pp. 89–113, 2007.
2. For a recent survey of Baha'u'llah's messianic claims see Buck, Christopher, 'The Eschatology of Globalization: The Multiple-Messiahship of Baha'u'llah Revisited' in Moshe Sharon (ed.) *Studies in Modern Religions, Religious Movements and the Babi-Baha'i Faiths*, Leiden: Brill, 2004, pp. 143–178 and references therein.
3. Matthew, 5:17.
4. Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, p. 49). See also Stephen Lambden, 'Islám, Muhammad and the Qur'án: Some Introductory Notes', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 1:1 (1991); Moojan Momen, *Islam and the Baha'i Faith*, (Oxford: George Ronald, 2000).
5. See for example Baha'u'llah, *Gems of Divine Mysteries-Javáhiru'l-Asrár*, (Haifa:Baha'i World Centre, 2002, pp. 9–10); ibid, Tablet to Pope Pius IX in, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts* (Haifa: Baha'i World Centre, 2002, 53); ibid, Lawh-i-Aqdas in *Tablets of Baha'u'llah revealed after the Kitab-i-Aqdas* (Wilmette:Baha'i Publishing trust, 1988, 2).
6. For other Qur'anic verses that describe meeting with God cf. 33:44, 6:31, 6:154, 10:45, 13:2, 18:110, 29:5, 30:8, 32:10.

7. Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come* (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1961, 114). 'Indeed, the essential prerequisites of admittance into the Bahá'í fold ... is the whole-hearted and unqualified acceptance by them ..., of the legitimacy of the institution of the Imamate, ...' See also Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'llah* (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1988, p. 101).
8. Bahá'u'llah, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán* (trans. Shoghi Effendi, Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1983, p. 65) 'Likewise, there appeared on earth Ahmad and Kazim, those twin resplendent lights – may God sanctify their resting-place!'
9. Todd Lawson, 'The Dawning Places of the Lights of Certainty in the Divine Secrets Connected with the Commander of the Faithful by Rajab Bursi' in Leonard Lewisohn (ed.), *The Legacy of Mediaeval Persian Sufism*, London: Khaniqahani Nimatullahi Publications, 1992, pp. 261–276; Pierre Lory, 'Souffrir pour le vérité selon l'ésotérisme chiite de Rajab Borsi', in Mohammad Ali Amir Moezzi et al (eds), *Le Shi'isme imamite quarante ans après: Hommage à Etan Kohlberg*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2009, pp. 315–23.
10. Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, *Sharh al-ziyara al-jam'i'a*, Tehran, n.p., 1276/[1859], volume 1, p. 167, in the section commenting on 'mah.aalli ma'rifatihî'.
11. See Khazeh Fananapazir, 'Lawh-i-Zíyárat-Namih-i-Imám Husayn' (Tablet of Visitation for Imam Husayn), [Electronic]. Last accessed 21 March, 2016.
12. Cf. Todd Lawson 'Coincidentia Oppositorum in the Qayyumu'l-Asam: The terms 'Point' (nuqta), 'Pole' (qutb), 'Center' (markaz) and the Khutbat al-tataniyya', *Occasional Paper's in Shaykhi, Babi and Baha'i Studies*, 5:1, Stephen Lambden 'The Khutbat al-Tutunjiyya [al-Tataniyya] خطبة الطنجية [التطنجية] ('Sermon of the Gulf') ascribed to Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (d. 40/661). Part 2 Text, Translation, Bibliography and Notes. 1987–2015 Hurqalya Publications: Center for Shaykhī and Bábí-Bahá'í Studies. Last accessed 21 March 2016 [Electronic].
13. Imam 'Ali.
14. This quotation is from Bursi's *al-Alfayn* cited in Ishraq Khavari, *Qamus-i-Íqán*, Vol. 1, p. 17.
15. Both the above quotations indicating utterances of 'high Imamology' are from the self-same Bursi in his book *Alfayn* as quoted by the late Ishraq Khavari (Idem).
16. Bahá'u'lláh, *Íqán*, pp. 166–168.
17. Bahá'u'lláh, *Íqán*, p. 153.
18. Qur'an, 54:50.
19. This is from the Bih.aar ul Anwaar [Oceans of Lights]) [Electronic]. Last accessed 21 March 2016.
20. **خطبہ ختنیہ** ختنیہ
21. This is in the 35th volume of the Intishárát Lajnih-yi Millí-yi Mahfazih-yi Áthár va Árshív-i Amr series of Bahá'u'llah's Writings. Iran National Baha'i Archives, Vol.35, Digitally republished, East Lansing, Mi.: H-Bahai, 2013, <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/diglib/INBA/INBAo35.pdf>. Bahá'u'llah refers to this Utterance of the KhT being the qutb around which all language of prophecy revolves. Last accessed 21 March 2016.
22. ca.600–661. See IK Poonwala, "Ali b. Abí Táleb' I. Life, in E. Yarshater (ed.) *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, London: Biblioteca Persica, 1:838–843), also Encyclopaedia Iranica, Online Edition, 1982, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ali-b-abi-taleb#pt1>.
23. *Annuaire de la Section des Sciences Religieuses de l'École des Hautes Études*, Paris, 1969–70, p. 239. Material in quotation marks is from Corbin's translation of Rashtí. Cf. Lawson, The Qur'an Commentary of Sayid 'Alí Muhammad, the Bab, Part II, ch.3.
24. Bahá'u'llah, 'Lawh-i Jawhar-i Hamd' (Tablet of the Essence of Praise) in *Majmu'iḥ-i Athar-i Qalam-i A'la* ('Collected Letters of Bahá'u'llah'), (Tehran: Iran National Baha'i Archives (INBA), 35, 165). Reprinted, H-Bahai: East Lansing, Mi., 1999. [Electronic]. Last accessed 21 March 2016. See Lambden, Sermon, op. cit., for extended discussion of the Lawh-i Jawhar-i Hamd.; Stephen Lambden, The Lawh-i Jawhar-i Hamd (Tablet of the Quintessence of Laudation) of Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri, Baha'-Allah (1817–1892) Hurqalya Publications: Center for Shaykhī and Bábí-Bahá'í Studies [Electronic], <http://hurqalya.ucmerced.edu/node/595>. Last accessed 21 March 2016.

25. Cf. Stephen Lambden, 'The Sinaitic Mysteries: Notes on Moses/Sinai motifs in Babi and Baha'i Scripture' in Moojan Momen (ed.) *Studies in Honor of the Late Hasan M. Balyuzi*, Los Angeles: Kalimat, 1988, pp. 65–183, Series: Studies in Babi and Baha'i History, 5).
26. Bahá'u'llah, Jawhar-i Ḥamd, last two lines. Bahá'u'llah, *Intishárát* volume 35.
27. See Bahá'u'llah, *Tablets revealed*, 107 (Ishráqát), 36 (Tárazát), 50,52 (Tajalliyát).
28. Here we have perhaps Bahá'u'lláh's most explicit assertion of the reliability of Bursí's compilation.
29. Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1988, p. 42).
30. Rashti, Sayyid Kazim, *Sharh khutbat al-tatārijā*, (Tabriz: n.p., Lithograph, 1270 [1853–4]).
31. Bahá'u'llah cites this tradition in his 'Tafsir-i-Surah-i-Va'sh-Shams' (Commentary on the Surah of the Sun) in *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'llah* (Shoghi Effendi trans.) Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1983, LXXXIX, p. 176.
32. Rashti, *ibid.*, p. 2.
33. Qur'an, 35:3.
34. Qur'an, 15:21.
35. *Idem*, 71:14.
36. Jabir ibn Yazíd al-Ju'fí, and Jabir al-Ansari. On the former, a well known Shi'ite historian, see Sayyid Husayn Muhammad Ja'fari, *The Origins and Early Development of Shia Islam*, Qum: Ansariyan Publications, <http://www.al-shia.com/html/eng/books/history/origins-development-shia-islam/29.htm> On the second Jabir see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jabir_ibn_Abd-Allah.
37. Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad 'the Bab' Shirazi. *Dala'il-i Sab'ih* (The Seven Proofs). Azali Publication: Tehran: 195? East Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1998., XI:13, on-line at <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/areprint/bab/A-F/dalail/sabiho46.jpg>, lines 9–12].
38. Gulpaygani, Muhammad, 'Mirza Abu'l-Fada'il'. *Kitab al-Fara'id* (Cairo: n.p., 1315 [1897–8],308); Mirza Abu'l Fadl Gulpaygani. *Kitab-i Fara'id*. Egypt: n.p., n.d. Digitally republished, East Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 2006 <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/authors/gulpaygani/faraid.htm>.
39. Cf. Bahá'u'llah: The *Kitab-i-Iqan*, 153; letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, February 28, 1938 cited in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 270.
40. Bahá'u'llah, *Aṭhar-i Qalam-i Á'lá* (Traces of the Supreme Pen), (Bombay, 1314 [1896]), p. 32.
41. *Ibid.* on-line at Baha'i Reference Library, <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/Q2/q2-37.html#pg32>. Last Accessed 21 March 2016.
42. Shoghi Effendi, *Promised Day*, p. 112.
43. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By* (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1974, p. 194).
44. Bahá'u'lláh, *Íqán*, pp. 180–181.
45. Bahá'u'lláh, cited in Shoghi Effendi, 'Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh' in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1974,106). See for an extended treatment of this theme Khazeh Fananapazir, 'The Day of God (Yawmu'llah) and the Days of God (Ayyamu'llah)' in Moojan Momen (ed.) *Scripture and Revelation*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1997, pp. 217–238.
46. Translation of the Sermon of the Gulf (Al-Khutbah al-Tutunjiyyah) of Imam 'Ali as printed in Hafiz Rajab al-Bursí's *Mashariq Anwar al-Yaqín fí Asrár Amir Mu'minín* (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus 1978,160–170). See also Rajab ibn Muhammad Bursí, *Les orient des lumières* (traduit de l'arabe par Henry Corbin, édition établie et introduite par Pierre Lory, Lagrasse: Verdier, 1996).
47. Qur'an, 21:30.
48. *Idem*, 69:12.
49. *Idem*, 13:2, 31:10.
50. *Idem*, 55:17.

