

5. The second epoch extended that twofold process, extending the range of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan and culminating with the election of the Universal House of Justice. The third epoch, characterized by rapid growth, concluded with the beginning of the Faith's emergence from obscurity into the larger arena of public notice, fueled in no small part by the persecution of the Bahá'ís in the land of Its birth. The fourth (and present) epoch began with the increased maturation of the administrative institutions from the local spiritual assemblies up to and including the Universal House of Justice which is now engaged in a vast expansion of the World Center. This

epoch will also witness the complete emergence of the Faith from obscurity and vastly greater involvement in the social and economic development of the world.

This brief guide provides a chronological view of the more significant events in the history of the religion. The chronology has been pieced together from a broad array of historical sources which will one day be listed at the end. Shoghi Effendi's system of transliteration is used throughout to most accurately display Persian and Arabic names. HTML does not permit full accuracy in this regard, as it does not support all the necessary characters. Here is a brief pronunciation guide to assist the reader: Bahá'u'lláh is pronounced: Ba (as in back) - haw - o (as in short) - law. Wherever you see a, think a as in arm. ' indicates a pause. Mirza is pronounced: Meerzaw. Whenever you see i, think ee as in meet. Bahá'í would therefore be Ba - haw - (brief pause) - ee; in this context the i means of, as in follower of. Quddus is pronounced:

Khodoos. Whenever you see u think oo as in moon. Don't worry too much about the Q - it is a guttural sound that doesn't come naturally to Anglophones . Unless you have heard Arabic or Persian, just treat it like a K.

First Epoch of the Heroic Age:

1844-1853:

The Ministry of the Bab, the Forerunner

12 Nov 1817 Birth of Bahá'u'lláh [Mirza Husayn-'Ali] in Tihiran, to one of the wealthiest families in Persia. Bahá'u'lláh, never having attended school, is taught calligraphy, riding, classical poetry and a good reading knowledge of the Qur'an which was customary for a nobleman's son at that time.

20 Oct 1819 Birth of the Bab [Siyyid 'Ali-Muhammad] in Shiraz, Persia

pre-1844 Bahá'u'lláh becomes known as "The Father of the Poor" for His generosity and care of the needy. His father dies in 1839. Bahá'u'lláh was asked to take His father's

place in the government but Bahá'u'lláh refuses the position.

22 May 1844 Declaration of the mission of the Bab in Shiraz to Mulla Husayn at 2 hours, 11 minutes after sunset (technically, 23 May - new day begins after sunset).

23 May 1844 Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá ['Abbas Effendi], eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh

soon after: The Bab instructed Mulla Husayn to journey through Persia and Iraq and deliver a scroll to One Who is worthy. The reputation of Bahá'u'lláh convinces him that He is the intended recipient. Bahá'u'lláh reads the scroll and immediately becomes a follower of the Bab.

12 Dec 1844 The Bab, accompanied by His foremost disciple Quddus, undertakes a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina where He performs His first public declaration of His divine mission.

Mar 1845 The Bab returns to Shiraz.

His

Teachings cause commotion among the populace, especially the clergy.

soon after: The Shah commands the erudite Vahid to investigate the Bab's claims. Vahid becomes a leading disciple.

Hujjat, another dignitary of the realm, also becomes a leading

disciple.

The anxiety among the clergy increases.

Sep 1846 The Bab journeys to Isfahan, accorded honours by the people. Death warrant issued by the local high clergy. The Bab journeys to Kashan and Tabriz, receives enthusiastic reception by the people.

23 Sep 1846 The Bab is arrested in Shiraz at the house of His uncle. The Shah, prompted by his top advisor, Haji Mirza Aqasi, has the Bab incarcerated at the fortress of Mah-ku in the mountains of Adhirbayjan for nine months. The local populace, at first hostile, comes to revere Him. The Bab reveals one of His great works, the Bayan.

1 Apr 1847 Bahá'u'lláh sends a letter and gifts to the Bab in Mah-ku.

20 Mar 1848 Mulla Husayn arrives at Mah-ku to see the Bab.

10 April 1848 Due to the great influence He was having with the people of the area, the Bab is transferred to prison in Chirig, a Kurdish area hostile to Persians. Here too many leading citizens become followers. The Bab is arraigned in Tabriz where He

makes a dramatic public declaration of His Station. He is returned to Chirig.

Jun 1848 Conference of Badasht. Organized, directed and hosted by Bahá'u'lláh and attended by 81 of the Bab's leading followers, the Babi Faith for the first time becomes understood by its followers as a religion distinct from Islam. Bahá'u'lláh bestows a new name upon each participant and with no contact, the Bab later confirms and uses those same names [note: the new names are the ones being used in this account]. Tahirih [the pure] pronounces the equality of women and publicly removes her veil. Bahá'u'lláh reconciles the participants following this great controversy, facilitating their understanding of this new religion.

21 Jul 1848 Mulla Husayn hoists the Black Standard and marches from Mashad with 202 fellow disciples to assist Quddus in Mazindaran.

4 Sep 1848 Muhammad Shah, intending to order death of Bahá'u'lláh, dies, succeeded by 17-year old Nasiri'd-Din Shah. Haji Mirza Aqasi, chief

antagonist of the Bab [the Antichrist of the Babi Faith], is expelled from the capital.

