

BAHA'I STUDIES BULLETIN

This Bulletin is primarily designed to facilitate communication between those among us engaged in Baha'i Studies. It is hoped that it may evolve into the Bulletin of an Association for the Study of the Babī and Bahā'ī Religions (or the like) and be befittingly published rather than photostatically reproduced.

The success of this Bulletin obviously depends on your support and willingness to contribute. A steady and sustained flow of scholarly contributions is vital especially since there are so few of us. The following list is intended only to serve as an indication of the nature and scope of contributions that would be welcomed:-

- a) Articles or short notes whether historical, methodological, sociological, doctrinal or theological, etc.,
- b) Bibliographical essays or notes;
- c) Copies of generally unavailable letters or tablets of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha or Shoghi Effendi whether in the original language(s) or in translation;
- d) Notices of recently published books, articles and reviews, etc.;
- e) Previously unpublished notes or documents;
- f) Reports of work in progress or of seminars and conferences relating directly or indirectly to Babī-Bahā'ī studies.

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Editorial Note

Once again I must apologise for the delay in producing this issue of the Bulletin. Please note that certain contributions contained within it were written some months ago and that it is dated Sept. 1985-- following Vol. 3.No.2. dated Sept. 1984 . Vol.3. No.4. (Dec. 1985) is just about ready for distribution. It is hoped that future issues will come out quarterly as planned. Distribution delays may however, be experienced.

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ESSLEMONT'S SURVEY OF THE BAHAI COMMUNITY IN 1919-1920:
Part VII: Iraq by Mirza Muhammad Husayn Wakil
Edited by Moojan Momen

Although the name of Iraq is not included in the rough outline for the chapter that exists in Dr. Esslemont's hand-writing[1], there is nevertheless a brief type-written account of the Baha'i Faith in Iraq among the papers in this collection. The author of this brief account is notified in a statement in the hand-writing of Esslemont: "The following account of the Cause in Mesopotamia was kindly supplied to me by Mirza Mohamad Hosein Wakil who for the last quarter of a century has been care-taker of the house of Baha'u'llah at Bagdad".

Mirza Muhammad Husayn Wakil (or in Persianised form: Wakil) was the son of Mirza Muhammad Wakil who had become a Babi in the days when Baha'u'llah was in Baghdad. Mirza Muhammad had remained in Baghdad and been one of those exiled from Baghdad to Mosul, where he died in about 1882[2]. His son Mirza Muhammad Husayn had been appointed custodian of the House of Baha'u'llah in Baghdad. He remained the custodian of this place of pilgrimage until 1922 when the property was seized at the instigation of the Shi'is of Baghdad, the beginning of a case that eventually came before the League of Nations. After this Mirza Muhammad Husayn moved to Alexandria for a time.

The following then is the account of Mirza Muhammad Husayn Wakil:

MESOPOTAMIA

When the Blessed Beauty was sent to Constantinople in 1863 some 14 or 15 Bahai families remained in Bagdad, but five years later these also were exiled to Mozul[3], in a more northerly region of Mesopotamia, so that there remained in Bagdad only a few believers who kept their faith secret. After remaining about twelve years in Mosul, the believers gradually left that neighbourhood. Several went on to Acca, remaining either in Acca or in places near the Holy Land, such as Alexandretta and Beyrouth. About ten or twelve families again took up their residence in Bagdad. Soon after these believers returned, the Blessed Beauty sent money to purchase the house where he had lived in Bagdad. The purchase was effected in the name of a Turkish believer named Haji Mohamad Hosain Hakim, as the government would not allow the place to be sold to a Persian. The house is now visited by all Baha'is passing through Bagdad to the Holy Land or elsewhere.

1. See Baha'i Studies Bulletin, Vol. 1, No.1, p.3
2. See 'Abdu'l-Baha, Memorials of the Faithful (translated Marzieh Gail), p. 108-116
3. Mosul; see Momen, The Babi and Baha'i Religions, pp. 265-7

After their return to Bagdad the believers had still to put up with a great deal of opposition and petty persecution on account of their faith. On one occasion five of them were stripped of all their possessions and again exiled to Mozul for about 10 months.

As long as the Turkish regime lasted in Mesopotamia, the believers were forbidden to teach the cause, not only by the Government but also by Abdul Baha himself. Because of their sterling character, cleanliness, trustworthiness and godliness, however, many people were attracted to them and they gradually increased in numbers. During the Great War of 1914-1918, a good many of the believers were killed, but with the overthrow of the Turkish government, the cause in Bagdad entered a new era. In December, 1918, Abdul baha wrote a Tablet for the believers in Mesopotamia containing the longed-for permission to teach. He wrote:- "If ye come across a person who may hearken to the call and whose ears are responsive, declare to him the Word of God, for verily t is sufficient and convincing." He added moreover that the teaching must still be given cautiously and with prudence. The effect of this call was immediately apparent. When it arrived the believers in Bagdad and the surrounding villages numbered about a hundred to a hundred and twenty men and women, but in less than a year that number was nearly doubled and great firmness and enthusiasm prevailed. They are planning to build a Mashrakol-Azkar and are desirous of starting a Bahai library as soon as circumstances permit. Outside the Bagdad district there is only one other small Bahai group in Mesopotamia, in the town of Basra, but there seems every reason to hope that with the removal of the old restrictions the Movement will now make rapid progress.

The Garden of Rizwan, outside Bagdad, where Baha'u'llah made his memorable declaration is now in the hands of the British Government which is using it as a Hospital site.

Among Esslemont's papers, there is also the typed record of a talk that he heard from Muhammad Husayn Wakil at Haifa on 3 December 1919. This talk repeats much of the same information as the account given above and may indeed have been the source of it. The following represents the only passage from this account that does not repeat information already given above:

MESOPOTAMIA...

... After about 12 years gradually the believers left Mozul. Some went with Jenab Zain[4] to Acca. The others returned to Bagdad, and from there many of them proceeded to Acca, remaining either in Acca or in places near the Holy Land such as Alexandretta. Amongst those was Jenab Mohammad Mostafa Bagdadi, the father of Dr. Bagdadi, who came to

4. Zaynu'l-Muqarrabin, a Baha'i from Najafabad who acted as a transcriber of Baha'u'llah's Tablets

reside at Beyrout, and later by command of the Master went to Alexandretta, where he passed away. Mirza M.H.W.'s (Muhammad Husayn Wakil's) mother came to Acca (and afterwards Haifa) and lived with the Holy Family, being the nurse of Shoghi Efendi. During the war she went to Alexandretta to see her daughters, but means of commn. [communication] were stopped and she was unable to return. She passed away at Alex.[andretta] from grief at separation from Shoghi!

When the B.B. [Blessed Beauty] was at Bagdad, he gave M.H.W.'s father the name of Wakil (agent)[5]. On his return from Mosul F.[ather of Muhammad Husayn Wakil] went from Bagdad to India, then returned to Mosul, passing away about two years after first leaving Mozul...

...Until 6 months ago, the injunction not to teach remained in force. At that time the Bahais numbered 100 to 120 men and women. Now those who are firm in the faith and are ready to give their lives for it number over 200. During the war a good many of the believers were killed. Some were Turks and had to join the army. With the bounty and assistance of the Beloved Master, each of the believers is now like a shining star. Haji Mohamad Hosein[6] was exiled to Mozul by the Turkish Govt. about 25 years ago, for a second time. M.H.W. was at that time in Acca visiting the Master. The M.[aster] told him to go to Bagdad via Mozul and get the key of the house from M.H. He did so, and has since remained in charge of the house. He and his relations have lived near. No one lives in the house itself. Pilgrims who go to Haifa and Acca visit the house, in accordance with the command of B.[aha'u'llah] in the Book of Akdas.. The Master says that teaching must still be done with cautiousness and wisdom. The people of Bagdad wanted to start a library, but the Master said the time for that has not yet come. The Master has instructed Mirza Mehdi of Resht to see to the repair of the House of God, along with M.H.W.

The Garden of Rizwan is now in the hands of the British Govt. who have a hospital there, which was erected 15 or 20 years ago.

At Bassera [Basra], about 8 days S.E. of Bagdad, there are 2 or 3 Bahais]

THE SOCIAL LOCATION OF THE BABI MOVEMENT: A PRELIMINARY NOTE.

Moojan Momen

5. This conflicts with the account given by 'Abdu'l-Baha in Memorials of the Faithful, pp. 108-115

6. Haji Muhammad Husayn Hakim the purchaser of the House of Baha'u'llah is evidently meant

THE SOCIAL LOCATION OF THE BABI MOVEMENT: A PRELIMINARY NOTE

FACTORS AFFECTING CONVERSIONS

The sense of anticipating the return of the Imam Mahdi (1) is much stronger among Shi'is than the anticipation felt by Christians for the return of Christ or even the comparable phenomenon of awaiting the Mahdi among Sunnis. It is frequently referred to in the course of the ordinary conversation of Shi'is and the wish for his speedy advent is a common subject of the exclamations and imprecations in everyday use. Thus it is not surprising that anyone claiming to be that return should occasion much interest and turmoil. However there were a number of specific factors that affected the response to the Bab's claims.

Any analysis of the Bab's claims and of the Babi movement would be distorted if it does not fully take into account the different phases in the nature of the claims put forward by the Bab. This subject has been discussed in more detail elsewhere (2) but for the present it is sufficient to state that in his early writings (1844-1848), the Bab appeared to be formally claiming to be only the agent of the Hidden Imam although the use of certain words and phrases in the text of these writings made it clear to those familiar with religious terminology that the Bab was hinting at a much greater claim, that of being the recipient of a new revelation from God (i.e. a status equivalent to that of Muhammad himself) thus abrogating Islam. These hints were clearly perceived by his leading early disciples (3) and were also the subject of the earliest attacks upon him by the ulama (4). But the generality of the people and of his supporters initially accepted him in the setting of his lesser formal claim, that of being the agent of the Hidden Imam. However even this was too much for the orthodox ulama who had, after what were often violent disagreements in the previous century, come solidly behind the view that they, the ulama as a body, were the general agents or vicegerents (nā'ib-i 'āmm) of the Hidden Imam (this was the position of the majority Usuli school). Even the lesser claim of the Bab to be the specific agent (nā'ib-i khāss) of the Hidden Imam would in effect remove the ulama's claim to legitimacy and authority (5). It was only in 1848 that the Bab openly advanced his greater claim, that he was the bearer of a new revelation from God which abrogated the Islamic dispensation. From this time onwards, the writings of the Bab took on a completely different tone. With regard to legal matters, for example, prior to 1848, the Bab was basically only reiterating the Qur'anic position on matters of ritual, jihād (holy war), etc. After 1848, and in particular in the Persian Bayan, the Bab departed wholesale from the Qur'an and the Islamic Shari'a in setting up an independent religious system. Thus for example most ritual acts were altered from their Islamic form and the position of jihād was substantially downplayed. The question of factors affecting conversions to the Babi movement must therefore be taken in the context of these internal developments.

During the earliest period of his ministry (1844-48), the Bab appears

to have directed his claim primarily, but not exclusively, towards the Shaykhi community. The Shaykhi movement had been founded by Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i (1753-1826). Its teachings were primarily an extreme philosophical esotericism. However two aspects of its teachings were to be of crucial importance in paving the way for the Bab's claims. Firstly, the Shaykhi doctrine held that the world had a hierarchy of spiritual beings at the apex of which was a Perfect Shi'i (ash-Shi'i al-kāmil) who, whether recognised or not was the instrument of God's guidance and blessings upon the world. This perfect Shi'i was considered to be the intermediary of the Hidden Imam. Although Shaykh Ahmad and his successor, Sayyid Kazim Rashti (c.1795-1843), never appeared to have formally claimed to be the Perfect Shi'i, it would seem that their followers thought of them thus. In some Shaykhi sources they are referred to as the two Babs. When Sayyid Kazim died in 1843, he had not appointed a successor and so it was perhaps not a major step for many Shaykhis to accept Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad as their new leader, to think of him as the Perfect Shi'i and to accept his title of the Bab. The second aspect of the Shaykhi teachings that was to be of importance with respect to the Babi movement was the fact that the Shaykhi leaders had interpreted many of the fundamental Islamic teachings such as the return of the Twelfth Imam and the Resurrection as being statements symbolic of spiritual truths rather than literal physical occurrences. Thus the Shaykhis were more prepared than other Shi'is to accept the Bab's later general claim that he was the returned Imam Mahdi and that the Day of Judgement had arrived.

Conversely there were certain aspects of the Bab's teachings that made it attractive to many of the Shaykhis. Two of the features of Shaykhism that made it socially and doctrinally distinctive from the majority Usuli school were the already-mentioned tendency to explain religious concepts in terms of symbols and its anti-clericism. The anti-clericism took the form of attacks upon the ulama in the writings of the Bab and a tendency to emphasise the importance of individual intuitive knowledge as a guide to action rather than the application of the religious law through the interpretation of the religious class. If one now compares, with respect to these two points, the teachings of the Bab and those of the other claimants to the leadership of the Shaykhi movement, it is clear that the Bab develops these two areas further whereas the other claimants tended towards a position of rapprochement with the Usuli majority. Thus we may assume that those Shaykhis more inclined to be radical with regard to these two areas would be more attracted to the Bab's teachings.

When the Bab did put forward his claims, there was a considerable response. Initially this response came mostly from the Shaykhis who were the first to be acquainted with the Bab's claims. Notable among non-Shaykhis to respond were Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Hujjat Zanjani who was an Akhbari, the sect that had tried to oppose the Usulis in their excessive concentration of power and authority in the hands of the clerical class, and Sayyid Yahya Darabi whose father was known as Kashfi on account of his claim to intuitive religious knowledge. Thus even these non-Shaykhis were representative of a tendency towards anti-clericism and esotericism.

One factor that occurs repeatedly among the various conversion accounts is that meeting the Bab himself was often a critical factor in the conversion process. However this factor does not follow the usual pattern of personal charisma in that the meeting with the Bab that is referred to is often one that occurred prior to the Bab putting forward any claim, when the usual factors that lead to an intensification of charisma would not have been operating in the mind of the subsequent disciple. For many of those Shaykhis who went on to become prominent Babis, meeting the Bab in Karbala in 1841-42, prior to his putting forward any claim, had such a marked effect upon them that they later acknowledged his claim immediately they heard of it (6). Similarly among non-Shaykhis, the Bab's address in the Masjid-i Vakil in Shiraz in 1845, although it is said to have been in the nature of a recantation of any claim on his part, had nevertheless such a profound effect upon his audience that 18 or more of the Babis of Shiraz dated their conversion from this experience (7). Comparable to this factor of meeting the Bab face-to-face is the fact that the writings of the Bab appear to have had an equally remarkable effect upon some of those who converted to the Babi movement. For example the leading Babi in Zanjan, Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Hujjat, never met the Bab face-to-face but the perusal of a single page of the writings of the Bab is reported to have been sufficient to cause him to give his allegiance to the Bab (8).

There was however one further factor within the Shaykhi community that seems to have facilitated the conversion of part of it to the Bab's movement. Sayyid Kazim Rashti himself did, according to a number of reports, lay some emphasis on adventist themes in his teaching sessions (9) although this is not clearly reflected in his writings. There is some evidence that already within the lifetime of Rashti there was something of a split between those Shaykhis more interested in esotericism and those more interested in the adventist themes in Rashti's teaching (10). Not unexpectedly, those interested in adventist themes were among those who later became Babis, while some of those identified as being more interested in esotericism became leading opponents of the Bab.

Apart from the Shaykhis, the Bab was able to address himself to the very considerable adventist tension that was present at this time due to the fact that it was the Islamic year 1260. Since this was the one-thousandth anniversary of the beginning of the Occultation of the Twelfth Imam and there were prophecies to the effect that he would reappear at this time, adventist expectation had reached a peak throughout the Shi'i world (11). Certain specific events, and in particular the sacking of Karbala by the Ottomans under Najib Pasha, intensified the expectation that the Hidden Imam Mahdi would appear - to avenge this dishonour to one of the holiest shrines of Shi'ism (12).

During the course of the six turbulent years of the Bab's ministry, certain events occurred which were interpreted by the disciples of the Bab as fulfilling the adventist prophecies in Islam. This factor came into particular prominence from 1848 onwards when the Bab identified himself as the return of the Imam Mahdi and a number of the leading disciples of the Bab were identified as being the "returns" of the

Prophet Muhammad, his daughter Fatima and the Imams who, in Shi'i eschatology, were expected to return in the company of the Imam Mahdi. Similarly, certain opponents of the Bab such as Hajj Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani were identified with the Anti-Christ figure of the Dajjal which also figures prominently in Shi'i prophecy relating to the advent of the Mahdi. The raising of the Black Standard in Khurasan by Mulla Husayn Bushru'i also was very significant in that this was a very well-known eschatological prophecy, familiar to both Shi'is and Sunnis. The result of all of this was an intensification of the messianic motif as a factor in conversions to the new movement.

Comparable to and bound up with this chiliastic fervour, was an appeal to certain very emotive Shi'i themes. In Shi'i Islam, all of the Twelve Imams (except the last) are popularly regarded as having been martyred. Many of the other key figures of Shi'i history were also martyred and thus martyrdom and being oppressed have become, for Shi'is, key symbols of being on the side of truth. Thus the Babis, once they came into conflict with the civil and religious authorities were able to portray themselves as the oppressed and their killed co-religionists as martyrs. Perhaps the key event in this connection was the Upheaval at Shaykh Tabarsi in Mazandaran where a number of the leading Babis were surrounded by large numbers of Government troops and after a protracted siege put to death by treachery. This was widely regarded as having been a re-enactment of the episode of Karbala and doubtless gained the Babi movement much secret support. This episode and others such as the Seven Martyrs of Tihnan, the persecutions in the village of Milan in Adharbayjan, and the transport of the heads of the martyrs of Nayriz were all interpreted by the Babis in this mixture of Adventist and Martyrdom motifs. There is even evidence that their opponents saw this symbolism clearly too (13).

The stages in the unfoldment of the public understanding of his claim (from that of being the Gate of the Hidden Imam to being the Imam himself to being a Prophet bearing an independent revelation from God) appear to have been a deliberate policy of the Bab. He himself in his writings states that he did this in order that at first "men might not be disturbed by a new Book and a new Cause" (13a). In this, the Bab appears to have been remarkably successful in that he was able initially to gather around himself a large group of disciples mainly from the Shaykhi community many of whom would probably have balked at joining the movement had it been presented as a complete departure from Islam. It seems that initially the Bab intended to proclaim himself as the Mahdi at Karbala after his return from Mecca but seeing the hostile reception that his emissaries received at the hands of the leading Shaykhi and Usuli ulama at Najaf and Kirman, he decided to postpone this announcement (13b). During the next three years, he was able to build up a community of disciples and to bind them closely to him. During this period, some of his leading disciples, such as Tahirih, would hint to the generality of the Babis of his "true station". Then when he did eventually put forward his more radical claims in 1848, the majority of the Babi community was now able to accept these. Only a few Babis withdrew at this stage.

MOBILIZATION

In this section, we will consider the diffusion of the Babi movement throughout Iran and Iraq and also look briefly at the network of communications used by the Babis and at their organization. Once again there are considerable differences between the early period, up to about 1848, and the later period.

Initially the Bab announced his claim during the spring and summer of 1844 to a small group of eighteen persons who had been pupils of Sayyid Kazim Rashti, the Shaykhi leader who had died a few months previously. Sayyid Kazim had appointed no-one to take over the leadership of the Shaykhis after him but this group of eighteen were not by any means persons who could have been considered viable contenders for this leadership. They were rather the best of the younger generation among the pupils of Sayyid Kazim. At least one of them, Mulla Husayn Bushru'i, had already distinguished himself by his journey to Isfahan where he had succeeded in obtaining from Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Shafti, the renowned mujtahid of that city, an endorsement of the Shaykhi teachings. But even this would not have made Mulla Husayn a realistic contender for the Shaykhi leadership as his youthful age would have been against him. Those who did consider themselves contenders for the Shaykhi leadership all eventually came out in opposition to the claims of the Bab.

