

Australian Bahá'í Studies promotes analysis of issues relevant to the Australian Bahá'í community. It encourages exploration of the history, teachings, and philosophy of the Bahá'í Faith in systematic, reflective, or artistic ways. It thus offers itself as a medium of communication for anyone who is interested in the development of the Australian Bahá'í community.

In view of the Bahá'í vision of scholarship as an activity accessible to all, rather than one limited to a small academic community, *Australian Bahá'í Studies* seeks input from people of diverse backgrounds and viewpoints, in a way that assists in redefining what is meant by scholarly practice. The readers of the journal have an interest in teaching the Bahá'í Faith, serving its administrative organs, and participating in its community life. It is also of interest to those studying the model that the Bahá'í community offers for the resolution of contemporary problems.



Association for
Bahá'í Studies
Australia



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AUSTRALIAN BAHÁ'Í STUDIES
Volume 2, 2000

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Section One: The Creative Inspiration

Creativity & Spirituality - Are They Related? – *Negin Sanaei*

The Beautiful Flight Toward the Light:
Reflections on an Artist's Life – *Robin M. Chandler*

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Letters Inscribed Upon His Sacred Scroll : An Anthology of
Poetry by Australian Bahá'ís 1999 – *Belinda Belton*

Remembrance of Clara & Hyde Dunn
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The Bot Series – *Vahid Payman*

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Mr Faizi and Mr Furútan in Australia: The Yerrinbool Tapes
*Hands of the Cause, Mr Abdul Qasim Faizi
and Mr 'Ali-Akbar Furútan*

Women and Religious Change: A Case Study in the
Colonial Migrant Experience – *Miriam Dixon*

The Practice of Taqiyyih (Dissimulation) in the
Babí and Bahá'í Religions – *Sepehr Manuchehri*

Section Four: Research and Literature

A "Phoenix Schedule" for the Dewey "200s" – Suggested
in Particular for Bahá'í Libraries – *Paul Gerard*

Report on Scholarship

Volume 2, 2000

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Editorial policy

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Note to Contributors

Australian Bahá'í Studies is open to submissions on all subjects. But it particularly seeks articles of practical relevance to the Australian Bahá'í community, and which might not be readily published elsewhere. These may
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include analyses of specific teaching methods, projects, and outcomes; reports on issues of management, leadership, and administration; application of the Bahá'í Teachings to issues of concern in Australian society; community histories; biographies; literary essays; and essays on Bahá'í theology and religious studies. Contributions may be in the form of essays, review articles, case studies, and reports on research in progress.

The editors are seeking papers that have the following qualities:

- The paper has clearly defined and properly focussed aims
- The paper makes a contribution to thinking on the subject
- The paper is presented in a coherent manner
- The paper provides an appropriate review of existing literature on the subject
- The paper provides appropriate and accurate citations for all material referred to

All submissions are subject to editorial review and should be submitted in IBM-compatible electronic form or on paper, in duplicate, to:

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Editorial

This volume of *Australian Bahá'í Studies* focuses on three subjects of enduring significance to the Australian Bahá'í Community: the role of the arts, the response of indigenous Australians to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, and glimpses at the historical context in 'the present' is experienced. It also includes a stimulating fourth section addressing issues of classification and organization of Bahá'í literature.

Since its inception in Australia, the Association for Bahá'í Studies has striven to respond to Bahá'í Writings on the significance of the arts, particularly by including performance and presentation in as many of its activities as possible. From the earliest scholarship conferences at Yerrinbool, through the annual conferences held in cities and towns across Australia, the Association has sought to provide performing artists with opportunities to share their artistry.

The challenge of hosting a conference specifically on the role of the arts, however, was always a daunting prospect, and it was not until 1999 that ABS Australia felt it could provide artists with the venues that did justice to their craft. The 18th Annual ABS conference 'The Creative Inspiration: Arts and Culture in the Bahá'í Faith', held in Melbourne in September 1999, allowed more than 50 presenters and performers to show their visual and performing arts, in such appropriate venues as Melbourne University's Gryphon Gallery and Melba Concert Hall, and RMIT's Kaliede Theatre.

While the papers in the present volume cannot convey the full impact of the conference's musical performances and visual displays, it nevertheless provides one further opportunity for discussion of the role of the artist, whether visual, literary, or performing.

The present volume's second section, 'On the road to reconciliation', focuses on encounters between indigenous Australia and the Bahá'í Teachings. Walter Waia offers an autobiographical account of his quest for justice, and June Perkins pays tribute to the life of Fred Murray.

A third section brings together some historical studies, and includes rare documentation of an early visit to Australia by Mr A.Q. Faizi and Mr A.A. Furútan. Miriam Dixson, renowned Australian author and Professor of History at the University of New England, explores the life of her grand-mother Margaret Dixson, one of the early Melbourne Bahá'ís, and an inspiration for

Prof. Dixon's own life's journey. Sepehr Manuchehri's paper focuses on an aspect of Bábí history (Taqiyyih) which has hitherto been subject to little scholarly consideration. It reminds us also that insightful scholarship in Bábí and Bahá'í history using original sources is being undertaken within Australia.

Volume 2 of *Australian Bahá'í Studies* commenced under the editorship of Graham Hassall and Natalie Mobine, but its completion was only due to the additional support of Ladan Rahmani, Stephen Beale, and the members of the Committee of the Association for Bahá'í Studies.

Section 1

Creativity & Spirituality: Are they related?

Negin Sanaei

The definition of creativity is very broad as it encompasses many things. Everyone is creative, even those of us who think otherwise. Every dream, every fantasy that we have all had as children and even those we have as adults are the manifestations of our creativity and imagination. Whether we appreciate all kinds of creativity, it surrounds us everywhere. We may ask ourselves why some creative works of certain creative and imaginative people last longer than others. We could ask why the works of Shakespeare have lasted so long, and why have the creative theories of Plato, the findings of Socrates, the imaginative discoveries of Galileo, the contributions of Einstein have made such a big impact on our civilisation? Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that Shakespeare's plays appeal to a majority of the population or perhaps the thoughts behind those ideas and works were spiritual or perhaps both.

Bahá'u'lláh states:

Consider Hippocrates, the physician. He was one of the eminent philosophers who believed in God and acknowledged His sovereignty. After him came Socrates who was indeed wise, accomplished and righteous... What a penetrating vision into philosophy this eminent man had!... He had a profound knowledge of such sciences as were current amongst men as well as of those which were veiled from their minds... He it is who perceived a unique, a tempered, and a pervasive nature in things, bearing the closest likeness to the human spirit... After Socrates came the divine Plato who was a pupil of the former... Then came Aristotle, the well-known man of knowledge... These men who stand out as leaders of the people and are pre-eminent among them, one and all acknowledged their belief in the immortal Being Who holdeth in His grasp the reins of all sciences.¹

This quotation explains to us why such men were 'successful' in their

1. Bahá'u'lláh, *Lawh-i-Hikmat in Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988, pp. 146-147.

imaginative endeavours. It will be referred to later in an attempt to find a better method of how we can be more 'successful'.

Spirituality may seem to be a mystic word; it takes on many facets. The definitions in the Bahá'í Writings vary. Poet, Jack McLean defines spirituality for Bahá'ís as “to be involved with the life of society in order to preserve and promote its finest heritage.”²

Spirituality and religion are often used interchangeably. Spirituality, in fact, is an aspect of religion and perhaps the most important aspect. Shoghi Effendi states: “no amount of administrative procedure or adherence to rules can take the place of this soul-characteristic, this spirituality which is the essence of man”.³

At the Bahá'í World Congress in 1992, David Hofman observed:

The world today is starving for spiritual food. It is dying of spiritual thirst. In the innermost private life of every man, woman and child on the planet, there is this inner frustration, this inner lack, this hunger, this yearning for something other than what the world is offering for them today or what they can discover in the world. When all the activities of mankind turn against him, his economics doesn't feed, clothe or shelter him, his religion doesn't inspire him to kindness and goodwill, his politics are unmentionable and his recreations are debased. Nothing today gratifies this longing, this yearning in the individual human soul.⁴

This inner yearning can illustrate why Deepak Chopra or James Redfield's books are among the best sellers. It is not hard to become more spiritual, as Bahá'ís believe that man is in reality a spiritual being and only when he lives in the spirit, is he truly happy. So how do we live in this spirit? Perhaps by using our spiritual power. What is our spiritual power? 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said our imagination along with other faculties like thought, comprehension and memory are parts of our spiritual power.⁵ The more we utilise any of these faculties, the more would we enhance our spiritual growth. This is not to say that if one person commits to memory all the books in the world, s/he is an especially spiritual person. That person also needs to use other faculties of their spiritual power. Just like the body which needs food, water, exercise and fresh air to survive, our spirituality needs to use all four faculties of our spiritual power mentioned above.

Jack McLean writes in his book *Dimensions in Spirituality* that “imagination can transcend time and space and directly go into the world of eternity

2. J.A. McLean, *Dimensions in Spirituality*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1994, p.126.

3. Letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, April 25, 1945, quoted in Helen Hornby, *Lights of Guidance* (2nd rev. ed.), New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988, p.542.

4. Bahá'í World Congress video, 1992.

5. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1990, pp.210-211.

with its ethereal, airy spirits.”⁶ Imagination is a constituent of our spirituality, therefore it has implications for spiritual growth. It also has sure implications for our spiritual detriment. Creativity has two dimensions. On the one hand, when it is focused on unveiling knowledge, the advancement of civilisation and the promotion of harmony and unification of the world, it becomes a powerful ally of spiritualisation. On the other hand, when its energies are harnessed in the service of the frivolous and self-focused gains, it can pose a serious threat to spiritual development.⁷ It becomes a threat when our creativity is used for our own materialistic purposes rather than for the portrayal of spiritual inspiration. Therefore imagination can be viewed as a power of the soul which may either focus on higher and abstract spiritual realities or on lower objects of self-gratification.

Recall the quote about Hyppocrates, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. In that quote Bahá'u'lláh asserts that they all believed in God and praised Him and recognised that without the help of God we are not worth as much. Even someone contemporary, like Einstein, insisted that religion and science should move forward together: “*Science without religion is blind, religion without science is lame.*”⁸

‘Abdu’l-Bahá expands on this point in *Paris Talks*: “*By the power of the Holy Spirit, working through his soul, man is able to perceive the Divine Reality of things. All great works of art and sciences are witnesses of this power of the spirit*”.⁹ And Bahá'u'lláh states:

*All art is a gift of the Holy Spirit. When this light shines through the mind of a musician, it manifests itself in beautiful harmonies. Again, shining through the mind of a poet, it is seen in fine poetry and poetic prose. When the light of the Sun of Truth inspires the mind of a painter, he produces marvellous pictures. These gifts are fulfilling their highest purpose when showing forth the praise of God.*¹⁰

Does this mean that if we do not write or paint about God and the Divine, our efforts are useless? I think not! I think the success of our art depends on our intentions and our purposes. Our intentions should be spiritual and wanting to portray what is in our spirit and inspiration for the sake of presenting and displaying our inspiration and not what that demonstration may pave the way for.

There are many demonstrations of decadent creativity, for example, creativity used in marketing campaigns for achieving their materialistic goals while

6. J. A. McLean, op.cit., p.176.

7. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, op.cit., pp. 210-211.

8. Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of Western Mind – Understanding the Ideas that Have Shaped Our World View*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1993, pp.355-356.

9. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, (10th Ed.), London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1961, p. 85.

10. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, op.cit., p.192.

destroying our self-worth and dignity. We are constantly probed to buy lottery tickets so we can ‘spend every minute of everyday, of every year’. This leads us to think that money can come easily and we therefore have no respect for the time which we have spent working hard. Nuclear power has the potential to help humanity but unfortunately it has had a major adverse result of destroying parts of the world and some members of its family. Einstein had said that if he had any vision of his energy theory being used as bombs he would never have discovered it. These examples show our spiritual development being threatened, when creativity is not used to advance human civilisation.

As an individual, however, I suggest that we acknowledge the negative and find out what we can learn from it and try to make amends by concentrating on the positive side of it. Let’s utilise all the great talent we have around us and appreciate its importance. Bahá'u'lláh states: “*It hath been revealed and is now repeated that the true worth of artists and craftsmen should be appreciated, for they advance the affairs of mankind,*”¹¹ and further, that, “*Arts, crafts and sciences uplifts the world of being, and are conducive to its exaltation.*”¹²

11. Bahá'u'lláh quoted in *The Compilation of Compilations, The Arts*, Maryborough: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1991, p. 3.

12. Ibid.

The Beautiful Flight toward the Light: Reflections on an Artist's Life

Robin M. Chandler

I would like to share a few subjective reflections about the nature of creativity from my own point of view, training and experiences as a social scientist and as an artist. When I was no more than seven years of age, my late father would pull out his compasses and drafting tools. Quietly seated next to him, legs dangling from the sofa far from the floor in those days, I now ponder the many intellectual rituals of mentoring which took place between he and I throughout my life.

My father was my first mentor. It was his interest in passing on to an eager 6-year-old the geometric procedures of three-point perspective which set me on a course in art production. In retrospect, his broader aim was to convey a type of analytical view of the world as a set of structures, but always foregrounding his apprentice with the consciousness that humanism, globalism, and reconciling apparent opposites was the key to unlocking the meaning of life. I drew horses. I painted horses. He gave me crits. 'Fabulous! Good! More! More!' he would say. I cut out paper dolls and threw them away after I was sure my scissors-hand could precision-cut, since the dolls didn't interest me, only the cutting. My parents could track me by the trail of paper cuttings and I earned an extra cleaning-up chore. I put it together in my head too late. No 'due process' in childhood.

A Depression kid, post-World War II fifties parent, my dad was, naturally, a gadget junkie. Turn a corner in the house and the Bell and Howell movie camera was glaring up your nose with Ahmad Jamal's Poinciana cooing from his new hi-fi. For ten years after coming home from dance class, Tchaikovsky and Schumann echoing in my eardrums, I climbed the front hallway stairs, sweaty and bunion-footed from too many pirouettes en pointe. I was rarely in the mood for being filmed since I was often en route to Irish step dancing rehearsals for St Patrick's Day or some school performance. There are reels of 8mm film somewhere of family, friend, and stranger alike doing mundane or zany things, and I hope these remain lost forever. Like my baby-boomer

peers, I was an American Howdy-Doody TV kid who watched the Russians launch the Sputnik, making us all irreversible technologists.

Then there was literature. Blessed with endomorphic genes, Daddy had season tickets to the living room sofa where he hulked over novels which he had read so often the spines had dissolved. Newspapers, milk cartons, classical literature; he read anything with words. 'No Decameron', he said. 'You're too young.' 'No' means 'do it' to adolescents. I thought he knew the rule. Skulking under my pillow at night with a flashlight and Boccaccio, I could draw imaginative and irrational parallels between its characters and the nuns and priests at Catholic school. Boccaccio's fantasies (or facts) were fodder for balancing out the equally incomprehensible celibate life of the religious clergy. So I put the metaphors and symbols of twelve years of parochial education behind me - grotesque uniforms and saddle shoes, daily mass, Gregorian chant and Verdi's Requiem, crucifixes with magic potions, Latin orations of Cicero's and Caesar's conquests, the Virgin Mary and the 'Immaculate Deception', poison yard sticks for bad kids, ashes on the forehead, and endless, endless processions for endless holy days and fetes, along with a healthy respect for God and being taught by feminist intellectuals - and at nineteen years of age became a Bahá'í. Since my parents were always on us kids like a cheap suit, there was no chance of invoking the Hague Convention. There was no chance, imprisoned by all this creative imagination, I would become a nuclear physicist, or so I thought.

'Babe' (my father's nickname) was my first music mentor. Beginning, he might say to me, 'now let me see if I can explain something to you', and proceed with a lecture demonstration about various popular dances. Perhaps he would say 'listen to the rhythm, the melodic structure ... and count', as he twirled me around the floor to Duke Ellington, then asked me to sing a few lines of Gregorian Chant, and hum a few bars from Stravinsky or Schubert and asked if I could 'see' the music! Sometimes he would simply pull out a rare book edition, explain it as family patrimony and threaten to return from the dead if I ever lost or sold his precious books in which he forgetfully and peripatetically hid money. Was it the books or the money, I often wondered, that he was more worried about? 'You can always get more money', he would insist, 'but a good book is hard to find'. In retrospect, these were outrageous expectations to lay on a child and from time to time it crossed my mind that he might be nuts, definitely different from the other, more normal dads.

It was not until my late 30's that I realized many artists pass their lives without mentors and, often, outside stimulating environments. In that third decade of my artistic life, American painter Lois Mailou Jones became a second mentor to me, equally relentless and exacting, until she died, an octogenarian, at the end of the twentieth century. She had ridden the waves of all the major movements of that century. The Indian art historian Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877-1947) and many others have waxed poetic about the uses of art, the

lineage created between teacher and student-apprentice, and the power of art to transform artist and audience.

However, 'no chance' is a challenge to God, as I later became a social scientist, closing the circle of my training and all the forms of cultural education I had absorbed. God always has the final word, the final melody, the final brushstroke as we try to set boundaries for our own universe of creativity and, at the same time, break all the rules in an effort to produce that ineffable artwork which also has substantive form and meaning.

In retrospect, I realise I lived in an intellectual paradise with a renaissance man who worshipped and respected the powers of the mind, loved knowledge, and stopped in his journey to see that the ecstasy of intellectual and aesthetic discovery was passed on to me. This is our charge, our mission, those of us who labour in the unfallowed fields of the knowledge industry in the information age: to discover it ourselves, whatever concept, theory or evidence, and to pass it on. How much the better to pass it on with the love of knowledge with which genius is endowed.

The visual text and the written text

With such an upbringing, who would expect my work to be anything but an interdisciplinary or global enterprise? I was an early convert thrown to the lions of mono-disciplinary complacency where learning ends when you get letters after your name. Like many others, I refused to study 'just one thing.' I could 'see' the links, the theoretical networks, the elegant structures connecting idea and practice! What was wrong with everybody else? Social science, educational methodology, studio production and art history! Why not? It always seemed so natural. Yet one quickly discovers that the first order of business in scientific creativity and creative science, if one wishes to be taken seriously, is to develop a 'language', a means whereby communication with others is possible. The expression of thought in form. Not merely the written text, but oral tradition which relies heavily on the power of memory (an ancient high art we have dispensed with), and the visual text, the 'language' through which an artist speaks, drawing the spectator's gaze into pictorial, architectural space, or cyberspace. The 'language' of music, theatre, dance: each enraptures us through the configuration of sound, literary dramatisation, or gesture.

I have pursued this path as a permanent calling. Consequently, 'returning' to science through doctoral work in sociology, cultural theory, and epistemology after many years in the arts constituted an affirmation of my early training; the idea that designing 'bridges', 'walkways', 'reservoirs', and 'airways' was a means by which seemingly disparate knowledge bases could be bridged and linked. Borrowing from this architectural model for thinking about the interdisciplinary and artist-scholar complexities of my work, I will devote my remarks to the forms of intelligence which have become central to my projects.

What follows is a description of my creative production philosophy and

collage, poetry and installation work which interrogates the boundaries of aesthetics and social science.

Since 1978 I have been developing collage as a medium/technique as a non-traditional form of fine art expression in the visual arts. For the past ten years I have been revisiting an interest in the visual text and the written text. Subsequently, several collages were produced with accompanying poems which I have read publicly when my own work as a studio artist was being showcased. In 1993 I also began to exhibit installation work on occasion and to produce photography for exhibition: the use of the photograph as an extension of collage themes. Creative productivity falls over two categories - studio art and inter-arts. My interest in creating collages functions on several multi-dimensional tracks. The creation of two and three-dimensional work represents an intellectual and aesthetic reciprocity between my field research as a social scientist and my art, constituting the link between theory and praxis. So powerful and important are the 'ideas' that they demand material production as works of art and as published written texts. This occurs at three stages - technical method, style, and the life of art.

In collages such as *Genesis*, *Genesis* (1994) and *Capoeira* (1988), I explore the layering and the repetition of form as a technique to create the illusion of depth of field, or alternately to convey a sense of the flat dimension, using colour as a magnet. However, these works revise cultural history through their thematic content by, respectively, re-situating women at the centre of early history, and re-presenting an Afro-Brazilian martial art form brought by Angolan slaves during the slave trade as a syncretised dance form. The works are narrative, telling stories as a visual text to be read.

Technical method: drawing with the scissors

Collage is a technique practised as early as the 14th century by the Japanese, described first by the French as *papiers collé* - cut and pasted paper - and later popularised by the Cubists.

Evolving over twenty years, my production technique involves an exploration and subsequent mastery of perspective drawing, composition, painting, design and collage. The 'drawing-with-scissors' technique describes my initial efforts to draw free-hand with the scissors a selection of abstract and minimalist forms which have become my 'signature' as a collagist: forms including plant and botanical forms, ginkgo leaves, priestesses, diffuse horizon lines and vanishing points, cultural icons, and experimenting with optical illusions, three-point perspective, fluid horizon lines, free-floating forms, design asymmetry, and geometric pattern.

Creating the illusion of depth of field using a 'layering' technology has been the goal of showing how two-dimensional space can be transformed into multi-dimensional space through the experimental use of colour, form, and multimedia - paper, paint, thread, copper tooling, artefacts, and my own

photography. Basic conservation issues, aided by high school chemistry, dictated the construction of experimental test boards on which I tested the chemical interaction of various papers and glues. Since most of my baseline materials (paper and glue) are handmade and/or imported, it was necessary, in the early stages of my career, to be able to anticipate what tactile and visual effects would result. Just as social science methodology is concerned with the reproducibility of experimental method, so is art method. For example, the production of handmade paper was facilitated by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) at Pyramid Atlantic (MD). However, I had been making paper prior to the receipt of that grant. Since 1995 my work has evolved into computer and digital areas and includes commitments for the development and interpretation of my work onto 'Immersadesk' technology, a process involving the creation of interactive, three-dimensional projections of selected collages onto three-dimensional or virtual spaces.

Style: collage as symbolic narrative

The research and selection of thematic content which elevates the medium and illuminates the expressive possibilities of collage is derived from my field work. I get ideas from the social landscape and attempt to reinterpret space from the third dimension into the two-dimensional format. Exploring the space-time continuum through the juxtaposition of form in space shows how the faculty of creative imagination can extend itself from 'virtual' space into 'real' space. In this respect, the science of collage-making demands a 'visual language' of its own to convey cultural meaning.

Thus, the aesthetic and intellectual strands of multimedia and cross-disciplinary projects converge in the 'collage-as-symbolic narrative'. Poems often accompany collage works or installation pieces. Works range from colour intensive, to create a sense of motion on the flat surface, to a black and gold/silver palette (also my 'signature' style) to play with the 'world of black as a colour'. Symbolism plays a big part in the style and energy of the works and most contain 'visual codes' which will only be comprehended as a new, more global paradigm takes hold. The idea of visual codes and secrecy is integral to the awakening of artist and audience alike.

The life of art: the artist as artefact

The artist is a participant in the creation of social worlds, the first concentric world being the art world. As each artist develops, s/he may subsequently create social space as a conscious advocate of a set of values or beliefs about the role of art, social life, and the artist. One of the first questions an artist asks is, 'what is the meaning of my work and for what and whom do I create (paint, compose, film, choreograph)?' My early artistic influences included Da Vinci, painter-collagist Henri Matisse, Lois Mailou Jones, collagist Romare Beardon, Gauguin (whom I studied as a child), and my father's drafting work.

However, my seminal influences as an intellectual observer began in 1966 in South America and the Caribbean. Subsequently, the world as a social unity became my production matrix.

As an artist matures, the question is extended to include '... and how might I pass on the traditions of art and the ideology of creativity and contribute to an ever-advancing civilisation?' In this way, an artist may choose to link the insular life of solitude (the studio) with the social and political events of their time. It was for this reason that I migrated to the world of social science, having experienced and observed social spaces from an artistic vantage point. Democratization movements and the art/artist later became the logical extension of my own participation as an artist - not only my studio work, but including arts administration, policy advising, and the launching of CARAVAN and The Peace Doors Project. Knowledge about how art worlds emerge and function represents a large database from which I tap for my teaching and course development, and which validates an intrinsic relation between the workplace and the classroom. I have been especially interested in art as a tool for spiritual transformation and stimulating the notion of global citizenship.

Finally, as a recent example of the consolidation of my art activities, I have been honoured with an international tour of my collage work with the US State Department's Arts in Embassies Program (1996-1999, 2000-2003) touring embassies in Gabon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Africa. This occurred within the same period as two artist residences - Johannesburg (1994) and Cape Town (1996) - and exhibitions in Durban (1996) and Johannesburg (1997). Thus embedded in the fabric of the South African art world, I was able to gain valuable insights into this arts community and include those experiences in a book on South Africa dealing with the politics and institutionalisation of art among the creative communities of South Africa, pre- and post-apartheid.

Principles, procedures and the language of collage

Scanning the particular thematic content or 'signature' of my collage-style genre, I mention the recurrence of other stylistic influences - the minimalist abstraction of African art, the geometric symmetry of Islamic ornamental design, and the laws and principles of Japanese painting regarding proportion and design and colour field harmony. Over twenty years, the process of collage-making has suggested a life metaphor; one in which we piece together the fragments of our lives and ride the universal wave of human experience.

As a physicist attempts to explain the nature of life by reconfiguring sets of equations, hopefully leading to some unified theory, my visual work seeks a coherence, an elegant means for organising complex visual data on a two-dimensional plane according to some inner question, some leap of imagination.

Following a period of mastery-of-technique, my iconography began to emerge as a signature style by 1984. The period during which an artist masters

individual technique conforms to a scientist learning advanced mathematics and theory as tools of speculation, investigation, and experimentation. Artists are concerned with the poetic treatment of that same conceptual space, only in tactile or plastic form. Using abstraction as an approach to form - human and anthropomorphic creatures, lush images of vegetation - and a colour palette from highly saturated colour to a black-gold/silver palette, I amassed a set of repeated forms which rush through the picture plane. My work seeks a symmetry and a depth of field through a 'layering' of forms across a space-time continuum creating a 'visual language'. Working with an assortment of papers - mostly handmade or imported - and testing and mixing several adhesives, the task was then to devise a logistical means for sequencing and arranging each layer of each dimension on the picture plane to create an illusion of hyperspace or depth of field. Three means resulted: one, the use of clear sheets of acetate to lay out and separate each layer; the second, using a Spectra Polaroid instamatic to take instant photos of each layer; and the third, and more recent, has resulted from the use of computer scans of existing works from color slide format to pict file format. Filtering tools allow the reconfiguration of a work in such a way that the same composition can be visualised through many different treatments. This latter technology has triggered infinite possibilities for my own work. Further, computer graphic and sound applications as well as the internet have opened up opportunities in a wide range of fields from theatre set design to creating published research for electronic journals.

The topics of my work in collage and poetry line up with on-going commitments to global projects, the use of the arts and cultural exchange to advance the peace process by getting people, particularly urban students, to think differently about puzzle-solving the great issues of our time.

Depicting cross-cultural myths and tales, family portraiture, and social themes such as the establishment of world peace (the nine-part Peace Series, 1989-90), I have attempted to invoke a mood which, I hope, inspires the viewers with an elegance of form and a more universal coverage of the varying meanings of humanism. As such, social issues often find their most discomforting but necessary presence in my work. Two more recent installation works are *Morningsong for a Tillian King* (1993), a commentary and poem on the Rodney King incident, and *Freedom and Madness* (1994), concerning the tensions of living the truly democratic life. Exhibited at the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston (1993) and the Mills Gallery at the Boston Centre for the Arts (1995), public response to *Morningsong* was particularly compelling given the brutality of the installation piece as a manifestation of violence and brutality. This work represented a marked departure from the style and medium of my 'signature' work. However, many artists would agree that the process of art-making is an eternal struggle with experimentation. As an individual passes through different stages in their life, the expression of artistic messages and their execution must undergo transformation, lest the artist die

with their genre. Art is a means, then, for perpetuating personal expression and defying mediocrity, and it keeps us thinking about who we are as human beings. It is a life commitment for me and a 'calling': an urge which began with my father's tutelage.

The socialisation and informal training of an artist have many elements which are linked with personal satisfaction and occupational success. Mentoring is an integral, though sometimes absent, aspect of an artist's career mobility. For some of the most formative years of my creative productivity I was fortunate to have Jones as a mentor. She aggravated, assaulted, role-modelled, encouraged, advocated, titillated, chastised, questioned, and praised my career and creative output with the goal of making me a better artist. I only hope she is proud that another generation has accepted the mantle of leadership in a profession which has always been a long and thorny, but spiritually redemptive, road.

Along with the need to create a body of work that exemplifies a certain identifiable style, mastery of skills, and other aspects of an artist's informal training and growth, public recognition also determines the public reception of an artist's productivity and career longevity. This acceptance into the fold is challenging. Historically, screening and legitimation is conducted in an exclusive way across race, gender, and lifestyle. Entrance and exit from the art world operate against an artist, and resilience in the face of frequent rejection is an unfortunate practice in getting work recognised, exhibited and reviewed. I have chosen to focus my exhibition practice at multiple venues, sometimes designated at a niche market/client, in order to maintain public representation of my work. For the most part, I have never been formally represented by a gallery, except for a consignment period with the former Isobel Neal Gallery in Chicago. From my first exhibition in 1978 to the current three-year international tour of my collages, I can say that the tortoise always wins the race. I have attained the rewards, achievements, and 'status creation' which many artists never achieve. While my work has been purchased for institutional and private collections, the thrill of the studio experience remains fresh and it is my true identity as a professional. Coming out of the studio into the public sphere was sparked by community-based organising popular in the United States and abroad in the 1970s and, later, social and economic development initiatives.

CARAVAN and the Peace Doors Project

When multiculturalism and the arts were first being launched at the state and federal level in the early 80s, CARAVAN, Inc. made a substantive contribution to public school education in the Boston, Cambridge and Lynn public schools under state and federal grant protocols. Later, CARAVAN was incorporated and listed with the Massachusetts Department of Education. It continues to offer consulting services in training to corporations and school systems.

By 1994, an appointment as a Fellow in the Center for Innovation in Urban Education (1994-95) at Northeastern University (where I teach) enabled me to write and ultimately publish an account of the CARAVAN model as a book chapter in *The Promise of Multiculturalism: Education and Autonomy in the Twenty-First Century*¹.

Thirteen years later in 1993, I launched The Peace Doors Project (incorporated under CARAVAN) as an international initiative in arts, architecture and peace education, a project which replicates the CARAVAN model in its emphasis on the education and training of young people for peace through the arts; that is, to influence change by promoting a shift from cultures of violence to cultures of peace. The PDP is currently under review by the Department of Public Works, Government of South Africa, where it was 'workshopped', along with Australia at the InSEA (International Society for Education through Art) World Congress in 1999 in Brisbane.

Conclusion

None of this happens to any artist unless, in the last analysis, one remains very close to one's spiritual roots. My roots are not merely Native American/Irish/German Jewish/African American blood lines, but the blood lines of my lineage as a Bahá'í. Thoreau's words have had deep resonance for me as a fellow New Englander: 'If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.' For Bahá'ís, Bahá'u'lláh is the Drummer for this age. Clinging to the hem of His robe is the only way to fly. And what a glorious ride it has been!

1. George Katsiaficas and Teodros Kiros, (Eds.), New York: Routledge Press, 1998, pp. 101-114.

The Creative Inspiration: Symbolism and Seeing

Karel Fontaine

Hallowed be the Lord in whose hand is the source of dominion. He createth whatsoever He willeth by His Word of command 'BE' and it is ... Unto Him pertaineth all glory and majesty in the kingdoms of Revelation and Creation and whatever lieth between them ... He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them, and He truly is a witness over all things.¹

Every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God is endowed with such potency as can instil new life into every human frame ... Through the mere revelation of the word 'Fashioner', issuing forth from His lips and proclaiming His attribute to mankind, such power is released as can generate, through successive ages, all the manifold arts which the hands of man can produce. This, verily, is a certain truth. No sooner is this resplendent word uttered, than its animating energies, stirring within all created things, give birth to the means and instruments whereby such arts can be produced and perfected.²

The creative impulse is a gift from God. Each of us is endowed with its magic. When I was a little girl in wintry London, wrapped in yellow fog that turned my world into a mysterious, swirling Turner painting, I would spend hours, even days, creating washing peg people clothed in Mother's sewing scraps and stitched with her cottons and threads. Other times, racked by asthma and struggling to breathe, my distress was soothed by the soft scratch and rub of pencils colouring pages of outline drawings in my Windsor & Newton books of people in historical or national costumes or flowers, plants, birds and butterflies.

I'd sit up and look from my little bed down the length of a narrow base-

1. The Báb, excerpts from a prayer for protection in *Bahá'í Prayers*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991, pp. 133-135.
2. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, No. LXXIV in *Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, a Compilation*, New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1986, p. 448.

ment room to French doors which gave onto a long narrow garden dominated by a giant horse chestnut tree, grass, and a bomb shelter under a pile of earth. Above my head the rest of the mid-Victorian town house rose five more storeys to attics with their gabled windows. It was all bomb-blast damaged, run down, and the fifteen rooms were rented. A motley assortment of Jewish refugees, eccentric artists, women of dubious morals, ex-servicemen, Russian émigrés and elderly impoverished gentry shared their lives closely with me and my parents. I was always the only child around. The sounds of gramophone and radio, as well as piano being played, filled the dark stairways where the light bulbs seldom worked. The smells of tenants' meals prepared by candlelight in makeshift kitchens on dark stair landings wafted throughout the building. Two bathrooms served us all, second floor and fifth floor, and three pence in an ancient 'Ascot' geyser - turn on the water and look out when you strike the match! - gave a tolerable bath once a week. I shared with mother to a certain age and then went it alone. Everything I did was done alone.

The richness of experience in my growing up, the curiosity for otherness engendered by the location and time of my youth, the cultural opportunities at hand - only a six penny bus ride in those days to the Tate Gallery or Science Museum or Zoo - all compounded my fascination with the inventiveness of human endeavour and the diversity of existence.

Again among His signs is the dawning sun of His knowledge, and the rising moon of His arts and skills, and His demonstrating perfection in all His ways, as testified by the learned and accomplished of many nations.³

Little did I know when I was six, eight or ten that at fifty I would produce a suite of costumes representing my understanding of the progressive stages made by the human soul in its journey towards its Divine Creator, as articulated by Bahá'u'lláh in *The Seven Valleys*. Those eight costumes incorporate influences born of old, new and growing interest in earthly subjects such as geology, land form, environment, architecture, as well as the more esoteric area of symbolism, philosophy and the arts.

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth is a direct evidence of the revelation within it of the attributes and names of God, inasmuch as within every atom are enshrined the signs that bear eloquent testimony to the revelation of that Most Great Light ... To a supreme degree is this true of man, who, among all created things, hath been invested with the robe of such gifts, and hath been singled out for the glory of such distinction. For in him are potentially revealed all the attributes and names

3. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1997, para. 4.15, p.18.

of God to a degree that no other created being hath excelled or surpassed. All these names and attributes are applicable to him. Even as He hath said: 'Man is My mystery, and I am his mystery.'⁴

For me, the creative impulse is inherent, subtle and shy. The influences upon it accrue. It is harboured within us and naïvely manifests itself in childlike ways and in many active forms until it either shrivels for lack of encouragement or we become too self-conscious or secretive, if criticised, to be productive. Then the force becomes latent, or pustulates and erupts in other activity, ill-guided or disruptive. But the creative impulse which blossoms into mature self-expression through a profession, or becomes an adjunct to day-to-day life, is satisfying, encouraging, health-giving and lauds its Source. The creative impulse is a driving force which inspires, stimulates and informs the obsessions and passions of achievement. The journey of life, with its changes born of inner alchemy and circumstance, is the only constant, and the periodic metamorphoses are what is so exciting about the process of making art from the raw materials of experience.

When I found the following quotation from Tolstoy, it thrilled me to know that my beliefs on the nature of art were the same as his:

All human life is filled with works of art of every kind - from cradle-song, jest, mimicry, the ornamentation of houses, buildings, monuments and triumphal processions. It is all artistic activity ... To evoke in oneself a feeling one has once experienced, and having evoked it in oneself, then, by means of movements, lines, colors, sounds, or forms expressed in words, so to transmit that feeling that others may experience the same feeling - this is the activity of art.⁵

As an artist who is a Bahá'í, I have a responsibility to make art that embodies divine principles and spiritual qualities, and offers to the onlooker an ennobling and enriching experience. It is the onlooker who will interact with the art and who will, according to their capacities, read, feel and understand what is contained therein.

It hath been revealed and is now repeated that the true worth of artists and craftsmen should be appreciated for they advance the affairs of mankind.⁶

4. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, op.cit., No. XC, p. 464.

5. Leo Tolstoy, *What is Art? And Essays on Art*, trans. Aylmer Maude, New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1960, pp. 49-51.

6. Bahá'u'lláh quoted in *The Compilation of Compilations*, The Arts, Maryborough: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1991, p. 3.

The theologian Paul Tillich declared that:

Art strives to communicate ideas about ultimate meaning, the most profound apprehension of reality ... [the 20th century] is a period in which the religious dimension has appeared with astonishing power in non-religious works.⁷

And the potter, Cecilia Davis Cunningham, stated:

In that rather large task of world salvation, the artist plays a modest but real role; to create epiphanies of beauty in the mundane surroundings of every day life.⁸

French author Anaïs Nin wrote:

Art must be for women like a personified ancient ritual where every spiritual thought is made visible, enacted, represented. Art must be like a miracle. Art is a miracle.⁹

The writer Nietzsche said: 'One must have chaos inside to give birth to a dancing star.'¹⁰

I started at sixteen as a painter, but very little remains of that thirty-year period. Now I work in textiles. My work is about turmoil and resolution, light and movement, form, gender, diversity and unity. In all my work the textile surface, with its colour and texture, becomes a canvas ripe for embellishment and manipulation. Through form, line and textural contrast I build up the emotion, ambience and symbolic language of the piece.

It is important for the artist to gauge his position correctly, to realise that he has a duty to his art and to himself, that he is not a king but a servant of a noble end. He must search his soul deeply, develop it and guard it, so that his art may have something on which to rest and does not remain flesh without bones.¹¹

Although to outward view, the wayfarers in this Valley may dwell upon the dust, yet inwardly they are throned in the heights of mystic meaning; they eat of the endless bounties of inner significances, and drink of the

7. Paul Tillich, *The Dilemma of the Artist* quoted in Ann Gordon Atkinson in *The Creative Circle*, Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1989, p. 58.

8. Cecilia Davis Cunningham, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 58.

9. Anaïs Nin quoted in *ibid.*, p. 58.

10. Nietzsche quoted in *ibid.*, p. 69.

11. Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, New York: Wittenborn Art Books, 1947, p. 75.

delicate wines of the spirit ... Only heart to heart can speak the bliss of mystic knowers; No messenger can tell it and no missive bear it.¹²

1995 Bahá'í Studies Course at Yerrinbool, Sydney

My textiles work is aimed at off-the-wall structures, free standing tapestries woven with copper wire and silk. I am also excited by the notion of the body being a moving canvas - that costume can become mobile art expressing form from nature and abstract ideas of energy or emotion. I am fascinated with dress as the maker and concealer of identity; how it can elicit responses from the body, influence the mind and mirror the soul; how the individual and society can transform, as witnessed in history through religious revival (eg. the Reformation and Puritanism) or social upheaval and its attendant practicalities (eg. World War I and the lifting of the hemline above the ankle and even to the knee by the 1920s).

During the 1995 Yerrinbool Bahá'í Studies Certificate Course, in the inspired atmosphere of group study and contemplation of the Sacred Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, it occurred to me that metaphysical, numinous and spiritual concepts might be represented in the phenomenal world by deriving structure from non-object based inspiration. To represent, in concrete form, in costume, the states of being experienced during the spiritual journey described by Bahá'u'lláh in *The Seven Valleys* became an all consuming and compulsive desire. After Summer School, back in Tasmania, I was overcome with a pure creative impulse of design and production which consumed my life, filling me with joy, excitement and a passion that replaced sleep or relaxation. Like the gestation of a baby, the work was completed in nine months and displayed in an art gallery to delighted acclaim. Every aspect of making the work, even construction difficulties, were challenges met with rapture. I seemed to be endowed with super-consciousness, working with both creative intuition and intellectual insight, analysing and unifying the symbolic and material aspects of each of the eight costumes I designed and made: one for each Valley, and the eighth figure, The Beloved, The Friend.

... eternity is in love with the productions of time¹³

Impulse, Integrity and Intuition

Rigour is a part of artistic creativity, and an artist employs the God-gift of creative impulse together with their capacity for synthesis, evaluation and metacognition. Through an integrated centre of being, an artist may delight, entertain, educate, provoke thought, chronicle, influence, open and illuminate pathways to the sub- and unconscious of individual and collective.

12. Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991, p. 30.

13. Erdman, *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, New York: 1965, p. 35.

Being an artist is hard work. As the potter and poet, Bernard Leach, said, writing of his painter friend, Reginald Turvey: 'The genuine artist is usually speaking a language which the average man does not understand'. Both men were Bahá'ís dedicated to their art disciplines and creating an art paradigm for the New Era. Of his own art, Leach said: 'If a pot does not speak, what can a potter say?'

The impulse to create is compulsive, ideas are revolutionary, boundaries of normative perception are pushed and stretched, social morés are questioned and values are condemned or reinforced. Art's history is a saga of brave discoveries, triumphs, passion, poverty, revolts, heresies, isolation, suicide, mystery and rejection. To maintain their integrity, artists in all disciplines employ introspection, contemplation, intellect and vision. Working with their intuition they manifest the creative impulse that drives them.

Likewise, reflect upon the perfection of man's creation, and that all these planes and states are folded up and hidden away within him.

*Dost thou reckon thyself only a puny form,
When within thee the universe is folded?*¹⁴

And the museums and galleries of the world are crowded with remnants from past glorious civilisations as well as more contemporary movements in artistic expression. Theatres and opera houses resound with the marvels of the stage arts, both past and present. Libraries are stacked with volumes of the written word.

*A primal creative urge belongs to all human beings, but has been submerged by the development of civilisation.*¹⁵

Cardinal uses the words 'submerged by the development of civilisation'. Perhaps Cardinal's view relates to his perception of 'the masses' being subverted and crushed by the manipulations of an immoral political, religious and economic structure with the attendant vicissitudes of a contemporary lifestyle. This perception differs markedly from the Bahá'í perspective, which believes fundamentally in the advancing evolution of human civilisation and spiritual enlightenment as the individual's goal.

The mainspring of Bahá'u'lláh's message is an exposition of reality as fundamentally spiritual in nature, and of the laws that govern that reality's operation. It not only sees the individual as a spiritual being, a 'rational soul', but also insists that the entire enterprise that we call civilization is

*itself a spiritual process, one in which the human mind and heart have created progressively more complex and efficient means to express their inherent moral and intellectual capacities.*¹⁶

Surviving the pressure of the creative impulse by exerting will over circumstance, artists tend towards the 'outside' of ordinary society and their endeavours often become the guide-posts of history and innovators of change. The imagery of Hieronymous Bosch (1450-1516), for example, indicates an unusual perception. Although he lived a quiet life, Bosch was accused of heresy and madness, but worked on steadily as allegorist. Bosch's symbology is rooted in European tradition and religious history. His 'abnormality' may be seen in the intensity of his message against hypocrisy, greed, treachery and folly. Bosch's work acknowledges his own potential madness if the battle against evil be fought and lost.

Of Mark Tobey, painter and Bahá'í, Marzieh Gail writes:

*To him, the artist was the eyes of the community, his function being to teach others to see ... 'After all,' he said, 'that is the essence of art: revealing the concealed ... I want to paint what nobody else sees,' he told us. 'The ignored and forgotten things. The unregarded.'*¹⁷

Presentation - Melbourne 1999

Visual culture has always been central to the life of most societies, and the attentive eye is the focal means through which understanding, representation and consciousness become manifest. Symbols are the time-proven forms that characterise and represent important markers for societal groups and cultures; mnemonics of secrets and hidden knowledge understood by the initiated, seldom explained and held in awe by the populace. Today, with the reward of open access to information sought since the Renaissance and demanded during the 20th century (the Century of Light, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá described it), we can interpret symbols through our individual education, experience and insight and use them as a short-hand for expression and description.

My presentation at the 1999 Bahá'í Studies Conference, Melbourne was titled 'The Creative Impulse, Symbolism and Seeing'. Using two projectors and 180 slides, I offered a visual journey for the observer who was asked to watch the relationships and correspondences between images in each section of slides. The watcher would be looking at a mind-scape of the textile artist, Karel Fontaine, and also at a sketchy representation of human progress and social evolution. The presentation was designed to be given without speaking other than to answer specific questions arising out of images and should have

14. Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys*, op. cit., p. 34.

15. Roger Cardinal, *Outsiders - Singular Vision*, London: Studio Vista, 1979, p. 24.

16. Bahá'í International Community, *Who is Writing the Future?*, Mona Vale: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1999, p. 5.

17. Marzieh Gail, *Other People, Other Places*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1982, pp. 206, 209-10.

been accompanied by music (very carefully chosen and timed but forgotten in the anxiety of the moment!) It was for the observer to look, perceive and intuit their interpretation, understanding and feelings. The eight image sections were titled as follows: Genesis; The Dualities; Creative Impulse at Work; Sign, Symbols and Communication; Structures; Form, Time and Progress; The City; The Spirit.

Images were drawn from printed sources (by taking slide photographs from books), friends' travels and art (especially the brilliant macro photography of fellow Bahá'í, Mark Keeman), my personal collection of travel slides, and images of my work, in particular details from the suite Veils of the Spirit. Augmenting the images were quotations from Bahá'í Sacred Writings, other writers and artists.

For the present purpose, however, I have adapted that presentation and have chosen a few examples of visual art through which to demonstrate seeing the creative impulse at work together with the overt and subtle symbolism inherent in the pieces. I have chosen work by André Derain (1880-1954), Georgia O'Keefe (1887-1986), Mark Keeman (b.1948), Martin Schaffner of Ulm (d. circa 1549), Mick Gubargu (b.1926) and Karel Fontaine (b.1943).

Symbols

*Are there symbols which may be called constant; proper to all races, all societies, and all countries?*¹⁸

*The old account in the Book of Genesis had, however, the advantage of indicating by a few bold strokes of symbolism the essential spiritual meanings of the story, as a master painter may, by a few strokes of the brush, convey expressions which the mere plodder with the most laborious attention to details may utterly fail to portray.*¹⁹

All symbols are a dynamic and polysymbolic reality, imbued with emotive and conceptual values - with true life. A symbolic element is present in all art, in that art is subject to psychological interpretation. Much in arts of all forms has moved from the representation of an objective reality towards the expression of subjective states of feeling. It has been suggested that man is a symbolising creature, and that science and technology have not freed him from his dependence. Indeed man's need for and use of symbols began at his naissance (eg. fertility statuettes and cave paintings) and has increased with his intellect and social constructs (eg geometric symbols used in Islamic

18. César Daly in Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth*, London: The Architectural Press, 1974.

19. J E Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, (4th ed), 1974, pp. 188-189.

cosmography for architectural decoration). Symbology is now regarded as a science with a long history and future.

*A prophet however much he may appear to be in opposition to his age, yet in a peculiar way represents that time. He is the antidote, or balance, the complement, and his is the voice which awakes all those who are ready to be like minded. If he is wholly successful, and his teaching is absorbed, it may afterwards hardly be understood how anyone might have believed otherwise. The flashing inspiration becomes a common place. It is the prophet's aim to be thus absorbed.*²⁰

From the towering temple constructions of incised plinth and slab in ancient Egypt to the aspiring spires and arches of Gothic architecture, symbolism has been at the core of religious building design - at the inner heart of ancient buildings were wonder, worship, magic and symbols. Modern design, asserts Lethaby, must now be for human service, intelligible purpose, and verifiable science.

*All architecture - that is, all that is worth the name - is one vast symbolism; symbolism controlled by and expressive of structure might be the definition of architecture in the higher sense.*²¹

Architecture began when the world was likened to a building with 'heavenly vaults' and 'azure domes', 'gates of sunrise', and 'canopies of light' - all survivors of a time when the earth was deemed the immovable centre of the universe, the floor on which the sky was built and the whole a chamber lit by the sun, moon and stars.

The idea of the temple incorporated cosmic symbolism founded on notions of sacred geometry and acting as heaven on earth, observatory and almanac. The foundations, placed four square and solid, reflected the 'walls of the firmament' - still seen in modern churches. These edifices served the initiated for sacred ceremony, together with their regalia and robes, and the uninitiated with guidance, whether through awe, fear, or crushed imagination. The massive and grand of the past was cemented with the blood and sweat of suffering humanity. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states: 'there will be a new art, a new architecture, fused with all the beauty of the past, but new.'²² And as W. R. Lethaby states:

What, then, will this art (architecture) of the future be? The message will

20. Godfrey Rubens, Introduction to *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth*, op cit., p. v.

21. W. Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth*, op cit.

22. *Star of the West*, Vol. V, (facsimile reprint), Oxford: George Ronald, 1984.

still be of nature and man, of order and beauty, but all will be sweetness, simplicity, freedom, confidence and light; the other is past, and well is it, for its aim was to crush life: the new, the future, is to aid life and train it, 'so that beauty may flow into the soul like a breeze.'

Perhaps Lethaby, writing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, foresaw something of the ideal to be realised in Bahá'í Houses of Worship around the world.

Symbolism and seeing

Through the impetus of the Islamic Revelation, the European Renaissance gave rise to a regional renewal of arts and letters. It began in Italy and moved across Europe, ushering the dawn of 'the Modern Age': man-centred, outward-looking and technologically innovative. As stated by the humanist writer Lorenzo Valla (1407-57):

*The arts of painting, sculpture, modelling and architecture had degenerated for so long and so greatly that they almost died with letters themselves, but in this age they have been aroused and come to life again.*²³

This renewal was informed by the secret teachings of the Cabbalists, Hebrew Scriptures, writings of Plato and the Gnostics and Hermetic texts (first brought to Florence in 1460 and translated by order of Cosimo de Medici).

Although science and superstition were still inextricably blended in the 16th century, it is interesting to see the visual symbols employed to illustrate contemporary thinking and the progress of the age. The 'Painted Table Top', 1533 (illustration 1) was made by the German painter and wood engraver, Martin Schaffner of Ulm (d. 1549). It shows, in schematic form, the cosmic harmonies thought to hold good between the planets (in the centre), the days of the week and Liberal Arts (seated women), the virtues (their attributes), the colours (their dresses) and the metals (the vessels standing next to them). Beginning at the top left with a scholar, possibly the owner of the table, who is drawing up the whole scheme, and continuing in anti-clockwise order, come the Sun (Sunday, Grammar, Hope, yellow, gold); the Moon (Monday, Rhetoric, Faith, white, silver); Mars (Tuesday, Arithmetic, Strength, red, copper); Mercury (Wednesday, Logic, Love, grey, quicksilver); Jupiter (Thursday, Geometry, Justice, blue, tin); Venus (Friday, Music, Holiness, green, lead); and Saturn (Saturday, Astronomy, Prudence, black, iron).

Incorporated in the landscape of the table painting are numerous symbolic forms such as flowers (transitoriness and beauty); rabbits (fertility); mountains

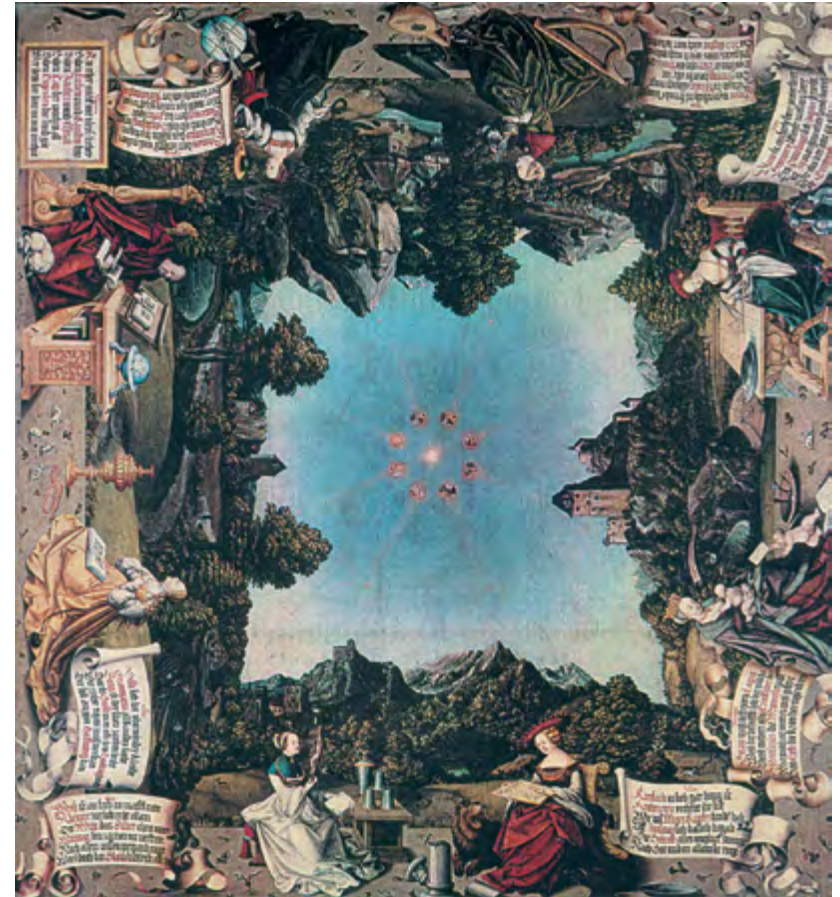


Illustration 1



Illustration 2

23. Peter Murray, 'A New Vision', in *The Age of the Renaissance*, Denys Hay (ed), London: Thames & Hudson, 1967, p. 76.



Illustration 3



Illustration 4

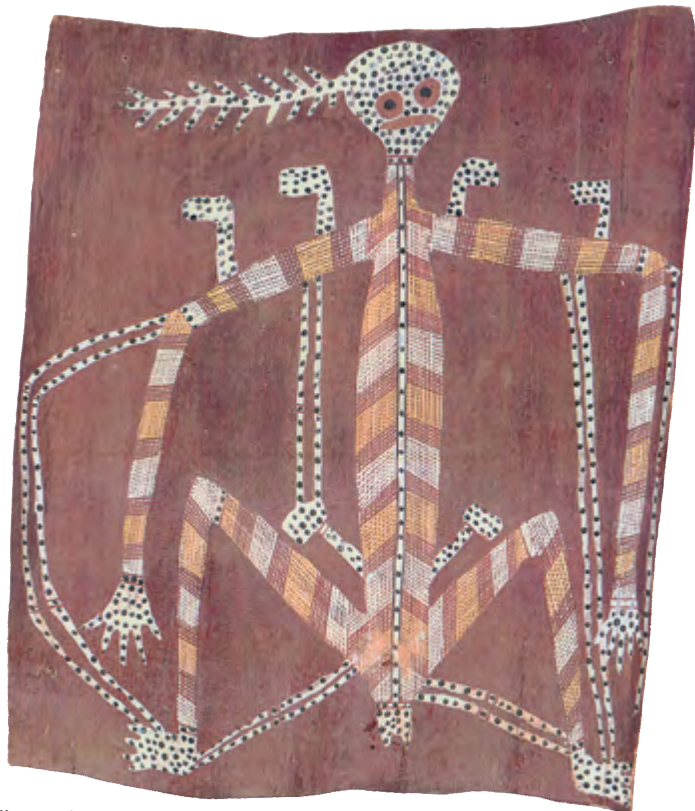


Illustration 5



Illustration 6

(loftiness of spirit and ideal, aspiration); forests (the female principle - Great Mother/Earth - luxuriant vegetable life free from control or cultivation, and symbol of the unconscious); rivers (ambivalent symbol of fertility and irrigation of the soil as well as the irreversible passage of time, loss and oblivion); bridge (connecting two worlds, heaven and earth; what can be perceived and what is beyond perception; the Covenant between God and Man; transition from one state to another and desire for change); globe (the sphere is a whole - the mystic 'Centre'; symbolic of the soul, perfection and felicity); books (Chinese symbolism - power to ward off evil spirits; allegory of written inside and out - esoteric and exoteric - linked to symbolism of weaving); farm - cultivation (associated with the mysterious world of seeds, buds, flowers and fruits following cosmic order; guardian of rites and regeneration); winding road (the journey of life). The image of a castle - and there are many forts and castles depicted on the table - symbolises the transcendent soul and the heavenly Jerusalem. The height of the hill also adds to the level of meaning. Shape, form and light all play an important part in defining the symbolism of the castle image, which generally depicts the ever watchful and embattled spiritual power. Castles usually protect 'treasure' and signify the will for salvation.

All symbols are functions and signs of things imbued with energies, and the serpent or snake is, by analogy, symbolic of the pure energetic force. The snake has a great variety of symbolic meanings which relate to its multitude of characteristics: undulating and sinuous movement, its association with trees, its shed skin and darting tongue, speed, stealth, hiss and capacity to kill. The snake is associated with temptation facing those who have overcome the limitations of the material and have entered the realm of the spirit and resurrection. In this way the serpent is symbolic not only of personal sin but of the principle of evil and the equal and opposite principle of mastery or control over dark forces and the spiritual development of humanity. In the middle of the marvellous Sistine Chapel ceiling, Michelangelo depicted Adam and Eve's Temptation and Expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The Tree of Knowledge is entwined with a massive serpent epitomising the symbolic and ambivalent energies of the snake, offering knowledge tempered by the wisdom of insight.

In the symbolist painter André Derain's work 'La Dance', 1906 (illustration 2) serpentine symbolism is not only blatant (the huge bright green snake coiled around the dancers' legs) but is also implied in tree form, body form and dress decoration. Emblematic creatures, such as the gryphon-like bird (top left corner) symbolise guardianship of the road to salvation and hover near a sinuous, fruit-bearing tree (the Tree of Life). In psychological terms it symbolises the relationship between psychic energy and cosmic force. The gryphon in mediaeval Christian art represented both the Saviour and the Antichrist (Cirlot). Derain's painting of the three ecstatic dancers therefore contains many statements relating to the three women enjoying their outdoor dance, the dance of life, amongst the trees. Perhaps he suggests the diverse

opinions and interpretations that might be made about their activity. Derain's symbolist palette, inspired by Delacroix and influenced by Gauguin, is rich in deep, pure and forceful colour ranging from lemon yellow in the sky to brilliant orange and purple in the garment of the left side figure. The composition of flat areas of colour broken by forceful line and the colour of deep shadow is a direct relationship with the artist's state of mind. Swirling with movement and figures drawn from erotic Indian and Romanesque sculptural forms, Derain has composed a painting steeped in correspondences between line, colour and emotion and a combination of spiritual references and corporeal classicism of the 16th and 17th centuries. By this means he creates a synthesis between tradition and modernity, the fixed and eternal, offering lyric and theatrical qualities for the beholder's eye to absorb and interpret.

The Cross

Complex in its symbolism, the cross is represented in a multitude of forms. In primitive cultures the two sticks were associated with kindling fire by rubbing the one stick (male) on the other (female) giving rise to the cross as a symbol of fire and suffering. Pre-dating Christianity the cross, like the Tree of Life, stands for the 'world-axis'. Placed in the mystic Centre of the cosmos, it becomes the bridge or ladder by which the soul may reach God. There are some versions which depict the cross with seven steps, comparable with the cosmic trees which symbolise the seven heavens. In addition the horizontal (or diagonal) arm cutting across the upright stands for the conjunction of opposites, joining the spiritual (vertical) principle with the phenomenal world. The vertical cross is also the simplest graphic depiction for a human.²⁴ The cross is also a potent symbol of unity. In Celtic symbology the circle joining the four arms of the cross signifies taking a step out from the centre and travelling the journey of life which the circle, like the wheel of life, describes.

In her 1929 painting 'Black Cross, New Mexico' (illustration 3) Georgia O'Keefe has painted a structure in a profound and pensive dark colour which is nearly black. The cross almost fills the picture plane, it looms in the absolute foreground, top to bottom, side to side, leaving only small quarters in each corner. Where the two arms join there are four small round marks, a tone lighter in colour - nails. This is the cross of the Catholic Church, the sign of the crucifixion, suffering and supposed salvation. O'Keefe has experienced a particular and local cross which epitomised for her the oppressive effects of the Church upon a people. Her portrayal of the cross is like a silhouette against a relentless desert landscape seeming impossible to inhabit. The cross, so predominant in view, bars movement into the beyond. It is a point of threshold but seems insurmountable and unpassable. The landscape beyond is pathless and barren, and save for the far sunlit horizon is suffused with dark

24. J E Cirlot, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962, p. 68.

and ominous colour. Is the sun of an old religion setting for ever and will the dawn of the new day bring with it a brighter prospect?

To my eye there is something both shocking and exciting in the use of colour in 'Black Cross'. The elements of realism and landscape in the picture make it the more powerful. The horizon line of bright yellow (the sun and life), hills of red (blood and Church hierarchy) and the steep organic undulations of the tightly packed hills - like penitents kneeling before it - contrast in a stark way with the linear outline of the dark cross. The pale blue sky with its tiny white day-moon (top edge right) suggests mercy and grace.

*Colors are forces, radiant energies that affect us positively or negatively, whether we are aware of it or not.*²⁵

*The word and its sound, form and its color, are vessels of a transcendental essence that we dimly surmise. As sound lends sparkling colour to the spoken word, so colour lends psychically resolved tone to form. The primeval essence of color is a phantasmagorical resonance, light becomes music.*²⁶

By contrast, could the cross in Mark Keeman's 'Photographic Study, Tasmania', 2000 (illustration 4), suffused as it is with the bright light of morning, signify the dawn of that new day? Although in close foreground and dark it is delicate and lightweight; the edge is lit by bright ambient light. Suspended in the middle of the picture plane is a flower, withered and dead, discarded, blown by the wind into a light-trapping cobweb strung across the glass pane. The alive green background is dappled and indistinct, unlike O'Keefe's carefully outlined and focussed hills. Although the flower is faded it retains much of its rich pink colour and, held by gossamer, hangs down as it might have on its bush, stamens stretched out in natural welcome.

Like O'Keefe's painting, this is a moment of vision caught and frozen in the frame. It is a threshold point between worlds forming the ether between the viewer, reality and the numinous beyond. Keeman's cross is rough edged, the cross in Mexico is smooth, yet emotionally in each the opposite is true. The searching eyes of both Keeman and O'Keefe have captured the mundane but each artist's work is redolent with emotional sensitivity, ambient light, colour and spiritual meaning, indicative of the universal quest for harmony and resolution. Seventy years and different continents separate their work and each artist is representative of their time and place, O'Keefe in the old world and Keeman, the Bahá'í, in the new, but both images speak of ensnarement and redemption, both images capture the essence of life, death and renewal.

25. Johannes Itten, *The Elements of Color*, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970, p. 12.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Yesterday and today

During 1971, in the wilds of the Eastern Pilbara region of Western Australia, I spent four months assisting in a dingo ear-tagging mission. No made roads, no running water, pregnant and with a young baby I experienced bush life as the 'off-sider' to two men, one a dog trapper and the other my husband. We found nine dingo puppies and I saw much out there to awe me. Tropical storms off the coast loomed black and menacing over us, hundreds of kilometres inland. The sun glancing out from under the slate grey cloud billows turned the spinafex grass plains to green-gold. Silence was palpable but for crickets. Carvings stood out pale and large on the billabong rock walls. Human figures with enlarged genitals, animals and spiral symbols were incised in abundance on rocks at ground level and in high outcrops silhouetted against the blackened sky.

Namarrkon is Lightning Spirit in Kunwinjku mythology (illustration 5). He disguises himself as a grasshopper and is responsible for electrical storms, thunder and lightning. His storms can wreak heavy damage, destroying camps and even killing people. Twin circuits of lightning pass through Namarrkon's elbows, ankles, lower torso and genitals. Lightning Spirit is associated with sexuality and procreation. Stone axes protrude from his knees and hips and he makes lightning by striking his axes on the ground. His malevolent and menacing aspect is shown directly by the stingray barb emerging from his head. It is believed that *marrkidjbu*, 'clever men', can conjure Namarrkon at will to strike a particular person whom they wish to harm.

Following is my 1991 poem informed by my experience of that land and in response to the bark painting of 'Namarrkon, the Lightning Spirit', 1973 by Mick Gubargu (Kulmaru clan, Kubumi, western Arnhem Land).

Namarrkon, the Lightning Man

Namarrkon!

Come Namarrkon!

Cleave the outcrop!

Your stone axe giant knees create the scene

For your rampage.

Rend the green grey sky!

Barbed forks discharge your glaring threats.

Plains-hopper!

Strike Plains-hopper!

Jump about the bilious spinafex sea storm-sun lit

Deep and broad between the granite edges of a dream.

Deep and still the light and heat.

You promise rain but never here -

Grasshopper tease!

So far between the flash and boom

Still the earth resounds and moves a little.

Strike! Axe antennaed termite head!

Namarrkon - you empty eyed electric ghoul - strike!

Set ablaze one tarry greengold grassy mass

Black billows rise pushed up by leaping vortex flame.

The knowing conjure Namarrkon

To split heads when vengeance needs

And Namarrkon engenders fear

While coitus comfort begets his fecund name.

I know you Namarrkon!

Colonial arrogance explains your physics -

No mystery here - you will wane and pass.

That special thunder light will fade,

The mood will change.

I will see you small and green again

Where no black char remains.

And nine months on new voices mewl in rebuilt camps

By river beds or outcrop water hole.

While Namarrkon awaits his season time

His chirrup guise the grind of sharpening stone.²⁷

Tomorrow

A never-ending continuum links the heritage of the past and gives stimulus to the creativity of the present in a practical demonstration of evolution. Pythagoras, born between 600 and 590 BC, coined the word philosopher, meaning one who is attempting to find out. Pythagoras defined knowledge as the fruit of mental accumulation. He believed it would be obtained in many ways, but principally through observation. Wisdom was the understanding of the source or cause of all things and this was obtained by raising the intellect to a point where it intuitively cognised the invisible manifesting outwardly through the visible - bringing itself into rapport with the spirit of things rather than merely their form. Pythagoras taught that both man and the universe were made in the image of God, and that the understanding of one predicated the knowledge of the other. Of his thirty-nine symbolic aphorisms the following are two: 'Declining from the public ways, walk in unfrequented paths', by which is implied those who desire wisdom must seek it in solitude and meditation;

27. Karel Fontaine, 1991, Personal Collection.

'Speak not about Pythagoric concerns without light', which is a warning not to interpret the mysteries of God and the secrets of science without spiritual and intellectual illumination.²⁸

*..man should know his own self and know those things that lead to loftiness or to baseness, to shame or to honor, to wealth or to poverty.*²⁹

*O people of Bahá! The source of crafts, sciences and arts is the power of reflection. Make ye every effort that out of this ideal Mine there may gleam forth such pearls of wisdom and utterance as will promote the well being and harmony of all the kindreds of the earth.*³⁰

Illustration 6 shows 'Breastplate, Valley of Search', 1995. It is beaten copper, lined in suede leather and forms a part of the red, flame filled costume designed to represent the Valley of Search in my performance piece, 'Veils of the Spirit'.

For artists today and tomorrow, especially those who are Bahá'ís, developing a new artistic paradigm is both challenging and invigorating. Rather than relying on existential agony and the reconstruction of perceived and known data, art today and in the future can be a living and evolving dialogue between the artist, their heritage, culture and society.

*Inhibited by the climate of non-commitment and defensiveness in which our twilight generation lives and moves, we have yet to discover, to our perpetual delight, that art is one of the forms of expression waiting to serve this Cause, waiting to dance with us along the knife-edge in a condition of self-abandonment. ...The power of eloquence, the dancing beauty of utterance, the mysterious subtleties of image and sign, symbol and metaphor, that attend this Revelation are some of its most significant characteristics.*³¹

Primarily it is the experience and education of an individual that informs their vision and allows them to see. Via the mechanics of the eye the messages received by the brain are interpreted by the mind and understood using acquired skill sets. We possess skills of discrimination, but we also possess skills determined and limited by our environment. If our experience and education

28. Manly P Hall, LXV-LXVIII, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, Los Angeles: The Philosophical Research Soc. Inc., 1977.

29. Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablet of Tarazat* in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh* in *Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1986, p. 187.

30. Bahá'u'lláh, *Kalimat-i-Firdawsiyyih* in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh* in *Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, op.cit., p. 206.

31. Bahíyyih Nakhjavání, *Artist, Seeker and Seer*, Bahá'í Studies, Ottawa: Association for Bahá'í Studies, 1982, p. 5.

are expanded and our minds broadened, our capacity for enjoyment, appreciation, inference and perception will likewise increase. Our vision becomes unveiled to the Light. The desire in us to seek and to know is our life force bestowed on us by Him. As we Bahá'ís say: 'I bear witness, O my God, that thou hast created me to know thee and to worship thee'.³² Those spiritually inclined will interpret the multitude of visual interests around them in moral and spiritual terms, desiring more knowledge and gaining more wisdom, translating and learning from their insights. The Creator desires us to know Him and He is the Source of all Knowledge. This is 'seeing' and through this awareness the creative impulse is stimulated to concretely manifest the Light through an artist's capacity to make art. Essentially, creative arts practice is religious practice. It is therefore an artist's role and responsibility to perfect their skills and technique, stimulate others to see, encourage inquiry and offer beauty, joy and illumination.

Bahá'u'lláh stated in His Writings:

*Knowledge is one of the wondrous gifts of God. It is incumbent upon everyone to acquire it. Such arts and material means as are now manifest have been achieved by virtue of His knowledge and wisdom which have been revealed in Epistles and Tablets through His Most Exalted Pen -- a Pen out of whose treasury pearls of wisdom and utterance and the arts and crafts of the world are brought to light.*³³

32. Bahá'u'lláh, Noon obligatory prayer in *Bahá'í Prayers*, op.cit., p. 4.

33. Bahá'u'lláh, *Tarazat* in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh* in *The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, op.cit., p. 189.

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Of Paramount Importance

Addressing the Paucity of Music in Bahá'í Devotional Practice

Michael Knopf

The use of music in Bahá'í devotional practice, whether private or communal, has been of perennial concern since the Bahá'í Faith arrived in the West in the early days of the twentieth century. The Eastern believers have had a continuous practice and understanding of the use of music in devotions descending directly from the Islamic tradition of chant known as *tilawat* or *tartil*. The Western Bahá'ís on the other hand, were faced with a new Revelation that had no fixed tradition of musical rendering that would not be totally foreign to their own cultures, and this provided a challenge to the community in its search for devotional musical expression. There was some frustration with older, established forms of musical worship precisely because they were derived and not new, and this caused a certain degree of discomfort. Nonetheless, established musical forms of worship were adopted by the early Bahá'ís, including hymns, spirituals, and renderings of classical and romantic songs with new words.

From early on in the history of the Bahá'í Faith, western communities have also used music in a variety of forms mostly derived from popular culture but aimed more at community singing rather than a true devotional approach. The exception was the music used in the Houses of Worship where more formal approaches were undertaken to maintain the qualities of sacredness, dignity and universality specified by Shoghi Effendi.¹ Bahá'ís recognize the importance of music because of the prominence it is given in the Bahá'í Writings. But there is confusion in regard as to what sort of music is appropriate for where.

Nothing in the Bahá'í writings points to the exclusion of past musical

1. Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974, p.77.

forms, rather are they encouraged, especially in the light of the fact that a new Bahá'í art cannot be forthcoming until the religion has had a major impact on the world. In the Bahá'í Writings however, distinction is made regarding the use of music in community activities like the Nineteen Day Feast and the devotional practice required by the intent of the House of Worship.

Music at the Nineteen-Day Feast

Shoghi Effendi saw music as being an “important element of all Bahá'í gatherings”, but emphasized that it should lead to “spirituality”.² In many places in the Writings of both ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the Guardian, the role of music is seen as a medium for the upliftment of the hearts and that joy and attraction to God should be the outcome. The intent is to assist in creating an atmosphere of spirituality. Here, in the Feast, instruments can be used and the style of musical practice can vary. This can be seen from the guidance of Shoghi Effendi that he thought it

*“advisable that the believers should make use in their meetings of hymns composed by Bahá'ís themselves, and also of such hymns, poems and chants as are based on the Holy Words.”*³

The other consideration is what texts are used. From the above quotation, it is evident that individual creations are welcome as long as they reflect a basis in Scripture. Texts to be used in musical renderings must hold a balance between the above and the following statement also by the Guardian.

*“During the devotional part of the Nineteen Day Feast any part of the writings of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and the Master can be read, also from the Bible and Qur'an, and other sacred scriptures.”*⁴

Music in the Mashriqul-Adkár

As is well-known amongst the Bahá'í Community, only the voice is allowed in the Houses of Worship. Texts for the readings and for the music have a different criteria from other Bahá'í devotional meetings. Only the Sacred Books of the World's revealed religions and those of the Bahá'í Faith are permitted. Also, a distinction is made between the Writings and public talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and his prayers. The former are omitted from devotional programs in the House of Worship whereas the latter is welcomed.

2. Shoghi Effendi quoted in *Compilation of Compilations, Music*, Maryborough: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1991, p. 80.

3. From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, April 7, 1935, cited in Helen Hornby (compilation), *Lights of Guidance* (2nd ed.), New Delhi: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988, pp. 245-246.

4. *Ibid.*

“Prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh and the Master [‘Abdu'l-Bahá], as well as the sacred writings of the Prophets, should be read or chanted...”⁵

Bahá'í texts for use in the House of Worship are defined then, as the Writings and prayers of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and the prayers of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá (but not his public talks or letters).⁶ Fundamental to musical practice in the Bahá'í House of Worship is the clarification from the Universal House of Justice as to congregational participation in the program.

“Regarding singing in the Temple, we must bear in mind the reference made by Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* to the need for the person who enters the Temple to sit silent and listen to the chanting of the verses of God, as well as the statements made by the Guardian regarding “the reader” or “a number of readers” or a “choir”.”⁷

This statement indicates that the “congregation” itself does not sing during the program within the House of Worship as those in attendance must sit in silence and listen to the Scriptural renderings. Listening to and understanding the texts is the extent of the participation of the congregation. Only specific readers and singers will do the rendering whether it be spoken or sung.

As to the subject of music itself, it is of interest to note that the musical style and form to be used for music in the House of Worship is left up to the artists themselves.⁸ Thus, style is of secondary importance, though undoubtedly it must meet the standard of any activity in the House of Worship which is to be characterised by the qualities of sacredness, dignity and universality.⁹ Such musical rendering of the text should also allow for the audibility and comprehensibility of the Texts being sung. Singing, like speaking is a form of recitation. The text comes first.

It appears from a consideration of the above, that the devotional practice in the Houses of Worship is of a special nature and is totally reliant on the need for the attendees to hear the Word of God read or sung. By contrast, singing by all in attendance at the Feasts and other devotional meetings would be appropriate and encouraged.¹⁰

5. From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada, April 2, 1931, quoted in *Lights of Guidance*, op.cit., p. 607.

6. See Shoghi Effendi quoted in *Lights of Guidance*, op.cit., pp. 608-610.

7. From a letter of the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda and Central Africa, August 19, 1965, quoted in *Lights of Guidance*, op.cit., p. 609.

8. “Chanting or singing will be the only sound (aside from reading) and what forms this will take must depend on the artists who create the music itself” From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi July 3, 1949, from *Extracts on the Institution of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar*, Haifa: Universal House of Justice, publication available from Bahá'í World Centre.

9. Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, op.cit., p. 77.

10. “Music is permitted during the spiritual part - or any part - of the 19 Day Feast.” From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, June 30, 1952, quoted in *Lights of Guidance*, op.cit., p. 245

Current music-making in Bahá'í Feasts and Bahá'í Holy Days

There is undoubtedly, much anecdotal evidence of the paucity of music in Bahá'í Feasts and Holy Days, and especially live music and group singing. To ascertain to what extent music is currently used in Bahá'í devotional gatherings, a survey was conducted via the internet. The survey establishes the paucity of live and particularly vocal music in Bahá'í community devotions, but it also demonstrates a real concern on the part of the respondents for having music in the meetings. The apparent strategy in addressing this concern was to have recorded music. However, it was encouraging to see that 19% of the respondents said that vocal music was used in the majority of their meetings. The questions aimed at discovering the extent of the use of music at meetings, whether it was live, recorded, or both, what proportion of it was vocal music, and whether there was any vocal or choral training in the community.

This survey was conducted via the internet with a brief questionnaire aimed at ascertaining the level of the use of music and particularly vocal music in Bahá'í devotional gatherings. These were defined as the Nineteen-Day Feast and the Holy Days. Respondents were mostly from Australia, but also from New Zealand, the United States, Canada, the Caribbean and the Netherlands. The results of sixty-two questionnaires are compiled below.

- Community size in population including adults and children.
 - 64.5% lived in communities of less than fifty Bahá'ís
 - 14.5% lived in communities of fifty to a hundred
 - 21% lived in larger communities of over a hundred
- Ninety-eight percent of all respondents stated that there was some music at the Feasts and Holy Days.
- Of the twenty-eight meetings in the category of Feasts and Holy Days, music was present in the following percentages.
 - 27.5% had music in up to ten meetings per annum
 - 16% had music between ten to fifteen meetings per annum
 - 16% had music between fifteen and twenty meetings per annum
 - 40.5% had music in most of the meeting i.e. twenty to twenty-eight
- Asked whether the music in these meetings consisted of live or recorded music, the following results were given.
 - 13% indicated that only live music was used
 - 36% indicated that only or mostly recorded music was used
 - 51% indicated that a combination of live and recorded music was used
- The proportion of vocal music used at these gatherings was distributed as follows.

- 27% had no vocal music
- 24% had vocal music one to five times per annum
- 17% had vocal music five to ten times per annum
- 13% had vocal music ten to twenty times per annum
- 19% had vocal music over twenty times per annum

The forms or styles of music mentioned most often were Persian chants, European music (including choral music and almost always recorded), Bahá'í songs (children's songs and folk settings), folk music, recorded music, and some ethnic styles. Original music was prepared in four of the sixty-two communities surveyed.

Of sixty-two communities surveyed only 13% (eight) had any form of musical training. This ranged from regular learning of songs in children's classes to small, organized choirs that rehearsed consistently. Seventy-five percent of respondents used music in private devotional practice, usually singing prayers and other Sacred Writings.

Ninety-eight percent of the respondents saw music as a part of their gatherings (some of these were one or two occasions out of the year), which indicates a healthy concern for its use. However, eighty-seven percent of communities surveyed have had no musical training. This indicates a lack of musical human resources to initiate training aimed at encouraging singing at such gatherings. It may also indicate a lack of will to do so. With seventy-five percent of respondents using music in their private devotions, what also may be missing is a sense of confidence to sing in a group. Training would assist in eliminating this hurdle.

Paths for Community Devotional Music Making

Two of the major contributing factors in the paucity of vocal music in Bahá'í devotions is the lack of musical training and the non-existence of a Bahá'í musical tradition. (The latter, of course, we would not really want. The aim is universality and diversity!). So, how can communities remedy this problem? Two paths are immediately available. The first is to adopt and adapt the tradition in current use within the wider community. Australians and other Western Christian societies can feel at home with such hymns and devotional songs whose words are appropriate to Bahá'í teachings. Hymns and like music can be found in bookstores and on the internet.

The second path is for communities to resolve to learn musical skills and sing new music. We live in a country that has a multitude of resources ready for use. (The reason we don't use them may well lie in the "quick fix" solution. This demands little from individuals and communities but does little for community development. With this solution one simply plays recorded music from a CD. Perhaps a few sing along with the machine.) With resources,

(perhaps one person resolving to be trained in methods of music learning, e.g. Kodaly), and a bit of enthusiasm and direction from Spiritual Assemblies, a portion of the Feast could be set aside to learn some simple musical skills and some new devotional songs that the community could sing together in unison for the spiritual part of any gathering.¹¹ The Kodaly system is fairly ubiquitous and very useful. Literature and resources can be found in libraries, schools and on the internet.

The need for vocal music in devotional gatherings needs to be steadily addressed. Communities can consult on a diverse variety of options in gaining new skills that will greatly enhance their community life. There are musicians and composers who are friends of the Bahá'ís who can prepare some music for Holy Day observances. Communities can also consider the option of hiring a choral workshop clinician to conduct a fun weekend of music learning and singing.

'Abdu'l-Bahá says that music is of paramount importance. Singing the Holy Writings is one area where this importance can be readily substantiated. "In the world of existence" 'Abdu'l-Bahá also says, "physical things have a connection with spiritual realities. One of these things is the voice, which connects itself to the spirit; and the spirit can be uplifted by this means-..."¹² The voice then, is of importance to our individual and communal worship.

Conclusion

Whatever barriers prevent Western Bahá'í communities from consistently using the medium of music in their devotional practice, a commitment will need to be made to address the problem in a systematic way. Such an undertaking can in real terms address the quality of community living and so warrants the effort. An understanding of what the Bahá'í Writings actually do say is of help, and the lack of musical skills within the community can be easily addressed over a period of time. It is essential that the will to do something about the inadequate use of music and particularly vocal music in Bahá'í devotional practices be maintained by a vision of the joy it can release in dispirited hearts, and of the social cohesion it can provide to a community.