51. Qur'an, 18:107, 23:11.
52. *Idem*, 18:86[84].
53. *Idem*, 7:172.
54. There is a variant reading in the Sayyid Kazim version, 'All was rendered possible (kuyyifa) for Me.'
55. Muhammad.
56. Qur'an, 53:56.
57. *Idem*, 6:95.
58. Qur'an, 7:133.
59. *Idem*, 29:14.
60. *Idem*, 34:16.
61. *Idem*, 44:25.
62. *Idem*, 57:3.
63. Note this key utterance: '...anticipate ye then the Revelation of the Speaker of Mount Sinai.' This indicates a future revelation or theophany which Baha'u'llah repeatedly identified as manifesting in himself. See fn.24.
64. Or, 'I was present when Satan was ordered to bow down to Adam.'
65. See Baha'u'llah, *Tablets revealed*, p. 148 (Lawh-i-Hikmat).
66. This sounds very close to Alitheia, 'Truth,' in Greek. Other terms seem also to be Greek sounding.
67. Qur'an, 110.
68. Probably a reference to the Fourteen Pure Ones, Fatimih, Muhammad and the Twelve Imams.
69. Original text in Bursi *Masháriq*, 164–166 The author is grateful to Mehdi Wolf for his contribution to the footnotes of this and the following translation. See also Khazeh Fananapazir (2012), *Khutbat al-iftikhár* in Omid Ghaemmaghami and Todd Lawson (eds), *A Most Noble Pattern: Collected Essays on the Writings of the Báb, 'Ali Muhammad Shirazi (1819–1850)*, Oxford, George Ronald, 2012, pp. 28–32.
70. This is a reference to the name 'Alí-Muhammad (i.e. the name of the Báb).
71. This is a reference to Husayn-'Alí, the name of Bahá'u'lláh, particularly as Raj'at refers to the Return of Husayn. See Baha'u'llah, *Suriy-i-Mulúk* (Surah of the Kings), *Summons*, pp. 204–207.
72. Súrah of Iron in the Holy Qur'án.
73. Oblique reference to the Thamud, their Prophet Salíh and the She-Camel so often referred to in the Holy Qur'án (See e.g. 11:61–65).
74. In Islamic tradition, Khadír was a servant of God who had been taught special knowledge and was sent to be a companion and teacher to Moses (see Qur'án 18:65–82). Khadir may not be a reference to a person, but, rather, to the inspirational Source. In this sermon, the Imám 'Alí is, in a sense, the Muse to all those inspired before, similar to Gabriel in the Qur'án 2:97.
75. See Qur'án, 97:1–3.
76. The first Súrah in the Holy Qur'án and said to be endowed with amazing powers.
77. Seth is named in Genesis as the son of Adam, and he lived for 912 years. (See Gen. 4:25–5:8.) Here, however, the reference is to the notion that Companion (Sahib), in a sense, means that the Eternal 'I' was with Seth (in Arabic, Shayth, the son of Adam). In Luke, Seth is an ancestor to Christ.
78. The family of Abbas, the uncle of Muhammad.
79. A city near the Euphrates River, 177km south of Baghídád. Formerly a Mesopotamian city, Kúfa was re-founded by the Arabs in 638, and was the capital of the Islamic Empire during

the caliphate of the Imám 'Alí. For a time, it also served as the centre for the 'Abbasid caliphate. This and the following references are to catastrophes and spiritual reverses in the fortunes of truth.

80. A mountainous and arid province in northeastern Irán. The territory served as the capital of the eastern provinces of Islám during the time of the early 'Abbasid Caliphs. Khorásan was first invaded by the Oghuz Turks in 1153 and again in 1157. The Mongols devastated the region between 1220 and 1222. Timur invaded in 1383.
81. The Imám 'Alí.
82. Bursi, *Mashariq*, pp. 160–162.
في معرفتهم صوات الله عليهم بالنورانية وفيه ذكر جمل من فضائلهم عليهم السلام
This hadith is also quoted in full in the *Bihar al-Anwar* (op. Cit.), vol 26.
83. Salmán-i-Farsí (Salmán the Persian), known as Salmán the Good, one of the faithful Companions of the Prophet. Bahá'u'lláh mentions him briefly in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, 65. The Báb, in the *Bayán-i-Farsí* (Wahíd 5, Báb 11), notes that he was one of only three souls (the other two were 'Abú Dharr and Miqdád) who remained truly faithful to the Covenant of Islám.
84. Jundub 'ibn Junadah, known as Abú Dharr Al-Ghifarí, was a shepherd of the Ghafarí tribe which lived in the Waddan valley, near Mecca. He was known for his courage, his calmness and his far sightedness and also for the repugnance he felt against the idols which his people worshipped. Hearing of the new Prophet, he journeyed to Mecca and was taught the new Faith by 'Alí and attained the presence of Muhammad. According to tradition, the Prophet had said, 'The earth does not carry nor the heavens cover a man more true and faithful than 'Abú Dharr'. Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle*,¹⁹ calls him 'a prince of the nations'.
85. Qur'án, 7:9.
86. Idem, 23:103 and 101:8.
87. Abú Dharr.
88. Or 'pure religion' (*ad-Dín al-Khális*). See Qur'án 7:29, 39:2, 3, 40.
89. Qur'an, 9:31 and 98:5.
90. Idem, 98:5.
91. Arabic: *za likad dinul qay yimu*. See Qur'án 30:30.
92. A subtle point is being made here. In the cited verse (2:45), 'patient perseverance' is *sabr*, a masculine noun, which requires a masculine pronoun. Yet, 'prayer' is *salát*, which is feminine. The pronoun used in the verse (i.e. 'it is indeed hard') is feminine, and thus could only refer to the aforementioned feminine noun. 'Alí then proceeds to connote *salát* with acceptance of his *Wilayat* or Guardianship, which, according to this interpretation, is exceedingly more difficult to attain than recognizing the Prophethood of Muhammad.
93. See Bahá'u'lláh, *Íqán*, p. 153.
94. He who is chosen as an Envoy (Prophet Muhammad).
95. He in whom God is pleased (Imám 'Alí).
96. The imperative used in both cases is *Kún*, ['Be' or 'Exist'] (i.e. the usage of the letters 'B' and 'E').
97. Qur'án 3:61, 'Our Selves [*anfusaná wa anfusakum*] ourselves, and yourselves'.
98. Idem 3:144, 'Will it be that, when he dieth or is slain'.
99. Reference to the assassination of Imám 'Alí in 661 A.D.
100. Qur'án, 33:56.
101. In the Bahá'í Dispensation, these are Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá', respectively, for the latter rarely took up His Blessed Pen during the time of His Father.
102. Qur'án, 42:7 and 64:9.
103. Idem 6:128, reference to the Qur'ánic verses that eschatologically there will be a Day of Ingathering and a Day of Resurrection.
104. This alludes to Qur'án 13:7: 'But thou art truly a warner, and to every people a guide.'

105. Idem, 16:89.

106. Lord of the Pool (Arabic: *sáhib al-hawz*) is a well-recognized title of 'Alí. 'Pool' refers to the pool of refreshing water in Paradise which the sincere believers will drink from. See Qur'án 15:45, 37:45 and 76:5–6.

107. i.e. the Banner of Victory in the latter days.

108. Qur'án 38:50. See also Qur'án 6:59, 39:63 and 42:12.

109. Idem, 33:40.

110. Arabic: *Wasiyy*. 'Seal of the Successors' is another title of 'Alí. A most interesting point is made here because, after 'Alí, there were, in fact, ten more *Wasiyy*, or eleven if the Qá'im is included. So clearly, this means that 'Seal' does not indicate 'last' temporally. On this subject, see Seena Fazel and Khazeh Fananapazir, 'A Bahá'í Approach to the Claim of Finality in Islám', *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 5:3 (1993) pp. 17–40; Momen, *Islam*, pp. 34–59.

111. In the *Súriy-i-Vafá*, Bahá'u'lláh speaks of His Name as the 'Sword of His Revelation between heaven and earth ... through which truth is separated from error, even from now until the Day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds.' See *Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets revealed*, pp. 185–186.

112. Qur'án, 9:128.

113. Idem, 42:4.

114. Idem, 40.

115. Idem 27:1, 28:2. It is interesting that Bahá'u'lláh confirms these passages in His last major work, the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, by quoting the Imám 'Alí as saying: The Commander of the Faithful (Imám 'Alí) hath said: 'I am He Who can neither be named, nor described.' And likewise He hath said: 'Outwardly I am an Imám; inwardly I am the Unseen, the Unknowable.' Abú-Ja'far-i-Túsi hath said: 'I said to Ábf 'Abdi'lláh: 'You are the Way mentioned in the Book of God, and you are the Impost, and you are the Pilgrimage.' He replied: 'O man! We are the Way mentioned in the Book of God, – exalted and glorified be He – and We are the Impost, and We are the Fast, and We are the Pilgrimage, and We are the Sacred Month, and We are the Sacred City, and We are the Kaaba of God, and We are the Qiblah of God, and We are the Face of God.' Jabír hath said that Abú-Ja'far – peace be upon him – spoke to him as follows: 'O Jabír! Give heed unto the Bayán (Exposition) and the Má'áni (Significances).' He -peace be upon him-added: 'As to the Bayán, it consisteth in thy recognition of God—glorified be He – as the One Who hath no equal, and in thy adoration of Him, and in thy refusal to join partners with Him. As to the Má'áni, We are its meaning, and its side, and its hand, and its tongue, and its cause, and its command, and its knowledge, and its right. If We wish for something, it is God Who wisheth it, and He desireth that which We desire.' (Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle*, pp. 112–113).