10 Oct 1848 Mulla Husayn and the 202 fellow disciples are besieged at Shaykh Tabarsi, eventually surrounded by twenty thousand soldiers.

Nov 1848 Quddus arrives at Fort Tabarsi after Mulla Husayn secured his release from Sari.

Dec 1848 Bahá'u'lláh imprisoned and tortured in Amul.

10 May 1849 The siege at Shaykh Tabarsi ends in betrayal when a promise of "no harm", signed on a Qur'an, is broken. The Babis are tortured, mutilated and massacred.

16 May 1849 Martyrdom of Quddus in Barfurush.

soon after: A force of 5000 men begin extermination of Babis, confiscating possessions, destroying houses, grizzly tortures, mutilations and executions - all inspired by religious fanaticism inflamed by the clergy. 1800 Babis martyred in Zanjan including men, women and children. Hujjat is martyred. The famous Seven Martyrs of Tihnan are martyred.

29 June 1850 Vahid is mutilated and killed in Nayriz.

9 Jul 1850 Attempted execution of the Bab in Tabriz by a firing squad of 750 soldiers in front of 20,000 witnesses fails. The Bab vanishes in the smoke and is found later completing His final instructions to His amanuensis. The leader of the first firing squad

refuses

to try again. A second attempt is made using a new leader at noon, this time

successfully. A gale force wind, earthquake, cholera and famine immediately

follow. One third of the firing squad later die in

an earthquake, the remainder

are executed for mutiny. The bodies of the Bab and Anis are retrieved as directed by Bahá'u'lláh and ultimately interred at the Shrine of the Bab on the slope of Mt. Carmel, Israel.

30 Aug 1851 Bahá'u'lláh arrives in Karbila, Iraq

- the start of a 10 month pilgrimage. Continues to spread the Bab's Teachings.

15 Aug 1852 Two crazed Babis attempt to kill Nasiri'd-Din Shah. They are executed on the spot. Nationwide

reign of terror sweeps Persia. Anyone suspected of being Babi are killed in unspeakably gruesome and inhumane manners. Many European diplomats

witness and record the events. The nominee of the Bab, Mirza Yahya, half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh, flees [note: the

Bab appointed him as His figurehead to deflect attention away from Bahá'u'lláh]. Upon hearing news of the assassination attempt,

Bahá'u'lláh rides to the military post in Niyavaran. He is arrested and marched in chains, bare

headed and bare footed to the Siyah-Chal of Tihran [literally

meaning the Black Pit, it was "an abominable pit that had once served as a reservoir of water for one of the public baths" of Tihran].

Here He was surrounded by criminals with His feet in mighty stocks and neck

weighed down by a mighty chain, a chain so infamous that it had its own name. Tahiri is executed. Her last words: "You can kill me as soon as you

like, but you cannot stop the emancipation of women". Bahá'u'lláh

is now the sole survivor from among the leaders of the Babi

Faith. No one would sign His death warrant out of fear that His execution would spark riots throughout Persia. Instead, it was hoped that he would die in this loathsome prison. This was not to be.

Second Epoch of the Heroic Age:

1853-1892:

The Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh

Aug - Nov 1852 In the Siyah-Chal,

Bahá'u'lláh receives His Intimation that He is the Messenger

of God for this Day. He leads the prisoners in song so loud that the Shah hears the singing from his palace. One by one, most of the other

Babis chained with Him are executed. By now, an approximate total of 20,000 Babis had been martyred. Bahá'u'lláh is poisoned, but survives. Bahá'u'lláh's family and Russian Minister Prince Dolgorouki demonstrate the complete innocence of Bahá'u'lláh in the matter of the assassination attempt. Bahá'u'lláh is released after four months of imprisonment, carrying the deep marks of the chains throughout the remainder of His days.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

recognizes the full impact of the station of His Father. Bahá'u'lláh bestows upon His Son the designation "Mystery of God".

12 Jan 1853 Bahá'u'lláh is banished, chooses Baghdad for His place of exile. His wealth is confiscated and properties pillaged.

His youngest son is left behind with relatives because of the lack of provisions and the harsh winter travel.

8 Apr 1853 Bahá'u'lláh arrives in Baghdad.

Mirza Aqa Jan is the first to recognize Him as the Promised One. Bahá'u'lláh achieves great fame because of the love He shows the people and because of the great Writings He reveals.

He is shown veneration by the populace. Mirza Yahya, prodded by Siyyid Muhammad [the Antichrist of the Bahá'í Faith], begins to discredit Bahá'u'lláh out of jealousy.

10 Apr 1854 Bahá'u'lláh leaves for the mountains of Kurdistan (Sulaymaniyyih) so that He would not be a source of disunity among the Babis. Here he stays nearly two years in isolation, except for brief visits to a local town for provisions.

Villagers who have contact with Him spread word of Him and are magnetized with His love. Meanwhile, under Mirza Yahya's direction, the Babi community degenerates. Out of desperation, 25 men claimed to be the Promised One foretold by the Bab. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, heartbroken by His Father's absence, passes time by copying and memorizing the Bab's Writings.

19 Mar 1856 Fame of a man in the mountains of Kurdistan, had reached Baghdad. Bahá'u'lláh's family realized this man is Bahá'u'lláh

and pleads for His return. He does return to Baghdad on this day and begins to rebuild the Babi

community. The community grows in size and respect.

