

Jamál Effendi and the early spread of the Bahá'í Faith in South Asia¹

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Abstract

Over a period of twenty years, Jamál Effendi travelled throughout India and succeeded in converting many people, including some notable figures, to the Bahá'í Faith. Jamál Effendi had even more influence in the establishment of the Bahá'í Faith in Burma than in India, as the present Bahá'í community in Burma can trace itself back to the sojourn there of Jamál Effendi and his companion Sayyid Muafá Rúmí. Jamál Effendi also visited other countries in south-east Asia and central Asia. This paper is an attempt to establish the routes and dates of his journeys, although some details of his activities remain uncertain. This paper concludes with a discussion of his techniques for spreading the Bahá'í Faith.

Although the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths reached India in its earliest days, it was not until the 1870s and 1880s, through the efforts of Jamál Effendi that the basis for the present-day Bahá'í community was laid. Jamál Effendi also spread the religion to the regions of south-east and central Asia. He was the first to take the Bahá'í Faith to the territories of some twelve present-day countries (some of these areas did not exist as separate countries at that time). The details of Jamál Effendi's journeys and the events that occurred during them have not, however, been fully investigated as yet; different sources report conflicting information. Jamál Effendi himself is also someone who has generated controversy about his methods and about the value of his efforts. This paper is an initial attempt to resolve at least a few of these questions.

It was during the time of the Báb that India's earliest contact with the Bábí and Bahá'í religions took place. Nabíl-i-A'ám's list of the eighteen "Letters of the Living" includes one Indian, Shaykh Sa'íd Hindí. He was instructed by the Báb to take the new religion throughout several provinces of Iran and back to his own homeland. Another Indian convert during this time was a blind sayyid named Sayyid-i-Baír. Nabíl states that he was converted by Shaykh Sa'íd Hindí in Multan.² Another account states that Sayyid-i-Baír

¹ This paper was presented on 4 December 1999, at a meeting of the Religious Studies Special Interest Group of the Association of Bahá'í Studies (English-Speaking Europe), held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

² Nabíl Zarandí (Nabíl-i-A'ám), *Dawn-breakers: Nabíl's Narrative of the Early Days of the*

heard of the Báb's appearance in Bombay and then travelled to Mecca where he met the Báb in person.³ Both histories agree, however, that he became a zealous believer and that he was eventually executed for his faith by Ildírím Mírzá, a Qajár prince, in Luristan. A third individual who is mentioned in the histories is Qahru'lláh, who came from India and, after meeting the Báb in Chihríq, began to spread the new religion in Iran, eventually returning to India.⁴

There were a number of other Indian Bábís present in Iran during the 1840s and 1850s. Mahjúr's monograph on the Bábí insurrection in Mazandarán lists four Indians among the 318 Bábís who fought at Shaykh abarsí. Despite this evidence of a number of Indian Bábí converts in Iran, there is no firm evidence that a Bábí community was established in India.

Early developments in India

In the 1850s, however, the Afnán family established a trading post at Bombay. The first to take up residence there were ájí Sayyid Mírzá and Sayyid Muammad, both sons of ájí Mírzá Sayyid asan, Afnán-i-Kabír. They had become Bábís after meeting Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdad in the 1850s. ájí Sayyid Mamúd, a grandson of ájí Sayyid Muammad, also traded in Bombay. These individuals were very successful as general merchants and commission agents, trading under the company name of Messrs. Haji Sayed Mirza and Mirza Mahmood Co.⁵ Later they were joined by ájí Muammad Ibráhím, who was known as ájí Muballigh. The latter had received a religious education and even obtained a certificate of *ijtihád* from Áqá Mírzá Muammad Taqí, one of the foremost mujtahids of Yazd, but had preferred to engage in trade. He had become a Bábí in 1280/1863-4 and had been instrumental in converting many of the Afnán in Shiraz and Yazd (he was related to the Afnán family by marriage). His activities had, however, brought him to the attention of his erstwhile teacher Áqá Mírzá Muammad Taqí, who issued a fatwá (judgement) of death against him. Consequently, it became necessary for ájí Muballigh to flee and he took up residence as a merchant in Bombay in the late 1860s. It was as a result of the endeavours of another member of the Afnán family, Mírzá Ibrahím (a son of ájí Abu'l-Qásim, the brother of the wife of the Báb), that the first Bahá'í printing and publishing company, the Náirí Press, was established in Bombay and began to publish Bahá'í books from about 1882–3 onwards. These Baha'is realised, however, that there was also potential for

Bahá'í Revelation (trans. Shoghi Effendi. Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974) 588-90.

³ Hamadání, *The Táríkh-i-Jadíd, or, New History of Mírzá 'Alí Muhammad the Báb* (trans. E. G. Browne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893) 244-47, 388-94.

⁴ Hamadání, *Táríkh-i-Jadíd* 241.

⁵ Roumie, "Baha'í Pioneers", p. 77. Rúmi, "A Short Historical Survey", section A, p. 2; see note 6.

teaching the Bahá'í Faith. They therefore wrote to Bahá'u'lláh asking if a Bahá'í teacher could be sent to Bombay and offered to defray his expenses.

For this mission, Bahá'u'lláh chose Sulaymán Khan, later known as Jamál Effendi, an Iranian from a minor noble family of Tunukábun in Mazandarán, not far from Bahá'u'lláh's own ancestral home.⁶ His father was named 'Ísá Khan Tunukabuní. The year of Jamál Effendi's birth is not known but was probably in the second decade of the 19th century.⁷ Many details about his early life remain obscure. Most of the information that we have is from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's account in *Memorials of the Faithful* and from Mírzá Káim Samandar who met Jamál Effendi in Istanbul and spent some time with him there. 'Abdu'l-Bahá indicates that Sulaymán Khan was brought up "cradled in wealth, bred to ease, reared in the comfortable ways of luxury."⁸ In his youth, he was married to the daughter of his maternal uncle Hidáyat Khan.⁹ We know he came to Tehran seeking some high position in court or in the government. 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Samandar both indicate that he encountered the Bábí movement and became a believer in Tehran, although

⁶ For this account of Jamál Effendi's life I have used several sources: The most important is an account by Sayyid Muafá Rúmí entitled "A Short Historical Survey of the Bahai [sic] Movement in India, Burma, Java Islands, Siam and Malay Peninsula." I am grateful to Roger Dahl for providing a copy of the manuscript of this work which is in the archives of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States of America. The manuscript is in several sections which were sent separately, and the numbering of pages is renewed at the beginning of each section. I have, therefore, assigned letters to each section: Section A is undated, 14 pages, section B is undated, 14 pages, section C is dated 6 June 1931, 31 pages; section D, 18 pages; the subsequent sections do not deal with Jamál Effendi's life. The first part of this manuscript was published in a series of articles: Siyyid Mustafá Roumie, "Baha'i Pioneers", *Baha'i Magazine*, 22.3 (June 1931) 76-9; 22.4 (July 1931) 112-6; 22.7 (Oct. 1931) 208-11; 22.8 (Nov. 1931) 250-3; 22.9 (Dec. 1931) 272-6; 22.10 (Jan. 1932) 313-5; 22.11 (Feb. 1932) 342-4. All information that is not otherwise referenced is from this work. Although Rúmí's account is presumably the most reliable for the period that Rúmí was with Jamál Effendi (mainly 1877-87), there are some probable inaccuracies in Rúmí's information about other periods of Jamál Effendi's life. These are discussed as they occur in this paper. For information to supplement and correct Rúmí's account, the following were consulted: 'Azízu'lláh Sulaymání, article on Jamál Effendi, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* (9 vols., Tehran: Mu'assisih Matbú'át Millí, 104-32 B.E./1967-75) 8:125-46; idem, article on Sayyid Muafá Rúmí, *Maábí-i Hidáyat*, 8:231-322. Fail Mázandarání, *uhúr al-aqq*, vol. 6 (unpublished manuscript) 453-7. Káim Samandar, *Tárikh Samandar* (Tehran: Mu'assisih Matbú'át Millí, 131/1974) 213-4. All information is from the account by Rúmí unless otherwise indicated. All further references to the Rúmí account will be given in the format "Rúmí, *op. cit.*, X:Y / Z". X is the section number of the manuscript, Y is page number of manuscript and Z is page number of the published account. Where there is no second number, this refers to the last part of the manuscript which was not published.

⁷ This statement is based on the fact that he is already described as an old man with a white beard when he arrived in India in about 1876, travelling around India became very difficult for him by the 1890s, and he died in 1898.

⁸ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Memorials of the Faithful* (trans. Marzieh Gail, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971) 134.

⁹ Fail Mázandarání, *uhúr al-aqq* 6:454.

the exact details of this are not known. This probably occurred sometime before the general proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh's claims in Iran in about 1868, since both Samandar¹⁰ and Sayyid Muafá Rúmi¹¹ state that he had been a Bábí before becoming a Bahá'í.

When Bahá'u'lláh's claim was known, Jamál Effendi accepted it immediately. He became so enthused that he set out to meet Bahá'u'lláh in about 1288 (1871-2), travelling by way of Tabriz, leaving behind wife and children. Samandar implies that it was at this time that he changed from the garb and lifestyle of the Iranian nobility and took up the clothing and way of a Sufi darvish.¹² A minor flirtation with Sufism was not at all unusual among the sons of the Iranian nobility but with Sulaymán Khan it became his permanent way of life. After visiting Bahá'u'lláh in Akka, Sulaymán Khan began a period of wandering as a darvish mainly in the Ottoman domains. Samandar met him in Istanbul in 1291 (1874-5). Samandar reports that Jamál Effendi had tried to teach the Sufis in the Ottoman domains about the Bahá'í Faith but had had little success.¹³ During this time, he had obtained a Turkish passport.

Jamál Effendi's first visit to India

When the request of the Afnáns for a Bahá'í teacher in India reached Akka, Sulaymán Khan happened to have returned to Akka. Bahá'u'lláh chose him for the task, giving him the titles Lámi' (the shining or brilliant one) and Jamálu'd-Dín (beauty of the religion). Henceforth he was known either as Shaykh Jamálu'd-Dín or Sayyid Jamálu'd-Dín, or more simply as Jamál Effendi. The exact date of Jamál Effendi's arrival in Bombay is uncertain. Some authors, and in particular, Sayyid Muafá Rúmi, who was converted by Jamál Effendi and was his close companion for many years, give the date as 1872-3.¹⁴ But this would negate Samandar's assertion that he met Jamál Effendi in Istanbul in 1291 (February 1874- February 1875). Others, including Fail Mazandarání, give the date 1295 (1878)¹⁵ or 1296 (1879),¹⁶ but this would negate Rúmi's assertion that Jamál Effendi attended the Durbar

¹⁰ Samandar, *Taríkh* 213.

