

Name, History, and description

Baha'u'llah in Edirne

Sites associated with Baha'u'llah

Edirne after Baha'u'llah

The modern Baha'i community

Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz and his Ministers

Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz

`Âli Pasha

Fu'ad Pasha

The Last Years of the Ottoman Empire

Sultan `Abdu'l-Hamid II

Jamal Pasha and World War I

Ataturk and Modern Turkey

Shoghi Effendi on the fall of the Ottomans and the rise of modern Turkey

The Baha'i Community of Turkey

Early history

Persecutions of Baha'is in Turkey

Institutional Growth

Composition of the community

Growth of the Baha'i community

Other Turkish Baha'i Communities

Turks in Iran

Turks in the Central Asian Republics

Turks elsewhere

Baha'i literature in Turkish

`Abdu'llah Pasha

Chapter Three:

The Baha'i Faith in Iran

An Introduction to the History and Culture of Iran

Geography

History

Culture

Three Clerics and a Prince of Isfahan:

Background to Baha'u'llah's Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

Lawh-i-Burhan

Mir Muhammad-Husayn-i-Khatunabadi, "the She-Serpent"

Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir-i-Isfahani, "the Wolf"

Aqa Najafi, "the Son of the Wolf"

Sultan-Mas`ud Mirza Zillu's-Sultan

Khomeini

Miscellaneous historical and doctrinal topics

Seven Proofs

Suratu'l-Haykal

Lawh-i-Aqdas

Philosophy

Islamic philosophy as background to Baha'i thought

The Bab and philosophy

Baha'u'llah and philosophy

`Abdu'l-Baha and philosophy

Shoghi Effendi and philosophy

Philosophical writings by Baha'is

The Greek philosophers and the Jews

Dreams

Evolution: a note

R.M.S. Titanic

Appendices

Personal Names

Baha'i laws and customs relating to personal names

Persian and Islamic names

Arabic

Arabic in the Baha'i writings

Other Arabic Baha'i Literature

Author's

Preface

The Babi and Baha'i religions are historical religions, born in the full light of history, situating themselves in history, and drawing justification and inspiration from their own histories. The following chapters collect a series of investigations, mostly biographical, of Babi and Baha'i history. In some cases, as in the chapters on Zanzibar and Turkey, they form a collected whole. In others, there is a looser connection. The central theme here is a belief that cultural context and detail illuminates Baha'i history, a theme also explored in my earlier *Sacred Acts, Sacred Space, Sacred Time* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1996).

Chapter One

Some Babi Martyrs

The Babi religion may be understood as a transitional phase between Shi'ism and the Baha'i Faith, and a theme that unites them is martyrdom. Whereas for Sunni Muslims the formative events of their religion were the triumphant conquests of early Islam, the formative event in Shi'ism was the martyrdom of the Imam Husayn. Husayn perished with a small band of followers in the plain of Karbala in 680. His dignity in defeat and his dauntless faith have provided the model for Shi'ite piety ever since. The figure of Husayn also provides a link connecting Shi'ism, the Babi religion, and the Baha'i Faith. In a dream the Bab drank seven handfuls of blood from the severed head of the Imam Husayn, and in the Baha'i symbolic universe, it is Baha'u'llah who is the return of the Imam Husayn. No Babi of Shi'ite background, as they all were, could fail to foresee the possibility of joining the returned Imam on some new plain of Karbala.

Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim-i-Qazvini,
a secretary of the Bab.

Also called Mirza Ahmad-i-Katib ("the Scribe") or Mirza Ahmad-i-Qazvini, he was a secretary of the Bab, the teacher of Nabil-i-Zarandi, the historian, and a friend of Baha'u'llah. Though of a merchant family, he studied law and theology in his home city of Qazvin with Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim-i-Qazvini. When his teacher proclaimed him a mujtahid, he doubted his

worthiness. After a dream which the Shaykhi merchant Haji Allah-vardiy-i-Farhadi explained as being of Siyyid Kazim-i-Rashti, he went immediately to Karbala with his brother `Abdu'l-Hamid and spent the winter in Siyyid Kazim's classes. After Naw-Ruz Siyyid Kazim sent him back to Qazvin where he worked as a merchant for a number of years. He was apparently married and had children.

Hearing of the Bab's proclamation, he set out for Shiraz--immediately and on foot, according to one report. Hearing in Tehran that the Bab had instructed his followers to meet him in Karbila, he went there, only to find that the Bab had in fact gone to Bushihr and Shiraz. He joined the party of Shaykhis seeking the Bab, waited for a time in Isfahan, and finally met the Bab with the first group of believers allowed to enter Shiraz. There he became a confirmed believer.

When his followers caused disturbances in the city, the Bab sent most of the believers away but ordered Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim to stay and make fair copies of his writings as they were revealed, a task he shared with Shaykh Hasan-i-Zunuzi and Siyyid Husayn-i-Yazdi. Just before the Bab was sent to Isfahan, he sent these three ahead where they continued to act as his secretaries, receiving letters from believers and transcribing the replies. Later when the Bab was living secretly in the house of Manuchihr Khan, they continued this task and were the only believers allowed to see him. After the governor's death in 1847, he followed the Bab to Kashan, Qum, and Kulayn, where he probably remained for the two to three weeks until the Bab left. He did not see the Bab again.

Mirza Lutf-`Ali (Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr 2:232-33) reports that Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim tried to go to the fort of Shaykh Tabarsi with Aqa Muhammad-Ja`far-i-Tabrizi but that they were detained in Shir-Gah. Hearing this, Mulla Husayn sent out a party under Mirza Muhammad-Baqir-i-Hirati that brought them to the fort. A few days later Mulla Husayn sent him to Sari to attend Quddus who was detained there. Quddus in turn sent him away with instruction to personally serve the Bab. Another report states that he took part in the disturbances in Khurasan

but did not reach the fort (ZH). Both versions are open to doubt since they are not mentioned in Nabil, who otherwise has full particulars on his activities.

Soon after, he settled in Tehran where he lived under the protection of Baha'u'llah and worked as a scribe, spending his evenings making copies of the works of the Bab, which he gave as gifts. In late 1848 a young Babi, Nabil-i-Zarandi, arrived in Tehran and settled at the Madrasiy-i-Daru'sh-Shifay-i-Masjid-i-Shah where Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim was then living. He befriended Nabil and introduced him to the leading Babis of Tehran, including Baha'u'llah and his family.

It was through Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim that Baha'u'llah corresponded with the Bab after his return from Mazandaran. With him Baha'u'llah originated the plan to proclaim Mirza Yahya as the Bab's successor while keeping him in hiding--this in order to deflect attention from Baha'u'llah, who was well known to the authorities and the people. (Traveller's Narrative 37/67-68. MMA 174. RG 1:53-54, 2:247-48.)

During the persecutions of February 1850, Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim took refuge in the Masjid-i-Shah, the royal mosque adjacent to the madrasah in which he was living. Warned by Baha'u'llah that the Amir-Nizam had ordered the Imam-Jum`ih to arrest him in the sanctuary, he escaped in disguise to Qum. From about this time he was generally known as Mirza Ahmad-i-Katib "the scribe"--a name given him by Baha'u'llah, probably as an alias rather than as an honorific. In Qum, shortly before the Bab's martyrdom, he received a coffer from the Bab containing the last of his writings and his pen-case, seals, rings, and the famous pentacle tablet containing 350 derivatives of the word Baha. He left the same day for Tehran, explaining that the Bab's accompanying letter ordered him to deliver it to Baha'u'llah.

After the Bab's martyrdom he and Baha'u'llah brother, Mirza Musa Kalim, received the remains of the Bab and his disciple. These they hid first in the Imam-Zadih Hasan, then in the house of Haji Sulayman Khan in Tehran, and finally in the Imamzadih Ma`sum, where they remained hidden until 1284/1867-68 (DB 521, RB 3:424-25). In spring of 1851 Nabil found him living incognito in Kirmanshah. During Ramadan in the summer of 1851 Baha'u'llah visited

them and sent them both back to Tehran. Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim spent the winter of 1851-52 living in a caravansary outside the New Gate of Tehran where he spent his time copying the Bab's works.

When he and Nabil fell under suspicion once more, he fled to Qum. By summer he was back in Tehran and was arrested at the time of the attempt on the life of the Shah. His brother `Abdu'l-Hamid, who had come to urge him to return to Qazvin, was arrested with him. The two brothers were imprisoned in the Siyah-Chal with Baha'u'llah until sometime between Aug. 22-26, when both were hacked to pieces with sword by the artillerymen of the royal bodyguard, probably in the present Maydan-i-Arg, adjacent to the artillerymen's camp and the passage to the Siyah-Chal.

Mirza Ahmad was important as an authority on the writings of the Bab. Several manuscripts in his hand of the Arabic and Persian Bayans survive. He handled the private correspondence of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and Mirza Yahya with discretion. He was also one of Nabil's principal informants for the inner history of the early Babi period. Modern Baha'is know him best as the source through which Mulla Husayn's famous account of the Bab's declaration reached Nabil.

The sincerity of his spiritual search is apparent from his own account preserved in Nabil, from the trust placed in him by the Bab and Baha'u'llah, and from his own actions: his contentment with the modest stations of merchant and scribe when his learning and piety would have given him an honored place among the `ulama, his abrupt departures in search of Siyyid Kazim and the Bab, and his refusal to rejoin his family in Qazvin. He enjoyed the respect and affection of Baha'u'llah and his family and the obvious devotion of Nabil.

Sources: DB xxxvii, lxiii, 52, 159-69, 176, 189, 192, 212, 214, 227-28, 331, 439, 504-6, 587-88, 592, 654. Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr 2:232-33, 3:295-309. BBR 142.

Two
Babi Youth

Mirza `Abdu'l-Vahhab-i-Shirazi

In the summer of 1844, the Bab began dispatching his first believers, the Letters of the Living, on various missions, assigning Mulla `Aliy-i-Bastami to announce the advent of the Bab to the leading clerics in Najaf, the most prestigious center of Shi`ite learning. The young merchant, Mirza `Abdu'l-Vahhab, had had a dream in which the Imam `Ali was distributing indulgences in the market. When he went to his shop in the Vakil Bazar in Shiraz the next morning, he saw Mulla `Ali reenacting the scene he had dreamed. He followed Mulla `Ali, who was leaving that day for `Iraq, and with some difficulty persuaded him to allow him to come. They had only gone a short distance when Haji `Abdu'l-Majid, Mirza `Abdu'l-Vahhab's father, caught up with them. He severely beat Mulla `Ali, left him lying at the roadside, and took his son back to Shiraz. Nabil reports this story in the words of Haji `Abdu'l-Majid who was later a prominent Baha'i in `Iraq and told the story often (DB 87-90).

Haji `Abdu'l-Majid some time later moved his family to Baghdad and then to Kazimayn where Mirza `Abdu'l-Vahhab established a business. Apparently he had no further contact with Babis until 1267/1851 when Baha'u'llah visited Baghdad and persuaded both him and his father to become Babis. When Baha'u'llah returned to Tehran, he refused to allow Mirza `Abdu'l-Vahhab to accompany him since he was the only child of his parents and even gave him some money to expand his business.

Nevertheless, `Abdu'l-Vahhab soon received his parents' permission to go to Tehran. He arrived at the time of the assassination attempt on the Shah. When he asked the way to the house of Baha'u'llah, he was arrested, placed in the Siyah-Chal, and chained with four others to Baha'u'llah. Soon afterwards he was executed--wearing Baha'u'llah's shoes because he had none of his own. He was hacked to pieces by the brother and sons of the Grand Vizier and their servants. The executioner later returned to the dungeon and praised the spirit with which he had faced death. Baha'u'llah often told the story of his execution and the dream that foretold it (DB 633-34). `Abdu'l-Baha praised him in a Tablet and one of his American talks.

His death date is fixed between

August 22 and 26 by two dispatches of Sheil and the report of the government newspaper (BBR 134-36, 141).

Sources: MAB 3:407-8.

DB 594. Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr 3:284-94.

Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 68, 79, 94-98,

108. DJT 319-21 (cf. AB 221-22).

Haydar Big-i-Zanjani

He was the son of Din-Muhammad-i-Vazir, Hujjat's military commander at the siege of Zanjan. He was apparently in his late teens at the time of the siege and seems to have acted as a sort of aide-de-camp to his father. As the siege progressed, he took a more active role in the fighting. For example, he claims to have been the one who captured Farrukh Khan, an army officer who infiltrated the Babi lines in an ill-starred attempt to capture Hujjat.

When the Babis surrendered, Haydar Big was spared execution but was tortured to get him to reveal the location of a treasure the Babis were thought to have hidden. He was then sent to Tehran where he was spared execution at the last minute because of his youth. He was imprisoned for nearly two years. He spent some years in the service of an unnamed believer who was later martyred. He was reported to have been living in Tehran in the 1880s.

His lively first-person account of the siege is preserved in the London manuscript of the New History and was included in Browne's translation of that book.

Sources: TJ 151-68

passim (in an interpolation added to the London MS by Haji Mirza Isma'il-i-Kashani). `Abdu'l-Ahad, "Pers. Narr." 769 in which Browne quotes Shaykh `Ali-Bakhsh-i-Zanjani as confirming several important particulars of Haydar Big's account of his adventures. Husayn Zanjani, Vaqayi` 74.

The Farhadis of Qazvin

Several members of this family are notable in Shaykhi and Babi history.

Haji Allah-varidi-(or virdi)-yi-Farhadi.
ca. 1770-ca. 1830. Shaykhi merchant

of Qazvin. Survived by sons Aqa Muhammad-Hadi, Muhammad-Mihdi, and Muhammad-Javad-i-Farhadi, and one other child.

Haji Asadu'llah-i-Farhadi,
ca. 1775-1263/1847-48. Babi martyr and younger brother
of Allah-wardi. His three daughters, Khatun
Jan, Hajjiyyih Khanum, and Shirin Khanum,
were married to his nephews Hadi, Mihdi, and Javad
respectively. A respected merchant, his house was
a meeting place for Shaykhis, including
Shaykh Ahmad himself when he visited
Qazvin. When Letter of the Living Mulla Jalil-i-Urumiyyih
came to Qazvin, Haji Asadu'llah became a Babi, paid
Mulla Jalil's expenses, and gave him lodging in his
house and one of his wives to marry. The Farhadi house
became a Babi meeting place and was visited by Quddus,
Mulla Husayn, Tahirih, and others.

When Mulla Jalil's classes
attracted the jealousy of Tahirih's uncle Haji Mulla
Taqi-yi-Baraghani, he ordered the Farhadi house
attacked and Mulla Jalil kidnapped. After Mulla Taqi's
murder, the house was again attacked and looted. Haji
Asadu'llah was taken from his sickbed to prison and
sent chained and on foot in midwinter to Tihran with
four others to answer for the murder. Soon after his
arrival he died, either because of the hardships of
the journey or because he was secretly murdered by
Mulla Taqi's family. After he was denied burial at
the shrine of Shah `Abdu'l-`Azim, he was buried
at the nearby shrine of Bibi Zubaydih .

Aqa Hadi-yi-Farhadi was
the eldest son of Allah-wardi and the nephew and son-in-law
of Asadu'llah. With his younger brother Javad, he
led the Babi rescue of Mulla Jalil from the madrasah
where he was being held and tortured. He made swords
in the cellars of the Farhadi house intended for use
at Shaykh Tabarsi. Suspected in the
murder of Mulla Taqi, he fled to Tihran, and his wife
and sisters-in-law and their children had to live in
hiding in a ruined shrine in great hardship. Baha'u'llah
sent him back to Qazvin to rescue Tahirih, which he
did.

Sources: Tarikh-i
Shuhada-yi Amr 3:82-88, DB:281-82.

Husayn-i-Milani,

who helped rescue the body of the Bab.

d. August 1852. Babi martyr.

One of the followers of the heretic Usku, among whom he was known as Imam Humam Aba-`Abdi'llahi'l-Husayn, he lived in Tabriz at the time of the Bab's execution and played a role in the rescue of the Bab's remains. Mu`inu's-Saltaniy-i-Tabrizi states that he removed the Bab's remains from the moat and conveyed them to the shop of Haji Muhammad-Taqi-i-Milani, while ZH states that it was to Husayn-i-Milani's shop that the remains were brought. Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, :88 states that he claimed to be Him Whom God will make manifest and that he acquired a following.

In August 1852 he was living in Tihran and was arrested after the attempted assassination of the Shah. ZH states he was executed in Niyavaran the same day as Haji Sulayman Khan, which would have made him one of the earlier martyrs of that month and thus presumably one of the better known Babi's of Tihran. A platoon of soldiers stripped him and killed him with bayonets.

Sources: Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr3:259. BBR:142.

The
Seven Martyrs of Tehran

In February 1850 a number of prominent Babis were arrested in Tehran. Seven of those who were condemned refused to recant and were publicly executed. The incident was significant on several grounds in the moral history of the conflict between the Babis and the secular and religious authorities of Iran. Browne later wrote:

They were men representing all the more important classes in Persian divines, dervishes, merchants, shop-keepers, and government officials; they were men who had enjoyed the respect and consideration of all; they died fearlessly, willingly, almost eagerly, declining to purchase life by that mere lip-denial, which, under the name of ketman or takiya, is recognized by the Shi`ites as a perfectly justifiable subterfuge in case of peril; they were not driven to despair of mercy as were those who died at Sheykh Tabarsi

and Zanjan; and they seal their faith with their blood in the public square of the Persian capital wherein is the abode of the foreign ambassadors accredited to the court of the Shah. (Traveller's Narrative, p. 216, quoted in BBR 100)

The following are biographies of these seven martyrs.

Sources: The event is described in every major history of the Babi religion. Notable accounts include DB ???, BHD, ???, BBR 100D5, God Passes By, 46D47, RR??. [Sorry, Wendy. A student is using a number of my books at the moment.]

2. Mirza Qurban-`Aliy-i-Barfurushi was a well-known mystical leader and the second of the Seven Martyrs of Tehran. Originally from Barfurush in Mazandaran or Astarabad in Gurgan, he was a widely travelled Sufi master, a shaykh of the Ni`matu'llahi order. He also had associations with the other mystical orders of the time. His followers and admirers were to be found in many parts of Iran--in Tehran, Khurasan, Hamadan, Kirmanshah, Mandalij, Mazandaran, and Astrarabad--and included members of the royal family, notably the Shah's mother. He was respected for his personal, moral, and spiritual qualities. He lived simply and always wore the simple garb and woolen cloak of the dervish.

Mirza Qurban-`Ali became a Babi in 1845 after a chance meeting with Mulla Husayn-i-Bushru'i while travelling from Karbila to Iran. In Tehran he studied with Vahid and was closely associated with the Babi community there. When the Bab was at Kulayn near Tehran, Mirza Qurban-`Ali and some other believers were able to visit him there.

According to Nabil and Fadil-i-Mazandarani, he was prevented by severe illness from going to join the Babis at Shaykh Tabarsi. However, Mirza Lutf-`Ali, a survivor of the siege, reports that he reached the government camp and, not being known as a Babi, was asked to serve as Mihdi-Quli Mirza's emissary to the Babis. At the fort he told Quddus of the situation in the government camp and then returned to Mihdi-Quli Mirza with samples of the writings of the Bab. Later, when Vahid went to Yazd and Nayriz, Mirza Qurban-`Ali intended to join him but was arrested

before he left.

Having taught his faith openly, he was one of the prominent Babis arrested in February 1850. Since he firmly maintained his faith even under the interrogation of the prime minister himself, intervention on his behalf by many friends, including even the Shah's mother, was unable to save him. To the prime minister he said that his name, which means "sacrifice to `Ali," proved that he was destined to be a martyr for `Ali-Muhammad, the Bab. He spent his last night chanting poems of mystical love in the prison.

He was brought to the Sabzih-Maydan after the execution of the Bab's uncle. After the executioner's first blow merely knocked off his turban, he recited the famous verse:

Happy he whom love's intoxication

So hath overcome that scarce
he knows

Whether at the feet of the
Beloved

It be head or turban he throws!

The second blow struck off
his head.

Sources: Tarikh-i
Shuhada-yi Amr 3:98-104.

4. Aqa Siyyid Husayn-i-Turshizi was Babi mujtahid, the fourth of the Seven Martyrs of Tehran. A native of Turshiz (Kashmar) in Khurasan, he did his initial studies in Khurasan then went to Najaf for advanced study. After he was accepted as a mujtahid there, it was decided that he would return to his native Khurasan to teach.

On this journey he met a Babi acquaintance, the merchant Haji Muhammad-Taqi-i-Kirmani, who was returning from Karbila to Tehran to wait permission to visit the Bab. On the journey the merchant was able to convince his friend of the truth of the new religion. In Tehran he met the Bab's uncle and other Babis and became a confirmed member of the Babi community of the capital.

He and Haji Muhammad-Taqi were arrested in February 1850. Under interrogation he defended the validity of the proofs given by the

Bab. Asserting that his knowledge and competence to judge such matters had been certified by the mujtahids of Najaf and Karbila, he demanded to be allowed to debate the `ulama of Tehran. He had, however, already been sentenced to death as an unbeliever by seven eminent mujtahids of the city in judgments solicited by the prime minister.

He was the fourth of the seven martyrs brought to the Sabzih-Maydan for execution. Haji `Ali Khan, the Hajibu'd-Dawlih, who was there at the orders of the Shah, later reported that at the last moment, he was very struck by the youth, beauty, and demeanor of Siyyid Husayn and on impulse offered him a high post in the government and his daughter's hand if he would renounce his faith. Aqa Siyyid Husayn refused, saying he preferred to leave the world and its wealth to those who cared for it. Angered, Haji `Ali Khan struck him in the mouth and ordered his immediate execution. He died after Mulla Isma`il-i-Qumi and before his friend Haji Muhammad-Taqi-i-Kirmani.

Sources: Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi
Amr 3: 108-12.

Haji Mulla Isma`il-i-Qumi (or Farahani) was a Babi cleric, the third of the Seven Martyrs of Tehran. He was born and raised in Farahan in `Iraq-i-`Ajam but studied and lived in Qum for many years. Later he studied in Najaf and Karbila, where he became a distinguished and learned Shaykhi, greatly respected for his character. He became a Babi when Mulla `Aliy-i-Bastami came to Karbila. After participating in the disputes there with the `ulama, he went to Shiraz to meet the Bab. He then went to Khurasan and was involved in the disturbances there. He was present at Badasht where he received the title "Sirru'l-Vujud" (Mystery of Being). He accompanied Baha'u'llah, Tahirih, and Quddus as far as Niyala, where the party was dispersed, and then went to Tehran. He bitterly regretted the illness that prevented him from going to Shaykh Tabarsi. At this time he lived in the in the Madrasiy-i-Daru'sh-Shifa where several other Babis also lived, notably Nabil and Mulla `Abdu'l-Karim-i-Qazvini. Nabil praises his eloquence in expounding the Qur'an and traditions. He actively taught the Babi Faith, always carrying

an indexed Qur'an in his pocket in case he met a receptive person.

When in February 1850 orders were issued to arrest the known Babis in the capital, he happened to be at the house of Mirza Shafi`, the vazir of Tehran, who warned him that his name was on the list and that those arrested would be tortured and killed. He went into hiding but was arrested when he was recognized in a public bath and was chained and imprisoned with the others. When brought to the Sabzih-Maydan, he was stoned and cursed by the spectators but replied with cheerful words. When he reached the execution site, he gave some money to the executioner to buy candy which he then shared with him. He then offered prayers and was executed.

Sources: Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr 3:104-7.

5. Haji Muhammad-Taqi-i-Kirmani, the fifth of the Seven Martyrs of Tehran, was a well-known Babi merchant.

In 1264/1847-48 he had set out from Kirman to make a pilgrimage to Karbila. In Shiraz he became a Babi through Haji Mirza Siyyid `Ali, the maternal uncle of the Bab. As the latter was about to visit the Bab in Chihriq, Haji Muhammad-Taqi asked permission to accompany him. Haji Mirza Siyyid `Ali told him to fulfill his original intention of making pilgrimage to Karbila and to wait there for the Bab's instructions. As it happened, the Bab considered conditions too dangerous, so Haji Mirza Siyyid `Ali wrote him to come to Tehran where they would wait together until conditions allowed them to go to Chihriq.

Haji Muhammad-Taqi set out for Tehran in the autumn of 1849. In Baghdad he fell in with a friend, Aqa Siyyid Husayn-i-Turshizi, who had become a mujtahid in `Iraq. During the journey to Iran Siyyid Husayn also became a Babi. All three were among those arrested and executed in Tehran in February 1850. Haji Muhammad-Taqi was the fifth to die, immediately after his friend, Siyyid Husayn-i-Turshizi.

Sources: Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr 3:108-12.

Aqa Siyyid Murtaday-i-Zanjani

was the sixth of the Seven Martyrs of Tehran. He was a merchant of Zanjaan and brother of the Siyyid Kazim-i-Zanjaan who died at Shaykh Tabarsi. When brought to the execution place, he threw himself on the body of Haji Muhammad-Taqiy-i-Kirmani and insisted that being a Siyyid, his death would be more meritorious than that of his friend.

The New History and Nuqtatu'l-Kaf do not mention him.

Sources: DB 457-58.

Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr 3:112. cf. TJ 252, 216.

6. Aqa Muhammad-Husayn-i-Maraghi'i

(or Tabrizi) was a servant. A native of Aharbayjan, he became a Babi in Tehran through Haji Mulla Isma'il-i-Qumi, for who he had a deep affection. He was a servant of `Azim, a prominent Tehran Babi, and was severely tortured to induce him to implicate others. He would neither speak nor cry out, and the guards thought he was dumb until Mulla Isma'il-i-Qumi told them otherwise. When he would not recant, he was condemned to death with the others.

When he was brought to the Sabzih-Maydan and saw the body of his teacher, he hugged it and announced his unwillingness to be separated from his friend. He and the other two remaining prisoners each claimed the right to be executed first. Finally, all three were killed at the same moment.

Sources: Tarikh-i

Shuhada-yi Amr 3:113-14.

Shaykh Salih-i-Karimi the Arab

The first Babi martyr in Iran

was a learned Arab cleric living in Karbila who had been converted by Mulla `Aliy-i-Bastami. A close disciple of Tahirih, he was one of those who accompanied her to Baghdad and Iran after her expulsion from Karbila. An older man, he was one of those who supported her in her disputations with her husband Mulla Muhammad-i-Baraghani in Qazvin.

When Tahirih's maternal uncle and father-in-law, Haji Mulla Taqiy-i-Baraghani,

was murdered, his heirs--particularly Tahirih's husband Mulla Muhammad--accused her of instigating the crime. Seventy Babis were arrested in Qazvin, and Shaykh Salih was among those accused of the actual murder. While imprisoned in the governorate in Qazvin, he was severely bastinadoed. Since the governor did not have the authority to order executions, the government was persuaded to have the five prisoners still suspected of the crime sent in chains to Tehran. One prisoner died in route and another, who had confessed to the crime, escaped soon after arriving. The remaining three were imprisoned in Tehran. They were interrogated individually by Mulla Muhammad, a mujtahid with Babi sympathies, who exonerated them. Nonetheless, Mulla Muhammad-i-Baraqani was able to persuade the Shah to order the execution of Shaykh Salih. He faced his death steadfastly, reciting prayers and composing a couplet at the place of execution. He was blown from the mouth of a cannon in the Sabzih-Maydan in Tehran. The pieces of his body were collected and buried in the courtyard of the Imamzadih Zayd.

Shaykh Salih-i-Karimi was the first Babi to be executed for his faith in Iran, though the elderly Haji Asadu'llah-i-Farhadi, another of the Babis suspected in the murder, died of ill-treatment and exposure on the road to Tehran.

Sources: Tarikh-i Shuhada-yi Amr 3:77-81.

\Shaykh Abu-Mansur Ahmad b. `Ali b. Abi-Talib Tabarsi was the twelfth century Shi`i scholar whose tomb near Barfurush was the scene of the most important battle between the Babis and government troops in 1848-49. Shaykh Tabarsi--not to be confused with his contemporary al-Fadl b. Hasan Tabarsi, the author of a famous commentary on the Qur'an--was one of the teachers of the Shi`i biographer, Ibn Shahrashub. He was best known for the Kitabu'l-Ihtijaj, a collection of the traditions in which the Prophet and the Imams used arguments.

Sources: Biharu'l-Anvar 0:140. Adh-Dhari`ah 1:281-82. A`yanu'sh-Shi`ah 3:29-30. The identification of the tomb with this man is made by the tablet of visitation in the tomb. See Brown, Year, p. 617.

Mulla `Abdu'l-Fattah

(c. 1774-1852) was a native of Baha'u'llah's home village of Takur. He was arrested during the attack on that village in revenge for the attempted assassination of the Shah. His beard and part of his chin were cut off, and he was brought to the Siyah-Chal in Tihran, where he immediately died. He was praised by Baha'u'llah in a visiting tablet and by `Abdu'l-Baha in prayers.

Tarikh-i

Shuhada-yi Amr 3:26_??, Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 89-92, Iqlim-i-Nur??.

Chapter

Two

The

Baha'i Faith in Turkey

Turkey is a secular state with a largely ethnically Muslim population occupying the Anatolian peninsula and a small area of the southeastern part of the Balkan Peninsula. Modern Turkey is the successor state of the Ottoman Empire, which until the end of World War I also controlled parts of the Arab Near East and the Balkans. The Ottoman Empire played a major role in Baha'i history, for it was to Ottoman Iraq that Baha'u'llah went as an exile in 1853. Later he was exiled under Ottoman authority to Istanbul, Edirne, and `Akka. `Abdu'l-Baha also lived in the Ottoman Empire for most of his life, the greater part of the time as a prisoner.

Baha'is have lived in the territory of modern Turkey since the time of Baha'u'llah's exile to Istanbul. The contemporary Baha'i community consists of several thousand believers with about a hundred local spiritual assemblies. The National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey was formed in 1959.

In addition to those living in modern Turkey itself, there are large numbers of Turks elsewhere, particularly in northwestern Iran and Soviet Central Asia. There are a considerable number of Turkish-speaking Baha'is in Iran and an increasing number of Turkic-speaking Baha'is in the new republics of Central Asia.

The

Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire

The Turks are among the many peoples who have overflowed from the steppes of Central Asia into the settled areas of the Middle East, Europe, and China. By the tenth century A.D. they had drifted into the eastern Islamic lands, at first as mercenaries but soon as rulers. The Ottoman Empire began in the thirteenth century as one of the petty Turkish principalities in the former Byzantine lands of western Anatolia.

In a series of brilliant conquests over the next two centuries, the Ottomans built an empire covering most of Anatolia and the southern Balkans, capped in 1453 with the capture of Constantinople itself. The Ottomans triumphantly moved the government from their old capital of Edirne (Adrianople) to Constantinople. At its height in the sixteenth century the Ottoman Empire stretched from Iraq to Algeria and from the Crimea to Aden and was one of the most powerful and advanced states in the world.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, it was clear that the Ottomans had failed to keep pace with the technological, economic, and military advances of the European states. Moreover, the administrative structure of the empire had become corrupt and the Sultan's power diluted. A number of provinces had already been lost to European neighbors or insubordinant governors. Many expected the empire to collapse. Napoleon, for example, invaded Egypt and Syria as a way of striking at Britain's Eastern interests.

However, the Ottomans proved more resilient than expected. A series of reforming Sultans attempted to reorder the state, army, and economy after European models. Salim (Selim) III (1789-1807) attempted to establish a "New Order" in which the old Janissary Corps would be replaced by a modern army, modern schools established, and the people given a say in local administration. In the end, however, the old army and government establishment united against him, and he was overthrown in a mutiny of the Janissaries.

He was succeeded soon after by his cousin, Mahmud II (1808-39), who, after consolidating his own power, carried on the reforms. In 1826 he tricked the Janissaries into mutinying and massacred them. He also tried to reform education, mostly without

success, though he did establish a modern medical school and language academies for training diplomats. The result was a professional diplomatic corps that furnished most of the reforming statesman of the next decades.

`Abdu'l-Majid I (`Abd'Ūlmeçid, 1839-61), though young and susceptible to influence, was sympathetic to the reforms and issued a series of decrees known as the Tanzimat which, at least on paper, went far towards making Turkey a modern state. However, by about 1850 the impetus towards reform had largely petered out. It was during `Abdu'l-Majid's reign that the Crimean War (1853-56) took place, in which the European powers united against Russia in defense of Turkey. Baha'u'llah alludes to the destruction of a Turkish fleet by the Russians in his Tablet to Napoleon III, an incident that Napoleon had used to justify his entrance into the war.

The Tanzimat reforms had failed to transform the state fundamentally, although many improvements had resulted. Their flaw was that for the sake of reform, power had been concentrated in the hands of the Sultan in order to allow him to make necessary changes. However, once power passed into the hands of an incapable Sultan, there were no institutions capable of restraining him.

Sources: For the history of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey, see Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* 2 vol. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976-); Lord Kinross, *The Ottoman Centuries*; EB (1985) "Turkey and Ancient Anatolia." For the religious situation in contemporary Turkey, see *World Christian Encyclopedia* "Turkey."

Ottoman attitudes towards
the Babis

In the nineteenth century

Ottoman Iraq was the temporary or permanent home to a large number of Iranians--pilgrims, clerics, students, refugees, merchants--most drawn by the Shi'i shrines there. The Babi religion first came to the attention of the Turkish authorities at the end of 1844 when one of the Letters of the Living, Mulla `Aliy-i-Bastami, was arrested in Iraq on the charges of circulating a blasphemous imitation of the Qur'an and disturbing

the peace. Najib Pasha, the governor of Iraq under whose authority Bastami was tried, seems to have sincerely considered Bastami's Babi views objectionable. Nonetheless, the main concern of the Turkish authorities was apparently to avoid provoking disturbances between the Shi'i and Sunni communities in Iraq and complicating already strained relations with Iran.

Two years later when similar disturbances arose around the person of Tahirih, Najib Pasha, having learned from the commotions associated with the Bastami affair, simply took her quietly into custody and held her in the house of a leading Sunni cleric while he waited for instructions from Istanbul. A few months later she was deported to Iran.

By the 1850s there were many Babis among the Iranians in Iraq, most notably Baha'u'llah. The Turks had traditionally granted asylum to refugees of all sorts, and at that time were freely giving Ottoman nationality to Iranian refugees, to the irritation of the Iranian government. They protected the Babis as well, giving them citizenship when the Persian authorities tried to have them extradited. Baha'u'llah kept the Babis under careful control, so the Turks had few reasons to be apprehensive about them.

The Iranian government, seeing the recovery of the Babi community under Baha'u'llah's guidance, was very anxious that he should be removed from Baghdad. The Iranian ambassador in Istanbul steadily agitated for this end. Eventually, the Turks gave in and ordered Baha'u'llah to Istanbul as a guest of the government.

Sources: For the trial of Mulla `Aliy-i-Bastami, see Amanat 220-38, Momen, "Trial," BBR 83-90.