116. Qur'án, 4:174.

117. Jesus Christ.

118. The story of Jonah is briefly recounted in Qur'án 37:139–148.

119. Idem, 18:37.

120. Qur'an, 26:189.

121. Idem 18:78. In the *Khutbat'ul-Iftikhár* (The Sermon of Glorification), the Imám claims the station of the companion to Khadír. See fn. 69.

122. Idem, 21:79.

123. Idem 18:83. The Arabic phrase *Dhul-Qarnayn* literally means 'two-horned one' or 'lord of two ages.' Anything with duality is suggestive of the two natures of these Immaculate Souls (such as the Imáms); while treading on earth, they walk in the immensity of space and heaven. Bahá'u'lláh writes of such souls: 'These ancient Beings, though delivered from the womb of their mother, have in reality descended from the heaven of the will of God. Though they be dwelling on this earth, yet their true habitations are the retreats of glory in the realms above. Whilst walking amongst mortals, they soar in the heaven of the divine presence. Without feet they tread the path of the spirit, and without wings they rise unto the exalted heights of divine unity. With every fleeting breath they cover the immensity of space, and at every moment traverse the kingdoms of the visible and the invisible.' (Bahá'u'lláh, *Íqán*, 67).

124. Qur'án, 55:7.

125. Idem, 84:3.

126. Idem 50:41. According to Mírzá 'Abú'l-Fadl's *Fara'id*, 'The Place Near' is Palestine in relation to Arabia.

127. Arabic *dábbá*; it refers to one Who should arise on the earth, although he is not of the earth or from the earth, and lead men to God.

128. Qur'án, 19:30–33.

129. Idem, 7:73.

130. Idem 79:6–7: 'One Day, everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion, followed by oft-repeated (commotions).'

131. Idem, 99.

132. Idem 85:22. See also Baha'u'llah, *Prayers And Meditations* (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1987, CLXXVI, 265) 'This, verily, is the Day wherewith Thy Scriptures, and Thy Books, and Thy Tablets, have been adorned. And He Who now speaketh is, in truth, the Well-Guarded Treasure, and the Hidden Secret, and the Preserved Tablet, and the Impenetrable Mystery, and the Sealed Book.'

133. i.e. Theophanies.

134. Guardianship and Vicegerency.

135. Qur'án, 26:6.

136. Qur'án, 6:61 and 74:31.

137. Qur'án, 101:1 and 69:4.

138. Idem 40:18: 'Warn them of the Day that is (ever) drawing near, when the hearts will (come) right up to the throats to choke (them).'

139. Idem 80:33: 'when there comes the Deafening Noise: That Day shall a man flee from his own brother.'

140. Among other titles, Bahá'u'lláh refers to the Imáms as 'those unquenchable lights of divine guidance'. See Baha'u'llah, *Íqán*, p. 144.

141. Idem, 30:48.

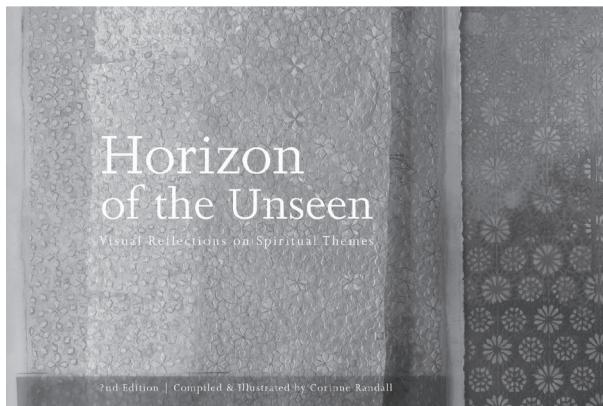
142. Idem, 13:13.

143. Idem, 36:37.

144. Idem, 92:2.

145. See fn.110.

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Notes for a Typology of Monotheism¹

Alessandro Bausani *Translated by Julio Savi*

Abstract

Alessandro Bausani was an Italian Baha'i, philologist and scholar at the University of Rome. A small but important part of his literary production was concerned with studies of the Babi-Baha'i Faith. He produced two well regarded papers on the origins and relations between various monotheisms in which he situates the Babi-Baha'i movement *vis a vis* other great religious systems. The first article was published in Italian as Bausani, Alessandro (1957). *Note per una tipologia del monoteismo. Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* (Rome) 28: 67–88. That article is translated here because of its relevance to Baha'i Studies. See also the companion article: Alessandro Bausani (1963). *Can Monotheism Be Taught?: Further Considerations on the Typology of Monotheism*. *Numen* (Leiden) 10: 167–201.

Keywords

monotheism
 typologies
 secondary
 monotheism
 origins
 Abrahamic religions
 Babism
 Baha'i

Pettazzoni will always have the undisputed merit of having historically approached and solved the issue of the exact definition and genesis of monotheism. His ideas in this regard are so familiar to scholars² that it is useless for me to summarize them here. And yet it is appropriate to remember that the issue of the origin of the concept of a 'great God' or Supreme Being should be kept separate from that of the origin of 'monotheism' itself: according to Pettazzoni the former arises primarily from a mythical apperception of heaven,³ the latter through the polemical and revolutionarily anti-polytheistic action of a Prophet, an historical founder. In this sense, monotheism is, according to Pettazzoni, an extremely rare phenomenon in the history of religion; indeed, he seemingly considered it as unique, since he limited it to the Israelite monotheism and upheld the possibility that the only form of non-Semitic monotheism, that is Zoroastrian monotheism, was born under the Jewish influence.⁴

My argumentation could start from these passages by Pettazzoni:⁵

Christian monotheism is initially a prolongation of Jewish monotheism; *later on it had its own development ...* (added emphasis) ... The founders of the great monotheistic religions did not reveal their respective gods out of nothing, but – *except Jesus, who was born in a monotheistic milieu* – they exalted gods, who in previous polytheisms had already been supreme gods, to the rank of absolutely unique gods ...

Now, I think that the above mentioned concept by Pettazzoni can be deepened in a typological and historical perspective, considering, on the one hand, beside the three quoted religions, also a fourth monotheistic

religion, which can be studied in particularly favourable conditions, since it was born in the last century [Editor's note, nineteenth century], that is Bābī-Bāhā'ism; on the other, the most recent hypotheses of religious science on that unusual type of monotheism, which I would call a 'failed monotheism,' that is Iranian monotheism.⁶

Pettazzoni also offers a starting point in his above quoted text, when he remarks that actually Christianity, born in the context of a monotheistic religion, meets only in part his definition (or, better, it meets his definition *only subsequently*, with its diffusion in the pagan Greek-Roman world and with its struggle against its idolatry). Christianity is, therefore, a rather *sui generis* monotheism. The same thing could be said about Bābī-Bāhā'ism, whose genesis, in a historical perspective, occurred in analogous conditions: that is, it was born in the context of a pre-existent monotheistic religion, Islam.⁷

Beside this broad similarity between these two monotheisms, which we will from now on call 'secondary monotheisms,' there are deeper similarities related to the modalities of their historical origin. *Firstly*, both of them appear as the fulfilment of an 'eschatological expectation' typical of certain milieus of both these primary monotheisms. *Secondly*, both of them appear in spiritual areas of primary monotheisms, in which, under the influence of other cultures (Hellenistic-neo-Platonic culture in the case of Judaism just prior to Christ, Iranian Manichean-Gnostic culture in the case of Shiite Iran), a special form of monotheistic religiosity especially propitious for the birth of a 'secondary monotheism' arose. *Thirdly*, in both of them the idea of God was psychologically, if not theoretically, subordinated to the idea of the Founder, who is, in one of those two religions, the Son of God and God himself, in the other one a 'Manifestation of God' (*mazhar-i ilāhī*), and not a simple 'prophet', like in primary monotheisms.⁸ *Fourthly*, both secondary monotheisms emphasize, between the two great sets of divine attributes (*ğalal-ğamal*, glory-grace, might-love, *tremendum-fascinans*, etc.), those of love-loving-kindness-*fascinans*, rather than those of *tremenda majestas*. *Fifthly*, in both secondary monotheisms the martyrdoms and the sorrows of both the Founder and his followers take on a vital importance, in sharp contrast with what occurs in primary monotheisms. These martyrdoms and sorrows go as far as taking on a redemptive value in Christianity and a more generically purifying and redeeming importance in Bābī-Bāhā'ism. *Sixthly*, both secondary monotheisms establish sacred institutions (the Charismatic Church in Christianity, the 'Administrative Order,' a Redeeming Ark, *safina hamrā*,⁹ in Bāhā'ism), which are substantially different from the idea of the 'people of God' of primary monotheisms.