1856 Bahá'u'lláh reveals The Seven Valleys. Later reveals The Four Valleys.

1858 Bahá'u'lláh reveals the Hidden Words.

circa 1860 Bahá'u'lláh applies for Ottoman nationality - obtains Turkish passports. Bahá'u'lláh's attendant is convinced to murder Him as He bathed, but struck by awe in His presence and remorse, he

flees. Later, the same man approaches Bahá'u'lláh with a pistol, but again, in His presence, drops the pistol and flees. Famous meeting occurs

between Bahá'u'lláh and clergy of several different faiths, in which the clergy concedes Bahá'u'lláh's knowledge and wisdom.

They ask Him to perform a miracle as a final proof. Bahá'u'lláh agrees, but says they must all agree to one miracle (for the Cause of God is not a sideshow with hourly miracles) and put in writing that upon completion of the miracle, they must confess

the truth of His Cause. The clergy could not agree on a miracle and drop the challenge. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, now 15, visits the local mosques and has dialog with the learned and Himself becomes

famous for His wisdom.

circa 1861-2 Bahá'u'lláh reveals The Book of Certitude (Kitab-i-Iqan).

21 Mar 1863 Bahá'u'lláh reveals the Tablet of the Holy Mariner, in which He reveals gloomy predictions. Prompted by the stirrings

of the clergy and the Persian Consul General of Baghdad, Bahá'u'lláh was invited to Istanbul on March 26th and given a sum of money for the journey by the Governor of Baghdad. Bahá'u'lláh accepts the invitation but gives all the money to the poor.

22 April 1863 Public declaration of the mission of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridvan [meaning Paradise, then known as the Garden of Najibiyyih] in Baghdad on the shores of the Tigris River, nineteen years after the Bab's declaration, which fulfills the Bab's prophecy.

3 May 1863 Bahá'u'lláh, 11 family members and 26

disciples depart for Constantinople at noon. During the journey, they are accorded enthusiastic receptions wherever they stopped, being preceded by the government cavalry, flags flying and drums beating.

13 Aug 1863 Bahá'u'lláh departs by steamer from the port of Samsun to Constantinople.

16 Aug 1863 Arrival in Constantinople [the Sublime Porte] at noon. The house provided was too small. Within a month they were relocated to larger quarters. The Persian government is extremely upset with the courteousness and kindness shown by the Sultan toward Bahá'u'lláh, Who was received as a guest. Finally the Sultan was unable to resist the political pressure and issues the edict of banishment to the remote Adrianople (modern day Edirne). Bahá'u'lláh sends His first of many letters to the Kings and rulers of the world, to Sultan 'Abdu'l-'Aziz.

12 Dec 1863 Arrival in Adrianople [the Land of Mystery] after a bitterly cold 12 day journey. Here, Bahá'u'lláh publicly announces His mission, both to His followers and to the world in letters to the Kings, rulers, religious leaders and mankind in general including elected officials.

Most Babís accept Him and become known as Bahá'ís.

Note that Bahá'u'lláh's presence in Constantinople and Adrianople were the first time in recorded world history that a Manifestation of God set foot on European soil. Here, His revelation rose to its zenith; He is shown great respect by local officials, the diplomatic corps, and religious communities. Among those addressed by Bahá'u'lláh at this time were: Napoleon III, the Czar, Queen Victoria, the Pope, the Sultan and the Shah. In most cases, Bahá'u'lláh declares His Mission and makes demands of the ruler and states the consequences should He be rejected. All but Queen Victoria reject Him, and all but Queen Victoria succumb to defeat and humiliation, including Pope Pius IX.

1864 Bahá'u'lláh is poisoned by His half brother, Mirza Yahya. He was seriously ill for a month and was left with a shaking hand until the end of His life. (Today, you can see the effects of the poisoning in the penmanship of Bahá'u'lláh, preserved in the Bahá'í archives in Haifa.) Mirza Yahya has the well poisoned which provided water to Bahá'u'lláh's companions.

1865 *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale* by the Comte de Gobineau is published, making the West aware of the Bab. 'Abdu'l-Bahá becomes known by all

as "The Master".

some time later Bahá'u'lláh reveals the Tablet of Ahmad for Ahmad-i-Yazdi, a resident of Baghdad, who travels throughout Persia confirming that Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all ages (part of the proof he gave was a written statement by the Bab "which declared that 'He Whom God shall make manifest' would bear the name Bahá").

12 Aug 1868 Mirza Yahya [who had been given the title Subh-i-Azal (Morning of Eternity) by the Bab], responded to Bahá'u'lláh's public claim by also claiming he was a messenger of God. Due to the plotting, scheming and intrigues by Mirza Yahya (who was the constant willing tool of Siyyid Muhammad), the Sultan banishes Bahá'u'lláh and His companions to 'Akka, while Mirza Yahya and his party (the Azalis) are sent to Cyprus. Bahá'u'lláh and 66 of His followers depart from Adrianople, initially for Gallipoli. Additionally, the government decided that four of the Azalis would accompany the Bahá'í group and vice versa. Siyyid Muhammad was one of the four to accompany Bahá'u'lláh. The lies and calumnies

by Mirza

Yahya and Siyyid Muhammad damaged the prestige of the Faith in the eyes of its western admirers such as E. G. Browne and A.L.M. Nicolas (the French Diplomat and translator of the Persian and Arabic Bayans). Yahya later died with no followers

left to give him a burial as either a Babi or Bahá'í.

