

COMMUNITY HISTORIES

Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions

VOLUME 6

Edited by Richard Hollinger



STUDIES IN THE BÁBÍ AND BAHÁ'Í RELIGIONS

(formerly *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*)

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'ABDU'L-BAHÁ WITH THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY OF CHICAGO
in Lincoln Park, Chicago, May 5, 1912.

STUDIES IN THE
BÁBÍ AND BAHÁ'Í RELIGIONS

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General Editor
ANTHONY A. LEE

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RICHARD HOLLINGER



KALIMÁT PRESS
LOS ANGELES

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First Edition.

Manufactured in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
(Revised for vol. 6)

Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í history.

Vols. 5- have title: Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í religions.

(Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í religions)

Includes bibliographies and indexes.

Contents: v. 1 [no title]—v. 2. From Iran east and west /
edited by Juan R. Cole and Moojan Momen—[etc.]—v. 5. Studies
in honor of the late Hasan M. Balyuzi / edited by Moojan Momen.

v. 6. Community histories / edited by Richard Hollinger.

1. Baha'i Faith—History. 2. Babism—History.

I. Momen, Moojan. II. Series.

BP330.S78 1982 297'.9'09 83-227

ISBN 0-933770-16-2 (v. 1)

ISBN 0-933770-76-6 (v. 6)

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INTRODUCTION: BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITIES IN THE WEST, 1897-1992

by *Richard Hollinger*

In his ground-breaking work on slavery in South Carolina, Charles Joyner notes: "All history is local history, somewhere. And yet how little this obvious fact is reflected in the scholarship . . ." ¹ A similar observation could be made about the scholarship on Bahá'í history. There is a significant body of literature on the history of the Bahá'í Faith in the West, for example, but very little has been published on the history of local Bahá'í communities. ² Historians describe *the* Bahá'í community without having examined in depth any particular Bahá'í community.

This volume is intended as a first effort to fill this gap in the literature. The essays by Duane Herrmann and Phillip Smith document the history of the Bahá'í Faith in Kansas and Great Britain, respectively. The articles by Deborah Clark, Roger Dahl, Peggy Caton, and Will C. van den Hoonaard focus on specific local communities in the United States and Canada: Baltimore, Maryland; Kenosha, Wisconsin; Sacramento, California; and St. John, New Brunswick.

These local communities were, of course, affected by national and international trends in the Bahá'í Movement and their histories should be viewed in that wider context. Three of the Bahá'í communities discussed in this volume—Baltimore, Kenosha, and Enterprise (Kansas)—date back to 1897-1898. During this period the Bahá'í Faith was being spread in the West almost exclusively by means of a course of lectures developed by Ibrahim Kheiralla (a Lebanese convert) which began with metaphysical teachings and ended with instruction on the Bahá'í religion.³ When students had completed the lessons, they were asked to write a letter to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the head of the Faith in Palestine, declaring their belief. If they did so, they were invited to join the Bahá'í community. Beyond this, there appear to have been meetings, in the Chicago Bahá'í community at least, that were intended for Bahá'ís only.⁴

The communities that developed during this period, as a result, seem to have had a fairly clear definition of membership, which probably contributed to the development of Bahá'í identities among the members. Kheiralla's message, which interpreted biblical prophecies as having been fulfilled by the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, also provided a powerful basis of a new identity for at least some members of the new Bahá'í communities. Nevertheless, it is not clear that all the Bahá'ís of this period viewed the Bahá'í Faith as an independent religion. The presentation Kheiralla offered was centered on interpretation of the Bible and could have given the impression that the Faith was a movement within Christianity.

Many of Kheiralla's students were highly individualistic in their approach to religion and had already been involved in other alternative religious groups.⁵ The Bahá'í teachings (however they were understood) were on the fringes of American religious belief, and most active church members would

not have been willing to attend Bahá'í classes. Kheiralla himself observed that most of his students were persons who had left their churches and were "true seekers . . . always looking about for some new religion."⁶ These individuals were not subject to the same social constraints as active churchgoers. Such persons may have been attracted by some aspects of the Bahá'í teachings without accepting the Bahá'í scriptures as a primary source of their religious beliefs.

Even for those who accepted the Bahá'í teachings with fewer reservations, it took some time to develop personal identities in which the Bahá'í Faith was a central element. During the years 1900 to 1904, this process was facilitated in the larger Western communities by visits from several Iranian Bahá'í teachers, including Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl Gulpaygání and Mírzá Asadu'lláh Iṣfahání. These teachers, especially the former, taught that the Bahá'í Faith was an independent religion and emphasized its unique laws and rituals.⁷ The publication and distribution of Bahá'í scriptures and of some introductory literature also contributed to an independent conception of the Faith. Some Bahá'ís who found this difficult to accept left the community during this time.⁸ However, an active core of believers seems to have adopted this understanding.

While this process of consolidation was taking place in some of the oldest Western communities, the Bahá'í Faith was also spreading fairly rapidly in new localities elsewhere in North America and Europe. Consequently, while a small group of active believers with strong Bahá'í identities emerged within a few years of the founding of the first Bahá'í communities, a significant number of Bahá'ís at any given time were new to the community and probably had weak Bahá'í identities.

In 1899, according to a list compiled about the end of that year, approximately 84% of the Bahá'ís in the West resided

in four cities: New York City; Chicago; Kenosha; and Cincinnati, Ohio. These ranged in size from 69 in Cincinnati to 712 members in Chicago. Another 7% resided in seven communities in the midwestern and eastern regions of the United States (including Baltimore and Enterprise) ranging in size from 6 to 23 persons; and a roughly equal number of Bahá'ís were isolated or lived in localities with only one or two Bahá'ís. There was only one Bahá'í group on the West Coast: San Francisco, with 14 members (1%).⁹ While most of the Bahá'í communities were relatively small (the median size was 19), the larger communities may be regarded as more representative of the Bahá'í experience in 1899. (The average community size was 113.)

The Bahá'í population at the turn of the century was centered in the midwestern and northeastern regions of the United States, almost exclusively in urban areas. There were Bahá'ís from various social classes, but there were few blacks, Jews, or Catholics in the Bahá'í population then.¹⁰ Few Bahá'ís lived in rural areas. The movement had not spread significantly outside of the networks of Protestants, in urban industrial centers of the United States, where it had first taken hold. It was some time before it transcended these networks and penetrated the social barriers imposed by religion, ethnicity, and geography.

On the other hand, the geographic dispersion of the Bahá'í population to other urban centers in the West began rather quickly. According to figures collected by the United States Census in 1906, there were 24 Bahá'í communities in the United States at that time.¹¹ The average community had a membership of 53, but the average attendance at Bahá'í community meetings was probably less than 20.¹² Most of the new communities were in the Midwest and Northeast. However, between 1906 and 1908 several new communities were established in the Pacific Northwest.¹³ Between 1900 and

1907, Bahá'í groups were also formed in Honolulu, Hawaii; Stuttgart, Germany; London and Manchester, England; Paris, France; and Montreal, Canada.¹⁴ Hence, there was a trend toward geographic diffusion as well as a trend toward the development of smaller communities.

This pattern of geographic diffusion without a substantial growth in the Bahá'í population appears to have continued until the 1930s. According to the 1916 census of religions, there were 2,884 Bahá'ís in 57 communities in the United States; thus the average community had 50 members.¹⁵ The number of persons who signed a petition to 'Abdu'l-Bahá circulated in 1918 suggests that the average attendance at Bahá'í meetings was about 29 and that as many as 30% of the active Bahá'ís in North America may have then resided on the West Coast.¹⁶ By 1921, there were at least six times as many Bahá'í communities as there were in 1899.¹⁷ However, a careful analysis by Robert Stockman suggests that the number of active Bahá'ís in the United States had not increased significantly.¹⁸ We can deduce from this that there was great deal of flux in the membership of the Bahá'í community; a significant number of persons must have drifted in and out of local communities during this period.

This pattern was particularly distinct in newly formed Bahá'í communities, which tended to exhibit the characteristics of "voluntary associations" popular with the urban middle class. This essay follows Bahá'í usage in referring to these groups as "communities," but such social configurations fit this description only in the broadest sense of the term; they might more accurately be likened to social clubs or religious study classes. New communities were usually begun when one person (or a family) in a locality opened a home for Bahá'í meetings; often these would begin as study classes conducted by outside teachers. Eventually, one or more local Bahá'ís might take responsibility for conducting the meetings. Often

when such key individuals left a community, the other members did not identify strongly enough with the Bahá'í Faith to take on a leadership role. In such instances, Bahá'í communities might become temporarily inactive or disappear altogether. An example of the latter is provided in Will C. van den Hoonard's essay on the St. John community in this volume.

The rapid fluctuation in Bahá'í membership necessarily retarded the development of Bahá'í community life. This was exacerbated, for a time, by the lack of a generally accepted body of Bahá'í beliefs and the absence of clear boundaries to Bahá'í community membership. During the 1890s, individuals had been obliged to write letters declaring their faith in Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá before they could become members of Bahá'í communities. However after 1900, there was no such requirement in most places. Bahá'í meetings, therefore, were generally open to anyone.

