

Baha'i Communities by Country: Research Notes

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Bahá'í Communities by Country:

Research Notes

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Jamal Effendi, possibly in the late 1880s, visited Java, Siam and Singapore. In the north he visited Kashmír, Tibet, Yárqand and Khuqand in Chinese Turkistán, then Badakhshán and Balkh in Afghánistán.[1] In the late 1930s Shoghi Effendi had urged the Persian Bahá'ís to send a pioneer to Afghanistan. A young Persian educated in India, Mr 'Ali-Muhammad Nabílí, was able to go to Afghanistan on "for purposes of commerce".[2] He flew to Kábul on a teaching trip sometime 1938-40 (BW38-40, p.718). Dr Misbáh, pioneered from Persia, was unable to remain there, and returned to Iran c. 1944-5.(BW44-6, 47). Muhammad-Husayn Tám and family also arrived, but their visitor's permits were not renewed (BW44-6, 47). A Persian Bahá'í family, Nemat and Ghodseh Ala'i, pioneered to Afghanistan in 1946, returning to Iran after one difficult year.

Afghanistan was a Consolidation Territory in Asia allocated to the Bahá'ís of Persia during the Crusade. A National Haziratu'l-Quds was established in Kabul, purchased by October 1954 (Guardian's cable, 1 October 1954, (Messages to the

Bahá'í World, 70; noted also in his Ridvan message, April 1955, p.81). The Persian community was to assist in helping establish a Bahá'í court in Kabul (Guardian's cablegram of 8 October, 1952 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 45). It had been intended that the Persian NSA oversee the establishment of an NSA in Afghanistan, but the plan ended with 1 group - Kabul. Barrett (p.133) lists 400 Bahá'ís in mid 1970s, and 4 LSAs in 1973, mostly Persian. The NSA was established in 1972.

Notes:

H.M. Balyuzi, Eminent Bahá'ís in the Time of Bahá'u'lláh, 124.

"Current Bahá'í Activities", Bahá'í World 1938-40, p.181.

Africa (mirrored from bahai-library.com/hassall_notes_africa)

In World Order of Bahá'u'lláh Shoghi Effendi wrote:

... the first stirrings of a conscious and determined revolt against the aims and methods of political and economic imperialism... (WOB 31)

... the "long-slumbering continent" (Bahá'í News Feb 53, 2).

In the period to 1953 five National Assemblies were involved in the African work. In the years prior to 1953 five National Assemblies were involved in teaching the Faith in Africa. Persia, Egypt, India, Britain and the United States.

In November 1951 Shoghi Effendi directed the British National Assembly to convene an intercontinental conference in Kampala in 1953, and directed that representatives of the British, American, Persian, Egyptian, and Indian National Spiritual Assemblies attend. In February 1952 he appointed Musa Banani a Hand of the Cause in Africa and requested that he assist in acquiring a local Hazírá in Kampala to "synchronise with the formation of first Assembly in heart of Africa" (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 21).

On January 5 1952 Shoghi Effendi cabled the Bahá'í world that the actions of the "heroic band" of pioneers to Africa was "reminiscent alike of episodes related in the Book of Acts and the rapid, dramatic propagation of the Faith through the instrumentality of the dawn-breakers in the Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation. The marvellous accomplishments signaling the rise and establishment of the Administrative Order of the Faith in Latin America have been eclipsed. The exploits immortalizing the recently launched crusade in the European continent have been surpassed. The goal of the seven-month plan, initiated by the Kampala Assembly, aiming at doubling the twelve enrolled believers, has been outstripped. The number of Africans converted in the course of the last fifteen months, residing in Kampala and outlying districts, with Protestant, Catholic and pagan backgrounds, lettered and unlettered, of both sexes, representative of no less than sixteen tribes, has passed the two hundred mark. The effulgent rays of God's triumphant Cause, radiating from the focal center, are fast awakening the continent and penetrating at an accelerating rate isolated regions unfrequented by white men and enveloping

with their radiant souls hitherto indifferent to the persistent humanitarian activities of the Christian missions and the civilising influence of the civil authorities...." (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 133).

In June 1952 American pioneers arrived in East and West Africa (30 June 1950, Messages to the Bahá'í World, 30).

In launching the World Crusade on the African continent, Shoghi Effendi called for the opening of 33 territories, the purchase of three Temple sites, the establishment and incorporation of three National Spiritual Assemblies, the purchase of three National Hazíratu'l-Quds, the establishment of a publishing trust, and for formation of an Israel branch by one National Spiritual Assembly (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 8 October 1952, pp40-45). In addressing the All-America Intercontinental Conference in Chicago in May 1953, the Guardian noted that on the continent of Africa there were 13 translations, 31 races and 24 tribes represented in the Bahá'í community. (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 148)

At Ridván 1954 the Guardian reported: "The Africa Campaign, outshining the brilliant success of the enterprise launched in Latin America, throwing into shade the splendour of the victories won in recent years on the European continent, eclipsing all previous collective pioneer undertakings embarked upon in the Asiatic and Australian continents, has almost doubled, in the course of a single year, the number of territories opened since the introduction of the Faith in that continent over eighty years ago. The total number of converts to the Faith belonging to the African race has passed the six hundred mark. The total number of African Bahá'í centres has now been raised to over one hundred and ninety. The total number of the tribes indigenous to the soil of that continent represented in the Faith is now over sixty."

Uganda alone now had 500 Bahá'ís in 80 localities, including 13 LSAs, and representatives of 30 tribes, and had dispatched 9 pioneers to other African locations. Shoghi Effendi reported in his Ridván message:

"A single territory out of the thirty-five territories already opened to the Faith in the African continent, situated in its very heart and which, a little over two years ago did not possess a single Bahá'í, now boasts of over five hundred colored converts, who are settled in over eighty localities, are drawn from thirty tribes, are provided with thirteen local Assemblies, and anticipate the immediate formation of about ten additional Assemblies. This same territory has, moreover, distinguished itself throughout the entire Bahá'í world through the dispatch of nine members of its mother Assembly for the purpose of pioneering in neighboring centers, as well as in territories situated on the eastern and western coasts of the African continent. A number of the newly-won recruits in some of these territories have, moreover, been instrumental in winning the allegiance of some of the members of their race, and have, in their turn, succeeded in opening no less than three neighboring territories in that continent." (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 62).

By October 1954 the number of African Bahá'ís had reached 700, including 380

in the past year. The number of Bahá'í centres had increased to 195, number of tribes to 85, translations 34, and Local Spiritual Assemblies, 50 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 71). By March 1955 there were 300 centres in Africa (Cablegram, March 20, 1955, Messages to the Bahá'í World, 75). By April 1955 there were 1,300 African Bahá'ís, over 100 Local Assemblies, 50 translations (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 77-8, 85).

On 23rd August 1955 the Guardian announced his intention, following renewed outbreak of persecution of the Persian Bahá'ís, to build the "Mother Temple of Africa in the City of Kampala, situated in its heart and constituting a supreme consolation to the masses of oppressed valiant brethren in the Cradle of the Faith" (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 90).

In his Ridván 1956 message the Guardian reported that 2,500 of Africa's 3,000 Bahá'ís belonged to the Negro race, and that there were 58 territories opened, over 400 localities, and over 120 Local Spiritual Assemblies (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 93).

At Ridván 1956 three new Regional Spiritual Assemblies were established.

Central and East Africa

Included Uganda, Tanganyika, Kenya, Belgian Congo, Ruanda-Urundi, French Equatorial Africa, Zanzibar, Comoro Is, Seychelles and Chagos Archipelago)

South and West Africa

Included South Africa, Mauritius, Reunion Island, St Helena, Bechuanaland, Basutoland, Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Madagascar, Mozambique, South-West Africa, Angola, Zululand and Swaziland

North-West Africa

Included Tunisia (secretarial seat in Tunis), Algeria, Morocco (International Zone), Spanish Morocco, French Morocco, Spanish Sahara, Rio de Oro, Spanish Guinea, Ashanti Protectorate, French Cameroons, British Cameroons, Northern Territories Protectorate, French Togoland, British Togoland, Gambia, Portuguese Guinea, French West Africa, the Gold Coast, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Madeira,[1] the Canary Island, Cape Verde Islands, and St. Thomas Island.

At the same time, the NSA of Egypt and Sudan became a Regional Assembly for North East Africa. It included French Somaliland; Egypt, Sudan, Abyssinia, Libya, Eritrea, British Somaliland; Italian Somaliland; and Socotra Is.

A year after the formation of these Assemblies the Guardian reported that "the momentum gained in the process of propagation of the Faith and consolidation of its newly-born administrative institutions has exceeded the rate of progress achieved in every other continent of the globe... the number of adherents of the Faith...is now well over thirty-five hundred, over three thousand of whom are Negroes. The number of localities where the followers of Bahá'u'lláh reside is over five hundred and fifty. The number of tribes represented in these flourishing communities has reached one hundred and ninety-seven. The

number of languages into which Bahá'í literature has been and is being translated is over seventy, whilst the number of local spiritual assemblies, constituting the bedrock of a solidly established Order, is approaching one hundred and fifty." (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 110).

See Bahá'í World 1950-54, "Development of the Faith in Africa", 52-53.

Bibliography: God Passes By, 313.

Africa: Central

The NSA of Central Africa, which existed from 1970 to 1971, had jurisdiction over the Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville). It dissolved in 1971 when the NSAs of Central African Republic, Chad, and Congo (Brazzaville) and Gabon were established.

Africa: Central African Republic

The NSA of the Central African Republic was formed from French Equatorial Guinea and Central Africa. During 1970-71 the community formed part of the NSA of Central Africa.

Africa: Central and East

The Regional Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa was established in 1956 and it was to last in different combinations of communities until 1970. The Guardian had called in his communication of 1 October 1954 for the formation of three African NSAs. The NSA of Central and East Africa was established with the assistance of the British NSA (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 71-2). It was established 1956, with its seat in Kampala, Kampala, and embraced Uganda, Tanganyika, Kenya, Belgian Congo, Ruanda-Urundi, French Equatorial Africa, Zanzibar, Comoro Is, Seychelles, and Chagos Archipelago. The NSA was incorporated the following year, and a National endowment was also purchased.

In his final message, October 1957, the Guardian called on the NSA of Central and East Africa to convene in Kampala, in January 1958, the first of five intercontinental conferences. He directed that Ruhiyyih Khanum and Lutfullah Hakim attend as his representatives, and take with them a portion of earth from the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, a lock of his hair, and a reproduction of his portrait (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 125, 129).

In 1964 the RSA of Central and East Africa evolved into the NSAs of Uganda & Central Africa; Tanzania, and Kenya, and in 1970-71 became part of the NSA of Central Africa.

Bibliography: Bahá'í World 1954-63, 286.

Africa: French Equatorial

Was part of the Belgian Congo until it was split into independent countries. It included Congo (Brazzaville).

Virgin Territory in Africa allocated to Egypt and Sudan NSA during the Crusade.

(became Gabon, Congo & Central African Republic): Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Max Kenyerezi arrived in September 1953. He was a Ugandan Bahá'í, dropped in Brazzaville by Nakhjavani and Olinga 26 September 1953, named Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. Is this "French Equatorial Africa"? If so, At Rid57 numbered between 10-20 (M,113). From 1957-64 part of RSA Central and East Africa.

Ended the Ten Year plan with an LSA at Bangui, & a group at Brazzaville. Gabon was opened by Rid 65. (UHJ Rid65 Message) See M 113

Africa: French West

(Became Mauritania & Mali - also Dahomey, Guinee, Ivory Coast, Senegal & Upper Volta).