21 Aug 1868 Bahá'u'lláh departs from Gallipoli by steamer for Haifa and then by sail to 'Akka.

31 Aug 1868 Arrival in 'Akka [the Most Great Prison, today known as Acre], a prison city

for which it was said at that time that should a bird fly over it, the bird would surely fall to the ground dead for its foul air. During the first short while, almost all the prisoners became ill with malaria, dysentery or other sicknesses. 'Abdu'l-Bahá tended to all the sick even though he himself contracted an illness. Bahá'u'lláh predicts that one day He will pitch His tent on Mt. Carmel. Three succumbed to their illnesses.

2 Sep 1868 The Governor of 'Akka visits the "desperate criminals"

and is deeply impressed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He is moved to improve their conditions. Another visitor states that "such pure and sanctified souls had never before been seen in 'Akka". Meanwhile, Siyyid Muhammad and Aqa Jan Big, the source of all the lies to the authorities, convinced some guards to move their quarters to overlook the land gate so that they could identify anyone who arrived if they were Bahá'í and thus warning the guards, the pilgrims who had walked for weeks would be turned back without even a glimpse of Bahá'u'lláh through His cell window.

23 Jun 1870 Mirza Mihdi (the Purest Branch, Bahá'u'lláh's youngest son) falls through a skylight in the prison. Bahá'u'lláh offers to heal him but Mirza Mihdi instead offers his life as a sacrifice so that those who desire may undertake pilgrimages. Bahá'u'lláh accepts and the Purest Branch dies at age 22. 70 years later, his body is entombed in the Monument Gardens on Mount Carmel.

4 Nov 1870 Release from prison barracks to house within 'Akka (the house of 'Udi Khammar). This house was attached to the house of 'Abbud. The partition between them was later removed and became known as simply the house of 'Abbud.

23 Jan 1872 Murder of Siyyid Muhammad (the one who had constantly manipulated Mirza Yahya into his cowardly acts), Aqa Jan Big and another companion Covenant-breaker in 'Akka in retaliation for their persecutions. Bahá'u'lláh had forbidden any act of retaliation, but seven of His tormented companions succumbed. An army of men descended upon the Bahá'ís. The seven guilty men were confined for several years. The remainder were confined for six months. The distress caused to Bahá'u'lláh of this event was immeasurable: "That which can make Me ashamed is the conduct of such of My followers as profess to love Me".

Aug - Sep 1872 Marriage of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Munirih Khanum. Four of their daughters survived the long imprisonment and distinguished themselves in their lives dedicated to service.

1873 A new governor of 'Akka is appointed. This one was captivated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and saw through the ploys of the antagonists. He asked Bahá'u'lláh what he could do of service: Bahá'u'lláh requested that the aqueduct be restored to operation. Bahá'u'lláh reveals the Kitáb-i-Aqdas [the Most Holy Book, the Book of Laws and Ordinances of the Bahá'í Faith]. In this Book is also found many more addresses to the rulers of the

world and is the culmination of His formal declaration. The Bahá'í community

transformed into a respected community and Bahá'ís were allowed to open up shops.

1875 The new governor is transferred, expresses his sorrow at his separation from Bahá'u'lláh and His son.

June 1877 Departure from 'Akka for the Mansion of Mazra'ih and His first visits to the Ridvan Garden.

Sep 1879 Occupation of the Mansion of Bahji [Joy]. Bahá'u'lláh increasingly delegates affairs of the Bahá'í community toward 'Abdu'l-Bahá, helping the community to become gradually accustomed

to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's role after Bahá'u'lláh's passing.

1883 Visit by Bahá'u'lláh to Haifa

1886 Death of Bahá'u'lláh's wife Navvab in 'Akka

April 1890 Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge University, interviews Bahá'u'lláh and visits

with 'Abdu'l-Bahá at Bahji.

Spring 1890 and summer 1891 Two more visits by Bahá'u'lláh to Haifa; revelation of the Tablet of Carmel; Bahá'u'lláh's identification of the site of the future Shrine of the Bab.

1891 Bahá'u'lláh's revelation of the Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

1892 Revelation of the Kitab-i-'Ahd [the Book of the Covenant], the last Tablet revealed.

29 May 1892 Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh at 8 hours after sunset (approximately. 3AM) in Bahji, 'Akka.

7 Jun

1892 Unsealing and reading of Bahá'u'lláh's Kitab-i-'Ahd at Bahji.

'Abdu'l-Bahá ["the Centre of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh", "the Master", "the Most Mighty

Branch", "the Exemplar"] is appointed as the interpreter of His teachings and the source of authority in all affairs of the faith.

Third Epoch of the Heroic Age: 1892-1921:
The Ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

1892-1896 Mirza Muhammad-'Ali [also a son of Bahá'u'lláh, designated The Greater Branch, second in rank to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and half-brother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá] undertakes covert campaign to discredit 'Abdu'l-Bahá and assume leadership of the Bahá'í Faith. 'Abdu'l-Bahá chooses to keep silent and protect the community

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23 Sep 1893 First public mention of the Bahá'í Faith in the West. In a session of the World's Parliament of Religions, the Reverend George A. Ford, a Syrian missionary, reads a paper talking about Bahá'u'lláh.

