Global Claims, Global Aims:
An analysis of Shoghi Effendi's
The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh (1929-36)

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This paper addresses two main questions: What is Shoghi Effendi's (1897-1957) discourse on 'globalization' and 'globality'? and What are the global[1] claims and global aims in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh?*

GLOBAL MISSIONARY PLANS

Global missionary plans[2] in the Baha'i Faith are traceable to 'Abdu'l-Baha in 1916-17, but they were unrealized during his lifetime.[3] At the beginning of Shoghi Effendi's 'ministry' (1922-57) he wrote *Bahá'í Administration* (1923-33) where he urged the Baha'is to spread globally (Shoghi Effendi 1928: 69) but the first executed systematic plan had to wait until 1936 when he announced 'The First Seven Year Plan' (1937-44).[4] Subsequently other *national* plans were developed.[5] The aim of 'The Second Seven Year Plan' (1946-53), however, was to establish local spiritual assemblies in various countries on *other continents*.[6] None of these plans, however, could be considered global but where either national, continental, or, at the most, *international* in scope. The year 1951-53 is a watermark in the geographical expansion of the Baha'i Faith. In 1951 Shoghi Effendi (1965: 104) coins the noteworthy term 'global crusade' and launches the missionary plan in 1953 via four 'intercontinental conferences' held on four different continents.[7] Thus, 'The Global Crusade' (1953-63)[8] can be said to be the first truly *global* missionary plan.[9] Shoghi Effendi played an

[1]The term 'global' appears already in 1676 in *Merriam Webster Dictionary* where it means 'of, relating to, or involving the entire world' and it seen as synonymous with the term 'worldwide.' Similarly, according to *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* the term 'global' means 'If something is global, it relates to the whole world.' It is distinguished from the word 'international' which is ordinarily understood as '1. involving several countries: involving two or more countries or their citizens, 2. crossing national boundaries: extending beyond or across national boundaries, 3. of relations among nations: concerned with relations between nations' (Encarta 2003). See Scholte 2002: 8-9 and footnote 9.

[2]These plans are fourteen tablets that are addressed to the N. American Baha'is and published in 1919 as *Tablets of the Divine Plan*. The mandate in these tablets is to spread the Baha'i Faith to all the five continents including 120 territories and islands.

[3]When 'Abdu'l-Baha passed away in 1921 there were neither National Spiritual Assemblies (NSAs - the nationally and democratically elected governing and administrative body of the Baha'i Faith) nor any administrative order and the Baha'is numbered only c. 200,000 followers out of which 90 percent were Iranian (Hofman 1993: 92; Smith 2000: 138). Geographically, the Baha'i Faith was largely confined to Iran with few followers in residing in 35 countries, mainly the Middle East, N. America and Europe (Smith 2000: 137-154).

[4]This plan was directed to the N. American Baha'is to 'establish one local spiritual assembly in every state of the United States and every province of Canada, and to created one centre in each Latin American republic' (Momen 1989: 180).

[5]E.g., India/Burma, the British Isles, Germany/Austria, and Australia/New Zealand.

[6]Europe and Africa.

[7]Africa (Kampala), America (Wilmette), Europe (Stockholm), and Asia (New Delhi).

[8]'The Global Crusade' is also known as 'The Ten Year Plan' (Hassall 1994/95).

[9]Shoghi Effendi (1971: 152, italics added) writes 'Let there be no mistake. The avowed, the primary aim of this Spiritual Crusade is none other than the conquest of the citadels of men's hearts. *The theater of its operations is the entire planet.*' Indeed, similar to 'Abdu'l-Baha's global missionary plan, its aim was 'to settle Bahá'ís in every significant territory and island group throughout the world' (Smith 2000: 272). At the beginning of global

important role of the international expansion of the Baha'i Faith but he is also the key figure in its global phase.[10] The focus of this paper is not on Shoghi Effendi's global missionary plans but on his globalization discourse and the global claims and aims in one of his most important doctrinal[11] documents - *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* (1929-36) – that *precedes* his plans. As such one purpose of this paper is to retrospectively delineate the ideological discourse at the basis for such subsequent global mission. It is argued that there is an implicit dialectic in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* where e.g., the Baha'i Faith is defined as a 'world religion' (global claim) while envisioning a future 'Baha'i commonwealth' (global aim). In order to shed light on this implicit dialectic it is maintained that an Aristotelian[12] causality – his idea of a final or teleological cause – is essential and recurrent. In Aristotle's analysis of causality, all things have a purpose or aim, actualized as various potentials develop over a period of time (Aristotle *Physics* II, 7. See Waterfield 1996). No scholarly work so far has put Shoghi Effendi's writings in globalization and Aristotelian contexts. The present paper is therefore preliminary research in a novel territory of Baha'i scholarship.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, GLOBALIZATION, AND GLOBALITY