The Bab gathered this small group of disciples around himself at Shiraz (except for Tahirih who became a member of this initial group of disciples through written communication) and from there dispersed them to various parts of Iran, Iraq and India. His instructions to them appear to have been to travel through these areas announcing his claim but without giving details of his specific identity until he himself performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and made his initial announcement there (14). The initial diffusion of the Babi movement was the result of the travels of these "Letters of the Living" from town to town throughout Iran and Iraq (15) and subsequent conversions within the Shaykhi network of each town visited. It is not clear whether this initial Shaykhi predominance among the converts was the result of the specific instructions of the Bab or whether it was a natural result of the fact that these "Letters of the Living" had all themselves been Shaykhis.

In the later stages of Babi history, the importance of itinerant propagandists remained very great except that there was an increasing tendency to widen the scope of those contacted beyond the Shaykhi circle. Thus for example one of the key Babi figures after 1846 was Sayyid Yahya Darabi, known as Vahid, who had not been a Shaykhi and as he travelled around the country, he succeeded in converting many of those associated with the network of contacts built up by himself and his father, Sayyid Ja'far Kashfi, a prominent mujtahid of that era.

Another way in which the Babi movement spread was that news of the Bab's claim spread through the country even more rapidly than the Babi propagandists and this frequently caused individuals to set out for

Shiraz in order to investigate the matter for themselves. In a few instances, an individual would be delegated by a group to go and investigate and report back to them. The conversion of Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Hujjat Zanjani followed the dispatch of such a messenger to Shiraz. Similarly, Mulla Muhammad Furughi was deputed by the inhabitants of the Turbat-i Haydari area to proceed to Mashhad and investigate the uproar caused by the teaching of Mulla Husayn Bushru'i (16). Another important example of this phenomenon, in that it led to the enrollment of a tribal group into the Babi community, was the journey of Shaykh Salman of Hindijan to Shiraz and his later conversion. He then returned to his home town and succeeded in converting some seventy families of the Afshar tribe (17).

One of the notable features of Iranian urban life which remained remarkably constant over many centuries was the tendency to form mutually-antagonistic factions. In many towns in Nineteenth century Iran, this factionation took the form of a division between the Shaykhis and the Usulis of the town. In other towns the divisions were according to the more traditional Ni'mati and Haydari quarters of the town (18). There is some evidence that, in a few towns at least, the diffusion of the Babi movement occurred within one of these factions only, resulting in the automatic enmity of the opposing faction. In Qazvin for example there was long-standing enmity between the Shaykhi faction led by such figures as Mirza 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, Hajji Mulla 'Ali Baraghani and Hajji Asadu'llah Farhadi and the Usuli faction led by Mulla Muhammad Taqi Baraghani. With the advent of the Babi movement, this Shaykhi-Usuli split became transformed into a Babi-Usuli split. Similarly there is some evidence that the Babis in Barfurush obtained most of their support from the Ni'mati faction in the town led by Shari'atmadar and were opposed by the Haydari faction led by Sa'idu'l-'Ulama (19). What is not clear however is to what extent this factor was important in other towns. In Nayriz, for example, it would appear from most accounts that almost the whole of one of the town's quarters became Babis but it is not clear whether it was factionalism or the conversion of Hajji Shaykh 'Abdu'l-'Ali, the Imam-Jum'a of that quarter, that was the major factor in these conversions. The issue is even less clear in the case of Zanjan where the town had, prior to the advent of the Babi movement, been split into two opposing factions by the outspoken stand taken by Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali. He had adopted the Akhbari school and was followed by an appreciable proportion of the town's population. Not surprisingly in view of the antagonistic stance taken by this school towards mujtahids, he was opposed by the town's Usuli mujtahids such as Hajji Sayyid Abu'l-Qasim. Then when Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali became a Babi, many of the townspeople who had formerly followed him also became Babis and the Akhbari-Usuli split within the town became a Babi-Usuli one. It is difficult in these two cases of Nayriz and Zanjan to separate the inter-related factors of factionalism and the tendency of the populace to follow their leader.

During the whole of his ministry, the question of communicating with his widespread following was always a potentially difficult one for the Bab. His family were wholesale merchants and had an extensive network of offices and agents covering much of Iran and the Gulf. During the early period of his ministry, the Bab appears to have used this network

quite extensively. Thus for example, when Mulla Husayn reached Khurasan in 1844, he communicated all that had happened to him by means of a letter that he sent through partners of the Bab's uncle in Tabas to Yazd where the family had a major office and thence to the Bab in Shiraz.

In the later stages of his ministry, the Bab used itinerant messengers in order to remain in communication with his following. By this time the Bab was imprisoned in the remotest corner of Adharbayjan and so communications were even more problematical. There was however a steady stream of Babis who travelled from all parts of the country to Maku and Chihriq to visit the Bab and were therefore able to take with them letters for the Bab and also to take back the Bab's letters and instructions. In addition to this a number of individuals and in particular Mirza Adi Ghuzal, known as Hajji Sayyah, became full-time messengers travelling around the country taking with them the messages and writings of the Bab and then returning to the Bab when they had completed their task. Associated with Hajji Sayyah in his task were persons such as Mulla 'Abdu'l-Karim Qazvini (known as Mirza Ahmad Katib) who spent their time transcribing the writings of the Bab so that there would be more copies for the messengers to distribute. The effectiveness of this system of communications was demonstrated when in 1848 the Bab issued instructions for as many of the Babis as possible to attend the Conference of Badasht, to rally to the Black Standard that Mulla Husayn had raised in Khurasan and later to go to the assistance of Qaddus and Mulla Husayn who were besieged at Shaykh Tabarsi. The large number of Babis from a wide geographical distribution (20) who responded to this call (even though many of them were unable to penetrate the ring that the besieging forces had put around the Babis at Shaykh Tabarsi and had to return disappointed) is ample evidence of the efficient workings of this network.

The Babi community never achieved any significant level of organization. Circumstances were against this. The ministry of the Bab was too brief and turbulent, the persecutions that marked its final stages too devastating in their effect and the proclamation of the claim of Baha'u'llah followed too soon to allow any real degree of organization and cohesion to develop among the Babis. In the writings of the Bab and in the instructions that he gave the "Letters of the Living", there are the barest outlines of a hierarchical system. It would appear that the Bab intended his followers to be constituted into groups of 19 (equivalent to the word wahid - unity), the first of these wahids was to consist of the 18 "Letters of the Living" together with himself. These wahids were to be further made up into groups of 19 (i.e. $19 \times 19 = 361$) called kullu shay' (meaning "All Things", this word being equivalent to 361). But what the exact organizational functions of these groups were to have been is not clear. In any case these wahids and kullu shay's were never formed as far as is known. The Bab also referred to a number of his followers as mir'at (mirrors). This was clearly a rank below that of the "Letters of the Living" (Huruf-i Hayy) but again the functions of these different designations from an organizational point of view is not clear and they appeared to have denoted spiritual rank rather than any particular function.

In 1848, when the Bab put forward his claim to be the Imam Mahdi, he began to apply to himself such titles as "The Primal Point" (nugta-yi ulā). Some of the histories indicate that he then transferred the title of "Bab" to one or two of his leading disciples (21). With this transfer of title there appears to have also been a certain degree of transfer of function and authority. There is only indirect evidence for this but certainly in some of the earliest Babi histories, Qaddus is referred to as Qa'im-i Mazandarani and Mulla Husayn Bushru'i as Qa'im-i Khurasani (22). Moreover, the raising of the Black Standard in Khurasan appears to have been done by Mulla Husayn in his new status as the Qa'im (the Qa'im being one of the titles of the Imam Mahdi and the prophecy relating to the raising of the Black Standard states that the Mahdi is with the Black Standard). The fact that the Bab sent Mulla Husayn his green turban (green signifying descent from the Prophet Muhammad) and gave him the new name Sayyid 'Ali (23) may also be of significance with regard to this assumption by Mulla Husayn of the role of the Mahdi. However it must be stressed that all of these are only hints and indications in the histories, and the Bab's writings, insofar as they are known to the present author, provide no basis for this putative transfer of authority (24).

In practice the Babi communities seem to have had no uniform formal organization. In some places, there appears to have been some degree of hierarchical importance attached to the question of how early in the history of the movement any particular individual became a Babi. In at least one source those who became Babis at an early stage are called the sabiqun (the forerunners) and their interpretations of the Bab's teachings are regarded as more authoritative (25). But in other places the Babis themselves gathered around a natural leader. This was often someone who had already held a leading position in the community before the advent of the Bab: usually someone who had held religious leadership such as Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Hujjat at Zanjan but occasionally a leading lay figure such as Aqa Rasul Bihnamiri who was the landowner at Bihnamir and led the Bihnamiri Babis at Shaykh Tabarsi. In most of the large cities such as Shiraz, Isfahan, Tihnan, Mashhad and Tabriz however, it would seem that there was no overall leadership except when someone of the stature of the Bab himself or Mulla Husayn was resident for a time in the town. In the cities, there is some evidence that leadership was divided with certain persons having an individual following among the Babis of the city (26).

SOCIAL LOCATION OF THE BABI COMMUNITY

The question of how many Babis there were in Iran at the time of its maximum spread is a difficult one to resolve since there is very little basis on which to form a judgement. However, it is interesting that several estimates, one by the Bab himself and another by the British Minister in Tihnan Sir Justin Shiel, agree upon a figure of 100,000 (27). One estimate puts the number of Babis in Baghdad at 70 during the time that Tahirih was there (28) and there was probably an equal number at Karbala.

In the same way as it is impossible to obtain any accurate estimate of the number of Babis in Iran, it is also impossible to make any except generalised statements regarding the social location of the Babi community as a whole. It is however possible to make a more accurate assessment of the Babi leadership since sufficient biographical information is available about this group to enable us to come to some definite conclusions. Analysing the Babi leadership cadre will in turn give us a firmer basis on which to make statements regarding the social location of the whole Babi community.

In order to give our assessment of the Babi leadership cadre a more quantitative basis, we have analysed the biographical information to be found in one of the standard historical works, Fadil Mazandarani, Kitab-i Zuhuru'l-Hagg, Volume 3. This work takes each Babi community and gives biographical information about the leading individuals in that community. We have analysed the information regarding the leading Babis named for each area (where Mazandarani has on occasions given just lists of names, such as names of those proceeding to Shaykh Tabarsi, we have assumed these individuals to be rank-and-file Babis rather than the leadership and therefore not included these in our analysis). Table 1 gives an analysis of the Babi community of Iran by occupation and geographical location (29).

It can immediately be seen from Table 1 that the preponderating social class of the Babi leadership was that of ulama, and in particular the minor ulama. Indeed all of the "Letters of the Living" belonged to this category as did most of the other important leaders. Wholesale merchants (the tujjar) are another prominent group. Socially, the ulama and the tujjar were very closely linked both in their day-to-day activities and by intermarriage (30). Thus it is interesting to note that these two groups together constitute almost 70% of those Babi leaders whose occupation is known. The peasant category primarily consists of fruit-growers from Nayriz.

One factor that is readily apparent from this table is the manner in which networks of people of the same occupation operated in the process of diffusion. Thus for example, in Qazvin, fifteen of the Babi leaders were wholesale merchants while Isfahan and Tabriz both of which had many merchants resident had very few of them become Babis. In Isfahan, one of the main networks through which the movement spread was the Asnaf (the guilded craftsmen). In Zanjan, although large numbers in the town became Babis, very few of the ulama did but in most other towns the ulama were one of the main networks through which the movement spread (31).

The further information derived from the analysis of Babi leaders is summarised in Tables 2 and 3. Table 2 demonstrates that the Babi leadership was drawn almost equally from the towns and the villages. There was little involvement of the tribes people that at this time are generally thought to have constituted some 30-40% of the Iranian population. The 5 tribal people to be found in Table 1 include one Kurdish tribal leader from the Qazvin area and one Afshar tribal leader from Hindijan (there were in fact another two tribesmen, one an Afshar and the other a Turkaman, but as these had occupations, they are listed

TABLE ONE: PROMINENT BABIS BY OCCUPATION AND GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	TOTAL
Khurasan (Ga'in & Simnan)	6	32	0	3	0	2	2	0	0	0	3	48
Mazandaran	2	8	1	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	23
Azerbaijan	2	22	0	6	3	2	2	3	0	0	6	46
Gazvin & Khamsih	2	10	0	0	4	17	0	9	1	3	1	47
Tehran & Qumm	2	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11
Kashan & Mahallat	1	8	0	0	0	9	0	2	0	0	7	27
Isfahan	1	14	1	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	3	24
Fars	1	13	1	1	0	3	2	2	12	2	2	39
Yazd & Kerman	2	8	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	14
Kirmanshah & Hamadan	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Iraq	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	7
Total	19	125	4	19	7	34	9	20	15	6	31	289
Percentage (Excluding column K)	7	48	2	7	3	13	3	8	6	2		99

- A - Major Ulama: mujtahids, Imam-Jum'is and any ulama who had a following
 B - Minor Ulama: all other ulama and tullab (religious students)
 C - Landowners & Employers: landowners and landowning farmers
 D - Notables & High Govt. Officials: governors, court officials, army officers of rank of sartip and above, high government officials
 E - Minor Govt. Officials: secretaries, couriers, soldiers, kadkhudās
 F - Wholesale Merchants (tujjar)
 G - Retail Merchants: Guilded retail merchants, petty commodity producers
 H - Skilled Urban Workers: guilded craftsmen (asnaf) and other service workers
 I - Peasants
 J - Tribal elements
 K - Occupation unknown

SOURCE: Māzandarānī, Zuhuru'l-Hagg, vol. 3

elsewhere in the table). But these represent the more settled tribes rather than the nomads.

Table 3 analyses the Babi leadership according to whether they became Babis before or after the year A.H. 1264 (A.D. 1848), which as described above, was in many ways a critical year. It can be seen from this table that the majority of the Babi leadership was converted in the early period, before 1264, and comparatively few after that date. The division between Shaykhi and non-Shaykhi clearly demonstrates the importance of the Shaykhi movement as a source for conversions especially in the earlier period. It should be noted that this table probably in fact underestimates the number of Babis who had previously been Shaykhis. It tends to be only those who had travelled to Karbala to study under Sayyid Kazim Rashti that can readily be identified as Shaykhis. Others may well have held to the Shaykhi position but, since at this time the lines between the Usulis and the Shaykhis had not yet been rigidly drawn, there was no ready method of identifying them. One suspects that many of those whom Mulla Husayn Bushru'i contacted on his first journey from Shiraz were probably Shaykhis whom he had previously met but they are not all identified as such and so appear in the non-Shaykhi section of the table.

Having analysed the Babi leadership, it remains to be seen what statements can be made with any degree of certainty regarding the Babi community as a whole. In making these statements reliance has been placed on an analysis previously made on the Babis participating in the Shaykh Tabarsi upheaval (32) as well as the information presented in the present paper and the general impression created by the histories.

The geographical spread of the Babi movement appears to have been closely related to the initial diffusion of the "Letters of the Living". The largest numbers of Babis were to be found in a broad band across central Iran stretching from Shiraz and Yazd northwards to Tehran and Mazandaran and thence north-eastwards to Khurasan and north-westwards to Adharbayjan. There were comparatively few Babis along the Gulf littoral, in the south-western towns such as Kirmanshah and Hamadan, in the south-eastern area centred on Kirman and in the province of Gilan (centred on Rasht) on the Caspian coast. This variation in the distribution can mostly be accounted for by the activities of the "Letters of the Living". The areas that have large numbers of Babis were the areas to which the "Letters" dispersed and began their propaganda on behalf of the Bab. Hamadan and Kirmanshah were not visited until comparatively late (by Tahirih in 1847) and so the community there was not well established before the persecutions began in earnest from 1848 onwards. Another indication that the Babi communities there were but weak is the fact that in later years, the Baha'i communities in those cities were not based on an earlier Babi community as was the case for the major central cities. Gilan does not appear to have been visited by any of the "Letters of the Living". No propaganda activity was carried out along the Gulf littoral either. The situation in Kirman was somewhat different. Qaddus did visit this city as did Mulla Sadiq Muqaddas but the opposition of the Shaykhi leader in that city, Hajj Mirza Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani, was so rigorous that little headway was made in that city. In Iraq, the main

TABLE TWO: RURAL/URBAN ORIGINS OF PROMINENT IRANIAN BABIS

		%
Large Towns (>22,000)	114	40
Medium-sized Towns (7,000-22000)	65	23
Small Towns (2,000-7,000)	37	13
Villages	66	23
	---	---
Total	282	99

SOURCES: Mazandarani, Zuhuru'l-Hagg, vol. 3. For this Table, the list of towns given by Thompson in Parliamentary Papers, vol. 69 for 1867-68, pp. 507-15 (reprinted by C. Issawi, Economic History of Iran, p.28) has been used for the large and medium-sized towns. For the small towns and villages, I have used information from Gazetteer of Persia. However it should be realised that this information is very imprecise and it is impossible to determine the size at that time of certain large villages such as Bushru'iyyih which has been classified here under villages but may well have had more than 2,000 inhabitants.

NOTE: The seven Iraqis included in Tables 1 and 3 have been excluded from this table hence the difference in totals.

TABLE THREE: PREVIOUS RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES OF PROMINENT BABIS BY DATE OF CONVERSION

Conversion before 1264 - Shaykhis	75
- not identified as Shaykhis	70
- total	145
Conversion 1264 or after - Shaykhis	2
- not identified as Shaykhis	38
- total	40
Date of conversion not known	104
Total -	289

SOURCE: Māzandarānī, Zuhuru'l-Hagg, vol. 3

Shaykhi centre of Karbala soon had a major Babi community through the efforts of Tahirih and others. At Baghdad and Kazimayn also there was much propaganda and a community was built up but no headway was made at the other main Shi'i centre, Najaf, probably because there was no Shaykhi presence there.

With regard to the occupational and class constitution of the Babi community, it cannot be assumed that the community as a whole would share the bias towards the ulama and tujjar shown among the leadership in Table 1. Indeed in places such as Zanjan and Nayriz where large numbers became Babis, the evidence seems to indicate that the converts were a complete cross-section of the community and the analysis of the participants at Shaykh Tabarsi (33) confirms that this was probably the case with the Babi community as a whole. Indeed in the case of the Zanjan Babis there is even a hint that there was a slight predominance of the poorer classes (34). At the other end of the social scale, the Babis even succeeded in making one or two converts from among the court and nobility. Tahirih, at various stages of her travels, is reported to have contacted a number of Gajar princesses and to have converted a few of them (35). Manuchihr Khan Mu'tamidu'd-Dawlih was probably the most influential figure converted but several others including Mirza Rida Khan Turkaman, Rida Gulī Khan Afshar and Baha'u'llah himself had access to court circles.

With regard to the urban/rural distribution of the Babis also, there would appear to have been no bias towards either urban or rural populations among the Babi converts. However, whereas there was a fairly even distribution of Babis throughout most of the major cities of Iran (with the exceptions noted above), this did not apply to the villages. Conversions in the villages tended to occur wherever there was already a link to that village through a Babi that had been converted in one of the towns or through the Shaykhi network. In such a situation large numbers would sometimes become Babis within one particular village while another nearby village would have no Babis at all. In addition it appears to have been largely in the north of the country that large numbers of villagers became Babis, particularly in Adharbayjan, Mazandaran and Khurasan. Apart from those who became Babis as a result of the journey of Sayyid Yahya Darabi Vahid from Yazd to Nayriz in 1850, there is no other record of significant conversions in the villages of the south. Thus the distribution of rural Babis was rather patchy but their total numbers were not inconsiderable and probably balanced the urban Babis. The paucity of tribal Babis mentioned above in the analysis of Babi leaders also holds true for the Babi community as a whole. The 70 Afshar families converted by Shaykh Salman in Hindijan are the only reference to be found of substantial numbers of tribal people becoming Babis. But these, as with the other tribal members mentioned above, represent the more settled rather than the nomadic tribes.

Apart from the tribes, the Babi movement made no significant converts among other major groups in the Iranian population. There is only a record of one conversion from among the Zoroastrians (36), a few Jews (37), a few Ahl-i Haqq ('Aliyu'llāhīs) (38) and no Christians or Sunnis.