To this concise introductory list, we will add a number of further considerations.

a) As it is well known, the eschatological expectation of a Saviour-Person that will come, in Judaism and in Islam, is ascribed by many to Iranian influences. This idea seems indeed extraneous to the absolute theistic religious system of Semitic monotheism, whereas it is more coherently explained in a cyclic system, like the Mazdean one. Interesting Mazdean texts associate the primordial heroes with those of the end (*fraškart*); Yam (Yima, Gamšid), a 'cultural hero', the founder of human civilization, builds his underground *var* for eschatological purposes for the future; Kai Kāüs is both a primordial

hero and the hero that assists in the fulfilment of the ultimate apokatastasis, etc.; the ultimate 'saviours' are of the same seed as the same initial prophet-saviour Zarathustra (cf. *Dātīstan i Dēnik*, 2:10-48-30); like him, they are called 'apostles.' Therefore, the founder himself takes on, in Widengren's words, an eschatological 'cyclic aspect'¹⁰ This concept, introduced into religions which consider time as *linear*¹¹, took on a slightly different shade, since it does not imply a return to the beginning, but a new world, 'new heavens, and a new earth'¹². The figure of the Founder-Prophet is, in primary monotheisms, quite different from the eventual coming saviour (Messiah, *Mahdī*), and believing in him is not after all so important. On the contrary, the founders of secondary monotheisms are in the singular position of being considered as the *fulfillers* of the eschatological promise *in their own person*, and of having been both (Jesus and the Bāb) killed and defeated: thence their bi-partition. The slain Christ will return in glory in a later and truer end of the world (but also the end of the world signalized by his first coming is a true one¹³); the Bāb announces the coming 'He Whom God will make manifest' (*man yuzhiruhu 'llāh*), who according to the Bahā'īs came soon after him (whence the weak eschatological emphasis of Bahā'ism as compared to that, very strong, of Bābism). Since the Iranian cycle fits in the progressive linearity of Time typical of primary monotheisms, the interesting possibility arises of a spiral multiplication of the cycle, versus the pure cyclicity of Gnosis and the 'straight line' of Judaism and Islam.¹⁴

b) The religious Dead Sea scrolls¹⁵ and the modern discoveries demonstrating that the religious type, which we will, for the sake of convenience, call 'gnosis,' is much more widespread than we used to think¹⁶ in Judaism, as well as in the rich harvest of data on Gnostic-Manichean trends in the 'heretical' Islam¹⁷ show that a new religious *Weltanschauung* arose in the areas of these two great primary monotheisms, for centuries, in recurring crises, beginning from the Arabic conquest, especially in certain times, that is, the days immediately before Christ in Judaism, and areas, that is the Eastern, Iranian zone of the Caliphal Empire in Islam. This religious *Weltanschauung* was characterized by a singular process – that I would call 'inverse mythologization.' As to Christianity, the existence of a mythologizing trend in certain pre-Christian milieus was acutely highlighted by Drews and his school, albeit at the service of an historically wrong thesis, that Jesus of Nazareth did not actually exist. In my opinion, this thesis, despite its various mistakes, is partly confirmed by recent studies.¹⁸ In the demythologized prophetic-Mosaic religion, which breaks the naturalistic evolutionary process of the mythological development with a preaching of the Divine Unity (in this regard, the Arabic term *tauhīd*, 'to make one,' 'to say one' is especially meaningful) concentrating all the Sacred in the One God (and not only One, but also 'single,' *fard*, in addition to *wāhid*, using the technical terms typical of the most perfect monotheism, the Islamic one), both a natural tendency and external influences act to re-build a new mythology; but this mythology cannot arise from below, in a naturalistic way. The One God himself begins, from the top, to pullulate, to ferment: his attributes become as if personified in angels, Powers, Logos, etc.¹⁹ As to Islam, whoever is somehow familiar with the Ismaili-Gnostic texts of the *guluww*²⁰ is struck by the repetition, throughout the whole history of these sects, of a leitmotiv that could be exemplified through such a sentence as:

'Such and such is the Acting Intellect.'²¹ It is not an objectification of natural forces, or cosmic powers. It is a kind of objectification of abstract ideas, of psychological or moral attributes of the personal God of theism (which goes as far as their personification, and then identification, with this or that historical personage). This typical process is unrelated to both Hellenic and pure monotheistic culture, whereas it is typical of the development of Iranian religiosity. In my opinion, one of the many singular features of the history of the Mazdean religion is a development that proceeds in the opposite direction, when compared to the development imagined by the euhemeristic theory: that is, in the most *ancient* stage of this religion (in the *Gāthās*) the divine attributes (*Ameshaspenta*) seem moral *concepts* in their most abstract condition, whereas later on they acquire a more precise angelic character and become more and more personified. Aside from the *Ameshaspenta*, also other personages – that in the Avesta had a more clearly mythological aspect (like *Yima*, *Thraetaona*, *Keresaspa*, etc.) – are perceived, as early as in Pahlavi Sassanid texts, as undoubtedly more 'euhemerized,' historicized and personified 'Sovereigns' than in ancient times.²² Zarathustra himself (on whose historical existence a number of scholars have cast doubts) is called an 'earthly God' in *Vispered* II, 4, 6; his switch from a metaphysical world to the 'incarnated world' (*axv i astōmand*) seems evident in passages from the *Dēnkart* (for example VII, III, 31). Besides, in the Avesta Ahura Mazda himself also has a corporeal aspect (see Darmesteter, *Le Zend Avesta*, Paris, 1892, vol. I. 7).²³ As Corbin suggests, in the Mazdean religiosity, we could speak of an 'angelic tendency,' versus the pure theistic tendency of prophetic monotheism and the naturalistic-mythological tendency typical of such religiosities as the Indian one. Therefore the rise, in the religious milieu of Iranian Islam, of a person who claims to be the 'manifestation' of this or that Koranic verse, of the divine word, of the 'Letters' of the name of God, etc. is not a new phenomenon; on the contrary, it was prepared by remarkable experiences. The Bāb (and later on and even more than him, Bahā'u'llāh) differs from the mere founder of a sect because he declares his definitive departure from Islam, proclaiming himself the bearer of a new prophetic book and the founder of a real new monotheistic religion.

c) The idea of a transcendent God, in whom all the Sacred was concentrated in the primary monotheisms, splits downward, therefore, with the Christ (or the *Bāb* and *Bahā*). The idea *per Christum ad Deum* is present in these secondary monotheisms since their earliest times, although it takes this form later on. Christ is the only way, the only mirror to meet the person of God, higher and higher and inaccessible in primary monotheisms. In the texts of the secondary Bābī-Bahā'ī monotheism there are passages of great interest, from which one can deduce that all the terms denoting 'God,' for example, in the Koran, are always referring to His visible Manifestation, as the only viable way to give a meaning in front of men to those, otherwise absurd, terms and expressions. And thus, for example, in the 'Book of Certitude' (*īqān*) the locution 'attainment unto the divine presence,' often mentioned in the Koran, is translated in concrete terms as 'attaining the presence of the Bāb and accepting his doctrine'; or, in the seemingly mystic work by Bahā'u'llāh 'The Seven Valleys,' the Koranic verse 18:110 'by whichever name ye will invoke Him (God): He hath most excellent names' is intended as referring to the various names or epithets of the *Manifestation*

of God, that is Muhammad, actually the only visible and concrete form of God for his age.²⁴ The theological speculation has specified, in Christianity (both because the concept of 'son of God' induced them to also consider the father as a person, and for the particular success of the concept of Holy Spirit) a 'Trinity'; on the other hand, in the Iranian-Gnostic heresies of Islam and in Bábī-Bahā'ism the concept that the only 'personality' of the Divine, strictly speaking, is his intermediary, or better manifestation (*Mazhar*), has been emphasized.²⁵ Manifestation and not incarnation: therefore the sacredness of the person of the founder is here intended, unlike in Christianity, as that of a 'purest mirror,' rather than of a 'son.' God, in his essence, remains in his absolute transcendence: the only way toward the vision of him is that of his *Mazhar*. However, beside any theological subtlety, the experience of a certain contact between God and man in the Founder remains as a common feature.

d) Browne (in *A year among the Persians*, Cambridge, 1927, p.444, see also p.330ff) proves that the Bábís, with whom he came in touch and had very interesting religious discussions, were aware of the fact that in their religion the attributes of *ğamal* were stressed more than those of *ğalal*, and saw in this a resemblance with the previous Christian monotheism, and perceived in the history of the prophetic cycles a sort of wide breath whereby the attributes of the *tremendum* were emphasized in certain dispensations (the Mosaic and the Muhammadic ones), while those of the *fascinans* were stressed in others (the Christian and the Bábí ones). The reason are wholly comprehensible, when one considers how important was, in those two secondary monotheisms, the Founder as a model of the divinity; and their founders (Christ and the Báb) were both persecuted to an ignominious death without any rebellion by them: therefore they necessarily were 'not powerful' in the perspective of human power.²⁶

e) As to the issue of pain and suffering, the position of these two secondary monotheisms is especially meaningful; prophets have been killed in primary monotheisms as well: 'from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar' (Matt. 23:35). The Prophetic books of the Old Testament describe the pains and afflictions of the prophets, and the Koran, in its stories of the prophets, confirms persecution as a recurring feature in the lives of the great Revealers, including Muhammad himself. But it always is a pain inflicted by adversaries, against whom the prophets somehow struggled. It is not God who wants his prophets to suffer, it is the wicked ones that make them suffer. In a passage (20:2) whose interpretation is much-discussed, God says in the Koran to his prophet: 'Not to sadden thee have we sent down this Koran to thee.' On the contrary, in secondary monotheisms the ancient idea of the god that dies, typical of certain paganism (Attis, Adonis, Osiris etc.), resurfaces in a different form. One of the reasons is that, since these monotheisms arose from existing monotheisms and did not struggle against polytheism, the prophets are not killed by pagans, but by persons who, for better or worse, are the representatives of the One God, the people of God. We need but to add the greater sacred intensity of the person of the Founder to the concrete historical experience whereby he is killed 'at the hand of the priests,' and we will have, *in nuce*, all the elements of the theological idea of the 'sacrificed son of God,' which

is especially developed in Christianity. Naturally, external influences enter into this experience: the areas where the archetype of the 'God who dies' is diffused are so wide, that one cannot deny its contact with those theologies. In the Muslim milieu it is well known that the closest figure to the type of 'the God who dies and redeems' is the person of Ḥusain, who is particularly worshipped in Persia.²⁷ The Bāb has always claimed that he was a repetition of Ḥusain²⁸ who voluntarily sacrificed himself to save his community.