Feb 1894 Dr. Ibrahim George Khayru'llah, having arrived in New York in 1892, moves to Chicago and seeks out people interested in the Bahá'í Message.

1894 Thornton Chase becomes first American Bahá'í. 'Abdu'l-Bahá confers upon him the title "Steadfast".
Louisa A. Moore becomes a Bahá'í, given the title "Banner", i.e. Banner of the Cause, and is later designated by the Guardian as "the mother teacher of the West".
She marries Edward Getsinger and becomes Lua Getsinger. Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, wife of Senator George F. Hearst, was taught by Lua Getsinger during one of Mrs. Getsinger's extensive travels throughout America.

1 Mar 1897 Shoghi Effendi, eldest grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is born of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's eldest daughter in the House of Abdu'llah

Pasha.. He is descended from Bahá'u'lláh on his mother's side and related to the Bab on his father's side.

1898 Phoebe Hearst organizes historic pilgrimage of 15 early American Bahá'ís to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá. By now there are hundreds of Bahá'ís in America. The

pilgrims arrive in 'Akka 10 Dec 1898. The hearts of the pilgrims are set ablaze by the love of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, so much so that some believe 'Abdu'l-Bahá is the return of Jesus Christ. 'Abdu'l-Bahá corrects them, saying that He is the Servant of Bahá. Robert Turner, the black butler of Mrs. Hearst, shown great kindness by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, later becomes the first black Bahá'í on the American continent.

May Ellis Bolles is asked to teach the Faith in Paris. Dr.

Khayru'llah, also among the pilgrims, sought

'Abdu'l-Bahá's endorsement of his presentation of the Bahá'í Faith. 'Abdu'l-Bahá corrects his misconceptions and urged him to seriously study the Bahá'í Writings. Khayru'llah refuses.

31 Jan 1899 Remains of the Bab finally arrive at Mt. Carmel.

'Abdu'l-Bahá begins construction of a befitting resting-place.

1899 First Bahá'í centre in Europe established in Paris.

1900 Dr.

Khayru'llah violates Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, establishes pact with Mirza Muhammad-'Ali and works against 'Abdu'l-Bahá, trying to seize control of the Faith in the West. Almost none of the American Bahá'ís follow his lead; they remain faithful to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Khayru'llah would continue spreading his poison for two decades, but unsuccessful, finally returns

to Syria.

1901 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His family, until this time free to venture in the area, are once again confined to the prison walls of 'Akka as a consequence of His enemies representation to the authorities that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was constructing a fort (in reality, the mausoleum) and building an army (in reality, just visiting pilgrims). He directs attention to correspondence while in prison and visits and assists the needy and the sick of 'Akka.

summer 1901 May Ellis Bolles teaches Thomas Breakwell, first British Bahá'í.

1902 May Ellis Bolles weds William Sutherland Maxwell, designer of the superstructure of the Shrine of the Bab, becomes May Maxwell. They establish their home in Montreal, Canada.

7 Jun 1903 'Abdu'l-Bahá reveals Tablet calling for the erection of a Temple in America.

1904 First commission appointed by the Turkish government investigates the charges leveled against 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Spanish Consul offers Him safe passage to any foreign port, but 'Abdu'l-Bahá refuses, saying He must abide by whatever the ruling.

1907 A second commission, composed of four corrupt officials, finally reaches a decision and announces that the charges against 'Abdu'l-Bahá have been substantiated and that He was to be exiled or executed. Upon their return to Turkey, the Young Turk Revolution seizes hold and the four commissioners flee.

Apr
1908 Purchase of some land for the future House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois.

1908 Some Answered Questions by Laura Clifford Barney published, based on her interviews of

'Abdu'l-Bahá encompassing her four pilgrimages. The Young Turk Revolution frees all prisoners of the Ottoman Empire, including 'Abdu'l-Bahá in September, Who is finally free to leave Palestine. 'Abdu'l-Bahá drafts His Will and Testament, detailing the two principal institutions of the Faith (the Guardianship - the sole authority for the interpretation of the Bahá'í teachings, and the Universal House of Justice - the primary legislative and administrative authority of the Bahá'í community). He begins to focus on building the international community and the establishment of spiritual assemblies in North America and Persia, the forerunners of the future local Houses of Justice.

28 Nov 1928 Construction begins on the first Bahá'í House of Worship (Ishqabad, Russia).

20 Mar 1909 'Abdu'l-Bahá interments the remains of the Bab on the spot chosen by Bahá'u'lláh years earlier.

1909 First of the tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá published in the West.

1910 Though in very poor health due to his long imprisonment, 'Abdu'l-Bahá journeys to Egypt to spread the Faith.

11 Aug 1911 'Abdu'l-Bahá sails for Marseille and later journeys to London (September) and Paris.

In December, He returns to Egypt.