11. The current writer has produced a volume of devotional songs entitled *The Paramount Project* intended for use at Bahá'í devotional meetings. Some of the songs would be appropriate for the Houses of Worship and the majority use texts from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The collection is somewhat eclectic, drawing on traditions of hymns, spirituals, eastern chants, folksong, and classical approaches. It was prepared using standard notation and the Tonic Sol-fa system that is found in the Kodaly music learning method in current use in most primary schools in Australia. The volume also contains fourteen pages of information aimed at assisting the reader to gain some skill and understanding in the reading of music.
12. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Music*, op.cit., pp.78-79. See also Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1978, p. 143, where human speech is described by Bahá'u'lláh as an "essence which aspireth to exert its influence".

The Passionate Artist

Ron Price

In some ways I see this paper as a continuation of the paper I delivered in 1990 at the ABS Conference that year in Perth on “The Inner Life and the Environment”. It is a continuation of that paper in the sense that what I want to stress here is the same thing: the inner life and private character. For it is here that ‘the creative inspiration’ finds its origins. I can not begin in a better place than quoting a passage of Shoghi Effendi, a passage that has gained in strength and meaning as the decades have passed since his passing in 1957:

Not by the force of numbers, not by the mere exposition of a set of new and noble principles, not by an organized campaign of teaching - no matter how worldwide and elaborate in its character - not even by the staunchness of our faith or the exaltation of our enthusiasm, can we ultimately hope to vindicate in the eyes of a critical and sceptical age the supreme claim of the Abhá Revelation. One thing and only one thing will unfailingly and alone secure the undoubted triumph of this sacred Cause, namely, the extent to which our own inner life and private character mirror forth in their manifold aspects the splendour of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh.¹

The creative inspiration is clearly associated in manifold ways with this “inner life and private character.” Before we begin to examine the inner life and creative inspiration, though, I would like to say a few things about ‘where I am coming from.’ What are the origins of my own creative inspiration? What are some of the perspectives and themes that inform it in relation to poetry which is but one of the many outward forms, manifestations of this creative imagination, inspiration and the inner spiritual powers? There are several sources and perspectives which illustrate something of what I want to say about my own creative inspiration. It would require a book to properly outline them. I will focus on a few here.

Firstly, there are the influences of socialization. Both my mother in the 1950s and my grandfather in the 1920s, began to write extensively in their late forties and fifties. My father had an immense energy and drive. The two sides of my

1. Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration – Selected Messages 1922-1932*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1995, p. 66.

life, as represented by my parents and grandparents, I think, have played a role, partly undefinable, in whatever inspiration has come into my life in poetry.

Secondly, there is the influence of my religion which I have been a member of now for forty years (and attending its various functions for forty-six years). A poetic literature, a long line of artistic and intellectually endowed associations, listening to people talk and talking with people from an infinitely wide range of paths in life, an exposure to books, to reading, to hearing people read, visible commitments, etc. These and other aspects of my connection with the Bahá'í Faith have all contributed to definable and undefinable influences on my creative inspirations. In this connection I would like to mention the invocation Alláh-u-Abhá or Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá which has special significance to Bahá'ís around the world. I have been using these invocations for over forty years. They are part of the core of ‘spiritual enrichment’ for Bahá'ís. There is a spiritual growth that is generated by the use of these simple words in worshipful devotion. Prayer in general has been an important part of my Bahá'í experience as far back as the 1950s. When one has many prayers memorized one can pray in an unfettered sense walking in the bush, along the beach, indeed, wherever one has privacy. I am confident this contributes to the devotional attitude and has effects on your life in mysterious ways. In purely quantitative terms I am sure I have spent more time in my life ‘talking to God’ through the revealed prayers than I have talking to any human being I have known, except perhaps my wife. It is, of course, difficult to measure the results of this process over many decades: an increase in the sense of intimacy with the Source of one’s light and life and a feeling that words, phrases, specific prayers, passages, indeed, many pages of the Writings have become old friends. If I recite them more quickly they feel like a mantra; if I slow down they feel like a deep meditation.

Thirdly, ill-health and personal difficulties: manic-depression in the 1960s and 1970s, divorce and employment difficulties which turned me toward seeking special inspiration. By 1980 I frequently read the following passage from *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* and sought the intercession of the departed Hands of the Cause on my behalf:

The soul that hath remained faithful to the Cause of God and stood unwaveringly firm in His Path shall, after his ascension, be possessed of such power that all the worlds which the Almighty hath created can benefit through him. Such a soul provideth, at the bidding of the Ideal King and Divine Educator, the pure leaven that leaveneth the world of being, and furnisheth the power through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest.²

I began writing poetry about 1981, a year or so after I began reading this

2. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976, p.161.

passage on a regular basis. Although I saw no association between this passage and my first poems, by the 1990s I began to wonder at the possible connection with my poetic output and these leavening influences. By the year 2000 I had written over two million words of poetry and five thousand poems and wondered where it all came from.

Fourth, the influence of other poets: Roger White in the 1980s and the western intellectual tradition since Wordsworth, more generally. For a dozen years, 1981 to 1992, I had ‘company defined by letters’, company with the most delightful letter writer I have ever known and a poet whose influences has had primacy.³ In the years 1993 to 1999 my poetic friends were in books. I read dozens of books about poetry since Wordsworth started writing in the 1780s. I read publicly in cafes, restaurants, in colleges and at Bahá'í functions but did not find it inspirational, although people enjoyed my reading due to my ability to entertain. But I had grown tired of the public domain after nearly thirty years of teaching and what seemed like an endless variety of meetings. I had dried up. Poetry functioned like a new lease on life, a new leaven that leavened my world of being.

Fifth, the possible influence of the Holy Year, 1992-1993. My Bahá'í life had occupied the span between the two Holy Years, the other being 1952-1953. I think this influence is most mysterious. My life as a Bahá'í had spanned these two special years and a flood of poetry was unleashed after this forty-year hiatus. Was this something of those ‘mysterious dispensations of Providence?’

Sixth, the particular view of time, space and history in the Bahá'í teachings. Time: 13.6 billion years; space: infinite, a general scientific view; and history: a ten stage process (Shoghi Effendi, 1953, Chicago) with plans, eras, cycles, epochs, stages and phases. All of this helped to give my life, my age and all of history a new, a quite specific, time focus and this plays a role in my poetry. Time frames seem to have taken on an especial meaning in poem after poem.

You will see from the above influences something of that inner life which I speak of and something of the creative inspiration which is at the centre of this article. My poetry tells a great deal about my inner life; indeed, I often feel quite naked in giving my poems to people. I don't really mind not having them published. Writing them is the real buzz.

Poetry as a Source of Social Good

If these booklets of poetry, some twenty-seven now,⁴ help to establish nothing else it will be my search for a context in which relevant fundamental questions about the undoubted right of the individual to self-expression, the societal need for legitimate and just authority and our need as individuals for

3. Robert Creeley, *The American Poetry Review*, Sept. 1999, p.18.

4. The last booklet I sent to the Bahá'í World Centre Library was called *The Art of Glorification*. For the period 9 January to 4 September 1997 I sent no poetry. The developments on Mt. Carmel are like a lodestone to human hearts. I continue sending my poetry as an expression of the intense attraction of the heart.

solid thinking about the organic change in the very structure of society that the world has been preparing for but has not yet experienced—can be examined. In thirty-two hundred poems, a massive corpus, this search for a context for the examination of fundamental questions may not be so obvious. I try to do a great deal in this poetry.

The fluid and elastic qualities that underpin the expression of freedom assume a different latitude from one mind to another. Indeed in this Faith there are “unique methods and channels”⁵ for the exercise and maintenance of freedom. The very meaning of freedom has been deepened, its scope extended. The very fact that my writing poetry, an expression of art, is elevated to an act of worship augers well for the “enormous prospects for a new birth of expression in the civilization anticipated by His World Order.”⁶

Much, if not virtually all, of my poetry is about personal experience, a personal view of some sociological or historical process or fact. I see this poetry as essentially lyrical, as capable of expressing a sense of commonality and, for me, unparalleled intimacy. Some of what I write could be termed confessional. The first person “I” is vulnerable, dealing as it does with varying degrees of self-revelation. But even in the second and third persons there is the poet's view, less direct, self-revelation less obvious. The poetry is self-serving; the reader is invited to share in my experience, in my thoughts. The poetry also serves the community, however self-focussed my poems are. They deal with the universal and with the growth and development of that universal Force, the Cause. They deal with community. And the quest for community, it would seem, has always involved some conflict, some anxiety.

I strive, of course, for moderation, refinement, tact and wisdom in any of my poetic expressions of human utterance. For everything there is a season. Thus far, the season of my poetic writing in public has been minimal. I have been quite happy that the public utterance of my poetry, at poetry readings, has been minimal. I have written about this before in the five interviews recorded in previous booklets of poetry. Bahá'u'lláh, Himself, reinforces this idea in the maxim that: “Not everything that a man knoweth can be disclosed ...nor can every timely utterance be considered as suited to the capacity of those who hear it.”⁷ As the Universal House of Justice says in its expatiation on the theme of speech and freedom “an acute exercise of judgement” is called for.⁸ Perhaps when, and if, I become “public property” I will have acquired more of that quality of acute judgement.

The freedom of the poet, the writer, to declare his conscience and set forth his views is at the root of the foundation of this Order, but poetry of a negative

5. Universal House of Justice, letter to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the United States of America, 29 December 1988 in *Rights and Responsibilities*, Ontario: Bahá'í Canada Publications, 1997, p. 12.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

7. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976, p. 176.

8. Universal House of Justice, letter to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the United States of America, 29 December 1988 in *Rights and Responsibilities*, op. cit., p. 13

quality should be strictly avoided to prevent confusion and discord reigning in community life and to remedy divisiveness. The process of criticism is baneful in its effect and, therefore, the nature of my poetry is intended to counteract dissidence which I see as “a moral and intellectual contradiction of the main objective animating”⁹ my words. But often what I write is simply ordinary speech, sometimes emotionally loaded, raised to a high level, the highest level I can, of expressiveness. I strive for what the Greeks called *kairos*: tact, discretion, prudent restraint, maturity, for the quality the poet Pindar expressed.¹⁰ For humanity today needs that *communitas communitatum* and this Faith, the Bahá'í Faith, has an important role to play in this unifying process. This poetry is part of that wider process, that wider phenomenon.

I seek a judicious exercise in my writing. I try to be sensitive to content, style, sound, tact, wisdom, timeliness in order to “give birth to an etiquette of expression”¹¹ worthy of that term ‘maturity’, which Pindar possessed, and which this age must strive to attain. There must be a discipline in this poetry if it is to attain the status of being a “dynamic power in the arteries of life.”¹² If my words are to attain “the influence of spring” and cause “hearts to become fresh and verdant”, they shall have to be seen as “acceptable to fair-minded souls.”¹³ I can not make such a claim of my poetry, yet. In this complex age with so much competition from the intense sounds of media and other art forms, I may never attain to such an influence.

I am sensitive to my poetry's tenderness, as I am to the tenderness of the Cause which motivates so much that underpins my poetry. The rigorous discipline that must be exerted when putting print before the public eye, I have not exerted, not entirely. For I have assumed that, for the most part, the public will not see most of my poetry, at least for some time to come. But I strive to speak the words of both myself and my fellow human beings as part of a whole; this autobiographical poetic serves the whole. It resonates in the immediate and the concrete, in the inner and the outer values of my life, or in the socio-historical frameworks in which it is couched.

However idiosyncratic and autobiographical a particular poem may appear it is related to the totality, the cosmic, the grand-scale, the great system of time and place provided by the teachings and a generally scientific view of humankind. For mine is the poetry of a meta-narrative. Hopefully different readers will be cheered or saddened in different ways as my poems drift through the diverse human situations they describe.

9. Universal House of Justice, letter to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the United States of America, 29 December 1988 in *Rights and Responsibilities*, op.cit., p. 17.

10. Joan Aleshire, “Staying News: A Defense of the Lyric”, *Poets Teaching Poets: Self and the World*, in Gregory Orr and Ellen B. Voigt (eds.), Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1966, pp. 28-47.

11. Universal House of Justice, letter to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the United States of America, 29 December 1988 in *Rights and Responsibilities*, op.cit., p. 17.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

13. *Ibid.*

Spontaneity, initiative and diversity must be encouraged, but everything in its time, the right time under heaven, so to speak. The individual in this Cause is “the focus of primary development”,¹⁴ but within the context of the group; for the individual is essentially subordinated to the group. The individual should be seen as a source of social good. This is his most supreme delight. This is the essential context for poetry. When, and if, this occurs my poetry will find its right and proper place in community life. Dealing as my poetry does with the fragile, confused and ever-to-be-rediscovered and redefined self, the place of the inner life and private character, the delight to which I refer will, hopefully, be associated with understanding, with intellect and wisdom, the two most luminous lights in the world of creation.¹⁵

Ron Price

28 November 1997

Autobiography: Analysis Yet Again

I have provided a succinct narrative account of my life (in a 40,000 word autobiographical narrative elsewhere). It is chronological; the factual material is ordered, sequential. But, clearly, sharpness of detail, revealing anecdote, even suspense and analysis of motivation are given with insight and style much more effectively in my poetry. There is so much poetry now, some 4 000 poems spread over at least 2 000 pages, that this collected and compendious mass of material, if it is ever to provide a basis for biography in the future, must be shaped, interpreted, given perspective, dimension, a point of view.

Such a biographer must provide the creative, the fertile, the suggestive and engendering fact, an imaginative, a referential dimension. Such an analyst must enact a character, a place, a time in history. He will do this through language, through imposing a formal coherency on my material, although inevitably there will be present the incurable illogicalities of life, as Robert Louis Stevenson called the inconsistent, the unresolved paradoxes of life. He will give the reader a portrait not an inventory. This is what any biographer must do. I do this in my autobiographical poetry. But I provide many pictures, many moods, many sides. Details balloon; they repeat; they illuminate.

I discover things about my life, but I do not invent them.

As Plutarch and Boswell, two of history's most famous biographers, demonstrated: “anecdote rather than history teaches us more about the subject.”¹⁶ I see my narrative as the home of history and my poetry as a source of rich anecdote. It was for this reason I turned to poetry as a reservoir of autobiography; it seemed to teach, to convey, much more than narrative. Claude

14. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

15. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1970, p.1.

16. Ira Nadel, *Biography: Fiction, Fact and Form*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984, p.60.

Levi-Strauss helps us to understand why several poems about one object, or person, provide more significance or meaning than a narrative when he writes:

To understand a real object in its totality we always tend to work from its parts.

The resistance it offers us is overcome by dividing it...Being smaller, the object as

a whole seems less formidable....it seems to us qualitatively simplified.¹⁷

One can not know everything about anyone, even oneself. The mountain of detail would sink a ship and would not enlighten anyone. The task of achieving comprehensiveness not only is impossible, it is irrelevant. But there are intelligible dimensions of one's life and it is these dimensions that my poetry deals with best. Imagination is critical in writing biography. Some writers see invention more important than knowledge. Inevitably, there is an element of invention, of moving beyond the factual, but my own preference is to use imagination in a framework of factual experience, as far as possible. To read my poetry should be to immerse oneself in the first several decades of Bahá'í experience in what the Bahá'ís see as 'the tenth stage of history' and, especially, that time when the spiritual and administrative centre on Mount Carmel received its richest, its definitive, elaboration and definition, in the half century 1951 to 2001 and especially the recent decade or so. There are several unifying nodes of experience for my poetry, in addition to the above. I have drawn them to the reader's attention from time to time in the introductions to some of my poems.

From a Bahá'í perspective my poetry will undoubtedly possess a moral appeal associated with overcoming hardship, a quality that characterized most nineteenth-century biography and some of its poetry. But the moral framework, while retaining a certain simplicity, is expressed in a portrait of complexity, refinement, mystery, a slumbering world, my own idle fancies and vain imaginings and the streaming utterance of a new Revelation.

Freud commented that biographers choose their subjects 'for personal reasons of their own emotional life.'¹⁸ I am sure this is equally, if not more, true of autobiographers. After criss-crossing Australia as an international pioneer and teaching in the northernmost and southernmost places in Canada - all of this over thirty-six years, I have watched this emerging world religion grow perhaps thirty times (two hundred thousand in 1953, to six million in 2000). I have taught in schools for nearly thirty years and feel, now, a certain fatigue. I must write this poetry for the same reason a foetus must gestate for nine

months. I feel, with Rilke, a great inner solitude and that life and history is itself a beginning: for me, for my religion and for the world. I want to suck the sweetness out of everything and tell the story.

I sigh a deep-dark melancholy, but keep it in as far as I am able. I am lonely and attentive in this sadness. My poetry gives expression to this process and to my destiny which comes from within. My poetry is the story of what happens to me. For the most part "life happens" and one must respond to the seeming inevitability of it all, although the question of freedom and determinism is really quite a complex one. Reality, I record in my poetry, comes to me slowly, infinitely slowly. My poetry records this process. My poetry is an expression of a fruit that has been ripening within me: obscure, deep, mysterious. After years it now comes out in a continuous preoccupation as if I have, at last, found some hidden springs. It is as if I have been playing around the edges, with trivia, with the surface. Finally something real, true, is around me. I stick to my work. I have a quiet confidence, a patience, a distance from a work that always occupies me. And so I can record a deep record of my time. I am preparing something both visible and invisible, something fundamental. And there is joy.

Ron Price

25 September 1998

17. Ibid.

18. *ibid*, p.122.

Building Creative Communities: Approaching the Arts as Social and Economic Development

Robin M. Chandler

This essay is dedicated to the Aboriginal artists of Australia.

This essay describes GATI¹ (Global Arts Training Institute), a model for building professionalism in the visual and performance arts which can be implemented in Bahá'í communities and incorporated into teaching plans to develop the next generation of arts practitioners and professional managers.² As part of the One Year and Five Year Plans, the author is suggesting a comprehensive training model which further develops and expands the Youth Workshop Model as a global model fusing Bahá'í principles, the principles of social and economic development, and a 21st Century vision which adapts the best in art, science and technology to training and educational programs. The GATI described below relies on support from the Bahá'í Administration and the private sector as a development partners.

Time is Short³

Each one is holding in his hand a trumpet, blowing the breath of life over all the regions... These souls are the armies of God and the conquerors of the East and the West. Should one of them turn his face toward some direction and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, all the ideal forces

1. For information about GATI (Global Arts Training Institute) contact the author by email at CIC370@aol.com or at the Caravan for International Culture website at www.caravan-inc.com, or write to Dr. Robin M. Chandler, Caravan, PO Box 370, Cambridge, MA 02238 USA.
2. The expression 'arts practitioners and professional managers' embraces the three emergent interdisciplinary fields including the cluster of music, dance, theatre, the visual arts, film, literature and writing, oral tradition, and performance ritual; the computer and digital media; and corporate arts management.
3. Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith – Messages to America 1947-1957*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1995, pp. 85-6.

and lordly confirmations will rush to his support and reinforcement. He will behold all the doors open and all the strong fortifications and impregnable castles razed to the ground. Singly and alone he will attack the armies of the world, defeat the right and left wings of the hosts of all the countries, break through the lines of all the legions and carry his attack to the very center of the powers of the earth. This is the meaning of the Hosts of God.⁴

That which belongs to the spirit of the future can only be realized in feeling, and to this feeling the talent of the artist is the only road.⁵

Those of us who are career professionals in the arts understand the power of the arts. The calling to art as a vocation is second nature. Others have to be convinced of its significance beyond entertainment, beyond the glamour, beyond escapism, beyond the celebration which lies at its heart. At best the artist perfects him/herself and, ultimately, perfects culture as a whole. Striving to perfect one's craft and oneself reveals divine attributes. In the presentation and performance of art, the artist reveals a transcendent moment, transmuting audiences and reminding them of the possibilities of human perfection, the promise of peace. Yet, as spiritual awakening requires a Divine Teacher, artistic talent requires an initiation process guided, formally or informally, by a teacher, a master, a guru.

In 1986 I was on my second pilgrimage to the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, this time with my daughter, Nuri. I met my Bahá'í brother, Ika Tutualepu, a descendant of the Tongan royal family, who was also on pilgrimage with his mother and family members. He had brought with him several sets of Tongan bark paintings intended as gifts to the members of the Universal House of Justice. In my conversations with him, he strongly identified with comments I was making regarding the growing consciousness and solidarity among people of colour as a precursor to global unity. Suddenly, in that moment of solidarity, I found myself the proud recipient of two exquisite paintings charting his family crest and history. In a long history of international travel, they remain among my most prized possessions: not as artifacts, but as talismans, social indicators of the power of the arts to preserve the stories of life, the visions and hopes of humanity across many millennia.

Artists are educators, narrating the myths of the past in story form and within artistic formats. From this emerges most of what we call a world-embracing global vision of civilisation. As such, the Sistine Chapel tells us no more or less than the Dogon Sigi ritual or Indian raga music. It is through the legacy of multicultural artistic traditions that we frame human life, rationalise our human culture, and build the infrastructure for future civilisation, thus advancing it. Just as the visual narratives of Ika's family histories were entrusted to bark, so will art inscribe our future Bahá'í communities.

4. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1969, p. 424.

5. Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, New York: Dover Publications, 1977, p. 12.

Every dance ritual ever devised, every song, chant or hymn ever sung, every poem ever recited, every form and shape moulded, cast or painted has had a human creator. Since every culture participates in human evolution, we look to each culture for the guidance, inspiration and vision encoded in their musical compositions, choreography, architecture, wall art and sculpture, praise poems and plays, all now joined by the promised collaborations provided by the computer and digital revolutions. I recall Shoghi Effendi's remarks in *The Individual and Teaching* on encountering diversity: 'We should meet them [indigenous people] as equals, well-wishers, people who admire and respect their ancient descent and who feel that they will be interested, as we are, in a living religion - and not in the dead forms of present-day churches.'⁶

GATI might be a bridge linking old Bahá'í Youth Workshop (BYW) models with more traditional art forms. The challenge to Bahá'í communities, institutions, and individuals, then, is to encourage new career paths in the arts through social programs linked with economic support, both private and institutional. Through such systematic support, the Bahá'í world community validates the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá whereby '[He] acknowledges the indebtedness of the peoples of the world to scientists and craftsmen,' states that 'the possessors of sciences and arts have a great right among the people of the world', and urges that 'the people of Bahá should treat craftsmen with deference.'⁷

Professionalising the Arts and Training Artists

*Teach them to dedicate their lives to matters of great import, and inspire them to undertake studies that will benefit mankind.*⁸

The arts, as a professional career path, are 'of great import', 'benefit mankind', nurture talent and attract genius. It is often assumed that such Writings relate only to training in those careers which are traditionally thought to be 'professional' - medicine, law, business, and so forth - due to parental and community fears that arts careers are leisure activities, economically unsustainable, and are less valued as worthwhile activities for making a living. Such attitudes represent too narrow an interpretation of the Writings and suggest a disdain for the arts which stifles career development and, thus, teaching. Career counselling by families and educators might benefit from recent statistics regarding the feasibility and sustainability of arts careers which have undergone interdisciplinary diversification.

6. Shoghi Effendi, *The Individual and Teaching*, p. 31. [refer to "Africa Calls", U. S. Office of Pioneering, Wilmette, Ill.]

7. Shoghi Effendi quoting Bahá'u'lláh in *God Passes By*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1965, p. 218; Bahá'u'lláh, *Bahá'í World Faith*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1969, p. 189; and Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1978, p. 38.

8. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1978, p. 129.

Educational reports from international agencies identify four phenomena which enhance education and training. One is that media and technology are indispensable learning tools in job and life preparation.⁹ The second is that the rigors of cross and interdisciplinary learning revitalises standard education by showing learners the benefits of critical thinking in many different disciplines. Third, content-focused learning without spiritual (moral, ethical, character) education may produce a superior scientist, accountant, or even artist, but learners so educated will not be able to function in a more global and diversified world. Fourth, and most relevant to this essay, learners who have had significant long-term arts study not only score higher on standardised tests, but display expanded interpersonal skills, self-awareness, and social stability due to the expressive demands of artistic training and production. In other words, the educated child who is arts-literate in interpersonal, intercultural, and interreligious experiences will be more capable of negotiating transactions which acknowledge the demands of globalism.

Bahá'í educational contexts (children's classes, Year-of-Service) ideally prepare learners for the expanding concentric loyalties which will define human communities in the future. Broadly speaking, trained arts practitioners revitalise Bahá'í community life, provide important role models for younger children, and assure administrative cohesiveness as a dynamic counterpoint of service action. Further, through touring and travel teaching, arts institutes seed and cross-fertilise with other sites and spawn new methods, new projects, and more institute experimentation.

What does all this mean for the twenty-first century? All art is a text, whether written, oral, aural, kinaesthetic or visual. As the divine worlds of God are many, we can begin to imagine with new faculties that real and virtual spaces await new forms of art production which address these newly understood realities across the four kinds of time alluded to by Bahá'u'lláh in *The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys*.¹⁰ There is, for example, a great deal of modern art which benefits from or utilises technology, and yet much of both art and technology is profane, amoral, and fragmented in both medium and message. By virtue of our identity as Bahá'ís, then, deepening in the Bahá'í Writings will not only unlock the spiritual doors of space-time with which both art and science are preoccupied, but will offer emerging Bahá'ís who seek professional arts careers a new imagination. With this new imagination, new forms of art production will be generated, culturally diverse amalgamations of performance practice will evolve, and challenging literacies of knowledge will be sculpted from the rocks of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. It is already happening. What is most critical at this juncture in global transformation, however, are the ways

9. The United Nations University Millennium Project, UNESCO, and numerous departments and ministries of education worldwide have on-going studies and projects which track emerging trends in education, arts, science and technology.

10. Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1978, p. 25.

in which emerging Bahá'í arts practitioners are able to sustain personal lives which are ethical, spiritually-centred, and which exemplify the radiance that the Bahá'í message is intended to convey. It is an exciting time to be alive, an innovation gateway which may only remain open for a short time.

GATI and the MATRIX Model

Fundamentally, this is a call for a GATI (Global Arts Training Institute). This endeavour might begin with an assessment of the social and institutional impact of Bahá'í Youth Workshops as they exist at varying stages of development throughout the Bahá'í world. In most communities and countries they exist through community and institutional mandates, but few receive the vigorous support they need to evolve into the twenty-first century at this dawning of the Bahá'í era. For example, the 'twenty-somethings' and 'thirty-somethings' who attended BYW ten years ago constitute a distinct age cohort of 'youth' who are now adults, as compared with current youth who may face a less enthusiastic BYW process now that its novelty has worn off. What do these trends mean for Bahá'í development in the arts and for teaching? Financial support has registered as an on-going challenge. What successes and new funding priorities have affected our rethinking of how to fund Bahá'í projects, not as religious organisations, but as community-based organisations which may be eligible for not-for-profit grants and which greatly contribute to the quality of life in cities, towns, and villages around the world? Is this information being systematised and shared?

After observing the art world for thirty years as a participant observer, artist and sociologist, as well as following the enthusiastic progress of Bahá'í Youth Workshops on several continents, it seems timely, given the admonitions of the Universal House of Justice and the Plans now in place, to provide the intergenerational support needed for the social and economic development of the arts focused on the professionalism of the Bahá'í youth through an international training institute. As I stood in a University of Melbourne audience in September 1999 watching a performance by 'Artworks' (as one of a handful of standing ovators who truly appreciated the potential power of this multimedia form), I realised the principles of 'workshopping' were a key factor in formulating a model for action in the arts.¹¹ It was at this moment, recalling Ika's Tongan paintings, revisiting my childhood memories of learning to reconcile Tchaikovsky, Ellington, and Gregorian chant, and having observed the endless procession of both western and traditional dance, theatre, film et al

11. Workshopping first appeared outside modern Bahá'í community life. Continents that underwent persistent political repression devised workshopping beyond their national borders, or 'underground', as a means of developing liberation arts as a progressive strategy for training and developing the arts in service to social and political freedom. For further reading see Robin Chandler, 'The Role of Culture in Democracy Movements in the Black Expressive Tradition: Artist Performance Practice in Brazil, South Africa and the United States', in Ran Greenstein (ed.), *Comparative Perspectives on South Africa*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998.

in my travels, that I finally plopped back into my seat and thought 'now how do we build creative communities?'

The following model would operate at the international level as a training centre, permanent and yet mobile, which would have numerous trainers and satellites around the world. The intention is not to standardise arts practice nor to stultify human creativity, but rather to consolidate and tap into the critical success factors which have made the arts a powerhouse of teaching and a training ground for new ideas and emerging artists. In fact, a new culture is brewing and mature artists might have a hand in shaping a future Bahá'í art world which has yet to emerge, but which is inevitable as a central feature of global society. This can only happen through an effective collaboration between social and economic development praxis now evolving in the international development community, and the theory and methodology embedded in every phrase and fragrance of the Sacred Texts. Courses in arts management and proposal writing, accompanied by studio training and more enhanced deepening methods than exist at present, would contribute to a rigorous institute.

Clearly, management training is encouraged in the Writings: 'Managing art with propriety will become the means of sociability and affinity; and sociability and affinity tends to guide others to the Truth.'¹² Such an institute would provide practical development skills and technical assistance to emerging individuals and organisations who would love to serve the Faith through the arts, but who have limited human resources. In the development community lingo, a GATI institute would be described as partnership-based, job-enhancing, technology-transferring, and enterprise-empowering! Evolving within the framework of Bahá'í principle and Divine Policy, a GATI could spin off an infrastructure mandated by Bahá'í administrative institutions which was theoretically and empirically grounded in the Writings, and people-driven by a cross-cultural team of administrators/teachers and a working advisory board. Professionalism in the arts in Bahá'í communities would employ the MATRIX Model (MATRIX is an acronym) which would focus on four goals: global citizenship, community development, service, and the notion that the soul has a right to be educated.

MATRIX

'M': mentoring and multi-skilling - Intergenerational knowledge has been passed down from teacher to apprentice, from gurus and master artists in every society for thousands of years. Mentoring works as an indispensable strategy. As knowing God derives from a personal relationship with the Creator, knowing one's craft is best achieved through information-sharing, particularly in 'the information age' of which we are all students.

12. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, op.cit., p. 377.

'A': the art world - understanding how art worlds have functioned in the past in both traditional and modern societies and how they might look in the future influenced by Bahá'í principles. GATI would extract the best educational, training, management and public relations elements of the existing art worlds and redefine them toward the goals of the Faith, the principles of justice, unity, and work as worship. Concepts such as networks of cooperation, collective action, status creation, subsidisation, public and private sector interaction, patronage, and many other aspects of community development would be taught.

'T': training and education - which includes conventional instruction in art modalities (music, dance, theatre, the visual media, etc) linked with spiritual education as an over-arching framework. Training-of-trainers techniques would dispatch highly skilled experts to the Bahá'í world community, particularly areas where mass teaching is either in process or anticipated.

'R': the residency or 'studio' experience - an essential incubation context for conceptualising, rehearsing, and testing both the power and resilience of the art form and the substance of the artist.

'I': Bahá'í identity - the core of artistic conduct and productivity. The development of individual identity as shaped by the Bahá'í Faith is both social and economic. The aim of the artist is to interact and influence society toward social unity and to secure an economic base from which to make a living. The dreams and visions of Generation X'ers are closely linked with the dreams and visions of the three Central Figures of the Faith.

'X': the four points of the letter 'x' as interrelated elements of the model, that is, interdisciplinary, multicultural, technological, and spiritual. The objective is to gradually inculcate the importance of these four aspects of progressive contemporary educational practice. In the arts, they are transferable technologies. Most conventional ways of thinking about educational method are being replaced by these four ideas, prevalent in our global culture, but deeply embedded in Bahá'u'lláh's Divine Plan and in art theory.

Interdisciplinary:

*There reside, therefore, in arts which are outwardly different, hidden forces equally different, so that they may all work in one man towards a single result, even though each art may be working in isolation.*¹³

13. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, op.cit., p. 43.

Multicultural:

*Let all be set free from the multiple identities that were born of passion and desire, and in the oneness of their love for God find a new way of life.*¹⁴

Technological:

*They shall reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom, and manifest unto everyone the signs of God.*¹⁵

*Day and night you must strive [to realise] that this world has a creator, a vivifier, a provider, an architect, knowing this through proofs and evidences and not through susceptibilities ... through decisive arguments and real vision ... visualizing it as clearly as the outer eye beholds the sun.*¹⁶

Spiritual:

*The artist must train not only his eye but also his soul.*¹⁷

Conclusion

*Every man who steeps himself in the spiritual possibilities of his art is a valuable helper in the building of a spiritual pyramid which will someday reach to heaven.*¹⁸

We do not yet know what 'Bahá'í art' is, nor what it means to be a 'Bahá'í artist' in the information age. As Kandinsky said in the beginning of the last century: 'At the present time any attempt to define this new art would be as useless as pulling a small bud open so as to make a fully blown flower.'¹⁹ In the first quarter of the year 2000, we would still be pulling buds to try and define these terms. For the moment we remain 'artists who are Bahá'ís', attempting to distil the inner meaning of the Bahá'í Writings in order to achieve justice and peace on our small planet inside an under-explored universe. We are also deeply influenced, as is the general art world, by the materialism, violence, prejudices, and misery which contaminate the spiritual atmosphere within which we try to operate. However, GATI is designed to focus on preparing emerging artists in studio, technology, and arts management praxis through a

14. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1978, p. 76.

15. Ibid., p. 251.

16. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1968, p. 65.

17. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, op.cit., p. 46.

18. Ibid., p. 20.

19. Ibid.

composite of educational technology transfer, distance education, and applied Bahá'í theory and deepening through a one-year, intensive, certified course of study bringing together two generations of Bahá'í arts practitioners for professional development, service, and teaching.

In Australia, the mainstream art world has been critically influenced by the current political focus on reconciliation and the human rights of Indigenous people. Several public events pursued these cross-cultural agendas which were less taken with western-based art production. They included 'Beyond the Future: The Third Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art', held at Queensland Art Gallery; 'Generations: The Stolen Years of Fighters and Singers' at the University of Western Australia's Centre for Indigenous History and the Arts; Dance North and Woomera Aboriginal Corporation's production of *Luuli*, a cross-cultural collaboration performed at the Lyric Theatre in Brisbane's Performing Arts Centre; and 'Focusing the Blur', a travelling community photography exhibition produced during Refugee Week by the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, Australian refugee teenage students from Serbia, the Sudan, Bosnia, Yugoslavia, and the Bahá'í Institute for the Performing Arts (BIPA).

In many other countries the flower buds emerge, including 'Spirit of Africa' in southern Africa, and in those regions and cities in which BYW continues to struggle toward service through the arts in the United States, Asia, South America, and Europe. The small and humble steps taken by individuals to develop arts institutes have left large footprints. They lead forward and must be taken to their next logical stage of development, socially and economically, through support from the upper echelons of the Bahá'í Administration as in any corporate community. Shoghi Effendi's cautionary and penetrating remarks guide GATI's urgent call to action:

Time is short. Opportunities, though multiplying with every passing hour, will nor recur, some for another century, others never again. However severe the challenge, however multiple the tasks, however short the time, however somber the world outlook, however limited the material resources of a hard-pressed adolescent community, the untapped sources of celestial strength from which it can draw are measureless in their potencies, and will unhesitatingly pour forth their energizing influences if the necessary daily effort be made and ... willingly accepted ... Nor should it be forgotten that in the hour of adversity and in the very midst of confusion, peril and uncertainty, some of the most superb exploits, noising abroad the fame of this community have been achieved.²⁰

20. Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, op.cit., pp. 85-6.

Elsewhere, I have mentioned that:

the more successful projects in interdisciplinary study and research occur and go on to spawn anomalies and revolution when one field and its practitioners are willing and enthusiastic about exploring the theoretical, methodological, and practical procedures of another field. This is manifest (1) in contemporary fields such as eco-geology, neurobiology, or computer graphics; (2) in projects such as space exploration, the Human Genome Project, or digitally transmitted photojournalism; and (3) in innovations such as community medicine (socially responsive health practices that thrive on shared strategies between home-bred rural herbalists and western-trained physicians collaborating in disease prevention and control) as well as music technologies which invent new, merger products and/or devices such as digitizers, synthesizers, and novel forms of dance notation using customized computer programming methods ... If more opportunities for gifted scientists and artists are made available to all echelons of these communities (not merely to those with access to scarce and exclusive sources of funding), then more practical but nonetheless revolutionary applications of the science-art matrix will yield spiritual solutions to the economic, social, logistical, and environmental problems of our planet.²¹

21. Robin Chandler, 'Creative Parallel Spaces in Science and Art: Knowledge in the Information Age,' *Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, vol. 29, no. 3 (Fall 1999), pp. 163-176.

Arts Can Move the Youth

Mahyar Amjadi

Bahá'í education places the greatest emphasis on the families, so much so that if the children's education is neglected, parents forfeit their right to parenthood.¹ Meanwhile, there are clear and detailed guidelines for the education of the young in schools, outlined by the Central Figures of the Faith. This article, however, deals with the option that the Faith presents society when the child has reached the age when the parental input is having less and less influence. It puts forward the theory that the arts are the 'what-to-do-if' of Bahá'í education.

The Bahá'í Faith has provided its followers with clear and detailed guidelines on the education of children. These guidelines give instructions on the essential requirements for education of children, from the moment of conception to the hour of marriage, when the consent of the parents remains instrumental in shaping the advancement of their children. The duty also remains with the children throughout their lives to serve their parents, thus further reinforcing the value of the family and the need for the children to keep in close contact with the parents.

Be that as it may, there still remains a growing number of youth in the Bahá'í community who, for a variety of reasons, were deprived of the blessings of a Bahá'í upbringing. The fact remains that the challenges that the Bahá'í youth are facing today, universally as well as within Australia, are not different to those that the youth in the wider community have to face. From the number of youth who have gradually become aloof from the Bahá'í community and divorced from the Bahá'í way of life, it appears that there is more than one family in Australia that has shown hesitancy in delivering the principles of Bahá'í education to their children. This paper aims to examine the solution that the Faith has to offer in such instances. The paper will first survey the possible solutions offered by non-Bahá'í sources, then mention the recent messages from the Universal House of Justice, and finally explore some of the writings of the Central Figures of the Faith.

Common methods of retraining youth

From the psychological point of view, the effects of peer pressure have always been considered of primary importance in theories aiming to explain

1. Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Q. 105, p. 138.

the behavioural patterns of youth. Other studies have demonstrated the effect that education has on modifying or changing the behavioural patterns of adolescents. Hansen and Graham found the effects of education to be greater than the effects of methods to overcome peer pressure in programs aiming to reduce smoking in school children.² Others, however, such as Meijer et al, have found that in a similar case, peer pressure is the issue that needs to be addressed.³ The effects of peer pressure on modifying the behavioural habits and long or short-term patterns of social responses are well documented in a host of other areas. These cover a vast array of aspects of human conduct, from sexual behaviour and orientation⁴ to eating habits,⁵ from academic performance⁶ to wearing of helmets,⁷ from perceptions of beauty⁸ to incidence of sport injury.⁹

There is little doubt that peer pressure plays a great role in presenting the youth with tests and challenges capable of shaping their life. The Bahá'ís, who, in many facets of their individual and collective lives, have to swim against the flow of the forces of the society, seem to have an inherent potential for susceptibility to negative peer pressure. As the effects of these pressures are more pronounced in youth than in adults, and as the Bahá'í youth are asked to uphold standards that are in most cases in direct contrast and opposition to those held by their peers in the wider community, the effects of peer pressure on them become greater. The way to preserve the Bahá'í standard, and turn the peer pressure on the youth in the wider community, inviting them to share in the wonders of a Bahá'í life, as well as reclaiming the disillusioned Bahá'í youth and winning back their trust, has been outlined in the Bahá'í writings.

References to youth and arts in recent messages of Universal House of Justice

There has been increasing reference to the arts and the importance of their application in teaching in the recent messages from the Universal House of Justice. These have also been linked with the youth and their presence in the teaching arena. Since the beginning of the Four Year Plan this trend has become

2. W. H. Hansen & J. W. Graham, 'Preventing Alcohol, Marijuana, and Cigarette Use among Adolescents: Peer Pressure Resistance Training versus Establishing Conservative Norms', *Preventative Medicine*, vol. 20, no. 3 (May 1991), pp. 414-30.
3. B. Meijer, D. Branski, K. Knol, & E. Kerem; 'Cigarette Smoking Habits among School Children', *Chest*, vol. 110, no. 4 (October 1996), pp. 921-6.
4. J. F. De Gaston, S. Weed, & L. Jensen, 'Understanding Gender Differences in Adolescent Sexuality', *Adolescence*, vol. 31, no. 121 (Spring 1996), pp. 217-31.
5. M. Grigg, J. Bowman, & S. Redman, 'Disordered Eating and Unhealthy Weight Reduction Practices among Adolescent Females', *Preventative Medicine*, vol. 32, no. 6 (November-December 1996), pp. 581-92.
6. A. Bandura, C. Barbaranelli, G. V. Caprara, & C. Pastorelli, 'Multifaceted Impact of Self-Efficacy Beliefs on Academic Functioning', *Child Development*, vol. 67, no. 3 (June 1996), pp. 1206-22.
7. P. Logan, S. Leadbetter, R. E. Gibson, R. Schieber, C. Branche, P. Bender, D. Zane, J. Humphreys, & S. Anderson, 'Evaluation of a Bicycle Helmet Giveaway Program - Texas', *Pediatrics*, vol. 101, no. 4, part 1 (April 1998), pp. 578-82.
8. G. R. Adams, 'Physical Attractiveness, Personality, and Social Reactions to Peer Pressure', *Journal of Psychology*, vol. 96, 2nd half (July 1977), pp. 287-96.
9. D. T. Bernhart & G. L. Landry, 'Sports Injuries in Young Athletes', *Advances in Pediatrics*, vol. 42 (1995), pp. 456-500.

more and more evident. The aspect which is of great interest to this paper, however, is the link that the House of Justice seems to increasingly emphasise between youth and the arts. There are instances when direct mention of the youth in relation to the arts has been made:

Involvement of the youth in music and the arts as a means of proclaiming and teaching the Cause distinguished their exertions in many places, the spread of dance and drama workshops was particularly effective.¹⁰

In the Ridvan message of BE 156, the mention of the arts is again associated with youth:

But a word too must be said in recognition of the prominent part being played by youth all over the world in their employment of the arts in the teaching work, renditions by their dance workshops, in particular, have acquired renown within and outside the Bahá'í community.

These references prompt a speculation that there exists a special power in the arts which is capable of being specifically beneficial to the youth. A search in the sacred Writings was therefore conducted with the intention of finding this connection. Why the direct association between youth and the arts? The transparent answer to the above question is obviously to advance the process of entry by troops. The Universal House of Justice repeatedly mentions that the main purpose is teaching and proclamation of the Cause:

The Four Year Plan aims at one major accomplishment: a significant advance in the process of entry by troops ... In all their efforts to achieve the aim of the Four Year Plan, the friends are asked to give greater attention to the use of the arts, not only for proclamation, but also for work in expansion and consolidation.¹¹

Similarly in the Ridvan Message of BE 154, we find reference to 'the widening efforts to make use of the arts in the teaching work and community activities'.

Other central figures of the Faith have also emphasised the importance of the arts in the proclamation and teaching of the Cause:

The day will come when the Cause will spread like wildfire when its spirit and teachings will be presented on the stage or in art and literature as a whole.¹²

10. Universal House of Justice, Ridvan Message BE 153

11. Ibid.

12. Letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, cited in the Ridvan Message, BE 153.

There is, however, another side to the story. Considering the fact that teaching the Faith is a bounty - 'Of all the gifts of God the greatest is the gift of teaching'¹³ - and the fact that there can be no teaching without learning - 'As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be'¹⁴ - there are therefore two synergistic processes in action here. The first is the fact that youth in particular have been encouraged to use the arts in their teaching efforts; and the second is the undeniable essence of teaching, which is conceived to be conducive to the spiritual growth of the teacher apart from its consequences in spreading the Word.

Thus it can be established that the exertions of the Universal House of Justice in encouraging the youth to participate in art-related activities have the twofold action of advancing the process of teaching, as well as creating a Bahá'í youth culture which will prevent submission of the youth to pressures exerted by peers and common cultures.

References of Bahá'u'lláh to the use of the arts

Bahá'u'lláh has made numerous references in His Writings to the importance of the arts and their application:

It hath been revealed and is now repeated that the true worth of artists and craftsmen should be appreciated, for they advance the affairs of mankind.¹⁵

Great indeed is the claim of scientists and craftsmen on the peoples of the world. Unto this beareth witness the Mother Book in this conspicuous station.¹⁶

The Writings also mention the importance of arts and crafts in the development of the individual. Bahá'u'lláh Himself asserts this point on numerous occasions:

Arts, crafts and sciences uplift the world of being, and are conducive to its exaltation. Knowledge is as wings to man's life, and a ladder for his ascent. Its acquisition is incumbent upon everyone.

At the outset of every endeavour, it is incumbent to look to the end of it. Of all the arts and sciences, set the children to studying those which will result in advantage to man, will ensure his progress and elevate his

13. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, Baha'i Administration - Selected Messages 1922-1932, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1995, p. 12.

14. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, cited in Bahiyih Khanum, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1984, p. 225.

15. Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988, p. 27.

16. Ibid., pp. 26-7.

rank. Thus the noisome odours of lawlessness will be dispelled, and thus through the high endeavours of the nation's leaders, all will live cradled, secure and in peace.¹⁷

Conclusion

There seems to be a subtle assertion by the Universal House of Justice offering a solution to the issues related to the youth. Arts can indeed be instrumental, not only in establishing a sustainable sense of belonging and unity amongst the youth, encouraging them to participate in Bahá'í activities, and cultivating the initial practical steps towards the evolution of a Bahá'í youth culture; but also to provide a security zone for the youth being torn between the demands of living in a materialistic society and the obligations of leading a life as a Bahá'í.

The challenge upon the community is therefore twofold. First, it is to direct the youth and guide them in establishing new Bahá'í art groups, particularly dance groups as these have been specifically mentioned by the House of Justice. Secondly, it is to overcome the test of drawing a line between guiding the youth in the path in line with the principles of the Faith, and interfering with the creative potential of the youth. The whole-hearted, continuous, and reliable support of these initiatives is an indispensable part of the organic growth of such establishments. The job of being a Bahá'í is hard enough, facing the pressures from non-adherents, without the pressures from inside the Faith.

The establishment of methods of teaching using the arts which reflect Australian culture, as well as proclaiming the principles of the Faith, is of crucial importance. In this span of history in this country, when a national identity is in the process of being sought and established, the presence of the Bahá'í youth and their world-moving influence on the collective consciousness can undoubtedly have everlasting ramifications for the future of Australia.

Letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll

An anthology of poetry by Australian Bahá'ís 1999

Compiled by Belinda Belton

“Oh Friends! Be not careless of the virtues with which ye have been endowed, neither be neglectful of your high destiny... Ye are the stars in the heaven of understanding, the breeze that stirreth at the break of day, the soft-flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men, the letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll...”

Bahá'u'lláh

17. Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1978, pp. 168-169.

Call to the Youth

On God's Sacred Mountain,
 from holy white steps
 a trumpet was raised
 and the clarion call sent forth
 - high and sweet and clear -
 into the stillness.

You, at your desk
 paused until the last pure note had disappeared,
 then putting your books aside,
 went forth to discover
 love and loneliness
 laughter and tears
 doubt and faith
 and the knowledge of self.

And in the quiet I can hear
 a nightingale singing in your heart.

Belinda Belton

“There are stars on the ground.”

*Three year old passenger, one evening, gazing on the city lights
 of India far below.*

Night flight over Sydney

Vast glittering net,
 beaded, bejewelled
 cast across the twisted depths of darkness.

Autumn is falling...

(for Terry, 1992)

Autumn is falling
 night comes early
 and chill.
 let me creep to your hearthstone-
 let me warm myself by your heart

Belinda Belton

I am the One...

I am the one you're persecuting
 I am the one you've called
 the killer of Christ then
 the betrayer of Muhammad
 I am the ugly, the crippled, the sad
 the hungry, and the dispossessed.

I am the beggar on the corner
 and the lonely king in the palace
 I am the one you are persecuting
 And the one whom you reject.
 I am the poor, unfortunate child
 whose house you've just wrecked.

I am the land you call occupied
 The one whom you've kept captive
 the one whose rights you have denied
 I am the Ancient City of Peace...
 I am the innocent babe on the bus
 in your blind hatred you've just killed

I am the one you segregate
 with contempt into ghettos in Africa,
 I am the tin miner in Chile,
 the cocaine grower, Columbia
 I am Harlem, I am Redfern
 and I am Fitzroy, Victoria.

I am the one you torture
 for taking the "wrong view"
 In your regime of terror
 I get in your way as you're
 squaring your circles and bashing
 square pegs into round holes.

I am the bludger you resent
 having to pay the dole to
 The hopeless poor among the rich
 A child who lives on the streets
 a helpless mother in a home of want
 The homeless drunk under a bridge.

You sneer at me for selling my blood
 My body or bits of it to a surgeon
 I live in the gutters of Pakistan
 of Moscow, Lima or in India:
 I am one of the ten percent planned
 unemployed here in lucky Australia.

Les Endrei

Come forth Beautiful Maiden...

Come forth beautiful maiden,
 the time is here
 For reunion with the world,
 Awake
 From your age long sleep
 I am the Planet Earth.

Come forth, O Spotless
 Maiden
 Hold your kind,
 cool, soothing hand
 Over my burnt forests,
 wipe from my brow
 The acid rain
 the radiation
 And soothe the
 smouldering deserts.

Stroke my white hair
 with loving hands
 Caress the azure blue
 of my face,
 Hold my hand and lead me
 on my limitless Path
 Through the star studded
 mysteries of space.

How I long for
 Your good pleasure,
 The unseen miracles
 of Your Essence,
 How I desire Your Charm,
 Your Fairness,
 Your Chastity,
 Your Innocence...

Heal me, O Holy Maiden,
 of my passion for power
 and for gold
 The festering
 cancer
 of wars...

Here are my gifts:
 of Tribes
 The Sacred Sites,
 The jewel of Krishna,
 From David the King
 The Golden Star

The Sacred Fire
 of Zarahustra,
 The Wheel of Buddha
 the Glowing Cross
 The Crescent of Islam
 and the most precious jewel,
 The Greatest Name!

The Suns Of The Seasons

Come forth, Beautiful,
 Holy Maiden,
 The time is now
 for your union
 with the Earth,
 Awake from your
 age long sleep,
 This is the life giving Kiss
 Of the Prince of Peace,
 the Redeemer of the world...

Come forth, Beautiful.
 Holy
 Maiden
 The time is here
 for your marriage
 with the world,
 Make your home
 forever
 with me,
 I am the Planet Earth!

Les Endrei

Do you deny
 that the sun exists,
 Because the night
 is dark?
 Do you see
 in the winter's lifelessness,
 The end, forever,
 of summer?

And believe that if the moon
 is sometimes slim
 It will never again
 shine full at night?
 That the harvest
 of autumn leaves
 Forbids the new
 spring's blooms?

That, if love grows dim
 in the clouds of life,
 It will never, as the sun,
 blaze again in the summer sky?

Day after night
 each next month
 merges into seasons
 and mounting years;

Life flows on
 by invisible law
 and as certain as its presence,
 is the promise of its continuance.

Love, like the suns of the seasons,
 will return.

Jane Hunt

The Hope Of The City

Just below the surface
 Of the near millennial city
 Lies a world of lush green pastures,
 Of clean air, soft breezes
 And heady, sunny days.

Just below the surface
 Of the stony-faced city-dwellers;
 Below the hard self-centredness
 Of the carefully-clocked, crisply dressed,
 Androids of the city:

Just below the surface
 Of the glazed eyes of the masses,
 Lies the intuitive care of countless mothers,
 The loyalty and devotion of fathers and brothers,
 The tender affection of new brides.

Just below the surface
 Of this society so driven by money
 Lies a subterranean stream of kindness,
 Of thoughtful consideration
 For the personal impact of life.

Just below the surface
 Of this angst-ridden metropolis,
 Lies the wistful hope of an aching multitude
 Who long for the end of care and trouble;
 The cessation of violence; the beginning of peace.

Just below the surface
 Of this confident young city,
 Astride its harbour, through which
 Have entered myriad different races,
 Lies a new world of unity of love.

Jane Hunt

Neighbourhood Watching

They do not miss Sunday services.
Conservatively attired, Bible wielding,
the clan gathers across from our house
for the weekly drive down to their hall.
The kids are clad as adult miniatures,
little guys in ties, girls in pretty dresses
and patent leather shoes. Sometimes
while waiting the younger ones stray
across the street to ride on our tireswing
before they are recalled and rebuckled
into a van or sedan by vigilant mothers.
My neighbours are certain that the return
of Christ is imminent – signs abound,
study confirms and every professional
prophet they attract cites further evidence.
These are decent people who live about as
well as Christians can in the last year of
the 20th century of their Christian calendar.
They like animals, keep watch on our
house when we're away, notice things
like left-on headlights. Good neighbours.

As their shining vehicles move out at the
appointed hour, their slow procession
passes a migrant youth roller-blading in
the opposite direction. His baggy jeans,
baseball cap and flowing T-shirt emblazoned
with a star and the word UNITY do not
attract their eyes for more than the moment
it takes to file a quick description just in
case. They would not consider that such
an exotic might know their Lord's current
name and address. Their slow convoy
winds down towards a red brick hall.

Oh, how the youth flies to meet mates
who create new dances to hip hop
soul plus rap.

Allan Lake

Poems are like trees

I think that poems grow like trees,
 subject to whim and sun,
 object of moon and stares.
 Something wakes the one
 with ear to the breeze –
 perhaps it's W.B.,
 T.S. or dear Emily
 throwing a line from just over (t)here.

Poems are strange as this day
 when I can lose or gain faith,
 fall in the river or love, rhyme
 or write against the current.
 Shall I decide me or
 let the spirit guide me?

Poems, I see now, know
 where they need to grow
 to find a path to the light.

Allan Lake

Children

Precious gift of life
 All dreams.
 No evil thoughts.
 Just hope,
 And Love,
 And eagerness,
 To be
 And to become.

Ray Meyer

The Language Of The Soul

What language does the soul speak?
 English, French, Swahili, Urdu?
 Oft-times silence!
 The knower knows without words.
 Two souls understand, and nothing is said.
 Waves communicate: no word restricts.
 Rainforests, silent: wonder filled.
 Mists form and disperse without sound.
 Vast sweeps of earth
 Knarled rocks
 Wind
 Leaves stir
 Flowers open
 Hearts pound
 Eyes well with tears,
 Or sparkle with laughter,
 Lovers touch.
 Where are the words to limit life's experiences?
 The language of the soul
 is empathy,
 One with another.
 Harmony,
 Vibrating together;
 Love,
 Fulfilment,
 Silence.

Ray Meyer

Life Lines

imagine you gone
 no you to share this life
 spread out in the palm of
 our tiny son's hand
 no life lines
 leading me to see the world
 in his grasp which comes so easily
 to trust us
 each finger folds
 you and me
 in a single stroke
 he leads us to guide him
 he touches our cheeks
 and leaves his affinity deep
 within our grasp
 our heartlines joined
 have caused him to appear
 as if he has always been
 the answer which we sought
 he recreates our fortunes
 in curtain fig trees
 stretched along the strand
 as we read the stretch of lines in
 each other's hands
 & hold this phenomenon
 so dear
 so fragile
 one day to be a strong spiritual warrior
 grasping the fate of the world
 with his love for the Eternal Beloved
 the palmistry
 of this beloved
 unfurls
 the universe

June Perkins

One Colour

One day death will make
the final adjustment,
after years and years of changes
along the way.
Dynasties and systems,
defined and redefined,
lives sown and resown
with different colours.
Death, at last, will yield
one colour, unheralded,
mixed with joy
and this old body
will make its final move
into that hole for those
who speak no more.*

Ron Price

(*expression used by the Báb in *Selections of the Writings of the Báb.*)

Beyond Last Gasp

One life of so much Consequence!

— —

One pearl -to me-so signal-

— —to take it-

Would cost me *just a life!*

-Emily Dickinson, Poem Number 270

One can not measure consequence
on this earthly side,
except through hints.

There are strong hints, too,
in His Word
about the other side.

It would seem the soul
needs this life
to define *that* consequence.

Gem or pearl or monarch
need time to shape their form
and you never know
until beyond last gasp
just what shape
you've taken
that befits
immortal clasp.

Ron Price

Flying

Children often dream of skies,
of wingless soaring, a gasping swoop
through cold cloud into the eye-aching
sun, warm in the bright play

Of air; or long to see clear,
released from the clattering sway
of Times railed carriage, and from
those nervous plans which should defend

Us from the thing that waits
around the next blind bend;
and they wish that images seen
vivid in the mind might glow

Clean from the world's dust
in the wordless speech that spirits know.
I still dream, as caged birds do,
who with each song affirm

That such dreams of skies are only
dreams of going home.

Shirin Sabri

Hunters

We all hunt happiness, as well we might
with any bait that comes to hand, trying
to coax it nearer, forever buying
things we hope will cage up light

and love and flight. Hopeless,
we chase on, lunge, grab and miss,
fingertips brushing the feathers of bliss.
Blinded by tears, we fail to notice

that happiness is the hunter, setting snares –
perhaps what we need to master
is not the task of running faster
but the art of being taken unawares.

Shirin Sabri

Remembrance of Clara and Hyde Dunn

Hooshang Eshraq-Khavari

This design is created to be considered as a remembrance item, glorifying the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Bahá'í Faith and the Dunns, in Australia. It also commemorates their valuable services to the Cause of God throughout the country. It contains several important points as follows (from the lower area to the upper area):

1. A bunch of 15 flowers dedicated by two abstracted shapes of Hands (to the one who sees)
2. The Hands recalls the Title of the Hands of the Cause of God, granted as a blessing to Father and Mother Dunn by Shoghi Effendi.
3. Two figure “9” round motifs are placed in suitable area of the lower part of the design as commemorative items.
4. An ornamental abstracted geographical shape of Australia is located in the central part of the design, dominated by a deep orange colour.
5. Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá in the centre of the drawing is surrounded by 19 small green rose leaves and 15 green branches, brought to their end by 15 red dots, connected to 15 abstracted forms of flowers.
6. The 75th Anniversary is presented by the above-mentioned 15 flowers, which each have 5 parts, so $15 \times 5 = 75$.
7. Seven flowers (left to right) include seven combinations of the letters of the words “Bahá'í Faith”.
8. A vertical form of the “Greatest Name” is placed in the eighth flower.
9. The last seven flowers include combinations of the letters of the words “Abhá Kingdom”.



The Bot. Series

VADO (*Vahid Payman*)

The following comes from the catalogue for Vahid Payman's first exhibition, at Melbourne's Botanical Gardens in December 1999.

In the major cities of this big brown body of land, Botanical Gardens have played a crucial civic and spiritual role. As a green oasis in the midst of steel structures, as a sanctuary far from the madding crowd, as a haven in which to contemplate, 'the Bot.' (as it is affectionately known) is unsurpassed.

I first became aware of the Bots' delights in my final year of school when, as senior students, we were granted permission by our headmaster to enter its grounds during lunchtime. Within its walls, my harassed soul often found calm and comfort. A few precious moments allowed me to discard the soiled garment of my psyche for a fragrantly fresh new attire. The Bot's spring and autumn colours would reawaken my parched and frozen senses. It was here that I fell in love and found my True Beloved.

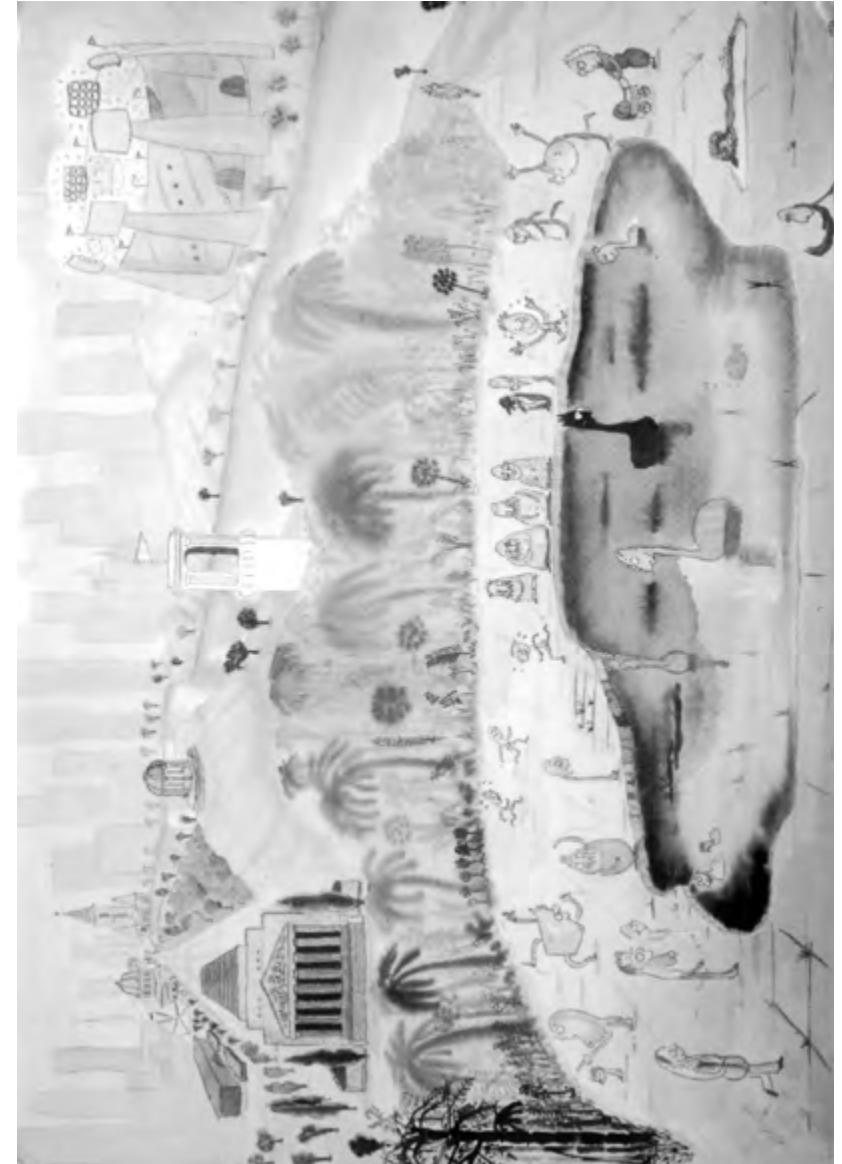
Like the garden of our hearts, the Bot is a place of love - love of God, love of spouse and family, love of humanity and of nature.

Ever since that time, I have always returned to the Bot. During dark nights of the soul, or early mornings of gladness, I have returned to refill my cup and to "attain that share of the flood of grace which God poureth forth" for me.

We have to cherish and adore our Bot. For close to its precincts are ominous symbols of an unhappy civilization. Shrines of death, towers of greed, and coliseums of violence lie on the margins of its happy landscape, forever intruding upon its otherwise serene centre. Like the eye of a cyclone, the Bot. is a point of stillness in an unceasing revolution of joggers, cars, and careers.

Let us make sure that the gardens of our hearts turn not into Gethsemanes of betrayal, but rather into Edens of purity and Ridvans of kindness and radiance, that therein, hyacinths and myrtles of wisdom continually spring forth fresh and green, and nightingales of holiness eternally sing their sweet melodies.

Far right : VADO, "Marvellous Bot".



Section 2

Something Regal: Uncle Fred Murray Extracts from a compilation of tributes, photographs and stories

June Perkins

WARNING : The author wishes to advise that in some communities it is distressing for photographs of people who have passed on to be featured. The following article contains such images from the Australian Bahá'í archives and people's personal photographic records.

This is an extract from a larger work which includes the following:

Introduction

Something Regal, June Perkins

On the way to the World Congress- Margaret Bluett

Coming home from the World Congress-David Podger

My story-Uncle Fred as scribed by Howard Harwood

Pelican Peter- by June Perkins

Tributes - Universal House of Justice, Hands of the Cause, Howard Harwood.

Recollections of early Indigenous believers, Madge Williams, audio interviews.

*Fred Murray Institutes- to request photographs and report for inclusion**

*Extracts from the Tape of the World Congress-still to locate**

Photographs, from various sources

Introduction

This collection began as extended research for a play composed in draft form five years ago. The play was inspired by the story of Fred Murray as told by Howard Harwood in a pamphlet. It resulted in a short poem and a correspondence with Howard Harwood, which lasted right up until his passing.

It also resulted in a few kind Bahá'ís sending me their stories, an interview with Madge Williams, meeting Betty Hindson, and being in touch with her on a regular basis.

Several times I have tried to write the script of Fred Murray's life, and ended up wanting to research more of the history of his life. As a result I have ended up with a compilation of memories, of stories gathering in the process of the desire to bring such a story to life- and several unanswered questions.

The image I have of this play is that it will consist of the people whom Uncle Fred had touched, entering a museum. Into that museum comes a big light that indicates such a story does not belong in an archive or in a few peoples unrecorded memories but they must tell the story. They then escape the museum to live and tell us the story.

So out comes the foster mother, the young George, brother of Fred, the Crowder brothers, Tindale, Howard and Myrtle, Collis, his wife Winnie, his son Fred Junior and others characters as well as Fred himself, to help build a picture for us.

Enacted before us are some of the scenes of these stories, we are in the outback, along the River, in Rome, Paris, London, Murray Bridge, the House of Worship....

Excerpts from the text of this compilation were performed at the Scholarship Institute at Yerrinbool in 1998. Howard, Fred, David, and Margaret "told" their stories. It was moving to hear those accounts. The play will one day happen, but the process of collecting the stories is ready to be shared now and if more stories should come forth perhaps there will be a second edition of this one day.

The script is writing itself, and if it should ever come to a movie screen or theatre near you, that will be wonderful, but for now it has life as a book. And also in the work of those Aboriginal Bahá'ís who wish to continue the work of Fred Murray and Howard Harwood, and Harry Carter and others who wanted to share the message of Bahá'u'lláh with the Aboriginal people of Australia.

"Something Regal"

He loved to watch Westerns. He would cover his eyes when there was a lot of violence and ask whoever was sitting next to him to tell him when it had stopped.

There was something regal, about Uncle Fred. He was the sort of person who would say, "Could you please get me a cuppa", unlike his friend Harry, who would get up and ask everyone, "well who'd like a cuppa, I'm about to make one"

So different, yet great mates. Petite Fred, tall and large framed Harry Carter.



Portrait of Fred Murray (From National Australian Bahá'í Archives)

These are some of the memories of Madge Williams, who was present when Uncle Fred became a Bahá'í.

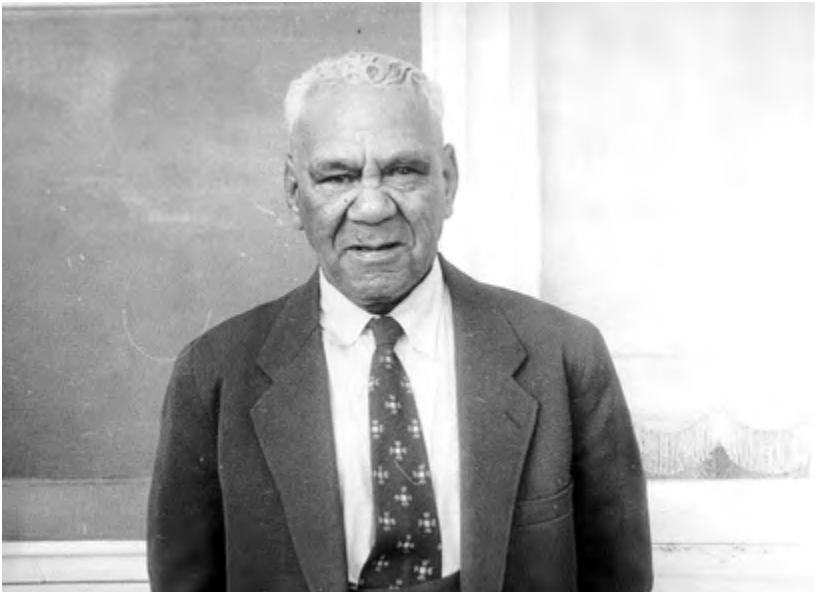
His life, like a dramatic movie, had rousing crowd scenes in which the central character gets to speak before hundreds of people, sacred spaces like the House of Worship, travel across the land and continents. He lost a family and found a family.

Many people have said, "I was touched by a small pamphlet about his life. It made me want to know about the Bahá'í Faith." Sue Obah, states "it was the reason I became a Bahá'í" That small pamphlet has enabled Uncle Fred's spirit to walk the dreaming tracks of this land.

It was his mate Howard Harwood, who served as a Member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia, who helped him put it together. Uncle Fred couldn't read or write, but he could tell stories, and he had a life that made a great story.

Anywhere where his story is told, you can sure his spirit is there. Maybe he is adding incidentals, smiling, and happy that he can continue to reach people through its rich tapestry. This collection of stories, is a development of that pamphlet- a filling in of some details and pictures to illuminate more the mystery of one human soul.

Howard Harwood a friend of Uncle Fred's, close to the next life and recently having passed on, spoke of Uncle Fred and the hardships he had throughout



Photograph of Harry Carter (From National Australian Bahá'í Archives)



First Aboriginal Bahá'í Conference (From National Australian Bahá'í Archives)

his life. He would speak or write to anyone who asked about Uncle Fred and these accounts provide some moving moments from Uncle Fred's life.

Howard recalls his first meeting with Uncle Fred, at the Aboriginal settlement of Gerard, which was situated on the River Murray South of the Fruit growing area:

"We went to Gerard seeking pure souls and we found Fred. He was in grave trouble and very sad. He had lived on the settlement for some years with his wife Winnie and their three children, Annette, Fred and Rhonda. His wife had died so his daughter Annette became the lady of the house- sadly her husband drank heavily and caused a lot of trouble on the settlement. The Superintendent banned him from living there. So Fred had to leave his house and move into the single men's quarters. Rhon[d]a and Fred Junior were separated from him and moved into dormitories. Their house was allotted to another family... sometime later there was an epidemic on the settlement and one day I received a telephone call from an Aboriginal Friend of Beiru, 15 miles out of Gerard, saying that he had seen Fred walking and Fred was walking from ... to my place."

Howard then explains how he went to out to get Fred, and found him soaked, as it had been raining. He found Uncle Fred 30 miles from ... and picked him up to drive him home with him. From the story Fred told him of the Reserve Howard concluded that it sounded very much like a concentration

camp. Not surprisingly Uncle Fred asked if he could please live with Howard and his wife Myrtle.

However, Howard was to find that responding to this request was not so straightforward due to the law at the time. All Aboriginal people were wards of the state and could not choose where they wanted to live. Also, Fred suffered from diabetes and needed insulin. Nevertheless Howard kept his promise and telephoned the Chief of the Aboriginal Department in Adelaide, who agreed to this. Fred's pension went to Howard, and Howard also got Fred switched from needles to tablets for his insulin.

Fred bought many bounties to Howard's family by coming to live with them; and there were many discussions of the Bahá'í Faith to which a lot of other Aboriginal people came. The connection of the Harwood family and Fred's did not begin with their meeting at Gerard though, but much earlier.

Hand of the Cause, Collis Featherstone and Madge and Morris Williams attended some of these discussions. Many of them took place around a fire, in the starlight. Up to 40 Aboriginal people would be there.

Margaret Bluett and Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum also met Uncle Fred.



Elizabeth Hindson First Indigenous person to serve on the National Spiritual Assembly (From National Australian Bahá'í Archives)

Fred, in his regal manner, and with a sense of timing, accepted the Faith at a large gathering at Murray Bridge. In his heart he had been a Bahá'í for sometime, but the moment and occasion were right and he declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh.

There were to be other moments of occasion throughout his time as a member of the Bahá'í community. One of these was to make the front page of the Adelaide News "World's Longest Walkabout". Uncle Fred gathered with Bahá'ís from around the globe in London, for the First Bahá'í World Congress. Also there was Elizabeth Hindson, the first Aboriginal Bahá'í, a young woman from Queensland.

Somewhere in the Archives is a recording of Uncle Fred giving a speech at that Congress.

For the journey to and from the congress Uncle Fred had travelling companions. Their accounts of their time with Uncle Fred give us glimpses of some of the highlights of that journey. Less close to him, perhaps, than Howard, they are touched in a different way by his personality.

Margaret Bluett and David Podger's stories tell us a lot about their emotions at the time with Uncle Fred.

David was recovering from the loss of his first wife and this permeates his story. Something about Uncle Fred gave him some solace at that time. He recalls a request Uncle Fred made to go to the World Centre, and his absolute acceptance that it was not possible at that time for him to be granted a visit.

Margaret's account gives us a vivid picture of Fred's travels on the way to London. Margaret does not seem to be that experienced a traveller, and misses planes, and gets lost whilst being Uncle Fred's "guide". It's all such a big experience for her, and Uncle Fred, seems to be the calmer one- although not that keen on sleeping in tall buildings.

We learn of Alessandro Bausani, a Professor of linguistics at the University of Rome recording an account of Uncle Fred's life as the last surviving member of his tribe. Maybe that account is somewhere in the archives of the National Spiritual Assembly of Rome.

The World Congress is a place where many people may remember Uncle Fred. Margaret remembers that he was not overwhelmed by the size of the Albert Hall rather he was looking forward to sharing his story.

From a campfire under the starlight to a large global audience of thousands of people, gathered in Albert Hall; Fred's ability to always be himself shone though.

According to Margaret, he began by stating, "I have come like a giant kangaroo across the world to stand on this stage and tell the world how happy I am to be a Bahá'í." In other accounts he said, "When I was a baby my people died, I thought I have no people! But now I am a Bahá'í you are all my people". The story of his suffering and persecution because he was

Aboriginal, the journey before he became a Bahá'í are mostly recorded for us by Howard Harwood.

In scribing Fred's story for him Howard recognised a bridge builder and wanted to help him build that bridge.

Fred Murray, was born "beneath a shady tree somewhere along the coast of Esperance Bay in West Australia" in 1884. His mother was of the Minen people. When he was around two years old and his brother was one, their parent died in a measles epidemic. They were orphaned... He and his brother were fostered by a European women, the wife of a sheep station manager who lived in the area".

It is a mystery to Howard why Fred and his brother were not fostered by the tribe. At the time a lot of Aboriginal children were being taken from their parents, and a lot of Europeans felt that Aboriginal people couldn't care for their

children. Howard states that this sad event of separation from the tribe, which would have included other family members, "This proved the means of saving their lives" as soon after there was a drought and then the drinking water of the Minen was poisoned.

Howard, suspects that they would have been sent back to the tribe after once they were older, but because they were so tiny they were saved. This is theoretical, as there was no tribe for them to go back to, or be sent back to.

Who told Fred and his brother the story of the poisoning we don't know, but they did learn who did it- and this same man was beating them up, and generally ill-treating them on the station where they lived. They endured this treatment for 9 years or so, until it just

U.K. TRIP FOR ABORIGINE

A 79-year-old aborigine will fly to London on Easter Sunday to take part in the centenary celebrations of his religion, the Bahá'í World Faith.

Fred Murray, of Renmark, who is undertaking the journey, is the last of the Minen tribe, which was almost wiped out last century by drinking polluted water.

When he was 12 years old he walked to Yalata station, where the owners took him in and gave him their name of Murray.

When Mr. Murray was 29 he was chosen as the perfect specimen of his race in SA, and a plaster cast was taken of him. The cast is in the National Museum of America.

Mr. Murray, who has never flown, will make the trip with 41 other members of the Bahá'í faith for the celebrations. It will be his first trip out of Australia.

About 7,000 Bahá'ís are expected to attend the congress from all corners of the world.

The religion originated in Persia when a Persian was exiled for his religious and social reforms.

The growth of Bahá'í in Australia was accelerated in 1951 with the completion of a house of worship at Inneside, Sydney, the fifth of its type in the world.



Mr. Fred Murray

Newspaper cutting of Fred Murray's trip to London.



At the World Congress- sitting with William Sears (Photo provided by Margaret Bluett)

became too much for them and they ran away. Did their Foster mother know of this ill treatment, if she did how she viewed it, whether she ever attempted to help them we do not know? Did she grieve when she found them gone?

"They travelled by foot many hundreds of miles overland to Yalata sheep station in South Australia, living of the land" Yalata station was on the border between Western Australia and South Australia.

Howard elaborates on this account from Bahá'í World and explains, that it took Fred and his brother George 18 months to travel from Western Australia to South Australia. At Yalata Station Fred and his brother came into contact with the Murray family, who were kind and caring people. George and Fred must have been happy here, they chose to adopt the name of Murray as their surname. On Yalata station the Murray brothers learned about Christianity. Fred had an interest in all Spirituality and his investigation of many stories, including the stories of Aboriginal peoples he met was something he held in his head, and shared with others. We have snippets of this in the pamphlet he produced with Howard.

Sometime later, the Crowder brothers came to Yalata Station and the Murray brothers went with them as horse boys. The Crowder brothers had a sister Annie, Howard's grandmother. This link between Howard and Fred went

back longer than their first meeting on Gerard Station. Perhaps this explains why Uncle Fred walked in the rain to Howard's house. He was going to stay with "family".

Life for a number of years consisted of herding sheep and cattle, rising horses and prospecting. Fred's brother died one day whilst taming wild horses. One can only imagine what it must have felt like for Fred to lose him, with them both having been through so much together.

Fred's marriage was apparently arranged. Howard thinks this was by Professor Tindale. Fred married a woman from Lake Victoria, Winnie Reed. No one seems to know where they spent their first few years of marriage, but it was during this time that Harwood says Fred began to hear the spiritual stories of his own people, and develop a deeper interest in them. He learned about Ngurenderi.

Fred went to live along the Murray and he worked on the paddle steamers and picking fruit. Although earlier, Howard speaks of three children, in later letters he states that Fred and his wife had 9 children, but only three of them survived the rest dying of gastroenteritis.

Fred's family lived a tribal life. What Winnie, Fred's wife, went through as he went up and down the river, and she lost child after child one can only wonder at. She passed away well before her husband. In fact, a short time after Uncle Fred retired from working and just after they had moved to Gerard settlement. The settlement had been a model reserve once, but gradually it had become an unpleasant place to live.

In 1998 Howard mentioned that one daughter of Uncle Fred's could still be alive and living at Gerard Settlement.

Life was challenging for Uncle Fred's children with the Australian laws the way they were and the effects of alcohol in Annette's family. More details about Fred Junior reveal that he had two sons but the government took them.

Apparently, Howard thinks Fred junior's children were raised in European homes, but eventually left to go and live in the bush again.

It seems a source of sorrow that the descendants of Uncle Fred's family for the moment remain away from the new family their father had found for them. And maybe one day these children will come home too.

Uncle Fred, loved to share the spirit of the Bahá'í Faith, he went travel teaching with Dr Muhajir and Howard and Myrtle and his great friend Harry. Uncle Harry and Uncle Fred would sit having long chats with Dr Muhajir. One wonders how wonderful it would be to have listened to those conversations.

He also met Rúhíyyih Khánum at the dedication of the House of Worship in Sydney and at Murray Bridge as well. Rúhíyyih Khánum was quite taken with Fred Murray, she sent a photograph of him at the World Congress, and requested that the National Spiritual Assembly place it at the House of Worship

where people could see it. Fred, for his part, called her "the dear lady who sent out the love from Haifa".

The World Congress experience's effect on Uncle Fred was profound, and according to Howard, he was so inspired by it he wanted to go and live in Adelaide to teach the Bahá'ís there about Aboriginal people and to help in bridging the gap between Aboriginal people and others. His project was bold and ahead of its time, well before Reconciliation councils, but Fred was to live only a few months at the Salvation Army hostel before quietly passing away in his sleep. Elizabeth Hindson was also greatly affected by the World Congress, and went to live in a small community to assist the development of the Bahá'í Faith in Australia.

There is bronze bust of Uncle Fred in the South Australian Art Gallery and the American National Museum made when he was thirty-five.

On his passing, messages came from both the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land.



Portrait of Fred Murray (From National Australian Bahá'í Archives)

“Praying his example will open way rapid spread of Faith, his long suffering people” (Hands of Cause)

“We recall Mr Murray’s attendance at the World Congress in London and we are very grateful that he was permitted to observe this historic event before his passing to the Abhá Kingdom. Please assure members of his family we have offered prayers at the Holy Shrines for the progress of his soul”. (Universal House of Justice)

Howard Harwood, said that it was Fred’s wish that all the Aboriginal people should learn about Bahá’u’lláh and he was doing all he could to fulfill his wish”. Recently Howard Harwood passed away.

We sat with him and prayed for him as requested. He was getting ready to go and meet old friends. Maurice Nicholson a local indigenous Bahá’í had come into see him as well and as we sat around his bed even to his last breath he was passing on bits of Fred’s story.