One of the major social thrusts of the Babi movement, at least as perceived by contemporary observers (39) and probably by the Iranian population itself, was in the improvement of the social position of women. The laws enacted by the Bab certainly made some improvements in the position of women. These included: the abolition of the veil and of the seclusion of women (40), the consent of both parties being necessary for marriage (41), and restrictions on the ease of divorce including the necessity of waiting one year (42). But the actions of Tahirih, her assumption of a leading role among the Babis and the Bab's evident approval of this obviously set an example which the Babis seem to have followed. What information exists in the historical sources seems to indicate that there was a significant degree of conversion among the women as well as the men. Certainly our analysis of the Babi leadership in the tables in this paper includes 11 women out of the 282 leading Babis (a better proportion than achieved by women in the British Parliament and U.S. Congress in 1984!). And conversions also occurred at all levels of society. The accounts of the upheavals at Zanjan and Nayriz speak of the women sharing in the defence of the Babi positions and even, in the case of Zaynab at Zanjan, taking a leading role in the fighting (43).

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December 1984

NOTES

1) In Shi'i doctrine, the Twelfth Imam disappeared in A.D. 260 (A.D. 873). He went into Occultation and will reappear to fill the earth with justice. He is the Imam Mahdi. See M. Momen, Introduction to Shi'i Islam, Oxford, 1985, Chap. 8.

2) M. Momen, "The trial of Mulla 'Ali Bastami: a combined Sunni-Shi'i fatwa against the Bab" Iran, Vol. 20, pp. 113-143; see in particular pp. 140-42.

3) Thus for example, the leading female Babi, Tahirih, was openly referring to the abrogation of the Islamic Shari'a in Karbala in 1845-47 several years before the Bab himself publically advanced such a position; see Mazandarani, Zuhuru'l-Hagg, Vol. 3 (Tihiran, n.d., hereinafter referred to as ZH3), p. 318 and statement by a Shaykhi in Mazandarani, ZH3, p.35. See also statement regarding Tahirih in Samandar, Tarikh (Tihiran 131), p.349, and statements regarding her pronouncements in Kirmanshah in 1847 (Mustafa Baghdadi, Risala Amriyya, Cairo, 1919, pp. 113, 114). Similarly regarding Hujjat, see Nabil's Narrative (London, 1953 and Wilmette, 1932, hereinafter referred to as Nabil with page number for British edition first and U.S. edition second) pp.392/538-9.

4) The combined Sunni-Shi'i fatwa against the Bab in Baghdad in 1845 and the book of Hajj Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani, Izhaq al-Batil written in 1845, both clearly demonstrate that these ulama were well aware of the implications behind the Bab's writings. See Momen "Trial of Mulla 'Ali", pp. 140-42.

5) See M. Momen, Introduction to Shi'i Islam, pp. 189-190.

6) See for example statements regarding the conversions of: Mulla Ahmad Mu'allim, Hajji Muhammad Rida of Isfahan, Mirza Muhammad 'Ali Nahri, Mulla Zaynu'l-'Abidin Shahmirzadi (Mazandarani, ZH3, pp. 158, 101, 97, and 200 respectively); also Mulla Muhammad Sadiq Muqaddas (Nabil, p. 69-70/100) and Hajji Rasul, the father of Nabil Qazvini (Samandar, Tarikh p. 16-17). Similarly for Sayyid Javad Karbala'i who had known the Bab from childhood (H.M. Balyuzi, The Bab, Oxford, 1973, pp. 37-8.

7) Personal communication of material to be presented in forthcoming book by Abu'l-Qasim Afnan.

8) Nabil, p. 129/179.

9) al-Qatil ibn al-Karbala'i quoted in Mazandarani, ZH3, p.506-7; see also Nabil Zarandi, pp.19-20, 28-32/24-5,38-45.

10) Mulla Yusuf Ardibili, one of the disciples of Sayyid Kazim at Karbala, is reported to have openly advocated adventist themes in Karbala during Sayyid Kazim's lifetime and to have clashed as a result of this with Shaykh Hasan Gawhar and Hajj Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani (Mazandarani, ZH3, pp. 49-50); Ardibili later became a Babi while

Gawhar and Kirmani became leading opponents of the Bab. Similarly, Hajji Asadu'llah of Saysan was proclaiming an adventist message before he even became a Shaykhi. Later he warned his disciples against Mulla Muhammad Mamaqani, a leading Shaykhi of Tabriz (Mazandarani, ZH3, p. 44-46); the followers of Hajji Asadu'llah later became Babis while Mamaqani became an opponent of the Bab.

11) On messianic expectation in Iran, Iraq and the Caucasus at this time, see Amanat "Babi Movement", pp. 75-90. Mrs. Meer Hasan Ali states that the Shi'is with whom she was in contact in Oudh in India in the 1820s were "said to possess prophecies that lead them to expect the twelve hundred and sixtieth year of the Hegirah as the time for his [the Imam Mahdi's] coming" (Mrs. Meer Hasan Ali, Observations on the Muslims of India, p. 76, quoted in J.R. Cole "Imami Shi'ism..." pp. 348-49.

12) See J.R. Cole and M. Momen, "Mafia, Mob and Shi'ism in Iraq: The rebellion of Ottoman Karbala 1824-43" Past and Present, forthcoming.

13) Mazandarani, ZH3, p. 42

13a) The Bab in Dala'il-i Sab'ih, translated in Selections from the Writings of the Bab, Haifa, 1976, p. 119

13b) See the Bab, quoted in A. Ishraq-Khavari, Gamus-i Igan, [Tihiran], 128/1971, Vol. 2, p.1003-4. See note in R. Mehrabkhani, "Some Notes on fundamental principles...", Baha'i Studies Bulletin, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 40-41.

14) For a more detailed list of the putative instructions of the Bab to the "Letters of the Living", see Momen, "Sunni-Shi'i fatwa", p. 115.

15) There appears to be no information as to what happened to Shaykh Sa'id Hindi, the "Letter of the Living" who was delegated to proceed to India beyond what is mentioned in Nabil p. 432/ 588-9.

16) Mazandarani, ZH3, 155n

17) Mazandarani, ZH3, p.301. From a previous analysis of the Babi converts at the Upheaval at Shaykh Tabarsi, it had appeared that there were negligible tribal converts to the Babi movement (Momen "Social Basis of the Babi Upheavals", International Journal of Middle East Studies, 15, 1983, pp. 166, 173). It is clear from this reference that this statement requires some modification. There are also references to conversions from among Kurds (Mazandarani, ZH3, p. 386).

18) A. Amanat, "The Early Years of the Babi Movement; Background and Development", Ph.D., Oxford, 1981, 383-4

19) Mazandarani, ZH3, p. 406-7

20) M. Momen "Social Basis", pp. 162-166.

21) Nuqtatu'l-Kaf, pp. 202, 206-207. See also Gobineau, Religions et Philosophies, Paris, 1957, p. 144

22) For example the Waqayi'-i Mimiyya by Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Zawari'i known as Mahjur. The beginning of the Waqayi'-i Qal'a by Mir Muhammad Rida Shahmirzadi speaks of the desire of his relatives, when they heard of Mulla Husayn being at Shaykh Tabarsi, to join his company in order that "we may suffer martyrdom at the stirrups of the Lord of the Age (i.e. the Imam Mahdi)."

23) Nabil, pp. 235-6/324-5. Mulla Husayn was not in fact a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. There is evidence that Mulla Husayn wore the green turban throughout the Shaykh Tabarsi episode, see Gobineau, Religions, p. 193.

24) The examples cited by E.G. Browne (Traveller's Narrative, pp. 230-234) are unconvincing as there are more obvious interpretations of these passages.

25) See letter by Shaykh Sultan Karbala'i written in 1263 (1847), regarding the disagreement between Tahirih and Mulla Ahmad Kurasani; quoted in Mazandarani, ZH3, pp. 240-250.

26) That at any rate was the situation among the Babis of Isfahan in 1870-73; see M.Momen "Early relations between Christian Missionaries and the Babi and Baha'i Communities" Studies in Babi and Baha'i History, Vol. 1, pp. 58-63.

27) See P. Smith, "A note on Babi and Baha'i numbers in Iran" Baha'i Studies Bulletin, vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 3-7.

28) Mazandarani, ZH3, p.317.

29) The categories and geographical divisions have been kept as close as possible to those in Momen "Social Basis..." in order to facilitate comparisons. Of particular interest is the comparison between Table 2 in that paper, the table for participants at Shaykh Tabarsi, and the present table. Participants at Shaykh Tabarsi included leaders as well as rank-and-file Babis.

30) On the close links between the ulama and the tujjar, see A. Mahdavi, "The significance of Private Archives for the Study of the Economic and Social History of Iran in the Late Qajar Period" Iranian Studies, Vol. 16, 1983, pp. 259-260.

31) On asnaf in Isfahan, see also Table 2 in Momen, "Social Basis...", p.162. On Zanzan, see also Table 7 in Momen "Social Basis...", p.170. The lack of conversions among the ulama in Zanzan is almost certainly due to the unorthodox Akhbari views of Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Hujjat which would have alienated the majority of the ulama from him prior to the advent of the Babi movement.

32) Momen, "Social basis...", pp. 161-66, 173-75

33) Ibid., Table 2

34) In a manuscript history by Mirza Husayn Zanjani, it is recorded that: "...as for the Babis, whichever of them were of the poorer classes of the town, or the traders or the sayyids or the religious students or others resisted the enemy with complete constancy and began to build fortifications. Some who were rich however, and wealth had become a veil for them, went over to the side of the Muslims, and these were those whose place had always been at the head of the assembly or at the front of the mimbar. Quoted in Momen, "Social Basis...", p.170

35) Avarih, Kawakibu'd-Durriyyih, vol. 1, pp. 114, 117-8

36) Mazandarani, ZH3, p. 395n.

37) There were six Jewish converts in Turbat-i Haydari in about 1850 (although these were probably Jews who had been forcibly converted to Islam) and a number in Baghdad. there may also have been a small number of Christian converts in Baghdad. The whole question will be dealt with in more detail in a forthcoming Ph. D. thesis by Stephen Lambden at the University of Newcastle.

38) These include Muhammad Big Chaparchi, the Bab's escort from Isfahan to Tabriz (see Nuqtatu'l-Kaf, Leiden, 1910, p. 124; Hamadani, Tarikh-i-Jadid, Cambridge, 1893, p. 217); and three residents of Qazvin, including one Kurdish tribal leader (see Mazandarani, ZH3, pp. 385, 386.

39) See end of account by Cormick of his interview with the Bab, Momen, The Babi and Baha'i Religions, 1844-1944; Some Contemporary Western Accounts, Oxford, 1981, p. 75; see also articles by Jablonowski cited in the same work.

40) Arabic Bayan, Wahid 19, Chapter 2

41) Persian Bayan, Wahid 6, Chapter 7

42) Ibid, Wahid 6, chapter 12

43) See accounts cited in Momen "Social Basis...", p. 175-6

BAHÁ'Í VALUES AND HISTORICAL INQUIRY

Musings on the Continuing Discussion of Ethics and Methodology

The popular conception of academic inquiry includes the notion that scholars must make a clear distinction in their work between facts and values. Science and religion - faith and reason - it is commonly assumed, must occupy wholly distinct, and even opposing, areas of human thought and activity. This popular view supposes that scholarship is or should be value-free, and that every scholar must strive to conduct his business without influence from his faith or values. Those Baha'is who hold this view are, therefore, naturally suspicious of any believer who starts out to make a scholarly study of some aspect of Baha'i history, assuming that he must discard, or at least suspend temporarily, his belief in Baha'u'llah and in the truths of the Revelation in order to pursue his work. They naturally view such an intention with alarm.

However, the dichotomy between facts and values, between faith and reason, has long since been discarded in modern academic circles. In the first place, it is recognized that no scholar is able, simply at will, to wipe himself clean of his values, biases, and moral judgments so as to pursue his work. Every academic historian recognizes that he, and all his colleagues, have biases that will affect their studies. The current view is that all human thought and activity is grounded in values, and there is no escape from this.

It is accepted among academics that values and value judgments are an integral part of all academic study, even in the so-called "hard sciences," such as chemistry, mathematics and physics. One cannot imagine physics, for instance without the choice of a significant line of research, the formulation of hypotheses, the evaluation of contradictory evidence, the judgments about the significance of partial data, the process of theory building, and so forth. All such basic activities are fundamentally based in human values and value judgments.

If values play such a role in the study of physics, the study of history provides an even more central role for them. The historian, after all, studies human beings: their actions, their intentions, their motivations. The idea that all this can be done without making judgments is, of course, preposterous. Any modern academic historian would find the notion of a "value-free history" laughable indeed.

The argument for the role of values in human history has been made particularly well by Professor Edward Hallett Carr, who, by the way, was by no means the first one to propose it. However, since his book What Is History? was published over twenty years ago and has become a popular textbook for undergraduate history courses in this country, and since it is used in these courses to debunk the popular notions we have mentioned above, it might be useful to refer to it. His views on the subject, while not unchallenged, can be taken to represent the current academic approach one might find in major universities today.

Carr notes in his book that there are an infinite number of data from the past which are available to us. Everything from the length of Napoleon's nose to the number of people killed in the Vietnam War falls into this category. The number of "facts" we can discover, even about the present, is unlimited. Obviously, all of these cannot be considered by the historian. The scholar must choose his subject, and then choose his facts, to make his work possible. This selection of subjects and facts is necessarily based on a system of values. Selectivity—even in our culturally determined realm of cognition—is the first place where values come into play. Carr goes farther to say, "The historian is necessarily selective. The belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian is a preposterous fallacy." And again, he maintains, "Historical facts. . . presuppose some measure of interpretation; and historical interpretations always involve moral judgments—or, if you prefer a more neutral sounding term, value judgments."

After denying that there are any "pure facts," Carr goes on to make the obvious, though often overlooked, point that the historian must use, as the sources of his history, documents which are themselves the products of human beings and so reflect their values, prejudices, etc. These documents are not accepted at face value, but must be weighed and evaluated by use of a different scholarly system of values. Therefore, it is the central work of history not merely to record what has been left behind by those in the past, but to evaluate it. Carr puts it clearly, "History means interpretation."

(All this is not to suggest that facts and values are the same things. They are different. Facts are the infinite number of sensory data which are available to us; values are the choices that we make concerning the importance, the usefulness, the meaning, and the moral worth of those data. However, both facts and values are integral parts of all human activity—from the simple act of cognition to the acceptance of a universal religious system. In any case, it is universally recognized among academics today that values and value judgments play legitimate roles in the study of history. Such a position is axiomatic to modern historical scholarship.)

In most cases, historians do not make their values explicit. But some schools of history have formulated open and systematic sets of values which they apply to the study of the past. Marxists are particularly vocal in this respect. They unapologetically declare that their study of history rests on a normative framework with explicit values concerning economic exploitation, the value of human labor, the goals of history, etc. They regard their work as one of the tools to be used in the struggle to expose false values and overturn the present world order. A Marxist interpretation of history is certainly respectable in academic circles. And as a result of its explicitly humanist values, it is immensely popular, as well.

Baha'i scholars who approach the study of history will also fall into the category of those who accept an explicit and systematic set of values. Baha'is have recognized the claim of Baha'u'llah to be the Manifestation of God for this age and they accept his teachings as the basis of their worldview. There is certainly no need

to make any apology for this as far as the academic world is concerned. But, the implication that such beliefs and values should have for the Baha'i scholar himself is a serious question.

It must be recognized that although the biases and values held by any scholar will have a profound affect on the character of his work, they are not themselves the objects of scholarly debate. Values do not admit to empirical proof or falsification. So neither the Baha'i scholar, nor his fellow believers, need have any fear that one's faith in Baha'u'llah is somehow threatened by scholarly pursuits. The acceptance of Baha'u'llah (as the source of one's values) is not something that can be proved or disproved on scholarly grounds. It is not properly a subject which would even arise in scholarly discourse. For the scholar of history, the question of the implications of his Baha'i identity for his academic work is a personal matter which must be worked out by the scholar himself, hopefully in discourse with fellow scholars of the same faith.

The question does not admit to a facile answer. Baha'is distinguish, for example, between the original, pure and uninterpreted teachings of Jesus as they were spoken and demonstrated by him two thousand years ago, and the development of Christendom and Christian doctrine through the centuries. Baha'is hold the explicit value that the pure teachings of Jesus were life-giving, divinely inspired guidance for the world, while the later developments hold no such status and are thought to have obscured the true teachings of Christ.

However, a moment's reflection will suffice to bring the scholar who sets out seriously to study the history of Christianity to the realization that this distinction is of no help at all to his work. This is for the simple reason that he has no access to the "pure teachings" of Jesus, and, therefore, he can never know what they were. The point might be made even more clearly by reference to the teachings of Buddha or Zoroaster, whose original teachings are even more obscure than those of Jesus. The fact is that the teachings of Jesus are available to us, insofar as they are recoverable at all, only through the writings and actions of his later followers.

Despite the fact that a Baha'i and, say, a Catholic might hold different values concerning Christian teachings and history, they must pursue exactly the same methods in their study of the history of Christianity. This is true despite the unique Baha'i values involved, since there is no possible way that these values can be applied to academic inquiry in this case. All that the scholar can do to recover Christian history, be he Catholic or Baha'i, is study the sayings and doings of men. These can only be approached through the evidence and documents which have been left for us—these also having been created by men. Reference to an unknown "perfect type" is of no help. One's conclusions from such a study will certainly be affected by one's values, but one's methodologies will not.

Now, when the Baha'i scholar turns to a study of the history

of the Baha'i Faith, he will not have to face quite the same problem of access to the original teachings of the Prophet. In the Baha'i Faith we have available to us many original documents written by Baha'u'llah. These documents form the basis of Baha'i belief. However, a study of these writings does not, in and of itself, constitute a study of Baha'i history.

Consider the following subjects: 1) the membership of the Baha'i Community of Los Angeles in 1932; 2) the rise of the Baha'i Faith in the West; 3) the history of the Baha'i Faith in Brazil from 1963 to 1973. The fact that we have access to the original Writings of Baha'u'llah will be of no help at all to the scholar who sets out to investigate these real subjects of Baha'i history. In his approach, he will have to pursue the same methods of inquiry that any non-Baha'i would. A study of the Holy Text does not constitute the study of Baha'i history.

It is possible to maintain, as a value, that the early actions of the Baha'is in America, for instance, should not be regarded as developments in Baha'i history, but rather should be seen as growth in the community's understanding of the Baha'i Revelation. This view would hold that the history of the Cause is guided by God, that somewhere in the Mind of God the Baha'i Revelation exists in perfect type, and that this form is gradually being made manifest on earth through a Divine Plan. No one could argue with such values on academic grounds.

But again, such a view would have no affect at all on the methodologies which the scholar must use to study Baha'i history.

Since he has no access to the Mind of God, he does not know, and can never know, what the "Baha'i Revelation" in its idealized form is. Therefore, all he can study are the doings and sayings of men as the developments of Baha'i history. He cannot study the Mind of God, nor can he make comparisons to an ideal which is unknown.

The academic student of Baha'i history can only study the actions of the Baha'is. It is these actions, along with the actions of the Central Figures of the Faith, which constitute Baha'i history. The early belief among Western Baha'is that 'Abdūl-Baha was the Return of Christ, the dissensions in the early New York Baha'i Community, the lessons of Ibrahim Kheiralla in his early American classes—these are all basic and important subjects of Baha'i history about which the study of the Holy Text may yield little or nothing. The Baha'i scholar has, in this respect, no special methodologies to pursue that differ from those of his non-Baha'i colleagues.

Even with reference to the Writings of Baha'u'llah, where they concern historical questions, the Baha'i may be in no different position than a non-Baha'i. The Baha'i Writings cannot always be taken literally—especially as regards questions of history. We know that all of the Prophets of God have spoken in metaphors and have geared their discourses to the understandings of their listeners.