Istanbul,
the Great City

From 16 August through 1 December 1863 Baha'u'llah was an exile in Istanbul or Constantinople, the former capital of the Byzantine empire and at that time the capital of Ottoman Turkey. In the nineteenth century it was the chief city of the Islamic world.

The City's Name

Istanbul was originally

named Byzantium, perhaps after the legendary Byzas, supposed to be the leader of the first Greek colonists to settle the site. The emperor Constantine the Great renamed the city "New Rome" and "Constantinopolis" in 330 A.D. In English this became "Constantinople"--"Qustantiyyih" in the Islamic languages. This name remained in use until the adoption of the Roman alphabet in Turkey after World War I.

The modern name "Istanbul"--or "Stamboul" or "Astanih"--is an Arabic corruption of a Greek phrase meaning "in the City" and was in use as early as the tenth century A.D. A pun attributed to Sultan Muhammad II, the Ottoman conqueror of the city, made this "Islambul"--"where Islam abounds." This became the preferred spelling of educated Ottomans.

Islamic cities, like people, had titles. Those of Istanbul reflect its importance and prestige: "Seat of the Sultanate," "Home of the Caliphate," "Home of Victories," "Dome of Islam," and the like. Western diplomats referred to Istanbul and the Ottoman government as "the Sublime Porte," a French mistranslation of Bab-i-`Ali, "High Gate"--the name of the part of the palace where several ministries were located.

To Baha'u'llah Istanbul was simply "the City" or "the Great City" (al-madinah al-kabirih), reflecting its preeminence in the Islamic world.

History and description

Istanbul is strategically situated on the European bank of the waterway separating Europe from Asia, on a triangular peninsula formed by the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and a deep inlet called the Golden Horn. By its situation it controls sea traffic between the Mediterranean lands and the Black Sea and the land traffic between the Balkans and Asia. Moreover, the Golden Horn is a splendid natural harbor, and the peninsula lent itself to defense. Thus, the history of Byzantium/Constantinople/Istanbul may be read as a twenty-six-century-long struggle between those who would use the city to dominate the lands bordering the Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean and those who found their ambitions limited by the rulers of the city.

The ancient and medieval

city. According to legend, ancient Byzantium was founded about 657 B.C. by colonists from Megara and Argos during the great age of Greek colonization. The early history of the town is a complicated series of struggles, as various powers contended for the town with its control of the Black Sea grain trade, punctuated by sacks as irritated neighbors retaliated for the tolls the city placed on shipping. Byzantium eventually joined the Roman Empire as a free confederate city, but soon lost its privileges. It was destroyed in 196 and 268 A.D. during civil wars, but was rebuilt both times.

Ancient Byzantium occupied a much smaller area than the modern city, and none of its monuments survive.

In 330 A.D. Constantine I, the Great, the first Christian Roman emperor, moved the capital to Byzantium. Now known as Constantinople, the city almost immediately became the leading city of the Western world and the capital of what was really a new eastern Greek Christian empire. Constantine tripled the size of the city. He and his successors filled the city with wonderful churches, palaces, and monuments, and girdled it with great walls that were to be breached only once in their history.

Within a century and a half, the last remnants of the Western Roman Empire had vanished, but the fortunes of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire continued to rise, and by the sixth century it had attained a power and magnificence nearly equal to that of Rome at its height.

Constantinople was also the seat of the Patriarch of Constantinople, among Christian prelates second only to the Pope in Rome. After the split with Rome in the eleventh century, he became the titular head of the whole Orthodox Church, as he remains to this day. Thus, Constantinople became a sort of holy city to the Eastern Christians.

After the sixth century the empire slowly dwindled, but Constantinople remained one of the world's great cities. At its height it had a population of half a million. An Arab traveler of the twelfth century could still remark, "This city is even greater than its repute." By the fifteenth

century, however, the Byzantine Empire had been reduced to some small, distant, and impoverished provinces and a few kilometers of land outside the city wall. The city was full of ruins and largely empty of people. The end came in 1453.

The Turkish city.

Muslims besieged Constantinople for the first time in 669 A.D. During this campaign the elderly Abu-Ayyub al-Ansari, the standard-bearer of the Prophet Muhammad himself, died and was buried before the walls of Constantinople. The siege failed. Naval raids a few years later also failed. In 716-17 the caliph Sulayman b. `Abdu'l-Malik, encouraged by a tradition that Constantinople was to be conquered by a caliph bearing the name of a prophet, besieged the city, again without success. Seven centuries would pass before a Muslim army again stood before the Great City.

In 1355 the Ottoman Turks, having taken the last Byzantine territory in Asia Minor, crossed the Dardanelles and established themselves in Europe. For nine more decades the city maintained a fragile independence, protected mostly by larger dangers and opportunities that preoccupied the Turks. A Turkish siege in 1422 failed to take the city, but in April 1453 a larger army equipped with the finest siege artillery in the world appeared before the walls. The desperate pleas of the last Byzantine emperor for aid from the West brought only two thousand Genoese soldiers. Cheered by the miraculous rediscovery of the tomb of Abu-Ayyub, the Turks stormed the city on 29 May. The last Roman emperor died fighting on the walls.

Sultan Muhammad II--now called "Fatih", the "Conqueror"--made Constantinople his capital. Finding the city in ruins and depopulated, he filled it with people deported from other conquered areas. He ordered his nobles to build the mosques and other public buildings for the various quarters of the city. By the end of his reign the population was perhaps 70,000. Over the next century Istanbul rose steadily in wealth, population, and magnificence as the sultans strove to make their capital the greatest city in the world. The Byzantines had left the ancient domed church of Hagia Sophia ("Holy Wisdom"). Taking this as their model, the Ottomans filled the city with great domed

mosques. In the sixteenth century the great architect Sinan and his staff built more than three hundred public buildings, most in Istanbul. Though the highpoint of Ottoman architecture was the sixteenth century, the Sultans continued building right up to the end of the nineteenth century.

In various ways the Sultans attempted to make Istanbul a sacred city of Islam.

The Ottoman Empire was cosmopolitan, embracing dozens of nationalities--a diversity reflected in the capital. From the first the Sultans had brought Christians and Jews to live in Istanbul. Once the city was reestablished, people flocked in of their own accord: Arab, Turkish, and Persian Muslims; Greek and Armenian Christians; representatives of all the conquered Balkan provinces; Spanish Jews, refugees from the Inquisition seeking the relative freedom of Turkish rule; Western European traders, diplomats, and mercenaries. Typically, people of a particular ethnic group would settle in a quarter around a mosque, church, or synagogue. There they would be allowed to govern their own affairs and would be held collectively responsible for the taxes, good order, and public health of their neighborhood.

After the sixteenth century Istanbul began a slow decline, reflecting the decline of Ottoman power. The city had always been troubled by earthquakes, fires, plagues, and civil disorder. With the decline of the central authority, these grew worse. With the central authorities no longer able to strictly enforce building regulations, areas once burned over filled up with ramshackle wooden houses. Houses had long since encroached on the broad avenues of Byzantine Constantinople. The city had become a warren of narrow alleys. The rise of modern Europe slowly ruined Istanbul's traditional industries and trade. The government was no longer as rich or as efficient as it had been. Whereas the charitable endowments of wealthy noblemen had once built hospitals, hospices, public kitchens, and other such institutions requiring large annual expenses, they now built libraries and fountains.

Thus, when Baha'u'llah came to Istanbul in 1863, he found the Great City at perhaps its lowest point since the mid-fifteenth century, though

still the greatest city of the Islamic world. It abounded with magnificent mosques and swarmed with people from many countries. It was the most European of Islamic cities, its harbors choked with shipping from all over the world and offering regular steamship service to Europe, Africa, and Asia. But Istanbul was run-down and ramshackle, like the empire it ruled, and none of the improvements in public services and facilities had yet been made that were later to transform Istanbul into a modern city.

Baha'u'llah in Istanbul

Baha'u'llah and his party reached Istanbul on Sunday, 16 August 1863/1 Rabi` I 1280 after a two-and-a-half day journey by steamship from Samsun on the northern coast of Asia Minor. Shamsi Big, an official responsible for guests of the government, met them and had them driven in carriages to a government guest house near the Mosque of Khirqiy-i-Sharif. This was in the center of the city, not far from the huge Fatih Mosque built by Muhammad II. Shamsi Big assiduously attended to the needs of the exiles, though the large party--more than fifty people--overcrowded the house. He hired two servants to do errands and cooking. Various of Baha'u'llah's companions helped as well.

The next day a representative of the Persian embassy called on Baha'u'llah bearing the compliments of Haji Mirza Husayn Khan Mushiru'd-Dawlih and an apology for not being able to call in person. It was a courteous and carefully calibrated acknowledgement of Baha'u'llah's high social rank and his status as a political exile. Many other visitors came as well, including high Turkish officials such as Yusuf Kamal Pasha, a former prime minister with whom Baha'u'llah discussed the possibility of an international language.

Baha'u'llah Himself refused to return these visits or to make the customary calls on the Shaykhu'l-Islam, the foreign minister, and the prime minister to arrange an audience with the Sultan. Baha'u'llah turned aside the advice of friends with the words, "I have no wish to ask favors from them. I have come here at the Sultan's command. Whatsoever additional commands he may issue, I am ready to obey." Years later, the Persian ambassador,

who had been shamed by the Persian princelings and schemers who swarmed in Istanbul looking for favors and pensions from the Sultan, confessed that he had felt pride in Baha'u'llah's "dignified aloofness." So it was left to Baha'u'llah's brother Mirza Musa to do such visiting as was necessary, accompanied by Aqa `Abdu'l-Ghaffar-i-Isfahani, the only one of Baha'u'llah's companions who spoke Turkish well. Baha'u'llah himself never went anywhere except to his brother's house and to the mosque and public baths.

Nonetheless, Baha'u'llah did not live in seclusion. Visitors crowded into the house, and he regularly received his companions. Other Babis began to appear in Istanbul--though Baha'u'llah, foreseeing that they would occasion trouble, sent them away as fast as he could.

Several major tablets were revealed during this period, notably Baha'u'llah's Mathnavi, a mystical poem in Persian; the Lawh-i-Naqus, known as Subhanaka ya Hu, revealed for the holy day of the Declaration of the Bab, which fell during Baha'u'llah's stay in Istanbul; and the tablet to Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz and his ministers.

It was also at Istanbul that Baha'u'llah's eighteen-month-old daughter Sahijyyih died. The child was buried outside the Edirne Gate. She was the daughter of Mahd-i-`Ulya, Baha'u'llah's second wife.

The original house having proved too small, the party moved after about a month to the house of Visi Pasha, a much larger and more comfortable house a short distance away near the Fatih Mosque.

The Persian ambassador soon realized he had made a major mistake in having Baha'u'llah brought to Istanbul. Though he was now much farther from Iran, Istanbul was not an isolated provincial town like Baghdad but the chief capital of the Islamic world. The ambassador now urged the Turkish government to transfer Baha'u'llah to somewhere less conspicuous, either Bursa in Anatolia or Edirne in European Turkey. The Sultan and his ministers, though not personally hostile to Baha'u'llah, saw that Babi doctrines had the potential to undermine the basis of Ottoman government,

as well as to complicate relations with Iran.

The news was first brought to Baha'u'llah by Shamsi Big. Baha'u'llah was furious. He had been brought to Istanbul as a guest and now was being made a prisoner. His first wish was to refuse to go, send the women and children to foreign embassies for safety, and let the Turkish government do what it could. At worst, the public martyrdom of the Babis in Istanbul would bring great glory to the Babi cause, but Baha'u'llah was confident the government would back down. However, Mirza Yahya, who had been living under an assumed name among the exiles, refused to take this risk. Faced with the possibility of a public rift among the Babi exiles, Baha'u'llah had to comply with the government's order. The official order was brought by a brother-in-law of the prime minister. Baha'u'llah replied with the stinging *Lawh-i-'Abdu'l-'Aziz va-Vukala'*--the "Tablet to 'Abdu'l-'Aziz and His Ministers."

After less than four months in Istanbul, the exiles were ordered to proceed immediately to Edirne. On 1 December 1863 they set out for their new place of exile.

Sites associated with Baha'u'llah.

House of Shamsi

Big, the first residence of Baha'u'llah and the Babi exiles in Istanbul. This was evidently a government guest house, not the personal residence of Shamsi Big. It was a two-story house of some size, though too small for the fifty-five exiles. Baha'u'llah and his family lived in the apartments upstairs, while the other Babis lived in rooms in the lower story. A pleasant reception room on the first floor provided a meeting-place for the Babis. This house was near the Mosque of Khirqiy-i-Sharif in the Sultan Muhammad Quarter in the center of Istanbul. The old house no longer exists.

House of Visi Pasha,

the second residence, to which Baha'u'llah moved about a month after his arrival in Istanbul. This was a fine three-story house with its own bath and cistern, separate private apartments for the family (the famous Turkish Harem), and a large walled garden in the visitors' section of the house. The house was located in the same quarter as the house of Shamsi Beg near

the Mosque of Sultan Muhammad II Fatih that gave the quarter its name. This house no longer exists. In 1952 Baha'is purchased part of the site of one of this house and in 1955 built a national haziratu'l-quds on the site. Conditions did not allow the building to be used for official Baha'i purposes so it was used as a residence.

The Fatih Mosque (Fatih Camii), built by Sultan Muhammad II Fatih "the Conqueror" as his contribution to the reconstruction of his new capital, is the largest mosque complex in Istanbul. Completed in 1471, in its original form it occupied a huge square, over 300 m. on a side. About half the area was an open court, in the midst of which sits the large domed structure of the mosque itself. Legend says that the Sultan cut off the architect's hand because the dome was smaller than that of the Church of Hagia Sofia. The cemetery behind the mosque contains the tombs of the Sultan and his queen. Around the courtyard were arranged an elementary school, library, hospital, public bath, dervish monastery, eight seminaries, and a public kitchen that once fed the thousands who lived or worked in the mosque complex, as well as the poor of the neighborhood. It was a particularly magnificent example of the mosques with their complexes of charitable institutions that once were the centers of life in Islamic cities. The mosque and most of the other buildings were destroyed in an earthquake in 1766. They were immediately rebuilt according to a new plan in a style influenced by European baroque architecture.

While he was in Istanbul, Baha'u'llah went to public noon prayers almost every day, usually in this mosque.

The Mosque of Khirqiy-i-Sharif (Hirka-i S̄erif Camii), the mosque of the Holy Mantle. Among the relics proving the legitimacy of the Ottoman Sultans' claim to the caliphate was the possession of the mantle of the Prophet. As it happened, they had two mantles, so in 1851 Sultan `Abdu'l-Majid built this charming mosque for the second, the first being kept in the treasury in the Topkapi Palace. It is built in the Neoclassical Empire style of the age of Napoleon I. It was very near the house of Shamsi Big, and Baha'u'llah came here for noon prayers. Both these mosques exist unchanged from Baha'u'llah's time.

Edirne Gate (Edirnekap'), in Baha'u'llah's time one of the two main gates to the city. The road to Adrianople started from this gate, so it is probably through it that Baha'u'llah left the city. Muhammad the Conqueror entered the city in triumph through the Edirne Gate. In ancient times there was a cemetery outside the gate. Perhaps it was still there in the nineteenth century, for it was outside this gate that Baha'u'llah buried his little daughter Sahijiyih.

Baha'i writings on Istanbul

There are many references to Istanbul in Baha'i literature, usually either allusions to the Turkish government or to Baha'u'llah's exile there. The most important is the apostrophe to the city in the *Kitab-i-Aqdas* (SCKA 21 and quoted often elsewhere.) Baha'u'llah addresses the city as the "Spot that art situate on the shores of the two seas" and says that "the throne of tyranny hath, verily, been established upon thee." There, Baha'u'llah says, he beheld "the foolish ruling over the wise, and darkness vaunting itself against the light." He prophesies that the "outward splendor" of the city would "soon perish, and thy daughters and thy widows and all the kindreds that dwell within thee shall lament." The Great City thus symbolizes the pride and corruption of the Ottoman Empire, and the literal abasement of the city becomes an example of the retribution of God.

The *Suriy-i-Muluk* addresses the Persian and French ambassadors in Istanbul and its clergy and wise men, criticizing the latter for their failure to investigate Baha'u'llah's claim.

Shoghi Effendi in *The Promised*

Day is Come makes the decline of Istanbul a symbol and sign, not just of divine retribution upon the Ottoman Empire, but of the decline in influence of Islam. He cites the fall of the caliphate and the flight of the last Ottoman Sultan, the decision to make Ankara the capital of the new Republic of Turkey, and the secularization of the city and of some of the great mosques.

Istanbul after Baha'u'llah

Though the great domed mosques still dominate the skyline of central Istanbul,

the city has changed much in the century since Baha'u'llah. In 1865 the Khwajih Pasha fire--said by Baha'u'llah in the Lawh-i-Ra'is to have been a divine warning--burned a large part of the city. This allowed the building of the first modern wide streets in the old city. Over the next half century modern city services were gradually constructed. In recent decades modern apartment blocks have largely replaced the wooden houses of old Istanbul, though the old city also holds the shanties of poor immigrants from the countryside. Istanbul is now a modern city covering several hundred square kilometers on both sides of the Bosphorus with a population of more than two million. A suspension bridge now connects Asia and Europe. The population has expanded enormously, particularly since the 1970s.

Politically, the last century has been less kind to the Great City. The Young Turks Revolution of 1908 humbled the Sultan. Five wars filled the city with Muslim refugees from the former Ottoman territories in Europe. After World War I the city was occupied for five years by the Allies. The Turkish Republic, idealizing the Turkish villages of Anatolia, spurned Istanbul and made its capital in Ankara, deep in Asia Minor. The Sultanate and Caliphate were abolished. The last Sultan fled to Europe, and the city lost its position as leading city of the Islamic world.

With the fall of the cosmopolitan Ottoman Empire and the rise of nationalistic Turkey and Greece, the Greek Christians who had lived in Istanbul for five centuries under Turkish rule began to leave. Istanbul has become steadily more Muslim and Turkish.

The Baha'i community of Istanbul

The first Babi to reach Istanbul was Mulla `Aliy-i-Bastami, the Letter of the Living who had gone to the Shi`i holy cities of Iraq to announce the coming of the Bab. He had been arrested, condemned, and sent as a prisoner to Istanbul. He was set to hard labor in the naval dockyards where apparently he died, for he was never heard from again.

When Baha'u'llah left for Edirne, he left behind Aqa Muhammad-`Ali Jilawdar (also known as Sabbagh-i-Yazdi) as a sort of Babi

agent to assist pilgrims passing through the city. About two years later he joined Baha'u'llah in Edirne. Others--both Baha'i and Azali--came to the city. Nine were arrested in 1868 at the time of Baha'u'llah's exile to `Akka, interrogated, and either deported or sent along with the other exiles.

While Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha were at `Akka, most Baha'i pilgrims passed through Istanbul, preferring the convenience of Russian railroads and steamships to the arduous overland journey through Iraq and Syria. Some stayed on in Istanbul. The Baha'i Qajar prince Abu'l-Hasan Mirza Shaykhu'r-Ra'is spent several years there in the 1880s and 1890s, for example. In the early 1880s the Afnan family established a branch of their trading firm in Istanbul under the management of Nabil ibn Nabil, the brother of Samandar. Istanbul at this time was also a center of Azali activity, mainly directed against the Qajar regime but also against Baha'u'llah. The Azalis made a number of accusations against the honesty of the Afnans. The affair lasted ten years, drove Nabil ibn Nabil to suicide, and forced the Afnans to close their office in Istanbul.

The modern Baha'i community of Istanbul was established around the turn of the century. After the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the new government attempted to suppress all the old religious institutions. When Baha'is were arrested in Smyrna on suspicion of being a secret religious society, the Istanbul Spiritual Assembly intervened on their behalf and were themselves arrested. However, they were soon cleared, having had the opportunity to publicly explain their beliefs. Shoghi Effendi reported the event as a triumphant vindication of the Faith that resulted in publicity all over the Middle East. Baha'is were arrested again on similar charges in 1933 and were held for about two months.

In 1951 a Baha'i delegation attended a United Nations conference for Middle Eastern non-governmental organizations in Istanbul. Shoghi Effendi told the Baha'i world of his pleasure at the degree of official recognition received by the Faith on this occasion.

In 1952 Baha'is were able to purchase part of the site of the house of Visi Pasha.

Since 1959 Istanbul has been
the seat of the National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey.
There is now a Baha'i center in Istanbul.

Sources: There is
a vast literature on Istanbul, its history, and its
monuments--even excluding works in Turkish. Popular
works include Bernard Lewis, *Istanbul and the Civilization
of the Ottoman Empire* (Norman, Oklahoma: 1972); *Constantinople:
City on the Golden Horn* (New York: Horizon Caravel
Books, 1969); and *Istanbul* (Time-Life Books). See
also EB "Istanbul." Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the
Roman Empire* contains a classic account of Byzantine
Constantinople. EI2 "Istanbul" contains detailed information
with full bibliography on the development and workings
of Turkish Istanbul. EI2 "Qustantiniyya" discusses
the period before the conquest from the Islamic point
of view. Guidebooks such as Hilary Sumner-Boyd and
John Freely, *Strolling through Istanbul* (London: KPI,
1987) are a good source of information and monuments
and the flavor of the city. Since modern tourism started
about the time of Baha'u'llah, guidebooks exist from
his time, such as *Handbook for Travellers in Constantinople*
(London: John Murray, 1845, 1871).

For Baha'u'llah's stay in
Istanbul, see *God Passes By*, 145, 157-61; *Baha'u'llah,
King of Glory*, , 154-55, ch. 26; RB 2: 1-6, 55-61,
317-18, 325-32; *Salmani* 37-40, *Phelps* 42-47; *Traveller's
Narrative* 54-55, 65; BBR 34n, 199-200; SAQ 31;
CH 59-60; ESW 68-69; MAs 8:27-28; MAB 2:177.

References to Istanbul and
its affairs in Baha'i writings include PB 50, 102-4;
ESW 106; AQA *Muluk (Lawh-i-Ra'is)* 234; MAB 1:381, 2:121-22,
299; WOB 173-74, PDC 38-39, 65-66, 100-1; *Tawqi`at*
3:61; EBB 3.

For the complicated affair
of Nabil ibn Nabil and the Azalis in Istanbul referred
to in ESW 33, 108-9, 123-24, see *Baha'u'llah, King
of Glory*, ch.40, RB 3:172, 4:391-406; *Muhadirat*
275-77, 417.

On the Baha'i community of
Istanbul, see *Baha'u'llah, King of Glory*, 31n;
RB 1:286-89; *God Passes By*, 303; BW 3:222-23,
4:317 (a photo of the community, c. 1930), 8:692, 9:659,
12: 66, 602, 605-7, 14:602; BN 28 (Nov. 1928) 2, 72

(Ap. 1933) 4, 245 (July 1951) 7; BA 152, 167-69; Garis, Martha Root 295, 322-23, 326-27; EBB 147-48, 181-85, 259; AB 117, 399; BBR 89-90; Tawqî` at 3:33; PP 316-18.

Edirne,
the Land of Mystery

Baha'u'llah's new place of
exile was Edirne, the old capital of the Ottoman Empire.

Name, History, and description

Roman Edirne was called
Hadrianopolis or Adrianople--the "city of Hadrian."
In Turkish this became Adirnih--"Edirne" in modern
Turkish spelling. Europeans--who learned classical
Greek but not Turkish in their schools--continued to
call the city "Adrianople" until Turkey adopted the
Roman alphabet in the 1920s. Baha'i writings use "Edirne"
in Persian and Arabic and generally use "Adrianople"
in English. There are occasional references to "Rumelia,"
the nineteenth-century name for the area around Edirne.
Baha'u'llah, however, usually referred to Edirne as
Ard-i-Sirr, "the Land of Mystery"--Sirr, "mystery,"
and Adirnih both having the numerical value of 260
in Abjad reckoning. Baha'u'llah sometimes associates
the epithet "remote" (ba`id) with Edirne, as in the
reference to "this remote prison" in the Arabic Tablet
of Ahmad. He also calls it "the city We have made
Our throne."

Edirne is located about 200
km. northwest of Istanbul on the main road from Istanbul
to Central Europe. It is strategically situated at
the junction of several rivers in the gap between the
Rhodope and Istranja mountain ranges and thus controls
access from Europe to the Thracian plain and Istanbul
itself. It is beautifully situated on a hill within
a bend of the river Tunja.

The city was evidently founded
by the Thracians who called it Uskadama. After its
capture by the Macedonians in the fourth century B.C.,
it was renamed Oresteia. The Emperor Hadrian rebuilt
the city in the second century A.D. Adrianople was
an important Byzantine fortress town for more than
a thousand years, guarding Constantinople against threats
from the northwest. Major battles were fought there
against Goths, Avars, Bulgars, Peaenigs, Crusaders,
Serbs, and Turks. In July 1362 the troops of the Ottoman

Sultan Murad I defeated the last Byzantine governor of Adrianople. The Ottomans made it their capital for the next ninety years and the springboard for their conquests in the Balkans. After the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, Edirne was no longer the capital but remained a favored retreat for the Sultans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The town prospered under the favor of Sultans who built fabulous palaces, mosques, and other buildings in the town.

In the eighteenth century

Edirne began to decline with the general loss of Ottoman power in the Balkans. Several mutinies of the garrison, a catastrophic fire, and an earthquake all damaged the city. After an occupation by Russian troops in 1828-29, Muslims began moving from the city to be replaced by Christians coming from nearby villages. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the population of Edirne was very mixed, with Muslim Turks being a minority. The bulk of the population consisted of Christian Greeks and Bulgarians with a large Jewish minority, Gypsies, and the usual scattering of nationalities from all over the Balkans and Near East. The population was about 100,000.

Though many of the Ottoman monuments had already disappeared or were in ruins, a number of great buildings still stood, especially several great mosques. Madrasahs, bazars, and caravansaries served the needs of learning, commerce, and travellers. The city once contained many palaces and mansions, but these had suffered cruelly in the decline of the city.

Baha'u'llah in Edirne

Baha'u'llah's exile

to Edirne marks his transformation from a guest of the Ottoman government to a political prisoner. Edirne, wrote Baha'u'llah, was "the place which none entereth except such as have rebelled against the authority of the sovereign." (God Passes By, 161) The journey there was made in the middle of winter without adequate preparations, and Baha'u'llah's party suffered severely. On their arrival they were placed in a series of temporary accommodations, vacant summer houses too small and too poorly built to hold a large number of people in winter. Among the tablets giving some details of life and events in Edirne is a very early letter

of `Abdu'l-Baha written in 1864 complaining of their living conditions during this first winter. Eventually adequate housing was found, but Baha'u'llah nonetheless moved several more times during his stay in Edirne. The other Baha'is generally rented houses near Baha'u'llah's. Most of the Baha'is not serving in Baha'u'llah's household found work, usually keeping shops in the bazaar. This helped to ease the financial hardships that had afflicted them during the first months in Edirne.

Baha'u'llah's stay in Edirne marked a crucial stage in the development of the Baha'i Faith. Most important, it was from Edirne that Baha'u'llah first made public announcement of his claim to prophethood. Most of the Tablets to the Kings were written in Edirne. Many tablets also announced and defended his claim to the Babi community. Messengers such as Nabil, the historian, carried the news of this claim to the Babis and won the allegiance of most of the Babi community of Iran and Iraq. A steady flow of pilgrims came to Edirne and carried away the news of Baha'u'llah's claim.

The second major development of the Edirne period was the open break with Mirza Yahya, the appointed successor of the Bab. Mirza Yahya had grown increasingly jealous of Baha'u'llah's prestige. However, this had been concealed from the ordinary Babis and Mirza Yahya had remained part of Baha'u'llah's household. In Edirne, however, the dispute finally came into the open. After Baha'u'llah formally confronted Mirza Yahya with his claim to be him Whom God shall make manifest, the Promised One of the Bab, Mirza Yahya responded with a counterclaim to prophethood. Affairs reached such a state that Mirza Yahya made two attempts to kill Baha'u'llah, once by poison and once by suborning Baha'u'llah's bath attendant. On 22 Shavval 1282/10 March 1866 Baha'u'llah withdrew from the community to allow his followers to decide their allegiances for themselves. Most chose to follow Baha'u'llah. Baha'u'llah referred to this period as the Ayyam-i-Shidad (the "days of stress") and the "most great separation."

Finally, it was in Edirne that Baha'u'llah began to establish the laws of his own religion, composing, for example, the tablets containing the rituals to be followed during pilgrimage to the two Holy Houses of Shiraz and Baghdad, the prayers of fasting, and a summary of Baha'i law, as well as

the Tablet of the Branch, which prefigured `Abdu'l-Baha's later appointment as his successor.

During these years the Baha'is maintained excellent relations with the authorities and townspeople. Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha were on visiting terms with several of the governors, as well as with consuls, missionaries, and the clergy, all of whom thought well of the character and piety of the Baha'is. Later some of these people came to visit in `Akka. It was also in Edirne that Baha'u'llah had his most extensive contact with Europeans.

In 1863-68 there were four governors of Edirne, at least three of whom are known to have been on good terms with the Baha'is:

Muhammad-Amin Pasha
Qibrisi, 1861-Apr. 1864, a former prime minister.

Sulayman Pasha, Apr.
1864-Dec. 1864.

`Arif Pasha, Dec. 1864-Mar.
1866.

Muhammad-Khurshid
Pasha, Mar. 1866- , whose deputy was `Aziz Pasha,
later the governor of Beirut in 1889-92.

When accusations were first made against Baha'u'llah, Khurshid Pasha defended his innocence. Later, when the orders came to exile Baha'u'llah, the Pasha left the city in protest, leaving his deputy `Aziz Pasha to carry out the expulsion.

`Aziz Pasha was a friend of `Abdu'l-Baha and later visited Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha in `Akka.

Two of Baha'u'llah's children were born in Edirne, Diya'u'llah in 1864 and Badi`u'llah in 1867.

Eventually, the dispute between the Baha'is and the Azalis came to the attention of the authorities. The decision was made to exile both parties to less sensitive areas. One morning in early August 1868, troops surrounded the house of Baha'u'llah. Despite the protests of the foreign consuls and the governor on their behalf, the Baha'is and Azalis were

ordered to leave the city immediately. Baha'u'llah refused to leave until his steward could settle his debts. The property of the Baha'is was sold at auction at very low prices. Baha'u'llah and his companions left the city on 12 August 1868/22 Rabi` II 1285.

Sites associated with Baha'u'llah

During their stay in Edirne, the Baha'i exiles rented a considerable number of houses and gardens. In addition, several other sites are also associated with Baha'u'llah's stay.

The Khan-i-`Arab was the two-story caravansary where Baha'u'llah was lodged during his first three nights in Edirne. It seems to have been located near the house of `Izzat Pasha, evidently in the southeastern part of the city near the Istanbul road. The accommodations there were poor. Others in the party stayed there somewhat longer. The Khan-i-`Arab no longer exists.

The first house near the Takyiy-i-Mawlavi in the Muradiyyih Quarter. Baha'u'llah and his family moved here from the caravansary. It was too small for his family so they moved again after a week. Others of the party moved in from the caravansary after his departure.

The second house in that quarter. This was a larger house in the same area. Baha'u'llah's brothers, Yahya and Musa, lived with their families in a second house next door. These early residences in Edirne were all poorly built, draughty, and verminous. Since the winter was extremely cold and Baha'u'llah's family had spent the previous winter in sweltering Baghdad, they were unprepared for the cold and suffered severely, especially the children, who were frequently sick. The sites of these first two houses were identified by Martha Root during her visit in 1933.

The house of Amru'llah. After six months or so, Baha'u'llah was able to rent the house of Amru'llah, a very large house across the street from the north entrance to the Salimiyyih Mosque in the center of the city. This was a splendid three-story house covering a city block. The andaruni (inner family quarters) had thirty rooms. Baha'u'llah and

his family occupied the top floor, Mirza Muhammad-Quli and his family the middle, and servants the bottom. The biruni (outer house) had four or five fine reception rooms on the top floor, as well as a kitchen. Other Baha'is occupied the middle floor. The house had a bath, cistern, and running water in the kitchen. Mirza Musa and Mirza Yahya occupied two other houses in the same quarter. Food for all three houses was prepared in the house of Amru'llah and was distributed to the poor as well. Meetings for prayer and to hear Baha'u'llah were regularly held in the reception rooms. Baha'u'llah lived in this house from 1864 until March 1866 and again later for a few months, probably during the first half of 1867. When the house was sold he moved to his final residence, the house of `Izzat Pasha. The house was apparently named for its owner, one Amru'll'ah Big, but coincidentally its name means "Cause" or "command of God."

The house of Rida Big.

A the time of the open split with Mirza Yahya, Baha'u'llah moved to the house of Rida Big, where he lived with his family for a little less than a year, the first few months in total seclusion. It is now in Baha'i hands and has been rebuilt. Mirza Musa also had a house in the neighborhood, as did a number of Baha'u'llah's companions. Down the street is an orchard rented by Baha'u'llah, now also in Baha'i hands. The house of Rida Big had an andaruni and a small biruni, but the latter had a very large walled garden.

The house of `Izzat Aqa.

After the sale of the house of Amru'llah, Baha'u'llah rented a house in the southeastern part of the city, not far from the Khan-i-`Arab. This was another large house with a fine view of the river and countryside. There were two large courtyards with flowers and trees. Baha'u'llah lived here for about eleven months. his companions had another house in the same area. Mishkin-Qalam, the calligrapher, and Mirza Musa also had houses in the area which Baha'u'llah visited on occasion.

The Muradiyyih mosque and

Takyiy-i-Mawlavi. A fine fifteenth century mosque complex. Originally it was built for the Mawlavi dervishes, the mystical order founded by the poet Rumi and much patronized by the Ottoman Sultans. When the building became a mosque, a takyih--dervish monastery--was

built next door. Subsidiary charitable foundations were added to the complex: baths, a hospital, a seminary, a bakery, and an almshouse. Several of the Baha'i houses were close to this mosque, and Baha'u'llah is known to have visited it. It still stands.

Salimiyyih Mosque.

The great domed royal mosque of Edirne. Built for the cultured and dissolute Sultan Salim II, "the Sot," this wonderful building was the masterwork of Sinan, the greatest architect of the Ottomans. Its dome and minarets dominate the city, as they have since 1575. It was in this mosque that Mirza Yahya challenged Baha'u'llah to meet him to publicly dispute their claims. Baha'u'llah came to the mosque at the appointed time, but Mirza Yahya failed to appear.

Edirne after Baha'u'llah

Edirne is mentioned often in the later writings of Baha'u'llah, usually as the "Land of Mystery." It is often associated with the open proclamation of his prophetic mission. The most important direct references to Edirne in Baha'u'llah's writings are the prophecies found in the Suriy-i-Ra'is and some other tablets of great destruction and political turmoil in the Edirne area and of Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz's impending loss of these territories. The fulfilment of these prophecies ten years later greatly raised Baha'u'llah's prestige and was a proof often cited by Baha'i teachers over then next several decades.