In order to portray Shoghi Effendi's global discourse some terminology needs to be discussed. The term 'globalization' appeared in the English language in 1959 (Schreiter 1997: 5) – two years after Shoghi Effendi's death. The term 'globality' is recent and this paper follows Scholte's (2002: 2, 4) distinction between globality as 'the condition' and globalization as 'the trend.' The latter term has during the last decades generated not only a variety of definitions[13] and conceptualizations but great theoretical implications (Robertson 1992; Waters 1995; Kofman & Youngs 1996; Beck 1998; Beynon & Dunkerley 1999; Scholte 1999, 2002; Baumann 2000). The idea of something worldwide is inherent, but not exhaustive, to definitions of globalization (Giddens 1990: 64; Robertson 1992: 8; Stackhouse 2000: 22). Recently there has been an upsurge in cultural dimensions of globalization where religion has an important role (Featherstone 1990, 1995; Robertson 1992; Friedman 1994; Appadurai 1996; Cvetkovich & Kellner 1997; Jameson, & Myoshi 1998; Haynes 1999; Skelton & Allen 1999; Tomlinson 1999). Rather than seeing globalization as a unified or one-dimensional concept Appadurai (1998) prefer five global 'scapes'[14] and Waters (1995: 187) suggests the

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crusade the Baha'i Faith was found within 128 countries and territories and when Shoghi Effendi unexpectedly passed away in London in 1957 the numerical growth was insignificant but it was established in 254 countries with about 50 NSAs (Rabbani 1969: 391-392).

[10]Smith (2000: 137-140) divides the expansion of the Baha'i Faith into three distinct phases: 1) the 'Islamic period' (1844-c.1892); 2) 'Internationalization' (c. 1892-1953); and 3) Global expansion (from 1953). See also Rabbani 1969: 94.

[11]Hofman (1991: 18) states that 'Without deep study of this basic document, no Bahá'í can claim to be truly knowledgeable of his Faith. Indeed, no one can have a deep, authentic knowledge of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh without study of all these expository and exegetical works of the Guardian.' See footnote 22.

[12]Baha'u'llah (1978: 147), 'Abdu'l-Baha (1978: 7; 1981: 15) and Shoghi Effendi (1991: 154) give several references to Aristotle in their writings. It is also significant that Kluge (2000: 3) states that there is an 'Aristotelian substratum or soil of the Baha'i Writings' and that 'the Baha'i Writings re-affirm many of Aristotle's philosophical ideas and methods of studying reality and adapt and develop them to their own unique purpose of laying the philosophical foundations for a Baha'u'llah's new world order' (Kluge 2002).

[13]Beck (1998: 36, translation mine) states that 'Globalization has surely been the most used and abused, most seldom defined, probably the most misunderstood, vague and politically effective slogan during the last years and will be during the years to come' (Cf. Robertson 2000: 63 and Scholte 2002). Thus, it is no surprise that authors on globalization are neither unanimous regarding its definition (Schreiter 1997: 4) nor do they agree when this process started (Schreiter 1997: 5; Stackhouse & Paris 2000: 8). Beck (1998: 37) gives various dates: Marx/Wallerstein 15th century; Giddens 16th century; Robertson 1870-1920; Perlmutter 1989. Rifkin (2003: 5) argues that it is traceable to 1944.

[14]1) ethnoscapes, 2) technoscapes, 3) financescapes, 4) mediascapes, and 5) ideoscapes.

term 'sacriscapes' for religion. Accordingly, globalization is currently perceived as a multi-dimensional phenomenon (Beyer 1994: 15; Waters 1995: 14-16; Robertson 2000: 54; Stackhouse 2000: 37-38).

Shoghi Effendi showed great interests in both education and world matters[15] and during his international studies[16] he chose subjects like economics, social sciences, political science and philosophy (Khadem 1999). In 1931 he writes that 'political and economic unification of the world' is 'a principle that has been increasingly advocated in recent times' (1991: 34). Robertson (1992: 8, italics added) portrays globalization as 'the *compression* of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole' and 'the overall process by which the entire world becomes increasingly interdependent, so as to yield a 'single place'. We could even go so far as to call the latter a 'world society', as long as we do not suggest by that term that nationally constituted societies are disappearing' (Robertson 1989: 8, italics added. Cf. Scholte 2002: 14, 16). Similarly, Scholte (2002: 2) defines globalization as 'the spread of transplanetary – and in more recent times – supraterritorial – connections between people.' Although Shoghi Effendi does not use Robertson's term 'compression,' he writes in 1931 that the world is '*contracted* and transformed into a highly complex organism by the marvellous progress achieved in the realm of physical science, by the world-wide expansion of commerce and industry,' and that 'the fortunes of its races, nations and peoples becoming inextricably interwoven' (Shoghi Effendi, 1991: 47, 59, 198). Similar ideas are found in other early writings. In 1939 he writes (1990: 87, italics added) that 'The world is *contracting* into a neighborhood,'[17] and in 1941 he writes of 'the fundamental changes effected in the economic life of society and the interdependence of the nations, and as the consequence of *the contraction of the world*, through the revolution in the means of transportation and communication' and that:

The world is, in truth, moving on towards its *destiny*. The interdependence of the peoples and nations of the earth, whatever the leaders of the divisive forces of the world may say or do, is already an accomplished fact. Its unity in the economic sphere is now understood and recognized. The welfare of the part means the welfare of the whole, and the distress of the part brings distress to the whole (Shoghi Effendi 1980: 122, italics added).

