

Report on Scholarship for 1999

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Report on Scholarship

This is the third annual 'Report on Scholarship' produced by ABS Australia.¹ Our purpose in compiling this *Report* is to bring into one location a survey of recent publications, and accounts by scholars of their current research projects and interests. In gathering together information on activities on Bahá'í scholarship in diverse parts of the world from 1999, the *Report* provides an indicative survey of subjects under investigation, and approaches to research. Bringing together reports from individuals, institutions, courses, and Associations for Bahá'í Studies, will allow a picture of general trends to emerge. The report also acts as a 'clearing house' for information.

It is hoped that this Report will be the stimulus for a more complete assessment of Bahá'í scholarship, on a global scale, at regular intervals. Should it be possible to identify a team of contributing editors, the *Report* could in future years provide an annual survey of developments in each discipline of interest to Bahá'í scholars. For instance, editors with expertise in such fields as education, the environment, peace studies, history, etc, could be called on to assess developments in their respective fields for the year in review. In this way, the *Report* would contribute a periodic global survey of a number of fields of scholarship, thus allowing the reader to remain informed of developments across an increasingly diverse field of information.

1. Reports for 1997 and 1998 are available on the ABS Australia website, <http://www.bahai.org.au/abs/>

Affiliate Associations for Bahá'í Studies

Australia

Committee: Dr Ratnam Alagiah, Dr Graham Hassall, Dr. Vahid Payman, Mr Colin Dibdin, Mrs Sima Hashemi, Mrs Sandra Langshaw, Ms Ladan Rahmani, Dr Natalie Mobini-Kesheh

Highlights and Achievements:

1. The Association's 18th Annual Conference, on the theme "The Creative Inspiration: Art and Culture in the Bahá'í Faith", was held at the University of Melbourne. The conference attracted more than 50 presenters and performers, and approximately 150 participants. The event included workshops and seminars, a dinner, an exhibition, a play, and a concert. Its aim was to provide an opportunity for those involved in the arts in the Australian Bahá'í Community to meet each other and become informed of each others' work, and to bring the arts to the wider community, and to foster discussion of critical issues facing Bahá'ís in the arts at the present time.
2. Thirty-seven participants attended all or part of the third Scholarship Institute at Yerrinbool over the Easter period, 2-4 April. The institute program was based on discussion of current research interests and participants were invited to speak about what they are interested in and how they are undertaking their research. Graham Hassall presented the ABS Report on Scholarship for 1998, which is a 56 page report including contributions from affiliate ABS's and individual researchers, and an extensive bibliography of works published in 1998.
3. The ABS Newsletter was produced in February, June, September and December 1998, and distributed to members and a large complimentary list comprising tertiary Bahá'í societies, national committees, Counsellors, regional National Assemblies, all ABS affiliate organizations, and Centres of Learning.
4. The first issue of the Association's journal, *Australian Bahá'í Studies* was published and sent to all members. Complimentary copies were also sent to a large list of individuals and organizations to promote subscriptions. *Australian Bahá'í Studies* is open to submissions on all subjects. But it particularly seeks articles of practical relevance to the Australian Bahá'í community, and which might not be readily published elsewhere. These may include analyses of specific teaching methods, projects, and outcomes;

reports on issues of management, leadership, and administration; application of the Bahá'í Teachings to issues of concern in Australian society; community histories; biographies; literary essays; and essays on Bahá'í theology and religious studies. The second issue had reached printing stage by December. Members will receive two issues of the journal per year, along with the ABS newsletter, as their membership entitlement.

5. We had direct communication with all Bahá'í Societies at universities from December 1998 to February 1999, and put together a short institute on society functioning which was well received by several universities. Financial assistance was also offered to support teaching activities at Curtin University and UTS Sydney. Later in the year we examined practical possibilities with the National Youth Committee with the aim of realising the unfulfilled potential for Bahá'í activity in universities.
6. ABS recognises and congratulates the initiative of the University of Western Australia Bahá'í Studies Society, which promotes Bahá'í scholarship through its "SPEAK" conference and journal.
7. ABS established financial scholarships for the participation of Baha'is at scholarly conferences, and youth and indigenous participation in Bahá'í studies conferences.
8. Our strategy for promoting Bahá'í scholarship at the 'grassroots' level was reassessed, with the result that regional Bahá'í Studies coordinating committees were discontinued, and initiatives such as the "Introduction to Bahá'í Studies" course were developed.
9. Collaboration with overseas ABS affiliates was continued, especially with ABS Japan.

Concerns and Issues:

1. It has been difficult to find volunteers who have time to support the various activities of the Association such as the library, mail-outs and journal production.
2. The ABS library, books stocks, records and files are difficult to access in their current location (in boxes in the basement of the House of Worship). A permanent office is needed.

Hopes and Opportunities:

1. ABS will hold its annual conference, on Health, Healing and Religion, in Toowoomba from 29th September – 1st October, 2000.
2. ABS will hold its fourth annual scholarship workshop at Yerrinbool over 21-23 April (Easter) 2000.
3. ABS is collaborating with the External Affairs Office to organise the 2nd Human Rights and Religion seminar in Canberra in mid-2000.
4. In the longer term, ABS seeks to increase the number of active interest

groups. This development requires the active interest and collaboration of ABS members.

5. ABS is continuing its use of the Internet, and is benefiting collaboration with specialists in this field. The web site is at www.bahai.org.au/abs. A design enhancement is in progress.
6. The "Introduction to Bahá'í Studies" course will be run in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and possibly Perth during 2000. This course introduces basic scholarship and presentation skills and the basics of a Bahá'í approach to scholarship, and offers participants assistance in carrying out a personal research project into an aspect of the Faith of their choosing.
7. Further progress is expected towards the publication of the talks of Mr Furútan and Mr Faizi given at Yerrinbool.
8. We anticipate that a national framework for supporting and providing leadership for teaching in universities will be established during 2000, in collaboration with the National Youth Committee and with the support of the National Spiritual Assembly. In the meantime a temporary part-time paid position is being established to carry out the routine but necessary management tasks required for Baha'is Studies society coordination.

English Speaking Europe

Committee: Masoud Afnan (chairman), Seena Fazel (vice-chair), Jane Aldred (from June 99), Nazila Ghanea-Hercock (secretary), Robert Ghanea-Hercock (treasurer), Roger Kingdon (until July 99), Parvine Foroughi (until October 99), Iarfhlaith Watson, Sahba Akhavan, Augusto Lopez-Claros (from October 99), Vafa Payman (from December 99)

NSA Liaison members: Wendi Momen (UK), Mr Seosamh (Joe) Watson (Republic of Ireland)

COLLABORATION

Consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly (September 99)

The ABS benefited greatly from a consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly on 12 September 1999, and was encouraged by the thoughtful discussion and helpful advice that ensued.

Collaboration with the Appointed Arm

Shahriar Razavi consulted with the ABS on 12 June 1999, and there have been a number of occasions during the year where informal discussions have continued with the Appointed Arm with Shahriar Razavi and Counsellor O'Mara on issues of mutual concern. Shahriar Razavi expressed the importance

of creating a sense of excitement about learning in the community as a challenge before both the Appointed Arm and the ABS.

Collaboration with the Bahá'í Councils regarding ABS contribution to schools

After its experience of contributing to the wider Bahá'í community through 3 summer school programmes last summer (Irish Summer School, Sidcot and Arts Academy), the ABS is keen to continuing serving and reaching out to the community in this way. All Bahá'í Councils have therefore been approached with the offer of our services in this regard.

Proposed joint conference in collaboration with a number of Agencies of the National Spiritual Assembly: the Office of External Affairs and the Office for the Advancement of Women

As a result of the consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly in September, the ABS decided to suggest the holding of a joint conference in collaboration of other Agencies of the National Assembly: the Office of External Affairs and the Office for the Advancement of Women. The aim would be to bring together the various expertise, networks and experiences of these agencies to hold a conference on one of the 4 areas of Bahá'í 'External Affairs' work – as outlined in the October 1994 letter of the Universal House of Justice: moral development, human rights, global prosperity and the status of women. The aim would be to hold a conference that could attract both non-Bahá'í academics as well as appropriate NGOs and activists. The ABS eagerly looks forward to the outcome of these consultations.

PUBLICATIONS

The Associate Newsletter

Issue 28 came out in Summer 1999, and Issue 29 will be due out in early 2000. The ABS welcomes the new editor of the 'Associate' Iarfhlaith Watson.

The Bahá'í Studies Review Journal

The Association of Bahá'í Studies continues to benefit from the review process (the Academic Review Panel) set up by the National Spiritual Assembly for all its publications, and is grateful for the input and advice of this agency. Issue 8 of 'The Bahá'í Studies Review' came out during this year, and Issue 9 will be going to press in the near future. We are grateful to the services of John Danesh and Seena Fazel as the editors of this journal, which remains the leading Bahá'í studies periodical. Substantial material from back issues has been put on our website <<http://www.breacais.demon.co.uk/abs/>> through the tireless efforts of Chris Manvell, who also typesets the journal for free.

EVENTS

Sidcot Summer School & Arts Academy

The ABS-ESE contributed programmes to the Sidcot summer school and the Arts Academy. At Sidcot, 4 sessions were held over 2 days on 'Bahá'í studies a survival course', and over 2 days on 'Science and Religion'. At Arts Academy a one-day conference was held on 'Citizenship' at the Arts Academy. The ABS is particularly grateful to the services of Roger Kingdon in enabling these opportunities and wishes him well in his research.

Youth Convention at Bahá'í National Convention 157 B.E.

The Association of Bahá'í Studies contributed to the programme of Youth Convention by highlighting the possibilities of service to the Faith through a commitment to Bahá'í Studies, and particularly the opportunities provided through the work of Bahá'í Societies at institutions of Higher Learning. The importance of responding to the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education in Iran campaign was emphasised, with a detailed explanation from Ramin Badii about the activities of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Leicester.

ABS annual conference

The theme of the next ABS annual conference will be pre-empting the theme of the United Nations for the year 2001: 'Dialogue Among Civilisations'. The ABS welcomes a wide variety of contributions under this overall theme: contributors old and new are most welcome.

Activities in the Republic of Ireland (National Convention, Irish Summer School)

The number of ABS members in the Republic of Ireland trebled through a strong encouragement of membership at the Irish National Convention. Furthermore, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Republic of Ireland invited the ABS to organised 4 afternoon sessions at the Irish Summer School in August 1999. These were considered a success by the National Assembly and ABS participation has been encouraged again this year.

Covenant Meeting "Challenges to the Covenant"

The ABS decided to hold a one-day conference on the Covenant – an issue that is particularly being emphasised by the Appointed Arm at present. An excellent programme of speakers and discussion on the above theme has been scheduled for 24 June 2000, and is the result of consultations with Shahriar Razavi of the Appointed Arm as well as the National Spiritual Assembly.

OTHER

Bahá'í Societies

Active Bahá'í Societies exist up and down the country including: Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Edinburgh, London (including SOAS and LSE), Cranfield, Cambridge and Oxford. Oversight for the activities of these Societies rests with the respective Local Spiritual Assembly. However, the ABS has responsibility for co-ordination, an annual Bahá'í Societies conference, encouragement and general guidance – which is carried out by the Bahá'í Societies Co-ordinators: Ramin and Sonja Farzanafar <ramfar@hotmail.com>. The Bahá'í Student Handbook, second edition (as compiled by Jenny Semple and Ian Holland), was reprinted during the year and remains an invaluable resource for Bahá'í Societies. It is also made available free of charge on our website; and copies have been requested, amongst others, by the US National Youth Committee as well as the European Bahá'í Youth Council.

Marketing & website

The ABS-ESE responded to the National Assembly's 'Web of Faith' project and is now linked on that service, as well as being linked to the Council for England website. The ABS is very grateful to the services of Chris Manvell in maintaining its site.

Membership

Current paid membership of the ABS-ESE is around 250, although the ABS takes on itself the responsibility of sending its publications free of charge to a wide range of libraries and non-Bahá'í academics throughout 'English Speaking' Europe, such that around 350-400 individuals and institutions receive our material. A number of senior non-Bahá'í academics have written to share their appreciation of receiving these publications.

Special Interest Groups

BIPOLIG (Bahá'í International Politics and Law Special Interest Group)

The last BIPOLIG conference was held at the London School of Economics in June 1999, and plans are underway for planning the next conference. Also during this year, 2 editors have been compiling a number of the contributions to BIPOLIG conferences over the past 5 years into a publication "Processes of the Lesser Peace" to be published by George Ronald later this year.

A number of Bahá'í youth in London have also taken the initiative of examining the whole BIPOLIG area of Bahá'í contributions to current affairs through weekly gatherings in London. This will undoubtedly contribute to the development of Bahá'í scholarship and skills of correlating Bahá'í teachings to the matters of the day among the youth, and also be of interest to non-Bahá'ís who want to explore these issues more thoroughly.

Religious Studies

The Religious Studies Special Interest Group hosted a conference in Newcastle in December 1999, and its next conference is being held at the London School of Economics, 14-16 July 2000.

Education

A number of Bahá'ís are exploring the possibility of setting up a Special Interest Group on Education.

The ABS welcomes all initiatives to set up Special Interest Groups, and is happy to provide some funds, share its experience, and advertise the events of such groups through its networks and publications. These groups are very much led from the grass roots, and merely facilitated and encouraged by the ABS Executive. Suggestions for the setting up of a Science and Religion, Gender, Arts and other Special Interest Groups are outstanding – and awaiting the initiative of an interested individual, group of youth, local community or Bahá'í Society. These groups can be crucial in deepening the interest, facilitating the research, bringing together the expertise, leading to publications, attracting the interest and sharpening the knowledge of Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís over time.

OVERVIEW

It has been a challenging year in terms of the turnover of the membership of the ABS itself, but also one of great opportunity. The ABS continues to try to create an atmosphere and culture of learning and Bahá'í scholarly activity in the UK, Ireland and beyond. Whilst many in our community are quite legitimately concerned with the immediate needs of our Faith here and now, and are quite weary of intellectualism in the wider society that is not necessarily targeted at service; there is a healthy balance that needs to be struck in the Bahá'í community about the scholarship ethos. Although, the immediate needs of the Faith are tremendous, we cannot lose sight of the urgent longer term needs of the Faith, and delay the potential of this Revelation to transform the arts and sciences. How can we claim, for example, that Bahá'u'lláh is the return of the Shah Bahram, where there is so little research on the Bahá'í Faith and Zoroastrianism that can convincingly support such a claim? How can we effectively share the message of 'Who is writing the future?' when we do not adequately understand the processes unfolding at present? Clearly, as the National Spiritual Assembly has emphasised, our community should celebrate difference and encourage the various talents in its midst – including that of scholarship and the equivalence of this path of service to other means of teaching such as pioneering, administering projects, etc.

There are many levels of 'scholarship' – in the least it is a means by which

every Bahá'í can be better grounded in her Faith and more effective in conveying it to the wider community, whether in clearer thinking in one's own mind, verbally or in writing. At another level, it is encouraging the publication of a ground-breaking work that may serve for hundreds of years as a milestone in terms of the Bahá'í contribution to knowledge. Both are necessary, and the Association of Bahá'í Studies hopes it can continue to support both these processes in the UK community, and welcomes your suggestions of how it may more effectively be able to do so in the future.

WHAT NEXT?

YOUTH

In consultations with the Appointed Arm, the ABS has realised the importance of particularly encouraging research on Bahá'í issues to be undertaken by youth. A list of topics have been highlighted by Dr Khan in Issue 3.2 of the Bahá'í Studies Review. It is for this reason that the ABS has been particularly heartened to encourage the initiatives of the London weekly BIPOLIG youth gathering, precisely to facilitate such research; and the plans of the Edinburgh Bahá'í Society to hold a Scottish Universities Bahá'í Conference in the near future.