Another passage in the Suriy-i-Ra'is states that "this Youth hath departed out of this country and deposited beneath every tree and every stone a trust, which God will ere long bring forth through the power of truth." (God Passes By, 181)

Baha'u'llah's prophecies concerning Edirne were soon realized. War broke out with Russia and several Balkan Christian states soon after the fall of `Abdu'l-`Aziz in 1876. The war of 1877-78 with Russia began with an initial success as the Turks heroically defended Plevna in Bulgaria against a Russian siege. However, when the Turks attempted to break out, they were defeated. The Russians poured south and the Muslim population of Bulgaria and Rumelia fled before them, dying in thousands from cold, hunger, disease, and Russian shells in that horrible winter.

All the chief towns of European Turkey fell, Edirne included. The city and its population, particularly the Muslims, suffered greatly from that occupation. Most of the Turkish territory north of Edirne was lost to the new Christian state of Bulgaria.

After the Russians withdrew, the town recovered for a time, and in 1890 its population was still about 87,000. However, it was once more devastated in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. The Turkish defeats in October 1912 left Edirne besieged by the Bulgarians. The Turks held out there until March 1913. When the Bulgarians began fighting with their former allies over the spoils of the war, the Turks were able to reoccupy Edirne. After the establishment of modern Turkey in 1923, the Greek population abandoned the town as part of the population exchanges between the two countries. The population--65,000 in 1911--had dropped to 34,500 in 1927.

Today Edirne is a border town with a population of 72,000 (1980), the first stop for travellers entering Turkey by train from Western Europe. It is the capital of the province of the same name. The area grows various grains and fruits.

The modern Baha'i community

After Baha'u'llah's departure in 1868, no Baha'is lived in or visited Edirne for many decades. The first recorded Baha'i visit to the city was that of Martha Root and Marion Jack, 17 October-6 November 1933. Shoghi Effendi had supplied them with a list of the houses and sites associated with Baha'u'llah. In the course of their visit they were able to identify four houses--all then in ruins after five wars--in which Baha'u'llah had lived, as well as several other sites. Though sixty-five years had passed since Baha'u'llah's departure, they were able to find two old men who remembered "Baha'i Big" and "Abbas Big" and who were able to supply them with information about the Baha'i households.

By 1963 with the aid of pioneers from Iran, a local spiritual assembly had been established in Edirne, and two sites associated with Baha'u'llah--the house of Rida Big and a nearby orchard--were in Baha'i hands. This house has been rebuilt though not fully restored and furnished. Pilgrims occasionally visit.

Two major anniversaries of events in Baha'u'llah's life were observed in Edirne. On 11-12 December 1963 some seventy Turkish Baha'is visited the city to observe the centenary of Baha'u'llah's arrival there. In 1967 five Hands of the Cause came to commemorate the centenary of the revelation of the Suriy-i-Muluk.

Sources: For the history and description of Edirne, see EI2 and EB "Edirne."

For accounts of Baha'u'llah's time in Edirne, see *God Passes By*, 161-180, *Baha'u'llah, King of Glory*, 217-59, 460-62, RB 2, BBR 185-200, 205-7, 234-35, 487, AB 19-26, *Traveller's Narrative* 55-59, Phelps 47-69, CH 60-64, BA 189.

Persian sources on the Edirne period, mainly important for Baha'u'llah's prophecies concerning Edirne, are MAs 8:27-28, *Amr va-Khalq* 2:284-92, 4:453-58, *Rahiq-i-Makhtum* 1:55-56, 67-72, *Qamus-i-Tawqi`* 1:100-104, DM/IK 2:282, 283, 7:915. Other references to these prophecies and related subjects include PUP 398, WOB 178, PDC 62, 65, *Iqt.* 74, TAB 213, MAs 4:277, 7:194-95, ESW 132, AQA 4:336, MAB 2:213, *Badayi`* 1:357, 2:194.

For Martha Root's account of her visit to Edirne, see BW 5:581-93, reprinted in Martha Root, *Herald of the Kingdom* 179-96. This article contains photographs of most of the important Baha'i sites. See also *Garis*, Martha Root 393-97.

On the modern Baha'i community of Edirne and the house of Rida Big, see BW 14:3, BN 328 (6/1958) 14, 397 (4/1964) 3-4, 434 (5/1967) 2.

Sultan
`Abdu'l-`Aziz and his Ministers

The period from Baha'u'llah's arrival in Istanbul in 1863 to his de facto release from confinement in `Akka in 1877 coincided with the important political developments that took place in the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz. He and his ministers `Ali Pasha and Fu'ad Pasha were the Ottoman officials responsible for Baha'u'llah's successive exiles, and each was the recipient of important tablets from Baha'u'llah. Ottoman officials were apparently impressed with Baha'u'llah personally, and `Ali Pasha praised his character and beliefs to foreign diplomats.

However, the Ottomans were mainly interested in the Babis as a pawn in Turkish-Iranian relations. By favoring or suppressing the Babis, they could exercise some influence on the Persian government. Baha'u'llah, however, held himself aloof from such machinations, refusing even to return the visits of Turkish officials. This evidently irritated the Sultan, and the Ottoman government yielded to the Iranian entreaties to send Baha'u'llah away from Istanbul. They were also apparently becoming concerned about Babi views on theocratic government spreading and undermining Ottoman authority.

The reasons for Baha'u'llah's final exile, to `Akka, are not absolutely clear. Evidently, the agitation of the Azalis in Istanbul aroused the implausible fear that Baha'u'llah was conspiring with the Bulgarians (Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 254). Foreign diplomats were told that the Baha'is threatened to cause unrest by their efforts to convert Muslims. Although there do not seem to have been converts in Edirne, a number of Baha'is had drifted into the city. There also had been trouble in Baghdad occasioned by the conversion of an Ottoman officer of Sunni clerical background. Baha'u'llah Himself believed that the Persian government was at least partly responsible. In any case, the Baha'is were treated with noticeable harshness in their expulsion from Edirne and in their initial conditions of imprisonment in `Akka.

In the late 1860s a further concern began to trouble the Ottoman government. A group of young aristocratic intellectuals, the Young Ottomans, had started agitating for constitutional reform. Baha'u'llah's letters to the kings, written mostly during the Edirne period, also advocated constitutional monarchy. A number of the Young Ottomans were in touch with Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha, both because Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha were perceived as belonging to corresponding social and intellectual circles in Iran and because some of the Young Ottomans were imprisoned in `Akka at the same time as Baha'u'llah. Thus during the last decades of Baha'u'llah's life, he was imprisoned not just because of old fears of Babi revolution but also because of the threat of liberal reform.

Baha'u'llah addressed the Ottoman government in a number of his works, especially during the period 1863-73. A number of tablets, notably

the Suriy-i-Muluk and the lost Lawh-i-`Abdu'l-`Aziz va-Vukala, addressed the Sultan directly, sternly criticizing the quality of his government. Baha'u'llah also complained of the unjust treatment he had endured at the hands of the Ottoman government, especially after his exile to `Akka. The Persian Lawh-i-Ra'is, for example, catalogs the sufferings endured by the Baha'i exiles during the early months in the Barracks of `Akka. The Kitab-i-Aqdas, completed in 1873, also denounces the tyranny of the regime of `Abdu'l-`Aziz.

Several works of this period contained specific prophecies of the fall of `Abdu'l-`Aziz and his ministers and of disaster at Edirne. These were strikingly fulfilled soon after with the overthrow of Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz in 1876 and the disastrous war of 1877-78, which culminated in the occupation of Edirne. The predictions, which had been well known before the events, greatly raised Baha'u'llah's prestige.

Sources: For Baha'u'llah's relations with the Ottomans, see *God Passes By*, 146-47, 172-75, 179, 181, 225; BBR 182-200; as well as the sources cited in elsewhere in this chapter.

Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz

Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz ("Abd'Ÿl'aziz." b. 9 Feb. 1830. d. June 1876) was the thirty-second Ottoman Sultan. Baha'u'llah's exiles to Istanbul, Edirne, and `Akka all took place during his reign, and it was only after his overthrow and death the Baha'u'llah regained relative freedom

Life and reign. The third son of the reforming Sulan Mahmud II, `Abdu'l-`Aziz came to the throne after the early death of his brother `Abdu'l-Majid I on 25 June 1861. In the early years of his reign he was under the influence of his two great ministers `Âli and Fu'ad Pasha. Under their influence the Tanzimat reforms continued. For example, European-style reforms were made in such areas as provincial administration, education, civil law, and the treatment of minorities and foreigners. He himself toured Western Europe, the first Ottoman sultan to do so. On the other hand, unrest continued in the Balkans, much encouraged by Russia. There were revolts in Montenegro, Serbia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Crete, eventually leading to the loss of much territory in

Europe.

After the deaths of Fu'ad and `Âli Pasha in 1869 and 1871, `Abdu'l-`Aziz became increasingly autocratic and reactionary. Though he aligned the Ottoman Empire with Russia, a traditional enemy, unrest continued in the Balkans, culminating in a bloody uprising in Bulgaria in 1875-76. Beginning in 1873 famine struck Anatolia. In one particularly severe winter wolves killed animals and people in the suburbs of Istanbul. The "Young Ottomans," a loose network of constitutionalist reformers, agitated against the regime. Finally, the government was forced in 1875 to default on the huge public debt accumulated through years of deficits, triggering a major financial crisis and panic.

Midhat Pasha, the president of the Council of State and a sympathizer with the Young Ottomans, obtained a fatva from the Mufti of Istanbul accusing the Sultan of madness, incompetence, and corruption, and with the support of other ministers, moved to depose him. Before dawn on 30 May 1876 warships and troops surrounded the palace. Another ship threatened the Russian embassy to prevent intervention from that quarter. At dawn a salute of 101 guns from the warships announced the fall of `Abdu'l-`Aziz. A few days later he was dead, though whether by suicide or murder is unclear.

Relations with Baha'u'llah.

It was under the authority of `Abdu'l-`Aziz that Baha'u'llah suffered three exiles, under increasingly harsh conditions, first as a guest to Istanbul, then to Edirne as a political exile, and finally to outright imprisonment in `Akka. There is not much evidence of `Abdu'l-`Aziz's own attitude towards Baha'u'llah. Most likely he shared the fears of his chief ministers about possible Babi political ambitions. He did personally endorse Baha'u'llah's final exile to `Akka and most probably the two earlier exiles.

On his part Baha'u'llah bitterly resented his treatment at the hands of `Abdu'l-`Aziz. He had done nothing against the Ottoman government: there was no justification for the harsh manner in which he and his followers had been treated. Thus, he denounces `Abdu'l-`Aziz in a number of tablets. The injustice of `Abdu'l-`Aziz, he more than once

told visiting pilgrims, was greater than that of Nasiri'd-Din Shah, for the latter had actually been the object of an attempted assassination by Babis, whereas `Abdu'l-`Aziz had no just cause for complaint against Baha'u'llah or the Babis.

Soon after the death of Fu'ad Pasha in 1869, Baha'u'llah prophesied the deaths of `Ali Pasha and of `Abdu'l-`Aziz in Suriy-i-Fu'ad and Lawh-i-Ra'is. This prediction was well known. Thus the dramatic fall of `Abdu'l-`Aziz greatly raised Baha'u'llah's prestige and was a factor in the conversions of at least two eminent Baha'is: `Azizu'llah Jadhhab and Mirza Abu'l-Fadl-i-Gulpaygani.

Since it was in 1877 that Baha'u'llah was finally able to leave `Akka and move the Mazra`ih, it seems probable that his relative freedom was a byproduct of the brief period of constitutional government under Midhat Pasha and the Young Ottomans.

Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz in the Baha'i writings. `Abdu'l-`Aziz is addressed directly at least twice in the writings of Baha'u'llah. In addition, he is mentioned in several other tablets, as well as in the writings of Shoghi Effendi.

a. Lawh-i-`Abdu'l-`Aziz
va-Vukala'. "Tablet to `Abdu'l-`Aziz and his Ministers," the first of Baha'u'llah's letters to kings. This was Baha'u'llah's reply to the Sultan's order exiling him to Edirne. The order had been brought by the brother-in-law of the prime minister. Baha'u'llah refused to see this man, who was received instead by `Abdu'l-Baha and Mirza Musa, Baha'u'llah's brother. Baha'u'llah promised to send a reply within three days. The next day Shamsi Big, Baha'u'llah's host, took this tablet in a sealed envelope to the prime minister. Shamsi Big told the Baha'is that the prime minister turned pale on reading it and said, "It is as if the King of Kings were issuing his behest to his humblest vassal king and regulating his conduct." On seeing this reaction, Shamsi Big discreetly left.

The text of this tablet is lost, but Nabil reports that it was relatively long and that it began with an address to the Sultan and

also included passages addressed to the ministers condemning their conduct and character. It would thus seem to have been similar in content to the passages addressed to the Sultan and his ministers in the slightly later *Suratu'l-Muluk*.

There is doubt as to the identity of the recipient. Shoghi Effendi identifies him as `Ali Pasha, the prime minister. However, `Ali Pasha was foreign minister at this time and Fu'ad Pasha prime minister.

b. *Suratu'l-Muluk*.

The most important surviving passage addressed to Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz is contained in this tablet, which also addresses the kings of the earth as a group. Baha'u'llah tells the Sultan that the selflessness of his advice is shown by the fact that he did not ask the Sultan for anything. He warns him against corrupt ministers. He should surround himself with just ministers with whom he consults about the good of the people. He should not rely on those who do not believe in God or who disobey divine law, for such people are not trustworthy. He should not allow others to act for him but should personally attend to matters of state. He should act with justice, trust in God, and observe moderation. He should pay special attention to the needs of the poor and prevent his ministers from enriching themselves at the expense of the people, for in Istanbul Baha'u'llah saw that worthless people ruled over honorable people. (This is repeated in the apostrophe to Constantinople in the *Kitab-i-Aqdas*: "We behold in thee the foolish ruling over the wise, and darkness vaunting itself against the light.")

The king is the shadow of God on earth and should behave accordingly. The passage ends with Baha'u'llah complaining of the unjust suffering he has had to endure but reaffirming his loyalty and praying for the well-being of the Sultan.

d. Shoghi Effendi's writings.

In his work on the letters to the kings, *The Promised Day Is Come*, Shoghi Effendi quotes the passages of the *Suratu'l-Muluk* addressed to Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz, as well as the apostrophe to Constantinople from the *Kitab-i-Aqdas*. A major theme of this work is the destruction of the individuals, states, and religious institutions hostile to Baha'u'llah and his Faith. Shoghi Effendi pairs `Abdu'l-`Aziz with Nasiri'd-Din Shah but

identifies him as more powerful than the Shah and more responsible for the sufferings of Baha'u'llah. He quotes the prophecies of the Lawh-i-Ra'is of the destruction and loss of the lands around Edirne and of the Lawh-i-Fu'ad of the death of `Ali Pasha and the Sultan himself.

Shoghi Effendi then traces the swift decline of Ottoman Turkey: the loss of European and African territory during the reign of `Abdu'l-Hamid II, the loss of the remaining Near Eastern and Balkan territories during and after World War I, along with the death of a large fraction of the empire's population due to war, disease, starvation, and massacre. Finally came the extinction of the six-hundred year old dynasty along with the title of caliph supposedly inherited from Muhammad Himself. Turkey was made a secular state and the capital was moved to Ankara. This, Shoghi Effendi states, was the retributive justice of God on `Abdu'l-`Aziz and his successors. Similar passages occur elsewhere in Shoghi Effendi's writings, notably in WOB 174-76.

Sources: EI2 "Abd al-`Aziz." *God Passes By*, 146, 158-60, 172-73, 179, 181, 195, 208, 225. *Baha'u'llah, King of Glory*, 154, 199, 206-7, 260-62, 307, 359-61, 379, 411-13, 476; portraits, 209, 263. BBR 199, 311n., 485. EBB 183. Habib 217, 234. MH 4:227-28, 7:461. PDC 19, 61-66, 71. WOB 174-79. The text of the relevant parts of *Suratu'l-Muluk* is found in *Alvah...bi-Muluk* 35-49. The English translation is in *GWB* cxiv, PDC 37-40, PB 47-54. A facsimile of the Farman banishing Baha'u'llah to `Akka is found in *BW* 15:50 and *Baha'u'llah, King of Glory*, 284.

`Âli Pasha

Life and Career. Muhammad

Amin `Âli Pasha (Mehmed Emin Ali Pasha; d. Bebek near Istanbul 7 Sept. 1871.) was the Ottoman statesman and diplomat who was foreign minister at the time of Baha'u'llah's exiles to Istanbul and Edirne and prime minister when he was exiled to `Akka. He was the "chief" addressed in the two tablets known as *Lawh-i-Ra'is*.

The son of an Istanbul shopkeeper, he was born in Istanbul in February 1815 and entered government service at the age of fourteen in the secretariat

of the court. His nickname `Âli ("lofty") referred either to his abilities or to his short stature. Since he knew some French, he was appointed to the Translation Bureau in 1833. The Translation Bureau was one of the reforms of Mahmud II and served as a school of foreign languages and training institute for diplomats. As one of the few modern educational institutions in the country, it produced many of the reforming statesmen of the middle of the century.

He rose rapidly in the diplomatic service and was sent to Vienna in 1836, St. Petersburg in 1837, and London in 1838 where he was the counsellor. In 1840 he was a deputy to the counsellor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and became ambassador to Great Britain the following year. In 1845 he was counsellor to the Foreign Ministry and became foreign minister for the first time the following year when his mentor Rashid Pasha was promoted to prime minister. He was dismissed for a few months in 1848 but soon restored. He continued in this post until 1852 when he became prime minister (Grand Vazir, Sadr-i-A`zam) for two months after the dismissal of Rashid Pasha. In the next two years he briefly held two minor governorships before returning to the Foreign Ministry. Thereafter he remained in high office most of the rest of his life, alternating as foreign minister and prime minister with his friend and fellow-reformer Fu'ad Pasha. He was foreign minister 1854-55, 1857-58, July 1861, Nov. 1861-67, and 1869-71. He was prime minister (Grand Vizier) five times: 1852, 1855-56, 1858-59, 1861, and 1867-71.

`Âli Pasha was greatly respected by European statesmen for his integrity, personal charm, diplomatic skill, and mastery of French. This served to protect him, since Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz would have been happy to be rid of him. As a diplomat he worked tirelessly to placate the European powers who threatened to dismember the empire. He was also able to settle peacefully the rebellion in Crete.

At home he was less popular. The sultan disliked him for his attempts to restrain the arbitrary exercise of royal power, to protect the prerogatives of ministers, and to strengthen the rule of law. The younger reformers, the so-called "Young Ottomans"--attacked him because he did not support

the movement for a constitution. Nonetheless, under his ministry a number of important reforms of the government structure were carried out, railroads begun, and improvements made in education, the army, and the navy.

William Howard Russell, the British war correspondent, said of him in 1869,

Aali Pasha is a very small, slight, sallow-faced man, with two very penetrating honest-looking eyes. He has a delicate air, and looks timorous and nervous; and his standing attitude is one of rather imbecile deference to everybody, but in the presence of the Sultan this becomes almost prostration. Yet, he is courageous, bold, enlightened, honest, and just; full of zeal for the interests of his country, and unceasing in his efforts for its improvement. (A Diary in the East, p. 475, cited in BBR 491.)

Relations with Baha'u'llah.

When Baha'u'llah came to Istanbul, `Ali Pasha was serving his fourth term as foreign minister and his ally Fu'ad Pasha was prime minister. He initially summoned Baha'u'llah to Istanbul at the urging of the Persian ambassador, who was anxious to have him removed from the vicinity of the Persian border and the Shi`i shrines. He seems to have been favorably impressed by Baha'u'llah. In 1866 the Austrian ambassador, Prokesch von Osten, reported:

`Âli Pasha has spoken to me with great veneration of the Bab, interned at Adrianople, who he says is a man of great distinction, exemplary conduct, great moderation, and a most dignified figure. He has spoken to me of Babism as a doctrine which is worthy of high esteem, and which destroys certain anomalies that Islam has taken from Jewish and Christian doctrines, for example this conflict between a God who is omnipotent and yet powerless against the principle of evil; eternal punishments, etc. etc. But politically he considers Babism unacceptable as much in Persia as in Turkey, because it only allows legal sovereignty in the Imamate, while the Osmanlis for example, he claims, separate temporal from spiritual power. The Bab, at Adrianople, is defrayed all expenses by the order of and to the charge of the Persian government.

Two years later, the dispute between the Azalis and the Baha'is led him to believe

that Baha'u'llah and his followers had political ambitions and were attempting to spread their religion in Turkish territory, and that they were likely to cause disturbances. Thus Baha'u'llah was to be exiled to a less sensitive area. Baha'u'llah viewed this as a clear injustice, motivated by nothing more than political expediency, particularly in view of the harsh conditions of his imprisonment in `Akka. He prophesied the downfall of both Fu'ad and `Ali Pasha.

Lawh-i-Ra'is, "Tablet of the Chief," is the title of two tablets addressed to `Âli Pasha.

1. The Arabic Lawh-i-Ra'is, also known as Lawh-i-Ra'is I or Suratu'r-Ra'is (or "Suriy-i-Ra'is") was composed during the journey from Edirne to Gallipoli. It was begun at Ke'an (Kashanih), where the exiles spent the night of 14-15 August 1868, and was finished at Gyavur-Köy soon after. It is written in an elevated Arabic style and is some twenty pages in length. The opening pages are addressed to `Âli Pasha. Most of the tablet, however, is addressed to Haji Muhammad-Isma`il-i-Kashani, known as Dhabih--"sacrifice"--or Anis--"companion"--by which he is called in this tablet. Dhabih and some others had arrived in Edirne, only to find Baha'u'llah's house guarded by troops. Unable to meet Baha'u'llah, he had gone to Gallipoli. The portions of the Suratu'r-Ra'is addressed to him are intended to console him for his failure to meet Baha'u'llah. Baha'u'llah also answers a question about the nature of the soul that Dhabih had asked in a letter. Dhabih was able to meet Baha'u'llah in a public bath in Gallipoli a few days after the completion of this tablet. Dhabih died in Tabriz about 1880.

The opening pages of the Suratu'r-Ra'is are a stern denunciation of `Âli Pasha for his persecution of Baha'u'llah. Addressing him bluntly as "O chief," Baha'u'llah tells him that he has no power to hinder the Cause of God by his "grunting" or the "barking" of those around him. His deeds have caused Muhammad to mourn. He has allied himself with the "chief of Iran"--meaning either the Shah or the Persian ambassador in Turkey--to harm Baha'u'llah. `Ali and Fu'ad Pasha both denied to foreign diplomats that the urgings of the Persian government

had anything to do with Baha'u'llah's exile.) Baha'u'llah compares him to the rulers who had opposed Muhammad, Moses, and Abraham. The Shah of Iran had killed the Bab, but Baha'u'llah had nonetheless arisen to revive his religion. He prophesies that there will be great afflictions and turmoil in the region of Edirne and that it will pass out from under the authority of the Turkish Sultan. Finally, Baha'u'llah states that his only purpose is "to quicken the world and unite all its peoples."

Baha'u'llah then addresses Dhabih. He tells of how he and his family and followers awoke to find the house surrounded by soldiers barring all from coming or going, even keeping them from obtaining food the first night. The people of the town, hearing that they were to be sent away, gathered around the house weeping--but the grief of the Christians was greater than that of the Muslims. One of the Baha'is, Haji Ja`far-i-Tabrizi, thinking that he was to be separated from Baha'u'llah, cut his own throat. Another of Baha'u'llah's followers had done this in Baghdad. Though this was contrary to divine law, it showed the depth of their love. Such a thing had not been seen in past religions.

Baha'u'llah praises Dhabih and seeks to console him. This is a day the prophets of the past all longed to attain. His followers should thus not let afflictions discourage them. He prophesies that God will raise up a king to protect his followers. He prays for Dhabih's success in spreading his faith during his travels and compares Dhabih's happy state with that of those people who have rejected Baha'u'llah.

Baha'u'llah also replies to Dhabih's question about the soul, regretting that he could not have heard the answer from Baha'u'llah's own lips. Saying that he does not wish to dwell on what people have said in the past, he gives a brief account of the soul, explaining that "soul," "spirit," "mind," "vision," and the like all represent the same entity, differentiated by the circumstances under which they are exercised. He refers Dhabih to another tablet where the matter is explained fully.

Baha'u'llah also mentions one "Ali" who had been in Baghdad with Baha'u'llah and who had come to Edirne, only to find him a prisoner.

The tablet closes with a prayer that Dhabih will not be hindered from meeting Baha'u'llah in Gallipoli.

2. Persian Lawh-i-Ra'is, also known as Lawh-i-Ra'is II and occasionally Suriy-i-Ra'is, is a letter to `Âli Pasha written not long after Baha'u'llah's arrival in `Akka, probably before the end of 1868. It is a strong protest at the injustice of the imprisonment of Baha'u'llah, his companions, and their dependents. The title is by analogy to the earlier tablet to `Âli Pasha, for the prime minister is not addressed as "Ra'is" in this tablet. It is in Persian and is about twenty pages long.

Baha'u'llah begins by criticizing `Âli Pasha's presumption of lofty rank. The heading of the tablet--"He is the Master by right"--reminds him that God is the true ruler. Baha'u'llah then addresses him as "thou who reckons thyself the highest of men"--a pun on his name `Âli, "lofty." He reminds him that all the Prophets of God, though they came to reform the world, were, like Baha'u'llah, branded as trouble-makers by the rulers of their time. However, even if this accusation were true, the women and children who were imprisoned with Baha'u'llah had done nothing wrong.

Baha'u'llah then describes some episodes of his exile from Edirne to `Akka: how some companions who were not included in the order paid their own way to `Akka, the sufferings of the children forced to change from ship to ship, how two of his companions tried to kill themselves when faced with separation, how they were denied food and water during the first night in `Akka, the three loaves of inedible bread that was the daily food ration, and the death and disrespectful burial of two of the exiles. Such treatment was manifest injustice, since the people of Edirne could testify to the piety and detachment of Baha'u'llah and his companions. Baha'u'llah prophesies that as a result, the wrath of God would seize `Âli Pasha and his government. Warnings had come before--for example, when a large part of Istanbul burned--but they had not heeded. Now it is too late: the wrath of God is so great to allow him to repent.

Baha'u'llah reminds him that neither pomp nor abasement lasts forever. To illustrate this, Baha'u'llah tells of an incident from his youth. his older brother was getting married, and Baha'u'llah's

father had arranged a puppet show as part of the festivities. Baha'u'llah watched in fascination as the puppet-king and the members of his court come on stage and take their places. A thief is executed and blood spurts from the severed neck. The king dispatches soldiers to fight a rebel, and from behind the curtain the sounds of cannon are heard. After the show, Baha'u'llah saw a man come out with a box under his arm. Baha'u'llah asked him where the king was and all the members of his court. The man said they were all in the box. From that day on, says Baha'u'llah, all the glory of the world has been like that puppet show in his eyes and of no value.

Any perceptive person, he says, knows that worldly glory will soon be placed in the box of the grave. Even if a man is not given to know God, he ought at least to pass his life with prudence and justice. Nevertheless, most people are asleep and infatuated with worldly things. They are like the drunken man who fell in love with a dog, only realizing what his lover was when morning came. `Âli Pasha himself is subject to the vilest ruler: his own self and passion. If he examined his own soul, he would realize his own abasement.

Baha'u'llah tells how, when he reached Gallipoli on his way to `Akka, he had asked a Turkish officer named `Umar escorting him to arrange a ten-minute interview with the Sultan at which the Sultan might ask him for whatever miracle or proof he thought sufficient to prove the truth of Baha'u'llah's revelation. If Baha'u'llah was able to produce it

, he and his companions should be freed and left to their own devices. But no word came from the Sultan or from the officer. Though it was not fitting for the Manifestation of God to go before another, Baha'u'llah made this offer out of consideration for the children and women who shared his imprisonment and exile.

The tablet closes with Baha'u'llah's advice to `Âli Pasha to ask God to let him see the good and evil of his own actions.

The importance of Lawh-i-Ra'is I and II. These two tablets and the related Lawh-i-Fu'ad, with their grim prophecies of affliction for the Ottoman

Empire and its leaders were soon widely circulated among the Baha'is and were recognized as being of special importance. Baha'u'llah Himself in a later tablet said that "from the moment the Suriy-i-Ra'is was revealed until the present day, neither hath the world been tranquilized, nor have the hearts of its peoples been at rest." (GWB `16.3) They were in circulation by the mid-1870s and were included in early published collections of the works of Baha'u'llah. Their importance for early Baha'i teachings lies in the fact that their prophecies were well known before the dramatic fall of Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz in 1876.

Sources: For general accounts of his life see EI2 " `Âli Pasha Muhammad Amin," as well as EB "Ali Pasa, Mehmed Emin," BBR 491, Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 469. For information on his attitudes towards the Baha'is, see BBR 187, 191, 311n. Baha'u'llah's statements about him are summarized in God Passes By, 174, 208, 231-32.

On the Arabic Suratu'r-Ra'is, see RB 2:411-21; Muhadirat 602-6, 687, 964; Ganj 109-11; God Passes By, 172, 174, 179-80; PDC 48; DM/IK 13:2058. The Arabic text is found in AQA: Muluk 203-25, Majmu`ih (Eg.) 87-102, Suratu'l-Haykal 129-43. Translated excerpts are found in God Passes By, 174, 179-80, WOB 178, RB 2:414-16.

On the Persian Lawh-i-Ra'is, see RB 3:33-37, Ganj 121-23, Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 173, DM/IK 13:2058. The text is found in AQA: Muluk 227-47, Majmu`ih (Eg.) 102-16. Translations of excerpts are found in God Passes By, 187, PDC 46, 62.

Fu'ad Pasha

Ke?eci-Zadieh Muhammad Fu'ad Pasha was the Ottoman prime minister at the time of Baha'u'llah's exile to `Akka.

Life. Fu'ad Pasha

was born in Istanbul in 1815. His father, `Izzat Mulla, was a religious judge and poet of some importance who lived an adventurous life in and out of royal favor. In 1829 `Izzat Mulla was exiled to Sivas, and Fu'ad left the theological seminary to study at the new modern medical school in Istanbul. He spent three years as an army doctor in Tripoli, Libya. Having learned French

in medical school, he was able in 1837 to obtain an appointment to the Translation Bureau, which also served as a training school for the modern diplomatic corps. Over the next fifteen years he rose rapidly as a diplomat and protege of the reformer Rashid Pasha, serving in London (where he was translator and later first secretary when `Âli Pasha was ambassador), Spain, Rumania, and Russia, as well as holding various high offices and commissions in Istanbul.

In 1852 he was appointed foreign minister for the first time under his friend `Ali Pasha and dealt with crises over Montenegro and the Christian holy places in Jerusalem. He was again foreign minister in 1855-56, 1858-60, 1861, and 1867. He was also prime minister in 1861-63 and 1863-66, during which time `Ali Pasha served as foreign minister. During 1863-67 he was also minister of war. He held several other senior posts at various times and was sent on a number of special missions, notably the suppression of the Greek revolt in Thessaly and Epirus in 1854-55 and the Lebanese civil war in 1860-61.

Fu'ad Pasha was one of the principal figures of the Tanzimat reforms of the middle of the nineteenth century. He was determined to reshape the Ottoman Empire in a more European mold. Nonetheless, his efforts were necessarily less devoted to positive reforms than to fending off external threats to the empire and internal threats to the reforms by conservatives, notably from the Sultan himself. He was criticized by the younger reformers because of his lack of interest in representative government. He was also interested in linguistic reform and in 1850 wrote the first modern Ottoman Turkish grammar with Ahmad Jawdat, a liberal cleric who was another of Rashid Pasha's reformist proteges.

He accompanied the Sultan to Europe in 1867. Exhausted by overwork, he went to France to rest in 1868-69. He died of a heart attack in Nice 12 February 1869.

Relations with Baha'u'llah.

Fu'ad Pasha was prime minister at the time of Baha'u'llah's arrival in Istanbul and foreign minister at the time of his exile to `Akka. As such he answered the inquiries of foreign diplomats made on Baha'u'llah's behalf. His policy is succinctly stated in his reply

to the inquiries of the Austrian ambassador:

On representing to Fuad Pasha the intolerant acts of the Ottoman Government towards the Babeer Sect, he was informed by His Highness that the Porte had ordered Mirza Hussein Ali and his adherents to be deported to Tripoli in Africa on account of their having tried to propagate religious dissensions in the Mahomedan Element in Roumelia; that the Porte was entirely responsible for this measure, the Persian Legation having taken to part in it; and that the subvention of 5000 piasters per month which was allowed to the Mirza by the Authorities at Adrianople would not be discontinued at Tripoli. (BBR 192)

The idea of exiling Baha'u'llah to Tripoli in Libya perhaps reflects Fu'ad Pasha's memory of three years as a young army officer in that desolate spot.

Baha'u'llah predicted the fall of Fu'ad Pasha in the Suratu'r-Ra'is.

.

The Suriy-i- or Lawh-i-Fu'ad is an Arabic tablet of Baha'u'llah commenting on Fu'ad Pasha's death. Written to Shaykh Kazim Samandar, probably soon after Fu'ad Pasha's death from heart disease on 12 February 1869. The latter had been prime minister at the time of Baha'u'llah's exile to Edirne and foreign minister when he was exiled to `Akka. Baha'u'llah had prophesied his fall in the Suriy-i-Ra'is, written about six months earlier. The Suriy-i-Fu'ad is written in the style of the passages about Hell in the Qur'an. It also contains many allusions to the Qur'anic narratives of the punishment of the ancient nations that persecuted the prophet. It was aptly described by Baron Rosen as "a sort of hymn of triumph on the occasion of the death of the most implacable enemies of the new religion." and was of some importance because of its accurate prophecies of the fall of `Âli Pasha and Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz. It was therefore widely circulated during the time of Baha'u'llah and was included in one of the collections of Baha'i scripture published in India during his lifetime.

This tablet is also known as "Lawh-i-Kaf-Za, "Tablet of K. Z." The tablet begins with these letters, which are an abbreviation of Kazim,

the name of the recipient.

After counselling Samandar to be steadfast, Baha'u'llah announces the death of Fu'ad Pasha: "God has taken the greatest of those who issued the decree against us." Using the narrative style of the Qur'an, he describes how Fu'ad Pasha fled to France, seeking the help of physicians against the wrath of God. A dialogue then takes place in which Fu'ad Pasha pleads with the avenging angel for his life, citing his wealth and high position as reason to be spared. But there is no escape for him: the angels of hell summon him to the punishment prepared for him, reminding him of the great injustice he committed in making prisoners of the Holy Family. Baha'u'llah then prophesies the downfall of `Âli Pasha, the other minister involved in his exiles, and of Sultan `Abdu'l-`Aziz himself--"their Chief who ruleth the land."