¹¹ Rúmi, *op. cit.* A: 1/76, see note 6.

¹² Samandar, *Taríkh* 213.

¹³ Samandar, *Taríkh* 213.

¹⁴ Rúmi, *op. cit.* A:2/77; W. Garlington appears to follow this dating giving 1872, 'India,' Part 1, *Bahá'í News* 528 (March 1975) 17-8.

¹⁵ Fail Mazandarání gives 1295 (1878, cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:129). Balyuzi follows this dating giving 1878, *Eminent Bahá'is* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1985) 122; Taherzadeh also gives 1878, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4 (Oxford: George Ronald, 1987) 181.

¹⁶ Fail Mázandarání, *uhúr al-aqq* 6:454.

(proclaiming Queen Victoria as Empress of India) which was held on 1 January 1877 in Delhi.¹⁷ If we assume that Samandar and the Durbar date are correct, this leaves only a narrow window of time between 1874 and 1876 for Jamál Effendi to have proceeded from Istanbul to Akka, been selected for the mission to India, travelled to Bombay, had the initial meetings that are described below and then gone on to Delhi. We may therefore tentatively date Jamál Effendi's arrival to around 1875.

Jamál Effendi arrived in Bombay with a relative, Mírzá usayn, who was to act as his companion in his travels. He was welcomed to Bombay by the Afnáns and installed in the Shi'í usayniyyih (building for commemorations of the martyrdom of the Imám usayn). According to Rúmí's account, Jamál Effendi called upon asan 'Alí Sháh, the first Aga Khan, the spiritual head of the Nizá'í Ismá'ílí community, who are known in India as Khojas. Also according to Rúmí, Jamál Effendi spoke to Mír Sayyid Muammad, the mullá and religious head of the Twelver Shi'í community, and converted him to the Bahá'í Faith. His activities, however, stirred up antagonisms and it was felt that he should leave after only a few months in Bombay.

As Jamál Effendi travelled through India and other regions, it was his custom whenever heading towards a new region to write to the ruler or governor and the leading colonial administrator of that region and announce his intention to travel there. Upon arrival, he would call upon them and speak to them.¹⁸ He proceeded in this manner as far as Rampur in the Rohilkhand division (later Bareilly division) of the United Provinces (later Uttar Pradesh), adjacent to the Himalayan foothills in north-west India. The chief of that state was Nawab Kalb 'Alí Khan (1834-1887). He was a Sunni who had become chief of Rampur on the death of his father in 1865. He was regarded as a good administrator who greatly developed his state during his rule. He was, as were many educated Indian Muslim, proficient in Arabic and Persian. Jamál Effendi was presented at the court of Nawab Kalb 'Alí Khan and stayed with the chief's uncle, Colonel Nawab Asghar 'Alí Khan. He debated with the leading Sunni 'ulamá there on the subject of the non-existence of evil.¹⁹ In Rampur and nearby Hassanpur, he succeeded in making many converts on this and subsequent trips.

¹⁷ Rúmí, *op. cit.* A:4/78; Rúmí in fact gives the date 1876, but although Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India in 1876, the Durbar did not occur until 1 January 1877.

¹⁸ *Bahá'í Newsletter of India*, 31 (May 1944) 1-2, cited in Garlington, *op. cit.* 18.

¹⁹ Rúmí, *op. cit.* A:3-4/77-8.

Jamál Effendi was in Delhi for the great Durbar which was held on 1 January 1877, at which Lord Lytton proclaimed Queen Victoria as Empress of India. Many rulers and dignitaries from all over India were gathered in Delhi for this occasion and Jamál Effendi took the opportunity to meet with them. For example, he met and formed good relations with Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824-83), the founder of the Hindu reform movement Arya Samaj.²⁰

Next Jamál Effendi proceeded south to Hyderabad in the Deccan in south central India (see Map 1). The ruler, Mír Mahbúb 'Alí Khan the Nizam, was very young and the prime minister and regent was Sir Salar Jung Mukhtarul-Mulk (1829-83). The latter's real name was Mír Turáb 'Alí Khan and he came from a notable family who had served as ministers to the Nizam of Hyderabad for generations. He was highly regarded as an administrator and statesman. He was a Shi'i and proficient in Arabic and Persian. Jamál Effendi spoke to this man and Rúmí reports that he was inwardly converted (and a tablet of Bahá'u'lláh was revealed for him), but he was compelled to remain outwardly a Muslim.

Jamál Effendi also visited Bangalore and Colombo on the island of Sri Lanka at this time.²¹ Fáil Mazandarání states that, at Colombo, Jamál Effendi met some opposition from Buddhist religious leaders. Mazandarání also states that Jamál Effendi's companion Mírzá usyan took ill, died and was buried there, but this seems unlikely in view of later events (see below).²²

Madras on the east coast of India was Jamál Effendi's next destination. It was here that Sayyid Muafá Rúmí first met Jamál Effendi and was attracted to him. Rúmí was then a young man of twenty-five years. He was born on 24 December 1852 in Karbala to a Shi'i family of Iran who had migrated there (his father had acquired the name Rúmí when he arrived in India in about 1826 after a prolonged residence in Istanbul). His mother had died a few days after his birth and he had been brought up in Karbala by his maternal uncle. He had come to India in the company of his father and was now starting to set himself up in business in Madras, trading in cashmere woollen shawls. We have Rúmí's eye-witness statement that Jamál Effendi "attracted large gatherings" in Madras. It appears that at this point, Jamál Effendi had two travelling companions, in addition to his relative Mírzá usyan. These were ájí Ramaán of Rampur and Rafi'u'd-Dín Khan of Hassanpur, who had both presumably accompanied him from north India.

The next episode is an indication of the trust and faith that Jamál Effendi was able to inspire in those he met. He was on the point of departing for

²⁰ Rúmí, *op. cit.* A:4/78.

²¹ Rúmí, *op. cit.* E:10.

²² Fáil Mazandarání cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:130.

Burma when a message arrived from the ruler of Rampur asking him to come to Rampur. The brother of the ruler, Nawab Mamúd 'Alí Khan, had fallen under the influence of a well-known atheist, Nazir Ahmed Hassan of Aligarh. The ruler was asking Jamál Effendi to come back to Rampur to deliver his brother from his disbelief. Jamál Effendi set off for Rampur accompanied by ájí Ramaán, Rafi'u'd-Dín Khan, and Sayyid Muafá, but sent Mírzá usayn on to Burma with his baggage. On the way, however, Jamál Effendi went to Gulbarga, where friends from Hyderabad came to meet him, and Bombay, where he met with the Afnáns.

As the party proceeded north, they were met at Cawnpore, south-west of Lucknow, by Nawab Mamúd 'Alí Khan who had been sent by his brother to receive Jamál Effendi. The latter remained in Rampur for one and a half months and succeeded in restoring Nawab Mamúd 'Alí Khan's faith, thereby incurring the enmity of Nazir Ahmed Hassan. On the journey back from Rampur, Jamál Effendi was accompanied by Sayyid Muafá Rúmí and a servant boy. They proceeded to Lucknow where Jamál Effendi called upon the Rajas of Amethi, Balarampur and Kashipur, as well as the British governor of the United Provinces. At Benares (Várnasi), he stayed with the Maharaja and met with Áqá Muammad Taqí Banárisí, of Khurasan, ájí Amad Bindání of Rangoon and some of the Iranian Muslims of Calcutta. Here he spoke at length about the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to the return of the Twelfth Shi'i Imam. At Patna, he was arrested as a result of the machinations of Nazir Ahmed Hassan, but proved his innocence and was able to meet with many of the prominent citizens of that city over Muslim month of Muarram, January 1878.

In Calcutta, Jamál Effendi took up residence in a house in Kolutollah provided for him by an uncle of the ruler of Rampur, Nawab Safdar Ali Khan. Here he met with many prominent people including the Iranian merchants of that city. In the gatherings that took place at the house of one of the Iranian merchants, ájí Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Karím Shírází, Jamál Effendi used the events that were occurring in the Russo-Turkish war as a way of bringing the discussion round to the question of the fulfilment of prophecy. At this time, ájí Mírzá Muammad 'Alí Afnán (eldest son of ájí Mírzá Sayyid Muammad, the Báb's maternal uncle) and his assistant Áqá Mírzá 'Abdu'l-amíd arrived in Calcutta from Hongkong and came to visit ájí Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Karím Shírází. Observing the great warmth between Jamál Effendi and these two merchants who were known as Bahá'ís, the Iranians guessed that Jamál Effendi was also a Bahá'í. It was at this time that Sayyid Muafá Rúmí became a Bahá'í and received a tablet from Bahá'u'lláh.

After a few months stay in Kolutollah, Jamál Effendi moved to Garden Reach, near Calcutta, at the invitation of Mír Ramaán 'Alí Munshí as-Sulán Bahadur, private secretary to Wájid 'Alí Shah, the former king of Oudh. Jamál Effendi had great hopes of converting the king who was reported to be a pious Shi'i Muslim. He found the king, however, to be immersed in luxury, merely

following the form of his religion, and oblivious to things spiritual. Mír Ramaán 'Alí, however, became a follower of Bahá'u'lláh.

From Calcutta, Jamál Effendi left for Rangoon with Sayyid Muafá Rúmí and Imtiyáz usayn Khan (later known in Burma as Dr 'Abdu'l-akím; he was the son of 'Abdu'r-Raím Khan, a Bahá'í of Rampur). Something of how well-known and established he had become in Calcutta can be judged by the fact that, as he sailed to Rangoon, he carried with him letters of introduction from several well-known people: Sayyid Amír 'Alí (1849-1928), the prominent Shi'í jurist and writer who was later to become a Muslim leader and author of a very well known book: *The Spirit of Islam* (1891); Mr 'Abdu'l-Laíf, a presidency deputy magistrate; and Amír 'Alí Khan (1810-79), the prime minister of the ex-king of Oudh. This departure ended Jamál Effendi's first period of time in India. Apart from the places already mentioned, Rúmí also lists Jaipur, Gwalior and Baroda as being places that Jamál Effendi visited in this period.²³ It would seem probable that he visited Baroda and Jaipur on his initial journey northwards from Bombay, while Gwalior could have been visited on the journey south from Delhi to Hyderabad after the Durbar.