Obviously there is a long way to go before there is the facility for regional clusters of Bahá'í youth to regularly be gathering throughout the UK in such scholarship groups (whether as facilitated in Bahá'í Societies, Special Interest Groups or other gatherings) but this is the long-term vision of the ABS in working towards a sustainable culture of Bahá'í scholarship in the UK. It is for this reason that the possibility of free ABS membership to all Bahá'í students during their Higher Education years, and permanently for functioning Bahá'í Societies, is currently being investigated.

MEMBERSHIP

The ABS is keen to ease the process of joining the ABS-ESE and is putting processes into place to do so through direct debit facilities, multiple-year memberships and through the liaison of discounts when applying for multiple-membership of a number of Associations of Bahá'í Studies. The ABS is also keenly aware that there is a far greater potential of membership than the current number around 250, but is strictly enforcing the procedure of cancelling over-due memberships after 2 reminders. The ABS is planning some market research to be done to promote/explore the membership of the ABS.

India

Moral Education Workshops

The Association for Bahá'í Studies organized six Moral Education Workshops for Primary School Teachers through Local Assemblies. Such workshops were held at Mumbai, Delhi, Chandigarh, Gorakhpur, Goa and Bangalore. One of the workshops in Mumbai was initiated by a non-Bahá'í school and teachers from 10 different schools participated in it. A special workshop was held for training the trainers for Moral Education Teachers for South India in Bangalore and friends from four different states numbering about 30 attended this workshop for 3 days.

ABS-India Chapters

Subsequent, to this activity, ABS-India opened this year 4 (four) Chapters at different places namely, Kerela, Delhi, Nagpur and Gwalior. However, these chapters need further follow-up work to activate them.

Personality Development Workshops

Two workshops on "Personality Development" held at the Bahá'í Centre, Mumbai, were attended by some fifty participants (post-graduate and graduate students of Engg. Colleges). Each was presented with a "Participation Certificate", and one of the Resource Persons declared his Faith in Bahá'u'lláh.

Art Group Programme

This was possible due to earlier introduction of ABS-India to UDCT students. For this programme we had around 2000 students present. As a strategic plan using an indirect way of teaching, some friends interacted with the people of capacity and presented the Faith at the All India Textile Conference as well as at the National Seminar in UDCT through paper presentation on "Role of Technology and Ethics on Development". A number of City Assemblies were contacted and encouraged to take up City Teaching Activities.

Research Fellowships

Three of 17 applicants were awarded ABS-India research fellowships, to undertake research on a Bahá'í topic for one year.

Activities undertaken by ABS-India in Four Year Plan (1996-2000)

In the initial years of the Plan, a lot of emphasis was given on consolidation of ABS-India and its executive committee. A newsletter, "Pragnya" was

started to create a link between the members and ABS-India. This requires further regularisation.

The Annual National Conference

In 1996, a 3-day international conference was arranged taking the advantage of the friends attending the 10th year celebration of the OPENING of the House of Worship. The conference theme was "Eradication of Poverty". About 80 friends including friends from abroad especially, USA, UK, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Bangladesh participated. Subsequently, every year, we had an Annual Conference on topics like Oneness of Mankind, the Bahá'í Faith and Contemporary Issues, at the New Era High School, Panchgani, the City Montessori School, Lucknow, and Bahá'í House, Delhi.

In general, on the average 35 papers were presented from different parts of the country. There is increasing enthusiasm among the Bahá'ís to write papers for the Annual Conference and signs are quite apparent that if encouraged properly, interest in the Bahá'í scholarship can take strong roots among the friends in India. The proceedings of these conferences are compiled in Book form for distribution and sale. Over 200 friends were contacted to write papers for such annual conferences. During these years, ABS-India also started getting due recognition through such programmes.

Research Fellowships

In order to have well researched papers at such conferences, ABS-India announced 15 Research Fellowships of Rs.2000/- each year and so three candidates have been selected from national level contest for this fellowship. We are sure, their work will be of great significance for subsequent publication of Journal of Bahá'í Studies.

City Teaching

During this period, ABS-India with the encouragement of the NSA, printed a number of brief statements on various issues, originally brought out by the Bahá'í International Community. This material was sent to more than 30 LSAs and a number of ABMs with a special request to use the same in their efforts in City Teaching or Teaching the People of Capacity. From time to time such encouragement has gone from ABS-India. At National Conferences, City Teaching subject was presented and explained to the Baha'is of Capacity and a number of communities were subsequently helped to undertake such programmes.

Moral Education Workshops

Moral Education Workshops for primary school teachers organized by ABS-India were very successful. Approximately 600 teachers attended 24 Workshops, in states including Kerela, Karnataka, Maharashtra, UP, Delhi,

Punjab, MP, and Orissa. This programme will crystallize into an independent project called SANSKAR supervised by ABS-India. Besides this ABS-India helped the Universal Educational Forum, an organization of Bahá'í Inspired Schools.

Training of Trainers

There were eight workshops conducted for Training of Teachers in Panchgani (two), Gwalior, Mumbai (two), Bangalore, Deolali and Cochin. The Universal House of Justice appreciated this activity of ABS-India and the LSAs are thus encouraged to concentrate on this goal of moral education. Indeed, our experience says, we, the Bahá'í community of India is in the best position to offer yeomen services in Moral Education to this vast country.

Government Level Interaction

In the district of Satara (Maharashtra), the Education Officer and the Collector initiated a program of moral education for 100 Principals of Primary Schools in his area to attend the same at New Era High School, Panchgani and ABS-India gave them orientation / lecture-cum-demonstration to introduce this program. We are following up this activity through New Era High School and Bahá'í Academy and possibly we may get an opportunity to train teachers from 500 schools in this area.

Interaction with Textile Association of India, Mumbai

ABS-India conducted a Moral Education Workshop with the Textile Association of India for their members at Bahá'í Centre, Mumbai. This activity was widely published in Textile periodicals and magazines and the Textile Association of India appreciated the activities of ABS-India.

Other Training Workshops:

a. Dynamics of Team building: ABS-India organized two well-attended workshops on "Dynamics of Team Building in Bahá'í Administration at Deolali and Panchgani.

b. Personality Development: We organized five workshops on "Personality Development" for College/University students and the response to these workshops was tremendous. On the average about 40 students (mainly Engineering and technology, doing their post-graduate and some college teachers) attended. The participants were given participation certificates and it also provided a good opportunity to share the message with them.

c. Fortress of Well-Being: Thirty youth attended a two-day national seminar organized in association with the Bahá'í Academy. A number of key issues concerning Marriage as an Institution, Chaste and Holy Life, Criteria for

selecting a life partner, Balancing Family life and Bahá'í activities, Spiritual parenting of children, True Happiness etc were discussed. There is a lot of demand for this course and we need to replicate it at different places with the help of NBYC-India.

d. Workshop on Teaching Techniques: This workshop was held to train the friends in "Introducing Bahá'í Faith to people of specific professions.

e. Workshop for Prominent Bahá'ís –Our Encounter with Bahá'u'lláh: A high level workshop on "Teaching the People of Capacity" was held 7th and 8th Nov. 1998 at Mumbai for Baha'is of recognized ability and capacity, to discuss the issues of teaching People of Capacity and becoming self-sufficient in Bahá'í Funds. This gathering of 40 Baha'is from different parts of the country was one of the highly successful programs ABS-India had organized. At this meeting the following groups were formed: Bahá'í Business Forum, Bahá'í Doctors Forum (reactivated), Bahá'í Lawyers Forum, and Bahá'í Educationist Forum.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it could be said that ABS-India is making a steady but modest contribution in the field of Moral Education as mentioned by The Supreme Body. The efforts of the Association to train believers in a variety of fields are particularly appreciated by the House of Justice, and it is hoped that the skills, knowledge and understanding gained by the participants in the Association's activities will be conveyed to the wider community. The endeavours of all those involved in the organization of these praiseworthy and valuable activities are warmly commended". This activity of ABS-India has been considered Socio-economic development activity and is recognized by OSED. The encouragement of Bahá'ís to undertake writing of papers is also slowly bearing fruits and now friends are coming forward to show their inclination towards Bahá'í Scholarship. Training of manpower through special workshops such as Personality Development, Dynamics of Team Building, Fortress of well-being etc., has been instrumental in building the capacity of the friends. Proper encouragement of Bahá'í Professionals will also help them to be integrated in Bahá'í activities.

Japan

ABS-Japan has two ABS Executive Committees, Japanese and English, with S. Fotos as general ABS coordinator and member of both committees: Japanese Executive Committee: H. Tsunoi, A. Hayashi, N. Fuji, M. Noguchi English Executive Committee: S. Friberg (left Japan in 12/99), K. Riggins, S. Strain

Officers and Committees

- A. Chair: H. Tsunoi
- B. Secretary: S. Fotos
- C. Treasurer: A. Hayashi
- D. Publications Committee
 - 1. Newsletter: A. Hayashi, N. Fuji & J. Strain; two issues, April and December 1999
 - 2. Proceedings: S. Fotos & M. Noguchi; *Proceedings of the Sixth and Seventh Annual Conferences* were completed 12/1999; distributed 1/2000.
- E. ABS-Japan website maintained and updated by S. Fotos: <http://www2.gol.com/users/sfotos>
- F. Special Interest Group (SIG) and University Club Committee: J. Strain, M. Noguchi, S. Friberg (left Japan 12/99)

Activities in 1999

A. Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

1. ABS-J has seven SIGs: English, Arts, Religious Studies, Translation, Education, Moral Education, Community Development
2. Report from Religious Studies SIG.
 - One meeting at Tokyo Baha'i Center in 1999 :
 - a. June 27: Sylvia Karlsson, Bahá'í from Sweden and Ph.D. student in environmental policy, spoke on: "Facing the environmental crises: the need for a global ethic."
3. Report from Moral Education SIG:
 - a. Two Virtues Project workshops were held in Hokkaido. The first, May 19 to July 7, met eight times for two hours each (16 hours) and the second, September 24-Nov. 12, met eight times for two and a half hours each (20 hours). There were six participants in the summer workshop and nine in the fall workshop. The participants were equally divided between Japanese and foreigners and Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís.
4. ABS-Japan representative at ABS-North America conference in Tempe, Arizona, June, 1999 a. Stephen Friberg attended; on June 14 a new SIG for ABS-NA Science and Religion SIG, was established

B. Special ABS Program, Tokyo Bahá'í Center, December 25 & 26

1. Dec. 25: 'An Analysis of "Who is Writing the Future"'
Speaker: Dr. Graham Hassall, member of National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia and Chair of ABS-Australia
2. Dec. 26: One-Day Symposium on the Kitáb-i-Aqdas
Speakers: Auxiliary Board Member Dr. Toshio Suzuki, Dr. Graham Hassall

C. No annual conference was held in 1999

Malaysia

Committee: Chandra Sekar, Ong Eng Eng, Sobhana Kumaran, Vahid Bhaskaran, Bhaskaran (left for India November 1999), Bala Ramasamy, Lim Sim Beow, Antonisamy, Natheson and Pragasam.

Introduction

Attempts have been made in the past 10 years to get ABS activities going in Malaysia, and a number of events have been held over the years with varying degrees of success. In the past 3 years or so, scholarship activities came under the purview of the Dept for External Affairs and/or the Institute for Development.

This year, however, a new Executive Committee was appointed by the Spiritual Assembly. Most members of the Committee are serving in this capacity for the first time. It has thus been a year of learning for the Executive Committee, even as we have enjoyed exploring the various aspects of Bahá'í Scholarship together and looking into activities that would address our needs and requirements in this area. The group has worked together well, and look forward to the coming year to move Bahá'í scholarship activities in Malaysia a step further.

Activities, Projects and Plans

- * Talk on "Bahá'í Scholarship" by Dr Graham Hassall of ABS Australia in June 1999 at the National Centre.
- * Meeting between Dr Graham Hassall and the newly-formed ABS Executive Committee in July 1999 which consulted on various aspects of Bahá'í Scholarship, the responsibilities of the Executive Committee and the experiences of the Australian ABS.
- * ABS proposal put forward for a College for Bahá'í Studies at the dialogue on Bahá'í Education called for by the National Spiritual Assembly's Director of Education, in August 1999. The proposal outlined the set-up of the College and the complementary role of the ABS. The formation of

the College was accepted in principle by the Spiritual Assembly, and a College Board appointed in September 1999 to look into the operational structure of the College.

- * Scholarship Skills Workshop held in September 1999. The workshop covered topics on Bahá'í Scholarship, Reading, Writing and Research Skills, and identifying research areas from the document *Who is Writing the Future?* (these will be taken up at the annual conference in May 2000). Participants were of all ages, but the majority was from the young adults group (18-25), one of the targeted groups for ABS activities.
- * Hosting of Panel Discussion on "Mental Tests" at the Winter School in December 1999. Each of the 4 panellists spoke for 5 minutes, outlining one aspect of mental tests. This was followed by a one hour long Question-Answer session, which saw active participation from the crowd.
- * Series of ABS Dialogues:
Dialogue 1 : Issues on the Internet (February 2000)
Dialogue 2 : Responses from the House of Justice (March 2000)
Dialogue 3 : Individual Rights and Freedoms in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh (April 2000)
The topics were chosen based on interest shown and questions raised at both the scholarship skills workshop and the Winter School panel discussion.
- * The new ABS newsletter will be distributed electronically. To be launched on 21 April 2000.
- * Annual Conference of the ABS with the theme "Challenges of the 3rd Millennium: Towards One World" to be held in May 2000. Target participation of 100, mainly Bahá'ís, although non-Bahá'í speakers will be invited. The papers will explore further the topics outlined in the document *Who is Writing the Future?* (This will include the research questions raised at the Scholarship Skills Workshop in September 1999).
- * The setting up of an ABS web-site is being looked into. If all goes well, the web-site will be launched at the Annual Conference.
- * To offer courses on Bahá'í Scholarship for the College for Bahá'í Studies, starting with one module for the Young Adults Programme for their 2000/2001 year.

New Zealand

Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Association for Baha'i Studies to the National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand

We have referenced this report to the numbered items in terms of reference from the beloved National Spiritual Assembly and to these documents:

- [1] denotes the National Spiritual Assembly letter of 14 April 1999 to the ABS Executive.
- [2] denotes the Universal House of Justice letter to selected National Spiritual Assemblies on 10 February 1995.
- [3] denotes the National Spiritual Assembly letter of July 1999 to the ABS conference participants.
- [4] denotes the National Spiritual Assembly letter of 7 October 1999 to the ABS Executive.
- [5] denotes the Universal House of Justice letter of 7 April 1999 to National Spiritual Assemblies.
- 3a. Liaise with National Institute, Summer Schools, and conferences to ensure there is a co-ordinated programme of learning offered to the New Zealand Baha'i community (National Four Year Plan action 1 / 1 / 4).
The National Human Resource Development Institute has primary responsibility for core training for New Zealand Baha'i community; Baha'i scholarship assists in developing programmes for National Institute.
Sent National Human Resource Development Institute Baha'i scholarship articles that related to the Institute's programme for Spiritual Assembly development.
Summer school committee has implemented workshops to practise application of Baha'i Teachings to situations.
Ruhi Institute process endorsed by the National Assembly in their Feast letter for 7.2.99 will stimulate a scholarly approach to the Writings.
- 3b. Provide the means for the friends to acquire a greater understanding of how the Teachings of the Faith relate to the issues of society (National Four Year Plan Action 2/2/3).
ABS Conference in July 1999 on the theme of Global Prosperity included presentations on applying spiritual principles to the workplace, human resource development, the role of business in the development of a global society, work is worship, unity and prosperity, supporting people in distress, education as the foundation for global prosperity, the role of regional and international organizations in global prosperity, the Virtues Project, achievement, a Baha'i framework for employment and income replacement after

- injury or illness, a model programme for youth at risk, glimmerings of the future world economy,
4. Phased plan for developing Baha'i scholarship created in August 1997
The ABS Executive had the blessing of meeting the beloved National Spiritual Assembly in August 1999 to help plan our plan to develop Baha'i scholarship.
- 4a. Promote a deep appreciation amongst the believers of the true nature and purpose of scholarly endeavour [1] to create a "new model for scholarly activity...animated by the spirit of enquiry into the limitless meaning of the Divine Teachings...characterized by the welcome it offers to all who wish to be involved in it, each in his or her own way, by mutual encouragement and cooperation among its participants, and by the respect accorded to distinguished accomplishment and outstanding achievement."
[2]
We have been successful in preventing Baha'i scholarship from becoming infected by academic materialism as has occurred in North America [5]
The cultivation of a new model of scholarly activity is a gradual process which cannot easily be measured.
- 4b. Ensure an atmosphere of love and cooperation, upliftment, positive growth and open-minded inquiry [3]
Present at the 1999 ABS conference but we cannot quantify this. Dr Dorothy Marcic, visiting scholar from Vanderbilt University and keynote ABS speaker, set a wonderful example of humility and radiant positivity. ABS conference dinner in July 1999 displayed extremely pleasant fellowship between presenters and other participants.
- 4c. Bahá'í scholarship should aim to alleviate the problems confronting humanity [1] & [3]
Global prosperity was the theme of the 1999 ABS conference (see response 3b)
Requested collaboration on 1999 ABS conference from Te Ao Kotahi Social and Economic Development Trust
- 4d. Promote the external affairs strategy of the Faith
ABS conferences have focused on one of the four themes of external affairs.
Invited non-Baha'i academics to participate in ABS conferences.
Close collaboration with National Office of External Affairs particularly

with recruiting overseas keynote speakers.