Mirza Abu'l-Fadl, regarded as the most learned Baha'i scholar, addressed this question as early as 1900, in his book translated into English as *Al-Durar al-Bahiyyih*, *MIRACLES AND METAPHORS*:

It is clear that the prophets and Manifestations of the Cause of God were sent to guide the nations, to improve their characters, and to bring the people nearer to their Source and ultimate Goal. They were not sent as historians, astronomers, philosophers, or natural scientists....Therefore, the prophets have indulged the people in regard to their historical notions, folk stories, and scientific principles, and have spoken to them according to these. They conversed as was appropriate to their audience and hid certain realities behind the curtain of allusion. (p.9)

In another passage he states:

It is well known that neither the Prophet Muhammad nor the rest of the prophets ever engaged in disputes with the people about their historical beliefs, but addressed them according to their local traditions. (p. 14)

From Abu'l-Fadl's point of view, which the reader is urged to review in its entirety, even when the scholar is presented with a direct quotation from the Writings on some point of history, he must subject that quotation to the same methodologies as he might use for any other source. This is because he cannot discount the real possibility that the verses revealed by Baha'u'llah might be interpreted figuratively, might have been spoken in the idiom of

the listener, or might have some other meaning that is not immediately obvious.

Juan Cole's article "Problems of Chronology in Baha'u'llah's Tablet of Wisdom" (World Order, Vol. 13, #3, Spring 1979, pp. 24-39) provides an excellent example of the importance of doing this. Here Cole notes that Baha'u'llah's statement in Lawh-i Hikmat that Pythagoras and Empedocles were contemporaries of David and Solomon, while it follows the traditional Muslim dating, is an historical and factual error. It would be a mistake, therefore, for Baha'is to accept Baha'u'llah's statement at face value. Any Baha'i historian who did so would find that position untenable.

A similar point might be made about the writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi, although they do not, strictly speaking, form a part of the Holy Text. Shoghi Effendi was not infallible in matters of Baha'i history. In a letter to an individual written on his behalf in 1944 by his secretary it is stated:

The infallibility of the Guardian is confined to matters which are related strictly to the Cause and interpretations of the Teachings; he is not an infallible authority on other subjects, such as economics, science, etc.

In a letter to an individual believer dated July 25, 1974, the Universal House of Justice made reference to an interesting incident concerning the Guardian's own methods of historical inquiry:

"The Guardian was meticulous about the authenticity of historical fact. One of the friends in Yazd wrote to him stating that the account given by 'Abdu'l-Baha in one of His Tablets about events related to the martyrdom of some of the believers in that place was in conflict with known facts about these events. Shoghi Effendi replied saying that the friends should investigate the facts carefully and unhesitatingly register them in their historical records, since 'Abdu'l-Baha Himself had prefaced His record of the events in His Tablet with a statement that it was based on news received from Yazd."

This is an important precedent. Faced with a clear conflict between the account of historical events as revealed in a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Baha and accounts from other sources, the Guardian instructed that the believers in Yazd should investigate the evidence from the other sources and record it. He did not instruct the believers to abandon the job of historical inquiry in the face of the Tablet.

Baha'i historians today, faced with similar problems of apparent conflict between information found in the Holy Texts and other evidence, will have to follow this same path. Statements of historical fact as they are found in the Writings of Baha'u'llah, or the interpretations of 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi, must be subjected to the same scrutiny that we would apply to any other source. The Baha'i historian must use his intelligence to sort out any conflict. He cannot simply assume that the statements

found in the Writings of the Faith are literally true. To do so would be to approach the subject of history blindfolded and to abandon the job of historical inquiry altogether.

In the absence of a living interpreter of the Writings of the Faith, which is the situation in which the Baha'i Community currently finds itself, no believer can assume that he understands the true intent of the Holy Text, no matter how obvious the meaning of a particular passage may seem to him. Our understanding of the Revelation must always be limited; our interpretation of any particular passage of the Text is always subject to revision, in the light of our own growing maturity, and in the light of future scholarly inquiry.

So, what are the unique approaches that a Baha'i historian will bring to his study of the history of his own religion? It seems to me that the answer is not yet clear. And it may very well be that there are no unique Baha'i methodologies. A resolution to this problem can only be worked out in time and through practice by scholars who face the question squarely.

However, part of the solution may lie in the realization that academic inquiry does not seek to determine Truth, with a capital T. Scholarship, especially history, is not equipped to take on questions of God, Revelation, and the like. Scholarship is not intended to determine values, and so does not threaten them. Baha'i scholars may maintain a firm conviction in the divine origin of the Baha'i Revelation and conduct their historical inquiries without feeling

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that this value is somehow constantly under review.

Naturally, as we pursue a deeper study of the Faith, our understandings of the Revelation will change. But as fallible human beings, we know that all our understandings are only partial and temporary approximations of the truth. As Shoghi Effendi has explained, the more we study the Faith, the more truths we find in it, and the more we find that our previous notions were erroneous. But the fact that our ideas about the Baha'i Faith are continually subject to change need not threaten our commitment to it.

Naturally, as the Baha'i historian, or any other Baha'i scholar, pursues his work he must remain mindful of the spiritual duties of courtesy, wisdom, tolerance, etc. But these are also values. They are fully compatible with the pursuit of scholarly knowledge and are not threatened by it. Likewise, these values are subject to various interpretations and growing understandings.

In closing, we might note that the common understanding of academic pursuits is also tinged with a good deal of suspicion and fear. There is the curious view that scholarly inquiry somehow exposes the Baha'i who seeks a deeper study of his Faith to some special spiritual dangers, such as pride or loss of faith—as if ignorance somehow confers a spiritual protection. It is understandable that dead religions which are desperately guarding false and outmoded ideas and doctrines might have every reason to fear an enlightened scholarship. But for Baha'is, the deeper search for truth should only strengthen our faith. And, of course, arrogance,

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pride, and loss of faith are not the monopoly of the learned. These are universal human failings that the ignorant are known to possess in great abundance.

Anthony A. Lee
Los Angeles, California
January 1, 1985

In order to give some substance to these notes I have drafted some concrete proposals for an academically informed course in Bahá'í Studies from the "Religious Studies" perspective (see below). There exists sufficient literature to make such a course a definite possibility— though "gaps" do exist. Largely for want of time I have chosen not to include detailed course and seminar reading lists. The proposed possible seminar, essay and/or examination questions will give some idea of the level of academic orientation envisaged.

Appendix I gives some idea of the orientation of the Association for Bahá'í Studies (cf. above).

Appendix II is a select compilation of Bahá'í materials on the importance of Bahá'í Studies.

Appendix III is my somewhat 'theological' response to possible objections to the evolution of an academic Bahá'í scholarship.

Stephen Lambden

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BÁBÍ-BAHÁ'Í STUDIES:
A PROVISIONAL COURSE
OUTLINE.

Proposals for an academically informed 2-3 year full time course in Bahá'í Studies from the "Religious Studies" perspective.

YEAR I, COURSE UNIT I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

10+10 one hour lectures and 5+5 supporting seminars.

Term I

1. Approaching Religious Studies.
2. The Modern History of Religious Studies and the search for a scientific methodology.
3. Empathy, Objectivity and the Phenomenological Method.
4. Methodology and the Study of the History of Religions.
5. The Philosophy of Religion and Philosophical Hermeneutics.
6. Approaching Religious Texts: The History of Methods of Scriptural Interpretation and modern methods applied to the study of religious writings.
7. Sociological Approaches to Religious Studies and the academic study of new religious movements.
8. Fundamentalism and the academic orientation.
9. Science, Religion and Secular Ideologies.
10. Religious Studies Today: Attitudes and Perspectives.

Term II

1. The Origins and Definition of "Religion".
2. Concordant Discord: Modern Perspectives on the Plurality of Religions.
3. Biblical Studies and Modern Theology.
4. The Hindu, Buddhist and Zoroastrian Traditions.
5. Islamic Studies Today.
6. Orthodoxy, Heterodoxy and Mysticism.
7. Approaching Bábí-Bahá'í History.
8. Approaching Bábí-Bahá'í Doctrine.
9. Bábí-Bahá'í Studies, the Bahá'í Institutions and the Bahá'í Community.
10. The challenge of Bábí-Bahá'í Studies: "faith", "reason", and the academic orientation.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS (I.I.)

Possible Seminar,
Essay and/or Exam-
-ination Questions.

- Of what importance is the academic study of religion ?
- Are religions meant to be studied?
- Is a scientific methodology of Religious Studies possible?
- Is presuppositionless objectivity possible?
- What is the Philosophy of Religion? To what extent is it a "constructive" discipline?
- Examine the various methods of scriptural exegesis?
- What are phenomenological methodologies?
- Discuss the various definitions of the term "hermeneutics".
- What factors are involved in the scholarly understanding of a religious text?
- Compare and contrast the "fundamentalist" and academic orientations.
- Outline the methods and concerns of the sociologist of religion.
- What sociological insights have been gained by the study of "new religious movements"?
- What are the central issues in the modern debate about "Science and Religion" ?
- How would you define the terms "sect" and "religion" ?
- What problems surround modern scholarly attempts to speak about a "unity of religions" ?
- How successful have modern Christian thinkers been in attempting to come to terms with religious pluralism?
- Discuss the various definitions of Christian "theology".
- Attempt to give brief answers to the following questions: " Does Hinduism have a Founder?", "Is Buddhism theistic? " What are the main sources for the study of Zoroastrianism?"
- Are the "Semitic" and "Aryan" world views compatible?
- Why do many contemporary Muslims feel threatened by western scholars of Islam? Has western "orientalism" failed to appreciate the phenomenon of Islam ?
- Does "mysticism" 'begin in 'mists' and end in schism'?
- What are the key issues in the modern study of religious mysticism?
- What methods do you think most appropriate to the study of Bahá'í history?
- Has Bahá'í doctrine evolved?
- Can "revelation" and source-critical theories be reconciled?
- Compare and contrast "Bahá'í deepening" and academic Bahá'í scholarship.
- Is there a relationship between Bahá'í scholarship and the Bahá'í community life?

YEAR I. COURSE UNIT II.AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ISLAMIC AND MIDDLE EASTERN BACKGROUND.

10+10 one hour lectures and 5+5 supporting seminars.

TERM. I.

1. Islāmic Origins: Muhammad and the Qur'an.
2. The Rise and Development of Islām.
3. The Origins and Growth of Shi'ī Islam.
4. The Transformation of Shi'ī Islam: Safavid Iran.
5. Qajar Iran and the wider Middle Eastern milieu.
6. Shi'ī Islām & Qajar Iran I.
7. Shi'ī Islām & Qajar Iran II.
8. The Impact of the West in 19th century Iran.
9. Islamic Messianism: Origins and Political Manifestations in 19th century Iran and the Middle East.
10. Reform Movements in Iran and the Middle East.

TERM II.

11. Islamic Doctrine and Practise: An Historical Survey.
12. Shi'ī Doctrine and Practise: Its Historical Evolution.
13. An Introduction to Shi'ī Tafsīr and Shi'ī Fiqh.
14. An Introduction to Shi'ī Prophetology and Imamology.
15. An Introduction to Shi'ī Eschatology and Messianism.
16. Sūfī Mysticism and Shi'ī Theosophy.
17. Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy in 19th century Shi'ī Islām.
18. The Shaykhī Movement: Origins and Sources.
19. Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsā'ī and Siyyid Kāzīm Rashtī.
20. Shaykhism and the Bābī-Bahā'ī Movements.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ISLAMIC AND MIDDLE EASTERN BACKGROUND (I, II)

Possible Seminar, Essay and/or examination questions:-

What were the main features of the prophetic Mission of Muhammad? Compare and contrast the traditional Muslim and modern scholarly views of the Qur'an.

Why did Islām become a major world religion?

What are the main features of Islamic orthodoxy?

Compare and contrast the traditional Shi'ī and modern scholarly views on the origins of Shi'ī Islam.

What are the principal differences between Sunni and Shi'ī Islam?

Why and how did Shi'ism become the state religion of Safavid Iran?

Suggest ways in which Shi'ī Islam expressed and consolidated itself in Safavid Iran.

Outline developments in Shi'ī Islam during the Qajar period.

What was the relationship between religious and temporal authorities in Qajar Iran?

What was the role of the ḥulamā' and tujjār (merchants) in Qajar Iran?

What impact did the West have on Iran during Qajar times?

What factors precipitated the emergence of messianic movements in the middle east in the 19th century?

Survey and account for the existence of the chief reform movements in 19th century Iran and the wider Middle East.

Write brief definitions of the terms "Kharijī", "Mu'tazilī", "Sunni", "Shi'ī", "Ismā'ilī", "Ishraqī", "Sūfī", "Akhbarī" and "Uḡulī".

To what extent and why do the beliefs of Sunni and Shi'ī Muslims differ.

What are the distinctive features of Shi'ī tafsīr?

What were the qualifications and function of the mujtahid in Qajar Iran?

Outline the distinctive features of Shi'ī fiqh.

What are the characteristically Shi'ī views of history and prophetology?

What are the principal features of Shi'ī Imamology?

Outline the key eschatological expectations of Shi'ī Muslims?

Write brief notes on the terms:- qā'im, dajjāl, raja' and muḥallā.

Outline the Shi'ī doctrines surrounding the occultation and return of the 12th Imam.

Are Sufism and Shi'ism compatible?

Who were the principal members of the so-called "School of Isfahan" and what were their main intellectual concerns?

Who were the most influential Shi'ī theosophical writers?

How might "orthodoxy", "heterodoxy" and "heresy" have been defined by a 19th century Shi'ī mujtahid?

Compare and contrast "orthodox" and "popular" Shi'ism as it existed in Qajar Iran.

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Why did the Shaykhí movement gain the respect and admiration of a not inconsiderable number of Shi^CI Muslims?

What are the principal features of the lives of Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kázim?

What are the chief sources for the study of the Shaykhí Movement?

To what extent was eschatology and messianic expectation a central concern of pre-Kirmani Shaykhis?

Outline the Bábí-Bahá'í view of Shaykhism.

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YEAR I. COURSE UNIT III.

AN INTRODUCTION TO BABÍ-BAHÁ'Í STUDIES

10+ 10 one hour lectures and 5+5 supporting seminars.

TERM I.

1. An Outline of the History of Bahá'í scholarship in the East.
2. An Outline of the History of Bahá'í scholarship in the West.
3. The Field and Present State of Bahá'í Studies.
4. An Introduction to the Writings of the Báb
5. Sources for the study of Bahá'í History and Doctrine.
6. An Introduction to the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.
7. Sources for the study of Bahá'í History and Doctrine.
8. The Ministry and Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: An Introduction.
9. Bahá'í History, 1892-1963: An Introductory Review.
10. Attitudes Towards the Bahá'í Movements.

TERM II.

11. The Bahá'í World View: God, the Universe and Man.
12. The Bahá'í Doctrine of the Manifestation of God.
13. Bahá'í Historical Perspectives: The succession of Religions.
14. One Religion—Many Religions: The Bahá'í Theology of Unity.
15. An Introduction to Bahá'í Law, Ethics and Spirituality.
16. Bahá'í Perspectives on Science & Religion and the Search for Truth.
17. The Origins and Growth of the Bahá'í Administrative Order.
18. The Growth of the Bahá'í Community in the East.
19. The Growth of the Bahá'í Community in the West.
20. The Bahá'í Faith Today and the Bahá'í Vision of the Future.

AN INTRODUCTION TO BABI-BAHA'I STUDIES (I.III).Possible Seminar, Essay and/or examination questions:-

- Who were the most important oriental Bahá'í scholars?
 Why has Mirzá Abu'l-Faḍl Gulpaygání come to be seen as the leading Bahá'í Apologist?
 Who were the most important occidental Bahá'í scholars?
 What importance do the researches of E.G.Browne have today?
 Indicate areas in which further research needs to be done in the field of Bábí-Bahá'í studies.
 How would you define the field of Babi-Baha'i studies?
 Why was Bábí-Bahá'í studies neglected after the passing of E.G.Browne?
 Are the writings of the Bab meaningful today?
 Which writings of the Báb do you consider most central to the understanding of his teachings?
 What are the principal sources for the study of-: a) Bábí history and b) Bábí doctrine?
 How might the writings of Bahá'u'lláh be classified?
 Which writings of Bahá'u'lláh do you consider most central to the understanding of his teachings?
 What are the principal sources for the study of —: a) Bahá'í history and b) Bahá'í doctrine?
 To what extent have non-Bahá'í scholars contributed to the Bahá'í self-understanding?
 What are the principal features of the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?
 What is the Bahá'í understanding of the person of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?
 What do you consider to be the most important writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?
 Outline the growth and spread of the Bahá'í Faith between 1892 and 1963.
 How do Iranians view the Bábí-Bahá'í movement?
 Why have certain Christian missionaries written anti-Bahá'í tracts?
 How have modern western intellectuals viewed the Bábí-Bahá'í movement?
 What is the Bábí-Bahá'í view of God?
 How do Bahá'ís view the origins and nature of man?
 What is the Bahá'í view of the purpose of life?
 What, for Bahá'ís, is a "Manifestation of God"?
 How do Bahá'ís view history? What do they mean by "progressive revelation"?
 What is the Bahá'í view of the purpose and function of religion.
 What do Bahá'ís mean when they speak about the "oneness of religion"?

- How do Bahá'ís conceive the relationship between their own Faith and the major world religions?
 What is the Bahá'í view of past sacred writings?
 To what extent are the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths legalistic?
 What does a Bahá'í mean when he or she speaks about "spirituality"?
 What are characteristic Bahá'í expressions of religiosity?
 What is the Bahá'í view of modern science?
 How might a Bahá'í define "Truth" and how appropriate it?
 What is the Bahá'í administrative order?
 When is a Bahá'í not a Bahá'í? Why and for what reasons might a Bahá'í lose his or her "voting rights" or be declared a "covenant breaker"?
 How and why did the Bahá'í community grow in the East?
 Why have westerners become Bahá'ís?
 How does the Bahá'í Faith today differ from the Bahá'í Faith at the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?
 What is the Bahá'í view of the future of mankind?
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YEAR II, COURSE UNIT ITHE BAB & THE BABI MOVEMENT.

10+10 one hour lectures and 5+5 supporting seminars.

Term 1

1. The Present state of Bábí Studies.
2. Siyyid ʿAlí Muḥammad the Báb I : The Early Years.
3. Siyyid ʿAlí Muḥammad the Báb II (1844-50).
4. Islām and the emergence of the Bábí movement.
5. Shaykhism and the emergence of the Bábí movement.
6. The Bábí hierarchy and its Social basis.
7. Qajar Politics and the Bábí Upheavals.
8. Islāmic eschatology and Bábí Messianism.
9. Mírzá Yahyá and Azalí Babism.
10. The Bábí phenomenon: Modern appraisals.

Term 2

1. The Early Writings of the Báb.
2. The Later Writings of the Báb.
3. The Writings of Leading Bábís.
4. The theology, cosmology and prophetology of the Báb.
5. The Claims of the Báb and leading Bábís.
6. Islām, Shaykhism and Bábí Doctrine.
7. Bábí tafsīr: the qabbalistic and spiritual hermeneutics of the Báb.
8. Bábí law and ritual.
9. From the Bábí movement to the Bahá'í Faith.
10. The Bahá'í view of the Báb and the Bábí movement.

THE BAB & THE BABI MOVEMENT (II.I)

Possible seminar, essay and or examination questions:-

What major areas within the field of Bábí studies remain unresearched?
In what kind of religious and social environment did the Báb spend his early years?

Summarise what is currently known about the early years of the Báb and suggest new avenues of investigation.

What prompted the Báb to intimate his claims in May 1844?

Outline the six year ministry of the Báb (1844-1850) and attempt to account for the rapid spread of the Bábí movement.

Write brief answers to the following questions:- Why did the Báb go on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina? What was the purpose and outcome of the conference of Badasht? Why was the Báb executed in July 1850?

Why did the Qajar rulers and Shí'í ʿulamā attempt to suppress the Bábí movement?

What was the Bábí attitude towards the Qajar state and the Shí'í ʿulamā?

Why did the Bábí movement attract a fairly large number of Shí'í Muslims?

Why did the Shí'í ʿulamā charge the Báb with apostasy?

To what extent could the Bábí movement be said to be neo-Shaykhi?

Why did Karím Khān Kirmānī attack the Báb?