The major gatherings in most Bahá'í communities were weekly meetings that were usually held on Sundays. In many communities these were the only Bahá'í gatherings. These meetings typically included prayers, readings from the Bahá'í sacred writings and from the Bible, a prepared talk on some aspect of Bahá'í history or the Bahá'í teachings, the reading of letters from Bahá'ís in other localities, a discussion of community business, and sometimes the singing of hymns.¹⁹ If someone unfamiliar with the Bahá'í teachings attended, an introductory talk would be given. The Nineteen-Day Feasts, social and devotional meetings called for in Bahá'í scriptures, were held in many communities beginning about 1906. But these, too, were often open meetings. In 1909 (by which time Feasts were held in most of the larger communities), Charles Mason Remey, a widely traveled Bahá'í, complained that there were almost no meetings being held just for believers.²⁰

In many communities, anyone who attended Bahá'í meet-

ings was regarded as a member of the Bahá'í community, and would have been counted in the census statistics cited above. However, many of those who attended Bahá'í meetings had not accepted Bahá'u'lláh as a prophet, had little commitment to the community, and held beliefs that were in conflict with the Bahá'í teachings. For example, between 1904 and 1912 Anna Monroe, who is not known to have ever expressed a belief in the Bahá'u'lláh, attended Bahá'í meetings in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Washington, D.C.—and even held Bahá'í meetings in her home in Berkeley.²¹ Her correspondence shows that she held 'Abdu'l-Bahá in high esteem, but that there were other spiritual teachers, such as Emmanuel Swedenborg, from whose writings she also drew inspiration and whom she may have regarded as equals of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Near the end of her life, for reasons that are not clear, she stopped attending Bahá'í meetings. Marion Yazdi, reflecting the standards of membership that developed later, recalled that Monroe "never became a Bahá'í."²² But Monroe was considered a member of the Bahá'í community while she was attending Bahá'í meetings.²³

The lack of clear community boundaries impeded the development of Bahá'í identities, especially in the smaller, newly established communities. However, in the cities with the greatest number of Bahá'ís, such as Chicago and New York, communities appear to have evolved into social configurations that were significantly different from those of smaller communities. These large communities were characterized by a wide variety of meetings and activities that drew families and individuals into interlocking social networks similar to those of a small town (or parish) church.²⁴ In some specific ways, such as the organization of choirs and the development of philanthropic endeavors, they emulated church activities. As in many of the small communities, large communities held Sunday meetings to which non-Bahá'ís were allowed (or

even encouraged) to attend. But their presence probably did not have the same impact on the proceedings that it would have had in a small community. On the other hand, if some persons regularly attended a number of different Bahá'í functions, they might develop Bahá'í identities, and be assimilated into the Bahá'í community.

In Chicago, at least, there are indications that the development of social networks within the community led to strong bonds of reciprocal obligation between the members. One example of this sense of mutual obligation is related by Roger Dahl in his essay on Kenosha in this volume. He notes that the Bahá'ís of Chicago arranged for the housing of a destitute and elderly Bahá'í from Kenosha. Their sense of obligation does not seem to have stemmed from a personal relationship with this woman; rather, they felt obliged to care for her because she was part of the community.

These large communities became centers of Bahá'í activity upon which many smaller communities depended for intellectual, moral, and material support. Even before 1900, members of the New York and Chicago communities had begun to support smaller communities in a number of ways. They conducted classes and meetings in small communities; corresponded with Bahá'ís in these places; published Bahá'í literature; and circulated copies of unpublished materials that illuminated various aspects of the Bahá'í teachings. In 1908, New York Bahá'ís launched the first English-language Bahá'í newsletter, *The Bahai Bulletin*, noting in the first issue its importance to small Bahá'í communities: "We in the large cities have no idea what this would mean to more isolated believers in small towns and villages . . . To them a paper coming regularly with news of the Cause would mean life itself."²⁵ The function of *The Bahai Bulletin* was later assumed by *Star of the West*, which was published by the Chicago Bahá'ís. In 1909, the Bahá'ís of Chicago organized

the first annual Bahai Temple Unity convention, attended by delegates from various Bahá'í communities, to facilitate the construction of a Bahá'í House of Worship in North America. All of these activities tied the Bahá'ís of small communities to a larger movement and, in the process, strengthened the Bahá'í identities of the members.

These activities, because they provided forums for discussing the Bahá'í teachings, also contributed to the emergence of a normative body of belief among the most active North American Bahá'ís. Even before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit in 1912, most of the leading Bahá'ís, though possibly a minority of those who attended local Bahá'í meetings, appear to have accepted the Bahá'í scriptures as their primary source of spiritual truth. Other religious teachings might be studied, but they would be interpreted and judged in the light of the Bahá'í teachings. Dreams, visions, and other forms of inspiration were also important in the culture of the community and were sometimes understood to validate certain forms of artistic expressions. For example, the design for the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois, was legitimized, in part, by the architect's assertion that it was "an inspiration of the creator . . . a copy of a Temple that exist[s] in the spirit world."²⁶ Personal inspiration could also provide proof of the truth of Bahá'í teachings, evidence for beliefs that were not known to have been addressed in Bahá'í scriptures and, to a more limited extent, esoteric meanings of the Bahá'í teachings. However, it was not acceptable for such inspiration to replace Bahá'í scripture as the primary source of doctrine for the community.²⁷

Although there was a degree of agreement among leading Bahá'ís concerning these matters, and this consensus was reflected in most of the published literature and much of the public discourse of the community, individualism remained at the heart of the American Bahá'í ethos. Because of this,

some Bahá'ís could defy the norms of the accepted Bahá'í epistemology by, for example, circulating documents that they claimed were letters received from 'Abdu'l-Bahá through "spiritual telepathy."²⁸ Views that were at variance with the general understanding of the Bahá'í teachings continued to be presented in Bahá'í meetings, and such opinions were occasionally found in Bahá'í publications. While Bahá'ís might express their personal disagreement with such ideas, they were reluctant to impose their views on others, even when there was a widespread consensus on a particular subject. Thus Marie Watson prefaced her criticism of a Bahá'í publication with the following disclaimer: "No one can dictate to another . . . but I must insist *for myself*, to sanction only the Principles of the Revelation as set forth by Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha." (Emphasis added.)²⁹

One Bahá'í, Charles Mason Remey, for years conducted a campaign to purge Bahá'í literature, and presentations at Bahá'í meetings, of ideas that could not be supported by Bahá'í scriptures. These efforts did achieve results, but they are significant primarily because they were so unusual. Although other Bahá'ís may have sympathized with Remey, few were willing to take such initiatives.

However, attitudes began to change in 1917 and 1918 as a result of a watershed event that has become known as the Chicago Reading Room Affair.³⁰ This controversy centered around the activities held at a Bahá'í Reading Room that had been established in Chicago, apparently as a way of reaching non-Bahá'ís with the Bahá'í message. This was supported by a number of the leading Bahá'ís of Chicago, and for a short time it seems to have been the center of Bahá'í activity in the city. However by 1917, there was a serious division in the community between those who supported the Reading Room and those who opposed the activities there. Separate meetings were held by the two rival factions, each of which

claimed to be the "Chicago Bahai Assembly" (i.e., community). Under normal circumstances, the matter would have been referred to 'Abdu'l-Bahá for resolution, but World War I had cut off communication with Palestine, making this impossible. Therefore, a committee was appointed, by persons who had gathered in Chicago to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of Bahá'u'lláh's birth, to investigate this division in the Chicago community. The Committee of Investigation concluded that the activities at the Reading Room constituted Covenant-breaking and that the participants, therefore, should be expelled from the Bahá'í community and shunned by the believers. This ruling was ratified by the delegates at the Bahai Temple Unity Convention of 1918.

Although there were a variety of accusations made against the Reading Room group and a number of unusual circumstances that led to this radical action, the primary argument for this decision was that the Reading Room group had split off from the Chicago Bahá'í community to form a separate and rival community, an act expressly forbidden by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.³¹ Behind this legalistic argument, however, lay worlds of meaning.

The dominant view of the relationship of the Bahá'í Faith to other religious teachings, which centered on the concept of "progressive revelation," allowed Bahá'ís at once to validate and transcend the teachings of the major world religions. Bahá'ís could also embrace the teachings of new religious movements, with some reservations, on the basis that they were (unknowingly) inspired by the spirit of the new age. However, the teachings of a few groups, such as Theosophists and Freemasons, were difficult for Bahá'ís to encompass. Theosophists asserted that their teachings were the distillation of truths found in all religions, and therefore the true essence of all religion—a claim that was difficult to fit into the Bahá'í paradigm without ceding the primacy of Bahá'í

scripture as the basis for spiritual truth. Beyond this, Theosophy, because it claimed to have captured the esoteric truth found in every religion, presented a paradigm into which the Bahá'í Faith could potentially be incorporated.

This potential was realized in the writings of W. W. Harmon, a Theosophist from the Boston area. He published books and circulated lessons within the Bahá'í community that offered esoteric interpretations of Bahá'í scriptures and explanations of the stations of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá that were influenced by the teachings of Theosophy. He was careful to note in his writing that the "Bahai Movement" was not responsible for his conclusions and that he was not "entering into the field of interpretation of the teachings of Baha'o'llah." This itself is evidence that explanations that contradicted or significantly exceeded the obvious meaning of the scriptures were regarded with some suspicion in certain Bahá'í circles.³² Harmon's teachings had been a source of controversy as early as 1912, and they faced increasing criticism as they became more influential.³³ The crux of the dispute in Chicago was that the Harmon lessons and other Theosophical teachings were being used in classes given at the Reading Room.

