

'The eternal enemy of Islām': Abdullah Cevdet and the Baha'i religion*

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In the last days of the Ottoman Empire during the armistice period (1919–1922), Abdullah Cevdet, one of the original members of the Young Turk *Osmanî İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress),¹ caused a considerable public upset in 1922 by publishing an article on the Baha'i religion in his journal *İctihād*. Some months earlier, in November 1921, and January and February 1922, a series of articles on the Baha'i religion with the title 'A scientific study of the Baha'i movement' (Bahai hareketi hakkında ilmî bir tetebbu) was published in the same periodical, in which the author, Emin Âli, spoke positively and emphatically about the history and tenets of 'Baha'ism', based, in his own words, on the voluminous writings of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha.² In response to those articles, on 1 March 1922, Abdullah Cevdet published his article 'Mezheb-i Bahauullah—Din-i Ümem' (The doctrine of Baha'u'llah, a world religion) in no. 144 of *İctihād*.³ The religious authorities and the Turkish press quickly responded, accusing him of attacking the Prophet Moḥammad and Islam, and praising the Baha'i religion. Consequently, Cevdet was sentenced to two years in prison, although he never served his sentence.

This paper aims to analyse this case in the context of the *Weltanschauung* of Abdullah Cevdet. Was he really the irreligious materialist historians usually depict? Did he regard religion solely as a tool to effect change in society? And, in this fashion, was 'Baha'ism' just an appropriate catalyst and an intermediary step to convert Muslims to Positivism? Or was Cevdet a committed man who wished for the well-being of humankind and thus proposed the Baha'i religion as a world-embracing movement of peace? By quoting at length from Cevdet's Baha'i article and portraying his trial, I will try to show that he did not see the Baha'i religion simply as an instrument or an intermediary step between Islam and Positivism, but that he identified himself with it. This is also attested in the statements of his adversaries.

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¹ Later Committee of Union and Progress (henceforth CUP). See M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Örgüt Olarak Osmanlı İttihād ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Jön Türklük, (1889–1902)*, vol. 1, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1986; idem, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995; idem, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

² *İctihād*, no. 140, 31 Kanûn-i Evvel (November) 1921, 2952–55; no. 142, 31 Kanûn-i Sâni (January) 1922, 2983–85; no. 143, 15 Şubat (February) 1922, 2999–3003; see further the review of these articles by L. Bouvat, 'İdjtihād', *Revue du Monde Musulman* (tome cinquantième), Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1922 (Kraus Reprint, Liechtenstein, 1974), 224: 'Cette étude ... fait ressortir le caractère altruiste (mot heureusement rendu par *ghâirperest*) et humanitaire de la nouvelle religion'. Emin Âli (Sipahioğlu) was later identified with the Baha'i religion and the group of suspected Baha'is who were put on trial in 1928 in İstanbul and İzmir (Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, US 1974 edition, 168). Emin Âli was the Turkish legal representative at the Joint Tribunal of Arbitration and the representative at the Lausanne conference (1922–23). Two Turkish Baha'is Neyir Özsuca and Haydar Diriöz, interviewed by the present author (Ankara, October 2000), stated that they had met him and that he was a Baha'i, although in newspaper articles it is said that he was not. That he was a Baha'i is also attested by Cevat Kuçan, *Unutulmaz Hatıralarım* (İstanbul, 1997), 143. On Emin Âli, see Mehmet Zeki, *Türkiye Teracimi Ahval Ansiklopedisi* (Encyclopédie Biographique de Turquie, İstanbul 1930–32), III: 161.

³ *İctihād*, no. 144, 1 March 1922, 3015–17.

Abdullah Cevdet and Westernism

Abdullah Cevdet (1869–1932),⁴ of Kurdish origin and a medical doctor by profession, was a poet, translator, radical free-thinker and an ideologist of the Young Turks who led the Westernization movement in the Ottoman Empire from 1908 until 1918. After his elementary education in south-eastern Turkey, in 1889 he joined the Military Medical Academy in Istanbul. The atmosphere of French and German scientific materialism, social Darwinism and Positivism that prevailed in this school at that time soon influenced Cevdet, who had come to Istanbul as a deeply religious student. İbrahim Temo, one of the founders of the CUP, contributed much to this change, and gave Cevdet several works on chemistry, biology, and physiology by European materialists such as Ludwig Büchner, many of which Cevdet later translated into Turkish. He and some of his friends founded the secret CUP; initially there was no political programme and the aim was to educate Muslims with Western liberal ideas and culture. Because of his political activities, Cevdet was arrested several times and had to leave the country. While in exile in Geneva, Paris and Cairo, he wrote critically of the despotic Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) and his repressive regime.⁵ Cevdet published articles on political, social, economic and literary issues in *İctihâd*, which he founded in 1904 in Geneva.⁶ He used the journal to promote his modernist thoughts and thus enlighten the Muslim masses.⁷

Westernism, Islamism and Turkism were movements of thought in the Ottoman Empire which attempted to change a static Islamic society into a dynamic one, and search for a new identity and order. They can be regarded as different projects in the history of modernization in the late Ottoman Empire.⁸

⁴ Karl Süsseim, “Abd Allâh Djewdet”, *Encyclopedia of Islam* (EI¹; Supplement), Leiden/Leipzig, 1938, 55–60; Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri, 1895–1908*, Istanbul 1964 (1992⁴), 221–50; idem, *Continuity and Change in the Ideas of the Young Turks*, expanded text of a lecture given at the School of Business Administration and Economics Robert College, 1969, 13–27; Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye’de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, Istanbul 1966 (1994⁴), 246–56; Frank W. Creel, ‘The program and ideology of Dr. Abdullah Cevdet: a study of the origins of Kemalism in Turkey’ (unpublished PhD thesis), The University of Chicago, 1978; Atilla Yargıcı, *Kemalizm’in Fikir Kaynakları: Tevfik Fikret, Abdullah Cevdet, Ziya Gökalp*, Istanbul, 1993. The only published book on Cevdet is M. Şükrü Hanioglu’s political biography in Turkish: *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, Istanbul: Uçdal Neşriyat, 1981 (PhD thesis); see also idem, ‘Abdullah Cevdet’, in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 1, Istanbul 1988, 90–93. On his Kurdish identity, his advocacy of Kurdish nationalism, see Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, passim; *Yüzyılımızın başlarında Kürt milliyetçiliği ve Dr. Abdullah Cevdet*, 1. baskı, Uppsala (Sweden): Jina Nû Yayınları, 1986; Naci Kutlay, *İttihat Terakki ve Kürtler*, 3. Baskı, Beybün Yayınları, Mayıs 1992, Stockholm; see further, Martin van Bruinessen, ‘Kurdish nationalism and competing ethnic loyalties’, original English version of: ‘Nationalisme kurde et ethnicités intra-kurdes’, *Peuples Méditerranéens* no. 68–9 (1994), 11–37, online at [http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Competing Ethnic Loyalties.htm](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Competing%20Ethnic%20Loyalties.htm) (25 August 2004); idem, ‘Constructions of ethnic identity in the late Ottoman Empire and Republican Turkey: The Kurds and their Others’, online at http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/constructions_of_ethnic_identity.htm (25 August 2004); Naci Kutlay, ‘Kürt milliyetçiliğinin doğuşu’, *Özgür Politika*, 23 Ocak (January) 2004, online at <http://www.ozgurpolitika.org/2004/01/23/hab48.html> (25 August 2004); idem, ‘Modern milliyetçilik akımı ve Kürtler’, *Özgür Politika*, 24 Ocak (January) 2004, online at <http://www.ozgurpolitika.org/2004/01/24/hab45.html> (25 August 2004).

⁵ For an attempt to prevent Cevdet publishing in Geneva and cause his return to Istanbul, where Abdülhamid would grant him an audience, see the letter of Ebüzziya Tevfik at the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), *Yıldız Esas Evrakı* 15/83, no date (probably 1904–05, the period of Cevdet’s sojourn there); see also BOA, *Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat Evrakı* 289/57, dated 21 Receb 1324/11 September 1906, for the prevention of the distribution of *İctihâd* in the Ottoman Empire.

⁶ He continued its publication in Cairo and Istanbul until his death.

⁷ On *İctihâd*, see esp. Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, 221–50.

⁸ Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, London: Hurst & Company, 1964 (1998²), 337–46, 359–66; Mehmet Akgül, *Türk Modernleşmesi ve Din*, Istanbul: Çizgi, 1999. On the genesis of Islamism as a political ideology in the Ottoman Empire after 1867, see Mümtaz’er Türköne, *Siyasî İdeoloji Olarak İslamçılığın Doğuşu*, Istanbul: İletişim, 1994.