Baha'u'llah once again exhorts Samandar to remain steadfast against the lies of the Azalis, for God has also taken Mirza Mihdi Gilani, the Azali in Istanbul. This man had written a treatise against Baha'u'llah, to which Baha'u'llah's Kitab-i-Badi` was a reply. A second narrative depicts Mirza Mihdi's pleadings with the angel of death. These stories, Baha'u'llah says, are told to console Samandar.

Sources: For his life and career, see EI2 "Fu'ad Pasha, Kece??k-zadeh Mehmed," Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 471-72, BBR 501. For his relations with Baha'is see BBR 187, 191, 311n; Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 154, 199, 206 (with photo); God Passes By, 146, 174, 208, 231-32.

The text of Lawh-i-Fu'ad is published in Mubin 210-14 and Rosen, Collections scientifiques 6:231-33. A sentence is translated in PDC 63. For further information on the tablet see RB 3:87, Ganj 192-93, DM/IK 13:1961, 2071, 2073-74.

The
Last Years of the Ottoman Empire

In 1876 the loose group of reformist exiled intellectuals and politicians known as the Young Ottomans had succeeded in deposing `Abdu'l-`Aziz on grounds of misgovernment and madness. The result

was a brief period of constitutional government--and, in distant `Akka, the release of Baha'u'llah from strict confinement within the city. `Abdu'l-`Aziz was succeeded by his nephew, the young Murad V, who was himself deposed three months later when he proved to be a drunkard and mentally incapable.

Sultan `Abdu'l-Hamid

II

When Murad proved unsuitable as sultan, the reformers turned to his younger brother `Abdu'l-Hamid (Abdŷlhamid), who thus became the thirty-sixth Ottoman Sultan.

Life and reign. Born

21 Sept. 1842 in Istanbul, he was the fifth of thirty children of Sultan `Abdu'l-Majid and seems to have had an unhappy childhood after his mother died when he was seven. Midhat Pasha, the reformer who had led the plot that overthrew `Abdu'l-`Aziz, offered him the throne on condition that he accept a constitution and constituent assembly and that he rule through the reformist ministers.

Before the reformers could

accomplish much, a disastrous war broke out--first, Christian uprisings in several Balkan provinces, then open war with Montenegro and Serbia (1875) and with Russia (1877-78). Despite heroic (and unexpected) Turkish resistance at Plevna in what is now Bulgaria, the Turks were totally defeated. The Russians occupied Edirne (Adrianople) and advanced to within a few miles of Istanbul, thousands of refugees pouring into the city ahead of them. In the end the Russians were stopped when the British navy moved to support Istanbul. Nonetheless, the Turks lost most of their remaining territory in Europe. The border of the newly-independent Bulgaria was only a few miles from Edirne. The finances of the Empire were placed under European control.

The failure of the Western

European powers to support Turkey against Russia confirmed `Abdu'l-Hamid's suspicions of the Europeans. Thereafter, he pursued a passive policy of delay in foreign relations. Though his extreme suspicion of the European powers sometimes lost opportunities for Turkey--as when his failure to cooperate with England lost him the chance to reassert Turkish sovereignty in Egypt--it kept Turkey

at peace for a generation and prevented further major losses of territory.

It quickly became clear that

`Abdu'l-Hamid was an autocrat of the most absolute sort and did not share the liberal views of the reformers who had brought him to power. Once the war with Russia was over, he suspended the constitution and dissolved the irritating new Constituent Assembly. The reformers who had brought him to power were soon silenced, exiled, or killed. An attempted counter coup further fueled his fears. Unlike earlier sultans who had left much of the ordinary business of government to their ministers, `Abdu'l-Hamid created a centralized despotism of a quite modern sort. He was himself shrewd and energetic, and he created a palace bureaucracy that allowed him to control directly all the details of government.

A horde of police, spies, and informers pervaded the empire. The building of railroads and a telegraph network allowed him to control the Empire far more tightly than any of his predecessors could have dreamed possible. Freedom of speech was suspended. Censorship was all-pervading and thorough. The palace was a virtual fortress, guarded by Albanian guards loyal only to the Sultan.

Apart from absolutism the

distinguishing policy of his reign was Pan-Islamism.

The Ottoman sultans had always claimed the title Caliph, supposedly bequeathed to them by the last `Abbasid caliph when the Ottomans conquered Egypt. Now, with many of the Christian provinces lost to the Empire, `Abdu'l-Hamid stressed his role as supreme Islamic leader: head of the leading Muslim state, protector of the Holy Cities, and successor to the Prophet Himself.

This won him support from the Muslim masses in the Empire and won prestige for him and the Ottoman Empire in other Muslim countries, especially those controlled by Europeans, where he was able to make trouble for the European powers. The greatest achievement of this policy was the building of the Hijaz Railway, which was to carry pilgrims from Damascus to Mecca and Medina. It was paid for by contributions from the entire Muslim world and was completed as far as Medina, before being destroyed in World War I. (It has never been rebuilt.)

The other side of this policy

was the persecution of the non-Muslim minorities, especially

the Christians. This culminated in the civil disorders in Macedonia great massacres of Armenians in 1894-96 (repeated on a much larger scale during World War I), carried out at the instigation and with the connivance of the authorities. Moreover, his partiality to his Muslim subjects did not in the end win their permanent loyalty, for his administration was sufficiently corrupt to alienate Muslims as well.

In some ways `Abdu'l-Hamid is to be seen as the full expression of the darker side of the Tanzimat reforms earlier in the nineteenth century. Like many of his reforming predecessors, he believed that reform could only be imposed from above, and in fact he carried out important reforms in several areas, notable education, communication, and law. However, absolute power was in the hands of a man gripped by exaggerated fears and for the most part blind to the actual needs of the people. Moreover, his insistence on dealing with everything himself greatly limited the effectiveness of government.

The Europeans were appalled by the oppressiveness and incompetence of his government, by the all-pervasive censorship, and especially by the brutal treatment of minorities. This won him the nicknames "Red Sultan" and "Abdul the Damned."

In the end the new educational institutions he had founded produced the reformers who overthrew him. A loose network of reform-minded exiles called the Young Turks formed the Committee of Union and Progress. In 1908 the commanders of the Turkish army in Macedonia mutinied in support of the Committee, marched on Istanbul, forced `Abdu'l-Hamid in July 1908 to reintroduce the constitution, and placed the leaders of the Committee in charge of the government. The following April a counter coup by the Istanbul garrison, probably instigated by `Abdu'l-Hamid, briefly overthrew the new government. The Macedonian troops returned, this time to depose `Abdu'l-Hamid. His brother, Muhammad V (r. 1909-18), became Sultan. `Abdu'l-Hamid lived out his life under house arrest, first in Salonika and then in Istanbul. He died in Istanbul on 10 Feb. 1918.

`Abdu'l-Hamid was in some respects an attractive figure--approachable, simple in dress, hard-working, and intelligent. Unlike some

of his predecessors, he was not ruined by the temptations of the harem. But he was lonely, fearful, and unhappy, and these qualities expressed themselves in the paranoia, treachery, and absolutism of his government. Muslims, Christians, and Jews celebrated together in the streets when he was overthrown.

`Abdu'l-Hamid and the Baha'is.

Baha'u'llah was the prisoner of `Abdu'l-Hamid from 1876 until his death in 1892, but there is no evidence that the Sultan was particularly concerned with the Baha'is in those years. Baha'u'llah was able to move out of the city of `Akka without interference the year after `Abdu'l-Hamid's accession. When Baha'u'llah died in 1892, `Abdu'l-Baha sent a cable to the Sultan, who gave permission for Baha'u'llah to be buried at Bahji--an interesting example of `Abdu'l-Hamid's concern for the minutiae of administration. This tolerance of the Baha'is lasted until the turn of the century.

After 1892 `Abdu'l-Baha remained a prisoner as his Father had been, theoretically in custody but in practice under few restrictions. It was the opposition of Mirza Muhammad-`Ali, the second surviving son of Baha'u'llah, to `Abdu'l-Baha that finally attracted Sultan `Abdu'l-Hamid's personal attention to the Baha'is. Mirza Muhammad-`Ali and his followers had approached the governor of Damascus, accusing `Abdu'l-Baha of plotting against the government. Several factors seem to have led the Sultan to give credence to these accusations. First was the increasing threat of nationalist movements in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Second was the arrival of Western pilgrims. The Sultan was well aware that various European powers had colonial ambitions in Ottoman territory, and he seems to have feared that the Americans visiting `Abdu'l-Baha were part of a plot to foment revolt. Finally, `Abdu'l-Baha had many friends--and possibly even followers--among reform-minded Turks. In August 1901 `Abdu'l-Hamid ordered that `Abdu'l-Baha, his brothers, and his cousin Majdi'd-Din once again be strictly confined within the wall of `Akka. Around 1905, Mirza Muhammad-`Ali and his supporters, aware of `Abdu'l-Hamid's alarm at the Constitutional Revolution in Iran, approached the authorities with fresh accusations. This time the Sultan responded with a Commission of Inquiry that spent some weeks investigating `Abdu'l-Baha and the Baha'is. However, when the Commission returned to

Istanbul, they found the Sultan preoccupied with finding those responsible for his attempted assassination. Apparently, `Abdu'l-Hamid did not take up the matter for some time. A tablet from `Abdu'l-Baha of about this time tactfully praises `Abdu'l-Hamid for ignoring the slanderous accusations against him and instructs the Baha'is to pray for the Sultan (TAB 3:494-96). In about 1908 there was fear that the Commission's recommendations would finally be acted on and `Abdu'l-Baha would be exiled to Fezzan in the interior of Libya. However, the Young Turks' revolution in the summer of 1908 resulted in the release of all political prisoners, `Abdu'l-Baha included.

Naturally enough, `Abdu'l-Hamid's dramatic fall and imprisonment and the simultaneous liberation of `Abdu'l-Baha impressed the Baha'is as an example of the hand of God at work. `Abdu'l-Baha, for example, sometimes remarked on it in his talks: "God removed the chains from my neck and placed them around the neck of `Abdu'l-Hamid. It was done suddenly--not a long time, in a moment, as it were." (PUP 225) For Shoghi Effendi, `Abdu'l-Hamid was (quoting an unnamed historian) "the most mean, cunning, untrustworthy and cruel intriguer of the long dynasty of `Uthman." (PDC 272) His fall was "the beginning of a new era" (PDC 65), one of "the awful evidences of that retributive justice" (PDC 66), and was one part of the collapse of Islamic institutions as a result of their failure to accept the Bab and Baha'u'llah.

Sources: EI2 "`Abd al-Hamid II." Accounts of the reincarceration of `Abdu'l-Baha, the Commission of Inquiry, and the release of `Abdu'l-Baha are found in *God Passes By*, 263-72, AB 94-95, 111-24, and BBR 320-23. These are largely based on information from *Khatirat-i-Nuh-Salih* and *Khatirat-i-Habib*. See also *Baha'u'llah, King of Glory*, 420, 425-27; AB 47, 128-29, 374, 395; EBB 148, 259; PDC 13, 61, 64-65; WOB 174-75; PUP 36, 203, 225.

Jamal Pasha and
World War I

After the revolution of 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress ruled in the name of the Sultan. New administrative, social, and economic reforms were imposed, including areas neglected by earlier reformers such as women's rights and industrial

development. `Abdu'l-Baha took advantage of the new freedom to travel to Egypt, Europe, and America. `Abdu'l-Baha publicly stated his gratitude for the fall of the Sultan, but by the time of his return to Haifa in 1913, the Committee of Union and Progress had become a dictatorship, ruling in an authoritarian style reminiscent of `Abdu'l-Hamid's. Once again `Abdu'l-Baha feared for the Baha'i position in the Holy Land. Internal reforms were, however, overshadowed by military disasters. In 1911 Italy seized Libya, the last Ottoman province in Africa. The First and Second Balkan Wars of 1912-13 resulted in the loss of almost all the remaining Ottoman territory in Europe to an alliance of Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro.

The Ottoman Empire rashly entered World War I as an ally of Germany and Austria. Though Ottoman forces performed fairly well--inflicting a humiliating defeat on the British in the Dardanelles campaign of 1915, for example--the Ottoman economy eventually collapsed under the strain of modern war. Troops deserted in large numbers. The Arab provinces of the Near East fell to Allied troops. On 30 October 1918 Turkey signed an armistice. Battle, famine, and disease had devastated the population.

For Baha'i history, the most important Ottoman official during World War I was Ahmad Jamal Pasha (Cemal Paşa), the Turkish commander-in-chief in Syria, who threatened to execute `Abdu'l-Baha.

Jamal Pasha's Life

and career. Born in Istanbul in 1872, he graduated from the Ottoman military college in 1895 and was commissioned a captain in the general staff. Stationed in Salonika, he joined the subversive Committee of Union and Progress, the "Young Turks." When the Committee seized power in 1908, he became a member of its executive committee. In the following years he was military governor of İstanbul and civil governor of Adana and Baghdad. He commanded a division in the First Balkan War (1912). After the Committee of Union and Progress seized total power in January 1913, he became successively military governor of Istanbul (promoted to lieutenant-general), minister of public works, and minister of the navy. During this period he was one of the three Young Turk leaders who ruled as a dictatorial triumvirate.

Soon after war broke out,

he was made commander of the Fourth Army in Damascus and military governor of the Syrian provinces--the area covering modern Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and northwestern Saudi Arabia. His efforts in 1915 and 1916 to invade British-occupied Egypt were repulsed. Despite progressive tendencies--notably an interest in public works and archaeology--Jamal Pasha ruthlessly suppressed the Arab nationalists, hanging thirty-two prominent Arab leaders in 1915 and 1916. He also persecuted the Jewish settlers in Palestine.

In December 1915 Jamal Pasha contacted the Allies, offering to revolt against the Ottoman Government, stop the massacres of Armenians, and cede European Turkey to the Russians. In return he would become Sultan of the Ottoman provinces in Asia. The British rebuffed him. Since the Turkish government did not find out about these negotiations, he remained in command of the Syrian army.

In June 1916 the Sharif of Mecca--the hereditary ruler of the Hijaz--revolted against the Turks and began harrying their lines of communication. The British invaded Sinai in 1916 and Palestine in 1917, driving back Jamal Pasha's army. At the end of the year, he was relieved of his command, having lost Palestine as far north as Jaffa and Jerusalem.

When the Young Turk government fell at the end of 1918, he fled to Europe. He was tried in absentia and sentenced to death. Accepting an appointment in the Afghan army, he traveled to Russia, where he helped negotiate an agreement between the Bolsheviks and Atatürk's nationalists in Turkey. In Tiflis, Armenia, on 21 July 1922, while returning from another diplomatic mission to Moscow, he was assassinated by Armenians, the third victim of a campaign to avenge the Armenian massacres of World War I.

Jamal Pasha and `Abdu'l-Baha.

After the outbreak of World War I, `Abdu'l-Baha came under renewed suspicion, probably for his Western connections. When Jamal Pasha first came to `Akka, probably about the beginning of 1915, he summoned `Abdu'l-Baha to his camp and told him bluntly that he had received reports that `Abdu'l-Baha was a religious mischief-maker. `Abdu'l-Baha saw that the Pasha was drunk and knew his reputation for hanging enemies real and imagined,

so he turned the matter to a joke by comparing his own reputation to that of Jamal Pasha, who had been in the eyes of the Sultan a political mischief-maker. The two men parted on good terms.

Mirza Muhammad-`Ali and his followers began reporting to Jamal Pasha that `Abdu'l-Baha's religious activities and relations with people in other countries were of a political nature and that he was opposed to the Committee of Union and Progress. It was not long after that the German consul in Haifa brought `Abdu'l-Baha the news that Jamal Pasha had told a gathering of Muslim clergy in Jerusalem that he intended to crucify him after he returned from conquering Egypt and that he would destroy the Shrines of Baha'u'llah and the Bab. `Abdu'l-Baha reassured the distraught consul that none of these events were likely to happen.

After the failure of the first Turkish attack on the Suez Canal on 2-3 February 1915, Jamal Pasha and his German advisers began elaborate preparations for a larger attack. Jamal Pasha himself roamed Syria and Palestine trying and hanging Arab nationalists. "Gallows" occurs frequently in `Abdu'l-Baha's description's of the Pasha's character. `Abdu'l-Baha was sufficiently concerned that one day early in 1916 he went to Nazareth to meet Jamal Pasha. When a letter arrived asking about `Abdu'l-Baha's whereabouts, he replied, "Tell him, `In front of a cannon."

Jamal Pasha's attacks on the canal in April and July also failed. Thereafter, he was preoccupied with the British advance through Sinai and southern Palestine that began in August and lasted until December 1917. Before he could carry out his threats to `Abdu'l-Baha, he was recalled.

Nonetheless, in December 1917 rumors of danger to `Abdu'l-Baha reached Major Tudor-Pole, a friend of `Abdu'l-Baha who was at that time an intelligence officer with the British army in Palestine. He alerted influential friends and followers of `Abdu'l-Baha, who persuaded the military authorities to pass word through the lines that `Abdu'l-Baha was not to be harmed. Haifa and `Akka fell to British and Indian cavalry on 23 September 1918. The British authorities immediately announced that `Abdu'l-Baha and his family were safe.

Jamal Pasha in Baha'i literature.

Jamal Pasha appears several times in `Abdu'l-Baha's talks to local Baha'is. (Most of what we know about his dealings with the Pasha come from these talks.) Though he joked about the real danger that Jamal Pasha posed, he described him as "a mountain of arrogance" and said that he was bloodthirsty, rapacious, and drunken.

For Shoghi Effendi, Jamal Pasha was one of a series of threats to the Baha'i World Center--Sultan `Abdu'l-Hamid, Hitler, and the 1947-48 war--averted by the providence of God. Shoghi Effendi described his character as "bloodthirsty" and "suspicious and merciless" and referred to his "ruthless military dictatorship" and to his being "an inveterate enemy of the Faith."

Sources: For the life of Jamal Pasha, see EI2 "Djemal Pasha" and his own *Memories of Turkish Statesman* (London, n.d.), also available in Ottoman, modern Turkish, and German.

The main source for his relations with `Abdu'l-Baha is *Khatirat-i-Habib*, pp. 184-86, 290, 332-33, 443-47, from which are derived other accounts such as AB 409-14, *God Passes By*, 317, PP 26, AAK 3:42-45, *Rahiq 1*:370. See also CH 202-5. Note that the order of events given in the body of the present article is an educated guess.

On the capture of Haifa, see AB 425-30, CH 219-27, BBR 332-38.

For Shoghi Effendi on Jamal Pasha, see PP 189, PDC 13, 65, CF 54, 72, *God Passes By*, 317.

Atatürk and Modern Turkey

Peace, however, was not to come to Turkey for four more years after the end of World War I. It became clear that the Allies planned the dismemberment of Turkey. The British, French, and Italians occupied Istanbul, the Straits, Cilicia, and the old Arab provinces. The Armenians had been promised a state including most of eastern Anatolia, and the Italians had been allotted southwestern Anatolia. The Greeks had invaded western Anatolia, pushing eastwards from the ancient Greek territories

of the Aegean coast, burning and killing as they went. The Sultan, a bitter enemy of the Young Turks, was in the hands of the Allies and was abetting their plans.

In the face of this disastrous situation, the Turks of Anatolia rallied to resist the various invaders. Mustafa Kemal, later known as Atatürk, the most successful of the wartime generals, organized a popular government in Ankara. The new regime defeated the Armenian Republic in 1921, regaining some territory lost to Russia forty years earlier and ending Armenian hopes for regaining their old lands in eastern Anatolia. In 1922 the Turks drove the Greeks back into the sea at Smyrna. The Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 confirmed the existence of the new Turkey. Huge population exchanges--Muslim Turks from Greece and Greek Christians from Turkey--and the loss of the non-Turkish Muslim provinces resulted in a new Turkish republic that was overwhelmingly Muslim and ethnically Turkish. The Sultanate was abolished and with it the Ottoman Empire. The last Sultan lingered a few months longer as caliph--now only a religious leader--but even this title was abolished in 1924.

Atatürk made himself a virtual dictator and set about reorganizing Turkey on the model of modern European nation-states. In the Ottoman Empire, the Turks had been the first of many nationalities of the empire; the Republic of Turkey became a Turkish national state. Islam was deinstitutionalized. Though mosques remained open, all the theological seminaries and monasteries of the mystical orders were closed. Almost all religious institutions were disbanded. A new civil law based on the Swiss code replaced Islamic law. Traditional headgear was prohibited, and men were required to wear Western hats. Under state sponsorship there was rapid economic development. Atatürk turned Turkey's back on the Islamic world and attempted to make it Western and European.

Atatürk was not entirely successful in eliminating Islam as a social and political force, particularly in the countryside. His attempts to abolish Arabic as a liturgical language were eventually abandoned. Even Atatürk's harsh anti-clerical measures could be seen by many pious Muslims as salutary reforms of corrupt religious institutions. Typical, perhaps, is the fact that Turks never ceased referring to Atatürk

himself as "Ghazi"--"victor in the holy war."

Politically, Turkey has become generally democratic. After Atatürk's death in 1938 Turkey enjoyed considerable periods of democratic rule, broken by military intervention in times of instability. Generally, Turkey has remained true to Atatürk's vision of a secular modern state--in recent years, for example, attempting to join the European Community. However, Islamic nationalism is also increasingly influential.

Shoghi Effendi on the fall of the Ottomans and the rise of modern Turkey

Five years after the end of World War I the Ottoman Empire was gone, replaced by Atatürk's secular Republic of Turkey. In several of his works, especially *The Promised Day is Come*, Shoghi Effendi points to this extraordinary transformation as evidence of the hand of God at work, sweeping away the obsolete forms of Islam and preparing the way for the eventual triumph of the Baha'i Faith, "a slow yet steady and relentless retribution." (PDC 61) He links it to the fall of the Qajar monarchy in Iran. For Shoghi Effendi the decline of Istanbul--no longer the capital even of the shrunken Turkish Republic--particularly symbolized this.

The Ottoman Empire also represented Sunni Islam's encounter with the revelation of Baha'u'llah, just as Iran and the Qajar regime represented Shi'ism.

Shoghi Effendi considered the Ottoman regime more culpable than the Iranian government in its treatment of the Baha'is. While in Iran the Babists had attempted to assassinate the Shah, the Ottomans had no just cause for complaint against the Baha'u'llah.

Sources: For Baha'i writings on the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, see *Amr va-Khalq* 4:453-58; PB 102-4; TB 213; PDC 19, 38-39, 61-66, 100-1; WOB 173-74; RB 2:312-23, as well as the bibliography on tablets mentioned above.

The Baha'i Community of Turkey

The modern Republic of Turkey has the second largest Baha'i community in the Middle East.

Early
history:

The modern Baha'i community of Turkey was established by Iranian Baha'i traders, pilgrims, and refugees seeking the opportunities and relative freedom of cosmopolitan Istanbul. A local spiritual assembly was established there, and Baha'i communities eventually grew up in other towns in the area. A second area of Baha'i settlement was in the south, in partly Arab areas like Adana, Iskenderun (Alexandretta, held by France until 1937), and neighboring towns. The Baha'is here seem to have been Arabic-speaking descendants of early Baha'is in Iraq and the Holy Land. Baha'i communities also eventually grew up in other important towns such as Smyrna and Ankara.

Martha Root visited Turkey in 1927, 1929, and 1932.

Persecutions of Baha'is
in Turkey

Like the Tanzimat and Young Turk reformers before him, Atatürk attempted to modernize Turkish society by authoritarian rule rather than by liberalization. He ruthlessly suppressed competing influences: most Islamic institutions, particularly the mystical orders, Freemasons, labor groups, Communists, and the like. In 1928 a number of Baha'is in Smyrna were arrested on the grounds that they were--as the Times of London correspondent put it--"a group of Turks, Americans, and Persians who had formed a secret society with the object of continuing the religious practices in vogue in the days of the Sultans." They were further suspected of having political contacts with royalist emigres. When the Istanbul spiritual assembly intervened, its members were also arrested. The Istanbul Baha'is used the trial as an opportunity to expound publicly the history and teachings of the Baha'i Faith, gaining considerable publicity in the Middle Eastern press. In the end they were cleared of the charge of being a subversive organization and convicted only of the minor charge of having failed to register as an association.

In 1932-33 many Baha'is were arrested in Istanbul and Adana on similar charges, although in Adana the prejudices of Muslims seem to have been a factor also. By March 1933 the Istanbul

Baha'is had been acquitted, but fifty-three Baha'is remained in prison in Adana, prompting Shoghi Effendi to ask the American and Iranian Baha'is to appeal to the Turkish authorities in their behalf. All the Baha'is were released by the beginning of April.

In later decades Baha'is continued to face intermittent harassment from Turkish authorities concerned that they represented a foreign political or cultural influence, thus forcing the Turkish Baha'is to remain somewhat cautious in their public activities. As late as the 1960s a Baha'i election meeting was raided by police and those present briefly jailed.

Institutional Growth

The constitution of the modern Republic of Turkey guarantees freedom of worship and conscience but prohibits religious interference in politics. The criminal code prohibits proselytism. The establishment of the republic resulted in the deinstitutionalization of Islam but also the departure of almost all non-Muslims from the country. Islamic institutions now are entirely controlled by the state. Other religious communities are free of direct state control but must operate within narrow legal limits.

The development of the modern Turkish Baha'i community has been shaped by these paradoxical circumstances. Though in most ways freer than other Middle Eastern Baha'i communities, it has always had to exercise its freedom with caution for fear of triggering old religious or newer political prejudices. The Turkish Baha'i community, like Turkey itself, exists in a cultural borderland between Europe and the Middle East.

Systematic development of the Baha'i community began with the Ten Year Crusade (1953-63). With the aid of pioneers from Iraq and Iran, the community grew to twelve assemblies in 26 localities. A national spiritual assembly was formed in 1959. The community built a national haziratu'l-quds in Istanbul and bought a temple site and three holy places. There were organized youth activities.

During the Nine Year Plan (1964-73) the community grew to 22 assemblies in 57 localities, including groups on three islands near the Dardanelles: Imroz, Bozca Ada, and Marmara. There were also systematic efforts to establish communities

in the towns and villages visited by Baha'u'llah and along the Black Sea coast. The number of assemblies and localities grew to 33 and 102 in 1979 but dropped to 29 and 98 by 1983. In 1986 there were 50 assemblies and 157 localities. Statistics on assembly activities such as feasts, assembly meetings, and children's classes show that the Turkish assemblies are relatively strong and active. Fairly large scale enrollments have occurred in southwestern Turkey.

The peculiar political conditions of Turkey made goals involving official recognition much more difficult to obtain. The first national spiritual assembly had to be elected by mail. Though the national spiritual assembly has not been able to achieve incorporation, since 1980 it has had some exemption from taxation. Since 1966 authorities have also permitted believers to list their religion as "Baha'i" on their identity cards.

The Turkish community is financially self-sufficient.

The most significant accomplishment of the Turkish Baha'i community is the degree to which it has become assimilated into its country, an achievement only equalled in the Middle East by the Baha'i communities of Iran, Iraq, Egypt, and Morocco.

The Turkish Baha'is have undertaken various efforts associated with Baha'u'llah's stay in Turkey. These include establishing communities in the areas visited by him, acquiring and restoring holy places, and commemorating events of his life in Turkey.

A Turkish Baha'i scholar, Sami Doktoroglu, discovered a number of important official Ottoman documents relating to Baha'i history.

Composition of the community

The earliest Baha'is in Turkey were Iranians. Some of their families have remained and have assimilated thoroughly into Turkish life, a process encouraged by strong Turkish nationalist pressures. Though Turkey still receives pioneers, it sends almost as many pioneers out to other countries. Over the years Baha'i teaching has brought many ethnic Turks into the community, especially since the 1970s.

During the Nine Year Plan the Turkish community was successful in teaching in the `Alavi, or `Ashiq, community, a dissident Shi`i minority in Anatolia. By the 1970s the Turkish Baha'i community was culturally Turkish, rather than being an expatriate Iranian community as is the case in many other Middle Eastern countries.

Since the Iranian Revolution of 1979, many Baha'i refugees have crossed into Turkey, some of whom have had to stay for long periods while awaiting resettlement.

Growth of the Baha'i community
(including Alexandretta/Hatay)

Year Baha'is LSAs Groups Isol. Local. Inc.
LSAs

1900 100?

1921 1

1930 2 8 10

1937 6?

1944 6?

1953

1963 12 9 5 26

1973 22 35 57

1979 33 69 102

1986 44 58 55 157

Sources: For the history of the modern Turkish Baha'i community, see AB 399; BBR 474-75; DM/IK 7:972-74; Garis, Martha Root, pp. 294-95, 322-27, BW 1:101, 103; 2:183; 3:43, 45, 218, 222-23; 4:97, 274, 430-31; 5:432; 6:511; 7:560; 8:692; 9:658-59; 10:559; 11:524-25; 13:297-98, 356, 759, 951, 1035; 14:86, 161, 418; 15:173-74, 251; 16:267; 17:96, 185-86; BN 28 (Nov. 1928) 2; 72 (Ap. 1933) 4; 397 (Ap. 1964) 3-4; 434 (May 1967) 2; PP 316-18; God Passes By, 303.

See also the statistical and teaching plan summaries released by the Baha'i World Center: 1963: 26, 31, 36, 44, 119; 1964: 12-14, 35; 1968: 2, 27, 50, 67, 79, 94, 101-2; 1975: 11, 44, 67, 71, 76, 95; 1983: 98; 1986: 39, 45, 50-51, 56, 66,

72-74, 79, 88, 90-91, 152-53.

Some photographs of Turkish Baha'is are found in BW 3:321, 4:317, 319; 13:297, 525; 14:264; 15:251, 576; 16: 266.

Other

Turkish Baha'i Communities.

The Turks are first known as the nomadic founders of a sixth-century empire stretching across Central Asia to the Black Sea. In later centuries they drifted into the Middle East as conquerors, nomadic tribes, and mercenary or slave soldiers. Their descendants today are scattered across Central and Southwest Asia. They are linked by history, language, and a common allegiance to Islam.

Though the largest modern Turkish community is in Turkey, large numbers of Turks live in Iran, the Soviet Union, and China, as well as elsewhere in the Middle East, Europe, and now even America and Australia. All speak Turkic dialects that are somewhat mutually intelligible.

Turks in Iran

Turks and Turkic peoples have lived in Iran for more than a thousand years, largely sharing the culture of the Persian-speaking majority. More often than not, Iran has been ruled by Turkish dynasties such as the Safavids (1499-1722) and the Qajars (1779-1924).

Most Turks in Iran are in Aharbayjan, now divided between Iran and the Soviet Union. These are the Azeri (Ahari) Turks, closely related by language and culture to the Turks of Turkey but thoroughly assimilated into Iranian life and sharing a common Shi'i faith.

The Babi and Baha'i religions spread among the Turks of Aharbayjan as it did among the Persians elsewhere in Iran. Most of the Babis at the battle of Zanjan, for example, must have been Turks.

A number of the nomadic tribes of Iran are also Turkic, but there have never been many Baha'is among them, though systematic efforts have been made to teach them.

Turks in the Central Asian Republics

Six of the new republics of the former Soviet Union are ethnically Turkish: Azerbaijan, Kirghizistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan, although the latter is now only 40% Turkic due to immigration from other parts of the former Soviet Union. The area north of Iran and Afghanistan and east of the Caspian was formerly known as Russian Turkistan. There are also other Turkic groups elsewhere in the Soviet Union. Baha'i refugees from Iran established communities in Russian Turkistan and the Caucasus around the turn of the century. Until the early 1930s there were national spiritual assemblies in the Caucasus, which included Soviet Azerbaijan, and Turkistan. Some of these communities still exist after half a century of isolation from the rest of the Baha'i world. Few if any of the local Turkic peoples ever became Baha'is.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, there has been rapid growth in the Baha'i communities in the new republics, including the Turkish areas. New converts seem to include a significant number of Turks, but the situation is changing rapidly as of this writing. [Wendy: If you actually have any numbers, please feel free to insert them.]

Turks elsewhere

Other Turkic communities exist in western China, Bulgaria, Syria, and Iraq. There are few if any Baha'is among these groups.

In the last three decades poverty has driven many Turks to emigrate to Western Europe, America, and Australia. The Five Year Plan called for collaboration among the national spiritual assemblies of Turkey, Germany, and Australia in teaching these emigrants.

Baha'i literature in Turkish

The Turkic languages belong to the Altaic family and are thus related to other Central Asian languages such as Mongolian. All the Turkic languages are characterized by vowel harmony, agglutinative morphology, and verb-final word order. They are thus very different in sound and structure

from other Islamic languages such as Persian and Arabic. Almost all modern Turkic languages once used the Arabic alphabet, though it was not very suitable for their sounds. Early Turkic languages also used the ancient Uighur script, and modern Republican Turkish uses the Roman alphabet. Since about 1939 Soviet Turkic languages have used the Cyrillic script, but since the independence of the Turkish republics of the former Soviet Union there have been plans for adopting the Latin alphabet of modern Republican Turkish.

The Turkic language used in the nineteenth century Near East was Ottoman (Osmanli), a southwestern Turkic dialect heavily infused with Persian and Arabic words. It was the language of government and the ruling elite throughout the Ottoman Empire, though educated Ottomans usually knew Persian and Arabic as well. It was closely related to Azeri, the Turkic dialect of northwestern Iran.

In 1928 as part of his modernization program, Atatürk decreed that Turkish should be written in the Roman alphabet. In addition he tried to purify the language from Persian and Arabic loan words. The Arabic script was no longer to be taught. This had the effect of cutting modern Turks off from their old literary heritage; not only could they not read the old alphabet, they no longer knew many of the Arabic and Persian words that filled Ottoman Turkish. Modern Turkish is thus quite different now from other Turkic languages and from the Ottoman Turkish of a century ago.

It should be noted that Republican Turkish spelling of Arabic and Persian words and names is based on Turkish pronunciation and thus differs substantially from the common transliterations directly from Persian and Arabic. "Muhammad," for example, is "Mehmet" in modern Turkish.

`Abdu'l-Baha lived almost his entire life in the Ottoman Empire and spoke Ottoman Turkish well. He wrote a number of prayers in Turkish. These are heavily infused with Persian words and phrases, in accordance with the literary tastes of the time. They have been published.

Though a few items evidently were published in Ottoman Turkish, Baha'i publishing

in Turkey did not begin in earnest until after the change to the Roman alphabet. In addition to expository works originally written in Turkish, many of the best known Baha'i books in Persian were translated, particularly works by Baha'u'llah, `Abdu'l-Baha, and Mirza Abu'l-Fadl-i-Gulpaygani. The early translators, such as Majdi énan, were educated before the reform and thus knew Persian and Arabic. These translations, though written in the Roman alphabet, were thoroughly Ottoman in style and became increasingly difficult for younger Turks educated in the new system. There have thus been attempts to rewrite the older translations in modern Republican Turkish to make them more accessible. Translation remains a problem since there are now few Turkish Baha'is who are fluent in Arabic and Persian. The enrichment of Turkish Baha'i literature has been a goal of teaching plans since 1964.