Virgin Territory in Africa allocated to Egypt and Sudan NSA during the Crusade. KBs Labib Isfahani, Nov 53; Habib Isfahani, April 1954. Ended plan with 3 LSAs, 1 group, 2 isolated.

Africa: North West

The NSA for North West Africa was established in 1956 with the assistance of the NSA of Egypt. It included 25 territories: Tunisia (secretarial seat in Tunis), Algeria, Morocco (International Zone), Spanish Morocco, French Morocco, Spanish Sahara, Rio de Oro, Spanish Guinea, Ashanti Protectorate, French Cameroons, British Cameroons, Northern Territories Protectorate, French Togoland, British Togoland, Gambia, Portuguese Guinea, French West Africa, the Gold Coast, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Madeira,[1] the Canary Island, Cape Verde Islands, and St. Thomas Island. The Assembly was established with about 1,000 Bahá'ís, and 38 Local Assemblies (BW18,624). The seat of the NSA was transferred from Tunis to Rabat. (Bahá'í World 1954-63, 287. See M 71 72)

Notes:

Not allocated by Guardian in plan - Messages to the Bahai World, 72)

Algeria

Algeria was a Consolidation Territory in Africa allocated to the NSA of Egypt and Sudan during the World Crusade. In April 1952 responsibility for the Bahá'í Community of Algeria was assigned to the Bahá'ís of Egypt. In June 1952 a Persian family, Mr K.H. and Mrs Monavar Attar-Hamedani, travelled from Iran to France, and then on to Algeria, where they lived there 16 years amidst hardships and dangers, before being expelled together with other pioneers in 1968.

Algiers LSA was established by Ridvan 1954.[1] A local haziratu'l-Quds was acquired by Ridvan 1957 (Guardian's message, April 1957, (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 116). At the end of the World Crusade there were two LSAs in Algeria, in Algiers & Oran; and two isolated centres, at Lamorcier and Tiaret.

1964-73

During 1967-69 the Algerian community was part of the NSA of North Africa, which

had jurisdiction over Algeria and Tunisia. When the pioneers were expelled in November 1968 the Attar-Hamedani family left behind a villa and office, and moved to Mont Pellier, before eventually settling in Hong Kong. In 1969 the NSA of North Africa was dissolved when Tunisia was placed under emergency rule. An NSA was formed in Tunisia in 1972 but Algeria remained unallocated.

Barrett (World Christian Encyclopaedia, p.136) lists 700 Bahá'ís in the mid 1970s, and notes (p.137) expansion had been checked by waves of persecution and the expulsion of 16 Persian "missionaries", and that all activities were banned. The Faith remained banned during the seven year plan.

Notes:

Guardian's cablegram 4 May 1954, in Messages to the Bahá'í World, p68.

Angola

Angola was a Consolidation Territory in Africa allocated to the British Isles NSA during the Crusade. A British Bahá'í had arrived to pioneer in Angola April 1952 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 27). In 1956 became part of the RSA of South and West Africa. By 1963 there was an LSA at Luanda and groups a Malange & Nova Gaia, and another Bahá'í at Nova Lisboa.

Ashanti Protectorate

Ashanti Protectorate was a virgin territory in Africa allocated to Persia during the World Crusade. It was a British protectorate, which became part of the Gold Coast, and then Ghana: Shoghi Effendi called for pioneers in message of 14 October 1953 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 173). Benedict Eballa arrived in April 1954, and was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. There were more than 20 Bahá'ís in the Protectorate by Ridván 1957 (Ridván Message 1957, (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 113). By Ridván 1963 there was an LSA at Kumasi.

Asia-Pacific

See:

Bahá'í Communities in the Asia-Pacific: Performing Common Theology and Cultural Diversity on a 'Spiritual Axis'

Bahá'í Faith in the Asia Pacific: Issues and Prospects

Origins of the Bahá'í Faith in the Pacific Islands: The Case of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands

Pacific Bahá'í Communities 1950-1964

See also:

Australia: History of the Bahá'í Faith

Australian Women and Religious Change: Margaret Dixson and the First Melbourne Bahá'ís

Bahá'í Community of Randwick: A Survey of 75 Years

Bahá'í Faith in Australia: 75 Years Remembered

Outpost of a World Religion: The Bahá'í Faith in Australia 1920-1947

Persian Bahá'ís in Australia

Seventy Five Years of the Bahá'í Faith in Victoria, Australia

Australia (mirrored from bahai-library.com/hassall_notes_australia)

British settlement in Australia commenced in 1788, to the detriment of the nomadic Aboriginal inhabitants whose occupation of the continent dated back 50,000 years. From federation in 1901 until recent years, the Australian nation remained an outpost of European culture, although in closer proximity to the peoples of Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. Although a Christian nation, secular influences are equally apparent in this increasingly multicultural society of almost 17 million people.

The Bahá'í Faith was brought to Australia in 1920 by Clara (d.1960) and Hyde Dunn (d.1941), both of whom had met `Abdu'l-Bahá when he visited California. The Dunns responded to Abdu'l-Bahá's call in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, to bring the Bahá'í teachings to Australasia. Hyde Dunn taught the Faith extensively as he worked his way around the Australian continent as a travelling salesman. The first Australians to become Bahá'ís, late in 1922, were Oswald Whitaker, a Sydney optometrist, and Effie Baker a Melbourne photographer who later worked for Shoghi Effendi in Haifa 1925-36. After Hyde Dunn's death in 1941 the Guardian referred to him as "lion-hearted", and posthumously named him a Hand of the Cause. Clara Dunn was named Hand of the Cause in 1952, and took part in the convocation of Hands in Haifa in 1957.

Among the most significant of Bahá'í visitors to Australia were Martha Root in 1924 and 1939, and Keith Ransom-Kehler in 1931-32. The former gained unprecedented media coverage for the Bahá'í community, while the latter attracted to it several able administrators and teachers, notably Hilda Brooks of Adelaide, who became the first secretary of the National Assembly.

Institutional development

The National Assembly of Australia and New Zealand was established in 1934, on a foundation of three local assemblies - Sydney, Adelaide, and Auckland (NZ). In 1936 the National Assembly first issued its news-organ, the Bahá'í Quarterly. Sydney Local Assembly was incorporated in November 1937, and Brisbane by April 1957 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 107), and it seems, by 1953 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 150). Adelaide was not incorporated until November 1962.

Shoghi Effendi said Australia was "impotent to extricate

herself" from world conditions (World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, 31). In Advent of Divine Justice he referred to the "solid achievements, spiritual as well as administrative" in Australia. (68). see Messages to the Bahá'í World, 21.

In 1938 the first summer school was held on a property at Yerrinbool, south of Sydney, eventually donated to the National Assembly by Stanley and Mariette Bolton. A National Hazírá was purchased in Sydney in 1944 at the instigation of Shoghi Effendi. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s efforts were made to expand the Australian Bahá'í community beyond the state capital cities, and a six-year teaching plan (1947-53) enlarged the community to 14 Local Assemblies and 45 other localities.

At the commencement of the Ten Year crusade there were about 60 Bahá'í centres in Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 148). In October 1953 Shoghi Effendi directed hand of the Cause Mr Furutan to visit Australia and New Zealand, and directed Clara Dunn to continue her efforts in the two countries also (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 172). At Ridván 1954 the Guardian announced the purchase of land "to the west of the Bab's resting place" which was to be registered in the name of the Israel branch of the NSA of Australia and New Zealand (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 70). This might be the same purchase, the registration of which was being "expeditiously carried out" as mentioned in the Guardian's 1956 Ridvan message (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 95).

In his Ridvan message 1957 the Guardian noted the convening of teaching conferences for South Australia in Adelaide, for Tasmania in Hobart, and for New South Wales in Sydney, as well as the holding of a Post-Convention Teaching Institute in Sydney (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 114).

During the course of the Ten Year Plan the Australian National Assembly was incorporated and Shoghi Effendi was instrumental in establishing a Branch of the National Assembly in Israel, in 1954. Also in 1954, Clara Dunn appointed two Auxiliary Board Members, Thelma Perks (d. 1988), who later served as a Counsellor on the Australasian Board, and H. Collis Featherstone, who was appointed a Hand of the Cause in the Guardian's last message, in 1957. In the same year, the New Zealand community established its own National Assembly. In May 1958 Sydney hosted one of four intercontinental conferences called by the Guardian to mark the mid-way point of the Crusade (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 124, 125). Mason Remey was directed to attend the Sydney conference, and to bring a portion of earth from the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, a lock of His hair, and a reproduction of his portrait. In the same message the Guardian called for representatives of the Australian NSA to be at the Djakarta conference. The earth was to be placed in the foundations of the Sydney temple

(Messages
to the Bahá'í World, 129).

During Australia's Five Year plan, 1974-79, objectives focussed on the attainment of legal status for Local Assemblies, on provision of pioneers for international goals, and on enrolment of minorities in Australia into the Bahá'í community. 50 Local Assemblies were to be incorporated and a Publishing Trust was established, in 1975.

Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone joined 81 delegates at the 1979 National Convention for the launch of the Seven Year plan, 1979-86, during which, successful National Teaching conferences and youth conferences were held, and difficult objectives such as opening remote Flinders Island were achieved. Other achievements were literary. In 1982 an affiliate branch of the Association for Bahá'í Studies held its first conference in Australia, at Yerrinbool and in 1984 "Herald of the South", a magazine first produced jointly with the New Zealand community in 1925 was re-established.

Recognition

The incorporation of National and Local Spiritual Assemblies in Australia was made difficult by the nature of the country's State laws. Bahá'í Holy Days received recognition from the Department of Education in Victoria by 1953 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 4, 150). By 1973 Bahá'í Marriage Certificates had received recognition.

With the resurgence of persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran that followed the 1979 revolution the Australian Bahá'ís entered a period of extensive contact with government officials and mass media. The Australian government was active in its defence of human rights for the Bahá'ís. In August 1980 the Minister for Foreign Affairs asked the Iranian Charge d'Affaires to inform the Iranian government of the Australian Government's concern about the persecutions of the Bahá'ís in Iran, and in September notice was given of a motion about the persecution in the House of Representatives. In February 1981 the Senate adopted a resolution deploring the persecution, and in August a similar resolution was adopted by the House of Representatives. In March 1982 the government established a special humanitarian assistance program, under which Persian Bahá'í refugees were eligible to migrate to Australia.

The Bahá'í community made representations to the heads of Commonwealth Governments when they met in Australia in September/October 1981, and in 1982 extensive media coverage was gained on government television programs (ABC) and "60 Minutes". Concern at the situation in Iran permeated the international conference held in Canberra in 1982 attended by 2,400 Bahá'ís from 45 countries, and at which were present Hands of the Cause Collis Featherstone, and Dr Ugo Giachary, who represented the Universal House of

Justice.

Since 1984 the Australian Bahá'í community has been involved in Peace activities at national and local level. In 1984 the National Assembly submitted a statement on peace to a Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. The Promise of World Peace, a statement by the Universal House of Justice, was presented to the Governor General, Sir Ninian Stephen in October

1985, and one year later, the Governor General attended a service in the House of Worship to mark the International Year of Peace. In 1986 the Australian National Assembly sponsored a "Peace Exposition" in the Temple grounds that attracted 10,000 visitors, and received a "Peace Messenger" award from the United Nations for activities throughout the Australian Bahá'í community. Peace Festivals were successfully organized by Atherton, Caboolture, Fremantle, and other Local Assemblies.