What were the main characteristics of the Bábí hierarchy?

Examine the role of Tahira within early Babism.

Did those Bábís who took part in the major upheavals believe that they were waging holy war (jihād)?

In what ways did the Báb claim to have fulfilled Shí'í eschatological expectations?

Examine and account for the Báb's teachings about man yuzhiruhu'llāh.

To what extent was the Bábí community a "unity in diversity"?

How did the Bábí community react to the martyrdom of the Báb?

Outline the career and claims of Mírzá Yahyá Nūrī?

In what sense is it true to say that Mírzá Yahyá was the Báb's successor?

What are the chief characteristics of Azalí Babism?

Why is Azalí Babism virtually extinct while the Bahá'í Faith is establishing itself as a new religion?

What can be learned from the study of Babism about the genesis of new religions?

Assess the major modern western theories about the rise of the Bábí movement.

What can be learned about the early teachings of the Báb from the Qayyum al-Asma'?

What are the key features of the Báb's earliest teachings?

"Judging from the Bayan.. Mirza Ali Muhammad [the Báb] was primarily interested in the triumph of his faith, and not so much in any project of social and political reform." [Mangol Bayat] Do you agree ?

Explain and comment on the five categories into which the Báb divided his writings.

What proofs are presented in the Báb's [Persian] Dala'il-i Saba' ?

Of what nature are the extant writings of leading Bábís?

What are the problems surrounding the authorship and dating of the Kitáb-i Nuqtat al-Káf? Is this work an Azalí forgery?

Outline the key teachings of the Báb about God and the Prophets.

What were the main claims of the Báb? Did they evolve?

Why did a number of leading Bábís make theophanic claims?

What are the chief characteristics of the Báb's interpretation of Islamic sources?

Why did the Báb utilise a qabbalistic and allegorical hermeneutic?

What is the relationship between Shaykhí and Bábí doctrine?

What are the main features of Bábí law and ritual?

To what extent were the Bábís able to practise their faith?

Did the Báb provide a workable socio-economic system?

How did the Bábís react to the leadership role of Mirzá Yahyá and the claims of Bahá'u'lláh?

How do Bahá'ís view Mirzá Yahyá ?

Compare and contrast Azalí Babism and the Bahá'í Faith.

What were the main arguments used by Bahá'ís to convert Bábís?

Why did Mirza Yahyá reject the claims of Bahá'u'lláh?

What is the Bahá'í view of the Bábí movement?

YEAR II. COURSE UNIT II.

10+10 one hour lectures and 5+5 supporting seminars.

BAHA'U'LLAH AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE BAHAI FAITH

Term 1

1. Bahá'u'lláh :The Early Years. (1817—1852).
2. Bahá'u'lláh at Baghdad (1853—1863).
3. The writings of the Baghdad Period.
4. From Constantinople to Adrianople (1863—1868).
5. The writings of the Constantinople—Adrianople Period.
6. The ^cAkka' Period (1868—1892).
7. The Writings of the ^cAkka' period I.
8. The Writings of the ^cAkka' period II.
9. The Claims of Bahá'u'lláh. and the Bahá'í view of his station.
10. The passing of Bahá'u'lláh and the Covenant crisis.

Term 2

1. The Theology and Prophetology of Bahá'u'lláh.
2. The Ethical and Mystical Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.
3. The Kitáb-i Aqdas and the Laws of Bahá'u'lláh.
4. The Kitáb-i Iqán and Bahá'u'lláh's interpretation of past scriptures.
5. The Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh to the kings and rulers and his social teachings.
6. Leading disciples of Bahá'u'lláh and the emergence and social basis of the oriental Bahá'í community.
7. Early oriental Bahá'í Apologetics: the debate with Muslims, Shaykhis and Azalis.
8. The early oriental Bahá'í mission to Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians & other religious minorities.
9. Early oriental Bahá'í historiography.
10. Bahá'í and other estimates of the mission and writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

BAHA'U'LLAH AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE BAHAI FAITH (II.II)

Possible seminar, essay and/or examination questions:-

- In what kind of social and religious milieu did Bahá'u'lláh spend his early years?
- What happened to Bahá'u'lláh during the period 1844--1852?
- What precipitated Bahá'u'lláh's "exile" to Iraq?
- What were the key features of the Baghdad period of Bahá'u'lláh's life?
- Why did Bahá'u'lláh withdraw to Kurdistan and why did he return from that region to Baghdad?
- What was the nature of the relationship between Bahá'u'lláh and Mírzá Yahyá during the Baghdad period (1853-1863)?
- What led Bahá'u'lláh to "declare his mission" in May 1863 and what was the nature of that "declaration" ?
- When did the Bahá'í Faith originate?
- What are the chief subjects mentioned in Bahá'u'lláh's writings of the Baghdad period?
- Explain Bahá'u'lláh's transition from Baghdad to Constantinople to Adrianople.
- Outline the key events of the Adrianople period.
- How do the Adrianople and Baghdad settings of Bahá'u'lláh's ministry differ?
- What precipitated the "Most-Great separation" ?
- What are the chief subjects mentioned in Bahá'u'lláh's writings of the Adrianople period?
- What was the nature of the Bábí-Bahá'í community during the Adrianople period (1863--1868)?
- Why was Bahá'u'lláh exiled to ^cAkka and Yahyá to Famagusta ?
- What were the chief events of the ^cAkka period (1868--1892) of Bahá'u'lláh's ministry?
- What was the nature of the West Galilean social and religious milieu into which Bahá'u'lláh was exiled?
- What are the chief subjects mentioned in Bahá'u'lláh's writings of the ^cAkka period?
- Comment on the major claims of Bahá'u'lláh? Did they evolve?
- How do Bahá'ís view and relate to the person of Bahá'u'lláh?
- What happened when Bahá'u'lláh passed away in 1892?
- Outline Bahá'u'lláh's teachings about God and his Messengers.
- Comment on the key ethical directives of Bahá'u'lláh? Is there a Bahá'í doctrine of salvation?
- What is the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's Seven Valleys ?
- To what extent does the Bahá'í revelation incorporate mystical elements?
- Why does the Kitáb-i Aqdas contain what it does?
- What kind of society would the implementation of the laws of the Kitáb-i Aqdas lead to ?

What are the key features of Bahá'u'lláh's ^ctablets to the Kings and Rulers?

What was Bahá'u'lláh's attitude towards the West?

Suggest why those 19 counted "Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh" were accorded this status.

How and why did the oriental Bahá'í communities grow during the period 1863--1892 ?

Make suggestions as to the social basis of the early oriental Bahá'í communities.

Comment on the nature and content of the early oriental Bahá'í dialogue with either a) Muslims, b) Shaykhis or c) Azalis.

What led Bahá'í teachers to attempt to convert oriental religious minorities?

Why was the Bahá'í mission to oriental Jewry successful and that to oriental Christendom unsuccessful?

What attracted Zoroastrians to the Bahá'í community?

What were the chief tendencies of early oriental Bahá'í historiography?

Why has the Tarikh-i Nabil ("The Dawnbreakers") come to be regarded as the most important work of Bahá'í history writing?

How have modern western scholars viewed the mission and writings of Bahá'u'lláh?

Comment on current Bahá'í views of the person and writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

YEAR II. COURSE UNIT III.

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH (1892-1921).

1. The Life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: 1844—1910
2. The Life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: 1910—1921
3. The Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
4. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's exposition of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.
5. 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Oriental Bahá'í communities.
6. Oriental Bahá'í Literature and attitudes towards the Bahá'ís in the East. (1892—1921).
7. The Spread of the Bahá'í Faith to the West I : > 1910.
8. The Spread of the Bahá'í Faith to the West II: 1910—1921.
9. Western Bahá'í Literature and attitudes towards the Bahá'ís in the West (> 1921).
10. Emergent Bahá'í "orthodoxy", the Covenant and the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Term 2.

1. The Life and Ministry of Shoghi Effendi : 1897—1944.
2. The Life and Ministry of Shoghi Effendi : 1944—1957.
3. The Writings of Shoghi Effendi.
4. Aspects of the Growth and Spread of the Bahá'í Community:1921-1944.
5. Aspects of the Growth and Spread of the Bahá'í Community:1944-1963.
6. The Emergence of the Bahá'í Administrative Order.
7. The Universal House of Justice and the Bahá'í Administrative Institutions.
8. Oriental Bahá'í Literature (1921→) and oriental perceptions of the Bahá'í Faith.
9. Western Bahá'í Literature and occidental perceptions of the Bahá'í Faith (1921 →).
10. Recent Developments with the Bahá'í Community and External Perceptions of it.

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH (1892-1963) (II.III)

Possible seminar, essay and/or examination questions

- Why did Bahá'u'lláh choose 'Abdu'l-Bahá to succeed him ?
- What were 'Abdu'l-Bahá's key objectives as head of the Bahá'í community?
- How do Bahá'ís view the person of 'Abdu'l-Bahá ?
- Why did 'Abdu'l-Bahá visit the West?
- How might the writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá be classified?
- What was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's attitude towards the West?
- Did 'Abdu'l-Bahá develop the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh?
- What do you consider to be the most important contributions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the evolution of the Bahá'í Community?
- What was the significance of the "Tablets of the Divine Plan"?
- What developments took place among the oriental Bahá'í communities during the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?
- What was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's attitude towards politics?
- What contribution did 'Abdu'l-Bahá make towards the evolution of the Bahá'í administrative order?
- Did oriental attitudes towards the Bahá'í community change during the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?
- Who were the major oriental Bahá'í apologists and historians during the period 1892—1963? What were their chief concerns?
- How did the Bahá'í Faith spread to the western world?
- Who was Ibrahim George Kheiralla?
- How did early Western Bahá'ís manifest their devotion to 'Abdu'l-Bahá?
- How did early Western Bahá'ís present their faith to prospective converts?
- What did early Western Bahá'ís understand by the "Covenant"?
- How was the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá received by the Bahá'ís of the West?
- Why did 'Abdu'l-Bahá appoint Shoghi Effendi the Guardian of the Bahá'í Community?
- How do Bahá'ís view the person of Shoghi Effendi?
- What were Shoghi Effendi's chief objectives?
- What was Shoghi Effendi's attitude towards Western civilization?
- Outline and account for opposition to Shoghi Effendi within the Bahá'í community.
- How did the Bahá'í community react to the passing of Shoghi Effendi?
- What were the chief developments within the Bahá'í world between 1957 and 1963?

Outline and account for the growth and spread of the Western Bahá'í communities during either 1921-1944, or 1944-1963.

What developments took place within the Iranian Bahá'í community during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi?

What are the chief institutions of the Bahá'í administrative order?

What are the functions and purposes of Local Bahá'í Assemblies?

What are the chief features of the Bahá'í theory of the Guardianship?

Why was the Universal House of Justice first elected in 1963?

Outline and comment on the functions of the Universal House of Justice?

Outline what you consider to be the key steps in the evolution of the Bahá'í administrative order.

How do Bahá'ís envisage the "Bahá'í Commonwealth" of the future?

"This new-born Administrative Order incorporates within its structure certain elements which are to be found in each of the three recognised forms of secular government, without being in any sense a mere replica of any of them." (Shoghi Effendi). Discuss.

What are the chief categories and contents of oriental Bahá'í literature written during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi?

Why have Bahá'ís in the orient suffered martyrdom?

What western Bahá'í literatures composed during Shoghi Effendi's ministry do you consider to be most important?

How, if at all, have Western perceptions of the Bahá'í community changed among western observers?

What recent developments have taken place with the Bahá'í community?

How do contemporary Bahá'ís express their religiosity?

APPENDICIES

ASSOCIATION FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES

The Association exists to cultivate opportunities for formal presentations of the Bahá'í Faith at universities and colleges. It has the related role of contributing to Bahá'í scholarship.

The Association was originally established as the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada in B.E. 132 (1974) in response to a goal of the Five Year Plan given to the Bahá'í Community by the Universal House of Justice:

To cultivate opportunities for formal presentations, courses and lectureships on the Bahá'í Faith in Canadian universities and other institutions of higher learning.

This goal was reemphasized in the 1979 message of the Universal House of Justice inaugurating the Seven Year Plan:

Expand the opportunities for teaching in Canadian institutions of higher learning and further develop the Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith.

In 1981, the Association decided, because of worldwide expansion, to change its name to Association for Bahá'í Studies and has secured the approval of the Universal House of Justice.

ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Centre for Bahá'í Studies, adjacent to the campus of the University of Ottawa, coordinates the activities of the Association and serves as a centre for research, instruction and information on Bahá'í studies.

The Association maintains a library within the Centre for Bahá'í Studies, collecting Bahá'í literature and studies on the Bahá'í Faith (e.g. books, articles, theses and dissertations).

The Association is engaged in developing curricula suitable for the presentation of the Faith at universities, and the cultivation of relationships with those responsible for accrediting such courses at universities.

The Association organizes presentations of the Faith through invited lectures at university departments and to scholarly groups.

The Association holds annual meetings, frequent international conferences, and a number of regional conferences which provide opportunities for Bahá'ís and others interested in Bahá'í studies to make formal presentations and exchange ideas. These conferences are held wherever sufficient membership and interest permit.

The Association's publications include a series of scholarly monographs, *Bahá'í Studies*, and a general journal and newsletter, *Bahá'í Studies Notebook*.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to any registered Bahá'í in any country. Members receive new issues of *Bahá'í Studies* and *Bahá'í Studies Notebook* and have the opportunity to consult with the Executive Committee at the Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee, appointed annually by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, is responsible for the direction of the affairs of the Association.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Any Bahá'í may become a life member of the Association for a fee of \$500. This one-time payment secures all the privileges of regular membership without the need to renew membership annually. As well, it enables the Association to acquire funds to support the cost of a number of its activities in universities and other institutions of higher learning, and to extend its field of service in the Bahá'í community.

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ASSOCIATION FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES
ASSOCIATION D'ÉTUDES BAHÁ'ÍES

34 Copernicus Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 7K4 (613) 233-1903

April 22, 1983

Robert Stauffer
818 N. 30th
Renton, WA
USA 98055

Dear Mr. Stauffer:

Thank you for your letter of 2 April 1983. To answer your questions systematically, I refer to the numbering used in your letter of 11 January 1983.

1. Membership in the Association is open to Bahá'ís in good standing. Therefore Bahá'ís without administrative rights may be subscribers to Association publications, but may not be members.

2. Anyone may submit papers to the Association. All manuscripts received are given out for blind review, that is, the author's name is obliterated from the manuscript before it is circulated for review. We feel this process ensures as impartial a review procedure as possible.

3. In the case of lifetime membership, if the member becomes ineligible for membership, the fee becomes a lifetime subscription. It would defeat the principle behind "endowment funds" if these fees were refundable.

4. As an Association based in Canada promoting Bahá'í studies, we are under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada. It has only been through their generous subsidies that such an Association ever got established.

The National Spiritual Assembly formally appoints the members of the Executive Committee after receiving recommendations from the Association. The National Spiritual Assembly defers all reviewing and publication decisions to the Executive Committee. Matters of great import (for example, expansion of Association activities in the United States) are decided in consultation with the institutions of the Faith that are directly concerned whether on a local, national, or international level.

5. The correspondence from the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada and the Universal House of Justice is couched in very general terms. It was left to the Executive Committee to propose specific objectives within the broad mandate of promoting Bahá'í scholarship and awareness of the principles at universities and other institutions of higher learning. We enclose a brochure listing these objectives.

6. Enclosed please find a diagram of the administrative structure of the Association. The members of the Executive Committee are selected from the general membership. Generally, potential members come to our attention through outstanding contributions at the regional level of Association activities - or through recommendations from other Bahá'ís who feel the candidate has outstanding qualities to offer the Association through service on the Executive Committee. Members receive Bahá'í Studies, Bahá'í Studies Notebook and the Association Bulletin and may serve on regional conference committees or special committees such as the Persian publication and conference committee based in Vancouver.

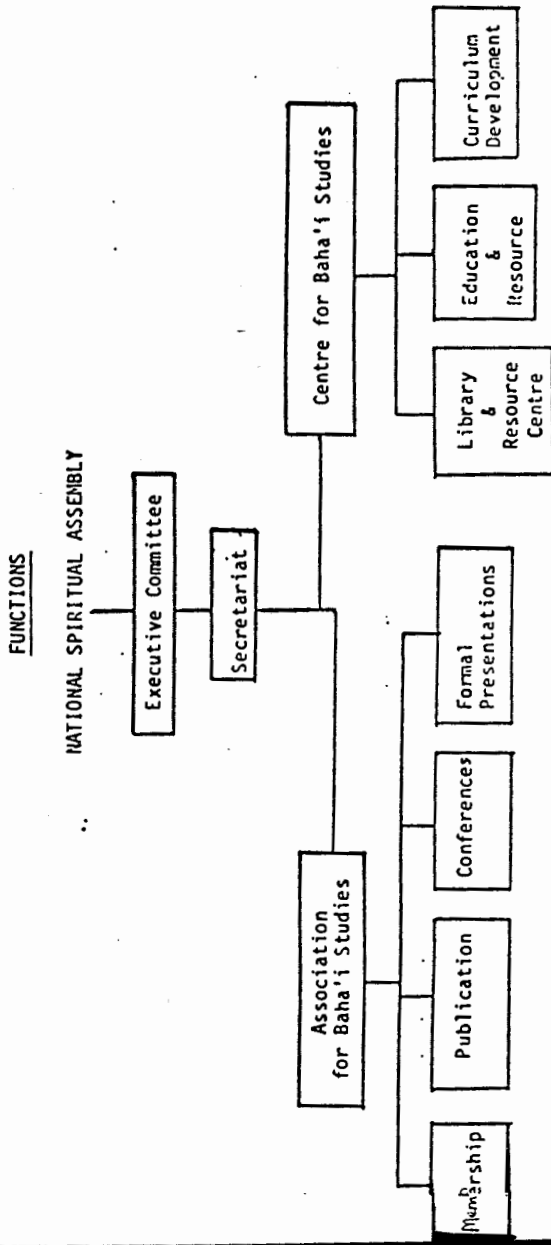
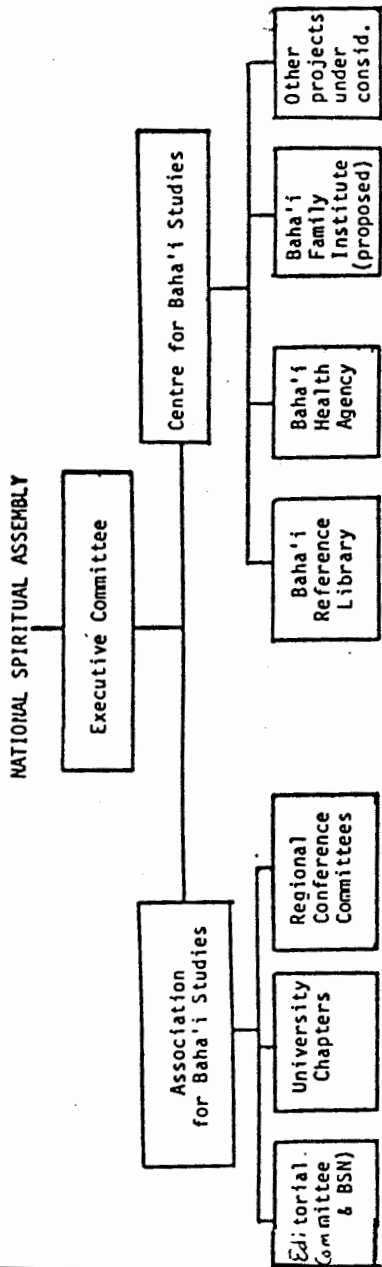
7. Manuscripts are sent blind to three independent reviewers. We have used both Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í reviewers who have expertise on the topic of the manuscript. The final decision to print or not to print rests with the Executive Committee a subset of which serves as the Editorial Board. Any manuscripts which generate opposing reviews are sent out to further review to assist the Editorial Board in their decisions. We ask the usual three copies, typed, double spaced, well referenced, using the Chicago Manual of Style format if possible. (We realize some universities insist on a house style). Manuscripts must be thoroughly referenced. I had not thought any studies of areas of Bahá'í scholarship were proscribed until you suggested Covenant-Breaking materials. As Bahá'í authors are cautioned by Bahá'u'lláh to avoid such writings as a poison, it would seem unadvisable for Bahá'ís to produce such studies and the Association has never received any submissions of the sort.