Many of the other accusations levelled against the Reading Room group—that they spread negative rumors about prominent Bahá'ís and sought to take over the leadership of the Bahai Temple Unity, for example—could have been directed at other contemporary Bahá'ís, including some of their most outspoken opponents. It was the theological challenge to the dominant Bahá'í paradigm that imbued these accusations with special meaning. If there was the possibility that Theosophy could absorb the Bahá'í Faith theologically, there was a fear that the Bahá'í community could be dominated by persons sympathetic to Theosophy. In this context, the "Harmonites" came to be seen as conspirators who sought to

usurp or infiltrate the legitimate leadership of the Bahá'í community so that they could contaminate the Bahá'í movement with Theosophical doctrines.

The Reading Room Affair, which affected a number of local Bahá'í communities in North America, continued to have repercussions throughout the 1920s. The incident marked a significant step towards defining the boundaries of the Bahá'í community. Although they were far from defeated as a force within the Bahá'í community, Bahá'ís who espoused Theosophy or other metaphysical teachings were put on the defensive. After 1918, Bahá'í leaders exhibited a greater willingness to exercise control over Bahá'í publications and presentations.

On the other hand, some prominent Bahá'ís, such as Roy Wilhelm and Agnes Parsons, felt that the conduct of the investigation had been inappropriate and sought to cultivate a more tolerant attitude in the community.³⁴ While the Reading Room Affair served to discredit metaphysical teachings, it did not challenge the participation of Bahá'ís in churches, other religious groups or movements for social change, which had also contributed to the ambiguity of community boundaries.

In fact, the involvement of Bahá'ís with other groups that promoted teachings similar to those of the Bahá'í Faith, appears to have been increasing at the very time when metaphysical teachings were coming under attack. About the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to the West (1911-1913), Bahá'ís began to place increasing emphasis on the Bahá'í social teachings in their public presentations of the Faith. Individuals might be attracted to specific Bahá'í teachings and could on that basis be considered Bahá'ís. This view seemed to be supported by some of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's public statements. For example, he was reported to have said: "To be a Bahá'í simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brother-

hood."³⁵ Responding to such exhortations, Bahá'ís became active in movements promoting peace, an international language, racial equality, and feminism.³⁶ At about this time, a view developed among some Western Bahá'ís that the purpose of the Bahá'í Faith was to spiritualize and broaden the perspective of existing organizations and movements. One such Bahá'í argued: "The Bahai Revelation is not to be organized. It remains an ideal, a force, a principle. Since organizations must be, let the old organizations remain, as many of them as prove useful. Infused with the Bahai Spirit, they can no longer conflict, duplicate or contend."³⁷ Some asserted that the Bahá'í Faith was the "esperanto of religions," whose purpose was to "coordinate the existing sects and religions but not attempt to replace them."³⁸ A number of prominent Bahá'ís felt that Bahá'ís could (and should) be active members of non-Bahá'í religious organizations. In 1911, for example, Tudor Pole encouraged the Bahá'ís of London not to leave their churches to form another sect.³⁹

During the 1910s and 1920s, many Bahá'ís, especially in the New York and Boston areas, affiliated with churches that had adopted progressive social programs, and they hired liberal clergymen to make public presentations on the Bahá'í Faith.⁴⁰ As early as 1908, Dr. Oliver M. Fisher, an Episcopalian minister, was active in the New York Bahá'í Community, where he lectured on the *Seven Valleys*; in 1910 he offered lectures on the Bahá'í Faith in London and held Bahá'í meetings his home there.⁴¹ Subsequently, Christian ministers were associated with a number of American Bahá'í communities, and as Phillip Smith observes in his essay on Great Britain, a Unitarian minister was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly there in 1927. The close association of Christian ministers with the Bahá'í community suggests that at least some Bahá'ís attended their churches. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram has argued that the affiliation of leading

American Bahá'ís with churches impeded the development of distinctive community devotional life in the United States.⁴² This might also account for the slow development of a distinct Bahá'í identity and practice in Great Britain.

The lack of a clear consensus on the meaning of Bahá'í identity and on the definition of membership in Bahá'í communities was partly rooted in the absence of local and national institutions whose authority was fully accepted by all Bahá'ís.⁴³ The Executive Board of the Bahai Temple Unity, was the first ongoing Western Bahá'í institution with more than a local scope of responsibility. Initially focusing on the task of establishing a Bahá'í Temple (*mashriqu'l-adhkár*), the body gradually took on broader responsibilities, but it generally functioned as a board of directors answerable to the delegates who elected it. The delegates themselves might achieve a consensus in a crisis such as the Reading Room Affair, but there was no regular forum at which they could consult and vote on the complex web of issues relating to Bahá'í identity.

Boards of Counsel (the precursors to Local Spiritual Assemblies), seem to have exercised more authority at a local level, but they did not always function with clear mandates to make decisions on all matters for the community. Sometimes their decisions were ratified by a general vote of the believers. In any case, most communities did not have elected consultative bodies; instead they had community officers who were elected or chosen in an informal manner by the community. As Mariam Haney, a Bahá'í since 1900, explained: ". . . the affairs of the Cause were administered by individuals who seemed naturally to have the necessary ability to function."⁴⁴ Thus, at both a national and local level, Bahá'í organization at this time could be described as a participatory democracy.

However, in the early 1920s this began to change. Shoghi Effendi, the grandson and appointed successor to 'Abdu'l-

Bahá, drawing on the principles outlined in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and in other Bahá'í scriptures, began to alter the existing Bahá'í community practices in significant ways. Local Spiritual Assemblies of nine adult members were to be elected in every community that was large enough, and they were to have the authority to govern the affairs of the community. National Spiritual Assemblies were to have authority independent of the delegates who elected them. Only persons who had declared their belief in Bahá'u'lláh were to attend Nineteen-Day Feasts or vote in Bahá'í elections.⁴⁵ The dissemination and implementation of these principles in the North American Bahá'í communities took until about the mid-1930s, and these efforts were not without opposition.

Bahá'ís who did not believe that the Bahá'í Faith should be organized, who felt that excluding non-Bahá'ís from some Bahá'í meetings contradicted the spirit of the Bahá'í teachings, or who opposed what they perceived as the dictatorial tendencies of Bahá'í administrators, coalesced around *Reality* magazine (published from 1919-1929) and the New History Society (founded in 1929). These organizations promoted the idea of an inclusive Bahá'í movement rather than an organized Bahá'í religion. However, neither of them appear to have had widespread support among Western Bahá'ís; both were able to continue their activities primarily because of the financial support of wealthy individuals.⁴⁶

After 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament began to be circulated in 1923, it became more difficult to advocate an anti-organization position, because this document included an outline for the development of Bahá'í organization. Nevertheless, many Bahá'ís continued to be troubled by what they viewed as intrusive aspects of the new Bahá'í administrative practices. When the Local Spiritual Assembly of Los Angeles sought to control the Bahá'í meetings held by Ed-

ward Getsinger, for example, he questioned their right to intervene in his personal activities and decried the "drift in the Cause toward *sectarianization*."⁴⁷

Such tension between older Bahá'ís and the newly established Bahá'í institutions was common, but the broader trend was toward acceptance of institutional authority. By 1925, support for the concept of a Bahá'í movement was so weak that *Reality* magazine sought a rapprochement with the National Spiritual Assembly.⁴⁸ Ultimately, however, neither *Reality* nor the New History Society was willing to submit to the authority of Bahá'í administrative institutions. Those who continued to be involved with these groups either distanced themselves from the Bahá'í community or were excommunicated, which effectively ended their influence among Bahá'ís.

This outcome, which became evident by the end of the 1920s, illustrates the changes that had occurred in the Bahá'í community by this time. Fifteen years earlier, the activities of *Reality* magazine and the New History Society probably would have continued within the community. As there was then no mechanism for resolving the differing concepts of Bahá'í community and Bahá'í identity, it is likely that most Bahá'ís would have viewed them not as opposition groups, but as representatives of different schools of thought within the Bahá'í Faith.

Although they did, in fact, have a profound effect on the New York Bahá'í community, the activities of the New History Society and *Reality* magazine were intended to influence the direction of the Bahá'í Faith at a national and international level. But the authority of both the Guardian and of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, the legitimacy of which they attempted to challenge, had been firmly established within the Bahá'í community by the late 1920s. There were still minor disagreements about the jurisdiction of the National Assembly

in local affairs and its relationship to National Convention delegates until the mid-1930s.⁴⁹ But by 1930, the National Spiritual Assembly was able to focus its attention on the implementation of administrative changes in local communities.

In 1931, for example, for the first time the National Assembly directed that local communities should be confined to the legal metropolitan boundaries of the town or city; those who lived outside these boundaries were to form separate communities.⁵⁰ The impact of this policy is noted in several of the essays in this volume.⁵¹ The implementation of this new rule obviously had important consequences for persons who were cut off from the communities to which they had belonged, but the loss of members was also sometimes traumatic for the rest of the community. For example, when the Berkeley Bahá'í community broke off from the San Francisco Bahá'í community, which then included all Bahá'ís in the San Francisco Bay Area, it was the San Francisco Bahá'ís who were upset by the change.⁵²

The National Spiritual Assembly also began to coordinate teaching activities in various parts of the country. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, many new local communities were established by teachers whose presentations had been approved by the National Assembly. As a result of the activities of these teachers, there was also a substantial change in membership in some of the established communities. Extended Bahá'í study classes were held in many local communities to insure that community members had a thorough understanding of the Bahá'í teachings and the principles of Bahá'í Administration.