Although these approaches differ, they cannot really be separated from each other because certain of their ideas were compatible. The platform for the Westernist movement was Abdullah Cevdet's journal *İctihâd*. Though fighting for the same goal of 'modernization' (*muâsırlaşmak*), there were disagreements among thinkers as to how such goals should be achieved. Cevdet, as the leader of this group of Westernists, attributed the decline of the Ottoman Empire to its not being 'European' and believed that the intellectuals were partially responsible for this. The only solution was for the Empire to be a civilized state and nation in line with the ideas and needs of the century, that is to say, to be Westernized in the scientific sense. 'Western civilization' was the light the Ottomans had to follow: 'The West is our teacher; to love it is to love science, progress, material and moral advancement'.⁹ Cevdet's statement that 'There is only one civilization, and that is European civilization. Therefore, we must borrow western civilization with both its rose and thorn'¹⁰ was diametrically opposed to the progressive Islamists' opinion of Western civilization, as exemplified by the comments of one writer: 'This dictum must be kept in view at all times: to preserve our oriental and Islamic civilization! ... European civilization is of no use to us. It is true that Europe has reached perfection today from the standpoint of science. No one can deny that. But, that civilization does no good for mankind from a moral standpoint. Thus, one must pick the rose, and beware of the thorns! Unfortunately, we are taking up their moral vices before getting their sciences'.¹¹

Abdullah Cevdet and religion

Westernist thinkers (*Garbcılar*) like Celal Nuri, Kılıçzade Hakkı, and Abdullah Cevdet believed that religion in its present state could not perform its social functions; it was necessary to modify it according to a changing society. As Christianity had its Reformation, Islam, too, needed to be reformed. Stagnant Islamic institutions did not respond to social needs; religion had to go back to its original form which rested on rational power. Imitation (*taklid*) must be abandoned and the 'gate of *icthâd*' (individual judgement/opinion) needed to be reopened;¹² for this, however, the modern intellectual must show the way. Like everything else, religion has to evolve. Ottoman Westernists believed that if the human mind could not explain something, this was to due to its lack of capacity and not because Islam was mistaken. The Westernist framework for religion was Positivism: in this ideology the individual is autonomous—He does not depend on a superhuman power or God, but his actions are motivated by his own rational power and not by a mystical feeling. Even if man privately acts irrationally, he should approach the world rationally.¹³ As Şükrü Hanioglu puts it, the Westernists 'attempted to demystify religion by redefining it according to their materialist beliefs'.¹⁴ In order to convince the Muslims, they clothed their beliefs with an Islamic garb but they had difficulty

⁹ Abdullah Cevdet, 'Şime-i Muhabbet', *İctihâd*, no. 89 (1913) cited in Berkes, *Development of Secularism*, 357. Hanioglu, *Opposition*, 17, n. 112 gives the year as 1914.

¹⁰ Abdullah Cevdet, 'Şime-i Muhabbet'; cited in Hanioglu, *Opposition*, 17; cf. Berkes, *Development of Secularism*, 358.

¹¹ Piriştineli Kadri, 'Dinsizlik', *Sırât-ı Müstakîm*, no. 95 (1911); cited in Berkes, *Development of Secularism*, 359.

¹² Thus Cevdet's reason for choosing this Islamic *terminus technicus* as the name of his journal.

¹³ Akgül, *Türk Modernleşmesi*, 117–89.

¹⁴ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, 'Garbcılar: their attitudes toward religion and their impact on the official ideology of the Turkish Republic', *Studia Islamica*, 1997/2, August, 133–58 (140).

convincing the masses. But as Şerif Mardin rightly points out, Cevdet was none the less not a ‘vulgar’ materialist, and though he did not believe in revealed religion, he was aware of its indispensable social function and cohesive power.¹⁵

Religion played an important role in the Westernists’ agenda, and Abdullah Cevdet, probably more than any other Westernist, appears quite ambivalent in his attitudes towards religion. As a Positivist, Cevdet was suspicious towards religion and towards Islam in particular. However, he believed that Islam was a source from which progressive ideas could be drawn in order to infuse fresh blood into Muslim veins. Since Muslims rejected everything that came from the West, that is to say from Christianity, the source of enlightenment must be the progressive ideas in Islamic institutions. Thus, Muslims could be persuaded to accept modernization and westernization as Islamic concepts and later be converted to Positivism.¹⁶ Naturally, Cevdet’s unrestrained beliefs were considered in his lifetime and after as anarchistic. Cevdet saw his own role as improving and repairing the mental power of the individual.¹⁷ In a sense he regarded himself as a social reformer or a ‘physician of society’ (*tabib-i içtimai*)¹⁸ and even ascribed to himself a prophetic role: ‘Day and night I strived to enlighten you/ I went from the moon to the sun, and from the sun to the moon/ The prophets promise a paradise in the next world/ I came to make this world a paradise for you’.¹⁹

Şükrü Hanioglu depicts Abdullah Cevdet as one who made use of materialist scientific notions by stitching them ‘onto an Islamic “jacket”’.²⁰ He presents Cevdet as an enemy of religion, particularly of Islam. Criticism of and veiled or open attacks on Islam by the Westernists—including Cevdet—were concealed as refutations of superstitions: ‘Today only a careful reader could comprehend the anti-religious rhetoric squeezed between the lines of popular journals and concealed by the use of heavy materialist jargon then deemed “scientific”’.²¹ Niyazi Berkes, on the other hand, states the following with regard to Abdullah Cevdet:

For him the trouble with the people of Turkey, in fact with Muslims throughout the world, was self-evident; indolence, ignorance, subservience to superstitions erroneously identified with the religion of Islam, self-subordination to degenerate and stupid clericals [sic], and the consequences of these—technological, scientific, economic, and even biological degeneracy. The remedies were equally obvious and simple: to push, pull, if necessary lash the people into moving, working, earning, seeing, and thinking like the infidels of the West. ... An impartial survey of the files of *İçtihad* will show that Cevdet was enemy neither of Islam nor of religion in general.²²

Because Cevdet’s religiosity has been an issue of discussion, it is necessary to look in more detail at some of his statements on the purpose and usefulness of religion; it should be noted that these thoughts are brought together from a

¹⁵ Mardin, *Continuity and Change*, 23.

¹⁶ Abdullah Cevdet, *İctihad*, May 1905, 88 ff.; Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, 232. On the ideology of the early Young Turks, see Hanioglu, *Opposition*, ch. 9.

¹⁷ Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, 239.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 239.

¹⁹ Cited *ibid.*, 221.

²⁰ Hanioglu, ‘Garbçılar’, 136.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 146.

²² Berkes, *Development of Secularism*, 339–40.

number of issues of his *İctihâd* over a course of decades, hence they were not expressed at the same time.²³

Abdullah Cevdet and the Baha'i religion

Abdullah Cevdet probably first came into contact with the Baha'i religion in around 1902 when he was abroad,²⁴ but it is possible he encountered it even as early as the 1890s when 'Babi' ideas were discussed among the Young Turk leaders. As a result of Nasiru'd-Din Shah's 1896 assassination by a disciple of Jamal'u'd-Din Asadabadi 'al-Afghani', who was mistakenly regarded as a 'Babi', early Young Turk leaders like İbrahim Temo, Ahmed Rıza, and İshak Sükuti became interested in the Babi creed. The Ottoman government regarded al-Afghani as a leader of the Young Turks. The despotic shah's death, brought about by the Babis, provided Iran with a chance for reform, the Young Turks believed, and they hoped that this would lead to a similar situation in the Ottoman Empire.²⁵ Here we have the first attempts by Young Turks to see the Babi (Baha'i) religion as a motivating force.

Hanioğlu has discussed Cevdet's article on the Baha'i religion, placing it in the context of Positivist ideology. He states that Cevdet presented Baha'ism to the public as the tool for the creation of a new 'ethic' [sic], and was attracted by the pacifist outlook of Baha'ism. In the opinion of Abdullah Cevdet, this creed, which has no clerics and aims at world peace, was a stage in the evolution of society, which would ultimately give up religion and accept biological materialism.²⁶ 'Abdullah Cevdet', Hanioğlu concludes, 'later asked the Muslims to convert to Baha'ism, which he regarded as an intermediary step between Islam and Materialism, and the Young Turks' efforts to create a very liberal and progressive Islam reflected a core endeavour'.²⁷ Hanioğlu cites the following passages from Abdullah Cevdet's article as evidence:

Every religion was founded to establish mercy and fellowship. No religion, so compelling that all individuals born into it remain faithful for life of their own free will, had ever existed. That religion is only the one of mercy and love preached and instituted by Baha'ullah and his son 'Abdu'l-Baha ... The difference between religious and scientific understanding, more simply, the difference between science and religion is that science is a light without heat and religion heat without light ... Nevertheless even if religion is not purely science it always is compatible to reason, and being so is its essential and eternal condition ... Baha'ism, founded by Baha'u'llah and organized and spread abroad by 'Abdu'l-Baha, has no idea, no law which is opposed to reason²⁸

Despite Cevdet's attempt to present Baha'ism as a new 'ethical system' by supporting it with the positive aspects of Islam, using thereby Muhammad

²³ See Appendix I; since not all issues of *İctihâd* were accessible for this research, use is made of Frank Creel's translations in his PhD thesis.

²⁴ As suggested by Hanioğlu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 339; the first Baha'i group in Europe was formed in Paris. The earliest evidence for Cevdet's acquaintance with the Babi/Baha'i religions is a letter by the Orientalist David S. Margoliouth, in *İctihâd* (no. 4, Mars/March 1905, 3–5) where a sketch about Babism is given.

²⁵ For details, see Necati Alkan, 'Ottoman reform movements and the Bahâ'î Faith, 1860s–1920s', in Moshe Sharon (ed.), *Studies in Modern Religions, Religious Movements and the Bahâ'î-Bahâ'î Faiths*, Leiden: Brill, 2004, 253–74; idem, 'The Babi and Baha'i religions in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1844–1928' (PhD thesis, Ruhr University, Bochum, Germany, 2004).