Though there are large Turkish-speaking Baha'i communities in Iran, the Iranian government prohibited the publication of literature in Turkish throughout most of this century. As a result there has been little Turkish Baha'i literature published in Iran, the Turkish prayers of `Abdu'l-Baha being a notable exception. A translation of the short obligatory prayer into Azeri is found in BW 16:601 and 17:520.

Sixty percent of the speakers of Turkic languages live outside Turkey, many of them in the Soviet Union: about one out of eight Soviet citizens speaks a Turkic language as his mother tongue. Most of the earliest published Baha'i literature in Turkish was printed by the large Baha'i communities in Baku in Russian Azerbaijan and Ashkhabad in Russian Turkistan. Beginning with the Nine Year Plan, the translation of Baha'i literature into the various dialects of Soviet Central Asia has been a goal, including Turkmen, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uzbek. Translations were made into at least the first two of these prior to the fall of the Soviet Union. It seems likely that with the independence of these states there will be a large increase in Baha'i literature in the languages of the Turkish republics.

Sources: For information on Turkish, see EB (1985) "Turkic Languages;" Bernard Comrie, *The World's Major Languages* (New York: Oxford, 1987) pp. 619-44. The most recent bibliographies of

Baha'i literature in Turkish are BW 13:1108; 18:889.
For other Turkic languages see BW 14:569; 15:714;
16:601, 612; 18:843, 857-58.

Excursus:

`Abdu'llah
Pasha

This Turkish official was the governor of `Akka from 1819 to 1832 and was the owner of a number of buildings important in Baha'i history. He was the governor of `Akka after his father-in-law Sulayman Pasha. He sided with the Turkish Sultan against Muhammad-`Ali Pasha of Egypt when the latter sent his son Ibrahim Pasha to invade Turkish Syria in the summer of 1831. The Egyptian army besieged `Akka for six months. Eventually, he was forced to surrender the city after a bombardment that damaged almost every building in the city. He was exiled to Egypt but later returned to reclaim his properties in the `Akka area. He then moved to Istanbul and finally to Medina where he died and is buried.

Among the extensive properties he amassed were the mansion of Mazra`ih on land formerly owned by his father `Ali Pasha and in which Baha'u'llah later lived; the Governorate of `Akka, now known as the House of `Abdu'llah Pasha, where `Abdu'l-Baha lived from 1896 to 1910; and mansions adjacent to the Mansion of Bahji and on the promontory of Mt. Carmel. He also completed the Citadel of `Akka in which Baha'u'llah was imprisoned.

Sources: DH 205-6.

Chapter
Three

The
Baha'i Faith in Iran

An
Introduction to the History and Culture of Iran

This article is intended to give background information useful for understanding the cultural and historical context of the rise of the Babi and Baha'i Faiths in Iran.

1. Geography. The modern state of Iran is centered on the Iranian Plateau,

a high arid plain surrounded on most sides by mountains.

The center of the plateau contains several regions of almost impassable desert. Most of the population of the plateau lives in oases near the mountains where water is available, often conveyed to the irrigation works by long tunnels called qanats, an irrigation system that has been in use for several millenia.

The bulk of the population of the plateau is Persian-speaking.

In the past large parts of the population have been nomadic, with most of the rest of the population living in agricultural villages. In the twentieth century most of the nomadic population has become sedentary, and the proportion of the population living in cities has greatly increased.

Modern Iran also includes

several adjacent geographical areas. In the northwest, Adharbayjan is a region of mountains and high plains. With more rainfall than in most areas of the country, it has traditionally been Iran's most important source of grain and meat. Its population, though Shi'ite in religion and Iranian in culture, is Turkish-speaking and thus is closely tied by language and experience to Turkey in the west and to the Republic of Azerbaijan to the north, an area that belonged to Iran until the early nineteenth century. North of the plateau are Mazandaran and Gilan along the south and southwestern shores of the Caspian. These areas, below sea-level, contain rain forests. Though the predominant language is Persian, these areas remain somewhat distinct from the rest of Iran. South and west of Adharbajan is Iranian Kurdistan, an area inhabited by the semi-nomadic Kurds and closely related by culture to the Kurdish areas of Iraq, Turkey, and Syria. Separatist movements have flourished in this area. The corner formed by the Iraqi border and the Persian Gulf is an ethnically-Arab lowland, geographically contiguous with Iraq, of which it has often been a part. Though Arabic remains the predominant language, there are large Persian settlements there and the region has become much more culturally integrated with the rest of Iran since the discovery of oil at the turn of the century. The extreme southeast of Iran is inhabited by the Baluch, a people also living in neighboring areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Finally, northeastern Iran is a continuation of the plains of Central Asia.

It should be noted that just

as all Iranians are not Persian speakers, not all speakers of Persian live in Iran. Persian is one of the two main languages of Afghanistan, and Tajik, a closely related dialect, is spoken in Tajikistan and parts of Uzbekistan. Persian was also the lingua franca of Islamic India and survived in India and Pakistan as a literary language into the twentieth century.

A large country, the climate of Iran varies from region to region. On the Iranian Plateau, summers are hot and dry. In the northern areas and in the mountains winters can be quite severe. Even in Tehran, snow is common in the winter.

2. History

Pre-Islamic Iran

The Aryans and their religion.

The Iranians are part of the Indo-European people. Sometime, probably in the early second millennium B.C., a people calling themselves Aryans migrated from north of the Black Sea southwest towards Iran and Afghanistan. These people worshipped a pantheon of gods preserved both in Hindu and Zoroastrian mythology. Their economy seems to have been based on cattle-raising. One group, the Indo-Aryans, went southeast into northwestern India, where they apparently conquered the native population. Their religion formed the nucleus of modern Hinduism. Another group, the Iranians, moved southwest into Iran, eventually settling a region including much of the area east of the Caspian, Afghanistan, and Iran. There is no direct evidence of the movements of the Aryans, but something can be deduced from comparing the languages and mythology of the Aryans of India and Iran. The Indo-Aryans, for example, used a word for "god" that the Iranians use to mean "devil." Likewise, the oldest myths of both peoples preserve something of their early culture. By the early first millennium B.C. various Iranian groups were dominant on the Iranian plateau and neighboring areas to the east and north.

At some time before or during the migrations of the Iranians, a prophet named Zarathushtra (Zoroaster, the usual English form, reflects the Greek form of his name) arose among them. He was a priest of the traditional religion. On the basis of visions of the supreme god Ahura Mazda (probably meaning "Lord Wisdom"), he denounced abuses and taught a religion

in which believers were to carry out various rituals, particularly concerning purity, in order to aid Ahura Mazda in his battle against the devil, Ahriman. Zoroaster formulated his teachings in the form of a series of hymns known as the Gathas. These were committed to memory by his followers and passed down by them until they were finally written down, together with much additional traditional material, sometime around the fifth century A.D. This body of literature is the Avesta, the holy book of Zoroaster's religion. For his teachings Zoroaster was persecuted until he finally found refuge with King Vishtaspa, who established Zoroastrianism as the state religion of his kingdom and fought the enemies of the new faith.

Though there is no direct evidence about Zoroaster until much later, there cannot be much doubt that he lived and preached. There is great controversy about where and when he lived, the traditional date and place—258 years before Alexander (570 B.C.) in Adharbayjan—being clearly too late and too far west. Various modern authorities place him in Sistan (on the border between modern Iran and Afghanistan), Choresmia (south of the Aral Sea), and Kazakhstan. Dates range from the early second millennium to the early first millennium.

The Medes and the Persians.

The Iranians come into written history with the rise of the Median empire, an Iranian dynasty, in western Iran in the ninth century B.C. In the seventh century one of the Iranian vassals of the Medes, Cyrus II the Great of Persis in southwestern Iran, overthrew his master and went on to conquer a vast empire, which eventually stretched from Libya to the gates of India and from the Bosphorus to the Indian Ocean. The Persian or Achaemenid Empire, as it is known, was the greatest state the world had yet seen, and its efficient administration set the pattern used throughout the Middle East for centuries to come. The Persian Empire plays a conspicuous role both in the Bible—it is the Persian king who restores the temple in Jerusalem—and in classical Greek history—Xerxes' famous and unsuccessful effort to conquer Greece. Through the Persian Empire Iranian culture and religious ideas were conveyed to the Mediterranean world.

The Persian Empire was unexpectedly and suddenly destroyed by Alexander's invasion in 334.

Alexander himself died before he could establish his dynasty, and the empire was divided by his generals, Iran falling to the descendants of Seleucus, who also ruled Iraq, Syria, and the Holy Land. Though Greek culture heavily influenced the Iranians, there was still only a thin Greek veneer on what was still an Iranian nation. By the second century B.C. the Seleucids had been supplanted by an Iranian dynasty originating near the southeastern corner of the Caspian. This dynasty, known to the West as the Parthians and to themselves as the Arsacids, ruled a loose confederation controlling a territory from Iraq and the borders of Syria to Afghanistan and the Aral Sea. Their famous mounted archers were the most formidable opponents of the Roman legions. Though more Iranian than the Seleucids, they were still much under the influence of Greek culture.

In the third century A.D.

the Sasanians, a local dynasty of Fars (the same region that was the homeland of the Achaemenids) overthrew the Parthians and formed the Sasanian empire. Occupying much the same territory as the Parthians, the Sasanians were militantly Zoroastrian in religion and continued the Parthian tradition of opposition to the Romans.

The Sasanian empire was well-organized and centralized. At their high point in the early seventh century, the Sasanians were able to occupy much of the Byzantine Empire and besieged Constantinople itself. Whereas the Persians nearly forgot the Achaemenids and Parthians, the Sasanian kings have remained well-known figures in many aspects of Iranian culture: literature, statecraft, art, and folklore.

The Arab Invasion and Empires.

In the years when Muhammad was preaching his new religion and establishing a Muslim state in Medina and eventually all of Arabia, the Sasanians were undergoing military defeat and civil unrest. Thus when the Arabs invaded Sasanian Iraq, resistance was ineffective. The provincial nobility failed to unite to support the central government against the invader. Thus, the Arabs were soon able to occupy both Iraq and Iran. Yazdegerd III, the fugitive Sasanian emperor, was killed in Marv, in the far northeastern corner of his empire. Thereafter, Iran was ruled first from Medina and then until 750 from Damascus.

Persians quickly came to play

a key role in the Islamic state. The first Arab occupiers were dependent on Persians to administer the old Sasanian provinces: Persian was the official language of administrative records in the eastern part of the Islamic world through the seventh century, and Persian officials carried on the routine of tax collection and administration under the eyes of their new Arab rulers. By the end of the century considerable numbers of Persians had become Muslims. In 750 a Shi'ite revolution in eastern Iran led to the overthrow of the Umayyad caliphs of Damascus. The Abbasids, the new caliphs, were descendants of an uncle of the Prophet. They moved the capital to Iraq, building the new city of Baghdad. Their chief powerbase was the eastern empire--Iraq and Iran, the Sasanian lands--and Persians played an ever-greater role in administration and cultural life. The administrative system and court rituals of the Sasanian empire were to a considerable extent resurrected by the Abbasids. During this period Iran gradually became overwhelmingly Muslim, mainly Sunni in this period, although there were always pockets of Shiite sympathy.

The Military Successor

States. By the end of the ninth century the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad could no longer exercise full control over their dominions. Governors of distant provinces became independent while still acknowledging the nominal authority of the prestigious but increasingly powerless caliphs in Baghdad. The example of independent provincial governors was soon followed by military adventurers who carved out ephemeral empires for themselves. Frequently drawing their strength from nomadic Turkic or Mongol tribes, such states characterize Iranian history into modern times. Often these rulers were little more than adventurous gangsters whose states prospered so long as the founder lived and fell apart under less ruthless heirs. Under such rulers life continued unchanged in the Persian cities, for a change of ruler often meant nothing more than a change of tax collector. Such cultural achievements as these military rulers could boast of tended to consist of subsidizing poets or scholars or of monumental architecture--both activities intended to legitimize the sovereign's rule. Only in a few cases did these states have lasting influences on Iranian life.

Iran as a political entity can scarcely be said to have existed in this period.

Political boundaries bore little relation to ethnic boundaries. Religious identities were often stronger than identities based on language or nation.

The Safavids. The modern state of Iran came into existence in 1500 through the conquests of Shah Isma`al Safavi, the hereditary head of an order of militant Shiite Sufis. Isma`il was a Turk from Ardabil in Azerbaijan, in the northwest of modern Iran. His state occupied the territory of modern Iran and some additional areas such as parts of Iraq, the Caucasus, and Afghanistan. Until this time Iran had been largely Sunni, though there was a long tradition of sympathy for radical Shi`ite groups. Isma`il forcibly converted his territories to Twelver Shi`ism, to the great irritation of neighboring Sunni states such as the Ottomans and the Uzbeks. Though under continual military pressure, particularly from the Ottomans, Isma`il and his successors were able to consolidate a regime that lasted for over 200 years. The cultural achievements of the Safavids were considerable. The Safavid kings and their courtiers were often lavish patrons of art, literature, and scholarship. Safavid architecture represents the highest achievement of Islamic architecture in Iran, notably Shah Abbas the Great's magnificent capital, Isfahan. Islamic philosophy reached its highest level of sophistication under the Safavids.

After a series of weak rulers the Safavid state collapsed in the early eighteenth century before an invasion from Afghanistan. This event triggered a half-century of instability in Iran. Two rulers in this period managed to gain control of the bulk of the old Safavid territories. The first, Nadir Shah, was a Sunni soldier from Khorasan, who in the classic pattern of military rulers in Iran, rose through his bravery, charisma, and luck to become a conquerer. His greatest achievement was his invasion of India in 1739, in which he sacked Delhi and brought a fabulous treasure, including the famous Peacock Throne, back to Iran. He was eventually assassinated by his own soldiers and his empire fell apart. The second strong ruler was Karim Khan Zand (r. 1751-79), who ruled much of Iran from Shiraz. Less ambitious than Nadir, he ruled under the unpretentious title of "regent" (vakil). Though typical of military adventurers in Iran throughout history, he won the affection of

the Persians through his wise and moderate rule, his concern for commercial prosperity, and the magnificent buildings he erected in his beloved Shiraz.

The Qajars. Karim

Khan's successor was immediately challenged by Aqa-Muhammad Khan (d. 1797), a eunuch of the Turkish Qajar tribe.

He had been variously a rival and advisor of Karim Khan. After the latter's death he established himself as ruler of most of the old Safavid territories, first uniting the various branches of the Qajar tribe under his rule, then defeating and killing Karim Khan's son Lutf-`Ali, and finally recapturing the lost territories of Georgia and Khorasan. After Aqa Mohammad's murder in 1797, his nephew Fath-`Ali became the ruler. Fath-`Ali Shah was distinguished less for his statecraft than for his uxoriousness: his wives, concubines, and resulting children numbered in the hundreds. During his reign Iran faced its first serious challenge from Europeans. Blundering into two disastrous wars with Russia, Iran lost the northern half of the key province of Azerbaijan. Fath-`Ali Shah's heir apparent was his son `Abbas Mirza, who ruled Azerbaijan for more than thirty years and conducted Iran's foreign policy. `Abbas Mirza was an intelligent and forward-looking man, who sought to adopt European-style reforms in such areas as the military and fiscal administration, much as the Ottomans were doing at the same time. His European advisors hoped that under `Abbas's rule, Iran would develop into a strong and stable modern state. Unfortunately, he shared his family's tendency towards dissipation, and he died shortly before his father. The throne thus passed to `Abbas Mirza's son, Muhammad (r. 1834-48). Muhammad Shah showed little interest in continuing the reforms that his father had undertaken, and relied on an incompetent prime minister, the ignorant and superstitious Sufi Haji Mirza Aqasi.

Muhammad Shah's son and heir,

Nasiru'd-Din (b. 1831, r. 1848-96), came to the throne as a teenager and ruled nearly half a century. Nasiru'd-Din Shah had been governor of Azerbaijan (the traditional post for the heir-apparent) under the supervision of Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, who then became prime minister. Amir Kabir was an ardent reformer, who sought to institute European-style reforms under an absolutist monarchy. He, for example, established the first modern institution of higher learning in Iran, the Daru'l-Funun ("Polytechnic").

It was he who ordered the execution of the Bab, apparently because he saw a charismatic and revolutionary religious movement as a threat to the stability of the state.

However, Naseri'd-Din Shah soon tired of his brilliant and overbearing prime minister, removed him from office, and had him killed in 1852. For the remainder of Nasiru'd-Din Shah's reign, Iran came under increasing pressure from the European powers—political, military, and economic. The Shah was himself interested in Western technology and methods, travelled in Europe, and periodically attempted to carry out reforms. However, he lacked the intelligence and will to follow through on these measures, not all of which were well-thought-out in any case. By the time of his assassination in 1896 at the hands of a supporter of the Pan-Islamist Jamalul-Din Afghani, Iran was entering a crisis.

The Constitutional Period.

Both Nasiru'd-Din Shah and his successor Muzaffari'd-Din Shah were perennially short of foreign currency to pay for imports of foreign goods and travel in Europe. They developed the practice of selling concessions—monopolies on some part of the economy—to raise funds. These concessions caused great resentment in the Iranian public, for not only did the resulting monopolies force Persians to pay unnecessarily high prices, but they often led to the ruin of sectors of the traditional economy. In 1890, the Shah sold a monopoly on the sale of tobacco to a British businessman. An outcry resulted, the clergy banned the use of tobacco, and the Shah was forced to withdraw the concession. A few years later the discontent crystallized in the form of a demand for a constitution. An alliance of modernist intellectuals (some of whom were secretly Azali Babis), bazaar merchants, and reformist clergy forced the dying Muzaffaru'd-Din Shah to agree to a constitution and a constituent assembly, the Majlis. When Muhammad-`Ali, the new Shah, tried to dissolve the Majlis, a civil war resulted in which the Constitutionalist forces eventually triumphed. Though the next decade was marked by unstable government and economic depression caused by World War I, the ideal of constitutional government became firmly rooted in Iran.

The Pahlavi Dynasty.

In 1921 Reza Khan, the head of a Russian-trained cavalry regiment that was the most effective military force in the country, seized power in Tehran and was proclaimed

prime minister. He was a resolutely secular and absolutist reformer who sought to modernize Iran from above on the model of Atatürk in Turkey and Mussolini in Italy. Though measures such as the forced unveiling of women and the curtailing of the authority of the clergy caused resentment, under his rule Iran rapidly developed a modern state apparatus and economy. He proclaimed himself Shah in 1925, deposing the powerless Ahmad Shah Qajar. The symbol of his achievements was a railroad he built going from the Persian Gulf through Tehran to the Russian border. It was this railroad, together with his fascist sympathies, that proved to be his undoing. When Germany invaded Russia, the Allies occupied Iran in order to be able to send supplies to Russia. Reza Shah was deposed and died in exile on the island of Mauritius.

His son, Muhammad-Reza came to the throne as a teen-ager and for some years was virtually powerless. During the 1940s political life flourished in Iran as the Majlis was freed from the heavy hand of Reza Shah. By the early 1950s the Shah was attempting to consolidate power. When Muhammad Mosaddeq, a nationalist politician, became prime minister and nationalized the British-owned oil fields, the American Central Intelligence Agency engineered a coup that overthrew Mosaddeq and brought the Shah to power. Like his father, Muhammad-Reza Shah attempted to modernize Iran from above. Paid for by steadily increasing oil revenues, vast changes occurred in Iranian life. Education became widely available, the country became firmly integrated into the world economy, and a large middle-class grew up. The clergy grew increasingly marginalized, particularly after 1963 when they were unable to prevent a land-reform program from stripping them of the lands that supported the religious institutions.

The Islamic Republic.

Under the Pahlavis political reform failed to keep pace with economic and social change. When uncontrolled inflation began to wreak havoc in the economy in the mid-1970s, the Shah began to lose his popularity. In 1978 an alliance of Islamic, leftist, and bazaar groups, united by the prestige of the Ayatollah Khomeini, forced the Shah into exile. Khomeini's own Islamic supporters, the best organized of the revolutionary groups, seized power. Despite a bitter campaign of terrorism by leftist groups and a long war with Iraq,

the Islamic regime was able to consolidate its power, uniting the country in hostility towards the Western powers, especially the United States. Despite a dismal human rights record and near economic collapse caused by war and mismanagement, the regime continued to enjoy wide support due to the reforms it was able to carry out and its genuine independence from foreign influence. Moreover, the fact that a modicum of democracy was maintained allowed the Islamic Republic to lay claim to both the nationalist and the constitutionalist political legacies.

3. Culture

The following is a brief account of several important themes in Iranian culture and society

Iran and Islam

A continuing theme in Persian culture is whether Iran should be identified as primarily Iranian or primarily Islamic. As early as the eighth century Persian Muslims had begun to reassert their identity as Iranians against the prevailing Arabic chauvinism of the ruling Arabs. The greatest expression of this attitude is Firdawsi's *Shah-Naiha*, the "Book of Kings," an eleventh-century revised poetic translation of a pre-Islamic national history written in Sasanian times. Thus, Iranian rulers and officials through the last thousand years have tended to identify with the heritage of pre-Islamic Iran, an identity reinforced by the Persian language. This Iranian identity was closely linked with a cult of monarchy, in which pre-Islamic ideas about the divine right of kings, elaborate court ceremonials, and administrative traditions were resurrected. It was the administrative classes, the most permanent element of the government, who clung most tenaciously to the pre-Islamic Persian heritage. Thus, Baha'u'llah's family, which had a tradition of government service, proudly asserted their pure Persian descent from the last Sasanian king.

On the other hand, pre-modern Iranian Muslims saw themselves as citizens of the Islamic nation or as Shiites. Thus a Persian Shiite would be quite willing for his daughter to marry an Arab Shiite but would on no account allow her to marry a Zoroastrian Persian. In most cases these two identities

co-existed. Sometimes they were fused, as when the mother of the Imam Husayn was identified as the daughter of Yazdegerd III, the last Sasanian emperor. The fact that Iran was the only Muslim state with Shiism as the state religion tended to smooth over potential conflicts between Iranian and Islamic identities.

In modern times the conflict between these two identities has sharpened. The Pahlavi Shahs, seeing Islam and the Shi'ite clergy as barriers to the modernization of Iran and to the consolidation of state power, appealed to a specifically Iranian nationalism. Outward symbols of Islamic allegiance such as traditional headgear were outlawed, and symbols of the glories of ancient Iran were brought forward to replace them. Thus, the Zoroastrian calendar replaced the Islamic calendar in official use. A campaign was launched to rid Persian of loan-words from Arabic—a nearly hopeless task, since Arabic words are as prominent in Persian as French, Greek, and Latin loan-words are in English. Parents were encouraged to give their children names from the Shah-Namih. This effort reached a height in 1971 when Muhammad-Reza Shah held a lavish celebration (thirty-five years late) at Persepolis, the old Achaemenid capital, of the 2500th anniversary of the foundation of the Persian monarchy. At the same time he revised the calendar to date from that event.

The clergy naturally resisted such measures. Khomeini, for example, insisted on signing his name "al-Khomeini," a small act of rebellion that converted his name from Persian to Arabic. After the Islamic Revolution the new Islamic rulers appealed once again to symbols of pan-Islamic identity, replacing, for example, the Persian national symbol of the Lion-and-Sun with the Arabic name of God, Allah, on the Iranian flag. The study of Arabic, the language of Islam, was once again made mandatory in Iranian schools. However, soon the country was locked in a desperate war with Iraq, and the Islamic leadership was forced to once again invoke the symbols of Iranian national unity to rally the nation to the fight.

Shiism and Islam.

Somewhat comparable to the conflict between Iranian and Islamic identity is the conflict between Shiite and Islamic identity. Shiites

see themselves as both part of and separate from the larger Sunni Islamic world. Ancient resentments born of the persecution of the imams separate Shiites from other Muslims, but both parties see the Shiites as part of the larger Islamic nation. On the whole, the experience of Iran, often at war with neighboring Sunni states, has predisposed its people to see themselves primarily as a distinct community surrounded by nations hostile to its faith. Thus, Shiism can be invoked to rally the Iranian nation against enemies, real or imagined. The propaganda of the Iran-Iraq war drew on ancient memories of the persecution of the Imams in Iraa, especially of the Imam Husayn. On the other hand, the official policy of the Islamic Republic has been to stress the commonalities between Shiite and Sunni Islam. In practice attitudes vary considerably among individuals. In the Shaykhi school, for example, and also in the writings of the Bab, Shiite particularism is predominant. On the other hand, Baha'u'llah had little interest in Shiite/Sunni differences.

Class structure of Iranian society. @

The fundamental class structure of Iranian society has its roots in pre-Islamic times. Although class lines were not rigid, there were distinct class patterns. The following are the major social divisions of traditional Iranian society.

Peasants: The largest portion of the Iranian population until very recent times consisted of peasants living in small agricultural villages. Their situations could vary considerably, depending mainly on whether they owned their own land. Typically villages and their agricultural land were the property of absentee landlords, usually civil or military officials. Villages also sometimes belonged to charitable foundationsÑin effect to the clergyÑor to wealthier merchants. The rent was paid in kind, and the crop was divided according to traditional formulae among the the landlord, the cultivator, and the individuals who supplied irrigation water, animals for cultivation, and seed. Due to a number of factors the economic situation of the peasants became steadily worse in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, leading many peasants to migrate to the towns and cities.

Nomads: At one time

nomadic tribes constituted nearly half the population of Iran. The nomadic peoples, or at least the chiefs of the major tribes, enjoyed considerable wealth and political power. Nomad soldiers were the backbone of the traditional Iranian army, and many of the Iranian dynasties of Islamic times, notably the Qajars, were of nomadic origin. Under the Pahlavis the power of the tribes was broken and most were forced to accept a sedentary life. Since the Islamic Revolution, some of the tribes have been able to resume a nomadic life.

The Bazar: Traditional

economic life in Iran is based on the bazar, an amorphous physical, social, and economic entity that is at the heart of Iranian cities. The bazar as a social class included shopkeepers, apprentices, craftsmen, wealthy wholesale merchants, moneychangers, and other participants in the market, great and small. The bazar tended to be allied to the clergy against the government, whose taxes, exactions, and interference was usually the bazar's chief problem. In the twentieth century new sorts of economic activity based on Western models destroyed the bazar's monopoly on economic life, but the bazar still remains important, both economically and politically.

The Men of the Sword:

Ruling was normally the prerogative of soldiers, who were often non-Persian invaders or tribesmen. The highest posts in government were normally occupied by members of this military ruling class.

The Men of the Pen:

The continuing administration of government was the prerogative of an educated bureaucratic class, mainly Persian in origins. The bureaucratic families maintained specialized skills in such areas as accounting, tax collection, official correspondence, and record-keeping. Thus, while a provincial governor in Qajar times would most likely be a Qajar prince whose place was owed to his tribe's Turkish military traditions, his secretary and his chief accountant would most likely be Persians whose families had specialized in these skills for generations. Baha'u'llah was from such a family and would thus have been expected to assume his father's administrative position. The cultural and administrative traditions of these bureaucratic families went back far into Sasanian times, and this class was the most

loyal supporter of pre-Islamic Persian traditions of nationalism and culture. Paradoxically, as an educated class they also tended in recent times to become Westernized.

The Clergy: The Shi`ite

clergy constituted a small but important social class.

To some extent, the profession of cleric was hereditary like most other occupations and crafts in pre-modern times. However, the class and professional boundaries were not rigid, and there was a steady flow of talented young men of other backgrounds entering the clergy, while the sons of clerics often took up other professions, usually as merchants. The clergy had very close links with the bazaar, and clerical families were and are often linked by marriage to bazaar families of comparable social station. For example, the Bab came from a merchant family, but he himself spent some time in the seminaries of Iraq, a cousin of his father became a leading cleric, and the family maintained close links with some of the Shaykhi clerics.

Few religious positions were directly controlled by the government, so the clergy frequently played roles as intermediaries between the government and other classes. The allegiances of the clergy varied considerably depending on their positions. Some—for example, the Friday Prayer leaders, who were appointed by the government—were closely linked to the government. Clerics supported by endowments and contributions were more likely to be aligned with the merchants, the main source of such revenues, whereas village mullas would be likely to occupy a position between the landlord and the peasants.

The New Class: The

rise of Western-style education in the early twentieth century created a new middle class without strong links to traditional Iranian culture. The possessors of the new education rose rapidly in influence and wealth as the Pahlavi reforms created a demand for officials, technicians, and businessmen. The new class represented a discontinuity in Iranian society since their experiences and outlook were in many ways fundamentally different from those of the traditional classes. Their rise was bitterly resented by more traditional groups like the clergy and the bazaar.

Persian Language and Literature

Persian is an Indo-European language and is thus related by structure to most European languages, but its alphabet and much of its vocabulary are Arabic. The language underwent vast changes in the millennium between the fall of the Achaemenid empire to Alexander and the reemergence of New Persian in the early Islamic period. Unlike other areas conquered by the Arabs, the Iranian-speaking areas never adopted Arabic except as a learned language. When independent states with Persian-speaking courts emerged in Iran around the 10th century, Persian reemerged as a literary language. The preeminent literary form in New (Islamic) Persian has always been poetry, and almost every educated Persian has at least dabbled in writing poetry. A knowledge of poetry is one of the basic attainments of an educated Persian, both in medieval and modern times. The first great classic of New Persian literature was Firdawsi's *Shah-namih*, an adaptation of the Sasanian national history. This work served as a rallying point for the reviving Persian nationalism. The educated bureaucratic classes continued to cultivate such nationalistic literature, as well as Persian adaptations of Islamic scholarly works and dynastic histories glorifying their patrons.

The best known tradition in Persian literature is mystical poetry. The rise of New Persian coincided with the rise of organized mysticism in Islam. A huge and impressive literature of mystical poetry, both lyric and epic/didactic, soon arose in Persian. Mystical themes came to permeate even secular Persian poetry, so that it is usually almost impossible to distinguish a mystical poem from a secular love poem. Mystical poets like Rumi and `Attar developed Persian into a subtle and expressive medium for discussing spiritual matters.

There was also prose literature in Persian. As a scholarly medium, Persian was until recently subordinate to Arabic, so Persian works on scholarly and scientific topics tended to be popular adaptations of more serious Arabic works. Notable genres in Persian include literary letter-writing, history, and statecraft. In Baha'i literature these genres are represented by such works as Baha'u'llah's and `Abdu'l-Baha's tablets, *Dawn-Breakers*, and *Secret of Divine Civilization* respectively.

The Arts

Apart from literature, three arts in which Persians excelled may be mentioned: calligraphy, decoration, and miniature painting. Because Islam discouraged figurative art and stressed the importance of the sacred text, calligraphy became an important art in Islam. Calligraphy was highly cultivated in Iran, so that any educated Persian was expected to have a reasonable command of one or more calligraphic styles. The Bab's calligraphy was seen as a miracle by his followers, and the production of display calligraphs and fine manuscripts was one of the ways in which early Baha'is propagated and legitimized their religion.

Persian artists excelled at decorative arts of all sorts. Even architecture was often subordinated to the surface of the wall or ceiling with its elaborate tile or carved plaster ornamentation. Decoration with elaborate calligraphy and floral or geometrical elements is heavily used in all kinds of Persian arts and crafts.

Miniatures—paintings illustrating books—were a particular Persian specialty. The place filled in Western art by great oil paintings is in Iran occupied by the magnificent decorated books produced for discerning royal patrons.

Etiquette

A portrait of Iran would be incomplete without some reference to the role played by etiquette, in many ways the most distinctive feature of Persian life. Iran is a very old society, for much of its history ruled by outsiders and subject to unexpected upheavals. Thus, it seems that Persian society turned inward and lavished much of its creativity on private life. Thus, Persian society has developed an elaborate system of etiquette. Two features are particularly noteworthy. First is a strong emphasis on hospitality, sometimes referred to pejoratively by Persians as ta`aruf, "polite hypocrisy." The underlying assumption is that the guest honors the host by his presence, so that the host is obliged to reciprocate by unquestioning and unstinting hospitality and generosity. Second is an elaborate set of rules governing interactions among individuals with finally graduated nuance to reflect personal, social, and class

rank distinctions. In language, oral or written, titles, style of speech and diction, and even pronouns reflect the relative status of the two parties. Though this system of etiquette gives Iranian society its characteristic graciousness, it is sometimes criticized by Iranians themselves as providing a mask for hypocrisy.

Sources:

A good introduction to many aspects of Iranian society, particularly in the twentieth century, is R. Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet*. Two well-informed European views from the nineteenth century are G. Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Problem*, a detailed and profoundly well-informed study of Iran from a political standpoint, and Morier, *Hajji Baba of Isfahan*, a charming but unflattering novel about Persian life. The most thorough survey of all aspects of Iranian life and history is *Cambridge History of Iran*, 8 vols. In many respects the finest general account of Iranian culture is still E. G. Browne, *The Literary History of the Persians*.

Three
Clerics and a Prince of Isfahan

Background
to Baha'u'llah's Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

Among the defining events in the development of the Baha'i community of Iran in the time of Baha'u'llah was the murder of two wealthy and prominent Baha'i merchants in Isfahan early in 1879. Members of the respected Nahri family, the two brothers were entitled by Baha'u'llah "the King and Beloved of Martyrs." The incident itself is well known. The following sections discuss the Tablet that Baha'u'llah wrote in immediate reaction to the murders and four prominent opponents of the Baha'i Faith in Isfahan: three clerics and a prince-governor.

Lawh-i-Burhan

The Tablet of the Proof was revealed in 1879 as a rebuke to the two clerics--the "Wolf" and the "She-Serpent"--responsible for the martyrdoms of the King and Beloved of Martyrs in Isfahan. The Imam-Jum`ih of the city, Mir Muhammad-Husayn Khatunabadi, had owed the brothers a large sum of money. It was generally thought that their arrest as Baha'is was

a pretext to void this debt and allow the governor, the Imam-Jum`ih, and Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir Isfahani, another leading cleric, to seize and divide the brothers' extensive properties. Though the governor had received orders to send the two brothers to Tehran, where they would most likely have been released, the two clerics were able to force him to permit their executions.

The killing of the two brothers--members of a prominent merchant family in Isfahan and among the leading Baha'is in Iran--shocked and angered the Baha'is and their many friends, both Iranian and European. Baha'u'llah immediately wrote the letter known as the Lawh-i-Burhan sharply rebuking the two clergymen. It reached Tehran only thirty-eight days after the killings. Mirza Abu'l-Fadl-i-Gulpaygani, on Baha'u'llah's instructions, sent a copy of the letter to each of the clergymen. There is no record of their reactions.

The principal theme of the Lawh-i-Burhan is contrast between the pretensions of the two clergymen to be exponents of the Law and faith of Islam and the injustice and cruelty of their killing two descendants of the Prophet himself. Most of the tablet is addressed to Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir, the more influential of the two.