The dramatic commemorations of Ḥusain's sacrifice themselves have an almost sacramental redemptive value: whosoever, during those commemorations, mourns for Ḥusain is saved from his sins!²⁹ (cf. the Mass). The idea is so alien to such a 'pure' primary monotheism as Islam, that these commemorations have been widely studied to trace their origins. As strange as it may seem, the hypothesis of an ancient Iranian foundation in this devotion so deeply rooted in modern Persia seems unlikely: in the remnants of the texts of the ancient Iranian religion, myths of a rescuing or saving death of the Hero or of the God are not so conspicuous. It should be noted, however, that we can identify, in a few texts, traces of the elimination of a primal Hero (*Gayōmart*, see for example *Mēnōkē Xrat*, XXVII, 1) from whose slayed body, in the beginning, all men are born and who, at the end (see *Bundahišn*, 30, 7–9), shows up again as the first among the resurrected ones, to contribute among the others to the ultimate redemption.³⁰ In the Iranian zone there is another less vague, less mythological-archaic, and more euhemerized legend, that of Siyāvuš. The ancient Iranian hero Siyāvuš also is 'wrongly' killed by his relatives (Afrāsiyāb), who put to death their own blood, and the historian Naršahī, who lived in the tenth century when the remnants of the ancient religion were still quite alive in a number of peripheral areas of the Iranian territory, bears witness to the existence of commemorative songs or dirges for him sung by the 'Magians' in Bukhara, where the hero was especially worshipped; these songs and ceremonies, which had a special sacred meaning, were called 'Siyāvuš's vengeance' (*kin-i Siyāvuš*).³¹ Tolstov³² maintains that Siyāvuš is a Central Asian ancient divinity, of an agrarian type, whose remote origins can be traced to the West (Phrygia, perhaps), linked with the legends of Attis, Adonis and the like,³³ that later on faded into the background at the hands of Zoroastrians. Despite all this, the issue of the historical origins of Ḥusain's worship and of the cult of pain in Persia is far from being easily solvable: since the frail pre-Islamic 'Iranian' traces are not enough to explain it, we should accept a closer and more comprehensible influence of Christianity and Manichaeism and of their substantially pessimistic ideologies. An examination of all the common features of Jesus's and the Bāb's rescuing deaths, through Ḥusain, may carry us too far away. We will only mention that those Passions also resemble one another in a typical feature: the earthquake and the perturbation of nature at the death of the Holy Man.³⁴

f) It is well-known that the Mosaic religion is essentially a national religion, and it also is well-known that, at the same time, in the days immediately before Jesus Christ, proselytizing trends were present (as exaggerated as they may have been by certain forms of the present liberal Judaism) in the Jewish world, trends that were especially alive in the Philonian milieus of the diaspora, but were also present, according to what the Gospel says, among the Palestinian Pharisees (Matt. XXIII, 15). Islam, the second great primary

monotheism, is, in its earliest times, a universal religion (the expression ‘a warning to all creatures’ referring to the preaching of Muhammad recurs in quite early Koranic Suras, 68:52; 81:27); however, when the Prophet becomes aware of the fact that his specific message is different from that of the other monotheistic messages, the idea appears of a preaching for the Arabic nation (4:41; 6:156-7; 13:30 etc.). Islam, is, essentially, albeit in a quite different form than Judaism, a non-missionary, ‘national’ monotheism; despite T. W. Arnold’s efforts to demonstrate the opposite,³⁵ the concept of belonging to the ‘sacred nation’ (*ummah*), although it is not related to that of belonging to a ‘race,’ is more similar to the Jewish concept of the ‘people of God’ than to the Christian idea of ‘Church.’ True, the bond that unites the members of the Nation is no more a blood tie (although a number of texts ascribe an almost sacred importance to the Arabic people), but a bond of adherence to the new faith-state founded by the Prophet; however, Islam was not a missionary religion, in the strictest sense of the word, and the Prophet never tried, at least in the beginning, to convince Christians and Jews, peoples of another ‘sacred nation’, to be converted.³⁶ Islamization should occur, and as a matter of fact mostly occurred, in an impersonal way, through a political (be it forced or not, here it does not matter) submission to the sacred Islamic nation. Missionarism in its strictest sense arose in the Iranian-Gnostic heretical communities (Manichaean influences) that led up to a secondary monotheism, and became especially wide and well-known in the Ismailism of the famous ‘assassins.’ The figure of the *dā’ī* (‘one who raises the call to truth,’ the Missionary) is very important also in their hierarchies and moreover has a metaphysical foundation (the ‘transcendent missionary,’ etc.). The *dā’ī* preaches a salvific Truth which can be summarized in the following proposition: ‘this person is the imam’³⁷, in the same way as the Christian missionary preaches the truth that *Xριστός ὁ Κύριος* (Christos o Kurios, the Christ is the Lord).³⁸ This kind of preached truth creates a ‘church’ rather than a ‘people of God.’ Here we have the model of a more restricted community (and actually at the beginning both Christianity and Bābīsm were considered as ‘sects’ of Judaism and Islam respectively), which considers itself as a metaphysically absolute truth and at the same time demands adherence as a call to safety. The Manichaean influences on these trends are known and generally accepted: and a typical feature of Manichaeism – versus the more closed nationalist Mazdeism (where the *anērān*, the ‘non-Iranian’ is identified with the satanic) – is the character of a redeeming community or church with universalistic missionary tendencies. As Widengren maintains, the concept of *dēn*, ‘church,’ has almost the features of a macrocosmic incarnation of the Christ-Vahman-Messenger, with whom the various *dēn*, ‘individual consciences,’ would be connected by participation.³⁹ Interestingly, the Bābī-Bahā’ī religion, born in this milieu, like Christianity was born in a Gnostic-oriented-Jewish milieu, has an interesting perception of its contrast with an Islam, conceived as a ‘nation-religion.’ In a passage by Bahā’u’llāh⁴⁰ Islam is described as the representative of a narrow conception of religious community as ‘country,’ versus the universalism of a *da’wa* (‘missio [mission]’) centred around the ‘recognition of the Manifestation’⁴¹: ‘In Islam they say: ‘Love of one’s country is an element of the Faith of God’⁴², but I say: “It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but it is his who loveth the world.”’ As paradoxical as it may

seem, the reason of this 'missionary universalism' of secondary monotheisms is precisely their typical concentration of the divine, of 'Truth' and of 'Salvation' in the person of the Founder: whoever says 'Christ is the Lord' or 'Seyyed 'Alī Mohammad from Shīrāz is the Mahdī and the Qā'im' or 'Bahā'u'llāh is the Manifestation of God' is regenerated by this same belief and becomes a part of the universal community of the true believers; but one needs to convince others of these confessions-propositions in order to save them, whereas, obviously in the case of Judaism, a national religion (and in a lesser degree, obviously, in the case Islam as well), since the anti-polytheistic profession of faith is, especially, the formula 'there is no god but God,' it is not very important to convince individuals who, accepting this general confession, arrive to it through different prophets (mouth-pieces of God, and nothing else). In these secondary monotheisms, parallel to the concentration of the Divine in the person of the Martyr-Founder and because of an obvious internal logic, two further sacralizations occur: the sacralization of the 'near ones' to the Founder (his Mother, in the case of Christianity, his descendants in the flesh in Bābī-Bahā'ism and, preliminarily in Shiite Islam, the *ahl al-bait*, the Prophet's family); and, especially, the sacralization of the Head of the redeeming Community, he himself a spiritual or carnal descendant of the Founder.

Also in Manichaeism (cf. Widengren, op.cit., p.41) there is an intimate union between Manvantara-Vohuman (the transcendent apostle of light historicized in Mani) and the 'head of the church' (*dēn-sarār*), 'Vohuman's good son.' In Bābī-Bahā'ism the 'Guardian' (*valī-e amri'llāh*), a descendant of the Founder in the flesh as well, is quite different from the head of a primary-monotheistic community (or better 'people'), like the Caliph, in the same way as the Catholic Pope is quite different from an Israeli Judge or King. In whatever time history may say that it was born, the Papacy is an internal logical product of such a secondary monotheism as Christianity, in the same way as the institution of the Guardian in the Bahā'ī religion or, in certain sects that failed to become totally emancipated from their mother religion, the 'Head' of certain extreme Shiite communities, or the head of the Manichaean church. The Missionary Church, the Founder's mystical body,⁴³ with its sacred head, is a more universal – although eventually smaller when outwardly seen (but ... 'my kingdom is not of this world')⁴⁴ – organism than those which were created by primary monotheisms, and which almost totally identify themselves with a more earthly 'state.'