²⁶ Hanioğlu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 338–9.

²⁷ Idem, *Opposition*, 202.

²⁸ Idem, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 339.

‘Abduh’s approach,²⁹ he did not succeed. In any case, the new Republican régime made it possible for him to propose that biological materialism would replace religion in Turkey, and it seems that he did not continue this discussion.³⁰ A Turkish society in which religion was secondary was one of the main features of Cevdet’s ‘utopia’, and it was his concept of ‘Westernization’, similar to the official ideology of the Turkish Republic, that gave him the opportunity to promote his ideas.³¹ This explains Haniöglü’s interpretation of Cevdet’s article.

However, Haniöglü omits those essential parts of Cevdet’s article which eulogize the Baha’i religion.³² Cevdet discusses the true nature of Christianity and Islam, which he believes came to be perverted in the course of history, and compares them with the Baha’i religion. As a result of his words and his alleged use of derogatory language in connection with Islam and favouring the Baha’i religion, he was denounced by the office of the *Şeyhülislam* and the chief prosecutor and attacked by most of the Istanbul-based newspapers. Even ‘the deputy and successor of our exalted Lord, the Prophet, his Excellency the Sultan [Vahideddin], was seriously afflicted and grieved’;³³ the latter issued an *irâde* (decree) condemning Cevdet.³⁴

The court case

Tevhid-i Efkar was one of the leading conservative newspapers that attacked the Baha’i religion and Cevdet. It saw the ‘Baha’i sect’—well-organized in

²⁹ Abdullah Cevdet mentions a talk with and a lecture by ‘Abduh in 1898 in Geneva (*İctihâd*, no. 3, 185–6). ‘Abduh is reported to have said that every truth, even that which you utter when you are alone in your room, must have an impact on the spiritual progress of mankind; see M. Horten, ‘Muhammad Abduh 1905+. Sein Leben und seine theologische-philosophische Gedankenwelt. Eine Studie zu den Reformbestrebungen im modernen Ägypten. Teil I’, in *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Orients* (1916) XIII, 85–114 (103). My thanks to Oliver Scharbrodt for this reference. See also, Haniöglü, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 137–8, for more detailed information. Moreover, it is said that ‘Abduh had met the Baha’i leader ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1879 in Beirut and was impressed by him; see Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, 193; also Juan R. Cole, ‘Muhammad ‘Abduh and Rashid Rida: a dialogue on the Baha’i religion’, in *World Order* 15, nos. 3–4 (Spring/Summer 1981), 7–16; for a recent and detailed study with new evidence, see William McCants, “‘I never understood any of this from ‘Abbás Effendi’”: ‘Abduh’s knowledge of the Baha’i teachings and his friendship with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abbás’, in Moshe Sharon (ed.), *Studies in Modern Religions*, 275–97. For new evidence, see Oliver Scharbrodt, ‘Encounters in the land of Bá: Muslim and Bahá’i accounts on the relationship between ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Muhammad ‘Abduh’, paper presented at the Religious Studies Special Interest Group, bi-annual seminar (Association for Bahá’i Studies, UK), Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, December 5–7, 2003. In his paper Scharbrodt compared Muslim and Bahá’i accounts on the relationship between ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1844–1921) and Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905), one of the most influential Muslim reformers of the nineteenth century. They met in Beirut in 1887 and exchanged letters afterwards. Although the nature of their encounter and the correspondence suggest that both were on friendly terms and shared mutual concerns for the future of the Middle East and Islam, later biographers of Muhammad ‘Abduh attempted to prove his ignorance of the nature of the Baha’i faith and its claim to supersede Islam. Scharbrodt presented a first-hand account by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá which provides new insights into their relationship. Based on both Muslim and Baha’i accounts, an attempt was made to describe the relationship between Muhammad ‘Abduh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at a later stage, after ‘Abduh had returned to Egypt and assumed prominence in the Muslim world as reformer and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá succeeded his father as head of the nascent Baha’i community.

³⁰ Haniöglü, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 339. Cevdet is reported to have said, in connection with the Baha’i who were put on trial in October 1928 in Istanbul and Izmir: ‘Don’t involve me in such matters. I am not interested in this! They can do whatever they want, it is none of my business!’; *Son Saat*, 10 October 1928, 2.

³¹ Haniöglü, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 341. For a discussion of this, see Creel, ‘The program and ideology of Dr. Abdullah Cevdet’; and Haniöglü, ‘Garbçılar’.

³² See Appendix II.

³³ ‘Adliye Müsteşârının Beyanâtı’, *Peyâm-ı Sabâh*, 23 April 1922/Şaban 1340, 3.

³⁴ *İctihâd*, no. 172, 1 December 1924, 3470; Süsseim, ‘Abd Allâh Djewdet’, 59. This was neither the first nor the last time that Cevdet was put on trial for violating sacred matters; BOA, *Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları* 180/58, dated 29 Şevval 1331/1 October 1913 and *ibid.*, 185/8, dated 5 Rebiülahir 1332/3 March 1914.

the West—as very dangerous, and threatening the Muslim world through propaganda by a great number of people. Abdullah Cevdet was seen as one stimulating that propaganda by publishing his article and presenting Islam as a religion devoid of mercy. The newspaper urged the religious authorities to act immediately to stop Baha'î activities. The article concluded that Abdullah Cevdet had been sentenced to two years' imprisonment because he presented some events in Islamic history as shameful and thus offended millions of Muslims. He attacked Moḥammad with aggressive language, and finally, 'the sentence of the irreligious (*dinsiz*) Abdullah Cevdet can be regarded as an effective lesson (*ibret-i müessire*) for those who nowadays are deceived by foreign propaganda and attack our religion. In this context, we do hope that those who are heedless in religious matters and disregard Islam be utterly punished.'³⁵

Among the opponents of Abdullah Cevdet were Ahmed Şirani,³⁶ and Mustafa Sabri, the *Şeyhülislam*³⁷ during the armistice period. Both were ulema and conservative Islamists. In an article discussing Cevdet's verdict,³⁸ Şirani wrote that the return of Abdullah Cevdet as a tumultuous publicist after his calm life as the director of Public Health³⁹ was a bad omen for Islam. It was no doubt clear that he would, as indicated by the proverb 'He will never change his habits' (*Can çıkmayınca huy çıkmaz*), proclaim a holy war (*cihad*) against religion. That Cevdet presented the Baha'î doctrine as a 'world religion' was a sign of mobilization for this holy war.⁴⁰

Why is Abdullah Cevdet so attached to Baha'ism, asks Ahmed Şirani, who saw himself as the 'compassionate opponent' of Cevdet, in another article discussing whether the Baha'î religion is pacifism.⁴¹ Why does he, while regarding religion as heat without light, consider Baha'ism—in fact a fabrication (*sani'a*) with the appellation 'religion'—as a religion without light and, instead of being antagonistic towards it, presents it as a new world-embracing light? Abdullah Cevdet provided the answer when he pleaded in court: he wrote the article being discussed, since he is a peace-loving man and because Baha'ism is pacifism. Şirani says that Cevdet has herewith shown to all present at the court the dimension of his love of Baha'ism, and presented himself as mankind's well-wisher. In the opinion of Ahmed Şirani, Cevdet shows nothing but worldly ambitions by publishing about Baha'ism in his *İctihâd* and by energetically identifying himself with the religion in court.⁴²

Abdullah Cevdet indeed did so. Note that he calls science 'light without heat' and regards religion generally as 'heat without light' in his famous article, and makes a distinction between the two. Hence, the nature of science is to

³⁵ 'Dinimiz Tecâvüz Edenlere Bir İbret-i Müessire', *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 21 April 1922, 3. This is just one example of many articles in this and other newspapers; for a translation of this article, see Appendix III. See further the list of newspaper articles attacking Cevdet in Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 300, n. 51–3.

³⁶ Sadık Albayrak, *Son Devir Osmanlı Uleması* (5 vols.), İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2000, 1: 282–3. Şirani had published three journals called *Hayrî'l-Kelâm*, *İtisâm* and *Medrese İtikâdları*.

³⁷ İsmail Kara, *Türkiye'de İslâmcılık Düşüncesi* (Metinler/Kişiler), 3 vols., İstanbul, 1987; 2: 261–310, esp. 263–5; Albayrak, 4: 116–17; see also Ülken, 79, 203, 204.

³⁸ 'Mebâhis-i Diniyye: Abdullah Cevdet Bey'in Levâhik Neşriyatı', *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 19 June 1922, 2.

³⁹ Cevdet held this post twice during the truce (1919–22). In this period he was partially forced to cease publication.

⁴⁰ For a translation of Şirani's main arguments see Appendix IV, no. 1.

⁴¹ 'Mebâhis-i Diniyye: Bahailik'teki sulhperverliğe bir nazar', *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 9 July 1922, 3. For a translation of the main points, see Appendix IV, no. 2.