Baha'u'llah denounces the injustice of sentencing the two brothers to death. Baha'u'llah says that there is no hatred in his own heart for the Shaykh, who has been deceived by his own folly. Had he realized what he had done, he would have cast himself into the fire.

Baha'u'llah compares the Shaykh to the Jewish priests who condemned Christ to death and to the leaders of the cult of idols in Mecca who opposed Muhammad. They could offer no proof to justify their actions, nor could the Shaykh for his. (This is the source of the title of the tablet.) In fact, the Shaykh followed his passions, not his Lord, and abandoned the Law of God--the knowledge of which is the source of the authority of the Muslim clergy--and followed the law of his lower self. True learning is to recognize the station of Baha'u'llah. If the Shaykh were to subdue his passions, he would understand the call of Baha'u'llah and his sins would be forgiven. Baha'u'llah and his followers,

as their actions testified, had no fear of the Shaykh's cruelty.

Baha'u'llah says that leadership had made the Shaykh proud. But there is no honor in being followed by the worthless and ignorant: it was such people who supported the priests who put Christ to death. Baha'u'llah refers here to three of his own works: tablets to the Sultan and Napoleon III and the Kitab-i-éqan.

Baha'u'llah digresses to address the Muslim clergy in general, warning them that neither their wealth nor the religious sciences in which they prided themselves would profit them. The Shah, Baha'u'llah implied, feared to interfere with wolves such as the Shaykh. But the Shaykh is like the last sunlight on the mountaintop, soon to fade away like those who had opposed God in the past. Truly, Muhammad and Fatimih the Chaste wept at his deeds. The Muslim clergy had opposed everyone who had tried to improve the condition of Islam. Baha'u'llah points as a warning to the disastrous war of 1877 in which Turkey had lost much of her territory in the Balkans.

Now Baha'u'llah turns from the "Wolf" to the "She-Serpent"--Mir Muhammad-Husayn, the Imam-Jum`ih. His denunciation of this man is even sharper than that of the Shaykh. There is no hint that this man deceived himself about the injustice of his actions. Soon, Baha'u'llah promises, "the breaths of chastisement will seize thee. . . ." He will not, Baha'u'llah prophesies, consume the wealth that he had pillaged.

When Edward Browne visited Isfahan a few years after the martyrdoms, he heard of "the terrible letter" threatening the two clergymen with divine chastisement. Most likely it immediately began circulating in manuscript among the Baha'is. It would have been convincing, for its prophecies of disgrace and death for the two clergymen were soon fulfilled. It was published in at least two early collections of the writings of Baha'u'llah, Aqdas-i-Buzurg (1314/1896) 200-208 and Majmu`ih (Cairo, 1920) 53-66. Baha'u'llah Himself quotes lengthy passages in Epistle to the Son of the Wolf--itself addressed to Aqa Najafi, the son of Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir:

pp. 79-86, 97-103. The entire text is included in the Arabic and English editions of Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Sect. 14. Almost the entire text of the tablet was translated by Shoghi Effendi in ESW.

Baha'u'llah in ESW refers to the tablet as "Lawh-i-Burhan." It is also known as "Lawh-i-Raqsha" ("Tablet of the She-Serpent").

See also: "Nahri family,"
"Muhammad-Baqir-i-Isfahani, Shaykh,"
"Muhammad-Husayn-i-Khatunabadi, Mir," "Isfahan."

Sources: For text and translation see TB, sect. 14. RB 4:91-102. Ganj 145-46. Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 382. AAK 2:40-41. DM/IK 13:2021, 2057. Nurayn 245-53.

Mir Muhammad-Husayn-i-Khatunabadi,
"the She-Serpent"

The cleric known in Baha'i tradition as "the She-Serpent" (Raqsha') was the Imam-Jum`ih of Isfahan and one of those responsible for the execution in 1879 of the Nahri brothers, the "King" and "Beloved of Martyrs." The Khatunabadis were the descendants of Mir Muhammad-Salih, a distinguished scholar of the early eighteenth century, and had held the position of Imam-Jum`ah of Isfahan for about a century. Mir Muhammad-Husayn was the brother of Mir Siyyid Muhammad Sultani'l-`Ulama', the Bab's host in Isfahan in 1846. On his brother's death in 1874, he inherited the family office, thus making him one of the two or three highest ranked clergy in the city. (The Imam-Jum`ah was the leader of Friday prayers at the most important mosque in the city. The holders of this office were, at least nominally, appointed by the government, although here, as was often the case, the office was effectively hereditary.) He does not seem to have lent any particular distinction to his office.

Mir Muhammad-Husayn's earliest contact with the Babis was when his brother sent him out of the city to meet the Bab, who was coming from Shiraz. Since the Bab stayed for some time in his brother's house, Mir Muhammad-Husayn must have met him a number of times.

Mir Muhammad-Husayn's importance

in Baha'i history arises from the curious fact that his bankers were Baha'is: the three Nahri brothers, a family of wealthy merchants who had become Babis at the time of the Bab's visits and who were now among the most important and well-known Baha'is of Iran. They would routinely pay the Imam-Jum`ih's debts as they came in. The account eventually reached the very large sum of 18,000 tomans. In early 1879 the brothers presented this bill for payment. Mir Muhammad-Husayn stalled, asking for an audit. Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir, the most powerful cleric in Isfahan and a bitter opponent of the Baha'is--proposed that the three Nahri brothers, well-known as Baha'is--be arrested as heretics. Their property would then be forfeit and could be divided among the two clerics and the governor, whose cooperation would be necessary. The three brothers were arrested, two of them while guests in the Imam-Jum`ih's house. The youngest recanted and was released. The two older brothers refused and were eventually executed at the insistence of the clergy. Mir Muhammad-Husayn and Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir personally delivered the death warrants to the prison.

After the executions of the two brothers, the Imam-Jum`ih sent his servants to seize their property and loot their houses, many of their possessions being extremely valuable. A few days later a dispute broke out between him and Zillu's-Sultan, the governor. Several weeks later Mir Muhammad-Husayn tried to force the issue by marching on the governorate with his supporters to demand a larger share of the plunder. When disorders continued, troops were sent from Tehran, the Imam-Jum`ih was exiled to Mashhad, and his property was plundered. He was allowed to return from his exile in Mashhad a year or so later. He died in Isfahan two years after his victims on 21 June 1881 of a repulsive tumor on his neck. He was buried in an unmarked grave by a few porters, no one else daring to risk the anger of the governor by attending his funeral. When the merchants closed the bazaar to mourn his death, the governor's attendants forced them to reopen their shops.

Baha'i tradition reports that when someone expressed doubts about the wisdom of killing the Nahri brothers, he had said, "Their blood be on my neck." Thus his gruesome death was interpreted as a punishment of his crime and the fulfillment of

Baha'u'llah's prophecy of his downfall.

Sources: BBR 271-74.

EBB 33-44. TB "Lawh-i-Burhan" `14, pp. 213-16. RB 4:73-102. God Passes By, 200-1, 232-33. DB 201. Browne, "Babis of Persia," p. 490-91.

Shaykh

Muhammad-Baqir-i-Isfahani, "the Wolf"

"The Wolf" was a leading mujtahid of Isfahan responsible for a number of persecutions of Baha'is. He born in 1234/1818-19 and was the son of a prominent cleric in Isfahan. His mother was the daughter of Ja`far Kashifu'l-Ghita', one of the most important exponents of the Usuli legal school. Muhammad-Baqir went to Najaf, where he studied jurisprudence with the two greatest Shi`i legal scholars of the time, Muhammad-Hasan an-Najafi and Murtada al-Ansari. Having completed his studies, he returned to Isfahan to assume the position of leader of prayers in the Royal Mosque. About the same time, the old Imam-Jum`ih and several other important clerics in Isfahan died, abruptly making him the highest-ranking cleric in the city. He acquired many students and great religious authority in Isfahan and surrounding regions. He wrote several books, none especially important. Most of Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir's efforts went into building up his religious, political, and economic power. His political position was such that he was sometimes able to challenge the governor directly, doing such things as inflicting the death penalty against the wishes of the authorities. He also acquired great wealth, at least partly by hoarding grain in times of famine.

In 1876 he was forced by the authorities to leave Isfahan and retire to Mashhad. He then went to Tehran, was reconciled to Zillu's-Sultan, the governor, and returned to Isfahan on 16 April 1876. In 1883 he fell from grace once more, being forced to leave the city after the humiliation of having his wife seduced by the governor. He died in Safar 1301/December 1883, shortly after arriving at Najaf.

Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir

had a number of children, several of them later prominent clerics in Isfahan. The most important was Muhammad-Taqi, better known as Aqa Najafi or to the Baha'is "the Son

of the Wolf."

Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir was a relentless foe of heresy and waged a twenty-year battle against Shaykhis, Babis, and especially Baha'is. In 1864, he had several hundred Babis of Najafabad arrested and wanted to put them all to death. More moderate clerics prevented this, but four were eventually killed--two of whom were under the protection of the Shah--and many others beaten and robbed.

In 1874, shortly before the arrival of Zillu's-Sultan, the new governor, he instigated a major pogrom against the Baha'is of Isfahan. About twenty were arrested, while hundreds of others took refuge in the office of the British telegraph company and the houses of the Europeans in the city. Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir proclaimed from his pulpit that Muslims were free to kill Baha'is and to do as they wished with their property and women. The garrison intervened to restore order, and eventually the Shah stopped the persecutions.

In 1878 a Baha'i from the village of Talkhunchih, Mulla Kazim, was arrested there and delivered into the hands of Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir. When he refused to recant his faith, he was publicly beheaded in the Maydan-i-Shah. His body was abused by the mob. Two other Baha'is were also arrested. One was severely beaten and his ears were cut off. A number of Baha'i houses were also attacked.

In March 1879 Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir; Mir Muhammad-Husayn, the new Imam-Jum`ih; and Zillu's-Sultan plotted to kill three Baha'i Nahri brothers. Zillu's-Sultan tried to withdraw from the conspiracy when he was ordered to send two of the brothers to Tehran, but some fifty clergymen, accompanied by their supporters, closed the bazaar and marched to the governorate. Zillu's-Sultan agreed to endorse a death sentence issued by the clergy. Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir and the Imam-Jum`ih personally supervised the execution.

After this last incident Baha'u'llah gave Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir the title "Wolf" (Dhi'b) for his cruelty, denouncing him in the Lawh-i-Burhan ("Tablet of the Proof"). In another

tablet (AQA 2:197-98, evidently written at the time of one of the Shaykh's exiles, he prophesies his final complete downfall.

After the Shaykh's death, his son Muhammad-Taqi--better known as Aqa Najafi or the "Son of the Wolf"--assumed his place as prayer leader in the Royal Mosque and carried on the crusade against the Baha'is.

Sources: A`yanu'sh-Shi`ih
9:186. BBR 243, 513, 268-74. EBB 33-40, 134, 259.
TB 203-26. God Passes By, 201, 232. AQA
2:197-98. Brown, "Babis of Persia" 491.

Aqa Najafi, "the Son of the Wolf"

Shaykh Muhammad-Taqi-i-Najafi~Usually called Aqa Najafi, and entitled by Baha'u'llah "Son of the Wolf"~was a bitter opponent of the Baha'is. He was born on 17 Rabi` II 1262/14 April 1846, the son of Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir-i-Isfahani, who was the leader of prayers at the Royal Mosque in Isfahan. He was related by blood and marriage to many prominent `ulama. He studied under his father in Isfahan and then went to Najaf where he studied the usual subjects under Mirzay-i-Shirazi, the highest-ranking Shi`i cleric of the time, and others. Returning to Isfahan, he was associated with his father and assumed his father's position in the Royal Mosque on his death in 1883. His title "Aqa Najafi" stressed his claim to be regarded as one of the Najaf circle of religious scholars.

Building on the wealth and power accumulated by his father, Najafi became the most powerful cleric in Isfahan and one of the wealthiest men of the city. For over thirty years he waged a bitter struggle for control of Isfahan with Zillu's-Sultan, the Qajar prince-governor. In the process he accumulated vast wealth, which he distributed generously to students and other clerics. The rise of his power in Isfahan was aided by the fall of Zillu's-Sultan from royal favor in 1888.

Despite his hatred for the representatives of the Qajar dynasty and his early support for the nationalist revolt against the tobacco concession in 1891-92, his support for the constitutional

revolution was ambiguous and inconsistent. He was criticized and mistrusted by many of the constitutionalist leaders, some of whom he had denounced as Babis and heretics.

Like his father before him, Aqa Najafi was a bitter and ruthless opponent of the Baha'is. Najafi was one of the clergy who had signed the death warrant of the two Nahri brothers and took an active role in forcing the governor to carry out the sentence.

After his father's death, Najafi assumed the leading role in the persecution of Baha'is in central Iran. He was largely responsible for the persecutions in Sidih in 1889, in Najafabad in 1889, 1899, and 1905, and in Isfahan and Yazd in 1903. In addition to his activities in Isfahan and its vicinity, he wrote to `ulama in other cities urging them to persecute the Baha'is. He also harassed the Muslims who attended the Christian missionary schools and the Jews. Such was Najafi's hatred of the Baha'is that he is said to have prohibited the recitation of the famous Ramadan dawn prayer, traditionally thought to contain the greatest name of God, because it contained the name "Baha."

Though the leading `ulama in Najaf did not usually openly endorse Najafi's pogroms, they did not repudiate him and helped prevent the government from acting against him.

Despite Najafi's thirty-year crusade against the Baha'is, he is best known among Baha'is for the Epistle to the Son of the Wolf. Baha'u'llah's last major work, this book is addressed to Aqa Najafi and contains Baha'u'llah's own summary of the history and teachings of his religion. The "Shaykh" addressed throughout the book is Najafi.

Aqa Najafi had fifteen children by three permanent and two temporary wives. Several of his children were of moderate prominence in clerical circles in Isfahan, as their descendants are still.

Najafi is variously said to have written forty or a hundred books. He published a number of them, but it is said that some of these were actually written by others.

His wealth is also a source of controversy. Though a clerical source speaks of his generosity, there seems little doubt that much of his wealth was ill-gotten. He cooperated with the governor to corner the market in wheat during a famine. On one occasion he had an official tortured and killed who had complained that Najafi had hoarded hundreds of tons of wheat while people starved. He threatened revenue officers to avoid paying taxes. The wealthy of Isfahan suspected that the Baha'is he attacked were chosen for the wealth that might be seized from them, and they feared him, even if they were not themselves Baha'is.

Aqa Najafi's character is a matter of disagreement. The clerical biographers generally praise him. "He was among the great scholars and clerics of Isfahan. . . He was almost without peer through the centuries in his political skill and ability to deal with the government." (Makarim) He has also been called a murderer, opportunist, hoarder, and plagiarist. He was hated in his day by the government, foreign diplomats, and missionaries, and feared above all others by the Baha'is. His fellow clergy admired him, then and now, as a zealous defender of their faith.

He died 11 Sha`ban
1332/5 July 1914 in Isfahan and was buried near the
Maydan-i-Shah in Isfahan.

Sources: EIr "Aqa
Najafi." Makarim 1662-67. A`yanu'sh-Shi`ih 9:196.
BBR 280-88, 363, 376-85, 395-96, 426-36, 514. EBB
38, 132-33, 151-53, 259. Momen, Sh`i 133, 140-41.
Algar, Religion 16, 102, 128, 173, 180-81, 209, 212,
220, 231-32. Ishr. 40. DM/IK1:46, 110.

Sultan-Mas`ud Mirza Zillu's-Sultan

Born on 5 Jan. 1850, Sultan-Mas`ud
Mirza Zillu's-Sultan

was the eldest surviving son
of Nasiri'd-Din Shah and long-time governor
of Isfahan. An important political figure in late
Qajar Iran, he is important in Baha'i history for his
role in the persecutions of Baha'is in the Isfahan
area. Though Zillu's-Sultan was the eldest of Nasiri'd-Din
Shah's sons to survive to adulthood, he was
passed over for the throne because his mother, `Iffatu's-Saltanih,

was a temporary wife and not of noble blood, so the next son, Muzaffaru'd-Din Mirza, was designated heir-apparent. His original title was Yaminu'd-Dawlih, but in 1869 he received the title Zillu's-Sultan, "shadow of the king."

He became governor of Mazandaran at age 11 and of Fars at 13. In 1874 he became governor of Isfahan. He ruled sternly, suppressed disorders, and paid taxes promptly to the central government. With these commendations, additional provinces were added to his government until by 1882 he governed about 40% of Iran, including such important areas as Yazd, Fars with its capital of Shiraz, and Kirmanshah. In addition, he built up an efficient provincial army containing 21,000 men, 6,000 horse, and ten batteries of artillery--a force that by Iranian standards was large, well-armed, and well-trained. He ruled regally in Isfahan, flattering English diplomats who supposed him to be enlightened and pro-British.

This situation abruptly ended in 1888. Nasiri'd-Din Shah, suspecting that Zillu's-Sultan planned to contest the throne with his gentler brother on his father's death, detained him while he was visiting Tehran and announced that Zillu's-Sultan had "resigned" all his offices except the governorship of Isfahan. His deputy-governors in the cities and provinces formerly under his rule were dismissed and the fine army disbanded. Zillu's-Sultan eventually returned to Isfahan, an embittered and much weakened man.

He remained governor of Isfahan for twenty more years. These years were dominated by a long struggle for control of Isfahan with the powerful and unscrupulous mujtahid Aqa Najafi. After the assassination of Nasiri'd-Din Shah, having lost his own power and without the support he had once hoped for from the English, he yielded to his younger brother's accession to the throne. He was finally dismissed from his governorship after the Constitutional Revolution and exiled to Europe. He was allowed to return during World War I and died not long after his return in Isfahan on 2 July 1918.

Zillu's-Sultan's relations with the Baha'is were complex and ambiguous. On his first arrival as governor in Isfahan, he was greeted

with a persecution of Baha'is instigated by Shaykh Muhammad-Baqir. He sought to prevent the news from reaching Tehran. In 1879 he consented to the arrest of the Nahri brothers, the "King' and "Beloved of Martyrs." It seems likely that his interest in the matter was the innocent extortion scarcely distinguishable from tax collection and that he did not particularly want them killed. Nonetheless, confronted on the one hand with the obstinate refusal of the two brothers to recant and on the other by a mob led by sixty clerics, he consented to their deaths. In this he disobeyed his orders from the Shah to send them to Tehran. After their deaths, he took such a large share of their plundered wealth that the Imam-Jum`ih, cheated in the transaction, raised another riot in protest.

In the various persecutions that took place in Isfahan and its vicinity through the rest of his governorship, Zillu's-Sultan generally played a passive role, pleading his inability to confront the clergy, especially the formidable Aqa Najafi. When possible he discouraged the pogroms but rarely took active measures to stop them. Zillu's-Sultan was not himself actively hostile to the Baha'is and in any case hated the clergy. It is said that Zillu's-Sultan did instigate the persecution of the Baha'is of Yazd in 1891 to divert attention from himself after he had been indirectly implicated in a plot against the Shah.

On at least one occasion Zillu's-Sultan attempted to enlist the Baha'is in his schemes to gain the throne for himself. He sent a messenger to Baha'u'llah, Haji Muhammad-`Aliy-i-Sayyah-i-Mahallati. Baha'u'llah rejected this overture politely but firmly and later remarked to his companions that had he sent Zillu's-Sultan's letter to Nasiri'd-Din Shah, it would surely have resulted in the prince's death.

In the fall of 1911 Zillu's-Sultan approached `Abdu'l-Baha in Paris, hoping for his help in securing his return to Iran and reacquiring certain properties of his that had come into the hands of Baha'is. `Abdu'l-Baha said that Zillu's-Sultan would return to Iran and that the property in question would be given to him without payment. Discovering that one of `Abdu'l-Baha's attendants was a son of one of the brothers he had put to death thirty years before, he muttered excuses. `Abdu'l-Baha said that he knew the

part Zillu's-Sultan had played and what his motive had been.

Zillu's-Sultan married Hamdamu'l-Muluk, the daughter of Nasiri'd-Din Shah's sister and Mirza Taqi Khan, the former prime minister. His son Jalalu'd-Dawlih was governor of Yazd and played a large part in the persecutions of the Baha'is there.

Zillu's-Sultan tried to portray himself to foreigners as a progressive and pro-British reformer. The astute Curzon, however, saw him as driven by the single ambition to supplant his brother as heir apparent and believed that he had also made overtures to the Russians. In fact, although he was a vigorous and in many ways capable ruler, there was much less to him than his English admirers saw. His rule was marred by cruelties: persecutions of Baha'is, the treacherous killing of a Bakhtiyari leader, and persecutions of Jews and others, mostly instigated by the clergy but tolerated by the prince. Foreigners were appalled by the damage he inflicted to some of the great monuments of Isfahan, though in this he cannot be said to have been better or worse than his contemporaries.

His relations with the Baha'is were consistently duplicitous. He was willing to present himself as sympathetic to the Baha'is and even to solicit their aid, but he abandoned them when it suited his political purposes.

Sources: Curzon 1:416-21 and passim. Browne, Year 114-15. BBR 268-90, 301-5, 376-85 passim, 524. EBB 33-44, 79-80. Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 409-10, 431-34. AB 161-62. CH 186-87. Makarim 1814-15.

Khomeini

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini--properly Imam Ayatu'llah Ruhu'llah al-Musavi al-Kumayni, the leader of the Iranian revolution of 1979, was bitterly hostile to the Baha'is and sanctioned the persecutions that took place under the Islamic revolutionary government of Iran.

Life. Khomeini was born in about 1900 in the impoverished oasis town of Khumayn, south of Tehran. His grandfather, a member of a Persian family living in Kashmir, had

studied in Karbila and settled in Khumayn at the invitation of a local chief around 1840. While Khomeini was still an infant, his father was killed in a dispute with a local landlord, leaving Khomeini to be raised by a somewhat more prosperous uncle. His uncle and aunt wished him to become a traditional physician (hakim), but he showed talent for Islamic learning. World War I having made travel to the Shi'i centers in Iraq impractical, he chose to study in the nearby town of Arak, eventually becoming a favored student of Shaykh `Abdu'l-Karim Ha'iri Yazdi (1859-1937).

Khomeini followed his teacher to Qum in 1922, where the latter led the revival of the town as a center of Shi'i learning and became its chief religious authority. By the end of the 1930s Khomeini had begun teaching the slightly unorthodox disciplines of mysticism and philosophy. In 1930 he married Batul Saqafi, the daughter of a prominent cleric of Tehran, whom he adored and by whom he had five children. By 1937-38 he was prosperous enough to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca and spend several months in the shrine cities of Iraq.

During these years Khomeini had been so angered by the secular and anti-clerical policies of Rida Shah Pahlavi that in 1944 he published a vitriolic anti-government pamphlet called *Kashfu'l-Asrar*, a work that foreshadows his later ideas on Islamic government. He was also influenced by the antisemitic propaganda of the Nazis, which left him with an abiding belief in a Jewish conspiracy against Islam.

When Ayatu'llah Burujirdi (1875-1962) came to Qum at the beginning of 1945, Khomeini became a close advisor, carrying out religious and political missions on Burujirdi's behalf that helped secure the latter's position as chief religious authority of the Shi'i world. Burujirdi firmly discouraged Khomeini's involvement in anti-government politics and terrorism.

During the 1950s Khomeini turned his attention to the problem of becoming a Grand Ayatu'llah--marja`u't-taqlid, a supreme authority on religious matters. He wrote a number of books, thus establishing his scholarly credentials. His increasing

personal wealth allowed him to gather a large circle of students. After about 1958 his position as an Ayatu'llah of the second rank was secure. Nevertheless, his prospects were limited by the presence of a number of more senior Ayatu'llahs, all of whom he was not likely to outlive. Moreover, his interests lay in philosophy, mysticism, and even poetry--not the jurisprudence that was the chief interest of his class. Even three decades later an air of doubt still attached to his claim to be a Grand Ayatu'llah.

In 1962 and 1963 the government introduced a number of reforms: large-scale land reforms, women's suffrage, and the elimination of religious tests for local offices. The first struck at the independence of the religious institutions, which were dependent on their large endowments of rental farmland, while the latter two were seen by the clergy as anti-Islamic. Large demonstrations took place throughout the country. Khomeini took a leading role in agitating against the measures, speaking against the Shah in bold and abusive language. The protests reached their height in 1963 at `Ashura, the anniversary of the martyrdom of Husayn, which fell that year at the beginning of June. By the time troops had restored order, hundreds were dead. Khomeini, along with other clerical leaders of the protests, was arrested and brought to Tehran where he was held for ten months before being released in April 1964. His preaching remained defiant. That November he was arrested again for his opposition to a bill removing American military personnel from the jurisdiction of the Iranian courts. He was exiled to Turkey. The following year he settled in Najaf, the chief Shi`i scholarly center of Iraq, where he lived until 1978.

Thought and writings.

Khomeini's chief intellectual importance is for his theory of Islamic government, a subject on which he held very different views from the majority of modern Shi`i clerics. Traditionally, Shi`is accepted the separation of church and state in the absence of the Hidden Imam. Khomeini argued that many of the fundamental laws of Islam presumed the existence of an Islamic government. Also, people are weak and, for the most part, will fall into sin without the influence of a government to enforce religious law. In our time Islamic states had fallen into the hands of those who

served the purposes of non-Muslim imperialists. Khomeini painted a stark picture of the division of society into a tiny minority of rich and corrupt oppressors exploiting the mass of oppressed Muslims. The solution was to establish true Islamic governments. The proper leaders for such governments were the Islamic clergy because of their knowledge of divine law and their commitment to justice. This last is the famous doctrine of the "guardianship of the jurisconsult" (vilayat-i-faqih). Khomeini presented this message in books, pamphlets, and fiery sermons smuggled into Iran on cassettes.

Though Khomeini's scholarly output was much less than that of other Grand Ayatu'llahs, he did write a number of books. These were:

Tahriru'l-Vasilah and Tawdihu'l-Masa'il, manuals on ritual obligations of the sort conventionally written by Grand Ayatu'llahs.

Kitabu'l-Bay`, a treatise on the law of contracts that provided a vehicle for his denial of the legitimacy of the secular state.

Islamic Government (Hukumat-i-Islami), a compilation of his lectures on government, his most influential work.

Misbahu'l-Hidayat, on mystical philosophy.

To this must now be added his Last Will and Testament, written in 1983 and constituting his political testament.

There are also a number of collections of speeches, letters, and the like.

Khomeini and the Iranian Revolution. While in Najaf he developed his theory of Islamic government and built up a loose revolutionary network within Iran. Eventually his uncompromising opposition to the Shah's regime won him support from other anti-government groups, who hoped to use him for their own purposes. Early in 1978 riots broke out in major Iranian cities, resulting in many deaths. Riots continued through the summer and fall, encouraged by Khomeini's network of supporters. Expelled from Iraq in October, Khomeini settled in Paris, by now the recognized leader of the revolution. After the Shah's departure from Iran, Khomeini returned

to Iran in triumph on 31 January and within days was the unquestioned ruler of the country though he himself held no government post.

Khomeini moved quickly to consolidate his Islamic regime by executing many leaders of the old government. By consistently supporting the most radical elements of the revolution, he was able to maintain his own position and eliminate other elements of the revolutionary coalition, such as Marxists, secular nationalists, and even rival Ayatu'llahs. Though various political groups coalesced out of the clerical coalition that had brought him to power, Khomeini retained supreme control, able to frustrate policies that he objected to. Under his authority Iran pursued a xenophobic foreign policy, resulting in disasters such as American hostage crisis, the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, and the American economic blockade.

Since Khomeini's program was primarily religious and moral, devoted to the moral and spiritual reform of Islamic society, he had few concrete economic and political programs, apart from a generalized hostility towards the West.

In the last years of his life, he was rumored to be ill. In any case, he played little role in day-to-day affairs, living in seclusion in a heavily fortified village near Tehran. Nonetheless, he retained the capacity to intervene in affairs if he chose, as his condemnation of the British author Salman Rushdie in 1989 proved. He died of complications following surgery on 4 June 1989 in Tehran.

Khomeini and the Baha'is.

Khomeini shared the distaste of many (though not all) Shi'i clerics for Baha'is. His first contact with Baha'is was evidently in Simnan in 1930, where he tried to organize an anti-Baha'i meeting. Later his hatred for Baha'is, Jews, and the Pahlavi regime coalesced, convincing him that the three groups were in league to destroy Islam. Thus Khomeini supported the anti-Baha'i pogroms of the 1950s and in 1963 accused the government of using local government reforms as a device to favor the Baha'is.

After his return to Iran in 1979 Khomeini refused to include Baha'is among the religious minorities protected by the Islamic regime.

There can be little doubt that the persecutions of the Baha'is in Iran under the Islamic regime were conducted with the consent of Khomeini, though they were generally initiated by particular groups within the revolutionary coalition and carried out by lower-level officials.

Sources: Almost every book published about the Iranian Revolution deals with Khomeini at length. An imperfect and generally hostile biography is Amir Taheri, *The Spirit of Allah* (Bethesda: Adler ` Adler, 1986). A study of the development of his intellectual views is found in Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent* (New York: NYU Press, 1993), ch. 8 and passim. Khomeini's works have been zealously published in Iran since the revolution though some post hoc editing has taken place. A representative sample by a good scholar is *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981). There are many translations of varying quality produced by or on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Miscellaneous
historical and doctrinal topics

Seven Proofs

The Persian. *Dala'il-i-Sab`ih* is a major polemical work of the Bab in which he justifies his religion and his claims to prophethood to an unidentified and evidently sceptical inquirer who is said to have written and asked for proofs of the Bab's mission. There are actually two works with this title, a longer version in Persian and a shorter version in Arabic. The Persian text mentions that it being written in Maku and that four years of the revelation had elapsed, that is in late 1847 or early 1848. The individual for whom the work was written is not known, but the text mentions that he was a student of Siyyid Kazim and had met Mulla Husayn and the content indicates that he was not a confirmed believer. Azal claimed that the recipient was the Bab's secretary, Siyyid Husayn Yazdi, and Fadil-i-Mazandarani believed that the recipient was Mulla Muhammad-Taqi Harawi, a Shaykhi who was converted by Mulla Husayn in Isfahan but who later abandoned the religion and wrote a refutation of the Bab (Brown, *Catalogue and Description*, p. 448; AAK 4:109). Since the former remained a firm Babi and the latter is referred to as a third person

in the text, the matter is still unsettled (the preceding is based on MacEoin, Sources, pp. 86Ð87).

The Seven Proofs seems to have been popular among the Babis; after the death of the Bab Mirza Ahmad Katib was able to earn a modest living copying it and the Persian Bayan for the Babis (DB 592), and at least thirteen manuscripts of the Persian text and three of the Arabic text exist in the hands of various Babi and Baha'i scribes.

The doctrines of the Seven Proofs closely resemble those of the Bayan, which was written about the same time. The chief theme of the work is the standard by which the Bab's claim to prophethood is to be evaluated. He argues that according to the Qur'an, a prophet is to be judged by his verses (ayat), a word that Muslims interpreted as meaning both "writings" and "evidentiary signs." Taking for granted that his own writings were comparable to the Qur'an, he argued that only God can reveal scripture and that the greatest miracle of Muhammad was that no one until the Bab had been able to compose anything comparable to the Qur'an. The verses of God must be greater than the miracles of the prophets of old, since the Qur'an, the only evidentiary miracle of Muhammad, abrogated their religions. Finally, whereas it took Muhammad twenty-three years to reveal the Qur'an, the Bab, who composed his works with extreme rapidity, had revealed works of comparable size in two days and nights, despite his not having had a conventional theological education.

The Bab, arguing against the usual Muslim reluctance to accept the possibility of revelation after Muhammad, points out that the Muslim belief that Islam abrogated Judaism and Christianity implies the obligation to accept other prophets if they come with inimitable revealed writings. This obligation applies to the Babis as well, who were counselled to accept Him Whom God shall make manifest, the messiah of the Babis, whom Baha'is identify with Baha'u'llah.

The Persian Seven Proofs contains a number of passages of historical importance, the most important being the Bab's explanation of the gradual revelation of his station.

Sources: An edition

has been published by the Azalis in Iran; Abu'l-Fadl Bayda'i, ed., *Dala'il-i-Sab'ih* (Tehran: Ism-i-A`zam, n.d.). Known MSS are listed in MacEoin, Sources, p. 185. I have used Cambridge Browne F.25 in the preparation of this article. I have not seen the Arabic version. A full French translation is A. L. M. Nicolas, *Le Livre des Sept Preuves* (Paris, 1902). English selections are found in SWB ???. See also AAK 4:108D15; Amanat, Resurrection 161, 193D94, 199, 375, 384; BBR 37, 39; MH 2:496; QI 202, 206, 1645D52; God Passes By, 26; Muhadarat 837-39.

Suratu'l-Haykal

The "Tablet of the Temple" is a major Arabic tablet of Baha'u'llah containing a mystical interpretation of the body (haykal) of the Manifestation of God. Surah, the term used for chapters of the Qur'an, is used for many of Baha'u'llah's Arabic writings, especially those written in the style of the Qur'an. Haykal is a loan word in Arabic. Its Hebrew cognate *h?kal* means "temple," particularly the Jerusalem temple. In Arabic, in addition to meaning a Jewish or Christian temple, it meant the body or form of something, particularly the human body, or something large. In the Bab's usage, a haykal is a talisman, particularly one in the form of a five-pointed star, which in many traditions represents the human body. In the Suratu'l-Haykal, the primary sense of haykal is the human body, particularly the body of the manifestation of God, but the meaning "temple" is also present.

Another tablet of Baha'u'llah states that the Suratu'l-Haykal was first written in Edirne but was revised in `Akka, probably in 1869 (UHJ memo). Thus it contains no obvious allusions to Baha'u'llah's exile to `Akka. The numerous passages criticizing the Azali Babis confirm its dating to the late Edirne or early `Akka periods. The existence of two editions probably explains the numerous variations between the two published texts. It was not written for a particular individual; when asked about the matter Baha'u'llah said that he himself was both the addresser and addressee (*Asraru'l-Athar*, 5:277).

It was one of the earliest works of Baha'u'llah to be translated into English. However, the translation was poor and its recondite

mystical symbolism was difficult for Western Baha'is to comprehend. The translation went out of circulation and the tablet is today little known to Western Baha'is apart from some passages translated by Baha'u'llah.

Contents: The Suratu'l-Haykal

begins with an invocation and a prayer in which Baha'u'llah praises God as the author of revelation and thanks Him for the affliction he has undergone for His sake. He describes how in his greatest affliction, the Maiden (huriyah) appeared to him calling joyfully, "This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not." She then addresses the Babis who had not accepted Baha'u'llah, warning them that God would raise up another people in their place if they did not aid Baha'u'llah. The Babis, she says, are the blindest of people, since they deny the like of that by which they prove the truth of their own religion—presumably a reference to Baha'u'llah's claim that his own writings too are divinely inspired. She calls on "this temple" to arise since all contingent beings are resurrected by him. She addresses the eye, the ear, and the tongue of Baha'u'llah, calling on his eye, for example, to look only at the beauty of God, not at the heavens or the earth.