Stackhouse (2000: 22, italics added) writes that globalization 'combines the notion of a worldwide, ordered place of habitation subject to *transformation*.' In 1931 Shoghi Effendi describes his visions of 'present-day society' that implies 'a change such as the world has not yet experienced' and that it:

calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilized world -- a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script and language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 43).

Sentences like 'the world, contracted and *transformed* into a single highly complex organism' and passages like 'Great and far-reaching as have been those changes in the past, they cannot appear, when viewed in their proper perspective, except as subsidiary adjustments preluding *that transformation* of unparalleled majesty and scope which humanity is in this age bound to undergo' also testify to this theme of transformation (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 46, italics added).

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[15]Ruhiyyih Rabbani (1969: 177) describes Shoghi Effendi as 'the keenest observer of political events and kept abreast of all happenings' and the 'exactitude with which he compiled statistics, sought out historic facts, worked on every minute detail of his maps and plans was astonishing' (Rabbani 1969: 127-28).
[16]The French Jesuit school, Collège des Frères, in Haifa, Catholic Boarding School and Syrian Protestant College (later known as the American University) in Beirut, and Balliol College at Oxford University (1920-21).
[17]Cf. Shoghi Effendi (1965: 126) and McLuhan's (1962) term 'global village.'

Moreover, globalization is portrayed as multi-dimensional involving 'transportation and communication' (communication), 'demilitarization' and 'political machinery' (politics), 'spiritual aspiration' (religion), 'trade and finance' (economics), and 'script and language' (culture). Noticed that such a process is 'not only necessary but *inevitable,* and that its *realization* is fast approaching' (1991: 43, italics added) and that the world is 'moving on towards its *destiny.*' Key terms as inevitability, realization, and destiny, coupled with world processes suggest an underlying Aristotelian teleology as well as global aims.

Above Robertson defines globalization in terms of a 'single place' and a 'world society.' Waters (1995: 5, italics added), similarly, states that in 'a globalized world there will be *a single society* and culture occupying the planet tend towards high levels of differentiation, multi-centricity and chaos.' Above Shoghi Effendi describes 'a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life' and 'yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units.' Thus, Shoghi Effendi, Robertson and Waters envision not only a 'world society' but emphasize that it will be diverse or heterogeneous. It is apparent that although Shoghi Effendi was unable to utilize the term 'globalization' there is an agreement between Shoghi Effendi and authors on globalization it is a:

- multi-dimensional phenomenon
- contraction/compression of the world (increasing inter-dependency)
- major transition/transformation
- move towards a single/world society, yet diversified

It is argued that the first three points depict 'globalization' (the trend) and the fourth point is 'globality' (the condition). Conceptualized in this manner Shoghi Effendi's global discourse predates modern authors on the subject more than half a century.

THE WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh: Selected Letters[18] was written to the N. American Baha'i communities during 1929-36. It is significant that this document was written during a phase-transition period between an end-phase administration ('the Administrative Order')[19] and a start-phase of missionary plans (1937-63).[20] It is also noteworthy that Ruhiyyih Rabbani writes that it was:

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[18]Although the original letters included neither a title nor subtitles, they were 'added with Shoghi Effendi's approval for the convenience of the reader' (Holley 'Introduction' to *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh,* p. v). Yet, in the very first letter, entitled 'The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh' the phrase 'the World Order ushered in by Bahá'u'lláh' occurs on the very first page (p. 3). The exact phrase 'the World Order Bahá'u'lláh' occurs 7 times (p. 35, 74, 148, 171, 185, 194, 195) and the phrase 'world order' 25 times. The letters are: 1) 'The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh' (27 February 1929); 2) 'The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh: Further Considerations' (21 March 1930); 3) 'The Goal of the New World Order' (28 November 193 1); 4) 'The Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh' (21 March 1932); 5) 'America and the Most Great Peace' (21 April 1933); 6) 'The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh' (8 February 1934); and 7) 'The Unfoldment of World Civilization' (11 March 1936). For a short summary of these letters see Smith 2000: 364-65.
[19]This can be seen from his correspondence with the N. American community, published as *Bahá'í Administration* (1923-33).
[20]Bramson-Lerche (1982: 266) writes that 'In 1926 Shoghi Effendi began to emphasize the transition from concentrating on developing the administrative institutions to using them to further propagation efforts' and that after Shoghi Effendi had 'established a basic understanding in the American community of the principles of the Bahá'í Administrative Order, he began to explain the principles of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh' (Bramson-Lerche 1982: 257). It is also noteworthy that Momen & Smith (2003) divides Shoghi Effendi's 'ministry' into

designed to clarify for the believers the true meaning and *purpose* of their Faith, its *tenets,* its implications, its *destiny* and *future* and to guide the *unfolding* and slowly maturing Community in North America and in the West to a better understanding of its duties, its privileges and its *destiny* (Rabbani 1969: 212, italics added).