⁴² For another of Ahmed Şirani's diatribes, where he represents Cevdet's article as a 'document of nonsense' that infuriated the government and the people very much, see 'Abdullah Cevdet Bey: mahkeme huzûrunda cür'etkârâne bir inkâr', *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 16 Şevval 1340/13 June 1922, 3.

illumine, to show the way; and the quality of religion is to warm up, while it does not shed light. However, Cevdet, depicted as the 'eternal enemy of Islâm,⁴³ who is said only to make use of religion as a tool for his materialist beliefs, adds that science can at best be a winter sun which does not heat and leads to the death of society. Warmth, i.e. religion, means movement; so it is for religion and not science to be the mover. And he unites both qualities in the Baha'i religion by stating that it was Baha'u'llah who for the first time provided the necessary light *and* heat. Baha'ism is 'light-shedding heat' and not a 'dark movement', he says, and expects it to be a worldwide movement of peace. Cevdet here also evokes the Baha'i principle of harmony between science and religion; he can find nothing in this religion which is opposed to reason or intellect. Although religion cannot be science itself, it is and must be consistent with intellect.⁴⁴ The last sentence of his article leaves no doubt that he was committed to the Baha'i religion: that only the divine fire in Baha'u'llah's soul can illumine the world and heat it at the same time.

To return to the conservative reaction; the newspaper *Peyâm-ı Sabâh* published letters of Mustafa Sabri in response to Abdullah Cevdet's claims, in which the *Şeyhülislam* put forward the differences between Islam and the Baha'i religion.⁴⁵ In both of his articles Sabri refers to Cevdet's thoughts on a statement in a book called *Kitabü'n-Nikâh ve't-Talâk* by the conservative Mahmud Esad Efendi, a lecturer at the Daru'l-Fünûn. The author maintains that whereas it is obligatory for the husband to pay the costs of necessary tools for hygiene, the wife has to pay the costs for unnecessary cosmetics, for medicine and the doctor's inspection. In short, Cevdet here argues that the justification of such a matter with the *Shari'a* makes it calamitous. Sabri replies that even if the intention here is good and aims to safeguard Islamic law, Cevdet and writers like him, who pretend to be great leaders of the Muslim world, are either ill-informed in matters of quranic law or intend to show with their publications that those laws belong to the Middle Ages.⁴⁶

In the defence statement he read in court, Abdullah Cevdet put forward his opinion of the Baha'i religion and the role he ascribed to it, and then defended the accusations raised against him. The following accusations were put forward against Abdullah Cevdet: (1) that he claims that Islam is devoid of mercy; (2) he had corrupted historical events; (3) he regarded the Prophet's military expeditions as merciless; (4) he attacked Islamic beliefs; and (5) he distorted the case of the Jewish tribe Qurayza. Cevdet discussed these points one by one and put forth his arguments in court.⁴⁷

Thus, after clarifying these points, Cevdet said that his philosophical and historical article does not legally contain vilifying and scornful statements. In addition, because his response to Mustafa Sabri in *Peyâm-ı Sabâh* on 13

⁴³ Süsseim, 'Abd Allâh Djewdet', 59.

⁴⁴ Reason or intellect ('*aql*') is employed by many Islamic thinkers and is also an intrinsic part of the Baha'i doctrine: 'Since the clash between science and religion did not affect the Islamic world to the same extent it did the western world, Bahá'u'lláh does not speak extensively of science in apposition or opposition to religion. He viewed the ultimate purpose of knowledge to be the moral improvement of humanity and the physical advance of civilization'; Franklin Lewis, "'First we must speak of logical proofs": discourses of knowledge in the Bahá'í writings', in *The Bahá'í Studies Review* 10 (2001/2002), 51–74 (55).

⁴⁵ Mustafa Sabri, 'Abdullah Cevdet Efendi'ye', *Peyâm-ı Sabâh*, 8 Receb 1340/7 March 1922, 2; idem, 'Hukûk-i zevciyet: Müslümanlık ve Bahailik', *Peyâm-ı Sabâh*, 19 Receb 1340/18 March 1922, 3; a rebuttal by Tahirü'l-Mevla, another Islamist, was 'Benî Qurayza Meselesi', *Peyâm-ı Sabâh*, 20 Receb 1340/19 March 1922, 3; Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 339, n. 45, renders this last title as 'Beni Fariza Meselesi'.

⁴⁶ Mustafa Sabri, 'Abdullah Cevdet Efendi'ye', *Peyâm-ı Sabâh*, 8 Receb 1340/7 March 1922, 2.

⁴⁷ *İctihâd*, no. 149, 11 September 1922, 3092–3101. See Appendix V.

March 1922,⁴⁸ where he quotes from the Quran, was studied, proofread, and confirmed before publication by the censors and the office of the *Şeyhülislam*, he had no responsibility for its content. He believed that this court was not a court of the Middle Ages and that he would be found not guilty.⁴⁹

From the very beginning, Abdullah Cevdet turned his trial into an issue of freedom of conscience (*hürriyet-i vicdân*).⁵⁰ During the months after his sentence was passed, he published a series of articles on 'martyrs of freedom of thought' where he dealt with European thinkers who were condemned because they had uttered their thoughts freely.⁵¹ He often quoted statements of European thinkers in this regard to underpin the matter of freedom of thought and conscience, such as 'Let them say what they want to say; let them blame you, condemn you, imprison you, let them hang you. But always make public your thoughts'.⁵² In civilized nations like England, Cevdet states elsewhere, divergences of belief among educated people are not a source of disregard and hate. For instance, a person believing in the next life can be a friend of one who does not believe this. They listen to one another's arguments and leave, whether convinced or not, without a feeling of enmity. The degree of a nation's state of civilization is measured by the extent to which it respects the freedom of conscience and thought. He assures his readers that he has not read this in printed books but in the book of his life, while having lived in England. There, nobody bothers whether you are a Christian, a Jew, a Zoroastrian or even an atheist. In Cevdet's eyes a person 'who does not have the freedom to say what he thinks has lost half his soul. If, when I say what I think, I am in peril of being called a heretic and cursed, won't I be impelled and forced not to appear as I am, and not to be as I appear? Isn't this state of affairs hypocrisy and a sham?'⁵³ One has to take sides against another person through his ideas and not by inciting a heated discussion, as did the *Şeyhülislam* Mustafa Sabri.⁵⁴ To recapitulate his arguments with regard to those freedoms it is again worthwhile to listen to Cevdet himself:⁵⁵

(An article) printed eleven years ago⁵⁶—that is filled with feelings of enthusiasm for Islam and national patriotism⁵⁷—was deemed an attack upon religion, but it didn't result in a single legal action. Eleven years later the article 'The sect of Baha'u'llah', has had its author dragged through the courts for a year, and has subjected him to extensive material and moral damages. And he is still being prosecuted for fines and

⁴⁸ 'Fâzıl-ı muhterem Mustafa Sabri Efendi hazretlerine', *Peyâm-ı Sabâh*, 13 Receb 1340/13 March 1922, 3.

⁴⁹ *İctihâd*, no. 149, 11 September 1922, 3100–01.

⁵⁰ 'Hürriyet-i vicdân meselesi' in *İctihâd*, 15 April 1922, no. 147, 3063–4; Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 300.

⁵¹ 'Hürriyet-i Fikriyye Şehidleri', *İctihâd*, no. 158, 1 Teşrin-i Evvel (October) 1923, 3237–9; no. 159, 4 Teşrin-i Sâni (November) 1923, 3253–8; no. 160, 1 Kânun-i Evvel (December) 1923, 3269–71; no. 161, 1 Kânun-i Sâni (January) 1924, 3285 ff.; no. 162, 1 Şubat (February) 1924, 3301 ff.

⁵² 'Laissez dire, laissez vous blâmer, condamner, emprisonner, laissez-vous pendre, mais publiez vos pensées'; *İctihâd*, no. 148, 25 July 1922, 3080; this statement was made by Paul-Louis Courier de Méré (1772–1825), a French political writer, classical scholar and pamphleteer, in his *Pamphlet des pamphlets* (1824); see <http://www.bmlisieux.com/litterature/courier/courie03.htm> (collection électronique de la Bibliothèque Municipale de Lisieux, 25 August 2004).

⁵³ *İctihâd*, no. 147, 15 April 1922, 3063.

⁵⁴ See 'Abdullah Cevdet Bey efendi'ye', *Peyâm-ı Sabâh*, 8 Receb 1340/7 March 1922, 2.

⁵⁵ Creel's translation, *İctihâd*, no. 154, 1 June 1923, 3179–80; cited in Creel, 'Program and ideology', 185.

⁵⁶ 'Meşihât-ı Celile'nin ta'mim ettiği duâ', *İctihâd*, no. 54, 1221, reprinted in no. 154, 3179. In this article Cevdet criticizes Muslim clerics who urge people and soldiers to recite a certain prayer 4,444 times for the victory of the Turkish army, instead of equipping it and reforming society according to modern standards, as did the Bulgarians.

⁵⁷ This phrase is not translated by Creel.

imprisonment. Within eleven years we have made progress, but not in understanding the sacred meaning of freedom, and especially the freedom of thought and conscience! I have been in Berlin, Paris, and London. What speeches I listened to there! What sharp perspectives, arguments, what slaughters I saw there against established convictions and renowned religions; not one in a thousand of these would be tolerated here. ... A person who does not come up against ideas and opinions (*ictihad*) counter [sic] to his own is not certain of the soundness and accuracy of his ideas and opinions. A person who is not free to choose and express his ideas loses half his soul, and those who make obstacles to this freedom become half-souls. A community should not be composed of half-souled individuals. May our community be a harmonious system of whole-souled individuals who are both resolute (in their opinions) and tolerant (of others).