The text of the pamphlet in which Howard took down Fred’s words is produced in this collection in full.

In it, Uncle Fred, speaks about how he and his brother learned the wisdom of tribal elders of other areas, although they could not learn it from their own people. His work represents the first translation of Bahá’í concepts into Aboriginal cosmology. It is almost certain that Uncle Fred knew more, and had more work to do in this area, as his move to Adelaide indicates. The Fred Murray Institute represents another chapter in such work.

The dreaming track of Uncle Fred stretches from Western Australia to South Australia, and along the flow of the Murray River. His greatest wish was that more of his people would learn of the significance of the Bahá’í message.

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A Lonely Road to Native Title Determination

Walter Waia

Prologue

This is my brief personal account of the Saibai Island Native Title Claim. The story does not in any way exclude others who have been important sources in the course of the claim process. It does not even aim to offend individuals or the general Saibai Island community. This account has been prepared in genuine interest to show to the reader a path guided by a spiritual domain of the writer. It is a story of an Indigenous Australian who walked a learning road to fulfill his obligations to his family, his clan and to the community as a whole. It is one’s test of his own capacity to achieve what he believed in whilst resting his faith on his spiritual belief, in order to succeed.

As for those of you who have chosen to walk this road, will find this account with similarities and may even sympathise with this story, if your experiences have given you growth. It certainly did for me.

The writer lays down his uttermost respect for the land rights struggle of his predecessors in Australia; and the most recent being the historic High Court’s Mabo decision as a result of the struggle of the Meriam plaintiffs. In respect of Saibai Island and the Torres Strait community, the writer owes his work to them, because he is an Ilanmun. As the old saying goes, “only a community can stand to make it happen”.

Introduction

My mind opened to the perspective of Indigenous land and sea rights in 1990. However, looking back, it actually began during the early years of my life. Or perhaps I should say, I was prepared for it, or from a totally different angle, it may be seen as predestination. Whatever it is, now today, I believe that my direction on this path have been led by Bahá’u’lláh, which is my spiritual foundation. Because, I believe that certain individuals who serve as catalyst for change are assisted by higher forces that are made available for contact to initiate a “that what needs to happen” at a particular life span. History has repeatedly told this tale. The change is inevitable and will be forever so because, change is a natural process and is a process of growth.

The Ait Kadal Clan

I am a descendant of the Ait Kadal Augad clan of Saibai Island. It is one of the clans of Migi Buway tribe. Besides the Ait Kadal, there are three other clans in Migi Buway. The other tribe is called Koey Buway and it has three clans. I should be frank to say that the essence of tribes and clans is slowly losing its meaning of unity, because the times have changed. And the culture and tradition of Saibai Islanders is fading quickly in the face the twenty-first century.

Ait is an island in the open swampland on the eastern end of Saibai. There are other small islands such as Augar, Abalmudh and Uruil Kawa. There are also garden places called as Wati Nguki, Somanapai, Kuthapai, Bin and Igelai. Other Migi Buway smaller clans that lived around here were Sui, Baidham and Karbai Waithuka.

The Kadal clan occupied the islands of Ait, Augar and Abalmudh. Ait was split into two parts. The major area of eastern part was owned by the Kadal clan and small part of the western area of the island was owned by the Sui clan. Augar and Abalmudh were predominantly Kadal clan. The Kadal clan was the dominant clan and oral history says that all the people that lived around this district were known as the "Ait Kadal Augad".

The Ait Kadal were subsistent gardeners, and dugong hunting was their regular practise because of the grazing seagrass on the flats of the reef on the eastern end of the island, which is the Ait Kadal territory. In the late nineteenth century, when the Christian missionaries arrived at the current village of Saibai, the Ait Kadal were asked to leave their beautiful swamp island to join the other tribe and clans at the current site. They were given land by the Saibai Kadal clan because of same totem identity. That particular stretch of land was initially given to the Saibai Kadal by the Burum clan in a form of customary exchange. Burum and Karbai Ialaithi and Karbai Waithuka are subclans of Thabu Augad.

As was the custom, once the land is given it is given for good. The Saibai Kadal was the owner of that parcel of land and it gave the Ait Kadal that property. So in actual fact, the Ait Kadal were outsiders to the current village site. I wondered later that maybe that was why their knowledge was intact and identity strong because the historical circumstances had led to this aspect. Otherwise, the Ait Kadal were by bloodline a clan of strong identity because of their warrior-like nature and their knowledge of dugong hunting practise.

Ngau Lag Kapu Yawa

"Good-bye to Home,

Faraway towers are tall,

The old bell of chimes is still ringing forever thee"

(These are some lyrics from my song, relating to this event of my leaving home.).

I grew up as a happy child who loved the freshness of sea, the swamp and all there is on my island. Playing model boats in the water, playing warrior games in the low shrubland using miniature clubs, bow and arrows were the center of my world. My father was a traditional dance choreographer and dancing came naturally to me. My father was also a song composer and a painter and I realized that these talents were innate in me. That is why later I became a poet.

I was not expecting it but it came and shattered my childhood world of happiness and bliss. Looking back today, I have treasured those wonderful memories. Sometimes I think I wished I were like the other island kids whose home was Saibai. But my father had other plans for me. His father Waia had did the same for him to prepare him to carry the family name. He was sent to a teachers college at Mabuig Island. He started his career as a school teacher, then an Island Industries Board Store Manager, and then a community leader as Council Chairman of the Saibai Island Council.

I still remember his words, not as instructing but calm with depth and wisdom, "Son I will send you away to the other world so that you too will be wise one day to come". I did not cry at that time but just gazed far into the distant sky, and I recall looking east then south at that precise moment.

In 1968, my parents sent me away from Saibai to attend State primary school at Thursday Island. This took place during the tender years of my life. I was only 8 years old then. Boarding at Torres Strait College for Islander boys and tending for myself, was a blast for emotional and psychological development at this age. It was as if I was dropped in the sea and I had no choice but to swim to survive. It was a pretty tough start in life for a young boy. From this time onwards, my struggle for identity began because I was an Ait Kadal living in a totally different environment. The Island school students would not see their parents between January and November each year because funding requirements and transport facilities were restricted during those days. When I am home over the December holiday period, my father would instill in me the knowledge, songs and dances, myths and legends of the Saibailgal, and my mother would give warmth and care. That is why, I think, I did make it through my teen years and was not a social misfit because of my struggles during those tender years. From 1973 onwards the Commonwealth Education provided funding assistance to Islander students and was able to fly the students to their home islands during semester breaks. On the same year, the Torres Strait College move from Thursday Island to Bamaga on Cape York Peninsula. After completing Year 12 at Bamaga High School in 1976, there was no turning back and I was determined to go ahead. The early start in life had toughened me up to face the challenge and the unknown. I made a choice to attend university schooling in Adelaide in 1979. There, I was a bit of a loner because of my obvious cultural background, so wandering about

“what am I doing here and where am I going” was easy for me to tap into. I became very independent. So, the development of my character took shape according to my view of the world.

Learning Experience

My learning experiences of the western schooling was a hard strenuous task. This is because the elements of learning are the very garments of the western society. This means the moment I make contact by using the English language as the medium of communication and of transmitting knowledge, my world view is totally changed because I had to think in English, which is foreign to me. This aspect in itself questions my identity of self. The more I venture into the higher levels of the western learning styles through aiming for a formal qualification, the more my sense of self is being questioned. During the challenging journey of my western learning, I made sure I was not lost but held onto my identity. Being in the early years of development, it was an extremely painful process which usually led me to consuming alcohol as a form of short-term relief. Under the influence of alcohol, I had my share of being in strife with the law and order of the community. I learnt my lessons very well in this area, and I will never walk that street again.

In fact, in Adelaide, I was joined later by my brothers Jeff, Cedric and Henley. This was another learning trend of hard drinking in the earlier years. There were a lot of pub fights, silly arguments and I got into a lot of trouble with the police. Jeff and I were worst and we carried this bad reputation in those younger days. Cedric and Henley were just as bad. That is why it was difficult for me in the later years to carry a public office. But, as by nature, I was always a fighter in many ways and strived to win, and I did succeed.

In tertiary education, I did a Diploma of Teaching, which is a very basic qualification. Due to the above learning trend, I had great difficulty accepting outside acquired knowledge, especially the world-view commanded by the western society, in particular, the English world. In my later years, I tried to upgrade my qualifications in Education and other fields but with no success because the interest was not there. In 1993, I even endeavoured to do a Bachelor of Laws Degree at the Australian National University, Canberra. The funding of study was supported by my success in the Commonwealth's professional development award during my employment with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission in Canberra. Acceptance into the law school was a clear-cut case and even my studies were a “meant to be” attitude. The only hindrance was that the Saibai Island 7 clans asked me to head the community's Native Title Claim. I had to make the choice whether my ambition on the selected career-path or the aspirations and desires of my clansfolk. Obviously, I chose the latter. I was now determined to achieve the community goal. My tact was then to hold the vision and govern the concept

of the vision while a legal expert utilises and practises the concept. In regards to formal learning, I think the basic qualification I obtained is enough for me. I do not know whether I will ever have a desire to further my western qualifications. As it is, I am already highly qualified in the Ait Kadal knowledge and its ceremonial dances and songs. That is why in maturity, I am willing to do what is natural to me and that is artwork in painting and carving, and writing poetry and composing traditional/contemporary songs, and choreograph Saibai Island dances. Or even build a model and a real size Saibailgau racing canoe. The mentioned is my father's and our family tradition. This is my only inner feeling now.

The Career-path

By 1983 with my tertiary study completed, my challenge and my career-path took me from Adelaide to Central Australian desert country as a school teacher in Pitjantjatjara Aboriginal community of Amata. The decision for this ocean man to be with the desert people was to learn about their ancient culture and to study and focus on his own Islander heritage. I discovered a lot of cultural similarities of identity of moiety groups or clan groups, and the dreaming stories which made the fabric of their society. A society shaken by the coming change and like mine, had to make adjustments. I was aware of their social and spiritual affiliation and connection to the land; and I learnt about their struggle for their land rights. In my observations of the Pitjantjatjara people, I was an outsider and lived in my own world by drawing comparisons or conclusions to the society of my Island home. It was a lone view.

In Amata, I met my close friend who became my brother. He is Steve Hillan and he was also a school teacher on this first time outback experience. Steve is of Caucasian Australian background. He was a traveller of his own and on his own quest. We were both outsiders to the Pitjantjatjara and batlers in our own ways, so we had lots of things in common. We assisted each other and gave advise to each other for our well being. We loved our beer and shared good laughs out of making many mistakes in someone else's culture and society. We had good times mixing with the local folks and we were well accepted into their group and we had great respect for them. Those were the good ol' days which I will treasure as number one memories. Our companionship is one that will last for this lifetime.

In 1985, I chose to take a leap from the desert country to Canberra as Research Officer in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. This choice was to learn about the bureaucracy and the government. Here again, challenge was the name of the game. Besides, adjusting to the demands of the western society, I also learnt the competitive nature of the western professional world. Thus, igniting the ambition and determination to aim for goals, whilst developing performance standards. Standards such as striving for

excellence in developing skills of competency, efficiency, diligence and being persistent and effective in delivery of services; being concise and clear in both oral and written expression. Creativity came naturally to me because of its innate ability in me. In addition to this drive, my purpose was 'engineered' by yet another source, the quest for identity in the general Australian community. After soiling my feet into the bureaucratic competitive world, my personal development had gained new found confidence and it was I am "me" an Ait Kadal whether you accept me or not, it does not really matter; as far as I am concerned you are okay anyway, no big deal.

Around this time I had made contact with my spiritual foundation, the Bahá'í Faith. Uncle Satto and Aunty Ira Williams of Toowoomba in Queensland, showed me this path and gave me time to consider.

Opening the Door

While in Canberra from 1985, my Ait Kadal elders sent me the warning signals to consider pursuing land rights for our clan property. Uncle Giwai Kusu, my father's close cousin, advised me accordingly that I should look at such concepts seriously because the time has allowed for such matters to be in place. He said, "all your Ait Kadal brothers have chosen to take to the sea and we your fathers have chosen you to fight for us with your pen". I was already burdened with heavy responsibility. Because Bab Yugom, Uncle Giwai was known as, gave me this advise with trust and faith. I saw that he knew I was the right person for such responsibility. He was reflecting on his experiences of World War 2 and the pearling days and how the Islanders were treated by the government of the day, and what was the Islanders' place in the wider community. It made me really sad to hear such stories coming from a proud Ait Kadal man.

My father, however, was light on this type of advice, maybe because he knew I was still young and not serious about life in general. Uncle Giwai did not stop but continuously advised me on this subject until he passed away on 19 July 1990. I was really hurt because I was close to him and he taught me a lot about the Ait Kadal clan and Saibai Island in general.

Early that year, I took another leap from the Public Service sector of Canberra to Saibai to undertake a teaching post at the local State primary school. This decision was due to my father's maturing age and I wanted to be with him during his last years of life. (My mother had already passed on in 1985). It was during my short stay at Saibai, in the years 1989 to 1990 that my father imparted to me our traditional ancient knowledge of all people being equal and that all natural cycles happen to regenerate life. The point was that human beings world over are part of the earth and part of the cosmos. This means that though we may be different, we are all the same regardless of race, colour or creed. He said, here, the Saibai Island land and the seas, the winds and the stars, all belong to us because they are part of our songs and dances, our

stories, our myths and legends. All over the world, every race has the same in their society. One quiet evening, my father said to me, look at the moon on the eastern horizon, from there you can see that the earth is so clear and alone in the universe. Two things happened to me at once. This powerful moment opened my eyes to seek for equal land justice and I saw a universal picture of earth as one home of all human race. Contemplating over this moment later, it became known to me that my father was giving me a message by communicating on a higher plane. He knew that the change had come during his time and he had to make cultural adjustments to suit the change, and he knew I was old enough to take the challenge of what needs to be done. My father, the late Wagea Waia OAM (contemporary medal of service recognition), bestowed with traditional title of Gudumulamai Pui (meaning "ceiling joist of a Great House"), was the last Chief Elder of Ait Kadal clan and his wisdom was just and true and of course, he was the central part of my life. The year was 1990. (My father's statement reflected the wisdom of many ancient societies of the world).

In 1991, I went back to Canberra and again served as a Research Officer at the Office of Torres Strait Islander Affairs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). There I met Phillip Mills who was the then Manager of the Office. At that time, Phil was also doing a research study of his family clan of Naghi Island. He passed onto me his wisdom and understanding of the social change that is taking effect across the country, in particular in relation to Indigenous people. He advised that you should do something about it before the change will sweep all the old knowledge away; we Islanders need it for other purposes in the future. I will never forget this wisdom coming from a visionary and a pace-setter. In his time, Phil had inaugurated the push for the establishment of the Island Coordinating Council. He had also established the above Office (only recently, Phil had established the major State Health facility on Thursday Island and across the Strait). Phil's vision was similar to my father's but however, elevated to an immediate and a modern scale. No doubt, Phil was also a traveller on that lonely road. It was as if this generous man who I have great respect for, was placed on my path for a reason and it was, to show me the way. By then, I had already experienced the plight of the Pitjantjatjara people, and I had learnt the bureaucracy and the government system. So it was then that I took up the burden of initiating the land claim process of the Ait Kadal clan.

The Native Title Path

On 24 May of that year, my father passed away and it even made me more eager to pursue my goal. I applied for a grant to the Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra to engage an anthropologist to do research on the Ait Kadal land tenure. Phil had introduced me to Nicolas Peterson, the then Head of Anthropology Department of the Australian National

University. Nic was doing the research for Phil's Naga clan of Naghi Island. On 28 October 1991, the Ait Kadal clan received a grant from the Institute and I engaged Richard Davis to do the work. Richard was doing a Ph.D degree and did the project under academic supervision of Nic. Richard was to commence his work in February 1992. So, I met with John Gayler, a Federal Labour Member for Leichhardt, at the Parliament House seeking assistance to secure a teaching position for Jenny (Richard's wife) at the State primary school at Saibai. My proposal was successful and Jenny, being a school teacher, was given a part-time position at the Saibai Island school. When Richard and Jenny arrived at Saibai in February 1992, they were instantly adopted into the Ait Kadal families as part of the Island custom, so they were not strangers in the community. Towards the end of that year, the other Saibai clans represented by Dana Ober wanted to do the same type of land tenure research to their properties. The Ait Kadal clan agreed that Richard should do the research on the whole clan community for the sake of the whole Island claim. Richard had done an excellent job on the report. As for me, my father, who was my backbone, had fallen and my only way now was on what he had taught me and of course my intuition. It was a very lonely road.

After my father had passed away, his young brother Kala Waia introduced the land claim process of the Ait Kadal to its clansfolk. He also welcomed Richard and Jenny into the clan and officially opened the research project for Richard to commence work. Uncle Kala, however, was already weakened by my father's passing because they were very close. On 25 June 1992, my famous renown Dhibal dancer Uncle passed away. Once again, I was really hurt because I was just getting over my father's passing. Some say I lightly took my Uncle's features, but as for Saibai Island dance, innately, I was his photo image. He further taught me his deadly technique which I carry on today. In the ancient Ait Kadal law, the Dhibal is danced by special and famous dancers who are the top leading men. Uncle and my father were the number one men of this calibre. Uncle and my father had passed onto me their "kulap" a dance rattle instrument and their general dance status. My father had initially choreographed the "diesel", the fabulous Saibai Island rattle dance of the community. In fact, Elia Faud of Poruma Island, a leading dancing man, passed onto my father the rattle kulap. (My father was a school teacher at Poruma during this time.) My father multiplied the kulap technique to a finer detail and a more faster rate. Since then, the "diesel" was born. "Diesel" came from the diesel motors of the 1900s. My Uncle was the status man of the "diesel" dance and carried that distinguished profile in the dance field. Both men, created dance instruments called "zamiyak" for using in dances, and composing dancing songs. A zamiyak can be a clan's totem or a star constellation for use in ceremonies. Both mastered the racing canoe knowledge and techniques, in fact, their decorated racers were swift and fast and well known in the community. It was their family tradition. I will always recall their colourful racers, flying

like a kite in the wind, covered with sea spray and our clan's yellow-blue flag proud and high in the mast. Sadly enough, my famous Uncle and my father were the last Waia brothers of their generation.

The dance knowledge of kamiyaqs and techniques, such as the "kulap" and "deisel" etc., and the knowledge of the racing canoes and model boats was passed onto me and my brothers Terry, Jeff and Cedric. In respected of canoe knowledge, Enosa Waigana of Ait Kadal said to my father "whichever spoon you use for your children, use the same spoon to give to my children". Enosa was implying the canoe knowledge. So when all of this knowledge was been given, my father made sure that Pili, Enosa's son was present to acquire this as well. When all was done, my father gave a sigh of relief and said, "Ngath ngau zageth mura muasin" (meaning, I have accomplished all my work.) So, it is evident in a cultural practice that this ancient knowledge and wisdom has been handed down to the next generation. After the session, it was very obvious that my father was left with absolutely nothing. All the knowledge and energy that made him who he is, has finally expired. These were his last days and he had imparted this knowledge because it was his responsibility to hold it for part of the 70 years of his life to the last moments on earth.

The above event of handing down the canoe knowledge happened when I was in Canberra. My brothers told me of the event in detail. My father actually instructed the brothers to make sure that Walter must know this knowledge, and Jeff in particular, wrote everything for me, so that I will not be left out. I think my father and Uncle Kala knew that I was attending another matter in Canberra in the best interest of the family and the Ait Kadal clan.

However, after Uncle Kala's departure, three figures rose on my Native Title path. They were the Tabuai brothers naming Barry, Edrick and Walter. They were younger than Uncle Kala and took the total responsibility of directing the clan. They were the knowledge holders and my instant advisers on the claim process. As one can observe that the status and knowledge of the clan is passed down the line. Uncle Barry, the closest to my father, completed his history to me and gave me his last words to him, saying, "Bala, I have sent our son, our arrow, called "Kimusal Thayak" (a special chosen arrow used by warriors to aim for target), was sent far faraway and will return when the time is right." Uncle Edrick had also taught me well and gave further me the knowledge of the Ait Kadal clan and also the history of Saibai Island. He passed onto me Waia's wisdom. Uncle Edrick was Waia's adopted and a special son. Uncle Walter, whom I am named after, was my close guardian on this strenuous path. Uncle Walter who had since became an Anglican priest, guided my steps in his prayers. In our custom, I am his son because he gave me his name and for that matter I have carried his name. These Tabuai brothers were also well known Ait Kadal dancing men. They were trainees of both Wagea and Kala. Uncle Barry and Uncle Edrick passed onto me (and my brothers Jeff and Cedric) their individual dance, song and kulap techniques. Song and dance plays an

integral part of ceremonies in the Saibai Island clan society and its way of life. (Since my initiation of the Saibai Island claim, Uncle Edrick gave me a new name, “Ngagalaig” the eagle, meaning the strong wings with strong claws, to lead the community on a unravelled terrain). These traditional Ait Kadal ceremonial titles are bestowed on me for my personage and spirit. In the traditional world, knowledge is handed down the generation through the spirit of the person. The elders can tell and foresee that a particular person is liable of carrying that knowledge to the next generation.

On the date of my father's departure (24/05/91), I officially accepted the Bahá'í Faith. The significance of this event was that his departure date was a day after the declaration of the Báb, a Prophet and the Forerunner of the Faith. The Faith became my backbone and a powerhouse to my intuition. I also recalled on his advise of Saibai which certainly reflected the Bahá'í perspective of the oneness of humankind and the earth as one home of the whole human race.

As mentioned above, toward the end of 1992, I was joined by Dana Ober of the cassowary clan, representing the rest of the clan community of Saibai to pursue the whole Island claim. It was good and beneficial for various reasons. One is that Dana is from a dominant tribe known as the Koey Buway and who are major land-holders at Saibai. The Ait Kadal clan belong to a Migi Buway tribe which consists of clans owning smaller parcels of land; and the Ait Kadal came to the current village from their homeland in the eastern end of the island. The other reason was that being rebellious, I did not have a good standing character in the community when I was young, and to hold a public office was not easy. Whereas, Dana had the whole community support and he had a respective background, and he was also a senior member in the claim process. So, he was the right person for the process. Early in 1993, Dana and the Saibai Island Council held a community meeting to address Native Title issues. The community unanimously agreed that a position within the Council should be created for me to administer the claim. With funding secured from ATSIC in Canberra, in September 1993, we established an office within the Council to administer the claim and I took up the position of being the Manager of Saibai Island Native Title Claim. I instantly engaged Dale Treanor of Cairns as the solicitor, Bryan Keon-Cohen of Melbourne as the experienced Mabo case barrister, and Jan Butland of Sydney as the third legal counsel who had wide experience in the Indigenous community. The Saibai Island Council consisting of Terry Waia as the Chairperson, Waba Waigana as the Deputy and Keri Akiba as the Councillor were all very supportive of the claim process. During the following meeting the community again unanimously agreed for Terry Waia (my eldest brother), Dana Ober and Walter Waia to be the technical applicants on the Saibai Island claim application. It was understood that three persons plus the legal representatives was just and fair to negotiate the claim on behalf of the community.

Heading an Island Native Title claim was my biggest test and challenge. It meant no mucking around, only serious business. This was where my intellectual and intuitive powers were at the very best of their ability. In other words, what I had in me was all concentrated to the fullest. There were lots of silent nights of careful strategic planning and tactful thinking to deal with each clan and to deal with the government bureaucracy. I was carrying on my shoulders the name of my Island home. I was extremely careful not to have the clans lose confidence in me. I made sure I did not lose the sight of my vision and it was focused all the time. The Bahá'í prayers became my morning, midday, evening and midnight companions. It dawned to me that answers to solving my problems and the foresight into the distant future came during the moments of my “dozing-off” to sleep or waking. Realising this fact, I quickly sent it back to the Universe in thanks because it belonged there and it did not come from me. Well, the more I was honest that these clear thoughts are not from me, the more they came. I knew I had a role to complete a particular task in this major plan of things. For my limited understanding, there was certainly a “divine providence” at play. Otherwise, this whole affair would never have happened. Strange it may seem. Native Title was raw and brand new and it was the trend of the nineties. And so it was, being the original, I became part and parcel of the trend.

Vision and Goal

When I first introduced the concept of land rights to the Saibai Island community, I started from the very beginning that no one actually owned this land and we all came to this place from somewhere. This had happened to all races of the world that they do not belong to what they call their home today. But rather their home and the society began from their stories and legends of long ago. So, a birth of a society manifests from the very first story of that place. In actual fact that place belonged to no one before we came here. Then who does it belong to? It belonged to the one who created it from the very beginning. My vision was based on my spiritual principles of the Bahá'í Faith and in itself a one that I cannot share with anyone else because it is not easy for a political and spiritual path to go together. I knew I was setting yet another mark on the lonely road.

The above approach had instantly eliminated the Saibailgal's restriction to their land. I led their view on a higher world level that the earth belonged to all races and to its creator. Even consultation amongst various clans at the community level was done in a just manner. At the government and interest party level the consultation was where all involved in the process of Saibai Island land claim had a fair and just result. The process had respect to those in authority and there were no arguments but a negotiated land agreement.

I knew from the very beginning that the Native Title path, which gives recognition to some form traditional land ownership, would heal the wounds

of the past of the Islander society. I seized at this opportunity knowing that this path will create a paradigm shift in the Indigenous community and the Australian society in general. I also knew that I alone cannot do it, the Saibailgal had to stand up and shake off the government dependency and be industrious like our generations of the yesteryears. I also knew that if the independent thinking did not sink into the Saibailgal, then I was some light years ahead of time. Perhaps, they will catch up one day. Or maybe I was only a dreamer.

I knew that the Mer Island plaintiffs of the infamous Mabo case have walked before me and my path was made easier because of their strenuous efforts, and I lay down my utter respect and gratitude for their struggle. As a result of this case, the Federal Government passed legislation called the *Native Title Act 1993* to recognise Indigenous peoples traditional and customary land ownership. But my path was in itself a new road because the concept of the model I was to initiate would benefit the rest of Torres Strait communities under the State's Deed of Grant in Trust land tenure. This was because the Mer Island was not under the mentioned State's land tenure and the High Court's Mabo decision did not reflect this particular land tenure. The Saibai model was prepared under the Native Title Act and was designed to encompass all communities in the region. The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) provided funding for the claim as its test case on the above mentioned land tenure. My burden was even heavier because on top of Saibai sat the whole of Torres Strait. I fine-tuned my focus to success only. With the brilliant legal mind of Dale Treanor, and the experienced handling of the matter by the legal counsel, plus the grassroots advise and guidance of Dana, the model took fruition on a negotiated table between the Saibai Mura Buway Torres Strait Islanders Corporation (representing the land holders), the State Government, the Telstrar and the Far North Queensland Electricity Corporation. My goal was finally reached. A power balance. The Indigenous landholders recognised; the corporate entities were not hindered but included in the deal; the Government acknowledged for its jurisdiction.

A Soul Mate

On 31 March 1989, my father foretold my wife as “the summer rain or the coming season's rain.” It was during the event of separation from my ex-wife when I sat beside him, hurt with shame. After a moment silent and looking into the distant sky, he said, “this event is for you to learn, and by the way whose son are you to jump the gun, give your wholehearted service to the community first and have patience for she will come. Before the monsoon season begins, the thunder and lightening speaks on the northern skies of Dhaudhai (Papua New Guinea), signaling that the rains are coming. Your first marriage is that signal, now wait for the rains to fall because the season's timing will be and is always right”. Being modern in contemporary terms or should I say my intuitive senses were still developing; I asked, “but how will I know”, and he

said, “you will know for sure, your inner being will tell you and also because I will no longer be here, I will be gone by then”. So, I was also expecting my soul mate. I wrote, yearning in anticipation and with great excitement, a short story depicting the beautiful Ait Kadal “woman of the mat” called, “Usalal”, whom I saw in my vision as the dream girl foretold by my old man. Also, in anticipation, I composed songs and wrote poetry for this mysterious woman who will one day carry my family name.

Anyway, while working very hard on the claim, another “meant to be” episode happened. Now, whether it was a blessing from my Saibai ancestors for the struggle that I endured to gain their tribal property, or a blessing from the twin Prophets of my Faith. Maybe it was both. Whatever it was, Uncle Satto and Auntie Ira introduced me to Ritu, my beautiful Bahá'í wife of Indian background. “God willing”; by then, I had just completed my work at Saibai. The year was 1995. This meant, my “cowboy” days were over and to settle down and start a family. Again, in tears I remembered my father foretelling “the summer rain or the coming season's rain.” The rest is another story.

TSRA Native Title Office

By early 1996, the TSRA Board commissioned me to establish its Native Title Office. On 18 March that year the Office came into existence and I continued to lead to completion the Saibai Island claim from here. Again, I engaged the above legal advisers to the TSRA. I was the Executive Officer and there was an administrative support officer to do administrative work. The period from April 1996 to 1997 was heated with local political opinions in respect of who should best govern the Native Title Office, the TSRA or another body. It was also the period where I was running hard against the opposite views and trying to secure funding to resource the Office. Finally, by 1998, the Native Title Office had a resident solicitor and a resident anthropologist and a team of consulting anthropologists, who joined the staff. We have since submitted an application for an increased funding for financial years 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 for the additional workload on the Torres Strait Native Title claims. In April 1999, the Commonwealth informed that the submission was successful. This was great news for the Office and the Islander community.

On 12 February 1999, the Federal Court of Australia recognised in common law the Determination of Native Title of Saibai Island. During the celebration of the Court's decision at the Island community on 13 March, I stood in the back with my lovely wife. As the Attorney General of the State of Queensland served the seven clan representatives with the Determination documents, our tears were flowing for my efforts of 9 years of hard work. My tears were for my father whose voice of tribal wisdom was the burning fire that kept me going for these years. This was it, an accomplishment of major responsibility and a success in flying colours, because I always remember my father's advice: “son, don't talk, speak with action because action speaks louder than words”. My

tears were for Bab Yugom and my famous Dhibal dancer Babudu. My tears were for our forefathers who had first met the change with great difference; and my tears were for saying good-bye to my Island home and its people. Because I know that I have fulfilled the wishes of my ancestors and the clans, and from now onwards, my journey will be that which belongs not only to a particular group but the whole human race.

Humility

Once again as a Bahá'í, I was really trying very hard to give humility to the community even at the main event of the ceremony. Because by nature, I am fiery, ambitious and straight to the point and always in the frontline. But during the ceremony I took the back stand and gave my 9 years of work to the community. The sad part of the event was, I did not get the full recognition for the heavy burden that I had carried because the "limelight" went to the elected leaders and the seniors of the community. That was okay. Maybe that was the way it was meant to be. I suppose Saibai folks took me for granted because I was one of them and I did all of this for everyone. Then again, I felt so used and I felt so empty. My energy that had fired me since 1990 or even before then had finally dropped down below zero. The climax had hit and with a flash the story was over. With deeper hurt, I asked my wife, and what was it all about? Why did I choose to walk this hard lonely road since I was only 8 years old? Why did my father sent me on this path? Why me? But my dear wife encouraged me and said, you were chosen and your blessings are in the Abhá Kingdom. At 4.45pm of that day, we left Saibai to Thursday Island. Among many personal tests and lessons of life's teaching, this was the biggest lesson I had learnt. Grasping over this event later, opened my eyes to my blessings that are right before me, my beautiful caring wife and our lovely child coming whom I have waited in my longing dreams; and my son of previous marriage who I struggled hard for joint-custody and who resides with his mother in Sydney, now questions his Indigenous identity and who will inevitably join me soon. My feelings had found peace.

On a Bahá'í plane and to my surprise, the whole process completed in exactly 9 years. The number 9 is revealed in Bahá'í Writings as the number of great significance because it is the final and the last numeral. Even, the National Native Title Tribunal's registered number of Saibai Island Community was QC 95/13, which adds to 9. I saw the potential and I went for it, and who knows may be the Saibailgal sit on an energy that will fully develop their community. They should run with it. And as for me, whatever was destined has been achieved and completed.

The Saibai Island model, which I have guided and steered through those dangerous reefs, will be used as a template for the Torres Strait communities in the region and also as a national resource.

The End Ina Kuth

With my father's careful nurturing, like lovingly designing a sea racing craft, I had the carriage of carrying the ancient flaming torch from his time through the rough and rugged oceans of change to the end of the twentieth century. (I was given a tribal name, Tauk, meaning, a spark of flame. Perhaps, I was to spark a flame, which will burn, throughout the Strait. Mabo had done so, otherwise. But as for mine, it will remain a mystery. My father had also given me his personal name even before I was born. Perhaps, he chose that I would carry the flame from his time to mine, for the purposes of identity. Well for that part, it is obvious). On this journey, I was a solitary traveller on the lonely road. At an early age of 39 years, I achieved and reached the pinnacle of my career as an initiator of a particular land claim model, and an answer to my identity struggle in this contemporary world. I know I have been too hard on myself, all these years, just to get here. It is time to take it easy now. I feel I have conquered myself by winning in the western system and by conquering my Island home. The first page of my history is over now and I look beyond 2000 for a new beginning.

My path was a silent one and my goal was justice. I believe I have served my purpose for the human race. On my spiritual plane, I believe I have served Bahá'u'lláh.

As to date, I am still involved in Native Title issues in the Torres Strait as being the Manager of the Native Title Office of Torres Strait Regional Authority. Until, my ancestor's tribal East Wind the "Sager Gub" will blow again.

My Foundation

"O SON OF SPIRIT!

The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice....."

Hidden Words, Bahá'u'lláh.

Section 3

Mr Faizi & Mr Furútan in Australia: the Yerrinbool tapes

Introduction by Graham Hassall

At the commencement of the Ten Year Crusade, in 1953, Shoghi Effendi requested Hand of the Cause 'Ali-Akbar Furútan to visit the Australian Bahá'í community. As Mr Furútan was not proficient in English at this time, Mr Abdul Qasim Faizi (who was also, three years later, appointed one of the Hands of the Cause) travelled with him to serve as his translator. Mr Faizi and Mr Furútan were given a welcome reception at Hazíratu'l-Quds in Sydney on 9 December. They had arrived from Auckland, New Zealand, the previous day, and were to travel to Queensland before turning south again to Yerrinbool, where the summer school was scheduled to start late in the month. Earlier, they had visited South Australia. Shoghi Effendi wrote to Leila V. Clark, secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Payneham:

He was most happy to hear of the visit made to the Groups of St. Peters and Stirling and to your own Community by the honoured Hand of the Cause of God, Dr. Furútan, and Mr. Faizi. These believers have rendered a great service to the Faith in visiting the various Centers in that land. The Guardian feels assured that your meeting with them has been the cause of great inspiration to all the friends, and is confident that they will arise and assist in accomplishing all the tasks set before them for the period of this historic Ten-Year Crusade, both in their own homeland, and beyond its confines. (17 December 1953)¹

Some seventy Bahá'ís attended the 1953-54 summer school. They came from most states of Australia, and from New Zealand to hear the two distinguished Bahá'ís from Persia. For most, Mr Faizi and Mr Furútan were the first Persian Bahá'ís they had met. On the first evening Mr Furútan spoke on

1. *Messages to the Antipodes – Communications from Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'í Communities in Australasia*, Mona Vale: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1997, pp. 350-351.

the importance of summer schools. He said Australia was in a fortunate position, having the Yerrinbool school to develop into the future. The participants cabled to Shoghi Effendi:

*YERRINBOOL SCHOOL SEND DEVOTED GREETINGS BELOVED
GUARDIAN JOYFUL THANKS HAND CAUSE FURUTAN RECORD
YOUTH ATTENDANCE*

To which the Guardian replied:

*LOVING APPRECIATION SUPPLICATING ATTENDANCE SCHOOL
ABUNDANCE BLESSINGS GREAT VICTORY²*

Because of Mr Faizi's Persian background, the school committee reported that his talks on the *Dawnbreakers* "were absorbed with rapt attention - a new horizon opened, flooding hearts with devotion and awe, as the series progressed through the history of Christianity, Islam, and the early Bahá'í Faith. The students were eager to further their studies of Nabil's Narrative, the Dawnbreakers". On four successive nights, Mr Furútan spoke on the *Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, and the youth requested special sessions with him. Mr Furútan was asked to encourage its members in the work they were beginning, and to deepen them in the fundamentals of their Faith.

Stanley W. Bolton knew well the importance of this opportunity to have such distinguished Bahá'ís on the program, and arranged for the talks to be recorded. Following the school the Yerrinbool school committee reported on its success to Shoghi Effendi, who replied through his secretary:

He was very happy that the honoured Hand of the Cause, Mr. Furútan, and Mr. Faizi, could be with you at this session of your Summer School, and he is sure they were the cause of great happiness and deep enkindlement of the friends present.

The Guardian has high hopes for the dear Australian and New Zealand believers, and he urges you, one and all, to persist in your labours, no matter at what cost, until all the goals set before you for the Ten Year Crusade, have been attained.

With warm Bahá'í greetings, R. Rabbani.

May the Almighty bless you and your dear co-workers in your highly meritorious endeavours, and enable you to win great victories in the service of His glorious Faith. Your true brother, Shoghi. (24 January 1954)³

2. Report of the 18th Bahá'í Summer School, 31 December 1953 - 10 January 1954. Correspondence. 0241/0060.

3. *Messages to the Antipodes*, op.cit., p. 352.

There were, of course, other significant aspects to the 1953-54 Summer School. In addition to the presence of two special visitors, five Bahá'ís described their recent pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and their meetings with the Guardian. Alvin and Gertrude Blum were present, prior to their departure for the Solomon Islands. Excitement at the tasks facing the Australian and New Zealand Bahá'ís was considerable, and there was an atmosphere of expectation.

When the National Spiritual Assembly reported to Shoghi Effendi on the completion of Mr Faizi and Mr Furútan's visit to Australia, the Guardian replied through his secretary on 16 June 1954:

He feels sure that the visit of the dear Hand of the Cause, Mr. Furútan, accompanied by Mr. Faizi, did a tremendous amount of good. Mr. Furútan has since made the pilgrimage to Haifa, and spoke very highly to the Guardian of the believers in that part of the world, whom he grew to love and admire very much during his visit.⁴

In the course of time the tape recordings made of the talks of Mr Faizi and Mr Furútan were forgotten, and only years later rediscovered in the National Bahá'í Archives at Mona Vale. The process of retrieving the talks then took a number of years. Robert Mannell transferred the recordings from the original "reel to reel" format to cassettes. Alan Waters made the first transcripts. Mr Ghodrattollah Ahmadian then compared the transcripts with the audio tapes, checking the text with the Persian and Arabic of Mr Furútan, and the English of Mr Faizi. Mr Ahmadian also annotated the text to make it more accessible to the reader. The collaborative nature of this project is clear, and the labours of each participant are acknowledged with gratitude.

OPENING REMARKS

Mr Stanley W. Bolton

A few years ago, the friends wished to build a dormitory here, and plans were drawn up as you will see, and the friends donated funds and we had quite a lot of money. Well you know, the building of the Shrine of the Báb was so important, and each donor was asked if they would care to send the money which they donated for the dormitory to the Shrine of the Báb and they said - yes. And all the money went to the shrine.

This is the first time that one person has been missing from the Summer school. And that is our dear Mother Dunn as we all know her. Clara Dunn, Hand of the Cause of God. She has always been at our schools, but this time she is attending the Summer School in New Zealand. But we shall all think of her, the Hand of the Cause of God for Australia.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 364.

Now we are very privileged indeed. We should be very thankful to our Beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi in extending the time of Mr Furútan here in Australia and New Zealand to come and attend this school. In fact I want to tell you what the Guardian said about this school when I was in Haifa. The Guardian was asked if he would be coming to Australia. He said "If I come to Australia, Bolton Place will be the first place I shall visit, because it is the first national institution established in that part of the world." So we are very privileged indeed to have with us Mr Furútan, Hand of the Cause of God from Iran to teach us here at this school.

In speaking to one of the Persians who was serving the Guardian so well in Haifa, the name of Mr Furútan arose. He said "If there were six Bahá'ís in the world who know Bahá'í administration, Mr Furútan ranks as the first."

....Mr Schopflocher, Hand of the Cause from Canada visited this school when the residence was being built. He said many things, he predicted many things and he named this school. Fred passed to the Abhá Kingdom a month ago.

Mrs Mariette Bolton.

This hall is dedicated to Hyde Dunn, Hand of the Cause for Australia. He used to come here many, many times to get away from the noise of the city, the trams, the bustle which he said used to eat into his heart, his very core. He loved the drive from Sydney. He was such an advanced soul, so highly developed spiritually. How he loved to get out in the woods, to get out into nature. And Father and Mother Dunn would just lie on the ground on red cushions with us, and while we were resting, we would walk this place and we would plan and think what we would do for the Cause, and all we thought, and all we did, and all we lived for was to some-day raise the school here, and one day Father Dunn laid the foundation stone of the residence. It has been such a joy. You youth will be happy here in the future. You have so much to do to carry this Faith forward. So this hall was raised in memory of Father Dunn when he passed on, and the Hilda Gilbert cabin was named after another early pioneer whom we loved very much. And so it went on. Freddie Schopflocher stood on the rafters of the residence as it was being built and he said "Mariette and Stanley, here some day this place will be crowded with cars, it will be all developed, it will all be for the school, for the Bahá'í Faith. Bahá'u'lláh's revelation will be taught here." Now we begin to see those souls that had a vision, how right and how true they were. And in the future it will be tremendous. Tonight we will say a prayer for the departed, because as Stanley mentioned, this place was named by Freddie Schopflocher.

Stanley P. Bolton

It is significant that we should have a visit from Mr Furútan, Hand of the

Cause from the Cradle of the birth of our Faith, in this opening year of the 10 year World Crusade. In the world of being, physical signs represent spiritual realities. The Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette is a physical sign of a spiritual reality. The Shrine of the Báb is a physical sign of a spiritual reality. All throughout the world, Bahá'í schools, this school Bolton Place, is a physical sign of a spiritual reality. And even here at the school itself, in the grounds of the school, we have an oak tree which itself is a physical sign of a spiritual reality. I'm referring to the oak tree planted by Father Dunn, Hand of the Cause, and pioneer, with his wife Clara Dunn to Australasia. I remember many, many years ago, Father Dunn planting that tree out in front, a very tiny oak tree at that day and veritably a tree amongst scrub. The gardens were not landscaped and the grounds were not laid out. I remember what a struggle that little oak had. I remember at one time we thought it was going to die. But somehow it seemed to pull through. And that tree today is flourishing and will continue to flourish. And that tree to me is a physical sign of a spiritual reality of the growth of the Faith in Australia. It was planted by Father Dunn as the Faith was planted. It had a slow beginning. It took several years for mother and father Dunn to make the first Bahá'í in Australia. The Faith went through hard times just as that tree did, strenuous and difficult times, but now today we can see evidences that the Faith is flourishing and will continue to flourish.

Mr Furútan has consented during his visit here to plant a tree. And that tree, too, will be a physical sign of a spiritual reality. It will grow tall, straight and high. It will shade many people. Many people will rest under its boughs and it will represent the visit of Mr Furútan to this school. And its height will stand for the height of his intellect and its grandness, the grandness of his spirit. There, in that tree will be a physical sign of a spiritual reality. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Mr Furútan, Hand of the Cause of God.

Mr Faizi

Session One

I have been invited to address the friends on the subject of Nabil's Narrative. I thought it over and came to the conclusion that we must first understand what we as Bahá'ís mean by history. It is one of those very attractive subjects that mankind has always studied. But those people who have written the histories of the world have never come to a conclusion of what they meant by history. In our Faith, many difficult questions have been answered; and what is meant by history has fortunately been solved most beautifully in the Bahá'í Writings and now we as Bahá'ís know what the study of history is. To know perfectly well what the Bahá'ís mean by history, let us survey the ideas of historians in different ages, because by having that in mind we will understand the comprehensiveness and the beauty of the definition given in the Bahá'í Writings.

In the olden days, mankind started to write events, either on reeds or on

stones or at a later time, on paper. Most of these events were written down by the command of powerful and strong men. Hence all these records are only the forced praises of those men of power, and the writers had to obey the wishes of those authorities. Therefore, if we read these events and descriptions we are not studying history. Later on when printing presses came into existence and they started to think independently and to write the history of the world, then different definitions began to appear. Some of the philosophers believed that if someone could write the history of wars, he had definitely written the history of mankind. Their reason is this: that during wars all the feelings, sentiments and intellectual powers of mankind are at tension. They pour out more than ever from the store of their knowledge; they invent more for the sake of victory. Therefore, if we write the history of wars, we have really written the history of man's achievements.

And this was the case with many histories written along that line. But later on, this idea was attacked by many critics. They said "If we really want to write the history of man, it is like writing the history of humankind, and if we write the history of humankind, and limit it only to the history and events of wars, it is like writing a biography of a man and concentrating the whole thing on how many times the man was diseased, how many times he had typhoid, when he contracted malaria, how many times he was operated on and things like that. This is not the true history of a man. Wars are like diseases, and if we concentrate our history on wars, then we are writing about the diseases of mankind. And we don't want that." Therefore they changed and searched for a better way of writing history. At the beginning of the 19th century, there appeared the great English historian Carlyle⁵ who said that if we write the biographies of great men, then we have written the history of mankind. Because it is the great men who create and bring into existence the country, the time, the century. If we want to know the history of France between 1789 and 1821, we must know the history of Napoleon. And if we know all about Napoleon, we know all about France during those years [text unclear]....

Now, for a point of interest to the Bahá'í scholar, we must know that it was Carlyle who, in the whole of Europe, first mentioned anything real about Prophet Muhammad. Before him, the Christian writers in their books, tried to change the history of Muhammad and to represent him only as a simple Arab camel-driver and nothing else. As a matter of fact, many of the people in the middle ages thought that Muhammad was not a human being, he was only an idol worshipped by the Arabs. [text unclear] Even Trotsky, a great literary man, thought that Muhammad was an idol. Carlyle was attacked by the people of the time because he mentioned Muhammad as a man and a great

5. Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), Scottish essayist and historian. He attended the University of Edinburgh, but left in 1814 without taking a degree in divinity. According to Carlyle, history is merely the essence of innumerable biographies. Among his works are: *The French Revolution*, *On Heroes*, *Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, and *Chartism*. The references here are to his work *On Heroes*.

source of truth.

This idea of biography as a record of history spread all over the world, and you know that Emerson the great writer and poet of America was a friend of Carlyle, and he imitated Carlyle and wrote of representative men. The critics also attacked this idea, and said that although it is true that great men make the time, the country and the century, but if we write only of them, then the connection of history will be lost. There will be no continuity to history. Therefore they were lost again as to what they should do. Now one of the writers started with the idea that the best fruit of humanity is its thoughts, let's write about the history of the thoughts of men. And it was very well received by many people, and really in this way you could have continuity. But the serious insatiable thirst of human beings was not quenched by this idea until our recent times when they came to think that real history is the slow evolution of the civilisations of the world: let's find the different civilisations and study them, then we will find the real achievements of mankind. And if you study the history written by H.G. Wells, especially the introduction, it shows the different stages of human civilisation. But please remember that H.G. Wells in his reference book about Muhammad has always referred to books of the missionaries and not to real sources. He is very rude and cruel on the topic of Muhammad. [text unclear] There is a more reliable source and that is the study of history by Toynbee.

And yet Bahá'í students are not satisfied with that. It is true that civilisations are the best output of humankind and yet we don't find continuity, and what is neglected is how these civilisations came into existence. And here is the place where the Bahá'ís will have a definite reply. Here we come to our definition of history. For that, we have many Tablets written by Bahá'u'lláh at different times. His intention was not to define history, but we understand from the Writings of our Faith what history is. One of these Tablets has been translated into English and it appears in the addresses of the Báb translated by Edward G. Browne. You know in the addresses of the Báb there are two Tablets translated, one Tablet to the King of Iran which is in the middle of the book and another is at the end of the book. Now in the beginning of the Tablet Bahá'u'lláh says God has created human beings as mines full of jewels and precious stones and gems. At different intervals he sends His manifestations to bring out these gems, out of the human minds. Now if we thoroughly study this sentence we come to understand what is the history of man. We see that at different times, different Prophets come and immediately after the appearance of these prophets a new civilisation comes into existence. That prophet like the plant sown on the earth of existence of human beings and flowers of civilisation, precious stones of thoughts, useful achievements came into existence. Therefore we Bahá'ís believe that the history of mankind is the unfoldment of the Divine Plan for the purpose of human beings on this earth. God has a

certain plan by creating mankind on this earth and little by little, gradually, He unfolds His plan by giving us great manifestations, great teachers who bring into existence what God means by our existence on this earth - by educating and making manifest the gems in our mind.

Now let us study this divine history in more detail. Let's study Moses, who appeared in Egypt amongst the people of Israel. We know that the people of Israel had been for three or four hundred years living in Egypt. Because these people were in contact with the Egyptians, they accepted their customs and habits and forgot to worship their God, the one and only God Jehovah. They started to worship animals as the Egyptians used to do. And God sent Moses, and ordered him to take out these people from Egypt as it was impossible for them to worship the one God while they were surrounded by people who were immersed in worshipping animals. He brought them out of that place and took them back to their original country.

Now the most interesting part of this trip was that they remained in the desert for forty years. Have we ever thought why God made these people linger in the desert for forty years. It would take them no longer than one month to reach Palestine, even if they were on foot. But it took them forty years to pass that short distance to Palestine because God wanted the old generation, those people who had been infected with the worship of animals, to die away so that Palestine would be inhabited by a new generation who had a new thought of worshipping one God - new emphasis, new energy and absolutely worshipping God and nothing else. It took them forty years to change the generation - when they were captives in the hands of the Pharaohs and the Egyptians, they were worshipping animal gods, but when they came to Palestine, they started a new way of life. A new civilisation was started by them.

Have you also ever thought why in the Old Testament, particularly in the early chapters, we see "I am Jehovah your God"? It is always repeated to pound this idea into the minds of a new generation coming into existence. For every ceremony, for every feast, he ordered them to sacrifice some sort of animal, so that these animals which had been worshipped by them will be degraded by them. Their attention will be turned only to God and not to animals or anything else. Just think, for 40 days Moses left them and went into the mountain, and when he came back they had made an animal to worship. The worship of animals was so deeply impressed into their hearts and minds that Moses did not want them to go to Palestine, till they were ready.

Now as the morning sun rises in the east and casts its first light in the west, so the sun of the religion of Moses shone in the east and its first reflection appeared in Greece. That's why we see that the civilisation of Greece was so great. In one little town in Greece there had been forty different philosophers living at the one time - this was all due to the reflection of the Sun of Truth. Now here is another point; at that time, many people in Greece migrated to the Holy Land and came into contact with the Israelites, and most of them

saw many of the prophets of Israel. And they studied with those people and learnt many things from them. Amongst them was Socrates, who came there and learned of the one God and the eternity of the soul. He returned to Greece, to his own people and started to preach to his own people - for them to turn their mind from worshipping gods and goddesses in the mountains and told them there is one God and that our soul will, after death, be everlastingly living. That was the cause of his condemnation and his being poisoned, and that was the reason he took the poison very bravely, for he firmly believed that his soul would live after him. One of the greatest bounties of God which has ever been explained, or given to anybody by God, is given to Socrates in the Tablet of the Philosophers⁶ from the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh. He said it was as if he had drunk from the cup of prophethood. He brings him very near to the prophets and he really was at that time a demi-prophet for the people of Greece. This is one of the points which may be disputed by scholars. "Oh we haven't read in any book that Socrates made a trip out of Greece and went to Israel!" Well it is not written in any history book, but we believe that it is true because 'Abdu'l-Bahá said it and we believe that whatever He said was true and some day the documents will appear and the school students will be satisfied. We need a human document to prove that God is right. That is the shortcoming of our minds really.

The civilisation that was brought about by Moses, when we study it thoroughly, continued till the time of Jesus Christ. Now we see how the links are connected together. If we study history in this light, the links will be connected to the Law of the Messiah. All teachings of Moses were centred around one central principle - the unity of God. Jesus came at a time when the Jews knew about the oneness of God, but they did not know about the Kingdom of God and were very materialistic in their life. You read in Matthew that the Synagogue was the place where they used to trade. They would bring their tables for money changes, even the *doves* would be brought to the Synagogue to be sold. They could not think that this was a sacred place, a place for the worship of God. They used to believe in God, but not consider this place sacred. We know that Jesus came to the Synagogue and cleaned that House of these people. It was the time when the attention of the people should be turned to the Kingdom of God. There was no need for Jesus to establish the unity of God, it was already established by Moses, but He had to teach about the Kingdom of God. And there is nothing more attention paid in the Bible than the Kingdom of God. In more than 90 places Jesus says the Kingdom of God is like this, like that and so on, so that if they did not understand one example, they could understand another one. He has given every sort of example, from trees, gems, pearls, the girls who have taken the lamps to be invited to the wedding of somebody, from the banquet of the King, all sort of things have been given so that their

6. Bahá'u'lláh, *Lawh-i-Hikmat (Tablet of Wisdom)* in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1978, pp. 135-153.

thought would focus on the Kingdom of God. Christ was the first Prophet who told about the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, therefore He was the first one who gave the glad tidings of the Manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh who was to establish the Kingdom of God on this earth.

Then Christ came and it took a long time for the establishment of His Faith in Europe and elsewhere, and after a time there came the Renaissance and a renewal of civilisation in Europe. Now after Him comes the Prophet Muhammad, another link to this great world civilisation. Muhammad came to the Arabs, and the central teaching was the establishment of the unity of God because the Arabs were worshipping idols, gods and goddesses. Another point He added was surrender to the Will of God. Islam in Arabic means surrender to the Will of God. He established His religion and civilisation and hence three great links were joined until modern civilisation was brought about. As we are going to have two more lessons on Islam, I will not dwell on this subject, but Islamic civilisation was the foundation of our present civilisation; how three great religions, hand in hand brought about the civilisation of our present time.

This line of the prophets just mentioned, was the Semitic line, meaning that they are of the line of Abraham. But we have other lines of prophets, it is very difficult to trace them now, but some traces remain. We have Zoroaster in Persia who came between Moses and Jesus, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá testifies, he appeared in Iran. The pivot of His teachings is the fight that always exists between good and evil. He says in everything you find this fight. One of the most interesting things that He says is that in the day of the King of Kings, good will prevail and bad will be conquered. His glad tidings about the coming of Bahá'u'lláh are the most clear. He says to the Persians that the Arabs will bring a religion, but that religion will be divided into so many sects that if the prophet comes back He would not recognise it. He mentions the Báb as the door of knowledge, He mentions Bahá'u'lláh as the King of Kings and 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the great branch. This is why we initially had so many people of Zoroastrian background coming into the Cause because of these clear references. The man who found these references was Abul Fadl, the great Bahá'í historian and learned man, whom the Guardian describes as the greatest literary man in the Bahá'í Cause. After the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he says the pen of Abul Fadl is the greatest. And He said if he had been living now he would find many things from the Writings of the Báb about the current period.

Session Two

We will all remember that different scholars have defined history as the history of wars, histories of individuals, great people of the world, history of thoughts and history of civilisation up to our present time. We said that according to what we understand from the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, we believe that history means the unfoldment of God's Plan for humanity on this earth. We are told that idea because we see that at intervals, different prophets

come, and each one brings some teachings and after them material civilisation is created in the world. Each one is a link connected to the previous one and each one tries to lift mankind from one level of progress to a higher one.

Now before entering into a discussion of Nabil's narrative and some historical aspects from that, I feel that there is a great need for us to know some details about the history of Islam, because it is so cruelly treated in the history written in the European languages (mostly done by missionaries). It is one of the most fascinating subjects, perhaps very new to the scholars of the West. Some are trying to eliminate those obstacles from the books written by those who had really cruelly treated Islam. Before we start we must know a little about the geography of this Arabian peninsula, enclosed by the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. Only from one side is it connected to land. Most of us know that Arabia is a barren country. There is plenty of rain in Arabia, but as the land is covered by sand, all the rain soaks into the sand and there are some subterranean rivers underneath which take the water to other places but Arabia itself remains barren, and that is why Arabs are scattered all over the place at the oases. They roam from oasis to oasis, and that is why they live a nomadic life. Before Islam, they had been obliged to raid other places of the neighbouring places for provisions and food. Therefore, the Arab onslaught on other countries had always been a natural part of life for the Arabs. Please remember this point when we come to the history of Islam.

Arab onslaught on other countries had always been a natural thing done by them before the coming of Islam. Some of them had been living on the borders of Persia and some on the borders of the Roman Empire. You know from the history of the olden days that Persia and Rome had always been fighting against each other. Both Rome and Persia conquered parts of the Arabian peninsula, and these two great Arab kingdoms were used as buffer states. When the two kingdoms would come to clash these two Arab states would firstly clash, and if they needed help, Persia and Rome would interfere. We all remember from our Bible stories that Abraham was living somewhere in Mesopotamia and He pioneered to Palestine, and we know that he took his first son Ishmael and brought him to what is now known as Mecca and he built for him a house. That house still remains, and it is that house which is the point of adoration and worship by the Muslims. The whole history of Islam circles around this house. In the beginning, of course, they were worshipping the One God, but little by little their religion deteriorated and they began worshipping gods and goddesses. All these tribes scattered around Arabia represented themselves in this big house in Mecca by one god, and they used to come to the house to worship their god, and were always fighting with each other on the superiority of their gods. This fighting used to take place often until at last some of the leaders came to a settlement, a truce. They said let us have wars for nine months of the year and stop it for three months.

During those three months of truce they used to gather in one place, start another sort of war, not with their swords, but with their tongues. Members from each tribe used to come and the poets used to recite poems in the honour their own tribe, their ancestors and so on. The poet from another tribe would recite some more elaborate poem on the same themes. That literary war started in Arabia. It is also interesting to note that amongst them were Christians and Jews. One of the greatest orators of pre-Islamic days was a Christian, and the Jews were there to teach the children how to read and write, for the Jews were the learned. In the house of Mecca, there were two important jobs which belonged to two very great families. One of the families had the key of the house, the other had the honour to give water to the pilgrims. These two great houses (tribes, families) were the House of Hashim and the House of Umayyah. It is also very important for us to know that these two houses had always been rivals because each one wanted to have both jobs.

Let us remember this, they had always been rivals. Let us remember it from an historical point of view and an administrative point of view. If we see that some of the things are strictly forbidden in the Bahá'í Cause and our beloved Guardian is extremely, emphatically hard on some little problems, we must search for the reasons of these things in history. Now we see that the rivalry of these two families continued all through history before Islam and even after Islam, because there was nobody to stop them fighting on these very insignificant problems of the key and the water. If there was someone to put them into accord, the whole history of Islam might have been written otherwise.

But from the House of Hashim came the prophet Muhammad. Muhammad as a word means the most praised. When he rose to educate the Arabs, the first to oppose him were from the House of Umayyah. It was due to a latent animosity within the family and due to the fact that Muhammad was winning the popularity with the people of his time. Muhammad had very few followers in the beginning; there were his cousin Ali, his wife Khadijah, and an old Arab, a wealthy man. A Negro who was an illiterate man and a slave to one of the Umayyids believed in Muhammad, and his master used to beat him every day for believing in Muhammad. After beating him with a hundred lashes of a whip, he said now, what do you say. He would say Alláh'u' Akbar. God is great and Muhammad is the Messenger of God. So he would start to beat him again until this poor slave would become unconscious. Then again when he became conscious, he would say, God is great and Muhammad is the Prophet of God. At last he drove him out of the house and the slave went to the Prophet, who loved him very much. He could not speak well, he had a lisp, but he was the first man who Muhammad appointed to go up to the minaret and call the believers to prayer, and some of the believers said to prophet Muhammad, why don't you send another who can pronounce the words correctly. Muhammad replied that he did not find anyone who said it as sincerely as this man - Bilál.

We mention these things because they pertain to the Cause. Some of these things remained obscure for the Muslims, but either 'Abdu'l-Bahá or Bahá'u'lláh explained them. I'm sure that in the films you have seen a Muslim go up to the minaret and call to prayer. In Nabil's Narrative, Mulla Husayn orders somebody to go to the minaret and give the call to prayer. He goes up and with a loud voice they call that God is great and the prophet Muhammad is messenger of God. But most usually they go around the minaret to several places and shout, with their hands covering their ears. Most people say that they do not want to hear their own bad voice, but this is not the explanation. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has given the explanation which has remained obscure throughout the ages. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that when the Prophet ordered the Negro slave, Bilál, to go up to the minaret the people of Arabia started to throw stones at him, and to protect his face from the stones first of all he would not stand in one place, then secondly he would cover his face until he had finished the prayer. That is the reason for it.

Now we come back again to our history. We come to Husayn, who is the most important character. Muhammad died after twenty-three years of ministry, and when he died, he did not have many believers from the family of Umayyah. Very few came to him. Before His death he had appointed Ali as his successor. He said he reared Ali by His own hand. Before going to Mecca for His last pilgrimage He said of whomsoever I am the master, Ali will be his master. Anyone who obeys him obeys God and anyone who denies him denies God. It was a very clear statement, and all the people came and congratulated Ali for the great rank given to him by the prophet Muhammad. But when Muhammad died, Ali and some others of his relatives went to the Prophet's house to bury him, but others went to another place. First of all, some of them said Muhammad has disappeared, but Abu-Bakr, one of the early followers said no, the only one who doesn't die is God. Muhammad was a man, and he died, although he was a Prophet of God. They chose Abu-Bakr as the first Caliph. Right at the time of the death of Muhammad a schism started, some few people followed Ali and the rest followed Abu-Bakr. After him Omar was appointed and after him Uthman, who belonged to the family of Umayyah. In order to have their earthly supremacy most of the family of Umayyah eventually came to Islam but not with pure intentions. It was Uthman who appointed as governors to the various regions, members of his own tribe who were mostly belonging to the Umayyah family. He especially appointed in Damascus, Mu'awiyah. All these people who were appointed as rulers came from a powerful family and now they had supremacy in Islam also. Now, it was time for them to do something against their old rival family of Hashim, and of course, Ali was from the house of Hashim. After Uthman, the Muslim community elected Ali as their successor, although he had already been appointed initially by the Prophet. They did not accept him as the infallible successor of Muhammad, as designated by the

Prophet, but as the elected leader. After him, Ali appointed his first son Hasan and then Husayn, the second son of 'Ali. This is a most important feature in the history of Islam. If you want to know the meanings of these names, because all the Arabic names have meaning, Ali means a high person (exalted), Hasan means good and Husayn is the diminutive of Hasan.

These four great Caliphs of Islam stand on their own. After them no one was elected. Already there is division. At the time of Hasan, Mu'áwiyah was the governor of Damascus, and Hasan was in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Mu'áwiyah was a very shrewd politician. He said that in a situation where you can do your work with a whip, never use a sword, and the place where you can do it with your tongue, never use a whip. He was always executing his ideas of policies and politics and won the hearts of many by money, giving them honours, titles etc. All around he had his own agents and spies and he always made everything impossible for Imám Hasan. Therefore, Hasan said I will be in the corner, you do whatever you like, just let me leave. He permitted Hasan to leave, but he sent one of his Negresses to serve in the House of Hasan and she poisoned Hasan with the dust of diamonds. After Hasan, Husayn was the successor, and he said to both families, I want my right. I am the true successor of the Prophet and I am not going to leave it to anyone. Now many people in Mesopotamia were followers of Ali, and they wrote him letters saying come to Mesopotamia, to Iraq, and we will support you. Husayn started with seventy of his followers, by the time he reached there, the whole situation had changed, and they proved to be infidels and turned against him. Mu'áwiyah had sent thousands of soldiers to fight against him. No one will ever dare to fight against thousands of soldiers with seventy followers, but Husayn decided to give his life, to sacrifice himself for the unity of Islam, for the glory of Islam; and it took ten days until all the followers were killed. Husayn was killed on the last day and that is why Husayn is considered the martyr of Islam. All the family were captured and all the male members of the family were killed except a little boy who was so sick they thought he would die anyway.

It is really through the blood of Husayn that Islam got its power again, and it created a certain zeal and enthusiasm in the hearts of its followers throughout the other parts of the world, and after some years they united together to destroy the Umayyah family and established a kingdom - a Muslim Caliphate in Iraq. So finally the Umayyah family was destroyed. Now you see how the rivalry which existed between these two families before the coming of Islam continued in Islam right through the Caliphates, and when they had power in Syria they had Hasan in a corner, killed him, then Husayn and all the family of Husayn. This little bit of history proves to us two great things. Firstly, that even though the people had a centre of the covenant, they did not want to go to him. They had Ali, appointed as the centre of the covenant, but they never cared for him, they went on following their own imaginings. The result of that

was the great division in Islam, and after that lots of sects everywhere in Islam. The second point is that if we do not prevent some little things in history they will grow bigger and bigger, and the results will be detrimental. A small rivalry between two families was not prevented before Islam, was allowed to grow in Islam and resulted in the bloodshed of the holy members of the family of the prophet Muhammad.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said that in the future, the martyrdom of the Báb will similarly be looked upon - the fact that in the time of the Báb the people said that we have the book of God, we don't need anybody.

Now Husayn is mentioned many times in our Writings and in the history of Nabil, so I wanted to mention how Husayn came into existence and how his martyrdom took place. Caliph means in place of, the one who comes after. Imam means the man who is in front.

Question: what is the significance of the twelve Imams?

Answer: I do not know the significance of twelve, but all through history we have had twelve. Twelve families of Israel, twelve disciples of Christ and twelve Imams of the Shi'ah, and you know in this Cause we will have twenty-four. The twelve princes in the Old Testament refers to the twelve Imams. The two witnesses who rule over the holy of holies for 1260 days refers to Muhammad and 'Ali.

The Christians say that because Hagar was cast out into the desert, her family were outcast from God and hence Muhammad and Islam should be shunned. This was not so. In fact Abraham took Hagar and Ishmael to what is now Mecca, which was a desert, and left them there. Hagar ran from place to place trying to find water for her son who was thirsty. The boy was playing with his finger in the sand and a stream gushed forth. That stream, known as Zam Zam is still in existence. God blessed Hagar and promised that from her family, twelve princes would appear.

Session Three

To illustrate the purpose of the summer school, let me tell you a story. Once there was a king in India who had four sons, and he brought a tutor to come and educate his sons so that they would be enabled to rule that country. The tutor started to teach them, and the very first lesson he taught was that under any affliction, one should never give way to self, but be brave and courageous. Then he said tomorrow, I want you to write down this passage and memorise it. The next day three of the sons showed the tutor their penmanship and repeated the passage. The other said I haven't yet learned this lesson. He was slightly rebuked, but the lesson was continued. For three months, the particular prince could not memorise the passage. He was called the black sheep of the family,

the stupid one.

One day the king and his ministers wanted to see what this tutor had done for the princes. So the tutor asked the fourth prince could he kindly memorise the first lesson for the next day, when the king and the court will examine and see what you have done. Well, the next day, the class room had been beautifully decorated, there was a special chair for the king and other appropriate places for the ministers, and the teacher showed very boastfully the achievements of the three, but that the fourth, only yesterday remembered the first lesson. The king was very angry, and rebuked the prince in front of all the people. But the little boy stood there smiling. The ministers said that it was not worthy of a prince to be so lazy and stupid, but still he stood there smiling. The king ordered that the fourth prince be beaten, and he was beaten in front of all the people, but still he was smiling, he never said anything, never lamented.

Then one of the wisest of the ministers came to the king and said this prince is the only one who has really learnt the first lesson. It is not only writing and memorising; he has learned it thoroughly, he has practised this lesson, he has let this lesson penetrate his soul. You see whatever you do, you rebuke him, ridicule him, he never gives way in his courage, he is always smiling. Then they understood that the fourth prince really wanted to learn.

This is the way we must learn our lessons in the Bahá'í schools. Not only reading and listening. Do we ever think when we say "Oh God, I am standing in front of you in absolute self abnegation, selflessness" - how very hard that lesson is? It takes us many years of practise to reach that stage with which we can audaciously declare to God "I am standing in front of you, selfless". Let us learn our lesson this way. Let it penetrate our soul, let it give exercise to our soul and heart and then our lives will really be worthwhile living.

I remember one of our very old teachers who had been the grandson of the arch enemy of Bahá'u'lláh, the one who stood against Bahá'u'lláh in the city of Baghdad, the one who challenged Bahá'u'lláh with all the clergymen of the holy cities of Iraq. Bahá'u'lláh sent a message saying "that if you all agree upon a miracle that you want Me to perform, I will do it, so long as all the clergymen sign that after that they will not oppose Us". Of course they did not dare to do it. Bahá'u'lláh said "even if you want the Tigris river to flow backwards, agree and sign and I will do it". The grandson of this man became a Bahá'í and was a great teacher. He was a very alert man, always making jokes, even with his inquirers. He would get up in the morning and say "you pour some tea, I will just tell some lies to God and come back. Then he would ??? say the long Obligatory Prayer. Well we don't want to tell lies to God!

We remember that we defined history as the unfoldment of God's plan through the prophets sent at intervals. Yesterday we saw how two great Arab families had been rivals and how this affected the course of the history of Islam. There is a prophecy that the witness will be killed, but they will not

bury him, they will let him die in the desert. This refers to the Umayyid family living in Damascus. They killed the spirit of Islam but they did not bury it. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says they did not let the name be forgotten altogether. They were Muslim in name, but not in spirit.

The blood of the Imam Husayn guaranteed the renewal of Islam, even though there would be two major sects. We know from the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, written by our beloved Shoghi Effendi, that as Bahá'ís, we recognise the claim of Shi'ism in the same way that we recognise in Christianity, the theory of Catholicism. That means we accept that after the passing of the messenger, there must be one who is the centre of the covenant, one who can explain the difficult passages of the writings.

Session Four

Today I want to give you something of the Qur'án, the great book of the Prophet Muhammad. Qur'án means that which is readable. An Arab will not say I am reading this book, he will say I am reading in this book. Please remember that in the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, there is another name for Qur'án - Furqán it means that which divides between truth and falsehood. The book of God shows the people what is right and what is wrong.

When you read the Qur'án you will not find it a relevant book, that means it is not like a story. You read one verse here with one theme, then another verse about a different topic. It's due to the fact that the Prophet Muhammad did not write it and did not relate it like a story. He revealed it to his followers at different times and repeated it several times until his followers memorised it. That is why it is said that the Qur'án was written first in the hearts of men - they had first to memorise it. Sometimes he would be asked different questions, he would answer them and again the followers would memorise it. Then at different times he would want to bring the Arabs close to the past religions. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that the very first thing that Prophet Muhammad said was why didn't you believe in Christ? Why didn't you believe in Moses? They were the great prophets of God, the great educators sent by God and he told the Arabs their stories from the beginning of Adam to the time of Christ.

Now some of the Christians may object when we speak about Islam, because there are some points about the history of the prophets of the past which are not the same as in the Bible. First of all, Prophet Muhammad did not want to teach history, he wanted just to bring an example to expose the Arabs to history and then to advise them, give them glad tidings. This was his purpose mainly, not as historian, but as a Prophet who wanted to take an example and then consider the results out of that. And if your Christian friends object any farther than that, you will please refer them to their own Bible and in many places there are accounts which are absolutely different from the Old Testament. And if they still object further, please refer them to their own four Gospels,

all of which are written about their own prophet; but the four Gospels have differences and are written quite differently. For instance there is the story of feeding the five thousand. John has written it one way, Matthew has written it absolutely another way. Then you ask them why there is difference here? Well, the same thing is true about the Qur'án. Now as I said, the Qur'án was memorised by the people, but there were seven people who knew it absolutely by heart; they were called the readers or the reciters of the Qur'án. First of all they knew it by heart, secondly they could chant it in a beautiful Arabic melody. They are famous for their reading and still when you listen to the radio and you hear them reading or chanting the Qur'án from Egypt or Baghdad or Palestine, they will say that they are chanting it after so and so, it means one of the first readers, after that fashion.

When the prophet Muhammad died, the Muslims were scattered all around the east, and there were several problems posed to the Caliphs about various matters. But the Caliphs elected by the people did not know the answers. They were not appointed by the Prophet as the interpreters of His Word. The Word of God was not revealed to them. They had no authority to explain. Therefore they could not expound or explain. In that case they came to Ali, who was really appointed by the Prophet and asked what should we do now. He said at least gather together the Qur'án in one book, and give to the believers. They must have a book in their hand. If they do not have the centre of the covenant, let them at least have the Qur'án. And so they started to gather the Qur'án. And this point is very important for us to know. If anybody questions the authenticity of the Qur'án, please remember that the first people who had memorised the Qur'án did not give their consent to sit down and write those words, they said it will be much below the sanctity of these words if we put them down. They were not ready to do this. But after much persuasion by the Caliph and much advice given to them, then they gave their consent. Now these people who would not have willingly given their consent to writing down the word of God would never write it wrongly, and therefore they were very sure and certain that the words were the Words of God and they wrote them down. There is no question about the authenticity of the book of the Qur'án.

They wrote down from those who had memorised and there had been some written down in the time of the Prophet on the leaves of palm trees, or on the bark of the tree or on the skin of animals, just a few fragments, not the whole complete book. They wrote it down and arranged it into chapters. They put the long chapters first and they went on and on to the small ones. And they named the chapters according to the most important point mentioned in the chapter. Please remember this, because some of the chapters appear to have funny names and the Christians laugh at them. They saw the first chapter of the Qur'án is called "cow". What is this, could it be the book of God? Please remember that it was given the name by the people who wrote it down and they

searched through for the most important problems discussed in that chapter and named the chapter after that. The titles were not given by God.

Then, we have a chapter called "Mary" which is all about Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ and so on and so forth. Now in relation to the Bahá'í Faith, we have one chapter called the chapter of Joseph, which is considered to be the most beautiful story amongst the Arabs. Many of the commentators on the Qur'án, wrote explanations on the meanings of the verses, but this special chapter veiled its explanation until the time of the Promised One, that means the Báb should come and explain it. Now, you all know from Nabil's Narrative that the first thing He wrote for Mulla Husayn was the first chapter of His commentary on the Surah of Joseph, the "best story". And why did He do so. Why had they been waiting for one thousand years for the commentary on the Surih of Joseph? First of all, when you read it from the very beginning, the very moment when the Báb declared His mission, he started with the praise of Bahá'u'lláh. He started to foretell the coming of Him. He started to imbue in every one the expectation of Bahá'u'lláh. And then He lamented the sorrows of Bahá'u'lláh. He says as Joseph was wronged at the hands of his brothers, so will Bahá'u'lláh be, so will the Master be, and so will the Guardian. That's why the Báb mentioned it, and explained it so that there would not be any controversy, because the controversy had been great in the past ages - others went against the covenant. In this dispensation, the most near relations had been against Him, and the Báb wanted to create this concept in his followers so that they would be ready for such a great catastrophe. That's why he mentioned it and explained it.

Now, here is a little story. There was a Bahá'í in Isfahan. You know the people of Isfahan are extremely funny, they always make jokes. Well, this Bahá'í had many letters from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. And then once he received a very short letter from the Master, at the time when the Cause had spread in Europe and in America. He wrote to the Master and said when Prophet Muhammad had not many followers he used to reveal for them the Surih of Baqarah (Cow), the longest surah in the Qur'án. And when the Prophet had many followers, he revealed the shorter chapters which are at the end of the Qur'án. Well now that the Cause has spread to America, it seems that you are forgetting me, and writing me short letters. And the Master sent him a very long letter in response to that.

In the Qur'án, besides the stories, exhortations and wisdom of God there is a great deal about learning. He encourages the Arabs to learn, to go around the world seeking knowledge and learn from different people. In the Qur'án it is written (*in Arabic*) "hit the ground", meaning go to all the places. And He orally also told them "Seek knowledge, even if it is in China". The Arabs did so, and went to China and learnt from them. Seek knowledge even if it is in heaven. He encouraged them. Seeking knowledge is compulsory for men and

women in Islam. Well after that the Arabs dispersed around the world and learnt many things from many different people, and it was as if Islam was composed of all the different civilisations of the past, brought by all the past prophets, poured them into a melting pot from which a new civilisation emerged.

They went to China and brought back paper, the compass and gun powder. I wish they had never brought back gun powder, but they brought it anyhow. But you know paper was the great revolution that was brought to the knowledge of mankind. When the people had more paper, they were encouraged to write more and to give more of their knowledge. And the compass encouraged people to go to the middle of the sea and discover other countries. The Americans must be grateful for the compass the Muslims brought from China. As a matter of fact compass in Persian and Arabic means that which shows the mausoleum, you know they want to pray towards the Ka'bah, and by that they found the direction. They only had it for that, but the Europeans got hold of it and sailed. The Arabs went to India, and from India they brought the most useful thing ever brought to the hands of mankind., i.e. numbers, amongst other things.

Before that time they only had Latin numbers, and you know what a clumsy way of writing that is. Having these Latin numbers only, the whole of mathematics would not have developed. If you want to multiply two numbers in Latin, a whole board would not suffice. But the Arabs went to India and got numbers from them. It is very interesting to know how the Indians got their numbers. They got it from a circle with two diameters perpendicular to each other. Now we consider nine the highest number, the climax of all numbers, because whatever you write after that is composed of other numbers. There is no number higher than nine. The Arabs wanted more than this and they invented zero. In fact the Arabs called it *Sefer*, and zero is a mispronunciation of the Arabic word "sefer".

Now, when they made progress in numbers, mathematics came to them and they invented algebra. In Arabic they call it *Aljabr*, and the word algebra has come to the English and other European languages. Now, "gabr" means "force", meaning a subject which is not studied by the students by their own free will, but they are forced to do it. Then we have many mathematicians in the Muslim world and the word *log* (logarithm) also comes from the Arabic world. There was a Persian who made a schedule, by which he could find the result of the multiplication of two numbers, two big numbers. First of all schedule is an Arabic word, in Arabic it is called *Jadwal* and secondly the name of the man who invented it was *Kharazmi*. Now I can't blame the Europeans for not being able to pronounce this, but little by little it was shortened logically. But please remember that it was from the Muslim mathematicians.

Anyway, they got many other things from India. Then they went to Persia and from Persia they got the books, literary books, Fables and the administration of countries, written at the time when the Persians were at the height of

their civilisation due to the influence of Zoroaster. They went to Asia Minor - Turkey and Greece. There they came to the source of knowledge, the books written by the great philosophers of Greece (referred to previously) in the times of Moses, the books written about philosophy, science, mathematics etc. were all stored in monasteries, churches and similar places, some of them untouched, some of them indexed as to what to read and what not to read. The Arabs bought them, and brought them back. They contained knowledge of medicine, geometry and chemistry, and many sciences. They took them back and started to encourage their own people to work on these things and it resulted in a great civilisation.

(Referring to a map and mentioning Spain, North Africa, Palestine, and Italy). Now Baghdad gathered all these books and translated them into Arabic. They added their own inventions and their own discoveries to all these sciences brought to the universities of Baghdad in books from China, India, Persia, Asia Minor, Greece and North Africa. You know that from about the eleventh century, the crusades took place. For about three hundred years the Christians used to come in flocks to Palestine. When they came they did not only fight, but they came into contact with the Muslims and the scientists and with men of learning. They began to realise how much knowledge the Muslims had, and they got some parts of the Arabic civilisation and Arabic learning. When they got into North Africa they did the same. Really the most interesting point about the history of Islam is the basis of our civilisation of today. Muslims gathered all the ancient civilisation together in one melting pot of Baghdad - the great centre of learning. Now the Europeans, due to the crusades and their contact with the Muslims in North Africa and in Spain, wanted to have these things, therefore they wanted the Arabic books translated into their own languages and there were many Jews who had been living in all these places. The Jews started to translate all these books into the European languages - it was a great service that the Jews did to European civilisation. So the Jews translated, and the Christians got these books, read them and added to them. Now we see the followers of three great messengers working together in the time of Islam to bring about the basic foundations of a world civilisation, and that is the civilisation upon which the whole world is living now. This is a very interesting point that we can find written only in the books and Tablets of the Master. He makes slight references to these things which allows us to realise aspects of this subject. There is another interesting point which I want to mention. I said the Europeans were using these Latin numbers and the Arabs used to have their alphabet for their numbers. And the alphabet were not letters, they would not say a,b,c,d and like that. They would say *Abjad*, *Hawaz* etc.. Now these were used for numbers and for writing also. And of course with this method, progress in mathematics would never be possible. It is interesting for us to know this because it will allow us to understand many things in our religion.

Now can you calculate the word Bahá from this. That is why we have Bahá as nine. Can you calculate the word Báb = Five. It is very useful for us to know these things and very interesting.

Question: I thought all the Qur'án was written on leaves and bark.

Answer: No, only fragments, otherwise there would have been no trouble in collecting them afterwards.

Question: Were there just seven who knew the Qur'án by heart?

Answer: No there were more than seven, but these seven were outstanding and reliable and their memory was beyond doubt.

Question: Are there any recommended translations of the Qur'án for Bahá'ís?