International work

In the years 1953-63 the National Assembly of Australia and New Zealand carried out one of the 12 Ten Year Crusade plans mapped out by Shoghi Effendi. The Australian Bahá'ís pursued both domestic and international objectives. In the Indian and Pacific Oceans Australians were to open the Admiralty Islands, Cocos Island, Mentawai Islands, New Hebrides, Portuguese Timor, and the Society Islands; and to consolidate the Bahá'í communities of the Bismarck Archipelago, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Guinea, New Zealand and Tasmania. Six members of the 1953 National Assembly members were among the pioneers to these destinations. When Australia and New Zealand were unable to send a pioneer to the Mentawai Islands, and Iran was similarly unable to send one to the Solomon Islands, the goals were swapped: Dr and Iran Muhajir opened the former, and Alvin and Gertrude Blum moved from New Zealand to the latter.

Territories to be opened to the Faith 1953-1963

ASIA:

1. Admiralty Is - Violet
Hoehnke, July 1954.

2. Cocos Is - Frank
Wyss, June 1955.

3. Loyalty Is - Daniel Haumont, October 1955.

4. Mentawai Is - Rahmatu'llah & Iran Muhajir, February 1954.

5. New Hebrides Is
- Bertha Dobbins, October 1953.

6. Portuguese Timor -
Harold & Florence Fitzner, June 1954; Jose Marques, July 1954.

7. Society Is - Gretta Lamprill, & Glad Parke, October 1954.

Territories to be consolidated

ASIA: 1. Bismark

Archipelago 2. Fiji 3. New Caledonia 4. New Guinea

AUSTRALASIA; 1. New

Zealand 2. Tasmania

In ten international collaboration goals during the Nine Year Plan (1964-73) Australia assisted the National Assemblies of the South Pacific, South

West Pacific, North East Africa, and Tanganyika and Zanzibar acquire properties.

A Continental Pioneer Committee was established to assist with the settlement of

pioneers in the nine year plan. Australia assisted with the establishment and incorporation of a National Assembly in the Bismarck

Archipelago and New Guinea in 1969 (the National Assembly of Papua New Guinea).

During 1974-79 pioneers embarked to Fiji, Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Laos, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga and Vietnam.

Assistance was to be given to Fiji in the translation of literature, and to several Pacific Assemblies in the acquisition of Haziras - the North West Pacific (Yap, Guam, Pohnpei and Majuro) and South West Pacific (Vila).

The Australian Bahá'í community has been responsible for opening several small islands surrounding the continent. Primary objectives of the Ten Year Crusade included the opening of Bathurst and Groote Islands and resettlement of Admiralty and Cocos Islands. The goal of opening Bathurst Island

was the last of Australia's Nine Year Plan tasks. A pioneer was accepted for employment on the islands' Aboriginal reserve on 29 April 1973, and on 24 April the Universal House of Justice Cabled "CONSIDER ALL AUSTRALIAN GOALS FULFILLED". Christmas island, an Australian Territory in the Indian Ocean, had achieved one Local Assembly by 1986.

Joseph Dobbins Jnr., who worked on Groote Island 1966-75, was followed on that island for lesser periods by Tom Jones (six months) and Tony and Allison Scott (one year). In the nine year plan members of the Andilyaugwa tribe became Bahá'ís and by 1973 there were 2 localities on the island. Melville Island, off the coast from Darwin in the Northern Territory, was opened to the Faith by 1967, but the pioneers had had to leave by 1973 (see Wellspring of Guidance, 103). Several Bahá'ís had travelled to Norfolk Island, off Australia's east coast, on short-term tourist visas, and in 1989 Colin Dibdin secured a professional post there, becoming the first pioneer to the island.

Work among

indigenous people

Efforts to attract Aboriginal Australians into the Bahá'í community began in South Australia and the Northern Territory in the 1950s and in the same decade the first Iranian Bahá'ís settled in Australia. Goals during the Nine Year Plan 1964-73 included translation of literature into Baining and Panaras languages; and the enrolment of Aboriginals. By 1968 the Bahá'í community included members of the Andilyaugwa (Groote Island), Bunanditj, Jirkia Minning, Junjan, Minen, and Narrogin tribes. The first Aboriginal Bahá'í, Fred Murray (1884-1963) of the Minen tribe, attended the 1963 London World Congress.

During the Five Year plan 1974-79 Bahá'ís from Turkey and Papua New Guinea visited Australia to assist with teaching in the Turkish and Aboriginal communities, and by 1979 the goal of establishing 3 Local Assemblies in Aboriginal areas had been exceeded by 4. By 1983, however, there were just 4 Local Assemblies in Aboriginal areas. Teaching projects had been carried out in the islands of Torres Strait, and efforts were also made to attract members of the Chinese and Greek communities in Australia to the Bahá'í Faith.

Following National Convention in 1985 an important meeting took place in Onslow, in the far north-west of Western Australia, between members of the National Assembly, the Carnarvon Bahá'í community, and Onslow Aboriginal elders. Discussion focussed on the essence of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings and the Aboriginal way of life. Acceptance of the Faith by Herbert Parker, an important tribal elder, in 1985, and Jack Malardy leader of the Karradjjarrie people, La Grange, in 1987 led to a similar entry into the Bahá'í community of more than one hundred Aboriginals. Similar results have occurred in North Queensland.

In August 1994 the National Spiritual Assembly presented a statement on "Aboriginal Reconciliation" to the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

Distinctive
contributions

When plans for a House of Worship in Tehran were frustrated by a wave of persecution in 1955 Shoghi Effendi announced the construction of two others, in Kampala, and Sydney. When a first Temple site was repossessed by the government a second 7 acre site acquired in February 1956. Plans to build the Temple were officially announced at the 1957 convention. After four years construction, the dedication of the Temple in September 1961 was attended by Hands of the Cause Ruhíyyih Khanum and Collis Featherstone, and by Jessie Revell, representing the International Bahá'í Council.

Four major Bahá'í conferences have been held in Australia. In March 1958, mid-way through the Ten Year Crusade, one of the "inter-continental" conferences announced by the Guardian was held in Sydney. It was attended by Hands of the Cause Clara Dunn, Agnes Alexander,

Charles Mason Remey, Zikru'lláh Khádem and Collis Featherstone, and by Bahá'ís from across Asia and the Pacific. A second conference in Sydney, in 1967, marked the mid-point of the nine year plan and coincided with the centenary of the proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh. Following the conference Hand of the Cause Dr Ugo Giachary, present as representative of the Universal House of Justice, travelled to Apia for an audience with the head of state of Western Samoa, that lead to his rapid acceptance of the Bahá'í teachings. A third major conference in Canberra in 1982 attracted 2,000 participants. A satellite conference of the second Bahá'í world congress was held in Sydney in November 1992.

Growth

The

Bahá'í Faith has spread slowly in Australia. Local Assemblies grew from 31 in 1963 (19 incorporated) to 61 in 1973, and 152 in 1986, a 54% increase for the period of the Seven Year Plan, and 17 in excess of the goal of 135. Youth had played an important role in propagation activities during the 1970s, and in April 1969 held a first National Youth Conference at Yerrinbool. In 1975 Hand of the Cause Dr Muhajir attended National Convention in Melbourne. Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone also attended, albeit for only one day, (his first attendance at an Australian convention since 1962), before flying to attend National Convention in Japan.

In the Seven Year plan Local Assemblies increasingly took the initiative in planning large-scale activities. From 1983 the Kentish community sponsored a series of annual events highlighting alternative technologies and lifestyles. Newcastle community fostered a sister city relationship with Ube, in Japan.

More

Persian refugees per capita were received in Australia than in any other

Bahá'í

community, and by 1988 Persians comprised 38% of the Australian Bahá'í community.

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Austria

Austria was opened to the Faith during the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá (1892-1921). The story of Tahirih had inspired Mme Hainisch and the poetess Marie Von Najmajer as early as 1870.[1] Martha Root visited in 1920s. The NSA of Germany and Austria was formed in 1923. In the 1920s Austria was listed as one of the 'leading local Bahá'í Centres' in Europe.[2] Herr F. Pollinger. Before 1926 the Vienna Bahá'ís had published Esslemont's What is the Bahá'í

Movement? By 1925 there were centres in Graz & Vienna. A photo of the Bahá'í group in Vienna appears in Bahá'í World 1926-28, p.137. The NSA of Germany and Austria was dissolved in 1937, and re-established in 1946.

Austria was a Consolidation Territory in Europe allocated to the NSA of Germany and Austria during the Crusade. Austrian Bahá'ís called on the attend the Stockholm Conference (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 18). A National Hazíratu'l-Quds was purchased in Vienna by Ridvan 1955 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 81). The First Austrian Teaching Conference held in Gosau by Ridvan 1957 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 112). Photo of the NSA elected in 1961 appears in Bahá'í World 1954-63, 275.

Austria ended the Ten Year plan with 6 LSAs; 1 group & 4 isolated Bahais. The site for a future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was purchased in Vienna. The Austrian NSA, upon its formation, was made responsible for the Bahá'í communities of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia. Barrett notes (p.157) growth from 7 LSAs in 1964 to 11 in 1973, and 48 other isolated centres or groups.

Bibliography: See Bahá'í World 1954-63, 282; God Passes By 226, 261, 281, 287, 330, 383, 388

Notes:

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Belgian Congo

Belgian Congo was a Consolidation Territory in Africa allocated to the British Isles NSA during the Crusade. When Mr Nakhjavani and Mr Olinga dropped Samson Mungono at Kamina in August 1953 there were already two non-African Bahá'ís in different parts of the country. The first LSA was established by May 1954 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 68). From 1957 until 1964 the Belgian Congo was part of the RSA of Central and East Africa. By Ridvan 1963 the Bahá'í Community comprised 143 LSAs.

Politically, the Belgian Conga eventually split into Congo (Kinshasa, 1960); French Equatorial Africa; Central Africa (later renamed the Central African Republic), Chad, and Gabon.

Bibliography: See God Passes By, 379.

Botswana

Bechuanaland was a virgin territory in Africa allocated to Persia during the World Crusade. Politically, it was a British High Commission Territory, which gained independence as Botswana in 1966.

Shoghi Effendi called for pioneers to the territory in his cable of 14 October 1953 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 173), John & Audrey Robarts, and their son Patrick Robarts, arrived in February 1954. All three were named Knights of

Bahá'u'lláh. At Ridvan 1957 the Bahá'í community numbered between 10 and 20 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 113). In 1956 the Bechuanaland Bahá'ís became part of the RSA of South and West Africa. By 1963 there were two LSAs; seven groups, and one isolated member.

Brunei

was a British Protectorate from 1888 until 1983 and is now an Islamic Sultanate. It was a Virgin Territory in Asia allocated to Persia during the World Crusade. Three Knights of Bahá'u'lláh were named for the area: Harry Clark and Charles Duncan, who both arrived in February 1954; & John Fozdar, who arrived in April 1954. Each was inscribed in the Roll of Honour in Shoghi Effendi's cable of 4 May, 1954 (BW54-63, 450)

Burundi

Nation established in 1962 from the Belgian administered UN trust territory of Ruanda-Urundi.

Until 1964 Burundi was part of the NSA Central and East Africa.

Cameroon

The British Camerouns was a virgin territory in Africa allocated to the British Isles NSA during the World Crusade. Politically, the area was a UN Trusteeship from 1946 until 1960. Eventually, adjoining French & British territories came together as Republic of Cameroon, later the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

Enoch Olinga arrived at Mamfe on 15 October 1953, and was subsequently named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. He had left Uganda by car with Ali Nakhjavani on 27 August.[1] The first Camerouns Bahá'í David Tanyi himself became Knight of Bahá'u'lláh to French Togoland. By Ridvan 1957 there were over 300 Bahá'ís in the British Camerouns (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 113) and a local haziratu'l-Quds had been acquired (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 116). In his Ridvan message in 1957 Shoghi Effendi made mention of a teaching conference held at Mutengere (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 115). By the end of the World Crusade the community comprised one incorporated LSA (Victoria) and 53 other Assemblies, as well as 8 groups & 3 isolated centres.