Abdullah Cevdet also benefited from public discussion. In promoting his pacifist ideas, the general ideas of the Baha'i religion that resemble pacifism had probably attracted him to this 'doctrine' (*mezheb*) and encouraged him to create a new 'ethical system' for Turkish society.⁵⁸ His contacts with European intellectuals, especially in Austria, resulted in his interest in pacifism, women's rights and feminism. In 1922 Cevdet founded the short-lived 'Union de Pacifistes' (*Ehl-i sulh birliđi*) in Istanbul with the aim of fighting war and promoting universal peace.⁵⁹ He wrote that: 'World peace may remain an abstract concept, a dream that never materializes. But for this to be so does not prevent a person from seeing world peace as an ideal, worthy, and in the pursuit of which lives may be sacrificed. There is no prospect that tuberculosis will ever be completely eradicated from the face of the earth; it will go on forever. Does this being so render vain and worthless the formation and activity of anti-tuberculosis societies?'⁶⁰

A statement of convictions of the *Ehl-i sulh birliđi* was published in *İctihâd*,⁶¹ and here the society's and thus Cevdet's ideas very much resemble the Baha'i principles of unity of humankind, world citizenship and peace. These include more specifically the notions that: (1) every nation can render a service to humanity and thereby secure its success and happiness; (2) all nations are as limbs of a single body and dependent on each other, and the noble features of a nation can reach perfection through love and reconciliation between individuals and nations; (3) real patriotism consists of a person providing the opportunities and means for his nation to serve humanity; (4) real pacifism consists of appreciating the worth of every nation and its service to humankind and bringing about mutual assistance, solidarity, global amity and happiness; and (5) a calamity done to an individual or a nation will affect the well-being of all humankind and 'an injustice done to a single one is a menace for all'.⁶² One might also add the following statement: 'There is only one civilization and

⁵⁸ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 338.

⁵⁹ Şükrü Hanioglu, 'Ehl-i sulh birliđi', in *Istanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 36, no. 1-4, 1976-77, 239-67.

⁶⁰ *İctihâd*, 1 December 1925, 3808; He further remarked: 'We pacifists are opposed to war, not to self-defense. Between our conviction that no good for any side will come out of war (that war will destroy both the attacker and the attacked) and our regarding the right and duty of self-defense as sacred there is no inconsistency'; *İctihâd*, 1 April 1924, 3337; both quotations by Creel, 'Program and ideology', 153, 154.

⁶¹ No. 148, 25 July 1922, 3085.

⁶² The last sentence is a statement by the French philosopher Montesquie: 'Une injustice faite à un seul est une menace pour tous'; cf. *İctihâd*, no. 149, 11 September 1922, 3099. Cevdet uses it throughout his 'Guiding Principles of the Review İdjtihad', e.g. *İctihâd*, no. 172, 1 December 1924, 3468 (see Appendix).

that is the inheritance of the great human family'.⁶³ Cevdet could not convince the authorities and the public of his peace-loving ideas through the Baha'î religion. This is underscored by the fact that the 'Baha'î organizations' in Anatolia were said to have relationships with English people with whom Cevdet had close ties through the 'Society of Anglophiles' (*İngiliz Muhibleri Cemiyeti*). Furthermore, the representatives of the National Independence Army (Kemalist movement) in Istanbul are said to have regarded the Baha'îs as a fairly inactive but dangerous group.⁶⁴

The trial of Abdullah Cevdet continued until the end of December 1926 and was one of the most interesting proceedings in the history of the Turkish press. The decision to imprison Cevdet was never acted upon, but as a result of this episode the Baha'î religion was extensively discussed in Turkey. The trial was dismissed because of the abolition of the law regarding the punishment for attacking sacred matters (*enbiyâya ta'n fezâhat-i lisânîyye*).⁶⁵ Cevdet's comment on this final decision was that even if he had been dragged through the courts for four years he could nevertheless find consolation in seeing that he was the reason for abolishing such a useless and dangerous legal article.⁶⁶ The treatment of such a famous and influential figure by the religious authorities may have strengthened Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's conviction that religion must remain a private matter and may have stimulated him rapidly to continue with his modernist reforms.⁶⁷

Conclusion

In this article I have attempted to fill a gap in the scholarship on Abdullah Cevdet by challenging the notion that his *Weltanschauung* was not greatly influenced by the Baha'î religion. I tend to agree with Niyazi Berkes that Abdullah Cevdet was not as irreligious or *Vulgärmaterialist* as he is said to have been. Various statements he made throughout his life underpin the fact that he not only regarded religion as an instrument to reform society but that humankind cannot live without it because it produces peace, harmony, light and unity. Consequently, Cevdet was no enemy of religion but of bigotry and superstition. In the same vein Cevdet did not consider the Baha'î religion as a step between Islam and Positivism; a close examination of his article in *İctihâd* and his remarks in his defence statement reveal his affection for this new religious movement which, in his eyes, could have led society to the world peace humankind has sought for generations. Usually, Turkish historians and Islamists still present the Baha'î religion as a negligible Islamic sect or as a dangerous group.⁶⁸ By further elaborating Cevdet's Baha'î article and its

⁶³ *İctihâd*, no. 172, 1 December 1924, 3468 (see Appendix).

⁶⁴ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 301, n. 54; *Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Arşivi*, 39–13963; for this document, see also Ahmed Fettahoğlu's tirade, "'Yüce Adalet Evi"'nin sakinleri: bahailer', *Tarih ve Düşünce*, Şubat (February) 2000, 12–23, here 21–23; see further Ahmet Uçar, 'Bahâilik de "irtica" içinde', *ibid.*, 24–5.

⁶⁵ Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 300; *idem*, 'Abdullah Cevdet', in *İslam Ansiklopedisi* (new edition), Istanbul: 1988, 1: 92.

⁶⁶ Cited in Hanioglu, *Siyasal Düşünür*, 390, n. 14. For the last phase of his court case, see 'İctihâd Cezâ Mahkemesinde', *İctihâd*, no. 182, 15 June 1925, 3632–33; 'İctihâd'ın Davası', *İkdâm*, 30 December 1926, 2; 'Fezâhat-ı lisânîyye: yeni kanûn-i cezâ'da olmadığından Abdullah Cevdet Bey'in adem-i mes'ûliyetine karar', *İkdâm*, 31 December 1926, 3.

⁶⁷ Cevdet and Atatürk met several times personally some time in 1924/25, yet the exact content of their discussions is not known; see Creel, 'Program and ideology', 26.

⁶⁸ See e.g. Ethem Ruhi Fığlalı, *Bâbîlik ve Bahâilik*, Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1994; Süleyman Özkaya, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgeleri Işığında Bahâilik Hareketi*, İzmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 2000. Both state that their work on Babism and Baha'ism is unbiased and present it as objective academic work but in fact they are quite the opposite and full of subjective conclusions which allow the Baha'î religion to appear in a negative light.

refutations in the context of his trial, scholars of Ottoman reform movements may now begin to reconsider the place of the Baha'i religion in those movements.

*Appendix I: Statements of Abdullah Cevdet regarding religion*⁶⁹

The reasonable purpose of religion is to develop among men the spirit of concord, of love and of mercy. It is better to cease using the remedy when, in place of healing or alleviating, it aggravates the trouble. ... Belief in a Supreme Being who rules the universe according to his own caprice indicates not only enormous credulity but also gives rise to a sad weakness of the human soul, leading it to a helpless inconsistency.⁷⁰

... Our enemy is not the softas [lit. Muslim theological students; bigots] at all; our enemy is degenerate *softalik* [bigotry], which is the enemy also of the softas, of Islam, of mankind. And we sincerely wish that those who stand against us as enemies, and who attempt to insult us and characterize us as 'irreligious' would turn their faces towards the light. ... We do not want to abolish, but to perfect, the softas; but even if they say 'we do not want to be perfected', we will perfect them anyway; because—and I say this in the most unqualified fashion and with full conviction of conscience—this country's salvation and perfection depends upon the salvation and perfection of this class.

... In my opinion, the medreses, that is schools to raise a spiritual class, are as indispensable as the military school and as necessary as the medical school.⁷¹

If I had been an enemy of Islam and of Muslims, there would have been one thing for me to do: to remain a disinterested spectator of Islam and the Muslims as they rushed towards the chasm, towards extinction, destruction, abasement, slavery and disintegration. There could have been no greater enmity towards Islam than just such an action, or lack of action.⁷²

Religion is the science of the masses; science is the religion of the elites. The religion of the elites is being elevated and expanded; it is making progress. For religion, the science of the masses, to rise up, to spread out, to make progress, to become sublime, is indispensable to public security and happiness. Taking this general principle as the basis for my conceptualization, I summarize the solution for the salvation of Islam in the following fashion: to complement religion with the value of science, and to complement science with the power of religion.

The human race cannot live without religion. And religion, when it loses its capacity to bestow warmth and light on the human race, to be the stock of comfort and harmony, cannot long survive. Let those who don't like us because they don't understand us say what they will; our wish is to see religion in life, and life in religion. As for what we understand by life: it is love, it is harmony, it is light, it is concord, common sense, the sense of security; it is a perpetual, refining unity, a unifying impulse, in the hearts and souls of men.⁷³

⁶⁹ All translations in Appendix I are by Creel.