Baha'u'llah replies to the maiden, telling her how Azal, the brother whom he had raised, had tried to kill him. He tells her that when this act became known, Azal had written to the Babis saying that Baha'u'llah had tried to kill him. (The context suggests that Baha'u'llah's discovery of Azal's plot was the occasion of writing this table, but it is not certain.)

Baha'u'llah now moves to the central theme of the tablet, the exposition of the metaphysical significance of the haykal. The four Arabic letters of the word are each associated with an attribute of God whose Arabic name contains that letter and with an aspect of God's relation with the universe:

ha': huwiyih (essence):
God's will

ya: qadir (power, which
is spelled QDYR in Arabic): God's sovereignty

kaf: karam (generosity):

God's bounteousness

lam: fadl (grace):

God's grace

Elsewhere in the tablet he meditates on the spiritual significance of various parts of the body of the manifestation: the hem of his robe, which purifies by its touch; the foot, created from the steel of might to be steadfast in the path of God; his breast, which reflects the lights of God upon all things; and the heart, the repository of all knowledge and from which new and wondrous sciences will come forth. Baha'u'llah is told that his temple has been made the fountainhead of each of God's names and attributes. He has thus been given the power to recreate all things, bringing forth suns from motes of dust. He is called the "Self of God," for the saying "there is no God but I" applies to Baha'u'llah.

The tablet returns often to the theme of the disbelief of the Babis, criticizing Babi leaders for priding themselves on such titles as "mirror" and "letter," though it is Baha'u'llah who is the creator of the letters and mirrors. God's acceptance of their pious deeds is, he warns, dependent on their belief. He warns that their unbelief will lead the mass of believers astray. He criticizes those who accepted the new faith but came to him with questions about the Shi`ite Imams and Babs, in the end losing their faith. These, he warns, are like the Jewish leaders with Jesus. Finally, he insists that it was he who was prophesied by the Bab in his writings. He calls himself the Primal Point, a title of the Bab, thus identifying himself with the Bab.

The Suratu'l-Haykal defies easy summary, for it is a dense tapestry of mystical imagery drawn from esoteric Shi`ism, the Qur'an, the writings of the Bab, and even the Bible.

Relation to other texts.

At Baha'u'llah's orders, the Suratu'l-Haykal was written as one point of a five-pointed star, with the tablets to the kings forming the other points. To judge by the first publication of this tablet, these other tables were those addressed to the Pope, Napoleon III, the Czar of Russia, Queen Victoria, and the Shah of Iran. Of this combined tablet he says, "Thus have We built

the Temple with the hands of power and might, could ye but know it. This is the Temple promised unto you in the Book. . . " (PDC 47), evidently an allusion to Rev. 21:22-23, which in earlier Arabic translations of the Bible evidently said, "the glory of God [baha'u'llah] is its light," a passage quoted by Baha'u'llah elsewhere. Shoghi Effendi identifies an allusion to "the temple of the Lord" that will be built by "the man whose name is the Branch" foretold in Zachariah 6:12-13 (God Passes By, 213). In addition to the Bible there is the famous tradition of Kumayl, a well-known mystical tradition of Shi'ism, which identifies one of the five stages of reality as "a light that shines from the morn of eternity and illumines the temples of unity (hayakilu't-tawhid). Shi'ite commentators identify the "temples of unity" as the prophets and imams. Elsewhere the Imam Husayn is called "the temple of revelation" (haykalu'l-wahy wa't-tanzil; `Abbas Qummi, Muntaha'l-Amal, Tehran, 1371/1951, p. 286).

Sources. The text

has been published at least three times: AQA 1:2-49; Kitab-i-Mubin, Tehran, 120 B.E./1963, pp. 2-38; and AQA 4:268-300. The early English translation made by Anton Haddad is Surat'ul-Hykl: Sura of the Temple (Chicago: Behais Supply and Publishing Board, 1900. Short quotations are translated by Shoghi Effendi in PDC 47-48, WOB 109-110, 138-39, 169; God Passes By, 102, 212. See also RB 3:133-46. Research Department, Baha'i World Center, "Questions about the Suratu'l-Haykal," unpublished memo, 5 September 1993. Khazeh Fananapazir, personal communication.

Lawh-i-Aqdas

The "Most Holy Tablet"

is an Arabic letter addressed to a Baha'i, apparently of Christian background. He may have been Faris Effendi, the Syrian Christian converted by Nabil-i-Zarandi while they were jailed together in Alexandria in 1868. It was written in `Akka, but the exact date is unknown. Its Arabic uses many Christian terms and quotations from the New Testament. The title--properly al-Lawhu'l-Aqdas--is given by Baha'u'llah Himself in the heading of the tablet. It is sometimes referred to as the "Tablet" or "Message to the Christians." It is to be classed with the tablets to the kings and rulers revealed in

the Edirne and early `Akka periods.

After the initial salutation addressed to the unnamed Christian Baha'i, the bulk of the tablet is addressed to the Christian community as a whole--the "followers of the Son," the priests, the bishops, and the monks.

Baha'u'llah begins by asking the Christians why they failed to recognize him as the return of Christ. He points to the Pharisees who had lived in expectation of the Messiah and had known the prophecies of the Old Testament yet had rejected Christ. The monks who fail to recognize Baha'u'llah are like these.

Baha'u'llah then eloquently announces his own claim to be the return of Christ, "come down from heaven, even as he came down from it the first time." This announcement is expressed in the prophetic language of the Bible and the Qur'an with allusions to the Kingdom of Heaven, the River Jordan, Sinai, the Father, the Hour, and the Face of God. He chides the Christians for not heeding the voice of the Bab, "the Crier. . . in the wilderness"--words that the New Testament applies to John the Baptist.

He calls the priests to leave their churches and their bells and not to be veiled by the name of Christ, for Baha'u'llah has glorified Christ. Now they should summon the people to the Most Great Name of Baha'u'llah. They should ponder the fact that although the light of his revelation appeared in the East, its effects were manifested in the West--perhaps an allusion to the extraordinary technical progress of Europe in the nineteenth century. As for the bishops, he says that they are the stars whose fall had been prophesied by Christ Himself. He promises the monks that if they follow him, he will make them his heirs, though if they fail to do so, he will endure this with patience. The tablet now becomes a dialogue between Baha'u'llah and Bethlehem and Sinai, in which these two holy places of Christianity and Judaism bear witness to Baha'u'llah's station.

Baha'u'llah addresses the recipient of the letter again, praising him for recognizing his Lord. The Muslims had persecuted Baha'u'llah without just cause, but such people are like the dead. He

should not be disturbed by what they say and should remain steadfast.

Baha'u'llah asks the recipient to greet on his behalf another Baha'i, whom he praises with wordplay on the man's name, Murad, which means "desired."

The tablet closes with a set of beatitudes proclaiming the blessedness of those who have recognized Baha'u'llah and his station.

Sources: The Lawh-i-Aqdas was first published in Kitab-i-Mubin, a collection of Baha'u'llah's writings published in Bombay in 18__ [and reprinted as AQA 1????] Shoghi Effendi translated several passages in PDC, along with similar passages addressed to the Christian priests. These are incorporated in the full translation found in TB.

The Arabic text is found in AQA 1:___ and TB/P, ch. 2. The full English text is in TB, ch. 2. Extracts translated by Shoghi Effendi are in PDC 42, 105-7, 110. Eric Bowes, "Baha'u'llah's Message to the Christians" (n.p.: Baha'i Publications Australia, 1986) is a brief commentary addressed to a Christian audience. It includes the full English translation. Information on the Lawh-i-Aqdas is found in Ganj-i-Shaygan 164-68, DM/IK 13:2011-14, and RB 4:227-35. Information on Faris Effendi, the probable recipient, is found in the sources mentioned and in RB 3:5-11 and Baha'u'llah, King of Glory, 267-68.

Philosophy

Philosophy (falsafah, from Gr. philosophia, "love of wisdom"; hikmat, lit. "wisdom.") is the investigation of the underlying principles of reality and knowledge by rational means. Philosophy is distinguished from religion by its reliance on rational investigation rather than revelation. Traditionally, the natural sciences were considered part of philosophy, but modern thought now confines philosophy to those subjects that cannot be investigated by empirical experiment.

The history of philosophy is complex, and it is not possible to explain here even the various conceptions of the meaning and content of philosophy. Moreover, little research has been

done into the philosophical aspects and antecedents of Baha'i thought, and almost nothing has been done to integrate the ideas of the Baha'i writings with modern philosophy. Therefore, this article will mainly discuss philosophy as part of the historical background of Baha'i thought and the references to philosophy in the Baha'i writings.

Islamic philosophy as background
to Baha'i thought

History of Islamic philosophy. Philosophy reached the Islamic world in the eighth century through the translation of a large number of Greek philosophic, scientific, and medical works. The Greek philosophical corpus in Arabic eventually included most of the works of Aristotle, extracts or summaries of the works of Plato, and various treatises and commentaries of later Hellenistic philosophers. By the ninth century there was an indigenous school of Islamic philosophy, the most important representatives of which were al-Kindi (9th cent.), al-Farabi (d. 950), and Ibn-Sina (980-1037), known in the West as Avicenna. These early Islamic philosophers expounded a system in which Aristotle's logic, physics, psychology, and ontology were combined with a neoplatonic metaphysics of emanation. Though later philosophers made many modifications, this system remains the basis of the Islamic tradition of philosophy up to the present. Thus, the reader should be aware that 'philosophy' in Islam refers primarily to the Greek tradition of philosophy, although some strains of Islamic mystical theology came to be included in the philosophical curriculum. Other kinds of Islamic thought, notably dogmatic theology, might also be included as 'Islamic philosophy', but following tradition they are not discussed here.

Philosophy, however, never completely overcame opposition from Islamic theologians and jurists who held that certain doctrines of philosophical metaphysics were contrary to Islam. As a result, many of the distinctive features of Islamic philosophy resulted from the philosophers' attempts to reconcile Greek philosophy with revealed religion and specifically Islam. Al-Farabi, the first great Islamic philosopher, taught that the doctrines of prophetic religion--particularly concepts such as heaven and hell that were most disputed between philosophers and theologians--were expressions

of philosophical truths in language suitable for the masses of people incapable of grasping literal philosophic truth. Since both philosophers of the Platonic tradition and Muslim scholars considered religions to be primarily legal systems, religion thus became a branch of political philosophy. Philosophy and religion expressed the same truths on different levels. Al-Farabi's approach was carried on by Spanish Arab philosophers such as Ibn-Rushd (Averroes 1126-1198) and greatly influenced both Jewish and Christian philosophy in the Middle Ages. In Islam, however, this approach to reconciling religion and philosophy died out after Averroes.

In the eastern lands of Islam Ibn-Sina was more influential. In contrast to al-Farabi, who like Plato made political philosophy central to his system, Ibn-Sina mainly confined himself to abstract issues and began to explore the philosophical implications of mysticism. As-Suhrawardi (1154-91) systematically integrated mysticism and philosophy, producing a system reinterpreting Ibn-Sina's system on the basis of the concept of divine light.

The great mystical theologian Ibn-`Arabi (1165-1240) produced a wonderfully complex system of mystical theology that came to be called "the Unity of Being" (wahdatu'l-vujud). In his system all the creatures of the universe are the self-manifestations of God. His works encompassed all the lore of Islamic thought and mysticism and burst on the Islamic world like a bombshell. Even for thinkers bitterly opposed to him, his system was immensely influential.

Islamic philosophy reached its greatest heights in seventeenth century Iran in the so-called "School of Isfahan," whose greatest representative was Mulla Sadra. In Sadra's system the rationalism of Ibn-Sina and the mysticism of as-Suhrawardi and Ibn-`Arabi were combined. Although philosophy was still a matter of suspicion to most Islamic clerics, a continuous tradition of philosophy has survived carried on by Shi`i clergy from Mulla Sadra and the School of Isfahan down to the present.

The Shaykhis were the most recent distinctive school to arise in Islamic philosophy. Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, a Shi`i Arab from eastern Arabia, propounded an elaborate system in which an extreme reverence for

the imams was combined with a philosophical system owing much to Mulla Sadra. His most distinctive contribution was the elaboration of an older idea in which a world of immaterial images intermediate between the physical world and the world of pure spirit served as the locale for heaven, hell, and the miraculous events of the last judgment. Like many Islamic philosophers before him, Shaykh Ahmad was bitterly attacked by orthodox clergy. After the death of his successor, Siyyid Kazim-i-Rashti, a large number of his followers became Babis. The remaining Shaykhis broke into several factions and emphasized the Shi`i orthodoxy of their views, modifying or concealing their most distinctive doctrines.

The philosophical tradition deriving from Ibn-Sina and Mulla Sadra has continued in the theological seminaries of Iran up to the present. Although it has never ceased to attract the suspicions of some of the clergy, in recent decades it has attracted considerable interest and respect in the West. A number of prominent figures in the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran were philosophers of this tradition, including Khomeini himself.

Doctrines of Islamic philosophy.

Though naturally there is immense variation in the views and approaches of Islamic philosophers over the last twelve centuries, some useful generalizations can be made. Islamic philosophy is based for the most part on the works of Aristotle, which Islamic philosophers understood as a systematic treatment of philosophy and science. Where appropriate works of Aristotle were not available, other classical works filled the gap, notably the substitution of Platonic works of political philosophy for the untranslated Politics of Aristotle and the addition of a late textbook of Neoplatonic metaphysics, misattributed in translation under the title of The Theology of Aristotle.

After al-Farabi's abortive attempt to organize philosophy on the basis of Platonic political philosophy, almost every Islamic philosopher organized his works on the basis of some variation of a systematic division of the sciences worked out by Ibn-Sina:

Theoretical

Logic

Mathematics

Physics (Natural Science)

Metaphysics

First Philosophy (ontology)

Theology

Practical

Ethics

Economics (Household Management)

Politics

While logic, the sciences, and even ethics eventually were accepted as useful tools even in Islamic jurisprudence, metaphysical doctrines came into direct conflict with Islamic dogmatic theology. While there are innumerable variations, Islamic philosophers generally shared a view of the universe something like the following:

God is that one being whose existence is necessary in itself. God in His essence is absolutely one and simple. Since an absolutely simple cause cannot be the direct cause of the complexity of the world, God in His simplicity cannot be the direct cause of all the particulars of the world, so that the tradition Judeo-Christian-Islamic account of God created the world by simple fiat cannot be accepted. Instead, God creates directly one other being--an immaterial intellect or mind variously known as the primal intellect, the primal will, the first angel, and the proximate light. This immaterial intellect creates another, which in turn creates another of still lower rank. The Islamic philosophers accepted the Ptolemaic astronomy, in which the earth was at the center of a set of concentric spheres, each associated with a planet and each moved by an immaterial intellect. It is the very complex interrelationships among the planets and their motions that account for the complexities of the sublunar world in which we live. The world itself is eternal, without beginning or end in time.

This metaphysical system came into conflict with Islamic theology and its representatives on several grounds. First was the question of authority. The philosophers claimed to derive doctrines about

God, the universe, and the soul from pure reason. Islamic philosophers worked prophecy into their systems and were for the most part sincere Muslims, but it was clear that prophecy was subordinate to philosophy. Second, there were several fundamental philosophical doctrines that directly conflicted with the usual interpretation of Islam: God did not create the universe from nothing at a particular moment of time. It was difficult to explain how God could know particulars or how His providence could care for the individual person. The night-journey of Muhammad, heaven and hell, and the last judgment could not be taken literally. Philosophers were accused of denying the immortality of the individual soul.

Earlier Islamic philosophers had attempted to defuse these criticisms, explaining prophecy and its symbolic elements by subsuming prophecy under political philosophy and explaining the contradictions between philosophy and religion in terms of the rhetorical difficulties of conveying philosophical truths to ordinary people. Later Islamic philosophy drew on mysticism and theories about the imagination to solve such difficulties. As it had in later Greek philosophy, philosophy became an ethical and mystical pursuit for the individual, not simply a subject of intellectual investigation. Thus, philosophical investigation was to some extent protected by the prestige of mysticism. In addition, new attempts were made explain religion in terms of philosophy. The most interesting was the doctrine of the World of Image. In the material world an image is normally a form subsisting in matter. The divine world of the intellects had no images, only pure intellect. The later philosophers, following Ibn-`Arabi--posited a world in which images could exist without matter. This explained a whole range of phenomena ranging from the images in mirrors, imagination, and dreams to the visions of mystics, heaven and hell, and the last judgment. The Shaykhis developed this idea to its highest degree, arguing that men lived both in this world and several levels of the world of image. The material body, for example, dies in this world but the image body in the world of image is resurrected as promised in the Qur'an.

The Bab and philosophy

The Bab in the Bayan prohibited the study of philosophy (qawa`id-i-hikmiya),

along with logic, religious law and legal theory, philology, and grammar, except insofar as these disciplines might be necessary for reading his works. He did allow the study of dogmatic theology (‘ilm-i-kalam).

The volume of his writings and the fact that he Himself was devoid of these sciences made their study unnecessary (Persian Bayan 4:10). Though the Bab condemned the study of abstract sciences, many of his most influential followers were drawn from the Shaykhis

and may be presumed to have had philosophical training and interests. However, in the few disturbed years before the suppression of the Babis, it is not likely that any of them had much time for philosophical activity.

The Bab's writings show some trace of Shaykhi philosophy and certainly presuppose issues dealt with in Shaykhi and Islamic philosophy, but they do not deal directly with philosophical issues.

The relationship of the thought of the Bab and his followers to Islamic philosophy needs much more study.

Baha'u'llah and philosophy

Though Baha'u'llah

condemned "such sciences as begin in mere words and end in mere words," he did not renew the Bab's explicit condemnation of philosophy. He is not known to have made any particular study of philosophy, but his writings show an easy familiarity with the concepts and main issues of Islamic philosophy. Though none of his writings can be said to be philosophical in a technical sense, he often uses philosophical terminology and sometimes treats specifically philosophical questions. An example is the Tablet of Wisdom (or of philosophy: ‘Lah-i-Hikmat'), written in reply to questions about the eternity of the universe submitted by the prominent Baha'i philosopher Aqa Muhammad-i-Qa'ini, Nabil-i-Akbar. In this tablet Baha'u'llah answers this classical philosophical question, though in a way that indicates that much of the dispute about it derives from the limitations of men's minds.

He goes on to summarize the history of the ancient philosophers, citing the common Islamic belief that the Greek philosophers were in contact with the prophets of Israel as evidence that the deistic philosophers drew their fundamental inspiration from prophetic religion.

‘Abdu'l-Baha's Secret of Divine Civilization, written about the same time, also gives this account of the history of philosophy.

It should be noted that philosophers were one of the groups addressed in the Suriy-i-Muluk.

`Abdu'l-Baha and philosophy

`Abdu'l-Baha's writings also show familiarity with Islamic philosophy, in addition to those ideas of European philosophy and science that were becoming known in the Middle East. His earliest major work, the commentary on the famous Islamic tradition "I was a hidden treasure," is a philosophical and mystical refutation of Ibn-'Arabi's doctrine of the unity of being. The Secret of Divine Civilization touches many of the themes relating to philosophy that characterize `Abdu'l-Baha's later references to the subject: philosophy as a sign of civilization, that the fundamentals of philosophy derive from the prophets, the praise of the great ancient philosophers, and the comparison of the early believers in each religion to philosophers. These themes are expanded in `Abdu'l-Baha's talks in Europe and America, where he also criticizes modern materialistic philosophy, by which he means a naive faith in the universal applicability of the methods of physical science. This he distinguishes from the deistic philosophy of the ancients and of more reflective moderns.

In such works as Some Answered Questions, `Abdu'l-Baha frequently uses the concepts and arguments of Islamic philosophy when he discusses scientific, metaphysical, and theological topics. Often he cites the views of the ancient philosophers in confirmation of his own views. Among the philosophical subjects specifically addressed by `Abdu'l-Baha in his writings and talks are proofs for the existence of God, personal eschatology, epistemology, free will, the nature of religion and evil, and substantial motion. Insofar as they assume a philosophy, the writings of Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha employ the late Avicennan philosophy of illumination current in nineteenth century Iran. Whether this philosophy is integrally connected with the Baha'i teachings or whether it is a rhetorical device sometimes useful for conveying them remains to be answered.

Shoghi Effendi and philosophy

Shoghi Effendi, who was educated in Western schools and had studied political

economy and philosophy in college, showed little direct interest in philosophy in his writings. Though he permitted the study of philosophy, he generally encouraged Baha'is to pursue more practical interests at this time. He makes little reference to contemporary philosophical schools other than to reiterate `Abdu'l-Baha's criticism of "materialistic philosophers" and to comment that this sort of philosophy was an intellectual fad that would one day pass. His most specific comment on philosophy is his sharp criticism of the contemporary schools of Hegelian political philosophy, particularly Communism, nationalism, and fascism.

Current Baha'i law allowing the study of philosophy is based on several interpretations of Shoghi Effendi in which he distinguished between "fruitless excursions into metaphysical hairsplitting" and "a sound branch of learning like philosophy" (UD 445).

Philosophical writings
by Baha'is

Among the numerous clerics who became Baha'is during the lifetimes of the Bab and Baha'u'llah were a number of men trained in philosophy. In addition to the many former Shaykhis who may be presumed to have a greater or lesser training in philosophy, we may include Vahid, Siyyid Yahyay-i-Darabi, the Babi leader of Yazd and Nayriz. A number of prominent Baha'is of the time of Baha'u'llah were also trained as philosophers, the most notable being Aqa Muhammad-i-Qa'ini, known as Nabil-i-Akbar, and Mirza Abu'l-Fadl-i-Gulpaygani. Though both these men wrote on Baha'i subjects, not surprisingly they dealt mostly with theological subjects and the defense of their new religion.

It is interesting that the two greatest modern Iranian Baha'i scholars, Fadil-i-Mazandarani and `Abdu'l-Hamid Ishraq-Khavari, were both former `ulama trained in philosophy. Though both wrote mainly on historical and theological topics, Mazandarani's great compilation of Baha'i writings, *Amr va-Khalq*, shows his knowledge of philosophical issues.

Three other recent Baha'i authors have written specifically on philosophy. `Azizu'llah Sulaymani, better known for his Baha'i biographical

dictionary, prepared a textbook of traditional Islamic philosophy for the use of Baha'i students. This work, *Rashahat-i-Hikmat*, is intended to familiarize the students with traditional philosophy for use in understanding Baha'i scripture and for teaching their faith to those trained in this philosophy. It makes no attempt to integrate modern Western philosophy or science. Dr. `Ali-Murad Davudi was chairman of the philosophy department at Tehran University until his disappearance shortly after the Islamic Revolution. He wrote a number of works on the history of Greek and Islamic philosophy, in addition to articles on Baha'i philosophical and theological themes. Ruhi Afnan, a cousin of Shoghi Effendi expelled as a covenant-breaker, wrote several works on the history of philosophy and its interrelationship with religion. These include an ambitious attempt to correlate Babi and Baha'i thought with the rationalist philosophies of Descartes and Spinoza.

Only recently have Western Baha'is begun to write on philosophical themes. Some examples are listed among the sources mentioned below.

The Greek philosophers
and the Jews

Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha praise the "deistic" (ilahi, muta'allih) philosophers of the Greeks. In a famous tablet to the Swiss scientist A. H. Forel, `Abdu'l-Baha writes:

As to deistic philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, they are indeed worthy of esteem and of the highest praise, for they have rendered distinguished services to mankind. (BW 15:37.)

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), for example, is mentioned a number of times, usually favorably. Aristotle's works had been the primary influence on Islamic philosophy. Islamic philosophers defended Aristotle and the other pagan philosophers as sages of antiquity who through reason and mystical insight or through contact with the Hebrew prophets had attained knowledge of the unity of God. Various wise sayings were attributed to him. Baha'u'llah's reference to him in the Tablet of Wisdom (para. 47/TB 147) and many of `Abdu'l-Baha's references to him reflect

this view of Aristotle. `Abdu'l-Baha thus contrasts him with the modern materialist philosophers and scientists (PUP 327, 356-57/KAB 2:299, BW 15:37) and compares the continued fame of his learning with the oblivion of the empires of his day (PUP 348/KAB 2:268). On the other hand, his learning was limited compared to that of the Prophets and of God (PT 19, SAQ 5:para. 6/p. 15). `Abdu'l-Baha attributes a type of pantheism to him (SAQ 82: para. 2/p. 290).

There has been considerable confusion about Baha'u'llah's account of the Greek philosophers, as elaborated by `Abdu'l-Baha. In his Tablet of Wisdom, Baha'u'llah had praised Hippocrates, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Apollonius of Tyana, and Hermes Trismegistus. Empedocles, he said, had been a contemporary of David and Pythagoras a contemporary of Solomon. Thus, "the essence and fundamentals of philosophy have emanated from the Prophets" (TB 9, para. 26, pp. 145). Socrates is praised for having taught monotheism, an offence for which the ignorant put him to death.

With the circulation of Baha'i writings in the West further questions arose. Western Baha'is questioned why the chronology implicit in the Tablet of Wisdom differed from the Western histories. Forel had evidently written to question `Abdu'l-Baha's criticism of "materialist" philosophers. Other questions might have been asked had the Western Baha'is of `Abdu'l-Baha's time known more of classical history: why was Empedocles placed before Pythagoras? Why did Baha'u'llah seemingly accept the historicity of Hermes Trismegistus, given that Western scholars had known for three hundred years that the works attributed to him were spurious? Explaining that Baha'u'llah's "Tablet of Wisdom was written in accordance with certain histories of the East," `Abdu'l-Baha states that histories from the period before Alexander the Great had many discrepancies and that such discrepancies were to be found even in the various versions of the Bible (Research Department, p. 2). To Forel he explained that there had been two schools of ancient philosophers, one deistic and one materialistic. His condemnation of philosophers had applied only to the materialists (BW 15:40). The explanation for Socrates' monotheism is that he studied in the Holy Land, for the Greeks were polytheists and so Socrates' monotheism must have had another source. Hippocrates had also lived in

Syria, in the city of Tyre (SAQ 14D15, 25.55; SDC 77; PUP 362D63, 406).

The difficulty with `Abdu'l-Baha's account is that it is not in accordance with what is known about the lives of Greek philosophers. Empedocles and Pythagoras were not contemporaries of David and Solomon. There is no evidence that Socrates went to Syria. Socrates did not teach monotheism. So why did `Abdu'l-Baha say and write these things? There are two kinds of answers: theological and historical.

The theological answer is simpler. In the time of `Abdu'l-Baha, Western science, and increasingly Western philosophy, were thoroughly positivistic, sometimes in a very simplistic way. `Abdu'l-Baha, as had many religious thinkers before him, cited the religiously-oriented Greek philosophers as evidence that reason did not necessarily imply irreligion. Pythagoras and Plato are old friends of monotheistic religion. Such statements are additional examples of Baha'u'llah's and `Abdu'l-Baha's habit of using their thorough command of high Islamic culture to explicate Baha'i teachings. But what are the materials that they drew on?

The key to understanding the historical origins of `Abdu'l-Baha's account is found in his statement that "the Tablet of Wisdom was written in accordance with certain histories of the East."

The pre-modern Islamic world had a very imperfect knowledge of the history of Greece in general and of Greek philosophy in particular. `Abdu'l-Baha's account can be explained by his reliance on the Islamic accounts of the Greek philosophers. The details of his account can be explained in three stages:

1. The two schools of Greek philosophy. On this point `Abdu'l-Baha is on solid ground. The later Greek historians of philosophy were fond of arranging philosophers in "schools" or "successions." Diogenes Laertius, the author of the most comprehensive surviving classical history of Greek philosophy, divides the philosophers into the Ionians and the Italians. The Ionians were the pre-Socratic physicists, or as it might be translated, "materialists." This succession included the atomists and those pre-Socratics who attempted to find a physical first principle of being. The Italians were the Pythagoreans and Empedocleans, whose interests

were more theological and religious (Diogenes Laertius 1.13-14). The same notion is found in pseudo-Plutarch (Aetius), *De placita philosophorum* (1.3). Here we find Pythagoras, Empedocles, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle listed among the Italians. This work was translated into Arabic, and this chapter was incorporated into various well known Arabic histories of philosophy (e.g., Shahrazuri [13th cent.], *Nuzhat al-Arwah*, ed. Ahmed [Haidarabad: Da'iratu'l-Ma'arifi'l-Osmania, 1396/1976], 1:20). The Italian school acquired added importance when it was identified by the Illuminationist school of Islamic philosophers with the "divine sages" of the Greeks. The Ionians were mostly forgotten by the Muslims. Thus to later Iranian intellectuals familiar with philosophy, the Greek philosophers of importance were the "divine" or "deistic" philosophers of the Italian school: Pythagoras, Empedocles, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. This was a tradition that both Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha know and cite.

2. "Those properly called wise." Medieval Muslim scholars attempting to understand the history of Greek thought were confronted by a variety of fragmentary accounts, none of which were sufficiently detailed to serve as the basis of a coherent and comprehensive history. As a result a variety of independent short accounts were transmitted, most of which eventually dropped out of circulation. The most persistent such tradition, found in works written from the tenth century on, was a list of "those properly called wise": Luqman, Empedocles, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Accounts influenced by it can be recognized by the error of placing Empedocles before Pythagoras. According to this account, Luqman lived in Syria at the time of David and was the first to be called "wise" (or "a sage" or philosopher, hakim). Empedocles came to Syria and studied with Luqman. Pythagoras went to Egypt, where he studied with the disciples of Solomon. Socrates was a follower of Pythagoras, who was put to death for refuting polytheism with rational arguments. Finally, there was Plato, who was Socrates' student. This tradition would have been known to any well-educated nineteenth century Iranian.

This account can be traced back as far as the tenth century philosopher al-`Amiri and probably derives in whole or part from some Christian source. It was common for early Christian theologians

to trace the origins of Greek philosophy to Jewish sources. They found it a useful strategy for undermining their most formidable pagan opponents, the Neoplatonic philosophers. Needless to say, there is no evidence of intellectual contact between the Greeks and Jews before the conquests of Alexander and little evidence of significant intellectual contact until even later.

The identification of the Jews as the original source of philosophy was useful for medieval Muslims as well, since the Islamic version of the theory of progressive revelation did not provide an obvious explanation for pagan philosophy. That this particular account is the origin of Baha'u'llah's and `Abdu'l-Baha's versions of the history of Greek philosophy is obvious from a variety of large and small features.

3. Oral simplification

and quoting from memory. There is one major remaining incongruity: `Abdu'l-Baha's statement that Socrates studied in Syria. No such statement is known either in Greek or Islamic sources--or for that matter, in Baha'u'llah's writings. `Abdu'l-Baha writes the following:

It is recorded in eastern histories that Socrates journeyed to Palestine and Syria and there, from men learned in the things of God, acquired certain spiritual truths; that when he returned to Greece, he promulgated two beliefs: one, the unity of God, and the other, the immortality of the soul after its separation from the body; that these concepts, so foreign to their thought, raised a great commotion among the Greeks, until in the end they gave him poison and killed him. . . .Eastern histories also state that Hippocrates sojourned for a long time in the town of Tyre, and this is a city in Syria. (SWAB 25, p. 55)

This passage attributes two innovations to Socrates: the unity of God and the immortality of the soul. In the Islamic versions of the tradition we have been discussing, these doctrinal innovations are attributed to Empedocles, not Socrates. Hippocrates is not said to have lived in Tyre; Pythagoras was. In each of these cases a less familiar name in the Islamic tradition--Empedocles and Pythagoras--has been replaced by a more familiar name--Socrates and Hippocrates. In the absence of a textual source embodying the confusion, the probable explanation is simply that `Abdu'l-Baha

read the story in some history and later retold it several times, having confused Socrates with Empedocles.

As for the larger question of whether the early Greek philosophers could have been influenced by Judaism, the answer is no. There is no surviving reference in Greek to the Jews dating earlier than the conquests of Alexander, which took place in Aristotle's lifetime. It is also quite certain that no such references were known in the first century A.D., since had they existed Jewish apologists such as Philo and Josephus would certainly have eagerly cited them, as would slightly later Christian writers. The reason why there was no such contact is simple enough; the Greeks and Jews had no common language. The Jews of that time used Aramaic as a lingua franca; the Greeks used Greek. There would have been nowhere they would have met with a common language. Plausible arguments can be made for a Zoroastrian influence, or even an Egyptian influence, on early Greek philosophy, but not for a Jewish influence.

Sources: The principle

Baha'i scriptures dealing with philosophical subjects are the Tablet of Wisdom (TB 9:137-52), SAQ (especially parts 4 and 5), PUP (20-22, 87-91, 253-55, 326-27, 355-61), and Tablet to Dr. Forel (BWF 336-48). Baha'i writers on philosophy have included A. M. Davudi, Insandar @ A'yun-i-Baha'i and Uluhiyat va Mazhariyat; William Hatcher, *Logic and Logos*; Julio Savi, *The Eternal Quest for God*; John Hatcher, *The Purpose of Physical Reality*; B. Hoff Conow, *The Baha'i Teachings*; Udo Schaefer, *The Imperishable Dominion*; M. Momen, "Relativism: a Basis for Baha'i Metaphysics," in *SBBR* 5:185-217; Robert Parry, "Philosophical Theology in Baha'i Scholarship," *BSB* Oct. 1992, 6/47/2: 66-91. Ruhi Afnan, *The Revelation of Baha'u'llah and the Bab: Book 1: Descartes' Theory of Knowledge* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1970); idem, *Baha'u'llah and the Bab Confront Modern Thinkers: Book 2: Spinoza: Concerning God* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1977). The text of the tradition of "the five properly called wise" is found, with thorough commentary, in Everett K. Rowson, *A Muslim Philosopher on the Soul and its Fate* (American Oriental Series 70; New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1988), 70-89, 203-63. On Socrates in Islamic sources, see Ilai Alon, *Socrates in Mediaeval Arabic Literature* (Islamic

Philosophy, Theology, and Science, Texts and Studies X; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991). On texts relating to Socrates in the Baha'i writings, see Research Department, Baha'i World Center, Memorandum to Universal House of Justice, 22 October 1995, which was kindly shared with me by Robert Johnston. On the history of Greek philosophy in the Tablet of Wisdom, see Juan R. I. Cole, "Problems of chronology *****Wendy, you must have this reference.*****"

Dreams

The attitude towards dreams displayed in Babi and Baha'i history and literature is firmly rooted in Iranian tradition. Iranians have generally accepted the possibility of significant true dreams. Thus, the sophisticated philosophical tradition of which the Shaykhi school was a part explained dreams as a contact with the World of Image, an intermediary world between the material and purely spiritual realms. The authority of true dreams was unquestioned in the Iranian, the Islamic, and the Shi'ite traditions. The Shah-Namih, the Iranian national epic, reports a number of dreams foreshadowing the rise or fall of rulers and thus granting political legitimacy. The Qur'an itself was sometimes revealed to Muhammad in dreams. The Prophet Joseph was the archetype of dream-interpreters (Q 12:4, 36-49). The Shi'ite Imams received inspiration through true dreams.