Held ABS conferences at Universities to improve the credibility of Baha'i scholarship and the Baha'i Faith as a religion that can generate major insights into world problems.

Assisted in planning Professor Dwight Allen's visit to New Zealand in June 2000 to use his scholarship as a means of promoting the Faith.

- 4e. Strive for excellence in both research and quality of presentations at ABS conferences [1]

As a result of methodical collaboration with presenters, presentation quality at the 1999 ABS conference was rated as substantially improved over the 1998 conference.

ABS conference chairing raised the standard of presentation and flow to a highly professional level consistent with the Toastmaster training of the chairperson.

- 4f. Exemplify unity in diversity at ABS conferences [4]

ABS needs to work harder to widen the ethnic diversity at ABS conferences.

Poster sessions at ABS conferences would be suitable for people reluctant to present a paper.

- 4g. Local ABS representatives

Only a minority of local ABS representatives in LSA areas have joined ABS. Sadly the majority of representatives cannot function fully without joining ABS (the subscription of \$15 per year is affordable and covers the cost of duplicating and posting four newsletters per year). Could the friends wishing to serve as local representatives please join ABS!

- 4h. Regional Bahá'í studies conferences

Deferred until the number of ABS members and their conference publications expand; insufficient numbers to justify regional conferences in 1999.

Encouraged Local Assemblies in University towns to host a regional ABS conference during Professor Dwight Allen's visit to New Zealand in June 2000

- 4i. Published July 1999 ABS conference papers

- 4j. Disseminating information helpful to Baha'i scholars via our ABS newsletter

Loaned Journal of Bahá'í Studies to National Baha'i Reference library

- 4k. Mentoring Bahá'í scholars

Creating a network of ABS members as the prerequisite for mentoring; the ABS conferences will build many useful relationships.

- 4l. Pacific Island participation in ABS conferences

One presentation at the July 1999 ABS conference

- 4m. Bahá'í participation in non-Bahá'í conferences - individual Bahá'ís have done this but ABS has not been involved.

- 4n. Other means for stimulating development of Bahá'í scholarship

Collaborated with Bahá'í Office of External Affairs in selecting non-Bahá'í speakers for ABS conference in July 1999

Collaborated with the Arm of the Learned

- 4o. Collaboration with the University of Waikato Continuing Education division in promotion of ABS 2000 conference to the general public at University of Waikato

- 4p. Appeal to the believers in "unwaveringly positive and encouraging tones" [1]

Achieved via quarterly newsletter to ABS members since December 1997 and articles in NZ Bahá'í News

- 4q. Collaboration with NZ representative for the Wilmette Institute

The Wilmette Institute offers outstanding non-residential courses relating the Faith to other religions (e.g. Christianity, Chinese religions) and in developing Baha'i scholarship skills.

We have planned conferences carefully to ensure that fees are low so that participation is open to the majority of believers (\$25 per day includes registration, lunch, morning and afternoon tea)

One of the bounties of serving on the Executive Committee for ABS is that the members are always willing to take on committee work and complete it on time and to a high standard.

North America

Committee: Anne Pearson (Chair), Lynn Echevarria (Executive Secretary), Mehran Kiai (Treasurer), Susan Stark Christianson, Niloofar Ahmadzadeh, Ridvan Moqbel, Wendy Heller, and John Hatcher.

Publications

During the past year the Association has published: 4 issues of the quarterly international Bulletin; the Journal of Bahá'í Studies volume 9, numbers 1, 2, and 3; and the book *Planning Progress: Lessons from Shoghi Effendi* by June Manning Thomas (April 1999). A plan was initiated to reorganize the editorial structure of the Journal of Bahá'í Studies in order to create a streamlined and responsive system of handling manuscript submissions and to eliminate delays.

Web Site

ABS-NA has acquired its own web domain at <<http://www.bahai-studies.ca>>. Continued expansion of the web site is planned, and the Science and Religion SIG has begun development of its section of the site.

Regional Committees

There are currently 5 Regional ABS Committees in the United States. The Mid-Atlantic region organized an exciting conference at Princeton University on April 10, 1999. This conference entitled "Spiritualizing Civilization: Exploring Arts, Knowledge, and Wonders" was attended by 90 people, mostly Bahá'ís, from 10 states. It incorporated a blend of participatory workshops in poetry, collage, and music, artistic presentations and formal academic presentations.

Annual Conference

The 24th Annual Conference will take place in Mississauga, Toronto, Ontario on August 31–Sept 3rd. The theme, "A Century of Light: Who is Writing the Future?" has been chosen to stimulate a retrospective and prospective analysis of the state of civilization at century's end and the potential for humanity's future.

Goals and Functions:

During the year, the Executive Committee, with guidance from the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, and encouragement from the NSAs of Alaska and United States, have engaged in some creative thinking regarding the goals and functioning of the Association. A statement on the next stage in the evolution and development of the Association was published in March and is available on the ABS-NA web site.

Philippines

The 6-member Board of Trustees of ABS-Philippines was reappointed by the National Spiritual Assembly in June 1999. The first project we focused on was the creation of a library. The Board has requested the NSA to give it responsibility for the National Baha'í Library. We also initiated a campaign to gather donated books from Bahá'í friends, local and foreign, to augment the volume of our acquisition. This will encourage future researchers to do their research here at the National Bahá'í Center where a portion of the second floor is allocated as the library.

Another project in mind is to make a directory of expertise from among the Bahá'ís all over the country. A questionnaire is being prepared by one of the Board members. This directory will be distributed to all the ten Regional Bahá'í Councils for their reference when they will be in need of resource persons for their external affairs efforts.

A project for students (high school and college) concerns making a History of Bahá'í Faith in the Philippines. The Bahá'í youth will research how the Bahá'í Faith started in their respective communities: who were the first teachers, the first Bahá'ís, first members of Institutions, teaching strategies used, etc. This will include gathering of documents, written, oral, pictures, records, interviews, etc. We do have fragmented accounts of the Faith in the Philippines but a wealth of information is still very much wanting. We are constructing a questionnaire to guide the youth in gathering data.

We haven't called for a conference or a seminar yet but plan to have a general membership meeting first. Also producing a newsletter seems to be premature yet at this point in time.

Singapore

The Singapore Association for Bahá'í Studies is a committee of the Spiritual Assembly of Singapore whose members are Dr A. Khursheed, Dr Phyllis Chew and Mrs Antonella Khursheed. In the past four years the Association organized four annual conferences.

So far four volumes of the proceedings have been published in a journal called *The Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review*. The journal has a MITA number which means that it is a publication approved by the Ministry of Information of Singapore. The first volume is out of stock. More than 660 copies of the first three volumes have been sold or donated. The journal is available through the Bahá'í US Distribution Service and is swapped with the journals with other ABSs around the world.

The Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review is a journal dedicated to correlating Bahá'í principles and beliefs to the different cultural traditions of Asia. It sets out to promote religious and cultural harmony. The journal is the main publication of the Singapore Association for Bahá'í Studies. The Association, a committee of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Singapore, was formed in April 1996. The papers published in the journal, are usually initiated as talks given at the annual Singapore Bahá'í Studies conference. The Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review is the first journal of its kind to appear on the Asian continent. The journal is open to Bahá'ís and their friends. So far four volumes of the journal have been published. Volume 1 (1996), is already out of stock, volumes 2 (1997) and 3 (1998) are still available.

The second volume of the Singapore ABS journal is on the "Fundamental Unity of Religions" and the third volume is on the "Never-ending Journey of the Soul".

The theme of volume four is "Challenges for the New Millennium", and it includes papers on the role of religion in the rise of the women's movement in Singapore, the status of moral values in modern society, moral education in schools, parallels between Bahá'í and Confucian approaches to human nature, and a study of the modern interfaith movement and its prospects for the future.

Also appearing in volume 4 of the Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review is a special Interfaith Supplement consisting of talks by various religious leaders and scholars from around the world on inter-religious issues. Each talk was chosen for its historical importance. The Supplement features talks by Vivekananda on Hinduism made at the first Parliament of World's Religions conference held in Chicago in 1893, an address by the present Dalai Lama on religious harmony, a talk by the renowned Quranic scholar Yusof Ali, an address by Chief Rabbi Elect Jonathan Sacks, a talk given by the present Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, and a speech by Pope John Paul II in India. Also included is the historic statement, "Nostra Aetate" prepared by the Second Vatican Council in 1965 which signalled an important change in the Catholic Church's position with respect to other religions. The Bahá'í contribution in the supplement is from the famous George Townshend paper delivered at the World Congress of Faiths in 1936, edited and approved by Shoghi Effendi. This paper is one of the first Bahá'í statements to be made in a modern interfaith setting. All in all, the supplement is a valuable interfaith resource, and is helpful in arriving at a greater degree of understanding and fellowship between Bahá'ís and people of other faiths. 276 pages

The price of the journal is S\$10 (Vol.2 and Vol.3) and S\$12 (Vol.4) per copy (shipping and bank transaction expenses are not included). Order forms can be obtained from your book agency, Association for Bahá'í Studies or directly from: The Association for Bahá'í Studies of Singapore*, c/o Dr. Anjam Khursheed, 105 Clementi Road, Kent Vale, Blk B #09-02, Singapore 129789. Tel./Fax +65 - 779 8415. e-mail: khur@pacific.net.sg

Institute/School/Foundation Reports

Afnan Library

During 1999, the Afnan Library succeeded in moving its books to a building that has been purchased for the library. Shelving has been put up for the books. Due to a failure to obtain the services of a librarian, however, it has not yet proved possible to put the books onto the shelves or to catalogue them completely.

The Bahá'í Academy, Panchgani

The Bahá'í Academy, established in 1982, is a Centre dedicated to advanced higher studies of the teachings of the Faith and training teachers, pioneers, administrators and future scholars for the Cause of God. It offers a number of short and long Courses every year on different themes, each geared to training a particular human resource.

The Bahá'í Academy has programs of study in the form of short term courses, long term courses (1 year - some of which involves independent research), distance learning courses, Bahá'í research fellowship, an extensive Bahá'í library, and "learn and serve" volunteer positions.

The Bahá'í Academy site <http://bounty.bcca.org/orgs/schools/bhacanet/index.html> is in the process of being revamped, and the new one is expected to go live sometime this Spring. In the near future, the Baha'i Academy would like to expand it's distance learning programs to include web-based courses.

Bahá'í Association for the Arts

The Publication:

We have been producing a quarterly on a regular basis since 1986. Now called Arts Dialogue, since this year it comes out three times a year in a magazine format of 24 pages with numerous black and white illustrations and photos. The only global magazine on the arts run by Bahá'ís. An index list of the latest issue can viewed at: <http://bahai-library.org/bafa/c-indx00.htm> Each issue contains articles, essays, creative writing, poetry, reviews, letters/readers comments, artist profiles, and of course, many illustrations. Subscription for

one year is \$AUS 32 or \$NZ 32 or \$US 20 email: forumbahai@es.co.nz for more details or go to our website: <http://bahai-library.org/bafa>

The New Website: <http://bahai-library.org/bafa>

We launched our new website in March 2000 and is gradually being added to as we find time. It's major purpose is to provide a database of work by artists from all disciplines found under the rubric, 'profiles'. Currently, those who have been featured in an issue of Arts Dialogue are being added first, going back from the latest issue. This is slow work because it must be done voluntarily. Only about 80 artists are currently on the database. Another part of the site is the 'contents' where going from the last issue, summaries and excerpts from Arts Dialogue can be viewed with links to the artist's pages. Under 'participate' and 'subscribe' can you see how you can participate in our activities and everyone is welcome to submit material for the 'art news' rubric which is updated monthly. Then there is 'who is BAFA' where you can read about who we are and what we do.

Art'nSoul email list

There is an email discussion group on the arts. Anyone can join. It is an open forum. The address for joining is: <art-nsoul-list-request@tarazat.nl> Then type "subscribe" in the subject line.

There is also an email list for Musicians who are Bahá'ís. This is not organized by BAFA but you might like to add it in as a resource. More info from: <http://joyfulnoise.freeservers.com>

Sonja van Kerkhoff
website designer

check out: <http://members.tripod.com/~huia>

Irfan Colloquium

The Irfan Colloquium is devoted to the promotion of research and studies in the scriptures and particularly Bahá'í holy Writings, principles of Bahá'í theology, and the World religions and the Bahá'í Faith. Irfan activities are under the auspicious of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the countries where they take place. They are cosponsored by Haj Mehdi Arjmand Memorial Fund; Nadia Saadat Memorial Scholarships; Persian-American Affairs Office of the National Bahá'í Centre, USA; Asr-i-Jadid Publishers (Germany); and Nureddin Momtazi Memorial Grants.

This year, 2000, Irfan gatherings will be held, in both Persian and in English languages, in Europe and North America. In Europe, Irfan Colloquium (in Persian) will be held at the Centre for Baha'i Studies, Acuto, Italy, 23-28 June

and (in English) it will be held at the London School of Economics (Bankside House), London, 14-16 July. Irfan Colloquium in North America will have concurrent sessions in Persian and English at: Louhelen Bahá'í School, Davison, Michigan, 6-8 October; and Bosch Bahá'í School, Santa Cruz, California, 23-26 November. There are two other Irfan activates, in addition to holding Colloquia and Seminars: Providing scholarship and fellowship grants, and Publications.

SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

Modest financial assistance, when needed, are provided in order to facilitate participation of accepted papers at Irfan Colloquia and Seminars.

IRFAN PUBLICATIONS:

1. THE LIGHTS OF IRFAN, annual volumes of the papers presented in the English language sessions.
2. SAFINIHI-YI IRFAN, annual volumes of the papers presented in Persian language sessions.
3. Volumes of selected papers related to a general theme published by George Ronald.
4. Abstracts of the papers presented at various sessions of the colloquium.
5. Guidebooks on the Study of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh
6. Occasional papers, monographs and booklets. For further information contact Irfan Colloquium, c/o Iraj Ayman, Bahá'í National Center 1233 Central Street Evanston, IL 60201-1611, USATel: 847-733-3501 FAX: 847-733-3502.