As we can see from the articles on Kansas and Baltimore, this process of reeducation may have also functioned as a way of identifying and removing from the membership lists those individuals who were not Bahá'ís according to the new

standards. In the 1930s, it became customary in most local communities in North America for persons to be required to attend study classes for as long as a year before being allowed to enroll in the Bahá'í community.⁵³ This prevented the development of the ambiguous boundaries of membership that had existed during earlier years and resulted in much greater consistency in Bahá'í beliefs.

As the Kansas essay illustrates, some persons left Bahá'í communities when the membership requirements changed, but they were probably outnumbered by new converts. According to the 1936 census of religions, there were then 2,584 Bahá'ís in the United States in 88 Bahá'í communities.⁵⁴ Although this estimate may be slightly high, and there is some question about whether the Bahá'í population grew significantly in the previous decade, there can be little doubt that there were many new converts during this time and that their presence and involvement in Bahá'í activities changed the nature of Bahá'í communities.⁵⁵

A survey of local communities conducted in 1937 illustrates some of the changes that had taken place in Bahá'í community life. The majority of the Bahá'ís in these communities were reported to have been enrolled after the "establishment of the administrative order."⁵⁶ Hence the majority of Bahá'ís, and the total membership of some communities, had by then been socialized into a Bahá'í culture that placed great stress on organization. This did not simply entail an acceptance of the authority of Bahá'í institutions. New Bahá'ís understood that when they had accepted the Bahá'í Faith they had also joined a community in which they were obliged to be active workers. In 1937, there was an average of 6.3 committees per community, or one committee for every 4.8 persons.⁵⁷ Many tasks that had previously been handled by individuals, such as the planning of the Nineteen-Day Feast or the maintenance of a Bahá'í Library, were now handled

by committees. This came to be viewed as the proper way to accomplish most tasks; and, as the example of Edward Getsinger suggests, activities that were not under the control of an institution were seen as improper. Mariam Haney, writing in the mid-1940s, observed that in the period prior to the establishment Local Spiritual Assemblies, "even the committees did not preclude the friends from serving and teaching in accordance with their own guidance. Those were the days when the 'rugged individualism' of Americans was greatly in evidence."⁵⁸ We can infer from this statement that such individual activities were no longer the norm when she wrote this. Although, as Deborah Clark observes with regard to Baltimore, some local committees may have been quite small, it seems probable that most active Bahá'ís were on a committee.

This suggests that, in comparison to earlier periods, there was a high level of commitment among the membership. The level of participation in Bahá'í meetings also seems to have grown from earlier decades. Attendance at Feast in 1937, for example, was estimated to be, on average, 56%; in 1918, it was probably about 38%.⁵⁹ Further evidence of this commitment can be seen in the high number of Bahá'ís who "pioneered" to new localities to establish new communities in the following decade. Between 1937 and 1944, 241 Bahá'ís—5% to 10% of the North American Bahá'í population—became Bahá'í pioneers.⁶⁰

Of course, this is evidence not just of high levels of commitment, but also of changing priorities in Bahá'í communities. By the end of the 1930s, North American Bahá'í communities had been transformed into an organizational type that one sociologist has termed a "mission," an organization in which a high proportion of resources is directed towards evangelical activities.⁶¹ Beginning in 1937 in North America, and in 1940 in Great Britain, plans were developed to focus

the resources of Bahá'ís almost exclusively on the recruitment of new members. After World War II, North American Bahá'ís began systematically to spread the Bahá'í Faith in Western Europe, establishing a number of new communities.⁶² After 1937, the Bahá'í population of the United States doubled roughly every thirteen years until the 1960s, when growth became more rapid.⁶³ The Bahá'í population of Canada seems to have grown at a faster rate—doubling every five or six years—but the membership was not measured in the thousands until the 1960s.⁶⁴ Bahá'í evangelical activities in North America, some of which were attempts to attract specific minorities, began to change the demographic composition of the Bahá'í population. By 1937, about 6% of the North American Bahá'ís were former Catholics and about 2% were former Jews.⁶⁵ Both groups were underrepresented in the Bahá'í community in comparison with the larger population. This is probably because both groups had developed cohesive social networks that were difficult to penetrate; Catholics and Jews were less like to convert to any other religion than were Protestants.⁶⁶ However, several surveys suggest that Catholic and Jewish representation in Bahá'í communities did increase. In 1953, for example, 15.6% of the Bahá'ís of New York City were from a Jewish background, an increase of 10.7% from 1937.⁶⁷ In a 1968 survey of new Bahá'í converts in the United States, 15% were former Catholics and 4% were formerly Jewish.⁶⁸ Finally, a 1979 study of the membership of the Los Angeles Bahá'í community found that 7.6% of the members were former Catholics and 9.3% had been Jewish.⁶⁹

There were significant numbers of African-Americans in one community—Washington, D.C.—even before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit there in 1912. In the later 1910s and 1920s, blacks became members of at least 19 other Bahá'í communities. By 1937, they comprised about 5% of the North Ameri-

can Bahá'í population and were found in 34 communities, with the largest number in Chicago.⁷⁰ Their representation within the Bahá'í community was not equal to their percentage of the U.S. population. However, if a comparison is made just of the populations of the states in which there were Bahá'í communities, African-Americans were overrepresented in the community.⁷¹ By 1950, blacks were estimated by one observer to comprise 15% of some local communities.⁷² In the 1968 survey cited above, 13% of the new Bahá'ís were found to be black.⁷³ These percentages reflect the composition of Bahá'í communities before a surge of black conversions in 1970 and 1971.

This cultural diversity affected the development of communities in a variety of ways. In some localities, there was opposition to interracial meetings from groups such as the Ku Klux Klan,⁷⁴ and some communities were investigated by government agencies such as the FBI, presumably because organizations that sponsored integrated meetings were suspected of being influenced by Communism.⁷⁵ Such interference, when it was overt, may have contributed to a sense of community solidarity. On the other hand, cultural differences may have contributed to a diminished intimacy in the social relationships within communities. In several instances, individual members of Bahá'í communities openly opposed the integration of Bahá'í meetings. Although such positions were almost unheard of after the 1950s, subtle forms of cultural tensions remained in some Bahá'í communities, and Bahá'ís may have developed more formal social relationships within communities because this insured a certain distance from persons with whom they felt uncomfortable.⁷⁶

In any case, a trend towards greater formality seems to have been encouraged by the direction focus of Bahá'í activities for several decades. Although this has yet to be adequately studied, it appears that Bahá'í communities in the 1940s and

1950s were characterized by high levels of membership commitment to the Bahá'í Cause, but rather minimal bonds of reciprocal obligation between the Bahá'ís themselves. Bahá'ís might provide financial or other forms of assistance to each other, but this seems usually to have stemmed from an understanding that the assistance would aid someone in his or her service to the Faith. In most communities, there was little development of communal devotional activity, which might have enhanced community solidarity, and most communities were too small to offer the types of services to believers that churches could. Because of the changes in the physical boundaries of communities and the emphasis on "pioneering," Bahá'í communities tended to be smaller than in earlier decades. While the number of Bahá'í communities roughly quadrupled between 1936 and 1947, the average size of local Bahá'í communities in North America went from 30 to 15 during this period.⁷⁷ Fifteen believers came to be seen as the ideal size of a Bahá'í community; when communities exceeded this size, Bahá'ís were encouraged to move elsewhere to form new communities. In these small communities, the basic Bahá'í activities of the time—Feasts, commemorations of Bahá'í holy days, firesides, Local Spiritual Assembly meetings, and committee meetings—occupied the active Bahá'ís to such an extent that little consideration could be given to other matters.

However, in the 1960s and the 1970s the Western Bahá'í population experienced a series of significant demographic changes which changed the composition and focus of many local communities. For one, there was a relatively rapid process of suburbanization in the post-war period in North America, as middle-class families moved out of urban centers. This migration was reflected in the loss of members in urban Bahá'í communities and contributed to the growth of new communities in suburban areas, a process that is ob-

served in the essays on Sacramento and Baltimore. However, a study of the Bahá'í population in 1976 shows that the number of Bahá'ís living in suburbs was disproportionately low. It appears that many Bahá'ís left large cities to establish new communities in small towns (under 45,000), where the Bahá'í population was disproportionately high.⁷⁸

The major event that affected Bahá'í communities, however, was the rapid spread of the Bahá'í Faith, especially among youth, which occurred in a number of Western countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Bahá'í population of the continental United States during this period increased from about 11,000 in 1963 to about 75,000 in 1976; it had reached 110,000 by 1991.⁷⁹ The rate of growth appears to have been higher in Canada, where the Bahá'í population went from 554 in 1953 to 17,724 in 1986.⁸⁰ Similar growth took place in other Western countries.⁸¹

This process received impetus from the growth of the counterculture, which removed social constraints from youth that might have otherwise impeded their investigation of the Bahá'í Faith and which simultaneously encouraged the study of nontraditional religious teachings. However, few of the Bahá'í converts seem to have been deeply involved in the counterculture. In the continental United States, many of the youth conversions resulted from activities on college campuses⁸²; while in Hawaii, the vast majority of the converts were U.S. military servicemen who were stationed in Honolulu.⁸³ These persons may have been influenced by the pervasive youth subculture, but they had not dropped out of society to pursue alternative lifestyles. Like the youth described in the Sacramento article, many of the new Bahá'ís expressed their identities using the symbols and trappings of counterculture, and they seem to have developed an oral teaching that mediated those elements of the Bahá'í Faith that were most incongruent with that culture. But the message these young Bahá'ís conveyed within that subculture may have been far closer to

mainstream Bahá'í thought than other Bahá'ís realized. Most of the new Bahá'ís were able to make a transition to a middle-class lifestyle with little difficulty. Those who did were probably more likely to remain active in Bahá'í communities.