Tenets (claims) is associated with *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh,* and note, in an Aristotelian teleology, how many times terms like 'purpose,' 'destiny' and 'future' (aims) are employed. The sixth letter, 'The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah' (1934), is relevant since Ruhiyyih Rabbani (1969: 213, clarification added) states 'I know from his [Shoghi Effendi] remarks that he considered he had said all he had to say, in many ways, in the Dispensation.' Moreover, it is significant that it is referred to his 'confession of faith' (Hofman 1993: 99) and 'doctrinal statement' (Smith 2000: 122). Such remarks infer the doctrinal status of this letter but such claim is also be substantiated and corroborated from terms and phrases used throughout *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* e.g., 'basic principles,' 'essential verities,' 'cardinal tenets' and 'fundamentals' (Shoghi Effendi, 1991: 3, 123, 199, 15).[21] The phrase 'fundamental verities and ideals of their Faith' may be interpreted as representing both claims and aims. In addition, Shoghi Effendi 1991: 147) refers to 'this general exposition of the fundamental verities of the Faith,' and that he has 'endeavored to dissipate . . . misapprehensions' (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 131).[22] Considering these points this paper concurs with previous Baha'i scholars who consider *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* one of Shoghi Effendi's major doctrinal work and a main source for understanding the Baha'i Faith.[23]

Before analyzing the global claims and global aims in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* it is important to briefly consider 'three Baha'i areas' 1) the Baha'i Faith, 2) the Administrative Order, and 3) the World Order of Baha'u'llah.[24]

In *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* the Baha'i Faith is divided into 'three ages that constitute the component parts of the Bahá'í Dispensation' (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 144). Each age or period in this dispensation is described in significant terms: 'the Transitional and Formative period of the Faith,' or 'the formative age,' which commenced with Shoghi Effendi's own 'ministry' (1922-) (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 98, 143). This period or age can be seen in contradistinction to the 'heroic age . . . the Primitive, the Apostolic Age,' that starts with the 'Declaration of the Báb,' (1844) and concludes with the passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha (1921) (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 52, 89). The formative age or period will, in turn, give rise to 'the Golden Age of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh,'(Shoghi Effendi 1991: 49, 53) 'that golden

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two phases: 1) The Development of the Baha'i Administrative Order (1922-c.1937) and 2) The Systematic Spread of the Baha'i Faith (c.1937-63). See also Hatcher & Martin 1989: 167.

[21]Variations of the most common phrases are: 'fundamental verities and ideals of their Faith' (pp. 66, 99, 147, 164); 'root principles' (pp. 99, 116); and 'this cardinal principle' (pp. 116, 151).

[22]The two first letters of *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* were addressed to Ruth White and Ahmad Sohrab, an American and a Persian Baha'i respectively, who both questioned the idea of Baha'i Administration and seriously attacked Shoghi Effendi's 'Guardianship.' It is noteworthy that Bramson-Lerche (1988: 276, italics added) states that 'White's attack . . . caused Shoghi Effendi to begn [*sic*] to synthesize and expound those *doctrines* in the Bahá'í Faith which would lay a solid foundation for *expansion* and give the Bahá'ís a more profound understanding of their religion, especially of the administrative order and world order.' Thus, there is a dialectic between doctrines (claims) and missionary expansion (aims).

[23]It is noteworthy that in 1987 a letter written on the behalf of The Universal House of Justice (quoted in Bergsmo 1991: 9) writes that 'such well-read and familiar titles as Bahá'í Administration, The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, The Advent of Divine Justice . . . [etc] . . . form part of the primary literature of the Faith.' *The World Order of Baha'u'llah* and *The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah* are also offered as internet-based distance-learning courses by the Wilmette Institute (Illinois, USA), see Wilmette Institute. See footnote 7.

[24]This phrase should not be confused with the title of *The World Order of Baha'u'llah,* but is a concept that Shoghi Effendi frequently employs in *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*. See footnote 16.

millennium,' (1991: 74, 156) 'the Most Great Peace,' (1991: 19, 69) or 'the Kingdom of God' (1991: 39, 44). Not only is the age described as 'transitional' or 'formative' but the *Baha'i Faith* itself is rendered as being 'in its embryonic state,' 'nascent,' an 'infant,' 'slowly maturing,' and 'slowly crystallizing' (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 23, 54, 74, 199).

The *Administrative Order* is described as being 'in infancy,' a 'newborn child,' 'nascent,' 'crystallizing,' and in a 'process of slow and steady consolidation' (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 156, 144, 98, 154). This Administrative Order is supposed to give rise to the World Order of Baha'u'llah, illustrated as 'embryonic,' a 'gradual emergence,' 'yet unborn' and it 'is slowly and imperceptibly rising' (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 185, 29, 168, 24). Evidently, a number of organic metaphors[25] portray such a process of growth and unfoldment of potentials, implying an Aristotelian teleology. The next passage utilizes an organic metaphor associating the 'three ages':

> The period in which the seed of the Faith had been slowly germinating [the Heroic Age] is thus intertwined both with the one which must witness its efflorescence [the Formative Age] and the subsequent age in which that seed will have finally yielded its golden fruit [the Golden Age] (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 144, clarification added).[26]

Notice the sequence: seed → germinating → efflorescence → fruit. Shoghi Effendi (1991: 155, italics added) also uses phrases like 'the *organic* institutions of this great, this expanding Order.'[27] The relationship between the areas above and the usage of organic metaphors is clearer in the next passage:

> Though the framework of His Administrative Order has been erected, and the Formative Period of the Bahá'í Era has begun, yet the promised Kingdom into which the seed of His institutions must ripen *remains as yet uninaugurated* (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 168, italics added).