E-Mail: iayman@usbnc.org

Landegg Academy

Applied Spirituality: Scholarship in the Service of Development

In 1996 the Canadian psychiatrist, writer and educator, Dr. Hossain Danesh, along with a small cohort of scholars, administrators, philanthropists and volunteers began deliberations toward the establishment of a university that would be located in the heart of Europe, but would be world embracing in its curriculum, faculty, staff and student body. The institution would be unique – not only because of its global reach, but because it would be Bahá'í-inspired and founded on the philosophy of *applied spirituality* — a revolutionary approach to all fields of study that seeks to integrate the empirical, analytical, ethical and spiritual dimensions of knowledge. This approach, noted its founder, "is based on the conviction that true human development and civilization are only possible when scientific research and technological advancement are harmonized

with universal spiritual and ethical principles.”

In the brief period since its establishment as an international center of higher learning, Landegg Academy has attracted to its Swiss campus professors, administrators, students and staff from scores of countries, and from every continent. It has established bi-lateral relationships with other respected universities in China, Israel, the United States, Canada, South America and Europe, and has begun to articulate a body of scholarship dedicated to an explication of the relevance of applied spirituality to a variety of academic and professional fields.

Applied spirituality is an approach to scholarship that seeks to place knowledge at the service of development. It assumes that knowledge of complex phenomena is best derived from a diversity of methods, and that there are often technical, as well as ethical dimensions to most human endeavors. Applied Spirituality thus assumes a position of epistemological and methodological openness – ever mindful of the fact that “nature gives most of her evidence in answer to the questions we ask.”² Applied Spirituality recognizes an essential complementarity between the empirical and rational demands of science and the ethical conduct required of human beings if our relationships to one another and to nature are to secure life and promote development. It is, therefore, not simply a new paradigm from which to view the problems of the world, but is an approach to living in the world which unites the philosopher and the practitioner and makes of these two – one. From this perspective, the spiritual qualities that characterize the student, scholar or practitioner are as critical to securing human happiness and progress as are his or her knowledge, skills and insights.

At the heart of applied spirituality is an ethical commitment to the oneness of the human race and the conviction that life and development are sustained by the creation and maintenance of unity within the context of diversity. In contrast to a materialistic perspective, it affirms that all forms of progress result from “the expression of spirit in the world of matter,”³ and thus the Academy affords consideration of spiritual principles vital in all of its classes, publications and academic undertakings. These principles are derived from the world’s religions, as they constitute the primary reservoir of humanity’s spiritual heritage.

In pursuance of its pedagogical mission, Landegg Academy publishes an academic journal, known as: *Converging Realities: A Journal of Art, Science and Religion*, which appears electronically on a quarterly basis, and in printed form once a year. Submissions to the journal may be directed to Converge@Landegg.edu. In addition, the institution offers the Masters degree in six disciplines, including: Conflict Resolution, Education, Ethics, Religion,

Leadership & Management, and Psychology; and the Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics & International Development, Political Science and International Relations, Psychology, Human Development and Education, and the Integrative Study of Religion. In consultation with a faculty advisor, students may also design their own majors.

Landegg Academy draws its faculty from a range of institutions around the world, including Harvard University, Carleton College, UCLA, American University, the University of Michigan and Franklin & Marshall College in the United States; the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, and Laval University in Canada; the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Shandong University in China; Seinan Gakiun University in Japan; the Norwegian State Academy of Music in Norway; the University of Copenhagen in Denmark; and others. Its graduates have been admitted to distinguished universities, including Cambridge University in England, the University of Pennsylvania in the United States, the University of Alberta in Canada, Jagelonian University in Krakow, Poland, and Harbin University in China, among others. For more information on Landegg Academy and its programs, please contact Info@Landegg.edu.

Wilmette Institute

The Wilmette Institute was established in 1995 to offer courses and other educational programs. It seeks to raise up diverse, knowledgeable, articulate teachers and administrators of the Bahá'í Faith by imparting knowledge; developing various skills, particularly teaching skills; and fostering Bahá'í identity. It receives no direct financial support from the Bahá'í National Fund, but funds its programs through tuition fees and donations.

1. Accomplishments over the Last Four Years.

When the Four Year Plan began, the Institute was just a year old and had not completed its first course. During the plan it accomplished the following:

Spiritual Foundations for a Global Civilization Program. The four-year Spiritual Foundations program held all four of its summer sessions during the plan, with an average annual attendance of thirty. The students studied all major aspects of the Bahá'í teachings, history, and scripture; attended workshops on public speaking, creative writing, conflict resolution, and public relations; and participated in seminars on teaching the Faith every year. Students also completed ten months of home study every year on the subjects covered during the summer session, including giving firesides and deepenings. The majority of students report a great increase in their self-confidence, many additional efforts at teaching the Faith and leading deepening classes, and enrollments (about 100 over the four years that they attributed to the Institute). Much experience

2. C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964, pp. 223-224.

3. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*. London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 12th edition. 1995, p.90.

has been gained over the last four years and the next four-year cycle (which begins in May 2000) will feature a shorter summer session, fewer months of home study, more focused classes, and the options of taking distance-learning courses in subjects of special interest to the student.

Distance-Learning Courses. The internet and worldwide web have revolutionized delivery of courses to students scattered across the United States. The Wilmette Institute launched its first distance-learning course in January 1998 and has offered courses on sixteen distinct subjects since (six surveying the writings of Bahá'u'lláh historically and one each on the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Kitáb-i-Iqán, Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, Advent of Divine Justice, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese Religions, and Zoroastrianism). Each course has a listserver for student and faculty discussion; conference calls so that they can talk together; students give firesides, deepenings, or institute courses as part of each course's requirements; and students complete written exercises of their choice. Approximately 300 students have enrolled in Wilmette Institute courses during the plan. Surveying of the students is not complete, but many have recounted numerous teaching opportunities as a result of Wilmette Institute courses; many describe heightened enthusiasm and confidence in teaching; and about ten enrolments attributable to efforts related to Wilmette Institute courses were reported.

Publicity and Marketing. The Institute has had to develop a systematic and ongoing effort to raise the Bahá'í community's awareness of the Institute, its purposes, and its offerings. Over the last four years it has developed a publicity plan consisting of annual publicity mailings, regular press releases to The American Bahá'í and other news organs, mailing of "ambassador kits" to many of its students before unit conventions, and a regular presence at the Grand Canyon, Desert Rose, Rabhani Trust, Greenlake, and Association for Bahá'í Studies conferences, as well as the National Convention. The selection of a logo and creation of stationery, a banner, and other "identity materials" have given the Institute a consistent "look." A website that is now one of the most popular Bahá'í websites has given the Institute visibility. A toll-free number (877-WILMETTE), newly acquired in early 2000, will make the Institute and its far-flung staff easier to reach. Its quarterly newsletter, The Lamp, is now mailed to about 900 people in ten countries. Its listserver of current and former students and friends has some 500 subscribers and provides a means for rapid dissemination of news. An annual Catalog has been developed and regularly updated and a Faculty Handbook released.

Administrative Developments. All the above has been accomplished by an institution with no permanent full-time staff. Youth year of service

assistance, occasional full or part-time support, and help by volunteers has kept the administrative work going. Because some part-time work has been off-site, telephone and internet communication has been vital to maintaining efficient coordination.

Financial Developments. Supporting the work of the Institute is the Afsharian Endowment and the Orlando Nunez Endowment, which provide financial aid to needy students. Semiannual fundraising efforts have begun to build up the Institute's modest endowment.

International Outreach. The Institute has provided study materials or advice to national, regional, or local training institutes in Alaska, Australia, France, the Gulf States, India, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom. In late 1999 the National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand recognized a Wilmette Institute representative, who coordinates publicity of Wilmette Institute courses, registers local students, and collects tuition in the local currency for the Institute under the National Spiritual Assembly's supervision.

2. Priorities for the Immediate Future.

The Wilmette Institute has begun to develop a Twelve Month Plan and a Five Year Plan. Among their features are the following:

1. Responding to the National Spiritual Assembly's priorities for study by creating courses in 2000 on The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, The Advent of Divine Justice, and The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. In 2001 the Institute will offer courses on The Secret of Divine Civilization and The Epistle to the Son of the Wolf.
2. Utilizing the pool of study materials developed for the Spiritual Foundations for a Global Civilization program in the development of new distance-learning courses. It is hoped that over the next four years (2000-2003) the Institute will be able to launch 39 new distance-learning courses in such diverse areas as the life of Bahá'u'lláh; the life, writings, and talks of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; the life and writings of Shoghi Effendi; Bahá'í History; Bahá'í theology and philosophy; individual development; marriage and family life; development of the Bahá'í community; Bahá'í teachings on global issues; and teaching the Faith.
3. With the creation of a Bahá'í satellite broadcasting system, the Institute will explore ways it can create courses in that medium.
4. The Institute wants to collaborate with the National Youth Committee in

creating an introductory course on the Faith that college students could take for credit toward their degrees, and with the National Teaching Committee on courses suitable for the growing pool of seekers.

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A Chair for Bahá'í Studies was established at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem in March 1999. In the introduction to its formal proposal for the establishment of the Chair, the University thus explained its motivation: "Three years ago, Professor Moshe Sharon began to teach the History and Sacred Literature of the Bahá'í Faith, on a regular basis, at the Institute of Asian and African Studies in the Faculty of Humanities of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As a result of Professor Sharon's pioneering work, the University has become convinced of the importance of the field and of the need to provide an institutional basis for the continuation and development of this work on both the teaching and research levels."

Research Office, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States of America

The Research Office of the National Spiritual Assembly was established in 1989 with a single thirty-hour per week staff member. In 1994 the staff expanded to two full-time persons, where it stands today. Its principal responsibilities (prepublication review of manuscripts and special materials; assisting and encouraging research on the Faith; correcting published information about the Faith; interfacing with academia; collaborating with other Bahá'í scholarly efforts) have steadily expanded over the last eleven years.

1. Accomplishments During the Four Year Plan.

Communications. The Research Office's output of letters and e-mails has steadily increased, from about 700 in 1990-91 (the first year for which data is available) to 3,600 communications in 1997 and 7,191 communications in 1999. No data is subsequently available because of the complexity of calculation. The increase reflects the Bahá'í community's steadily expanding interest in scholarly matters and the Office's growing network of contacts with Bahá'í

authors and researchers, as well as the spreading use of e-mail (acquired by the office in September 1993).

Prepublication Review. The Office's reviewing work has also expanded since 1990-91, when it completed prepublication review of 64 written works. The statistics for the last four years are as follows:

Literature Review:

Year	Total Works	Pass	Changes Req	Reject	No Rating
1997	181	118	52	0	11
1998	161	97	47	3	14
1999	126	92	28	3	3
2000	187	88	42	5	53

Special Materials Review:

Year	Total Works	Pass	Changes Req	Reject	No Rating
1997	357	282	58	9	8
1998	387	271	97	8	11
1999	205	171	25	7	2
2000	270	173	52	4	41

The figures show no trends in terms of numbers of works submitted to review except that the numbers fluctuate considerably. The quality of submissions also seems to vary from year to year, although usually at least 60-70% of those that receive a rating, pass without changes.

Support of the National Spiritual Assembly's Research Needs. Every year the Research Office collects and edits the information for the annual report of agencies of the National Spiritual Assembly and organizes statistical data requested annually by the Universal House of Justice. In addition, every year it puts together one or two additional reports; in 1999-2000 the Office prepared a study of Social and Economic Development projects.

Support of Academic Research on the Faith. The Research Office has become a major center of information for researchers (Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í) who are studying the Faith. The Office plans the Bahá'í program at the American Academy of Religion each year, involving one or two panels of talks on aspects of the Faith and a book display in the exhibit hall. A staff member is a Bahá'í representative to the Pluralism Project, which studies the diversity of religion in the United States. For the last three years the Research Office has coordinated the Bahá'í involvement in the Cooperative Congregational Survey Project, a research effort to study 700 or more congregations in each of 40 denominations in the United States. The survey, to coincide with the 2000

government census, was mailed to all local spiritual assemblies in January; already 500 have completed the survey. In the last four years staff members have published Bahá'í related articles in two encyclopedias and one c.d. rom; the journal *Nova Religio*; a sociological series on religions; and a volume on religions' views about the millennium. In 1999 the Office helped find Bahá'í presenters at a conference on new religious movements in Pennsylvania and a staff member attended and spoke. The Office answered research queries directed to it by about five non-Bahá'í scholars.

Support of Research by Bahá'ís. The Office has been centrally involved in most efforts in the United States to support scholarship by Bahá'ís. Staff members serve or have served on the boards of the Bahá'í encyclopaedia project, *World Order* magazine, the Association for Bahá'í Studies, and the *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*. Reviewing or editing articles for the encyclopaedia and *World Order*, drafting interchanges and editorials for *World Order*, and planning special issues of *World Order* are a major focus of the Research Office. The staff is heavily involved either in planning three Irfán Colloquia per year (which focus on scripture and world religions from a Bahá'í perspective), in editing the abstracts and papers, or in publishing the program booklets. The Institute for Bahá'í Studies (based in the Research Office) sponsored several conferences for Bahá'ís interested in specialized research topics during the Plan, the most recent one being "Revealing the Splendors of His Light: Exploring Spirituality in Bahá'í Life." It was held in Evanston in August 1999 and was attended by about 60 people. Most of the planning for the conference was done by the Research Office.

The Research Office is also the home of the Wilmette Institute, which offers courses on aspects of the Faith. While research and publication are not the focus of Wilmette Institute courses, they have resulted in one or two published articles on the Faith that otherwise would not have been produced. The Institute has also helped create an environment in the American Bahá'í community that is supportive of scholarship.

Protection of the Faith. The Research Office (through the Institute for Bahá'í Studies) has become a center for correcting errors in academic publications and responding to unwarranted criticisms or attacks. Every year it has sought to correct three or four works. Lack of staff has hampered the effort and a backlog of about 15 works needing comment has developed. The Research Office was also central to rallying support for the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) in Iran, when Iranian government agencies attempted to shut it down in the fall of 1998. The Office became a clearing house for information and developed two listservers (one for Bahá'í college professors, the other for students and staff) to keep them informed of the latest developments. Since then the two listservers have become a valuable conduit for networking

like-minded researchers and disseminating research and scholarly requests.

Developing Research Resources in Wilmette. The Office has helped expand the Bahá'í National Center library and its finding aids over the last four years. An important development was the contribution of a collection of works on Judaism in mid 1999.

2. Priorities for the Immediate Future.

Over the next year the Research Office hopes to acquire more staffing, allowing it to focus more energy on protection of the Faith; responding to attacks and inaccurate publications; networking Bahá'í researchers; and training more Bahá'ís to be able to answer difficult scholarly questions about the Faith. The Office also hopes to make more effort to educate Bahá'ís about the prepublication review process, especially of special materials.

Reports by Individuals

Ratnam Alagiah

r.alagiah@mailbox.gu.edu.au

Alagiah, R., An ethical theory for International Accounting: World Order and Uniform Accounting Standards Worldwide, Paper accepted and presented at the 5th Critical Perspectives on Accounting Conference, Hosted by the City University of New York, New York, 22-24 April, 1999.

Alagiah, R., Theory leading Practice: World Order and Uniform Accounting Standards Worldwide, Paper accepted and presented at the Emerging Issues in International Accounting Conference, Center for International Accounting Education and Research, Niagara University, August, 5-7, 1999.

Sheila Banani

banani@ucla.edu

In November 1999 I participated in the nationally-sponsored Irfan Colloquium held at the Bosch Baha'i School and delivered a paper which will be published in the Irfan Proceedings in English this year (2000) to be titled LIGHTS OF IRFAN. My article is entitled: "The Seven Valleys of Bahá'u'lláh and Farid ud-Din Attar."