A series of surveys conducted in the 1970s and 1980s illustrates this point. A 1979 study of Bahá'ís in Rhode Island found only one Bahá'í—a former Hare Krishna member—who had been part of any group identified with the counterculture.⁸⁴ Surveys of Bahá'ís in Los Angeles and in the United Kingdom conducted in the same year found that 5% and 12.1% respectively had been members of non-traditional religious groups. But most of these persons had been Christian Scientists, Mormons, or Spiritualists, groups that were not associated with the 1960s counterculture.⁸⁵ A 1985 survey of Bahá'ís who had experiences with non-traditional religious groups found persons who had been members of groups that were associated with the counterculture, such as a Kundalini Yoga Ashram and the Children of God, but they were outnumbered by former Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.⁸⁶ Although no reliable statistics are available, it is highly unlikely that persons who had been members of nontraditional religious groups ever comprised more than 10% of the Bahá'í population.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, anecdotes that circulate among Bahá'ís suggest that in the early 1970s a significant minority of new Bahá'ís had been involved in nontraditional religious movements. The surveys seem to indicate that those who were deeply identified with this religious subculture were less likely than others to remain active in the Bahá'í community.⁸⁸ A significant percentage of all new Bahá'ís, perhaps one-third of those in North America, became inactive or withdrew from the Bahá'í community by the late 1970s, but the Bahá'í population continues to be dominated by babyboomers, most of whom converted during this period.⁸⁹

The growth of the Bahá'í population in the 1960s and

1970s increased the ethnic diversity of Bahá'í communities. In the United States, a significant percentage of the new Bahá'ís were African-Americans. This was true in urban areas, but the Bahá'í Faith also began to spread among blacks in rural areas of the American South, especially in South Carolina. About 20,000 persons converted there in 1970 and 1971, but the absence of established communities in these areas made it difficult to reinforce and sustain the Bahá'í identities of new converts.⁹⁰ In urban areas, new Bahá'ís were gradually socialized into a new identity through association with a community, both before and after conversion. In some parts of the South this was not possible, and many Bahá'ís there seem to have continued to regard themselves as Christians. Nevertheless, well-established communities have emerged in the "mass teaching areas," and this represents the first major penetration of the Bahá'í Faith into the rural population of North America.

In the 1960s, the Bahá'í Faith also began to spread in another sector of the rural population: Amerindians in the United States and Canada. As with rural conversions in the South and in some other parts of the world, many of these Bahá'ís seem to have developed dual religious identities; and many still practice their traditional religions.⁹¹ There have also been some conversions of Hispanics in rural areas, primarily in the American Southwest. Because many of these Bahá'ís are migrant farmworkers, their integration into existing communities and the development of new communities among them has been problematic.

Rural conversions have changed the social base of the Bahá'í population, but, because the new converts are geographically segregated from the majority of the other Bahá'ís, this has had a very limited impact on the majority of local communities. Other demographic changes had a greater impact, especially in the larger urban communities. For example,

although their numbers have been relatively small, the conversion of Hispanics in urban areas of the United States and of French-speaking persons in Canada has added to the diversity of a number of communities. The influx into the American Bahá'í population of Southeast Asian refugees—some of whom converted before they arrived and some after—has dramatically changed the demographic composition of a few Bahá'í communities, primarily on the West Coast.

The most dramatic demographic change to affect Western Bahá'í communities, however, has been the influx of Persian refugees following the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79. They spread throughout North America and Europe, and although no reliable statistics are available, it seems probable that they comprise 15% or more of the Bahá'í population in these areas.⁹² Both the Iranian and Southeast Asian emigres tend to be disproportionately represented in certain large metropolitan areas, where they sometimes comprise the majority of Bahá'ís in a community.

The frequency of certain Bahá'í activities in these communities—race unity deepenings, cross-cultural workshops, language and culture classes, and the like—suggests that there have been some difficulties dealing with cultural differences among Bahá'ís. At the same time, such activities also underscore the commitment of these communities to full integration. Serious cultural tensions have emerged between Iranian and local Bahá'ís, but this phenomenon appears to have been specific to a few large urban communities. In general, Iranian Bahá'ís seem to have assimilated more easily into Western societies than non-Bahá'í Iranian immigrants,⁹³ and their presence, as Peter Smith and Moojan Momen have observed, has contributed to “an increased sense of international Bahá'í solidarity and cohesion.”⁹⁴

The growth of the Bahá'í Faith since the 1960s has changed the size and character of many local communities.

Although it is not possible to determine with accuracy the current average community size, we can observe that in the United States the average number of Bahá'ís in a locality went from 5.1 in 1947 to 14.2 in 1991.⁹⁵ If Bahá'í communities experienced a similar growth, the average community would have 41 members. Some of the communities in major urban centers now number several hundred, while the Bahá'í population of Los Angeles has exceeded one thousand for more than two decades. The increasing size of communities has allowed for the development of more diverse and specialized Bahá'í activities, a trend that became very visible in the 1980s.⁹⁶ A number of activities that fostered a stronger sense of community were sponsored by Local Spiritual Assemblies, including counseling services, women's support groups, Alcoholics Anonymous groups, Bahá'ís in Recovery Programs (which has chapters in many communities), ESL classes, dance and drama workshops, programs for single Bahá'ís (including at least one matchmaking service), and Youth for One World (a youth organization with chapters sponsored by local communities). These changes seem to have been more pronounced in the large metropolitan communities.

The 1980s also saw the emergence of activities that drew together Bahá'ís from various local communities around a special interest or profession. For example, the Association for Bahá'ís Studies now has a number of special interest sections that have facilitated the development of networks of Bahá'ís with particular areas of expertise, and there are now organizations or informal networks of Bahá'í lawyers, physicians, publishers, computer users, short-wave radio operators, and academicians. There have also been a number of new Bahá'í journals—mostly short-lived—focusing on specialized subjects, such as literature, social issues, parenting, women's issues, and the academic study of the Bahá'í Faith.⁹⁷ It is significant that a number of these endeavors were initi-

ated not by Bahá'í institutions but by individual Bahá'ís. Corporations owned by individual Bahá'ís have also been formed to publish and distribute Bahá'í books, audio recordings, and other materials; and to initiate philanthropic projects. This is a marked departure from the Bahá'í practice considered normative for several decades.

Many of these activities, whether begun by individuals or Bahá'í institutions, amount to the formation of voluntary associations within the Bahá'í community. Their impact on local communities is not yet clear, but presumably they draw some resources away from local activities. On the other hand, although they only involve a minority of Bahá'ís, they appear to have fostered greater social cohesion in the Bahá'í population at an international level.

The way communities were affected by and responded to the trends described above has varied greatly and has usually been dependent on the local conditions within and outside Bahá'í communities. Some of the diversity of the Bahá'í experience in the West is documented in this volume. However, significant areas of Western Bahá'í history, are not represented here. It is hoped that future volumes in this series will include articles that, for example, document the experiences of African-Americans in communities in South Carolina and Amerindians on reservations and reserves in the United States and Canada. It is especially important that histories be written for Bahá'í communities in continental Europe. The focus of this introduction on North America is no reflection on the significance of European Bahá'í history; it is a reflection of the state of the existing literature. It is equally important that histories of communities outside the West be written and published.

As the study of the Bahá'í Faith develops as an academic field, such detailed histories will become essential. There is a huge mass of primary source material relating to the history

of the Bahá'í Faith, including community records, personal papers, newsletters, and memoirs. These materials, especially voluminous for recent decades, are scattered around the world. No single historian can hope to make use of all of these sources. Therefore, the development of a secondary literature, including well-researched local, regional, and national histories is necessary before reliable broader studies can be written. This volume is intended as a small contribution to such a literature.

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JULY 1992

NOTES

1. Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984) p. xvi.

2. The few exceptions to this tend to focus on the very early years of a community, which does not allow for an examination of continuity and change over time. See, for example, William P. Collins, "Kenosha, 1893-1912: History of an Early Bahá'í Community in the United States," in Moojan Momen, ed., *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History* (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1982) pp. 225-254, and the treatment of several early American communities in Robert Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith in America: Origins, 1892-1900* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1985).

3. For a full description of these classes, see Robert Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith*, pp. 60-84.