Notes:

On 19 September 1953 the British NSA reported to the IBC that no news had been heard so far: ATC. Corresp. with NSA of Australia. 1953-1960. 0140/0038.

Canary Islands

The Canary Islands was a virgin territory in Africa assigned to the United States in the World Crusade. Politically, it was a Spanish autonomous region also called Islas Canarias. Four Knights of Bahá'u'lláh were named for the territory: Gertrude Eisenberg, who arrived 13 October 1953; George and Marguerite True, who also arrived in October 1953; and Shawqi Rawhani, who arrived in June 1954. LSAs were established at Las Palmas and Santa Cruz de Tenerife at Ridvan 1955. (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 85) The Bahá'í

Community numbered over 20 by Ridvan 1957 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 113) and the Guardian referred in the same message to the holding of the Canary Islands Teaching Conference in Las Palmas (p114). Alyce Janssen pioneered at some stage, but the date is unknown.

By Ridvan 1963 there were the LSAs at Las Palmas (est. '55 - M,85) and Santa Cruz de Tenerife, and an isolated centre at Fuerteventura. A National Spiritual Assembly was established in 1984.

Cape Verde

The Cape Verde Islands were mentioned in Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets of the Divine Plan. They were subsequently nominated as a "Virgin territory" in Africa during the World Crusade and assigned to the United States. They were opened by Knights of Bahá'u'lláh Howard & Joanne Menking, in January 1954. Politically, the Islands became an Overseas Portuguese Province in 1951, and gained independence in July 1975. The Bahá'í community numbered over 20 by Ridvan 1957 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 113), and at the end of the Crusade there were Bahá'í groups at Achada Alem & Praia, and isolated centres at Fogo Island & Mindelo. An NSA was established in the islands in 1984.

Chad

1970-71 Chad was part of the NSA of Central Africa.

China (mirrored from bahai-library.com/hassall_notes_china)

Abstract: Of the efforts to transmit the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh to the world's immense variety of cultures and peoples, the campaign in China has been one of the most arduous. It has been challenged by the sheer geographic and demographic expanse of the country, by problems of translation, of human resources, and by a lack of means of communication; and it has been inhibited too by the successive waves of political and social upheaval which have shaken the country across several generations. In a reference to these conditions, Abdu'l-Bahá referred to the "groaning of India and China" (WOB, 17). The Bahá'í Teachings first reached China during the lifetime of Bahá'u'lláh, but they remain unknown to many in the world's most populous country.

An account of the Bahá'í Faith in China falls into interrelated and not necessarily distinct periods. The first, from the 1880s until the emergence of the first Chinese Bahá'ís, the second, lasting until the Communist Revolution of 1949, a third, from then until the late 1980s, and a fourth, covering the most recent years. This paper documents the efforts which have been made to promote the Bahá'í Teachings in China during these periods, on the basis of primary and secondary materials available in English.

China has been mentioned several times in Bahá'í Writings. In his early treatise Secret of Divine Civilization, 'Abdu'l-Bahá referred to the lack of education in China, whether spiritual or material:

It is certain that the people of China were, in the sight of God, among the most rejected of men, because they worship idols and are unmindful of the

omniscient Lord... (p. 26)

Today [ie, 1875] from the standpoint of population the greatest nation in the world is China, which has something over four hundred million inhabitants. On this account, its government should be the most distinguished on earth, its people the most acclaimed. And yet on the contrary, because of its lack of education in cultural and material civilization, it is the feeblest and the most helpless of all weak nations. Not long ago, a small contingent of English and French troops went to war with China and defeated that country so decisively that they took over its capital Peking. Had the Chinese government and people been abreast of the advance sciences of the day, had they been skilled in the arts of civilization, then if all the nations on earth had marched against them the attack would still have failed, and the attackers would have returned defeated whence they came. (p.110-111)

China's lack of "material civilization", however, did not imply that China lacked in capacity, or in noble spiritual and intellectual traditions. In his later letters, published collectively as Tablets of the Divine Plan, 'Abdu'l-Bahá referred to the need for Bahá'ís to prepare themselves prior to travelling to China for the purpose of promoting the Bahá'í Cause: "China, China, China, China-ward the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh must march!", 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote in 1917,

Where is that holy, sanctified Bahá'í to become the teacher of China! China has most great capability. The Chinese people are most simple-hearted and truth-seeking. The Bahá'í teacher of the Chinese people must first be imbued with their spirit, know their sacred literature, study their national customs and speak to them from their own stand-point, and their own terminologies. He must entertain no thought of his own, but ever think of their spiritual welfare. In China one can teach many souls and train and educate divine personages, each one of whom may become a bright candle of the world of humanity. Truly, I say they are free from any deceit and hypocrisies and are prompted with ideal motives.

Had I been feeling well, I would have taken a journey to China myself! China is the country of the future. I hope the right kind of teacher will be inspired to go to that vast empire to lay the foundation of the Kingdom of God, to promote the principles of divine civilization, to unfurl the banner of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and to invite the people to the banquet of the Lord!

The Bahá'í Writings acknowledge that Bahá'í pioneers reached China early (WOB, 84). They also note the influence of Russian communism on China (WOB, 181). Until a nationalist revolution in 1911, China was ruled by emperors of the Ching Dynasty. The last Emperor abdicated on 12 February 1912 and the revolutionaries declared China to be a Republic. The first President of the new Republic was Dr Sun Yat-Sen (Sun Zhongshan).

The downfall of the monarchy was followed, however, by a period of foreign incursions into Chinese territory. Japan had occupied Taiwan in 1895, and invaded North-east China in 1931, and entered Beijing in 1937. This was also a

period of internal instability and civil war, and the period 1916-1926 was characterised by the rule of "war-lords" in different regions of the country. The ruling Kuomintang government was challenged by the rise of the Chinese Communist Party. These political foes waged civil war in the 1930s, until the Communists took power in 1949. Shoghi Effendi described the fall of the Chinese Dynasty as one of the world-wide events of "divine chastisement" afflicting the countries of the world since the advent of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation.

Early Bahá'í travellers

Abu'l-Fadl

The Persian Bahá'í scholar Mirza Abu'l-Fadl Gulpaygani is reported to have travelled in the 1880s through Russia to China and Kashgaria (Chinese Turkistan), but little is known about his activities in detail. 'Abdu'l-Bahá is reported to have expressed a desire to visit Kashgar, and even to have secured a passport with the intention of setting out on this journey alone, but to have been prevented from leaving Akka by Ibrahim Pasha.

In 1902 an unnamed Persian Bahá'í was posted Shanghai to represent in 'Ishqábád-based business. This may have been Mirza Abul Badhi, whom American Bahá'ís Mason Remey and Howard Struven met in Shanghai when they visited China from late 1909 until January 1910, during their world-wide tour of Bahá'í communities. From Burma Charles Mason Remey wrote to Mrs H.C. Wagner:

"Shanghai in China was our next field for doing a little work. There interest in the teachings is just beginning. While there we met Mirza Abdul Baghi (pronounced baj-jy) one of the firm Persian Bahá'ís, who has lived here for several years past.... At last, after visiting various ports, we found ourselves settled in the Mashrak-el-Azkar, at the above address, amid the Bahá'í friends here in Rangoon." see alsoGPB 261.

About 1914 Mirza Mehdi Rashti, Ali-Hasanoff, and Husayn Uskuli moved to Shanghai as tea-merchants for their "Omid Trading Company", although only the latter remained after the outbreak of war. Mr Uskuli (Mírzá H.A. Ouskouli) had first arrived from Ashqabad in 1915. When his wife died in Ashqabad in 1923 brought some of his six children to China. These included Ridvaniyyih and her husband S.A. Sulaimani, who established an importing business, and remained until 1950. After a period in Iran they pioneered at the commencement of the World Crusade to Formosa (Taiwan). Mr Uskuli remained in Shanghai for all years, except 1918-1922, until his passing there in 1956.[Suliemani, 1970 #419] Another Persian Bahá'í, Mirza Hossein Touty, resided in Shanghai in 1918-19, In January 1921 he left China, living for periods in the Russian seaport of Vladivostok and then the southern Philippines province of Mindanao, before returning to live for an extended period in Shanghai.

A number of Bahá'í women also visited China in these early years. In the course of four visits, Martha Root and spoke in some 100 universities, colleges and schools (noted in GPB 386-7). She was joined on one of her visits (as described below), by Agnes Alexander, who was resident in Japan.

Chinese abroad

Since the Chinese constitute one of the most widespread racial diasporas, it is not surprising that a number of Chinese nationals, and others who were ethnically Chinese, encountered the Bahá'í Teachings while resident or travelling in other countries. Some Chinese attended Bahá'ís meetings while in Washington for a Peace Conference in February 1922. Bahá'ís were also in contact with Chinese scholars attending several North American universities.

T.J. Chwang, who is regarded as the first Chinese believer, attended Bahá'í meetings in Chicago and returned to Shanghai in 1916. Another early adherent, Mr Chan S. Liu, heard of the Bahá'í Faith while studying at Cornell University about 1921. He returned to Canton to become President of the Agricultural College at Sun Yat Sen University, and was later appointed director of the Bureau for the Improvement of Sericulture, Department of Reconstruction, Honglok. His article, "A Chinese view of the Bahá'í Cause", appeared in Bahá'í World vol.v 1932-1934, p.665-6. Mr Liu thus came from an educated family. His relative C.T. Wong, as reported at the time, had been Minister for Foreign Affairs "during the recent trouble in Manchuria".

Japan and Korea

Other early contributions to the spreading of the Bahá'í message in China came from Japan and Korea. In 1917 a Korean Bahá'í translated a pamphlet into Chinese, which was published by the Bahá'ís in Shanghai, and the "No.9" compilation was also translated and published by 1926 (as The Bahá'í Cause in China), by the American Bahá'ís. About 1922 Agnes Alexander introduced the Bahá'í principles to a group of Chinese students, including some from the Peking Women Teachers' College, during their study visit to Japan.

The first visit by Martha Root

Perhaps the first concerted public campaign to promote the Bahá'í Teachings in China was that by Martha Root in 1923. For six months she taught advanced English at the Peking Esperanto College. She was joined in China for some of this time by Ida Finch. According to Star of the West report Miss Root had been "in Peking studying the life of the great and ancient civilization of China and preparing for her lectures and journeys in behalf of the message of world-unity." As was the case when she passed through or resided for a time in other countries, articles on Miss Root and the Bahá'í Faith soon appeared in the local press. The North China Standard for Tuesday July 3, 1923, printed a news item about `Abdu'l-Bahá carried by Asiatic News Agency Services. An extensive interview with Miss Root appeared in The North China Standard, Tuesday, September 25, 1923. October 4, 1923, The Peking Daily News carried a report "Another Religion Comes to China" and the North China Standard for the same day carried a similar item under the heading "Miss Root Gives talk on Bahá'í 'Revelation'". On 12 January 1924 The China Press advertised a talk Miss Root was soon to present before Shanghai's Esperantists.

After a devastating earthquake hit Japan Agnes Alexander and her sister joined

Miss Root, and travelled with her for the next three months, visiting many cities in the north of China, including Yentai (Chefoo), the birthplace of Confucius. met her in Shanghai, and accompanied her from there back to Japan. Miss Root spoke at several colleges in Wuhan, with the assistance of Mr K.T. Yang. The three women then travelled by rail through Nanking to Shanghai. At the end of December 1924 the Alexander sisters sailed for Hawaii, while Miss Root remained in Shanghai another two and a half months.

