

THE LANGUAGES OF REVELATION OF THE BAHÁ'Í WRITINGS

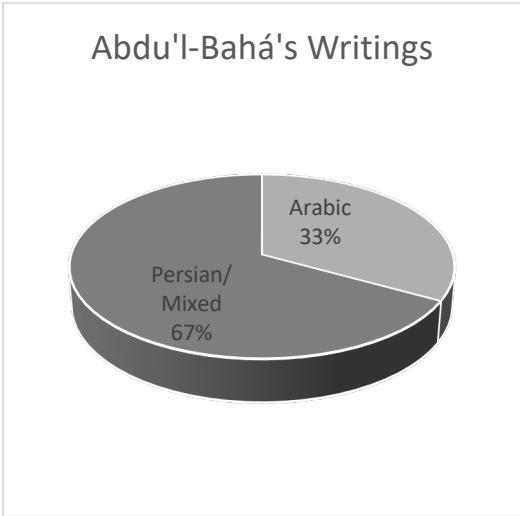
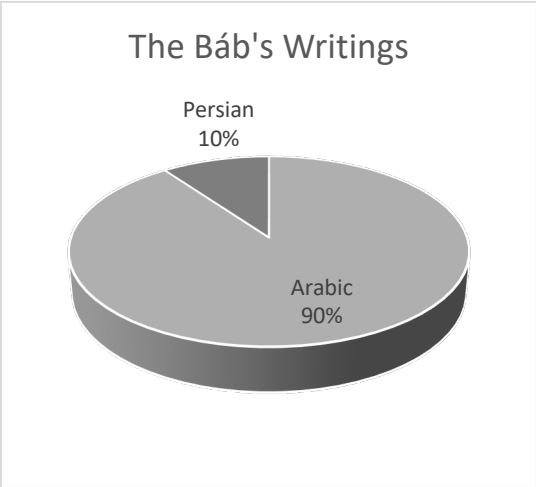
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Overview of Languages of Revelation

"Over 90% of the works of the Báb, well over half of the works of Bahá'u'lláh, and one third of the works of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are in Arabic; the remainder are in Persian or a mixture of the two."

Steven Phelps, "A Partial Inventory of the Works of the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith" (Version 2.02, 3 November 2020), p. 2; PDF accessible online at: <http://blog.loomofreality.org/>



The Linguistic Makeup of the Bahá'í Writings

The mixture of Arabic and Persian in the Bahá'í Writings is a truly novel and wonderful thing. It is not at all unusual for a text to begin in one language, switch to the other midway, and then switch back to the first language further on.

This is most commonly seen with Bahá'í prayers, which were typically not born in a vacuum, but are in fact passages from longer Tablets. Oftentimes, a Tablet will begin in Persian, then shift to a prayer in Arabic, and then resume in Persian. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's *Tablets of the Divine Plan* abound with examples of this phenomenon.

Beyond this, there are also cases in which a shift from one language to the other will occur not only later on in a given work, but even mid-sentence.

The intricate relationship between these two modes of revelation for this dispensation demands that a student of the Writings be proficient in both of them to adequately grasp their full potency. Shoghi Effendi attests to this fact in one of his most important letters:

. . . Bahá'u'lláh and, to an almost equal extent, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, have bequeathed to posterity mines of such inestimable wealth as none of us who belong to this generation can befittingly estimate. Such testimonies bearing on this theme are impregnated with such power and reveal such beauty as only those who are versed in the languages in which they were originally revealed can claim to have sufficiently appreciated.

(From *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*; published in *World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 103)

The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH	LANGUAGE
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas	Arabic
The Kitáb-i-Iqán	Persian
Epistle to the Son of the Wolf	Persian
The Kitáb-i-'Ahd	Persian
The Call of the Divine Beloved	Mixed
Kitab-i-Badi'	Persian
Days of Remembrance	Mixed
Javáhiru'l-Asrár (Gems of Divine Mysteries)	Arabic
Haft Vadi (The Seven Valleys)	Persian
Chahar Vadi (The Four Valleys)	Persian
The Summons of the Lord of Hosts	Mixed
The Tabernacle of Unity	Persian
Lawḥ-i-Karmil (Tablet of Carmel)	Arabic
Lawḥ-i-Aqdas (The Most Holy Tablet) (Tablet to the Christians)	Mixed
Bishárát (Glad-Tidings)	Mixed
Ṭarázát (Ornaments)	Mixed
Tajalliyát (Effulgences)	Mixed
Kalimát-i-Firdawsíyyih (Words of Paradise)	Mixed
Lawḥ-i-Dunyá (Tablet of the World)	Mixed

WRITINGS OF BAHA'U'LLAH (Continued)	LANGUAGE
Ishráqát (Splendors)	Mixed
Lawḥ-i-Ḥikmat (Tablet of Wisdom)	Arabic
Aṣl-i-Kullu'l-Khayr (Words of Wisdom)	Mixed
Lawh-i-Siraj	Persian
Suriy-i-Haykal (Surih of the Temple).	Arabic
Lawḥ-i-Maqṣúd (Tablet of Maqṣúd)	Mixed
Súriy-i-Vafá (Tablet to Vafá)	Mixed
Lawḥ-i-Siyyid-i-Mihdíy-i-Dahají (Tablet to Siyyid Mihdíy-i-Dahají)	Mixed
Lawḥ-i-Burhán (Tablet of the Proof)	Arabic
Kitáb-i-'Ahd (Book of the Covenant)	Persian
Lawḥ-i-Arḍ-i-Bá (Tablet of the Land of Bá)	Mixed

The Writings of The Báb

WRITINGS OF THE BAB	LANGUAGE
Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'	Arabic
Persian Bayán*	Mixed
Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih (The Seven Proofs)	Arabic
Kitáb-i-Asmá' (The Book of Names)	Arabic
Tablet Addressed to "Him Who Will Be Made Manifest"	Arabic
Second Tablet Addressed to "Him Who Will Be Made Manifest"	Arabic
Tablet to the First Letter of the Living	Arabic
Epistle to Muḥammad Sháh	Arabic
Another Epistle to Muḥammad Sháh	Arabic
Further Epistle to Muḥammad Sháh	Arabic
Tablet Containing Words Addressed to the Sherif of Mecca	Arabic
Address to a Muslim Divine	Arabic
Address to Sulaymán, One of the Muslim Divines in the Land of Masqat	Arabic

* The Persian Bayán is mostly in Persian, as the name suggests, but still contains a considerable amount of Arabic

The Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

WRITINGS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHA	LANGUAGE
Memorials of the Faithful	Persian
The Secret of Divine Civilization	Persian
Lawh-i-Dr Forel (Tablet to Dr Forel)	Persian
Tablets of the Divine Plan	Mixed
Tablets to The Hague	Mixed
A Traveler's Narrative	Persian
Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	Mixed