

fell into disrepair. Shoghi Effendi gained custody of the house in 1929 and restored it. He eventually acquired large parcels of land around the house, which have gradually been developed into a circular park. (7) The shrine of Baha?-Allah, a small stone building next to the mansion of Bahji. Baha?-Allah was buried in a house used by his son-in-law adjacent to Bahji. Eventually a monumental superstructure is planned for this shrine as well, which is the Bahai qebla.

A number of other historic sites are owned or controlled by the Bahais in the Acre/Haifa area. These include the cell in the prison barracks where Baha?-Allah was confined, the houses of ?Abbud and ?Abd-Allah Pasha in Acre, the house of ?Abd-al-Baha? in Haifa, and several gardens near Acre used by Baha?-Allah. For the most part these have been restored and are visited by Bahai pilgrims.

The two other sites of Bahai pilgrimage are no longer in Bahai hands. The house of Baha?-Allah in the Kark district of Baghdad was seized by the Iraqi government in 1925. This was the house Baha?-Allah lived in for most of his stay in Iraq. Baha?-Allah declared it a site of pilgrimage in his book of laws, the al-Ketab al-aqdas (Ketab-e aqdas). The house of the Bab in Shiraz—a beautifully preserved nineteenth-century middle-class home in the old part of the city—was seized by the authorities and demolished in 1980. This was ordained to be a place of pilgrimage both by the Bab in the Bayan and by Baha?-Allah.

Bahais also consider a number of historic sites elsewhere to be holy places—places visited by the Bab, Baha?-Allah, or ?Abd-al-Baha?; sites of martyrdoms; and tombs of martyrs and important believers. These include a number of places in the West visited by ?Abd-al-Baha? and a large number of places in Iran—notably the houses of Baha?-Allah in Tehran and Mazandaran; houses associated with the Bab in Shiraz, Bušehr (Bushire), Isfahan, and Urmia; the site of the conference of Badašt; and the cell where Baha?-Allah was imprisoned in 1852-53. These were expropriated following the revolution in 1979.

A Bahai who is able is obligated to make a pilgrimage once in his lifetime to pray at the shrine of Baha?-Allah or at the house of the Bab in Shiraz or the house of Baha?-Allah in Baghdad. In addition, it is considered spiritually uplifting to visit places associated with holy souls and martyrs. There is little ritual associated with visiting the Bahai shrines. Visitors are expected to remove their shoes and maintain an atmosphere of quiet reverence but are otherwise free to do as they wish. Bahais commonly wear their national dress on formal occasions while on pilgrimage.

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