11 Apr 1912 'Abdu'l-Bahá arrives in New York City at the request of the American Bahá'ís. Visits many cities including Chicago where He laid the cornerstone for "the Mother Temple of the West", Eliot Maine where Sarah Farmer, founder of Green Acre, later opened her facility for

Bahá'í training, and Montreal where He was the guest of William and May Maxwell, whose home later became the first Canadian Bahá'í centre, and whose daughter Mary was to become the wife of Shoghi Effendi. During the next 239 days, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke at countless churches, halls and homes on many topics such as the basic principles of the Faith, philosophical, moral and spiritual topics, and spoke to church congregations, peace societies, trade unions, university faculties, etc. The talks are later published as "The Promulgation of Universal Peace".

1 May 1912

'Abdu'l-Bahá lays the foundation stone for the first Bahá'í House of Worship in the West at Wilmette, Illinois.

19 Oct 1912 'Abdu'l-Bahá visits the grave of Thornton Chase in Inglewood, California.

29 Jun 1912 'Abdu'l-Bahá hosts first Unity Feast at the Wilhelm properties in W. Englewood, New Jersey.

5 Dec

1912 'Abdu'l-Bahá sails for England, visits Liverpool, London, Bristol and Edinburgh. He visits Paris, Stuttgart, Budapest and Vienna.

May 1913 'Abdu'l-Bahá returns to Egypt.

5 Dec 1913 'Abdu'l-Bahá returns to Haifa.

July 1914

By now, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has dismissed all the pilgrims from the Holy Land. He has predicted a great world conflict.

August 1914 The Great War begins and contact between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the West is cut off. 'Abdu'l-Bahá again becomes a prisoner of the Turkish government as a result of the machinations of Mirza Muhammad-'Ali and again lives under the constant threat of execution.

1916-1917 Tablets of the Divine Plan, the mandate for the global expansion of the Faith, is sent to America.

1918 Shoghi Effendi receives Bachelor of Arts degree from the American University at Beirut.

23 Sep 1918

'Akka is liberated by British and Indian cavalry and 'Abdu'l-Bahá is again freed.

1919 First Convention of the Covenant held in New

York City. Later that year, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani [Rabbani meaning "Divine", surname given to him by 'Abdu'l-Bahá] was acting as the Master's secretary, translator and right-hand man. Shoghi becomes known in "high" circles.

winter

1919 J. E. Esslemont visits for ten weeks, and in 1927

publishes

Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era.

27 Apr 1920 'Abdu'l-Bahá's

humanitarian services, having saved thousands of people from famine in Palestine after the War due to His personal organization of extensive agricultural operations near Tiberias, results in British Government knighthood.

24 Sep 1920 Excavation

begins for the foundation of the House of Worship, Wilmette, Illinois.

1920 'Abdu'l-Bahá sends Shoghi Effendi to Oxford to perfect his english. Shoghi Effendi believes his

lot in life

to be that of a translator and servant of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

20 Dec 1920 Construction begins on the House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois.

28 Nov 1921 'Abdu'l-Bahá dies after a brief illness at 1AM in

Haifa. Over ten thousand people, including Muslim, Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Jewish and Druze dignitaries, the British High Commissioner and governors of Jerusalem and Phoenicia attend. Nine speakers, prominent representatives of the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities, eulogize His pure and noble life. By now the Bahá'í community has spread throughout the Middle East, India and North America but most Bahá'ís still resided in Persia. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's last instructions are in an envelope addressed to Shoghi Effendi.

First Epoch of the
Formative Age: 1921
- 1947

29 Dec 1921

Shoghi Effendi arrives in Haifa, accompanied by Lady Blomfeld and Rouhangeze.

3 Jan 1922 Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá formally read. The Guardianship is inaugurated and Shoghi Effendi is appointed the first Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith: the sole authoritative interpreter of the Bahá'í Writings. As interpreter, the Guardian analyzed world events in the light of Bahá'í Scriptures and sent lengthy letters to Bahá'í communities throughout the world with his results. He was asked numerous questions on a broad range of topics. His answers comprise a significant portion of the interpretation of the

Bahá'í Writings. Shunning any personal acknowledgement or praise, the Guardian forbid any commemoration of events associated with his life and fulfilled his role largely outside of public view; a stark contrast to the charismatic style of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Generally speaking, the

Guardian concentrated on: the development of the Bahá'í World Center, the translation and interpretation of Bahá'í Teachings, the expansion of the administrative order, and the implementation of the divine plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

15 Dec 1922 Shoghi Effendi returns to Holy Land to resume duties as Guardian.

16 Feb 1923 Declaration of the first native Hawaiian Bahá'í on (Mae Tilton Fantom, Maui).

12 Mar 1923 Shoghi Effendi calls for the establishment of Local and National Bahá'í Funds.

1923 National Spiritual Assemblies are formed in British Isles, Germany and India.

1924 National Spiritual Assembly is formed in Egypt.

1925 National Spiritual Assembly is formed in the United States and Canada (one mutual assembly at this time).

1 Aug 1927 Bahá'í Summer School opened at Geyserville, California.

14 Feb 1929 Work begins on three additional chambers of the Shrine of the Bab.

3

Mar 1929 League of Nations Council resolution upholds the Bahá'í Community's claim to Bahá'u'lláh's house in Baghdad.

27 Nov 1929 Restoration of the Mansion at Bahji begins.

15 Jul 1932 Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf (Bahiyiyh Khanum), Bahá'u'lláh's daughter, in Haifa. She was the

loyal stalwart supporter of the Faith and provided Shoghi Effendi with invaluable support after his appointment as Guardian.