Summing up this quick typological review – in which my method was especially inspired by Pettazzoni's statement in his above mentioned *Saggio* : 'Any typology is necessarily abstract. But one thing is that which establishes static morphological features, another thing that which catches dynamic developmental analogies' – it seems quite evident that, in a theoretical perspective, all the various aspects of 'secondary' monotheism come from that interesting phenomenon which we have called, with a paradoxical, but expressive, term, 'fermentation of the God' of primary monotheism. In the One God of the rigid prophetic monotheism, *logos*, angelical substances, hypostases, transcendent individuals, which can be represented and as a matter of fact are represented⁴⁵ in this or that historical personage, begin at a certain point to appear, in a more and more distinct form. This phenomenon should, obviously, be kept apart – and it

is important to remark it – from the well-known historical phenomenon of the permanence, in monotheistic religions, of deities or religious concepts typical of the previous naturalistic ‘paganism’: in the Iranian milieu, for example, one should keep the phenomenon whereby such gods of the pre-Zoroastrian naturalistic-mythological Pantheon, as Mithra, Anāhitā etc. survive, in certain modes and despite the monotheistic reformation, in the religious conscience of the people, apart from the phenomenon whereby a number of Archangelic attributes, envisioned by the religious genius of the Founder, such as ‘Good Thought’ (*Vohu Manah*) or ‘Holy Meekness’ (*Spenta Armaiti*), develop in the way we saw and become real personal entities or even living persons.⁴⁶

Which are the historical reasons of this ‘fermentation’ of the God of primary monotheisms that in the course of time implies the birth of secondary monotheisms? The reason is not, like in the former ones, the revolutionary initiative of struggling against polytheism taken by a Founder who loudly utters the name of the One God and adds ‘beside Thee there is no one,’ and is wholly bent on desacralizing nature (See note 5, p.225), so that he may avoid any relapse (which history however has demonstrated to be unavoidable) into ‘pagan’ naturalism. Now that monotheisms have been established and that, rightly or wrongly, there is no danger of a re-paganization, the need to struggle against the multiplicity of the centres of the Sacred (which no one fears may be naturalized) relax, so to say, and the transcendent God is pluralistically vitalized. This process may also occur in the absence of external influences,⁴⁷ but as a matter of fact these influences are present, and quite clear. I mean that body of religious ideas, hardly described by a homogeneous definition, which – a mixture of Hellenic, neo-Platonic-oriented paganism, Babylonian,⁴⁸ Iranian, Egyptian ideas – prevailed in the area of the Near East just before the birth of the Christian secondary monotheism. These ideas, quite faithfully handed down by the Ismaili esoteric tradition and by the Islamic philosophers of the *ishrāq* (‘Illumination’), in the Islamic cultural area which has been a precious living Middle Age almost to our days, lived on in Persia in the nineteenth century when the Bābī-Bahā’ism was born there. These trends, Christianity that was already born in those days and perhaps Indian ideas, influenced the birth of a ‘failed’ secondary monotheism from that great, albeit ‘failed’ itself, primary monotheism⁴⁹ that was Mazdeism, I mean Manichaeism, in which many features typologically emblematic of secondary monotheism, as well as many mythical remnants that prevent us to typologically put it among monotheisms, may be identified. Manichaeism itself influenced later on, as a further partly secondary-monotheistic element, both the development of Christianity and the whole history of Gnostic Muslim heresies.⁵⁰ However, to consider, as one could feel tempted to do, Christianity on the one hand and Bābī-Bahā’ism on the other as ‘particular instances of gnosis’ would be a simplistic conclusion.⁵¹ Syncretistic gnosis, which is largely pagan-naturalistic and, in its most ancient forms, unaware of pure monotheism and of the demythologizing work of its founders, is so strictly bound to myth that it cannot be confused with secondary monotheisms, although they were undoubtedly influenced by it. Confusing them would be tantamount to misunderstanding the essential difference between a naturalistic mythologization from ‘below’ and the ‘intellectualistic-theological’ mythologization ‘from the top.’

Note

For reasons of completeness we mention that, as it is well known, other monotheistic or monotheistic-like forms of religion arose in the context of different cultures and religions, especially in India, from the contact between Islam and Hinduism. The fruits of these results are of two kinds: an Hinduized Islam on the one hand, a monotheistic-oriented Hinduism on the other. For a more complete treatment of this subject the reader may refer to any manual of History of Religions, with one remark. These attempts (the ephemeral 'divine religion,' a personal creation of the Moghul Emperor Akbar, d. 1605, which had a little more than few hundreds followers of doubtful sincerity in his court, and a pleasant, but failed attempt to continue it by the unlucky Prince Dara Sikhō, killed in 1659 is of the former type;⁵² the philosophical-schools-sects of the followers of Kabīr, from Dādu and, the most important among them, Sikhism⁵³ are of the later type) cannot be included in our typology (otherwise it would become an abstract, ahistorical comparative nonsense) mainly for a reason that seemingly eluded the same authors of those syncretism's, that is, a misunderstanding between the one, but personal and transcendent 'God' of Islam, and the one but impersonal 'Divine' of the Hindu *Weltanschauung*, a reason whereby these monotheisms (which, except Sikhism, were limited to restricted circles) are pseudo-monotheisms. The same Sikhism, this interesting religion that has become a people, does not escape the above mentioned misunderstanding, besides, as all the authors agree, not long after its formation and, especially, after its struggle with Islam, it has gradually been more and more reabsorbed into Hinduism.

Suggested citation

Alessandro Bausani, 'Note per una tipologia del monoteismo, *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* (Rome) 28, 1957, 67–88 trans. Julio Savi, Notes for a 'Typology of Monotheism', *Baha'i Studies Review*, 19, 2013, 215–30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/bsr.19.215/1>.

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Endnotes

1. Translated and published with permission of the Dipartimento di Storia, Culture, Religioni, Sapienza Università di Roma, Marianna Ferrara, Editorial Office SMSR, personal communication 24 March 2016.
2. See primarily, beside his old essay, *Dio, formazione e sviluppo del monotheismo* [God, the Birth and Development of Monotheism], Bologna, 1922, several papers collected in *Saggi di Storia delle Religioni e Mitologia* [Essays on History of Religions and Mythology], Rome, 1946 and his recent *Onniscienza di Dio* [The Omnipotence of God] (Turin, 1955).
3. Another important possibility, especially as to the Great Creator Gods, is a mythical projection of the shaman, who has the power to create through his mere thought. See R. Pettazzoni, *Mythes des origines et mythes de la creation*, in C. J. Bleeker, G. W. J. Drewes and K. A. H. Hidding (eds) *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference of the History of Religions*, (1950), Amsterdam, 1951, pp. 67–78.
4. Cf. *La religione di Zarathustra*, Bologna, 1920, 79ff. The idea that Zarathustra was a disciple of Jewish prophets is ancient and was popular in the Islamic world. The historian Tabarī (I, 681, 6–12) quotes a tradition whereby Zarathustra was a disciple of a poorly identified Jewish prophet whose name was Sīmī; in other quite ancient Iranian Islamic traditions he is identified with Abraham (cf. documents in Mohammad Mo'in, *Mazdayasnā va ta'sir-e ān dar adabīyat-e fārsī*. 'Il mazdeismo e la sua influenza sulla letteratura persiana [Mazdaism and Its Influence on Persian Literature]', Teheran, 1326 (1948), 87ff).
5. See 'Monoteismo e Politeismo' in Pettazzoni, *Saggi*, pp. 36 and 38.
6. Other quite interesting failed monotheisms, which could be usefully studied all together in a number of perspectives despite their great geographical and cultural differences, are especially Akhenaton's reformation (Egypt, fourteenth century B.C.) and the religion-philosophy of Mēh-ti (Micius, China, fifth-fourth century B.C.). In both cases the attempt to concentrate all the sacred in a single point which is somehow external to and transcendent in respect to the world has implied analogous results: the temporary efflorescence of an unprejudiced secular and naturalistic art in Egypt, the rise of ideas of logic and technique in China. Pettazzoni has often maintained (see quoted works) that Akhenaton's attempt is not a real monotheism, since it does not imply the 'exclusion of all the other gods.' Note, however, the following passage from the famous hymn to Aten: *p³ ntr w', nn ky hr hw. f*, 'O god, beside whom there is no other god' (I am quoting Kruse's text and translation, *Archetypus Psalmi 104* (105), in *Verbum Domini*, XXIX, 1, 1951, 36). To the one God the one founder-revelator corresponds: 'there is no one that knows Thee beside Thy son ... [thus] reveal Thine advice and power to him...' (ibid. 38).
7. As to the Bābī-Bahā'ī religion, see especially the various works by the English orientalist E. G. [Edward Granville] Browne, one of the major specialists in this field. A quite detailed bibliography can be found in Rudolf Jockel, *Die Glaubenslehren der Bahā'ī Religion*, Darmstadt, 1951.
8. As I often had the opportunity to note in my contacts, in Eastern countries, with Bahā'īs and Muslims, nothing outrages the latter ones more than the idea of 'praying to Bahā'u'llāh,' which may sometimes be found in Bahā'ī texts; an idea which is perfectly normal for a Christian as to the Christ.
9. Literally, 'crimson ark'. It is a recurring expression in the Bahā'ī texts, where it denotes the 'Sacred Community'. The red colour (the Muslim mystic Rūmī, d. 1273, said that it was 'the best of colours') specifically refers to the blood of the martyrs.
10. Widengren, *The Great Vohu Manah and the Apostle of God*, Uppsala 1945, p. 65.