8. We welcome your suggestions as to the organizations of small libraries. We have consulted with the librarians at the World Centre Library and a Bahá'í librarian who heads the Oriental Section of the New York Library for suggestions, but no final decisions have been made. We have merely inscribed acquisition numbers and are inputting particulars on our CBM-8032 computer. We are attempting to compile a bibliography of theses and dissertations on Bahá'í topics, and a former Executive Committee member has worked years on a bibliography project which the Association hopes to publish.

9. The Association mandate is received from the Universal House of Justice in every Seven Year Plan. It appears logical to place all Bahá'í university and college organizations under the Association's mantle. In Canada, we have Universal House of Justice permission to begin Association for Bahá'í Studies chapters at Canadian universities working with Local Spiritual Assemblies and existing Bahá'í Clubs on campus. We hope eventually to have the budget to hire a resource person who would act as research and education (curriculum) coordinator. It is premature to estimate a target date.

10. The Association has a file of Lancaster papers. Some are missing.

11. The Association is supported by membership fees, literature and tape sales, and by National Spiritual Assembly subsidy. Non-members pay for



services rendered (e.g., conference fees, subscription fees, copying fees and postage). As the Association is not identical to the Bahā'ī Faith there is not the restriction against receiving funds from non-Bahā'īs. We expect to investigate the terms of various non-Bahā'ī granting agencies in Canada to see how the Association might use such funds to sponsor research on Bahā'ī studies. Our balance sheets are prepared semi-annually and are not restricted information.

12. The Association is not incorporated but has the status of non-profit religious organization. The Association enjoys federal and provincial tax exemptions for all goods used "solely for the promotion of religion." We use the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada's incorporation, as parent organization.

13. At this time there are plans for expansion of Association sponsored activities outside Canada and at present there are three United States Regional Conference Committees functioning. However, there are no plans to open any offices and the library holdings will be consolidated in Ottawa.

14. The University of Toronto has a course, Religion 1119T on the computer for the next three years. They require a minimum registration of five graduate students to hold the course. The courses on the Bahā'ī Faith that have been taught in Canada have all been non-credit and taught by Bahā'ī graduate students.

15. The Association's focus is on college and university courses, and these are our first priority.

I trust this letter answers your questions. If not, please do not hesitate to write again.

Sincerely,

Christine Zerbinis
 Christine Zerbinis
 Executive Secretary

Encl: Brochure diagram

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* Reproduced with the permission of Robert Stauffer (Ed.).

Appendix II

Some select quotations on the importance of Baha'i Scholarship

"There are certain pillars which have been established as the unshakeable supports of the Faith of God. The mightiest of these is learning and the use of the mind, the expansion of consciousness, and insight into the realities of the universe and the hidden mysteries of Almighty God.

To promote knowledge is thus an inescapable duty imposed on every one of the friends of God..."

('Abdu'l-Baha passage cited Selections From the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha [Haifa 1978], p.126 [No. 97]).

" It seems that what we need now [1949 !] is a more profound and coordinated Baha'i scholarship in order to attract such men as you are contacting. The world has—at least the thinking world—caught up by now with all the great and universal principles enunciated by Baha'u'llah over 70 years ago, and so of course it does not sound 'new' to them. But we know that the deeper teachings, the capacity of his projected World Order to re-create society, are new and dynamic. It is these we must learn to present intelligently and enticingly to such men! "

(From a letter dated July 3, 1949, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer).

"The Cause needs more Baha'i scholars—people who not only are devoted to it and believe in it and are anxious to tell others about it, but also who have a deep grasp of the Teachings and their significance, and who can correlate its beliefs with the current thoughts and problems of the people of the world." (From a

letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi 21 October 1943

"What he [Shoghi Effendi] wants the Baha'is to do is study more, not to study less. The more general knowledge, scientific or otherwise, they possess, the better. Likewise he is constantly urging them to really study the Baha'i teachings more deeply."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi dated 5th July 1947).

"Baha'i scholars and writers will, no doubt, gradually appear, and will, as promised by Baha'u'llah, lend a unique support to their Faith."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi cited in U.S. Bahá'í News No. 102 [August 1936], p.2.)

" As the [Bahá'í] Cause develops it will need more and more people who are really versed in their branch of learning and who can interpret the [Baha'i] teachings to suit the facts."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi in Baha'i Youth : A Compilation, p. 14).

" What the Faith needs, even more than teachers, is books that expound the true significance of its principles in the light of modern thought and social problems."

(From a letter of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer dated 6 May 1933 cited Unfolding Destiny..[London 1981], p.431).

".. the majority of Baha'is, however, intensely devoted and sincere they may be, lack for the most part the necessary scholarship and wisdom to reply to and refute the claims and attacks of people with some education and standing."

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi dated 25th September 1942 cited in ibid., p.439).

"Scholarship has a high station in the Baha'i teachings and Baha'i scholars have a great responsibility to a growing, divinely-guided world society.."

"Baha'i scholarship is of great importance in the development and consolidation of the Baha'i community."

(From a Statement of the Research Dept. of the Universal House of Justice on Baha'i Scholarship [1979]).

"The Supreme Body [= The Universal House of Justice] has informed us [= the International Teaching Centre] that it believes that both the International Teaching Centre and the Boards of Counsellors can render valuable services in the field of Baha'i scholarship by encouraging budding scholars, and also by promoting within the Baha'i community an atmosphere of tolerance for the views of others."

(From a letter of the International Teaching Centre dated 22 March 1981).

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"In the message of Naw-Ruz 1979 addressed to the Baha'i world, the Universal House of Justice stated that 'at the heart of all activities, the spiritual, intellectual and community life of the believers must be developed and fostered'. In pursuance of this objective, the International Teaching Centre sent a letter to all Continental Boards of Counsellors on 9 August 1984, providing further information on this important subject in the hope that it would assist them to devise ways to foster the development of Baha'i scholarship along lines that are in accordance with Baha'i standards and values.

"The Universal House of Justice feels that this information would also be of particular assistance to your National Spiritual Assemblies, and has therefore instructed us to send you the enclosed excerpt from the International Teaching Centre's letter."

(From a letter written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, dated 25 October 1984, to selected National Spiritual Assemblies.)

A STATEMENT ON THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF BAHÁ'Í SCHOLARSHIP

Issued by the International Teaching Centre on 9 August 1984

The Importance of Baha'i Scholarship:

Over 50 years ago, the Guardian emphasised the need for development of the intellectual life of the Bahá'í community, in the statement:

"In these days when people are so skeptical about religion and look with so much contempt towards religious organizations and movements, there seems to be more need than ever for our young Baha'is to be well-equipped intellectually, so that they may be in a position to present the Message in a befitting way, and in a manner that would convince every unbiased observer of the effectiveness and power of the Teachings."

(From a letter dated 5 May 1934 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer.)

Some years later, he described Bahá'í scholarship as being an important aid to teaching the Faith to those who do not find the Bahá'í principles novel in the light of modern thought:

"It seems what we need now is a more profound and co-ordinated Bahá'í scholarship in order to attract such men as you are contacting. The world has — at least the thinking world — caught up by now with all the great and universal principles enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh over 70 years ago, and so of course it does not sound 'new' to them. But we know that the deeper teachings, the capacity of His projected World Order to re-create society, are new and dynamic. It is these we must learn to present intelligently and enticingly to such men."

(From a letter dated 3 July 1949 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer.)

More recently, attention has been directed to the role to be played by Bahá'í scholarship, in the statement:

"The Universal House of Justice regards Bahá'í scholarship as of great potential importance for the development and consolidation of the Bahá'í community as it emerges from obscurity."

(From a letter dated 3 January 1979 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

As the Supreme Body pointed out in the opening sentence of the Ridván 1984 message to the Bahá'ís of the world, the emergence from obscurity of the Faith has been a marked feature of the past five years. This directs unprecedented public attention to the Cause of God, and also necessitates increased emphasis on the development of Bahá'í scholarship, since in the same message, the House of Justice says:

"Persistently greater and greater efforts must be made to acquaint the leaders of the world, in all departments of life, with the true nature of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation as the sole hope for the pacification and unification of the world."

The Nature of Bahá'í Scholarship:

A vital prerequisite to the fostering of Bahá'í scholarship is the acquisition of a clearer understanding of the meaning of this term. We can do no better than to offer an illuminating passage from the writings of the Guardian, which might well be taken as a definition of the attributes toward which a Bahá'í scholar should aspire:

"... The Cause needs more Bahá'í scholars, people who not only are devoted to it and believe in it and are anxious to tell others about it, but also who have a deep grasp of the Teachings and their significance, and who can correlate its beliefs with the current thoughts and problems of the people of the world."

(From a letter dated 21 October 1943 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer.)

This passage calls for distinctive qualities. The description of the kind of Bahá'í scholar of which the Faith stands in such need at this time places emphasis upon belief, devotion to the Faith, a profound understanding of the Teachings and a strong desire to share them with others. A distinctive feature of such Bahá'í scholarship, which is also reiterated in other passages of the writings of the Guardian, is that of relating the Bahá'í teachings to the present-day concerns and thought of the people around us.

Fostering Bahá'í Scholarship:

The Universal House of Justice specified how the Counsellors can foster Bahá'í scholarship:

"In the field of Bahá'í scholarship . . . the Boards of Counsellors can render valuable services in this area by encouraging budding scholars and by promoting within the Bahá'í community an atmosphere of tolerance for the views of others. At the same time the fundamental core of the believers' faith should be strengthened by an increasing awareness of the cardinal truth and vital importance of the Covenant, and an ever-growing love for Bahá'u'lláh."

(From a communication dated 10 February 1981 written by the Universal House of Justice to the International Teaching Centre.)

We consider first the matter of "encouraging budding scholars".

From the passage of the Guardian's writings dealing with the attributes to which a Bahá'í scholar should aspire, it is evident that Bahá'í scholarship is an endeavour accessible to all members of the Bahá'í community, without exception. All believers can aspire to the attributes described by the Guardian, and can strive to relate the Bahá'í teachings to the thinking and concerns of the non-Bahá'í population around them. You can perform a valuable service in bringing this potential role to the attention of all the believers — including those who may lack formal education, and those who dwell in remote areas, villages and islands — and to discourage any thought that Bahá'í scholarship is an activity open only to those who are highly educated or who are pursuing an academic career.

As the followers of the Blessed Beauty make efforts to correlate the Bahá'í teachings, which impinge upon every aspect of human life, with the thoughts and problems of the people around them, they will inevitably discover new ways of presenting the teachings convincingly and will also acquire an ever-increasing understanding of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

At the same time special encouragement should also be given to believers of unusual capacity, training or accomplishment to consecrate their abilities to the service of the Cause through the unique and distinctive contribution they can make to Bahá'í scholarship. The Guardian repeatedly linked the work of Bahá'í scholars to the expansion and consolidation of the Faith, as stated in the following:

"If the Bahá'ís want to be really effective in teaching the Cause they need to be much better informed and able to discuss intelligently, intellectually, the present condition of the world and its problems. We need Bahá'í scholars, not only people far, far more deeply aware of what our teachings really are, but also well read and well educated people, capable of correlating our teachings to the current thoughts of the leaders of society.

"We Bahá'ís should, in other words, arm our minds with knowledge in order to better demonstrate to, especially, the educated classes, the truths enshrined in our Faith."

(From a letter dated 5 July 1949 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer.)

The Universal House of Justice, in responding to a Bahá'í who wanted to use logical means to convey and prove spiritual principles, wrote that:

"... the House of Justice understands that you desire to find ways of conveying spiritual truths in logical ways and demonstrating their validity through scientific proofs. There can be no objection to such an attitude. 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself used such a method. The danger Bahá'í scholars must avoid is the distortion of religious truth, almost forcibly at times, to make it conform to understandings and perceptions current in the scientific world. True Bahá'í scholars should guard against this."

(From a letter dated 7 June 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

The Supreme Body has also referred to the distinctive role to be played by Bahá'ís who acquire expertise in various fields of endeavour, in affirming that:

"As the Bahá'í community grows it will acquire experts in numerous fields — both by Bahá'ís becoming experts and by experts becoming Bahá'ís. As these experts bring their knowledge and skill to the service of the community and, even more, as they transform their various disciplines by bringing to bear upon them the light of the Divine Teachings, problem after problem now disrupting society will be answered."

(From a letter dated 21 August 1977 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

Closely allied to this role is the call of the House of Justice for:

"... the promotion of Bahá'í scholarship, so that an increasing number of believers will be able to analyse the problems of mankind in every field and to show how the Teachings solve them."

(From a letter dated 19 January 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

The Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members can do much to assist in the response to this call by their stimulation and encouragement of Bahá'ís of distinctive capacity and promise, especially young Bahá'ís who are choosing their life work. Since the Bahá'í Teachings relate to every dimension of human thought and activity, believers who become eminent in any legitimate field of knowledge are in an enviable position to make a significant and far-reaching contribution by presenting the Teachings in a way that demonstrates the profundity and efficacy of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Bahá'í community can already point to the example of several believers who have become recognised widely for their scholarship, and whose intellectual pursuits were enriched by their abiding devotion to the Faith, and their compelling desire to teach the Cause. Within this company is to be found Mírzá Abu'l Fadl, who was described by the Guardian as "very excellent and erudite", as well as the Hands of the Cause of God George Townshend, whose scholarship was praised by the Guardian, and Hasan Balyúzi, who was eulogised by the Universal House of Justice for "his outstanding scholarly pursuits", as well as others who are presently engaged in like service.

Promoting an Atmosphere of Tolerance:

We now consider "promoting within the Bahá'í community an atmosphere of tolerance for others" and strengthening "the fundamental core of the believers' faith". The Universal House of Justice has stated that:

"The combination of absolute loyalty to the Manifestation of God and His Teachings, with the searching and intelligent study of the Teachings and history of the Faith which those Teachings themselves enjoin, is a particular strength of this Dispensation. In past Dispensations the believers have tended to divide into two mutually antagonistic groups: those who held blindly to the letter of the Revelation, and those who questioned and doubted everything. Like all extremes, both these can lead into error. The beloved Guardian has written that 'The Bahá'í Faith . . . enjoins upon its followers the primary duty of an unfettered search after truth . . .'. Bahá'ís are called upon to follow the Faith with intelligence and understanding. Inevitably believers will commit errors as they strive to rise to this degree of maturity, and this calls for forbearance and humility on the part of all concerned, so that such matters do not cause disunity or discord among the friends."

(From a letter dated 7 October 1980 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

The challenge to all believers is to develop the balanced combination prescribed by the House of Justice to such an extent that they do not fall into one of the mutually antagonistic groups of which the Supreme Body warns.

On the need for tolerance the Universal House of Justice wrote:

"The House of Justice agrees that it is most important for the believers, and especially those who hold positions of responsibility in the Administrative Order, to react calmly and with tolerant and enquiring minds to views which differ from their own, remembering that all Bahá'ís are but students of the Faith, ever striving to understand the Teachings more clearly and to apply them more faithfully, and none can claim to have a perfect understanding of this Revelation. At the same time all believers, and scholars in particular, should remember the many warnings in the Writings against the fomenting of discord among the friends. It is the duty of the institutions of the Faith to guard the community against such dangers."

(From a letter dated 18 July 1979 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

Promotion of an atmosphere of tolerance thus requires that those holding positions of administrative authority not over-react, and that those setting forth their understanding of the Teachings not foster discord and dissension, deliberately or unwittingly. The warning against the fomenting of discord highlights one of the hazards facing believers who embark upon the practice of Bahá'í scholarship. On one occasion the Universal House of Justice felt moved to comment that:

"There have, however, been cases of believers who look upon themselves as scholars, and may even be such in an academic sense, who have considerable expertise in certain aspects of the Faith but are lamentably ignorant or misinformed about other aspects of the Cause and the Teachings. Others have expressed biting critical views with a quite un scholarly intemperance."

(From a letter dated 8 October 1980 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

By striving to express themselves with courtesy, moderation, tact and wisdom, Bahá'í scholars will contribute to the maintenance within the Baha'i community of an atmosphere of tolerance which facilitates their limitless exploration of the meaning and implications of the Bahá'í Revelation.

Strengthening the Core of the Believers' Faith:

This need for Bahá'í scholars to become thoroughly deepened in the spirit of the Cause, and well versed in its Teachings is emphasised in the following passage:

"In the application of the social laws of the Faith, most of the difficulties can be seen to arise not only from outright disobedience, but also from the actions of those who, while careful to observe the letter of the law, try to go as far as it will permit them away from the spirit which lies at its heart. A similar tendency can be noted among some Bahá'í scholars. The great advances in knowledge and

understanding in the vital field of Bahá'í scholarship will be made by those who, while well versed in their subjects and adhering to the principles of research, are also thoroughly imbued with love for the Faith and the determination to grow in the comprehension of its teachings."

(From a letter dated 27 March 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

In the same letter the Supreme Body calls attention to the danger of intellectual pride, which a Bahá'í scholar must combat within himself, in these words:

"The House of Justice feels that Bahá'í scholars must beware of the temptations of intellectual pride. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has warned the friends in the West that they would be subjected to intellectual tests, and the Guardian reminded them of this warning. There are many aspects of western thinking which have been exalted to a status of unassailable principle in the general mind, that time may well show to have been erroneous or, at least, only partially true. Any Bahá'í who rises to eminence in academic circles will be exposed to the powerful influence of such thinking."

(From a letter dated 27 March 1983 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

The provisions of the Covenant stand as our inviolable protection against distortion of the Teachings and against the subtle temptations of intellectual pride. Central to the Covenant is the authority of the Manifestation of God and of the infallible institutions that the Holy Writings ordained. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has specified that:

"Unto the Most Holy Book everyone must turn and all that is not expressly recorded therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice. That which this body, whether unanimously or by a majority doth carry, that is verily the Truth and Purpose of God Himself."

(From "Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha", Part Two.)

The Universal House of Justice has clarified that:

"In the Bahá'í Faith there are two authoritative centres appointed to which the believers must turn, for in reality the Interpreter of the Word is an extension of that centre which is the Word itself. The Book is the record of the utterance of Bahá'u'lláh, while the divinely inspired Interpreter is the living Mouth of that Book — it is he and he alone who can authoritatively state what the Book means. Thus one centre is the Book with its Interpreter, and the other is the Universal House of Justice guided by God to decide on whatever is not explicitly revealed in the Book."

(From a letter dated 7 December 1967 written by the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

and it has pointed out that:

"While it may often be the part of wisdom to approach individuals or an audience from a standpoint of current knowledge, it should never be overlooked that the Revelation of the Manifestation of God is the standard for all knowledge, and scientific statements and

theories, no matter how close they may come to the eternal principles proclaimed by God's Messenger, are in their very nature ephemeral and limited. Likewise, attempting to make the Bahá'í Faith relevant to modern society is to incur the grave risk of compromising the fundamental verities of our Faith in an effort to make it conform to current theories and practices."

(From a letter dated 21 July 1968 written by the Universal House of Justice to a National Spiritual Assembly.)

A vital element of Bahá'í scholarship is humility in recognising the limitations of the human mind in its attempts to encompass the Divine Message. Bahá'u'lláh addresses the Creator in a prayer, using these terms:

"Exalted, immeasurably exalted art Thou, O my Beloved, above the strivings of any of Thy creatures, however learned, to know Thee; exalted, immensely exalted art Thou above every human attempt, no matter how searching, to describe Thee! For the highest thought of men, however deep their contemplation, can never hope to outsoar the limitations imposed upon Thy creation, nor ascend beyond the state of the contingent world, nor break the bounds irrevocably set for it by Thee."

(From "Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, No. CLXXXIV.)

Another vital provision of the Covenant is that concerning interpretation. The Universal House of Justice states:

"... individual interpretation is considered the fruit of man's rational power and conducive to a better understanding of the teachings, provided that no disputes or arguments arise among the friends and the individual himself understands and makes it clear that his views are merely his own. Individual interpretations continually change as one grows in comprehension of the teachings.