4. The Friday night meetings in Chicago appear to have been intended for, and primarily attended by Bahá'ís. It was at these meetings that Bahá'ís were introduced to the "Higher Teachings"—those based on Bahá'í scriptures. These meetings are mentioned in: Attie Dealy to Maude Lamson (n.d.) and G. S. Dixon to Maude Lamson July 31, 1899. Maude Lamson Papers. National Bahá'í Archives. Wilmette, Illinois. Maude Lamson to Ibrahim Kheiralla, July 9, 1899,

July 15, 1899, and July 29, 1899. Kheiralla/Saleeby Family Papers (In private hands); and Fannie Lesch to "Brother in Faith," August 23, 1899. Portland Bahá'í Archives. There is no direct evidence that non-Bahá'ís were kept out of these meetings. But on at least one occasion persons were prevented from attending a meeting in which the final lesson (on the Greatest Name) was to be given, because they had not attended the earlier classes. (See "Only Believers were Permitted to Hear Address of Dr. Kheiralla Last Night," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, September 22, 1899, p. 2.) It seems unlikely that Kheiralla would have knowingly permitted non-Bahá'ís to attend meetings where the "Higher Teachings" were presented. The appointment of "watchmen" for the Kenosha Bahá'í meetings suggests that they had similar concerns. (Kenosha Bahá'í Community minutes, entry for June 22, 1899. Kenosha Bahá'í Community Records.)

5. See Peter Smith, "The American Bahá'í Community, 1894-1917: A Preliminary Survey," in Moojan Momen, *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, p. 121; and Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith*, pp. 101-103.

6. "Kheiralla is Here," *The Commercial Tribune* (Cincinnati) September 21, 1899, p.5.

7. See Mirzá Abu'l-Fadl, *The Bahá'í Proofs* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1983) pp. 71-78.

8. Thornton Chase, "A Brief History of the American Development of the Bahai Movement," *Star of the West*, vol. V, no. 17 (January 19, 1915) p. 263.

9. Computed from Bahá'í Membership Lists, United States, 1894-1900 (Microfilm). National Bahá'í Archives. Wilmette, Illinois. It should be noted that this list does not include the names of all of the Bahá'ís enrolled during the years covered. More importantly, it is an enrollment list—not a membership list—so it may include the names of many persons who were never active in a Bahá'í community.

10. Robert Stockman, "The Bahá'í Faith and American Protestantism, 1894-1921," (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1985) p. 48. Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith*, p. 110.

11. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies: 1936—Separate Religious Denominations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office) Part I, Vol. II, p. 75.

12. *Ibid.* In 1905, a petition was circulated in Bahá'í communities that was sent to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The petition was probably signed by the vast majority of persons who attended the meetings where it

was circulated; thus it can be used as a rough indicator of attendance at Bahá'í meetings. The names of those who signed the petition, totalling 422 persons, were listed on the tablet (letter) 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote in response, which was printed in 1906. This is an average of eighteen persons per community. Although it is probable that the petition was not circulated in every community, it is also likely that the attendance at the meetings where it was circulated was higher than average.

13. Minutes of the Portland Bahá'í community, entry for November 25, 1906. Portland Bahá'í Archives. Membership list of the Seattle Bahá'í Assembly, April 15, 1907; minutes for the meeting of April 15, 1907; "Members of the Spokane Assembly," August 1908. Seattle Bahá'í Archives.

14. Peter Smith, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions: From Messianic Shi'ism to a World Religion* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1987) pp. 106-107. More detailed accounts of the establishment of these communities can be found in the following sources: Agnes Alexander, *Forty Years of the Bahá'í Cause in Hawaii, 1902-1942* (Honolulu: National Spiritual Assembly, 1974); Duane Troxel, "A Survey of the Origin and Development of the Bahá'í Faith in the Hawaiian Islands, 1900-1915" (unpublished paper); Charles Mason Remey, "The First Meetings in Paris" in "Bahá'í Reminiscences, diary, letters, and other documents by Charles Mason Remey" (New York Public Library) folio 1; "In Memoriam: May Ellis Maxwell," *Bahá'í World*, Volume VIII (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1942); Rainer Flasche, "Der Religion der Einheit Selbstverwirklichung der Menschheit: Geschichte und der Bahá'í in Deutschland," *Zeitschrift fuer Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft*, vol. 61, no. 3 (1977) pp. 188-213; the memoirs of Alma Knobloch, Washington, D.C., Bahá'í Archives; and E. T. Hall, *The Beginning of the Bahá'í Cause in Manchester* (Manchester: Bahá'í Assembly, 1925).

15. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies: 1936*, p. 75.

16. *Star of the West*, vol 10, no 8 (August 1, 1919) pp. 156-164. The number of persons on the list (1,136) has been divided by the number of localities with two or more Bahá'ís (57), resulting in an average of 19.9 per community.

17. "List of Bahais of the United States and Canada. Made at the Request of Shoghi Rabbani, March 1922," Alfred Lunt Papers. National Bahá'í Archives.

18. Stockman, "American Protestantism," pp. 33-34.

19. The time and frequency of Bahá'í meetings has been gleaned from notices and articles about local communities that appeared in *The Bahai Bulletin* (New York) and *Star of the West* between 1908 and 1910 (inclusive). Of 25 communities, 13 met on Sundays; the remainder either had meetings on weekday evenings or did not specify the time of their meetings.

The description of the meetings is based largely on instructions for the conduct of meetings that were given by Isabella Brittingham to the Portland Bahá'ís, and which she said were "widely observed in America." These are found in the minutes of the Portland Bahá'í community between the entries for March 30, 1907 and April 7, 1907. (Portland Bahá'í Archives.) As Brittingham was one of the most widely traveled American Bahá'í teachers, her observations carry considerable weight.

20. Circular letter from Charles Mason Remey in *Star of the West* vol. 1, no. 9 (August 20, 1910) pp. 2-3.

21. Ramona Allen Brown, *Memories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Recollections of the Early Days of the Bahá'í Faith in California* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980) pp. 5, 45. Marion Carpenter Yazdi, *Youth in the Vanguard: Memoirs and Letters Collected by the First Bahá'í Student at Berkeley and at Stanford University* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982) p. 6. Anna Monroe to Phoebe Hearst, November 9, 1911 and n.d., Phoebe Hearst Papers. Bancroft Library.

22. Yazdi, *Youth in the Vanguard*, p. 6.

23. Excerpts from letters of Helen Goodall (TS), June 20, 1904 and January 8, 1905, in private hands.

24. The involvement of entire families in communities, intra-community marriages, business partnerships between Bahá'ís, and Bahá'ís hiring personal and business employees from within the community can be seen as indicators that these communities transcended the norms of voluntary associations. This issue has not yet been systematically studied, and there is only anecdotal evidence to support this observation. However, it is possible to obtain some crude statistical evidence on family participation by examining several Bahá'í lists.

In Kenosha, the names of 86% of those who signed a petition to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1901 (Thornton Chase Papers. National Bahá'í Archives. Wilmette, Illinois.) appear with the name of at least one other

family member, indicating that they were active as a family. For those who signed a petition to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1918 the figure is 94%. (*Star of the West*, vol 10., no. 8, p. 161.)

The names of 34.5% of the Chicago Bahá'ís in 1897 were listed with another family member. (Bahá'í Membership Book, Chicago House of Spirituality Records. National Bahá'í Archives.) For the 1918 petition, the figure is 48% for Chicago, and 37% for New York. (*Star of the West* vol. 10, no. 8, pp. 157-160.)

The dramatic difference between Kenosha and the other communities can be explained by the fact that this community emerged from a working-class population. It was therefore modeled after working-class social organizations which tended to have more intense social relationships, while the membership in Chicago and New York was more middle-class.

Nevertheless, the fact that there were classes for children in Chicago (*Part of the Bahá'í History of the Family of Charles and Maria Ioas—Epilogue* [n.p., n.d] [not paginated]) and a Bahá'í youth club in New York (*Bahai Bulletin*, November 1908 [not paginated]) does suggest a significant degree of family orientation. Moreover, there were well-known Bahá'í families who provided stability and cohesion to these communities: the Dodge, Harris, MacNutt, and Kinney families, in New York; the Ioas, Greenleaf, Lesch, Agnew, and Bartlett families, in Chicago.

25. [Arthur P. Dodge?], "Editorial Department," *The Bahai Bulletin* vol. 1, no. 1 (September 1908) [not paginated].

26. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram, *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, Volume Four: *Music, Devotions, and Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1987) pp. 197.

27. Charles Mason Remey, *Reminiscences of The Summer School: Green Acre—Eliot, Maine* (n.p., 1949) pp. 70-71, 73-75. Armstrong-Ingram, *Music, Devotions and Mashriqu'l-Adhkar*, pp. 198-202.

28. Remey, *Reminiscences*, pp. 70-71. *Star of the West*, vol. 9, no. 5 (June 5, 1918) p. 58.

29. Marie Watson to Mrs. Aseyeh Allen (copy), July 20, 1920, Aseyeh Allen-Dyar Collection. Washington, D.C., Bahá'í Archives. It is interesting to note that in this same letter, Watson cited personal inspiration in defence of a Catholic doctrine: "The Immaculate Conception is a spiritually scientific fact proved to my soul and I *know* also the *process* . . . Beware how you handle these matters. These are 'holy mysteries' not known to the merely intellectual aspect."

30. For a description of this incident, see Peter Smith, "The American Bahá'í Community, 1894-1917," pp. 189-94. Except where otherwise noted, this is the source for the information on this incident.