11. See in this regard the interesting remarks by Cullmann (*Christ et le temps*, Neuchâtel, 1947) about the concept of time in Judaism. As to Islam, see my, *The Concept of Time in the Religious Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbāl*, *Die Welt des Islams*, 3, 3-4, 158-186. The idea of a cyclic time deeply differentiates Zoroastrian mysticism from those of Judaism and Islam; historical research should, in my opinion, bear in mind certain shades of religious experience, which would be wrongly considered as verbiages and theological subtleties (See also H. C. Puech, *La Gnose et le Temps* [Gnosis and Time], in *Eranos Jahrbuch*, XX (1951), Zurich, 1952, 57ff, in which the issue is put into focus).
12. The Koran even seems in a number of passages (for example 39:74) to identify the eschatological paradise with a future conquest of the earth (our earth). See my comment upon Koran 2:248; 39:23; 20:15 in *Studi Orientalistici in onore di G. Levi della Vida*, Rome, 1956 (vol. I, p.41ff).
13. Several difficulties, with which neo-testamentary scholars are quite familiar, on the issue of Jesus's eschatological speeches and of the Parousia, would be solved, in my opinion, if we could prove – and perhaps we have the elements to do so – that Jesus had a cyclical progressive conception of divine Revelation. His coming and his death, which crowned his (future) work, are themselves the 'end of the word' (of a cosmic era); however, later on, there will be a further end of the following era with a later coming. Such an exegesis is quite common in the Gnostic-oriented heresies of Islam and it also is the official Bābī-Bahā'ī exegesis (the Comforter, who will say that which Jesus did not deem timely to say in his preaching, is not, in their opinion, the Holy Spirit, but the future prophet of the new cycle).
14. Many Islamists ascribe the fundamental Koranic concept of 'succeeding revelations' to Manichean influences. Widengren has recently made important terminological contributions to this thesis (See *Muhammad the Apostle of God and His ascension*, Uppsala, 1955). In my opinion, the various concurrences and eventual borrowed technical terms should not, however, lead us to forget the essentially different spiritual approach to the concept of time in Islam – which is virtually identical to that of Judaism – and in the Manichean-Gnostic world. The personal, erratic and arbitrary God of primary monotheisms could be a sufficient basis for the birth of the idea of succeeding revelations, which is somehow a Biblical idea, even without any Manichean influence.
15. For an excellent, up-to-date report see Sabatino Moscati, *I manoscritti ebraici del deserto di Giuda*, Rome, 1955.
16. See G. Quispel, *Gnosis als Weltreligion*, Zürich, 1950.
17. A particularly acute scholar of these trends is Corbin, untiring editor and translator of little known texts of Ismailism and of the 'metaphysics of light' in the *Bibliothèque Iranienne* of Teheran and elsewhere.
18. Arthur Drews, *The Christ Myth* (I use the English translation of the German edition, London, 1910). As insufficient as his documentation is, Drews has the merit of highlighting him whom he calls 'the pre-Christian Jesus,' an image formed by complex hybrids of Iranian, Hellenistic-Philonian, and Essene influences. He confuses the real naturalistic mythologism with what we call mythologization from the top, typical of secondary monotheisms. But his idea that Jesus was *god* before he was born (although he says that he was not born at all!) solves many of those contradictions in which 'liberal' criticism gets and will get entangled. Recent studies (for example the revaluation of the antiquity of John's Gospel, the Dead Sea scrolls, etc.) confirm, anyway, that certain points of his thesis are correct.
19. We cannot exclude, in my opinion, that the mysterious personage, whom one of the Dead Sea scrolls (the commentary upon Habakkuk) calls 'Master of Justice' persecuted by the 'impious priest,' and about whom historians discuss so much in their attempts to identify him (See Moscati, *Manoscritti ebraici*, 30ff), is a hypostasis of Jahveh's servant, that is a transcendent personage. This hypothesis would not be a contrast to the 'mythologizing from the top' tone of those texts.
20. This term of Muslim heresiography, which literally means 'exaggeration,' usually generally denotes the most extreme heretic sects and mainly hints at an 'exaggeration' of the concentration of the Divine in founders-men or saints. The typical *gālī* ('one who exaggerates') is whoever is prone to call this or that personage a 'manifestation' or 'incarnation' of divine hypostases.
21. For example, according to the *Noṣairīs*, 'Alī is the 'Divine Meaning' (*Ma'ana*), Muhammad is the *Ism* ('Transcendent Name'), Salman (a Persian freedman of the prophet who

assisted his previous master in his military enterprises) is 'the Door of divine science' (*Báb*). In Ibn Arábí's mystical philosophy, the 'Universal Soul', a rather naturalistic-cosmic ideological concept, is identified with the Perfect Man (*al-insan al-kāmil*, the Jewish *adam qadmóñ*). This fact explains the switch: transcendent concepts – 'perfect (still semi-transcendent) man' – this or that particularly holy man. Widengren (op.cit.) shows an analogous switch for the Iranian *Vohu Manah*, but, I think, he misunderstands the original abstract-moralistic character (which precisely characterizes this switch). In Bábism even the letters of the divine supreme name descend upon, or become reflected in this or that man: The Báb had invested his eighteen 'apostles' with the title of *hurūfat-i Hayy*, 'the letters of the Living,' whereas he himself was the personification or 'manifestation' (as we shall see, it is not correct to say 'incarnation') of the Point of the Sacred Letter B, and he is mainly known among his followers as the 'Primal Point' (*Nuqta-i Úlā*). Obviously, these developments, which occur at the end of a long historical chain going back to the Jewish Kabbalah and even earlier through the Islamic *Hurūfism*, have nothing to do with a real 'mythology.'

22. This same process of descent from heaven on earth seems also to concern the evil transcendent hypostases. Thus the term *dēv* (originally 'god' and later on 'demon,' as it is well known) also means – because of that mysterious process of 'visualization of the forms (*kālbad*) of the demons' which is mentioned in the Pahlavi texts – 'a man who worships the *dēvs* (cf. also Yasna IX, 15: 'Thou hast knocked down all the *daēvas*, O Zarathustra, that formerly wandered on earth disguised as men'). Typical are the 'demons of Mázanderāñ,' who swing between a time in which they are mythical beings who 'struggle in the atmosphere' (cf. G. Messina, *Il libro apocalittico persiano Ayalkār i Zamāspik*, Rome, 1939, 94-5), and a euhemerized time when they are evil men (ibid. 106). As to the thought of the late post-Islamic time, it is well expressed by the following Ferdowsi's verse: 'see, thou, the *dīv*, as evil human beings (*tū mar dīv-rā mardum-i bad śīnās*).
23. Ibid. p.86, Darmesteter mentions the phenomenon of 'euhemerization' (as he calls it) of Iranian legends (for example the dragon Dalák, with snakes coming out from his shoulders, later on becomes an evil man, who had an abscess on his shoulders!), but he does not seem to catch its deeper general meaning.
24. See Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i Iqān*, Italian translation, 'Il Libro della Certezza' Rome, 1955, 181, id. *Haft Vādī* (*Hidden Words*), trad. it. *Le Sette Valli e le Quattro Valli* (*The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys*), Rome, 1946, 8]. This approach to the issue of God may in a measure be found as early as in the extreme *śī'a*.
25. This position is similar to that of Serveto who is often mentioned together with the Socino-like Unitarians, but who represents a type of Christocentric Unitarianism, quite different from and, perhaps, at heart, closer to the primitive Christianity than the 'liberal' Unitarianism.
26. The Christian documents on this issue are well known. As to the Bábís, we quote from the *Iqān*, the above mentioned work by Bahá'u'lláh going back to his Bábí days (it. trans. cit. p.122ff):
 - 'This sovereignty [of the Promised One], however, is not the sovereignty which the minds of men have falsely imagined . . . Were sovereignty to mean earthly sovereignty and worldly dominion, were it to imply the subjection and external allegiance of all the peoples and kindreds of the earth – whereby His loved ones should be exalted and be made to live in peace, and His enemies be abased and tormented – such form of sovereignty would not be true of God Himself' (pp. 106 and 124).
 - But the abasement of the Servant of God comes to be the source of a subtler power which becomes revealed in the future, in the same way as, according to Paul, whoever forgives draws 'coals of fire on his [persecutor's] head' (Rom. 12:20).
27. Son of 'Alí and Fátima and therefore grandson of the Prophet, killed after a heroic resistance together with a small group of followers in the battle of Karbalá (Mesopotamia) in 680 A.D. by the predominant followers of the Umayyad Caliph Yazid. Shortly after his 'martyrdom,' his repented traitors began to go as pilgrims to his tomb, to mourn and sing expiatory hymns (Tabarī, II, 547). Gradually a special kind of funeral lamentation for him developed, which reached its apogee at the end of the eighteenth century, with real theatre mystery plays. We knew only a score of them, but recently Cerulli has brought form Persia, and deposited in the Vatican Library, more than 600 librettos of these mystery plays commonly called *ta'ziyé* ('dirge').
28. A number of statements by the Báb drew his adversaries to make the accusation, which has always been rejected by the original Bábí sources, that they believed in reincarnation

(*tanāsuh-i arvāh*). In reality, their idea is different. Their idea is that states, typological combinations of qualities of personages of previous prophetic cycles, arise again and become recombined in later cycles, as if new actors re-played an ancient drama (Cf. Browne, *Materials for the Study of the Bābī Religion*, Cambridge, 1918, p. 330).