Answer: The Guardian recommended two, the translation by Sale and that by Rodwell. But please note that the translation only was recommended, not the footnotes etc. We must not trust the whole translation either, there are many errors. You know, the Arabic language has many expressions which can't be translated into any other language. For example, you say the wife of the Guardian. We never say that. In Arabic and Persian we have a special word which is used only for that purpose which is Haram. I can't translate that. It doesn't mean holy, it doesn't mean this or that, it is specially for the wife of the Guardian. Or the wife of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It is not a new word, it existed in Arabic. And suppose this is translated into the Qu'rán, the translator will say the wife, but it does not mean the wife really. And in the Qur'án you will read statements about men and women. He says to men you are their clothings, and they are your clothings. By that He means you two are one body with one sort of covering clothing the body, you must be united in your family. With my apologies to all, one of the translators translated it as you are their trousers and they are your trousers. That was the closest he could do, but if he had put the spirit of the word, it would have been much better of course. And in many other places there are their funny mistakes as well.

Question: What do the words Islam, Muslim Mohammadan and Hindu mean?

Answer: Islam means to surrender. Muslim is the nominative form derived from Islam which means the one who has surrendered his will to the will of God. Therefore Islam is the name of the religion, Muslim is the name of the

follower. Islam the religion says surrender your will to the Will of God, and the Muslim says I have surrendered my will to the Will of God. Sometimes the historian does not want to write Islam or Muslim, he wants to nominate them after the founder of the religion so he designated them Muhammadan or Muhammadanism like Christianity. It's an English term, not Arabic - so exists in the English translation and not in the Arabic language.

Hind (Hend) is the name of India. When you say Hindi, it means a man from India, whether Muslim or Hindu or Christian. But when you say Hindu, it means the follower of the Hindu religion in India.

Question: Did the Muslims originate medicine or did they get it from somewhere else?

Answer: No it originated at the time of wars. And this is a very important point. Muhammad the prophet did not order his followers to fight, but He said you must only defend yourselves and your Cause. Because if those bands of followers were to be all killed at once in a battle against the powerful tribes of the times, the whole Cause of Islam would be forgotten. He said defend your Cause and yourselves. In these wars of defence He said women should also participate. Now, women had three great jobs. Firstly to give water to the men. They had these large skin bags, filled with water, and the women would go around and with cups in their hands, give water to the thirsty ones. Second to dress their wounds, which is where nursing started, and thirdly to encourage them by singing poems and thrilling words.

Question: The accusation made against Muslims that Islam was spread by the sword, was that in the time of Muhammad or did it ever take place?

Answer: It took place after the Prophet Muhammad. We have said that they elected their leaders after the Prophet's death. These Caliphs were first politicians and then leaders of their religion. They sent armies to other lands, but what they did first was to mix it with religion. They sent missionaries, for example to Persia, and told them that if they became Muslims, they would be under the protection of Islam. And they said if you do not become Muslims then you have to pay a sum of money, a tribute. If you pay a tribute, well and good. If you are not willing to pay a tribute, they would send armies there to oblige them to pay tributes. It is amusing to read in the original writings and commandments of those first four Caliphs, that they preferred that the people pay tributes and not become Muslims; they wanted the money more than people becoming Muslims. But under the successorship of Ali, the tribute was not demanded and Muslims did not wage war, they only defended themselves when attacked by others.

Question: In the Muslim Faith I have heard that when they are killed for their Faith they go to paradise? Is that true.

Answer: Yes, that is true. He says defend your Faith and yourself. When you are aggressively attacked by others, and if you are killed in that defence, you will go to paradise. They needed that in those days.

I will tell you some of the books on this subject. First there is "The stories of the Saracans" by Amir `Ali. It is one of the most authentic histories written about Islam. He had been an Indian, and the book is written in superb English. It is used as a textbook on Islam in many of the countries of the world. Second is the "History of Science" by Dr. Sauter. He is an American who has studied the history of Science and after 30 years investigation recently wrote a book. He is very much in favour with the idea that the basic foundations of our civilisation are Islamic. And he gives four waves of civilisation coming from the east to the west going back to the east and coming back to the west again. Very interesting treatment of the subject.

Session Five : Islam and the Dawnbreakers of the Bahá'í Faith

First successor of the Prophet Muhammad who was appointed by Him, was called `Ali. The second one, his son, Hasan, and the third Husayn - the two being the sons of Ali. These successors were called Imams. Now at the same time that the line of the Imams was going down to the descendants of Ali, there was another line of the Caliphates, also descending - those who did not believe in or accept the authority of the Imams, but stood against them until every one of them were killed by them. But the most important Imam was Husayn, who voluntarily went to martyrdom, who said if my blood is shed, the religion of Islam will be fed with it and will stay forever. That is why we have so many references to Imam Husayn in the Bahá'í Faith, and also in the history of the Cause. In the Book of Certitude, the Book of Iqan, pages 231 and 232 we read Bahá'u'lláh's words regarding the Báb:

"Likewise, in His interpretation of the letter "Há," He craved martyrdom, saying: "Methinks I heard a Voice calling in my inmost being: 'Do thou sacrifice the thing which Thou lovest most in the path of God, even as Husayn, peace be upon him, hath offered up his life for My sake' And were I not regardful of this inevitable mystery, by Him, Who hath my being between His hands even if all the kings of the earth were to be leagued together they would be powerless to take from me a single letter, how much less can these servants who are worthy of no attention, and who verily are of the outcast...."

You see how very important Husayn stands in our religion. The Báb Himself said "I heard in my innermost self a voice which told Me sacrifice like Husayn".

This is one reference from the Báb. And in another place, in Nabil's Narrative:

"In one of His Writings revealed in the Year A.H. 1260, the Báb declares the following: "The spirit of prayer which animates My soul is the direct consequence of a dream which I had in the year before the declaration of My Mission. In my vision I saw the head of the Imam Husayn, the Siyyidu'-sh-shuhadá, which was hanging from a tree. Drops of blood dripped profusely from His lacerated throat. With feelings of unsurpassed delight, I approached that tree and, stretching forth my hands, gathered a few drops of blood of that sacred blood, and drank them devotedly. When I awoke, I felt that the Spirit of God had permeated and taken possession of My Soul. My heart was thrilled with the joy of His divine presence, and the mysteries of His Revelation were unfolded before my eyes in all their glory."

So two great references to Imam Husayn; and the craving for martyrdom on the part of the Báb. He wanted to be martyred for the sake of Bahá'u'lláh. On page 231 of Iqan we read:

Gracious God! In His book, which he hath entitled "Qayyumu'l-Asma'," - the first, the greatest and mightiest of all books - He prophesied His own martyrdom. In it is this passage: "O thou Remnant of God! I have accepted curses for Thy sake; and have yearned for nought but martyrdom in the path of Thy love. Sufficient witness unto me is God, the Exalted, the Protector, the Ancient of Days!"

He desired and craved for martyrdom in the path of Bahá'u'lláh. In another passage of the Qayyumu'l-Asma, He addresses Bahá'u'lláh when He says I want to be martyred for Thy path. Now here is the most interesting point about the relationship between Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb. Whatever Bahá'u'lláh did for the sake of the Báb, the Báb did the same for the sake of Bahá'u'lláh. Whatever we read in the Writings of the Báb referring to Bahá'u'lláh, He did the same thing, for Him. Whatever physical thing happened to the Báb, the same thing happened to Bahá'u'lláh, Now there we read that He craved to be martyred in the path of Bahá'u'lláh and here Bahá'u'lláh says (at the time before His declaration), at the time when He was a Bábí, a follower of the Báb:

*"We stand, life in hand, ready; that perchance through God's loving kindness and grace, this revealed and manifest Letter may lay down his life as a sacrifice in the path of the Primal Point, the Most Exalted Word."*⁸

7. Nabil-i-A'zam, *The Dawn-Breakers*, (trans. Shoghi Effendi), Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974, p. 177.

8. Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974, p. 252.

The Primal Point and the most Exalted Word both refer to the Báb. The Báb said He wished to be martyred for the sake of Bahá'u'lláh and Bahá'u'lláh repeats the same sentiment. In Nabil's Narrative we read again,

*"...The Báb, whose trials and sufferings had preceded, in almost every case, those of Bahá'u'lláh, had offered Himself to ransom His Beloved from the perils that beset that Precious Life; while Bahá'u'lláh, on His part, unwilling that He who so greatly loved Him should be the sole Sufferer, shared at every turn the cup that had touched His lips. Such love no eye has ever beheld, nor has mortal heart conceived such mutual devotion. If the branches of every tree were turned into pens, and all the seas into ink, and earth and heaven rolled into one parchment, the immensity of that love would still remain unexplored, and the depths of that devotion unfathomed."*⁹

So we begin to understand the real importance of Husayn, as a sacrifice in Islam.

Now this is the map of the place where our Cause first started. This is Persia, here is Shiraz, and here is Teheran. One in the south, one in the north. This is the country of Iraq, which is also called Mesopotamia, a Greek word which means between two rivers - Euphrates and the Tigris. Sometimes you read in the Tablets, "the Euphrates stream of Thy love" - it means this river, figuratively speaking. Now we know that all the fights of Husayn's martyrdom took place in an area here. Now the city where the body of Husayn is buried is in this place called Karbila. It is composed of these two words "Karb", which means calamity and "bila" which means disaster. Calamity and disaster because such a great calamity, Husayn's martyrdom took place on this plain.

Is there any other place called Karbila in the Bahá'í World today? Well it is interesting to know that a Central American lady offered her own place for an institution (for the use of the Faith) and she called that place Karbila after reading Nabil's narrative. The Guardian has been extremely pleased and he told the Persian believers to tell the priests of Islam how much we magnify the name of the martyrs of Islam, even a believer in Central America has given her possessions and called it Karbila.

So this is Karbila. There are two other places, Najaf and Kazimayn. These three places are very famous. Karbila is the place where Husayn is buried, Najaf is the place where Ali is buried and Kazimayn is another holy place. Why do we mention these names? - well they are the great centres of learning. All those who want to study theology go from Persia, Iraq, India etc. to these three centres of learning and study theology.

In the book "The Promised Day is Come", there is one page about the clergymen of Islam and the Guardian there mentions everyone of these places,

what they have been studying. It is at the top of the page. For instance he mentions history, traditions, Qur'án, the science of words, the science of rhetoric, character, philosophy, ancient philosophy, things like that. All the Islamic terms are written down by the pen of the Guardian. Now, what is the situation in these places. I want you to visualise how they are living there. Suppose this is a shrine. Around it are houses of the people and very small lanes going here and there - narrow, small, dirty lanes. All the cities are alike, except that Karbila is more green and prosperous than these two, namely, Najaf and Karbila. Here and there you will find mosques, and it was a custom amongst the Muslims that wherever they had a Mosque, they would also have a school near it. This school had rooms around it where the students would have one room per student. The rooms were quite tiny, but sufficient for a student to be comfortable.

There is one man who is the head clergyman of the city. If the students are from wealthy families, they finance themselves. If they do not have enough finance, he will finance them to study. Sometimes the school is quite large, and on every corner of the school (not a regular class like this), a teacher will sit down. Now, the students coming out of their rooms, know which teacher teaches philosophy, traditions, the Qur'án, and rhetoric. In another school there is one who teaches history. So if they wish to study history, they go to this man and sit around him on the floor and he will discuss the lesson. There is no regular classes, no teaching program, no regular examination, but when they study all these different courses here and there, they will go to the head clergyman and say they have studied all these courses then he will examine them. When he is satisfied that they know all the rules and science of religion, he will give them a certain paper and the student will go to his own country and become the head of the city for religious affairs.

This is the situation. Having this in mind, please remember that a very great learned man rose up from this place called Ahsá which is between Iraq, Arabia and Persia. It is an Arabic region. This great man's name was Shaykh Ahmad. You know that Shaykh in Arabic means old man, and as the old men had been the head of the tribes and families therefore it has come into the Arabic language to mean the Headman. But they also use Shaykh to refer to a learned man. Shaykh Ahmad means the learned man whose name is Ahmad. Now he rose from this place and taught the coming of the Promised One to the people of his time. He made a trip to the little island of Bahrain and he wrote some of his very great books in that island. When the great priest of that island was approached by the Shaykh for his examination, the priest wrote on Shaykh Ahmad's paper that verily he is the examiner and not the examined one. This is what he has written. He found him so superbly conversed in all the teachings of Islam. It is interesting to note that our first believer in Bahrain was named Shaykh Ahmad also.

9. Nabil-i-A'zam, Nabil's Narrative, op.cit., pp. 268-269.

Question: Was he a Bahá'í before you went there?

Answer: No, no. There were no Bahá'ís there, but after a few years he accepted the Cause. When I asked his name he said Shaykh Ahmad.

Back to the original Shaykh Ahmad. He found this place very small for his work. Where could he find a better place than these three places of learning we mentioned above? That is why in Nabil's narrative you read that he departed from his place (Ahsá) and went to the places where there are representatives of Persia, Iraq, India, and all the Muslim countries gathered there for the science of religion. They wanted to learn something, to get something.

They gathered there and Shaykh Ahmad started his teachings. As he started, firstly there were 10, in the afternoon there were a hundred students. His fame went far and wide very rapidly. All those little clergymen became jealous of him and started to work against him, and you will read in Nabil's narrative all the things that happened to him by the clergymen of his time. Now you know the reason why, because they found their classes empty. All the students rushed to him.

After him, he named one of his students to be his successor and that one was from the north part of Iran, Siyyid Kazim. You see, the Báb from the south, Bahá'u'lláh from the north; Shaykh Ahmad from the south, Siyyid Kazim from the north. South and north, just overwhelming the whole country.

So Siyyid Kazim took over and became the leader after the Shaykh's death. Now I have made all this introduction because of this little point. One day, Siyyid Kazim sat in his class, and a number of students came in. His students, who were of the very famous people of the time, the greatest poets, the greatest literary men of his time, the princes, the learned men of the time, those who were taking certificates were sitting in his class. One day he came to the class and said there had been some of the great learned people at the time of Shaykh Ahmad who used to help our cause and make the people ready for the coming of the Promised One, and those great and learned men are now in the cities of Iran but are silent now. They do not help us. I want one from amongst you to get up and go to Iran and talk to these people and bring them back to the Shaykhi School and make them help our cause. We need them now. We need some people to make the populace of these countries ready for the Promised One so that they will not be inflicted by the flame of the wrath of God. They will be ready to accept the Promised One. Now there arose from the midst of the students a very fat man, the greatest poet. Siyyid Kazim said sit down, it's not your work. Another man said I will go. He said to him, it is a lions cage, don't play with it, you are not worthy of that, sit down. The third one arose, he said I will go. No, you are not worthy of that.

Now in the corner of the room, behind the students, there was a young man from this part of Iran, Kurasan. About 21 or 22 years of age. He was just

silently sitting there without any movement, without any pretence. Siyyid Kazim pointed to him. He said Mulla Husayn you get up. That was the first time we hear the name Mulla Husayn in our history, uttered by the mouth of Siyyid Kazim. He said you get up and go and he went, firstly to Isfahan. Without any delay, he went directly to the classroom of the great learned man of that city, and when he entered the class, without any attention to the learned men, he went forward and sat down in front of him and said why are you silent. Why don't you work for the Cause of God. Why don't you make people ready for the Cause of God, for the Promised One? The leading priest was so afraid of this brave approach by this young man. Also note that daily he went to the priest, and the students laughed at him because he was so young.

The leading teacher said I have seen some differences between the sayings of Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kazim. Mulla Husayn said no they are not different, they were both brought forward for the same purpose. Bring books and I will prove it. They brought books, he proved it to him so the teacher promised that he would write pamphlets and work for the Cause of God. Mulla Husayn left the room and went to the mosque. The man sent a servant after him. The servant came back and said that Mulla Husayn went to a certain mosque, went to a pond of water, took ablutions (it means he washed his hands and face), said his prayers, laid down on a mat and pulled his aba, his big long cloak, on him and slept.

The great man gave him 100 tumans, which is almost equivalent to 300 or 400 pounds of today, and told the servant to give it to him. He went back and presented the money to Mulla Husayn but he did not accept it. He said that he did not need money, and urged him to tell his master to fulfil his promise and that will be sufficient.

From there, we read in Nabil's Narrative, he went to Khurasan and did the same thing to another higher clergyman. Made him also an ally and brought him back to life so that he would work for the Cause of God. My purpose in telling you this story is not just to tell a story, rather to make us think. When Siyyid Kazim told Mulla Husayn, get up and go, have you ever thought how he went? Did he say I have family to support now, what about my brothers and sisters there. He had his own family, brothers and sisters. How can I go, what about them?. Where can I get some money to go on this long trip. He did not even ask his master what shall I tell this man, which way should I go. Immediately when he got the command, he got up and went and everything was done well. We do not know how he was financed, it is not mentioned in our history. Perhaps he sold all his possessions to do the work of God.

And when he returned from that trip he did not find his master alive. You have all read the history. And then again another point to all this that Mulla Husayn was a youth. It is especially the privilege of the youth to do these things when they are quite light and unburdened, they are not yet entangled with the difficulties of life.

They say once a king of India wanted to choose a great treasurer for himself. He invited his ministers to his court and after giving them something to drink he said that door leads to my treasures. You go inside that and see all the things exposed to you. The rubies, the pearls diamonds, everything. Then from the end door go out to your houses. When they went in and there was no one to control them or able to see them (and they thought from the next door they would go to their homes), there was no one to bother them, well they made free of all those things and gathered in their pockets as much as they could. Some got pearls, diamonds, silver, gold in their pockets everywhere. And they went out and entered a certain court and there was the king standing in front of them. He gathered them all together in the court, and ordered his appointed musicians to play. "Now, all of you must dance to this music and I want to see which one of you dances the lightest," commanded the King. Those who had been heavy with all the things they had carried on themselves of course could not dance nimbly, could not go on their tip toes. There was only one young man amongst them who was dancing and jumping and bouncing. Well, the king chose him as his treasurer.

Now the Guardian wants us to be like that. The music of the world is going on, the Guardian says come on and show your art, show that we are not entangled by the world, that we are light, not heavy. Please remember this passage of Bahá'u'lláh which should always stand in front of us. He says between God and his created, between God and man there is only one ladder of three steps. He said that the first step is names and all that belongs to it. In one of His prayers Bahá'u'lláh says "O God, save us from the oceans of names". The second step is the world and all its pleasures. Any kind of pleasure in the world. And the third, the next world with all the promises. Even that should not stand between us. He says any one who passes these three steps will immediately see himself with his beloved. If he does something, he must not think of the material aspects or the next world's bounties of God. He must do it for the love of God and that only.

How can we do that? We will do it if we have certitude. You know that there is a difference between faith and certitude. Suppose we are all thirsty in this room and there is a spring of water over there. We look at this spring of water. We have faith that there is a spring of water. But perhaps that spring of water is salty, we can't drink the water, it does not satisfy our thirst. If we go there and drink of that water then we will come to the stage of certitude. Now when we know the Cause of God, we know history, we know teachings. When we practice that, put it into our everyday life, then we will reach the stage of certitude. And in that state, we can do everything and surmount everything in our path.

Let me tell you a story about one of the first believers who had reached the state of certitude. Once there came a man from some part of the world to the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. He pretended to be a Bahá'í and all the people were

very kind to him, especially one of the old believers who had been posted by Bahá'u'lláh to take care of him and to accept him in his own house. After about 10 days the man came to the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and said I had about 40 gold pounds with me when I came and last night the owner of the house stole it from me. Bahá'u'lláh called the old believer and said go and give him his 40 pounds. He immediately went and sold his things and borrowed some money and after some hours gave him 40 pounds. And he started to repent and say prayers for sinners. Later the visitor went to Bahá'u'lláh, with a scornful laugh in his mouth and said I wanted to test you. The man has not stolen the money from me, and when I told you I wanted to see if you could tell me that he has not stolen the money. But you believed my word. How do you say you are a prophet of God? Bahá'u'lláh said I wanted to show you what kind of faithful believers I have. And the Bahá'ís said to the old man, how come you immediately paid the 40 pounds. He said, Bahá'u'lláh said I had stolen, I was sure that I had stolen. There was no doubt, I must have done something with it, I didn't know what, but I was sure that I had done something with it. This is the stage of certitude that we wish to reach some day, through prayers. That was I think our lesson for this morning.

I was thinking about explaining about the power of the Word of God, but I was not sure where to find the translation of that work. But most happily the devotions arranged by Miss Dobbins had that subject I had in mind. Bahá'u'lláh says any word issued by the pen of the manifestation of God has certain power and potentialities emanating from that word and at different times certain souls receive those emanations and bring about sciences, arts, knowledge of mankind. It's one of the most interesting parts in the Bahá'í literature to show the origin of arts and sciences of human kind on this earth.

I wanted to explain this as I had it in mind to tell you. Yesterday we started saying about the manifestation of God, the Báb, the forerunner to this stupendous revelation of Bahá'u'lláh - that the Báb declared in 1844 or 1260 AH. We must know both these dates as in the books of the past, both dates are given, when the manifestation of God declares His mission. Now let us bear in mind that this year (1844) is the turning point in human history, arts, sciences, literature. Before that humanity was the same as at the time of Christ. Please read "One Earth" by Hemmerick Seller. In that book you see the changes which took place at the time of the manifestations. He brings a very beautiful example. Before Caesar when Christ was born, when someone wanted to go from Rome to London it took him twelve days on a horse. In 1839, the British ambassador to Rome wanted to go to England, which is the same distance, it took him twelve days also. It is the best example to give of how the world was the same until about 1844.

Now, when this year dawned, the Sun of Truth appeared and shone on the hearts of men. With the release of it by the Words of God, little by little everything sprouted out and new art, new literature, new thoughts, new inventions

came. If you study English literature, you will know that this year is given as the year of the coming of romanticism in English literature. The romantic poets in English, French and German literature all over Europe wanted to break off those strict rules of classicism, and they wanted to be free to express their own ideas; ideas about nature, about mother child, parents. You know the words of Wordsworth, you have read Coleridge, Byron, Keats, Shelly. Great figures in romantic literature appeared after 1844. All those great figures of the French literature such as Victor Hugo¹⁰ and the rest, appeared at this hour of the century. The greatest novel that has ever been written, *Les Misérables*, was started by Victor Hugo in 1844, and finished in 1863. He started it when the Báb declared his mission and finished it when Bahá'u'lláh declared His mission at Ridván Garden.

It was in the year 1843 when the great French poet wrote a poem called *Respoir*, the meaning of which is "hope". At the end of that poem it said "Oh God, humanity is in darkness, isn't it time that you come to take away the veil from your face and show yourself to us. This is our last hope in life". I will now read to you the dates of the poem, please note these dates and you will find many interesting things written about the Cause by those great literary figures who received the rays of the sun of truth. You will be surprised to know that Alfred de Vigny¹¹ one of the French poets, on the day of the martyrdom of the Báb wrote a poem on the crucifixion of Christ. And he said "what right have you to do that"? He said that you must worship God. As if he was talking about the martyrdom of the Báb. He felt the great sorrow, the great tragedy in human history and wrote of the name of Christ - with which he was familiar. One of the prophecies of the Báb is this, that the gospels should be taught all around the world, and our Hand of the Cause, Mr Townshend has said that it occurred in 1843, because the Bible had been taken to all the countries of the world except Tibet. It was taken to Tibet in 1843, and a year after that the Báb declared.

Then, if you look into inventions, you see the steamers, cars, planes, radios, everything else came into existence after that year. It was in this year when medicine too made sick people unconscious for operations. And the most outstanding of these inventions was the Telegraph. You know Morse was the man who invented Telegraph and this man tried his best in order to get telegraph at least between two cities in America to show the practical ways of transmitting news, but no one ever helped. When he had been friends with a little girl, a girl of about twelve or fourteen years old, and he did not have anybody else to open his heart to except this little girl. He told her of his troubles, of his tragedy in life and showed her how this wonderful machine works, but no one will help

10. Victor Hugo (1802-85), French poet, novelist, and playwright. His most well-known works are *Les Misérables*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *The King Amuses Himself* - which was adapted by Verdi for the opera *Rigoletto*.

11. Alfred Victor de Vigny (1797-1863), French poet, novelist and dramatist.

me he said. This little girl happened to be one of the daughters of a senator, and she went and insisted that her father do something, for this man. So then a telegraph was established between two near cities in America. When this had been done, Mr Morse went to this little girl and said you did all for me, now I leave it in your hands. I want the first message to be given by you. You give me the message and I will send it. She went to her grandmother who was always reading the Bible and the grandmother said it is written in the old testament that on that day these words will be spoken "What hath God wrought",¹² and she gave it to Mr Morse, and what time do you think this was transmitted, on the morning of the night when the Báb declared His mission. At night He declared His mission in the East, next morning when 'Abdu'l-Bahá was born, the first telegraphic message was given in the West, "What hath God wrought".

There are very many interesting facets when you study the history of the Cause along with the history of the times. You will find the history of the Cause supplementary to all these histories. The history books tell us that this year is the year of the industrial revolution. History does not explain what overtook the minds of the people of Europe, or what the source was. But now the Bahá'ís know, it was because of the coming of the Sun of Truth which brought to life all these latent powers within humanity.

Likewise with previous religions, whenever a religion came from the East, in the West material civilisation was brought into existence to help with the propagation of the spiritual powers.

Yesterday we studied about Mulla Husayn. After Mulla Husayn had become a believer in the Báb, went a second time from the region of Khurasan to visit the Báb who was incarcerated in Mah-Ku. It is a mountain, semicircle in form, like a ball broken in half. When you are in the mountain it is like you are under a ceiling. The Báb was incarcerated in that place. In His Writings He says that the king has imprisoned Him in this place which has no light, except a small candle and there is no one with Him except some dogs. That was all He had. It is also very interesting to note a reference in the Old Testament that when the Ark of Noah was settled down it was on the mountain of Ararat, and that mountain stands in front of the mountain of Mahku.

Mulla Husayn took a trip from Khurasan along all the northern borders of Persia, to this place which is the neighbouring part of Russia. We always say he went, but in every step he had difficulties. He took this trip on foot, that means he had been walking in the desert, and at night he would reach a certain place called caravanserai. Of course not as comfortable as your caravan here. By caravanserai, they mean a small house in the middle of the desert with rooms inside. Those passing by night come inside, take a room for the night then go the next morning. But Mulla Husayn who was such a well known person throughout Iran that he could never go into one of these caravans because he

12. *Old Testament*, Numbers 23:23.

would never come out of it. Those people would kill him so he had to go from one place to another until he reached the presence of the Báb. You read all the details of this in Nabil's Narrative.

The Báb told Mulla Husayn to go back and visit the friends everywhere and send them His regards. The very same thing that the Guardian is doing now. Whoever visits him he says send the friends my love, my regards and assure them of my prayers. The very same thing the Báb told Mulla Husayn. He gave the friends power and energy as he went to Khurasan. On another occasion he knew that there was some help to be given to Quddus in Mazindaran and he said to the Bábís of those days we want to go to Quddus. Many people followed him. But when he came out of the city, he passed some miles and stopped the followers and said, those of you who have any attachment in their hearts such as wealth, riches, family, dear ones in life without any hesitation go back, we want only those who have not the least doubt in their heart.

We only want those who are ready for the worst thing coming in life. Some of them were very frank and returned. Another time he stopped and again he did the same thing, and some others went back. By this he sieved his followers. He had the cream of youth under his hand and the third time he stood up on his horse and said I know that all of you have changed whatever you had in your possessions into precious things such as diamonds, rubies, emeralds so that wherever we go and we need something you may sell them. You have little things but costly. Now I want you to purify yourselves. I don't want you to have any of these things: possessions. Throw them out, into the desert. And the very first man to obey him, had two bags of precious stones, was the father of Badí the one Mr Furútan spoke about. He was the one who took the letter of Bahá'u'lláh to the King of Iran, his father was one of these followers. He immediately dismounted his horse, went to the desert and threw away the precious stones and the others followed: they obeyed.

[text missing] said to the second one - "you look to know about it." He said something about the inside of the bird and how it was created, but yet he was not satisfied. He said, "if you can break it I will see the inside." The man said "it is a precious gift from one of the kings of the earth to you. If you break it the whole relation is broken up."

He gave it to the third one and he did something. Everyone found excuses. He gave it to Iyaz, who was enamoured with the king. He said "Iyaz, what do you think?" He immediately took the stone and smashed it into pieces and said "this is the inside." But the king said "how did you dare to break this most precious pearl? Didn't you see my ministers, how they described this bird?" He said "Your majesty, your word is more precious than this. Had I not broken this I would have broken your word, your command. I don't want to do this."

Then let's try to be like that with the Guardian. Let's never break his word. Break other things, then we'll have more precious things of course.

There is another story about the same man. Once the same king took a great part of his treasury with him and went hunting. He specially ordered his servant to make a hole in the sack which contained these precious stones and these fell out on the way. Some parts had been strewn with these diamonds and pearls and other things. The King galloped away on his horse and went on. Suddenly he looked back and he found only this young man Iyaz with him. The king asked where are the rest? He answered they are collecting your precious stones. "Why didn't you collect some?" asked the King. Iyaz replied that he had never wanted anything in his life, only to be with the king. This is what the youth can do really. It is within their power as they are not yet entangled in life. They are like birds whose wings are not in the mud of the earth - they can soar with their beloved wherever the beloved says to go - and they will follow. If we get such lessons from history, then it will be a living history. To relate the dates of history - what date did that man come, how many were his followers. These are childish things. Let's learn one incident from the history of mankind, history about any religion, and make the lesson in our own soul, and let the soul exercise with these things till it shows its perfections which are latent, and then we will be so happy that we will be more ready to give whatever comes to us for the pleasure that we get out of those stages of perfection.

Friends, Foes, Followers

In Pharaoh's Egypt, as you remember that the Israelites had become worshippers of animals. That was the greatest difficulty that Moses had. He stood against it, and we also remember that he kept the Israelites in the desert of Trans-Jordan for forty years so that all the old generation would die away, and a new generation, those who were firmly believing in the One God would enter into the Promised Land.

If you study the Old Testament you will come across so many difficulties that Moses encountered with his own people. Please when you study it, study it in a comparative way with other religions. You remember that one of the greatest difficulties was that He went away for forty days and when He returned, they had made a statue of an animal and had started to worship it. When he neglected them even for a little while they returned to their old beliefs.

Now we understand how difficult it is to cleanse one's soul from previous ideas, habits and customs. It is difficult for all of us who have come to the Bahá'í Faith from different backgrounds; we bring in our own customs and habits and we want to sometimes adapt the Bahá'í Faith to our own habits. And it is very hard to adapt ourselves to the Bahá'í teachings.

Now in the time of Jesus, He had one great difficulty, and that was the three classes of the clergymen of the Israelites. The Pharisees, the scribes and the Sadducees. You know that the Israelites themselves were ready to accept the Messiah, but their leaders were always preventing them. You refer to the Gospels and see in many different places, the people come to the pharisees

and say Jesus is doing wonderful things, he is telling us beautiful words of God, there is nothing wrong with Him; but then immediately before they had finished their words, the Pharisees said “never approach Him. He is the leader or the prince of the devils and he is working with the devil and not with the spirit of God.” In some of the Gospels you see that the people are at a loss what to do. They don't know which way to turn. Jesus passes in the streets, goes into houses and Synagogues, cures the people, exhorts them, explains to them difficult passages of the Books of God, and yet here is that power standing against Him. There is the power of God also, but that government was Roman. Palestine was part of the Roman Empire. They did not have anything directly to do with Jesus. Their action against Jesus was only at the instigation of the Pharisees. Therefore Jesus also had one difficulty to face, and that was the people of Israel.

Government was interfering, but not very much. Moses had likewise one difficulty, his own people. Jesus had the people of Israel and a part of the government, but not very seriously, at the time when Pharisees used to instigate. You remember reading in the Gospels, when they go to the Roman governor and they take Jesus to him and he questions Jesus and comes out and says I haven't found any fault with this man, so that I could kill him. But the Pharisees said that from head to foot he is full of faults and he must be crucified. Well then the Roman governor, Pilate, brings water and washes his own hands. He says I wash my hands of the whole affair before anything happens to this innocent man.¹³ See how mild the governor is towards Jesus Christ. It was all the insistence of the pharisees. That is why in the Gospel of Matthew you see so many “beautiful” things said by Jesus to the Pharisees. He calls them vipers and the sons of vipers. He calls them graves, inside full of dirt, but outside full of ornaments. Please study them. It is very useful for us to know how these people stood against Him.

Now at the time of Muhammad the Prophet as we remember, his own kinsmen were against him. That family were always against Him; stood against him with one force. In Arabia, there was no government to interfere with these matters, but it was the collective force of the people that aimed to stop Him preaching His Cause. His greatest enemy was His own uncle who was called Abu Hakim, the father of all philosophers. He was a great man, a very learned man, but he could not believe in the Prophet Muhammad. The prophet called him Abu Jahl, which means the father of all ignorance; and he was really because he could not see the truth of the Prophet Muhammad. For 23 years, Muhammad used to go from town to town, even to villages and He used to preach and recite the verses of the Qur'án, and brought many families into the new Faith, tribes who used to be antagonistic, he united them. But the forces from inside His family were always against Him, but no government.

13. Matthew, 27:24.

This is an interesting story that may help us in our pioneering. Once the Prophet sent His cousin Ali who was appointed as His successor also, to certain parts of Arabia. He said “you go there to the city of Yemen and teach the Cause. Give a speech there in the square of the city and come back.” He went there and you know Yemen had many Jews there, still it is one of the greatest centres of the Jews. He went and called the people to come into the square and he spoke to them. One of the things he spoke was this: some of the people do not see in the daytime, but they see at night. Some do see in the daytime and some see neither in the daytime nor in the night. This was one of the things he mentioned in his speech. Well after his speech was over and the people dispersed to their houses, one of them went to a very learned Jew who was living in a secluded place and asked what was the matter in the city. He said “a certain man by the name of Ali came and spoke to us and he said that there is a prophet in Mecca. And amongst the things he said was about the people who do not see in the daytime, but they see at night and some who see in the daytime and some who see neither in the daytime nor in the night.” And the man immediately prostrated himself towards Mecca and said “I believe in Muhammad the Prophet of God.”

They brought this news to Ali. None of the people who had heard him ever came to him, only the news of this man. He returned to the Prophet Muhammad, and He said “what happened?” “Nothing, thousands of people were there, only one who was not there believed.” Muhammad said “I have sent you for that man only.” You see you may go pioneering and many people come to you, but the one the Guardian has in mind may never come to you. But those people who are between you and him may go and give him the message and bring him to the Cause. Our job is to go there and proclaim the Message of God; we do not know what will happen there.

One of the believers of Iran before I went to Bahrain came to me and said “I am too old to go, you are going for pioneering.” He said never worry. The Guardian has made the house of the Cause in that Island. He has arranged everything, has brought electricity to that house also, but that house is now dark. The only job for the pioneer is to turn the switch, and everything will be light. I went there and wrote him back that he (the Guardian) turned the switch for me, because really everything is done by him for those who go and do his bidding.

Now we come back to our subject again. These were the difficulties of the prophets of old. Now, we come to the Báb and His time. Well, the Báb faced difficulties unsurpassed in history. First, when he claimed His mission the clergymen of Iran who had the possession of everything stood against Him. And then the government also helped them. In other ages we did not have governments interfering, but at the time of the Báb both hand in hand stood against Him. When I say the clergymen of Iran, please remember this point.

We have two sorts of clergymen. There are those who wear green or black turbans and those who wear white turbans. Both are extremely dangerous, but there are some differences between them. Those who wear green and black turbans believe that they are descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, and as such they have the right to possess one fifth of your property. They even go to such extremes that they say one of the five fingers of your hand belongs to them. When they go at a certain time of the year they go to the farm and collect their one fifth and sometimes with chains in their hands they go and collect this from the poor villagers. Anywhere that they went and passed, the people were afraid for they knew something would happen, for they had this power in their hands. Now the white turbaned people believed that the Qa'im, the Promised One is the real king of the world and as he is absent they are his representatives, therefore the kings of Iran are subdued to them. Please refer to the Promised Day Is Come written by our beloved Guardian, in the place where he explains the power of the clergy in Iran, he very fully deals with this subject. As they claim that the kings were under their rules and obedience, therefore whatever they said the kings had to do. Obey.

I remember one day, one of the old believers in a village in Isfahan told me all his property had been taken by a certain cruel man because he was a Bahá'í. He said "I went to Tehrán and I went to the court and lodged a complaint and I got a decree from the King that he must give me back my property. I was so happy that I returned and showed him my decree from the King. He said that it is true that it is signed by the King, but what will our clergyman say?" They took the letter to the clergyman, who said that the decree did not matter at all, because he had not signed it. So the Bahá'í could not retake his own property as the clergyman had not signed the King's decree.

Well, these two great forces, the Kings and the Clergy, hand in hand stood against the Báb from the very moment He returned from Mecca, they put Him in prison; He was never freed, and from town to town they took him as a prisoner - they took him from Shiraz to the borders of Russia, and they kept Him there until they put Him to death.

Now is there any comparison between this and the life of other prophets? Moses was free to go to his own people, educate them, tell them about the Words of God. The people could see Him, could be magnetised by His presence. Jesus was going to the houses, seeing people in the streets, making miracles for the people. Going to the Synagogues - you remember He went one day to push out all those commercial people from the Synagogue. He had this freedom that the Báb did not. Muhammad the prophet for 23 years used to go here and there from village to village, though they tortured him very much. One time an Arab came and gave Him such a blow to the head that it caused a row of teeth to fall out. They used to pour ashes of fire on His head, they used to cover His road with thorns, they did everything to Him, but yet He was free to go

amongst the people, to sit with them, talk to them, but the Báb did not have this freedom. The followers were not free to see Him. After He left Shiraz, the governor of Shiraz proclaimed and said "In whatever house I find a page of the Writings of the Báb, the owners should be sure that the house will be destroyed to dust." And that is why in those days, anyone who had a Writing of the Báb used to bring it to the House of His wife and mother and for many months, they used to wash away the ink on the pages. Many of the Tablets of the Báb we no longer have because they were destroyed.

And yet with all these great difficulties, the government and the priests hand in hand stood against the Báb: Let's see what the friends and followers brought about. The followers of Moses were from his own people, nation, one sort of idea, and yet with all the miracles they saw from Moses, all through the forty years they were objecting to Him. Why did you bring us out of Egypt, we were comfortable there. Why do you command us to do this, why that? Why do you want our gold for the altar of God? Always why, why, why? And the followers of Jesus, who counted less than fifty, of which twelve were the chosen ones. These twelve did not know him. Once He asked them who am I. Only one said "I believe you are the son of the living God." Another interesting point in the gospel is this. When Jesus was proclaiming His message, doing His miracles, and he had gathered some followers here and there, who came to Him - two members of the followers of John the Baptist, who was at that time in prison. And they said "are you the Messiah, or should another one come?"¹⁴ There was a doubt there, He was not even sure about Him. Jesus said, "go to him, and report whatever you have seen here." Even Jesus did not say go to him and say that I am the Messiah.

And then at the time of the Prophet Muhammad, His followers were so meek, so humble, therefore all the people were saying paradise is for the foolish ones - they were making fun of the paradise Muhammad described for His followers, because only a very limited number of humble, illiterate ones were coming to Him. And then they told Him if you are a prophet, why is it that only these low ones with limited thought come to you?¹⁵ And they were calling him a mad poet,¹⁶ and His followers were very very few at the beginning, mostly illiterate, and as I told you one was that Negro from Abyssinia who could not even pronounce the words. There was another one who was a shepherd. That shepherd was tending his sheep in the fields and someone passed by and the shepherd asked what was the matter in these days. "It is nothing," he answered, "There is someone by the name of Muhammad who has come to our city and brought confusion to the city." He immediately bent down and prostrated and said immediately "I bear witness that Muhammad is the prophet of God." He was a shepherd, but his heart was mirror-like, and

14. Matthew, 11:2-4.

15. Qur'án, 11:29; 37:35.

16. Qur'án, 37:35.

the name of Muhammad brought him to faith. None of Prophet Muhammad's followers except Ali, His cousin, was a learned man. None of the followers of Jesus was a learned man, you know Peter the greatest of all was only a simple fisherman; Matthew was a tax collector and so on and so forth. But the Báb with all the restrictions He had, with all those enemies of the clergymen and the government, look at the list of His followers - none of them is illiterate. All were learned and erudite in those days.

Mulla Husayn was a great learned man of his time, Quddus also, Mulla Ali also. Every one of them, and the greatest amongst them - Tahirih, the great woman of that age, a miracle of her time, in a country where still the majority of women are illiterate, where the majority of women are neglected, are not considered to be anything equal to men. To have such a woman is one of the miracles of the Cause of God.

She is known by her poems, but she has something else which is much greater than her poems. There are pieces written by her in pure, beautiful Arabic and Persian, in answer to the questions of the clergymen and leaders of thought. She was so pure and had such insight that in one of her letters addressed to Bahá'u'lláh she says "Why don't you ask 'who is your God?' so that I can reply 'you are'". She knew Bahá'u'lláh from then, even though Bahá'u'lláh never showed anything in those days regarding His station and He was considered one of the followers of the Báb.

Think of the great Vahíd, who was sent by the King of Iran. You know if the King wanted to send a representative he chose the best - his name signifies that, it means 'unique'. Without any doubt of his erudition, they sent him to Shiraz, and the king said "go and investigate into the matter and bring me the news". He went and met the Báb, became a follower, and did not even go back to the court - he sent a message that he had become a follower, and he was martyred. Hujjat, from Zanjan in the northern part of Iran, who had a great school of learning, sent one of his students to the Báb to bring some sign about the truth. He brought back a letter. When Hujjat read the letter, he closed the books and said "we read these books to find our Beloved. Now that we have found Him, close the books, we no longer need them. Now is the time of action." He believed in the Báb and we know that he was martyred in the north of Persia. And thousands of these people gave their lives for the Báb in those early days. Amongst the early believers we can find none who really were from humble origins or who were illiterate completely. They were men of learning, men of erudition, especially in divine theology and they found their beloved and they established the Cause of God and sealed the Faith with their pure blood.

Now, here I remember something, one of the beautiful passages of our beloved Guardian. He said the Bahá'ís when talking about the history, teachings, the administration, the principles, world order, they must never depend

on these things when they teach the Cause, they must never boast about these things. These are not proofs to the people. One and only one thing will attract the people, that is the life of the Bahá'ís. No matter how much he relates history, no matter how much he describes the world order or administrative principles or the laws detailed in the books of Bahá'u'lláh, they are of no effect unless they are followed by a mirror-like life. He says his life must become a mirror into which the sun of these teachings will reflect and his life will show to the people all those principles in his daily life. It is a precious Cause, we must try our best to see if there is a trace of character, we must try to do our best for the sake of the Cause.

Now you see that all these believers came from all parts of Iran - we don't want to go into all the details of these things, but some came from very small villages, villages of one-hundred people for example. Villages that are absolutely destroyed now - destroyed because there were Bahá'ís there, but they came to the call of God, they gathered around the Báb, they gathered wherever there was something to do. They gathered in Nayriz, in Zanjan, in Tabarsi, in Khurasan, all these great centres of activities, they went there. Whatever was to be done they did it. They neglected their properties, wealth, fame, learning, everything and 'life in hand' as we say, they went to the battle-field. There is a story about a bird, I heard it in India, and I find it very useful to illustrate this. I don't know if you have heard it before. There is a bird, the eggs of which are very much hated by other birds. Wherever the bird has its nest and lays its eggs, other birds will attack and destroy the eggs. In order to have little ones, this poor bird goes to different nests of other birds in the forest and lays eggs in different places. And they are hatched under different mothers. But when she is sure that the little ones can fly, she just goes to the top of a tree and sings a certain song and all these little children will come back to her.

So that you will be taken back to the conditions of those days so you can see how they accepted the faith, how they lived for it, under what circumstances they used to teach, and how they died for it. 'This is the story that I have heard from the man himself. Once I was living in a village, I was there for 5 years. The village had a population of 30,000 people, only 2,000 were Bahá'ís, but these Bahá'ís were so stalwart, staunch and steadfast that all the people in those surroundings used to say that all the people in this village are Bahá'ís. Though only 2 out of 30 were Bahá'ís. It was such a beautiful community. Every night we had a public meeting, all the farmers used to come back from their farms, to the Hazirat'ul-Quds. No formal program was made for it. But tea was served by the committee of service and usually they were asked to tell stories of the past, and for 5 years I heard these stories every night and sometimes during the day and the stories were not ended. We had always some visitors from other parts of Persia for the believers in that village were well known for their hospitality. It was in that village that I first started to become fat. I remember

once there was a Tablet that belonged to the city of Kashan. Someone was chanting it, he chanted the first two lines and one man said "here are twenty-five of them". Twenty-five friends from that city of Kashan had just come to see us the moment we had just started to read the tablet. And they came in and the rejoicing was really complete. One day came to us, an old man, very old, hugely built, and from his face you could read great sufferings he had gone through, and from his lips you could see what a beautiful smile he had, passed through all these ordeals. The friends' joy had no end when he came to us. He came from the same city where I was born as I came to the Bahá'í religion at the age of 17 or 18 very easily, I really kissed his feet because I said it was due to your suffering in our city that this gift of God was given so easily. I loved this man intensely. Then, one night the Spiritual Assembly asked would you like that we bring some inquirers for you to speak to them about the Cause. He said "when I was in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá he said go and teach the Cause of God, I told him Master, I am a simple carpenter, how can I tell them about the Faith. He said tell them your life story, that will be a great teaching." That is why I am giving you his life story now.

He was a simple carpenter in the city of Qum. It is the city where in Nabil's narrative we find that Qum was the city that the Báb did not want to go in. Somebody came to him and told him little by little about the Cause. It took him ten complete years to understand what Bahá'u'lláh said. He said "I didn't know anything about my own religion, I didn't know how to read and write, how could I understand this great Cause of God? From the moment I started talking to the man about the cause, I knew there was something in it, but I wanted to grasp it, but I couldn't, I didn't have the capacity - it took me ten years to develop that capacity within myself." But he said "The moment I said I am a Bahá'í, I immediately stood up for teaching. And I started to teach. The whole city rose against me, and the very first week I became a Bahá'í they put me in prison." He said "Now I tell you something about the prison, but you can only have a conception of it, you can't imagine it." He was telling to the people who were also suffering and said "they opened my legs as far as they could and they tied one leg to one end of a log and the other leg to the other end. And then they laid me down and tied my head to the log. The man that was there started to beat me every day." The first three beatings each day I mentioned Ya Ali'u'Ala, Ya Baha'ul-Abhá and Ya Bahá'u'l-Abhá - I mentioned the Báb and Ya Bahá'u'l-Abhá - mentioned Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá and then I didn't feel anything." These three words. He said "The friends in that city tried to bring me out - there were only three Bahá'ís at the time, and one went to Tihrán and went to the outstanding Bahá'ís and they approached the Prime Minister and then a telegram came that they should release him from prison."

He said "My mother saw me one day in the street and she hit her breasts so hard that blood came out and said that I will never forgive you that you

left Islam and became a Bahá'í." He said "One night, the four of us gathered together, we were so poor, we gathered four pence. One penny was spent for charcoal, and one penny for tea and two pennies for something to sweeten our tea with." He said "We had only this much, and we made a nineteen-day feast. Just as we started to say prayers, a group of people came in to our feast and scattered us." And due to that, one of the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, one of the greatest that He has revealed, was for these four people who had nineteen-day feast in those days. He said "The name of 'Abdu'l-Bahá had always been in my mind and I wanted to meet him. Suddenly there arose something in my mind and I wanted to see Him. And at this time I had worst saw in the log, the dust of this saw came to my eyes and I had very terrible eye disease, and at this moment I decided I had to go on foot to 'Abdu'l-Bahá." His eyes were so bad that he had to open them, go three or four steps, "then open them again till I reached the first city where I worked as a mason. When I had some money I went to the next village and so on, village by village, town by town till I reached Baghdad. When I reached Baghdad I dreamed of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and he went like this twice to me, I said I am sure that He is accepting me. I passed through the Arabian desert, an extremely difficult desert to pass through with guides, means of transport still in difficulty."

He passed through the desert on foot until he reached Beirut. In Beirut he saw Muhammad-i-Baghdadi, one of the believers at the time of Bahá'u'lláh, who was there to receive the visitors and guests of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and he went to his house. He said "Have you written to 'Abdu'l-Bahá?" The man replied, "No, something told me I had to come." Muhammad-i-Baghdadi said you don't have permission and 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that everyone must have permission before they come. He said but he gave me permission in my dream, but the man said that that is not a document, we must be orderly and the Master said that no-one can come without the permission. He told him where is the house of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he said "You must cross the sea." He said he was so mad he wanted to throw himself into the sea and swim to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. And then he understood that he was enamoured by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, so he said "You can stay in my house and I will write to the Master." He wrote to the Master and the answer was that the visitor is permitted, let him come. He said "I went on foot to the House of the Beloved. I went in, they said 'the Master is in this room, you must go in.' He said "Suddenly I saw all the things I did in this life. I saw the moment I stroked my sister with a piece of wood. I saw the time I scaled the wall and saw something when I was a Moslem. I saw the time when with a hammer in my hand I hit against the people who were always fighting in those days." And he said "I don't want to go in, I want to go back." At this moment the doors opened and 'Abdu'l-Bahá embraced him. Yes. He said "I didn't know, I don't remember the moment 'Abdu'l-Bahá embraced me, I only know after perhaps hours I appeased of it and I heard the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá - 'you are welcome, be assured, you are welcome.'"

And then 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked his own barber to take some blood out of this man, yes he took a little of his blood and then he said I felt a little bit better. Now there was a man who used to work in the pilgrim's house. This man used to say to the visitors, "Now it is one month you are here, now you must go tomorrow." The other one next day, next month and so on. He said "I went to him and said the friends come here and become alive when they see the master. You are the angel of death when you come and say you must go tomorrow. By His own life if you come and tell me this I will strangle you here or throw you in the sea. If the Master tells you, tell him I am not ready. Let the Master come and tell me I must go." He said one day also, the Master was standing at the door, you know when they used to eat with their hands, they used to wash them first. Well the Master would pour water on the friends' hands to make them clean and then the Master from His own shoulder would give each one a towel. He said "I took the towel, folded it, put it in my pocket and sat down at the table. When the man came to collect the towels, he said 'you did not give it to me, the Master did, let Him come and take it back.' Well, this man promised never to tell me to go out from the presence of the Master. Then some weeks passed and the Master one night said 'the friends in Ishqabad are building a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, they are going to start. We will send them some money, each one, as much as we have.' So all the friends gathered the money and gave it to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. One of the friends didn't have any money, so he borrowed some money from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. 'Abdu'l-Bahá then said 'write the name of Muhammad Hasan on the list and note that he borrowed nine shillings from 'Abdu'l-Bahá.' And they wrote it down. And then the Master said, "Oh how I wished that I could go to the Temple and work there as a mason, as a labourer. I want to take mud from one place to another, stone from one place to another, I want to work as a labourer. But I am imprisoned in this place, I cannot move from this place, but how I wished to go.' This man stood up and said 'I will go'. Then I thought that I had become the angel of my own death, the man didn't tell me to go, but I stood up and said I would go."

Well the Master said, "alright you can go, but we have something to do yet, and then you can go." That thing that they had to do was this; The body of the Báb had been carried from place to place, village to village until it had reached the city of Haifa. Now it had been Naw Ruz when this man was there and the Master said we have to enshrine the body of the Báb. And this man was appointed to take the marble coffin from the House of the Master to Mt Carmel. And when they did it, you have read the account of how the Master went there and took off his shoes and His turban. Well on that night, the Master returned from Haifa to Akká, but there were eight persons there, and we worked on the shrine, we made the gardens, sowed the seeds so that flowers would grow, we were so happy chanting prayers, singing songs and telling stories, and suddenly at about 3am in the morning, one of the believers said "let us write a

letter to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and seek confirmation from Him, because we were the first people to work at the shrine." And they wrote their names, and because they were eight and wanted to make it nine, they wrote the name of 'Abdu'l-Bahá because they said "You are always with us." And they started to walk to Akka. At about five in the morning they saw the balcony that Bahá'u'lláh used to walk on. The Master had been walking there and He asked them to come up. He asked, "Did you plant the seeds?" They said "yes." "Well," He said, "I wish that you had counted me as one of yourselves". So they brought out the letter and showed Him. He read the letter and immediately wrote the answer for it and He called them the sowers of flowers. And he told Mishkin Qalam to write nine copies of the answer and He gave each one of them a tablet.

This is one of the incidents. Well, he went to Ishqabad and worked at the Temple. If you have seen the picture of the Temple in Ishqabad in the Bahá'í World, the tallest man standing with something on his shoulder, well he is the man of whom I have told you in this story.

All through his life he was full of love, he never stopped showing his enthusiasm, even to the end of his life. Sometimes you would see him dancing in the street. I would say, "Ismail, why are you dancing?" He would say, "Sometimes when I am walking, I think that I am living in an age when Bahá'u'lláh has declared His mission, and I have seen His son, I can't control myself and I sing and dance wherever I am." Once he had lunch with me, I said: "Don't you just want to stretch?" He said, "If I stretch a little more I will reach heaven."

Now, another traveller who had been there at the same time told me this beautiful story, because it was at the same time that the body of the Báb was enshrined. He was from the city of Nayriz, the place where some upheavals took place at the time of the Báb - you will remember this from Nabil's Narrative. He was at the conference - do you remember the old man Mr and Mrs Blum,¹⁷ well this is the one.

His name was Vahíd. He said one day before Naw-Rúz, the Master said "I want to go to the shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, but my carriage has places for only three persons. And I only want from amongst you three persons to come." Then he asked Haji Mirza Haydar 'Ali, who is called the angel of Mt. Carmel, "Draw lots and whoever has lots will come with me."

They drew lots and three persons from the same city of Nayriz had been written on their papers - carriage. They went with the Master from Haifa to Akká and then to the shrine. On the way 'Abdu'l-Bahá suddenly started talking and said "It's tempest, it's storm". We looked at the ocean and there was not even the sign of a small wave. He said the time of Bahá'u'lláh was good; every day we had a new disaster, a new calamity, but these days things are quiet. We don't have ordeals and difficulties these days - how can we be happy. When he said this I was so frightened within myself I knew something must have

17. Alvin and Gertrude Blum were listening to Mr Faizi.

happened somewhere. In order to save the situation, I said to the Master that before I came from Nayriz, someone by the name of Husayn asked me to ask permission for him to come and to be honoured. Suddenly the Master looked at me and said he is already honoured. I grew with enthusiasm and excitement, I did not know what to do in that situation. We went to the Shrine and prayed, and then the next day the Báb's entombment was finished. Sunday after that we wanted to go back to our own city. The Master gave him a letter and said when you get back to Nayriz, open it and read it for the friends. I went to Nayriz, opened the letter and read it. It was about the entombment of the remains of the Báb in Mt Carmel and then he says that later he found out that on the day the Master was saying there is a tempest, that calamity is good, twenty seven of the believers in Nayriz were martyred, and the Master had written that the blessed body of the Báb had been entombed in Mt Carmel, it needed sacrifice, and the honour had been given to the friends in Nayriz. And one of them was Husayn, the one who asked to go on pilgrimage, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá said he was already honoured.

I thought of giving you these two stories to show how it took them years and years of growing within themselves before they could accept the Cause. How they worked for it, how they died for it and how they passed through the thorny road with love to the Master and the Cause. And we just see a shrine these days, with a body in the shrine but we must always think of the mysterious powers, mysterious events that have taken place step by step till the shrine had been realised.

The most delicious times in our life in Bahrain were when the pioneers passed through Bahrain to go to different parts of Arabia. They had to go from different ports so that people did not suspect they came from one country. It was not allowed by the Spiritual Assembly of Bahrain for us to meet in one place. They had to come at least after 10pm, because they were going to the most [text unclear] places in the world. If they were found out to be Bahá'ís they would be dragged back. One day a young man came and said he wanted to go to Qatar, where there were no pioneers. And it was very difficult for any one to go there. There were no boats or aeroplanes going there in those days. And we asked him was alone and he said, "No I am married, and my wife has sent me - we are tired of living in that city and we want to pioneer. I have come to pave the way." Well he remained there for about one week and then we found a sailing ship that used to take petrol to Qatar, and he sat on tanks of petrol all the way. He entered and most fortunately they wanted a carpenter and he volunteered for that. One week after that he sent word that he wanted another one to come, even if he doesn't know carpentry, it doesn't matter, let him come. So we sent another one immediately. When the second one arrived at the factory he said he didn't know any work, he hadn't worked as a carpenter. Well the first pioneer went to the master of the works and said every day I

am paid seventeen shillings. Please give me ten shillings and give him seven shillings, but do not tell him you are giving it to him from my salary. Just give me ten and give him seven and say this is from the factory. The master said alright, if you want it that way, and it was arranged for one year. During that year he learned the work, and we established by then two persons. They worked so well and so faithfully that they said if he wanted to go and get his family, they would give him a passport.

They gave him a permit and he brought his family - his wife and his little son. And they hired a house. Their house became a centre amongst the friends and they were most wonderful. And then after that there were lots of pioneers - now we have about twenty five, due to the faithful service of this first one. When they were many, the Shaykhs, the clergy, the religious leaders were against them and wanted to send them out. They were afraid of their influence. They called the first pioneer and said you must go out. He said by what order. They said by the order of the governor of this city. He said I will go out but I will be responsible in front of our International Bahá'í Council - he frightened them by this word. He said we have this international administrative council they will say why have you been sent out, what have you done, have you killed somebody, have you stolen something? If I say it is because I am a Bahá'í, they will not accept this reason. They were frightened for one whole month, they wrote to us that they were in difficulty and every night we prayed for them the remover of difficulties. And after one month they said you can stay, and they even gave them passports and allowed them to go to the conference and we met them there.

Another outstanding figure, a young man who was a graduate from the agricultural college, he decided to go pioneering. He came in to another part of Arabia where the Arabs from the desert come out of the desert just to eat something, and then go back in.

Mr Furútan

After twenty years serving in the Central Administration of the Bahá'ís in Iran, it is a great pleasure for me to be at this Summer School. I think that it is one of the best Bahá'í Summer Schools in the world, first, because it is established near the first Bahá'í Spiritual centre which was established in this country. Second, it has for 18 years served the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. And third, the order and beauty which I have witnessed everywhere. I have been to some of the Bahá'í summer schools all over the world, but this one has a special place in my heart. The greatest gift that I can offer this institution is my heartfelt prayer and request to the threshold of Bahá'u'lláh so that He by His unlimited bounties will enlarge the school and services rendered by this institution.

Those persons who are singled out by the Hands of Bahá'u'lláh to establish

Bahá'í administrative centres on this earth, and He enabled them to achieve charitable deeds during their life, must always stand out as shining examples in front of all the Bahá'ís, because it is only the sacred deeds which always shine like eternal stars from the horizon of the Abha Kingdom and from the horizon of this earthly life.

I know that you all realise that one of the great principles of the Bahá'í religion which is the most outstanding is that religion and science must always be in accordance with each other and must always go hand in hand in the service of humanity. One of the greatest miseries of mankind throughout the ages is that science and religion have been kept always apart. Science has divorced religion altogether, and religion has always hated science. The world of humanity has remained with one wing entangled in the mud of this world. But during this dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, the two wings are even.

The two sides, those who divorced religion and those who hated science have always been the cause of great misery and both are responsible for the many wars and bloodshed which have taken place during the history of humanity. Of course, you all remember the two great wars, these two great catastrophes which took mankind to the abyss of misery were the result of the conflict which existed and still exists between science and religion, and their followers. Some of these wars were very long - 300 years, and resulted in so much bloodshed. e.g. the crusades. For the first time in history, Bahá'u'lláh wants to bring these two powers together so that they can work for the prosperity of mankind. The place where these two powers will meet is in the schools. I have spent all my life as a teacher. I have studied the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the topic of education, and both advise humanity to have these two subjects taught to the children, so that they will be brought up by these two great powers.

Of course the time will come when the Bahá'ís will have their own educational institutions. Until such time, we must place great emphasis and importance on the summer schools. This is where we receive real Bahá'í education. That is why the beloved Guardian has said these summer schools all over the world are the introductory steps toward the establishment of Bahá'í universities in the future. One of the examples by which we can understand the nature of these schools is this: If we wish to make some soup, first we bring a pot, and then into the pot we place many elements. We are those many elements placed in the pot of the summer school. By the heat of the love of God, we will be boiling and will produce something wholesome for every adult, youth and child. The result of such institutions will be great for all.

You all realise that the Cause has reached a certain stage. Let us suppose that all the Bahá'ís are passengers in a certain boat, the boat of the Cause of God. The boat has left the shore, that stage was the Heroic Age of the religion of Bahá'u'lláh. Now it is on a tempestuous ocean, passing through very stormy days and nights to reach the shore of the Golden Age of the Cause of

Bahá'u'lláh. Now during this time there are different elements coming to the boat. Some are from a Muslim background, some from Jewish and Christian backgrounds, some Persian, some American, Arab, European, all have different backgrounds, all come into this boat and bring some traces of their previous education and spiritual understanding. We must do our best to cleanse ourselves of those traces, and be pure Bahá'ís before we reach the next shore.

Schools are melting pots where all these traces and unnecessary elements will be melted and washed away. They are like a polish on the mirror. If we follow the instructions and steps then of course we will get the best result out of them. Therefore we know that we come to the summer school to mould our thoughts and spiritual understandings according to the stupendous Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

Session One : The real cause of divisions in religion

The lessons that will be given here are quite different from those at a conference. I will arrange it in such a way so that if there is anyone in the audience who wishes to take notes or refer to a book, he can easily do so. The subject I wish to discuss is what has been the cause of sects in other religions. All the previous religions of the past have been divided into many divisions and sects - what has been the cause of it.

If we thoroughly study the religions of the past, we see that some years after the ascension of every one of the prophets, all the toils and troubles resulted in nothing, in vain. The messengers of God came to unite the different members of humankind, and they did succeed in uniting them. But, after a short while, they were again dispersed. They came to collect them under the banner of love. After a little while they were divided into divisions. They came to create love in the hearts of the people, but after their ascension, that love was changed into utter hatred amongst the same members and followers.

Again, if we study the reasons for sects forming after the passing of the prophets and come close to the roots of those events we will understand that the followers did not want to recognise the centres of the covenant. They did not want to come to the centre of the Covenant in times of difficulties and everyone of them followed his own whimsical ideas and imaginations. They neglected the words of God and they were dispersed.

To illustrate this basic fact I will go through the history of the dispensations of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and will explain for you some of the reasons and some of the subjects which resulted in the formation of differences amongst themselves. This is something that I am sure you have studied, but I will briefly remind you of the same.

After Moses, for 450 years the Israelites were governed by elected people called judges. And the government had been very just and good - so good that the neighbouring countries respected the Israelites and the form of their government. And no division took place amongst them. After that, they changed the

elected judges into the kings on the throne. And the first king Saul was put on the throne of the Israelites to govern them. After Saul was killed there came David on the throne of Israel. And after him, Solomon. These two, David and Solomon were both prophets and kings. And it was during their reigns that the followers of Moses reached the climax of their progressive spiritual and material civilisation. The Mosaic civilisation was really established in their time.

But unfortunately, after Solomon, the followers were divided as to who should be the successor of Solomon. You know the Israelites were comprised of twelve branches. Ten branches accepted Jeroboam as their king and followed him. Only two accepted Rehoboam, son of Solomon, as their king. And it was the first time that division started in the family of Israel.

Now, those who followed Rehoboam the son of Solomon had their central root in Jerusalem and the holy of holies was there. And that was the centre of all of the Jews in those days, but his competitor Jeroboam chose as his centre the city of Shamron, and in order to persuade his followers not to go to Jerusalem to pay a visit to the holy of holies, he made a temple for gods and goddesses. When they were divided, they became weak and they had to find support from wherever they could. So each one of the rival kings tried to flatter the kings of Phoenicia and the kings of Egypt. In order to attract their attention to themselves, they brought into the temples the gods and goddesses and idols worshipped by the Phoenecians and the Egyptians and thus a great competition started between these two kings of Israel in bringing the idols into their temples.

Well, God was patient with them for some years, but this patience came to an end and he became angry. He brought upon them destruction. First the Assyrian kings destroyed Shamron, and secondly the Babylonian kings destroyed Jerusalem and brought the Jews into captivity and to the city of Babel keeping them there for seventy years, after which the king of Persia - Cyrus the Great - delivered them from their captivity and caused them to return to their native land.¹⁸

Now, during this time of course, they were again divided into different sects and divisions and their whole power was scattered and they became weak and feeble so that they could not withstand any force from outside. At that time the great Roman Empire came and scattered the Jews all over the world and this time was contemporary to the time of Jesus Christ.

Now, consider this fact about the history of the Jews. Moses with very many difficulties brought them out from the land of Egypt and delivered them from their troubles in that country. They were slaves, he made them the masters of their own land. He made them learned men. He gave them the kingship of Solomon and David. He made them the centre of material civilisation. But due to the whimsical fancies and imaginings, they were divided into sects and

18. See the Old Testament, the Book of Ezra I.

their whole power was taken away from them so that they became so weak and feeble that they were the lowest people of the world, and were scattered.

The same history you will find amongst the Christians. It is unfortunate that this happened in all these religions. You all know that when Jesus was crucified, he had about 120 to 150 very poor followers, and it took them about three centuries to become well known or officially recognised in the Roman Empire. And it was only in the time of Constantine the Great, a believer in Christ, through whom Christianity was known in the Roman Empire. After three centuries they came to life and were known throughout the Roman Empire.

Then they became free and they started to teach the Cause of Christ in Europe, Africa and Asia. And wherever they went, of course they had priests and clergymen. But the one who was living in Rome became the head of all of these priests and clergymen of different continents and countries of the world and he was supposed to be the most learned of them all and was elected Pope.

After the seat of the Roman Empire was transferred to Constantinople, the great clergymen of that country who were under the mercy and bounties of the Empire did not want to obey the rules and regulations issued by the Pope in Rome and tried to make themselves independent of him. It was the struggle between them and the Pope that broke Christianity into two great churches of the east and the west. And that was the starting point for all the divisions thereafter.

The dispute was first about the authority of which one should be the greatest clergyman of the Empire and then the scientific and theological disputes started. And the first thing they disagreed on was the trinity - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These became subjects of great discussion amongst them. In the beginning they used to explain it very concisely and briefly saying that the son existed in the father like mind exists in the human being. As human being has a soul and one of its effulgences is the mind, so does the Son live in the Father. And the holy spirit is just a mediator between the two. They were discussing this and explaining it to the followers and there was no dispute about it. But afterwards they began to say now, between these three, which one was the greatest, Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit. Are we going to have all three on the same level, on different levels, which one is lower and which one is higher? And this became the starting point for divisions.

Arius,¹⁹ one of the theologians of the first part of the fourth century declared that there was no resemblance between father and son. Father is everlastingly living in his high position and sent his son as a manifestation amongst mankind for the education of mankind. And we must absolutely have them separated from each other.

19. Arius (256-336) was originally a native of Libya. His beliefs concerning the trinity and the divinity of Christ caused him his exile to Illyria (the ancient region of the eastern and northern coasts of the Adriatic Sea, known afterwards as Yugoslavia). His doctrine caused agitation for the whole church for more than half a century.

Now, when he expressed this idea amongst the followers, it was utterly against what the great book believed and propagated in those days. Pope and his followers, Arius and his followers began to dispute this fact, and quarrelled to such an extent that the emperor was obliged to gather most of these clergymen, in Nicaea,²⁰ in Asia Minor to settle the disputes amongst themselves.

It was in this congress where the basic principles of Christianity were formulated. And up to now they still believe the doctrines which were formulated at that congress in the first part of the fourth century. They said Father and Son are equal in degree, in origin and in qualities. Of course, we must never think that when one congress outlined the basic principles of Christianity they all followed it immediately and that there was no dispute or argument. They had great disputes and great wars and strifes amongst themselves by pen, by tongue and by sword. The history of these different congresses have been written by the blood of the followers of these great theologians.

In the fifth century, another calamity started, and that was the calamity of the Nestorians. The Nestorians said that Jesus sometimes called himself the Son of Man and sometimes the Son of God. Therefore we can call Mary the mother of man or the mother of God. And another church in Alexandria, stood against this idea, saying that Mary is the mother of God and that is all. Now when Christianity reached the borders of England, at about the sixth century, the division and differences between the two churches of Rome and Constantinople reached its climax. There was no end of quarrels. Sects were created every day as a result of different views and different ideas between these two different churches.

In the eighth century of Christianity another thing started, and that was this: should the Christians worship the pictures, icons and statues representing the Christ, God or the Holy Spirit? Now at Alrius in Sophia, which was a great temple near the country of Turkey, the king decided that he must have some, but the Pope was against it and ordered that he must resign his job. And that started wars between those different sects. Now the two sects became known as the worshippers and non-worshippers of the pictures, icons and statues of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

In the ninth century another problem started, this time between the Greeks and the Romans. They said from which one of the two does the Holy Spirit emanate, from the father or from the Son. Now the Latin people said both of them, the Greeks said from God only. And another series of strifes and wars started between the two countries.

In the tenth century, Christianity reached Russia, after one thousand years

20. Situated on the eastern shore of Lake Ascania, Turkey. It is especially famous for two religious councils held there, the first of which was convened by Constantine in 325. 318 bishops out of 1800 met to settle the Arian dispute concerning the question of nature of Jesus Christ. The Nicene Creed, which defined the Son as consubstantial with the Father, was adopted as the official position of the church regarding the divinity of Christ. The second council was convened in 787 by Irene, Empress of the East, and 350 bishops. The council ordered the veneration of images and their restoration in churches throughout the Roman Empire.

since the time of Christ. And it was in that century that the crusades started, and began three hundred years of fighting between the Christians and the Muslims over their Holy Places.

After that the Reformation started, Luther appeared and Protestants came into existence. And after that Protestants and Catholics became divided into still smaller sects and today you will find in every country more than 400 sects of Christianity. From then until now there have been more sects but there is no time to look at those new ones.

Now you see very clearly that the history of Christianity has been written down by the blood of its followers from the very beginning until now. For a very long time, there have been theological subjects to dispute about and to fight for. Now those things have been forgotten, there are political, national and racial prejudices bringing war between the Christian nations. One Christian nation is destroying the houses, cities and civilisation of another Christian nation.

Most unfortunately, one of the subjects they utterly neglected was the subject of women amongst the Christians. They did not rank them equal to men, and they neglected this great part of humanity. They did not realise that at least half of the population were women and they did not want to confess that they were equal to men, and they brought the reasons from their holy books. They went even farther than that, and discussed whether women had a human soul or not. Should they be considered as human beings or not. With apologies to the ladies at this meeting, they all decided that only men had human souls, and not women.

To support their own ideas, they opened their holy books. Of course, I don't say that the holy books said such things, but it was due to their ignorance of the meaning of the Word of God, and the wrong explanations of the Words of God. They opened the book where it said that God took some clay and moulded it into the figure of man and breathed into him the soul or the breath of life. And then He made him sleep and took out one rib and made it into women. But they contended that in the book of God, it is not written that He breathed into women the breath of life. Therefore, she has no human soul.

Some dared to question the clergy of those days "how come they move like men". They said, "well, there is a devil by the name of Beelzebub²¹ living in them and making them move like human beings, and that is why in paradise, Eve became first friendly with Satan and that was the cause of their expulsion from paradise." Open the third chapter of Genesis,²² where it says "now that you have become with Satan, you must have children with great many difficulties, and your husband will be your master and you must obey him." The same story has been repeated in the Qur'án, and that is why amongst the Arabs and the Muslim world, when they want to mention their wives they say "my

21. Beelzebub, Beelzebub and Baal-Ze-Bub: see 2 Kings 1:2,3,6,16 and Matthew 10:25.

22. The Book of Genesis, 3:16.

rib". Mr Furútan has a letter from his friend and he says my rib sends you her love. He says some of the Muslims are more fortunate and they say my ribs.

And Paul the great disciple also repeats and says these things in another form. He says God is the head of Christ and Christ is the head of man, and the ornament on man. and man is the head of woman. And then he goes on and says that man is not created for woman, but woman is created for man. As he is the glory of God, when he is going to the Church, he must take off his hat and have his head open in the presence of God, but women must cover their heads because they are not the glory of God, they are the glory of man.²³ Thus you see in every day in the history of Christianity, we have had some sort of schism brought about in that religion, even today. You will be surprised to know that sects are made for very insignificant reasons. One says: "what do you call God? You must call him Jehovah", and so they form a sect by themselves who don't use any other name for God but Jehovah. Another says: "which day shall we have holiday, Saturday or Sunday? So, they make another sect where they have Saturday as their holiday and things like that.

It is most surprising that they all say God is love. And we ask them if there is God then there must be love and not division. If there is division there is hatred, no love and hence no God. And that is why we say wherever there is division, hatred and schism, there is no God there and we do not want it.

The same thing is true in the religion of Islam. The moment Muhammad died, the religion was divided into two sects. Ali, his cousin and his son-in-law had to be recognised as his successor, but Omar, one of His followers did not let this be realised, and they elected an old man, Abu Bakr, as His successor, and this caused the two great sects, Shiah and Sunni, and now there are more than seventy different sects in Islam. With the exception of some years at the beginning of the Islamic dispensation, all the Muslims spent their time in wars against each other. If we really want to explain these things, we must explain 1000 years of warfare, civil wars amongst themselves.

The same subjects, and even things worse than that have been discussed by the followers of Muhammad, the prophet. Firstly, one of them said "is Gabriel, the one who was the mediator between Muhammad and God, a higher personage in the presence of God or is the servant of the House of Ali higher?". They said angels are made of the essence of things, since they are essence, let us see and count how many could gather together at the tip of a needle. They wanted the exact number and they fought over these numbers. Some said ten thousand, some said fifteen thousand, and thus they discussed all the days and hours of their lives for these insignificant problems.

You know they had Imams as sacred personalities and they called them sacred and pure. Well, they said: "our Imams are sacred and pure; when they sweat, is their sweat clean or not. If they are gathered in a certain place, can

23. 1 Corinthians, 11:3-9.

we make ablution for prayers with it or not". Their minds, especially the minds of the theologians of Islam, were, as we say in Persian, frozen. They could not think independently by themselves and they could not think about the serious problems of life. They were the same as the theologians of Christianity.

Now, for one example, I mention the name 'Abul Fadl, the greatest literary man and historian in the Cause. I want to give you an example of his life when he was a Muslim, how he was thinking and then when he became a Bahá'í, what a great change was brought upon him. When he was a Muslim priest - he was a great clergyman in Islam, and very learned too, he used to go and visit a holy place outside of Tihiran on Thursday evenings, and he used to go on a donkey. One day he took his donkey to a blacksmith who used to live at the gates of Tihiran who happened to be a Bahá'í. This blacksmith was illiterate. When Abul Fadl took the donkey to the blacksmith, the blacksmith started a certain discussion with him. The Bahá'í blacksmith said to him, "from the size of your turban, I understand that you are a big, learned man. I have a question for you. Is it true that the drops of rain are brought down by angels? We have heard that each drop of rain is brought by angels, they fly down to bring one drop of rain, then they fly up to get another one. Thousands of them fly up and down to bring this rain. Is it true or not? And Abul Fadl said, yes I have read it in one of our books. Then he asked from him, I have also heard that wherever there is a dog (for a dog is unclean to the Muslims) in a certain house, then the rain will not fall on that house or seven houses around it. Is it also true or not? He said yes, it is true, I have read this in our books. Then he asked him, please give this answer, if every drop of rain is brought down by an angel, and if angels don't come to houses with dogs, then there must be some houses without rain. How is it that we have rain everywhere, if this is the case. Well, Abul Fadl was really startled by this. He was a teacher of logic and philosophy, and he had read all these books without any serious attention to them, and now this question by this illiterate blacksmith had made him think and he was surprised and did not know what to answer. This was the introduction of him for becoming a Bahá'í. A blacksmith was the reason for him becoming a Bahá'í.

Just to bring our lesson to a conclusion, I want to give a final picture of the whole situation. There is the book of God given by a certain prophet to mankind for their instruction, education and guidance. He also appoints a certain man to interpret for him, but they did not want to pay any attention to him. Now this huge ocean of divine knowledge was divided by the ideas of different individuals into many little streams, weakening the ocean and weakening themselves and starting to fight against one another. This is a picture of all the religions of the past when they did not turn their attention to their centres of the Covenant. Well, this age is called the pride of all ages, and in the next lesson we will study how the covenant of God was established by Bahá'u'lláh in this age.

Session two : The Bahá'í Dispensation

Whatever I want to refer to tonight, you will have already studied in the books and Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I only want to repeat them to emphasise some important points. I am sure that you have come across the words "Cycle" and "Age" in the Tablets. Bahá'u'lláh is the founder of this Cycle, which will last at least 500 thousand years. And He is at the same time the founder of an Age which will last at least 1,000 years.

In this new Cycle which will last for 500,000 years, there will be many "ages" or "dispensations". The first one is that of Bahá'u'lláh himself and at regular intervals, every 1,000 years or so, a prophet will arise to renew the spirit of the Cause, all these prophets will be the propagators of the general principles of humanity laid down by the pen of Bahá'u'lláh.

When I say that this new Cycle will last for 500,000 years, and the general principles of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh will not change, please remember that those general principles such as world peace, the Most Great Peace, will not change. Do you imagine that by the coming of any prophet will this great principle be changed? Or that prejudices of all kinds should not be abolished? Do we think that this principle could ever be altered? Or education should not be compulsory? These principles will be carried on for evermore. As long as mankind is on this planet, he will be in need of these principles, and at intervals the prophets will come and give these principles new impetus, to penetrate these teachings further into the hearts and souls of the people.

The world will be united by the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, and never will the time come when the people say let's go back to the time when we were divided into sects. We have been divided into little countries' fighting. These teachings will progress mankind from one stage to a higher stage and this will continue for evermore.

When a man reaches the age of maturity he never goes back to the age of childhood. He will go on. The same thing will occur with mankind as a whole. Under the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, humanity will pass into the age of maturity, the wheel of history will ever be marching on and never goes back.

Now this "Age" which belongs to Bahá'u'lláh himself is divided into three great parts. First part is the Heroic Age. Second part is the Formative Age, and the third is the Golden Age. Now the Heroic Age is divided into three parts. Firstly, the time of the Báb, nine years. Secondly the time of Bahá'u'lláh, 39 years, and thirdly, the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 29 years. Altogether, 77 years. Now the first period, the time of the Báb, which lasted nine years, starts with the declaration of the Báb, and ends with secret declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in the dungeon of Siyah-Chal (Black Pit) in Tihiran. And that of Bahá'u'lláh starts with the declaration of Bahá'u'lláh and ends with his ascension in Bahji, thirty nine years later. And the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá from the time when they read the Will and Testament of Bahá'u'lláh till the ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Now, it is interesting to know that the Heroic Age which begins with the declaration of the Báb and ends with the ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá is exactly equivalent to the lifetime of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, because as you will remember 'Abdu'l-Bahá was born on the morning preceding the declaration of the Báb's mission. He was born with the birth of the Heroic Age, and with His passing, it came to an end. This is a very interesting point.

Now, in the life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, you find the history of the Heroic Age, the exemplary life of a hero in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, and the greatest example of servitude to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

In the first part of the Heroic Age, the Kingdom of God descended from the heaven to the earth. The religion of God was established. By the three great personages of the Cause, the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the victory of the Faith was guaranteed by the blood of 20,000 martyrs.

Due to the cause of the power of Bahá'u'lláh, and the receptive power of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, something new was brought into existence, and that was the Tablets of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This was a child born by the power of Bahá'u'lláh, and the receptive nature of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Guardian says that this document is an outline of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. The Guardian also said that the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are supplementary notes of the Kitab-i-Aqdas.²⁴

When this first Age, the Apostolic Age, came to an end by the ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, it meant that the law giving power of God came to an end, and the second stage, the Formative Age began. In this second Age two powers are needed: protective power of God and executive power.

Whatever was necessary for 500,000 years of humanity was laid down by the pen of Bahá'u'lláh in His books and Tablets, and whatever should not be changed in 1,000 years was also written down by His pen. But those things which would be affected by time, were left unwritten, but it was left to those elected legislative bodies to develop rules for the parts not written by the pen of Bahá'u'lláh.

Those things that would be affected by years and days were left for the boards that would be elected by the people, and they have legislative powers. Now, these will be of three kinds - international for the whole world, national for one country and local for one place. This shows the elasticity of the religion of God. It is steadfastly having roots in the principles of Bahá'u'lláh, but growing according to the needs and to protect, rules and regulations that will be laid down by legislative bodies.

There are two points worthy of attention. First, those legislative powers are boards, the members of which are not there by inheritance. They are elected by the people -international, National and local. And elections in the Bahá'í religion are absolutely free from all the destructive elements. That means there

24. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1944, p. 328.

are no candidates, no propaganda, no speeches and none of these other childish things done in the world today. It is the sacred religious duty of every believer to freely elect whomever from among his own community who is sincere, active and wise. The second element which is worthy of attention, is that there are parts that are not written by the pen of Bahá'u'lláh, but have been left to a board which are elected by the people. That board will put down rules and regulations for the whole world.