"... although individual insights can be enlightening and helpful, they can also be misleading. The friends must therefore learn to listen to the views of others without being overawed or allowing their faith to be shaken, and to express their own views without pressing them on their fellow Bahá'ís."

(From a letter dated 27 May 1966 written by the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer.)

The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh gives rise to a Bahá'í community which will increasingly become known for its fostering of creative development and for its encouragement of individual expression. The Covenant also provides guiding principles by which a Bahá'í scholar can exemplify that harmony of faith and reason which is a hallmark of the Bahá'í Dispensation.

With the Seven Year Plan calling for the fostering of the intellectual life of the Bahá'í community, and with the closely-associated development of Bahá'í scholarship, the world-wide community of the followers of the Greatest Name embarks upon an exciting phase in its development, which will widen the range of people attracted to its truths, greatly enhance its prestige and influence, and broaden the foundation of the world civilization to which the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh will ultimately give rise.

The Letter reproduced on pp. 75-81 (cf. p. 74) is taken from, Bahá'í Scholarship, An excerpt from a letter to the Continental Board of Counsellors from the International Teaching Centre, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of New Zealand Inc. New Zealand, 1985. [pp. 1-8].

APPENDIX III

A Brief Response to possible Bahá'í objections to the support of Academic Bahá'í Scholarship and the Establishment of a Permanent Bahá'í Studies Centre and Research Institute.

Objection : The time now is for the Bahá'í World to concern itself with teaching; to proffer its 'good news' to mankind and develop its administrative institutions. Academic scholarship is something for the future.

Reply : This kind of Bahá'í voiced sentiment is both understandable and widespread. It is not a false perspective though it is often voiced by Bahá'ís who have little or no knowledge of what the aims, intentions and purposes of academic scholarship are; by individuals who have a limited perception of what Bahá'í scholarship might contribute to the Bahá'í world. To say that Bahá'í scholarship is 'for the future' is to say that detailed research into Bahá'í scripture, history and doctrine, etc. is currently irrelevant. It is to say that Bahá'ís who wish to study their Faith in detail are wasting their time— they should be 'out teaching'.

In the light of the plethora of Bahá'í texts that underline the importance of the intellect and Bahá'í intellectual life it can hardly be said that Bahá'í scholarship is a waste of time. A variety of authoritative Bahá'í texts explicitly state that Bahá'í administrative institutions should strive to promote and enrich the intellectual life of the Bahá'í community. The Bahá'í philosophy of 'teaching' obviously includes the intellectual articulation of Bahá'í perspectives. Academics and intellectuals also need to be 'taught' or informed about Bahá'í teaching. The concrete support of Bahá'í scholarship would have important consequences for internal Bahá'í 'deepening' and external Bahá'í 'teaching'. It would serve to enable certain individuals to be more adequately informed about their own Faith and enable them to befittingly communicate it to others. It would also equip individuals to 'defend their Faith' against distorted and hostile misrepresentations — which are increasingly of a detailed nature or such that the 'non-expert' in Bahá'í history and doctrine cannot hope to discuss or 'refute'. Experts and academically trained Bahá'í scholars are needed to discuss and communicate research findings that clarify 'obscure questions' and to throw light on doctrinal and other issues that 'trouble individuals or Bahá'í communities'.

Quite apart from the concrete benefits that the support of academic Bahá'í scholarship can now offer there is also the point that studying religion is ontologically valuable and important—it is important, in other words, in its own right and for its own sake as an expression of the creative human spirit. It should not be necessary to justify the academic study of the Bahá'í Faith.

Bahá'í scholarship should be viewed as an integral part of Bahá'í community life. As human beings Bahá'ís have intellects and should use and develop them to the full. It is obvious that the scholarly study of religion is important inasmuch as the lives of countless individuals are determined by their religious beliefs and practises. It can be extremely intellectually, emotionally and spiritually stimulating and demands a high level of empathy, insight, imagination, detachment and honesty. The contemporary decline of interest in religion has perhaps influenced Bahá'ís more than many would care to admit in terms of obscuring the importance of religious studies in general and Bahá'í studies in particular. So-called 'concrete careers' or 'business success' become all important to the detriment of the alleged 'ephemerality' of the study of religion— even the Bahá'í Faith itself!

Another reason why it is imperative that Bahá'í institutions begin to support Bahá'í Studies in a concrete manner— the sooner the better in this connection—is that it is becoming increasingly important that Bahá'ís understand the history, nature and teachings of the great world religions. As time passes the Bahá'í dialogue with, for example, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians and Muslims will take on new dimensions and become more and more informed. Academically trained experts on the history and teachings of these religious traditions will be needed; Bahá'ís who are capable of informed dialogue with leading intellectuals. The standard of the Bahá'í approach to the 'great world religions' is, at present, intellectually very poor. Secondary Bahá'í literature designed to 'convert' Hindus, Buddhists, Jews and Christians, etc., has much to be desired; the errors of 'fact' are many and the apologetic stance dated. Intellectuals who read this literature are frequently horrified by the low standard of Bahá'í scholarship. The writers of such tracts are often devoted and well-meaning Bahá'ís who have not had the benefit of informed tuition. In no oriental or occidental language does there exist an informed Bahá'í approach to contemporary Jews, Muslims or Christians. The Bahá'í literature is, for the most part, dated and inadequate. Outside of the promotion of Bahá'í scholarship this situation is unlikely to improve. The establishment of Bahá'í Studies institutions would go some way towards educating Bahá'ís such that informed dialogue with other religionists becomes possible.

The support of Bahá'í Studies cannot be left for the 'future' as if the internal and external articulation of Bahá'í perspectives is divorced from scholarly research.

Objection: The establishment of an 'Institute for Bahá'í Studies' would lead to a Bahá'í intellectual elite.

This, I think, and I have heard it voiced on several occasions, is a quite absurd objection. No scholarly or academic institution for 'higher study' can exist without applying the principle of selectivity. Some individuals are better suited to specific academic pursuits than others. Everyone cannot be a nuclear physicist or a philosopher. Not all Bahá'ís desire or would be particularly good at religious studies—even those who take religious studies degrees can differ markedly in ability; otherwise they would all get 'first class degrees'. Not all Bahá'ís

desire to be 'Bahá'í scholars' or engage in the disciplined approach to Bahá'í Studies. Not all Bahá'ís would be willing or able to face the challenge of studying their own Faith; to achieve the necessary balance of empathy and objectivity.

Though then, selectivity is inevitable this has nothing to do with elitism. Bahá'í scholars are simply Bahá'ís—no better and no worse—who study their faith in a systematic and disciplined manner. Those who might graduate from a course in Bahá'í Studies do not become anything; they are not then entitled to say 'I am a Bahá'í scholar', 'I am special' (God forbid) or anything else. They are nothing other than Bahá'ís who have attempted to study and understand their Faith in a disciplined manner. On a spiritual level they may emerge 'no better than anybody else' since the scholarly study of the Bahá'í Faith is not necessarily the same as 'deepening'. In actual fact the scholarly study of one's own Faith can be an extremely humbling experience. One has to admit—often frequently—that one did not know about or understand Bahá'í teaching or history as well as one might have imagined. One makes mistakes and has them exposed. Far from giving the student any sense of belonging to an elite it should be that he or she becomes more aware and tolerant of other religionists and of human limitations.

Bahá'í scholars are not 'priests' or anything comparable. They have no authority as individuals at all. Their detailed studies do not qualify them to guide others spiritually. They are simply fallible members of the Bahá'í community who, for one reason or another, have decided to study their Faith in detail. They do not constitute an elite.

Objection: The Academic approach to Bahá'í Studies is an inappropriate one.

This possible objection is based on a misunderstanding of the 'academic approach'. The academic approach is neither directly designed to promote nor destroy faith. There may be academics—both Bahá'í and not—who seem to challenge faith positions but it is often the case that what are challenged are uninformed and premature crystallizations of a supposed "Bahá'í orthodoxy". Scholars sometimes, by virtue of their detailed researches, come up with Bahá'í perspectives that are new and it is not infrequently that case that textual support for their theories is discovered—scriptural texts are found, not generally known or published, that confirm their detailed researches.

Conscious of the fact that the academic approach is not incompatible with apologetics and theology (= "faith articulating itself") each of the great world religions sponsor institutions that take an internally academic approach. Bahá'ís have nothing to fear about taking an internally academic approach. If Bahá'ís wish to establish institutions of higher learning that are respected for their academic integrity it is imperative that they understand and adopt an academic stance. It remains for the future for Bahá'í scholars and theologians to work out the kind of academic approach that is best suited to Bahá'í Studies. It seems to me to be certain however, that an inhibiting 'fundamentalist' position will not equip Bahá'í scholars to enter into adequate dialogue with the thinking world or befittingly articulate their Faith.

Objection: Are there not already learned Bahá'ís and Bahá'í scholars who are capable of fulfilling Bahá'í intellectual needs? Why bother with an Institute?

While there are learned Bahá'ís and Bahá'í scholars there is no institution designed to promote and coordinate academically informed Bahá'í scholarship and no full-time course which caters for the needs of younger Bahá'ís who desire to undertake detailed study. A definite gap exists. Furthermore, many of the learned Bahá'ís and Bahá'í scholars have no real training—if any at all—in the academic study of religion. The academic study of religion is a specialised discipline. Knowing a lot about the Bahá'í Faith seldom equips a given individual to enter into academically informed religious debate. The proposed Centre or Institute would promote this kind of scholarship; students would be trained in Bahá'í studies according to the best contemporary methodologies surrounding the study of religion. This would lead to new intellectual developments within the field of Bahá'í Studies. If Bahá'ís are to keep up with modern developments in the study of religion it is not enough to fall back on the generality of 'learned Bahá'ís'. If Bahá'ís are to enter into dialogue with modern intellectuals they must be academically informed.

A learned Bahá'í may know a great deal, for example, about the Bahá'í notion of 'progressive revelation' but this does not mean that he or she could contribute in an academic manner to the contemporary debate about the possibility of an emergent 'world theology'. A Bahá'í scholar may be learned in the Bahá'í interpretation of the Bible but may be completely unable to understand or evaluate the methods and findings of modern Biblical scholarship. Such examples could be multiplied. The setting up of a Centre or Institute on academic lines would produce scholars who might make important contributions to key contemporary concerns.

The number of learned Bahá'ís who have been trained in the study of religion remains very few. The proposed Institute would go some way to increasing their number and raising Bahá'í intellectual standards. No matter how well-qualified a Bahá'í might be in such fields as medicine, chemistry, physics, engineering, psychology or economics this does not mean that his studies make him or her a good student of religious subjects. Many Bahá'ís regarded as learned are learned in areas other than Bahá'í studies. Bahá'í studies is a self-contained and specialist field. As such it needs to be fostered and developed. Learning in an area peripheral to Bahá'í studies does not mean that academic integrity in Bahá'í studies is automatic. In brief, because contemporary Bahá'í deepening and study does not lead to academically informed and expert knowledge in Bahá'í studies there is a need to establish academically oriented research and teaching Institutes. Oriental Bahá'í scholarship tends to polymathism rather than systematic analysis and is generally uninformed by modern scholarly methodologies. Occidental Bahá'í "deepening" is usually 'teaching-oriented' and unaware of a plethora of texts and MSS in Arabic, Persian and other languages central to the more scholarly approach. I am not suggesting that "deepening" should be scholarly research but trying to highlight the differences between them. Though there is some contact, Bahá'í "deepening" is generally as different from academic research as the Christian "Bible study group" is from a University Biblical Studies course. Many questions seldom if ever raised in Bahá'í "deepening" are fundamental to scholarly research. Texts and documents, Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í, crucial for academic research are relatively unimportant in the "deepening" context.

Objection: There already exist local, national and international Bahá'í Institutes designed to promote Bahá'í deepening and scholarship, why suggest something else?

This objection has already been responded to in the previous pages. The proposal that an academically oriented Bahá'í Studies Centre and Research Institute be set up does not devalue the importance of already existing institutions designed to promote deepening and scholarship. From what has been said it should be obvious that something both necessary and essentially new is needed. There is a difference between institutions that cater for the "deepening-teaching" situation and those envisaged that will promote an academically informed Bahá'í scholarship.

Objection: It would be too costly to establish an Institute for academic research and teaching. The Baha'i Fund would be better channelled elsewhere.

As, has been argued, the promotion of academic Bahá'í scholarship is not peripheral to central Bahá'í concerns it is hardly the case that it should not be funded. In the light of the resources of the Bahá'í International Community it is not at all inappropriate that one or more academically oriented Institutes be set up.

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The above notes may seem to be abstract or even irrelevant. Perhaps they are? When however, academic institutions for Bahá'í Studies come into being-- as I feel sure they will-- these kinds of issues will inevitably take on much greater importance.

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A PERMANENT BAHÁ'Í STUDIES CENTRE AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE-- FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS.
Denis MacEoin

A PERMANENT BAHAI STUDIES CENTRE AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE -- FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Denis MacEoin

I have read with considerable interest Steve Lambden's 'Thoughts on the Establishment of a Permanent Baha'i Studies Centre and Research Institute' and wish to congratulate him for having set out so lucidly a proposal which appears to merit serious attention in the Baha'i community. I wish him luck in his efforts to generate sympathy for his scheme and hope sympathy may in the end lead to concrete support in the form of adequate funding for the enterprise. In general, I find myself in agreement with most of his observations, although I have reservations about what seems to me to be an overly elaborate and unduly directed syllabus proposed for a three-year course in Baha'i studies. I have no doubt that, were such an institute to be set up, it could serve a valuable function and contribute a great deal to the development of this field as well as to the enrichment of the intellectual life of Baha'is as a whole.

I do, at the same time, have one or two more general reservations the expression of which may help to clarify some of the problems that may be engendered by the establishment of such an Institute and, perhaps, assist in the formulation of more precise plans for the development of academic work in this area. Perhaps my most general observation is that the growth of Babi and Baha'i studies has always suffered from something of a tension between Baha'i perceptions of the status of Baha'ism and the actual, mundane situation of that religion. It is, I think, important to bear in mind that the notion that Baha'ism is a 'world faith' is an ontological assumption for adherents rather than a statement of observable or meaningful fact. Even if we accept the highest current estimate of Baha'i world membership as standing at 3 to 4 million (a figure which, for various reasons, I believe to be exaggerated, perhaps as much as twice the true figure), we still do not have a religious group of any greater size or significance than the Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses. In historical terms, Baha'ism is a very new and untried phenomenon, with no significant literary, artistic, architectural, political, social, philosophical, theological, or legal achievements to its credit; it has never been the religion of a state or region or the basis for a civilization; and its spread has been the result of conscious, somewhat forced planning (assisted by modern transport and communications) rather than natural or sustained growth. I do not say any of this to be disparaging. In its own terms or in comparison with other new religious movements, Baha'ism has been extremely successful, and I see no reason why it should not continue to be so for at least a little while to come.

But it is obvious that there are acceptable reasons for doubting whether it makes sense -- for the outsider at least -- to try to put Baha'i studies on a par with, say, Buddhist or Islamic studies, or to attempt to fit Baha'ism as a major component into general courses on world religions or as part of a contribution to the development of a 'world theology'. By that standard, general world religion courses would be bursting at the seams with an endless array of small religious traditions claiming parity with the major faiths. I have often in the past expressed my concern about the rather artificial (and, I think, misleading) efforts of Baha'i institutions to have their faith introduced into schools on a par with the established religions of major ethnic minorities. At my harshest, I would describe it as something of a con trick which seeks to take advantage of general public ignorance about the true status of Baha'ism in the world as a whole. Certainly, it is, I am sure, true to say that most scholars even now would approach the Baha'i faith (in its widest sense, as embracing Babism -- something I would on other grounds dispute) from two principal angles: 1) historically, dealing only with the Babi period (up to the 1870s, perhaps), within the context of modern Shi'ism, Islamic reform, or 19th-century Iranian or Middle East history; and 2) sociologically, as a new religious movement (with rather less attention to the question of origins). Those concerned with broader studies of world religions would still be perfectly justified in giving it only the most perfunctory attention, if any at all. All this may, of course, change quite a

lot in the next 50 years or so, but for the present I believe a down-to-earth appraisal of the situation is the one most likely to lead to useful results. Even I, who am very far from promoting Baha'ism as a major topic, find difficulty in convincing colleagues that it is a subject worth considering in any depth at all.

None of this need, of course, have very much impact on purely internal studies, but it does, I think, have to be taken seriously into account in any attempt to foster relations with the academic world outside the Baha'i community or to incorporate Baha'i studies into the framework of religious studies as a whole. A realistic view of how things stand will do more to encourage a positive attitude on the part of outsiders than any amount of what will be seen as pretension or self-delusion about status and comparability. In a situation where even well-established and important minor religious traditions such as Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, or Shintoism are not well provided for, one cannot expect to bring Baha'i studies deep inside the mainstream of religious studies.

This is, in itself, something of an argument in favour of the establishment of a wholly internal institution designed to train Baha'is in the academic study of their faith. There are, however, problems with such a proposal. At present, the structure of the Baha'i administrative system is such that there would seem to be virtually no room for direct vocational training leading to a career within the Baha'i organization itself. Even if those institutions of the Baha'i faith most in need of religious experts (as opposed to computer programmers, managers, or accountants), by which I mean the Auxiliary Boards and Counsellors (and perhaps some of the Haifa-based agencies, such as the Research Centre), in their capacity as Baha'i 'ulama', were to develop along more clearly professional lines in the near future, the ethos of appointment would seem to be such as to preclude structured training for the explicit purpose of recruitment into a specific branch of the leadership cadre. The implication that an Institute such as that proposed by Steve might lead to some sort of careerism within the Baha'i administration would, I think, provoke wide opposition in Baha'i circles. It is, of course, eminently arguable from an internal Baha'i perspective that professionalism is at least as desirable in the ranks of the 'religious' leadership (dare one say 'clergy'?) as in the more mundane areas of Baha'i administration, but I shall leave such a debate to those more intimately concerned with it. Another problem with a wholly internal Institute is that, for Baha'i youth to undertake a three-year course in what would effectively be a form of seminary training, would prove of little or no direct benefit to them in choosing and pursuing careers in the outside world -- not an irrelevant consideration in the current economic climate. Inevitably, such an Institution could prove to be a viable proposition only for those with the funds and alternative career options (or family backing) to make it workable.

From an academic viewpoint, the idea of a Baha'i-financed and Baha'i-directed Institution raises serious questions. My own experience in the Baha'i community and what I know of the current activities of bodies like the Canadian Association for Studies on the Baha'i Faith (who managed, for example, recently to hold a conference on 'The Baha'i Faith and Islam' without the participation of anyone who had actually carried out original research in that field) make me skeptical about the chances for such an Institution to be accorded genuine academic freedom consonant with the standards deemed necessary in any secular establishment of higher education. It would be only natural and understandable for Baha'i institutions, were they to finance an operation of this sort, to seek to control the content and direction of courses and research, much as they currently control publications on Baha'i subjects. They are, after all, in the business of converting the world to their faith, not encouraging the dissemination of contrary opinions or doubts. I do not see how such an objection can be realistically circumvented. The mere espousal of the principle of academic integrity would not, of itself, reassure outside academics that control of some sort would not be exercised (as evidenced by the highly tendentious career of CASBF). Even established universities face serious problems concerning academic freedom in the case of externally-funded appointments (my own lectureship at Newcastle, funded by Saudi Arabia being a case in point -- there are current fears that it

may be terminated on the grounds that I carry out and supervise research into 'non-Islamic' topics -- i.e. Shi'ism, Shaykhism, Babism, and Baha'ism). Those who hold the purse-strings must, in the final analysis, influence (however unconsciously) the direction and tenor of research and teaching. One has to ask whether the funding bodies would view with equanimity such possibilities as courses taught by someone like myself or a percentage of Baha'i students withdrawing from the faith or the publication of a journal or books likely to contain material that would not be passed by a Baha'i reviewing panel. Only institutions with no direct stake in the subject taught can hope to remain unconcerned by potentially divisive or damaging developments like those I have mentioned.