In 1923 Miss Root introduced the Bahá'í Teachings to a number of significant public officials. These included, in Canton, President of China, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, who requested that he be sent Bahá'í books. In Shanghai, she met Dr Y.S. Tsao, President of Tsing Hua University, who in 1930, as described below, became an active member of the Bahá'í community. Fung Yan L. Folk, another educated individual in Canton, wrote to Miss Root on 11 April 1924:

I want to assure you that during your brief visit in Canton you have sown seeds for the Bahá'í Cause which, in due time, will bring forth a thousand folds.

You have certainly given a new impetus to my religious life. I have found in the Bahá'í teachings that something which I have hitherto sought for in vain. I find that it satisfied both the requirements of the intellect and the longings of the heart.

The Bahá'í movement appeals to me in that it is a movement for the doing away of all kinds of prejudice, which is so detrimental to all kinds of thinking both spiritually and intellectually and for the ushering in of the new era of universal brotherhood through the spirit of good will.

I like the Bahá'í movement, in that it gives one the freedom to express one's religious life, in whatever way is most suited to one's nature and thinking, so long as it is for the fullest realization of self, in the attainment of the chief good of humanity.

The 1930 visit of Martha Root

When Miss Root returned to China from Hong Kong in September 1930 she visited Canton, Shanghai, and Nanking, renewing old friendships, and taking up new opportunities. Her correspondence with at this time indicates the considerable impact her public appearances and private activities as a teacher of Esperanto had on numerous individuals. K T. Yang, in Shanghai, who had assisted her work in Wuhan in 1924, and who had assisted in translating copies of her talks into Chinese, wrote:

How glad I was, you may imagine, when I found your name printed under the subject. How do you do? I hope you are always in your good health.

You are really a wonderful lady. You work diligently and permanently for your mission: for peace of the world, for spreading of Esperanto and for propaganda of your religion. I think you have certainly made some great advances for your movement. Could you kindly tell me some interesting news concerning your work during these years?

Miss Root arrived in Canton in September 1930 to find a well-planned itinerary. The Bahá'ís assisted her in meeting the Governor of Kwangtung Province, Chen Ming-Shu, and made plans for her to speak on radio, lecture at the University and other higher institutions, and meet several newspaper editors. She lectured on a Tuesday at the Government College of Telegraphy; on Wednesday at the Royal Asiatic Society (on "The Bahá'í Movement in Five Continents"); on Saturday morning at the Shanghai College (on "Bahá'í Scientific Proofs of Life after Death") and Saturday evening, at the Royal Asiatic Society lecture room, and under the auspices of the Esperanto Society (on "Esperanto as the Universal Auxiliary Language"), and late Monday afternoon another lecture at the Royal Asiatic Society lecture room. These meetings were anticipated in reports in the Shanghai Times and the China Press on 19 and 23rd September, while other reports appeared subsequently.

Similar press coverage appeared prior to Miss Root's two week visit to Shanghai. The "Day by Day column" of the North China Daily News announced in September:

"All those interested in the Bahá'í Movement will learn with interest that Miss Martha L. Root, a New York journalist, who has just made a four months journey through Persia and has been giving a series of lectures throughout South China on the Movement, will arrive in Shanghai some time in the middle of this month."

The Shanghai Bahá'ís arranged for Miss Root to lecture three times in the National Geographic Society Hall. The most significant result of her visit, however, was acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith by Dr Y.S. Tsao and his Swedish born wife, Eileen Tsao. As already noted, Miss Root had met the Tsaos during her visit in 1923. Agnes Alexander, who came to Shanghai from Tokyo "for a few days" to assist Martha Root, later recalled:

Martha bravely went out to the College without any previous introduction, but was received most kindly by Dr. Tsao and his wife, who is Swedish by birth, but American naturalized. Afterwards Dr. and Mrs. Tsao entertained us in their home and invited me to speak in the Auditorium of the College on the Bahá'í Faith to the whole student body, and a second time he called a meeting for any students who might be interested to meet and talk with us."

Martha Root described Dr Tsao, a graduate of Yale University, as "one of the keenest educationists in China and a distinguished writer of Chinese affairs". His contribution to the development of Bahá'í literature in China is discussed further below. Following her visit, meetings were being held twice each month, on Saturdays between five and seven pm. The Bahá'í community included the seven members of the Uskuli family, plus four others: Miss Cooper, Mr and Mrs Tsao, and Mr Touty. Photos of the Bahá'ís of Shanghai appear in Bahá'í World 1928-1930, p.361; 1930-1932, p.421. The Tsao's may be in a picture of Bahá'í World Vol IV. & Vol VII. There were other declarations in Shanghai during Martha Root's 1930 visit. These included Mr Chan S. Liu, of Canton. Sometime after the tragic death of her husband, Mrs Eileen Tsao moved

to Hong Kong, and later to Sweden.

Nanking

After visiting Shanghai, Miss Root travelled with the Sulaimanis to Nanking. She stayed at the Yengtze Hotel. In one week she lectured at Nanking Central University [Gin Ling? as mentioned by Sulaimani] to an audience of more than two thousand students, interviewed the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Education, as well as Dr Paul Linebarger, the legal advisor of the Chinese National Government, and several other state officials. Her 45-minute speech at Nanking Central University on Monday, 6 October, was part of a memorial service. She also met leaders of the Y.M.C.A., and addressed that group, as well as several colleges and other schools. Three thousand small booklets were later distributed to these groups.

Contact with ethnic Chinese also occurred in other countries. In 1932 members of the Chinese Club in Los Angeles, including president J. Kam Machida (the wife of a Japanese), in addition to Japanese and American Indians, attended interracial dinners sponsored by the Bahá'ís of that city (Louis Gregory, "Racial Amity in America: An Historical Overview", *The Bahá'í World* Vol. VII, 1936-1938, p.663). In Hawaii, in May 1937, Martha Root spoke with Professor Shao Chang Lee, Professor of Chinese History and Philosophy at the University of Hawaii. Lee had first encountered the Bahá'í teachings in San Francisco in 1919, when asked to lecture on "Chinese Philosophy" at the Bahá'í Centre. He knew his friend and teacher Dr Tsao to be "a great exponent of the Bahá'í teachings in China" and had discussed the Faith when visiting him in 1928, 1933, and 1935.

Kai Tai Chen:

Since the Great War has come to an end every man seems to realize the demoniacal nature of fighting. The voice of peace is now heard on all sides. Men are doing their utmost to prevent a future war. But in order to do this effectively the best method is to spread abroad the spirit and teachings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Mrs Keith Ransom-Kehler

The noted American Bahá'í traveller Keith Ransom-Kehler visited China in August 1931. Although different in temperament to Martha Root, she had a similar capacity to attract interest in the Bahá'í Faith. On the boat from Japan, for instance, she met Rev. K.T. Chung, and discussed the Bahá'í principles with him thoroughly. In November 1931, as noted above, Rev. Chung contributed the preface to Tsao's translation of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era. A.M. Suleimani reported to Ella Robarts in Green Acre:

We...had a very beautiful time last week when Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler on her way from Japan to Australia passed through Shanghai and was amongst us for one day, delivering gladdening news of Bahá'í activities in Japan and other lands.

In Shanghai Ransom-Kehler broadcast on radio, delivered public lectures, and met prominent educators and officials. From newspaper publicity in Australia, we know that Mrs Ransom-Kehler visited Dr Tsao and Mr C.S. Liu.

Publications

In 1926 M.H.A. Ouskouli was establishing a magazine, to have articles in Persian, English and Chinese. A number of Chinese writers were contributing articles to Bahá'í publications. James Y. C. Yen contributed "The Intellectual Shock in China", *Star of the West* vol 19; and "Mass Education Movement in China", *Star of the West* October 1925, 16:7. Several Bahá'í books were published in Shanghai in the early 1930s. These included *Light of the Age* (1926). Published in 1931 were *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, *The Most Great Peace*, *Paris Talks*, *The Goal of A New World Order*. *The Valuable Contribution of the Bahá'í Cause (I & II)* (1932), and *Kitab-i-Iqan* be translated into Chinese. An index to *Some Answered Questions* was published in 1933, and *Some Answered Questions*, which Shoghi Effendi had asked Chan Liu to translate about 1933, was printed in Shanghai in 1940.

Liu explained when writing to Martha Root that when Shoghi Effendi had asked him to undertake translation of *Some Answered Questions*, he found that Dr Y.S. Tsao had already commenced the task, so had not wished to duplicate the effort. Dr Tsao was tragically killed in a car accident, however, and it is believed that up to ten chapters of completed translation were lost. Mr Uskuli had then arranged for someone unfamiliar with the Bahá'í teachings to undertake the translation, and was arranging for its printing without having its accuracy checked. This same letter Martha Root sent on to Roy Wilhelm, with her added note explaining that whereas Dr Tsao was a scholar, who "insisted on perfection", Mr Uskuli was a "devoted Bahá'í who does the best he knows". She asked that the question concerning the quality of the translation not be brought up with Mr Uskuli, as it was already with the press. Besides, he had been ill, and she did not wish to worry him.

Canton

By the mid 1930s there were active Bahá'í communities in Canton, and Shanghai.

Chan S. Liu resided at 6 Park Sui Fiong Tai Tong Street Old City, Canton. In 1935 he translated some Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, including *Ishraqat*, which his colleague Mr Chow assisted in refining. In 1936 Liu translated the *Hidden Words*, also corrected by Mr Chow. He got Mr Liang, chief secretary of the Legislative Yuan, to write the introduction. Although Liu was occupied in his profession in the silk industry, he looked forward to a time when he could devote all his time to translating Bahá'í literature, which he felt his country was much in need of. He printed 2,000 copies of *The Hidden Words* in March 1937, and Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh was ready for the press at the time war broke out in August 1937. Martha Root explained to Roy Wilhelm that:

Chan was so particular about his own [translation] that he sent "Tablets of

Bahá'u'lláh" to Peiping to be looked over carefully by some great scholars.
Now it is ready to be printed.

In August 1937 Mr Liu's wife and children departed Canton to stay for several months with her parents at Kweilin, the capital of Kwangsi. The atmosphere in Canton was intense, as the government was preparing to resist attack from Japan. Liu was extremely pressed for time, but was undertaking a little translation work each morning before leaving home. Martha Root knew the value of Liu's contribution, and knew of her own illness. She urged Roy Wilhelm to stay in close touch with him. In 1939 she made inquiries on his behalf concerning migration to Australia. By 1938 Mr Liu was in Hong Kong, but by 1940 was back in Kweilin, Kwongsi, where he seems to have been in the employment of the Provincial Government. In 1944 he was at 56 Fu Hing Rd, Shamean, Canton.

Shanghai

In 1926-30 the Uskuli family resided at 41 a Kiangse Road. There were seven family members. Uskuli, two daughters and a son, a son-in-law, and his mother-in-law. Martha Root reported to Roy Wilhelm in 1937 that Mr Uskuli spoke very little english, and no Chinese, but was "eager to serve and he only lives for the Cause." During 1934-36 the Shanghai Bahá'ís maintained a library at a room at the Chinese Y.M.C.A. (BW34-36, p.79)

In 1934 the American painter Mark Tobey visited Shanghai, to visit his friend Teng Kuei, who had studied at the University of Washington in 1923. The city, wrote Arthur L. Dahl, "gave Mark fresh impressions of the energy, the fascinating lines and textures to be found in the streets of a cosmopolitan city, and also the characteristics of Chinese life, culture and art." While in China Tobey had met Dr Tsao, and on his return to the United States had arranged for a compilation on the Bahá'í approach to economics to be forwarded to him.

Another who visited the Shanghai Bahá'ís at some time was Prof. Raymond Frank Piper, chair of the department of Philosophy at Syracuse University, who had heard of the Faith in Hawaii during a 17 month journey around the world studying religion, and whose essays on the principle of unity as found in the Bahá'í Writings later appeared in the journal World Order.