Now, within that legislative power, the international one will come into existence by three processes. First, all the local communities of every country will elect representatives to go to the capital city of each country to form the convention. The convention from all the believers in that country will elect the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly. The members of the National Assemblies will elect from all the Bahá'ís of the whole world the members of the International House of Justice. These members must be the most active, the most wise and the most sincere. Three times the communities will be sieved to have the most pure in the International House of Justice working for the whole of the world.

The International House of Justice will be established on Mount Carmel. It is from there that the streams of the knowledge of God, and the laws of God will flow down to all the countries. The National Spiritual Assemblies of the countries will receive laws and regulations from the International House of Justice, and the rules and regulations that have not been decided by the International House of Justice but are needed in their own countries will be decided by them. And they will convey all messages to the local assemblies, and the local assemblies will adopt regulations not mentioned there according to the demands and necessities of their situation. Now you see how the legislative power comes down from the highest International House of Justice to the local assembly which may be just 9 people, but yet they receive that regulation from the great House of Justice of the world. And how the friends are connected by their Local Assembly to their National and International Houses of Justice.

That a world order will be established, we can say that the world is under the commandment of God. Above all is the Book of God, under that the International House of Justice, then the National Assemblies and then the local Houses of Justice, all working together, and the individuals will put them into action.

Now, above all is the Word of God. Whatever legislation is laid down by the International House of Justice must not be against what is written in the book of God. At the head of the House of Justice is the Guardian who leads the legislative power to the Guardianship, that is whoever, to the one who has the power of expounding the book of God on this earth.

The legislative power is one of the pillars of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh and we say that this legislative power is under the word of God. But who is the one to expound the Book of God, to see that nothing will be laid down against

the book of God. This is important for us to study.

Do you remember in our previous lessons that we discussed how in previous religions, they were always divided into sects and divisions and we explained why this was so - many people tried to explain the verses of God according to their own imaginations and limited understandings of the complete meaning of the Book of God. And everyone tried to bring followers to himself and thus the religion was divided. But we must be glad and rejoice in our hearts that this door is forever closed in the Bahá'í religion.

'Abdu'l-Bahá has clearly said in His Tablets of Will and Testament, that no one of these Houses of Justice whether International, National or Local, no one of the family of Bahá'u'lláh or the Báb, no one of the most learned people in the Bahá'í community and no one of the Hands of the Cause has any right to expound or explain the meanings of the Book of God according to their own understandings. This refers to only one person, and that is the centre of the Covenant of God.

I have often said that if you put all the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá on one part of the balance, and only this Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the other side, this will be equal to all of those writings. The reason is this, the religion of God came to establish the unity of humanity. Bahá'u'lláh says I came primarily for this purpose. Twenty thousand people gave their lives for this purpose. And the only thing that guarantees that unity is the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Had it not been for this, the Bahá'í Faith would by now be divided into thousands of sects around the world.

'Abdu'l-Bahá has said that no sin will ever be equal to making divisions and differences amongst the friends. The powers of understanding of the people are different. Should we refer to the power of understanding of the people, a beautiful, constructive, prosperous house will immediately be changed into a desolated, destroyed house. Light will vanish immediately, and a night full of darkness will come in its place.

Many have asked me what is the guarantee for the unity of the Bahá'í world. I have often told them it is the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Has he said it clearly, they ask? Yes, everything is written extremely clearly and declared by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I read you some parts:

Firstly, this is what the Master says about the person of the Guardian. He says:

“O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsán (Branches), the Afnan (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abhá Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi - the youthful branch branched from the two hallowed and Sacred Lote-Trees and the fruit grown from the union of the two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness, - and he is the sign of

*God, the chosen branch, the guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsán, the Afnán, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the expounder of the words of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendents.”*²⁵

Here He describes the Guardian, and gives him five different ranks. Some people may say, well ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is describing him as a very good person, yet they do not have to obey him. This is also addressed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in another part, when he describes the Guardian as:

*“The sacred and youthful branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God as well as the Universal House of Justice to be universally elected and established, are both under the care and protection of the Abhá Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of His Holiness, the Exalted One, (may my life be offered up for them both... Whoso rebelleth against him and against them hath rebelled against God; Whoso opposeth him hath opposed God;... Whoso denieth him hath denied God; whoso disbelieveth in him hath disbelieved in God; whoso deviateth, separateth himself and turned aside from God. May the wrath, the fierce indignation, the vengeance of God rest upon him!...It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsán, the Afnán, the Hands of the Cause of God... to turn unto him and be lowly before him.”*²⁶

Now, some people may say if we disobey the Guardian, let the wrath of God rest upon us. But they are not left on that point only, the Master has written about them. He says:

*“...the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the People of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!”*²⁷

Now having this document in our hands, we must remain assured and certain that never will the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh have the same destiny of other religions. No east church and west church. No Omar or Abu Bakr or other covenant breakers as in the age of Islam will ever come into existence. In the House of Justice the two great powers will unite, the power of legislating and the power of expounding. The Guardian will be the head of that legislative power,

25. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, Sydney: Bahá’í Publications Australia, 1992, p. 18.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

and always will protect the unity of humanity under his unerring guidance.

We don’t say that there are no differences existing in the Bahá’í Cause. The differences which exist have been much greater than those of the religions of the past, but the only thing that safeguarded the unity of the people of Bahá’u’lláh was this document and nothing else.

These are the last lines of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

“It is incumbent upon you to take the greatest care of Shoghi Effendi, the twig that hath branched from and the fruit given forth by the two hallowed and Divine Lote-Trees, that no dust of despondency and sorrow may stain his radiant nature, that day by day he may wax greater in happiness, in joy and spirituality, and may grow to become even as a fruitful tree.”

“For he is, after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the guardian of the Cause of God, the Afnan, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause and the beloved of the Lord must obey him and turn unto him. He that obeyeth him not, hath not obeyed God; he that turneth away from him, hath turned away from God and he that denieth him, hath denied the True One. Beware lest anyone falsely interpret these words, and like unto them that have broken the Covenant after the Day of Ascension (of Bahá’u’lláh) advance a pretext, raise the standard of revolt, wax stubborn and open wide the door of false interpretation. To none is given the right to put forth his own opinion or express his particular conviction. All must seek guidance and turn unto the Centre of the Cause and the House of Justice. And he that turneth unto whatsoever else is indeed in grievous error.

*The Glory of Glories rest upon you!*²⁸

These Tablets of the Master were written when the Beloved Guardian was 9 years old. I congratulate the Bahá’í community for having been given a document by which their unity is forever safeguarded. Whenever I read the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, my soul soars in the oceans of beauty and happiness.

Questions and Answers

Question: Was the Guardian ready at the age of 9?

Answer: There is a short time for us to think of the future and less to think of the past. If the guardian at the age of 9, he would be the guardian of the Cause of God, he could control the Cause. At that age of 9 he was fully ready to accept that responsibility, and that is why the Master wrote it down. Of

28. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

course for those persons who are confirmed from the high ranks of God, we never count years. Even from amongst the students of the schools, we find a child of nine who has the capacity of a child of the age 15, 16 and more. Also children of age 15 or 16 who did not have the capacity of those aged 5 or 6 after the intelligence test was given to them.

We have heard of many children, precocious ones, who have been showing great intellectual capacity at the age of 9, who have conducted great orchestras for example. And then a person who is divinely appointed, divinely supported is like a machine through which God works, no matter at what age he is.

Question: Some Christians believe, probably from the Book of Revelation, which mentions a millennium at the end of which the devil will be loose for a while, that there will be a period, a short period of difficulty, before the next manifestation is accepted.²⁹

Answer: You see, it exactly happened at the time of Bahá'u'lláh. Millennium refers to the coming of Muhammad. His revelation was for 1000 years, and when Bahá'u'lláh declared his mission there were devilish spirits who stood against Him as covenant breakers and against the Master, and they had a free time in those days and they were free. But in the time of the Guardian, as it is written in the fables of the East, a great power will put the devils in a bottle and seal it. Now he has done so, and they will never come out.

Question: Our communities are not very large, and since our voting is through prayer and not through nomination, how are we to know those who are best qualified?

Answer: As the community will grow in number, the means will increase also such that the friends will know each other better than now. If now we meet only 19 days a time, in the future we will have better time to meet and oftener than now, more occasions more places and know each other much better than now. The means will be newspapers, radio, television, and many other things which will help us altogether.

Session Three : The powers of Expounding and Legislating

We remember from our last lesson that the prophetic cycle established by Bahá'u'lláh for 500,000 years and this cycle is divided into several ages and we are now in the first age, the age of Bahá'u'lláh himself which will last for at least 1000 years. We also said that this age is divided into 3 periods. Apostolic or heroic, formative and golden period. We all remember that the first period lasted for 77 years, the life age of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, now we are in the formative

period, and we don't know when we will reach the golden age of Bahá'u'lláh. The first period was divided into three parts, first the Báb's nine years, second Bahá'u'lláh's 39 years and third 'Abdu'l-Bahá's 29 years. The world order of Bahá'u'lláh is based on two great pillars. First the pillar of expounding, and second the pillar of legislation. We also mentioned that expounding the Book of God is only in the hand of one central figure and that is the centre of the covenant of God. No-one in the Bahá'í world community, no Local or National Assembly, no Hand of the Cause of God and no international House of Justice will ever have the right to do that. Legislation divides into three kinds: the international, national and local. What we said now is the revision of last night's lesson.

Tonight's lesson will centre around these two problems. First, the relation between the power of expounding and the power of legislation. Then the problems, miscellaneous problems, which come out of these two.

This point is extremely important for the Bahá'ís to know, that the duties of the guardians of the Cause and the duties of legislative powers are explicitly written down by the pens of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We want to know the duties of these two great powers, of the Guardian and of the House of Justice, because they are not left alone by themselves to do whatever they like, but their duties are appointed, and according to those duties they must work, decide and act.

Now, the first and foremost duty of the Guardian of the Cause is expounding. Please have in mind that this word never means explanation. By expounding the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh or the Book of God it is meant that when there is diversity of understanding about something in the book, there are several people who have a different understanding, then they refer to the Guardian and he says this verse means this and only this. The people should not follow different ideas, but that which is expounded by the Guardian. But sometimes there is a different word in the book, and I may go and ask somebody for the explanation. He says what it does mean; he does not expound. He says it means this word, it is a synonym to that word. Some parts may refer to an historical thing. He says this refers to that. And then the meaning will be clear. But in other places where expounding of the problem is concerned, it is only in the hand of the Guardian.

One day the Guardian read for me a verse from the book of Aqdas in which Bahá'u'lláh addresses Tihiran. He says, soon, all the affairs will be revolutionised in the land of Tehran. 'Now here is a word in the second part, a word which may mean that public will rule on you or there will be a confusion on you and your country. And two or three different meanings can be made on this word. That word in Arabic is *Jomhoor*, the public will rule. Then he asked me "what do our teachers say about this verse of the book of the Aqdas? How do they give the meaning?". "Well," I said, "so far the teachers have told me

29. Revelation 20:1-3.

that there will be a great confusion in Tehran and then the people will rule and there will be anarchy.”

He said “no, it does not mean that. Bahá'u'lláh says revolutions will take place in Iran and then the public will rule over the land. It means when the public of Iran will elect their representatives and then the NSA or the House of Justice of Iran will have the full representation and will rule over Iran.”³⁰

Well, I gave you this example so that you will know the difficulties that will arise and had it not been for the sake of one who would give his decisive meaning about the word, then there would be confusion amongst the friends. But he gives the real meaning of the word and everyone will be satisfied.

I give you an example from the Master. There is a verse in the Qur'án that says “God had a trust and he wanted to entrust it to the world of creation. He gave his trust to the mountains, they did not accept it, he brought it upon all the very heavy strong things, and suggested to them to accept this trust of God, they did not accept. But he suggested to man, you accept it and man accepted it. Because He was the Wronged-one and the commentators of the Qur'án wrote because man was oppressor and ignorant. Well, there arose a great difficulty amongst them for that trust is the trust of prophethood. And the most perfect man of every age accepted that trust of God. Well, they said if the prophets who are the most perfect of all creation accepted the trust of God, how could they be called ignorant and oppressors? They were at a loss and are still at a loss, and they don't know how to solve this problem.”³¹

Well, the Master solved it in one simple sentence. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá says refer to the grammatical rules of the Arabic language and you will very obviously find the meaning. In this case, it does not mean oppressor, it means oppressed one, wronged one; it does not mean ignorant one, it means ignored one. They accepted as they were the most wronged ones on earth, the prophets, and those whose values were always ignored by mankind. It means that. It solved the whole problem. Well, wherever such problems arise we must refer to the centre of the covenant and he will expound it for us and we will clearly understand the meaning.

Now, the same centre of the Covenant in whose hand lies the authority to expound, is the chairman of the legislative power. Hence by the one person, the two powers will be connected to each other. The power of expounding is the chairman of the power of legislating. The chairman of the House of Justice must be the Guardian of the Cause, thus the two pillars will be connected to each other. The Guardian has no interference in the work or opinions of the members of the House of Justice. He is there so that if it ever happens that a decision is passed by the House of Justice that may be against the explicit Writings of the Book of God, the Guardian will put his finger there and says it is against that rule of God and it should not pass.

30. See Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1992, p. 54.

31. *Qur'án*, 33:72.

(text missing) ...and regulations for the whole world is the International House of Justice and the only place where we believe that their decisions are divine and divinely protected and we know why the Guardian should be the chairman of the House of Justice - so they should always be under his guard, so that the weakness of humanity may never enter the decisions and may never have anything to do with their study of cases. Always they will be under the unerring guidance of the Blessed Perfection and the Báb. That is why ‘Abdu'l-Bahá said in His Will and Testament, that their decisions will be divine, everybody has to obey them and whosoever disobeys them has disobeyed God.

Now, you see very clearly how the two powers have their own duties to perform and none will have the power to interfere with the other one, and joining them will be the person of the Guardian of the Cause. Well, their duties of legislative power are also very clearly written down. Those things that are not mentioned in the Book of God and in the Tablets of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, they may make rules about them according to the circumstances of the time and whenever it necessitates to change it, they themselves may change the rules.³²

Another duty of the Guardian is to nominate and appoint Hands of the Cause. It is not a title given by any other person, it is the duty given to them by the Guardian. “The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God...”³³ Now, whoever may be appointed Hand of the Cause, as many as the Guardian appoints, then in a certain time they will elect nine from amongst themselves who must be in the service of the Guardian. The duties of these Hands of the Cause are also explicitly written down in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá:

*“The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words.”*³⁴

The Guardian will encourage each and all of them to different services which he has in mind, such as teaching, education and other things. Therefore, we understand the duties of everyone, the Guardian, the House of Justice, the members of the Hands of the Cause and others are fully and explicitly written down in this *Will and Testament* of the Master, so that no-one will ever deviate from his duties.

32. See Shoghi Effendi, *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*, London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1947, pp. 55-65.

33. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *Will and Testament of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá*, op.cit., pp. 20-21.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Now that the Guardian is expounding the Book of God, the House of Justice makes rules and regulations, but who is to execute these things. The governments of the world will be the power of execution of all these laws passed by the House of Justice. The governments will also be international, national and local and each will be the executive power of this great legislative power. We have a judicial court also to solve the disputes occurring between different nations of the world. The great powers of the world expounding, legislating and executing are found explicitly in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Now, you remember we explained how religions have been divided into different sects because they have been quarrelling over what they should believe and what should be the basic beliefs of the religion. What should we call Jesus? What should we believe in the Holy Ghost? What is the rank and station of the mother of Jesus? What should we believe in God? The same thing happened in the history of Islam. Now, to prevent all these hows, whys and wherefores in the Bahá'í religion, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has fully and completely written down the basic beliefs of all the Bahá'ís and no one has the right to change these beliefs in the course of the years to come.

This is the foundation of the belief of the people of Bahá (may my life be offered up for them): "His Holiness, the Exalted One (the Báb), is the Manifestation of the Unity and Oneness of God and the Forerunner of the Ancient Beauty. His Holiness the Abhá Beauty (may my life be a sacrifice for His steadfast friends) is the Supreme Manifestation of God and the Day-spring of His Most Divine Essence. All others are servants unto Him and do His bidding." Unto the Most Holy Book every one 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 the Purpose of God Himself.³⁵

Now, please ponder on these facts so far explained and see how everything is lawfully written down and we have everything according to the law of religion and if there is any way that they may create a certain schism or division in the Cause of God, please mention if there is any, all are closed up for centuries. If you think there is any chance for any man to make a new scheme to create a schism in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh you may mention it now and that will be shown in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that this door is also closed.

The International government will be the representative of all the governments of the world working with the House of Justice so that none will deviate from the rules issued by that board. National governments may have kings at the head for instance but that government should work according to the issues of the National Assemblies and local governments will be the same under local Assemblies.

35. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

I specially explained these things as several of the friends have asked me what is the difference between the institution of the Guardianship and the Institution of the Pope. It is a very interesting question and the explanation is quite easy. Now, first I ask what is the difference between Jesus Christ and all those clergies at His own time: such as pharisees, Saducees, the Heads of the Synagogues and others? The difference is that Jesus Christ was supported, guided, aided and protected by God and the others were not. The same difference exists between the Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause and any other person who claims to have the power in his own hands. The Guardian is appointed by the Master and the Master is appointed by Bahá'u'lláh. He is divinely appointed. The others are self appointed. He is appointed by the revealed Pen of the manifestation of God, the others are not. About him it is said that he is always under the protection and guidance of God but about them such things are not said.

What is the difference between Peter and the Pope? Peter was appointed by Christ. He said to him you are the rock and upon this rock I will build my church.³⁶ It is an oral saying of the Manifestation of God and we accept it as such that he was appointed as the centre of the covenant of Christianity. But nothing has been said about the Pope; nothing has even been said about the Pope by Peter or people like him.

There is a living example. Suppose I say to you that I am the governor of Yerrinbool. Will you accept it? You say "never". And I say, "Why don't you accept it?" What is the difference between me and the person who calls himself Mayor or governor? You will say that he has something in his hand from the central government to show that he is appointed by the government but you do not have that paper. The difference is very small, but the reality is great. The same difference exists between the Pope and the Guardian. Guardian has something in his hand written down by the revealed pen of God but the Pope does not have anything.

Now people come here and tell you they are doctors. Will you accept them as such? You will never accept them, but only the ones who have their diplomas in their hands, then you say they are doctors. In every little thing we want something in the hand of those who claim things. I say look here now, we accept Peter as the Centre of the Covenant in Christianity only because Jesus Christ has said it. We accept it only because of that. But when the others do not have such a thing then of course we do not accept them as the central figures of a great power on earth.

The difference between the Guardian and the Pope is like the difference between man and the manifestation of God, the difference between Pope and Christ. If the same document had been produced to us by any person we would accept it, we don't have the Guardian because he is Shoghi Effendi.

36. Matthew, 16:18.

No, because in this document it is written you should refer to this person. Anyone who has a divine document, a divine certificate in his hand we accept him as the centre of the covenant.

How do we know that Bahá'u'lláh is the manifestation of God? We know by his word that he has been appointed. And the same man who was appointed by God has singled out 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Centre of the Covenant and 'Abdu'l-Bahá has singled out Shoghi Effendi as his Centre of the Covenant and the Guardian of the Cause. It is one link connected to another one.

It is a school and we want everything to be logical and scientific. Now, the popes claim to be infallible, this station of infallibility is given to them by God or is it a self appointed privilege? They do not have any document to show that it is given to them by God, but some years ago they thought of having this power in their own hands and they claimed it to be infallible.

We had a king in Iran who used to issue decrees and medals for himself. Every week the order would be issued and medals would be worn by him. Well, it is very easy for him to do that, but if it is given to him by another authority then it would be appreciated. The same thing applies to these people. They give themselves authority, privileges, infallibility and other things.

Read the Gospel all through and see if you can find anywhere in the Gospel where it is said by Jesus Christ that in the future, some people will be the heads of my church and they will be infallible and we will accept it. There is no reference like that in all the Bible. We read this before and we read it again:

The sacred and youthful branch, the guardian of the Cause of God as well as the Universal House of Justice...are both under the care and protection of the Abhá Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of His Holiness, the Exalted One (may my life be offered up for them both). Whatsoever they decide is of God. Whoso obeyeth him not, neither obeyeth them, hath not obeyed God...³⁷

It is a divine document in our hand. Whenever there is such a divine document in our hand we accept it and say the others may also have the same power. It is like flowers. Wherever it grows it is a flower. We will accept it as flower. The first difference between the Guardian and the Pope is this: that the Guardian was divinely appointed and he is not. The second is that the Guardian is divinely appointed as infallible and the Pope is not. The third, he has duties to perform and he has only to see to those duties written down for him, but these duties are written down by a higher authority, the pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá but the Pope has no such duties, no one has outlined his duties, everything is in his own hand and his powers have no end and no limit.

The Guardian is only the Chairman of the House of Justice and of course

he is the one to expound the Book of God for the people, but the Pope is the head of the clergymen of the earth and the clergymen are commanding the people and their powers have no limit.

You see, even some money which goes to the Guardian, Bahá'u'lláh in the Kitab-i-Aqdas and some other Tablets has definitely and explicitly said to which lines and ways this money should be spent. Therefore the Guardian is obliged to follow these rules and duties.

When we see the Guardian in his daily life we see that he follows all these rules and regulations of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. His clothing are extremely simple and years and years old, but very clean. He has full 24 hours job, he sleeps only 4 to 5 hours every day, he has no holidays, no off days, no long breaks, no amusement, just work and work and work. Why? He has all the authority in his hand, but he never thinks of himself, just works for the Cause throughout his life. This shows that he is holy, he is under the protection of God and he is confirmed by God.

We have nine days during which we do not work. These nine days are worst for the Guardian, because during those days he receives telegrams from all around the world and he replies to each and every one of them. Therefore, receiving and answering these telegrams means additional work during those holy days. I say that the guardian is self imprisoned in his library or studio where he always is and lives and works.

Of course, I find such questions as what is the difference between the Pope and the Guardian very reasonable. The world is afraid of such a station and when we say we have a Guardian, they are afraid of another sort of papacy in the Bahá'í religion. As we say in Persian, a man who is bitten by a snake is afraid of a black and white thread (a burnt child dreads the fire). Those who have been under that authority are afraid of having such a thing in the Bahá'í religion. But if they ask and you explain these things point by point, they will understand and I believe, if they understand well they will be thankful and grateful to God for having given us a Guardian who is under the unerring guidance of God himself.

Not all that glitters is gold, but it is only gold that glitters. Of course, when we say that the Guardian is the head of our religion it does not mean that he is like the Pope, we must see to the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and understand the difference between these two powers.

Another example. The sun has set. The world is in darkness. If the moon shines, which one is better - the moon-shine or without it? The guardianship is the moon that receives light from the sun and reflects it to the earth after the absence of the sun of truth. All through this age of Bahá, due to the guardians, we will never have a dark night.

37. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, op.cit., p. 19.

Question: What if the guardian cannot attend a meeting of the House of Justice?

Answer: It is written in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that if the Guardian can not go to the House of Justice and be the chairman, he will send by his own appointment, a representative as such. This also is written there so that in the future, they will not question it in the House of Justice. It is written down.

Question: The guardian who comes after the present guardian, will he be of the same station?

Answer: It's not the first guardian, it is for all the guardians; all will be under the protection and guidance of God.

Question: Will he have more authority than any form of government in Italy or Rome?

Answer: Since the middle ages the pope was extremely powerful. The kings could not become kings in their own countries unless their crowns had been put on their heads by the pope and they should have been blessed by him too. In the churches of Rome, there are statues of the kings kneeling down and the Pope is blessing them. That shows the power in the olden days. But as there were fights between the Popes and the states, little by little the power decreased, but now in Rome his power is so that government is under his influence.

Question: Do you have any information about when the International House of Justice will be established?

Answer: I have not seen anything written down, but as I collect from here and there, my personal feeling is that by 1963 we will have our International House of Justice.

Question: When will we have world peace?

Answer: Lesser peace? Yes. You know we have lesser peace and Most Great Peace. The lesser peace will be by 1963.

No Governments of the Future

There are three more subjects about the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and I want to dwell upon them tonight. First, the states in the future; governments. Second, the judicial power of the Bahá'í administration or the course of Justice. Third, our keeping apart from the Covenant breakers.

This is what 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said about governments in his Will and Testament. We read it first and then the explanation will be given.

This House of Justice enacteth the laws and the government enforceth them. The legislative body must reinforce the executive, the executive must aid and assist the legislative body so that through the close union and harmony of these two forces, the foundation of fairness and justice may become firm and strong, that all the regions of the world may become even as Paradise itself.³⁸

You read here clearly that the Master states two forces. He means the legislative power and the executive power. And he emphatically says that these two must harmoniously work together - legislative must aid the executive and the executive must assist the legislative. Another term that he uses for these two forces is government.

You remember, we have three kinds of legislative centres - international, national and local. And here 'Abdu'l-Bahá says the government should put into action what is enacted by legislative power. Therefore, we will have three forms of government - international, national and local.

The executive power or the international government is to put into power the laws and regulations of the International House of Justice. And it is another duty to perform and that is to supervise the national governments, lest sometimes they stand aggressive against another government. In that case the international government should see to it and subdue the aggressive nation or the nation who does not want to execute the laws of the international House of Justice.

A national government will be the executive power of whatever is issued by the International House of Justice and by its own national House of Justice. And whatever is issued by the local assemblies, local House of Justices, the local government will be the executive power. Whatever the national government gives the right to them to follow the rules and regulations issued by the local government, they will perform.

The details of these governments are not put down, therefore it will be the duty of the Guardian and the House of Justice to put down the details and forms of these three kinds of international, national and local governments.

The International Tribunal

The international tribunal of Justice is only to see to the disputes that happen between international governments, and that is what is written in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The exact quotation is:

38. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, op.cit., p. 24.

*This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the Guardian of the Cause of God. He must continually urge them to strive and endeavour to the utmost of their ability to diffuse the sweet savours of God, and to guide all the peoples of the world, for it is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined. To disregard, though it be for a moment, this absolute command which is binding upon everyone, is in no wise permitted, that the existent world may become even as the Abhá Paradise, that the surface of the earth may become heavenly, the contention and conflict amidst peoples, kindreds, nations and governments may disappear, that all the dwellers on earth may become one people and one race, that the world may become even as one home. Should differences arise, they shall be amicably and conclusively settled by the Supreme Tribunal, that shall include members from all the governments and peoples of the world.*³⁹

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in other Tablets has explained how this international tribunal may be formed. He says the members should be from all countries and when they come to this tribunal, they should have credentials from their parliaments and from their governments so that they will really represent their nations and their governments and in that case whatever they vote and whatever they say and decide will be fully accepted by their own nations and their own governments.

That is what we have about the international judicial power and how it will be formed. More than that, details of other judicial centres are not written down therefore this is something that will be explained and laid down in the future.

Some preliminary steps have been taken so far. For instance, the international council that we have in Haifa now, the Guardian says, is an introduction to the international judicial power. And if you study the 10 year plan, you will see in 5 or 6 Islamic countries the Guardian has ordered that in their capitals a judicial court should be formed and this is another step of judicial powers to be brought into existence by the Bahá'í world during the next 10 years.

The Avoidance of Covenant-Breakers

The third section deals with abstaining from contact with the Covenant breakers.

I first want to explain what is a covenant breaker, who is a covenant breaker. Could a man count himself a Bahá'í and also a covenant breaker. Could these two gather together in the same person. The covenant breaker is one who has broken the covenant of the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh or ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. You know each one of them had a certain covenant made with the people of the world.

39. Ibid., pp. 21-22.

Anyone who does not abide by these covenants will of course be counted as one who has broken these covenants.

As this is very important and I have been asked about it many times, I want to explain it as fully as possible so that every part of this question will be fully explained. Let's suppose one of the followers of the Báb. The person says I am a Bábí, a follower of the Báb. And as such I don't want to accept Bahá'u'lláh as the manifestation of God, I don't recognise Him as the one promised by the Báb, we call such a man as the one who has broken his covenant with the Báb. But if the same man says for some years I studied the teachings of the Báb and I accepted them. But now I think they are wrong, I don't want this line of religion to be adopted by myself and I will go back to my previous Islamic religion. We don't call a man who has gone back a covenant breaker, he has backslided.

The same thing is true for anyone who says I accept Bahá'u'lláh and His teachings but I do not accept ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the centre of His covenant. This means that he has accepted everything except the most important document of Bahá'u'lláh - His Will and Testament which is written by His own hand. Such a person is called one who has broken the covenant of God. The same man, if he goes back to be a Christian and does no longer accept Bahá'u'lláh as the manifestation of God, we do not call him a covenant breaker.

I again explain the meaning of covenant breaker. The covenant breaker is the one who accepts the writer of the Will and Testament, but does not accept his writings, i.e., his Will and Testament. It is like the one who says so and so is my father but I will never accept his written will after his death. The same thing is true about the one who says I accept Bahá'u'lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá but I don't want to abide by the rules of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, I don't want to accept Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian of the Cause, he is a covenant-breaker but if he goes back and does not accept anyone of these, we do not call him a covenant breaker.

In brief, we can never accept a man who says, well, in the process of my spiritual experiences, I have come as far as Bahá'u'lláh but I do not accept ‘Abdu’l-Bahá or I have come as far as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá but I do not accept Shoghi Effendi. Such a thing is absolutely wrong in all the religions of the world and is not to be accepted by anyone

The first part of the Tablet of the Will and Testament will be read and please pay attention as to how ‘Abdu’l-Bahá describes the covenant breakers.

All praise to Him Who, by the Shield of His covenant, hath guarded the Temple of His Cause from the darts of doubtfulness, Who by the Hosts of His Testament hath preserved the Sanctuary of His most Benificent Law and protected His Straight and Luminous Path, staying thereby the onslaught of the company of Covenant-breakers, that have threatened to

subvert His Divine Edifice; Who hath watched over His Mighty Stronghold and All-glorious Faith, through the aid of men whom the slander of the slanderer affect not, whom no earthly calling, glory and power can turn aside from the Covenant of God and His Testament, established firmly by His clear and manifest words, writ and revealed by His All-Glorious Pen and recorded in the Preserved Tablet.⁴⁰

Again, the covenant breakers are described as such: covenant breakers that have threatened to subvert His Divine Edifice. Can we ever call a man who wants to destroy this divine edifice from the very foundation, can we call such a man a Bahá'í?

And now, one of the greatest and most fundamental principles of the Cause of God is to shun and avoid entirely the Covenant-breakers, for they will utterly destroy the Cause of God, exterminate His Law and render of no account all efforts exerted in the past. O friends! It behoveth you to call to mind with tenderness the trials of His Holiness, the Exalted One, and show your fidelity to the Ever-Blest Beauty. The utmost endeavour must be exerted lest all these woes, trials and afflictions, all this pure and sacred blood that hath been shed so profusely in the Path of God, may prove to be in vain.⁴¹

Here you see, he says, one of the most important fundamental principles of the Cause is to shun and avoid the covenant breakers and last night we read another part of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He said anyone who stands against the Guardian of the Cause must immediately be expelled from our community.

Now, you understand why the Bahá'í religion will ever be safeguarded against division and schism. Now, you understand why corruption will never find its way to this divine institution. The hardest point and the most severe treatment in the Bahá'í religion is found only in this case and that is the case of the treatment of the covenant breakers who always try to destroy the divine edifice from its very foundation.

The man who says I accept the Bahá'í religion but I do not want to obey the rules and regulations of the Guardian, he will not be considered to be a healthy man. In many tablets we read that such a disease of the spirit is like leprosy. As leprosy is most dangerously contagious, so the disease of the covenant breakers is also contagious. And that is why 'Abdu'l-Bahá, wanting to keep us healthy in body and spirit, has advised us to avoid and shun all these people.

Wherever persons of this nature have been found, covenant breakers, they have been treated very faithfully and seriously. The friends have followed the

advice of the Master and have been extremely serious about it, they left them alone to themselves and never had anything to do with them. But we have in Persia, people who came to the Assembly and said, we don't want to be Bahá'ís, please cross out our names from the list, we want to live as Muslims - well, they remain friends as they were before, but they will no longer participate in the Bahá'í activities.

If in the ages gone and the past religions, in the very beginning had they been as severe as this with the covenant-breakers, the history of the world would not have been written with the blood of the followers of these religions. We would have been much more prosperous and happier now. The wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in writing these severe words is that the history of the past will not be repeated in the religion of Bahá'u'lláh.

If we want to show compassion to a wolf, would it not be an open cruelty to many many lambs and sheep? Should we be kind to snakes and let them be free in the society of mankind, what shall we do to protect our own children? If the Bahá'í administration acts against three or four of these spiritually diseased persons, it is just to protect so many other healthy ones in the community. I have found an example which illustrates the Bahá'í world. I believe the Bahá'ís throughout the world are like a band of musicians who want to give a certain performance. Everyone of them has a special musical instrument. Everyone has a special part of the music. All are playing their parts. If everyone is playing his own part by himself regardless of the conductor, no one will ever want to go and listen to them perform. But the moment the conductor goes in the front and all look to his hand, and all wait for the start of his movement, though everyone has a different instrument, and different notes of music, the result of the music played under the guidance of one conductor will be most beautiful music that will delight everyone and everyone will listen. This is the station of the Guardian with the Bahá'ís one in the south, one in the north, one in the east and one in the west, everyone with different backgrounds, yet working harmoniously together.

When I reached Australia and saw some of the cities, I could never compare the life in Australia to the life I have seen in the East. But when I meet the friends in different centres, it is as if I met the friends from other parts of the world. They had the same idea, the same purpose, the same plans, the same enthusiasm and the same faith and all working harmoniously together the same as the people of the East. Apparently different, but spiritually the same. Had it not been for that divine guidance we would not have such harmony amongst the friends. Australia would work in one way, the east another way, and none of them would ever resemble each other.

Man has a soul, and one of the reflections of the soul is the power of the brain. The brain keeps all the members of the body in equilibrium, even though the members appear absolutely different to each other yet they work harmoniously together in keeping up the body of man. Now, the same man, suppose

40. Ibid., p. 7.

41. Ibid., p. 31.

something happens to him so that his brain does not work sanely, healthily. The hand which is supposed to take a morsel of bread to feed the body will take a huge stone and hit it's own head and hurts it. The man who has been healthy and using his teeth for the purpose of chewing, will chew his own hands rather than the thing that is given to him. Other religions of the past did not obey the centres of their covenants therefore the central power of the brain stopped working and the whole body started to do work but detrimental to the body itself. Now, we are fortunate that we have that divine, spiritual leader and all the members of this body of humanity under his guidance are working harmoniously together.

Question: What do we do to help covenant breakers?

Answer: There is no door closed to anybody in the Bahá'í Faith. The Guardian has left this door open. He says anyone who is cast out of the community because he has deliberately broken the Covenant of God, he must refer to myself in any difficulty. If he wants an answer to a question, he must refer to myself. If he wants to repent, he must refer to myself. If he wants to return to the Bahá'í community, he must write to myself and I am always ready to help such people, to assist them, to bring them out of their plight. He says the others are not able to help them. It is the same as a doctor who says that this man has T.B. If you are his nearest relative and go to him, you will catch it too. Please don't have anything to do with him because I can defend myself and I can cure him. Is it clear?

Question: How do we discover a covenant breaker and what authority says they are a covenant breaker?

Answer: I thank you for this delicate question. Individuals have no right to protest against anyone. It is the duty of the administrative centres, local and national. When the institutions are sure of the conduct of some people and recognise them as such they inform their Local Assembly, they report it to the National Assembly who at this time, report it to the Guardian. Now, if an individual sees the traces of ill-conduct or things that lead to being a covenant-breaker, detrimental to the spirit and foundation of the Cause, his religious duty, conscientious duty is this. First of all not to say anything to anybody, even his nearest relatives and friends. He should go directly to the assembly and report what he has witnessed with his own eyes. And after that he should keep quiet about it and feel sure that he has done his religious duty and he has nothing more to do about it. Why should he not say anything to someone else? If I should see something wrong from a friend of mine and he is committing some sort of sin which is not worthy of a Bahá'í, detrimental to the Cause of God, if I go and explain it to another person, I will be worse than the first one

because I am back-biting, the worst thing ever described in the Bahá'í religion. As it was explained, my first duty is to go directly to my administrative body and report it and bring proofs of what I say so that the doors may be open for them in their investigation. Suppose I drink and a Bahá'í sees me drinking. If he reports this to his wife or his friend he is backbiting, and then he will be worse than I am. He must directly go to his Assembly, report to them and then bring the proof as to where and when I was drinking, leave the matter there and go out and keep absolutely silent. Then the Assembly will investigate it, take its course of action. The individual's duty is concluded by that. Of course you all know that backbiting is absolutely forbidden in the Bahá'í Cause because it absolutely destroys the foundation of the Cause. The communities where the individuals do not commit this great sin, flourish, increase in number and strength every day.

Question: How do we reconcile that the Cause is impregnable?

Answer: Well, the question is extremely easy. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says it is impregnable. No one can ever destroy this great fortress of God. Why? Because he has ordered his soldiers to be vigilant, to be prepared for the onslaught. If He had not said this, of course they could have come in and destroyed it. But as he has put soldiers on every place, told them to safeguard the fortress of God, then those who want to destroy it can never approach it. The one is supplementary to the other. The covenant breakers desire the destruction of this. Potentially they could destroy it, but the Bahá'ís will be defending it. It is like a bomb, it has the power to destroy, but 'Abdu'l-Bahá says never let it fall here and the Bahá'ís keep watch against it.

Question: Do all try to destroy the Cause or are some just inactive?

Answer: This desire of destruction is the second nature of all these people who become covenant breakers. It is just like a snake biting. When it is cold it can not do anything, but whenever it is warm and it finds a suitable situation it bites. The same thing is true about the covenant breakers. In a place where the friends are very strong, they are frozen, they can't do anything, but the moment they find an opportunity, then they bite and want to destroy. If you find that they are quiet and don't do anything, it is due to the strength of the friends and they can not find a suitable situation to destroy the Cause. Bahá'u'lláh especially in His Book of Aqdas says beware lest you be overtaken by pity in the Cause of God. He says pity can sometimes be a cause of harm. We have to obey the injunction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and exactly comply with it. We should have pity on the sacred blood of the Báb and the Ancient Beauty.

Personal Investigation of Truth

I believe that the topic for this evening, personal investigation of truth, is a very important one which we are asked about in our daily lives. One of the Great principles of the Bahá'í Cause is investigation of truth and we often very proudly say independent investigation of truth. It means that the Bahá'ís search for the truth, they try to find it wherever it is, they are not imitators of others and they do not accept things as inheritance from their parents. Often it happens that about some little subjects or important ones there will be created misunderstandings. To avoid such a thing I want to make this subject quite clear by giving some illustrations. First we believe that God has given every individual enough power and capacity to understand the truth for himself. He has the power to investigate after the truth, find it, grasp it and comprehend it absolutely. As far as fundamental principles of any religion are concerned, blind imitation is absolutely forbidden. It means that as God has given individuals the capacity to search and find the truth, he must fulfil whatever God has given him. He must use his gifts, divine gifts, to seek the truth for himself and never blindly follow the others, no matter how close those persons may be to him.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in one of His addresses has clearly stated that blind imitation has always been the first and the greatest obstacle between the people and the Manifestations of God. The Jews did not accept Christ because they had been told by their fathers and grandfathers or their clergymen. The Muslims did not understand the Manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh because they had the same disaster in their creeds and ideas and social life.

In the Qur'án sometimes God explains, by the verses written there, the behaviour of the deniers of the manifestation of God. For instance, when Muhammad declared His mission to them and called them to worship the one God. Now, these are the words as if it were the words of the deniers: "we found the beliefs of our fathers and grandfathers and we have to follow their footsteps."⁴²

That is why Bahá'u'lláh has made this independent investigation of the truth one of the fundamental principles of the Cause, so that the people would not follow their clergymen, will not follow the learned men of their own time, will not follow the religion of their fathers and grand-fathers. They would search and find the truth by themselves.

Now, I explain another principle of the Bahá'í religion, which may apparently appear opposite to this independent investigation of truth. And we want to know how to reconcile these two together. Now in another part of the writings of Bahá'u'lláh he says anything revealed and written in the Books of God must be accepted and obeyed by all the followers. Faith has no other meaning but obedience. He says we must know God as this: He does whatever He wills and He orders whatever he likes and He is never to be questioned. The Báb says if the Manifestation of God who will come after me and by that

He means Bahá'u'lláh, if he tells you that this is heaven and that is the earth you do not have the right to question Him why and how. Now he says we have to reconcile these two. Apparently they are opposite to each other, opposite to independent investigation of truth.

Bahá'u'lláh in the Aqdas and in many other Writings says the essence of faith is this, that every believer should know God as this: He does whatever He likes. He orders whatever He wills and He is never to be questioned by the believers. He says that if you ever want to be protected against transgression of any of the rules of God, you must always have this in mind. He does whatever He likes. He goes on further - make it a standard, a flag, let it go ahead of you always, follow it so that you will always be on the right path of God, you will never be a transgressor of the rules of God.

Apparently, these two seem contradictory. But, if we understand these two orders we will find out that they are not contradictory, they are two screws of one machine, placed in their own places. The machine of our Faith will be steadfast by these two screws and the explanation will be given. Bahá'u'lláh says Independent investigation of truth, this means a preliminary step to reach the truth. You do your best, examine, read question, criticise as much as you can until you reach the truth, and then you say now I have found it. When you have found it then the stage of obedience will start. There is a rule in logic which says when you have found something and you keep searching for it there must be something wrong with you. He says now it is day and if we see someone with a lamp in his hand walking around the garden we say why do you have a lamp in your hand. He says I want light. You say it is daytime, we have light, you don't need a lamp, there must be something wrong with you. When you have the truth, when you find the manifestation, then you don't need to search after the truth any more. You have the truth in your hand. Therefore, whatever is written, ordered, commanded by Him is the truth and nothing else.

Now suppose someone says I have found the truth, then he does something against what the truth is telling him, it is a deviation from the truth. We don't call it faith, we don't call it anything. And we don't find that claim to be true, it means that he has not really found the truth. If he has found it, then he must follow it.

Now, I give several examples so that this principle of our faith will be clear to everyone. Suppose someone has an illness. Now, suppose before he goes to the doctor he may write to the ministry of health and ask for the name of a good doctor. He may ask his friend and inquire here and there about the best doctor. He may read all the signboards for the doctors and when he has found the right one, he goes in and explains about his health problem. After that, he starts the stage of obedience to the doctor. The doctor commands whatever he likes, and there is no right for the patient to ask him anything. If he asks him why do you do this, the doctor explains to him and will say this is my place as

42. *Qur'án*, 43:21.

a doctor and this is your place as a patient. You must obey. If he says take this medicine, we will obey, because we believe that he will cure all our diseases.

When he gives you the medicine and he wants to explain why he has given you the medicine, it is his kindness and bounty and if you understand then it will add to the pleasure of taking the medicine against the disease. But suppose there is no understanding, it is beyond the understanding of the man why he should take these drugs, then the only thing for him to do is to obey the doctor and wait for his cure.

Suppose, I want to take a trip by boat. I go to the different companies and find one that comes from Bombay to Australia. In Bombay I am sure about the boat and the captain, I go to the boat. As soon as I enter the boat I must obey the captain. The boat goes this way and suddenly goes that way. Shall I go upstairs and knock on the door of the captain and say why was the boat going that way yesterday and this way today. And if again I go to the captain and say yesterday the boat was going very fast and today it is going very slow, why and why. The first time he will be very kind but by the fourth time he will send me to somebody and tell him to keep me aside until we reach the shore and then deliver me to an asylum, because there is something wrong with me. And he is right to do so because he says you understood well about the ship and the captain and the capacity of the ship, and since you honoured us with your presence on the ship you must rest assured, be comfortable that you will reach your shore. Have a good time here and never bother yourself about what the captain does.

It is the most surprising thing that we know everyone on the earth does whatever he likes and says whatever he likes except God Himself. The least thing that we do represents the point. The minute I reached Sydney I took a taxi to Lang Road, the headquarters. The driver took me from this lane to that lane, down this street and that street. It took me three quarters of an hour to get there but I never said to him why do you go this way, why that way. He does whatever he likes, I had my life in his hands, but I was sure that after some minutes I would reach where I wanted to get to. In such little things we surrender everything, but not to God. We send our children to the school, to the teachers. And if our children do not obey their teachers we punish them because the children do not recognise that the teachers say whatever they like and do whatever they like.

The same thing exists in our school. We gather together in the summer school and they give us a certain programme. And they tell us whenever you hear the bell ringing you must come to the class. We all obey. Suppose we did not have this attitude. One would say it is better to start at five o'clock in the morning. Another would say ten o'clock, another would suggest eight o'clock. There would be no system, no order, no benefit out of the whole school. But as we surrender our will to the one who is the manager of the school, the whole

programme runs smoothly and we get benefits out of it.

Let's consider the other side of it. Suppose we are all in bed and we hear the bell ringing. Well, one says I must investigate to see if there is any truth in the ringing of the bell. Is there any necessity for the bell to be ringing and who is ringing the bell? Who has made the bell? Another one will say we need a bigger bell for ringing. Another one will say no, we don't need it, we will wake up by ourselves. And so on, and so forth, the day will be finished and we will be dispersed in beds and baths, in the dining room, and in the parks and gardens and no class will ever be formed.

Investigation after truth was till the door of the school. Up until then we were free to learn about the rules and regulations of the school but when we entered and wrote our names down as students of the school then it is the stage of obedience and that is why we see our classes in order and our lessons going on from the beginning of the day.

That is why in the Bahá'í administrative order we give papers to people to sign. They come to the assembly and say "we have found the truth. We are fully convinced that the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are manifestations of God and the Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahá is our rule and order of life" and so on.

Session Four : Temples

You all know or have read that we already have two temples in the world. One in Ishqabad and the second at Wilmette in America. The second one is the holiest of all temples that we have had or will have in the history of the Bahá'í Cause, because the cornerstone of this Temple have been laid down by the hands of `Abdu'l-Bahá and no temple will have such an honour in the whole world. That is why we call the Temple at Wilmette the holiest of all temples and the mother temple of the West.

You all know things in their own right have no value, but they have value in proportion to something else. When anything is related or belongs to a person, that thing will have a certain value to us. The greater the person the greater the value of that thing, therefore something that belongs to God, the greatest of all things must have the greatest of all values.

For example, there are plenty of houses in the world, but we have a certain value for a certain house because we say in that house a great poet, some great man had been living. As it belonged to that man, therefore it has value to us. When I was in Germany, I went to Frankfurt and found many houses that were ruined during the war. Laws had been laid down that they had to be demolished, except for one house, which had been repaired, remodelled and that house had belonged to the great German poet Goethe⁴³ and every day 50 or 60 people used to go and visit the house because it had been the house of a great poet of the country.

43. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), German poet, dramatist and novelist. His famous works are *Faust*, *The Sorrows of Youth Werther*, and *Westminster Divan*.

Therefore, we understand that the value of things depends upon to whom they belong. The higher the person, the greater the value. Now a House is built in the name of God, and they say this House belongs to God. That shows how great the house is in our hearts, and what a great value the house has in the history of mankind.

Bahá'u'lláh in his book of Aqdas says that whenever you build a House in the name of God, you must decorate it to the best possible manner that you can because it belongs to God, to a great power ruling all over the world. You all know that these Temples that we have built to the best decoration, but by decoration I mean it has the words of God inscribed on the entrances, on the inside and outside. We are forbidden to put pictures or statues in our Temples.

All the Houses of God that have been built in all the religions of God have been for the same purpose but you know as religion corrupts the main purpose little by little fades and disappears.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said that when it is finished, that will be a new decade, a new age in the struggle of the Cause all through the world. We must expect such a great resolve as the Temple itself is a great silent teacher. I was there when it was completed and dedicated. Hundreds of newspaper men were gathered there and they all wrote about different aspects of the Temple, how it was constructed and when it was finished. They also said from different broadcasts from different centres in America and they also showed it by television to different parts of America. These articles will be written down again and again and the news of the Temple will be broadcast from different centres, therefore you see it is not a simple building that is being built, it is a divine construction for the propagation of the unity of mankind. It introduces the Bahá'í religion to everyone who sees it and it introduces the basic principles of the religion of God as they pass by every day.

In conclusion I want to say that these pictures are taken with exquisite beauty and talent and yet you must not be satisfied with this, pictures will never do justice to this building, you must go and see it with your own eyes. I congratulate you and the whole Bahá'í world community for having such a great Temple of light and such a great divine edifice in this age of God.

Before I start my lesson, and as all the friends are glad that they are going home, I must tell you a story. In about 850 AD it is written that once a man came to the court of one of the Califs⁴⁴ and claimed to be a prophet. The Calif asked him: "do you also receive inspiration?" The man said: "yes." The Calif said: "but we had a prophet some time ago by the name of Muhammad who said: "there is no escape and I receive inspiration and I am a prophet." The Calif said: "put this man in prison now," but he ordered the gaoler not to treat him as a common prisoner as the man claimed to be a prophet. After a few months the Calif remembered that there was a man who claimed to

44. Calif Mámun, son of Harun-El-Rashid (Aaron the upright) from the Abbasid of Baghdad.

be a prophet and ordered the man to be brought to him again. They went and brought him back to the court. The Calif found the man happy, well off, fat and quite all right in health too. He said: "are you still a prophet?". "Yes". "Do you still receive inspiration?" He said: "yes, I received one that said 'don't leave this place it is very good for you'". Now, this is the story of my going home, and the Summer School and the kindness of the friends - I really must not leave this place.

I believe that you have read or have heard that the Báb in one of His Writings said "Well be it of the one who looks at the order of Bahá'u'lláh and thanks His God". It is extremely important as He clearly mentions the name of Bahá'u'lláh in this verse of His Book. And in the Book of Aqdas, there is a verse, and I am sure that you have all read the translation, what I say is not the exact translation. He says the World Order is confused by this great order which God has brought to mankind. The world order is again mentioned in the Works of Bahá'u'lláh. There are two very important words in this verse, please be careful to study them. First, He says "new" world order, and the second is the eyes of heaven and earth have never seen similar to it.

This world order is explained by Bahá'u'lláh in His many books and Tablets such as the Aqdas, the tablet of the World, the Tablet of Effulgences, Splendours, Ornaments (Tajalliyyat, Ishraquat, Tarazat, etc.) and many other Tablets. But these are the most important ones, in which He has given the basic principles of the world order.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in many of His Tables has explained and given the details of this world order especially in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá which is supplementary to the Aqdas. He has given the framework, the foundations of the world order. And as you have seen in the letters of the Guardian, he gradually showed us the practical ways of putting it into action: "this World Order of Bahá'u'lláh." Now, the importance in this World Order lies in the fact that the one who foretold it was the Báb, a great Manifestation of God, He first foretold in His Writings the order which would be founded by Bahá'u'lláh. The founder of this order is the Promise of all Ages, the great manifestation of God, Bahá'u'lláh himself. The expounder of this World Order, is the mystery of God, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the exemplar of the Bahá'í life. And the one who established it is the Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause.

The Guardian has especially warned us in many of his writings that we must never say that it is similar to any prevailing order in the world. It is never resembling aristocracy, democracy or autocracy or any other divisions of these three great systems of government in the world. It is none of these orders, and yet it is an order by itself, the similar of which has not yet been created in the world.

It is the nature of man, that whenever he hears something new, he compares it with his own self or some near one. If you say to a child that Einstein

is the greatest physicist in the world today, he will say that he is like my dad. Or if you tell him more than that, the child will say, alright a little bit more than him. If you say to a villager about Newton and the great discoveries he made in science, he will say he must be like the Mayor of our city. If not equal to him, a little bit higher than him. He will never be able to enlarge his ideas and reach the high station of these people. This is the nature of man.

The same thing takes place when we first hear about the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. We immediately say it is like our own country, like France, like England. We resemble it to something we know, but we must not do this before we study it thoroughly. We remember and we believe that all the civilisations of the past have been created by the manifestations of God. Therefore there will be found some good elements in all these systems of government. In the Bahá'í World Order you will not find any one of the institutions or systems of government, but a mixture of the best elements drawn from these systems; a beautiful mixture of all these things which have been created as a new and beautiful order.

I am sure that you know all these expressions, but I only repeat them so that you will remember them better. Democracy is derived from two Latin words - demo and cracy. Demo means "the people", "cracy" means government.⁴⁵ Therefore it means government of the people on the people. And it has several different forms and shapes. It may be in public, it may be like the election system that takes place in Russia, a general sort of election which takes place in America or any other part, which is called democracy or the elected who rule over the people and who are chosen by the people.

An aristocracy means the government of the best. It is the sort of government which Plato advised in his book *The Republic*, and he said the people should be divided into two parts, the good and the best - the best must always be the rulers. The best in oratory, the best in genealogy, the best in ideas, learning, science must be the rulers of the people, therefore they call it aristocracy.

Autocracy means self styled government - someone makes himself the ruler of a country and rules without restraint - such as the rule of Nicolai in Russia or the rule of Wilhelm in Germany.

Please remember these three forms of government, study them in your leisure time and see the forms they have. You will find that every one of them has many sides of corruption. Then, compare it with the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh and you will find the best elements are gathered here. When I say the best elements are gathered here, I don't mean that Bahá'u'lláh laid out these three forms in front of Him and chose the best elements - no - all these systems are the remnants of the civilisations which have been the direct result of the manifestations of God and now this is a new World Order

45. The root of the word comes from the Greek language as: *demós*, "the people" and *kratein*, "to rule" and so *demotrákia* (democracy) means rule or government by the people.

revealed to Him by God and it will be the best at keeping the world in order in the future ages, belonging to the Age of Bahá'u'lláh.

Please remember at present we say Administrative order of Bahá'u'lláh and then we have another term World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. We want to make sure that we know the exact differences between these two. Administrative order of Bahá'u'lláh is what we are practising now. We are putting the World Order on a very small scale - for ordering the affairs of the Bahá'ís themselves. But as time passes and the communities will grow and the Cause of God will spread and will be world embracing, then the time will come when all these administrative institutions will give their place to the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. It is in the embryonic state of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. It is the first step for the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh at a time when all the world will live under the order given by Bahá'u'lláh in His books and tablets.

There is no difference between these two - the difference is only in size. Both are perfect systems, but one is very very small. It is like the earth compared to the sun. We are practising in this Bahá'í Administrative order until the time when we will give it to the world as the World Order.

When we say that in 1963, as it is promised by Daniel thousands of years ago, the Bahá'í Faith will be established in the world, we don't mean that in the world at that time we will not find any non-Bahá'í. What we mean is this, the child is gathering all the limbs of the body and all things required for growth. In that year the child will have everything that it needs, the child of the Cause will be perfect in everything, will have eyes, hands, limbs and then he will be ready to grow, to march on. This is what we mean by being well established in the world and nothing else.

The world order of Bahá'u'lláh is not yet born, it is still in its embryonic stage. It is growing, is gathering strength, and in the year 1963 the child will be born and that is why we celebrate that year, the birth of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. For instance, in our Administrative Order now, we don't have the International House of Justice, some of our National Assemblies are not yet formed, the Institution of the Hands of the Cause is not yet complete - the Guardian says he gives them gradually. During these 10 years, little by little all the details of this great edifice will be completed by the Guardian and from 1963 on the child of the World Order will be born and will start to grow.

Now, when we say the child will be born, let us not think that really it will be a child and will grow very slowly, steadily and lazily. No, this child will do the work of 100 years in one day, and you must take some gifts for this child when he is born. From now, get ready and prepare your gifts of faith, of pioneering, of steadfastness, of certitude, bravery and encouragement that you have and bring them all to the great celebration that will be in Baghdad for the birth of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

In conclusion, I want to thank all of you for the kindness that you have

bestowed on both of us. If there have been any shortcomings in my services to you I apologise for that. I always consider myself as a humble, weak and meek servant in front of the friends of God, and I am sure that I can not do what they deserve. I need your prayers. Alláh-u-Abha.

Women and Religious Change: a case study in the colonialmigrantexperience.¹

Miriam Dixson

Foreword

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, currents of religious change long perceptible in the west became far more pronounced. Long established religions lost adherents to agnosticism on the one hand and, on the other, to newer, more individualistic religions which were less institutionally and liturgically oriented. From as early as the mid-eighteenth century, women had bulked increasingly large in the church congregations of the west as men tended to stand aside from religion and dedicate themselves to a more and more secularised public world of work and politics. This trend too became more pronounced in the late nineteenth century, but a new feature now came to the fore: women rose to striking public visibility in organised religious activity, assuming organisational and leadership roles on a scale surpassing even that of the radical religious turmoil associated with mid-seventeenth century Protestantism.

Against this European background I want to take up the story of Margaret Dixson in Australia. Her shift from Anglicanism, via numerology, astrology and commitment to the world ideals implicit in Esperanto, to the teachings of Bahá'í, on the one hand reflects the widespread change occurring in western Protestant religion we have noted. But beyond that it also traces out a far from uncommon pattern the historian is able to discern among Australian religious women of her time.

My grandmother Margaret Dixson was born Margaret Bertha Shann on Wednesday, 11 July 1877 at 12.50 pm (her horoscope, 1926) and died at the age of sixty two in Melbourne, 1939. My grandmother's life, and that of my father, was deeply shaped by the circumstances of my great-grandfather's story, above all by the breakup of his marriage somewhere in the 1880s.

My great-grandfather Frank Shann, Margaret's father, was the twelfth

¹ This paper was first presented at the ABS Annual Conference in Melbourne in 1988.

or thirteenth son of a Yorkshire clothier family, the Shanns. Strips of land belonging to Shanns can be seen in maps of the villages outside Leeds from the 16th century onwards. During the expansive eighteenth century, Margaret Dixson's branch of the Shanns moved into Leeds, set up as textile manufacturers, and became citizens of substance. They played a part in church and civic life: Shann daughters, for example, taught the children of barge-dwellers, the 'bargees', and a notable Shann male was prominent in the affairs of the Leeds library. Margaret Dixson's passion for things of the mind took one of its points of departure from the traditions of her English and Australian Shann bourgeois family. But, as we shall see, it was her destiny to be and feel estranged from them and much of the nourishment they might have given her.

Various Shanns migrated to America and New Zealand, but since Margaret Shann Dixson's immediate family is our quarry here, I'll confine myself now to the Australian branch. The Australian Shanns, like the English, number some well-known citizens: Edward Owen Giblin Shann, Australia's first prominent economic historian and professor of economic history at the University of Western Australia; Frank Shann, a former headmaster of Trinity Grammar, Kew, Victoria. Frank's son, Edward, has been head of the Economic Division in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; an Australian representative at the International Monetary Fund in Washington; Chief Economist with Shell Australia, and Director of Policy and Research with the Business Council of Australia. After many years as a paediatrician in the New Guinea Highlands, his brother Athol spent some of his time setting up international programs and lecturing on third world infantile disease for the World Health Organisation. He was also the Director of Intensive Care at the Royal Children's Hospital and Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics at the University of Melbourne.

Margaret Shann's father Frank was born in 1836, and married Elizabeth Anne Barry in 1858. She died giving birth to their second child, and next year (1864), we find the young widower following his elder brother Richard to Australia. Richard found his way to Queensland and there established a family. Frank, who divided his time between Victoria and Tasmania, married Frances Wood, whose name was given to my father: John Francis Dixson.

Frances Wood's parents were John Wood and Anne Davenport, both Irish Protestants. John was the son of John Wood and Annie Knox, of the same religious persuasion, and they lived in Fermanagh county. Frances's mother, Anne Davenport, was the Tipperary-born daughter of an army captain. Frances's father John was at various points in his career an overseer, a tollgate keeper, and finally a farmer. John and Ann Wood married at St. Andrew's church, Dublin, on 23 June 1837. Arriving in Australia about 1845, they stayed for some thirteen years in New South Wales and many more in Victoria. John died in Victoria at the age of eighty-five in December 1890.

Several of John and Ann's eleven children had been born in Ireland, before

they migrated, but Margaret Dixson's mother, Frances, was born in New South Wales, possibly in Monaro, on 24 April 1851 and subsequently christened in the Church of England on 5 June that year.

Frances, as we've said, married Frank Shann, and the couple had four children. Then - a most unusual thing in that day and age, particularly among what in the phrase of that time would have been called 'respectable' citizens, they divorced.

Margaret Bertha Dixson had one sister, Elizabeth (called Leischen, with the nickname 'Fuss'), and two brothers, Edward and Frank: the girls' names, like those of the boys, were typical Shann names.

In Australia, Frank Shann worked at various occupations. Between about 1889 and 1896, for example, we find him editing the *Nhill Mail* and publishing the first poems of John Shaw Neilson. His sons Frank and Edward went to school at Nhill state school, SS2411, as it was designated. Frank Shann also established a school in Hobart, Tasmania. Here he became friendly with L.F.Giblin, the economist later to play an important part in helping the Australian federal government to fashion its responses to the 1929 depression. As token of his affection for Giblin, Frank Shann called his second son by the name of 'Edward Owen Giblin'. Frank Shann's letters to Margaret Dixson reveal him as a deeply religious man, and in 1909, at the age of seventy one, we find him still active in local church affairs in Albert Park, a suburb of Melbourne, writing for the church newspaper. At that time Margaret, then a busy young mother and farmer's wife, wrote regretting that she "had so little time to read and study God's Word". In response Frank advised her to "ask for His Holy Spirit and 'He will teach you all things...'"

In the late nineteenth century when the parents split up, Frances, the mother, took the two girls, Margaret and 'Leischen', and Frank, the father, took the two boys, Edward and Frank. The stories of each side then diverge quite markedly: that of the boys is one of hard work, steady success and upward social mobility; that of the mother and girls one of hard work, lack of success and downward mobility. One could perhaps explain this entirely by recalling the tragically scarce paid work-options then available to the unskilled woman, especially one who'd been initially a mother and wife and then became a sole parent. Such options are very limited today, but at the time Margaret Dixson's mother had to rear her girls, there was not even a safety-net social welfare system. Family legend has the mother earning their income by selling jewellery from a horse-drawn buggy. Neither daughter seems to have received significant formal education.

Edward and Frank, the brothers, by contrast received a good education. Edward's postgraduate experience at the London School of Economics played no small part in shaping his later attitudes towards economics. As a postgraduate student, Edward described as 'particularly helpful' a letter of introduction

his father procured from the distinguished Australian politician Alfred Deakin. In later life, when as we noted, he was to become a leading economic historian, Edward corresponded actively with John Maynard Keynes whom one surmises he met during his years in London. His elder brother, Frank, at one point a teacher at Wesley College, Melbourne, as we saw became headmaster of the Anglican boys' school, Trinity Grammar, Kew.

My story of Margaret Shann's life now shifts to north-eastern Victoria, to farming country near Numurkah. At some time in the early twentieth century, Margaret Shann became governess in the home of one of the five brothers of Walter Dixson. It was no doubt through that position that she met the handsome, dark haired and blue-eyed Walter Dixson. At about nineteen she married him, at the time a moderately successful farmer. My photo of the marriage shows a reflective and quite strikingly attractive Margaret and a debonair, a dashing Walter, then thirty-seven. Walter's father was English. His mother was Anne Wilson, a Scottish woman whose own father was a sea captain. The Dixsons were early settlers in the Goulburn Valley, and though Walter had five brothers, there were no sisters. In sixteen-inch rainfall country well-suited to wheat, he raised wheat and some sheep. With his brother Harry, who lived about two miles away, he also worked an area of good wheat country on the banks of the Murray some miles from the home farm. The brothers further grazed cattle on another largish area in a horseshoe bend of the river for many years called Dixson's Bend. Walter Dixson's wheat won a prize at the Numurkah District Agricultural Society annual competition in 1904, and on occasion his horse, Silvermane, won competitions.

Margaret, dark-haired and dark-eyed, with her 'humorous sort of mouth', was an eternal optimist who could only see the good side of people. She bounced when she walked, she whistled, she loved to sing. Her daughter Molly described her as 'something of a dreamer', 'so spontaneous in her feelings'. She 'loved to laugh', and 'didn't care if people looked at her'. Some detail of Margaret's life with Walter on the farm outside Numurkah comes from her elder daughter, Dorothy Ann ('Doris'). Her first babies were twins and died. Then came Doris, John Francis ('Jack', my father), and Molly. Margaret seems to have been an excellent sewer, for pictures show the children in fine flowing babies' dresses - baby Jack is quite elegant - and sturdy Doris at about nine, long beribboned tresses and a frilled, fetching dress. Margaret seems to have been a good cook and housekeeper. She was an enthusiastic pianist, it seems, and Doris tells us she played her children to sleep. Later when fourteen year old Jack was learning the saxophone, she would sit by his side 'for hours' while he practised, beating time for him.

Farm life in the early twentieth century demanded a lot of women, even more than it does now. For example Doris recalled that her mother had to wind up water from a deep well to feed the draft horse, and carry buckets of

water into the house to boil water over the fire. As a careful housekeeper she had to bear it with equanimity when storms deposited layers of fine dust over her dinner table. An excerpt based on Doris's information about her from my book on Australian women, *The Real Matilda*, fills out the picture of Margaret's life on the farm a little more:

My own grandmother, Margaret Bertha... was a deeply intellectual woman. But because she married a farmer in north-east Victoria, the life of the mind was often denied to her, for example, by the need to cook for farm labour during harvest, by tasks such as carrying water to the kitchen (Grandfather was reluctant to 'waste' money for capital improvement by piping water to the kitchen) and hand sewing clothes for Dad and my aunts. Though Grandma died when I was nine, she had a crucial influence on my life...

Margaret Dixson might have thought herself starved for the life of the mind, but she was far from entirely cut off from it. Mrs Hilda Morrison of Numurkah tells us that 'Dickie', as Margaret was known around Numurkah in the early years of the century, studied numerology and astrology, attending lectures on these given by that great stalwart of early twentieth-century country town culture in Australia, the local school headmaster. Hilda Morrison can also remember conversations in Esperanto between her own mother and Dickie, and I remember Grandma teaching the language to me when she lived with my family in St. Kilda, a suburb of Melbourne, not long before her death. From her childhood, Doris recalls parcels of books on Milton and Shakespeare arriving at the farm homestead, and Molly tells of her mother's musical evenings there.

In 1916 or 1917 Walter Dixson's story ended tragically, and as a result, Margaret's life changed dramatically, taking her finally to Melbourne where she would encounter the young Bahá'í movement. On the home farm Walter and Margaret weathered the severe droughts of 1915-1916, and had a bumper crop ready to harvest. Facing severe wartime labour shortage, Walter tackled the crop only to collapse and die ten days later from cerebral haemorrhage. The bereaved family left the farm and finally found its way to Melbourne. Doris was old enough to work, and left home. Despite some help from Doris, Margaret found it extremely hard to earn enough money to raise Jack and Molly. At some point Margaret took her children to Echuca, Victoria, where she worked as housekeeper for her cousin, Ruby Dixson, a former singer and one-time protegee of Dame Nellie Melba. However Margaret Dixson pined for the city and the life of the mind, and found her way back as soon as she could. In the Melbourne suburb of South Yarra (Margaret was fond of South Yarra, and the family lived in rooms in several different locations here), she

found further work as housekeeper. But she took other kinds of work wherever she could find them. For example we know that at one stage, in a converted tram situated in the backyard of a home in Ormond, she taught Esperanto to a seventeen-year-old youth struck down with polio. She also set up a tiny nursery school at an Ormond girls' school, 'Kilvington', owned by her friend Miss Fish. Margaret charged twelve shillings a week for each child, and had five pupils.

Margaret's interest in numerology, astrology and Esperanto took her into the New Civilisation Centre, in Collins Street, Melbourne in the early twenties. The Centre was based on New Thought, a philosophical and mental therapeutics movement developed in North America. 'Individualistic and non-liturgical', it emphasised the power of constructive thinking, and to some extent recalls the Theosophical Movement which also had a branch in Melbourne at that point. At this time a newspaper advertises Margaret Dixson as teaching numerology classes at the New Civilisation Centre. It is reasonable to surmise she first encountered the infant Australian Bahá'í movement here, for we know the founders of the Australian movement, Clara and Hyde Dunn spoke at the Centre at this time. She became secretary to the Melbourne Bahá'í group. In the early 1920s, Margaret and her two children accompanied the Dunns to Sydney, where they shared a house at Randwick. We find her mentioned as secretary to the Sydney group during her brief stay there.

Margaret Dixson, born into the Church of England, drew enormous satisfaction from her later commitment to the Bahá'í movement. Her son and daughter register her years as sole parent as a time of great material hardship, and considerable ill-health: according to her daughter Molly, she often seemed 'too weak ... just worn out.' But she was never downcast, and never complained. Margaret Dixson was a seeker. We can see signs of this in the discussion evenings she held at the farm near Numurkah; in her studies from much the same period in numerology, astrology and Esperanto; and finally in her involvement with the Bahá'ís. Graham Hassall describes her as 'an ardent worker for nearly twenty years' with the Bahá'í movement in Melbourne, and in that work he suggests she displayed qualities of 'genuine self-effacement, or humility...'

Finally, she had a love of the Australian country, and we end this tribute to her life with an excerpt from an article she wrote in 1928 which conveys something of the flavour of that love and of her sense of what it meant 'to be a pilgrim':

Leaving the beautiful agricultural districts behind us, we passed now into a barren and rocky belt of country called 'Stony Rises', where nothing was in evidence but the mineral kingdom, and the country seemed to be covered with strange-looking mounds, which as we came nearer turned out to be stone outcrops of all sorts of queer shapes. All the fences

hereabouts were built of stones carefully and laboriously built one upon another) standing monuments of the forming of the qualities of Patience and Perseverance in the souls who made them. So it appeared that whereas pilgrims may set out through what appears to be a pleasant and easy path, sooner or later the hard stones of the self will come to light. . . (But) we in this wonderful day of swiftly-moving events do not have to live a life-time among the stones, as did those old pioneers, but can move rapidly on to the Desired Land.

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The Practice of Taqiyyih (Dissimulation) in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions

Sepehr Manuchehri

“Beware that in this divine dispensation testimony is not limited by speech and belief is not entrusted on the tongue. The sign of faith is the preparedness for being sacrificed in the path of the Lord. You can not claim to be a Bábí unless you reach the ultimate stage of detachment from personal welfare, material comforts and family life. Now return to your home and ponder in solace: At the time of reckoning the mob will attack your house, confiscate your life possessions, take your wife, massacre your children and force you to recant in exchange for freedom. In that hour if you have the resolve to take in all of the afflictions and remain steadfast in the Cause, only then are you considered to be a Bábí.”

Mulla Jalil Urumi (Letter of Living) to Haji Nasir Qazvini¹

Introduction

Many customs and traditions that are prevalent amongst the followers of various Islamic sects today are not based on the fundamental principals of the Islamic belief. Rather they have gradually been instilled in the sub-culture during centuries. Taqiyyih or dissimulation of one's true belief has been a common practice amongst the followers of Ismailiya, Wahhabiya, Haydari, Nemati and Shaykhi schools of thought during the Qajar era.²

The citizens of the (then) Persian Empire did not accept Mohammedan Islam voluntarily. The Khalifs forcibly defeated it in to submission. Islamic teachings were adopted not through genuine spiritual transformation, but through force and decree by the first generation of Persians after a series of heavy defeats from the Arab forces. The psychological impacts of this defeat amongst the general populations was far heavier than the political overthrow of the Sassanite King and physical destruction of the economic resources and

1. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq Vol 3.*, H-Bahá'í, Michigan: Lansing, 1998.

2. Abbas Amanat, *Resurrection & Renewal*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989, p. 205.

achievements of the Persian Empire. Such impacts manifested themselves in Persians ignoring their rich heritage in favour of adopting an Islamic identity, remoulding their creativity through 'Islamic Arts and Culture' and the establishment of a new class of 'Ulama' (clerics). All of which signalled the extinction of their self-reliance and the open acceptance of the foreign rule by all classes of the society³.

The establishment of Islamic rule did not remain unchallenged. A string of relatively small uprisings in various provinces sought to obtain self-reliance from the rule of Khalifs. Some even threatened to overthrow the ruling hierarchy. The determination shown by the Khalifs in the violent suppression of these movements gradually convinced the masses that Islam is the victorious ideology and the dominant force in the whole region. Participation in the new religion thus became vital for their social and economic survival. Hundreds of mosques were constructed, recital of Quranic verses became customary and an increasing number of the masses enrolled in Islamic Schools (Madrassa). Self-Denial (Taqiyyih) of their earlier Zoroastrian beliefs and pretence in practicing the Islamic Faith became a common practice. The degree of this pretence was such that the children of former Zoroastrians were now competing in mastering recitations of Arabic verses and traditions from the Holy Imams.⁴

However the version of popular Islamic thought promulgated in Persia was at odds with that of the other countries under Islamic rule. The major point of difference lay in the excessive praise and importance placed in Imam Ali (son in law of the Prophet Mohamed) and the adoption of an alternative version of the early Islamic history. The political rivalries between the Safavid Kings and the Othoman Rulers during the early 18th century forced the Safavid Kings to reconsider their Islamic credentials. They allocated huge resources to local 'Ulama' in order to promote Shiite thought and to blend it in with the Persian sub-culture. Shiite philosophy was in direct competition to the Ottoman beliefs and quickly obtained majority support with assistance from the political establishment. Built on accepting the guardianship of the 12 Holy Imams, the Shiite theology emphasised subjugation and promised taking revenge against the forces of infidel oppression at the coming of the promised Mahdi.⁵

Shiite thought established Taqiyyih as a mean to safeguard the believers from the Oppressors of the time. This was seen as a tactical manoeuvre designed to protect and consolidate their numbers in order to assist and support the promised Mahdi in due time and rise up against the established and corrupt world order. However the circumstances surrounding the coming of Mahdi and differing opinions concerning the Day of Resurrection caused major disagreements within the Shiite hierarchy. This caused many scholars

3. Shojau'l Din Shafaa, *Dar Peykar Ahriman*, (1st Edition), Paris: Khavaran Publishing, 1984, p. 35.

4. Dar Peykar Ahriman, *Shojau'l Din Shafaa*, op.cit., p. 35.

5. Ibid., p. 223.

to postpone the coming of Mahdi in their literature to a distant future. Various stories and legends became popular concerning the intimate details surrounding his lengthy 'disappearance' and his likely 'reappearance'. Scholars who did not support such myths viewed the coming of Mahdi in a more humanistic sense. They remoulded the concept of Taqiyyih to the dissimulation of the personal details of Mahdi. Numerous traditions and literature were released concerning the practice of Taqiyyih on His name and the details of his coming in the writings of Shaykh Abbas Qumi and Mohamed Baqir Majlissi.⁶ The majority of these traditions were attributed to Imam Ja'afar Sadiq the sixth Holy Imam.⁷

It is interesting to note that by the time of the Qajar period the practice of Taqiyyih was widespread amongst the followers of alternative Islamic Schools (Ismailiya, Wahhabiya, Shaykhi and Sufi) as a safeguard against the dominant and powerful Usuli Shiite Ulama. Taqiyyih was even used by minorities such as Jews and Bábís to protect their numbers against the constant harassment of mainstream Islam. This paper briefly traces the use of Taqiyyih in Shaykhi School of thought and its application in the progress of Bábí and Baha'i religions.

Taqiyyih in Shaykhi Thought

The practice of Taqiyyih confined Shaykhi eschatology to philosophical arguments. Shaykh Ahmad Ahsai's frequent references to the necessity of Taqiyyih owing to the limited capacity of the ordinary believer to grasp the true meaning of the secrets of religion indicates his hesitation to declare his more controversial views.⁸ Moreover, his configuration of the "Perfect Shi'a" did not necessarily affirm the immediate resurgence of the Hidden Imam. The "Perfect Shi'a" was a protomessianic figure. But his guidance to the extent that it was recognised by the public did not herald the return of the Imam Mahdi, at least in consistent theological language.

The same approach can be observed in the works of Ahsai's successor Siyyid Kazim Rashti. Rashti acknowledges:

"Elaboration on the secrets of the subject of Ma'ad would lead us to raise various matters which are not appropriate to our time. Since the people of this age can not tolerate them and this would accelerate their denial. As our Lord Sadiq, Peace be up on him, has said 'Not all that is known is to be said, and not the right time has come for all that is to be said, and not all appropriate sayings should be said to those who are incompetent of understanding'. Therefore, owing to their complexity,

6. Mohamed Baqir Majlissi, *Baharu'l-Anvar*, Tehran: Intesharat-e Amir Kabir 1982, p 26.

7. Abbas Amanat, *Resurrection & Renewal*, op.cit., p. 200.

8. Ibid., p. 56.

reference to these matters without full explanation are beyond public comprehension. This is the reason why the Holy Imams and the adepts among Shiites constantly covered the delicate details of this subject under the cloak of outward expressions so that the secret gem would be safely protected from the encroachments of the ignorant.”⁹

Prudence and secrecy inspired an allegorical language. Signs of metaphorical speculations can be detected in Ahsai's works which on one occasion specify the date of birth and the date of revelation of the Qa'im in a codified message.¹⁰ Perhaps this triggered the followers of the Shaykhi school to refer to Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kazim as 'Hamil' or 'Carrier'.¹¹ A title that points to a knowledge of hidden secrets and a responsibility to protect them.

The Shaykhi thought became popular in Iran and the Atabat. Advocation of this thought by the political establishment (represented by Haji Mohamed Karim Khan Kirmani a leading student of Ahsai and an influential member of the Qajar clan) and the renounced Mujtahids in major cities (such as Mulla Mohamed Mamaqani in Tabriz) popularised discussions on the intimate details of the return on Mahdi and his proposed reappearance.

Taqiyyih thus became an important tool for the promulgation of the Shaykhi thought on the one hand, and the concealment of their hidden “secrets” on the other. Shaykh Ahmad used this dual approach during his travels in Iran whilst promoting his vision.

Revelation of the Báb

The Báb initially laid claim to the position of the ‘Deputy’ of the Hidden Imam. Many early Bábís were ordered to transmit this claim to the public and other believers.¹² This approach was intended to create a sense of anticipation for the appearance of an unidentified promised person. In His work *Dala'il Sab'a* the Báb declares:

“Since I was aware of the limits of the public, I ordered the concealment of my name”¹³

In December 1844 he instructed Mulla Husayn in the following words:

“Do not reveal the word of your Lord to those who would deny it. Observe the practice of Taqiyyih in order to avoid persecution and imprisonment”¹⁴

Mulla Husayn appreciated the practical importance of this approach. For instance, he refused in the first weeks after his conversion, to disclose the personal details of the Báb to his Shaykhi compatriotes in Shiraz. This caused resentment amongst some of them who took their grievance to the newly arrive Quddus: “*Jinab-i Akhund has attained the presence of the Lord, recognised His station and remains unwilling to disclose His details*”. Mulla Husayn was forced to explain instructions from the Báb requiring the concealment of His name. At this time the Báb was seen to be passing by. Quddus immediately looked up and said: “*I do not see this Cause as distinct from this young Siyyid*” Mulla Husayn then responded by a verse from Rumi “*I desire a sharp vision who recognises the King in disguise*”.¹⁵

The Báb in his early correspondence with his disciples strongly forbade them to divulge his identity¹⁶. On a few occasions He quoted well-known traditions from Imam Ja'far Sadiq on the necessity of Taqiyyih:

“*Taqiyyih is my faith and the faith of my forefathers. Anyone who does not practice Taqiyyih has no faith.*”¹⁷

also:

“*By your refined wisdom my Lord, you made Taqiyyih your command. Thus people practiced it from the beginning of occultation up to now. And that practice was the testimony to [people's] eagerness to come to your presence.*”¹⁸

After his return from Mecca, the Báb was arrested in Bushihr and taken in to custody to the residence of Husayn Khan Nazimu'l Dowla the Governor of Fars. On the same Friday, the Báb was pressured by the Ulama particularly the Imam Jumha of Shiraz to publicly renounce His earlier claims in the grand Mosque of Wakil in front of a congregation of the faithful. The Báb attended the prayer session and publicly denied his claim to the position of ‘Deputyship’ of the Hidden Imam. This renunciation no doubt saved his life from the evil intentions of the Shirazi Ulama who had earlier encouraged Husayn Khan to execute Him. The public renunciation although pleased Shaykh Abu

9. Siyyid Kazim Rashti, ‘Risala’ in *INBA*, vol II no 4, hand written manuscript not dated. pp. 216-263, also see Abbas Amanat, *Resurrection & Renewal*, op.cit., p. 57.

10. Shaykh Ahmad Ahsa'i, *Kitabu'l Reja'a*, who wrote this in response to a certain Siyyid Husayn who wrote a treatise regarding the day of resurrection. This is detailed in *Qatil Karbalai*, hand written manuscript no date, p. 53 and cited in *Resurrection & Renewal*, op.cit., p. 57.

11. Haji Mohamed Karim Khan Kirmani, *Izhaq'ul Batil*, Tehran, publisher and year unknown.

12. Abbas Amanat, *Resurrection & Renewal*, op.cit., pp. 56-58.

13. The Báb, *Dala'il Saba'a*, Published in Tehran 1944, Publisher unknown, p. 29.

14. Letter from the Báb addressed to Mulla Husayn, *INBA*, no. 91, IV, op.cit., pp. 10-14.

15. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq*, Vol. 3, H-Bahá'í, Michigan: Lansing, 1998, p. 418.