Mieko Bond

mmmbond@hotmail.com

In 1998 I submitted a thesis at Landegg Academy on Bahá'í Consultation and Alternative Dispute Resolution'. It was a critique of the alternative dispute resolution procedures in North America showing that they have a different process but the same underlying theory of justice and human nature, which produces tensions that are inherent in the North American legal system already. I then presented the Bahá'í theory of justice and consultation as I understand it, demonstrating that it could solve the tensions and problems with the legal system and criticism of the dispute resolution procedures at present (ie power issues in negotiation). I am interested in liasing with others with the same interest and I do have a bibliography in the area. I have written a thesis on 'why are there gender differences in violence? a criminological and Bahá'í approach' and papers on socio- biological evolution, human nature, comparison of the weberian work ethic and the Bahá'í work ethic, etc.

Christopher Buck

drchristopherbuck@usa.net

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Forthcoming

God and Apple Pie: Visions of America's Spiritual Destiny, Albany: State University of New York Press. [under advance contract] 1999

Paradise and Paradigm: Key Symbols in Persian Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith. Albany: State University of New York Press. Resold as: *Studies in the Babi and Bahá'í Religions*, vol. 10. Los Angeles: Kalimat Press

ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLES

Forthcoming

"Baha'is", *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'án*, Ed. Jane McAuliffe et al. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

MULTI-AUTHOR WORKS

Forthcoming

"The Baha'i Faith in the World and in America.", In *World Religions in America*, Third revised edition. Ed. Jacob Neusner, Los Angeles: Westminster John Knox Press.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

"33 Baha'i Principles of Unity," *Bahá'í Studies Review* 9 (1999).

"Bahá'u'lláh as Zoroastrian Saviour," *Bahá'í Studies Review* 8 (1998): 14-33. [published in 1999]

"A Symbolic Profile of the Bahá'í Faith." *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* 8.4 (1998): 1-48. [published in 1999]

REVIEWS

Review of Will C. van den Hoonard, *The Origins of the Bahá'í Community of Canada, 1898-1948*. *University of Toronto Quarterly* 69.1 (Winter 1999/2000).

Review of Moojan Momen, *The Phenomenon of Religion*. *Baha'i Studies Review* 9 (1999).

ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS

1999

"Native Messengers of God in Canada?: A Test Case for Baha'i Universalism." *Bahá'í Studies Review* 6 (1996): 97-133. Web site:

http://www.breacais.demon.co.uk/abs/bsr06/66_buck_messengers.htm
[published online in 1999]

“The Kitab-i Iqan: An Introduction to Bahá'u'lláh's Book of Certitude, with Two Digital Reprints of Early Lithographs.” Occasional Papers in Shaykhi, Babi and Bahá'í Studies 2.5 (June 1998). Web site: <<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~bahai/bhpapers.htm> [Note: The following appendices were published in late 1998 or in early 1999.]

Appendix 1

Facsimile of 1310/May-June 1893 Iqan Lithograph Book of Certitude (Kitáb-i-Iqán). Bombay: n.p., 1893 Reprinted Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1998. Web site: <<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~bahai/areprint/baha/G-L/I/iqan1893/iqan1893.htm> [Digital reprint of image files of rare Bombay lithograph of Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-I-Iqán in the hand of Mishkín-Qalam (Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1310 A.H./May-June 1893).]

Appendix 2

Bahá'u'llah's Book of Certitude (Kitáb-i-Iqán): 1882 Bombay Lithograph, Bombay: n.p., 1882, Reprinted Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1998. Web site: <<http://h-net2.msu.edu/~bahai/areprint/baha/G-L/I/iqan1882/iqan1882.htm>

“Note: This is the first printed Baha'i book.... Thanks to the current owner, Payam Afsharian, for sharing a photocopy for digital reproduction, and to Christopher Buck, who donated the photocopy as part of his 1998 Occasional Paper on the Book of Certitude.”

ABSTRACTS

Religious and Theological Abstracts 29 (1987). Published in 1998 CD-ROM (Abstract #608). Abstract: “The Identity of the Sabi'un: An Historical Quest.” *The Muslim World* 74.3-4 (July-Oct. 1984): 172-86.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

1999

New World Transliterator (shareware). Web site for download: <<http://hyperarchive.lcs.mit.edu/HyperArchive/Archive/edu/lang/new-world-transliterator.hqx>

CONFERENCE PAPERS

2000

“A Multidimensional Approach to Teaching World Religions: The DREAMS Paradigm.” Chicago: Midwest Region Conference American Academy of Religion [March 2000]

1999

“Thirty-Three Baha'i Principles of Unity.” Baha'i Studies Colloquy, 1999 Annual Meeting. American Academy of Religion (Boston).

GUEST LECTURES

2000

“Race against Time: The Millennium in Black and White.” Department of African-American Studies University of Illinois at Springfield

ADVISORY BOARDS

Editorial Advisory Board, African American Studies, Collegiate Press
Editorial Advisory Board, Journal of Baha'i Studies

Rodney Clarken

rclarken@nmu.edu

I am coordinating a study course on the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah through the Wilmette Institute. We have 108 students currently taking this course. You may want to visit its site at <http://www.wilmetteinstitute.org> I continue to try to develop educational ideas based on Bahá'í principles and ideals. Web page: www.nmu.edu/staff/rclarken

William P. Collins

wcol@erols.com

Bill Collins has a 5-page article on the Baha'i Faith appearing in *The Encyclopedia of Millennialism and Millennial Movements* edited by Richard A. Landes, to be published in May 2000 by Routledge. He is continuing work on his book on millennialism and time prophetic interpretation in the Bahá'í Faith. He is also preparing reviews for *Library Journal*, some of which are for Bahá'í works. Bill continues also to maintain a site for a network of Bahá'í librarians at <http://www.bcca.org/librarians> including an annual web newsletter entitled *Scriptum*. He assisted the Bahá'í World Centre Library as a consultant in March 2000.

Lynn Echevarria

Lynn.E@sk.sympatico.ca

Ms. Lynn Echevarria, a SSHRC fellow (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) successfully defended her doctoral thesis in sociology at Essex University, United Kingdom in 1999. Dr. James Beckford of Warwick University, sociologist of religion, presided as the external examiner. The dissertation focuses on the construction of women's religious identity in the Baha'i Faith, and the social processes inherent in Baha'i community life. The study is based upon the collection and analysis of a large amount of data

gleaned from 20 full life histories of Baha'i women and men, additional interviews, and archival and statistical resources. Using concepts rooted in symbolic interactionism, life history perspectives and feminism, the author analyses the processes through which a sample of Baha'i women (mid-twentieth century) make meaning of the Baha'i teachings and translate that meaning into action in their lives. *Working Through The Vision: Religion and Identity in the Life Histories of Baha'i Women in Canada* Department of Sociology, University of Essex, Ph.D. dissertation, 2000, 277 pages. This study is available through the British Library System and at the National Library of Canada, Ottawa, after April 2000. It will also be available for reference at the Association for Baha'i Studies Library in Ottawa.

Cheshmak Farhoumand-Sims

cheshmak@yorku.ca

PhD candidate, York University, Department of Political Science.

Major: International Relations / Minor: Comparative Politics

Dissertation Research: UN Human Rights Mechanisms and the Protection of the Rights of Women.

ABS Affiliate: Canada

Chapters in Books Published in 1999/2000

"Bahá'í Conceptions of World Order" with Charles Lerche. In Dorn, W. (Ed), *World Order for a New Millennium: Replacing the Law of Force with the Force of Law*. New York: MacMillan Press, 1999.

"Reconciliation: Insights from the Bahá'í Writings." Forthcoming in Lerche, C. (Ed.) *Religion and Conflict Resolution: Healing the Body Politique*. New York: One World Publications, 2000.

Conferences Attended and Presented Papers at:

March 2000: International Studies Association Convention Paper Presentation: The Bahá'í international Community, the United Nations and the Protection of the Bahá'í Community of Iran.

May 1999: Centre for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota Paper Presented: Reconciliation Theory and Practice.

September 1998: Association for Bahá'í Studies Conference, Montreal Paper Presented: The Hidden Words: Linking Human Rights to the Covenant.

Sandra Sims Fotos

sfotos@gol.com

Recent Bahá'í Scholarship:

1998. Commentary on Susan Brill's "Conversive relationality in Bahá'í scholarship: Centering the sacred and decentering the self." *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* 8 (3): 81-85.

1999. Strategies for spiritualization. *Journal of Baha'i Studies* 9 (1): 1-25.

Work as Editor:

1999. Proceedings of the Sixth and Seventh Annual Conferences, Association for Bahá'í Studies-Japan

Dale Grider

Howdybud@bellsouth.net

I think the following websites constitute an invaluable perspective that illuminates issues of credibility and validity within Baha'i scholarship, and the paradigm as a whole. The material found here should provide impetus for serious study for the true seeker.

The Fireside Letters: <http://personal.sdf.bellsouth.net/~howdybud>

A critical review of the Fireside Letters by Bahá'í Daniel Grolin, and rebuttal by Dale Grider;

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~cdibdin/rebuttal.htm>

Daniel Jalal Grolin

dgrolin@yahoo.com

Forthcoming publication:

The New Dialogue, George Ronald; August 2001.

The book presents an extensive treatment of the Gospels and what they tell us about the Historical Jesus and Early Christianity as well as some reflections on how this could figure into a new type of Bahá'í/Christian dialogue.

Forthcoming articles:

"A comparison of religious practice in the Bahá'í Faith and Early Christianity". For *Bahá'í Studies Review*.

"The soul's journey from God and back. A comparison of a hymn of Early Persian Christian and the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh."

Odense, Denmark

Graham Hassall

grahamh@bahai.org.au

1999 was another busy year for ABS Australia (see the report for ABS Australia above), and for other writing and teaching projects. In January I taught in the Certificate in Bahá'í Studies program at Yerrinbool. I participated in the Scholarship Institute at Yerrinbool in April, and the ABS annual conference in Melbourne in September, and at other times participated in ABS activities in Malaysia and Japan. Toward the end of the year I established a website for published and unpublished papers: www.bahai-library.org/asia-pacific. Publications that have appeared in print since last year's Report on Scholarship include:

(with Seena Fazel), "100 Years of the Bahá'í Faith in Europe", *Bahá'í Studies Review* 8 (1998), 35-44.

"Fazel Mohamad Khan (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 839-843.

"Hamuel Hoahania (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 843-844.

"Thelma Perks (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 903-907.

"Rose Hawthorne (in Memoriam)", *The Bahá'í World Vol XX: 1986-1992*, Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1998, 914-916.

"The Bahá'í Community of Randwick: A Survey of 75 Years", *Australian Bahá'í Studies*, 1999.

(with Nancy Ackerman) "The Bahá'í Faith in Russia", *The Bahá'í World 1998-1999*

Forthcoming:

"Contemporary Governance and Conflict Resolution: A Bahá'í Reading", in Charles Lerche (ed.) *Healing the Body Politic: Aspects of Conflict Resolution in the New World Order* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming)

"Dunn, Clara and Hyde", *Contributions to an Encyclopaedia of the Bahá'í Faith* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming)

"In Memoriam: James Heggie", *Bahá'í Studies Review*

The Bahá'í Faith in Hong Kong, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

"Persian Integration in Western Communities", in Seena Fazel & John Danesh (eds), *Challenges and Controversies in the Bahá'í Community*, Oxford: George Ronald

"The Future of Bahá'í Studies", *Bahá'í Studies Review*

John Hatcher

hatcher@chuma.cas.usf.edu

WORK PUBLISHED:

Journey of the Soul (Bahá'í Canada Publications, 1999). Monograph *The Divine Art of Revelation*. Wilmette, Illinois: the Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1998 (60 pages)

"The Theme of Alienation in the Poetry of Robert Hayden," at The First International Conference on Kahlil Gibran, University of Maryland, December 9-12.

WORK COMPLETED BUT NOT YET PUBLISHED:

The Poetry of Táhirih. Book length manuscript scheduled for publication in August 2001. Translation of poetry and scholarly introduction and notes. (Oxford: George Ronald Publishers)

"*The Perspective of the Bahá'í Faith on the Child, the Family and the Community*. (a monograph to be published by Palabra Publications.

WORK IN PROGRESS:

Close Connections: The Bridge Between Realities. Completed second draft of manuscript (ca. 300 pages). Is now being reviewed by publisher. Contract attached.

OTHER SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES:

- * appointed to the executive committee for the Association for Bahá'í studies.
- * appointed Associated Editor for the *Journal for Bahá'í Studies*.
- * helped edit translation of *Desinformation als Methode* by Dr. Udo Schaefer into English contract with George Ronald (Oxford). Recently published as *The Crooked Made Straight*.
- * helped teach a course on The Kitáb-i-Íqán for the Wilmette Institute.
- * talk on "Mysticism and the Quest for Transcendence" at the Selby Library January 7, 1999.
- * poetry Reading from translations of Táhirih's verse at Selby Public Library September 7, 1999.

Humaida Jumalon

nsaphil@skyinet.net

I have developed a Module for Moral Development (Universal Values Education) for non-Bahá'ís. This is actually patterned after Book I of the Ruhi Training Institute with modifications to suit to non-Bahá'í participants. I have added quotations from other major religious Scriptures and one more section (to the original three) on the Golden Rule. Questions under exercises are also modified. Right now, I have a group composed of more than ten new friends from at least five other different religious affiliations who volunteered to take the module. We are meeting once a week (one to one and a half hours) for this and it will be our third meeting next week. We call our group "The Peacemakers' Circle."

Charles Lerche

colerche@vub.ac.be

Books – Edited:

Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991);
Towards the Most Great Justice: Elements of Justice in the New World Order (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1996);
Healing the Body Politic: Aspects of Conflict Resolution in the New World Order (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming 2000)

Chapters in Books:

"The Global Agenda" in Anthony Lee (ed.), *Circle of Peace* (Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1986);
 "Human Nature and the Problem of Peace" in Charles Lerche (ed.), *Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991);
 "Justice as a Theme in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh" in Charles Lerche (ed.), *Towards the Most Great Justice* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1996);
 co-author with Cheshmak Farhoumand, "The Bahá'í Vision of World Order" in Walter Dorn (ed.), *World Order for a New Millennium: The Political and Spiritual Dimensions of Peace-building*, St. Martin's Press, 1999;
 "Globalization and its Conflicts" in Charles Lerche (ed.) *Healing the Body Politic: Aspects of Conflict Resolution in the New World Order* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, forthcoming 2000)

Journal Articles – Refereed:

"Us and Them: A Study of Alienation and World Order", *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 17-22, Dec. 1993-March 1994;
 "Statecraft, Globalization and Ethics", *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, Vol.9, No. 2, pp 71-90, June 1999

Website: <http://colerche.virtualave.net> (several conference papers and other things)

Thellie Lovejoy

alovejoy@tfb.com

The Dwight Barstow Collection:

Where do I begin! Through the Grace of God, through a Bahá'í I did not even know, I was given 70 boxes and 13 filing cabinet drawers full of unorganized papers and periodicals that had belonged to a Mr. Dwight Barstow, then deceased, about 15 years. That's a lot of paper! We had to rent a small moving truck to cart it to our home. About half of the bulk was not worth saving. I threw that half out, page by page, paper by paper, looking at each one. What was left is the most incredible private archive imaginable!

Dwight Barstow never married and left no heirs. His life-time accumulation of papers were stored for the fifteen years in a garage of a friend who finally decided to give it to someone who would sort them, store them, save them, whatever was best to be done with the material. My name was suggested to her by a mutual friend and I agreed to do it. That was February 1999 and I've been busy with the material ever since.