Some significant Chinese Bahá'ís

Y.S. Tao's article, "The Unity of Civilization" had already appeared in Bahá'í Yearbook 1925-26 (p141-7). At this time, however, Tsao firmly believed in the suitability of the Bahá'í teachings for China, but does not seem to have been familiar with the contribution to be made through application of its' administrative order. Tsao wrote:

The Bahá'í revelation is not an organization. The Bahá'í Cause can never be confined to an organization. The Bahá'í revelation is the spirit of this age. It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahá'í Cause is an inclusive movement; the teachings of all religions and societies are found here (p. 146)

suggesting the influence either of early communications to Western audiences by Abdu'l-Bahá, based on a simplified view of its administrative requirements, or else the influence of conversations with Martha Root, who also sometimes introduced the Bahá'í Teachings in these terms. Moreover, Tsao's position in China was remote from the expanding Bahá'í communities in North America and elsewhere, was not conducive to see the emergence of Bahá'í administrative institutions in other countries. There were, additionally, Bahá'ís in other parts of the world at this time who promoted the idea that adoption of Bahá'í belief freed them from what they regarded as the limitations of "organised religion". Thus Horace Holley reported in his "Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities in the East and West" for the period 1930-1932 that:

The Cause in China has not yet developed to the point of elective Assemblies; the activities are maintained through the devoted loyalty of a few, but by these few knowledge of Bahá'u'lláh has been made to penetrate far into the consciousness of the educated class.

Dr Tsao was also active in writing for the press in China, and in translation of `Bahá'í Writings and other materials into Chinese. An article by Tsao that appeared in The North China Daily News in 1931, for instance, was forwarded by A.M. Suleiman to The Bahá'í Magazine. The Bahá'í World 1932-1934 reported:

Valuable translations by Dr. Tsao of Shanghai into Chinese included "The Tablet of Iqán", "Paris Talks of 'Abdu'l-Bahá," and the Index to "some Answered Questions," the book itself being under way in a translation expected to appear in the near future. The same faithful worker has given Chinese renderings to a number of articles and pamphlets, among them 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablet to the Committee on a Durable Peace, the Hague. (p.29)

In his essay "The Bahá'í Cause in China", which appeared in Bahá'í World 1930-1932, Dr. Tsao explained the relationship between the the Bahá'í principle of the common origin of religions was in harmony with Chinese belief. He believed the Chinese were looking for a new formulation of the Confucian teaching, "Rectify the heart, ennoble the person, regulate the family, rule the country and pacify the world", and believed it had been provided in part by Sun Yat Sen's "three principles", Nationalism, Democracy and Socialism. Tsao felt, however, that Dr Sun's formulation "The People's State, People's Rights and People's Livelihood", compared unfavourably as a "philosophy of life to regulate human behaviour", and that the Bahá'í principles, because they are based on universalism, fill China's needs:

To a real Bahá'í believer, the sight of human sufferings, ignorance and poverty will redouble his efforts to work for their improvement. Vainglory, pride and selfish gains will naturally be banished from one's thoughts. China decidedly needs such men and everybody knows it and feels it keenly. If the Bahá'í Cause can supply such men, China will accept this Cause willingly and eagerly.

In 1930 Dr Tsao had offered to translate J.E. Esslemont's work Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era into Chinese, and advanced the project quickly. In

correspondence with American Bahá'í Victoria Bedikian in November 1931 Dr Tsao indicated that the increasingly difficult conditions being experienced by the Chinese people, and the positive response to the Bahá'í Teachings that they demonstrated whenever he spoke of them, encouraged him to complete the work, which was at that time undergoing final revision. A proof copy had been sent to Agnes Alexander to assist her in the translation into Japanese. Shoghi Effendi sent a donation toward the costing of printing. The Reverend K.T. Chung wrote an introduction. "The translator of this book is neither a priest nor a theologian," Tsao wrote of himself in its introduction,

"but he believes religion to be education in the broadest sense of the world, especially as the relation of religion to the advance of civilization is so intimately intertwined. When the Bahá'í Cause was first introduced to him, he at once realized how broad and deep the principal beliefs are and how befitting they are to the present world. Several years ago in an address on "The Unity of Civilization and the Universality of Religion" given before a liberal Christian gathering, the twelve principles of the Bahá'í Faith were read to them and they at once understood that these principles are in harmony with the ideals of unity and universalism. Patriotic leaders like Dr. Sun Yat-Sen and General Chen Ming-chu who heard and read about the Bahá'í beliefs have also declared them to be highly desirable to the present needs of China and the world. They have all realized the existing conditions of social life in China and the weaknesses of human nature, so it is their belief that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh as far as they know, will be able to advance and expedite the progress of civilization, while such broad and noble principles can never produce any harm.

In 1932 a letter by Tsao appeared in Prof. Pritam Singh's *The Bahá'í Weekly*. Tsao reported that his translation of Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* was 'being revised for the last time and will soon be in print in the Chinese language'.

In the introduction to a pamphlet, *Some Principles of the Bahá'í Faith* Tsao explained that he had concluded that the Bahá'í teachings could "regenerate China". There seems to be evidence that Tsao was in contact with senior public officials in different parts of China who were sympathetic to Bahá'í ideals. Ho Chien, for example, then governor of Hunan Province, contributed an article to *World Order* after having read a copy of the North American magazine, which Tsao translated into English. It was this conviction that spurred Tsao to spend his evenings in translation work. Tsao had translated *Some Questions Answered*, part of which was destroyed during the printing process. Tsao died before being able to retranslate the destroyed passages. Mr Ouskuli approached I.S. Shen to complete the translation, which was completed by May 193(8?). (BW38-40, p567, cf *Bahá'í News* 88:8; 109,6). Dr Tsao was killed in a car accident on 8 February 1937, shortly before the arrival of Martha Root for what was to be her final visit to China.

Martha Root's fourth visit - 1937

Shanghai

Martha Root arrived in Shanghai from Japan in July 1937, and remained there until August 17. Tony Seto had written for her a letter of introduction to Dr Fong F. Sec, of the Commercial Press in Shanghai, who had studied in America, and who Seto had had met in Honolulu some years earlier in the home of Leonard Fong.

She met Walter H. Chen, for twenty years the editor of the North China Daily News and author of The New Life Movement. Chen, who read the Hidden Words (perhaps given him by Root?) was a friend of Generalissimo and Mrs Chiang Kai-Shek.

After leaving China Miss Root sent copies of her book, Tahireh the Pure to H. Touty, with a request that he forward one to the editor of the North-China Daily News. A review appeared several months later, which Touty forwarded to Root together with his own comments.

Hostilities between Japan and China commenced at 10 am on the morning of August 13. As the phones were no longer working Mr Touty sent a note to Miss Root urging her not to worry, as British, French and American forces had landed to protect the settlement. He asked if there was anything he could do for her. On the 17th Miss Root departed as a refugee on the steamship President Jefferson, which reached Manila on August 20, five minutes before the occurrence of the worst earthquake in that city in a century.

Nanking

Tony Seto, then in San Francisco, provided Martha Root with an introduction to his cousin, Dr and Mrs Ping Ling in Nankin. Miss Root was "native American," he wrote to them, "but is a world citizen and a lover of humanity. She is now on a lecture tour around the world for the Bahá'í Faith." Seto deemed it a personal favour if they could "show her the points of interest in and around Nanking", or better still, if they could "arrange to have her speak before the organisations there".

1940-1953

Following the second world war several individuals who had become Bahá'ís in North America returned to China. These included Mr Chu Yao Lung, Mr M.S. Yuan and Mr Tien Lee Chien. Mr Chu resided in Nanking and introduced his neighbour Mr H.C. Yuan to the Faith. All four migrated to Taiwan as Chinese government employees in 1949.

At about the end of 1945 Bernice Wood, who had become a Bahá'í in Washington DC in October, arrived in Chungking to work as a medical administration assistant with the UNRRA. After two months she transferred to Shanghai, where she resided for the next three and a half years. By 1949 there were Bahá'ís in Canton, Nanking & Shanghai.

Canton

In Canton Miss Root met Fuey Ling, a teacher. In January 1939 Ling wrote to Root to say she was now in charge of a normal school with 300 students, and

that she often thought of Miss Root and her "inspiring personality and of the cause you are trying to promote and spread throughout the world".

Ethiopia

There were ten Bahá'ís in Addis Ababa when the first LSA was elected on 8 November 1934. Its members were Atto Sium Gabril-ch, Atto Haila Gabril-vc, Habib Boutros, Sabri Elias-sec, Edouard Goubran, El-Saad Said, E-saad Mansour, Abdu'llahi ahmed, and Aurahil Egsabaihir. A cable announcing formation of the Asesmbly was sent to Shoghi Effendi, who replied "rejoiced, praying, love, gratitude". Mr Sabri Effendi Elias was from Alexandria in Egypt. He printed one thousand pamphlets in amerigna, and translated Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era.[1] The same work was later printed in Abyssinian. A circular letter of 21 August 1935 informed LSAs that spiritual meetings had been suspended due to the "present condition of Ethiopia".[2] Elias was forced to leave Ethiopia by socio-political events in 1935, but he and Mrs Elias returned to Addis Ababa in January 1944.[3]

A gathering was held in Addis Abba in July 1950 to commemorate the centenary anniversary of the martyrdom of the Bab.[4] Mr G.M. Bahta was secretary of Addis Ababa LSA in 1952. Other members of the LSA were Mrs Gila, Dr V. Kies, Mr Sabri Elias, Mrs Sabri, Mr Alfred Shafi, Mr Birch, Sayed Mansour, and David A. Talbot.

The Bahá'í Community of Abyssinia, now called Ethiopia, was nominated as a consolidation Territory in Africa under the responsibility of the NSA of Egypt and Sudan NSA during the Crusade. It subsequently became part of the RSA of North-East Africa, formed in 1956. Holy Days and Bahá'í Marriage certificates were recognized in Addis Ababa, and the LSA obtained legal incorporation in 1955-56[5].

By 1963 there was one LSA in the country, in Addis Ababa, and seven groups (in Adua, Alamaya, Debrezeit, Dessie, Dire-Dawa, Gondar & Jimma). There were, in addition, twelve members in other areas (Adigrat, Ambo, Awassa, Bedele, Endeselasie, Gorsum, Harar, Hosana, Kalafo, Nazareth, Wollisso, Wonji).

The Ethiopian monarchy fell in 1974.

Bibliography: See God Passes By, 331, 378, 384

Notes:

Addis Ababa LSA, circular letter, 15 December 1934. 0511/0183.

0511/0183. Sabri Elias to "Brothers in the Bahá'ís Spiritual Assembly," in West and East.

Bahá'í World 1944-1946, p57.

Bahá'í World 1950-1954, p.30

Messages to the Bahá'í World, p.93.

Europe

See:

100 Years of the Bahá'í Faith in Europe

Egypt (mirrored from bahai-library.com/hassall_notes_egypt)

Egypt is among the few territories

opened to the Faith during the ministry of Bahá'u'lláh (1853-92). Bahá'í merchants began establishing themselves in Alexandria and Cairo from the 1860s.

Haji Báqir-i-Káshání and Siyyid Husayin-i-Káshání took up residence in Egypt during the period Bahá'u'lláh was in Adrianople (GPB 176).