29. We quote from an unpublished *ta'ziyé* (this example could be multiplied at will): 'O great Lord, for the honour of Husain, forgive the sins of Husain's friends. Suffer not that the hands of us, who mention Thy name, O God, may let loose the hem of Husain's sacred robe, and to those who have formed this mourning assembly for Husain, grant what they need, in the two worlds.' According to Tabarī (II, 547), the prayers and the wails of the repented ones conveyed very early the idea of Husain being sacrificed as a *waṣīla*, 'an intermediary' between the sinners and God (or the prophet).
30. See J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *L'homme dans la religion iranienne* in *Anthropologie Religieuse*, C. J. Bleeker, ed., Leiden, 1955, pp. 98–99, 105.
31. Narsahī, *Ta'rih Buhārā* in Schaefer, *Chrestomathie Persane* Vol. 1, 38 and 46ff.
32. Tolstov, *Pos sledam drevne-horezmjskoj civilizacii* ('On the trail of the civilization of the ancient Xvārizm'), Moscow-Leningrad, 1948, pp. 84–5.
33. There is a very interesting testimony of a Chinese traveller in Central Asia in the seventh century, who writes that Samarkand's men said that 'the divine son' died at the seventh month and that his bones were lost. When this month began the servants of God wore black clothes, beat themselves and mourned and women and men scattered there to look after his body: at the seventh day the feast ended. (N. Ja. Bičurin, *Sobranie svedenij o naredah obitavših v Srednj Azii v drevnie vremena*, Vol. II, Mosca-Leningrad, 1950, p. 296).
34. The passages of the Gospel are well-known. For Husain the world stopped, the sun became as yellow as saffron, stars fell down, the horizon was red for six months, and only later people could see every day the red colour at dawn and sunset (Cf. the myth of Adonis, Suyūtī, op. cit., in Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, 331). In the case of the Bāb, the phenomenon is historicized: at the time when he was shot in Tabriz (9 July 1850) a storm upset the town, a whirl of dust darkened the sun, obscurity reigned in the town from midday to evening. (Cf. *The Dawn Breakers. Nabil's Narrative of the early days of the Bahā'ī Revelation*, translated from the original Persian by Shoghi Effendi, New York, 1932, p. 515).
35. In his fine book, which is still useful for the abundant information it offers, *The Preaching of Islam*, Westminster, 1896.
36. Missionarism is only typical of modernistic trends and communities, which borrowed many things in this regard from Christianity (See Pareja, Bausani, Hertling, *Islamologia*, Rome, 1951, 484, 588). It is noteworthy that one of the most acute modernists, Mohammad Iqbal (d. 1938), criticizes in one of his poems the idea of the Islamic missionary propaganda in Christian Europe, in the name of a 'theocratic-national' conception of Islam, which is substantially faithful to the original spirit of Muhammad's faith (The above mentioned passage, which is important in order to understand certain modern attitudes of the Muslims, may be read in its French translation in Muhammad Iqbal, *Message de l'Orient*, trans. Eva Meyerovitch et M. Agha, Paris, 1956, p. 129).
37. The *Imām* is the living fount of religious authority, the only one who can say 'I am the Truth' cf. analogous statements by the Christ versus the less vitalistic concept of Truth in primary monotheisms, (a concept that is quite different from that of philosophy). As to the issue of truth-*imām* in Ismailism, see the recent work by G. S. Hodgson, *The Order of the Assassins*. Gravenhage, 1955, 52ff.
38. I agree with Cullmann (*Le prime confessioni di fede cristiane*, Italian translation, Rome, 1948) which shows, through quite convincing arguments, that this is substantially the gist of the primal Christian preaching.
39. Widengren, *The great Vohu Manah . . .* 40ff. I do not think that this combination, even in Nyberg [Henrik Samuel Nyberg (1889–1974), was a Swedish scholar competent in both Semitic and Iranian studies], is satisfactory as an explanation of *dēn*-soul.
40. In the 'Tablet to the World' and *passim* in other of his writings (cf. the anthology *Bahā'ī World Faith*, Wilmette, 1943 175 [Editor's Note see now *Bahā'u'llāh*, *Lawh-i-Dunya*, *Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh Revealed after the Kitāb-i-Aqdas*, Haifa, Bahā'ī World Centre, 1978, 81ff].
41. In the *Aqdas*, a fundamental Bahā'ī sacred book, the 'recognition of the divine Manifestation' in the specific person of Bahā'u'llāh is viewed as primary, and is put before good deeds, which take their value from that recognition (See *al-Aqdas*, Bombay 1314 H. 2;

Russian translation, Tumanskij, Kitabe Akdes, *Memoires de l'Academie Imperiale des Sciences de St Petersburg*, St. Petersburg, 1899, 1). [Editor's Note see now Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Haifa, Bahá'í World Centre, 1992, p. 19].

42. An apocryphal *ḥadīth* ascribed to Muhammad.
43. That's why the immediate collaborators of the Bahá'í Guardian are called 'Hands of the Cause of God' (*ayādī-i amrī'llāh*).
44. Cf. Bahá'u'lláh: 'I do not wish any earthly power. The hearts of men are my kingdom'. See also useful information in Pettazzoni, *Religioni Nazionali, Supernazionali e Mistiche* in the above quoted *Saggi*, 166–7, which prescinds however from our distinction between primary and secondary monotheisms. C. Clemen, 'Missionary Activity in the non-Christian Religions', *Journal of Religion* (Chicago), 10:1, 1930, p. 107 also is interesting as to the concept of 'mission'.
45. I use on purpose the word 'represented' rather than 'incarnated,' because 'incarnation' has a specific theological and typological value, which cannot and should not be lightly used. For example, almost all Gnostic-oriented Islamic sects strongly reject the concept of *ḥulūl* ('incarnation,' literally, 'descent' of the divine essence in a Man) as to their Founders, and yet authoritative scholars – perhaps wrongly considering these distinctions, which are significant for whomever has a true religious experience, as theological trifles – insist in using the term 'incarnation'. (Cf. as to extreme Shiism, Widengren, *Muhammad*, 43 and 45; and as to Bábí-Bahá'ísm, Nallino himself in his article *Bahá'í* in the 'Enciclopedia Italiana'). This criticism should be also extended to those who – like for example Bousquet, in his, very interesting, paper on the origins of Islam ('Observations sociologiques sur les origines de l'Islam', *Studia Islamica*, 2, 1954, pp. 61–87) – in the name of a quite abstract sociological typology, strings the founders of Islam, of Christianity, of Mormonism, of *Christian Science* etc. all together on the same plane.
46. The fact that *Spenta Armaīti* is the 'archangel of the Earth' has nothing to do with the formation of a purely naturalistic chthonic divinity. The direction of the formation of the former is so to say from the top downwards, that of the latter one (a 'Great Mother' of the various 'paganisms') comes from below. In my opinion, a greater clarification of these two different processes of mythologization may also be useful while studying the historical developments of Christianity and Islam. In the latter one, for example, one could, more clearly than what has been done up to now, distinguish between the cult of the saints, partly born from surviving pagan practices (in Sindh *Khidr*, perhaps the remnant of an ancient vegetation Deity, is worshipped as a saint and identified with the river Indus) and the cult of the *imāms* and related personages in extreme sects, a phenomenon, the latter one, of opposite mythologization and typologically and historically different from the previous one, despite their psychologically common features. Other cases of 'mythologization from the top' are present for example in certain Islamic legends, the 'personification' of the Koran, and in certain Jewish traditions, the personification of the 'Sabbath'.
47. For example, also concepts that are quite evident in the Koran, especially that of the wholly inconstant arbitrariness of the Koranic God, who is *one* in his person, but totally plural in his *deeds* and 'second thoughts' (the idea of *bada'*, that God can at a certain point repent and change his mind, since he can do anything, as well as the same anthropomorphic-like concept of the Koran personal God, who can be wholly fulfilled only when he becomes a visible person on earth, the *Imām* or the 'manifestation', that are typical of the *Šī'a*) contribute to the Shiite fermentation of the Islamic primary monotheism.
48. The works of many specialists demonstrate the remarkable importance of the Mesopotamian element in this Gnostic-oriented syncretism, as well as in the mystery religions. See for example H. Zimmern, *Babylonische Vorstufen der Vorderasiatischen Mysterienreligionen*, *Zeitschriften der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 76:1, 1922, pp. 36–54, and G. Widengren, *Mesopotamian elements in Manichaeism*, Uppsala, 1946.
49. I think that we cannot simply insert Zoroastrianism into the series of typical monotheisms, as Pettazzoni definitely, even recently, does in the preface of his often quoted *Saggi* ('... the historical monotheistic religions, which are Yahwism, *Mazdaism*, Christianity and Islam,' *ibid.*, p. IX). In my opinion the four typical monotheisms are Yahwism and Islam (both of them primary monotheisms), Christianity and Bábí-Bahá'ísm (both of them secondary monotheisms). In *Mazdaism*, as we actually and historically know it, the pre-monotheistic naturalistic-mythical remnants are many indeed, despite the undoubtedly historical work of a revolutionary founder. If we study Zoroastrianism and compare our studies with those of the other primary monotheisms, we come under the impression that

Zoroastrianism is a 'failed' primary monotheism, in the same way as Manichaeism may be typologically defined a 'failed' *secondary* monotheism.

50. The importance of the struggle against Manichaeism in Islam is conspicuous, and, as in any other struggle, also external influences are remarkable. See M. Guidi, *La lotta fra l'Islam e il Manicheismo*, Rome, 1927.
51. As Drews did for Christianity (*Die Entstehung des Christentums aus dem Gnostizismus*, Jena, 1924) and various scholars for Bábí-Bahá'ísm, which, according to a number of scholars, is a 'gnostic sect' of Islam.
52. As to the interesting, but equivocal, attempt of Dárā Sikoh, see the work of its founder *Mağma‘-al-Bahrain*, ed. and trans. Mahfuz al-Haqq, Calcutta, 1929, and Cl. Huart, L. Massignon, *Les entretiens de Lahore [entre le prince impérial Dárā Shikuh et l'ascète bindou Baba La'l Dás*, *Journal Asiatique*, Oct-Dec, 1926 (209), 285 and L. Massignon- A.M. Kassim, Un essai de bloc islamo-hindou au XVII siècle, *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 63:1, 1926, pp. 1-14.
53. The important work of MacAuliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, 6 vols. 1909 remains fundamental to the study of Sikhism.