16. Letter from the Báb addressed to Mulla Ibrahim Shirazi, *INBA*, no. 91, XXXVI, op.cit., pp. 170-176.

17. Letter from the Báb addressed to the Nahi brothers, *INBA*, no. 91, IV, op.cit., p. 137.

18. Letter from the Báb addressed to believers in Qazvin, *INBA*, no. 91, XL, op.cit., p. 193.

Torab the Imam Jumha, failed to impress the new Shaykhi converts and early believers in general.¹⁹

In the early phase of His revelation, the Báb revealed His position as that of 'Bábíya' or the Gate leading to the presence of the Hidden Imam and clearly instructed His followers to conceal His name.²⁰ Haji Siyyid Javad Karbalai recounts a lengthy interrogation of his friend and colleague Mulla Ali Bastami (Second Letter of Living) in Karbila, in an effort to learn the name of the Báb. The conversation as recorded in *Kashfu'l Qita* indicates the loyalty of Mulla Ali to this instruction from the Báb.

After a few months the Báb observed a greater acceptance and readiness amongst His people and gradually moved His claim to that of 'Zikryya' and 'Qaiemyya' meaning that of the Hidden Imam in its entirety. In the final years of His life He publicly announced the station of 'Mazhariah' meaning that of a manifestation from God.

The reception of His message was not free from confusion. A number of early believers instantly recognised His true station right from the onset. This naturally resulted in confusion and disagreement amongst the Bábí community during the early phase of the revelation. At a time when the Báb intended to convey his message with caution, many of his leading followers (eg. Tahirih, Vahid and Hujjat) openly declared the coming of the promised Mahdi and proclaimed His message linking it to the earlier Shaykhi prophecies. No doubt the adoption of such a cautious policy by the Báb managed to attract the maximum attention with the minimum possible controversy during the early months. However the scope and impact of His revolutionary claims would eventually draw the full wrath of the Ulama. Bahá'u'lláh mentions this fact in one of His tablets:

*"The Báb in response to the weakness of the people revealed His message with wisdom. In one instance He writes This revelation is the point of Quran in its entirety.. on another occasion he reveals If people were not weak the word Mashíyya would not have been mentioned. No doubt these utterings were made in wisdom. If He had revealed what was revealed in His final years during the early period, the fire of opposition and denial would have inflicted in the early days what was inflicted on Him in the final days."*²¹

The Báb openly declared His station as the promised Qa'im during the public trial in Tabriz. After the punishment handed to Him following the trial, He wrote a letter to Prince Nasiru'l Din Mirza:

19. Nabil Zarandi, *Talkhissi As Tarikh-e Nabil Zarand - Mataleh u'l Anvar*, India: Bahá'í Publication Press, 1973, pp. 156-158.

20. Mirza Abul Fadl and Mirza Mehdi Golpayegani, *Kashfu'l Qita'a*, Tashkent, 1919, p. 242.

21. Fadil Mazandarani, Zuhur Al-Haqq, Vol 3, H-Bahá'í, Michigan: Lansing, 1998, p. 287.

"This weak soul has no desire contrary to the will of the Lord and the Guardians of His Cause. Though my being is mere nothingness but since my heart is able to recognise the true meaning of the oneness of God, the manifestation of His prophet and the Guardianship of His Imams, and my tongue confesses to all that has been revealed by Him. I hope for His mercy and have no desire save His contentment.

If certain words – contrary to His will – have been revealed from my pen, my purpose has not been that of rebellion. In any event I seek forgiveness of His Excellency. This servant has no knowledge to warrant any claims .. Certain prayers and words that have been revealed from the tongue do not represent any concerns.

*And the claim to the deputyship of His Excellency Hujauallah – peace be up on Him – is void. This servant has not laid such a claim or any other one. Request is made for clemency from His Royal Excellency (king) and your Excellency to honour this servant with your mercy, kindness and forgiveness."*²²

A quick comparison between the above letter and His earlier repentance in Shiraz reveals a familiar pattern:

1. The Báb regards any claims to the position of Deputyship of the Hidden Imam as void. In fact He repeatedly spoke of being the Hidden Imam and an independent manifestation from God during His exile to Azarbayijan. Such claims were far greater than His early position of 'Bábíya' or Gateship which he adopted only months earlier in Shiraz. The Báb had bestowed the title of 'Bábíya' and Deputyship to Mulla Husayn as early as the Shiraz period. The title of Bábu'l-Báb further illustrates Mulla Husayn's new transformation. Therefore theologically from that point onwards the Báb was no longer the Deputy to the Hidden Imam.
2. The Báb rejects any suggestion of leading a rebellion against the State. The Qajar establishment were seriously concerned about the hidden agenda of the Báb. Overtures and suggestions of possible revolt were made by the Ulama keen to form an alliance with the State in suppression of the Bábí movement. After the involvement of the Royal troops in the Tabarsi and Zanjan uprisings – events that Ulama had created – many Bábís openly supported a revolt against the oppressive forces. This in turn increased the suspicion of the officials.
3. The Báb rejects any notions of having acquired knowledge. This issue was floated by the Ulama to belittle His reputation in revealing verses in speed

22. Mirza Abul Fadl and Mirza Mehdi Golpayegani, *Kashfu'l Qita'a*, op.cit., pp. 204-205.

and writing in a style similar to that of Quran. Ulama claimed that the Báb had earlier acquired such knowledge from their peers. In effect claiming that the Báb was repeating what they had taught Him earlier.

4. The Báb refers to His thorough understating of the fundamental Shiite principles. These are namely Tawhid (Oneness), Nabuvva (Prophethood) and Velaya (Guardianship). This was partly in response to Ulama's claim that he had developed a psychological disorder and confused the basic concepts of religion. The Báb in effect conveyed his appreciation of the popular understanding of Shiite teachings and his intimate knowledge of these issues.

Taqiyyih Amongst the Early Disciples

Many of the Báb's loyal followers observed his instructions on the practice of Taqiyyih and became the source of invaluable service to the new Cause. Others used Taqiyyih to selfishly protect their livelihood. Some went further and actually provided assistance to the officials in persecuting the other Bábís.

- Siyyid Hassan and Siyyid Husayn Yazdi both met the Báb whilst in Isfahan. Siyyid Husayn immediately became His scribe and recorded many of the divine tablets and letters revealed by Him. The two brothers continued to serve the Báb in this capacity until His exile to Maku. Siyyid Hassan was ordered by the Báb in Maku to recant his faith, retire from service and return. Siyyid Husayn stayed until the end and similarly followed Báb's instructions, practiced Taqiyyih and was saved from the enemies after His execution. A short time after the Báb's execution, Siyyid Husayn went to the Russian Consul General in Tabriz and conveyed certain information on the final hours of Báb's life and Bábí teachings in general. The Russian Consul General took Siyyid Husayn to Tehran with himself under diplomatic protection. Siyyid Husayn was well respected in the Bábí community as the only disciple who personally witnessed the final four years of the Báb's life and was a privy to the secrets of the Cause. He was known as 'Aziz' (favourite) 'Katib' (scribe) and Katib-ul-Bayan (scribe of Bayan). Bahá'u'lláh refers to the two brothers in one of His tablets:²³

"In the presence of the Compassionate Lord in Azarbayijan were two souls. He sent away Husayn according to His mercy and expelled Hassan according to His justice. Although he was held in high regards by my Forerunner and Beloved" ²³

- Mirza Mohamed Zakir (Rowza Khan) Yazdi was a leading Shaykhi student who had accompanied Mulla Husayn to Shiraz. He became one of the Letters of Living and was ordered to spread the new message in the city of Yazd. His arrival and initial enthusiasm was met with severe opposition by the intolerant Ulama who immediately issued a Fatwa to take his life. He became disillusioned and searched for means to save his life. He relied on his Shaykhi credentials and claimed to be a devoted follower of Haji Mohamed Karim Khan Kirmani. He even married a woman from the Kirmani clan. With a combination of Taqiyyih and support from his new family he managed to spare his life and maintain his reputation amongst the Mullahs. Privately he remained a Bábí and taught the faith secretly to close confidants. He continued to practice Taqiyyih until the end.²⁴
- Qahr'ullah was a Dervish from India who had travelled to Persia and became a Bábí. He met the Báb in Chihriq and was instantly transformed to such an extent that he openly declared the coming of Mahdi various villages in Azarbayijan. His open proclamation caused a stir in the city of Khoy and as a result many Bábís were persecuted. The Báb ordered him to leave Iran. He returned to India only to come back to Chihriq after a few months and sought refuge in close proximity to Báb's cell. When the Báb was taken to Tabriz for execution, Qahr'ullah followed Him barefooted. He was present at the hour of execution. After the execution he was arrested and interrogated. During the process, he practiced Taqiyyih and claimed to be a Sufi follower and was subsequently released. He was later killed in Tehran.²⁵
- Many of the Bábí women who visited Tahirih whilst she was held captive at the residence of Kalantar Khan observed Taqiyyih. They pretended to be housemaids and carried back and forth correspondence between the Bábís and Tahirih.²⁶

Prominent Bábí leaders never encouraged other believers to practice Taqiyyih. In situations where a Bábí questioned his loyalties or doubted his beliefs, they were advised to make a personal choice. Buddas on a number of occasions told his followers during the Tabarsi uprising:

*"The Lord is detached from any form of assistance from His followers. If all of you leave I shall reveal the Lord through my walking-stick."*²⁷

24. Ibid., p. 458.

25. Ibid., p. 458.

26. Ibid., p. 338.

27. Author unknown, *Nuqtatu'l Kaaf*, E.G. Browne, (ed.), Leiden: EJ Brill, 1910, pp. 184-187.

23. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq*, Vol. 3, op.cit., pp. 459-460.

- Following the martyrdom of Mulla Husayn and increasing hardships inside the fortress, a number of Bábís lead by Mirza Mohamed Husayn Motavalli Qumi decided to leave the fortress. Qumi became their spokesman and met with Quddus. Upon hearing his intentions Quddus replied: “*Very well, leave whenever you can.*”²⁸

Mirza Mohamed Husayn Motavalli Qumi surrendered to the government forces claiming: “*I had initially approached Bábís to investigate their cause. After spending some time with them I observed many words and no action. I did not see any truth in their claims and left*”.²⁹ A short time later he became disillusioned. Openly praising the Bábís and at other times questioning their resolve. When the Prince learnt about his state of mind, he sent Qumi to the nearby city of Sari fearing that he was a Bábí infiltrator.³⁰

- Defection of Qumi instantly intensified the official propaganda encouraging the Bábís to surrender. This in turn caused more Bábís to reconsider their situation. Aqa Rasul Behnamiri and thirty of his companions left the fortress after they obtained permission from Quddus. They were not lucky. All were sprayed with bullets in the vicinity of the fortress. Their bodies were taken to nearby towns and publicly beheaded. Quddus would repeatedly say: “*We passed over the actions of Aqa Rasul and God forgave him.*”³¹

Mirza Mohamed Husayn Motavalli Qumi was arrested years later in Tehran following the unsuccessful attempt on the life of the Shah. After torture he recanted his faith and cooperated with the officials in the identification of other Bábís in order to save his life. He survived the ordeal and later met Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdad only to become an Azali at a later date.

Taqiyyih Amongst the Second Generation of Bábí Notables

Many learned and respected Bábís practiced Taqiyyih before and after the martyrdom of the Báb in order to avoid involvement in various uprisings, persecutions and afflictions. Such Bábís were fully aware of the significance of their actions. Many chose to assist their fellow Bábís secretly in times of need. The scope of such assistance was limited to their degree of caution and Taqiyyih.

It appears that these Bábís were not ready to sacrifice their positions, titles and life comforts for their faith. Taqiyyih amongst them was no longer a tool

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

to protect the identity of the Báb or His position. This requirement was largely superseded after the execution of the Báb. These Bábís represented the prosperous class of Ulama and Bazari merchants who were in some way dependent on the Ulama or the ruling establishment for their survival.

It is interesting to note that many from this group later changed their ways, declared their faith and lost their life for the cause. Clearly they had an internal struggle between conscientious belief and human desires. A struggle that resulted in them abandoning the practice of Taqiyyih.

- Haji Mulla Baqir Ardakani was the Imam Jumha in the city of Ardikan. He became one of the first disciples of Vahid. He continued to practice as a Mullah in the local mosque after becoming a Bábí. He led the mass prayers, conducted religious ceremonies and preached Islamic traditions. Gradually rumours began to circulate about his hidden loyalties. Rival Mullah's and ambitious officials rose in his opposition and signed an open petition calling him an infidel and requesting his removal. The petition was sent to the Governor of Kirman. Haji Mulla Baqir Ardakani subsequently met the Governor, practiced Taqiyyih and convinced him that the allegations are not correct. The Governor became fond of the Haji and paid for his expense to travel to Karbila in order to become a Mujtahid. He spent two years in Karbila and returned to his native Ardikan. Such was the Governor's respect for him that a welcome party was dispatched to the outskirts of Ardikan to greet him. Upon his arrival he instantly received recognition from the leading Mullah's of Yazd and Ardikan to engage as a Mujtahid. He returned to his duties as the Imam Jumha and publicly distanced himself from the Bábí faith. He continued to assist Bábís in secret and later became a Bahá'í.³²
- Mullah Mohamed Ja'far Kirmani was a leading cleric in the city of Kirman practicing as an Islamic teacher in that city. He became a Bábí after he met Mullah Sadiq Muqaddas Khorassani in Kirman. He was considered as one of the learned Bábís. When Haji Mohamed Karim Khan Kirmani the Shaykhi leader found out about his conversion, he organised a public campaign forcing Mullah Mohamed Ja'far to be sidelined and isolated by his former followers. Mullah Mohamed Ja'far resorted to the local Mujtahids and Imam Jumha for assistance. They publicly announced that he is not a Bábí. After a short while he re-commenced his duties as a teacher in the mosque, occasionally standing in as the acting Imam Jumha. Mullah Mohamed Ja'far Kirmani continued to assist the Bábís in secret but refused to meet any of the prominent Bábí leaders. He sent a letter to the Báb and received a tablet in response. He continued to practice Taqiyyih

32. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq*, Vol. 3, op.cit., p. 482.

and maintained his Islamic credentials choosing to remain a Mullah until the end of his life.³³

- Shaykh Mohamed Taqi Hashtroudi was a former Shaykhi student and considered as a learned Bábí. He was extremely conservative, living and practicing a life of Taqiyyih. It was acknowledged amongst the Bábís that he “*Ran miles away*” at the mention of the name Bábí. He enjoyed particular respect and influence within the Shaykhi followers. Mulla Mohamed Mamqani (one of the Shaykhi Mullah’s who signed the Báb’s execution order) displayed sincere affection towards Shaykh Mohamed Taqi and would invite him to his house every time he visited Tabriz. Shaykh Mohamed Taqi Hashtroudi would secretly meet with the Bábís during the night. His counterparts never found out about his real convictions.³⁴
- Haji Mirza Ibrahim Sabzevari was one of the grand Mujtahids in the city of Sabzevar and enjoyed enormous powers as the religious head and Imam Jumha of that city. He had met the Báb whilst He was in Isfahan and secretly believed in Him. However he practiced Taqiyyih and dissimulated his thoughts. He assisted the Bábís of that city during desperate times.³⁵
- Aqa Mirza Ahmad Azqandi was a leading student of Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kazim. He enjoyed the respect of the Shaykhi community. He declared his faith in the Báb following a meeting with Mullah Husayn and wrote a treatise in support of Báb’s claims. Following a series of persecutions in Yazd, he suffered an enormous financial loss, battered reputation and threats to his personal safety. In the following decades he refused to get involved in Bábí cause and practiced Taqiyyih to save his life. Following the execution of the Báb, he became reinvigorated abandoning the practice of Taqiyyih in order to assist his fellow Bábís.³⁶
- Abu’l Hassan Mirza Haj Shaykhu’l Rais was a Qajar Prince and a leading poet who enjoyed recognition in the literary circles in the City of Mashhad. Mirza Saeed Khan was a former Foreign Minister who was seconded to administer the Imam Rida estate in the City of Mashhad during his retirement. Both practiced Taqiyyih in order to protect their life from what they called “*the savagery of the mob particularly the Mujtahids*”. They are known to have assisted the Bábís on a number of occasions. In at least one instance, they requested the Bábís to observe Taqiyyih to escape the persecutions.³⁷

33. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq*, Vol. 3, op.cit., pp. 401-402.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

- Haji Mirza Hassan Shirazi was considered to be the Grand Mujtahid of Shiites and an expert in Islamic philosophy. He exercised considerable influence over the general Shiite population including officials in the Royal court of Nasir’ul-Din Shah. His famous Fatwa on banning the use of Tobacco caused the political turmoil at the time. Haji Mirza Hassan Shirazi was a second cousin of the Báb and had met Him in the house of the Imam Jumha in Isfahan. After observing the power of His words, he declared his faith. From that period onwards, Haji Mirza Hassan exercised extreme caution in his contacts with the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh and other believers. He managed to save himself by practicing Taqiyyih. He is known to have intervened on at least one occasion to assist the Bábís in captivity.³⁸
- Haji Mulla Mohamed Hamzih Shariatmadar was a respected old cleric in the City of Bábol (Bar-foroosh). He constantly assisted and protected the Bábís and in response to questions from the general public would say “*I do not consider them bad and will not make negative comments about them.*”³⁹ He set out to join the Bábís in Shaykh Tabarsi and was unable to get there due to the military embargo. Under instructions from Quddus, the 85 year old married his sister in order to protect her and a number of tablets and writings from Quddus. He performed final prayers for the funerals of Bábí martyrs and sought forgiveness for their killers. Other Mullah’s became furious and called him a traitor and an infidel. Haji Mulla Mohamed Hamzih Shariatmadar managed to free the body of Quddus and bury it in the outskirts of the city. When his rival counterpart Saeedu’l Ulama provoked the mob to dig up and burn his remains, Haji complained vehemently to the Governor and warned of the wrath of God comparing this to the actions of the oppressors of Imam Husayn in Karbila. The Governor issued an order preventing Saeedu’l Ulama from carrying out his wish.⁴⁰
- The Mirza Mohamed Riza Abrari in Yazd was an influential senior Mullah. He was a former student of Siyyid Kazim Rashti who later believed in Báb. He practiced Taqiyyih to such an extent that his son was unaware of his belief. In the final hour of his life, he called his son Shaykh Zinul’Abedin to his bedside and encouraged him to investigate and accept the claims and teachings of the Báb.⁴¹
- Aqa Shaykh Sadiq was a well-known scholar and teacher in Yazd and enjoyed a great deal of respect from the Ulama. He practiced Taqiyyih and never declared his faith in public. This caused him to continue teaching in

38. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 1013.

39. *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 441.

40. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 817, and Vol. 3, p. 441.

41. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 817.

the Shaf'ite school in Yazd for another 12 years. When rumours began to spread, he was banned from teaching all together.⁴²

- Haji Mulla Mohamed Ali was another scholar and teacher who was the acting Imam Jumha on the locality of Dih Abad close to the City of Yazd. He became a Bábí in secret and was known for practicing Taqiyyih. He encouraged the Governor to build a special school for the young children in that locality. Once the school was built, he became the senior teacher. When rumours of his faith spread, he left his job and escaped to Yazd.⁴³
- Mirza Riza Quli Hakim brother of Bahá'u'lláh practiced as a Physician in the Royal Court in Tehran. His persistence in Taqiyyih was such that he refrained from mentioning His name or declaring His relationship with himself.⁴⁴
- Haji Mirza Yahya Dowlat-Abadi was a leading Bábí figure in Isfahan. After allegations of his Bábí affiliations surfaced, he was taken in to custody. In order to please the Shaykh Najafi the Mujtahid of Isfahan and protect his financial interests, Haji Mirza Yahya Dowlat-Abadi agreed to attend a number of his ceremons and publicly denounce and slander the faith. His denunciation came during a heavy round of persecutions in nearby Najaf Abad in which many Bábís were arrested and killed. Later he announced his allegiance to Azal and began to persecute the local Baha'is. Bahá'u'lláh devotes a full section in the Epistle to the Son of Wolf to his activities and treason.
- Mirza Aqa Rekab-Saz was a renowned Bahá'í in Yazd. The enemies provoked his wife – who was biased against the faith – to make an official complaint against him to the Governor. She agreed and alleged that Mirza Aqa was a Bahá'í engaged in copying Bahá'í Scriptures and regularly met with other notable Bahá'ís. Mirza Aqa decided to quell the rumours by practicing Taqiyyih. He became a regular participant in the daily prayers in the mosque of the senior Shaykh in the city. Gradually he gave the impression that he is not a Bábí and saved his life. He was later martyred in another round of persecutions.⁴⁵
- Haji Mirza Kamalul'Din Naraqí was a leading Imam Jumha and mullah of his native town of Naraq. He had travelled to Baghdad, met Bahá'u'lláh

42. Ibid., p. 819.

43. Ibid., p. 823.

44. Mirza Abul Fadl and Mirza Mehdi Golpayegani, *Kashfu'l Qita'a*, op.cit., p. 398.

45. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq*, op.cit., Vol. 6, p. 874.

and became a Bahá'í at the age of 20. Upon his return to Naraq, the people appointed him as their Imam Jumha. He continued in this capacity and practiced Taqiyyih for a further year. One day he became wary of Taqiyyih and during his daily ceremon thought to himself: "*Taqiyyih and caution is not the path of the lovers of religion. The days in this life will pass and there will be no recourse but regret.*" Immediately he began to speak on the importance of the fundamental teachings and their priority over minor religious issues and promised the crowd that he will re-commence his duties in the mosque on another day. He then left the mosque and returned to Baghdad immediately.⁴⁶

Form Taqiyyih to total Denial

For many Bábís the practice of Taqiyyih was a forerunner to their eventual abandonment of their faith. Most of these Bábís had cautiously adopted Taqiyyih and then gradually moved on to severe ties with the Cause even refusing to assist other Bábís.

- Mulla Hadi Qazvini was a Shaykhi student of Siyyid Kazim Rashti who later came to Shiraz and became one of the Letters of Living. He did not get involved in the Tabarsi uprising and shielded his life through Taqiyyih. Following the open declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, Mulla Hadi became a devout Azali and rose in His opposition. Mulla Hadi was expelled from the community by Bahá'u'lláh during the Adrine period and spent his final days in oblivion.⁴⁷
- Mulla Mohamed Taqi Horavi was a leading Mujtahid of his time. Islamic clerics in Isfahan relied on his knowledge and understanding of Shiite theology. He handled the judicial matters in that City. Later he became a Bábí and translated His 'Sahifeh Adliya' from Arabic to Farsi. He sent a number of letters to the Báb in Maku and in reply received many tablets from His pen. Months later fear and insecurity caused him to practice Taqiyyih and he gradually distanced himself from the Bábís. He spent his final days in Karbila isolated and suffered a lonely death.⁴⁸
- Mulla Ali Akbar Ardistani was one of the early Bábís who accepted the faith during Mullah Husayn's stay in Isfahan. He then followed Mulla Sadiq Muqaddas to Shiraz. They were arrested, heavily tortured and carried around the Bazaar. After that event he adopted Taqiyyih and never again involved himself at times of danger.⁴⁹

46. Ibid., p. 678.

47. Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 306.

48. Ibid., p. 96.

49. Ibid., p. 103.

- Mirza Husayn Yazdi was an influential Mullah in the city of Yazd. He copied and distributed many of the Báb's treatises. When rumours circulated about his Bábí affiliations, he practiced Taqiyyih and ordered his followers to inflict lashes on an arrested Bábí (Mulla Ali Naqi Rowza Khan). He survived a major upheaval against the Bábís in that city and was subsequently appointed as the head of the Islamic school and amassed considerable wealth. On another occasion he ordered two other Bábís to be beaten until such time that they recant their faith.⁵⁰
- Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani was a leading Azali and the son in law of Mirza Yahya Azal. He practiced Taqiyyih and on many occasions publicly humiliated teachings of the Báb and the character of Azal. His famous book 'Sad Khatabeh' is a testimony to his open adoption of Taqiyyih.⁵¹
- Taqiyyih amongst the rank and file Bábís was a personal choice. Many Bábís openly engaged in other unlawful activities and yet called themselves a Bábí. Ustad Mohammad Ali Salmani recalls his early days as a Bábí:

*"The majority of Bábís had no ethics and many were involved in unacceptable behaviours. I visited Aqa Mohammad Javad Najafabadi – a genuinely honest Bábí – at his house on 21st Day of Ramadan. He was a good Bábí but happened to drink wine. He was filtering wine in his residence where the odour had alerted the neighbours. They surrounded the house, arrested us and took us to the prison ... We were five in total. Mohamed Javad - a good old man who used to travel to nearby districts and teach - Abdul' Karim Isfahani who has now become a covenant breaker, Mohamed Sadiq the brother of Abdul' Karim who displayed little conviction in the cause, Mulla Ali my teacher who was a genuine and well natured individual and myself."*⁵²

He continues:

*We consulted amongst ourselves in jail and agreed to exclude Mohamed Sadiq from our ranks because he was not stable. We told the authorities that he has been arrested by mistake and they later released him. Thus we then became four in number and decided against dissimulation (Taqiyyih) as it was not desirable. We agreed that it was best to say the same thing (during interrogations) and maintain consistency."*⁵³

50. Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 110.

51. Mirza Abul Fadl and Mirza Mehdi Golpayegani, *Kashfu'l Qita'a*, op.cit., p. 398.

52. Ustad Mohamed Ali Salmani, *Sharh-i Hal*, H-Bahá'í, Michigan: Lansing, 1997, p. 3.

53. Ibid., p. 4.

Treaties and Compilations

In many instances the learned Bábís who practiced Taqiyyih left behind significant literal works in support of the new revelation. Unfortunately in some cases the opposition of their children to the Faith resulted in the loss of most of these treatises. The impact of these treatises in guiding the general population to the Cause is difficult to verify. However their very existence indicates the internal struggle within the learned class of Bábís who chose to practice Taqiyyih.

- Shaykh Mohamed Taqi Hashtroudi wrote a book entitled 'Abvab-Al-Hoda' in support of the Bábí cause from a Shaykhi perspective. This work includes the author's detailed personal recollections from the classes of Shaykh Ahmad Ahsai and Siyyid Kazim Rashti in detail. In certain sections he resorts to abusive language whilst condemning the enemies of the faith such as Mulla Mohamed Mamaqani (ironically one of his ardent followers!). He submitted this book during his final days to Mulla Mostafa Tabrizi one of his Bábí contacts in Tabriz.⁵⁴
- Aqa Mirza Ahmad Azqandi whilst observing Taqiyyih and caution wrote a treaty in support of Báb's claims at the request of his Bábí friend.⁵⁵
- Haji Mulla Mohamed Hamzih Shriatmadar published a book entitled 'Asrar-Al- Shahada' five years after the martyrdom of the Báb. He writes:

"Báb means the Gate. As the Prophet (Mohamed) was the City of knowledge and Ali – Peace be up on him – was the gate to that city ... Similarly the first gate was Jinab-i Mirza Ali Mohamed who was from a merchant family. Although I never met him, I have read a book written by Him when he was 27 years of age. In His younger days He spent less than a year in Karbila in the company of Jinab-i Haji Siyyid Kazim (Rashti). He only studied elementary subjects and developed an extraordinary power to write and an incredible mental capacity to create (works) ... He wrote 6 or 7 volumes in a style close to the Quranic verses and many powerful 'Khotab' similar to 'Sahifeh Sajadieh' (written by Imam Ali). He wrote a commentary to the Sura of the Cow 'Baqarah' with difficult and strange combinations of words. These works were delivered to me. They were written with a pleasant style of handwriting. He had a quick pen and wrote in style. He claimed the position of Bábíya and named himself the Báb ... The second Báb after Him was Jinab-i Haji Mohamed Ali the son of

54. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq*, Vol. 3, op.cit., pp. 73-74.

55. Ibid., p. 154.

a Mazandarani farmer who lived at the same age and appeared slightly older than Him. He accompanied (the Báb) to Mecca ... and similar to (the Báb) had not studied conventional theory. After returning from Mecca He wrote an incomplete commentary on the Surah of Oneness (Tawhid). I read approximately 5 to 6 thousand verses revealed by Him at a quick pace. The slope and message if this work were solely on the oneness of God ... The third Báb was Jinab-i Akhund Mulla Husayn Bushruieh. He was competent in the conventional theory, theology, fundamentals and grammar. He considered his knowledge of Bábíya a mere drop of ocean in comparison to the other two. He was quite brave, had a fighting spirit and was skilled with the sword ... (after Shaykh Tabarsi) they brought Haji Mohamed Ali and several of his followers to town. Haji was taken to Sabzeh-Maydan and was set on fire. When the public questioned me about my opinion of the oppressor / oppressed parties, or regarding their infidelity or Islam, I used to remain silent. Not writing a response or uttering an answer ... This was a summary of their story. Although they are now stamped out and forgotten, but life has many turns and twists. Must ponder on the consequence (of actions) and its implications ... Others alleged that prophets and Imams were witches and considered them mentally unstable, infidel or mad. This was due to their own stupidity and deficiency in understanding and comprehension. How can it be that a knowledgeable, honest, learned, respected and perfect man born as a Shiite in a Shiite family and raised amongst the shiites seeking the religion of Siyyid Al Mursalin (Mohamed) would lie and lean towards blasphemy? Insane and mentally ill will not do what he does ... If people are investigating, they must ask him or remain quiet and leave Him to His Lord. They must not denounce Him according to their imperfect minds...⁵⁶

- Mulla Alyaz was a Jewish Physician in the City of Hamadan who secretly declared his faith following a meeting with Tahirih in that City. He then practiced Taqiyyih in order to protect his life and the security of the Jewish minority in Hamadan. He subsequently assisted Conte Gobineau in compiling information and detailing certain events relating to Bábí history.⁵⁷

Unfortunately not all of the compilations and writings were complimentary to the Cause. The Azali Bábís and in particular Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani and Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi showed little hesitation in alteration and falsification of Bábí teachings and history in their works. Azali Bábí' regarded Taqiyyih as an imperative requirement.

Contrary to Bahá'ís who had begun to discard the practice of Taqiyyih with the passage of time and gradually moved to stamp out this practice from their ranks, Azali's stayed loyal to the Taqiyyih and praised its adoption in their literature. Azali leaders such as Haji Mirza Hadi Dowlatabadi, Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani and Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi all had publicly renounced the Báb and Azal in a series of formal meetings with Ulama, officials and common people. However in the case of Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani and Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi their repeated Taqiyyih were never believed by the general public and government authorities.

- Aqa Khan Kirmani allocated a considerable section to raising the status of Taqiyyih in the Bábí religion in his book *Hasht Behesht*. He regards those who practice Taqiyyih as true believers. This may have been aimed at countering the negative impressions created in the minds of most Bábís following the flagrant manner which Azali leaders used in public to slander their faith. *Hasht Behesht* lists the advantages of Taqiyyih:

“Taqiyyih is a sign of true religion and if (a follower) of an aborted religion practices Taqiyyih, he will be destroyed instantly. Aborted religions have no features other than some superficial customs and ceremonies ... Aborted religions do not possess any hidden secrets or truths. Therefore practicing Taqiyyih in these religions will cause them to be destroyed and annulled. The more the hidden secrets, Taqiyyih and concealment in a religion, the more the authenticity and truth of that religion ... believer is the person who displays more Taqiyyih. Increased concealment in a religion will cause greater power, influence and respect in its teachings ... Secrets and truths are like roots and bases. The healthier the root and base, the greater the appearance of a tree. It has been said by the learned that a tree without a firm base will not produce green branches. Hiding a secret will hasten the prosperity of the revelation. Just as a plant will not grow if the seed is not hidden inside the ground ... Whosoever keeps secrets will experience an eternal joy in his heart ...”⁵⁸

Aqa Khan ventures further and classifies secrets in to four levels. The concealers of secrets in the upper level cannot disclose their message to those from a lower level. The highest level is level 4 where Aqa Khan claims *“even they do not know what secret they are concealing”*⁵⁹

According to Aqa Khan one must behave in a cordial fashion with the enemies and not share ‘secrets’ with them. In his more political work ‘*Sad Khatabeh*’ Aqa Khan contradicts his earlier claims:

56. Ibid., pp. 439-441.

57. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 700.

58. Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, *Hasht Behesht*, printed in Tehran: year unknown, pp. 62-65.

59. Ibid., pp. 62-65.

*“One of the evils of conversion by force and declaration without thought which manifests itself amongst the Iranians is Taqiyyih. Curse on Taqiyyih ... though Iranians contend themselves by taking this course, they neglect the fact that half of the moral values of this nations have been corrupted due to Taqiyyih which was originally instilled in their veins through the sword of the Arabs ...”*⁶⁰

During this work he switches from Taqiyyih to outright opposition to the Báb and personal insult:

*“The philosophical teachings of Mulla Sadra, theologies of Shaykh Morteza, Irfan of Shaykh Ahmad and Bayan of the Báb: How have they benefited this beleaguered country? They have not increased government revenue, increased their standard of living or removed the threats of Russian and British influence. Though every day their poverty is increased and their plight becomes more sorrowful...”*⁶¹

Also:

*“Siyyid Báb had no warships to support his claims. Despite his arrogance, his people displayed no bravery or grandeur. Despite his self-praise, he possessed no considerable knowledge or power. Therefore he based his government on Islam and staked his reputation on the love of the Holy Imams.”*⁶²

And:

*Siyyid Báb has called himself the Lord of all in the Heavens and in the Earth. We can say that such arrogance is not new in the Islamic nation ... rotten Dervishes and forgotten leader have made such claims but non have dared to call themselves God.”*⁶³

Mirza Aqa Khan and other Azalis claimed loyalty to the Báb and his teachings. Yet they attributed such falsities and attacks on His character. This duality in approach reduced their moral credentials amongst the Bábís and nullified their vehement campaign against Bahá'u'lláh.

- In contrast the Bahá'ís were clearly instructed by Bahá'u'lláh to consider “Steadfastness in the Cause of God” to be above all of the teachings.

60. Mirza Abul Fadl and Mirza Mehdi Golpayegani, *Kashfu'l Qita'a*, op.cit., pp. 159-160.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

Bahá'u'lláh writes to Haji Siyyid Javad Karbalai in these words:

*“Certain souls who confess to recognising the Lord ... if they fail to observe certain actions or do not consider them in accordance with wisdom, [one] must not treat them in harshness ... There are certain teachings that compliance with them will cause no harm to the individuals. It is a duty of all to observe them ... in this age the important necessity is for all to recognise the manifestation of God and be steadfast in His Cause.”*⁶⁴

- The conflicting statements made by Azali Bábís in regards to the Báb caused Mirza Abu'l Fadl Golpayegani to write these words to Edward Browne:

*Are they (Aqa Khan & Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi) proclaiming the Islamic Faith or the Azali Faith? Unless we assume that they are practicing Taqiyyih and have concealed their religion in disguise. This excuse is contrary to Mr Browne's view of the Azali's, considering them as brave and independent people. This excuse is also in variance with their (Aqa Khan & Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi) initiative in setting up a United Islamic Front. Therefore we can either say that they are genuine Moslems and Mr Browne has portrayed them as Azali. Or that they are genuine Azali's ... and their open invitations for a united Islam and concern for the Islamic religion stems from Taqiyyih ... Mr Browne claims to be an independent observer. How can he ignore these apparent contradictions? ...these two souls are either hardline Shiites or wayward infidels.”*⁶⁵

Pressure from the Family

In many cases the emotional pressure and physical harassment by the members of the immediate family coerce the new converts into observing Taqiyyih. Some chose not to disclose their new affiliation with the family right from the start. From the family's point of view, public disclosure of their member's new faith was an open invitation for unwanted persecutions. It was a preamble to provoking the enmity of their neighbours and imposition of economic and social embargos on the whole family. The easiest way out of the crisis was encouraging the 'wayward' member to observe Taqiyyih.

Recognition of the new faith caused many families to be disrupted, separated or even destroyed. The other members of the family with reputation, business or influence in the old system, those who wanted to achieve a higher status in the existing order or those who simply wanted to protect the status quo did not want to be drawn in to a raging conflict over religion. Whence they treated the 'wayward' family member with the utmost contempt.

64. Ibid., pp. 69-70.

65. Ibid., p. 130.

- Mirza Abu'l Fadl conveyed this point to Prince Kamran Mirza who planned to massacre the Bahá'ís in Tehran: “*Many Bahá'ís conceal their faith to such an extent that their immediate family members remain unaware of their faith. Their identification is not possible by peaceful means.*”⁶⁶
- Mulla Alyaz was a Jewish Physician in Hamadan. When he declared his interest in the faith to his father, his family became alarmed. His father – the influential leader of the local Jewish Community in Hamadan - concerned at the potential danger facing the Jewish minority at the hands of the Ulama and the mob, insisted that his son reconsider this matter. Mulla Alyaz became a Bábí without his father's knowledge and concealed this matter from him for a considerable period of time.⁶⁷
- Mirza Aqa Ismu'llah Moniru'l Monib had a merchant father who was a hardline Shiite. He was extremely opposed to the Báb and the Bábís. When Monib became a Bábí, he initially practiced Taqiyyih and concealed the matter from his father. A short time later he experienced a spiritually transformation, spending a considerable time in meditation and displaying outward signs of emotional attachment to the Cause. When his father found out, he took his son to the outskirts of Kashan in the company of a few of his colleagues. He then ordered them to kill his own son and abandon his body. After Monib pleaded with his father, he reluctantly agreed to free him on the condition that he leaves the city and never returns.⁶⁸
- Mirza Aqa Rebab-Saz was forced to practice Taqiyyih in Yazd after his wife made a formal complaint to the Governor.⁶⁹
- Mulla Abul'Hassan Ardikani observed Taqiyyih and concealed his beliefs from his immediate family until the final day of his life.⁷⁰
- The relatives of Shaykh Zainu'lAbidin Abrari encouraged him to practice Taqiyyih in public.⁷¹

Mass Taqiyyih

Many instances of mass Taqiyyih have been recorded in various Bábí accounts. Mass Taqiyyih occurred in localities where the persecutions and opposition to the Cause were particularly intense. A major disadvantage of mass Taqiyyih was the abandonment of the faith by their children and grandchildren.

66. Ibid.

67. Fadil Mazandarani, *Zuhur Al-Haqq*, op.cit., Vol. 6 , p. 700.

68. Ibid., p. 641.

69. Ibid., p. 874.

70. Ibid., p. 869.

71. Ibid., p. 817.

Following the ill-fated attempt on the life of Nasiru'l Din Shah, an official order was issued to all Governors and Regional Rulers to “*vehemently attempt to arrest them and destroy their numbers. Ulama are reminded to issue Fatwa's for their execution and consider their possessions Hallal*”⁷².

- The number of mass Taqiyyih cases amongst the Bábís reached such a proportion that according to Nabil writes: “*it caused the ignorant to assume that there are no more believers left.*”⁷³ . Similarly Browne records that despite his best efforts he was unable to obtain Bábí literature during his travels in Iran.
- The numerous children and grandchildren of Aqa Siyyid Ismail Kashfi – one of the devoted disciples of Vahid – following his return from Nayriz, moved away from this cause and displayed little resolve in investigation and participation in (Bábí) activities.⁷⁴
- Many of the Bábís in Qum followed the example set by Mirza Mohammad Husayn Motavalli Qumi, refusing the take part in uprisings and were thus protected from the afflictions for years.⁷⁵
- Many Bábís in the city of Yazd practiced Taqiyyih following the persecutions there after the ill-fated attempt on the life of the Shah (year 1268 HQ). Many more practiced Taqiyyih during another round of persecutions in the year 1300 HQ.⁷⁶
- Many Bábís in Zanjan practiced Taqiyyih after the violent crushing of the Zanjan uprising and again following the attempt on the life of the Shah. The children and grand children of the martyrs in Zanjan distanced themselves from the faith and refused to meet other Bábís or disclose their relationship to the martyrs. They continued to live in hiding, isolated from one another and in a state of total concealment.⁷⁷
- Many Bábís practiced Taqiyyih during the persecutions in Tehran following the crack down by Prince Kamran Mirza in 1300 HQ.⁷⁸ In Hamadan many Bábís observed Taqiyyih in order to protect their lives.⁷⁹

72. Ibid., Vol. 4 , p. 107.

73. Ibid., Vol. 6 , p. 23.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid., Vol. 3 , p. 392.

76. Ibid., p 392.

77. Ibid., p. 184.

78. Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 279.

79. Ibid., Vol. 6 , p. 700.

- A great majority of the Bábís in the locality of Hendijan publicly practiced Taqiyyih and convinced the Mujtahids that they have converted back to Islam. Whilst many became Moslems over time, a number of them continued to uphold Taqiyyih for a considerable period of time.⁸⁰
- After the martyrdom of the Báb, many of His relatives in Shiraz lived in fear of their lives. They practiced Taqiyyih for years until such time that Bahá'u'lláh dispatched His teachers to Shiraz.⁸¹
- Mirza Ahmad Kashani was one of the early believers in Kashan. He had met the Báb whilst He was staying in the house of Haji Mirza Jani Kashani. During the persecution of the Bábís following the attempt on the life of the Shah, the mob attacked his house in order to arrest him. He remained hidden for a while and then decided to leave for Baghdad. He joined a fellow Kashani on the way. At Baghdad he observed that his travelling companion in the House of Bahá'u'lláh and realised that they were both concealing their intentions from one another earlier during their journey from Kashan.⁸²
- Mulla Ali Akbar Shirazi practiced Taqiyyih to conceal his true affiliations from his friends Mulla Qulam Hosayn and Mulla Mohammad Riza. Later he abandoned Taqiyyih and began to talk to them about the Cause.⁸³
- Haji Shaykh Zainu'l Abedin Abrari recalls meeting a Bábí in Karbila who had escaped the persecutions in the City of Yazd. When asked about further information about the Cause, the Bábí pleads with him: "*Haji this is not the place for such conversation*" and asks him to practice Taqiyyih.⁸⁴

Cooperation with the Officials

A number of Bábís cooperated with the authorities in the identification, arrest and persecution of their fellow Bábís in return for saving their lives. Such Bábís had to prove their 'sincerity' to the authorities by implementing tough sanctions against their colleagues. In certain instances it is difficult to ascertain whether their cooperation was done voluntarily or under duress.

- Vahid managed to convert many of the Ulama in the township of Istahbanat on his way to Nayriz. Many of them sensing that the government troops were planning an attack, joined forces and under the leadership of Haji

80. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 905.

81. Ibid., p. 871.

82. Ibid., p. 804.

83. Ibid., p. 913.

84. Ibid., p. 817.

Rasul Mehrizi – formerly a devout follower of Vahid – and attacked their fellow Bábís. The same individual later provoked the Ulama in Yazd in organising another persecution against the Bábís. At least on one occasion he lashed the Bábís with his own hands.⁸⁵

- Another Bábí was Aqa Siyyid Ismail Maranjani. He initially requested Vahid for his consent to marry his daughter. When this was refused, Aqa Siyyid Ismail Maranjani attacked and looted the Bábís, stole Vahid's horse and joined the opposition forces and eventually assuming the leadership of the hardline Mullah's in Nayriz.⁸⁶
- Following the ill-fated attempt on the life of Nasiru'l Din Shah, prison officials were busily interrogating Azim. Mirza Mohamed Husayn Motavalli Qumi – a defected Bábí – intervened saying "*there are souls greater than Azim under His shadow*" pointing to Bahá'u'lláh. On another occasion he cut off the ear of Azim to please his interrogators.⁸⁷
- In the year 1300 HQ two Bábí defectors named Karbalai Mohamed and Mirza Qulam Husayn actually initiated the persecutions in Tehran. They visited Aqa Siyyid Sadiq Tabatabai the grand Mujtahid, formally made a number of complaints from the Bábís and submitted a list of more than 1000 Bábís within the Tehran province to the Mullah. During the meeting they advised the Mujtahid that the Bábís call him 'Dajjal'. This infuriated Aqa Siyyid Sadiq Tabatabai to such an extent that he immediately drafted a letter to Prince Kamran Mirza requesting the massacre of all Bábís. He enclosed the list of Tehrani Bábís with the letter. Following the receipt of the letter, Prince Kamran Mirza arranged a private meeting with the two Bábís and questioned them about the activities of the Bábís in Tehran and specifically Siyyid Mahdi Dahaji. Finally he advise them to continue their associations with the Bábís and Bahá'ís. They were to inform him of potential Bahá'í gatherings so he could dispatch his troops for their mass arrest.

The Bahá'ís learnt of the wickedness of Karbalai Mohamed and Mirza Qulam Husayn and refused to associate with them. After a short time Karbalai Mohamed again visited Aqa Siyyid Sadiq Tabatabai the grand Mujtahid complaining that "*the Prince has not acted on your earlier correspondence*". The Mujtahid wrote a second letter to Kamran Mirza threatening that "*if you do not arrest and execute the Bahá'ís, the masses will take the initiative in to their own hands*".

85. Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 110.

86. Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 300.

87. Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 113.

Finally the government officials led by Karbalai Mohamed raided the houses of the Bahá'ís. Karbalai Mohamed started by questioning the owner and would go inside and collect the Bahá'í literature as evidence. Amongst the seized items were the Bayan-i Farsi, Commentary on the Surah of Kowthar, Commentary on the Surah of Baqarah, Tablets from Bahá'u'lláh and a photograph of Sutanu'l Shohada. Karbalai Mohamed delivered these items directly to the house of the Mujtahid.

Simultaneously Mirza Qulam Husayn led another group of government officials in another part of Tehran. He caused the capture of many including Mirza Abul Fadl Golpayegani. A total of 37 Bábís and Bahá'ís were arrested during this round of persecutions.⁸⁸

Clever Responses Under Pressure

Many Bábís used a combination of vague and two-sided satirical language in order to trick the authorities in to believing they were not a Bábí.

- Mulla Abdullah Fadil was one of the learned Bábís (formerly a respected Mullah) captured by the Hissamu'l Dowla the Governor of Fars on orders from Shaykh Husayn the Mujtahid of the City in 1287 HQ. In response to the question of whether you are a Bábí, he replied:

“What can I say. May God never bring afflictions to His creatures. Every man has rivals and enemies in his own class and occupation. The creed of Ulama are no exception. The majority of the respected people of Fars hold me in high regards and this has caused their jealousy. In the past they have alleged that I am a Sufi simply because I had referred to the words of Shaykhu'l Rais and Sadru'l Mota'ahelin. Now they have alleged in the presence of His Excellency that I am a Bábí.”

The Governor asked “So what they allege about you and others is untrue?”. Mulla Abdullah Fadil replied “I search after the truth and have not yet reached the essence of the matter. I have no knowledge of the super natural and hidden secrets”. This reply convinced the Governor who arranged for his freedom.⁸⁹

- Mohamed Khan Baluch was a sufi from the southern Balushistan province who had met Bahá'u'lláh in Akka and became a Bahá'í. During the persecution in Shiraz in 1287 HQ he was captured. The Governor asked him “Are you a Bábí?”. He replied “It is obvious that I am a Dervish. And

dervishes follow a style not a religion.” The Governor asked him to insult Subh-i Azal. Mohamed Khan Baluch used a humorous tome to condemn the morning (subh), noon and night of Eternity (Azal). The audience became amused and the Governor arranged for his freedom.⁹⁰

- Aqa Mirza Mahdi was a respected Mulla in the city of Rasht. He had become a Bábí following a series of discussions with Andalib. In the year 1297 HQ the enemies provoked the Mujtahid of that city Aqa Mirza Abdu'l Baqi to capture and execute him. The Mujtahid invited Aqa Mirza Mahdi to his house. When he entered the house, Aqa Mirza Mahdi observed crowds of people had gathered awaiting on receiving orders from the Mujtahid to persecute him. He immediately embraced the Mujtahid and greeted him in a warm and friendly manner. The Mujtahid became surprised and told the audience: “I had suspected that such rumours are false. I have no doubts regarding the faith and loyalty of Mirza Mahdi”. Mirza Mahdi replied:

“Let me begin by explaining why some people think that I am a Bábí: I met up with a Dervish accidentally a short time ago. He was a pleasant talker and I socialised with him.

After a few days he asked me: Is it true that you followers of Ithna Ashari Shiism are awaiting the appearance of the Qa'im in the year 1260 according to the traditions and Ahadith from the Holy Imams?

I answered: Yes we are waiting for His coming. But I have not heard traditions regarding the year 1260.

He recited the famous tradition from Abi Labid Makhzoumi. I did not believe him. He requested a copy of the book Baharu'l Anvar. I gave him the book. He opened a particular page and showed me the exact tradition. I became disillusioned and started to debate the matter. I asked about Dajjal and miracles and this is how he responded (lengthy summary of discussions).

As hard as I tried I failed to prove his errors. He produced some damning answers and prevented me from stating my convictions.

Anyhow we did not see one another afterward. I took my concerns to the teacher of my school who is an expert in tradition and Ahadith. Others learnt of the discussions and called me a Bábí.

Now I request your expertise to give me sufficient answers so that I could debate and defeat the Bábís in the future.”⁹¹

- Aqa Mirza Mahdi used this opportunity to relay what he had heard from Andalib prior to his declaration. His words had a deep effect on the stunned

88. Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 269.

89. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 878.

90. Ibid., pp. 940-941.

91. Ibid., pp. 961-963.

audience. The Mujtahid said to him: *“If you had asked me earlier I would have provided the answers and punished the Dervish accordingly. However today time is short and we must leave the full answers to another time.”* He then allowed Mirza Mahdi to walk free.⁹²

- In Bushruieh following one of the upheavals a Mulla Mohamed Taqi was captured and told to recant his faith to save his life. He went to the local mosque and declared:

“Some people are known to be Bábís and the public in particular the Mujtahids curse them. Therefore I curse them”.

He then stood down and returned to his house. This infuriated the local Mujtahid who claimed that Mulla Mohamed Taqi had effectively cursed him. He wrote to the Ulama in Tabass and received a reply saying *“What has transpired is sufficient. Do not take any further actions.”*⁹³

- Haji Mirza Kamal’ul Din Naraqí after a year of practicing Taqiyyih went to the mosque and addressed the congregation on the importance of observing the fundamental principles of the faith and their priority over the details, stood down from the pulpit and abruptly left the mosque. Many called him *“mentally disturbed”* and others suggested that he may have become a Bábí.⁹⁴
- Haji Shaykh Zinu’l Abidin Abrari one of the (secret Bábí) Mujtahids in the city of Yazd was invited by the Ulama to attend a grand meeting in order to consider the fate of one of the captured Bábís. He recalls:

“They discussed the execution warrant and considered his infidelity and religion.. I remained quiet and internally bemused throughout. The chief of Ulama Shaykh Sabzevari asked: Why are you silent? The religion of the Lord is under threat. It is not the place for silence.

I replied: “Islam is in the utmost strength and its teachers have the utmost courage. As there are innocent lives being lost. Today the real protectors of religion, that is the Chief Mujtahids and Ulama and deputies of the Imam are present in the Atabat and remain unaware of such conflict and bloodshed. It is best to convey the present situation to them and await their orders prior to taking any actions. In addition I can not see the logic in killing Shaykh Sadiq. If the purpose is to kill one Bábí, what is the result? So many have been massacred, what has been achieved? If the

*purpose is to prevent the masses from becoming Bábís, this approach is wrong. Because when a soul renowned for his steadfastness and honesty is killed, he becomes more important and attracts many others. Therefore it is appropriate that this committee makes the following resolution: to punish those who make allegations against others, and to treat the alleged Bábís with kindness. So the masses will not be attracted to the and not become terrorised by our actions. This introduction managed to quell the fire of hatred and anger in the gathering to an extent that they abandoned the thought of killing Shaykh Sadeq.”*⁹⁵

- Following the murder of Mulla Taqi Borqani in Qazvin, the general assumption was that it was planned by Aqa Hadi Farhadi. The mob attacked his house but could not find him. Aqa Hadi managed to conceal his identity and was busily planing to free Tahirih. The angry mob captured his brother Aqa Mahdi, took him to the main square and began inflicting lashes on his bare body. They wanted to find out the whereabouts of Aqa Hadi. At the same time the disguised Aqa Hadi approached the perpetrators and asked with a Yazdi accent *“Who is this person and why are you torturing him ?”*. They replied: *“His brother has murdered Haji Mulla Taqi and has gone in to hiding. He will not reveal where”*. Aqa Hadi answered: *“Do not torture this poor soul. I witnessed a caravan arriving in Yazd coming from this City two days ago and amongst them was a certain Aqa Hadi. He is probably the same person that you are looking for.”*⁹⁶
- Haji Mulla Mohamed Hamzih Shari’atmadar always assisted and supported local Bábís in the city of Barforoosh. Whenever the public asked about the Bábí claims and ideas he would reply *“I do not consider them bad and will not make negative comments about them.”*⁹⁷
- Haji Mulla Baqir Ardakani the Imam Jumh’a of Ardikan was secretly a Bábí. The rival mullah’s found out about his conversion and submitted a petition to the local Governor asking for his execution. When he met the Governor, Haji Mulla Baqir Ardakani resorted to pleasantries and managed to attract the mind and heart of the Governor. The Governor then ignored the petition, sent the Haji to Karbila for two years and arranged an elaborate welcome party after his return.⁹⁸

92. Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 371.

93. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 62.

94. Ibid., p. 678.

95. Ibid., p. 817.

96. Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 375.

97. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 441.

98. Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 482.

Embarrassment in the Presence of Officials

Taqiyyih and dissimulation did not always save the lives of the Bábís.

- Aqa Rasul Behnamiri and thirty of his followers left the Tabarsi fortress and intended to convey their allegiance to the government forces. As they surrendered they were sprayed with bullets. Their bodies were taken to nearby towns and beheaded in public view.⁹⁹
- During the interrogations the government officials repeatedly asked Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi and Haji Mirza Husayn Khan whether they are Bábí or Bahá'í. They all concealed their beliefs and used a combination of abusive terms and hate words to distance themselves from the Cause. When asked: *“You are the Son in Laws of Azal. How can you not be a Bábí or Azali?”* They replied by swearing at the Báb and Azal. A short time later the same officials beheaded all three and sent their heads to the Royal Court in Tehran.¹⁰⁰

In other instances the Taqiyyih of the individuals became the object of ridicule for the interrogators:

- During the interrogations of the Bábí captives following the attempt on the life of the Shah, Siyyid Husayn Motavalli Qumi became one of the Bábís who recanted their faith and wanted to save his own life. As the officials were questioning Azim, Qumi intervened saying: *“There are souls greater than Azim under His shadow”* pointing to Bahá'u'lláh. The chief interrogator became infuriated and hit him in the face saying: *“Your mischievous actions are obvious to all. Shut your mouth and be quite.”*¹⁰¹
- During the interrogation of the Bábís in Tehran in year 1300 HQ, Mirza Zinu'l Abidin Jarrah claimed to be a Sufi and a follower of Mirza Kouchak Hamadani. He added: *“I also curse the Bábís”*. Prince Kamran Mirza became angry and after a heavy round of verbal insult told him: *“Do you assume that I am ignorant about your affairs, pursuing a line of trickery?”* He then imprisoned Mirza Zinu'l Abidin Jarrah along with the other captives. On another occasion Kamran Mirza addressed the Bábí recanters with these words: *“During the times of peace and comfort you are firm Bahá'ís and at times of difficulty and distress you make false allegations against decent people.”*¹⁰²

99. Ibid., p. 447.

100. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 929.

101. Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 113.

102. Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 279.

- On one occasion Haji Mirza Rida Quli Hakim the brother of Bahá'u'lláh visited Mirza Husayn Khan Moshirul'Dowla the Premier. The Premier introduced him to the guests as the brother of Bahá'u'lláh. Hakim protested: *“Why didn't you introduce my relationship with my famous father?”* Mirza Husayn Khan replied:

*“You must be proud of having such a brother. Thousands of souls from all backgrounds recognise his station with utmost respect. How is it that you run away from such a privilege? ... Your brother is the one individual who saved my face in front of the Ottoman authorities. The reason is that every time Iranian dignitaries and Princes visited Istanbul they would immediately go around to every Ottoman minister and official seeking money. This had caused the Ottoman authorities to assume that Iranians are all beggars by nature. When your brother was brought in to Istanbul, He did not visit the house of any of the Ottoman official except those who came to His house. This convinced the Ottoman authorities that there are grand personalities amongst the Iranians.”*¹⁰³

- On another occasion Haji Mirza Rida Quli Hakim went to the house of Mirza Husayn Khan Moshirul'Dowla. He was entertained by the host, his two brothers and other member of the Qatar establishment. Mirza Husayn Khan asked him: *“What is the news from the Gentlemen?”* Hakim who claimed to be a follower of Mulla Ali Kani, started to talk about this Mulla. Mirza Husayn Khan intervened saying: *“I meant the brothers”*. Hakim replied: *“I have no links or correspondence with them. Mr Ala'ul Malek can testify to this fact”*. Mirza Husayn Khan became infuriated and said:

*“Hakim, did you assume that I had an ulterior motive from asking this question? This is not true. Although during my term as Ambassador certain actions were implemented in Istanbul but they were wrong. The (former) Premier Mirza Aqa Khan committed a great treason to this country. For years and years enormous cash reserves from this country were sent to Saudi Arabia. God intended to finally channel this wealth back to Iran. However the Iranian Government did not realise this fact. I am telling you the position and station of His Cause is far greater than the personal servitude of people like me and you.”*¹⁰⁴

- During a personal visit, Mirza Abdul's Khan Ala'ul Malek one of the Qajar officials told Mirza Fadlu'llah Khan Nizamul Mamalek (niece of Hakim):

103. Ibid., pp. 398-399.

104. Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 504.

“Your uncle (Mirza Rida Quli) assumes that our friendship is based on superficial worldly matters. However as I sense that you are a clever young man, I confine in you that I associate with this family for certain other considerations. I can see that the likes of you people will not associate with us in the future.”¹⁰⁵

Conclusions

1. Taqiyyih has its roots in Iranian psyche. It was a wide spread practice amongst the defeated Zoroastrians after the devastating series of defeats they suffered at the hands of Islamic warriors.
2. Taqiyyih was formally included as part of the Shiite theology in the early part of the 17th century. As early as the Safavid period certain Mujtahids promoted certain traditions from the Holy Imams in relation to the coming of the Mahdi. Their purpose was to safe guard his identity against the ferocity of the opposition.
3. The Founders of Shaykhi school used Taqiyyih to promulgate their anticipation for the coming of the “Perfect Shi’a”. Shaykhi literature contain numerous references to ‘secrets’ of resurrection and the inability of the common people to understand them.
4. At the time of the revelation of Báb, the ferocity of prejudice and hatred was such that He first revealed His position as the Deputy to the Hidden Imam. Taqiyyih was an essential requirement during the early phase of the revelation simply because the level of prejudice within the society could have totally crushed the movement before it had a chance to spread.
5. The Báb even ordered many of his followers to practice Taqiyyih in order to spread the cause and carry out importance services for the faith.
6. As the Bábí cause progressed and their numbers grew, the Báb revealed his true identity as the Hidden Imam and a manifestation from God. This claim effectively made the Bábí faith independent from other Shiite sects. Mulla Husayn was now appointed to the position of Deputy of the Hidden Imam.
7. After the martyrdom of the Báb and the severe persecutions that followed in the ensuing years, the practice of Taqiyyih became popular amongst the Bábís. There were many instances of learned Bábís concealing their faith and evidence of Mass Taqiyyih in a number of cities.
8. Many of those who recanted their faith continued to support and assist other Bábís in times of need. For others the practice of Taqiyyih was a forerunner to their eventual abandonment of their faith. A few even engaged in the active persecution of their former colleagues. On the other hand many abandoned Taqiyyih and later lost their life for their Faith.

9. There are a number of treaties and compilations written by Bábís who practiced Taqiyyih. It is difficult to ascertain their success in assisting the Cause. Such works were indicative of the inner struggle within the Bábís in proclaiming their true identity.
10. Taqiyyih was in many instances used to conceal one’s faith from the threats posed by the immediate family members.
11. Taqiyyih did not always result in saving one’s life. It was largely a circumstantial confession. Many Bábís lost their lives even though they had earlier recanted their faith.
12. Bahá’u’lláh clearly announced that the recognition of the manifestation of God and ‘steadfastness’ His Cause is more important than observing any of the other teachings. Gradual abandonment of Taqiyyih amongst the Bahá’ís was one of the distinguishing feature of the new religion from the Bábí era. After this time the practice of Taqiyyih became unofficially superseded.
13. In contrast the Azali Bábís glorified Taqiyyih in their literature. Taqiyyih was considered a virtue and classified into various levels of concealment. Prominent Azali leaders openly recanted their faith and even abused Báb and Azal in the process. The extent of Taqiyyih in their words and actions caused Mirza Abu’l Fadl to question Edward Browne’s method of portraying of Azali Bábís. Taqiyyih became one of the distinguishing features of the Azali-Bahá’í split.

Provisional Translations into English by the Author

¹⁰⁵. Ibid.

Section 4

A “Phoenix Schedule” for the Dewey “200s” – Suggested in particular for Bahá'í Libraries

Paul Gerard

Melvil Dewey first proposed the classification that bears his name in 1876. It is still the most widely used library subject classification in the world - although many large, general libraries (most notably those attached to universities) prefer the classification used by the United States Library of Congress (LC), while highly specialised libraries of various kinds often use their own schemes.

DDC is (as might be expected after 125 years!) very old fashioned in many respects - but it has the great advantage over LC of having been conceived as a unified whole by an undoubted genius, rather than having grown like topsy out of a hodgepodge of ad hoc decisions by ordinary librarians; and the great advantage over specialised schemes of being instantly familiar to librarians and library users all over the world.

DDC is now in its 21st edition - which is of course many times larger than the original (42 page) proposal. Over the years, it has been changed in two basic ways. The first method has been to expand existing schedules to accommodate new subjects. The simple “decimal” notation used by DDC is admirably adapted to this procedure, up to a point. Eventually new numbers become very long indeed, and ultimately, of course, they become unworkably long. This is most noticeable in the “500s” and “600s” - (science and technology) where many new subjects have arisen since 1876.

The other method has been to simply scrap a whole section of the classification that is palpably out of date and insert an entirely new schedule. The Dewey people themselves have called this kind of thing a “Phoenix Schedule” (after the legendary bird born anew out of the flames). The current section for music is a fairly recent example.

What is different about this particular “Phoenix” is that it is NOT an official,

standard “Dewey” bird, but a “foreign exotic” - designed, at least initially, for a particular library.

The original Dewey scheme divided all knowledge into nine major classes (plus a tenth class for “miscellaneous” subjects that did not fit easily into any of the other classes). Each major class received a block of one hundred numbers. Initially Dewey considered a thousand different subjects would be plenty, in fact his scheme was very widely criticised at the time for being too detailed!

The block of numbers between 200 and 299 were reserved for “Religion”. In comparison with the 500s (“science”) and 600s (“technology”) - the Dewey 200s have NOT grown spectacularly over the years – in fact, they remain relatively close to Dewey’s original outline. And yet, time has caught up with the Dewey 200s too!

In 1876, Melvil Dewey was very properly concerned with the needs of the particular library for which he was responsible, for other libraries in the United States, and, perhaps, other English speaking countries.

In the world as he knew it, or at least in the world in which he envisioned his classification being used, “religion” meant Christianity.

In spite of praiseworthy attempts over the years by the publishers of the scheme to improve DDC’s coverage of at least some non-Christian religions, the resulting fundamental bias, excusable as it is in historical context, limits the value of the Dewey 200s, and thus of DDC as a whole, for any library concerned with “religion” in anything but a narrowly Christian sense, and particularly for a Bahá'í library.

Here is a copy of the official “Second Summary” of the Dewey 200s:

200	Religion
210	Philosophy and theory of religion
220	Bible
230	Christian theology
240	Christian moral and devotional theology
250	Christian orders and local church
260	Social and ecclesiastical theology
270	History of Christianity and Christian church
280	Christian denominations and sects
290	Comparative religion and other religions

- Apart from the 210s (basically, “religion in general”) and the 290s (reserved for “comparative religion” as well as all “other” religions - i.e. those “other” than Christianity) the numbers are all reserved for Christian topics!
- In fact there is really no specific number for Christianity at all, unless we take “230” as the general Christian number. BUT this comes AFTER

“220” (the Bible), which is surely an aspect of Christianity, rather than an independent subject, even though some Jewish scripture finds a place in the Old Testament. Very simply, “religion” is considered to be the same thing as Christianity, and, even worse, Christianity the same thing as religion!

- Finally – the Bahá'í Faith not only nestles in an obscure corner of the 290s – it *still*, after years of complaint from the Bahá'í community, has a number that clearly implies that it is a sect of Islam!

Nor is this the worst of it! Because of the piecemeal way in which the schedules for the Dewey 200s have evolved there are in fact four different arrangements used for particular religions. First there is Christianity – which, as we have seen, sprawls over 80% of the available number base. The overall arrangement is firmly based in Melvil Dewey’s first thoughts on the subject – and is frankly rather poor. Then there are the schedules for Christianity’s close relatives, Judaism and Islam. These are later, and overall rather more sensibly arranged. They are however quite different from the Christian arrangement, and from each other. Finally there are all the real “others” – originally lacking any kind of subdivision at all. These have been given a standard, fairly sensible, but unfortunately far from comprehensive arrangement – that is, once more, different.

To illustrate the effect of this inconsistency – here is an entry from the alphabetical index to standard DDC:

Prayers (Private devotions)	291.433
Buddhism	294.344 33
Christianity	242
Hinduism	294.543 3
Islam	297.382 4
Sufi	297.438 24
Judaism	296.45

“Private prayer” is indicated for comparative religion, and some particular religions as “-433” but this is far from consistent - within the schedule for Islam, for instance, it is evidently “-3824”, in Judaism “-45”. There is no way for the library user to work out where to find works on private prayer in a particular religion – and in fact even for the cataloguer it is far fiddlier than it need be!

To summarise the position - in “fixing” the Dewey 200s, - so that a Bahá'í library can make effective use of this great classification - we face three problems:

- The basic outline of the scheme at this point is grossly biased towards one religion. Even for a library in an entirely “Christian” country this is rather poor – for a country where other religions form an important part of the local culture it is obviously intolerable.

- The subdivision of the different religions is inconsistent. This makes the scheme unnecessarily hard to follow for both cataloguer and user.
- The Faith (and, far from unimportantly, most other “Non-Christian” religions as well) are either not covered at all, or very badly covered.

To be fair – the problem of Christian bias in the Dewey 200s has been recognised for many years: even the Dewey people themselves (OCLC Forest Press) would not go so far as to say that the standard form of the Dewey 200s would be suitable for (say) a library in a Muslim country. A suggestion made in old editions of DDC to alleviate this problem was that for such a library, a special, “private” schedule should be inserted for the “home religion”. For instance, such a schedule has been prepared for the Bahá'í World Centre Library, which is to be inserted before the regular 200s, at B200, and lists specifically Bahá'í topics. It should be noted that the BWC do not use this schedule themselves, preferring the LC classification to Dewey.

The great drawback of using an extra “pre-location” schedule like this is that one is still stuck with the regular Dewey 200s for all religions except one’s own! For a Bahá'í library, in particular, this leaves several of our primary objections intact.

In fact, this suggestion no longer forms part of DDC. Instead, Edition 21 proposes a series of options to “give preferred treatment or shorter numbers to a religion other than Christianity”. These, to a large extent, simply replace the Christian bias of Dewey with a similar bias toward another religion! This is, of course, fundamentally opposed to the Bahá'í principle of the oneness of religion, but it is also inconsistent with the universal intent of the Dewey classification as a whole. To an even greater extent than the old idea of the special “prelocated” schedule, these options displace, but do not remove, the fundamental flaw in the current Dewey 200s.

The idea of a Phoenix schedule is of course “Burn it, and let a new one be born”. The new outline follows the theories of the great Indian mathematician and librarian Ranganathan – in that it classifies by one thing at once – in this case “religious system”. Something like this:

- 200 Comparative religion, works concerned with several religions**
- 210 Tribal, folk, quasi religions and historical religion**
- 213 Religions of pre-literate peoples, folk religion**
- 215 Ethnic and localised religion**
- 216 Anti religions, cults, quasi religions**
- 217 Historical religions**
- 222 Hinduism**
- 223 Jainism**
- 226 Sikhism**

- 228 Buddhism**
- 233 Confucianism**
- 235 Taoism**
- 244 Shinto**
- 250 Zoroastrianism**
- 260 Judaism**
- 270 Christianity**
- 280 Islam**
- 290 Bahá'í Faith**

Our allocation of numbers still cannot be absolutely even-handed, in that the “Middle Eastern” religions are defined by two digits, the major “Far Eastern” ones by three, and the others by five or more. Something like this is forced on us by the fact that there are only nine digits in our numbering system – and more than nine religions. Overall, however, the improvement is obvious.

Many topics will mean something rather different in the context of the various religions – but since the different religions amount to differing perspectives on, and answers to, the same set of questions – the outline, at least, of a classification of one religion can be applied to any other. It is hard to escape the conclusion that Mr. Dewey himself would have wanted it done this way, at the beginning of the 21st century.

The following is our equivalent index entry to the standard Dewey one considered above:

Prayers (Private devotions) (examples)	[-833]
Buddhism	228.833
Christianity	278.33
Comparative religion	208.33
Hinduism	222.833
Islam	288.33
Sufism	288.538 33
Judaism	268.33

Not all topics apply to all religions – for instance, a religion might conceivably forbid personal prayer – in this case the relevant number is simply not used. Nor will a particular topic (or number) necessarily have exactly the same meaning in the context of another religion. None the less, a subject common to more than one religion has the same number, regardless of the religion concerned – and is thus arranged on the shelf in the same relation to other topics.

Many other topics – such as specific holy days, scriptural books, or idiosyncratic doctrines are not common to all religions, but are still grouped under the same common heading in each religion. For instance:

Scripture (examples)	[-4]
Bahá'í scripture	294
Buddhist scripture	228.4
Christian scripture	274
Hindu scripture	222.4
Muslim scripture	284
Jewish scripture	264

The “4” in each case is followed by “non-common” notation to specify the particular Holy Book involved. Thus the Bhagavad Gita is classed at 222.455, with other examples of Hindu scripture - St. Luke's Gospel at 274.4726, The Kitáb-i-Aqdas at 294.54.K6.

After a good deal of consultation with Bahá'í librarians around the world – especially Mr William Collins – who was responsible for setting up the Bahá'í World Centre Library in Haifa, this Phoenix schedule is nearing completion – at least to the stage that it could be applied to a Bahá'í library. In fact the ultimate intent is that it be brought up to a standard that any library could “slot it in” to the regular Dewey Decimal Scheme, to improve their arrangement of religious materials.

290 The Bahá'í Faith

Class encyclopaedias and other fully comprehensive works on the Bahá'í Faith at 290. Class works on Bábism as a separate entity at 292.72 – OR alternatively at 282.76.

General division of this subject follows the pattern set by 201-209. In contradistinction to the schedules for some other religions, however, this schedule is set out more or less complete. In the rather unlikely event that a subject be required that is not specifically enumerated below, but does occur in 201-209, it should be built by adding to the base number 29 notation following 20 in 201-209.

291 General introductions, apologetics, comparisons

.3 General introductions to the Bahá'í Faith

Class comprehensive works, encyclopaedias etc. at 290.

Class works on the faith in particular countries in 292.6.

.33 Anecdotal autobiography

For instance, “God loves laughter”. Class “serious” biography and

autobiography written for purposes other than introducing the Faith in an appropriate number under 293.

4 Value of the Bahá'í Faith

.43 Apologies, proofs.

.48 Works attacking the Faith (polemics).

Class works written by covenant breakers under 292.7 – works written from the point of view of a particular religion, either under the religion of the author – or, optionally, and especially for a Bahá'í library, under 291.6

.6 Other religions from a Bahá'í perspective

To the base number 291.6 add notation following 2 in 200 that serves to define the religion to which the Faith is compared – see the examples below.

.622 The Bahá'í Faith and Hinduism

.628 The Bahá'í Faith and Buddhism

.67 The Bahá'í Faith and Christianity

.68 The Bahá'í Faith and Islam

Include here other religions considered or discussed in the light of the Faith, and works on relations between Faith and other religions. Also (optionally, but especially in a Bahá'í library) use for apologies for (and attacks on) the Faith in relation to the teachings of a particular religion.

.7 The Bahá'í Faith compared or opposed to other (secular) subjects

Add to the base number 291.7 the Dewey class number for the subject concerned (without trailing zeros or decimal points).

291.7 numbers refer to treatment of a subject (in a general way) from a Bahá'í standpoint. For instance, use 291.75 for “The Bahá'í Faith and science” in a general sense, BUT prefer 295.414 for the unity of science and religion as a Bahá'í principle. 291.765 might be used for “General administration from a Bahá'í standpoint” BUT use 299.1 for “Bahá'í administration”. Use 291.737 for “The Bahá'í Faith and education” BUT Education in the faith (i.e. deepening) is 298.7. *If the distinction is NOT a useful one* - prefer the specific number to the 291.7 one. Another alternative, which will quite often apply, is simply to class the work in question with its own subject, outside the 200s! In particular, avoid classing a work here simply because its author happens to be Bahá'í, or because it includes a few references to the Faith.

In any case, do *not* class specific religious teachings at this point – use a heading under 295.

See also the note at 201.7

292 Historical and geographical treatment of the Bahá'í Faith

.5 General Bahá'í history

Class history of particular subject with the subject - e.g. history of teaching at 299.8. Class history of the Faith in particular countries (*apart from history belonging to a particular period*) in "292.6". Class Bahá'í biography in 293.

.52 Heroic age (up to 1921)

.522 Preparation for revelation (Pre-1844)

.522 5 Shaykhis

.523 Ministry of the Báb (1844-1853)

.524 Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh (1853-1892)

.524 2 Baghdad period (1853-1863)

.524 3 Constantinople/Adrianople (1863-1868)

.524 4 'Akká period (1868-1877)

.524 5 Mazra'ih/Bahjí period (1877-1892)

.525 Ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá (1892-1921)

.53 Formative age (1921-)

.533 Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi (1921-1957)

.534 Stewardship of the Hands (1957-1963)

.535 From election of U.H.J. (1963-)

.6 The Bahá'í Faith in particular places, countries, geographic regions

Add to the base number 292.6 notation 4-9 from Table 2 – as in the following examples:

.652 The Faith in Japan

.68 The Faith in Latin America

.694 The Faith in Australia

If a work treats the history of a particular period in a particular country (say, the faith in Japan during the guardianship of Shoghi Effendi) *then class with the period rather the country*. In particular, DO NOT use "292.655" (the faith in Iran) or "292.656" (the faith in the Middle East) for the early history of the faith!

.7 Covenant breakers etc

Include here literature produced by particular covenant breaking groups, if held, as well as works written from a mainstream Bahá'í standpoint. Works on the *general* subject of covenant breaking are classed at 298.13.

.72 Disputing station of Bahá'u'lláh

Class here all Bábis post 1853 – or, alternatively, class Bábism at 282.76.

.72.A8 Azalis

Use Cutter numbers for specific covenant breakers and covenant breaking groups, as here, under appropriate classification.

.74 Disputing station of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

.76 Disputing station of the Guardian

.76.F3 Free Bahá'ís

.78 Disputing the authority of Institutions

.78.B6 Baha'is under the protection of the covenant

.78.O7 Orthodox Bahá'ís

293 Biography of (and general works about):

For 293.05 and 293.5 - 293.9 use Cutter numbers for specific people

.05 Precursors of the Faith

.1 The Báb

.2 Bahá'u'lláh

Short works about Bahá'u'lláh primarily intended as an introduction to, or as an apology for, the Bahá'í Faith – are best gathered under "291.3" or "291.4".

.3 'Abdu'l-Bahá

.4 The Guardian

.5 Hands of the Cause of God

.6 Knights of Bahá'u'lláh

.7 Martyrs

.8 Other Bahá'ís

.9 Non-Bahá'ís relevant to Bahá'í history

294 The Writings (Holy books, scripture and quasi scripture)

Note that headings for 294.1 to 294.3 are used repeatedly for 294.4 - 294.9

Class the reading of scripture as an aspect of religious life at 298.3

.1 Works about Bahá'í holy books and scriptures

.11 Authorship, origins, authenticity

.12 Inspiration – revelation

.123 Infallibility of scripture

.13 Concordances

.15 Textual studies

.16 Study - scriptural criticism (Exegesis)

.164 Symbolisms & typology

.165 Harmonies

.166 Literary criticism

.167 Historical criticism

.17 Commentaries

.18 Secular subjects in Bahá'í scripture

Add to the base number 294.18 the Dewey class number for the subject concerned (without trailing zeros or decimal points). Thus, "Medicine in Bahá'í scripture" becomes 294.1861

.19 History of scripture

.195 History of translations

.2 General collections of scriptural works**.3 Special collections****.32 Collections compiled for a specific purpose**

.322 Collections compiled for specific classes of reader

.322.3 Young people

Include here stories from Holy writings retold for children

.325 Prayers

OR, perhaps, prefer 298.3 for prayer books of all kinds

.326 Personal devotions

.327 For feasts and/or holy days

Add to the base number 294.327 the notation following 297 – for example: Scriptural readings for Ridvan 294.3276

.328 For deepenings etc.

Add to the base number 294.328 the numbers following 298.75. For example Scripture for deepening new believers: 294.32873

Note that collections of scripture prepared for deepenings *on a particular subject* should be classed at 294.34 rather than here

.33 Collections linked by form (e.g. "Tablets")**.34 Collections linked by subject (e.g. "Love")****.36 Collections linked by date or period**

Add to the base number 294.36 the notation following 292.52 to define the period.