31. Untitled notes on the meetings of the Committee of Investigation (TS), Ella Cooper Papers. San Francisco Bahá'í Archives. *Report of the Bahai Committee of Investigation 1917-1918* (Washington D.C.: n.p., n.d.) p. 4. It is not clear, from the historical evidence, that the Reading Room group did, in fact, split off from the Chicago community. They claimed that it was their accusers (Zia Bagdadi and Corrine True) who had created the division in the community.

32. W. W. Harmon, *The Seven Principles of the Microcosm and the Macrocosm Applied to the disclosures of Baha'o'llah in the Book of the Seven Valleys* (Boston: n.p., 1915) pp. 11-12.

33. Notes on a meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in San Francisco, Ella Cooper Papers. San Francisco Bahá'í Archives.

34. Smith, "American Bahá'í Community," p. 190. Interview with Walter Blakely, conducted by the author on October 25, 1985.

35. John E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1931) p. 86.

36. For a summary of involvement of Bahá'ís in the peace movements, see Richard Hollinger, "Bahá'ís and American Peace Movements," in Anthony Lee, ed., *Circle of Peace: Reflections on the Bahá'í Teachings* (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1985) pp. 3-20. On Bahá'ís and racial issues, see Gayle Morrison, "To Move the World: Promoting Racial Amity, 1920-1927," *World Order* (Winter 1980) pp. 9-31; and Mark Perry, "Pioneering Race Unity: The Chicago Bahá'ís, 1919-1939," *World Order*, vol. 20, no. 2 (Winter 1985-1986) pp. 41-60. On Bahá'í involvement with the Esperanto movement, see Wendy Heller, *Lidia: The Life of Lidia Zammenhof, Daughter of Esperanto* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1985). No research has yet been published on Bahá'í involvement in the feminist movement, however, there were feminist Bahá'ís. Laura Dreyfus-Barney, for example, was a founding member of the International Council of Women. I am indebted to Jean L. Kling, curator of the Alice Pike Barney papers, for this information.

37. Aseyeh Allen Dyar, *Short Talks on the Practical Application of the Bahai Revelation* (Washington D.C., 1922) p. 55.

38. Remey, *Reminiscences*, p. 27-28.

39. Arthur Cuthbert, "London, England, News Notes," *Star of the West*, vol. 2, no. 2 (April 9, 1911) p. 2.

40. Armstrong-Ingram, *Music, Devotions and Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* pp. 261-273. Interview with Walter Blakely, October 25, 1985. Remy, *Bahá'í Reminiscences*, p. 28.

41. Thornton Chase to Ella Cooper, November 14, 1908, Ella Cooper Papers. San Francisco Bahá'í Archives. "New York," *Bahai Bulletin* (November 1908). *Star of the West* (June 24, 1910) p. 12; and (July 13, 1910) p. 16. Fisher's pilgrimage is reported in the January 1909 issue of the *Bahai Bulletin*.

42. Armstrong-Ingram, *Music, Devotions and Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* pp. 267-73.

43. For a discussion of this, see Mark Perry, "The Chicago Bahá'í Community, 1921-1939," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1986) pp. 11-15.

44. Mariam Haney, "The American Pioneer Period," *World Order* vol. 11, no. 3 (1945) p. 92.

45. Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration: Selected Messages, 1922-1932* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974) pp. 20, 37, 79-80, 90.

46. *Reality* began as an effort to attract non-Bahá'ís to the Bahá'í Faith. (Pilgrim's Notes of Agnes Parsons, Ella Cooper Papers. San Francisco Bahá'í Archives.) As such it seems to have been supported by a number of Bahá'ís for the first few years. (See Peter Smith, "Reality Magazine: Editorship and Ownership of An American Bahá'í Periodical," in Juan Cole and Moojan Momen, eds. *From Iran East and West: Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, Vol. 2 (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1984) pp. 135-144. The founders, Eugene and Wandeyne Deuth, also started a "Bahá'í Library," with which a number of New York Bahá'ís were associated. (Wandeyne Deuth to Governor Sulzer, January 6, 1920, William Sulzer Papers. Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont.)

Harrison Gray Dyar, who took over the editorship in 1922, took the magazine in a more radical direction than the original editors. He was critical of Bahá'í administration, especially of the Guardianship. (See "A Brief History of the Bahai Movement," *Reality*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 3-4; "Unjustified Bahai Organization," *Reality*, vol. 6, no. 7, pp. 35-37; and "The Will of Abdul Baha," *Reality*, vol. 6, no. 7, pp. 16-20.) Dyar must have had an independent source of income, because he worked much his adult life as an unpaid curator at the Smithsonian Institution. (Biographical Note in the Inventory of the Harrison Gray

Dyar Papers, Smithsonian Institution Archives.) Since the publication of *Reality* magazine ended with his death in 1929, it seems probable that he was providing it with financial support. Dyar was also the proprietor of a journal on entomology.

The activities of the New History Society could not have been undertaken without the financial support of Julie Chanler. See Ahmad Sohrab, *Broken Silence: The Story of Today's Struggle for Religious Freedom* (New York: New History Foundation, 1942).

47. E. C. Getsinger to L.A. Bahai Assembly, February 1934. Local Spiritual Assembly of Los Angeles Records. Los Angeles Bahá'í Archives.

48. "Editorial—Our Change of Policy," *Reality*, vol. 10, no. 3, p. 3.

49. See Mark Perry, "Boundaries and Horizons in the Chicago Bahá'í Community, 1920-1940," (unpublished paper); and Dr. Loni Bramson-Lerche, "Some Aspects of the Development of the Bahá'í Administrative Order in America, 1922-1936," in Moojan Momen, ed., *Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History*, pp. 267-295.

50. Local Spiritual Assembly of Chicago to the National Spiritual Assembly, May 20, 1931, National Spiritual Assembly records. Cited in Mark Perry, "An Overview of the Chicago Bahá'í Community, 1921-1939," p. 19.

51. For the affect of this on the Denmark Bahá'í Community, see Margit Warburg, "The Circle, the Brotherhood, and the Ecclesiastical Body: Bahá'í in Denmark, 1925-1987," in Armin W. Geertz and Jeppe Sinding Jensen, eds., *Religion, Tradition, and Renewal* (Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1991) pp. 201-224.

52. Interview with Anne Stevenson, conducted by the writer on September 8, 1982. Yazdi, *Youth in the Vanguard*, pp. 72-74. It should be noted that the formation of the Berkeley community occurred before the National Spiritual Assembly's announcement of this policy.

53. This has been deduced from 49 questionnaires on "Local Bahá'í History and Records," circulated in North America in 1937. (National Bahá'í Archives. Wilmette, Illinois.) According to this survey, 34 communities (69%) had such classes. Most of the communities did not specify the length of time of these courses but of those that did, the average length was twenty-seven weeks. Twenty-eight communities (57%) indicated that Bahá'í Administration was a major focus of the classes.

54. Bureau of Census, *Religious Bodies: 1936*, p. 75.

55. "Local Bahá'í History and Record" questionnaires. Of the communities who identified their period of most rapid growth, 71% indicated that it was after 1926.

56. "Local Bahá'í History and Record" questionnaires. The questionnaires usually give a percentage in answer to this question. I converted these to numbers using the total membership of the local community, added the figures from all of the communities together, and computed the percentage (61%) from the total membership included in this survey (1,497).

57. *Ibid.*

58. Haney, "The American Pioneer Period," p. 92. "Committees" here refers to Boards of Counsel and the Chicago House of Spirituality, precursors to Local Spiritual Assemblies.

59. The "Local Bahá'í History and Record" questionnaires, included a question about attendance at Feast, which was usually answered with a percentage. I converted these to numbers; added up the total number who were estimated to attend Feast regularly; and divided by the total number of Bahá'ís listed in these communities, to arrive at the 56% estimate.

I have used the list of Bahá'ís on a petition sent to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1918 to arrive at the second estimate. The petition circulated in local Bahá'í communities for a number of weeks (Carl Scheffler, "Outline of how Supplication was drafted," *Star of the West*, vol. 10, no. 8, p. 168) and would therefore have been circulated at one or more Feasts. If anything, this number (1,124 for the United States) would be a high estimate of Feast attendance, as some could have signed at other meetings.

Much of the change between 1918 and 1936 may have resulted from changes in the definition of membership. Many of those counted on the 1916 census would probably not have been counted in 1936.

60. *The Bahá'í Centenary 1844-1944* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1944) p. 175. The number of Bahá'ís in North America in 1943 was 4,578 (*Bahá'í News*, no. 161, p. 3.). The pioneers would constitute 5.2% of this number and 9.4% of the figure given by the 1936 census (2,584). Another, possibly more accurate, gauge of the size of the Bahá'í population in 1936 is the Bahá'í Historical Record Cards (in the Bahá'í National Archives, Wilmette, Illinois), which were filled out by North American Bahá'ís in 1935-1936. There are 1,813 of these, and the Bahá'í pioneers would comprise 13.2% of this population.

61. Ross P. Scherer, "A New Typology for Organizations: Market, Bureaucracy, Clan, and Mission, with Application to American Denominations," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 27, no. 4 (December 1988) pp. 475-498. Scherer notes that "missions" can also focus their resources on social action, but few can balance both social action and evangelical activities. The decline in social activism in the Bahá'í community during this period fits this pattern.