Burma

Jamál Effendi left Calcutta in May 1878 and arrived in Rangoon seven days later. In Burma, Jamál Effendi met with perhaps his greatest success in converting individuals who would go on to form the basis of the Bahá'í community of Burma. At this time, the British had occupied lower Burma, but King Mindon (reigned 1853-78) still ruled over upper Burma and it was the latter's reputation for justice and tolerance of all religions that had attracted Jamál Effendi. Prior to his arrival, he had written to a certain young Iranian merchant, ájí Sayyid Mahdí Shírází, whose brother ájí Sayyid Muammad Shírází was a well-known Bahá'í merchant of Egypt, asking him to make arrangements for their accommodation. Upon arrival they immediately wrote to ájí Sayyid Muammad. The latter, according to Rúmí, replied, informing them that Mírzá usayn, Jamál Effendi's relative and travelling companion, who had been sent on to Burma earlier, had died and Jamál Effendi needed to retrieve his belongings from police custody.²⁴ According to Fáil Mázandarání, however, Mírzá usayn died in Sri Lanka (see above). Rúmí's account is likely to be the more accurate as he was an eye-witness of these events.

Thanks to the letters of introduction that Jamál Effendi had brought with him from Calcutta, he had no difficulty in seeing the British Chief Commissioner, Charles Aitchison (1832-90), the chief secretary, Mr J.E. Bridges, and the deputy commissioner, Major Evanson. Through these officials, he eventually managed to get authorisation to have his belongings

²³ Rúmí, *op. cit.* A:11.

²⁴ Rúmí, *op. cit.* A:11.

(that had been with Mírzá usayn) returned. On going to the police lock-up to retrieve his belongings, however, Jamál Effendi discovered that many valuable items, some of which he intended to present to the King of Burma, had been stolen. Jamál Effendi then undertook a prolonged court case lasting over a year against the Secretary of State for India for redress for the property that had been lost. The court case resulted in a double blow for Jamál Effendi. Not only was the case lost (the judge, Rúmí reports, ruled that as Jamál Effendi had described himself as a darvish and faqir in his passport, it would make no difference to him if his possessions were lost) but in the interval, King Mindon of Burma died on 1 October 1878.

Assuming his correspondent was a merchant, Sayyid Mahdí had rented for Jamál Effendi a large house in the commercial district. Here, and later in another house in Mogul Street, Jamál Effendi received a constant stream of visitors. He talked to large numbers about the Bahá'í Faith and many became convinced Bahá'ís. Among these was Sayyid Mahdí himself, Áqá Muammad Qásim Shírází, and members of the Kázirúní family (all Shi'is), Mawlaví 'Abdu's-Subhán Qurayshí (originally of Bijnaur in India) and a large number of his relatives and Qádir Khan akím (all Sunnís), Madurai Namassavaya Pillay (a Hindu, who took the name Jamálu'l-Haq), and 'Alí Bhogah (a Khoja).²⁵ Many of these were among a large group of pilgrims from Rangoon to Akka in 1899 who took with them a marble sarcophagus which 'Abdu'l-Bahá used to hold the remains of the Báb. While still a new convert to the Bahá'í Faith, Sayyid Mahdí was rash enough on one occasion to make a public statement about the Bahá'í Faith during the Friday prayers in the Shi'í mosque and was fortunate to escape with his life.

Following the instructions of Bahá'u'lláh, Jamál Effendi proceeded to Mandalay, the capital of upper Burma, in early 1879 and remained there for some eighteen months. Along with Rúmí, he took with him three of his new Rangoon converts, Dr 'Abdu'l-akím, Dr Khabíru'd-Dín and Fakir Muammad, a servant. In Mandalay, Jamál Effendi was able to speak about the Bahá'í Faith to the Muslim population of that city. Although Jamál Effendi and his companions faced some hostility and were forced to move from their first lodgings near the mosque on account of this, they eventually found many who were willing to ally themselves with the new religion. A certain 'Abdu'l-Wáid (Burmese name Ko Thin) became enthused with the new message and introduced Jamál Effendi to his uncle 'Abdu's-Sattár (Burmese name U Koo), a silk merchant. The latter arranged for Jamál Effendi to take up residence in a house in the Koyandaw quarter belonging to him and built a special platform from which he could address the crowds that came. Jamál Effendi wrote during this time a number of pamphlets in Urdu regarding the prophecies of Islam and a 300-page book in Urdu entitled *Mi'yár al-aqíqat* (*The Standard of*

²⁵ Rúmí, *op. cit.* B:7-8.

Reality or Truth) for U Koo.²⁶ Even among the Iranian Shi'i community, thanks to the efforts of Áqá Muammad Qasim Shírází who had come from Rangoon, there were some who listened to the message favourably. It was not possible, however, under the regime of the new king, Thibaw (the last king of Burma, reigned 1878-85), to proclaim the new religion publicly or to government officials.

After his sojourn in Mandalay, Jamál Effendi returned to Rangoon and appears to have remained there for some six years, living first in Lewis Street, then in 39th Street, and taking up trade in ponies and hackney carriages in order to secure an income. A severe set-back in the financial affairs of the Afnán family that occurred at about this time may have caused his funds to dry up, forcing Jamál Effendi to seek to earn a living for himself. After about a year (i.e. in about 1881-2), Jamál Effendi undertook another trip to Mandalay, but an Iranian Shi'i who was hostile to the Bahá'í Faith caused a spurious case to be brought in the courts against him. It required a Bahá'í who was chief commissioner of customs (Mullá Ismá'íl) to intervene with the prime minister Kewun Mingyi before the case was dismissed. After this, it was judged best for Jamál Effendi to return to Rangoon. Over the next few years, Sayyid Muafá made several journeys taking ponies and gems to Calcutta (in about 1882) and Penang (about 1883). In the latter town, he stayed with Towan Omar Khalidi, a Sufi shaykh. He tried to teach the Bahá'í Faith to those he met there, but had little success. In about 1884, Rúmí returned to Calcutta with ponies and precious stones for sale. On this occasion, he met ájí Mírzá Abu'l-Qásim Náir Ifahání, a Bahá'í who was supposed to be preparing the way for a tour by Bahá'u'lláh's son, Mírzá Muammad 'Alí, to teach the Bahá'í Faith. He was surprised to find this man publicly saying that his object was to open Muslim centres of Freemasonry in India, under the auspices of the Freemasonry movement headquartered in Istanbul.

It is recorded by Áqá Sayyid Ismá'íl, the son of ájí Sayyid Mahdí Shírází, that the Bahá'ís of Burma used to ask Jamál Effendi to mention their names in the reports that he wrote back to Akka. These would be sent to the Afnáns in Bombay. They would send these on to their trading office in Egypt, from where pilgrims would take them to Akka where they would be delivered to Mírzá Áqá Ján, Khádimu'lláh.²⁷

Journey to south-east Asia

The next journey that Jamál Effendi undertook was to south-east Asia in about

²⁶ Rúmí, *op. cit.* B:12.

²⁷ Sayyid Muafá Rúmí cited in Sulaymání, *Maábi-i Hidáyat* 8:131.

1884-5 (see Map 2).²⁸ He and Sayyid Muafá left their business affairs in the hands of some of the Bahá'ís and initially set off for India. In Calcutta, they found most of their old friends had moved away or died and so they pressed on to Dacca (now Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh) where they met some “interesting and important people”²⁹: including Khája ‘Abdu’l-Ghaní, who is described as a descendent of the former chief of the province, and Mawlavi ‘Ubaydu’lláh al-‘Ubaydí, who was professor of Arabic at Dacca College.³⁰

While they were in Dacca, an urgent telegram arrived from the Afnáns in Bombay summoning them there. They set off somewhat perplexed. Upon arrival, they hired a room near Batliwalla Hospital in Byculla and went forthwith to the Afnáns’ office in Fort Bombay. Upon their arrival, Jamál Effendi was shown into a private room while Rúmí was left in the outer room for a couple of hours wondering what was going on. Eventually Jamál Effendi re-appeared and told Rúmí that Mírzá Muammad ‘Alí, the son of Bahá’u’lláh, had arrived. Jamál Effendi instructed Rúmí that when Mírzá Muammad ‘Alí emerged from the inner rooms, Rúmí should “bow reverently before him and fall prostrate at his holy feet.”³¹ When Mírzá Muammad ‘Alí appeared, however, Rúmí only bowed before him to the extent that good manners dictated and did not prostrate himself. This caused great annoyance to Jamál Effendi, the Afnáns and others present. Mírzá Muammad ‘Alí stayed a little while and then went out for a walk with ájí Mírzá Abu’l-Qásim Náir. The group remaining talked among themselves of plans for Mírzá Muammad ‘Alí’s visit. Among these were plans for Mírzá Muammad ‘Alí, who was a fine calligrapher, to prepare a number of collections of the writings of Bahá’u’lláh for publication. As they stood to leave, ájí Sayyid Mírzá Afnán asked Rúmí why he had not prostrated himself at the feet of “Áqá” (the Master). Rúmí replied that according to the text of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, it was forbidden to adore or to fall prostrate before any individual,³² that there was no question regarding the matter of who was our “Master” while Bahá’u’lláh was still alive, and we did not know who would be our “Master” after his passing. The Afnáns were very annoyed at Rúmí’s answer and attacked Jamál Effendi when he tried to intervene to calm matters down. Eventually they told

28 This date is given in a letter of Rúmí cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i-Hidáyat* 8:233. It also corresponds to the information (see later) that while they were away on this trip, the British took over Upper Burma, an event that occurred in November 1885.

29 Roumie, “Baha’i Pioneers” 274.

30 Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:4.

31 Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:5.

32 This is not in fact stated in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* but in other tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, see *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (Haifa: Bahá’í World Centre, 1992) n. 57, p. 193.

Jamál Effendi that he was not to bring Rúmí to their office again.³³ Mírzá Muammad 'Alí stayed about one year in India on this occasion but none of the teaching activities that had been expected of him materialised. Mírzá Muammad 'Alí returned to Bombay in about January 1890 and again stayed for just over a year, supervising the publication of a number of compilations of the writings of Bahá'u'lláh. A few years later, after the passing of Bahá'u'lláh, these Afnáns, ájí Sayyid Mírzá and Sayyid Muammad, sided with Muammad 'Alí against 'Abdu'l-Bahá and were declared covenant-breakers.