It seems to me that a more realistic proposition at the present time would be the creation of a centre for Babi and Baha'i studies (thus differentiated) at a department of religious studies in a reputable western university. This could be done by the provision of funds for, let us say, one lecturer and one research fellow, as well as library facilities and funding for publications, including a journal. Such funding would have to be given absolutely and without strings of any description, ideally in the form of an outright endowment to the university in question, with no stipulations whatever concerning the appointment of incumbents, the content of the library, or the review of publications. It would take some courage on the part of whatever institution (or individual) provided the funds to set up such a centre, but their faith in such a venture would, I believe, be amply rewarded by a reciprocal faith in the teaching and research carried out there.

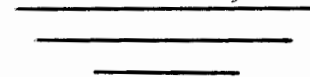
It seems to me that an essential prerequisite for discussions leading to the establishment of such a centre will be the recognition on the part of Baha'i officialdom of the difference between critical academic study of the Baha'i religion and unacademic hostile comment. If it can be accepted that academic work on religion must entail some degree of controversy and even at times lead to trenchant criticism of established positions and dogmatic assumptions, but that this is crucial to genuinely independent and intellectually valid research, then the possibility of a centre staffed at some stage only by non-Baha'is (just as a centre for Islamic studies might well have no Muslim staff on occasions) might appear less threatening (or less conspiratorial) than it possibly does at present. It is a two-sided affair. If the Baha'i leadership wishes: Baha'ism to be taken seriously in academic circles and wants to introduce it into university curricula on some level, it must come to terms with the fact that this can only really be done by taking the academics themselves seriously and according them the respect they deserve as professionals doing their job as they best know how.

It really boils down in the end to a question of professionalism. Steve has already alluded to the fiasco of the Afnan/Hatcher critique of my article on Babi holy war. What was crucial to that whole situation was the fact that it involved two amateur scholars wading into a controversy they were unequipped to handle (but which they/they knew a lot about), using a thin veneer of scholarship as a mask for what were essentially fundamentalist motives, ending in the production of a naive attack on a professional study which, whatever its merits or demerits, accuracy or inaccuracy, was based on a thorough investigation of complex source materials. As I state in my response, the Afnan/Hatcher article performed a serious disservice to the cause of scholarship in the area, whether by Baha'is or others, to the extent that it would implicate the former in its polemical motivation and fundamentalist methodology, and discourage the latter from involvement in a field of research which could lead to unpleasant situations of that kind. Only a thorough-going professionalism can help allay the fears raised by ill-informed critiques such as this or the earlier Baha'i attacks on E.G. Browne.

I do not think my suggestion precludes Steve's idea for a Baha'i Institute in its own right. The two proposals would be parallel approaches to a complex problem. Steve proceeds from a position of optimism with regard to the growing status of Baha'ism as a faith and a community, I take a more cynical view of the importance and future prospects of the movement. To that extent, the purposes Steve has in mind might best be served by an internally-run seminary-style institution (similar to others established in recent years by adherents of other new religious movements, such as the Unification Theological Seminary, the Religious Science School of Ministry, and the Dharma Realm Buddhist University);

more secular academic ends would be met by the provision of some teaching and research in a single establishment under non-Baha'i control, attracting both Baha'i and non-Baha'i students. It is, of course, possible that one of the results of such a division would be that the Baha'i Institute would become more theologically-oriented and the outside Centre a more strictly religious studies operation, but I think such a demarcation is implicit in the situation. I know Steve wants to create a Baha'i Institution that would conform to the highest academic standards, but, as I have argued in two earlier articles in this Bulletin, there would be tensions between such an aim and the aims of Baha'i scholarship as seen, for example, by the Haifa Research Centre.

In closing, perhaps I can reverse Steve's basic concern about the lack of academically-trained Baha'i scholars (a concern which I nonetheless endorse) by drawing attention to the fact that, as things stand, I am still the only non-Baha'i scholar engaged in full-scale research and writing on Babi or Baha'i subjects. Until larger numbers of outsiders can be persuaded to enter the field in a serious way (even if only to the extent of two or three major publications), there must remain an imbalance the effects of which will continue to be deleterious to the proper development of the subject. I feel this particularly acutely because of the reception my work receives in certain Baha'i circles. Were there to be a wider non-Baha'i scholarship on the subject, it would be more difficult to dismiss some of my theories and approaches as my own personal eccentricities or the results of personal animus: there would be a wider context into which my work could be fitted, as in the case of any other academic subject. And that in itself would, I venture to say, prove a major step forward the process of making Babi and Baha'i studies take their place, however minor, in the full spectrum of scholarship.



Martha Root's tours, 1924, 1939.

In order to describe the manner in which Martha Root presented the Baha'i Faith during her Australian visits, 1924 and 1939, her press articles have been given some content analysis. Obviously, this method suffers in that she had no control over what was printed, but she had control over what she said. Given that the Baha'i Faith contains a wide range of subject matter, specific selection of topics would have had to be done for inclusion in brief articles. The Faith could have been presented as a personal religion, stressing the individual development it strives for; or theologically, as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, (the millennial motif); it could have been presented as a program for social reform.

table 16. Points made in Martha Root press articles, 1924. (other than mere references)

	1:	2:	3:	4:	5:	6:	7:	8:	9:	10:	11:	12:	13:	14:	15:	16:
highlight travels	*	*
Baha'i	*	.	.	*	*	*	*	*
Bab	*	.	.	*	*	.	.	*
Baha'u'llah	*	.	.	*	*	*	*	.	.
Abdu'l-Baha	*	*	.	.	.
Shoghi Effendi	*
Christianity	*
Muhammad
Esperanto	*	*	.	.	*	*
Universal Peace (and basic principles)	.	*	*	*	*	.	*	*	.	.	*	*	*	*	*	*
Capital and Labour	*	*
Spiritual Healing	*	.	.	.

PRESS ARTICLES

1. Perth, unknown, n.d.
2. Argus, August 15
3. Adelaide, unknown, n.d.
4. West Australian, July 3.
5. Daily News, July 14.
6. West Australian, July 26.
7. New Zealand Herald, September 22.
8. Sydney Morning Herald, October 11.
9. The Sun, October 14.
10. Hobart, unknown, October 22.
11. Examiner, 25 October.
12. Daily Telegraph, n.d.
13. The News, November 6.
14. The News, November 7.

15. Saturday Journal, November 8.
16. The Register, November 11.

ERRORS AND QUESTIONABLE STATEMENTS

In these press articles, a number of errors or questionable statements are made. These points being raised do not help make clear if they are the errors of the individual papers, or of Miss Root. Newspapers often generated fanciful claims about Baha'i to 'improve' the story:

1. The claim that the Baha'i movement had 30,000,000 or even 17,000,000 followers is clearly incorrect. The correct figure was probably closer to 400,000. (1) (3).
2. The claim that President Wilson spent two months studying the Baha'i teachings before writing his 14 point peace plan is yet to be proven. (2)
3. The claim that the Baha'i movement had 'no leaders' was demonstrably false. This may have been a reference to the fact that there is no clergy, and that individual Baha'is decide the truth or falsity of religious claims, experiences, or teachings. (2)

- (1) Perth, unknown, n.d.,
 (2) West Australian, July 3, President Wilson, "no Leaders"
 (3) Register, November 11, 17,000,000 followers

Classification of known engagements, (excluding Baha'i)

- EDUCATIONAL 7
 1- Blind Institute
 1- Society of Arts
 1- Auckland Teacher's Training College
 2- Y.W.C.A.
 1- Comrade's Boys Club
 1- Boy's Institute Boys Club
- SOCIAL REFORM 6
 2- Esperantists
 1- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
 1- Peace Society of the Australian Church
 1- National Council of Women
 1- Rotary
- RELIGIOUS 15
 1- Australia Church
 7- Theosophists
 1- Spiritualist churches
 3- New Civilization Centre
 1- Occult Church
 1- All Saints Church Boys Club
 1- Auckland Unitarian Church

- POLITICAL 11
- 1- Socialists, Bolsheviks, I.W.W.
- 7- Labour Party
- 3- Chinese Nationalist Club
- CULTURAL 4
- 1- Chinese Club
- 1- Lyceum Women's Club
- 1- Pioneer Women's Club
- 1- English Speaking Union
- BROADCASTS 5

table 17 a. Points made in Martha Root press articles, 1939.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
highlight travels	*	*																
Baha'i	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bab				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Baha'u'llah				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Abdu'l-Baha				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shoghi Effendi				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Christianity				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Islam				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Esperanto				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
World Peace		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Basic Principles		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Economics				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Universalism		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Queen Marie				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Politics				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

TABLE 17 b.

	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Highlight travels											
Baha'i			*	*			*	*			
Bab			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Baha'u'llah			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Abdu'l-Baha			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shoghi Effendi			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Christianity			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Islam			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Esperanto	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
World Peace	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Basic Principles			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Economics			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Universalism			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Queen Marie			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Politics			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Press Articles

1. Sydney Morning Herald, Nov 30, 38
2. Daily Telegraph, November 30, 38
3. The Mail, Adelaide, February 25
4. Sydney Morning Herald, December 1, 38
5. West Australian, January 11
6. Daily News, January 19
7. West Australian, January 21
8. West Australian, January 25
9. Advertiser, Feb 7
10. Advertiser, Feb 8
11. Sydney Morning Herald, Feb 9
12. The Dawn, Feb 15
13. The Sun, Feb 28
14. The Examiner, Mar 6
15. Mercury, Mar 6
16. Mercury, Mar 7
17. Mercury, Mar 10
18. Mercury, Mar 11
19. Examiner, Mar 11
20. Woman, Mar 13
21. Sydney Morning Herald, Mar 22
22. Daily Telegraph, Mar 22
23. Peacewards, Apr 1
24. Wireless Weekly, Apr 5
25. Manly Daily, Apr 8
26. Manly Daily, Apr 20
27. Auckland Star, Apr 26
28. New Zealand Herald, Apr 27
29. New Zealand Herald, Apr 29

Errors and questionable statements

As with the 1924 publicity, again some statements can be questioned.

1. The Baha'i writings state that in the future, the work-day will be shortened. The statement that there will be only five hours work, so as to allow time for "soul development" is not an accurate statement of "Baha'i teachings". (5)
2. The statement "The beautiful Baha'i Temple in Chicago was surrounded by chapels in which many varied religious services were conducted" (16) is incorrect. Concerning this Effie Baker had written to Hyde and Clara Dunn as early as September 1925:

I was giving Martha's description of the Universal Temple to Mrs Wheeler one evening and Mirza Fazel was much amused. I gave it as she said about the 9 avenue gardens, and fountains, and the building being circular, with 9 dens leading into 9 chapels where all the seven different religions would be

able to put in their own paraphernalia and worship God in their own way and the other two allotted to New Thought, Theosophists, and other modern religions... he laughed and said this was a very nice explanation, but was purely imagination...all people are permitted to enter any door. If it were restricted to different doors leading into different chapels for the different religions, it would at once mean separation and be contrary to the Baha'i principle of universality..." (A)

Classification of known engagements, 1939

13 EDUCATIONAL (14%)

- 2 W.E.A.
- 1 Hobart State High School
- 1 Commercial High School
- 1 Trinity Grammar
- 3 Women's League of Health
- 1 Kilvingston Girls School
- 1 Friends High School
- 1 Board of Social Study and Training
- 1 Headmaster, Knox Grammar
- 1 People's University

19 SOCIAL REFORM (21%)

- 1 Women's Services Guild
- 1 Radiant Health Club
- 1 Women's International League of Peace and Freedom
- 2 National Council of Women
- 1 Peace Message to World Women
- 2 Rotary
- 4 Esperantists
- 1 Australian League of Nations
- 1 New World Movement
- 1 Feminist Club
- 1 United Women's Peace Movement
- 1 Rationalist and Sunday Freedom League
- 1 Women's Crusade for World Peace and Brotherhood
- 1 Crusade for Social Justice

A. Effie Baker to Hyde and Clara Dunn, September 22, 1925.
Euphemia E. Baker Papers.

12 RELIGIOUS (13%)

- 1 Adelaide Spiritual Mission Church
- 1 Women's Christian Temperance Union
- 3 Theosophical Society
- 1 Hobart Christian Spiritual Church
- 1 Australian Church
- 2 Unitarian Church
- 2 Y.M.C.A.
- 1 Chinese Church

6 POLITICAL (6%)

- 1 Hobart Lord Mayor
- 1 Senator Macartney Abbott
- 1 Chinese Consul
- 1 United Australia Party
- 1 Polish Consul
- 1 Fabian Club

18 CULTURAL (20%)

- 1 Overseas Club
- 1 World Relations Club
- 1 Lyceum Club
- 1 Country Women's Association
- 1 Writers Cultural Club
- 1 Chinese Women's Society
- 1 Bellerive and Sandford Country Women
- 1 Millions Club
- 1 English Speaking Union
- 1 Quota Club
- 1 Penwomen's Club
- 1 Travel Club
- 1 Fellowship of Australian Writers
- 1 Business Girls
- 1 Guest Club
- 1 Optimists Club
- 1 Overseas Club
- 1 New Women's Club

14 BROADCASTS (15%)

Comparison of press coverage 1924 and 1939

(other than mere mentions)

Topics	1924		1939	
	No.	%	No.	%
Travels	2	4.8	4	5.9
Baha'i	6	14.6	17	25.3
Bab	4	9.7	1	1.4
Baha'u'llah	5	12.1	2	2.9
Abdu'l-Baha	2	4.8	-	-
Shoghi Effendi	1	2.4	-	-
Christianity	1	2.4	1	1.4
Islam	-	-	-	-
Esperanto	5	12.1	6	8.9
World Peace	12	29.2	18	26.8
Economics	2	4.8	1	1.4
Spiritualism/Universalism	2.4		6	8.9
Queen Marie			2	2.9
Politics			1	1.4
Totals	41		67	

On the basis of these figures, a number of comments can be made. Firstly, the issue of world peace dominated the press coverage. This mostly included reference to the Baha'i principles. These principles were not always given with reference to the Baha'i Faith. The second most dominant theme was Esperanto. Christianity was mentioned only once in each period, and Islam was not a topic at all. The issue of world peace was discussed with very little reference to current economic or political conditions.

Comparison of Speaking Engagements, 1924 and 1939

Kind of engagement	1924		1939	
	No.	%	No.	%
Educational	7	14.5	13	15.8
Social Reform	6	12.5	19	23.1
Religious	15	31.2	12	14.6
Political	11	22.9	6	7.3
Cultural	4	8.3	18	21.9
Broadcast	5	10.4	14	17.0
Totals	48		82	

These figures show that Martha Root spoke before a significant number of political groups - significant partly because such a large degree of contact would not have happened at a later date. The Religious organizations addressed were mostly 'fringe Christian' groups, the most orthodox perhaps being Reverend Strong's Australian Church, which was in fact a radical Australian Christian group. The majority of the groups addressed were single issue reform or cultural groups, many of which have disappeared. We could speculate that some of these groups served the function that modern media now caters to - learning about current affairs, overseas conditions, etc.

Graham Hassall.

Sources used in this survey

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- Euphemia E. Baker Papers
- Martha L. Root Papers - United States National Baha'i Archives.
- Martha L. Root Papers - Australian National Baha'i Archives.

Secondary

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 XXXXXXXX

NOTES, COMMUNICATIONS & BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
MISCELLANY.

EARLY WESTERN PILGRIM ACCOUNTS

I am presently compiling a list of early Western Baha'i pilgrim accounts. If anyone is able to supply me with any titles additional to those on the enclosed list I would be most grateful. I am interested in both published and unpublished accounts.

Also, could anyone let me have copies of the Hannen's Akka Lights; Horace Holley's Pilgrimage to Thonon; Roy Wilhelm (and M.J.M.), Glimpses of Abdul Baha, and Open Door, and the Winterburns, Table Talks with Abdul Baha?

Original editions of any of the early pilgrimage accounts would be particularly welcomed.

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August 1984

THE AFNAN LIBRARY TRUST

About the Trust

The Afnan Library Trust is an independant charitable trust set up in 1985. It was set up in accordance with the wishes of the late Hand of the Cause Hasan M. Balyuzi that his collection of papers, books, manuscripts, photographs and newspaper cuttings be formed into a library, named the Afnan Library, founded in the name of Muvaqqaru'd-Dawlih and his wife Munavvar Khanum and dedicated to Khadijih Bagum, the wife of the Bab.

The object of the Library is to promote the study of the Baha'i Faith by maintaining and expanding Mr. Balyuzi's collection. The range of subjects to be covered in the collection includes, apart from material directly about the Baha'i Faith itself, the fields of British, European and World History, Middle Eastern studies in general and religious studies.

The Trustees consist of three persons nominated by Mr. Balyuzi:

- Mrs. Mary Balyuzi
- Mr. Robert Balyuzi
- Dr. Moojan Momen

as well as a representative of the National Spritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom. The Trust was registered with the Charity Commision for England and Wales on 20 June 1985 (Registration Number 291949).

The Trust has also received support from the Universal House of Justice which "views the final accomplishment of the wishes of the late Hand of the Cause as of the very greatest importance".

The income of the Trust consists solely of donations and bequests. Annual accounts will be available for inspection.

The Appeal

Thus far the Trust has principally been engaged in cataloguing the books bequeathed by Mr. Balyuzi and adding to the collection by the purchase of papers and books. However, the Trustees have decided that in pursuing the objects of the Trust, the priority must now be the purchasing or leasing of suitable premises to serve as a library and the furnishing and equipping of these. This is an essential step in order to realise the wish of Mr. Balyuzi that the collection be made available "to all who seek knowledge". In addition the Trustees will be endeavouring to keep the Library up-to-date by the purchase of such books and periodicals as funds will allow.

The Trustees envisage that when funds become available, the activities of the Trust will expand in a number of directions and they will be in a position to award scholarships and grants in furtherance of the aims of the Trust and to undertake publications.

It is upon the advice of the Universal House of Justice and in order to carry out these plans that the Trust is now launching an appeal for donations. Donations may be specified for any of the objectives outlined above. For residents of the United Kingdom, the Trust, as a registered charity, is able to recover income tax on payments made under Deeds of Covenant; gifts in the form of stocks and shares are not liable to capital gains tax, nor are gifts or bequests liable to capital transfer tax. Gifts and bequests of relevant books and papers as well as suitable pieces of furniture for the Library and offices will be most welcome.

In addition the Trust would be pleased to receive voluntary assistance in a number of fields such as: librarianship, legal work, accountancy, and graphic design. There is also need for someone with a good knowledge of Persian to undertake some identification and cataloguing work. But these areas of assistance are relevant mainly to those resident in the United Kingdom.

Should you feel able to help with the work of the Trust, to make a donation or covenant an annual sum to the Trust, please write to the following address: Afnan Library Trust, Wixamtree, Sand Lane, Northill, Biggleswade, Beds., SG18 9AD, United Kingdom.

dialogue

A BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL OF COMMENTARY AND OPINION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

A new quarterly Baha'i journal will begin publication in the Fall of 1985. The publication, entitled Dialogue: a Baha'i Journal of Commentary and Opinion, was begun by a group of Baha'is who wished to bring their Faith into dialogue with the intellectual currents of our time. Dialogue is intended to be a forum for diverse viewpoints on various subjects of interest to Baha'is. The journal will publish essays on issues within the Baha'i community, such as Baha'i expansion in the Third World, involvement in politics, and the use of statistics within the community; as well as articles expressing Baha'i viewpoints on contemporary issues, such as the environment, the peace movement, health and healing, and human rights. Dialogue seeks contributions on these topics, and on others that are of particular interest to the Baha'i community.

The Fall issue will include the following articles: "Apartheid in South Africa—Why It is a Baha'i Issue"; "Cultural Pluralism in the Baha'i Community"; "Baha'i Consultation: A Model for Environmental Legislation"; and "'Abdu'l-Baha's Responses to Christian Dogma." There will also be review articles on recent Baha'i biographies, and on the book Circle of Unity.

Subscriptions to Dialogue are \$10.00 a year in the United States and Canada (\$15.00 elsewhere). Subscriptions and contributions should be sent to Dialogue, P.O. Box 24B21, Los Angeles, CA 90024, U.S.A.