Bahá'u'lláh sent Haji Mulla Ali Tabrizi and Mirza Haydar Ali Isfahani to Egypt. They lived at Mansúriyya and there converted a number of people, including Haji Abu'l-Qasim of Shiraz (E.G. Browne, Materials 33). In 1888 the Khedive Isma'il

Pasha deported Isfahani to Sudan. (Cole, "Rashid Rida")

1892-1921

Mirza Abdu'l-Fadl Gulpaygani arrived in

Cairo in the mid 1890s. He taught at al-Azhar, and attracted more than fourteen teachers and students to the Faith (Cole "Rashid Rida"). Mirza Ratfi of Cairo went to Akka for the first time with Sarah Farmer as

interpreter (Ford, Oriental Rose, 176-7). Port Said Bahá'í M.T. Basheer visited Chicago in 1910 (Bahá'í News 1:5, 12)

Literature

Gabriel Sacy, a Frenchman of Syrian

origin, lived in Cairo, and had corresponded with Leo Tolstoy (Stendardo, Leo Tolstoy and the Bahá'í Faith. 23). In June 1902 Sacy printed in Cairo Du

rġgne de Dieu et de l'Afneau, connu sous le nom de Babysme. Many early treatises were published in Cairo: an Arabic history of the Bábís

(unsympathetic but well-informed) written by the Persian, Mírzá Muhammad Mahdí

Khan, Za'imu'd-Duwla, was printed in

Cairo in 1903-1904). Numerous

Persian titles were published in Cairo, including Tablets

from Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets and

Prayers from Bahá'u'lláh, The

Epistle to the Son of the Wolf; Seven

Valleys, Four Valleys and Poetry of Bahá'u'lláh, The Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá (in three volumes); Some Answered Questions; Abu'l-Fadl's Al-Fara'id, Dwrer'l-Bahiyyeh, Hujaj'l-Bahiyyih and The letters of Abu'l-Fadhl; Haider Ali's Dala'il-el-'Irfan and Bihjet'l-Sudur.

Other works published in Cairo included The History of Tahireh. Some titles were co-published with Bombay - The Book of Iqán, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's The Muduniyyeh, and Siasiyeh (BWI, 111)

Publications in Arabic included The Ishraqát, Tajalliat, Tarazat, and Kalamat and The Talks of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Europe and America.

Myron H. Phelps completed his work Life and Teachings of Abbas Effendi when in Cairo in March 1903. On 24 September, 1913, the Egyptian

Gazette printed a letter to the editor by Jean Stannard concerning the recent death of Aminius Vambéry.[1] This letter included Vambéry's testimony to the Îreligion of Abdu'l-Bahá'.[2]

Miss J. Stannard is here since the 2nd January, she arrived in Burma Rangoon about the 12/12/22 from Egypte.[3]

Haji Abdu'l-Karim travelled from Cairo to USA c.1901 (Gail, 157). Ford (Oriental Rose, 94-101) describes Karim as a trader who spent much time in Akka, from the time Bahá'u'lláh moved outside Akka until at least 1892. Gail describes Haji Ghulam Riday-i-Khurasani as "The distinguished servant of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, gardener and caretaker of the Shrine of the Báb. see Gail, 228.

Zaynu'-'Abidín Ismá'íl, surnamed 'Zaynu'l-Mukhlisín (the adorning of the sincere ones) by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, had migrated from Hamadan to Cairo. Married to Hamídih Khánúm-Aqá from Shiraz. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had spoken in their home in Cairo. In 1946 their son Fawz Zayn married Bahiyyih 'Ali

Sa'd'id-Din, daughter of a Lebanese Bahá'í who obeyed 'Abdu'l-Bahá and came to Egypt to marry Ismat Ali Effendi, daughter of the first Egyptian Bahá'í.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt

Soon after being freed from imprisonment in Palestine, 'Abdu'l-Bahá arrived in Egypt in September 1910. See Bahá'í News 1:13, 8; Bahá'í

News 1:15, Dec 12, 1910, p2; Bahá'í

News 1:17, Jan 19, 1910, p4-5; Bahá'í News 1:19, 4-5; publicity of 'Abdu'l-Bahá Bahá'í News 2:3, 5. Cairo was a centre for intellectuals and other

influential figures, a number of whom made Abdu'l-Bahá's acquaintance. Tudor-Pole visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá outside Alexandria in November 1910. An interview with him appeared in Christian

Commonwealth (1910 28 Dec),

"A Wonderful Movement in The East" (reproduced in Bahá'í

News 1:18, 1-4). Khaja-Hassan

Nizami, an Indian intellectual who

met Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt, later translated Seven

Valleys into Urdu. (Bahá'í

World Vol. III, 1930-32,

89) Sheikh Faraj, a Kurd living in Cairo, translated

Ishraqat in to Arabic during the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.[4]

Perhaps 'Abdu'l-Bahá was so well known in Egypt that there was

considerable press coverage of his funeral, a decade later. Reports of Abdu'l-Bahá's passing in Egyptian newspapers included Al

Lataif Al Musawa (Cairo) 5th December; the Sphinx of Cairo on 17 December,[5] and the Egyptian Mail (ãThe World Religion of the Future. Teachings of

Abdel-Bahá. Passing of A Great Prophet) n.d. Viscount Allenby, Egypt's High Commissioner, who had visited

with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Haifa, cabled a message of sympathy to his relatives (BWI,

28 and The Bahá'í World vol. 2, 1926-28,

15).

Following his time spent in Egypt, 'Abdu'l-Bahá sometimes spoke of his experiences there when he travelled further abroad. When in London in 1911, for instance, he said:

Knowledge is the first step; resolve, the second step; action, its

fulfilment, is the third step. To construct a building one must first of all make a plan, then one must have the power (money), then one can build. A society

of Unity is formed, that is good - but meetings and discussions are not enough. In Egypt these meetings take place but there is only talk and no result.[6]

Bahá'ís in Egypt at this time included Mirza Hassan Khorassani, "Rue Cherif Pasha", D. Mohammed Yazdi, "an oriental gentleman of pleasing manners and placid countenance". Tamaddun ul Molk and Nouraddin Zaine acted as secretaries to `Abdu'l-Bahá. Nevill G. Meakin, Miss Louisa A.M. Mathew from England, Kaem Maken of Tehran, formerly a minister of state; Haji Mirza Haydar Ali, Shaykh Momammed Baghdadi, Abdol Hosein (who was soon to visit Persia). Western pilgrims who visited Egypt included Coy, and Grey, and M & S Paine, were given hospitality in Cairo in August 1920 by Muhammad-Taqi Isfahani (In His Presence, 67). Louis Gregory visited `Abdu'l-Bahá at Ramleh beginning April 10, 1911, and remaining until 4 May.[7]

On 17 June 1913 'Abdu'l-Bahá arrived at Port Said aboard the steamship Himalaya.

From there he sent a telegram instructing many pilgrims to come to Port Said. As

there was not enough room to receive them in the hotel in which he was staying, a tent was erected on the roof for the purpose.[8] On 2 December 1913 'Abdu'l-Bahá left Alexandria to return to the Holy Land.[9]

For other information on Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt see also Star of the West 6:18, February 7, 1915, p159 "Letters from the Orient received by Miss Martha L. Root", p159-60; 9:17, January 19, 1919, p.199-2000; 9:19 Mar 2, 1919, p.217; 10:4 May 17, 1919, p73-74; 10:7 July 13, 1919, p.141-2.

There were also activities by covenant-breakers in Egypt in the early years. In God Passes by Shoghi Effendi records:

ÎThe

strenuous exertions of an ambitious Armenian, who, in the course of the first years of its establishment in Egypt, endeavored to supplant it by the

"Scientific Society" which in his shortsightedness he had conceived and was sponsoring, failed utterly in its purpose.'- God Passes By, 327

Persecution of Egyptian Bahá'ís 1919-1920

By 1915 Bahá'ís

from Cairo, Port Said and Alexandria had contributed to the Bahá'í Temple Unity Fund (BWI,69-70). A Photo of

the Bahá'í Assembly of Port Said can be seen in the first Bahá'í World.

(BWI,44) On early publishing

activities see Bahá'í Yearbook 1925-26, p.111. Edward

Mickail Youssef described his community in correspondence with Victoria Bedikian:

My father [Mickail Youssef] is a station master. As he was at Hamul, a village in Menouffia Province, he was accustomed to go every week in his rest day, at Shebin El Kom, the biggest town at that Province. After a short time there were many friends in that town. I was at the secondary school of Shebin El

Kom. Many friends sent letters to our Guardian, and He wrote to them many many beautiful and spiritual answers.

The friends were accustomed to meet regularly at my house. The number of them reached about 10. In every meeting many of the beloved were gathered to hear the word. Sometimes their number reached about 20. That state was complete about one year, and after that I finished my education, and my father also was transferred to another far town in upper Egypt, and after he was transferred to Rosetta. We hope that God may help us in spreading his light in the hearts of Rosetta and planting the seed of Bahá'u'lláh in it.[10]

1921-1957

The NSA of Egypt and Sudan was

established in 1924 and incorporated in 1934. It was later one of twelve national assemblies that participated in the

Ten Year World Crusade

Port Said

The Port Said Bahá'ís continued through the years to meet many pilgrims arriving from other countries to make their pilgrimage in the Holy Land. In 1936

the Assembly's address was in Kawala Street, Secretary 1953-38 was J.

Chawafaty. In 1923 an Assembly was

established at Kummus Saayidah [Kom-el-Saa'id?]. The Bahá'ís there also established a school (the Abbasia Charity School) and a pilgrim house, and had taught their faith in 14 towns in the Deni-Suef district.[11]

See also: "The Bahá'í Cause in Northern Egypt", Star

of the West 14:8, November 1923, p.313; The Bahá'í Cause in Egypt, Star of the West 14:12 March 1924, p.375-6. In

the mid-1920s there were Bahá'ís in Port Said, Alexandria, Isma'ílyyih and Assiut (BWI, 102). Photo of Annual Convention (BW II 1926-28, 35). Photo of Ridvan fest in Alexandria (BW 26-28, 76). Some

of the Egyptian Bahá'ís also visited Europe. Mustapha Suliman, of Port Said, travelled in Europe 25 April - 27 July 1922, visiting the Bahá'ís in Paris, London, Berlin, Stuttgart.[12]

Ecclesiastical Court Decision

In Muslim

countries of the near and middle east only recognised religions were entitled to

establish ecclesiastical courts, which presided over matters of personal status,

such as registration of birth, marriage, divorce, and inheritance. When the Muslim ecclesiastical courts denounced Egyptian Bahá'ís as heretics, who were not entitled to the benefits of Muslim law, the Bahá'ís appealed to the Egyptian government.

On 10 May 1925 an Islamic court pronounced the Faith to be independent of Islam. (Report BW II 1926-28, 31-33) (See WOB,10-12; Guardian's communications

10/1/26; 12 January 1927 in Bahá'í Administration) Hippolite Dreyus-Barney assisted the Egyptian Bahá'ís in lifting some

of the persecution they received (BWIII,210).

1940s

A photo of the National Hazirat'ul-Quds

under construction in Cairo appeared in Bahá'í

World 1940-44, p.47. It was completed by the Centenary celebrations in 1944.

(See report BW44-46, 56-59) The number of LSAs in Egypt rose to seven, with the addition of those in Suez, Tanta and Sohag.

Pioneering

Hassan Effendi

Al Saeed of Port Said and Rashad Effendi Al Hamamsy of Cairo pioneered to the Sudan in 1944, although the latter was transferred back to Egypt after six months (BW44-46, 57). There was also a pioneer to Ethiopia.

Summer School

Seventeen

attended the first Egyptian summer school, held near Port Said in July (1944?).

(BW44-6, 59).