⁷⁰ 'The guiding principles of the review *İdjtihad*', *İctihâd*, no. 172, 1 December 1924, 3486. These principles were published throughout various issues in Turkish and English; Creel, 'Program and ideology', 168–9. For the first sentence, cf. *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, (UK Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982), 28: 'If a religion becomes the cause of hatred and disharmony, it would be better that it should not exist. To be without such a religion is better than to be with it'.

⁷¹ *İctihâd*, 4 April 1913, 1303–06; Creel, 'Program and ideology' 169, 170.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 9 January 1919, 2921–2; Creel, 171.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 15 April 1922, no. 154, 3072; Creel, 171.

If religion is a system of opinions and beliefs, then my thirty-five years of life (?) and my ten thousand pages of writings prove that I have it in its strongest form; even you concede this and are not aware that you concede it. But if religion is to believe in a lot of silly tales and nonsense, or to appear to believe in them, and to store up worldly goods by pandering to the ignorance and fanaticism of the people, then whoever wants religiosity in this sense of the term can have it. I reject such religiosity and loathe those who are thus religious.⁷⁴

The difference between science and religion is this, that science is a light without heat; religion is heat without light. Science at the most can be a winter sun; under its rays, which never warm one up, we can freeze to death from the cold. ... Religion is intelligence; he who has no intelligence has no religion.⁷⁵

Yes, we want to see everybody to be religious; but for us the religious man is only he who seeks the truth, who thinks the truth, who loves the truth. The day that everybody is religious in this philosophical sense of religiosity, religion will become the most sublime, the most profound, the most beautiful of institutions, both human and divine.⁷⁶

Appendix II: Translation of 'Mezheb-i Bahau'llah—Din-i Ümem'

Bahā'ism is a religion of compassion and love (*Bahailik bir din-i merhamet ve muhabbetdir*). But one could ask which religion is a religion of oppression and enmity. Has not Jesus said, 'Love one another'⁷⁷ and preached love and peace to the world? Has not Moḥammad come as a mercy for the peoples (*rahmatan li'l-'ālamīn*)⁷⁸ and said 'Do not hate one another, do not be the cause of misfortune for one another and do not envy one another. O servants of God, be all brothers'⁷⁹ Again, has not our glorious Prophet said, 'A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands'⁸⁰ Some will say to me that the same [exalted] person said 'Fight ye in the cause of God' (*qātilū fi sabīli'llāh*).⁸¹ Firstly, as a proposition and basis of our belief this is not a *hadīth* but a quranic verse; and 'fight' (*qātilū*) is the word of God, and God is 'He shall not be asked of His doings' (*lā yus'alu 'ammā yaf'alu*).⁸² Secondly, the Germans have translated *qātilū* as 'Kaempfen sie' [sic; kämpft] and the French as 'Combattez-vous'. That means that there is no difference between saying *qātilū fi sabīli'llāh* and *jāhidū fi sabīli'llāh* [*jāhidū* 'strife, endeavour', also 'fight'].⁸³ While this being so it constantly shows in a sharp and shameful way that the historical events in Christianity and Muhammadanism do not remain upon these divine principles. Their 'ghazwas' [military expeditions on behalf of Islam], their 'St. Bartholomew' [Massacre of Huguenots in France on 24 August 1572] and Crusades etc. are no wise deeds of mercy and peace. In short, the order to sell the women and children as concubines and slaves after cutting off the heads of the men of the tribe of Qurayza and throwing them in a pit, and the choice of the young and beautiful Rayhana, daughter of 'Umar,

⁷⁴ Ibid., 1 January 1925, 3486; Creel, 171–2.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 15 April 1927, 4332; Creel, 174.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 1 February 1932, 5652; Creel, 174.

⁷⁷ Cf. John, 13:34, 15:12, 17.

⁷⁸ Quran 21: 107.

⁷⁹ *Hadīth, Sahih Bukhari*, vol. 8, book 73, no. 90, 91, 92 and 99.

⁸⁰ *Hadīth, Sahih Bukhari*, vol. 1, book 2, no. 9, 10; vol. 8, book 76, no. 491.

⁸¹ See e.g. Quran 2: 190, 2: 244, 3: 167, 4: 84; cf. 4: 74–7, 9: 111.

⁸² Quran 21: 23.

⁸³ See, e.g., Quran 5: 5, 9: 41.

one of the 800 captives whose heads were cut off and thrown in a ditch, by the Prophet Moḥammad for himself can, of course, not be seen as compatible with the true spirit of mercy.

Every religion was founded to establish mercy and fellowship (*merhamet ve uhuvvet*). No religion so compelling that all individuals born into it remain faithful for life of their own free will has ever existed. That religion is only the one of mercy and love preached and instituted by Baha'u'llah and his son 'Abdu'l-Baha. Baha'u'llah says: 'Beware lest ye sow tares of dissension among men or plant thorns of doubt in pure and radiant hearts ... Commit not that which defileth the limpid stream of love or destroyeth the sweet fragrance of friendship. By the righteousness of the Lord! Ye were created to show love one to another and not perversity and rancour'.⁸⁴ These truly divine words are indispensable in that they have to be uttered and repeated and allowed to penetrate the souls profoundly in every age, especially in this age of humanity.

A spiritual teacher who set universal love, mercy and peace as a belief and who provided the necessary light (*nur*) and heat (*hararet*) has not existed before his holiness (*hazret*) Baha'u'llah. I said, 'who provided ... the heat'. The difference between religious and scientific understanding, more simply, the difference between science and religion, is that science is a light without heat and religion heat without light (*ilm hararetsiz bir nurdur; din nursuz bir hararetdir*). Let science be merely a winter sun; under its cold light we could be frozen to death.⁸⁵ As it was mentioned elsewhere, heat therefore means movement; but to be the mover (*muharrik*) is not the characteristic of the light but of the heat. Nevertheless even if religion is not purely science it is always compatible with intellect (*akıl*), and being so is its essential and eternal condition.

Our exalted lawgiver [Moḥammad] says: 'Religion is intellect; a man without intellect has no religion' (*ad-dīn huwa'l-'aql; la dīn li-man la 'aql la-hu*).⁸⁶

Baha'ism, founded by Baha'u'llah and organized and spread abroad by 'Abdu'l-Baha, has no idea, no law which is not compatible with reason, that is, Baha'ism is light-shedding heat. It is not a dark movement. This feature leads it to be a world-embracing and universal religion of peace and love. A true prophet who teaches mercy and brotherhood performs conquests in the regions of the heart completely without terror and weapons and can, although he does not claim to be a prophet, say ... : 'We were wounded, we have conquered but our field of battle never was coloured by anyone's blood'.

Never does it befit the station of those who were sent as a mercy for the people to kill but to be killed!

'Abdu'l-Baha, who said 'the candle gives its life: drop by drop it sheds its very essence in order to diffuse those tears. This shall be an example, a model for you,'⁸⁷ indeed burned like a torch, and after kindling thousands of torches he left to be alight in other worlds ...

But how much heat and light can spread from this spark? In order to heat the world the fire in Baha'u'llah's soul is necessary, a spiritual and divine fire to illumine and to heat at the same time.

⁸⁴ 'Lawh-i Hikmat', in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Wilmette, Ill: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1992 (pocket-size ed.). Cevdet ascribes this to 'Abdu'l-Baha in his footnote.

⁸⁵ Cf. *İctihâd*, 15 April 1927, 4332; cited in Creel, 174, 'The difference between science and religion is this, that science is a light without heat; religion is heat without light. Science at the most can be winter sun; under its rays, which never warm up, we can freeze to death from the cold'.

⁸⁶ For this *hadith*, cf. al-Ghazzali's *Ihya' ulum ad-din*, online at <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/gz/ihya/english/ihya-vol1-C1.htm>; see Section 7, Knowledge 95.

⁸⁷ Cf. May Maxwell, *An Early Pilgrimage*, Oxford: George Ronald, 1976 (first ed. 1917), 42.

Appendix III: An anti-Baha'i newspaper article with regard to Cevdet's case

Recently, a propaganda network of the Baha'i societies which have a well-ordered organization in America, has reached our country. Here and there signs of an extensive stimulus for the propagation of the Baha'i sect can be witnessed. The number of those—knowingly or not—being an instrument for this propaganda, increases. While the spiritual bond between millions of Muslims in different continents and the centre of the Caliphate is very significant in this most important period of history, an intensification of such activities in Istanbul will provide a grave and dangerous means for those maintaining special purposes to cause evil effects in the Islamic world. We urge our official religious institutions to direct their gaze intensely to this threat.

As part of this propaganda an article titled 'The Baha'i religion, a world-religion' [sic] and signed by Abdullah Cevdet was published in the journal *İctihâd*, no. 144, dated 1 March 1922. In this article it is said that Baha'ism is a religion of love and mercy and, in its comparison with Islam, it is purported that the holy wars of our Prophet were devoid of mercy and compassion.