Jamál Effendi and Rúmí stayed for three weeks in Bombay and then went to Madras where they found the Bahá'í community numbered some four hundred persons. Sayyid Muafá was re-united with his father there, while Jamál Effendi lectured and met with numerous enquirers. Among those who were counted as Bahá'ís in Madras were Nawáb Fírúz usayn Khan, Nawáb Mamúd Miyán, Sayyid Káim 'Alí, the chief contractor for the building of Madras harbour, 'Uthmán Khan Subadar Major Bahadur, aide-de-camp to the governor of Madras's bodyguard, Sayyid Dáwúd, the leader of the Nawáb Walajah Mosque (Sunni) and Mullá Muammad 'Alí Rampúrí, a learned scholar of Arabic from the Bohra Ismá'ílí community, together with his nephew Murád 'Alí, a merchant.³⁴

From Madras, Jamál Effendi and Sayyid Muafá sailed to Singapore with two servants, one Shamsu'd-Dín, the son of Dr Khabíru'd-Din, and the other Lapudoodoo of Madras. On board they talked with a Portuguese general who was on his way to take up a post for his government in the Pacific. In Singapore, they were the guests of an Arab merchant Abú Bakr ibn 'Umar al-Junayd, who was the Turkish vice-consul (Jamál Effendi held a Turkish passport). Here Jamál Effendi was easily able to get permission to travel to Java on his Turkish passport, but Rúmí was asked to pay a large bond as surety. Of course, no-one in Singapore was willing to stand surety for a complete stranger. Rúmí eventually persuaded the British authorities to issue travelling documents on the basis of which the Dutch consul gave him and the two servants a permit to travel (the country that is now known as Indonesia was then the Dutch East Indies).³⁵

Jamál Effendi and his party sailed on to Djakarta (Batavia), the seat of the Dutch colonial authorities, where they were assigned to the Arab quarter, Pakhojan. The Dutch authorities were extremely nervous about any religious propaganda in their colonies. Rúmí reports that their travel permits therefore only allowed them to visit the coastal ports of the Dutch East Indies and that spies were set to watch their activities. The Turkish consul-general in Batavia,

³³ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:4-6.

³⁴ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:6/p. 274.

³⁵ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:7/p. 274.

‘Alí Ghalib Bey, however, gave them every assistance. Jamál Effendi did not know Malay, the language most widely spoken in this region; he spoke Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Urdu and Hindi. Fortunately, however, Rúmí was gifted with languages and soon picked up Malay to add to the long list of languages that he was able to read, write and speak: Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati, Urdu, Burmese and English.

Finding that they could not teach effectively in Batavia, Jamál Effendi and Rúmí travelled to Surabaya, further along the north Java coast, where they stayed for a couple of months. Here a certain Sayyid Akhíl ibn Háshim al-Habashí became a Bahá’í together with his family. They travelled along the coast, dropping anchor at the island of Bali, which Rúmí calls Bali Amfinan, and then on to Lombok, which Rúmí calls Bali Lombok. Here they were eagerly anticipated by Sayyid ‘Abdu’lláh, the chief collector of customs, for not only were they bringing with them his estranged son Muammad Nat, but Rúmí was in a position to verify Sayyid ‘Abdu’lláh’s claim to descent from the eminent Sufi shaykh Sayyid ‘Abdu’l-Qádir Gílání of Baghdad. Rúmí drew up the appropriate genealogical chart and Sayyid ‘Abdu’lláh gave a great banquet to celebrate the occasion. Sayyid ‘Abdu’lláh arranged for them to be received by the Buddhist king and his Muslim queen, with whom they spoke on religious matters.

Jamál Effendi’s next stop was Macassar (now Ujung Padang) on the Celebes Island (now Sulawesi), where he and Sayyid Muafá narrowly escaped death at the hands of a treacherous host. The Celebes Island contained numerous small principalities which had come under Dutch suzerainty but retained their independence. The Dutch were anxious to retain control of the rich supply of spices and timber which this part of the world supplied against the incursion of other powers. As the Turkish consul in Batavia had asked them to visit an aged Turkish soldier on this island, they were able to persuade the Dutch governor, Mr Brooghmänn, to allow them to go into the interior. They first sailed northwards along the coast in a small native boat to the port of Pari Pari. This was the capital of a small kingdom ruled by Fatta Arongmatua Aron Rafan. Here they were received by the king and his daughter, Fatta Sima Tana, who was married to Fatta Talloo Latta, the king of Sedendring. Jamál Effendi succeeded in curing the king of his psoriasis through the use for a month of a herb called cassia fistula, some other herbs that they collected in the jungle, and carbolic soap. Consequently, Jamál Effendi was able to teach the Bahá’í Faith openly here and the king became very favourably disposed to the new religion.³⁶

Jamál Effendi and Sayyid Muafá then travelled on to the town of Sedendring, which is situated inland on a large lake, and beyond that to the province of Padalia and Fammana, where they found a warm welcome from the ruler King Fatta Chikourdi (or Fatta Padali Arong Fammana) and Queen

³⁶ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:13-15/313-5.

Diammarala but little response to the Bahá'í message. They were planning to leave again when there was an outbreak of small-pox. The king called upon Jamál Effendi for assistance and the latter used scabs from children who were recovering together with breast milk from a woman to make a vaccine with which to inoculate the children. This reduced the death-rate to one percent.³⁷

The two Bahá'ís then travelled by canoe along a river until they reached Boonay (Bone, Boni), the province of the Bugis people with its capital at Watampone. The Bugis were a fiercely independent people who had rebelled against the Dutch several times, most recently in 1859. Here the king, who was a young and well-educated man, and the queen, who was descended from the royal house of Goa (the area around Macassar), welcomed them warmly and they had the opportunity to teach the Bahá'í Faith. The king asked them to prepare a handbook for the administration of the kingdom and Sayyid Muafá reports that they wrote this in line with the Bahá'í teachings. The king and queen are reported to have accepted the Bahá'í teachings and to have been prepared to promulgate them "as soon as they were divinely confirmed."³⁸

Unfortunately, the two Bahá'ís were not able to prolong their stay as the Dutch governor at Macassar had given them a strict four month limit. They retraced their steps, but when they reached Padali, news came of the death of King Fatta Arongmatua of Pari Pari. Therefore Rúmí pressed on by pony to Pari Pari to attend the funeral while Jamál Effendi remained behind. Later Rúmí returned and the two men went on to Pari Pari. Their servant, Lapudoodoo, died at Sedendring on the way. At Pari Pari, Queen Fatta Sima Tana presented them with adoption papers for two native Bugis boys, Naír and Bashír, to be servants in the holy household in Akka.³⁹

At Macassar, the governor refused to allow the two Bugis boys to continue and said that the matter must be resolved in Batavia. So Jamál Effendi and Rúmí returned to Batavia, spending a week at Surabaya with Sayyid Akhíl on the way. In Batavia, 'Alí Ghalib Bey, the Turkish consul-general, was absent on leave and the French consul-general was looking after the affairs of Turkish citizens. Through the latter, they managed to get an appointment with the Dutch viceroy of the East Indies and persuaded him to allow them to keep the adopted Bugis boys. While in Batavia on this occasion, they had much more success in teaching the Bahá'í Faith. Sayyid 'Uthmán ibn Háshim, who is described as a great sage, and Sayyid 'Abdu'-Raím ibn 'Aqíl

³⁷ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:16-17/342-3. It not clear from where Jamál Effendi obtained his medical knowledge, but his use of carbolic soap to treat psoriasis and his use of scabs from cases of small-pox with the active virus neutralised by antibodies from the milk of a nursing mother to inoculate children shows the workings of a knowledgeable and resourceful mind.

³⁸ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:17-20/343-4.

³⁹ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:20-23.

as well as several others became Bahá'ís.⁴⁰

Eventually, the two men left for Singapore. They had with them letters of introduction to the French consul-general in Thailand and the king of Thailand from the French consul-general in Batavia who knew both of these individuals. Jamál Effendi, therefore wanted to go on to Thailand. He remained in Singapore, while Rúmí returned to Rangoon, taking their servant boy Shamsu'd-Dín back to his father and purchasing there some precious stones, suitable to present to the king of Thailand. This trip took two weeks and on the day of his return to Singapore, the older of the two Bugis boys, Naír, disappeared. After painstaking investigations, it was discovered that he had been enticed by some Arabs and then abducted onto a boat that had sailed that day to Mauritius with labourers for the sugar plantations there. Jamál Effendi was very upset by this news.

Jamál Effendi and Rúmí sailed on to Thailand, together with Bashír, the younger Bugis boy, and Mas'úd, a black servant boy. The French consul-general welcomed them and arranged for them to stay in a government guest house near the royal palace. Rúmí writes that they had arrived at a time when the mother of King Chulalongkorn (reigned 1868-1910) had just died. But it must have been another royal death that had just occurred, since Queen Devisinindra (Princess Rampoe), the mother of the king, had died in 1861. The king was in mourning and was seeing no visitors. After staying a month or so, the two men returned without having met the king but having spoken of the Bahá'í teachings to Iranian Shi'is who were settled there and to Sayyid 'Alí Yamání and other prominent Muslims.⁴¹ They returned to Singapore and then back to Rangoon. In another account, Rúmí also mentions that they taught the Bahá'í Faith in Malaya.⁴² It may, however, be that he was counting Singapore as being part of Malaya.

Journey to Akka

Upon their return to Rangoon, Jamál Effendi and Rúmí found matters greatly altered. The political situation had changed drastically with the British annexation of upper Burma in November 1885 and the deposition of the king. Among the Bahá'ís, much had also changed. In view of the new political and economic conditions, Dr Khabíru'd-Dín had sold up the pony and hackney carriage business that had been the main economic support of the two men and had returned to working in the Rangoon General Hospital; akím Imtiyáz usayn was without employment and homeless; while Mawlaví 'Abdu's-Subán Qurayshí, the first Burmese Sunni to become a Bahá'í had passed away.

⁴⁰ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:24-5.

⁴¹ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:26-7.

⁴² In a letter of Rúmí cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:233.

Furthermore, Sayyid Mahdí Shirází had been negligent in pursuing tenure of a plot of land in a prestigious location that the British authorities had agreed to hand over for a Bahá'í centre to be built. The government had now allocated it to a British missionary society for a church. They went to Mandalay for a few days to ascertain the situation there. Upon their return to Rangoon, some of the Bahá'ís there persuaded Jamál Effendi to agree to a plan to send Rúmí back to Mandalay to set up a business office to connect with the businesses of the Rangoon Bahá'ís such as Abu'l-Zafar Qurayshí.