Observe that 'the promised Kingdom' is described 'as *yet uninaugurated.'* Shoghi Effendi even states that he considers it his 'that the promised glories of the Sovereignty which the Bahá'í teachings foreshadow, can only be revealed *in the fullness of time*' (1991: 16, italics added). Thus, the full potential is still to be actualized in the future.

In this brief analysis Shoghi Effendi portrays the Baha'i Faith (1929-36) as dialectically positioned *between* two great ages or periods, and that 'three Baha'i areas' are seen as part of a slow and yet steady evolution of organic processes developing over time (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 23, 155). Thus, in an Aristotelian teleology, the Baha'i Faith (1929-36) is depicted in a state of formation or transition:

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The Baha'i Faith

Heroic Age → **Formative Age** → Golden Age

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(Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá)　**(Shoghi Effendi)**　(World Order of Baha'u'llah)

|

(Administration /***The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*/** Plans)

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[25]Hatcher & Martin 1989: 184-185.

[26]This interpretation is based on the fact that Shoghi Effendi mentions the 'three ages' in the earlier sentence.

[27]For an analysis of Shoghi Effendi's 'Organic Order' see Coe 1993: 25-56. For a discussion on 'organicism', which is one of S. C. Pepper's 'Root Metaphors' or 'world hypotheses,' see Pepper 1942.

GLOBAL CLAIMS[28]

The first area, reviewed above as Shoghi Effendi's discourse on 'globalization' or 'globality,' does not directly involve the Baha'i Faith but pertains to 'the world':

The World

- 'the world, contracted and transformed   (p. 47)
  into a highly complex organism'
- 'the fortunes of its races, nations and peoples   (p. 59)
  becoming inextricably interwoven'
- 'that universal fermentation which, in   (p. 170)
  every continent of the globe and
  in every department of human life'
- 'a world of inter-dependent peoples and nations'   (p. 198)

Subsequent lists concern the 'three Baha'i areas' discussed above:

The Baha'i Faith

- 'the world-wide Faith'   (p. 8)
- 'the international character of the Cause'   (p. 9)
- 'the world-wide law of Bahá'u'lláh'   (p. 41)
- 'insists upon the imperative **claims** of a unified world'   (p. 42, emphasis added)
- 'Baha'u'llah's all-embracing dominion'   (p. 47)
- 'their world-embracing Cause'   (p. 53)
- 'its world-embracing program'   (p. 55)
- 'a far-flung Faith'   (pp. 66, 98)
- 'transcends political and social boundaries, which   (p. 66)
  includes within its pale so great a variety of
  races and nations'
- 'Its world-unifying principles'   (p. 73)
- 'the universality of its teachings'   (p. 93)
- 'has assimilated varied races, nationalities,   (p. 197)
  creeds and classes'
- 'a Faith established within the jurisdiction of no   (p. 199)
  less than forty different countries'
- 'From Iceland to Tasmania . . . this world-enfolding   (p. 201)
  System, this many-hued and firmly-knit Fraternity'

The Administrative Order

- 'the world-wide Administration'   (p. 47)
- 'this great, this ever-expanding Order'   (p. 155)

The World Order of Baha'u'llah

- 'this world-embracing . . . Order'   (p. 18)

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[28]A difference between a claim and an aim is that the former pertains more to statements that relate to *what is* (the presence), or in Aristotelian terms, what is *potential.* In this context it is closely related to doctrines (although doctrines may also be related to prophecy in the sense of futurology). An *aim* is more related to purpose, intention, and plan, or in Aristotelian terms, what can be *actualized.* As such an aim is related to *what will be* (the future). In this context it relates to, anticipates, and precedes, global activities and processes, especially global missionary ideas and plans.

Obviously, the *present* (1929-36) nature of the Baha'i Faith is described most expressively and little attention is paid to the two 'orders.' These, it is argued, are unrealized phenomena ascribed to a *future* globality.

Another way to describe the global claims is statements that define the Baha'i Faith a *world* religion. Such statements are seen in the seventh and last letter, 'The Unfoldment of World Civilization' (1936), where a whole section - subtitled 'A World Religion'- is devoted to this definition:

Ceasing to designate to itself a movement, a fellowship and the like -- designations that did grave injustice to its *ever-unfolding* system -- dissociating itself from such appellations as Bábí sect, Asiatic cult, and offshoot of Shí'ih Islám, with which the ignorant and the malicious were wont to describe it, refusing to be labeled as a mere philosophy of life, or as an eclectic code of ethical conduct, or even as new religion the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is now visibly succeeding *in demonstrating **its claim** to be regarded as a World Religion, destined to attain,* in the *in the fullness of time,* the status of a world-embracing Commonwealth, which would be at once the instrument and the guardian of the Most Great Peace announced by its Author (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 196, emphasis and italics added).