.4 Works of (or recorded teachings of) the Báb**.41 Works ABOUT the writings of the Báb**

Add to base numbers 294.41, 294.43 notation following 294.1, 294.3

.42 General Collections**.43 Special Collections****.44 Specific works revealed by the Báb**

(Arranged alphabetically, using Cutter numbers - as follows)

.44.B3 Bayán, Arabic

.44.B5 Bayán, Persian

.44.D3 Dala'il-i-Sab'ih

.44.K3 Khasa'il-Sab'ih

.44.K5 Kitab-i-Asma'

.44.K7 Kitab-i-Panj-Sha'n

.44.K9 Kitabu'r-Ruh

.44.L32 Lawh-i-Haji Mirza Aqasi

.44.L34 Lawh-i-Hurufat

.44.L36 Lawh-i-Muhammad Shah

.44.Q3 Qayyumu'l-Asma (Ahsanu'l-Qisas)

.44.R3 Risaliy-i-'Adliyyih

.44.R4 Risaliy-i-Dhahabiyyih

.44.R5 Risaliy-i-Fiqhiyyih

.44.R6 Risaliy-i-Furu'-i-'Adliyyih

.44.S2 Sahifatu'l-Haramayn

.44.S3 Sahifiy-i-Ja'fariyyih

.44.S4 Sahifiy-i-Makhdumiyyih

.44.S5 Sahifiy-i-Radaviyyih

.44.S8 Suriy-i-Tawhid

.44.T3 Tafsir-i-Nubuvvat-i-Khassih

.44.Z5 Ziyarat-i-Shah 'Abdu'l-Azim

.5 Works of (or recorded teachings of) Bahá'u'lláh**.51 Works ABOUT the writings of Bahá'u'lláh**

Add to base numbers 294.51, 294.53 notation following 294.1, 294.3

.52 General Collections**.53 Special Collections****.54 Specific works revealed by Bahá'u'lláh**

(Arranged alphabetically, using Cutter numbers - as follows)

.54.A3 Alvah-i-Laylatu'l-Quds

.54.A5 Asl-i-Kullu'l-Khayr (Words of Wisdom)

.54.A9 Az Bagh-i-Ilahi

.54.B2 Baz-Av-i-Bidih-Jami

.54.B4 Bisharat (Glad Tidings)

.54.C4 Chihar Vadi (Four Valleys)

.54.H3 Haft Vadi (Seven Valleys)

.54.H4 Halih Ya Bisharat

.54.H7 Hur-i-'Ujab

.54.H8 Hurufat-i-Allin

.54.I7 Ishraqat

.54.K2 Kalimat-i-Firdawsiiyyih (Words of Paradise)

.54.K3 Kalimat-i-Maknuniyah (Hidden Words)

.54.K4 Kitab-i-'Ahd

.54.K6 Kitab-i-Aqdas (Most Holy Book)

.54.K7 Kitab-i-Badi'

.54.K8 Kitab-i-Iqan
 .54.L12 Lawh-i-'Abdul'l-'Aziz va Vukala
 .54.L13 Lawh-i-'Abdul'l-Vahhab
 .54.L14 Lawh-i-'Abdu'r Razzaq
 .54.L15 Lawh-i-Ahbab
 .54.L16 Lawh-i-Ahmad (Tablet of Ahmad)
 .54.L17 Lawh-i-Amraj
 .54.L18 Lawh-i-Anta'l-Kafi (Long Healing Prayer)
 .54.L19 Lawh-i-Aqdas
 .54.L22 Lawh-i-Ashraf
 .54.L23 Lawh-i-Ashiq va Ma'shuq
 .54.L24 Lawh-i-Ayiy-i-Nur
 .54.L25 Lawh-i-Baha
 .54.L26 Lawh-i-Baqa
 .54.L27 Lawh-i-Basitatu'l-Haqiqah
 .54.L28 Lawh-i-Bismilih
 .54.L29 Lawh-i-Bulbulu'l-Firaq
 .54.L32 Lawh-i-Burhan
 .54.L33 Lawh-i-Dunya
 .54.L34 Lawh-i-Fitnih
 .54.L35 Lawh-i-Ghulamu'l-Khuld
 .54.L36 Lawh-i-Habib
 .54.L37 Lawh-i-Haft Pursish
 .54.L38 Lawh-i-Hajj
 .54.L39 Lawh-i-Hawdaj
 .54.L42 Lawh-i-Hikmat
 .54.L43 Lawh-i-Hirtik
 .54.L44 Lawh-i-Huriyyih
 .54.L45 Lawh-i-Husayn
 .54.L46 Lawh-i-Ibn-i-Dhi'b (Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)
 .54.L47 Lawh-i-Ittihad
 .54.L48 Lawh-i-Jamal
 .54.L49 Lawh-i-Karim
 .54.L52 Lawh-i-Karmil (Tablet of Carmel)
 .54.L53 Lawh-i-Kullu't-Ta'am
 .54.L54 Lawh-i-Malikh (Tablet to Queen Victoria)
 .54.L55 Lawh-i-Malik-i-Rus (Tablet to Czar Alexander II)
 .54.L56 Lawh-i-Mallahu'l-Quds (Tablet of the Holy Mari-
 ner)
 .54.L57 Lawh-i-Manikji Sahib
 .54.L58 Lawh-i-Maqsud
 .54.L59 Lawh-i-Maryam

.54.L62 Lawh-i-Mawhid
 .54.L63 Lawh-i-Mubahilih
 .54.L64 Lawh-i-Napulyun I (First Tablet to Napoleon III)
 .54.L65 Lawh-i-Napulyun II (Second Tablet to Napoleon
 III)
 .54.L66 Lawh-i-Nasir
 .54.L67 Lawh-i-Nuqtih
 .54.L68 Lawh-i-Pap (Tablet to Pope Pius IX)
 .54.L69 Lawh-i-Pisar 'Amm
 .54.L72 Lawh-i-Qina'
 .54.L73 Lawh-i-Quds
 .54.L74 Lawh-i-Rafi'
 .54.L75 Lawh-i-Ra'is
 .54.L76 Lawh-i-Raqsha
 .54.L77 Lawh-i-Rasul
 .54.L78 Lawh-i-Ruh
 .54.L79 Lawh-i-Ru'ya
 .54.L82 Lawh-i-Sahab
 .54.L83 Lawh-i-Salman I
 .54.L84 Lawh-i-Salman II
 .54.L85 Lawh-i-Samsun
 .54.L86 Lawh-i-Sayyah
 .54.L87 Lawh-i-Shaykh Fani
 .54.L88 Lawh-i-Sultan
 .54.L89 Lawh-i-Tawhid
 .54.L92 Lawh-i-Tibb
 .54.L93 Lawh-i-Tuqa
 .54.L94 Lawh-i-Yusuf
 .54.L95 Lawh-i-Zaynu'l-Muqarrabin
 .54.L96 Lawh-i-Ziyarih
 .54.M2 Madinatu'r-Rida
 .54.M3 Madinatu't-Tawhid
 .54.M4 Mathnavi
 .54.M8 Munajathay-i-Siyam
 .54.Q2 Qad-Ihtaraka'l-Mukhlisun (Fire Tablet)
 .54.Q3 Qasidiy-i-Varaqa'iyiyh
 .54.R3 Rashh-i-'Ama
 .54.R5 Ridvanu'l-'Adl
 .54.R6 Ridvanu'l-Iqrar
 .54.S2 Sahifiy-i-Shattiyyih
 .54.S3 Salat-i-Mayyit
 .54.S4 Saqi Az Ghayb-i-Baqa

.54.S5 Shikkar Shikan Shavand
 .54.S6 Subhana Rabbiya'l-'Ala
 .54.S7 Subhanika Ya Hu
 .54.S8 Suratu'llah
 .54.S911 Suriy-i- Ahzan
 .54.S913 Suriy-i-Amin
 .54.S915 Suriy-i-Amr
 .54.S917 Suriy-i-A'rab
 .54.S919 Suriy-i-Ashab
 .54.S921 Suriy-i-Asma
 .54.S923 Suriy-i-Bayan
 .54.S925 Suriy-i-Damm
 .54.S927 Suriy-i-Dhabih
 .54.S929 Suriy-i-Dhibh
 .54.S931 Suriy-i-Dhikr
 .54.S933 Suriy-i-Fadl
 .54.S935 Suriy-i-Fath
 .54.S937 Suriy-i-Fu'ad
 .54.S939 Suriy-i-Ghusn (Tablet of the Branch)
 .54.S941 Suriy-i-Hajj I
 .54.S943 Suriy-i-Hajj II
 .54.S945 Suriy-i-Haykal
 .54.S947 Suriy-i-Hifz
 .54.S949 Suriy-i-Hijr
 .54.S951 Suriy-i-'Ibad
 .54.S953 Suriy-i-Ism
 .54.S955 Suriy-i-Ismuna'l-Mursil
 .54.S957 Suriy-i-Javad
 .54.S959 Suriy-i-Khitab
 .54.S961 Suriy-i-Ma'ani
 .54.S93 Suriy-i-Man'
 .54.S965 Suriy-i-Muluk (Tablet of the Kings)
 .54.S967 Suriy-i-Nida
 .54.S969 Suriy-i-Nush
 .54.S971 Suriy-i-Qadir
 .54.S973 Suriy-i-Qahir
 .54.S975 Suriy-i-Qalam
 .54.S977 Suriy-i-Qamis
 .54.S979 Suriy-i-Sabr
 .54.S981 Suriy-i-Sultan
 .54.S983 Suriy-i-Vafa
 .54.S985 Suriy-i-Ziyarih

.54.S987 Suriy-i-Zubur
 .54.S989 Suriy-i-Zuhur
 .54.T2 Tafsir-i-Hu
 .54.T3 Tafsir-i-Hurufat-i-Maqatta'ih
 .54.T4 Tafsir-i-Suriy-i-Va'sh-Shams
 .54.T5 Tajalliyat
 .54.T6 Tarazat
 .54.Z3 Ziyarat-namih (Tablet of Visitation)
 .54.Z4 Ziyarat-namiy-i-Awliya
 .54.Z5 Ziyarat-namiy-i-Bábu'l-Báb va Quddus
 .54.Z6 Ziyarat-namiy-i-Bayt
 .54.Z7 Ziyarat-namiy-i-Maryam
 .54.Z8 Ziyarat-namiy-i-Siyyidu'sh-Shuhada

.6 Works of (or recorded teachings of) 'Abdu'l-Bahá

.61 Works ABOUT the writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Add to base numbers 294.61, 294.63 notation following 294.1, 294.3

.62 General Collections

.63 Special Collections

.64 Specific works revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá

(Arranged alphabetically, using Cutter numbers - as follows)

.64.A5 Alvah-i-Tablighiy-Imrika (Tablets of the Divine plan)
 .64.A6 Alvah-i-Vasaya (Will and Testament)
 .64.L12 Lawh-i-Aflakiyyih
 .64.L14 Lawh-i-'Ahd va Mithaq
 .64.L16 Lawh-i-'Ammih
 .64.L18 Lawh-i-Ayat
 .64.L22 Lawh-i-Du Niday-i-Falah va Najah
 .64.L24 Lawh-i-Duktur Fural (Tablet to Dr. Forel)
 .64.L26 Lawh-i-Haft Sham'
 .64.L28 Lawh-i-Hizat Bayti
 .64.L32 Lawh-i-Khurasan
 .64.L34 Lawh-i-Lahih
 .64.L36 Lawh-i-Mahfil-i-Shawr
 .64.L38 Lawh-i-Muhabbat
 .64.L42 Lawh-i-Tanzih va Taqdis
 .64.L44 Lawh-i-Tarbiyat
 .64.M3 Madaniyyih (Secret of Divine Civilization)
 .64.M4 Maqality-i-Sayyah (Traveller's Narrative)
 .64.M8 Mufavidat (Some Answered Questions)
 .64.S3 Sharh-i-Fass-i-Nigin-i-Ism-i-A'zam
 .64.S4 Sharh-i-Shuhaday-i-Yazd va Isfahan

- .64.S5 Siyasiyyih
- .64.T2 Tadhkiratu'l-Vafa (Memorials of the Faithful)
- .64.T3 Tafsir-i-Bismi'Ilahi'r-Rahmani'r-Rahim
- .64.T4 Tafsir-i-Kuntu Kanzan Makhfiyyan
- .64.Z5 Ziyarat-namih (Tablet Of Visitation)

.7 Other authoritative Bahá'í writings

Include here only writings with a “quasi-scriptural” authority. 294.72 – 294.78 naturally follow the same pattern as 294.71.

.71 Works of (or recorded teachings of) Shoghi Effendi

- .711 Works ABOUT the writings of Shoghi Effendi

Add to base numbers 294.711, 294.713 notation following 294.1, 294.3

- .712 General Collections
- .713 Special Collections
- .714 Specific works revealed by Shoghi Effendi

Where appropriate – use Cutter numbers for *specific works* of Shoghi Effendi, as for the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

.72 Works of Hands of the Cause of God

.73 Messages from, rulings by the U.H.J.

Add to base numbers 294.731, 294.733 notation following 294.1, 294.3

.75 Recognised rulings by N.S.A.s

.76 “ “ “ L.S.A.s

.78 Recognised rulings by other Administrative bodies

295 The Teachings (God, ethics, principles)

[.0 Schools and kinds of theology]

Do not use 295.0 – class all “deviant” Bahá'í works under 292.7 (covenant breakers).

.1 God

.11 Oneness of God

Class Bahá'í discussions or refutations of Trinitarian, polytheistic, pantheistic etc. conceptions of God under 295.11 – adding to the base number 295.11 notation following 205.11 as appropriate.

.12 Existence, knowability, attributes of God

.121 Existence of God

- .121 2 Proofs
- [.121 3 Agnosticism]
- [.121 5 Atheism]

Do NOT use 295.1213 or 295.1215. Class Bahá'í discussions, refutations of atheism, agnosticism at 291.61633, 291.61634.

.123 Knowability of God

- .123 1 Unknowable in essence
- .123 2 Knowable through logic
- .123 4 Knowable through faith
- .123 6 Knowable through tradition
- .123 8 Acceptance through revelation by manifestations

.125 Attributes of God

- .125 2 Goodness of God
- .125 3 God the creator
- .125 4 Just ruler of the universe

Include here Theodicy (vindication of God's justice in permitting evil and suffering to exist).

- .125 41 Sovereignty, kingdom of God
- .125 42 Wisdom, omniscience
- .125 43 Mercy of God

.125 5 Other attributes and titles

Including omnipotence, transcendence etc.

.129 Greatest Name

.15 Love of God

.18 Primal will, Holy Spirit

.2 Spiritual Beings

.21 Manifestations of God

Use “293.1” for The Báb and “293.2” for Bahá'u'lláh – unless the nature of Manifestation itself is the primary subject

.211 Unity of the manifestations of God

.212 Relation of Manifestation to God

.213 Most Great Infallibility

.214 Revelation, progressive revelation

For works specifically on authorship, inerrancy of scripture, see under 294.1

.215 Miracles

.216 Prophethood

.217 Previous manifestations from a Bahá'í standpoint

Add to the base number 295.217 notation following 2 defining the religion founded by the manifestation concerned – for example:

- .217 6 Moses
- .217 7 Jesus
- .217 8 Muhammad

.219 Future Manifestations

.25 Spirit beings

- .255 Good spirits, Angels etc.

.3 Humanity**.31 Creation, purpose, relation to God**

.311 Faith, belief and doubt

For proofs of the existence of God use 295.121 – for faith as a virtue, use 295.472

.312 Man created to know and love God

.313 Recognition of Manifestation

.315 Dependence

.315 5 Submission to the will of God

.32 Nature of humanity and human society - relation to natural world

For the virtue of love and respect for the natural world use 295.432.

.321 Oneness of humankind

For racial prejudice and racism use 295.4153

.322 Equality of men and women

For Sexism use 295.4155

.324 Immortality of the human spirit

For works on Heaven and Hell use 295.344. Class here works on death.

.324 2 Reincarnation, karma (Fallacy of)

For the effect of good works on salvation, use 295.34855

.325 Free will and predestination**.326 Relation of humankind to the natural world**

For Oneness of religion and science in general - use 295.414

.326 3 Nature of creation

.326 35 Eternal

.326 37 Kingdoms

.326 5 Evolution

For the relationship between the Bahá'í Faith and science, use 291.75

.33 Eschatology

.333 Resurrection, return

.335 Day of God; last days

.337 Calamity

.34 Salvation etc.**.342 Good and evil****.344 Heaven and Hell****.348 Salvation, divine forgiveness**

.348 5 Grace and good works

.348 53 Grace

.348 55 Good works

.4 Principles, morals, personal ethics

Class at 295.4 general works on "living the life". For religious *occupational* ethics see 295.5.

In this schedule, vice is seen as a deficiency of its corresponding virtue. E.g., a work on *pride* (as a vice) is classed at the number for *humility*

.41 Justice, fair-mindedness

Use a number under 296 for Bahá'í *law* on any 295.4 subject.

.412 Independent investigation of truth**.414 Harmony of religion and science**

For general works about the relationship between the Bahá'í Faith and science, prefer 291.75. Use this number for the oneness of Science and religion *as a virtue or principle*.

.415 Prejudice and intolerance (Elimination of)

.415 1 Religious intolerance

.415 3 Racism and Ethnicism

.415 5 Sexism

.415 7 Ageism

.415 8 Intolerance of people suffering from illnesses and handicaps

.42 Honour, purity

.421 Self-respect, honour

.422 Honesty, ethical dealing

.423 Thrift

.424 Truthfulness

.426 Trustworthiness

.427 Matching words with deeds

.428 Chastity, sexual morals

.429 Purity

.43 Kindliness and related virtues

.432 Concern for the environment

.432 5 Kindness to animals

.432 7 Vegetarianism

.433 "Golden Rule"

.433 3 Sympathy and empathy

.433 7 Respect for others' rights

.434 Generosity, charity, care for the poor and sick

.435 Encouragement

.436 Courtesy and tact

.437 Hospitality

.439 Forgiveness, tolerance

.44 Love and related virtues

- .443 Love
- .445 Friendliness, friendship

.45 Selflessness and related virtues

- .452 Sacrifice
- .454 Service

.46 Humility and related virtues

- .461 Humility
- .463 Reverence
- .465 Obedience
- .466 Patience
- .468 Dignity

.47 Faith and related virtues

- .472 Faith
- .473 Courage
- .474 Happiness
- .475 Hope
- .476 Steadfastness and perseverance
- .477 Sincerity
- .478 Zeal

.49 Other qualities and virtues**.5 Occupational ethics**

Add to the base number 295.5 the Dewey number for the discipline involved – e.g. medical ethics 294.561. Class honesty at 295.422.

.6 Social teachings

Works treating the practical relationships between the Faith and social questions should generally be classed under 291.73 .

Class teachings concerning the social nature of humanity under 295.32
Use 296.5 for social *laws*.

.63 Teachings concerning Peace and War

- .633 Pacifism

Doctrines absolutely forbidding war in any circumstances.

- .634 Lesser peace
 - .634 5 Collective security

For international cooperation in general use 295.655

- .635 Most Great Peace
- .636 Warfare
 - .636 3 Just war

War necessarily waged, for a just cause.

- .636 8 Holy war

.64 International standards

- .643 International standard measure
- .645 International standard script
- .646 Universal second language

.65 Government

- .653 Individuals and the state
 - .653 2 Obedience to government
 - .653 23 Military service
- .655 International cooperation, world federation
 - .655 2 International executive
 - .655 3 International legislature
 - .655 4 International law
- .656 Political systems
 - .656 3 Republicanism
 - .656 5 Royalism

.66 Teachings concerning economics

For the specific virtues of justice, honesty, thrift, generosity etc. see numbers under 295.4

- .663 Spiritual solution to the economic question

.67 Teachings concerning social life, customs and change

- .673 Social life and customs
- .675 Social change

296 Laws, prescriptions and proscriptions

For scriptural and legislative *sources* of Bahá'í law use appropriate division of "294" - e.g. The Kitab-i-Aqdas at 294.54.K6.

3 Personal laws**.31 Membership of the Bahá'í community****.311 Declaration****.312 Suspension of voting rights****.313 Expulsion****.314 Resignation****.315 Membership of (or involvement with) non-Bahá'í bodies**

- .315 2 Interfaith bodies
- .315 3 Charitable and "service" organisations
- .315 5 Other religious bodies
- .315 7 Secret societies etc.
- .315 8 Political parties etc.

Here include participation in partisan politics.

.316 Obligations and privileges

- .316 4 Contributions to the cause
- .316 5 Obligatory prayer and repeating holy verses

For comprehensive works on Bahá'í personal devotions use

- .316 7 Privilege of voting in Bahá'í elections

For loss of voting and administrative rights see "296.312".

.32 Laws of personal conduct

.322 Laws affecting sexual conduct

Class rape at 296.32474. For marriage laws use 296.553 – for chastity as a virtue, use 295.427

- .322 2 Adultery and fornication
- .322 4 Homosexuality
- .322 6 Birth control; abortion

.324 Laws concerning respect of the body, of human life

- .324 5 Use of alcohol and other drugs
- .324 7 Violence
- .324 72 Assault
- .324 74 Rape
- .324 75 Murder and manslaughter - suicide
- .324 77 Warfare
- .324 778 Holy War

.326 Laws concerning respect of property

- .326 3 Theft
- .326 5 Fraud
- .326 7 Malicious damage, arson etc.

.327 Laws of respect for other's rights

- .327 6 Backbiting
- .327 8 Discrimination

.328 Other "personal" laws

- .328 2 Gambling
- .328 4 Involvement with psychic phenomena

.5 Social laws

.53 Theocracy, religious government

For the relationship between the Faith and the secular state use 291.732 – for teachings on relations with secular government use 295.65.

.532 Laws governing international matters

- .532 5 Laws relating to U.H.J.

.533 Laws governing communities

- .533 5 Laws relating to N.S.A.s and L.S.A.s

.55 Laws of family life

.552 Duties of children to parents

For duties of parents to children use 296.555.

.553 Marriage

For laws of sexual conduct and adultery etc. see 296.322

- .553 1 Monogamy – plurality of spouses
- .553 3 Courtship, betrothal
- .553 4 Parental consent
- .553 6 Dowry
- .553 8 Divorce
- .553 83 Year of patience

.554 Law concerned with death

- .554 3 Treatment of human remains, burial
- .554 5 Laws of inheritance

.555 Responsibility for children

- .555 7 Responsibility for education of children

.57 Crime and punishment

- .572 Religious sanctions
- .575 Fines and confiscations
- .578 Imprisonment
- .578 9 Life imprisonment
- .579 Capital punishment

297 Feasts & holy days - the Bahá'í calendar

Collections of scriptural readings suitable for a particular occasion, are classed at 294.327, 294.4327 etc. Works on the preparation of worship for particular occasions, including specific programs, are classed at 298.857.

.3 The Nineteen Day Feast

- .331 Bahá (Splendour)
- .332 Jalal (Glory)
- .333 Jamal (Beauty)
- .334 'Azamat (Grandeur)
- .335 Nur (Light)
- .341 Rahmat (Mercy)
- .342 Kalimat (words)
- .343 Kamal (Perfection)
- .344 'Izzat (Might)
- .351 Mashiyat (Will)
- .352 'Ilm (Knowledge)
- .353 Qudrat (Power)
- .354 Qawl (Speech)
- .354 Masa'il (Questions)
- .361 Sharaf (Honour)
- .362 Sultan (Sovereignty)

- .363 Mulk (Dominion)
 - .364 Ala (Loftiness)
 - .4 The days of Ha (Intercalary days)**
 - .5 Naw Ruz (Bahá'í New Year)**
 - .6 Ridvan**
 - .601 First day of Ridvan
 - .609 Ninth day of Ridvan
 - .612 Twelfth day of Ridvan.
 - .7 Holy Anniversaries.**
 - .73 The Declaration of the Báb
 - .74 The Passing of Bahá'u'lláh
 - .75 The Martyrdom of the Báb
 - .76 The Birth of the Báb
 - .77 The Birth of Bahá'u'lláh
 - .78 The Day of the Covenant
 - .79 The Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá
 - .8 Other specifically Bahá'í anniversaries**
 - .9 Other anniversaries etc.**
 - .93 World Religion day
 - .94 Race Unity Day
 - .95 World Peace Day
 - .96 United Nations Day
 - .98 Human Rights Day
- 298 Religious life and practice**
- .1 The Covenant**
 - .11 Eternal (Greater) Covenant**
 - .12 Specific (Lesser) Covenant**
 - .13 Covenant-breaking**

For specific covenant-breakers or covenant-breaking groups, see under 292.7.
 - .2 Pilgrimage and Holy places**
 - .21 Bahá'í Pilgrimage**
 - .213 Accounts of particular pilgrimages
 - .215 Pilgrim's notes

For *authoritative* notes of talks by (for instance) 'Abdu'l-Bahá or Shoghi Effendi consider classing in appropriate subdivision of 294.
 - .26 Bahá'í Holy places**
 - .261 In the Holy Land (Israel/Palestine)**
 - .261 1 Holy places in Haifa
 - .261 11 Shrine of the Báb
 - .261 115 Shrine of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

- .261 13 House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá
- .261 2 Holy places at Bahjí
- .261 23 The Mansion
- .261 25 The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh
- .261 3 Holy places in 'Akká
- .261 32 The Barracks
- .261 321 Cell of Bahá'u'lláh
- .261 35 The house of Udi Khammar
- .261 37 The house of Abbud
- .261 38 The house of 'Abdu'llah Pasha
- .261 39 Bahá'í cemeteries in 'Akká
- .261 9 Elsewhere in the Holy Land
- .261 92 Mazra'ih
- .261 95 Gardens near 'Akká
- .261 953 Ridvan garden
- .261 955 Firdaws
- .261 957 Ashraf

.262 In Iran (Persia)

- .262 1 House of the Báb (Shiraz)

.263 In Former Ottoman Empire

- .263 2 House of Bahá'u'lláh (Baghdad)

.264 Elsewhere**.3 Personal Devotions****.33 Prayer****.35 Reading, reciting scripture****.4 Ritual self-denial – fasting – asceticism****.44 Dietary self-denial**

- .443 Fasting

Class periods of fast in 297

.5 Meditation and mysticism, religious experience**.53 Meditation****.58 Mysticism****.6 Other Mystic Practices****.62 Religious healing****.68 Divination, prophecy**

For prophecy enshrined in scripture, see 294 – for prophecies of Manifestation see 295.21.

.7 Deepening – religious education (Bahá'í)

Class here Bahá'í learning, the Bahá'í Faith as an academic subject. Class teaching, pioneering under 299.8.

.72 Importance in general spiritual development

.73 Methods of deepening

- .731 Self deepening
- .732 Informal gatherings, firesides
- .733 Formal institutes etc.
- .734 Bahá'í summer schools

.75 Deepening particular groups of people

- .753 By age group
 - .753 3 Young people
 - .753 33 Children

Including "Rose Gardens" (Children's classes)

- .753 35 Youth
- .755 By socio-economic class
(Include deepening indigenous people.)
- .756 By ethnicity, nationality
- .757 New and isolated believers
 - .757 3 New believers
 - .757 5 Isolated believers

.76 Deepening on particular subjects

Add to the base number 298.76 the numbers following 29 in 291-299 – e.g. learning about scripture 298.764 – Deepening on the covenant 298.7681. Actual deepening materials would in most cases be best classed with the subject concerned, or under the appropriate division of 294.

.8 Bahá'í Worship

Including individual and community praise of God, celebration of nineteen day feasts, holy days, special occasions – temple services (unity feasts) and other interfaith worship.

Class personal prayer, reading of scripture at 298.3.

.81 Essentially non-ritual nature**.82 Prayer and scriptural readings in acts of worship**

- .823 Congregational prayer
- .824 Reading, reciting, chanting of scripture in worship

.84 Use of music in worship

Class religious music in general at 781.7 or 782.22

- .844 Song books, "Hymnals" etc.

.85 Celebration of particular occasions

- .853 Bahá'í weddings
- .854 Bahá'í funerals
- .857 Feasts, Holy days etc.

Add to the base number 298.857 notation following 297. For collections

of scripture suitable for the celebration of particular feasts, holy days – see 294.

- .858 Times of the day

Including dawn prayers

- .89 Unity feasts, Temple services and other interfaith worship

.9 Charity, donations to the Cause

For the virtue of generosity, charitableness, use "295.434" – for the *obligation* to contribute to the cause under Bahá'í law use 296.3164.

299 Institutions and organisations, administration**.03 Directories****.06 Statistics****1 General Administrative Topics****.11 General administration**

For subjects not allowed for below - add to the base number 209.11 the numbers following 65 in 651-659 – e.g. General Office administration 299.111. For public relations, advertising use proclamation at 299.53, rather than 299.119.

.15 Bahá'í elections

For the privilege of voting in Bahá'í elections, and removal of this privilege, see 296.3167.

- .158 Conventions etc. called for the purpose of holding elections

.18 Conferences and regional meetings**.2 Administrative Centres and Houses of Worship****.22 The World Centre (Haifa)****.24 National & Local centres**

(e.g.) Australian National Centre 299.2494

.26 Houses of worship

(e.g.) The Indian Temple 299.2654

.3 Administrative Institutions

Committees or sub-organisations of any institution are numbered after a 0 (zero) - the numbers 2-8 are used to locate the committee (where this is appropriate) thus a committee of the U.H.J. might be 299.34202 - a committee of the N.S.A. of Australia might be 299.3439403.

.34 Governing institutions (the Rulers)

- .341 The Guardianship

For works specifically on Shoghi Effendi, use 293.4 – for works on other "Guardians", class under covenant breakers, at 292.78.

- .342 The Universal House of Justice
- .343 National Spiritual Assemblies
- (e.g.) The NSA of the United States 299.34373

- .345 Local Spiritual Assemblies
- .346 Isolated believers and communities too small or immature to form an L.S.A. (Groups)

.38 Protective & teaching institutions (the Learned)

For teaching itself use 299.8.

- .382 The Hands of the Cause of God

For consideration of Hands *as individuals*, including biography, use 293.5. For general consideration of Bahá'í history during the period of the stewardship of the Hands – prefer 292.534.

- .383 International teaching centre
- .384 Continental Boards of Counsellors
- .386 Auxiliary Boards
 - .386 3 For propagation
 - .386 5 For protection

.4 Bahá'í clubs, societies etc.

.42 General

- .422 International
- .424 National and Local
- .425 Institutional
 - .425 7 University Bahá'í societies

.45 Special interest groups

- .450 2 Bahá'í library groups & associations
- .451 Bahá'í philosophical societies etc.
- .452 Bahá'í religious, theological societies etc.
- .453 Bahá'í social welfare & educational societies

Including Women's groups.

- .454 Bahá'í Esperanto clubs etc.
- .455 Bahá'í scientific associations etc.
- .456 Bahá'í technical groups (e.g. computer clubs)
- .457 Bahá'í artistic societies
- .458 Bahá'í literary societies
- .459 Bahá'í historical societies

.8 Teaching, Consolidation & Pioneering

Define "teaching" as the introduction of non-Bahá'ís to the Faith – for religious education of Bahá'ís use "deepening" (298.7). Class institutions of the Faith connected with teaching under 299.38

.801 Importance of

.802 Role in spiritual development

.81 Plans & campaigns

For history, achievements etc. of particular plans – see appropriate heading under 292.5 or 299.82.

.82 History of teaching

.83 Proclamation & Advertising

- .835 Advertising the faith, publicity
- .837 Formal proclamation

.84 Particular teaching methods

- .842 Personal teaching
- .844 Firesides
- .845 Travel teaching
- .846 Public meetings
- .847 Mass teaching
 - .847 3 "Street preaching"
 - .847 5 "Door-knocking"
- .848 Use of the media

.85 Teaching particular groups of people

- .853 By age group
 - .853 3 Young people
 - .853 33 Children
 - .853 35 Youth
- .855 By socio-economic class
(Include teaching indigenous people.)
- .856 By ethnicity, nationality
- .858 Teaching people of particular religious background

.86 Consolidation

- .862 Community Development
- .863 New believers

Use this number for the general care and nurture of new believers, especially as part of the consolidation process. For *deepening* new believers, use 298.7573.

- .867 Isolated believers

Use this number for the general care and nurture of isolated believers. For *deepening* isolated believers, use 298.7575. For the place of isolated believers in the administrative structure, use 299.346.

.87 Pioneering

For works about *individual pioneers* (including Knights of Bahá'u'lláh) and all biography in this area, use appropriate division under 293.

- .872 History of pioneering
- .876 In particular countries, regions etc

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Report on Scholarship

This is the third annual 'Report on Scholarship' produced by ABS Australia.¹ Our purpose in compiling this *Report* is to bring into one location a survey of recent publications, and accounts by scholars of their current research projects and interests. In gathering together information on activities on Bahá'í scholarship in diverse parts of the world from 1999, the *Report* provides an indicative survey of subjects under investigation, and approaches to research. Bringing together reports from individuals, institutions, courses, and Associations for Bahá'í Studies, will allow a picture of general trends to emerge. The report also acts as a 'clearing house' for information.

It is hoped that this Report will be the stimulus for a more complete assessment of Bahá'í scholarship, on a global scale, at regular intervals. Should it be possible to identify a team of contributing editors, the *Report* could in future years provide an annual survey of developments in each discipline of interest to Bahá'í scholars. For instance, editors with expertise in such fields as education, the environment, peace studies, history, etc, could be called on to assess developments in their respective fields for the year in review. In this way, the *Report* would contribute a periodic global survey of a number of fields of scholarship, thus allowing the reader to remain informed of developments across an increasingly diverse field of information.

1. Reports for 1997 and 1998 are available on the ABS Australia website, <http://www.bahai.org.au/abs/>

Affiliate Associations for Bahá'í Studies

Australia

Committee: Dr Ratnam Alagiah, Dr Graham Hassall, Dr. Vahid Payman, Mr Colin Dibdin, Mrs Sima Hashemi, Mrs Sandra Langshaw, Ms Ladan Rahmani, Dr Natalie Mobini-Kesheh

Highlights and Achievements:

1. The Association's 18th Annual Conference, on the theme "The Creative Inspiration: Art and Culture in the Bahá'í Faith", was held at the University of Melbourne. The conference attracted more than 50 presenters and performers, and approximately 150 participants. The event included workshops and seminars, a dinner, an exhibition, a play, and a concert. Its aim was to provide an opportunity for those involved in the arts in the Australian Bahá'í Community to meet each other and become informed of each others' work, and to bring the arts to the wider community, and to foster discussion of critical issues facing Bahá'ís in the arts at the present time.
2. Thirty-seven participants attended all or part of the third Scholarship Institute at Yerrinbool over the Easter period, 2-4 April. The institute program was based on discussion of current research interests and participants were invited to speak about what they are interested in and how they are undertaking their research. Graham Hassall presented the ABS Report on Scholarship for 1998, which is a 56 page report including contributions from affiliate ABS's and individual researchers, and an extensive bibliography of works published in 1998.
3. The ABS Newsletter was produced in February, June, September and December 1998, and distributed to members and a large complimentary list comprising tertiary Bahá'í societies, national committees, Counsellors, regional National Assemblies, all ABS affiliate organizations, and Centres of Learning.
4. The first issue of the Association's journal, *Australian Bahá'í Studies* was published and sent to all members. Complimentary copies were also sent to a large list of individuals and organizations to promote subscriptions. *Australian Bahá'í Studies* is open to submissions on all subjects. But it particularly seeks articles of practical relevance to the Australian Bahá'í community, and which might not be readily published elsewhere. These may include analyses of specific teaching methods, projects, and outcomes;

- reports on issues of management, leadership, and administration; application of the Bahá'í Teachings to issues of concern in Australian society; community histories; biographies; literary essays; and essays on Bahá'í theology and religious studies. The second issue had reached printing stage by December. Members will receive two issues of the journal per year, along with the ABS newsletter, as their membership entitlement.
5. We had direct communication with all Bahá'í Societies at universities from December 1998 to February 1999, and put together a short institute on society functioning which was well received by several universities. Financial assistance was also offered to support teaching activities at Curtin University and UTS Sydney. Later in the year we examined practical possibilities with the National Youth Committee with the aim of realising the unfulfilled potential for Bahá'í activity in universities.
 6. ABS recognises and congratulates the initiative of the University of Western Australia Bahá'í Studies Society, which promotes Bahá'í scholarship through its "SPEAK" conference and journal.
 7. ABS established financial scholarships for the participation of Baha'is at scholarly conferences, and youth and indigenous participation in Bahá'í studies conferences.
 8. Our strategy for promoting Bahá'í scholarship at the 'grassroots' level was reassessed, with the result that regional Bahá'í Studies coordinating committees were discontinued, and initiatives such as the "Introduction to Bahá'í Studies" course were developed.
 9. Collaboration with overseas ABS affiliates was continued, especially with ABS Japan.

Concerns and Issues:

1. It has been difficult to find volunteers who have time to support the various activities of the Association such as the library, mail-outs and journal production.
2. The ABS library, books stocks, records and files are difficult to access in their current location (in boxes in the basement of the House of Worship). A permanent office is needed.

Hopes and Opportunities:

1. ABS will hold its annual conference, on Health, Healing and Religion, in Toowoomba from 29th September – 1st October, 2000.
2. ABS will hold its fourth annual scholarship workshop at Yerrinbool over 21-23 April (Easter) 2000.
3. ABS is collaborating with the External Affairs Office to organise the 2nd Human Rights and Religion seminar in Canberra in mid-2000.
4. In the longer term, ABS seeks to increase the number of active interest

groups. This development requires the active interest and collaboration of ABS members.

5. ABS is continuing its use of the Internet, and is benefiting collaboration with specialists in this field. The web site is at www.bahai.org.au/abs. A design enhancement is in progress.
6. The "Introduction to Bahá'í Studies" course will be run in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and possibly Perth during 2000. This course introduces basic scholarship and presentation skills and the basics of a Bahá'í approach to scholarship, and offers participants assistance in carrying out a personal research project into an aspect of the Faith of their choosing.
7. Further progress is expected towards the publication of the talks of Mr Furútan and Mr Faizi given at Yerrinbool.
8. We anticipate that a national framework for supporting and providing leadership for teaching in universities will be established during 2000, in collaboration with the National Youth Committee and with the support of the National Spiritual Assembly. In the meantime a temporary part-time paid position is being established to carry out the routine but necessary management tasks required for Baha'is Studies society coordination.

English Speaking Europe

Committee: Masoud Afnan (chairman), Seena Fazel (vice-chair), Jane Aldred (from June 99), Nazila Ghanea-Hercock (secretary), Robert Ghanea-Hercock (treasurer), Roger Kingdon (until July 99), Parvine Foroughi (until October 99), Iarfhlaith Watson, Sahba Akhavan, Augusto Lopez-Claros (from October 99), Vafa Payman (from December 99)

NSA Liaison members: Wendi Momen (UK), Mr Seosamh (Joe) Watson (Republic of Ireland)

COLLABORATION

Consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly (September 99)

The ABS benefited greatly from a consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly on 12 September 1999, and was encouraged by the thoughtful discussion and helpful advice that ensued.

Collaboration with the Appointed Arm

Shahriar Razavi consulted with the ABS on 12 June 1999, and there have been a number of occasions during the year where informal discussions have continued with the Appointed Arm with Shahriar Razavi and Counsellor O'Mara on issues of mutual concern. Shahriar Razavi expressed the importance

of creating a sense of excitement about learning in the community as a challenge before both the Appointed Arm and the ABS.

Collaboration with the Bahá'í Councils regarding ABS contribution to schools

After its experience of contributing to the wider Bahá'í community through 3 summer school programmes last summer (Irish Summer School, Sidcot and Arts Academy), the ABS is keen to continuing serving and reaching out to the community in this way. All Bahá'í Councils have therefore been approached with the offer of our services in this regard.

Proposed joint conference in collaboration with a number of Agencies of the National Spiritual Assembly: the Office of External Affairs and the Office for the Advancement of Women

As a result of the consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly in September, the ABS decided to suggest the holding of a joint conference in collaboration of other Agencies of the National Assembly: the Office of External Affairs and the Office for the Advancement of Women. The aim would be to bring together the various expertise, networks and experiences of these agencies to hold a conference on one of the 4 areas of Bahá'í 'External Affairs' work – as outlined in the October 1994 letter of the Universal House of Justice: moral development, human rights, global prosperity and the status of women. The aim would be to hold a conference that could attract both non-Bahá'í academics as well as appropriate NGOs and activists. The ABS eagerly looks forward to the outcome of these consultations.

PUBLICATIONS

The Associate Newsletter

Issue 28 came out in Summer 1999, and Issue 29 will be due out in early 2000. The ABS welcomes the new editor of the 'Associate' Iarfhlaith Watson.

The Bahá'í Studies Review Journal

The Association of Bahá'í Studies continues to benefit from the review process (the Academic Review Panel) set up by the National Spiritual Assembly for all its publications, and is grateful for the input and advice of this agency. Issue 8 of 'The Bahá'í Studies Review' came out during this year, and Issue 9 will be going to press in the near future. We are grateful to the services of John Danesh and Seena Fazel as the editors of this journal, which remains the leading Bahá'í studies periodical. Substantial material from back issues has been put on our website <<http://www.breacais.demon.co.uk/abs/> through the tireless efforts of Chris Manvell, who also typesets the journal for free.

EVENTS

Sidcot Summer School & Arts Academy

The ABS-ESE contributed programmes to the Sidcot summer school and the Arts Academy. At Sidcot, 4 sessions were held over 2 days on 'Bahá'í studies a survival course', and over 2 days on 'Science and Religion'. At Arts Academy a one-day conference was held on 'Citizenship' at the Arts Academy. The ABS is particularly grateful to the services of Roger Kingdon in enabling these opportunities and wishes him well in his research.

Youth Convention at Bahá'í National Convention 157 B.E.

The Association of Bahá'í Studies contributed to the programme of Youth Convention by highlighting the possibilities of service to the Faith through a commitment to Bahá'í Studies, and particularly the opportunities provided through the work of Bahá'í Societies at institutions of Higher Learning. The importance of responding to the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education in Iran campaign was emphasised, with a detailed explanation from Ramin Badii about the activities of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Leicester.

ABS annual conference

The theme of the next ABS annual conference will be pre-empting the theme of the United Nations for the year 2001: 'Dialogue Among Civilisations'. The ABS welcomes a wide variety of contributions under this overall theme: contributors old and new are most welcome.

Activities in the Republic of Ireland (National Convention, Irish Summer School)

The number of ABS members in the Republic of Ireland trebled through a strong encouragement of membership at the Irish National Convention. Furthermore, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Republic of Ireland invited the ABS to organised 4 afternoon sessions at the Irish Summer School in August 1999. These were considered a success by the National Assembly and ABS participation has been encouraged again this year.

Covenant Meeting "Challenges to the Covenant"

The ABS decided to hold a one-day conference on the Covenant – an issue that is particularly being emphasised by the Appointed Arm at present. An excellent programme of speakers and discussion on the above theme has been scheduled for 24 June 2000, and is the result of consultations with Shahriar Razavi of the Appointed Arm as well as the National Spiritual Assembly.

OTHER

Bahá'í Societies

Active Bahá'í Societies exist up and down the country including: Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Edinburgh, London (including SOAS and LSE), Cranfield, Cambridge and Oxford. Oversight for the activities of these Societies rests with the respective Local Spiritual Assembly. However, the ABS has responsibility for co-ordination, an annual Bahá'í Societies conference, encouragement and general guidance – which is carried out by the Bahá'í Societies Co-ordinators: Ramin and Sonja Farzanafar <ramfar@hotmail.com>. The Bahá'í Student Handbook, second edition (as compiled by Jenny Semple and Ian Holland), was reprinted during the year and remains an invaluable resource for Bahá'í Societies. It is also made available free of charge on our website; and copies have been requested, amongst others, by the US National Youth Committee as well as the European Bahá'í Youth Council.

Marketing & website

The ABS-ESE responded to the National Assembly's 'Web of Faith' project and is now linked on that service, as well as being linked to the Council for England website. The ABS is very grateful to the services of Chris Manvell in maintaining its site.

Membership

Current paid membership of the ABS-ESE is around 250, although the ABS takes on itself the responsibility of sending its publications free of charge to a wide range of libraries and non-Bahá'í academics throughout 'English Speaking' Europe, such that around 350-400 individuals and institutions receive our material. A number of senior non-Bahá'í academics have written to share their appreciation of receiving these publications.

Special Interest Groups

BIPOLIG (Bahá'í International Politics and Law Special Interest Group)

The last BIPOLIG conference was held at the London School of Economics in June 1999, and plans are underway for planning the next conference. Also during this year, 2 editors have been compiling a number of the contributions to BIPOLIG conferences over the past 5 years into a publication "Processes of the Lesser Peace" to be published by George Ronald later this year.

A number of Bahá'í youth in London have also taken the initiative of examining the whole BIPOLIG area of Bahá'í contributions to current affairs through weekly gatherings in London. This will undoubtedly contribute to the development of Bahá'í scholarship and skills of correlating Bahá'í teachings to the matters of the day among the youth, and also be of interest to non-Bahá'ís who want to explore these issues more thoroughly.

Religious Studies

The Religious Studies Special Interest Group hosted a conference in Newcastle in December 1999, and its next conference is being held at the London School of Economics, 14-16 July 2000.

Education

A number of Bahá'ís are exploring the possibility of setting up a Special Interest Group on Education.

The ABS welcomes all initiatives to set up Special Interest Groups, and is happy to provide some funds, share its experience, and advertise the events of such groups through its networks and publications. These groups are very much led from the grass roots, and merely facilitated and encouraged by the ABS Executive. Suggestions for the setting up of a Science and Religion, Gender, Arts and other Special Interest Groups are outstanding – and awaiting the initiative of an interested individual, group of youth, local community or Bahá'í Society. These groups can be crucial in deepening the interest, facilitating the research, bringing together the expertise, leading to publications, attracting the interest and sharpening the knowledge of Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís over time.

OVERVIEW

It has been a challenging year in terms of the turnover of the membership of the ABS itself, but also one of great opportunity. The ABS continues to try to create an atmosphere and culture of learning and Bahá'í scholarly activity in the UK, Ireland and beyond. Whilst many in our community are quite legitimately concerned with the immediate needs of our Faith here and now, and are quite weary of intellectualism in the wider society that is not necessarily targeted at service; there is a healthy balance that needs to be struck in the Bahá'í community about the scholarship ethos. Although, the immediate needs of the Faith are tremendous, we cannot lose sight of the urgent longer term needs of the Faith, and delay the potential of this Revelation to transform the arts and sciences. How can we claim, for example, that Bahá'u'lláh is the return of the Shah Bahram, where there is so little research on the Bahá'í Faith and Zoroastrianism that can convincingly support such a claim? How can we effectively share the message of 'Who is writing the future?' when we do not adequately understand the processes unfolding at present? Clearly, as the National Spiritual Assembly has emphasised, our community should celebrate difference and encourage the various talents in its midst – including that of scholarship and the equivalence of this path of service to other means of teaching such as pioneering, administering projects, etc.

There are many levels of 'scholarship' – in the least it is a means by which

every Bahá'í can be better grounded in her Faith and more effective in conveying it to the wider community, whether in clearer thinking in one's own mind, verbally or in writing. At another level, it is encouraging the publication of a ground-breaking work that may serve for hundreds of years as a milestone in terms of the Bahá'í contribution to knowledge. Both are necessary, and the Association of Bahá'í Studies hopes it can continue to support both these processes in the UK community, and welcomes your suggestions of how it may more effectively be able to do so in the future.

WHAT NEXT?

YOUTH

In consultations with the Appointed Arm, the ABS has realised the importance of particularly encouraging research on Bahá'í issues to be undertaken by youth. A list of topics have been highlighted by Dr Khan in Issue 3.2 of the Bahá'í Studies Review. It is for this reason that the ABS has been particularly heartened to encourage the initiatives of the London weekly BIPOLIG youth gathering, precisely to facilitate such research; and the plans of the Edinburgh Bahá'í Society to hold a Scottish Universities Bahá'í Conference in the near future.

Obviously there is a long way to go before there is the facility for regional clusters of Bahá'í youth to regularly be gathering throughout the UK in such scholarship groups (whether as facilitated in Bahá'í Societies, Special Interest Groups or other gatherings) but this is the long-term vision of the ABS in working towards a sustainable culture of Bahá'í scholarship in the UK. It is for this reason that the possibility of free ABS membership to all Bahá'í students during their Higher Education years, and permanently for functioning Bahá'í Societies, is currently being investigated.

MEMBERSHIP

The ABS is keen to ease the process of joining the ABS-ESE and is putting processes into place to do so through direct debit facilities, multiple-year memberships and through the liaison of discounts when applying for multiple-membership of a number of Associations of Bahá'í Studies. The ABS is also keenly aware that there is a far greater potential of membership than the current number around 250, but is strictly enforcing the procedure of cancelling over-due memberships after 2 reminders. The ABS is planning some market research to be done to promote/explore the membership of the ABS.

India

Moral Education Workshops

The Association for Bahá'í Studies organized six Moral Education Workshops for Primary School Teachers through Local Assemblies. Such workshops were held at Mumbai, Delhi, Chandigarh, Gorakhpur, Goa and Bangalore. One of the workshops in Mumbai was initiated by a non-Bahá'í school and teachers from 10 different schools participated in it. A special workshop was held for training the trainers for Moral Education Teachers for South India in Bangalore and friends from four different states numbering about 30 attended this workshop for 3 days.

ABS-India Chapters

Subsequent, to this activity, ABS-India opened this year 4 (four) Chapters at different places namely, Kerela, Delhi, Nagpur and Gwalior. However, these chapters need further follow-up work to activate them.

Personality Development Workshops

Two workshops on "Personality Development" held at the Bahá'í Centre, Mumbai, were attended by some fifty participants (post-graduate and graduate students of Engg. Colleges). Each was presented with a "Participation Certificate", and one of the Resource Persons declared his Faith in Bahá'u'lláh.

Art Group Programme

This was possible due to earlier introduction of ABS-India to UDCT students. For this programme we had around 2000 students present. As a strategic plan using an indirect way of teaching, some friends interacted with the people of capacity and presented the Faith at the All India Textile Conference as well as at the National Seminar in UDCT through paper presentation on "Role of Technology and Ethics on Development". A number of City Assemblies were contacted and encouraged to take up City Teaching Activities.

Research Fellowships

Three of 17 applicants were awarded ABS-India research fellowships, to undertake research on a Bahá'í topic for one year.

Activities undertaken by ABS-India in Four Year Plan (1996-2000)

In the initial years of the Plan, a lot of emphasis was given on consolidation of ABS-India and its executive committee. A newsletter, "Pragnya" was

started to create a link between the members and ABS-India. This requires further regularisation.

The Annual National Conference

In 1996, a 3-day international conference was arranged taking the advantage of the friends attending the 10th year celebration of the OPENING of the House of Worship. The conference theme was "Eradication of Poverty". About 80 friends including friends from abroad especially, USA, UK, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Bangladesh participated. Subsequently, every year, we had an Annual Conference on topics like Oneness of Mankind, the Bahá'í Faith and Contemporary Issues, at the New Era High School, Panchgani, the City Montessori School, Lucknow, and Bahá'í House, Delhi.

In general, on the average 35 papers were presented from different parts of the country. There is increasing enthusiasm among the Bahá'ís to write papers for the Annual Conference and signs are quite apparent that if encouraged properly, interest in the Bahá'í scholarship can take strong roots among the friends in India. The proceedings of these conferences are compiled in Book form for distribution and sale. Over 200 friends were contacted to write papers for such annual conferences. During these years, ABS-India also started getting due recognition through such programmes.

Research Fellowships

In order to have well researched papers at such conferences, ABS-India announced 15 Research Fellowships of Rs.2000/- each year and so three candidates have been selected from national level contest for this fellowship. We are sure, their work will be of great significance for subsequent publication of Journal of Bahá'í Studies.

City Teaching

During this period, ABS-India with the encouragement of the NSA, printed a number of brief statements on various issues, originally brought out by the Bahá'í International Community. This material was sent to more than 30 LSAs and a number of ABMs with a special request to use the same in their efforts in City Teaching or Teaching the People of Capacity. From time to time such encouragement has gone from ABS-India. At National Conferences, City Teaching subject was presented and explained to the Baha'is of Capacity and a number of communities were subsequently helped to undertake such programmes.

Moral Education Workshops

Moral Education Workshops for primary school teachers organized by ABS-India were very successful. Approximately 600 teachers attended 24 Workshops, in states including Kerela, Karnataka, Maharashtra, UP, Delhi,

Punjab, MP, and Orissa. This programme will crystallize into an independent project called SANSKAR supervised by ABS-India. Besides this ABS-India helped the Universal Educational Forum, an organization of Bahá'í Inspired Schools.

Training of Trainers

There were eight workshops conducted for Training of Teachers in Panchgani (two), Gwalior, Mumbai (two), Bangalore, Deolali and Cochin. The Universal House of Justice appreciated this activity of ABS-India and the LSAs are thus encouraged to concentrate on this goal of moral education. Indeed, our experience says, we, the Bahá'í community of India is in the best position to offer yeomen services in Moral Education to this vast country.

Government Level Interaction

In the district of Satara (Maharashtra), the Education Officer and the Collector initiated a program of moral education for 100 Principals of Primary Schools in his area to attend the same at New Era High School, Panchgani and ABS-India gave them orientation / lecture-cum-demonstration to introduce this program. We are following up this activity through New Era High School and Bahá'í Academy and possibly we may get an opportunity to train teachers from 500 schools in this area.

Interaction with Textile Association of India, Mumbai

ABS-India conducted a Moral Education Workshop with the Textile Association of India for their members at Bahá'í Centre, Mumbai. This activity was widely published in Textile periodicals and magazines and the Textile Association of India appreciated the activities of ABS-India.

Other Training Workshops:

a. Dynamics of Team building: ABS-India organized two well-attended workshops on "Dynamics of Team Building in Bahá'í Administration at Deolali and Panchgani.

b. Personality Development: We organized five workshops on "Personality Development" for College/University students and the response to these workshops was tremendous. On the average about 40 students (mainly Engineering and technology, doing their post-graduate and some college teachers) attended. The participants were given participation certificates and it also provided a good opportunity to share the message with them.

c. Fortress of Well-Being: Thirty youth attended a two-day national seminar organized in association with the Bahá'í Academy. A number of key issues concerning Marriage as an Institution, Chaste and Holy Life, Criteria for

selecting a life partner, Balancing Family life and Bahá'í activities, Spiritual parenting of children, True Happiness etc were discussed. There is a lot of demand for this course and we need to replicate it at different places with the help of NBYC-India.

d. Workshop on Teaching Techniques: This workshop was held to train the friends in "Introducing Bahá'í Faith to people of specific professions.

e. Workshop for Prominent Bahá'ís –Our Encounter with Bahá'u'lláh: A high level workshop on "Teaching the People of Capacity" was held 7th and 8th Nov. 1998 at Mumbai for Baha'is of recognized ability and capacity, to discuss the issues of teaching People of Capacity and becoming self-sufficient in Bahá'í Funds. This gathering of 40 Baha'is from different parts of the country was one of the highly successful programs ABS-India had organized. At this meeting the following groups were formed: Bahá'í Business Forum, Bahá'í Doctors Forum (reactivated), Bahá'í Lawyers Forum, and Bahá'í Educationist Forum.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it could be said that ABS-India is making a steady but modest contribution in the field of Moral Education as mentioned by The Supreme Body. The efforts of the Association to train believers in a variety of fields are particularly appreciated by the House of Justice, and it is hoped that the skills, knowledge and understanding gained by the participants in the Association's activities will be conveyed to the wider community. The endeavours of all those involved in the organization of these praiseworthy and valuable activities are warmly commended". This activity of ABS-India has been considered Socio-economic development activity and is recognized by OSED. The encouragement of Bahá'ís to undertake writing of papers is also slowly bearing fruits and now friends are coming forward to show their inclination towards Bahá'í Scholarship. Training of manpower through special workshops such as Personality Development, Dynamics of Team Building, Fortress of well-being etc., has been instrumental in building the capacity of the friends. Proper encouragement of Bahá'í Professionals will also help them to be integrated in Bahá'í activities.

Japan

ABS-Japan has two ABS Executive Committees, Japanese and English, with S. Fotos as general ABS coordinator and member of both committees: Japanese Executive Committee: H. Tsunoi, A. Hayashi, N. Fuji, M. Noguchi English Executive Committee: S. Friberg (left Japan in 12/99), K. Riggins, S. Strain

Officers and Committees

- A. Chair: H. Tsunoi
- B. Secretary: S. Fotos
- C. Treasurer: A. Hayashi
- D. Publications Committee
 - 1. Newsletter: A. Hayashi, N. Fuji & J. Strain; two issues, April and December 1999
 - 2. Proceedings: S. Fotos & M. Noguchi; *Proceedings of the Sixth and Seventh Annual Conferences* were completed 12/1999; distributed 1/2000.
- E. ABS-Japan website maintained and updated by S. Fotos: <http://www2.gol.com/users/sfotos>
- F. Special Interest Group (SIG) and University Club Committee: J. Strain, M. Noguchi, S. Friberg (left Japan 12/99)

Activities in 1999

A. Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

1. ABS-J has seven SIGs: English, Arts, Religious Studies, Translation, Education, Moral Education, Community Development
2. Report from Religious Studies SIG.
 - One meeting at Tokyo Baha'i Center in 1999 :
 - a. June 27: Sylvia Karlsson, Bahá'í from Sweden and Ph.D. student in environmental policy, spoke on: "Facing the environmental crises: the need for a global ethic."
3. Report from Moral Education SIG:
 - a. Two Virtues Project workshops were held in Hokkaido. The first, May 19 to July 7, met eight times for two hours each (16 hours) and the second, September 24-Nov. 12, met eight times for two and a half hours each (20 hours). There were six participants in the summer workshop and nine in the fall workshop. The participants were equally divided between Japanese and foreigners and Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís.
4. ABS-Japan representative at ABS-North America conference in Tempe, Arizona, June, 1999 a. Stephen Friberg attended; on June 14 a new SIG for ABS-NA Science and Religion SIG, was established

B. Special ABS Program, Tokyo Bahá'í Center, December 25 & 26

1. Dec. 25: 'An Analysis of "Who is Writing the Future"'
Speaker: Dr. Graham Hassall, member of National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia and Chair of ABS-Australia
2. Dec. 26: One-Day Symposium on the Kitáb-i-Aqdas
Speakers: Auxiliary Board Member Dr. Toshio Suzuki, Dr. Graham Hassall

C. No annual conference was held in 1999

Malaysia

Committee: Chandra Sekar, Ong Eng Eng, Sobhana Kumaran, Vahid Bhaskaran, Bhaskaran (left for India November 1999), Bala Ramasamy, Lim Sim Beow, Antonisamy, Natheson and Pragasam.

Introduction

Attempts have been made in the past 10 years to get ABS activities going in Malaysia, and a number of events have been held over the years with varying degrees of success. In the past 3 years or so, scholarship activities came under the purview of the Dept for External Affairs and/or the Institute for Development.

This year, however, a new Executive Committee was appointed by the Spiritual Assembly. Most members of the Committee are serving in this capacity for the first time. It has thus been a year of learning for the Executive Committee, even as we have enjoyed exploring the various aspects of Baha'í Scholarship together and looking into activities that would address our needs and requirements in this area. The group has worked together well, and look forward to the coming year to move Baha'í scholarship activities in Malaysia a step further.

Activities, Projects and Plans

- * Talk on "Bahá'í Scholarship" by Dr Graham Hassall of ABS Australia in June 1999 at the National Centre.
- * Meeting between Dr Graham Hassall and the newly-formed ABS Executive Committee in July 1999 which consulted on various aspects of Bahá'í Scholarship, the responsibilities of the Executive Committee and the experiences of the Australian ABS.
- * ABS proposal put forward for a College for Bahá'í Studies at the dialogue on Bahá'í Education called for by the National Spiritual Assembly's Director of Education, in August 1999. The proposal outlined the set-up of the College and the complementary role of the ABS. The formation of

the College was accepted in principle by the Spiritual Assembly, and a College Board appointed in September 1999 to look into the operational structure of the College.

- * Scholarship Skills Workshop held in September 1999. The workshop covered topics on Bahá'í Scholarship, Reading, Writing and Research Skills, and identifying research areas from the document *Who is Writing the Future?* (these will be taken up at the annual conference in May 2000). Participants were of all ages, but the majority was from the young adults group (18-25), one of the targeted groups for ABS activities.
- * Hosting of Panel Discussion on "Mental Tests" at the Winter School in December 1999. Each of the 4 panellists spoke for 5 minutes, outlining one aspect of mental tests. This was followed by a one hour long Question-Answer session, which saw active participation from the crowd.
- * Series of ABS Dialogues:
Dialogue 1 : Issues on the Internet (February 2000)
Dialogue 2 : Responses from the House of Justice (March 2000)
Dialogue 3 : Individual Rights and Freedoms in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh (April 2000)
The topics were chosen based on interest shown and questions raised at both the scholarship skills workshop and the Winter School panel discussion.
- * The new ABS newsletter will be distributed electronically. To be launched on 21 April 2000.
- * Annual Conference of the ABS with the theme "Challenges of the 3rd Millennium: Towards One World" to be held in May 2000. Target participation of 100, mainly Bahá'ís, although non-Bahá'í speakers will be invited. The papers will explore further the topics outlined in the document *Who is Writing the Future?* (This will include the research questions raised at the Scholarship Skills Workshop in September 1999).
- * The setting up of an ABS web-site is being looked into. If all goes well, the web-site will be launched at the Annual Conference.
- * To offer courses on Bahá'í Scholarship for the College for Bahá'í Studies, starting with one module for the Young Adults Programme for their 2000/2001 year.

New Zealand

Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Association for Baha'i Studies to the National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand

We have referenced this report to the numbered items in terms of reference from the beloved National Spiritual Assembly and to these documents:

[1] denotes the National Spiritual Assembly letter of 14 April 1999 to the ABS Executive.

[2] denotes the Universal House of Justice letter to selected National Spiritual Assemblies on 10 February 1995.

[3] denotes the National Spiritual Assembly letter of July 1999 to the ABS conference participants.

[4] denotes the National Spiritual Assembly letter of 7 October 1999 to the ABS Executive.

[5] denotes the Universal House of Justice letter of 7 April 1999 to National Spiritual Assemblies.

3a. Liaise with National Institute, Summer Schools, and conferences to ensure there is a co-ordinated programme of learning offered to the New Zealand Baha'i community (National Four Year Plan action 1 / 1 / 4).

The National Human Resource Development Institute has primary responsibility for core training for New Zealand Baha'i community; Baha'i scholarship assists in developing programmes for National Institute.

Sent National Human Resource Development Institute Baha'i scholarship articles that related to the Institute's programme for Spiritual Assembly development.

Summer school committee has implemented workshops to practise application of Baha'i Teachings to situations.

Ruhi Institute process endorsed by the National Assembly in their Feast letter for 7.2.99 will stimulate a scholarly approach to the Writings.

3b. Provide the means for the friends to acquire a greater understanding of how the Teachings of the Faith relate to the issues of society (National Four Year Plan Action 2/2/3).

ABS Conference in July 1999 on the theme of Global Prosperity included presentations on applying spiritual principles to the workplace, human resource development, the role of business in the development of a global society, work is worship, unity and prosperity, supporting people in distress, education as the foundation for global prosperity, the role of regional and international organizations in global prosperity, the Virtues Project, achievement, a Baha'i framework for employment and income replacement after

injury or illness, a model programme for youth at risk, glimmerings of the future world economy,

4. Phased plan for developing Baha'i scholarship created in August 1997
The ABS Executive had the blessing of meeting the beloved National Spiritual Assembly in August 1999 to help plan our plan to develop Baha'i scholarship.

4a. Promote a deep appreciation amongst the believers of the true nature and purpose of scholarly endeavour [1] to create a "new model for scholarly activity...animated by the spirit of enquiry into the limitless meaning of the Divine Teachings...characterized by the welcome it offers to all who wish to be involved in it, each in his or her own way, by mutual encouragement and cooperation among its participants, and by the respect accorded to distinguished accomplishment and outstanding achievement."

[2]

We have been successful in preventing Baha'i scholarship from becoming infected by academic materialism as has occurred in North America

[5]

The cultivation of a new model of scholarly activity is a gradual process which cannot easily be measured.

4b. Ensure an atmosphere of love and cooperation, upliftment, positive growth and open-minded inquiry [3]

Present at the 1999 ABS conference but we cannot quantify this. Dr Dorothy Marcic, visiting scholar from Vanderbilt University and keynote ABS speaker, set a wonderful example of humility and radiant positivity. ABS conference dinner in July 1999 displayed extremely pleasant fellowship between presenters and other participants.

4c. Bahá'í scholarship should aim to alleviate the problems confronting humanity [1] & [3]

Global prosperity was the theme of the 1999 ABS conference (see response 3b)

Requested collaboration on 1999 ABS conference from Te Ao Kotahi Social and Economic Development Trust

4d. Promote the external affairs strategy of the Faith

ABS conferences have focused on one of the four themes of external affairs.

Invited non-Baha'i academics to participate in ABS conferences.

Close collaboration with National Office of External Affairs particularly

with recruiting overseas keynote speakers.

Held ABS conferences at Universities to improve the credibility of Baha'i scholarship and the Baha'i Faith as a religion that can generate major insights into world problems.

Assisted in planning Professor Dwight Allen's visit to New Zealand in June 2000 to use his scholarship as a means of promoting the Faith.

- 4e. Strive for excellence in both research and quality of presentations at ABS conferences [1]
As a result of methodical collaboration with presenters, presentation quality at the 1999 ABS conference was rated as substantially improved over the 1998 conference.
ABS conference chairing raised the standard of presentation and flow to a highly professional level consistent with the Toastmaster training of the chairperson.
- 4f. Exemplify unity in diversity at ABS conferences [4]
ABS needs to work harder to widen the ethnic diversity at ABS conferences.
Poster sessions at ABS conferences would be suitable for people reluctant to present a paper.
- 4g. Local ABS representatives
Only a minority of local ABS representatives in LSA areas have joined ABS. Sadly the majority of representatives cannot function fully without joining ABS (the subscription of \$15 per year is affordable and covers the cost of duplicating and posting four newsletters per year). Could the friends wishing to serve as local representatives please join ABS!
- 4h. Regional Bahá'í studies conferences
Deferred until the number of ABS members and their conference publications expand; insufficient numbers to justify regional conferences in 1999.
Encouraged Local Assemblies in University towns to host a regional ABS conference during Professor Dwight Allen's visit to New Zealand in June 2000
- 4i. Published July 1999 ABS conference papers
- 4j. Disseminating information helpful to Baha'i scholars via our ABS newsletter
Loaned Journal of Bahá'í Studies to National Baha'i Reference library

- 4k. Mentoring Bahá'í scholars
Creating a network of ABS members as the prerequisite for mentoring; the ABS conferences will build many useful relationships.
- 4l. Pacific Island participation in ABS conferences
One presentation at the July 1999 ABS conference
- 4m. Bahá'í participation in non-Bahá'í conferences - individual Bahá'ís have done this but ABS has not been involved.
- 4n. Other means for stimulating development of Bahá'í scholarship
Collaborated with Bahá'í Office of External Affairs in selecting non-Bahá'í speakers for ABS conference in July 1999

Collaborated with the Arm of the Learned
- 4o. Collaboration with the University of Waikato Continuing Education division in promotion of ABS 2000 conference to the general public at University of Waikato
- 4p. Appeal to the believers in "unwaveringly positive and encouraging tones" [1]
Achieved via quarterly newsletter to ABS members since December 1997 and articles in NZ Bahá'í News
- 4q. Collaboration with NZ representative for the Wilmette Institute
The Wilmette Institute offers outstanding non-residential courses relating the Faith to other religions (e.g. Christianity, Chinese religions) and in developing Baha'i scholarship skills.

We have planned conferences carefully to ensure that fees are low so that participation is open to the majority of believers (\$25 per day includes registration, lunch, morning and afternoon tea)

One of the bounties of serving on the Executive Committee for ABS is that the members are always willing to take on committee work and complete it on time and to a high standard.

North America

Committee: Anne Pearson (Chair), Lynn Echevarria (Executive Secretary), Mehran Kiai (Treasurer), Susan Stark Christianson, Niloofar Ahmadzadeh, Ridvan Moqbel, Wendy Heller, and John Hatcher.

Publications

During the past year the Association has published: 4 issues of the quarterly international Bulletin; the Journal of Bahá'í Studies volume 9, numbers 1, 2, and 3; and the book *Planning Progress: Lessons from Shoghi Effendi* by June Manning Thomas (April 1999). A plan was initiated to reorganize the editorial structure of the Journal of Bahá'í Studies in order to create a streamlined and responsive system of handling manuscript submissions and to eliminate delays.

Web Site

ABS-NA has acquired its own web domain at <<http://www.bahai-studies.ca>>. Continued expansion of the web site is planned, and the Science and Religion SIG has begun development of its section of the site.

Regional Committees

There are currently 5 Regional ABS Committees in the United States. The Mid-Atlantic region organized an exciting conference at Princeton University on April 10, 1999. This conference entitled "Spiritualizing Civilization: Exploring Arts, Knowledge, and Wonders" was attended by 90 people, mostly Bahá'ís, from 10 states. It incorporated a blend of participatory workshops in poetry, collage, and music, artistic presentations and formal academic presentations.

Annual Conference

The 24th Annual Conference will take place in Mississauga, Toronto, Ontario on August 31–Sept 3rd. The theme, "A Century of Light: Who is Writing the Future?" has been chosen to stimulate a retrospective and prospective analysis of the state of civilization at century's end and the potential for humanity's future.

Goals and Functions:

During the year, the Executive Committee, with guidance from the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, and encouragement from the NSAs of Alaska and United States, have engaged in some creative thinking regarding the goals and functioning of the Association. A statement on the next stage in the evolution and development of the Association was published in March and is available on the ABS-NA web site.

Philippines

The 6-member Board of Trustees of ABS-Philippines was reappointed by the National Spiritual Assembly in June 1999. The first project we focused on was the creation of a library. The Board has requested the NSA to give it responsibility for the National Baha'i Library. We also initiated a campaign to gather donated books from Bahá'í friends, local and foreign, to augment the volume of our acquisition. This will encourage future researchers to do their research here at the National Bahá'í Center where a portion of the second floor is allocated as the library.

Another project in mind is to make a directory of expertise from among the Bahá'ís all over the country. A questionnaire is being prepared by one of the Board members. This directory will be distributed to all the ten Regional Bahá'í Councils for their reference when they will be in need of resource persons for their external affairs efforts.

A project for students (high school and college) concerns making a History of Bahá'í Faith in the Philippines. The Bahá'í youth will research how the Bahá'í Faith started in their respective communities: who were the first teachers, the first Bahá'ís, first members of Institutions, teaching strategies used, etc. This will include gathering of documents, written, oral, pictures, records, interviews, etc. We do have fragmented accounts of the Faith in the Philippines but a wealth of information is still very much wanting. We are constructing a questionnaire to guide the youth in gathering data.

We haven't called for a conference or a seminar yet but plan to have a general membership meeting first. Also producing a newsletter seems to be premature yet at this point in time.

Singapore

The Singapore Association for Bahá'í Studies is a committee of the Spiritual Assembly of Singapore whose members are Dr A. Khursheed, Dr Phyllis Chew and Mrs Antonella Khursheed. In the past four years the Association organized four annual conferences.

So far four volumes of the proceedings have been published in a journal called *The Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review*. The journal has a MITA number which means that it is a publication approved by the Ministry of Information of Singapore. The first volume is out of stock. More than 660 copies of the first three volumes have been sold or donated. The journal is available through the Bahá'í US Distribution Service and is swapped with the journals with other ABSs around the world.

The Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review is a journal dedicated to correlating Bahá'í principles and beliefs to the different cultural traditions of Asia. It sets out to promote religious and cultural harmony. The journal is the main publication of the Singapore Association for Bahá'í Studies. The Association, a committee of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Singapore, was formed in April 1996. The papers published in the journal, are usually initiated as talks given at the annual Singapore Bahá'í Studies conference. The Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review is the first journal of its kind to appear on the Asian continent. The journal is open to Bahá'ís and their friends. So far four volumes of the journal have been published. Volume 1 (1996), is already out of stock, volumes 2 (1997) and 3 (1998) are still available.

The second volume of the Singapore ABS journal is on the "Fundamental Unity of Religions" and the third volume is on the "Never-ending Journey of the Soul".

The theme of volume four is "Challenges for the New Millennium", and it includes papers on the role of religion in the rise of the women's movement in Singapore, the status of moral values in modern society, moral education in schools, parallels between Bahá'í and Confucian approaches to human nature, and a study of the modern interfaith movement and its prospects for the future.

Also appearing in volume 4 of the Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review is a special Interfaith Supplement consisting of talks by various religious leaders and scholars from around the world on inter-religious issues. Each talk was chosen for its historical importance. The Supplement features talks by Vivekananda on Hinduism made at the first Parliament of World's Religions conference held in Chicago in 1893, an address by the present Dalai Lama on religious harmony, a talk by the renowned Quranic scholar Yusof Ali, an address by Chief Rabbi Elect Jonathan Sacks, a talk given by the present Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, and a speech by Pope John Paul II in India. Also included is the historic statement, "Nostra Aetate" prepared by the Second Vatican Council in 1965 which signalled an important change in the Catholic Church's position with respect to other religions. The Bahá'í contribution in the supplement is from the famous George Townshend paper delivered at the World Congress of Faiths in 1936, edited and approved by Shoghi Effendi. This paper is one of the first Bahá'í statements to be made in a modern interfaith setting. All in all, the supplement is a valuable interfaith resource, and is helpful in arriving at a greater degree of understanding and fellowship between Bahá'ís and people of other faiths. 276 pages

The price of the journal is S\$10 (Vol.2 and Vol.3) and S\$12 (Vol.4) per copy (shipping and bank transaction expenses are not included). Order forms can be obtained from your book agency, Association for Bahá'í Studies or directly from: The Association for Bahá'í Studies of Singapore*, c/o Dr. Anjam Khursheed, 105 Clementi Road, Kent Vale, Blk B #09-02, Singapore 129789. Tel./Fax +65 - 779 8415. e-mail: khur@pacific.net.sg

Institute/School/Foundation Reports

Afnan Library

During 1999, the Afnan Library succeeded in moving its books to a building that has been purchased for the library. Shelving has been put up for the books. Due to a failure to obtain the services of a librarian, however, it has not yet proved possible to put the books onto the shelves or to catalogue them completely.

The Bahá'í Academy, Panchgani

The Bahá'í Academy, established in 1982, is a Centre dedicated to advanced higher studies of the teachings of the Faith and training teachers, pioneers, administrators and future scholars for the Cause of God. It offers a number of short and long Courses every year on different themes, each geared to training a particular human resource.

The Bahá'í Academy has programs of study in the form of short term courses, long term courses (1 year - some of which involves independent research), distance learning courses, Bahá'í research fellowship, an extensive Bahá'í library, and "learn and serve" volunteer positions.

The Bahá'í Academy site <http://bounty.bcca.org/orgs/schools/bahacanet/index.html> is in the process of being revamped, and the new one is expected to go live sometime this Spring. In the near future, the Bahá'í Academy would like to expand its distance learning programs to include web-based courses.

Bahá'í Association for the Arts

The Publication:

We have been producing a quarterly on a regular basis since 1986. Now called Arts Dialogue, since this year it comes out three times a year in a magazine format of 24 pages with numerous black and white illustrations and photos. The only global magazine on the arts run by Bahá'ís. An index list of the latest issue can viewed at: <http://bahai-library.org/bafa/c-indx00.htm> Each issue contains articles, essays, creative writing, poetry, reviews, letters/readers comments, artist profiles, and of course, many illustrations. Subscription for

one year is \$AUS 32 or \$NZ 32 or \$US 20 email: forumbahai@es.co.nz for more details or go to our website: <http://bahai-library.org/bafa>

The New Website: <http://bahai-library.org/bafa>

We launched our new website in March 2000 and is gradually being added to as we find time. It's major purpose is to provide a database of work by artists from all disciplines found under the rubric, 'profiles'. Currently, those who have been featured in an issue of Arts Dialogue are being added first, going back from the latest issue. This is slow work because it must be done voluntarily. Only about 80 artists are currently on the database. Another part of the site is the 'contents' where going from the last issue, summaries and excerpts from Arts Dialogue can be viewed with links to the artist's pages. Under 'participate' and 'subscribe' can you see how you can participate in our activities and everyone is welcome to submit material for the 'art news' rubric which is updated monthly. Then there is 'who is BAFA' where you can read about who we are and what we do.

Art'nSoul email list

There is an email discussion group on the arts. Anyone can join. It is an open forum. The address for joining is: <art-nsoul-list-request@tarazat.nl> Then type "subscribe" in the subject line.

There is also an email list for Musicians who are Bahá'ís. This is not organized by BAFA but you might like to add it in as a resource. More info from: <http://joyfulnoise.freesevers.com>

Sonja van Kerkhoff
website designer
check out: <http://members.tripod.com/~huia>

Irfan Colloquium

The Irfan Colloquium is devoted to the promotion of research and studies in the scriptures and particularly Bahá'í holy Writings, principles of Bahá'í theology, and the World religions and the Bahá'í Faith. Irfan activities are under the auspicious of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the countries where they take place. They are cosponsored by Haj Mehdi Arjmand Memorial Fund; Nadia Saadat Memorial Scholarships; Persian-American Affairs Office of the National Bahá'í Centre, USA; Asr-i-Jadid Publishers (Germany); and Nureddin Momtazi Memorial Grants.

This year, 2000, Irfan gatherings will be held, in both Persian and in English languages, in Europe and North America. In Europe, Irfan Colloquium (in Persian) will be held at the Centre for Baha'i Studies, Acuto, Italy, 23-28 June

and (in English) it will be held at the London School of Economics (Bankside House), London, 14-16 July. Irfan Colloquium in North America will have concurrent sessions in Persian and English at: Louhelen Bahá'í School, Davison, Michigan, 6-8 October; and Bosch Bahá'í School, Santa Cruz, California, 23-26 November. There are two other Irfan activates, in addition to holding Colloquia and Seminars: Providing scholarship and fellowship grants, and Publications.

SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

Modest financial assistance, when needed, are provided in order to facilitate participation of accepted papers at Irfan Colloquia and Seminars.

IRFAN PUBLICATIONS:

1. THE LIGHTS OF IRFAN, annual volumes of the papers presented in the English language sessions.
2. SAFINIYI-IRFAN, annual volumes of the papers presented in Persian language sessions.
3. Volumes of selected papers related to a general theme published by George Ronald.
4. Abstracts of the papers presented at various sessions of the colloquium.
5. Guidebooks on the Study of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh
6. Occasional papers, monographs and booklets. For further information contact Irfan Colloquium, c/o Iraj Ayman, Bahá'í National Center 1233 Central Street Evanston, IL 60201-1611, USATel: 847-733-3501 FAX: 847-733-3502.

E-Mail: iayman@usbnc.org

Landegg Academy

Applied Spirituality: Scholarship in the Service of Development

In 1996 the Canadian psychiatrist, writer and educator, Dr. Hossain Danesh, along with a small cohort of scholars, administrators, philanthropists and volunteers began deliberations toward the establishment of a university that would be located in the heart of Europe, but would be world embracing in its curriculum, faculty, staff and student body. The institution would be unique – not only because of its global reach, but because it would be Bahá'í-inspired and founded on the philosophy of *applied spirituality* — a revolutionary approach to all fields of study that seeks to integrate the empirical, analytical, ethical and spiritual dimensions of knowledge. This approach, noted its founder, "is based on the conviction that true human development and civilization are only possible when scientific research and technological advancement are harmonized

with universal spiritual and ethical principles.”

In the brief period since its establishment as an international center of higher learning, Landegg Academy has attracted to its Swiss campus professors, administrators, students and staff from scores of countries, and from every continent. It has established bi-lateral relationships with other respected universities in China, Israel, the United States, Canada, South America and Europe, and has begun to articulate a body of scholarship dedicated to an explication of the relevance of applied spirituality to a variety of academic and professional fields.

Applied spirituality is an approach to scholarship that seeks to place knowledge at the service of development. It assumes that knowledge of complex phenomena is best derived from a diversity of methods, and that there are often technical, as well as ethical dimensions to most human endeavors. Applied Spirituality thus assumes a position of epistemological and methodological openness – ever mindful of the fact that “nature gives most of her evidence in answer to the questions we ask.”² Applied Spirituality recognizes an essential complementarity between the empirical and rational demands of science and the ethical conduct required of human beings if our relationships to one another and to nature are to secure life and promote development. It is, therefore, not simply a new paradigm from which to view the problems of the world, but is an approach to living in the world which unites the philosopher and the practitioner and makes of these two – one. From this perspective, the spiritual qualities that characterize the student, scholar or practitioner are as critical to securing human happiness and progress as are his or her knowledge, skills and insights.

At the heart of applied spirituality is an ethical commitment to the oneness of the human race and the conviction that life and development are sustained by the creation and maintenance of unity within the context of diversity. In contrast to a materialistic perspective, it affirms that all forms of progress result from “the expression of spirit in the world of matter,”³ and thus the Academy affords consideration of spiritual principles vital in all of its classes, publications and academic undertakings. These principles are derived from the world’s religions, as they constitute the primary reservoir of humanity’s spiritual heritage.

In pursuance of its pedagogical mission, Landegg Academy publishes an academic journal, known as: *Converging Realities: A Journal of Art, Science and Religion*, which appears electronically on a quarterly basis, and in printed form once a year. Submissions to the journal may be directed to Converge@Landegg.edu. In addition, the institution offers the Masters degree in six disciplines, including: Conflict Resolution, Education, Ethics, Religion,

2. C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964, pp. 223-224.

3. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*. London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 12th edition. 1995, p.90.

Leadership & Management, and Psychology; and the Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics & International Development, Political Science and International Relations, Psychology, Human Development and Education, and the Integrative Study of Religion. In consultation with a faculty advisor, students may also design their own majors.

Landegg Academy draws its faculty from a range of institutions around the world, including Harvard University, Carleton College, UCLA, American University, the University of Michigan and Franklin & Marshall College in the United States; the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, and Laval University in Canada; the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Shandong University in China; Seinan Gakiun University in Japan; the Norwegian State Academy of Music in Norway; the University of Copenhagen in Denmark; and others. Its graduates have been admitted to distinguished universities, including Cambridge University in England, the University of Pennsylvania in the United States, the University of Alberta in Canada, Jagelonian University in Krakow, Poland, and Harbin University in China, among others. For more information on Landegg Academy and its programs, please contact Info@Landegg.edu.

Wilmette Institute

The Wilmette Institute was established in 1995 to offer courses and other educational programs. It seeks to raise up diverse, knowledgeable, articulate teachers and administrators of the Bahá'í Faith by imparting knowledge; developing various skills, particularly teaching skills; and fostering Bahá'í identity. It receives no direct financial support from the Bahá'í National Fund, but funds its programs through tuition fees and donations.

1. Accomplishments over the Last Four Years.

When the Four Year Plan began, the Institute was just a year old and had not completed its first course. During the plan it accomplished the following:

Spiritual Foundations for a Global Civilization Program. The four-year Spiritual Foundations program held all four of its summer sessions during the plan, with an average annual attendance of thirty. The students studied all major aspects of the Bahá'í teachings, history, and scripture; attended workshops on public speaking, creative writing, conflict resolution, and public relations; and participated in seminars on teaching the Faith every year. Students also completed ten months of home study every year on the subjects covered during the summer session, including giving firesides and deepenings. The majority of students report a great increase in their self-confidence, many additional efforts at teaching the Faith and leading deepening classes, and enrollments (about 100 over the four years that they attributed to the Institute). Much experience

has been gained over the last four years and the next four-year cycle (which begins in May 2000) will feature a shorter summer session, fewer months of home study, more focused classes, and the options of taking distance-learning courses in subjects of special interest to the student.

