

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** The Universal House of Justice

**Date:** 8 March 2009

**From:** Research Department

### **The Persian manuscript of Nabíl's history (Tárikh-i-Nabíl)**

The Research Department has studied the email letter of 8 September 2008 from Mr. XXX. He poses a series of questions about the original and corrected Persian manuscripts of Nabíl's history (Tárikh-i-Nabíl) and their past and present accessibility to scholars for research purposes. The following are our responses to his queries.

#### **Questions 1–6**

Mr. XXX asks whether it is possible for scholars to inspect the surviving copy of the manuscript in question, whether there are or have been any restrictions on access to it, how many persons have inspected it since 1963, and how many have had their requests denied.

In a letter dated 7 July 1995 written on its behalf, the Universal House of Justice responds to a query as to whether there is a policy regarding access to the original manuscript, as follows:

You have asked for a copy of the second half of Nabíl's Narrative. We regret that we are unable to comply with your request at this time, as access to these unpublished materials has not to date been made generally available.

(From a letter dated 7 July 1995 written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

#### **Question 7**

Mr. XXX asks whether there are any publications or unpublished materials in any language, with the exception of the recent work of Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání,<sup>1</sup> which cite or make use of the original manuscript used by Shoghi Effendi or make observations about it.

It may interest Mr. XXX to know that in response to a query about the unpublished portion of "The Dawn-Breakers", the Universal House of Justice in a letter written on its behalf dated 10 March 2005 wrote the following:

You inquire about the unpublished portion of "The Dawn-Breakers". The Universal House of Justice has no specific plans for the translation into English and publication of this material. Important portions of this material are reflected in the contents of "God Passes By" as well as the Hand of the Cause of God Hasan Balyuzi's "Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory".

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání, *Shoghi Effendi: The Range and Power of His Pen* (Casa Editrice Bahá'í, 2007), pages 92–112.

As Mr. XXX may be aware, Shoghi Effendi added material gleaned from Part II of the manuscript to expand the article on the Bahá'í calendar in *The Bahá'í World*, beginning with volume III (see pages 136, 138–139).<sup>2</sup> In volume IV of *The Bahá'í World*, he added historical data regarding Bahá'u'lláh gleaned from the same source (see pages 253–256).<sup>3</sup>

### **Questions 8–12**

Mr. XXX asks if the corrected version of the manuscript is known to exist and whether there have been any “subsequent reports of the corrected manuscript surfacing since communications were reported at the time of the publication of the Narrative in the late 1930s”.

If we understand correctly, Mr. XXX is alluding to the second manuscript of Nabil's history, which included the corrections that Bahá'u'lláh requested. As he is aware, this corrected manuscript was among the papers that were stolen by the Covenant-breakers as confirmed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The records at the World Centre do not include any copies, full or partial, of the corrected manuscript, and we have not yet identified any document or communication that suggests its present whereabouts. Furthermore, we are not aware of any efforts being made on behalf of the House of Justice to recover it.

### **Conclusion**

At the close of his email, Mr. XXX states that in *Shoghi Effendi: The Range and Power of His Pen* Mr. Nakhjávání refers to a memorandum he received from the Research Department. Mr. XXX asks if this memorandum “and any other relevant letters and memoranda on the subject of the manuscript Nabil's Narrative, especially those concerning access by scholars, be made available to us.”

We wish to bring to Mr. XXX's attention that, given the confidential nature of communications between individuals and the Bahá'í World Centre, it is not possible for the Research Department to provide him with a copy of the memorandum in question.

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<sup>2</sup> *The Bahá'í World*, volume III (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1930).

<sup>3</sup> *The Bahá'í World*, volume IV (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1933).