History:

Dwight became a Bahá'í and moved to the LA area in the late 40's. He began to collect old Bahá'í periodicals such as Stars of the West which led him to a position where he could help others collect such things as well. That grew into an operation he called the Bahá'í Periodical Exchange (BPE). Through the BPE, he helped dozens of folks complete their periodical collections. He indorsed having them professionally bound, once the collection was completed. In his effort to collect Bahá'í periodicals, he made a habit, I was told, of befriending "little old ladies" in the greater LA area. He befriended particularly the ones who had no Bahá'í heirs to whom to leave there Bahá'í papers, books and periodicals. And so his collection grew. I now have the remnants of his collections (not the books) which include tens of thousands American Bahá'í News, as well as, Star of the West and the older World Order magazine, as

well as some other periodicals, more rare. (Do you know anybody who could use some old Bahá'í News? alovjoy@tfb.com)

The Project:

One of the most surprising items I found while sorting through his boxes was typed-copies of Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Baha to the early American believers, particularly surprising to me, because he had hundreds of them. These pages of typed, copied Tablets, I put altogether and photocopied. The documents are so old that when handled, little pieces of paper flake off. I wanted to photocopy them, so I could read them without damaging the pages. Also, having come upon these wonderful, mostly-unpublished documents so undeservedly as I had, I did not feel they were mine to keep without sharing them with others. I thought they looked like something at least some Bahá'ís would like to read, rather than putting them in an archive where few, if any, would have access to them. The stack of photocopies is a little more than three and one half inches high, 868 pages, a little less than two reams of paper, 9 pounds of paper!

Numbering:

I created a system of numbering the documents so that it is easy for me to identify the documents within the collection in order to correspond with others regarding the documents and to keep them separate from my other collections. I numbered each photocopied document with a different number, while with pencil, I marked the same number on the back side of each original corresponding document. That way, I can go directly to the original of any photocopied document, or refer to any document easily with others whom I have given copies.

Every page I numbered starts with "BC#" (Barstow Collection) that way there is no confusion with other numbers found on some of the documents made by previous owners. If a document has more than one page, each page it is marked with the same document number and different letters behind it, for example document #200 is marked BC#200A, & BC#200B, etc., until end. Behind the last page of the document, I put a dash to indicate that is the last page, as it is not always obvious. This system for numbering documents with code letters first, has proven to be rather serendipitous, as I am now using it to keep all of my other collections organized and separated.

Once having photocopied and numbered them, I wanted to offer them to Bahá'ís, so I made an offer on Bahá'í Announce to see if anybody wanted them. I did get about 50 requests. I then photocopied the now numbered photocopies, making copies for Baha'is who wanted them, and shipped them world-wide, charging for costs and postage.

Reading and e-mail:

The next step was to actually read these photocopies. I was reading the same generation of photocopies as the ones I had shipped, so if a word was undecipherable on the copies I could look it up on the original, for those who received copies, I made an e-mail list. Via e-mail, I sent information regarding undecipherable words, tips about how to store and read the photocopies, the history of the pages which I call the "Barstow Collection" or BC. I e-mail information when I identify where one is published. I also notify them if I find duplicate documents within the collection. If I learn the document is available on the internet, I send them the link to find it electronically. Additionally, I sent by e-mail the few of the documents that I have reproduced by typing. If anyone on the list has information to share about one of the documents they can share it with the list, also.

Indexing:

I made an index-type of table of contents as I read, so that I will be able to find quotes I liked again.

Fan mail:

Seldom when I send notices out to the BC list was there reason for anyone to respond. Nevertheless, a few have written to say thanks. I call it "fan mail" and I love it! This is my favourite.

"I will never be able to adequately thank you for this work you are sharing with me. My schedule has only permitted me to get through the first few documents. But your stream of information and clarifications has kept me anxious to really dive into this collection. Thank you a thousand times a thousand times!"

Comment:

Before reading these documents, I had read every book published in English of the Bahá'í Writings. Every book I read gave me new information that is not in any other book. It took me 30 years to endeavor to resolve undertake such a fete as finding and reading all those books as before I had thought, each book would have basically the same information as every other book but just restated in a different letter. What I found was, every book, although does have some restated material, also has different material found nowhere else, answers to questions I did not even know had been answered in the Writings. I was once told by a seeker that they had been told by their friend, "One thing about the Bahá'ís is they sure don't know much about what is in their Writings." How profound!

The Bahá'í Writings are a huge and vast ocean, wonderful and exciting and impossible to define, at this point, exactly how vast. Now, I have learned so

much more from reading these Tablets. Answers to questions I had not read anywhere else, just like in every other book of Bahá'í Writings. So much is not published! So much that is published is so vastly under read. So many solutions and answers are already given but lost obscurity. If we do not know the teachings, how can we found a civilization built upon them? I leave you with this quote, something in the BC, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual by Rúhíyyih Khánum, dated July 5, 1947:

“It is very easy indeed for him to understand how you, with your training [a psychologist], are often tested and irritated by your contact with some of the believers. But then you must remember that your advantages of a reasonable mind and a scientific education, have not been given to all, and you cannot expect acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings to endow people with these things automatically. But think of the kind of human beings, if brought up in the society He envisages, and taught in the homes, schools and universities which were the mirror and product of His teachings, which would be produced! There you would really have a new race of men.

“Shoghi Effendi has for years urged the Bahá'í (who have asked his advise, and in general also), to study history, economics, sociology, etc. in order to be au courant with all the progressive movements and thoughts being put forth today, and so that they could correlate these to the Bahá'í teachings. What he wants the Bahá'ís to do is to study more, not to study less. The more general knowledge, scientific and otherwise, they possess, the better. Likewise he is constantly urging them to really study the Baha'i teachings more deeply. One might liken Baha'u'llah's teachings to a sphere; there are points poles apart, and in between the thoughts and doctrines that unite them.”

Marlene Mackie

mmacke@execulink.com

I am writing a biography of distinguished Canadian Bahá'í, Laura R. Davis, who died in 1990. I'm seeking stories and recollections about Laura. If you went to firesides in her home, or met her during any of her international travelling teaching trips or otherwise knew her, please contact me at <mmacke@execulink.com>.

Sen McGlinn

Sen.McGlinn@Bahai.NL

Student of Islamic Studies and Persian at the University of Leiden, the Netherlands. Previously studied English literature and Christian theology at the University of Otago, New Zealand. Research interests focus on the theology of social relations and community structures (ie., political theology), covering: Political theory in the Bahá'í Writings, politics and religion, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, the Bahá'í administrative order, the Guardianship and the House of Justice, the covenant as constitutional law, the individual and the collective, the nature of Bahá'í religious law.

Journal Articles - Refereed

A theology of the state from the Bahá'í writings', *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 41, Autumn 1999. Reprints available from the author, Sen.McGlinn@Bahai.NL

Reference Works

The Leiden List of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets', current edition, at <http://bahai-library.org/resources/leiden.list/>.

A variety of articles have also been posted at the bahai-library site.

Moojan Momen

momen@northhill.demon.co.uk

During this year a book entitled *The Phenomenon of Religion: A Thematic Approach* by Dr Momen was published by Oneworld Publishers, Oxford. During the remainder of the year Dr Momen worked on two projects: a paper on Jamal Effendi which will be published in Bahá'í Studies Review and a book *Islam and the Bahá'í Faith* to be published by George Ronald, Oxford.

Vera B. Moreen

verissimam@hotmail.com

Swarthmore College

I am embarking on a project on the conversion of Iranian Jews to Bahá'í. I am particularly interested in when/how/why specific individuals and families decided to convert. I would be grateful if you could guide me to sources, written and/or oral, that might be of help in this investigation.

Fariborz Moshirian

fariborm@bahai.org.au

I am an associate editor of the *Journal of Multinational Financial Management* (JMFM), an internationally well-known finance journal published by the Elsevier publisher in North Holland. This journal reaches 8500 academics, practitioners and all major international institutions such as the UN, the IMF and the World Bank. In 1998, I was the editor of two issues of this journal, which selected some articles for presentation at the 10th Australasian Finance and Banking conference. I entitled this issue of the journal "The Asia-Pacific Financial Axis" and wrote an article explaining the concept of the Asia-Pacific financial axis and the importance of regional institutions such as an Asia-Pacific parliament, a regional court, a single Asian currency and an Asian Central Bank.

In 1999, I called the issue that I was the editor of "Challenges for Further Global Financial Integration" in which I elaborated on the significance of an international single currency and the importance of new international institutions for a global society. I also alluded to the importance of a world government. I have just completed the issue of this journal for the year 2000. I entitled this issue "Financial Challenges for the New Millennium" in which my introductory article goes into some detail as to how a world central bank, responsible for an international single currency and one single interest rate, could create macroeconomic stability, prosperity and certainty for long term investment and for the development of all nations and people. Furthermore, I elaborated on how a world federal government and its agencies and ministries could facilitate the process of globalisation in which workers and employers' rights, the global environment, human rights, universal health and education etc could be protected and promoted and how all people could then see globalisation as no threat to their jobs, environment or national sovereignty. I have also elaborated on the significance of "localisation" where, in the last 10 years or so, in more than 80 countries local/regional governments have emerged and how these local governments are playing a key role in the national economy of these countries (could Bahá'í regional councils be considered as a parallel to this development?) and how a sound world federal government requires effective local/regional and national governments and how the members of international institutions such as a world government, a world parliament or a world central bank could be more relevant, respected and accepted if people and institutions at the local and national levels participate in this process.

While these concepts are familiar to Bahá'ís, I think these three issues of the JMFM and the practical steps suggested in them as to how a global society could operate, gives us as Bahá'ís more opportunity to argue that we are not only have the vision of a global society but are also able to offer

practical solutions to people of capacity and policy makers in this process of globalisation and the establishment of world peace.

June Perkins

junep@aus.bahai.org.au

Undertook one year break from PhD, to work for National Office, as indigenous community development officer. Returned to studies January 2000 (Due to complete in 2001). During 1999- for the National Bahá'í Teaching committee, and National Spiritual Assembly, researched issues in translation for Indigenous languages in Australia, and undertook consultations with many indigenous Bahá'ís on various issues to do with institutes, teaching etc. Also put together a compilation of indigenous Bahá'í photographs from Australian Bahá'í archives 1960-2000 compiled with help of Wahidah Sijaya, David Perkins, Neda Rahmani and archives left with Archives as ongoing development as a resource.

Publications in 1999

"Surfing the News Waves, A Bahá'í Newsreel for the Pacific and Asia," *Australian Bahá'í Studies*, Vol 1: 1. 1999

"Heart to Heart", "Pupil of the Eye", "Indigenous Teaching kit" Documents/compilations/Workshops and educational kits compiled for Indigenous Desk to support pioneering, teaching, education, deepening- distributed to Regional Teaching Committees. 1999.

Workshop- "Sharing stories" given at Brisbane Women's Conference. Partnerships in the New Millennium. Sept 1999.

As it is In Music insert: compiled 3 editions *Australian Bahá'í Bulletin*. Indigenous Desk, 1999. Editor: June Perkins.

Upcoming- October 2000, Australasian Drama Studies: Interview with Wesley Enoch. (Utilises Seven Valleys in analysis)

Upcoming- Interview with Bob Maza, *Herald of the South* (2000)

A report on current interests and activities in Bahá'í scholarship.

Current thesis topic PhD: University of Sydney English dept/ Performance Studies:

Womb Weavers: indigenous women and cultural and spiritual transmission in the new millennium. Interested in chatting with indigenous women, mothers, daughters, granddaughters, about this issue. Study to involve 2 in depth case studies as well. email jper3046@mail.usyd.edu.au

Also working on workshop series on indigenous religions of spiritual axis region for Community Development course at Yerrinbool Centre of Learning.

Other interests include parenting, Bahá'í education for young children and children in general, especially developing the partnership between institutions and parents, and integrating children and families into the whole community.

Research on Fred Murray story started in 1995, being completed in 2000 and made available to Australian Bahá'í community in some form during 2000.

Brent Poirier

brent@bci.org

1. I am revising and extending for publication as a pamphlet my article "The Flow of Divine Authority" on the Covenant of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the authority in the Sacred Texts for the Universal House of Justice to function without the presence of a Guardian.
2. I have an abiding interest in the verses of the Bible interpreted by the Bahá'í Writings, particularly the *Kitab-i-Iqan*. Some are on my website <http://web.nmsu.edu/~bci> which is soon being moved to <http://www.bci.org/pilgrim>
3. For some years I have been collecting materials related to the Master's visit to the Western United States and forwarding them to the Archives. Recently a recording by Sachiro Fugita came to light, including his recollections of travel with the Master in 1912 — the only audio recording I am familiar with, recounting eyewitness accounts from a member of the Master's travelling party. This is on the above website.
4. I have an interest in the development of international law.
5. I am interested in correlating the Bahá'í teachings on mysticism, with the other aspects of the Faith, such as administration and teaching.

Sholeh Quinn

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My book entitled *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbas* is due to be published by the University of Utah Press later this year.

Nozomu Sonda

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I have recently published an introductory book on the Bahá'í Faith in Japanese, which was a revision of a previously published one. It presents the Bahá'í teachings in view of the philosophical and psychological framework of the Japanese people and their culture. The concept of God, image and attitudes towards religion are quite different from those of the West; that is why a book like this was needed. I am also working on other related subjects: concept of reincarnation and life after death in Japan; comparative studies of the Bahá'í Faith and some prominent religious movements in Japan; prophecies for the 21st century and beyond; and an introductory book on comparative religions. (For the reader's reference, my background is as follows: I studied Social-Psychological and Cross-Cultural Psychology as well as English as a Second Language. Have taught English, Japanese and Cross-Cultural Studies including at Maxwell International Bahá'í School. Currently director of a language school/translation business in Japan).

Peter Terry

peterry@megalink.net

In 1999 I did not complete any works, and spent an inordinate amount of time on the Internet, writing literally thousands of messages related to Bahá'í scholarship. I wrote two papers, delivered at the 1999 'Irfan Colloquium at Louhelen Bahá'í School: "Chronological Issues in the Lawh-i-Hikmat" and "'Abdu'l-Bahá's Explanation of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh" which will be published by the Colloquium in due course. Also, I have participated on h-bahai, bahai-st, tarjuman, bahai-apologetics and soc.religion.bahai during 1999, posting much material related to research interests of mine.

Will C. van den Hoonaard

will@unb.ca

University of New Brunswick

We worked on Bahá'í studies on several fronts this year—quite different from the past years. The matter of the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Studies in Iran was brought to the attention of numerous university authorities and agencies in Canada, involving university presidents and such governing councils as university Senates. Some 15 universities voiced their protests with UNESCO and Iranian authorities and the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa. Not less significant

was the interests taken by the Canadian Association of University Teachers. It published in their national news organ for two successive months accounts in English and French about the closing of BIHE, in addition to a letter of thanks from the Office of External Affairs of the NSA of Canada. Over 27,000 university faculty were thus directly informed of the Faith.

On a more personal level, we are happy to report that Lynn Echevarria has successfully defended her Ph.D thesis at Essex University which deals with religious identity among Canadian Bahá'í women. Lynn is now the Secretary of the ABS-North America. Deborah van den Hoonard, a professor of sociology and gerontology at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, has completed her new book, *The Widowed Self: The Older Woman's Journey Through Widowhood* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Fall 2000), which promises to be a significant contribution to her field. She and her husband, Will, have also completed an empirical study of how Canadian Bahá'ís are doing in promoting the equality of women and men. Wilfrid Laurier University Press and the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion are currently reviewing the ms for publication. The couple organized in May 1999 the 16th Annual Qualitative Analysis Conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick, which brought together a number of Bahá'í scholars within the context of qualitative research being presented by 120 other scholars. The van den Hoonards are organizing the 17th Conference, 18-21 May 2000. Will continues to be a member of the international Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project (of which he has been a member since 1984).

Robert Weinberg

weinberg@dircon.co.uk

My major area of interest at the moment is the life of Sara Louisa, Lady Blomfield. I am preparing a full-length biography for George Ronald Publishers. I am also involved in plans to restore Lady Blomfield's resting-place and to befittingly commemorate her services to humanity. I have an ongoing book project looking at how nature is used as a metaphor in the writings of the world religions for spiritual growth and how this metaphorical use of the natural world represents an area where the unity of religion can be demonstrated.