After about four months of trading successfully in Mandalay, Rúmí was urgently summoned to Rangoon. Here it was announced to him that Jamál Effendi was going on a trip back to Akka and that prior to his departure, he had arranged for Rúmí to be married to the daughter of the late Mawlaví 'Abdu'l-Subán Qurayshí. In the account that he has written of these years, Rúmí clearly betrays his unhappiness at this unexpected turn of events. He hints that he was not altogether pleased with having this marriage foisted upon him, and especially so suddenly. He was also heart-broken that Jamál Effendi was planning to go off to Akka, to the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, without taking him. He realised, however, that if he refused, he would disgrace Jamál Effendi and run the risk of the powerful Qurayshí family turning against the Bahá'í Faith. Somewhat reluctantly he consented to the marriage, although even almost fifty years later his writing about those events still reveals his resentment.⁴³

The wedding took place in September 1886. Shortly afterwards, Jamál Effendi left for Akka. Rúmí states that he took a boat from Rangoon headed for Port Said via the Suez Canal, eventually arriving in Akka. He was accompanied by two recently-converted Iranians and the young Bugis boy, Bashír, who was to work in the household of Bahá'u'lláh.⁴⁴

Second journey to India and travels in central Asia

Bahá'u'lláh did not allow Jamál Effendi to remain in Akka for long but urged him to return to India to continue his work. On 20 March 1888, Jamál Effendi set out for India accompanied by ájí Faraju'lláh Tafrişhí, who was married to Jamál Effendi's sister and replaced Mírzá usayn as his travelling companion.⁴⁵ On the way, he stopped at Aden for over a month and taught the

⁴³ Rúmí, *op. cit.* C:28-30.

⁴⁴ It is presumably this boy who can be seen in one of the photographs of Jamál Effendi, see Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá'ís* 123.

⁴⁵ There are some problems regarding the identity of ájí Faraju'lláh Tafrişhí. Fáil Mázandarání (*uhúr al-aqq* 6:451-2) writes that this man was a brother of Mírzá Naru'lláh, who died in Edirne (see Balyuzi, *King of Glory* 236-7), Mírzá Riá-Qulí, who was killed in Akka, (Balyuzi, *King of Glory* 323, 325) and Badrí-Ján, the wife of Azal. He states that he was married to a sister of Jamál Effendi, but that he died in 1276 (1859-60), leaving a son who became a well-known Bahá'í physician Dr 'Atá'u'lláh Khan. On the other hand, there was a

Sultan of Lahej, a town some 18 miles north-west of Aden. In Bombay, he taught the Zoroastrian community. Then Jamál Effendi began to travel throughout India once more. Rúmí was not with Jamál Effendi on these journeys but he mentions the following towns that were visited: Calcutta, Delhi, Lucknow, Cawnpore (Kanpur), Moradabad, Rampur, Bareilly, Gwalior, Fatehgarh, Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Malwa, Kailaspur, Hyderabad (Deccan), Madras, Bangalore and Simla (see Map 3).⁴⁶ Jamál Effendi was constantly on the move, cultivating his contacts, encouraging the converts, visiting members of the nobility, and writing reports of all this to Bahá'u'lláh, who would reveal tablets for many of the princes and others who were attracted to the Bahá'í Faith through the activities of Jamál Effendi. Rúmí describes Jamál Effendi's movements from place to place as being restless and swift like quicksilver.⁴⁷ He states that Jamál Effendi's travelling expenses on these journeys were paid by Nawab Safdar 'Alí Khan (d. 1893), the chief and president of Rampur state.⁴⁸ Rúmí writes that Bahá'u'lláh wrote an exhortation and proofs to the head of the Bohra Ismá'ílí community Sayyid-ná Najmu'd-Dín of Bombay. Jamál Effendi got Mullá Muammad 'Alí Rámpúrí, a learned scholar of that community who had become a Bahá'í, to come from Madras where he resided to Bombay to deliver this message to the Bohra leader. Rámpúrí addressed the Bohra leader in front of a large audience and debated with him.⁴⁹

From his base in the United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh), Jamál Effendi must have undertaken several trips to Sind and the Punjab. From the list of towns that Rúmí reports that he visited, we can assume that he probably travelled to Delhi, then to Jaipur, Jodhpur and Hyderabad in Sind. We can assume that he then spent some time in the Khairpur area of Sind north of Hyderabad, since we know that he managed to convert a number of people there, including the Rajah of Khairpur, Mír 'Alí Murád (d. 1894). The latter had been put into power in place of his brother after the British annexation of Sind in 1843. He had at first ruled over a large area of upper Sind, but had

ájí Faraju'lláh Tafrishí who was a companion of Bahá'u'lláh in Akka (see Balyuzi, *King of Glory* 279, 331). It seems most likely that these are both the same person, that Mázandarání is wrong about his date of death, that he migrated to Edirne at about the same time as his brothers, was exiled to Akka, and then chosen by Bahá'u'lláh to accompany Jamál Effendi on account of his close relationship to him.

46 Rúmí, *op. cit.* D:1.

47 Rúmí, *op. cit.* D:1.

48 It appears from the files in the national archives of the Government of India that Nawab Safdar Ali Khan and Jamál Effendi had a falling out shortly before the former's death in 1893 since he registered a complaint against Jamál Effendi with the foreign department of the government of India alleging that Jamál Effendi had obtained money from him under the false pretense of having influence with the British authorities. See file Foreign: Secret E, Sept. 1898, no. 102, pp. 14-15; national archives of the government of India, New Delhi.

49 Rúmí, *op. cit.* D:2.

been stripped of much of his domain in 1856 after a British commission had enquired into his activities. We can assume that Jamál Effendi then continued north since we know he visited Lahore, Amritsar, Puneh (Punch) and Gujrat in the Punjab and even Peshawar in the north-west frontier.

Jamál Effendi also travelled into central Asia. We have few details and no reliable itinerary of this journey. The whole trip is said to have taken eighteen months. It appears that on one of his visits to the Punjab, he travelled on to Jammu and Kashmir. From this point onwards, however, there is confusion.

We have two itineraries suggested by Rúmí in two different sources. These may represent two separate journeys but this is unlikely as some episodes are common to the two accounts. In one account cited in Sulaymání from a letter of Rúmí, he states that Jamál Effendi travelled to Ladakh and then on towards Yarqand (now Shache in the Chinese province of Xinjiang). This route probably took him south-east at first skirting the Karakorum range and entering Tibet. On the boundary of Kashmir and Tibet, all of Jamál Effendi's books, tablets and luggage were lost when one of the pack animals fell down a ravine into a mountain stream. In this same area, he is said to have come across some Ismá'ílí followers of the Aga Khan. As a consequence of frost-bite which affected Jamál Effendi's feet, he was forced to remain in Yarqand for six months, probably the winter of 1888-9 or 1889-90. Jamál Effendi appears to have been dispirited by the rough reception that he received from the people of these parts. He pressed on to Badakhshan which today straddles Afghanistan and Tajikistan and further to Balkh in the north of present-day Afghanistan.⁵⁰

Another account by Rúmí, in his manuscript history, states that having wintered in Kashmir, Jamál Effendi went, in April 1889, to Ladakh and Leh, then to Gilgit and on into the Pamir range of mountains (Badakhshan) where he met the followers of the Aga Khan. Here he experienced a severe snow-storm which resulted in frost-bite to his feet and he turned aside to Kandahar. According to this account it was on his way back from Kashmir to India that he lost all of his baggage in a mountain stream.⁵¹

It can be seen that in the first account it is written that Jamál Effendi experienced frost-bite to his feet and met followers of the Aga Khan between Ladakh and Yarqand, and in the second, these two events happened in the area of the Pamir mountains. Similarly, there is a story in both accounts that he wrote to 'Abdu'r-Ramán Khan, the Amir of Kabul, explaining that his feet were damaged by frost-bite and asking for permission to proceed to Kabul. The Amir replied that he was forbidden to come to Kabul and that if he came, his hands would go the way of his feet. However, in the first account, it is

⁵⁰ Letter of Rúmí, cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:134-6. Some of the details of this account, such as the six month stay in Yarqand, are also recorded in Fail Mázandarání, *uhúr al-aqq* 6:456.

⁵¹ Rúmí, *op. cit.* D:3-4.

stated that Jamál Effendi wrote this letter from Yarqand and in the second that he wrote it from Kandahar.

Both of these accounts have problems with them. On the one hand, Rúmí's account in his manuscript history seems more credible because the Ismá'ílí followers of the Aga Khan are located in the Pamir (Badakhshan) area. On the other hand, the suggested itinerary given going from Kashmir to Ladakh, Leh and then to Gilgit seems somewhat tortuous, and it is by no means clear how Jamál Effendi would have got from the Pamirs to Kandahar without having gone through Kabul in the first place. On the other hand, it would make more sense for Jamál Effendi to write to the Amir of Kabul from Kandahar, asking for permission to travel through Kabul and the Khyber Pass into India, than it would if he were writing from Yarqand.

One source states that Jamál Effendi even reached Khuqand (Kokand in Uzbekistan) and the western confines of Turkistan.⁵² All sources are agreed that Jamál Effendi found these areas inhospitable and eventually returned, remaining for a time in Ladakh where he had converted Ahmadu'd-Dín, the secretary to the British commissioner, to the Bahá'í Faith. He finally reached Srinagar in Kashmir in August-September 1889. From there he returned to India.

We have an account of Jamál Effendi's activities in his last years in India from an unusual source. We have noted previously that Jamál Effendi at times styled himself Shaykh Jamál ad-Dín and Sayyid Jamál ad-Dín. It appears that at one stage, the British authorities in India confused Jamál Effendi with Sayyid Jamál ad-Dín Asadábádí, who called himself "Al-Afghani". Al-Afghani was a thorn in the side of the British, advocating the liberation of Muslim lands such as Egypt and India from British colonial rule. The confusion between the two is rendered less surprising when it is remembered that two Azalí Bábís, Shaykh Amad Rúí and Mírzá Aqá Khan Kirmání, were members of al-Afghani's inner circle, and al-Afghani himself was commonly thought to be a "Bábí".⁵³ Thus, for example, when a follower of al-Afghani assassinated Náir ad-Dín Sháh, this was followed by vengeance being taken on two Bahá'ís, Varqá and his son Rúu'lláh.⁵⁴ There was no distinction in the minds of most people between Bábís and Bahá'ís. All were still called Bábís at this time.