1934 National Spiritual Assembly is formed in Persia and Australia.

10 May 1934 Tax exemption for Bahá'í properties on Mt. Carmel announced.

21 Apr 1937 First Seven-Year Plan launched. Goals: to establish at least one local spiritual assembly in every state of the United States and every province of Canada; to make certain that at least one Bahá'í

teacher was residing in each Latin American republic; to complete the exterior design of the first Bahá'í house of worship in North America. The plan was successfully completed in 1944, the centenary of the Bab's declaration.

25 Dec 1939 Remains of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Mother (Navvab - The Most Exalted Leaf) and Brother (The Purest Branch) interred together on Mt. Carmel.

21 Apr 1946 Second Seven-Year Plan launched. This plan focused on Europe, which only had national spiritual assemblies

in Great Britain and Germany. It also called for the formation of local spiritual assemblies in Latin America and a vast increase in assemblies in North America. The plan was successfully completed in 1953, the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's Intimation.

15 Dec 1946 Completion of plans for erection of arcade of the Shrine of the Bab.

Second Epoch of the Formative Age: 1947 - 1963

Mar 1948 Shoghi Effendi decides to commence work on the Shrine of the Bab superstructure.

1948 Distinct National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada formed.

1949 Special Act of Canadian Parliament is the first official recognition of the Bahá'í Faith by any government

.

9 July 1950 Completion of the Arcade and Parapet of the Shrine of the Bab.

16 Dec 1950 Mazra'ih leased from Israeli authorities.

1951 The Guardian begins appointing Hands of the Cause of God (distinguished believers who were assigned tasks to teach the Faith and protect its institutions).

Apr 1953 Formal dedication of the house of worship at Wilmette, Illinois, designed by French-Canadian architect Jean-Louis Bourgeois.

21 Apr 1953 Ten Year World Crusade launched, to conclude in 1963: the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's declaration in the Garden of Ridvan. The goal was to extend the Faith to 132 more countries and the existing 120 countries and territories were to be expanded.

Oct 1953 The Shrine of the Bab is completed.

4 Nov 1957 The Guardian dies in England of Asian flu while on a visit to purchase furnishings for the Bahá'í archives building on Mt. Carmel. Although provisions permitted successive Guardians, Shoghi Effendi had not appointed one (no living direct descendants of Bahá'u'lláh were faithful to His Covenant).

The Guardian had indicated that at the completion of the Crusade, conditions were ripe for the election of the Universal House of Justice.

The Hands of the Cause of God, collaborating with the national spiritual assemblies, worked to complete the goals of the Ten Year World Crusade.

1 Feb 1959 Completion of the Bahá'í Home for the Aged in Wilmette, Illinois.

15 Jan 1961 Dedication of the House of Worship in Kampala, Uganda.

16 Sep 1961 Dedication of the House of Worship in Sydney, Australia.

Third Epoch of the Formative Age: 1963

-

1986

28 Apr 1963 First Bahá'í World Congress

in London, England.

The Hands of the Cause of God, in an unprecedented gesture of renunciation,

disqualified themselves from eligibility for the election of the Universal

House of Justice. The nine members of the first Universal House of Justice

are elected by the members of the 56 existing national spiritual assemblies of

the world. The first membership included Bahá'ís of Jewish, Christian and

Muslim backgrounds and several ethnic origins. The Bahá'í Faith, having

withstood the attacks of those who would destroy it, and those who would fragment it into dozens of sects, emerges

as one unified Faith with one sole living authority: the Universal House

of Justice; truly the Day that shall never be followed by Night referenced

in the Bible.

30 Apr 1963 Presentation of the members of the first Universal House of

Justice; reading of its first message in London, England.

21 Apr

1964 The Universal House of Justice launches a Nine Year Plan which was to be completed in 1973, the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation of the Kitab-i-Aqdas.

26 Apr 1964

Election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands.

4 Jul 1964 Dedication of the Mother Temple of Europe in Langenhain, Germany.

19 Feb 1968 First Ruling Monarch to become a Bahá'í accepts the Faith: His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II - Head of State of Western Samoa.

by April,

1969 The Universal House of Justice had appointed 11 Continental Board Counsellors to serve the Faith in roles of protection and propagation.

21 April 1970 Eleven more national spiritual assemblies are formed, bringing the total to 94.

21

April 1971 By now, 10,360 Local Spiritual Assemblies exist, and Bahá'ís reside in 46,334 localities.

19

Dec 1971 Erection of Obelisk on Mt. Carmel to mark site of future Mashriqu'l-Adhkar.

29 April 1972 Dedication of Mother Temple of Latin America in Panama.

By now, the Spiritual Assembly of Iraq has been dissolved because of persecution against

Bahá'ís in that land.

15 Mar 1973 Mazra'ih is purchased.

21

Apr 1973 The Universal House of Justice launches a Five Year Plan.

5

Jun 1973 Announcement of the establishment of the International Teaching Centre in Haifa.

7 Feb 1974 Announcement of the design for the Permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice.

13 July 1974 Dedication of the John Bosch Bahá'í Summer School in Santa Cruz, California.

14 Jan 1975 Purchase of the house of 'Abdu'llah Pasha, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Holy House in 'Akka and birthplace of Shoghi Effendi.