Upon this article that contains aggressive charges as to hurt the feelings of Muslims, the trial against the author of the article by the chief prosecutor commenced yesterday at the court of criminal jurisdiction of the second instance.⁸⁸

Appendix IV: Ahmed Şirani's criticism of Abdullah Cevdet and the Baha'i religion

1. The return of Abdullah Cevdet as a tumultuous publicist after his calm life as the director of public health⁸⁹ is a bad omen for Islam. It was no doubt clear that he would, as indicated by the proverb 'He will never change his habits' (*Can çıkmayınca huy çıkmaz*), proclaim a holy war (*cihad*) against religion. That Cevdet presented the Baha'i doctrine as a 'world religion' was a sign of mobilization for this holy war(!). But look at this confusion of thoughts of this famous doctor: while attacking Islam and writing eulogizing poems about Baha'ism, thus forcedly separating them, he united both at the court. Answering the questions of the judge related to Baha'ism, he insultingly said 'Baha'ism is not outside Islam!' The doctor shows with the statement: 'No religion, so compelling that all individuals born into it remain faithful for life of their own free will, had ever existed. If there is such a religion, it would only be that one of mercy and love founded (preached) and instituted by Baha'u'llah and his son 'Abdu'l-Baha' in the article causing his verdict, that he first intended with this statement that no divine religion could be united with another, and therefore also not with Baha'ism which he wants to be accepted as a religion, he then talked about the unity of Islam and Baha'ism. Is this not an insult resulting of bewilderment in the presence of the court's greatness? To make us believe that Baha'ism is compatible with Islam is as problematic and erroneous as to make others believe that Baha'ism is a religion; the abundant contradictions in the matters of belief do not allow this. [...] According to Baha'ism all divine religions are annulled and abrogated; thus someone accepting Baha'ism has to believe in this. The followers of every religion approve and are convinced of the perpetuity of their particular religion. As those who have

⁸⁸ 'Dinimize tecâvüz edenlere bir ibret-i müessire', *Tevhîd-i Efkar*, 21 April 1922, 3.

⁸⁹ Cevdet held this post twice during the truce (1919–1922). In this period he was partially forced to cease publication.

not abandoned Judaism, Christianity or Islam cannot accept Baha'ism, the Baha'is likewise cannot remain as Jews, Christians or Muslims.

A real and divine religion does not allow its followers to be concerned with other religions. Islam, for instance, because it is the last and eternal religion, categorically does not allow and tolerate its unity with the religions it has abrogated. That Baha'ism leaves its door open to the faithful followers of other religions, is a proof *per se* that it is not a real and divine religion, and it appears in the guise of religion to facilitate obedience to its ordinances. For that reason 'Baha'u'llah Efendi' has given Baha'ism the appearance that it is consistent with and in unity with other religions. This stems from a shrewdness by which the faithful followers of other religions are hunted by the Baha'is' religious net until it is too late to return to their real religion. 'Baha'ism is certainly neither a religion (*din*) nor a religious doctrine (*mezheb dini*), nor a religious order (*tarikati diniyye*). In order to be a religion, a religious doctrine or a religious order, it must be based on revealed books (*kütüb-i münzele*) and a prophet sent by God (*nebi-yi mürsel*). [...] Yet Baha'ism is neither based on revealed books nor on a messenger of God. Neither can Baha'u'llah be a divine prophet, nor can his 'Lawh-i Hikmat' or others of his wretched texts be a revealed book (*kitab-ı semavî*). Baha'ism is a social and political doctrine (*meslek-i ictimai ve siyasi*). It is furthermore a kind of syncretism and its programme is similar to Socialism, and it evokes Freemasonry. The ulema of Islam and the Caliphate can in no ways tolerate the propagation of Baha'ism as a religion and above all, as a world religion, because it has perilous political aims. Abdullah Cevdet's efforts to mislead the Muslims from the main road of the Islamic *shari'a* to the blind alley of the Baha'i doctrine, is an inexcusable crime. [...]

Abdullah Cevdet uses the quranic verse 'Fight ye in the cause of God' (*qatilū fi sabilīllāh*) to show that God is not merciful, that there is a controversy and opposition between God and Moḥammad. The ignorant and bold doctor denies thereby the legitimacy and lawfulness of the holy wars and military expeditions, the purpose of which are the exalting of the word of God [i.e. proclaiming the true religion to the unbelievers]. If freedom of conscience makes opposing everything lawful then anyone has right of action and petition against Abdullah Cevdet in the name of freedom of conscience, when he opposes everything.

Abdullah Cevdet's water of life, Baha'ism, is in reality a deceitful mirage that has led him to error and to expect any benefit from it would be sheer naivety. In order to achieve a goal, a programme must have authority to confirm (*kuvve-i te'yidiyye*) which serves for the execution of its ordinances (*infaz-ı ahkâm*); this authority is either divine or human. As Baha'ism is no divine law (*şeriat-ı semavî*), 'Abdu'l-Baha Efendi cannot convince anyone that it is a divine religion (*din-i semavî*) and thus has no basis for authority to confirm. Mankind is divided into two groups; one comprises the irreligious and the other the religious. And the irreligious accept 'Abdu'l-Baha Efendi, the originator of Baha'ism,⁹⁰ as a divine prophet, who is a poor dervish, an old man in need of help.⁹¹

2. Baha'ism is no doubt a political faction, and those who accept it have but worldly ambitions. A fabrication devoid of authority to confirm cannot hope

⁹⁰ Here Şirani confuses 'Abdu'l-Baha with his father Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i religion.

⁹¹ 'Mebâhis-i Diniyye: Abdullah Cevdet Bey'in Levâhik Neşriyâtı', *Tevhid-i Efkâr*, 19 June 1922, 2.

to arouse religious feelings of obedience in the hearts of men, and therefore it is totally absurd that Baha'ism can rely on authority to confirm (*kuvvet-i te'yidiyye*). [...] The Baha'i fabrication, in order to attain authority to confirm, is bound to the formation of a powerful Baha'i government. However, we must conclude that when such a government is formed, we will witness not a trace of peace and goodness, of welfare and repose, and of compassion and love in the Baha'i state (*memalik-i Bahaiyye*). The Baha'is, who are already split into antagonistic parties and sects, as soon as they seize power, will no doubt kill each other, plunder each other's properties, and when they find an opportunity, will stain mankind with blood. [...] How will Baha'ism eradicate the conflicts and fights, wars and clashes that prevailed for ages among individuals and nations? And how will this Baha'i myth put an end to the sedition and disorder, whilst Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were not able to do it among their respective communities? Abdullah Cevdet should have shown ways to gain comfort and wealth, and not that mischievous fabrication as a path to peace and comfort; because as long as mankind suffers in hunger and poverty, the establishment of fabrications like Baha'ism will but cause new conflicts and quarrels. Cevdet has nothing but worldly ambitions by publishing about Baha'ism in his *İctihâd*, with which he energetically and exceedingly identified himself at the court.⁹²

*Appendix V: The defence statement of Abdullah Cevdet*⁹³

The First World War has caused humanity to suffer disaster after disaster, as it has poured down calamities upon Islam. It has undoubtedly overwhelmed great parts of Africa, America and Australia with blood, fire and teardrops; the whole world mourns, is destroyed, and is in agony and frustration. It searches for its saviour and herald of peace and amity; the strongest evidence for these calamities is, indisputable for all, the worldwide discord and enmity. Mankind desires a sure cord of peace and repose to cling to, a prince of unity and brotherhood, of concord and harmony; spirited and conscious eyes are seeking for such a light. It is because of this urgent longing and extraordinary need that the world's press talks about the international and worldwide Baha'i movement; a movement of thought, peace and brotherhood which arose from the East and within Islam, and sends out its splendour to the West. While it has existed for a long time, the passing of the organizer of this great movement, 'Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas Efendi, resulted in extended publications on the principles and origins of this movement, the personality of its founder, and its history, in newspapers of every creed and language. [Cevdet mentions publications from Egyptian and Syrian newspapers and even one published by Russian immigrants in Paris.] The Istanbul press has of course not remained neglectful towards this universal and widespread movement. The articles in nos. 1216 and 1217 of *Servet-i Fünûn*,⁹⁴ titled 'Garb'a meydan okuyan bir hakîm-i şark' (An Oriental sage challenging the West); the article 'Acaba garbla şark birleşecek mi?' (Will the East and the West be indeed united?) in no. 5 of the journal *Yarın*;⁹⁵ the article series 'Amerika'da bir câmi-i Bahai' (A Baha'i mosque in America) in the newspaper *Vakir*; the detailed article series

⁹² 'Mebâhis-i Diniye: Bahailik'teki Sulhperverlie Bir Nazar', *Tevhîd-i Efkâr*, 9 July 1922, 3.

⁹³ *İctihâd*, no. 149, 11 September 1922, 3092–5.

⁹⁴ The third part of the article was published in no. 1220.

⁹⁵ Vedad Bekir; 10 Teşrin-i Sâni (November) 1337/1919, 5–6.

on the Baha'i movement in the newspaper *İkdâm*, and, with this, the letter of 'Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas Efendi to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace in The Hague,⁹⁶ were published subsequently. Certainly the journal *İctihad* could not have remained indifferent to such a widespread movement of thought; therefore it has published an unbiased study containing encyclopaedic information. Thus the article that brought about his court case is nothing but a subjective deduction of those previous publications. With the word 'religion' (*din*) in the title of my article 'The doctrine of Baha'u'llah, a world religion', I have not intended a 'divine establishment' as current among the people. By using the word 'religion' in this article together with 'love' and 'mercy' always as 'religion of love', 'religion of mercy', it is clear that I used that word as meaning 'path' or 'method' (*minhac*).