It was not surprising then that the British authorities kept a close eye on Jamál Effendi and compiled some reports about him. One of these, dated 1891, is from an unnamed Indian Muslim who was a British agent and who

⁵² Fail Mázandarání, *uhúr al-aqq* 6:456.

⁵³ For an account Sayyid Jamálu'd-Dín "al-Afghani", see Nikki Keddie, *Sayyid Jamál ad-Dín 'al-Afghání'* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1972). On accusations that he was a Bábí, see p. 411. On his close association with Azalís, see pp. 275, 377-82.

⁵⁴ Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá'ís* 93-4.

pretended to become a Bahá'í in order to gather more information. Although it may be considered a hostile account, it does nevertheless paint a useful picture of Jamál Effendi in his final years in India, travelling about, cultivating and educating his circle of contacts and converts in the different parts of India:

The following is the substance of a statement made by an apparently well informed person, as to the real objects of the presence in India of Saiyid Jamal-ud-din, who is described by the informant as a Persian, but who calls himself a Turk of Constantinople:—

In the city of Akka (? Acre) shore now lives one Husen Ali, a Turk, who calls himself Baha-ullah Effendi alias Jamal Mubarik [the Blessed Beauty]. This man declares all religions to be bad, and says that he himself is God. He converted a number of people and collected them at Baghdad. About 4 years ago they rebelled against the Shah, but they were suppressed and gradually withdrew from Persia to Turkey in Asia. Baha-ullah is now under surveillance at Akka, which is called "Az Maksud" [*Ar Maqúd*, a common term among Iranian Bahá'ís for the Holy Land] by the converts. Baha-ullah's agents go about to all countries and endeavour to persuade people that he is visited by messengers of God, and that his converts will become rulers of the earth. Baha-ullah's son, Muhammad Ali, came to Bombay on this mission, and then returned to Akka. Agents are appointed everywhere, Saiyid Jamal-ud-din is one of these agents. He came to Kailaspur and stayed 10 days with me. He told me all about Baha-ullah and his own mission, and proposed to appoint me as his agent, and asked me to go with him to Bombay to see Muhammad Ali. I agreed to become a disciple of Baha-ullah in order to discover why Saiyid Jamal-ud-din had come to India. I agreed to become his agent for the same reason, and he now often writes to me. I have not got his letters with me, but can produce them if wanted. He is now in Farukhabad, and I believe that he has obtained a number of converts in India. He has plenty of money and spends it freely, and goes first class by railway. There is in Bombay a man named Agha Saiyid Mirza [Afnan], a merchant of Shiraz, who supplies him plentifully with money. It is Jamal-ud-din's intention now to go to Hyderabad in Sind in order to visit a convert named Mir Ali Murad, Raja of Khairpur. He promised to make me the Raja's Wazir. Nawab Safdar Ali Khan, President of the Rampur State Council, is also a convert, and Saiyid Jamal-ud-din lived at his house in Rampur for 2 months, and was there when General Azim-ud-din Khan was

murdered. He is now staying, at the house of a Native gentleman of Fatehgarh, named Imam-ud-din Khan. Rafi-ud-din Khan and Akbar Khan of Hasanpur, in the Moradabad district, are also his converts. The converts agree to do what Baha-ullah may direct.⁵⁵

On the 21st September 1891, the same informant wrote direct to the General Supdt., T. and D. Department [General Superintendent, Thagi and Dakaiti Department, responsible for monitoring criminals and trouble-makers], as follows:— “The man Saiyid Jamal-ud-din Shah is no ‘Rumi,’ he is a man from Astrabad Mazinderan in Persia, and his name is Mirza Muhammad Ali. He is no Muhammadan but a ‘Babi,’ and his head-quarters are at Akka in Palestine.”

This information regarding, Jamal-ud-din is curious, if true, and may explain the wanderings of this individual. It is the first intimation received in the C. S. B. [Central Special Branch] of any attempt on the part of the ‘Babi’ sect to proselytise in India. The success of the sect in Persia was mainly due to the communistic doctrines proclaimed by the founder, which attracted the masses. In 1851, the Shah caused the leader of this sect, styled the ‘Bab’ to be seized and executed, and a large number of his followers was put to death. The sect, however, was not extinguished, though compelled to practise their faith in secret. A recent authority (Benjamin) states that there are some 400,000 ‘Babis’ in Persia to be found among all conditions of society. The ‘Babis’ are also said by him to be unusually active in the present day, and to be sending forth emissaries widely to make proselytes. The sect has extended to Turkey, the leader of the Turkish branch residing at Constantinople. (C.S.B.)⁵⁶

In December 1892, Jamál Effendi was reported by the British authorities to have been in Bangalore from where he proceeded to Hyderabad in the Deccan.⁵⁷ It would have been in the early summer of 1892 that news of Bahá’u’lláh’s passing reached India and eventually Jamál Effendi. At this time, Bombay became a centre for the activities of the partisans of Mírzá Muammad ‘Alí, with the presence there of such persons as Mírzá usayn

⁵⁵ N.W.P.S.B., 29-8-91 [North West Province Special Branch, 29 August 1891].

⁵⁶ Report of D.E. McCracken, dated 14 August 1897, in file Foreign: Secret E, Sept. 1898, no. 100, pp. 13-14; national archives of the government of India, New Delhi. Words in rounded parantheses are in the original document. Comments in square parantheses have been added by the present author.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, citing a memorandum of the central special branch, no. 102, pp. 14-15.

Kharúmí, ájí usayn 'Alí Jahrumí, ájí Sayyid Mírzá Afnán and Sayyid Muammad Afnán. Eventually, 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent a number of Bahá'ís to Bombay to demonstrate the falseness of their position and guide the Bahá'ís there. To what extent Jamál Effendi was involved in these events is not certain. He was probably in Bombay for short periods of time during these years for we know that his companion, ájí Faraju'lláh, died in Bombay in April 1894. Rúmí also mentions that Jamál Effendi made one more journey to Burma. The two leading Bahá'ís of Mandalay, 'Abdu'l-Wáid (Ko Thin) and his uncle 'Abdu's-Sattár (U Koo), had died by this time but he met others who had remained firm Bahá'ís.

The last years of Jamál Effendi's life

As the years passed, it became increasingly difficult for Jamál Effendi to continue his arduous travels. Eventually he returned to Akka, leaving Madras for Port Said in April 1896.⁵⁸ He was accompanied by two Bahá'ís of Rangoon, ájí Sayyid Mahdí Shírází and Dr Khabír ad-Dín. He either brought with him or had sent previously a number of people to serve in the household of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Of these the most well-known are Isfandiyár, who served as the coachman of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and Khusraw, who served in the household.

After Jamál Effendi had remained some months in Akka, 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent him on an important mission to Iran. Since Jamál Effendi was a member of the nobility, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wanted him to go to Qum where the former prime minister 'Alí Asghar Khan, Amín as-Sulán, was in exile and deliver to him a message. Amín as-Sulán had intervened to save a Bahá'í, Áqá Siyyid Asadu'lláh, and had sheltered him in his own office. For this Bahá'u'lláh had wanted someone to give him a message acknowledging his help and urging him to dedicate himself to the service of the Cause of God. 'Abdu'l-Bahá tells the story of that journey:

After a time Amínu's-Sulán lost the Sovereign's favor. Hated, in disgrace, he was banished to the city of Qum. Thereupon this servant dispatched Sulaymán Khan to Persia, carrying a prayer and a missive written by me. The prayer besought God's aid and bounty and succour for the fallen Minister, so that he might, from that corner of oblivion, be recalled to favour. In the letter we clearly stated: "Prepare to return to Tihran. Soon will God's help arrive; the light of grace will shine on you again; with full authority again, you will find yourself free, and Prime Minister. This is your reward for the efforts you exerted on behalf of a man who was oppressed." That letter and that prayer are today in the possession of the family of Amínu's-Sulán.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

From Tihran, Sulaymán Khán journeyed to Qum, and according to his instructions went to live in a cell in the shrine of the Immaculate [Fáimih]. The relatives of Amínu's-Sulán came to visit there; Sulaymán Khán inquired after the fallen Minister and expressed the wish to meet him. When the Minister learned of this, he sent for Sulaymán Khán. Placing all his trust in God, Sulaymán Khán hastened to the Minister's house and, meeting him in private, presented the letter from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Minister rose, and received the letter with extreme respect. Then addressing the Khán he said: "I had given up hope. If this longing is fulfilled, I will arise to serve; I will preserve and uphold the friends of God." Then he expressed his gratitude, indebtedness and joy, and added, "Praise be to God, I hope again; I feel that by His aid, my dream will come true."

In brief, the Minister pledged himself to serve the friends, and Sulaymán Khán took his leave. The Minister then desired to give him a sum of money to defray the expenses of his journey, but Sulaymán Khán refused, and despite the Minister's insistence, would accept nothing. The Khán had not yet reached the Holy Land on his return journey when Amínu's-Sulán was recalled from exile and immediately summoned to the Premiership again. He assumed the position and functioned with full authority; and at first he did indeed support the believers, but toward the end, in the case of the Yazd martyrdoms, he was neglectful. He neither helped nor protected the sufferers in any way, nor would he listen to their repeated pleas, until all of them were put to death. Accordingly he too was dismissed, a ruined man; that flag which had flown so proudly was reversed, and that hoping heart despaired.⁵⁹

Jamál Effendi returned to Akka and lived out the last days of his life there. He died on 9 November 1898.⁶⁰ He was buried in the Akka cemetery near the grave of Mírzá Músá, the brother of Bahá'u'lláh. 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote a tablet of visitation⁶¹ for him and instructed that on his grave be written the following words:

Verily, Jamál ad-Dín, a traveller famous in every clime, the spreader of the fragrance of the love of God, has now become a

⁵⁹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Memorials of the Faithful* 137-8.

⁶⁰ 24 Jamada II 1316, from a letter of Rúmí, cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:140. Balyuzi gives the date 20 August 1898 without indicating his source; *Eminent Bahá'is* 128.