17 Jun 1975 Announcement of beginning of excavation for the Seat of the Universal House of Justice.

12 Sep 1976 His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa visits Shoghi Effendi's grave in London, England.

1978 Religious fanaticism in Iran sparks the beginning of persecution against the Bahá'ís of Iran.

27 Jan 1979 Foundation Stone Ceremony, site of future House of Worship, Western Samoa, with His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II.

21 Apr 1979 The Universal House of Justice launches a Seven Year Plan.

31 Jan 1983 Universal House of Justice occupies its Permanent Seat on Mt. Carmel.

21 April 1983
In the last five years, the House of the Bab and the ancestral home of Bahá'u'lláh in Takur were razed and scores of Iranian Bahá'ís were executed: their crime - being Bahá'í.

Summer, 1983 Six young women, aged 18-25 were hanged in Shiraz. All were offered freedom if they would recant their Faith. None accepted

that offer. Children are expelled from schools in Iran for being Bahá'í.

21 April 1984 Nine new National Spiritual Assemblies are formed, bringing the number to 143. The Bahá'ís of Iran continue to be persecuted.

Some six hundred men, women and children are currently in prison. The administrative functions have long been disbanded there.

1 Sep 1984
Dedication of the House of Worship in Apia, Western Samoa.

Oct 1985
The Universal House of Justice publishes "The Promise of World Peace". This statement on peace is formally presented to virtually all rulers, whether individuals or parliaments, of the world and to the leading thinkers of the world.

17 Nov 1985
Universal House of Justice announces reinterment of the remains of Mirza Muhammad-Quli (faithful half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh) in new Bahá'í cemetery looking towards the Qiblih of the Faith (i.e. the resting place of Bahá'u'lláh).

Fourth Epoch of the Formative Age: 1986
- Present

21 Apr 1986 The Universal House of Justice launches a Six Year Plan.

3 Aug 1986 Historic visit to Bahá'í World Centre by Sir Thomas Davis, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands for a consultation with the Universal House of Justice on world peace.

24 Dec 1986 Dedication of the House of Worship of the Indian Subcontinent in New Delhi, India.

21 April 1987 By now, more than 1 million copies of "The Promise of

World Peace" had been distributed. 200 Iranian Bahá'ís are still in prison in Iran.

3 Oct 1987 Bahá'í Faith becomes sixth world religion to join Network On Conservation and Religion of the World Wide Fund for Nature.

Sep 1988 Opening of the Maxwell International Bahá'í School in British Columbia, Canada.

21 April 1990 By now, two Knights of Bahá'u'lláh had settled in Sakhalin Island, the last remaining territory named by Shoghi Effendi in his Ten Year Global Plan. A two-year subsidiary teaching plan is introduced by the Universal House of Justice. The United States House of Representatives unanimously adopted a resolution calling for the emancipation of the Iranian Bahá'í Community.

18

March 1992 Word of the secret execution of Mr. Bahman Samandari in Iran is made known.

21 April 1992

The Holy Year begins, in commemoration of the centenary of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh. The Faith is now represented in every nation on earth. Law of Huququ'llah takes effect. Last known execution of a Bahá'í in Iran took place this month.

22

Nov 1992 Second Bahá'í World Congress held in the City of the Covenant (New York City) - attended by 30,000 Bahá'ís.

21 March 1993 The Most Holy Book (Kitab-i-Aqdas) is published in English for the first time.

21 Apr 1993 The Universal House of Justice launches a Three Year Plan.

March 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen involving 250 Bahá'ís from more than 40 countries. "The Prosperity of

Humankind", produced by the Bahá'í International Community's Office of Public Information, was distributed and discussed.

21 April 1995

172 National Spiritual Assemblies are existent.

Sept 1995 The

Fourth World Conference on Women was held in

Beijing,

attended by more than 500 Bahá'ís and an official delegation

from BIC. Also in 1995, the Bahá'í International Community's

United

Nations Office produced and distributed a statement, entitled "Turning

Point for All Nations", containing proposals for the development of the United

Nations.

21 Apr 1996 The

Universal House of Justice launches a FourYear Plan.

"The structural

framework of the Centre for the Study of the Texts and the

Extension to

the International Archives Building has been raised up and the

work on these buildings has advanced towards

initiation of the exterior and

interior finishing work. The erection of

the permanent seat of the International

Teaching Centre, the third

structure currently being built on the Arc, is

progressing rapidly. Seven terraces below the Shrine of the Bab are

now

completed, foreshowing the unfolding splendour from the foot to the ridge

of God's Holy Mountain."

This is a work in progress.

More details on the development

of the World

Center will be added when I can do so.

It is my hope that this chronology provides you with an overview which

will

aid your understanding of the extraordinary circumstances in which

the

Bahá'í Teachings have been revealed. This is by no means an

exhaustive work; myriads of details have been left out for the sake of

brevity.

As a suggestion, try viewing this chronology when you pick up one

of

Bahá'u'lláh's works. Look at His trials and tribulations and peruse the words from The Pen of Glory. How else could such outpourings of wisdom and love have emanated under such circumstances from an uneducated Man except through the Power of God? This is the first and foremost proof of the Manifestation of God: His Revelation.

--J. Thomas Pawlowski

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