Persecution

The Egyptian

community experienced renewed persecution in 1944. It was instigated largely by the Sharia Muslim Courts, whose

verdicts were published in newspapers without right of reply (elaborated

BW44-46, 57-8). There were disturbances in Tanta and Arish. Bahá'í marriages

were not recognised by the Immigration department. Furthermore, the Grand Mufti

of Islam in Egypt issued a statement declaring the independent status of the

Faith. The NSA was preparing a memorandum for the government seeking protection for the Egyptian Bahá'ís.

To mark the centenary of the martyrdom of the Bab, in July 1950, the NSA

of Egypt and Sudan published a memorial pamphlet and held a public meeting,

which resulted in coverage in the local press (BW50-54,20). By April 1950 the

community had been granted a burial ground by the government in Port Said (M,

4); by April 1951 right of membership on LSAs had been extended to women (M, 12,

97), and the City governate of Cairo stepped toward recognition of Bahá'í laws

of personal status, which had been codified and submitted to govt by the Egyptian NSA. (M, 12)

In June 1952 Shoghi Effendi described the Egyptian Bahá'ís as:

"the members of the second most persecuted yet resolute community established in the heart of both the Arab and Muslim worlds, who, by virtue of the position they occupy, must play a distinctive part in the emancipation of a proscribed Faith from the fetters of religious orthodoxy" (M, 36)

Abdelnasser, in *The Islamic Movement in Egypt*, records the opposition to the Bahá'í

Faith from such Islamic figures as Shikh 'Abdil-Hamid Kishk:

The famous mosque

preacher Shikh 'Abdil-Hamid Kishk accused Jews of spreading dissension around the world throughout history. He believed that Israel was created in the region to divide Muslims. Shikh Kishk accused both Israel and colonialism of creating Bahá'ísm as a means to combat Islam....[13]

Property

The NSA had to purchase site for Mashriqu'l-Adhkar in Cairo. The Guardian advised it to establish a fund for purchase of land in a Cable dated December 7 1953 (BN Jan 54, 1-2). The

property was acquired by April 1955, 17,000 sq metres on the banks of Nile (M, 81). There was also an endowment for North East Africa. By 1953 the National Hazíratu'l-Quds

in Cairo was valued at LE 11,000, Villa Safvan at Port-Fuad was worth LE 8,000, and property at Isma'iliyyij was worth LE 1,500 (ISC, 17) Land for a Summer School was acquired by Ridvan 1957. (M,116)

Ten Year Plan

In

1953 the Egyptian Bahá'ís were given a plan of expansion that required opening

6 African territories to the Faith, and consolidating eight others. (See M72)

Territories to be opened to the Faith

AFRICA:

1. French Equatorial Guinea - Knight of

Bahá'u'lláh Max Kenyerezi, October 1953

2. French West Africa - KBs Labib

Isfahani, Nov 53; Habib Isfahani, April 1954

3. Morocco (International Zone) - KB's

Manuchihi Hizari, Sept 53; Hurmuz Zindih, Sept 53; Elsie Austin Oct 53;

Muhammad-'Ali Jalili, Oct 53; Husayn & Nusraat Ardikani, Nov 53; 'Ali Akhbar

& Shayistih Rafi'i, Nov 53; 'Abbas Rafi'i, Nov 53; Richard &

Evelyn Walters, Apr 54; Richard & Mary L. Suhm, Apr 54.

4. Rio de Oro - KB Amin Battah, Oct 53.

5.

Spanish Morocco - KB's: Fawzi Zaynu'l-'Abidin & family, Oct 53; Luella

McKay, Oct 53; John & Earleta Fleming, Oct 53; Alyce Janssen, Oct 53.

6. Spanish Sahara - KB: Muhammad Mustafa

Sulaman, Oct 53.

Territories to be Consolidated

AFRICA:

1. Abyssinia

2. Algeria

3.

Eritrea

4. Libya

5. Morocco (French)

6. Somaliland

7. Sudan

8. Tunisia

In 1953 the Guardian directed Hands of the Cause Varqa and Ala'i to visit
Egypt and Sudan (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 172)

The NSA of Egypt and Sudan became the Regional Assembly for North East
Africa. It included French

Somaliland; Egypt, Sudan, Abyssinia, Libya, Eritrea, British Somaliland;
Italian

Somaliland; and Socotra Is. This Assembly was given the task of forming a National Spiritual Assembly for North West Africa, which Shoghi Effendi announced in October 1954 was to be established at Ridvan 1956.

The NSA had the task of incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly of North West Africa, and establishing a National endowment. The NSA was to establish a National Haziratul'Quds in Tunis, but was unable to complete its goals of establishing a National Bahá'í Court, and National Bahá'í Publishing Trust in Cairo. Neither was the NSA able to establish an Israel Branch. It achieved incorporation in 1961.

The NSA of North Africa was to double the number of LSAs and Localities in Egypt & Sudan, and instigate local incorporations in Egypt & Sudan.

By decree 263 of 1960, President of the United Arab Republic, Nasser, dissolved Bahá'í assemblies, confiscated their belongings, banned all Bahá'í

activities in Egypt, provided for the punishment of "any organisation or individual who performed any of the activities of the said Assemblies, by a minimum sentence of six months' imprisonment or a fine not exceeding [100 Egyptian pounds]." (Bahá'í World

1983-86, 284). The community ceased its administrative activities, but continued to hold 19-Day Feasts. Egypt ended the Ten Year plan with 13 LSAs, 11 groups & 9 isolated centres.

Muhammad Mustafa was one of the main pillars of the embattled community.

See also Sabri & Rushdie (Bahá'í World 54-63, 905); Farajullah Al-Kurdi

(Bahá'í World 54-63, 916); Ruhi (Bahá'í World 54-63, 939); GPB

176, 364-72, 195, 302, 338, 344-5, 333, 336, 400, 178, 195, 248, 286, 257, 262,

267, 280-1, 283, 290, 315, 317, 319, 327, 330, 335-6, 339-41, 343, 383-4, 388

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See M97,116,148,68

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Studies Bulletin 3:1 (June 1984), (68-71)

Bahá'í World 1954-63, 287.

"The Persecution of the Bahá'í

Community in Egypt 1985-1986", Bahá'í

World 1983-86, 283-

Notes

[1] Star of the West 4:17, January 19, 1914, p.284-6.

[2] Bahá'í Year Book, vol 1. 1925-26, 118-9.

[3] Mustafa Roumie, 27 January 1923 to Victoria Bedikian, Victorian Bedikian
Papers. 23/4-5. Syed Mustapha Roumie. US National Bahá'í Archives.

[4] Bahá'í Administration, 23.

[5] Excerpts are reproduced in The Bahá'í World vol. 2, 1926-28, 14.

[6] `Abdu'l-Bahá in London: Addresses and Notes of Conversations, London:
Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988? 54.

[7] Louis G. Gregory, A Heavenly Vista: The Pilgrimage, Washington, 1911.

[8] Mirza Amhad Sohrab, Star of the West 4:7, July 13, 1913, p.121.

[9] Ali M. Yazdi, 'Memories of Shoghi Effendi', The Bahá'í World Vol. XIX,
1983-1986, 756.

[10] 12 January ? 1935. Victoria Bedikian Papers. 31/51. E/M/ Youssef. USBA.

[11] "Bahá'í News and Notes", Star of the West 14:7, October 1923, p.214.

[12] M. Suliman to V. Bedikian, 30 July 1922. Victoria Bedikian Papers. 28/9.
Mustapha Suliman. USBA.

[13] Shikh Kishk, The Story of My Days. In Abdelnasser, Walid Mahmoud, The
Islamic Movement in Egypt: Perceptions of International
Relations 1967-1981, Kegan Paul International, London, 1994, p.138.

French Cameroun

[UN Trusteeship 1946, 1960 gained indep. as Cameroon]: Virgin Territory in
Africa allocated to the NSA of India, Pakistan and Burma during the Crusade.
KBs Samuel Njiki, April 1954; & Mehrangiz Munsiff, April 1954. Numbered over 20
by Rid57 (M,113). Ended plan with Isa at Douala, & 5 isolated centres. See M113

French Togoland

Virgin territory in Africa assigned to the United States in the Crusade KBs
David Tanyi, April 1954; Mavis Nymon, May 1954; & Vivian Wesson, May 1954.

United Nations mandate from 1946, became Togo in 1957. Numbered over 20 by Ridvan 1957 (M,113). Ended plan with LSA at Lome. See M 113

Ghana

British Togoland was a virgin territory in Africa allocated to the British Isles NSA during the World Crusade. Politically, the territory was a UN mandate from 1946 until 1957. It then joined Gold Coast in 1957, which became Ghana in 1960.

Edward Tabe and Albert Buapiah arrived in April 1954, and were both named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. The Bahá'í Community numbered over 20 by Ridvan 1957 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 113). By the end of the World Crusade it comprised 3 LSA, 2 groups & 6 isolated centres.

Hong Kong

See:

Bahá'í Faith in Hong Kong

Lesotho

Basutoland was a virgin territory in Africa allocated to Persia during the Crusade. It was a British High Commission Territory, which achieved internal self-government in 1965, and in 1966 became Kingdom of Lesotho.

Frederick & Elizabeth Laws arrived in October 1953 and were subsequently named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. In 1956 Basutoland became part of the RSA of South and West Africa. By Ridvan 1957 there were over 50 Bahá'ís in the Territory (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 113). An endowment was acquired by Ridvan 1957 (Messages to the Bahá'í World, 116). By 1963 there were six LSAs, 10 groups, and 5 individual members in other localities.

Russia

See:

Notes on the Babi and Bahá'í Religions in Russia and its territories

Somaliland

Somaliland was divided amongst the British, French & Italians. The Bahá'í community was assigned to Persia in April 1952 (M 27), and Somaliland was a consolidation Territory in Africa allocated to the NSA of Egypt and Sudan during the World Crusade. See the stories of Cyrus Samandari (Bahá'í World 1954-63, 925) and Pappiloud (Bahá'í World 1954-63, 944). The Community was part of the NSA of North East Africa from 1956, and at the end of the World Crusade there was a group at Hargeisa. See Messages to the Bahá'í World, 68-82.

Tasmania

See:

Bahá'í Faith in Tasmania 1923-1963

Zaire

Until 1960 Congo was part of the large Belgian Congo. Marthe Molitor returned to Rwanda c. 1947 having become a Bahá'í in Belgium. Assisted in forming first LSA in Brazzaville. (See a Brief Obituary in Bahá'í World 1994-95, 315). Between 1956-64 the Congo Bahá'í Community was part of the Central and East African NSA. The NSA of the Congo was established in 1970. In 1971 it was renamed the NSA of Zaire, and existed until the Bahá'í community was among religious groups banned in the Congo in 1981. In the early 1980s the religions made an application to allow general freedom of religion, and in a message of 26 November 1991 the Universal House of Justice announced the reestablishment of the NSA of the Congo Republic "after a lapse of more than a decade due to political conditions".

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Zambia

NSA formed in 1967, with its seat in Lusaka.

Zanzibar

Zanzibar, an island of Tanganika, was assigned to the Indian Bahá'í Community at Ridvan 1952.[1] At the beginning of the World Crusade it was allocated as a consolidation Territory in Africa under the responsibility of the NSA of India, Pakistan and Burma. From 1957 it became part of the RSA Central and East Africa. As at Ridvan 1963 there was a group, although an LSA had been established in 1955.[2] In 1964 Zanzibar became part of Tanzania.

Notes:

Shoghi Effendi, Messages to the Bahá'í World, 27.

Shoghi Effendi, Messages to the Bahá'í World, 85, 134.

Zululand

Zululand was annexed to the South African Province of Natal in 1897. This Consolidation Territory in Africa was allocated to the British Isles NSA during the Crusade. In 1956 it became part of the RSA of South and West Africa. By 1963 there was an LSA at Kwa Mundi, & groups at Empangeni & Umlalazi.

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