⁶¹ A poor translation of this may be found in Rúmí, *op. cit.* D:11-12.

traveller in those realms of God which are hidden from the eyes
of the people of realm of veils. 1316 AH⁶²

Jamál Effendi's method of promulgating the Bahá'í Faith

Bahá'u'lláh could scarcely have chosen a more suitable person than Jamál Effendi for the task of spreading the Bahá'í Faith in India. Islam had spread in India largely as a result of the effort and sacrifices of itinerant Sufis who planted the message of Islam in every part of India, following to some extent the model of the Hindu sadhus. Among the Indian Muslims, Sufi shaykhs had largely substituted for the role of spiritual mentorship exercised by the guru and swami in Hindu society. It was not at all unusual for a Sufi shaykh to be accorded greater respect than an orthodox Muslim religious leader. Wherever they travelled or settled, these Sufi shaykhs would be the natural centre of attraction and devotion. Because of the eclectic and inclusive nature of much of Indian spirituality, these Sufi shaykhs would even be the object of the respect of non-Muslims. It is also important to note that many of the Sufi shaykhs who had spread Islam throughout India had been of Iranian origin. Therefore the Persian language had become the language of the Indian and eastern Islamic world; it became the language of commerce, literature and, under the Moghul empire, the language of government. Most educated Indian Muslims therefore knew Persian well. Rúmí commented on this thus:

Because in ancient times generally all those who promulgated the Faith of Islam in India were Persian sages, and mostly were dervish in appearance, and as the Indian Empire formerly was ruled by [the] Mogul Dynasty, therefore at the time when Jamal Effendi came to India, though it was then India under the British Government, yet the majority of the [educated] people were well acquainted with the Persian language and literatures, and as Jamal Effendi spoke a very high Persian, and travelled all over India in [a] princely manner, with two or three companions, yet with gentle behaviour of exemplary independence and virtue; therefore the people [were] attracted by his venerable appearance and eloquent discourse. It was very easy for him to interview with the chiefs of the states and the government high officials.⁶³

Jamál Effendi's previous life as a wandering darvish suited him admirably for

⁶² Provisional translation of text given in Sulaymání, *Madbí-i Hidáyat* 8:140. Immediately before the date at the end, there is the word "al-Fátiah", which is a reference to the opening súrah of the Qur'án, traditional for tombstones, and not translatable.

⁶³ Rúmí, *op. cit.* A:11.

travelling through India, attracting the attention of Indian Muslims in the role of a Sufi shaykh. As he stepped off the boat in Bombay in about 1875, Jamál Effendi was the picture of a Sufi shaykh (master or *walí* - loosely translated as “saint”). He is described as having had a radiant and attractive face, white beard and whiskers, the Mawlawi head-gear upon his head, an ornamented scarf around his neck and prayer-beads in his hand.⁶⁴ His command of a high literary Persian would have added to his aura. From several sources, in particular Sayyid Muafá Rúmí, we have accounts of his personal charisma, his ability to speak eloquently and in a manner able to charm and attract his audience.⁶⁵

We do not have a precise description of the teaching methods of Jamál Effendi but we can put together a picture from the evidence to hand. Among the pieces of evidence that we have are the following:

1. Jamál Effendi’s appearance: we know that Jamál Effendi dressed in the attire of a Muslim holy man, more specifically that of a Sufi shaykh of the Mawlawí Sufi order (the Mawlawí or Mevlevi Order of Sufís follow the very influential Iranian mystic of the 13th century, Jalálu’d-Dín Rúmí). In a traditional society such as that of Muslim India, a person’s appearance classifies that person: you are as you appear. Thus, if Jamál Effendi appeared as a Sufi shaykh, then he was a Sufi shaykh to everyone around him.
2. Jamál Effendi’s name: Jamál Effendi was known by such names as Jamálu’d-Dín Sháh⁶⁶ or Darvish Jamalu’d-Dín Bábí.⁶⁷ The designation “Sháh” is a title typically taken by Sufi shaykhs.
3. Events in Mandalay: ‘Azízu’lláh Sulaymání records the following information on the authority of Mafúal-aqq ‘Ilmí, one of the prominent Bahá’ís of India, who in turn learned this from Khalífa Muammad Yúnis of Mandalay. In the town of Mandalay alone, Jamál Effendi had made some six thousand people followers of Bahá’u’lláh. In accordance with the exigencies of prudence (*ikmat*), however, he had not told them that this meant a new religious dispensation (a new *Sharí’ah*). They were under the impression that they were still under the Islamic dispensation. In the time of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Mírzá Maram came to Mandalay and endeavoured to guide them to the fact that a new religious dispensation had arisen. Some four thousand of these

⁶⁴ Fail Mazandarání cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:129.

⁶⁵ See Rúmí comments in *op. cit.* A:11.

⁶⁶ Roumie, “Baha’i Pioneers”, p. 76. The British secret reports also refer to him as “Saiyid Jamal-ud-din Shah.”

⁶⁷ Fail Mazandarání cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:130.

persons were extremely dismayed and turned upon Mírzá Maram and attacked him - he was only saved by the speedy arrival of the British police. Some two thousand, however, remained Bahá'ís.⁶⁸

4. Mírzá Mamúd Zarqání's account: The following account of Jamál Effendi needs to be treated with some caution. It is written by Mírzá Mamúd Zarqání who appears to have had some degree of animus against Jamál Effendi - this can only be described as a hostile account. The present author is unaware of any cause for this although it may be that its writer experienced the same sort of events that befell Mírzá Maram as described in 3 above:

The first messenger to carry the Bahai Revelation to India was an old Persian named Suleyman Khan who was known among the friends as Jamal Effendi, in order to distinguish him from Suleyman Khan the Martyr. About 40 years ago, he visited Baha'u'lláh at Acca, and received permission to make a tour in India. His intention was not to go as a Bahai teacher, but Baha'u'lláh told him he ought to take the opportunity of spreading the teachings. He visited the principal cities of India and Burma and made the acquaintance of many of the nobles and distinguished men. He went in the character of a Dervish leader (Sufi), and when he found that people were attracted, he would read to them some of the Tablets, such as *Hidden Words*. He printed and published *Seven Valleys* as if he himself were the author. Little by little he introduced more of the teachings, telling some of his most intimate friends that they should repeat the name: 'Allah'o'Abha,' and finally showing them the book of *Ighan*. Occasionally, he spoke about one higher than himself, whose representative he was, but he made no specific mention of Baha'u'lláh, and it was usually supposed among his followers that he was himself the head of the cult he represented.

After spending some five years in India, he returned to the Holy Land. Baha'u'lláh reproved him for having published *Seven Valleys* in his own name, but the work he had done was followed up by others and turned to good account. Most of his teaching had been in the towns of Mandalay and Rangoon. In the latter city there lived a Bahai from Shiraz named Seyed Mehdi, who after the departure of Jamal Effendi, began to teach the Cause publicly. He was joined by one of the friends of Jamal

⁶⁸ Fail Mazandarání cited in Sulaymání, *Maábí-i Hidáyat* 8:137-8. Sydney Sprague relates the story of Mírzá Maram's troubles but without mentioning Jamál Effendi's previous involvement. See *A Year with the Bahá'ís of India and Burma* (London, 1908) 34-5.

Effendi named Seyed Mostafa, who is still an active teacher.⁶⁹

Zarqání's accusation that Jamál Effendi hid the name of Bahá'u'lláh entirely in his discourse and let people think that he was the leader of the movement that he was preaching is discounted by the evidence of the British secret papers. In the British account, Jamál Effendi is portrayed as clearly informing the inner circle of those who gathered around him that their true allegiance was to Bahá'u'lláh. Indeed the extent of Jamál Effendi's sharing of orthodox Bahá'í teachings in relation to Bahá'u'lláh to his inner circle can be seen from the presence in this account of terms very familiar to Bahá'ís who know Persian and Arabic; such terms as "Jamál-i-Mubárák" (the Blessed Perfection, as a designation for Bahá'u'lláh) and "Ar-i-Maqúd" (land of the heart's desire, for Akka).

Zarqání's accusation that Jamál Effendi published *The Seven Valleys* in his own name is, however, probably true since it can be found in other places. Fáil Mázandarání gives a statement by 'Azízu'lláh Jazzáb that he heard Bahá'u'lláh state that Jamál had taken *The Seven Valleys* and added a page of his own at the beginning and published this as his own work.⁷⁰

Thus, from the various pieces of information that we have, we can build up a picture of Jamál Effendi's method of proselytisation. When he arrived at a city, it was his custom to approach its ruler or major official. He often had a letter of introduction to them. He would either write to them or call upon them. He would talk to them on general religious themes. Sufi holy men were regarded as possessing the ability to cure disease. Jamál Effendi appears to have obtained some rudiments of medical knowledge and to have put them to good use. The combination of the appearance of a Sufi holy man and medical skills produced in many places a favourable impression that then attracted crowds to hear his discourse.

Apart from the *baraka* (blessings) bestowed by merely being in his presence, part of the attractiveness of the Sufi shaykh is the implication that he will teach his pupils a secret path, esoteric knowledge that is not available through the mere reading of books. We may surmise that Jamál Effendi attracted large numbers of people by holding forth on the usual Sufi themes. He probably then introduced some of the mystical writings of Bahá'u'lláh such as *The Seven Valleys*, which he had had published in India. It is evident that Jamál Effendi was able to inspire in many people a love for the writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

It seems that, following the efforts of Jamál Effendi, many people

⁶⁹ This is taken from an account of the Bahá'í history of India by Zarqání that is to be found among Esslemont's papers in the archives of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom.

⁷⁰ Cited in Fáil Mázandarání, *uhúr al-aqq*, vol. 8, pt. 2, (Tehran, 132/1975), p. 1154 footnote.

considered themselves followers of Bahá'u'lláh but only in the same sort of way as others might consider themselves followers of a Sufi shaykh. Bahá'u'lláh had thus the status of the *qub* (pole, axis), the supreme leader of a Sufi order, while Jamál Effendi was his local or regional agent or representative, authorised by the *qub* to deliver his teachings. To these people Jamál Effendi taught the greeting "Alláhu Abhá" as well as giving them copies of Bahá'u'lláh's *The Seven Valleys*.

