

Katerat, 2005, pp. 200-91; Shoghi Effendi, pp. 48-49). For the next three or four years, he made a number of approaches to be readmitted to the community but never fulfilled the conditions of a public repentance that were laid down for this. Shortly afterwards, in 1933, he published the first of his refutations of the Bahai faith, *Ketab-e Sobhi*, and over twenty years later, in 1956, he published another anti-Bahai tract, *Payam-e pedar*, which repeats much of the material in the first book. In both of these books, he provides little in the way of substantive intellectual or doctrinal arguments against the Bahai faith. Rather, he bases his rejection of the religion on the accusation that the leading adherents of the religion that he met did not live up to the teachings that they propagated to others. He accuses many of them of vices and moral failings. It is notable that he largely exempts the Bahai leader 'Abd-al-Baha' from his accusations.

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Yahya Dawlatabadi as a teacher at the latter's Sadat School, and he later taught at the American High School in Tehran. In 1931, he visited the head of the Kowtariya branch of the Ne'mat-Allahi Sufi order, Mohammad Hosayn Mahbub 'Alīshāh, in Maraga and was initiated into this order. In 1933, he began to teach Persian language and literature at the Higher Academy of Music (*Honarestan-e 'ali-e musiqi*) in Tehran, where he remained until his death except for a short break in 1937-38, when he taught at the Law College (*Daneškada-ye hoquq*).

On 26 April 1940, a few days after Radio Tehran (later named Radio Iran) began broadcasting, Sobhi delivered the first of his children's stories, which became a regular program at noon on Fridays (and sometimes also in the evenings). He would often chant some verses from Rumi's *Matnawi* and then proceed to tell a story. The program was very popular with children (and many adults), and he continued with it for 22 years (until cancer of the larynx stopped him shortly before his death), thereby becoming one of the most well-known radio personalities in Iran. At first, the main source of his stories was a collection compiled by Sadeq Hedayat, whom he visited regularly. There has been a debate about whether Sobhi plagiarized Hedayat's work (see HEDAYAT, SADEQ iii), but what is certain is that the two of them had a falling out in 1948 with Hedayat stating that Sobhi had launched a vitriolic attack on him (Hedayat, p. 131). Later, Sobhi relied on his listeners to send him stories, and in this way he was able to collect a great deal of folklore from around the country. On the back of this work, he became the first to publish collections of Persian folktales rewritten for children (see Bibliography), an endeavor which Ulrich Marzolph (p. 210) considers to have been valuable but not rigorous or academic. His books contained illustrations by Layli Taqipur and Mohsen Waziri Moqaddam.

Sobhi did not marry and lived alone with a simple lifestyle that was

described as “dervish-like” and in a simple, spartan room with a kaškul (an oval bowl carried by dervishes, suspended from the shoulder) and two tabarzins (halberd) attached to the wall against which he sat. His storytelling for children on radio was continued after his death by Mawlud ?Atefi and others, and then for 24 years after the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 by Mohammad-Reza Saršar (i.e., Reza Rahgodar), who also wrote a book about Sobhi. Sobhi’s work in collecting folktales and broadcasting them on radio was also continued on a much more rigorous and academic basis by Abu’l-Qasem Enjavi (d. 1993) and the Markaz-e farhang-e mardom (Center for popular culture) that he founded (see FOLKLORE STUDIES i. OF PERSIA), at Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting.

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(Moojan Momen)

Originally Published: April 27, 2015

Last Updated: April 27, 2015

Cite this entry:

Moojan Momen, "SOBHI, FAZL-ALLAH MOHTADI," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2015, available at

<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/sobhi-fazl-allah-mohtadi> (accessed on 27 April 2015).

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