62. Arthur Hampson, "Growth and Spread of the Bahá'í Faith," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1980) pp. 378-82; Warburg, "Bahá'í in Denmark"; Karel Dobbelaere and Michel Voisin, "Sekten en nieuwe religieuze bewegingen in België," *Tijdschrift voor Sociologie* vol. 7, nos 1-2 (1986) pp. 395-437; Flasche, "Bahá'í in Deutschland." A useful primary source that documents the activities of Bahá'í "pioneers" in Europe during this period is Charles Mason Remy, *Journal-Diary of Bahá'í Travels in Europe*, 2 volumes (n.p., 1947 and 1949). See also Will C. van den Hoonard, comp., "An Annotated Index of the United States European Teaching Committee Minutes. Sources for the Study of European Bahá'í History" (unpublished ms.).

63. Hampson, "Growth and Spread," pp. 222, 229. I have used the figure 11,047 as the number of Bahá'ís in 1963 ("Proposed Budget for the First Year of the Nine Year Plan," copy in my possession) and the 1936 Census figure of 2,584, to arrive at this estimate.

64. Will C. van den Hoonard, "Canada," (draft of article for the *Short Encyclopedia of the Bahá'í Faith*). *Bahá'í News* (March 1947) p. 8.

According to these sources, the Bahá'í population of Canada went from 270 in 1947 to 554 in 1953.

65. Stockman, "The Bahá'í Faith and American Protestantism," p. 48-49.

66. Frank Newport, "The Religious Switcher in the United States," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 44 (1984) p. 533. Wade C. Roof and Christopher K. Hadaway, "Denominational Switching in the Seventies: Going Beyond Stark and Glock," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 18 (1979) pp. 366-67. Rodney Stark and Charles Glock, *American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968) p. 195.

67. Peter Berger, "From Sect to Church: A Sociological Interpretation of the Bahá'í Movement" (Ph.D. dissertation, New School for Social Research, 1954) p. 133. The Berger survey suggests that the

number of Bahá'ís from a Catholic background in New York went down slightly from 9.7% (14) in 1937 to 7.8% (7) in 1953. However, the Berger survey was conducted at a single Nineteen-Day Feast and therefore was not a survey of the entire community. The percentages for 1937 have been computed from figures in Stockman, "The Bahá'í Faith and American Protestantism," pp. 48-49.

68. Hampson, "Growth and Spread," p. 357. The percentage of Catholic converts was still below their representation in the wider population, which was then 26%. It should be noted that this survey only included persons who converted in December 1968.

69. Peter Smith, "A Sociological Study of the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Lancaster, 1982) p. 438.

70. Morrison, *To Move the World*, pp. 32-34, 204-205. Robert Stockman, "The Bahá'í Faith and Protestantism," pp. 45-46.

71. Hampson, "The Growth and Spread of the Bahá'í Faith," p. 340.

72. T. Lane Skelton, "A Sociological Analysis of the Bahá'í Movement" (M.A. Thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 1955) p. 68.

73. Hampson, "Growth and Spread," p. 347.

74. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 283. Sandra Kahn, "Encounter of Two Myths: Bahá'í and Christian in Rural American South—A Study in Transmythicization," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Santa Barbara, 1977) pp. 261-262. Lucille Buffin, "Fifty-Three Years with Miami, Florida Bahá'ís, 1933-1966," (unpublished paper, an earlier version of which is in the National Bahá'í Archives, Wilmette, Illinois) p. 5.

75. Mary Elizabeth Archer, "Global Community: Case Study of the Houston Bahá'ís," (M.A. Thesis, University of Houston, 1980) p. 180. Interview with Lois Willows conducted by the writer on January 2, 1985. According to Willows, the FBI agent charged with investigating Bahá'ís in Long Beach, California eventually became a Bahá'í. The writer was informed by former employees of the U.S. Bahá'í National Center that this institution was infiltrated by an intelligence unit of the Chicago Police Department in the late 1960s or early 1970s.

76. This possibility was raised by a series of conversations I had with Bahá'ís who were active in one U.S. community in the 1950s. Although these were not formal interviews, I did ask questions that were intended to uncover what types of relationships Bahá'ís had

with each other during this period. Several patterns emerged from these queries. It appears that the conduct of Bahá'í meetings was rather formal and impersonal and did not lead to the development of friendships among the members. Individual Bahá'ís did develop close relationships, over time, as a result of personal contact outside Bahá'í meetings. However, because blacks and whites in the community rarely met together socially they rarely developed close friendships. This pattern of relationships may be specific to one community, however.

77. In 1949, there were 372 Bahá'í communities in North America (*Bahá'í World*, Volume XI, pp. 525-531); there were, in 1947, 5,720 Bahá'ís (*Bahá'í News*, March 1947, p. 8). Hence the average community size was approximately 15. The Bahá'í population probably grew between 1947 and 1949, and therefore this estimate may be slightly low. According to the figures in the 1936 census, the average Bahá'í community would have had 29.3 members; the average community size according to the "Local Bahá'í History and Record" questionnaires was 30.5

78. Hampson, "Growth and Spread," pp. 308-309.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 229. The "Proposed Budget for the First Year of the Nine Year Plan," gives the figure 11,047 for 1963. The 1991 figure comes from a statistics sheet provided by the U.S. Bahá'í Office of Public Information, dated September 1991.

80. Will C. van den Hoonaard, "Canada."

81. See Warburg, "Bahá'í in Denmark," and Margaret J. Ross, "Some Aspects of the Bahá'í Faith in New Zealand," (M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1985) pp. 116-124.

82. This conclusion is based on conversations with Robert Phillips, Anthony Lee, and Jesse Villagomez, each of whom was a member of the U.S. Bahá'í National Youth Office during the period of youth conversions.

83. Interview with Lois Willows, January 2, 1985.

84. Robert Stockman, "A History of the Rhode Island Bahá'í Community, 1866-1979." National Bahá'í Archives. Wilmette, Illinois.

85. Smith, "A Sociological Study," p. 438.

86. Unpublished (and untitled) survey of selected Bahá'ís in the United States conducted by Janet Tanaka in 1985.

87. The Tanaka survey was not a random sample, and therefore cannot be used to gauge the percentage of Bahá'ís who had been

involved in non-traditional religions. However, a 1968 survey (Hampson, "Growth and Spread," p. 357) indicates that 90% of new converts stated that they were either Christians, Jews, or had been raised as Bahá'ís.

88. One exception to this might be Bahá'ís involved with Transcendental Meditation (TM), some of whom have been able to reconcile continued involvement in this movement with their Bahá'í identities. For example, at a Bahá'í conference in St. Louis in 1974, I met Bahá'ís from a community the total membership of which was active in this group. As of the late 1980s, there was a Bahá'í community in Iowa composed entirely of individuals who were studying these teachings at a TM college.

89. Hampson, "Growth and Spread," pp. 228-230. Hampson notes that, in 1976, 31% of the persons on the U.S. Bahá'í membership lists were "mail returns,"—their addresses were unknown and they were not known to be active in any Bahá'í community. A similar pattern can be seen in Canada where the Bahá'í population exceeded 17,000 in 1986, but the number with known addresses was 11,500 (*Bahá'í Canada*, April 1988, p.3.)—a mail return rate of 32%.

90. Kahn, "Encounter of Two Myths," pp. 15-16.

91. A Bahá'í pioneer on a Navajo reservation in Arizona, for example, informed the author that all of the Bahá'ís there continue to participate in Navajo religious ceremonies.

92. It is estimated that 25,000 Bahá'ís fled Iran after the revolution ("NSA of US Presents Peace Statement to President Reagan," *Alaska Bahá'í News*, March 1986, p. 3.) Not all of them settled in the West, but it would appear that most of them did. In the mid-1980s, the writer was given an unofficial estimate by an employee of the U.S. Bahá'í National Center that there were 12,000-14,000 Iranian Bahá'ís in the U.S., which would be slightly more than 10%. Resident Bahá'ís in Canada have informed me that the percentage is higher in that country. Peter Smith's survey of the British Bahá'í community in 1979 found that 31.8% were Iranian. ("A Sociological Study" p. 439.) As of 1981, Iranians comprised 17% of the Danish Bahá'í Community. (Warburg, "Bahá'í in Denmark.")

93. Chantal Saint-Blanat, "Nation et religion chez les immigrés iraniens en Italie," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* (July-September 1988) pp. 27-37.

94. Peter Smith and Moojan Momen, "The Bahá'í Faith 1957-

1988: A Survey of Contemporary Developments," *Religion*, vol. 19 (1989) p. 85.

95. Computed from information in *Bahá'í World*, Volume XI, pp. 525-541; *Bahá'í News* (March 1947) p. 8; and a statistics sheet provided by the U.S. Bahá'í Office of Public Information, dated September 1991. These figures include localities in which there is only one Bahá'í; the figures given above for the average community size included only localities with two or more Bahá'ís.

96. Most of the information discussed below has been gleaned from a review of bulletins from twenty U.S. Bahá'í District Teaching Committees and local Bahá'í newsletters from the following communities: Boston, Chicago, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New York Portland, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto. I reviewed publications dating from 1985 to 1990, although it was not possible to locate copies of every publication for this entire time period.

97. Among the journals are: *Spiritual Mothering, dialogue, Wherefore, The Green Door, I Read the News Today, The Journal of Bahá'í Studies, Soundings*, and *The Bahá'í Studies Bulletin*.