Distance-Learning Courses. The internet and worldwide web have revolutionized delivery of courses to students scattered across the United States. The Wilmette Institute launched its first distance-learning course in January 1998 and has offered courses on sixteen distinct subjects since (six surveying the writings of Bahá'u'lláh historically and one each on the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Kitáb-i-Iqán, Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, Advent of Divine Justice, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese Religions, and Zoroastrianism). Each course has a listserver for student and faculty discussion; conference calls so that they can talk together; students give firesides, deepenings, or institute courses as part of each course's requirements; and students complete written exercises of their choice. Approximately 300 students have enrolled in Wilmette Institute courses during the plan. Surveying of the students is not complete, but many have recounted numerous teaching opportunities as a result of Wilmette Institute courses; many describe heightened enthusiasm and confidence in teaching; and about ten enrolments attributable to efforts related to Wilmette Institute courses were reported.

Publicity and Marketing. The Institute has had to develop a systematic and ongoing effort to raise the Bahá'í community's awareness of the Institute, its purposes, and its offerings. Over the last four years it has developed a publicity plan consisting of annual publicity mailings, regular press releases to The American Bahá'í and other news organs, mailing of "ambassador kits" to many of its students before unit conventions, and a regular presence at the Grand Canyon, Desert Rose, Rabbani Trust, Greenlake, and Association for Bahá'í Studies conferences, as well as the National Convention. The selection of a logo and creation of stationery, a banner, and other "identity materials" have given the Institute a consistent "look." A website that is now one of the most popular Bahá'í websites has given the Institute visibility. A toll-free number (877-WILMETTE), newly acquired in early 2000, will make the Institute and its far-flung staff easier to reach. Its quarterly newsletter, *The Lamp*, is now mailed to about 900 people in ten countries. Its listserver of current and former students and friends has some 500 subscribers and provides a means for rapid dissemination of news. An annual Catalog has been developed and regularly updated and a Faculty Handbook released.

Administrative Developments. All the above has been accomplished by an institution with no permanent full-time staff. Youth year of service

assistance, occasional full or part-time support, and help by volunteers has kept the administrative work going. Because some part-time work has been off-site, telephone and internet communication has been vital to maintaining efficient coordination.

Financial Developments. Supporting the work of the Institute is the Afsharian Endowment and the Orlando Nunez Endowment, which provide financial aid to needy students. Semiannual fundraising efforts have begun to build up the Institute's modest endowment.

International Outreach. The Institute has provided study materials or advice to national, regional, or local training institutes in Alaska, Australia, France, the Gulf States, India, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom. In late 1999 the National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand recognized a Wilmette Institute representative, who coordinates publicity of Wilmette Institute courses, registers local students, and collects tuition in the local currency for the Institute under the National Spiritual Assembly's supervision.

2. Priorities for the Immediate Future.

The Wilmette Institute has begun to develop a Twelve Month Plan and a Five Year Plan. Among their features are the following:

1. Responding to the National Spiritual Assembly's priorities for study by creating courses in 2000 on *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, and *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*. In 2001 the Institute will offer courses on *The Secret of Divine Civilization* and *The Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*.
2. Utilizing the pool of study materials developed for the Spiritual Foundations for a Global Civilization program in the development of new distance-learning courses. It is hoped that over the next four years (2000-2003) the Institute will be able to launch 39 new distance-learning courses in such diverse areas as the life of Bahá'u'lláh; the life, writings, and talks of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; the life and writings of Shoghi Effendi; Bahá'í History; Bahá'í theology and philosophy; individual development; marriage and family life; development of the Bahá'í community; Bahá'í teachings on global issues; and teaching the Faith.
3. With the creation of a Bahá'í satellite broadcasting system, the Institute will explore ways it can create courses in that medium.
4. The Institute wants to collaborate with the National Youth Committee in

creating an introductory course on the Faith that college students could take for credit toward their degrees, and with the National Teaching Committee on courses suitable for the growing pool of seekers.

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A Chair for Bahá'í Studies was established at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem in March 1999. In the introduction to its formal proposal for the establishment of the Chair, the University thus explained its motivation: "Three years ago, Professor Moshe Sharon began to teach the History and Sacred Literature of the Bahá'í Faith, on a regular basis, at the Institute of Asian and African Studies in the Faculty of Humanities of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As a result of Professor Sharon's pioneering work, the University has become convinced of the importance of the field and of the need to provide an institutional basis for the continuation and development of this work on both the teaching and research levels."

Research Office, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States of America

The Research Office of the National Spiritual Assembly was established in 1989 with a single thirty-hour per week staff member. In 1994 the staff expanded to two full-time persons, where it stands today. Its principal responsibilities (prepublication review of manuscripts and special materials; assisting and encouraging research on the Faith; correcting published information about the Faith; interfacing with academia; collaborating with other Bahá'í scholarly efforts) have steadily expanded over the last eleven years.

1. Accomplishments During the Four Year Plan.

Communications. The Research Office's output of letters and e-mails has steadily increased, from about 700 in 1990-91 (the first year for which data is available) to 3,600 communications in 1997 and 7,191 communications in 1999. No data is subsequently available because of the complexity of calculation. The increase reflects the Bahá'í community's steadily expanding interest in scholarly matters and the Office's growing network of contacts with Bahá'í

authors and researchers, as well as the spreading use of e-mail (acquired by the office in September 1993).

Prepublication Review. The Office's reviewing work has also expanded since 1990-91, when it completed prepublication review of 64 written works. The statistics for the last four years are as follows:

Literature Review:

Year	Total Works	Pass	Changes Req	Reject	No Rating
1997	181	118	52	0	11
1998	161	97	47	3	14
1999	126	92	28	3	3
2000	187	88	42	5	53

Special Materials Review:

Year	Total Works	Pass	Changes Req	Reject	No Rating
1997	357	282	58	9	8
1998	387	271	97	8	11
1999	205	171	25	7	2
2000	270	173	52	4	41

The figures show no trends in terms of numbers of works submitted to review except that the numbers fluctuate considerably. The quality of submissions also seems to vary from year to year, although usually at least 60-70% of those that receive a rating, pass without changes.

Support of the National Spiritual Assembly's Research Needs. Every year the Research Office collects and edits the information for the annual report of agencies of the National Spiritual Assembly and organizes statistical data requested annually by the Universal House of Justice. In addition, every year it puts together one or two additional reports; in 1999-2000 the Office prepared a study of Social and Economic Development projects.

Support of Academic Research on the Faith. The Research Office has become a major center of information for researchers (Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í) who are studying the Faith. The Office plans the Bahá'í program at the American Academy of Religion each year, involving one or two panels of talks on aspects of the Faith and a book display in the exhibit hall. A staff member is a Bahá'í representative to the Pluralism Project, which studies the diversity of religion in the United States. For the last three years the Research Office has coordinated the Bahá'í involvement in the Cooperative Congregational Survey Project, a research effort to study 700 or more congregations in each of 40 denominations in the United States. The survey, to coincide with the 2000

government census, was mailed to all local spiritual assemblies in January; already 500 have completed the survey. In the last four years staff members have published Bahá'í related articles in two encyclopedias and one c.d. rom; the journal *Nova Religio*; a sociological series on religions; and a volume on religions' views about the millennium. In 1999 the Office helped find Bahá'í presenters at a conference on new religious movements in Pennsylvania and a staff member attended and spoke. The Office answered research queries directed to it by about five non-Bahá'í scholars.

Support of Research by Bahá'ís. The Office has been centrally involved in most efforts in the United States to support scholarship by Bahá'ís. Staff members serve or have served on the boards of the Bahá'í encyclopaedia project, *World Order* magazine, the Association for Bahá'í Studies, and the *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*. Reviewing or editing articles for the encyclopaedia and *World Order*, drafting interchanges and editorials for *World Order*, and planning special issues of *World Order* are a major focus of the Research Office. The staff is heavily involved either in planning three Irfán Colloquia per year (which focus on scripture and world religions from a Bahá'í perspective), in editing the abstracts and papers, or in publishing the program booklets. The Institute for Bahá'í Studies (based in the Research Office) sponsored several conferences for Bahá'ís interested in specialized research topics during the Plan, the most recent one being "Revealing the Splendors of His Light: Exploring Spirituality in Bahá'í Life." It was held in Evanston in August 1999 and was attended by about 60 people. Most of the planning for the conference was done by the Research Office.

The Research Office is also the home of the Wilmette Institute, which offers courses on aspects of the Faith. While research and publication are not the focus of Wilmette Institute courses, they have resulted in one or two published articles on the Faith that otherwise would not have been produced. The Institute has also helped create an environment in the American Bahá'í community that is supportive of scholarship.

Protection of the Faith. The Research Office (through the Institute for Bahá'í Studies) has become a center for correcting errors in academic publications and responding to unwarranted criticisms or attacks. Every year it has sought to correct three or four works. Lack of staff has hampered the effort and a backlog of about 15 works needing comment has developed. The Research Office was also central to rallying support for the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) in Iran, when Iranian government agencies attempted to shut it down in the fall of 1998. The Office became a clearing house for information and developed two listservers (one for Bahá'í college professors, the other for students and staff) to keep them informed of the latest developments. Since then the two listservers have become a valuable conduit for networking

like-minded researchers and disseminating research and scholarly requests.

Developing Research Resources in Wilmette. The Office has helped expand the Bahá'í National Center library and its finding aids over the last four years. An important development was the contribution of a collection of works on Judaism in mid 1999.

2. Priorities for the Immediate Future.

Over the next year the Research Office hopes to acquire more staffing, allowing it to focus more energy on protection of the Faith; responding to attacks and inaccurate publications; networking Bahá'í researchers; and training more Bahá'ís to be able to answer difficult scholarly questions about the Faith. The Office also hopes to make more effort to educate Bahá'ís about the prepublication review process, especially of special materials.

Reports by Individuals

Ratnam Alagiah

r.alagiah@mailbox.gu.edu.au

Alagiah, R., An ethical theory for International Accounting: World Order and Uniform Accounting Standards Worldwide, Paper accepted and presented at the 5th Critical Perspectives on Accounting Conference, Hosted by the City University of New York, New York, 22-24 April, 1999.

Alagiah, R., Theory leading Practice: World Order and Uniform Accounting Standards Worldwide, Paper accepted and presented at the Emerging Issues in International Accounting Conference, Center for International Accounting Education and Research, Niagara University, August, 5-7, 1999.

Sheila Banani

banani@ucla.edu

In November 1999 I participated in the nationally-sponsored Irfan Colloquium held at the Bosch Baha'i School and delivered a paper which will be published in the Irfan Proceedings in English this year (2000) to be titled LIGHTS OF IRFAN. My article is entitled: "The Seven Valleys of Bahá'u'lláh and Farid ud-Din Attar."

Mieko Bond

mmbond@hotmail.com

In 1998 I submitted a thesis at Landegg Academy on Bahá'í Consultation and Alternative Dispute Resolution'. It was a critique of the alternative dispute resolution procedures in North America showing that they have a different process but the same underlying theory of justice and human nature, which produces tensions that are inherent in the North American legal system already. I then presented the Bahá'í theory of justice and consultation as I understand it, demonstrating that it could solve the tensions and problems with the legal system and criticism of the dispute resolution procedures at present (ie power issues in negotiation). I am interested in liasing with others with the same interest and I do have a bibliography in the area. I have written a thesis on 'why are there gender differences in violence? a criminological and Bahá'í approach' and papers on socio- biological evolution, human nature, comparison of the weberian work ethic and the Bahá'í work ethic, etc.

Christopher Buck

drchristopherbuck@usa.net

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Forthcoming

God and Apple Pie: Visions of America's Spiritual Destiny, Albany: State University of New York Press. [under advance contract]

1999

Paradise and Paradigm: Key Symbols in Persian Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith. Albany: State University of New York Press. Resold as: *Studies in the Babi and Bahá'í Religions*, vol. 10. Los Angeles: Kalimat Press

ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLES

Forthcoming

"Baha'is", *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'án*, Ed. Jane McAuliffe et al. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

MULTI-AUTHOR WORKS

Forthcoming

"The Baha'i Faith in the World and in America.", In *World Religions in America*, Third revised edition. Ed. Jacob Neusner, Los Angeles: Westminster John Knox Press.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

"33 Baha'i Principles of Unity," *Bahá'í Studies Review* 9 (1999).

"Bahá'u'lláh as Zoroastrian Saviour," *Bahá'í Studies Review* 8 (1998): 14-33. [published in 1999]

"A Symbolic Profile of the Bahá'í Faith." *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* 8.4 (1998): 1-48. [published in 1999]

REVIEWS

Review of Will C. van den Hoonard, *The Origins of the Bahá'í Community of Canada, 1898-1948*. *University of Toronto Quarterly* 69.1 (Winter 1999/2000).

Review of Moojan Momen, *The Phenomenon of Religion*. *Baha'i Studies Review* 9 (1999).

ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS

1999

"Native Messengers of God in Canada?: A Test Case for Baha'i Universalism." *Bahá'í Studies Review* 6 (1996): 97-133. Web site:

http://www.breacais.demon.co.uk/abs/bsr06/66_buck_messengers.htm
[published online in 1999]

“The Kitab-i Iqan: An Introduction to Bahá'u'lláh's Book of Certitude, with Two Digital Reprints of Early Lithographs.” Occasional Papers in Shaykhi, Babi and Bahá'í Studies 2.5 (June 1998). Web site: <<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~bahai/bhpapers.htm> [Note: The following appendices were published in late 1998 or in early 1999.]

Appendix 1

Facsimile of 1310/May-June 1893 Iqan Lithograph Book of Certitude (Kitáb-i-Iqán). Bombay: n.p., 1893 Reprinted Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1998. Web site: <<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~bahai/areprint/baha/G-L/I/iqan1893/iqan1893.htm> [Digital reprint of image files of rare Bombay lithograph of Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-I-Iqán in the hand of Mishkín-Qalam (Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1310 A.H./May-June 1893).]

Appendix 2

Bahá'u'lláh's Book of Certitude (Kitáb-i-Iqán): 1882 Bombay Lithograph, Bombay: n.p., 1882, Reprinted Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1998. Web site: <<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~bahai/areprint/baha/G-L/I/iqan1882/iqan1882.htm>

“Note: This is the first printed Baha'i book.... Thanks to the current owner, Payam Afsharian, for sharing a photocopy for digital reproduction, and to Christopher Buck, who donated the photocopy as part of his 1998 Occasional Paper on the Book of Certitude.”

ABSTRACTS

Religious and Theological Abstracts 29 (1987). Published in 1998 CD-ROM (Abstract #608). Abstract: “The Identity of the Sabi'un: An Historical Quest.” *The Muslim World* 74.3-4 (July-Oct. 1984): 172-86.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

1999

New World Transliterator (shareware). Web site for download: <<http://hyperarchive.lcs.mit.edu/HyperArchive/Archive/edu/lang/new-world-transliterator.hqx>

CONFERENCE PAPERS

2000

“A Multidimensional Approach to Teaching World Religions: The DREAMS Paradigm.” Chicago: Midwest Region Conference American Academy of Religion [March 2000]

1999

“Thirty-Three Baha'i Principles of Unity.” Baha'i Studies Colloquy, 1999 Annual Meeting. American Academy of Religion (Boston).

GUEST LECTURES

2000

“Race against Time: The Millennium in Black and White.” Department of African-American Studies University of Illinois at Springfield

ADVISORY BOARDS

Editorial Advisory Board, African American Studies, Collegiate Press
Editorial Advisory Board, Journal of Baha'i Studies

Rodney Clarken

rclarken@nmu.edu

I am coordinating a study course on the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah through the Wilmette Institute. We have 108 students currently taking this course. You may want to visit its site at <http://www.wilmetteinstitute.org> I continue to try to develop educational ideas based on Bahá'í principles and ideals. Web page: www.nmu.edu/staff/rclarken

William P. Collins

wcol@erols.com

Bill Collins has a 5-page article on the Baha'i Faith appearing in *The Encyclopedia of Millennialism and Millennial Movements* edited by Richard A. Landes, to be published in May 2000 by Routledge. He is continuing work on his book on millennialism and time prophetic interpretation in the Bahá'í Faith. He is also preparing reviews for *Library Journal*, some of which are for Bahá'í works. Bill continues also to maintain a site for a network of Bahá'í librarians at <http://www.bcca.org/librarians> including an annual web newsletter entitled *Scriptum*. He assisted the Bahá'í World Centre Library as a consultant in March 2000.

Lynn Echevarria

Lynn.E@sk.sympatico.ca

Ms. Lynn Echevarria, a SSHRC fellow (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) successfully defended her doctoral thesis in sociology at Essex University, United Kingdom in 1999. Dr. James Beckford of Warwick University, sociologist of religion, presided as the external examiner. The dissertation focuses on the construction of women's religious identity in the Baha'i Faith, and the social processes inherent in Baha'i community life. The study is based upon the collection and analysis of a large amount of data

gleaned from 20 full life histories of Baha'i women and men, additional interviews, and archival and statistical resources. Using concepts rooted in symbolic interactionism, life history perspectives and feminism, the author analyses the processes through which a sample of Baha'i women (mid-twentieth century) make meaning of the Baha'i teachings and translate that meaning into action in their lives. *Working Through The Vision: Religion and Identity in the Life Histories of Baha'i Women in Canada* Department of Sociology, University of Essex, Ph.D. dissertation, 2000, 277 pages. This study is available through the British Library System and at the National Library of Canada, Ottawa, after April 2000. It will also be available for reference at the Association for Baha'i Studies Library in Ottawa.

Cheshmak Farhoumand-Sims

cheshmak@yorku.ca

PhD candidate, York University, Department of Political Science.

Major: International Relations / Minor: Comparative Politics

Dissertation Research: UN Human Rights Mechanisms and the Protection of the Rights of Women.

ABS Affiliate: Canada

Chapters in Books Published in 1999/2000

"Bahá'í Conceptions of World Order" with Charles Lerche. In Dorn, W. (Ed), *World Order for a New Millennium: Replacing the Law of Force with the Force of Law*. New York: MacMillan Press, 1999.

"Reconciliation: Insights from the Bahá'í Writings." Forthcoming in Lerche, C. (Ed.) *Religion and Conflict Resolution: Healing the Body Politique*. New York: One World Publications, 2000.

Conferences Attended and Presented Papers at:

March 2000: International Studies Association Convention Paper Presentation: The Bahá'í international Community, the United Nations and the Protection of the Bahá'í Community of Iran.

May 1999: Centre for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota Paper Presented: Reconciliation Theory and Practice.

September 1998: Association for Bahá'í Studies Conference, Montreal Paper Presented: The Hidden Words: Linking Human Rights to the Covenant.

Sandra Sims Fotos

sfotos@gol.com

Recent Bahá'í Scholarship:

1998. Commentary on Susan Brill's "Conversive relationality in Bahá'í scholarship: Centering the sacred and decentering the self." *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* 8 (3): 81-85.

1999. Strategies for spiritualization. *Journal of Baha'i Studies* 9 (1): 1-25.

Work as Editor:

1999. Proceedings of the Sixth and Seventh Annual Conferences, Association for Bahá'í Studies-Japan

Dale Grider

Howdybud@bellsouth.net

I think the following websites constitute an invaluable perspective that illuminates issues of credibility and validity within Baha'i scholarship, and the paradigm as a whole. The material found here should provide impetus for serious study for the true seeker.

The Fireside Letters: <http://personal.sdf.bellsouth.net/~howdybud>

A critical review of the Fireside Letters by Bahá'í Daniel Grolin, and rebuttal by Dale Grider;

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~cdibdin/rebuttal.htm>

Daniel Jalal Grolin

dgrolin@yahoo.com

Forthcoming publication:

The New Dialogue, George Ronald; August 2001.

The book presents an extensive treatment of the Gospels and what they tell us about the Historical Jesus and Early Christianity as well as some reflections on how this could figure into a new type of Bahá'í/Christian dialogue.

Forthcoming articles:

"A comparison of religious practice in the Bahá'í Faith and Early Christianity". For *Bahá'í Studies Review*.

"The soul's journey from God and back. A comparison of a hymn of Early Persian Christian and the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh."

Odense, Denmark

Graham Hassall*grahamh@bahai.org.au*

1999 was another busy year for ABS Australia (see the report for ABS Australia above), and for other writing and teaching projects. In January I taught in the Certificate in Bahá'í Studies program at Yerrinbool. I participated in the Scholarship Institute at Yerrinbool in April, and the ABS annual conference in Melbourne in September, and at other times participated in ABS activities in Malaysia and Japan. Toward the end of the year I established a website for published and unpublished papers: www.bahai-library.org/asia-pacific. Publications that have appeared in print since last year's Report on Scholarship include:

(with Seena Fazel), "100 Years of the Bahá'í Faith in Europe", *Bahá'í Studies Review* 8 (1998), 35-44.

"Fazel Mohamad Khan (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 839-843.

"Hamael Hoahania (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 843-844.

"Thelma Perks (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 903-907.

"Rose Hawthorne (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 914-916.

"The Bahá'í Community of Randwick: A Survey of 75 Years", *Australian Bahá'í Studies*, 1999.

(with Nancy Ackerman) "The Bahá'í Faith in Russia", *The Bahá'í World 1998-1999*

Forthcoming:

"Contemporary Governance and Conflict Resolution: A Bahá'í Reading", in Charles Lerche (ed.) *Healing the Body Politic: Aspects of Conflict Resolution in the New World Order* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming)

"Dunn, Clara and Hyde", *Contributions to an Encyclopaedia of the Bahá'í Faith* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming)

"In Memoriam: James Heggie", *Bahá'í Studies Review*

The Bahá'í Faith in Hong Kong, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

"Persian Integration in Western Communities", in Seena Fazel & John Danesh (eds), *Challenges and Controversies in the Bahá'í Community*, Oxford: George Ronald

"The Future of Bahá'í Studies", *Bahá'í Studies Review*

John Hatcher*hatcher@chuma.cas.usf.edu***WORK PUBLISHED:**

Journey of the Soul (Bahá'í Canada Publications, 1999). Monograph *The Divine Art of Revelation*. Wilmette, Illinois: the Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1998 (60 pages)

"The Theme of Alienation in the Poetry of Robert Hayden," at The First International Conference on Kahlil Gibran, University of Maryland, December 9-12.

WORK COMPLETED BUT NOT YET PUBLISHED:

The Poetry of Táhirih. Book length manuscript scheduled for publication in August 2001. Translation of poetry and scholarly introduction and notes. (Oxford: George Ronald Publishers)

The Perspective of the Bahá'í Faith on the Child, the Family and the Community. (a monograph to be published by Palabra Publications.)

WORK IN PROGRESS:

Close Connections: The Bridge Between Realities. Completed second draft of manuscript (ca. 300 pages). Is now being reviewed by publisher. Contract attached.

OTHER SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES:

- * appointed to the executive committee for the Association for Bahá'í studies.
- * appointed Associated Editor for the *Journal for Bahá'í Studies*.
- * helped edit translation of *Desinformation als Methode* by Dr. Udo Schaefer into English contract with George Ronald (Oxford). Recently published as *The Crooked Made Straight*.
- * helped teach a course on The Kitáb-i-Íqán for the Wilmette Institute.
- * talk on "Mysticism and the Quest for Transcendence" at the Selby Library January 7, 1999.
- * poetry Reading from translations of Táhirih's verse at Selby Public Library September 7, 1999.

Humaida Jumalon

nsaphil@skyinet.net

I have developed a Module for Moral Development (Universal Values Education) for non-Bahá'ís. This is actually patterned after Book I of the Ruhi Training Institute with modifications to suit to non-Bahá'í participants. I have added quotations from other major religious Scriptures and one more section (to the original three) on the Golden Rule. Questions under exercises are also modified. Right now, I have a group composed of more than ten new friends from at least five other different religious affiliations who volunteered to take the module. We are meeting once a week (one to one and a half hours) for this and it will be our third meeting next week. We call our group "The Peacemakers' Circle."

Charles Lerche

colerche@vub.ac.be

Books – Edited:

Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991);

Towards the Most Great Justice: Elements of Justice in the New World Order (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1996);

Healing the Body Politic: Aspects of Conflict Resolution in the New World Order (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming 2000)

Chapters in Books:

"The Global Agenda" in Anthony Lee (ed.), *Circle of Peace* (Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1986);

"Human Nature and the Problem of Peace" in Charles Lerche (ed.), *Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991);

"Justice as a Theme in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh" in Charles Lerche (ed.), *Towards the Most Great Justice* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1996);

co-author with Cheshmak Farhoumand, "The Bahá'í Vision of World Order" in Walter Dorn (ed.), *World Order for a New Millennium: The Political and Spiritual Dimensions of Peace-building*, St. Martin's Press, 1999;

"Globalization and its Conflicts" in Charles Lerche (ed.) *Healing the Body Politic: Aspects of Conflict Resolution in the New World Order* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming 2000)

Journal Articles – Refereed:

"Us and Them: A Study of Alienation and World Order", *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 17-22, Dec. 1993-March 1994;

"Statecraft, Globalization and Ethics", *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, Vol.9, No. 2, pp 71-90, June 1999

Website: <http://colerche.virtualave.net> (several conference papers and other things)

Thellie Lovejoy

alovejoy@tfb.com

The Dwight Barstow Collection:

Where do I begin! Through the Grace of God, through a Bahá'í I did not even know, I was given 70 boxes and 13 filing cabinet drawers full of unorganized papers and periodicals that had belonged to a Mr. Dwight Barstow, then deceased, about 15 years. That's a lot of paper! We had to rent a small moving truck to cart it to our home. About half of the bulk was not worth saving. I threw that half out, page by page, paper by paper, looking at each one. What was left is the most incredible private archive imaginable!

Dwight Barstow never married and left no heirs. His life-time accumulation of papers were stored for the fifteen years in a garage of a friend who finally decided to give it to someone who would sort them, store them, save them, whatever was best to be done with the material. My name was suggested to her by a mutual friend and I agreed to do it. That was February 1999 and I've been busy with the material ever since.

History:

Dwight became a Bahá'í and moved to the LA area in the late 40's. He began to collect old Bahá'í periodicals such as Stars of the West which led him to a position where he could help others collect such things as well. That grew into an operation he called the Bahá'í Periodical Exchange (BPE). Through the BPE, he helped dozens of folks complete their periodical collections. He indorsed having them professionally bound, once the collection was completed. In his effort to collect Bahá'í periodicals, he made a habit, I was told, of befriending "little old ladies" in the greater LA area. He befriended particularly the ones who had no Bahá'í heirs to whom to leave there Bahá'í papers, books and periodicals. And so his collection grew. I now have the remnants of his collections (not the books) which include tens of thousands American Bahá'í News, as well as, Star of the West and the older World Order magazine, as

well as some other periodicals, more rare. (Do you know anybody who could use some old Bahá'í News? alovjoy@tfb.com)

The Project:

One of the most surprising items I found while sorting through his boxes was typed-copies of Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Baha to the early American believers, particularly surprising to me, because he had hundreds of them. These pages of typed, copied Tablets, I put altogether and photocopied. The documents are so old that when handled, little pieces of paper flake off. I wanted to photocopy them, so I could read them without damaging the pages. Also, having come upon these wonderful, mostly-unpublished documents so undeservedly as I had, I did not feel they were mine to keep without sharing them with others. I thought they looked like something at least some Bahá'ís would like to read, rather than putting them in an archive where few, if any, would have access to them. The stack of photocopies is a little more than three and one half inches high, 868 pages, a little less than two reams of paper, 9 pounds of paper!

Numbering:

I created a system of numbering the documents so that it is easy for me to identify the documents within the collection in order to correspond with others regarding the documents and to keep them separate from my other collections. I numbered each photocopied document with a different number, while with pencil, I marked the same number on the back side of each original corresponding document. That way, I can go directly to the original of any photocopied document, or refer to any document easily with others whom I have given copies.

Every page I numbered starts with "BC#" (Barstow Collection) that way there is no confusion with other numbers found on some of the documents made by previous owners. If a document has more than one page, each page it is marked with the same document number and different letters behind it, for example document #200 is marked BC#200A, & BC#200B, etc., until end. Behind the last page of the document, I put a dash to indicate that is the last page, as it is not always obvious. This system for numbering documents with code letters first, has proven to be rather serendipitous, as I am now using it to keep all of my other collections organized and separated.

Once having photocopied and numbered them, I wanted to offer them to Bahá'ís, so I made an offer on Bahá'í Announce to see if anybody wanted them. I did get about 50 requests. I then photocopied the now numbered photocopies, making copies for Baha'is who wanted them, and shipped them world-wide, charging for costs and postage.

Reading and e-mail:

The next step was to actually read these photocopies. I was reading the same generation of photocopies as the ones I had shipped, so if a word was undecipherable on the copies I could look it up on the original, for those who received copies, I made an e-mail list. Via e-mail, I sent information regarding undecipherable words, tips about how to store and read the photocopies, the history of the pages which I call the "Barstow Collection" or BC. I e-mail information when I identify where one is published. I also notify them if I find duplicate documents within the collection. If I learn the document is available on the internet, I send them the link to find it electronically. Additionally, I sent by e-mail the few of the documents that I have reproduced by typing. If anyone on the list has information to share about one of the documents they can share it with the list, also.

Indexing:

I made an index-type of table of contents as I read, so that I will be able to find quotes I liked again.

Fan mail:

Seldom when I send notices out to the BC list was there reason for anyone to respond. Nevertheless, a few have written to say thanks. I call it "fan mail" and I love it! This is my favourite.

"I will never be able to adequately thank you for this work you are sharing with me. My schedule has only permitted me to get through the first few documents. But your stream of information and clarifications has kept me anxious to really dive into this collection. Thank you a thousand times a thousand times!"

Comment:

Before reading these documents, I had read every book published in English of the Bahá'í Writings. Every book I read gave me new information that is not in any other book. It took me 30 years to endeavor to resolve undertake such a fete as finding and reading all those books as before I had thought, each book would have basically the same information as every other book but just restated in a different letter. What I found was, every book, although does have some restated material, also has different material found nowhere else, answers to questions I did not even know had been answered in the Writings. I was once told by a seeker that they had been told by their friend, "One thing about the Bahá'ís is they sure don't know much about what is in their Writings." How profound!

The Bahá'í Writings are a huge and vast ocean, wonderful and exciting and impossible to define, at this point, exactly how vast. Now, I have learned so

much more from reading these Tablets. Answers to questions I had not read anywhere else, just like in every other book of Bahá'í Writings. So much is not published! So much that is published is so vastly under read. So many solutions and answers are already given but lost obscurity. If we do not know the teachings, how can we found a civilization built upon them? I leave you with this quote, something in the BC, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual by Rúhíyyih Khánum, dated July 5, 1947:

“It is very easy indeed for him to understand how you, with your training [a psychologist], are often tested and irritated by your contact with some of the believers. But then you must remember that your advantages of a reasonable mind and a scientific education, have not been given to all, and you cannot expect acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings to endow people with these things automatically. But think of the kind of human beings, if brought up in the society He envisages, and taught in the homes, schools and universities which were the mirror and product of His teachings, which would be produced! There you would really have a new race of men.

“Shoghi Effendi has for years urged the Bahá'í (who have asked his advise, and in general also), to study history, economics, sociology, etc. in order to be au courant with all the progressive movements and thoughts being put forth today, and so that they could correlate these to the Bahá'í teachings. What he wants the Bahá'ís to do is to study more, not to study less. The more general knowledge, scientific and otherwise, they possess, the better. Likewise he is constantly urging them to really study the Baha'i teachings more deeply. One might liken Baha'u'llah's teachings to a sphere; there are points poles apart, and in between the thoughts and doctrines that unite them.”

Marlene Mackie

mmacke@execulink.com

I am writing a biography of distinguished Canadian Bahá'í, Laura R. Davis, who died in 1990. I'm seeking stories and recollections about Laura. If you went to firesides in her home, or met her during any of her international travelling teaching trips or otherwise knew her, please contact me at <mmacke@execulink.com>.

Sen McGlinn

Sen.McGlinn@Bahai.NL

Student of Islamic Studies and Persian at the University of Leiden, the Netherlands. Previously studied English literature and Christian theology at the University of Otago, New Zealand. Research interests focus on the theology of social relations and community structures (ie., political theology), covering: Political theory in the Bahá'í Writings, politics and religion, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, the Bahá'í administrative order, the Guardianship and the House of Justice, the covenant as constitutional law, the individual and the collective, the nature of Bahá'í religious law.

Journal Articles - Refereed

A theology of the state from the Bahá'í writings', *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 41, Autumn 1999. Reprints available from the author, Sen.McGlinn@Bahai.NL

Reference Works

The Leiden List of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets', current edition, at <http://bahai-library.org/resources/leiden.list/>.

A variety of articles have also been posted at the bahai-library site.

Moojan Momen

momen@northill.demon.co.uk

During this year a book entitled *The Phenomenon of Religion: A Thematic Approach* by Dr Momen was published by Oneworld Publishers, Oxford. During the remainder of the year Dr Momen worked on two projects: a paper on Jamal Effendi which will be published in Bahá'í Studies Review and a book *Islam and the Bahá'í Faith* to be published by George Ronald, Oxford.

Vera B. Moreen

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Swarthmore College

I am embarking on a project on the conversion of Iranian Jews to Bahá'í. I am particularly interested in when/how/why specific individuals and families decided to convert. I would be grateful if you could guide me to sources, written and/or oral, that might be of help in this investigation.

Fariborz Moshirian

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I am an associate editor of the *Journal of Multinational Financial Management* (JMFM), an internationally well-known finance journal published by the Elsevier publisher in North Holland. This journal reaches 8500 academics, practitioners and all major international institutions such as the UN, the IMF and the World Bank. In 1998, I was the editor of two issues of this journal, which selected some articles for presentation at the 10th Australasian Finance and Banking conference. I entitled this issue of the journal "The Asia-Pacific Financial Axis" and wrote an article explaining the concept of the Asia-Pacific financial axis and the importance of regional institutions such as an Asia-Pacific parliament, a regional court, a single Asian currency and an Asian Central Bank.

In 1999, I called the issue that I was the editor of "Challenges for Further Global Financial Integration" in which I elaborated on the significance of an international single currency and the importance of new international institutions for a global society. I also alluded to the importance of a world government. I have just completed the issue of this journal for the year 2000. I entitled this issue "Financial Challenges for the New Millennium" in which my introductory article goes into some detail as to how a world central bank, responsible for an international single currency and one single interest rate, could create macroeconomic stability, prosperity and certainty for long term investment and for the development of all nations and people. Furthermore, I elaborated on how a world federal government and its agencies and ministries could facilitate the process of globalisation in which workers and employers' rights, the global environment, human rights, universal health and education etc could be protected and promoted and how all people could then see globalisation as no threat to their jobs, environment or national sovereignty. I have also elaborated on the significance of "localisation" where, in the last 10 years or so, in more than 80 countries local/regional governments have emerged and how these local governments are playing a key role in the national economy of these countries (could Bahá'í regional councils be considered as a parallel to this development?) and how a sound world federal government requires effective local/regional and national governments and how the members of international institutions such as a world government, a world parliament or a world central bank could be more relevant, respected and accepted if people and institutions at the local and national levels participate in this process.

While these concepts are familiar to Bahá'ís, I think these three issues of the JMFM and the practical steps suggested in them as to how a global society could operate, gives us as Bahá'ís more opportunity to argue that we are not only have the vision of a global society but are also able to offer

practical solutions to people of capacity and policy makers in this process of globalisation and the establishment of world peace.

June Perkins

junep@aus.bahai.org.au

Undertook one year break from PhD, to work for National Office, as indigenous community development officer. Returned to studies January 2000 (Due to complete in 2001). During 1999- for the National Bahá'í Teaching committee, and National Spiritual Assembly, researched issues in translation for Indigenous languages in Australia, and undertook consultations with many indigenous Bahá'ís on various issues to do with institutes, teaching etc. Also put together a compilation of indigenous Bahá'í photographs from Australian Bahá'í archives 1960-2000 compiled with help of Wahidah Sijaya, David Perkins, Neda Rahmani and archives left with Archives as ongoing development as a resource.

Publications in 1999

- "Surfing the News Waves, A Bahá'í Newsreel for the Pacific and Asia," *Australian Bahá'í Studies*, Vol 1: 1. 1999
- "Heart to Heart", "Pupil of the Eye", "Indigenous Teaching kit" Documents/compilations/Workshops and educational kits compiled for Indigenous Desk to support pioneering, teaching, education, deepening- distributed to Regional Teaching Committees. 1999.
- Workshop- "Sharing stories" given at Brisbane Women's Conference. Partnerships in the New Millennium. Sept 1999.
- As it is In Music* insert: compiled 3 editions *Australian Bahá'í Bulletin*. Indigenous Desk, 1999. Editor. June Perkins.
- Upcoming- October 2000, Australasian Drama Studies: Interview with Wesley Enoch. (Utilises Seven Valleys in analysis)
- Upcoming- Interview with Bob Maza, *Herald of the South* (2000)

A report on current interests and activities in Bahá'í scholarship.

Current thesis topic PhD: University of Sydney English dept/ Performance Studies:

Womb Weavers: indigenous women and cultural and spiritual transmission in the new millennium. Interested in chatting with indigenous women, mothers, daughters, granddaughters, about this issue. Study to involve 2 in depth case studies as well. email jper3046@mail.usyd.edu.au

Also working on workshop series on indigenous religions of spiritual axis region for Community Development course at Yerrinbool Centre of Learning.

Other interests include parenting, Bahá'í education for young children and children in general, especially developing the partnership between institutions and parents, and integrating children and families into the whole community.

Research on Fred Murray story started in 1995, being completed in 2000 and made available to Australian Bahá'í community in some form during 2000.

Brent Poirier

brent@bci.org

1. I am revising and extending for publication as a pamphlet my article "The Flow of Divine Authority" on the Covenant of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the authority in the Sacred Texts for the Universal House of Justice to function without the presence of a Guardian.
2. I have an abiding interest in the verses of the Bible interpreted by the Bahá'í Writings, particularly the *Kitab-i-Iqan*. Some are on my website <http://web.nmsu.edu/~bci> which is soon being moved to <http://www.bci.org/pilgrim>
3. For some years I have been collecting materials related to the Master's visit to the Western United States and forwarding them to the Archives. Recently a recording by Sachiro Fugita came to light, including his recollections of travel with the Master in 1912 — the only audio recording I am familiar with, recounting eyewitness accounts from a member of the Master's travelling party. This is on the above website.
4. I have an interest in the development of international law.
5. I am interested in correlating the Bahá'í teachings on mysticism, with the other aspects of the Faith, such as administration and teaching.

Sholeh Quinn

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My book entitled *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbas* is due to be published by the University of Utah Press later this year.

Nozomu Sonda

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I have recently published an introductory book on the Bahá'í Faith in Japanese, which was a revision of a previously published one. It presents the Bahá'í teachings in view of the philosophical and psychological framework of the Japanese people and their culture. The concept of God, image and attitudes towards religion are quite different from those of the West; that is why a book like this was needed. I am also working on other related subjects: concept of reincarnation and life after death in Japan; comparative studies of the Bahá'í Faith and some prominent religious movements in Japan; prophecies for the 21st century and beyond; and an introductory book on comparative religions. (For the reader's reference, my background is as follows: I studied Social-Psychological and Cross-Cultural Psychology as well as English as a Second Language. Have taught English, Japanese and Cross-Cultural Studies including at Maxwell International Bahá'í School. Currently director of a language school/translation business in Japan).

Peter Terry

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In 1999 I did not complete any works, and spent an inordinate amount of time on the Internet, writing literally thousands of messages related to Bahá'í scholarship. I wrote two papers, delivered at the 1999 'Irfan Colloquium at Louhelen Bahá'í School: "Chronological Issues in the Lawh-i-Hikmat" and "'Abdu'l-Bahá's Explanation of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh" which will be published by the Colloquium in due course. Also, I have participated on h-bahai, bahai-st, tarjuman, bahai-apologetics and soc.religion.bahai during 1999, posting much material related to research interests of mine.

Will C. van den Hoonaard

will@unb.ca

University of New Brunswick

We worked on Bahá'í studies on several fronts this year—quite different from the past years. The matter of the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Studies in Iran was brought to the attention of numerous university authorities and agencies in Canada, involving university presidents and such governing councils as university Senates. Some 15 universities voiced their protests with UNESCO and Iranian authorities and the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa. Not less significant

was the interests taken by the Canadian Association of University Teachers. It published in their national news organ for two successive months accounts in English and French about the closing of BIHE, in addition to a letter of thanks from the Office of External Affairs of the NSA of Canada. Over 27,000 university faculty were thus directly informed of the Faith.

On a more personal level, we are happy to report that Lynn Echevarria has successfully defended her Ph.D thesis at Essex University which deals with religious identity among Canadian Bahá'í women. Lynn is now the Secretary of the ABS-North America. Deborah van den Hoonaard, a professor of sociology and gerontology at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, has completed her new book, *The Widowed Self: The Older Woman's Journey Through Widowhood* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Fall 2000), which promises to be a significant contribution to her field. She and her husband, Will, have also completed an empirical study of how Canadian Bahá'ís are doing in promoting the equality of women and men. Wilfrid Laurier University Press and the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion are currently reviewing the ms for publication. The couple organized in May 1999 the 16th Annual Qualitative Analysis Conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick, which brought together a number of Bahá'í scholars within the context of qualitative research being presented by 120 other scholars. The van den Hoonaards are organizing the 17th Conference, 18-21 May 2000. Will continues to be a member of the international Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project (of which he has been a member since 1984).

Robert Weinberg

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My major area of interest at the moment is the life of Sara Louisa, Lady Blomfield. I am preparing a full-length biography for George Ronald Publishers. I am also involved in plans to restore Lady Blomfield's resting-place and to befittingly commemorate her services to humanity. I have an ongoing book project looking at how nature is used as a metaphor in the writings of the world religions for spiritual growth and how this metaphorical use of the natural world represents an area where the unity of religion can be demonstrated.

Reports on Conferences held in 1999

ABS Australia – 18th Annual Conference

**'The Creative Inspiration': Arts and culture in the Bahá'í Faith.
Melbourne University 21st - 26th September 1999**

The Association's 18th Annual Conference on the Arts and Culture attracted more than 50 presenters and performers, and approximately 150 participants. The conference included workshops and seminars, a dinner, an exhibition, a play, and a concert. Its aim was to provide an opportunity for those involved in the arts in the Australian Bahá'í Community to meet each other and become informed of each others' work, and to bring the arts to the wider community, and to foster discussion of critical issues facing Bahá'ís in the arts at the present time. The first three days consisted of workshops in drama, the visual arts, creative writing, dance, and music. Sessions were conducted by Jan Coker, Maxien Bradley, Grant Hindin Miller, the Centre Theatre Company, Ruth Park, Artworks Visual Arts Theatre, Greg Parker, Shirin Lagha'i, Kath Podger, Michael Knopf, Ron Price, and Michael Phillips.

The Visual Arts Exhibition, held in the Gryphon Gallery in the University's splendid 1888 Building, was officially opened on the evening of 23rd September, with a reception and music by the Melbourne choir, "Breezes of Harmony". Over the next three days the work of twenty artists attracted hundreds of visitors. The exhibition include work by Jannu, Karel Fontaine, Steve & Angela Clark, Vahid Payman, Ruth Park, Chris Reid, Kath Podger, Diane Arjomand, Katayoun Mottahedin, Claus Barabbas Mayrhofer, Anne Williams, Yvonne Chapman, Terry Eichler, Lorni Hyland, Sonja Van Kerhoff, Ebrahim Malekzadeh, Haifa Mehdizadeh, Mehrzad Mumtahan, and Carolynn Newport.

From Friday to Sunday participants chose between some forty sessions, almost all focused on the arts. These included performances and seminars on poetry (Ron Price - "The Passionate Artist"; Belinda Belton - "Bahá'í Poetry: the Power of the Word", Narelle Kinneally Tolstoff - "Spiritual Symphonies"), Literature (Jamshid Fanaian; Camilla Fligelman "Is it nearly impossible for a mere human being to write a good work of art with a religious theme?";) and Music (Michael Knopf); artists presentations about their own work (Kath Podger; Sonya Van Kirkhoff, Jan Coker "Mnemonic", Steve & Angela Clark "Making a living whilst maintaining artistic integrity – The Artists Dilemma"; Karel Fontaine "The Creative Impulse: Symbolism and Seeing", Robin Chandler: This Artist's Life: A presentation of 25 years of life and work as artist,

administrator, sociologist, and CEO as one model of integrate the life of art into spiritual service & teaching”, Monir Rowshan “Inspiration/ Visualisation of Dreams”) and thoughts on the artistic process (Phillip Hinton “The Search for the Beloved: The Artist as Spiritual Voyager”, Ben Hinton “An exploration of the diverse concepts of creativity, imagination, and inspiration”; Negin Sanaei “Creativity and Spirituality - are they related?”; Simon Hinton “Will Celine Dion Eat the World? - Globalisation and The Cultural Marketplace”).

There were also papers on the position of the arts in the Bahá'í Community (Mahyar Amjadi “Arts Can Move the Youth”; Bahá'í Institute of Performing Arts “Performance: A Sacred Act”, Simon Hinton “Artists, Institutions and Money - An Unholy Trinity? - Arts Funding and Infrastructure Support in the Bahá'í Community”; Robin Chandler “Building Creative Communities: approaching the arts as social & economic development through professionalizing, training, and networking internationally).

There were also presentations on other subjects (Sepehr Manuchehri, “The Practice of Taqiyah (self-denial) in the Bábí & Bahá'í Religions” and Graham Hassall “Current issues in Bahá'í Scholarship”). Neda Rahmani presented “The Asia Pacific Newsreel”, and there was a display by fashion designer Afsoon Missaghi.

Lunch times were given over to the launching of publications (Michael Knopf “The Paramount Project - New Bahá'í Devotional Songs for Community Singing”) and a website (the Victorian Bahá'í Community Website official Launch), and a demonstration of wood carving by South Australian artist Chris Reid.

On the evening of Friday 24th September the Association presented an evening of performance at Performance - Melba Hall. Those present were privileged to experience a three hour program featuring Amir Farid, Artworks, John Grey, Greg Parker, Alice Chew, Jamshid Hatami, Behzad and Anis Khoshmashrab, Vafa Ferdowsian, Michael Knopf, Grant Hindin Miller, Ruth Rowshan and Bernardo Soler (Nougat). Special thanks to Erfan Khadem for assistance at the concert, and to Master of Ceremonies Omid Master.

The Conference Dinner attracted more than 100 guests, who enjoyed an outstanding premier of jazz classics performed by Kylie Richardson and Grant Hindin Miller’s personal journey into the creative life. In the closing session of the conference, Phillip Hinton performed his one-man play “Portals to Freedom” at RMIT’s Kaleide Theatre.

ABS Australia Scholarship Institute

ABS Australia’s third scholarship institute was held at Yerrinbool 2-4 April 1999. After getting to know each other a little better on the Friday evening, and discussing the aims of the institute, the program commenced the next morning. The institute program is based on discussion of current research interests. Participants are not required to present “finished research”, but are invited to speak about what they are interested in, and how they are undertaking the research. Thus the institute focuses on the creative process, rather than on the creative output.

In the first session ABS Australia presented the “*Report on Scholarship*” for 1998. This report on scholarship activities in Australia and elsewhere provided a basis for discussion on the nature and purpose of Bahá'í Scholarship, what is currently being undertaken, and what projects might usefully be undertaken in the future. Presentations were then made by Vahid Payman “Aboriginal religion and the Bahá'í Faith”; Nastaran Habibi “Food Safety”; Kaye Waterman “Report on research projects”; and Nushin Burwell “The operation of the International Goals Committee”. The afternoon continued the presentation of individual projects. Roger Le Lievre spoke on “*Iranian Bahá'ís and Australian refugee policy*”; followed by Ahmad Aniss’s *Report on Current Projects*; Ladan Rahmani on “*International Law and Human Rights*”, and Glen Duncan on “*Knowledge Management*”. On Saturday evening the participants viewed rare film of the Yerrinbool School and of the Hands of the Cause in Haifa, taken in the 1950s by Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, introduced by Mrs Madge Featherstone.

The Sunday session commenced with group discussion of a paper by Jef Clark about “learning community”, published in the Association’s new journal, *Australian Bahá'í Studies*. This was followed by presentations by Graham Waterman, on his current *research projects*; Cath Holt “*Researching the Christian-Bahá'í Nexus*”, and Babak Mohajerin, who also reported on *Current Projects*. The final session of the institute included reports on individual projects, as well as discussion of a course on Bahá'í Scholarship being developed for ABS by Colin Dibdin. Being the final session, it also included an opportunity assess the results of the weekend. Presentations were made by Erin O’Connor, on “*The Earth Charter*”, and by Natalie Mobini, on *Current Projects*.

The success of the institute demonstrated the depth of scholarly activity currently taking place within the Australian Bahá'í Community, and encouraged ABS to continue with this format for dialogue amongst those who are interested in it.

ABS-Japan - Eighth Conference

Towards True Peace and Harmony: The Eighth ABS-Japan Conference, January 14-16, 2000

Venue: Kyoto

Site chair: Mary Noguchi

Conference Report by Janet Sono

With presenters and presentations from Australia, Papua New Guinea, Okinawa and Japan on the theme of "Japan and the Development of True Peace" to light the way, the Asia-Pacific Spiritual Axis momentarily turned ablaze at the 8th Annual ABS-Japan Conference held in the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto from January 14th -16th, 2000. After prayers in both Japanese and English, bilingual Site Chair Mary Noguchi opened the Conference, followed by a World Citizenship Workshop organized by Jerris Strain. Presentations on the conference theme included "The Bahá'í View of Japan's Role in the World Peace Process" (by Counselor N. Iwakura), "How the Bahá'í Community Can Assist Japan in Peace Initiatives" (NSA Secretary K. Schwerin), "Unique Contributions of the Asia-Pacific Region in Achieving a Lasting Peace" (Australian NSA member G. Hassall), a panel discussion by three Japanese Bahá'í mothers on "Educating Bahá'í Youth in a Non-Bahá'í World", and "English Education and World Peace" (by K. Arai). On Saturday evening, there was also a panel discussion open to the public on "Japan and the Development of True Peace", with non-Bahá'í guest Ritsumeikan University Professor A. Fujioka, who is Director of the of the World Peace Development Center in Kyoto, Dr. G. Hassall, Auxiliary Board Member Z. Moghbel, and ABS-Japan Chair H. Tsunoi serving as moderator. Afterward, a group of four women from Japan and Iran, dressed in exquisite traditional garments, played the koto (a Japanese stringed instrument that somewhat resembles the harp). Attendees also enjoyed presentations on human rights education (by NSA Member J. Goldstone), aspects of the Bahá'í community in Japan (N. Sonda and K. Suda), Bahá'í perspectives on psychosocial health and healing (D. Trautmann), and how the indigenous people of New Ireland, Papua New Guinea have embraced the Faith and made it part of their culture (C. Volker). The Conference took place in full view of a lovely mountain that houses a famous Zen temple, making those in attendance feel that we were on sacred and holy ground. Especially during the koto concert on Saturday evening, it seemed as if angels had come down from the Concourse on High to bless the conference with their heavenly music, encouraging the participants to strive gently but firmly for true peace and harmony in the world.

ABS North America – 23rd Annual Conference

The 23rd Annual Conference of the Association took place in Tempe, Arizona, June 17-20 1999. The Conference theme was "Sacred Justice: Uniting the Human Family." Plenary speakers included experts in the field of American Indian contributions to law and justice. The Hasan M. Balyuzi was given by Dr. Richard W. Thomas, who spoke on "The State of Race Relations in the American Bahá'í Community: Challenges, Progress and Future Directions". The first Louis G. Gregory Symposium on Law and Justice was deeply appreciated by the participants who focused on the role of culture in law, and issues leading to a united family. Music and arts were integrated throughout the program and outstanding presentations were given by American Indian artists and Canadian First Nations storytellers and performers. A unique feature of this conference was the Town Meeting held to discuss "Alternatives to Violence in the Schools. A panel of prominent community leaders, made up of primarily non-Bahá'ís, discussed this topic with the participation from an audience of 400 people, half non-Bahá'ís. The press from CNN, CBS, a local Hispanic TV station, and the daily Arizona newspaper covered the event.

Science and Religion at Tempe

1999 Annual Meeting of the Science and Religion Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Association for Bahá'í Studies - North America (ABS-NA)

ABS-NA Science and Religion SIG members and their guests enjoyed animated discussions on evolution, the relationship between science and religion, and the difficulties facing Bahá'í college students at their annual meeting on June 17 in Tempe, Arizona. Held the day before the Association for Bahá'í Studies 1999 Annual Conference, the meeting attracted a diverse audience in excess of 30 people. The morning session, cool and welcoming in a room away from the Arizona heat, focused on the relationship between science and religion. Science and religion are different approaches to the same reality, according to the Bahá'í writings. Given this, how then are they related? The writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the prophet/founder of the Bahá'í Faith, say that nature and the creation educate us about God. "Every created thing," Bahá'u'lláh wrote, "is a sign of the revelation of God." The implication of this is that scientific knowledge leads to the knowledge of God, argued Stephen R. Friberg, a physicist working in Japan. Science has other lessons for religion, contended Safa Sadehpour, a student of medicine and neuroscience at Harvard

and MIT. Science requires faith. Without faith in the explicability of nature and the belief that phenomena obey fixed and discoverable laws, science cannot move forward. The implications of modern irreligious culture for Bahá'í students was addressed by Kelly Snook, a recent Stanford University Ph.D. in planetary sciences at NASA Ames Research Center. Confronted in universities with secular understandings that enshrine science and denigrate religion, Bahá'í youth sometimes have a hard time sheltering their maturing beliefs. Bahá'ís knowledgeable about the sciences should offer a helping hand, she argued.

The afternoon session focused on evolution, a topic figuring prominently in the Bahá'í writings on science and religion. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the renowned son of Bahá'u'lláh, commented frequently on evolution in his speeches in the salons and churches of Paris and London in the first decades of the century and in his visits to North America. An overview of his comments was given by Courosh Mehanian, a physicist working in the San Francisco Bay area. We came into existence by evolutionary processes occurring over great spans of time, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Although we have passed through the animal kingdom in the process of evolution, our powerful mind – the “rational soul” – sets us apart from the animals. We have moral, ethical, and spiritual responsibilities. Current perspectives on biological evolution were described by Ron Somerby, an evolutionary biologist/taxonomist with the state of California. He described how the oneness of life can be seen in the shared genes and development pathways of life's diverse organisms. Molecular genetics now allows detailed decoding of genes, developmental biology has shown how genes interact and embryos develop, and studies of bacteria have revealed a wealth of new information about simple cells.

The closing talk of the conference revisited the issue of the relationship between science and religion. Renowned scientist/writer Stephen Jay Gould in a widely read new book has written of science and religion as “non-overlapping magisteria” with separate spheres of authority. Mark Foster, a sociologist now teaching in Kansas, suggested that we seek further for better understandings of the relationship between these two most important institutions. Describing 'Abdu'l-Bahá's comments on evolution and ether as requiring further thought, he urged us to discard simplistic interpretations. Questions, responses, and discussions responding to his comments continued for an hour.

A final comment: although Bahá'ís have long known that science and religion are compatible, it is only recently that the chill between the two has begun to ease in the world of intellectual opinion. This presents both opportunities and a challenge. The opportunities arise because of a new climate of openness to a centrally important aspect of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings. The challenge is to present those teachings well and to be able to present them in a manner befitting the needs of a sophisticated and critical scientific community. Meetings like the Science and Religion SIG meeting in Tempe are an important

component of the process of developing a mature and intellectually compelling understanding of the Bahá'í teachings about science and religion.

To contact the Science and Religion Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Association for Bahá'í Studies - North America (ABS-NA) for membership or to inquire about its activities, please e-mail Ron Somerby at <sommerby@ns.net>, Stephen R. Friberg at <srfriberg@worldnet.att.net>, or visit the ABS-NA website at <http://bahai-studies.ca/srsig/index.html>

ABS Singapore 4th Annual Conference

The 4th Annual Conference of the Singapore Association for Bahá'í Studies was held on 17th April 1999 in the setting of the Lounge/Seminar room of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science in the National University of Singapore (NUS). Copies of the 3rd Singapore Bahá'í studies Review, as well as ABS journals produced by the UK, Japan and Australia were displayed and sold.

The conference was attended by a total of 27 people. The five speakers delivered talks related to the main topic of the Conference: “Challenges for the New Millennium”. Dr Habibul Khonder, a lecturer in the department of sociology at the NUS, spoke on the need to find common ground between various religious and secular groups in Bangladesh. Dr Phyllis Chew spoke on the role of religion in the rise of the women's movement in Singapore. Dr Anjam Khursheed described modern trends towards religious pluralism and interfaith activity. Dr Suresh Sahadevan described the limitations of moral relativism and science with respect to moral values. Mr Kwek Yi Hsing presented various models of moral education, stressing the need to recognise spiritual dimensions to human nature.

All the talks aroused interest and questions among the participants in relation to Bahá'í views on many current issues. One inquirer sent a thank you card to the conference organizers, declaring that the conference had inspired him to attend “the activities of Bahá'í at all times”.

Bibliography of publications in Bábí and Bahá'í Studies, 1998-1999

An ever-increasing body of literature on the Bahá'í Faith is being produced by Bahá'í publishers, and such other bodies as Associations for Bahá'í Studies. A list of current Bahá'í Publishers can be found in editions of *The Bahá'í World*. Systematic posting of essays on the world wide web is also widely regarded as "publication". Significant references to the Faith appear in the literature of religious studies and the social sciences generally, as well as in current affairs literature. The following is a partial listing of recent literature that either refers to, or focuses on, the Bahá'í Faith. It is compiled through searches in bibliographic reference available on cd-rom and on the internet.

A. A remark on Reference services

The rapid emergence of electronic information services is revolutionising access to information on the Bahá'í Faith. Electronic sources range from websites that are freely accessible, to databases available only by subscription (eg Lexis), to discussion groups that allow researchers to communicate back and forth. By combining these sources the researcher may learn not only of such traditional sources of scholarly information as books and academic papers, but of such other sources as news services and newspaper articles. Judicial and other official records such as those of the United Nations Organization are also becoming available, as are book lists supplied by book-sellers. A search at the on-line bookstore "Amazon.com", for example, found 264 references to "Bahá'í" in March 1999 and 304 references in October 1999. A CD ROM from Newsbank called REDEX has an "Index to UN Documents" which when searched in March 1999 yielded 209 references to "Bahá'í". A search in the EBSCO database, in the "World Magazine Bank" file, yielded 107 references.

The vast quantity of data that is searchable on some subscription databases is breathtaking. UMI, for instance, includes eight sub-databases, each of which includes a constellation of information.⁴ A search in the Library of Congress

4. The eight databases are **ABI/INFORM Global**, a business and management database covering advertising, marketing, economics, human resources, finance, taxation, computers, etc; **Applied Science & Tech Plus** (Wilson's authoritative Applied Science & Technology indexing combined with UMI full-text and images for the leading periodicals in science and technology. Subject coverage includes computers, engineering, physics, telecommunications and transportation); **Health Module** (covering medical conditions, substance abuse, insurance, health policy, etc); **Education Plus** (H.W. Wilson's Education Abstracts database and UMI full-text images covering adult education, homeschooling, language and linguistics, special education, etc); — (footnote continues next page)

catalogue on 10th October 1999 yielded 682 references to Bahá'í. Redo the UNESCO search – 25 references at UNESDOC. Only one reference was found in a search of the 6,800 theses/dissertations and conference papers in the Theological Research Exchange Network.⁵ A Database named Emerald comprises full text access to approximately forty titles in marketing, general management, human resources, quality, property, operations, production & economics, library & information services, information management, training & education and engineering.

A subscription called FirstSearch grants access to a large number of databases.⁶ The firstsearch database called "Papers first" includes "Papers included in every congress, conference, exposition, workshop, symposium, and meeting received at The British Library."

The netfirst database consists of "Bibliographic citations including abstracts, subject headings, and classification codes." It includes a variety of Internet accessible resources including World Wide Web pages and Listservs, and will soon also encompass Usenet newsgroups, FTP sites, Gopher servers, and electronic publications in other formats. A search in March yielded 212 records for "Bahá'í".

Services such as "eLibrary" will track subjects and notify the researcher of new publications.⁷

(footnote 4, cont.) **ProQuest Computing** (computing journals); **ProQuest Medical Library** (more than 100 key medical titles); **ProQuest Telecommunications** (full-text for publications in the telecommunications industry); and **Social Science Plus** (addiction studies, gerontology, econometrics, international relations, minority studies, urban studies, etc).

5. <http://www.tren.com/search/>. The reference found is Beckwith, Francis J., *Baha'ism: A Presentation And Critique Of Its Theological Tenets And Apotheotic Use Of The Christian Scriptures*, Simon Greenleaf School Of Law, M.A. 1984, 126 pages.
6. FirstSearch has "General Databases" and Specialist Databases. There are six "General Databases": WorldCat (Books and other materials in libraries worldwide); Article1st (Index of articles from nearly 12,500 journals); Contents1st (Table of contents of nearly 12,500 journals); FastDoc (Index of articles with text online or by email); NetFirst (OCLC database of Internet resources) and UnionLists (OCLC Union Lists of Periodicals).
The Specialized Databases searched for this report on scholarship were AHSearch (Arts & Humanities Search. A citation index); BiographyInd (Guide to wide range of biographical material); BookRevDigst (Reviews of fiction and nonfiction books); BooksInPrint (R. R. Bowker's Books In Print); ContmpWom-enIss (Contemporary Women's Issues with full text); DataTimes (An index of regional newspapers); Diss (Dissertation Abstracts Online); EducationAbs (Leading publications in the field of education); FactSearch (Facts and statistics on topics of current interest); GPO (U.S. government publications); IndxLegalPer (Index to Legal Periodicals & Books); LibraryLit (Materials on libraries and librarianship); NewsAbs (Newspaper Abstracts From over 25 newspapers); NYT (The New York Times daily and Sunday editions); PapersFirst (An index of papers presented at conferences); PerAbs (Periodical Abstracts with full text); PerContentsIndx (Periodicals Contents Index - 1961-1991); Proceedings (An index of conference publications); ReadGuideAbs (Abstracts of articles from popular magazines); SIRSResearcher (SIRS Researcher with full text online); WilsonSelect (H.W. Wilson Select Full Text); WorldAlmanac; and World Book Encyclopedia.
7. <www.tracker.elibrary.com> According to the website, eLibrary Tracker "is a unique service that searches our Electric Library database each day for any topic you want and e-mails you the latest headlines automatically. eLibrary Tracker searches through Electric Library's extensive database of popular newspapers, magazines, reference books, pictures, maps, and radio and TV transcripts. We add new content every day so you'll always get the most current information. ...Registration is Free... Simply tell us which topics you'd like us to keep track of, how often you'd like to receive the information, and give us your e-mail address. We do the rest..."

These are just a few of the extensive resources now available to the researcher. In time, a systematic project to monitor such open source information will provide the field of Bahá'í studies with unprecedented access to scholarly information pertinent to the progress of all aspects of Bahá'í studies.

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C: Internet Reports

Bahá'í Faith Index

<http://www.bahaindex.com>

The Bahá'í Faith Index can be defined as a Bahá'í internet portal, meaning that it is a search engine, web page directory by category, discussion area, news source, online bookstore, software resource, and chatroom all rolled into one. Primarily it is a search engine, containing at any given moment roughly 3,000 links. There is also a "random link" function.

A main aspect of the site is the discussion area, known as the "Bahá'í Forum". This is open to the public, but there is always the possibility of setting up usernames and group restrictions so that individual communities can privately discuss matters. The Bahá'í Faith Index is the Bahá'í equivalent of Yahoo! The site's primary aim is to index all Baha'i links into a search engine and directory. This means that all 3,000 links or so are hand-edited, and are not only put in the right categories in the search engine, but are put in whatever other categories they may belong in the directory listings. Every month I send out a "Bahá'í Internet Update" about new links and resources. This is an opt-in mailing list. Additionally I maintain a "What's New" page to document new additions to my search engine. The Bahá'í Faith Index is also the home page for the Baha'i Ring, a world-wide collection of Bahá'í web pages linked together with common navigation buttons (part of the Webring network at www.webring.com).

Ideally, one would be able to find information relevant to one's search after at most two or three clicks.

The Index is an Amazon Associate, meaning that one can search for Bahá'í books at Amazon.com and buy them, giving the webmaster of the Baha'i Faith Index a small commission on each sale (usually 2% or 3%). Per year this adds up to about \$40, which is used to pay for the domain name "bahaindex.com" and to make backups of the site on cd-rom.

The site also features a prominent section for languages other than English. The internet is international, and therefore I want to provide an opportunity to those whose native tongue is not English to read about the Baha'i Faith in their own language.

I don't only link to other sites' content - I have some of my own. For instance:

The Dawn-Breakers

<http://www.bahaindex.com/DAWN/>

A 700-page history of the early Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths, fully illustrated and annotated, as well as searchable

Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era

<http://www.bahaindex.com/NewEra/>

A classic introduction to the Baha'i Faith by J.E. Esslemont.

Huqúqu'lláh converter:

<http://www.bahaindex.com/huq.html>

Allows one to calculate Huqúqu'lláh in one's currency of choice.

There is, of course, much more to mention, but that can be discovered by simply browsing through the site.

—Casper Voogt

webmaster

<http://www.bahaindex.com/>

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Bahá'í Library

DEFINITIONS

- * The Baha'i Academics Resource Library is an online archive of primary and secondary sources and scholarly tools and resources.
- * I, Jonah Winters, run it as an individual and self-proclaimed executive editor. I would prefer to run the Library as but one member of a collaborative body, but thus far individuals sufficiently dedicated to the project have not stepped forward to help form such a body. At any one time I have assistance in formatting and proofreading documents from any half-dozen volunteers.
- * My material comes almost exclusively from submissions, usually from authors (or, in the case of letters from the Universal House of Justice, from recipients). Though I have permission to scan and post a large number of other materials, simple time constraints prevent this.

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES AND GROWTH IN 1999:

I am pleased to report a productive year. First, I moved the Library from its initial home at my old ISP to its own dedicated server, <http://bahai-library.org>. This has provided the Library with a range of facilities, disk space, and server reliability which has allowed for significant growth, both in terms of content and mandate.

From its humble origins in early 1997 as a venue for personal academic work — i.e., a typical grad student homepage — it has become the Internet's largest collection of Baha'i academic material and primary sources. In 1999

the Library grew to encompass all published Sacred Writings and a number of related primary source items, from provisional translations to original compilations to transcriptions of talks by notable Baha'í figures. As well, it has either published or re-published hundreds of secondary-source items, including academic articles, essays, books, and book reviews. Finally, a number of resource tools such as bibliographies and academic study guides have been contributed, including materials prepared for the Wilmette Institute. As well as "premiering" works online, the Library seeks to mirror any and all academic or primary source material appearing at any other website online. As there is still relatively such material on the internet, I believe that we have been successful at mirroring at least 95% of all such material posted at other sites.

The Bahá'í Academic Resource Library's mandate is simple, if ambitious. It seeks to make available any and all material on or related to the Bahá'í Faith which is either academic in origin or of potential use in academic research. The four criteria I use in deciding what to include are whether an item is (1) scholastically useful; (2) historically significant; (3) is a primary source, e.g. the Sacred Writings; or (4) has been published by reputable, scholastically-oriented agencies. This is usually regardless of content. That is, materials are neither accepted nor rejected on the basis of the author's belief or the relevance of the material to promoting entry by troops. However, the four criteria outlined above do tend to exclude deepening material, promotional items, and the majority of apologetics on the one hand, and polemical or excessively tendentious material on the other hand. The Library's mandate is not exclusively an "academic exercise," if the double entendre will be forgiven. Exceptions to these four criteria have been made when it was deemed necessary to favor community sensibilities over academic utility. For example, material that might pass one or even all four of these criteria that could yet be excessively controversial or inflammatory, or of a highly personal or sensitive nature, has been omitted. I do not view this as renouncing academic principles, but rather as necessary deference, a bow to the delicacies of working in an intra-faith environment in which one must honor both the primary audience and the contributors.

The Library's goals for the next two or three years are twofold. In the near future, I will simply continue adding material as it gets contributed, and as well I am gradually — as time allows and volunteer help appears and fades away — revising and improving the archive of published Sacred Writings. The more distant goal is to categorize and formalize the structure of the Library, using as a starting point the Library of Congress classification scheme expanded upon by William Collins and currently under implementation at the Baha'í World Center archives.

The Library also provides space to other, thematic collections of material maintained by other individuals, such as the Baha'í Association for the Arts, Baha'í materials in Russian, and Baha'í materials on East Asia. These are independent projects which are housed at but not maintained by the editors of

the Baha'í Library. The Baha'í Academics Resource Library is not affiliated with the International Baha'í Library, <http://library.bahai.org>.

To help proofread, format, or post material, or to contribute material, please write to me at winters@bahai-library.org.

Sincerely,

Jonah Winters, executive editor

H-Bahai

In 1999, the H-Bahai subscribers discussed, among many other things, the following: the Báb's Surat al-Hamd; Bahá'u'lláh's Ishráqát, Surah of the Companions, Tablet of Maqúd, Persian Tablet of the Holy Mariner, Tablet of the Temple, and Tablet of the Vision; they also discussed arranged marriage, Yale historian Abbas Amanat's book on the Bábí movement, *Resurrection and Renewal*; the biography of the BÁB'S wife, Khadijih Begam; issues in religious fundamentalism; philosophical theology and the status of proofs for the existence of God, as well as science and reason; the Buddha and non-theism; the Indian Bahá'í community and issues in the Indian Census and their relationship to Bhakti Hinduism; the meaning of intellect/wisdom and the maturation of the world; the human rights situation of Bahá'ís in Iran; and Vance Salisbury's views concerning the textual history of Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*.

H-Bahai also digitally published large amounts of text that is freely available on the World Wide Web, including:

William Garlington. "The Development of the Bahá'í Faith in Malwa: 1941-1974." *Occasional Papers in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Bahá'í Scriptures." *Occasional Papers in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2 (April, 1999).

both at <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/bhpapers.htm> ;

and

Juan R. I. Cole Bahá'u'lláh's Commentary on a Verse of Rumi *Research Notes in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 3, no. 1 (January 1999)

Frank Lewis Scripture as Literature *Research Notes in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 3, no. 2 (April 1999)

Sepehr Manuchehri, The Practice of Taqíyyih (Dissimulation) in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions, *Research Notes in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (September 1999)

at <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/notes/research.htm> ;

and

Denis MacEoin “Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of the Bell (Lawh an-Naqus) for the Báb.” Arabic Text appended. Translations of Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Texts (Reprint Edition). vol. 3, no. 1 (February, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole “Shoghi Effendi on the Charity Fund.” Translations of Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Texts, vol. 3, no. 2 (March, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole “Bahá'u'lláh's Surah of the Companions (Surat al-Ashab): Text, Introduction and Translation.” Translations of Shaykhi, Bábí and Bahá'í Texts, vol. 3, no. 3 (November, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole “Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets of the Holy Mariner: Text and Translation.” Translations of Shaykhi, Babi and Bahá'í Texts, vol. 3, no. 4 (December, 1999).

It reprinted:

Browne, Edward Granville. *A Year Amongst the Persians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927. [First published A & C Black, Ltd., 1893].

Browne, Edward Granville. *A Traveller's Narrative (Makala-i-Shakhsi Sayyah) Written to Illustrate the Episode of the Báb*. By Abbas Efendi, Son of Bahá'u'lláh. Volume 1: Persian Text. Volume II: English Translation and Notes. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891).

— — — —. “Personal Reminiscences of the Bábí Insurrection at Zanjan in 1850” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* Vol. 29 (1897): pages 761-827.

— — — —. “Autobiography and Silence: The Early Career of Shaykhu'r-Ra'is Qajar,” in Johann Christoph Bürgel and Isabel Schayani, eds., *Iran im 19. Jahrhundert und die Entstehung der Baha'i-Religion* (Zürich: Georg Olms Verlag, 1998), pp. 91-126.

at : <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/index/diglib/diglib.htm>

It also digitally posted, in Arabic and Persian:

The following works by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá (<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/abtext.htm>):

Makatib-i Hadrat-i ‘Abdu'l-Baha khitaab bih Yuhanna Da'ud (“Letters of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá to Yuhanna Da'ud”). MS. Digitally Published, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.

Majmu'ih-'i Makatib-i Hadrat-i ‘Abdu'l-Bahá (“Collected Letters of ‘Abdu'l-

Bahá”). Volume 75. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1978. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999. Prayers.

Maqalih-'i Shakhsi Sayyah kid dar qadiyyih-i Báb nivishti ast [*A Traveller's Narrative*] Ed. and Trans. E. G. Browne. 2 vols.: Persian Text Volume 1. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891) Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.

and:

Ardikani, Sadri Navabzadih. “Matalibi dar barih-'i Tarikh-i Nabil-I Zarandi” (Issues in the Study of the Chronicle of Nabil Zarandi). *Mutali'i-i Ma`arif-i Baha'i* no. 18. (Tehran: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 134 B.E./C.E. 1978). Reprinted, Lansing, Mi.: H-Bahai, 1999.

And the following works by the Báb (<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/index/albab.htm>):

Majmu'ih-'i Athar-i Hadrat-i A'la (“Collected Letters of the Báb”). Volume 40. Iran National Baha'i Archives Private Printing: Tehran, c. 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999. Notes: Contains Tafsir Surat wa'l-'Asr, Ithbat an-Nubuwwah al-Khassah, Dar Bayan-i I'tiqadat, Javab-I Su'al-i Hadrat-i Vali, Javab-i Su'al-i Mirza Sa'id Ardistani, Javab-I Su'al-i Hadrat-i Muhammad 'Ali Mudhhib, Risalat al-'Alamin al-Ukhra.

Majmu'ih-'i az athar-i Nuqtih-'i Ula va Subh-i Azal Tehran, n.d. (1950?). Digitally reprinted (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Risalah fi an-Nubuwwah al-Khassah (Treatise on the Special Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad) MS in private hands. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat al-Baqarah (Commentary on the Surah of the Cow).. Iran National Baha'i Archives, Private Printing, no. 69, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat al-Hamd (Commentary on the Fatihah) Iran National Bahá'í Archives, Private Printing, no. 69, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat al-Qadr (Commentary on the Surah of Power [Qur'án 97]). Iran National Bahá'í Archives, Private Printing, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat at-Tawhid (Commentary on the Surah of Unity [Qur'án 112]). Iran National Bahá'í Archives, Private Printing, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tasbih Fatimah (In Praise of Fatimah). Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1998);

The following works by Bahá'u'lláh (<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/bahatext.htm>):

- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 26. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1976.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 35. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 42. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 48. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 49. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 57. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 61. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”).
Volume 66. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977.
Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- Panj Kanz (“The Five Treasures”). Oral discourse of Bahá'u'lláh in early 1860s in Baghdad to a handful of Iranian expatriate princes, recorded by Nabil Zarandi. Published in *Ahang-i Badi`* (Publication details not available). References: Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* 4 vols. (Oxford: George Ronald, 1974-1987), 2:140-143.

and

Fadil Mazandarani, *Tarikh-i Zuhur al-Haqq* (History of the Babi-Bahá'í Religions in Iran), Volumes 5 and 6. Lansing, Michigan: H-Bahai, 1999 at <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/index/diglib/mazand1.htm>

Zanjani, ‘Abd al-Ahad. Account of the Siege of Zanjan (in Persian). Persian MS. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahá'í Digital Publications, 1999).

Notes on Contributors

Mahyar Amjadi is practicing as a dentist in the state of Victoria. He has a keen interest in the arts and its impacts on society. The implications of the life in the Bahá'í community as well interactions with the society at large, have been the points of inspiration for the on-going thinking process outlined in this paper.

Belinda Belton grew up in New Guinea and Rhodesia, before settling in Perth. She studied and worked in Japan for two and a half years and received a B.A. in Asian Studies from Curtin University in 1991. Her poem ‘Sixteen’ was awarded in the West Australian Young Writer’s Award when she was in year eleven. She has had poetry included in anthologies by the Poet’s Union and UNE. Cognizant of the passion and the poignancy with which the early Baha’i believers expressed their faith through poetry, Belinda looks forward to a flourishing of all the Baha’i arts, including verse, in the years ahead. She works as a flight attendant for Qantas and lives in the Blue Mountains with her husband Terry.

Robin Chandler is a tenured Associate Professor at Northeastern University in Boston. An artist and sociologist, Dr. Chandler has conducted research in the U.S., Brazil, southern Africa, and Australia for more than 20 years. A proponent of action research in the areas of globalism and identity, cultural policy advising, multimedia applications, and micro-enterprise development in rural arts, crafts, and cultural tourism has earned her grants from the NEA, NSF, the Fullbright Commission, and numerous awards and honors. As founding-director of Caravan for international Culture (CIC-1980) Chandler’s reputation as an educational consultant and teacher-trainer has focused on education for global citizenship. Widely published in the area of popular culture and the arts, Chandler is an exhibiting artist with the U. S. State Departments’ Arts in Embassies Program, and director of The Peace Doors Project.

Miriam Dixson, B.A. History Hons.(Melbourne); M.A. (History Hons. Melbourne); Ph.D. (Australian National University); D.Litt. (hon.causa. University of New England.); Hon.Fellow (University of New England). Miriam Dixson has taught history in the History Departments at the Universities of Melbourne, New South Wales, Monash, and the University of New England. She has been a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar, a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University and a member of the Federal Government’s Commission for the Future. In August 1999, the University of New South Wales Press published Dixson’s most wide-ranging analysis of Australian identity to date, *The Imaginary Australian*. This book has drawn considerable acclaim. In addition, she

is the author of many other publications including books, monographs, book chapters and journal articles.

Karel Fontaine was educated to matriculation and then secretarial training. She worked in advertising, publishing, and art gallery management. Emigrated to Canada in 1967; again managed an art gallery. Travelled and taught English in South America, 1969; married an Australian; arrived Australia 1971. Mother to three, grandmother to one, traveller, geographer, artist - currently exploring textiles, in particular felt. Bahá'í since 1983. Lives in the bush in Tasmania.

Paul Gerard is a retired librarian, living in Tasmania. He was introduced to the Australian National Bahá'í Centre's library, and its problems, by his daughter, June Perkins. Nowadays, Mr. Gerard's most important job is caring for his handicapped son - but he finds some spare time to work on projects like this one.

Michael Knopf has a Bachelor of Music with Honours in composition. He currently works as a lecturer in music at James Cook University in Cairns. He has self-published over 30 original works for solo instruments and vocal pieces including *The Mountain of God* for soli, chorus, and orchestra. He became a Bahá'í in 1971 and has served in various capacities since that time. He currently serves as an Auxiliary Board Member for Propagation.

Sepehr Manuchehri is an Electrical Engineer - Curtin University of Technology MBA (Human Resources) - University of Western Australia. His research interests are Bábí history, theology and thought. Published: "Features of the Bábí Resistance at Shaykh Tabarsi" in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies Australia* 1998. Translated many extracts from primary Bahá'í sources which are about to be digitally published. He is currently working on a biography of Mirza Yahya Subh-i Azal, the half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh. This paper started off as a Chapter to this book and gradually expanded to become an independent work. It relies mostly on primary source material, most of which have not been translated into English before. Understanding the process of Taqiyyih gives a better insight into the survival of the Bábí religion and dynamics of the early Bahá'í communities.

Vahid Payman is a psychogeriatrician and a cartoonist. His main interest is the human psyche and its pictorial representation. Under the name of "VADO", he held his first major exhibition called "The Bot Series" in Melbourne, December 1999.

June Perkins is a devoted parent of two, writer & academic whose poetry has appeared most recently in publications such as *ANU Poet's Lunch Compilation* (2000) and *Ulitarra*. She has worked on a number of collaborative dramas with women and youth in theatre and radio and served in a variety of committees within the Bahá'í community at national, local and regional levels since her youth. Her parents declared as Bahá'ís in Tasmania in 1975. Through them she is a world citizen whose heritage includes Mekeo, English, Irish and French ancestors. Her present goals are to finish her doctorate at University of Sydney, learn to drive, get more sleep, and move into filmmaking.

Ron Price is 57 and has just retired after a thirty-year career as a teacher in primary, secondary and post-secondary schools. He lives with his wife and son in Tasmania. He became a Bahá'í in Canada in 1959. Forty of his booklets of poetry, entitled 'Pioneering Over Three Epochs,' are now in the Bahá'í World Centre Library. They are part of the celebration of the Mt. Carmel Project and of the 'befitting crescendo' to the achievements of the Bahá'í community in the twentieth century.

Negin Sanaei graduated from Macquarie University in 1997 with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Economics. She currently works for Challenger International Ltd as the Training Coordinator for the Unit Trust Area. Her scholarly interests include global economic affairs and the international political economy climate.

Walter Waia is originally from Saibai Island in the Torres Strait, Qld. He and his family currently live on Thursday Island where he works as an Executive Officer of the Native Title Office, Torres Strait Regional Authority. Walter is a poet and a writer. In 2000, he participated in the Queensland Writers Centre's first Indigenous Mentorship Program. He is currently completing his autobiography. He was introduced to the Bahá'í Faith in 1986 and declared his belief in 1991. Since that time he states that: "My life took a new direction and my perspective to the world realised a real journey."