This passage is central, not only because the word claim is employed, but also since the Baha'i Faith is claimed an 'ever-unfolding system,' 'a world religion,' (global claim) while 'destined to attain, in the fullness of time, the status of a world-embracing Commonwealth' (global aim). Thus, although the Baha'i Faith is described as global, its full potential, in an Aristotelian teleology, has yet to be actualized in a future globality.

GLOBAL AIMS

The third letter, 'The Goal of a New World Order' (1932), is pertinent since Shoghi Effendi's secretary referred to it as follows:

Shoghi Effendi wrote his last general letter to the western friends because he felt that the public should be made to understand the attitude the Bahá'í Faith maintains towards prevailing economic and political problems. We would let the world know *what the real aim of Bahá'u'lláh was* (Compilation 1991, italics added).

Again Shoghi Effendi's economic and political interest is mentioned. Shoghi Effendi writes, for example, that 'It is towards this goal – *the Goal of a new World Order . . . all-embracing in scope . . .* that a harassed humanity must strive' (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 34, italics added). 'The Goal' is synonymous with aims and the phrase 'all-embracing in scope' is tantamount to global and together they convey a global aim. Such global aims are nowhere clearer in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* than in the last letter, 'The Unfoldment of World Civilization' (1936), especially under the subtitle 'World Unity the Goal':

Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society *is now approaching.* Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is *the goal* towards which a harassed humanity *is striving.* Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty *is moving* towards a climax. A world, *growing to maturity,* must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 202, italics added).

World unity is clearly seen as an inevitable and more mature stage in the unfoldment of humanity's collective life depicted as: family → tribe → city-state → nation → world unity. This scheme, together with phrases like 'must strive,' 'is now approaching,' 'is striving,' 'is moving,' and 'growing to maturity,' and terms like 'inevitable' and 'Unfoldment' conveys in

Aristotelian teleology and, coupled with terms like 'World unity,' constitute global aims and globality. This idea of 'world unity' is also seen in Shoghi Effendi's concept of a 'world commonwealth' where 'all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded' (Shoghi Effendi, 1991: 203). The global aims of this 'world commonwealth,' also referred to as 'Bahá'í commonwealth' (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 7, 18), in the last letter, is listed below. The list presents global aims and globality found throughout *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.*

The World

- 'Some form of a world super-state *must needs*   (p. 40)
  be evolved'
- 'a world parliament'   (p. 40)
- 'a supreme tribunal'   (pp. 40, 203)
- 'a world community'   (p. 40)
- 'a single code of international law'   (p. 40)
- 'an organic change in the structure . . . a change   (p. 43)
  such as the world has *not yet experienced'*
- 'a world organically unified in all the essential aspects   (p. 43)
  of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration,
  its trade and finance, its script and language,'
- 'yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics   (p. 43)
  of its federated units'
- 'that transformation of unparalleled majesty and scope   (p. 46)
  which humanity is in this age *bound to undergo'*
- *'to bring to a climax* the forces that are transforming the   (p. 170)
  face of our planet'
- 'This commonwealth ... must ... consist of: (p. 203)
  - a world legislature
  - a world executive
  - an international force
  - a mechanism of world inter-communication
  - a world metropolis
  - a world language
  - a world script
  - a world literature
  - a universal system of currency, weights
    and measures
  - a world federal system   (p. 204)
  - a world civilization'   (p. 206)

The Baha'i Faith

- 'our Faith . . . *shall* evolve . . . and shall forge ahead . . .   (p. 23, italics added)
  till it embraces the whole of mankind'
- 'The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, whose **supreme mission**   (p. 163, emphasis added)
  is none other but the *achievement* of this organic and
  spiritual unity of the whole body of nations'
- *'preparing for* the spiritual conquest and the complete   (p. 195, italics added)
  redemption of mankind'

The Administrative Order

- 'this Administrative Order - the rudiments of *the future*   (p. 146, italics added)
  all-enfolding Bahá'í Commonwealth'

- 'this Order constitutes the very pattern of that divine (p. 152, italics added)
  civilization which . . . Bahá'u'lláh is *designed to* establish
  upon earth'
- 'the Bahá'í Commonwealth *of the future* of which this vast (p. 152, italics added)
  Administrative Order is the sole framework'
- 'the implications of *this constantly evolving* Scheme (p. 156, italics added)
  are more fully understood and its ramifications more
  widely extended over the surface of the globe'
- '**The central, underlying aim** which animates it is the (p. 157, emphasis added)
  establishment of the New World Order'
- 'For this process is actuated by the generating influence of (p. 195)
  God's changeless *Purpose,* and is evolving within the framework
  of the Administrative Order of His Faith'
- 'as their Administrative Order expands and consolidates itself' (p. 199)

The World Order of Baha'u'llah

- 'a World Order that *shall* reflect . . . the Abhá Kingdom' (p. 46, italics added)
- 'a new order *destined to* overshadow all mankind' (p. 52, italics added)
- 'the New World Order *destined to* embrace *in the* (p. 144, italics added)
  fullness of time the whole of mankind'
- 'that World Order, the establishment of which must (p. 161)
  signalize the Golden Age of the Cause of God'
- 'This New World Order . . . involves no less than the (p. 162, italics added)
  complete unification of the entire human race'

The choice of words 'must needs be evolved,' 'not yet experienced,' 'bound to undergo,' 'to bring to a climax,' 'till,' 'supreme mission,' 'preparing for,' 'the future,' 'designed to,' 'constantly evolving,' 'underlying aim,' 'shall,' 'Purpose,' 'destined to,' and 'in the fullness of time' are all significant. Clearly, in contrast to the list on global claims, the emphasis is on the *future.* Moreover, the words like 'must,' 'bound to', 'designed to,' 'shall,' 'destined to' all indicate an Aristotelian teleology. Coupled with phrases like 'the whole of mankind,' 'the whole body of nations,' 'upon earth,' 'over the surface of the globe,' and 'World Order' they convey global aims and globality.