Otherwise the Muslim community of Haifa, with the occasion of 'Abdu'l-Baha's passing, would not have written a statement in the manner, 'Verily, we are from God ... the Muslim community announces with complete regret and sorrow the passing of the exceedingly learned, the great benefactor, and the munificent 'Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas', and would not have ended this with the supplication, 'May God cover him with His grace and good-pleasure'. And Muhammad Murad Efendi, the mufti of Haifa, would not have said in his sermon of condolence, 'The dear departed was a well-versed learned one in the intricacies of the Islamic *Shari'a* and a great master of writing; even if his material part is absent from the eyes, his perpetual deeds will not be absent from the minds. ... O thou kind departed, you lived in grandeur, and you died in grandeur. This venerable procession and comprehensive gathering is an evident proof for your grandeur in life and death'; and again, 'Abdu'llah Efendi al-Mukhlis, among the outstanding ulama of the Azhar mosque would not have uttered the words, 'O Baha'is, this tragedy is not only your tragedy; it is the sorrow of all the Muslims! It is the misfortune of the people of the past and present. The Muhammadan Baha'i teachings (*ta'âlim-i Bahaiyye-i Muhammediyye*) are distributed in East and West, and it has numerous followers. They take part in our sorrow, as well.' With the citations above from the newspaper *an-Nafir*⁹⁷ published in Haifa, I tried to show here the purpose and meaning of the word 'religion' and that Baha'ism is part of Islam, and to prove that it cannot be considered hostile towards Islam.⁹⁸ The Baha'i religion is a religion in the sense of a model, a path of virtue and equity in dealing with others, as is expressed in the *hadîth* 'Religion is conduct' (*ad-dîn al-mu'âmalâ*).

⁹⁶ 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Jawâbnâma-yi Jan'îyyat-i Lâhây barâ-yi ijârâ-yi şulh-i umûmî*; Faraju'llah Dhaki al-Kurdi (ed.), Misr (Egypt) 1338/1920; most of this letter is translated into English, *Selections from Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha*, #227. An Ottoman Turkish translation by a certain M.'A. Gulistani was published as installments in the newspaper *İkdâm*, 'Bahai Hareketi Hakkında', 28 Teşrîn-i Sâni/November 1921, 4; 8 Kanûn-i Evvel/December 1921, 4; 2 Kanûn-i Sâni/January 1922, 5.

⁹⁷ For extracts from some speeches delivered on the memory of 'Abdu'l-Baha's death, see Jamil al-Bahri, '*Abdu'l-Bahâ wa ad-Diyânat al-Bahâ'iyya: Mawtuhu wa Tashyî' Jinâzatih*' (Pamphlet on the Passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha), al-Matba'a al-Wataniyya: Haifa 1921 (Digital republication, East Lansing, Mi.: H-Bahai, 2001, online at <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/vol5/bahri/bahri.htm>), and Hasan M. Balyuzi, '*Abdu'l-Bahâ: The Centre of the Covenant*', Oxford: George Ronald 1971, 466-473. For other tributes, see Sh. Z(aydan?), 'Abbâs Afandi wa madhhabâ al-Bâbiyya wa'l-Bahâ'iyya', *al-Hilâl*, 3 Jumada'l-Ula 1340/1 January 1922, 308-14; *al-Muqtataf* (60), 'as-Sîr 'Abbâs 'Abdu'l-Bahâ', January-May 1922, 56-58.

⁹⁸ Cevdet supports this by referring to the book *Burhân-i Lâmi*' ('The Brilliant Proof') by the noted Baha'i scholar Mirza Abu'l-Fadl Gulpaygani, a rebuttal of publications by some Protestant priests from the Anglican Church in America who saw the Baha'i religion as spreading rapidly in America and exclaimed that Islam is invading America under the name of 'Baha'ism'. The book was written December 28, 1911, in Syria, Published under the title *Burhane Lame* at Chicago, 1912, Press of Baha'i News Service. For Abu'l-Fadl, see e.g. <http://www.northhill.demon.co.uk/relistud/abulfadl.htm>, accessed 14 December 2001.

*Accusations put forward against Cevdet:*⁹⁹

1. *Muhammadanism*¹⁰⁰ is no longer based on mercy

Cevdet admits that he claimed this in his article; not only with regard to Islam, but also Christianity. However, by claiming that Islam is no longer based on mercy, he is just showing his opinion that real Islam is the essence of mercy and compassion. To say it is not based any longer on mercy, does this not mean that it is in reality based on mercy but that the principles of mercy are abandoned? Here the real Muhammadan religion is not criticized, on the contrary, the deviation from those principles of mercy is criticized. As for this criticism: because it is established on historical and scholarly proofs, it cannot be said to vilify other religions whatsoever. How much less can it be the cause of trouble and using bad language against the preacher of those principles of mercy, Moḥammad, whom he has honoured and revered several times with words such as 'our glorious Prophet', and 'our great lawgiver'. Put aside the notion that Cevdet's claim is the cause of abusive language and trouble; it is quite the opposite, a repetition of the purport of the holy tradition, accepted by Sunnis and Shiis alike: 'A day shall be witnessed by My people whereon there will have remained of Islam naught but a name, and of the Quran naught but a mere appearance. The doctors of that age shall be the most evil the world hath ever seen. Mischief hath proceeded from them, and on them will it recoil'.¹⁰¹ Is this a confirmation of true prophetic words, a verification of a deplorable truth and a historical event, of which the revered Prophet cautioned? Or is it a false accusation against 'his holiness' Moḥammad?

2. *The corruption of historical events in a shameful way*

Abdullah Cevdet replies to this by stating that no historical event has been corrupted in his article: has the massacre of 'Saint Bartholomew' not occurred? Did the Crusades not take place? Are the military expeditions (*ghazwa*) not still continuing in the Islamic world? Even if there were an inquiry and reproach, since he has used the history books which are known to the people for many ages, there is no corruption of historical events and thus this cannot be considered a crime.

3. *The military expeditions of the Prophet were not deeds of mercy and peace*

Cevdet assures us that he has, undoubtedly, talked about military expeditions on behalf of Islam and not about military expeditions of the Prophet. Moreover, when his formulation was taken from *İctihâd* to the indictment it was subject to change. His intention was to mention the military expeditions among the community of the Prophet, the battles of *Siffin* and *Jamal* between Muslims, and tragedy of *Karbala*. There is no conscious individual that will call these shameful tragedies among the Muslims, which have killed the grandchildren of the Prophet in the most merciless way and afflicted the holy household of the Prophet, as deeds of compassion and claims that they are compatible with the Islamic principles of mercy. Consequently, Cevdet's criticism of the still ongoing military expeditions for the sake of personal ambitions and politics is not contrary to the quranic command 'Do not separate ...' (*lā tafriqū ...*)¹⁰² which raises the banner of unity and monotheism, and is not at variance with the divine prohibition 'Do not become unbelievers after me by

⁹⁹ *İctihâd*, no. 149, 11 September 1922, 3095–3101.

¹⁰⁰ I am translating 'Muhammediyet,' the term used by Cevdet but I am aware of the fact that Muslims do not like this term.

¹⁰¹ Cf. <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/fundamentals/hadithsunnah/muwatta/009.mmt.html#009.9.24.91> Book 9, Number 9.24.91 (MSA-USC Hadith Database).

¹⁰² 3:103; meaning, that Muslims must not split in factions.

cutting off the necks of one another' (*la tarjī'ū ba'dī kuffāran yaḍribu ba'dakum riqāb ba'dīn*)¹⁰³ uttered by Moḥammad, and it blames the conditions that he sees on the lowest level of unbelief.

4. *Attack on Islamic beliefs*

Nowhere in his article is found, either explicitly or by implication, an attack against the Islamic faith. The Islamic faith is to believe in the unity of God, the prophethood of Moḥammad, and predestination. All the beliefs outside this are not agreed upon in the various factions and sects, and even if they are regarded as misleading, they do not constitute an attack on Islam. Cevdet says that he does not oppose the unity of God, the prophethood of Moḥammad or predestination, hence there is no attack on Islam.

5. *The case of Banu Qurayza*

Cevdet reinforces his opinion about this question with works of Muslim historians such as Abu'l-Fida. Does not 'is not compatible with' solely mean to confirm what they describe in their works, he asks. As the Prophet's companion Sa'd ibn Mu'az has carried out the decision to execute the men of the tribe, it is he, not Moḥammad, who was unmerciful. Sunnis unanimously believe that Prophets including Moḥammad are not free from error except in receiving divine revelation. The other aspect is, as expressed in the Quran, 'I am but a man like you' (*Innamā anā bashar mithlikum ...*).¹⁰⁴ And as God says in the Quran that it is permissible to take as concubines female prisoners of war, Moḥammad did not transgress divine law by taking Rayhana as his wife. This means in accordance with Sunni lines that Prophets are not free from error, and this does not spoil their infallibility at all; without violating their honour, this is 'not compatible with true compassion'.

¹⁰³ See, e.g., *Sahih Bukhari*, vol. 1, Book 3, no. 122; vol. 2, Book 26, no. 795; vol. 2, Book 26, no. 797; vol. 5, Book 59, no. 685; vol. 5, Book 59, no. 687 (<http://www.usc.edu/cgi-bin/msasearch>).

¹⁰⁴ Quran, 18:110.