Reports on Conferences held in 1999

ABS Australia – 18th Annual Conference

**'The Creative Inspiration': Arts and culture in the Bahá'í Faith.
Melbourne University 21st - 26th September 1999**

The Association's 18th Annual Conference on the Arts and Culture attracted more than 50 presenters and performers, and approximately 150 participants. The conference included workshops and seminars, a dinner, an exhibition, a play, and a concert. Its aim was to provide an opportunity for those involved in the arts in the Australian Bahá'í Community to meet each other and become informed of each others' work, and to bring the arts to the wider community, and to foster discussion of critical issues facing Bahá'ís in the arts at the present time. The first three days consisted of workshops in drama, the visual arts, creative writing, dance, and music. Sessions were conducted by Jan Coker, Maxien Bradley, Grant Hindin Miller, the Centre Theatre Company, Ruth Park, Artworks Visual Arts Theatre, Greg Parker, Shirin Lagha'i, Kath Podger, Michael Knopf, Ron Price, and Michael Phillips.

The Visual Arts Exhibition, held in the Gryphon Gallery in the University's splendid 1888 Building, was officially opened on the evening of 23rd September, with a reception and music by the Melbourne choir, "Breezes of Harmony". Over the next three days the work of twenty artists attracted hundreds of visitors. The exhibition include work by Jannu, Karel Fontaine, Steve & Angela Clark, Vahid Payman, Ruth Park, Chris Reid, Kath Podger, Diane Arjomand, Katayoun Mottahedin, Claus Barabbas Mayrhofer, Anne Williams, Yvonne Chapman, Terry Eichler, Lorni Hyland, Sonja Van Kerhoff, Ebrahim Malekzadeh, Haifa Mehdzadeh, Mehrzad Mumtahan, and Carolynn Newport.

From Friday to Sunday participants chose between some forty sessions, almost all focused on the arts. These included performances and seminars on poetry (Ron Price - "The Passionate Artist"; Belinda Belton - "Bahá'í Poetry: the Power of the Word", Narelle Kinneally Tolstoff - "Spiritual Symphonies"), Literature (Jamshid Fanaian; Camilla Fligelman "Is it nearly impossible for a mere human being to write a good work of art with a religious theme?") and Music (Michael Knopf); artists presentations about their own work (Kath Podger; Sonya Van Kirkhoff, Jan Coker "Mnemonic", Steve & Angela Clark "Making a living whilst maintaining artistic integrity – The Artists Dilemma"; Karel Fontaine "The Creative Impulse: Symbolism and Seeing", Robin Chandler: This Artist's Life: A presentation of 25 years of life and work as artist,

administrator, sociologist, and CEO as one model of integrate the life of art into spiritual service & teaching”, Monir Rowshan “Inspiration/ Visualisation of Dreams”) and thoughts on the artistic process (Phillip Hinton “The Search for the Beloved: The Artist as Spiritual Voyager”, Ben Hinton “An exploration of the diverse concepts of creativity, imagination, and inspiration”; Negin Sanaei “Creativity and Spirituality - are they related?”; Simon Hinton “Will Celine Dion Eat the World? - Globalisation and The Cultural Marketplace”).

There were also papers on the position of the arts in the Bahá'í Community (Mahyar Amjadi “Arts Can Move the Youth”; Bahá'í Institute of Performing Arts “Performance: A Sacred Act”, Simon Hinton “Artists, Institutions and Money - An Unholy Trinity? - Arts Funding and Infrastructure Support in the Bahá'í Community”; Robin Chandler “Building Creative Communities: approaching the arts as social & economic development through professionalizing, training, and networking internationally).

There were also presentations on other subjects (Sepehr Manuchehri, “The Practice of Taqiyah (self-denial) in the Bábí & Bahá'í Religions” and Graham Hassall “Current issues in Bahá'í Scholarship”). Neda Rahmani presented “The Asia Pacific Newsreel”, and there was a display by fashion designer Afsoon Missaghi.

Lunch times were given over to the launching of publications (Michael Knopf “The Paramount Project - New Bahá'í Devotional Songs for Community Singing”) and a website (the Victorian Bahá'í Community Website official Launch), and a demonstration of wood carving by South Australian artist Chris Reid.

On the evening of Friday 24th September the Association presented an evening of performance at Performance - Melba Hall. Those present were privileged to experience a three hour program featuring Amir Farid, Artworks, John Grey, Greg Parker, Alice Chew, Jamshid Hatami, Behzad and Anis Khoshmashrab, Vafa Ferdowsian, Michael Knopf, Grant Hindin Miller, Ruth Rowshan and Bernardo Soler (Nougat). Special thanks to Erfan Khadem for assistance at the concert, and to Master of Ceremonies Omid Master.

The Conference Dinner attracted more than 100 guests, who enjoyed an outstanding premier of jazz classics performed by Kylie Richardson and Grant Hindin Miller’s personal journey into the creative life. In the closing session of the conference, Phillip Hinton performed his one-man play “Portals to Freedom” at RMIT’s Kaleide Theatre.

ABS Australia Scholarship Institute

ABS Australia’s third scholarship institute was held at Yerrinbool 2-4 April 1999. After getting to know each other a little better on the Friday evening, and discussing the aims of the institute, the program commenced the next morning. The institute program is based on discussion of current research interests. Participants are not required to present “finished research”, but are invited to speak about what they are interested in, and how they are undertaking the research. Thus the institute focuses on the creative process, rather than on the creative output.

In the first session ABS Australia presented the “*Report on Scholarship*” for 1998. This report on scholarship activities in Australia and elsewhere provided a basis for discussion on the nature and purpose of Bahá'í Scholarship, what is currently being undertaken, and what projects might usefully be undertaken in the future. Presentations were then made by Vahid Payman “Aboriginal religion and the Bahá'í Faith”; Nastaran Habibi “Food Safety”; Kaye Waterman “Report on research projects”; and Nushin Burwell “The operation of the International Goals Committee”. The afternoon continued the presentation of individual projects. Roger Le Lievre spoke on “*Iranian Bahá'ís and Australian refugee policy*”; followed by Ahmad Aniss’s *Report on Current Projects*; Ladan Rahmani on “*International Law and Human Rights*”, and Glen Duncan on “*Knowledge Management*”. On Saturday evening the participants viewed rare film of the Yerrinbool School and of the Hands of the Cause in Haifa, taken in the 1950s by Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, introduced by Mrs Madge Featherstone.

The Sunday session commenced with group discussion of a paper by Jef Clark about “learning community”, published in the Association’s new journal, *Australian Bahá'í Studies*. This was followed by presentations by Graham Waterman, on his current *research projects*; Cath Holt “*Researching the Christian-Bahá'í Nexus*”, and Babak Mohajerin, who also reported on *Current Projects*. The final session of the institute included reports on individual projects, as well as discussion of a course on Bahá'í Scholarship being developed for ABS by Colin Dibdin. Being the final session, it also includes an opportunity assess the results of the weekend. Presentations were made by Erin O’Connor, on “*The Earth Charter*”, and by Natalie Mobini, on *Current Projects*.

The success of the institute demonstrated the depth of scholarly activity currently taking place within the Australian Bahá'í Community, and encouraged ABS to continue with this format for dialogue amongst those who are interested in it.

ABS-Japan - Eighth Conference

Towards True Peace and Harmony: The Eighth ABS-Japan Conference, January 14-16, 2000

Venue: Kyoto

Site chair: Mary Noguchi

Conference Report by Janet Sono

With presenters and presentations from Australia, Papua New Guinea, Okinawa and Japan on the theme of “Japan and the Development of True Peace” to light the way, the Asia-Pacific Spiritual Axis momentarily turned ablaze at the 8th Annual ABS-Japan Conference held in the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto from January 14th -16th, 2000. After prayers in both Japanese and English, bilingual Site Chair Mary Noguchi opened the Conference, followed by a World Citizenship Workshop organized by Jerris Strain. Presentations on the conference theme included “The Bahá'í View of Japan's Role in the World Peace Process” (by Counselor N. Iwakura), “How the Bahá'í Community Can Assist Japan in Peace Initiatives” (NSA Secretary K. Schwerin), “Unique Contributions of the Asia-Pacific Region in Achieving a Lasting Peace” (Australian NSA member G. Hassall), a panel discussion by three Japanese Bahá'í mothers on “Educating Bahá'í Youth in a Non-Bahá'í World”, and “English Education and World Peace” (by K. Arai). On Saturday evening, there was also a panel discussion open to the public on “Japan and the Development of True Peace”, with non-Bahá'í guest Ritsumeikan University Professor A. Fujioka, who is Director of the of the World Peace Development Center in Kyoto, Dr. G. Hassall, Auxiliary Board Member Z. Moghbel, and ABS-Japan Chair H. Tsunoi serving as moderator. Afterward, a group of four women from Japan and Iran, dressed in exquisite traditional garments, played the koto (a Japanese stringed instrument that somewhat resembles the harp). Attendees also enjoyed presentations on human rights education (by NSA Member J. Goldstone), aspects of the Bahá'í community in Japan (N. Sonda and K. Suda), Bahá'í perspectives on psychosocial health and healing (D. Trautmann), and how the indigenous people of New Ireland, Papua New Guinea have embraced the Faith and made it part of their culture (C. Volker). The Conference took place in full view of a lovely mountain that houses a famous Zen temple, making those in attendance feel that we were on sacred and holy ground. Especially during the koto concert on Saturday evening, it seemed as if angels had come down from the Concourse on High to bless the conference with their heavenly music, encouraging the participants to strive gently but firmly for true peace and harmony in the world.

ABS North America – 23rd Annual Conference

The 23rd Annual Conference of the Association took place in Tempe, Arizona, June 17-20 1999. The Conference theme was “Sacred Justice: Uniting the Human Family.” Plenary speakers included experts in the field of American Indian contributions to law and justice. The Hasan M. Balyuzi was given by Dr. Richard W. Thomas, who spoke on “The State of Race Relations in the American Bahá'í Community: Challenges, Progress and Future Directions”. The first Louis G. Gregory Symposium on Law and Justice was deeply appreciated by the participants who focused on the role of culture in law, and issues leading to a united family. Music and arts were integrated throughout the program and outstanding presentations were given by American Indian artists and Canadian First Nations storytellers and performers. A unique feature of this conference was the Town Meeting held to discuss “Alternatives to Violence in the Schools. A panel of prominent community leaders, made up of primarily non-Bahá'ís, discussed this topic with the participation from an audience of 400 people, half non-Bahá'ís. The press from CNN, CBS, a local Hispanic TV station, and the daily Arizona newspaper covered the event.

Science and Religion at Tempe

1999 Annual Meeting of the Science and Religion Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Association for Bahá'í Studies - North America (ABS-NA)

ABS-NA Science and Religion SIG members and their guests enjoyed animated discussions on evolution, the relationship between science and religion, and the difficulties facing Bahá'í college students at their annual meeting on June 17 in Tempe, Arizona. Held the day before the Association for Bahá'í Studies 1999 Annual Conference, the meeting attracted a diverse audience in excess of 30 people. The morning session, cool and welcoming in a room away from the Arizona heat, focused on the relationship between science and religion. Science and religion are different approaches to the same reality, according to the Bahá'í writings. Given this, how then are they related? The writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the prophet/founder of the Bahá'í Faith, say that nature and the creation educate us about God. “Every created thing,” Bahá'u'lláh wrote, “is a sign of the revelation of God.” The implication of this is that scientific knowledge leads to the knowledge of God, argued Stephen R. Friberg, a physicist working in Japan. Science has other lessons for religion, contended Safa Sadehpour, a student of medicine and neuroscience at Harvard

and MIT. Science requires faith. Without faith in the explicability of nature and the belief that phenomena obey fixed and discoverable laws, science cannot move forward. The implications of modern irreligious culture for Bahá'í students was addressed by Kelly Snook, a recent Stanford University Ph.D. in planetary sciences at NASA Ames Research Center. Confronted in universities with secular understandings that enshrine science and denigrate religion, Bahá'í youth sometimes have a hard time sheltering their maturing beliefs. Bahá'ís knowledgeable about the sciences should offer a helping hand, she argued.

The afternoon session focused on evolution, a topic figuring prominently in the Bahá'í writings on science and religion. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the renowned son of Bahá'u'lláh, commented frequently on evolution in his speeches in the salons and churches of Paris and London in the first decades of the century and in his visits to North America. An overview of his comments was given by Courosh Mehanian, a physicist working in the San Francisco Bay area. We came into existence by evolutionary processes occurring over great spans of time, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Although we have passed through the animal kingdom in the process of evolution, our powerful mind – the “rational soul” – sets us apart from the animals. We have moral, ethical, and spiritual responsibilities. Current perspectives on biological evolution were described by Ron Somerby, an evolutionary biologist/taxonomist with the state of California. He described how the oneness of life can be seen in the shared genes and development pathways of life's diverse organisms. Molecular genetics now allows detailed decoding of genes, developmental biology has shown how genes interact and embryos develop, and studies of bacteria have revealed a wealth of new information about simple cells.

The closing talk of the conference revisited the issue of the relationship between science and religion. Renowned scientist/writer Stephen Jay Gould in a widely read new book has written of science and religion as “non-overlapping magisteria” with separate spheres of authority. Mark Foster, a sociologist now teaching in Kansas, suggested that we seek further for better understandings of the relationship between these two most important institutions. Describing 'Abdu'l-Bahá's comments on evolution and ether as requiring further thought, he urged us to discard simplistic interpretations. Questions, responses, and discussions responding to his comments continued for an hour.

A final comment: although Bahá'ís have long known that science and religion are compatible, it is only recently that the chill between the two has begun to ease in the world of intellectual opinion. This presents both opportunities and a challenge. The opportunities arise because of a new climate of openness to a centrally important aspect of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings. The challenge is to present those teachings well and to be able to present them in a manner befitting the needs of a sophisticated and critical scientific community. Meetings like the Science and Religion SIG meeting in Tempe are an important

component of the process of developing a mature and intellectually compelling understanding of the Bahá'í teachings about science and religion.

To contact the Science and Religion Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Association for Bahá'í Studies - North America (ABS-NA) for membership or to inquire about its activities, please e-mail Ron Somerby at <sommerby@ns.net>, Stephen R. Friberg at <srfriberg@worldnet.att.net>, or visit the ABS-NA website at <http://bahai-studies.ca/srsig/index.html>

ABS Singapore 4th Annual Conference

The 4th Annual Conference of the Singapore Association for Bahá'í Studies was held on 17th April 1999 in the setting of the Lounge/Seminar room of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science in the National University of Singapore (NUS). Copies of the 3rd Singapore Bahá'í studies Review, as well as ABS journals produced by the UK, Japan and Australia were displayed and sold.

The conference was attended by a total of 27 people. The five speakers delivered talks related to the main topic of the Conference: “Challenges for the New Millennium”. Dr Habibul Khonder, a lecturer in the department of sociology at the NUS, spoke on the need to find common ground between various religious and secular groups in Bangladesh. Dr Phyllis Chew spoke on the role of religion in the rise of the women's movement in Singapore. Dr Anjam Khursheed described modern trends towards religious pluralism and interfaith activity. Dr Suresh Sahadevan described the limitations of moral relativism and science with respect to moral values. Mr Kwek Yi Hsing presented various models of moral education, stressing the need to recognise spiritual dimensions to human nature.

All the talks aroused interest and questions among the participants in relation to Bahá'í views on many current issues. One inquirer sent a thank you card to the conference organizers, declaring that the conference had inspired him to attend “the activities of Bahá'í at all times”.