So far the global aims and global claims in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* has been analyzed as two separate categories but they are nonetheless intimately related. Many of the areas discussed above can be found in e.g., a single passage of 'The Unfoldment of World Civilization':

The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh [the Baha'i Faith] whose *supreme mission* is none other but the achievement of this *organic* and spiritual unity of the whole body of nations, should, if we be faithful to its implications, be regarded as signalizing through its advent the coming of age of the entire human race. It should be viewed not merely as yet another spiritual revival in the ever-changing fortunes of mankind, not only as a further stage in a chain of progressive Revelations, nor even as the culmination of one of a series of recurrent prophetic cycles, but rather as marking the last and highest stage in the stupendous evolution of man's collective life on *this planet.* The emergence of a world community, the consciousness of world citizenship, the founding of a world civilization and culture -- all of which must synchronize with the initial stages in *the unfoldment* of the Golden Age of the Bahá'í Era -- should, by their very nature, be regarded, as far as *this planetary life* is concerned, as the furthermost limits in the organization of human society . . . (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 163, clarification and italics added).

First of all, Shoghi Effendi states what the 'supreme mission' is for the Baha'i Faith. This aim is some form of global unification of nations i.e., globality. It further clarifies what the Baha'i Faith is and is not (claims). The role of the Baha'i Faith is associated the 'evolution of man's

collective life on this planet' and 'this planetary life' (global claims and global aims). Four global aims (world community, the consciousness of world citizenship, a world civilization and world culture) are seen to *'synchronize* with the initial stages in the unfoldment of the Golden Age'. Shoghi Effendi depicts that the 'Golden Age' has stages and is supposed to 'unfold,' suggesting an Aristotelian teleology. Moreover, the idea that 'The emergence of a world community' will coincide with 'the Golden Age of the Bahá'í Era' indicates that globalization and the three Baha'i areas are not seen as unparallel or independent. In the following passage Shoghi Effendi describes this 'twofold process':[29]

As we view the world around us, we are compelled to observe the manifold evidences of that universal fermentation which, in *every continent of the globe* and in every department of human life, be it religious, social, economic or political, is purging and reshaping humanity in anticipation of the Day when the wholeness of the human race will have been recognized and its unity established. A twofold process, however, can be distinguished, each tending, in its own way and with an accelerated momentum, *to bring to a climax the forces that are transforming the face of our planet.* The first is essentially an integrating process, while the second is fundamentally disruptive. The former, as it steadily evolves, unfolds a System which may well serve as a pattern for that world polity towards which a strangely-disordered world is continually advancing; while the latter, as its disintegrating influence deepens, tends to tear down, with increasing violence, the antiquated barriers that seek to block humanity's progress towards *its destined goal. The constructive process stands associated with the nascent Faith of Bahá'u'lláh,* and is the harbinger of *the New World Order that Faith must erelong establish.* The destructive forces that characterize the other should be identified with a civilization that has refused to answer to the expectation of a new age, and is consequently falling into chaos and decline. A titanic, a spiritual struggle, unparalleled in its magnitude yet unspeakably glorious in its *ultimate consequences,* is being waged as a result of these opposing tendencies, in *this age of transition* through which the organized community of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh and mankind as a whole are passing. (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 170, italics added)
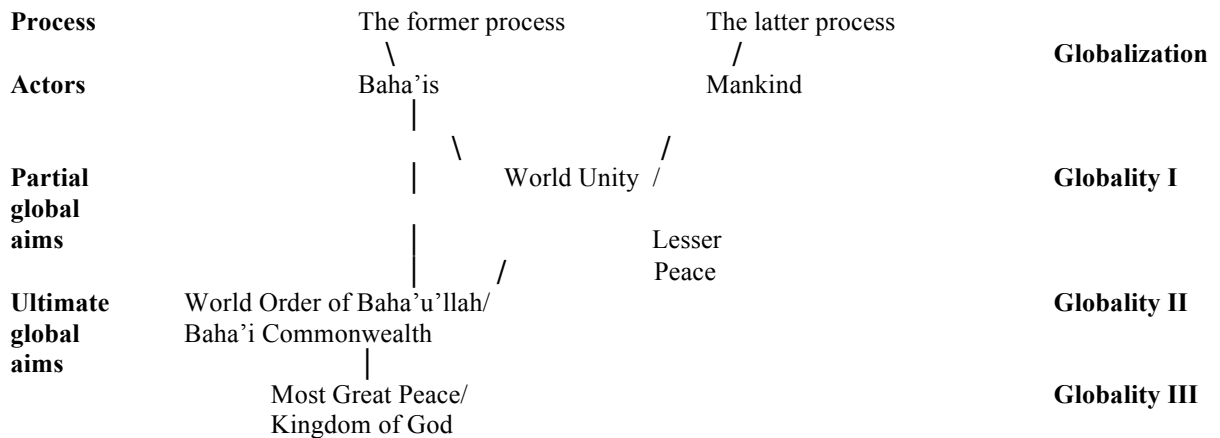
Shoghi Effendi refers to a 'universal fermentation' global and pervasive. The first process (the integrative) is associated with the Baha'i Faith and the second (the disruptive or destructive) is connected with 'civilization' or 'this age of transition.' These two global processes will eventually 'bring to a climax the forces that are transforming the face of our planet.' Note that the Baha'i Faith will serve 'as a pattern' for the future 'world polity' and that it is 'the harbinger of the New World Order.' Yet, both Baha'is and 'mankind as a whole' share, in an Aristotelian teleological sense, the same 'destined goal' and 'ultimate consequences.' Above Stackhouse states that the term ''globalization' combines the notion of a *worldwide, ordered* place of habitation subject to *transformation*.' Shoghi Effendi frequently employs terms like 'worldwide' and 'order.' Coupled with the idea of the 'three ages,' organic metaphors, and recurrent terms like 'unfoldment,' 'reconstruction,' and 'a twofold process,' he also maintains that the world's 'ordered place of habitation' is undergoing an inevitable and radical transformation where the aim is some form of globality ('World Unity'). Yet, although such globality is the same for the two processes, Shoghi Effendi (1991: 162) makes a subtle, but important, distinction with regard to the actors, the sequence, and ultimate aim of these processes. The latter process, associated with 'the collective efforts of mankind,' can only 'hope to achieve anything above or beyond that 'Lesser Peace'' that is described as a 'political unification of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres,' (Shoghi Effendi 1965: 33) or 'political peace between nations' (Smith 2000: 266-267). In contrast, the former process will achieve 'The Most Great Peace' described as:

a peace that must inevitably follow as the practical consequence of the spiritualization of the world and the fusion of all its races, creeds, classes and nations — can rest on no other basis, and can be preserved through *no*

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[29]Although Shoghi Effendi does not refer to 'the Major and Minor Plan of God' (1965, p. 139-140) in *The World Order of Baha'u'llah* he refers (1991: 161) to 'God's all-pervasive Will, the shaping of His perfectly and world-embracing Plan.' These concepts, however, illustrates how he envisions the dialectic and coincidence between the above-described global processes.

other agency, except the divinely appointed ordinances that are implicit in the World Order that stands associated with His Holy Name [the Baha'i Faith]. (Shoghi Effendi 1991: 162, italics and clarification added)

The actors, processes, and aims can be depicted as follows:

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Process              The former process    The latter process
                              \                  /            Globalization
Actors                     Baha'is             Mankind
                              |
                         \          /
Partial                  |    World Unity /                   Globality I
global
aims                     |                  Lesser
                         |        /         Peace
Ultimate        World Order of Baha'u'llah/                   Globality II
global          Baha'i Commonwealth
aims                     |
                    Most Great Peace/                         Globality III
                    Kingdom of God
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Accordingly, both Baha'is and mankind as a whole are, inevitably destined to establish 'World Unity' (Globality I) yet the former are only *indirectly* involved in creating the 'Lesser Peace.' In contrast, the latter are *uninvolved* in establishing the ultimate global aims, 'the World Order of Baha'u'llah/Baha'i Commonwealth,'[30] synonymous to 'the world's future super-state,' or 'world-civilization,' (Globality II) and that will inaugurate 'that golden millennium,' 'the Most Great Peace/Kingdom of God' (Globality III) of the Baha'i Faith.[31]

CONCLUSION

In this brief analysis of Shoghi Effendi's global discourse in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* it is clear that although a leader of a religious community, his view of globalization (and Globality I) includes a range of non-religious dimensions, and his ideas predates, and is strikingly similar to, modern authors on the subject. Yet, theological and teleological (Aristotelian) aspects of his of global discourse predominate *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.* This paper has argued that this globalization discourse is the ideological basis for Shoghi Effendi's subsequent global missionary plans.

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[30]Shoghi Effendi (1991: 196, italics added) states 'in demonstrating its claim to be regarded as *a World Religion,* destined to attain, in the in the fullness of time, the status of *a world-embracing Commonwealth,* which would be at once the instrument and the guardian of *the Most Great Peace* announced by its Author.' More precisely, Shoghi Effendi (1974: 364, italics added) refers to this process as 'the successive stages of *repression,* of *emancipation,* of *recognition* as an independent Revelation, and as a *state religion,* must lead to the establishment of *the Bahá'í state* and *culminate* in the emergence of the *Bahá'í World Commonwealth.'*
[31]Shoghi Effendi (1965: 33, italics added) writes, for example, that 'the Lesser Peace, as foretold by Bahá'u'lláh . . . must, in the end, *culminate* in the unfurling of the banner of the Most Great Peace, in the Golden Age of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh.'

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