The most important class of dream for the spiritual background of the Baha'i Faith is that in which a religious figure appears and initiates or gives knowledge to an individual. The tradition of receiving revelation in a dream goes back in Iran to Zoroaster. Throughout the history of Islamic Iran, claims to religious knowledge or authority have been made on the basis of dreams in which the Prophet, the Imams, angels, or other supernatural individuals appeared. Such dreams took on particular importance for Shi'ism, since it was believed that the Twelfth Imam was in concealment but still concerned with the affairs of his community. It was through dreams that he most commonly instructed his followers. For Shaykh Ahmad Ahsa'i, the founder of the Shaykhi school, such dreams were central. He saw the Imams and the Prophet many times in dreams and had received from them the authority to teach (Amanat, Resurrection 131-32, 168).

During the period prior to his declaration of his mission to Mulla Husayn, the Bab had significant dreams. It was a dream in which he drank a drop of the blood of the Imam Husayn's severed head that begin his prophethood. Likewise, Baha'u'llah's prophethood first came to him during dreams in the Siyah-Chal.

True dreams may also be symbolic and require interpretationÑas the example of Joseph shows. In Baha'i history the most famous interpretation of a dream is that of Baha'u'llah's father. According to Nabil (DB 119) Baha'u'llah's father had dreamed of his son swimming in the ocean as fish clung to his hair. A dream interpreter had been summoned and explained this as a prophecy of the boy's future greatness. Likewise, a mujtahid's dreams warn him of Baha'u'llah's greatness (DB 111Ð12), and a dream tells a merchant to prepare to be the Bab's host (DB 217). Such dreams have continued to play a role in Baha'i piety ever since.

In Baha'i theology, dreams are significant only as evidence of the objective existence of the spiritual realm. Both Baha'u'llah and `Abdu'l-Baha say that true dreams, dreams in which problems are solved, and the power to travel beyond one's own body in dreams are evidence that man's soul is immaterial (SV 32Ð33; GWB 79:151Ð53; SAQ 61:227Ð28).

In the modern Baha'i community, dreams have no official authority (LoG 1739:513Ð14, 1745:515), but they often play a role in the spiritual lives of individuals. Two themes are particularly significant. Dreams in which `Abdu'l-Baha appears, often to give some spiritual advice or practical instruction, seem to be not uncommon and are generally viewed as spiritually significant. Second, dreams sometimes play a role in teaching successes. A Baha'i teacher might report being guided by a dream to a place or an individual. Sometimes, Baha'i teachers report being told that a dream, either of them, of `Abdu'l-Baha, or of some other recognizable Baha'i image, had presaged their coming. Though such reports have no canonical authority and perhaps properly belong to the realm of Baha'i folklore, they do play a role in modern Baha'i spirituality.

Sources: On dreams

in Iran see H. Ziai, *Elr*, s.v. "Dreams and Dream

Interpretation."

Evolution: a note

From the mid-nineteenth century to the present, the issue of conflict between science and religion has been preeminently identified with the dispute about evolution and human origins. The religious implications of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection were recognized as soon as his *The Origin of Species* was published in 1859. Not only did Darwin's theory discredit traditional religious accounts of the origin of man, such as those found in Genesis and the Qur'an, it seemed to make man an animal like any other and thus cast into doubt any account positing a supernatural aspect of human beings. The controversies concerning evolution in the Christian world are well known and still continue, especially among evangelical Protestants. Darwin's theory became well known in the Middle East with a few decades of its publication through popular accounts in Arabic and other Islamic languages. A Shi'i cleric in Najaf wrote a two volume refutation of Darwin soon after the publication of the first book on the subject in Arabic. Thus, by the time `Abdu'l-Baha came into contact with Westerners around the beginning of the twentieth century, evolution was a subject on which any serious religious thinker--Middle Eastern, American, or European--would be expected to take a position on.

`Abdu'l-Baha's best known statement on the subject is in *Some Answered Questions* (ch. 45-51). Though no detailed study of this text and its background has been made, it is usually understood to advance a theory that man evolved from a more primitive form to his present state but that he was always a distinct species, not directly related to other animals. Such a theory has no scientific support.

`Abdu'l-Baha's statements on evolution reflect the unease of many thoughtful religious people of the time at the use and misuse of Darwinist concepts. Evolution was being used as a justification for the abandonment of traditional religious and spiritual ideas, of standards of decency and kindness, and of the social solidarity that made the rich and powerful responsible for the well-being of the poorer and weaker members of society. The formulation

given in this talk is clearly `Abdu'l-Baha's attempt to offer a way out of this dilemma, using the philosophical and theological concepts of the sophisticated Iranian philosophical tradition, which since the work of the great philosopher Mulla Sadra in the 17th century, had seen the transformation of substance as a key to understanding the deepest nature of being and the godhead. Thus, his statements on evolution should be read not literally as corrections to a particular scientific theory but as affirmations that scientific truth must be understood in the context of a spiritual view of the universe.

R.M.S. Titanic

The biggest news story during the first few weeks of `Abdu'l-Baha's stay in America was the sinking of the British passenger steamship Titanic of the famous White Star Line. He had reached America on 11 April 1912, a few days before the disaster.

The largest and most luxurious liner built to that day, the Titanic sank after striking an iceberg on her maiden voyage from England to New York on 15 April 1912. Of the 2235 people aboard 1522 drowned or froze, including many prominent English and Americans. News of the disaster reached America the next day and filled the papers for weeks to come. Following a speech to the Persian-American Association in Washington, D.C., on 20 April, he was asked about the disaster by reporters. He replied that Europeans and Americans seemed possessed by a desire for speed, that it was a pity if such a loss of life had indeed resulted from nothing more important than the desire to save a few hours (Ward, 239 Days, citing Washington Evening Star, 21 April 1912).

At a reception on 23 April, he returned to the topic of the disaster. `Abdu'l-Baha, who had chosen to come to America on the more modest Cedric of the same line, remarked that he had traveled as far as Naples with some of those who died--presumably some of the many Syrians among the immigrants in steerage, almost all of whom died. Explaining that in everything there is a divine wisdom, he then spoke of death as the gate to the other worlds of God and said that the disaster showed both the need for man's technical skill and his ultimate dependence on God (PUP 46D48). `Abdu'l-Baha's remarks are notable for avoiding both the most common

reactions to the disaster: excessive sentimentality and intemperate criticism of society, the owners, crew, or survivors.

Appendices

Personal Names

A source of particular confusion for Westerners studying Baha'i history are the complex system of names used by Persians, particularly prior to the modernization of Persian names in the twentieth century. This appendix is intended as a guide to these names and the the Baha'i laws and customs governing personal names.

Baha'i laws and customs relating to personal names.

Islamic customs concerning personal names. Islamic given names were almost always Arabic religious names of one of the following classes:

forms of the name of the Prophet, such as Muhammad, Abu'l-Qasim, Ahmad, and Mustafa;

names of other holy persons, such as prophets, imams, and companions of the prophet;

names related to God, such as `Abdu'llah ("servant of God") and `Abdu'r-Rahman ("servant of the All-Merciful");

for women, names of the wives of the prophet and other holy women, such as Fatimih, `A'ishih, and Maryam.

Old Arabic names identified by Muhammad as unlucky or inappropriate or born by famous villains of Islamic history fell out of use. These naming practices were commended by piety and desire for good fortune and were not laws strictly speaking.

Babi laws governing names.

In the Persian Bayan the Bab strongly recommended the use of names relating to God--attributes of God such as Baha'u'llah, "splendor of God;" Jalalu'llah, "glory of God;" and Jamalu'llah "beauty of God" or names of servitude such as `Abdu'llah and Dhikru'llah

"mention of God"--or names of the Shi`i Holy Family--Muhammad, `Ali, Fatimih, Hasan, and Husayn. Thus the world would gradually be filled with the names of God (5:4). He specifically allowed the use of the name `Abdu'l-Bayan, bayan ("exposition") being in the eyes of the Bab a name of God (3:4).

Baha'i laws governing names.

There are very few specific Baha'i laws governing personal names. `Abdu'l-Baha said that children are not to be named Baha'u'llah, Bab, or Primal Point (Nuqtiy-i-UUla, another common title of the Bab). Girls are not to be named Khayru'n-Nisa' ("best of women"), for this title is reserved for the mother and first wife of the Bab. The name `Abdu'l-Baha may, however, be used. Baha'u'llah, writing through his secretary, says that in this day the names Diya', Badi`, Husayn, and `Ali are particularly pleasing. In a letter through his secretary addressed to the Arab Baha'is he says that they should name their sons Husayn or `Ali (i.e., Baha'u'llah's own names) and give them the title (laqab) `Abdu'l-Baha. Girls should be given the title Amatu'l-Baha and be named Dhikriyyih, Nuriyyih, Sahihiyyih, or `Izziyyih (Amr va-Khalq, 3:59-62). These last probably should be understood as recommendations rather than binding laws.

Baha'i practices relating

to personal names. The Bab, Baha'u'llah, and `Abdu'l-Baha, as well as some of the Babi leaders, all were accustomed to give their followers religious names and titles.

Similar practices existed among Muslims, especially the clergy, but it was carried much further among the Babis and the Baha'is. This seems to have served several purposes. First, a new name indicated a new spiritual identity. Thus, when Baha'u'llah gave the participants in the conference at Badasht new names, it symbolized their membership in a new and independent religion. Second, the titles given to Babi and Baha'i leaders indicated their rank. Thus, Mulla Husayn Bushru'i was given the titles "Babu'l-Bab" ("gate of the gate") and "Qa'im of the People of Khurasan," a messianic title. `Abdu'l-Baha was entitled Most Great Branch, hinting at his station as his father's successor.

Third, religious names were used for security, to protect the identity of individual believers. Thus, letters were commonly addressed with names, letters, and numbers that were both religious symbols and codes.

The names and titles conferred by the Bab and Baha'u'llah were most commonly names and attributes of God numerically equivalent according to the Abjad reckoning to the individual's given name. Thus, Muhammads were commonly entitled Nabil, both being equivalent to 92 according to the sum of the numerical values of the individual letters. Yahya became Vahid (28). Second, names were sometimes given because of their meaning or for some reason no longer clear. For example, the Babi heroine Qurratu'l-`Ayn ("solace of the eyes," which name itself was a nickname given her by her teacher) was given the name Tahirih ("The Pure One") to indicate her unimpeachable status within the Faith. Third, a name or title might be a variation of the individual's previous name or title. Thus, the Babi leader in Zanzan, whose clerical rank prior to his conversion had been Hujjatu'l-Islam ("proof of Islam") was given the title Hujjat ("proof"), a title of the Hidden Imam previously born by the Bab Himself. Haji Mirza Muhammad-Taqi Afnan, the builder of the Baha'i temple in `Ishqabad, was called by `Abdu'l-Baha Vakilu'l-Haqq ("deputy of God") after his government title of Vakilu'd-Dawlih ("deputy of the state"). Fourth, names and titles were given because of the individual's activities. Thus, Mirza Aqa Jan Kashani was known as Khadimu'llah ("the attendant of God") because he was Baha'u'llah's private secretary. Fifth, sometimes religious names were given to children at the request of the parents.

When in 1925 Iranians were required to choose Western-style family names, forms of these religious names and titles were often used as surnames. Thus, the family of a Muhammad who had been addressed by Baha'u'llah as Nabil might chose to be known as Nabili ("of Nabil") or Nabilzadiah ("son of Nabil"). In other cases, a striking word from a tablet addressed to the individual in a Tablet might be adopted as a surname. In other cases an arbitrary word of Baha'i religious significance might be chosen as a surname.

Modern Iranian Baha'i given names are of three sorts. First, names of Babi and Baha'i saints and heroes, virtues and spiritual qualities, and attributes of God. Second, and less common, the old Islamic names. Third, the common Iranian secular names drawn from Persian history, mythology, and poetic

imagery.

Outside of Iran, names and titles given by the central figures were much less common, both because the Baha'i Faith did not spread outside the Islamic world until the time of `Abdu'l-Baha and because Western-style names are rarely changed. `Abdu'l-Baha did sometimes give "Persian"--i.e., Baha'i religious--names to Western believers, but though these were treasured, they were not often used in public. He also frequently named children. Shoghi Effendi does not seem to have named children nor, with a few exceptions, given personal titles. Modern Baha'is do frequently give their children Baha'i names, usually those of well-known heroes and heroines such as Tahirih, Vahid, Bahiyyih Khanum, and Hands of the Cause, but this is by no means universal or obligatory.

A related practice is the "naming ceremony," a meeting for prayers and celebration at which an infant is formally named. This was sanctioned by `Abdu'l-Baha as a substitute for the Christian baptismal ceremony. Shoghi Effendi, however, did not encourage this practice. (TAB 149-50; Lights of Guidance, `321; Amr va-Khalq, 3:262.

Persian and Islamic names

Until 1925 Iranians did not use modern-style names composed of a given name and a surname and in fact did not have a single fixed name at all. Instead, the names of individuals were built up from given names, nicknames, titles, and descriptions and varied considerably, depending on the context in which the individual was mentioned and his time of life. A single individual might be known by quite different names in different times and places. By examining the various parts of an individual's name it is sometimes possible to deduce a good deal about him. Most of what follows refers specifically to men's names. To the extent that women were known outside their families, their names were built up in similar ways. More will be said about women's names below.

It should be noted that titles of honor and respect tended to become devalued with time, both because of the Iranian taste for exaggerated courtesy and because of corruption within the government

offices responsible for granting titles of nobility. Thus, Khan, originally a title of high officers of the state, became by the early twentieth century the equivalent of "Mister."

Each element of the nineteenth century Iranian name will be discussed in turn. After that there will be brief discussions of women's names, traditional Turkish and Arab names as they appear in Baha'i history, and modern Middle Eastern names.

a. The given name (ism)

is the name given to a child at birth. In Iran it was usually the name of a prophet or imam such as Muhammad, `Ali, Husayn, or Ibrahim (Abraham), a variant form of the name of a prophet or imam such as Ahmad (an honorific form of Muhammad), Baqir, Sadiq (both titles of particular imams), or Kalb-`Ali ("dog of `Ali"), or a name relating to God such as `Abdu'llah, Allah-Yar ("friend of God), Nasiri'd-Din ("champion of the Faith"), or Fadlu'llah ("grace of God"). Sometimes compound forms are used such as Husayn-`Ali, Muhammad-Javad, or `Ali-Rida, each being a fuller form of the name of an imam. Sometimes only the last element of the compound is used, particularly if the second element is only used with one particular first element. When Muhammad or `Abd is the first element, it is particularly likely to be dropped. Examples are Muhammad-Hasan becoming Hasan, `Ali-Rida become Rida, and `Abdu'r-Rahim becoming Rahim. Occasionally, ancient Persian names such as Firuz and Farhad were used. These became very common in the twentieth century but were less used in the nineteenth. Turkish names such as Qilich are occasionally seen.

Although the given name was never changed, it is less useful than it might be for identifying individuals. First, there were a great many people with common names like Muhammad, `Ali, and Husayn. Second, because these names were so common, people were likely to be referred to by some nickname or title, rather than by their given name.

b. Titles used before the given name tended to show social or religious status. The following are the most common:

Akhund: A Shi`i clergyman. Roughly synonymous with mulla. In the

twentieth century "akhund" acquired the pejorative sense of "ignorant priest."

Aqa: "sir" or "mister." Among Baha'is it usually applied to men of lower social status, such as servants. When it is used after the given name, it indicates affectionate respect. In modern Persian, it is the equivalent of "Mister." In Turkish Aqa indicates high rank, and it is sometimes used that way in Persian, as when `Abdu'l-Baha is referred to as Aqa, "the Master."

Darvish or dervish: a wandering mystic. The word usually has a slightly unsavory connotation, but when used as a title for a Muslim mystic, it indicates respect and that the individual was known as an ascetic and mystic.

Hadrat: "His Majesty" or "His Holiness," used in the form "Hadrat-i-so-and-so." A title of extreme deference, used only of prophets, kings, and people of the highest eminence. It is an honorific used in speaking about someone, not part of his name as such.

Haji, Hajj: "Pilgrim." Title acquired by a man who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Its female equivalent is Hajiyyah. It is most commonly born by clergy and merchants. A "Haji Mulla Muhammad" would be a cleric, while a "Haji Muhammad" would most likely be a pious merchant.

Imam: (1) One of the twelve descendants of the prophet Muhammad who were, according to the Shi`ites, his legitimate successors. (2) The leader of public prayers in a mosque. (3) In modern usage, a Shi`ite cleric of high rank.

Jinab: "Threshold." Used before a name in the form "Jinab-i-so-and-so." It is used in speaking about someone important, learned, or holy, but is less deferential than "Hadrat."

Karbila'i: Title acquired by one who has visited the Shrine of the Imam Husayn in Karbala. It is a less prestigious title than Haji.

Mashhadi: Title acquired by one who has visited the tomb of the Imam Rida in Mashhad in northwestern Iran. Because a visit to Mashhad was less expensive than a pilgrimage

to Mecca or Karbila, this title tends to indicate a lower social class than Haji and Karbila'i.

Mir: a contraction of "Amir," "prince," indicating descent from Muhammad. It is equivalent to "Siyyid."

Mirza: contraction of "Amirzadih," "son of a prince." Prefixed to a name, it indicates that the person is roughly equivalent socially to a minor government official. As such it could indicate anyone from a person who simply was literate to a high government official who was not a member of one of the ruling tribes. However, after a name it means "prince." Thus, Mirza `Ali might be a clerk, whereas `Ali Mirza would be the son or grandson of the Shah.

Mulla: A Shi`i clergyman.

Most mullas were professional clerics, but the title was also sometimes used by those who had some theological training but who earned a living some other way.

Pahlavan: a brave and athletic man. In the nineteenth century, it seems to be a polite title for lutis, the street toughs who played a major role in the towns, frequently in alliance with the clergy.

Shaykh: Elder.

In Baha'i history this title is usually used for Arab clerics.

Siyyid: a descendant of Muhammad.

Originally, the title meant "lord" or "chief." It is the modern Arabic word for "mister."

Sultan: King or sovereign.

The usual title of the head of the Ottoman Empire.

Ustad: master craftsman.

c. Titles used after the given name--e.g., Muhammad Khan, Muhammad Big, etc.--usually indicate high social station.

`Ali-Shah: Title of certain mystical leaders in nineteenth century Iran.

Bagum: Lady, Dame. The female equivalent of Big. A title of respect for a woman.

Big: (pronounced "bay") In Iran a title of middle-ranking officials, especially

military. In Turkey it was a title of nobility.

Jan: "Heart." It is sometimes used as a following title and indicates affection or affectionate respect.

Khan: A secular title of nobility. In nineteenth century Iran it was used by high government officials who were not members of the royal family, especially those from the Turkish tribes that formed much of the ruling class in Iran. In the early twentieth century, it was used by middle-class men.

Khanum: Title of respect or affection for women. In modern Persian, it precedes the name and means Miss or Mrs.

Mirza: When placed after the given name, a prince.

Pasha: Title given to high political or military officials in the Ottoman Empire.

Pur: Son of, placed after the name. It is a common element of modern surnames.

Shah: King. Placed after the given name, it is the title of the kings of Iran. Placed before a name, it indicates a saint or his shrine or a leader of mystics. Thus, Nasiri'd-Din Shah was the king of Iran, but Shah `Abdu'l-`Azim was the tomb of a descendant of an imam. See also "Ali-Shah" above.

Vazir: Minister. Title of the holder of a high government post.

Zadih: Son of, placed after the name. It is a common element in modern surnames.

d. Names from places, tribes, and family. People with similar names were commonly distinguished by their place of origin, tribe, or some ancestor. Such names go at the end of the full name and usually end in -i, a suffix roughly meaning "of." Some examples are:

Shirazi, Isfahani,
Rashti, Nuri--of Shiraz, Isfahan, Rasht,
and Nur. Sometimes in Persian the -i is not used,

as in Salih-i-`Arab (for `Arabi), meaning Salih the Arab. It should be noted that these names frequently refer to where the individual or his ancestor used to live, rather than where he currently is: Shaykh `Abdu'r-Rahman was known to the Babis in Baghdad as "Kirkuki," because he lived in Kirkuk, but in Kirkuk, where everyone was "Kirkuki," he was known as Talibani, the name of his family. Occasionally, such names are the proper names of families, such as Baha'u'llah's family, the Nuris.

e. Names from professions:

People were frequently nicknamed according to their professions, such as Banna (builder), Mujtahid (jurisconsult), Mustawfi (accountant), Katib (copyist), Qahvih-Chi (coffee-maker), and Ashtchi (soup-maker).

f. Titles of nobility (laqab, alqab.) These took the form of two-word phrases, usually in Arabic, such as Mu`tamidu'd-Dawlih (Trust of the State, title of a governor), Maliku'sh-Shu`ara (King of Poets, title of a prominent poet), Ra'isu't-Tujjar (Chief of the Merchants, title of an important businessman), Amir-Nizam ("Chief of State," title of the Prime Minister). Under the Qajars such titles were granted by the Shah and were graded to indicate the bearer's occupation and importance. There were similar titles for noblewomen. New titles were often given with promotions. Titles were sometimes, but not always, inherited. In the time of the Bab such titles were restricted to people of considerable importance. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the system had been thoroughly corrupted, thousands of titles having been granted by dishonest clerks. The system was abolished by Rida Shah as part of his modernization of personal names in 1925 but these titles sometimes continued in informal use or were adapted to form the newly required modern surnames.

These titles of nobility were either used after the proper name and titles or in place of it. Thus, the Iranian ambassador to Turkey might be known as Haji Mirza Husayn Khan Mushiru'd-Dawlih or just by his title of nobility, Mushiru'd-Dawlih.

Baha'i religious titles sometimes were formed on the model of these titles of nobility, as in Mahbubu'sh-Shuhada ("Beloved of Martyrs").

g. Women's names. These followed the same patterns as men's names. However, because women were seldom in contact with many people outside their own families, their names were generally simpler. Frequently, they were known by such titles as Khanum Jan or Bagum Khanum. These really meant no more than "Grandma" or "the Madam," but in a society where women were not likely to be known outside their family, they were sufficient. In cases where women were known, they acquired names, titles, and nicknames in the same way men did.

h. Arab names. Occasionally classical Arabic names are found in Baha'i literature. These take the following form:

[given name] ibn (son of)
[father's name] ibn [grandfather's name] etc. These may be preceded by an honorific title (laqab) such as Qutbu'd-Din (Axis of the Faith) or Nasiru'd-Din (Champion of the Faith). After this comes a name of the form "Abu Muhammad," meaning "Father of Muhammad," where Muhammad is, usually, the name of the man's eldest son. Then comes the given name and chain of ancestors. Finally there are names ending in -i identifying the man's home city, tribe, or family.

Thus the thirteenth century scientist known as Qutb al-Din Abu'th-Thana' Mahmud ibn Mas`ud ibn al-Muslih al-Shirazi. His given name was Mahmud, his father's name was Mas`ud, and his grandfather's al-Muslih. Qutb al-Din was a respectful title meaning "Pole of the Faith." Abu'th-Thana' means "father of praise," a polite euphemism substituting for the patronymic he would have borne had he fathered a son. "Shirazi" indicates that he came from Shiraz; before he left Shiraz he had been known as "Kazaruni," from Kazarun, the family's ancestral home. In practice, he is most commonly known as Qutb al-Din Shirazi, a form of his name that his mother would not have recognized.

The full name is not usually used, and people are generally known by some distinctive portion of the name. Thus there are people famous in Islamic history known as Mu`awiyih (the given name), Khalil ibn Ahmad (given and father's name), Abu-Bakr (name of eldest son), Ibn-`Arabi (name of an ancestor), Nizamu'l-Mulk (honorific title), and

al-Farabi (name of home city).

i. Turkish names. Such

Turkish names as are found in Baha'i history are usually those of government officials and are rather similar to Iranian names, although the titles have different meanings. The reader should be aware, however, that because the modern Republic of Turkey has adopted the Roman alphabet, Ottoman Turkish names may be found spelled either according to the transliteration scheme for the Arabic alphabet or according to modern Turkish spelling. Thus, Muammad may also be spelled Mehmet, reflecting Turkish pronunciation. Modern Turks use western-style given and surnames.

j. Examples of Persian

names. The following are few examples to aid the reader in interpreting nineteenth century Persian names.

Siyyid `Ali-Muhammad-i-Shirazi:

the Bab. "Siyyid" indicates he was a descendant of the prophet Muhammad. "' Ali-Muhammad" was his given name and combines the names of the Prophet and his adopted son, the first imam. "Shirazi" indicates that he came from the town of Shiraz.

Mulla Husayn-i-Bushru'i,

also known as Babu'l-Bab: "Mulla" indicates that he had had a religious education. "Husayn" was his given name, for the third imam, and is apparently a shortened form of his full name, which was Muhammad-Husayn. "Bushru'i" is from Bushruiyih, the village he came from. "Babu'l-Bab" is a title meaning "Gate of the Gate," given him by the Bab in recognition of his having been the first believer.

Mulla Abu'l-Hasan-i-Ardikani,

also known as Haji Amin and Amin-i-Ilahi: "Mulla" indicated that he had a religious education. "Abu'l-Hasan" is his given name; it means "Father of Hasan" and is a form of the name of an imam. He came from Ardikan. "Haji" means "pilgrim;" while it usually refers to someone who has been to Mecca, in this case it probably refers to his having been the first outside Baha'i to visit Baha'u'llah in `Akka. "Amin-i-Ilahi" means "trustee of God"; he was the trustee of the huququ'llah, the religious tax payable to Baha'u'llah.

Manuchihr Khan

Mu`tamidu'd-Dawlih, the governor of Isfahan who befriended

the Bab. "Manuchihr" was his given name, the name of a legendary hero of pre-Islamic Iran. "Khan" is the title of a high official, usually not of Persian origin. "Mu`tamidu'd-Dawlih" means "trust of the state" and was a title of nobility granted by the Shah.

Mulla Muhammad-i-Zarandi, also known as Nabil-i-A`zam or Nabil-i-Zarandi. His given name was Muhammad and he had a very modest religious education. He came from the village of Zarand. Baha'u'llah gave him the title of Nabil-i-A`zam, "the Most Great Nabil," "Nabil" being numerically equivalent to "Muhammad." He was called "Nabil-i-A`zam" or "Zarandi" to distinguish him from several other Muhammads also known as "Nabil."

Asiyih Khanum, also known as Navvabih Khanum, Navvab, Buyuk Khanum, and Varaqiy-i-`Ulya: the first wife of Baha'u'llah. Her given name was Asiyih. "Khanum," "lady," is added for politeness, as it would be for any respectable lady. "Navvab," "Navvabih," and "Buyuk" all mean, roughly, "Madam" or "Lady." Within the household there would be no need for surnames or the like to tell who was meant. "Varaqiy-i-`Ulya" means "Most exalted leaf." Since the Manifestation of God is symbolized by a tree, a leaf is a female member of the holy family. Her daughter Bahiyyih Khanum bore this title after her death.

Arabic

The most important language of Baha'i scripture is Arabic. The following is intended as an introduction to the language for those who encounter Arabic words in Baha'i texts but who have no interest in learning the language.

History. Arabic (Arab.: al-`Arabiyyih, lughatu'l-`Arab, lisanu'l-`Arab; Pers.: Tazi) is the old language of Central Arabia. It is now spoken in the Arab countries and used as a liturgical language throughout the Islamic world. It was often used by the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and `Abdu'l-Baha, particularly for authoritative texts, prayers, and communications with Arab Baha'is./

Arabic is a member of the Semitic family. Thus it is closely related to many languages of the ancient Near East, notably Hebrew, and more distantly to ancient Egyptian and many languages

of North and West Africa. It is attested in names and fragments as early as the ninth century B.C. and preserves, perhaps because of its long isolation, an elaborate Semitic grammar already largely lost in biblical Hebrew. The Classical Arabic now used evolved in the sixth century in the poetry of Central Arabia. It owes its importance to its use, with some elements of the Hijazi dialect, in the Qur'an.

After the Islamic conquests of the seventh century, Arabic gradually became the spoken language of the Islamic areas where other Semitic or Hamitic languages had formerly been spoken. Even in areas such as Iran and Turkey where other vernaculars remained in use, Arabic was the language of learning until the early twentieth century. In the Islamic world almost all works on religion or science were written in Arabic, and its vocabulary permeated the speech and writing of other Islamic languages. In Persian, for example, almost any Arabic word could be used; and a Persian text on religion, philosophy, or science would often be almost indistinguishable from Arabic.

The increasing importance of Arabic led to a vast development in its vocabulary; but largely because of the prestige of the Qur'an the structure of the written language has not changed greatly since the time of Muhammad. An educated Arab can still read even pre-Islamic poetry without much difficulty. The spoken dialects have, however, changed considerably in the various Arab countries; but they have rarely developed into independent written languages. Classical Arabic is still normally spoken in formal situations such as university lectures, political speeches, and broadcasting.

Structure. Like other Semitic languages Arabic is based on meaningful roots of three consonants. These roots can be combined with vowels and other consonants in several hundred forms, each of which has a particular meaning. The root K.T.B., for example, has to do with writing; and when used with the simple active participle form *katib*, becomes *katib*, meaning "writer" or "scribe." *Kitab* is an infinitive form; hence *kitab* means "writing" or "book." *Kataba* means "he wrote," *mukatabah* "correspondence," *maktub* "letter," and so on. Word forms commonly seen

in English texts are usually nouns or adjectives (the two are not strictly distinguished in Arabic) and include:

ʿalīq:ʿ

active participle: Nasir ("victorious") ??

maḥbūb:ʿ

passive participle: Mahbub ("beloved"); Majnun ("possessed by jinn" or "mad"); Maqsud ("Desired One").

ʿabd:ʿ

noun: `Abd ("servant" or "slave").

There are only two verb tenses in Arabic, perfect and imperfect, each of which may refer to past, present, or future. Thus time is not so precisely defined as in English (cf. KI:115).

Arabic has a set of consonants different from English, some of which are nearly impossible for an English speaker to pronounce. In Baha'i contexts Arabic words are usually pronounced with the Persian accent.

Arabic in the Baha'i writings.

Many of the Bab's works are written in Arabic--works written in Qur'anic style, works on theology and law, commentaries on the Qur'an, and the like. The Bab's Arabic works pose many difficulties, not only because of their abstrusity, but also because of their vocabulary and complex sentence structure. The Bab's enemies criticized his grammar and accused him of ignorance of the most elementary rules of the language; he was supposedly asked to conjugate qala ("to say"), an exercise for a schoolchild, and to have been unable to do so. In fact, the difficulty was that the Bab was unwilling to accept the limitations of conventional Arabic grammar and style and frequently used nonstandard derived forms of words. While theoretically there are a large number of words derivable from any Arabic root, in fact only a small number are used. The Bab used many more unknown in Arabic (for example, most of the 360 words derived from baha' that he included in a famous tablet.) The effect is a style intense, unorthodox, challenging, and sometimes obscure. The Bab Himself claimed that his verses and their beauty were testimony to the truth of his revelation. (SB:45, 109; BHD:141; BYP 2:1, 7:2.)

Although most of Baha'u'llah's

writings are in Persian, many of the most important are in Arabic, and Arabic passages are often found in tablets to educated Persians--the Arabic tending to be more formal, the Persian more intimate. Baha'u'llah often used Arabic when he was addressing the world or writing something of universal relevance: the Kitab-i-Aqdas is in Arabic, as are the tablets to the Kings, the obligatory prayers, the marriage vows, and the prayers of fasting and burial.

Baha'u'llah wrote a clean and elegant Arabic, relatively free of both the unorthodox elements of the Bab's style and the excessive decorativeness of his contemporaries' literary Arabic. (Much the same was true of his Persian style.) He generally wrote in rhymed prose (saj`) in a style reminiscent of the Qur'an, but somewhat simpler and without archaic elements. His style is austere, concise, and elevated--well translated by the King James English commonly used in Baha'i translations of his writings. Baha'u'llah's grammar and usage is sometimes influenced by Persian, as is usual in Arabic written by Iranians. For this reason Baha'u'llah was sometimes criticized for not writing pure Arabic. Late in his life he initiated a project to collect and edit his own writings; one of the things that was done was to eliminate some of the "Babi-ism" characteristic of his early Arabic writings.

Generally, Baha'u'llah expresses Himself in terms familiar to his reader, often using technical terms from the Islamic religious sciences, the Qur'an, and Islamic mystical philosophy.

Though `Abdu'l-Baha was completely fluent in Arabic (He spent most of his life in Arab countries) and wrote many tablets in Arabic, the bulk of his works are in Persian. His Arabic style was of a high order, but somewhat more complex and conventional than his Father's.

Shoghi Effendi also knew Arabic well and often used Arabic elements in his Persian writings, but he generally did not write in Arabic.

Other Arabic Baha'i Literature.

A good deal of Baha'i literature has been published in the Arab countries, especially in Egypt: Arabic Baha'i sacred writings, translations of English and Persian works, and native Baha'i literature. Egypt

was a principal center of Baha'i publishing in the early twentieth century. More recently, the Lebanese Baha'i community has published a number of books in Arabic. The Universal House of Justice uses English in its communications with the Arab communities.

Sources: For a general account of the Arabic language, see EI2, s.v. "al-`Arabiya." On Arabic in Iran see EI3, s.v. "Arabic." The classic popular introduction to Arabic literature is R. A. Nicolson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907).

METADATA

Views3605 views since posted 2025-07-24; last edit 2025-10-30 07:44 UTC;

[previous at archive.org.../walbridge_sacred_time](#)

Language

English

Permission

author

Share

Shortlink: bahai-library.com/6987

Citation: [ris/6987](#)

select Collection:

Archives

Articles

Articles-unpublished

Audio

Bibliographies

BIC

Biographies

Books

Chronologies

Compilations

Compilations-NSA

Compilations-personal

Documents

East-asia

Encyclopedia

Essays

Etc

Excerpts

Fiction

Glossaries

Guardian

Histories
Introductory
Letters
Maps
Music
Newspapers
NSA-documents
NSA-letters
Personal
Pilgrims
Poetry
Presentations
Resources
Reviews
Scripts
Software
Statistics
Study
Talks
Theses
Transcripts
Translations
UHJ-documents
UHJ-letters
Video
Visual
Writings

home

sitemap

series

chronology

search:
author

title

date

tags

adv. search

languages

inventory

bibliography

abbreviations

[links](#)

[about](#)

[contact](#)

[RSS](#)

[new](#)

— Sacred Time: Babi and Baha'i History and Biography (Used by permission of the curator)