To a much smaller inner circle, Jamál Effendi then revealed the true extent of the revolution brought about by Bahá'u'lláh, the inauguration of a new religious dispensation. To these he gave copies of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* (which was published by the Náirí Press in Bombay) and mentioned them in letters to Bahá'u'lláh so that they received tablets from Bahá'u'lláh. We cannot know what proportion of his circle of admirers was brought into Jamál Effendi's confidence in this manner, since of course many would have rejected the teachings, while others would have subsequently been lost to the community because there was probably insufficient follow-up of Jamál Effendi's work after he left the sub-continent. We know however that several of those whom he introduced to the Bahá'í Faith later became important individuals in the history of the Bahá'í Faith in the Indian sub-continent. Among those whom we know were introduced to the full teachings of the Bahá'í Faith by Jamál Effendi are: Sayyid Mustafá Rúmi (converted in Madras, accompanied Jamál Effendi in his later journeys, settled in Burma, named Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi), Rafi'u'd-Dín Khan (of Hasanpur), and ájí Ramaán (of Rampur), Sayyid Mahdí Shirazi, Dr *Khabíru'd-Dín* and many others in Rangoon. We also read in the above account of some two thousand persons in Mandalay. In assessing these accounts, it would appear that Jamál Effendi's greatest success in bringing people to the Bahá'í Faith were in Burma (Rangoon and Mandalay) and in the area of the United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh) to the east of Delhi (in towns such as Rampur, Moradabad, Fatehgarh and Farrukhabad). While it has not been possible to establish a firm ongoing link between Jamál Effendi's converts in the Rampur area and the later Bahá'í community, there is no doubt about the existence of such a link in Burma.

The results of Jamál Effendi's labours in south-east Asia await further investigations but there are as yet unconfirmed reports that remnants of Jamál Effendi's teaching on Celebes Island can be found in the religious milieu of that area and found their way into the political system of Indonesia in the form of the concept of *mufakat*, or "consensus," arrived at on the basis of extensive consultations (*musyawarah*) aimed at reaching unanimous agreement. Decisions are seldom arbitrary or made by one person but are the result of extensive discussions. This is the traditional approach to all problems. Similarly the results of his efforts in central Asia cannot at present be adequately assessed. There is, for example, a Sufi order in Gansu Province in central China. It is called Lingming Tang (the Hall of the Mind or Soul

Enlightenment) and is a suborder of the Khúfiyyah which is a main division of the Naqshbandiyyah in China. The oral tradition of this group states that its doctrines are based on what a Bábí who came from the central Islamic world to China at some time in the nineteenth century taught to the founder of the order Ma Lingming (1853-1925).⁷¹ Whether this is a remnant of the work of Jamál Effendi or not remains to be determined.

Zarqání and others have accused Jamál Effendi of being a charlatan, of not really teaching the Bahá'í Faith, or of having journeyed from place to place accepting luxurious hospitality and being of very little benefit to the Bahá'í Faith. While there is a certain amount of truth in this (in view of his publication of *The Seven Valleys* in his own name), it is evident that he was operating in an environment where any direct and open teaching of the Bahá'í Faith would have evoked violent opposition. Thus the approach that Jamál Effendi took, that of using indirect public methods to identify those who might be inclined to hear about the Bahá'í Faith and then teaching these in private, would appear to have been appropriate to the situation and in line with Bahá'u'lláh's oft-repeated advice to exercise prudence and wisdom in promulgating his religion.⁷²

Conclusion

It may perhaps be helpful to compare Jamál Effendi's teaching of the Bahá'í Faith to other teaching campaigns. Whatever may have been Ibrahim Kheiralla's faults and whatever opinion one may have about his later conduct, there can be little doubt that he conducted a very successful initial campaign in bringing the Bahá'í Faith to north America, resulting in several thousand conversions.⁷³ It must immediately be stated that Jamál Effendi and Kheiralla used different approaches to the Bahá'í Faith: Jamál Effendi relied on mystical themes, while Kheiralla concentrated on eschatological ones. They

⁷¹ Personal communication from Dr Jianping Wang of the Institute for World Religions, Beijing, derived from researches carried out by Prof. Ma Tong of the Institute of Nationalities in Gansu. Ma Tong, *Zhongguo Yisilan jiaopai menhuan suyuan* (Studies of the Origins of Islamic Factions and Sufi Orders in China) (Yinchuan: Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1986).

⁷² Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976) no. 10, pp. 13-14; no. 97, pp. 196-7; no. 136, p. 296; no. 164, pp. 343-4. See also Susan Stiles Maneck, "Wisdom and Dissimulation: the use and meaning of *Hikmat* in Bahá'í writings and history," *Bahá'í Studies Review* 6 (1996): 11-23.

⁷³ On Kheiralla, see Robert Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith in America*, vol. 1: *Origins 1892-1900* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1985); Richard Hollinger, "Ibrahim George Kheiralla and the Bahá'í Faith in America," in Juan R. Cole and Moojan Momen ed., *From Iran East and West, Studies in Babi and Bahá'í History*, vol. 2 (Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1984) 95-133; Peter Smith, "The American Bahá'í Community, 1894-1917: A Preliminary Survey," in Moojan Momen (ed.), *Studies in Babi and Bahá'í History*, vol. 1 (Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1982) 85-223.

were also operating in very different environments. Jamál Effendi was in situations where he had to proceed very cautiously, otherwise he would have stirred up fanaticism, which might have even occasioned his death. Kheiralla was operating in a much freer environment. Despite these differences, we can detect certain common features between Jamál Effendi's efforts in India and Kheiralla's in north America:

1. The slow introduction of the concepts of the Bahá'í Faith. Both Kheiralla and Jamál Effendi took a very gradualist approach towards revealing to their audiences the basis facts of the Bahá'í Faith. Kheiralla had a series of public lectures during the first ten of which he said almost nothing about the Bahá'í Faith, but rather dwelt on Biblical prophecy and general spiritual teachings.⁷⁴ Jamál Effendi similarly appear to have taught initially on general Sufi themes only gradually introducing some of Bahá'u'lláh's more mystical and spiritual writings.
2. A secret teaching. At the end of the series of Kheiralla's lectures, which usually consisted of twelve or thirteen lectures, people were invited to accept the "Greatest Name" and only then, if they went through this stage, were they invited to a further series of private lectures at which they learned of the teachings of the religion. Similarly, Jamál Effendi chose from among those who attended his orations a small circle of people to whom he revealed the full message at private sessions.
3. Use of popular religiosity. Both Jamál Effendi and Kheiralla appear to have owed their success to a large extent to their ability to blend elements of popular religiosity into their presentation of the Bahá'í Faith. Kheiralla was able to blend elements from various apocalyptic themes that had been present in north American society since the early 19th century, as well as certain themes from the "cultic milieu". Jamál Effendi was able to tap into the Sufi element of popular religiosity in Muslim India. Both used a combination of approaching the Bahá'í teachings through popular religious themes and utilising popular means of communicating these teachings. They were successful, perhaps more successful than any subsequent Bahá'í teachers have been, at presenting the Bahá'í Faith in terms of popular religiosity.

If we examine other occasions in which there has been relatively greater success in converting large numbers of people to the Bahá'í Faith, then we can see that this theme of adapting the Bahá'í Faith to popular religiosity recurs. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that there was again the same

⁷⁴ See one person's notes on thirteen lectures in Browne, *Materials for the Study of the Bábí Religion* (Cambridge: University Press, 1918) 128-42.

level of mass teaching of the Bahá'í Faith in India that there had been in the time of Jamál Effendi. But at this time it was Hindus rather than Muslims who were converted in large numbers. Once again the combination of adapting the Bahá'í message to popular religiosity and using a medium familiar in popular religion played a part in the success of this campaign. At this time, the Bahá'í message was adapted to Hinduism by such means as avoiding the Islamic elements in the Bahá'í Faith and identifying Bahá'u'lláh with the Kalki avatar. Traditional and popular Indian methods of communication were also used such as the composition of *bhajans*, a popular religious song form.⁷⁵ At about the same time, there was an upsurge in conversions in the west. One of the main groups that became Bahá'ís were young people. Once again, the success was achieved when Bahá'ís led people to the Bahá'í teachings through the popular issues of the time and also used popular music and theatre as the means of communicating the message.

It may also be instructive to compare Jamál Effendi's methods of proclaiming the Bahá'í Faith to those of Martha Root. His bold approach to rulers and high government officials, his writing to them before his arrival in their city or calling upon them immediately after arrival, his use of high level contacts in one place to provide introductions in another, and his presentation of books to those that he called upon all resemble the methods used by Martha Root many years later.⁷⁶

In summary, then, although ideas about the success of the efforts of Jamál Effendi may have been exaggerated in certain accounts, he did nevertheless succeed in establishing small groups of Bahá'ís across a very wide area of the Indian sub-continent as well as proclaiming the Bahá'í Faith across a still wider area including central and south-east Asia. He was the first person to teach the Bahá'í Faith in these countries, whose combined populations represent more than half of the population of the world. He was the first to teach the Bahá'í Faith in India (where reside the largest number of Hindus in the world), in China (the population of which includes the largest number of Buddhists in the world) and Indonesia (the largest Muslim country in the world). He operated, however, in a potentially dangerous environment and it was therefore necessary for him to use a gradual method of introducing people

⁷⁵ William Garlington, "Bahá'í Bhajans," *World Order* 16.2 (Winter 1982): 43-49. Idem, "The Bahá'í Faith in Malwa," in G. A. Oddie (ed.), *Religion in South Asia* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1977). Idem, "Bahá'í Conversions in Malwa," in J. R. Cole and M. Momen (eds.), *From Iran East and West* 157-185. Idem, "The Bahá'í Faith in Malwa: A Study of a Contemporary Religious Movement," unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Australian National University, 1975. Steven Garrigues, "The Bahá'í Faith in Malwa: Identity and Change Among the Urban Bahá'ís of Central India," unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Lucknow, 1975.

⁷⁶ On Martha Root, see M. R. Garis, *Martha Root, Lioness at the Threshold* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1983).

to the Bahá'í Faith. His success in initiating the Bahá'í community in Burma, and to a lesser extent in India, may usefully be compared to that of Kheiralla in north America, while his success in proclaiming the Bahá'í Faith to a wide assortment of rulers and prominent figures throughout India and in central and south-east Asia may be compared with the efforts of Martha Root in other parts of the world some fifty years later.

Countries visited by Jamál Effendi

Countries where Jamál Effendi was the first Bahá'í to visit and to teach the Bahá'í Faith

(with Mírzá Huayn):

Sri Lanka

(with Sayyid Muafá Rúmí):

Burma (Myanmar)

Bangladesh

Indonesia

Thailand

(With ájí Faraju'lláh Tafrishí):

Pakistan

Tajikistan

Afghanistan

Countries where Jamál Effendi was the first to teach the Bahá'í Faith:

India

Singapore (probably first visited by Sayyid Muammad 'Alí Afnan)

Countries where Jamál Effendi may have been the first to visit and to teach the Bahá'í Faith (evidence not conclusive):

China (and Tibet)

Uzbekistan

In addition, Sayyid Muafá Rúmí appears to have been the first Bahá'í to visit and teach the Bahá'í Faith in Malaysia