Bibliography of publications in Bábí and Bahá'í Studies, 1998-1999

An ever-increasing body of literature on the Bahá'í Faith is being produced by Bahá'í publishers, and such other bodies as Associations for Bahá'í Studies. A list of current Bahá'í Publishers can be found in editions of *The Bahá'í World*. Systematic posting of essays on the world wide web is also widely regarded as "publication". Significant references to the Faith appear in the literature of religious studies and the social sciences generally, as well as in current affairs literature. The following is a partial listing of recent literature that either refers to, or focuses on, the Bahá'í Faith. It is compiled through searches in bibliographic reference available on cd-rom and on the internet.

A. A remark on Reference services

The rapid emergence of electronic information services is revolutionising access to information on the Bahá'í Faith. Electronic sources range from web-sites that are freely accessible, to databases available only by subscription (eg Lexis), to discussion groups that allow researchers to communicate back and forth. By combining these sources the researcher may learn not only of such traditional sources of scholarly information as books and academic papers, but of such other sources as news services and newspaper articles. Judicial and other official records such as those of the United Nations Organization are also becoming available, as are book lists supplied by book-sellers. A search at the on-line bookstore "Amazon.com", for example, found 264 references to "Bahá'í" in March 1999 and 304 references in October 1999. A CD ROM from Newsbank called REDEX has an "Index to UN Documents" which when searched in March 1999 yielded 209 references to "Bahá'í". A search in the EBSCO database, in the "World Magazine Bank" file, yielded 107 references.

The vast quantity of data that is searchable on some subscription databases is breathtaking. UMI, for instance, includes eight sub-databases, each of which includes a constellation of information.⁴ A search in the Library of Congress

4. The eight databases are **ABI/INFORM Global**, a business and management database covering advertising, marketing, economics, human resources, finance, taxation, computers, etc; **Applied Science & Tech Plus** (Wilson's authoritative Applied Science & Technology indexing combined with UMI full-text and images for the leading periodicals in science and technology. Subject coverage includes computers, engineering, physics, telecommunications and transportation); **Health Module** (covering medical conditions, substance abuse, insurance, health policy, etc); **Education Plus** (H.W. Wilson's Education Abstracts database and UMI full-text images covering adult education, homeschooling, language and linguistics, special education, etc); — (footnote continues next page)

catalogue on 10th October 1999 yielded 682 references to Bahá'í. Redo the UNESCO search – 25 references at UNESDOC. Only one reference was found in a search of the 6,800 theses/dissertations and conference papers in the Theological Research Exchange Network.⁵ A Database named Emerald comprises full text access to approximately forty titles in marketing, general management, human resources, quality, property, operations, production & economics, library & information services, information management, training & education and engineering.

A subscription called FirstSearch grants access to a large number of databases.⁶ The firstsearch database called "Papers first" includes "Papers included in every congress, conference, exposition, workshop, symposium, and meeting received at The British Library."

The netfirst database consists of "Bibliographic citations including abstracts, subject headings, and classification codes." It includes a variety of Internet accessible resources including World Wide Web pages and Listservs, and will soon also encompass Usenet newsgroups, FTP sites, Gopher servers, and electronic publications in other formats. A search in March yielded 212 records for "Bahá'í".

Services such as "eLibrary" will track subjects and notify the researcher of new publications.⁷

(footnote 4, cont.) **ProQuest Computing** (computing journals); **ProQuest Medical Library** (more than 100 key medical titles); **ProQuest Telecommunications** (full-text for publications in the telecommunications industry); and **Social Science Plus** (addiction studies, gerontology, econometrics, international relations, minority studies, urban studies, etc).

5. <http://www.tren.com/search/>. The reference found is Beckwith, Francis J., *Baha'ism: A Presentation And Critique Of Its Theological Tenets And Apologetic Use Of The Christian Scriptures*, Simon Greenleaf School Of Law, M.A. 1984, 126 pages.

6. FirstSearch has "General Databases" and Specialist Databases. There are six "General Databases": WorldCat (Books and other materials in libraries worldwide); Article1st (Index of articles from nearly 12,500 journals); Contents1st (Table of contents of nearly 12,500 journals); FastDoc (Index of articles with text online or by email); NetFirst (OCLC database of Internet resources) and UnionLists (OCLC Union Lists of Periodicals).

The Specialized Databases searched for this report on scholarship were AHSearch (Arts & Humanities Search. A citation index); BiographyInd (Guide to wide range of biographical material); BookRevDigst (Reviews of fiction and nonfiction books); BooksInPrint (R. R. Bowker's Books In Print); ContmpWom-enIss (Contemporary Women's Issues with full text); DataTimes (An index of regional newspapers); Diss (Dissertation Abstracts Online); EducationAbs (Leading publications in the field of education); FactSearch (Facts and statistics on topics of current interest); GPO (U.S. government publications); IndxLegalPer (Index to Legal Periodicals & Books); LibraryLit (Materials on libraries and librarianship); NewsAbs (Newspaper Abstracts From over 25 newspapers); NYT (The New York Times daily and Sunday editions); PapersFirst (An index of papers presented at conferences); PerAbs (Periodical Abstracts with full text); PerContentsIdx (Periodicals Contents Index - 1961-1991); Proceedings An index of conference publications; ReadGuideAbs (Abstracts of articles from popular magazines); SIRSResearcher (SIRS Researcher with full text online); WilsonSelect (H.W. Wilson Select Full Text); WorldAlmanac; and World Book Encyclopedia.

7. <www.tracker.eLibrary.com> According to the website, eLibrary Tracker "is a unique service that searches our Electric Library database each day for any topic you want and e-mails you the latest headlines automatically. eLibrary Tracker searches through Electric Library's extensive database of popular newspapers, magazines, reference books, pictures, maps, and radio and TV transcripts. We add new content every day so you'll always get the most current information. ...Registration is Free... Simply tell us which topics you'd like us to keep track of, how often you'd like to receive the information, and give us your e-mail address. We do the rest..."

These are just a few of the extensive resources now available to the researcher. In time, a systematic project to monitor such open source information will provide the field of Bahá'í studies with unprecedented access to scholarly information pertinent to the progress of all aspects of Bahá'í studies.

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C: Internet Reports

Bahá'í Faith Index

<http://www.bahaindex.com>

The Bahá'í Faith Index can be defined as a Bahá'í internet portal, meaning that it is a search engine, web page directory by category, discussion area, news source, online bookstore, software resource, and chatroom all rolled into one. Primarily it is a search engine, containing at any given moment roughly 3,000 links. There is also a "random link" function.

A main aspect of the site is the discussion area, known as the "Bahá'í Forum". This is open to the public, but there is always the possibility of setting up usernames and group restrictions so that individual communities can privately discuss matters. The Bahá'í Faith Index is the Bahá'í equivalent of Yahoo! The site's primary aim is to index all Baha'i links into a search engine and directory. This means that all 3,000 links or so are hand-edited, and are not only put in the right categories in the search engine, but are put in whatever other categories they may belong in the directory listings. Every month I send out a "Bahá'í Internet Update" about new links and resources. This is an opt-in mailing list. Additionally I maintain a "What's New" page to document new additions to my search engine. The Bahá'í Faith Index is also the home page for the Baha'i Ring, a world-wide collection of Bahá'í web pages linked together with common navigation buttons (part of the Webring network at www.webring.com).

Ideally, one would be able to find information relevant to one's search after at most two or three clicks.

The Index is an Amazon Associate, meaning that one can search for Bahá'í books at Amazon.com and buy them, giving the webmaster of the Baha'i Faith Index a small commission on each sale (usually 2% or 3%). Per year this adds up to about \$40, which is used to pay for the domain name "bahaindex.com" and to make backups of the site on cd-rom.

The site also features a prominent section for languages other than English. The internet is international, and therefore I want to provide an opportunity to those whose native tongue is not English to read about the Baha'i Faith in their own language.

I don't only link to other sites' content - I have some of my own. For instance:

The Dawn-Breakers

<http://www.bahaindex.com/DAWN/>

A 700-page history of the early Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths, fully illustrated and annotated, as well as searchable

Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era

<http://www.bahaindex.com/NewEra/>

A classic introduction to the Baha'i Faith by J.E. Esslemont.

Huqúqu'lláh converter:

<http://www.bahaindex.com/huq.html>

Allows one to calculate Huqúqu'lláh in one's currency of choice.

There is, of course, much more to mention, but that can be discovered by simply browsing through the site.

—Casper Voogt

webmaster

<http://www.bahaindex.com/>

cvoogt@bccca.org

Bahá'í Library

DEFINITIONS

- * The Baha'i Academics Resource Library is an online archive of primary and secondary sources and scholarly tools and resources.
- * I, Jonah Winters, run it as an individual and self-proclaimed executive editor. I would prefer to run the Library as but one member of a collaborative body, but thus far individuals sufficiently dedicated to the project have not stepped forward to help form such a body. At any one time I have assistance in formatting and proofreading documents from any half-dozen volunteers.
- * My material comes almost exclusively from submissions, usually from authors (or, in the case of letters from the Universal House of Justice, from recipients). Though I have permission to scan and post a large number of other materials, simple time constraints prevent this.

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES AND GROWTH IN 1999:

I am pleased to report a productive year. First, I moved the Library from its initial home at my old ISP to its own dedicated server, <http://bahai-library.org>. This has provided the Library with a range of facilities, disk space, and server reliability which has allowed for significant growth, both in terms of content and mandate.

From its humble origins in early 1997 as a venue for personal academic work — i.e., a typical grad student homepage — it has become the Internet's largest collection of Baha'i academic material and primary sources. In 1999

the Library grew to encompass all published Sacred Writings and a number of related primary source items, from provisional translations to original compilations to transcriptions of talks by notable Baha'í figures. As well, it has either published or re-published hundreds of secondary-source items, including academic articles, essays, books, and book reviews. Finally, a number of resource tools such as bibliographies and academic study guides have been contributed, including materials prepared for the Wilmette Institute. As well as "premiering" works online, the Library seeks to mirror any and all academic or primary source material appearing at any other website online. As there is still relatively such material on the internet, I believe that we have been successful at mirroring at least 95% of all such material posted at other sites.

The Bahá'í Academic Resource Library's mandate is simple, if ambitious. It seeks to make available any and all material on or related to the Bahá'í Faith which is either academic in origin or of potential use in academic research. The four criteria I use in deciding what to include are whether an item is (1) scholastically useful; (2) historically significant; (3) is a primary source, e.g. the Sacred Writings; or (4) has been published by reputable, scholastically-oriented agencies. This is usually regardless of content. That is, materials are neither accepted nor rejected on the basis of the author's belief or the relevance of the material to promoting entry by troops. However, the four criteria outlined above do tend to exclude deepening material, promotional items, and the majority of apologia on the one hand, and polemical or excessively tendentious material on the other hand. The Library's mandate is not exclusively an "academic exercise," if the double entendre will be forgiven. Exceptions to these four criteria have been made when it was deemed necessary to favor community sensibilities over academic utility. For example, material that might pass one or even all four of these criteria that could yet be excessively controversial or inflammatory, or of a highly personal or sensitive nature, has been omitted. I do not view this as renouncing academic principles, but rather as necessary deference, a bow to the delicacies of working in an intra-faith environment in which one must honor both the primary audience and the contributors.

The Library's goals for the next two or three years are twofold. In the near future, I will simply continue adding material as it gets contributed, and as well I am gradually — as time allows and volunteer help appears and fades away — revising and improving the archive of published Sacred Writings. The more distant goal is to categorize and formalize the structure of the Library, using as a starting point the Library of Congress classification scheme expanded upon by William Collins and currently under implementation at the Baha'í World Center archives.

The Library also provides space to other, thematic collections of material maintained by other individuals, such as the Baha'í Association for the Arts, Baha'í materials in Russian, and Baha'í materials on East Asia. These are independent projects which are housed at but not maintained by the editors of

the Baha'í Library. The Baha'í Academics Resource Library is not affiliated with the International Baha'í Library, <http://library.bahai.org>.

To help proofread, format, or post material, or to contribute material, please write to me at winters@bahai-library.org.

Sincerely,

Jonah Winters, executive editor

H-Bahai

In 1999, the H-Bahai subscribers discussed, among many other things, the following: the Báb's Surat al-Hamd; Bahá'u'lláh's *Ishráqát*, Surah of the Companions, Tablet of Maqúd, Persian Tablet of the Holy Mariner, Tablet of the Temple, and Tablet of the Vision; they also discussed arranged marriage, Yale historian Abbas Amanat's book on the Bábí movement, *Resurrection and Renewal*; the biography of the BÁB'S wife, Khadijih Begam; issues in religious fundamentalism; philosophical theology and the status of proofs for the existence of God, as well as science and reason; the Buddha and non-theism; the Indian Bahá'í community and issues in the Indian Census and their relationship to Bhakti Hinduism; the meaning of intellect/wisdom and the maturation of the world; the human rights situation of Bahá'ís in Iran; and Vance Salisbury's views concerning the textual history of Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*.

H-Bahai also digitally published large amounts of text that is freely available on the World Wide Web, including:

William Garlington. "The Development of the Bahá'í Faith in Malwa: 1941-1974." *Occasional Papers in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Bahá'í Scriptures." *Occasional Papers in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2 (April, 1999).

both at <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/bhpapers.htm> ;

and

Juan R. I. Cole Bahá'u'lláh's Commentary on a Verse of Rumi *Research Notes in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 3, no. 1 (January 1999)

Frank Lewis Scripture as Literature *Research Notes in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 3, no. 2 (April 1999)

Sepehr Manuchehri, The Practice of Taqíyyih (Dissimulation) in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions, *Research Notes in Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Studies*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (September 1999)

at <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/notes/research.htm> ;

and

Denis MacEoin “Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of the Bell (Lawh an-Naqus) for the Báb.” Arabic Text appended. Translations of Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Texts (Reprint Edition). vol. 3, no. 1 (February, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole “Shoghi Effendi on the Charity Fund.” Translations of Shaykhí, Bábí and Bahá'í Texts, vol. 3, no. 2 (March, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole “Bahá'u'lláh's Surah of the Companions (Surat al-Ashab): Text, Introduction and Translation.” Translations of Shaykhi, Bábí and Bahá'í Texts, vol. 3, no. 3 (November, 1999).

Juan R. I. Cole “Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets of the Holy Mariner: Text and Translation.” Translations of Shaykhi, Babi and Bahá'í Texts, vol. 3, no. 4 (December, 1999).

It reprinted:

Browne, Edward Granville. *A Year Amongst the Persians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927. [First published A & C Black, Ltd., 1893].

Browne, Edward Granville. *A Traveller's Narrative (Makala-i-Shakhsi Sayyah)* Written to Illustrate the Episode of the Báb. By Abbas Efendi, Son of Bahá'u'lláh. Volume I: Persian Text. Volume II: English Translation and Notes. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891).

— — —. “Personal Reminiscences of the Bábí Insurrection at Zanjan in 1850” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* Vol. 29 (1897): pages 761-827.

— — —. “Autobiography and Silence: The Early Career of Shaykhu'r-Ra'is Qajar,” in Johann Christoph Bürgel and Isabel Schayani, eds., *Iran im 19. Jahrhundert und die Entstehung der Baha'i-Religion* (Zürich: Georg Olms Verlag, 1998), pp. 91-126.

at : <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/index/diglib/diglib.htm>

It also digitally posted, in Arabic and Persian:

The following works by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá (<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/abtext.htm>):

Makatib-i Hadrat-i ‘Abdu'l-Baha khitaab bih Yuhanna Da'ud (“Letters of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá to Yuhanna Da'ud”). MS. Digitally Published, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.

Majmu'ih-'i Makatib-i Hadrat-i ‘Abdu'l-Bahá (“Collected Letters of ‘Abdu'l-

Bahá”). Volume 75. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1978. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999. Prayers.

Maqalih-'i Shakhsi Sayyah kid dar qadiyyih-i Báb nivishti ast [*A Traveller's Narrative*] Ed. and Trans. E. G. Browne. 2 vols.: Persian Text Volume 1. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891) Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.

and:

Ardikani, Sadri Navabzadih. “Matalibi dar barih-'i Tarikh-i Nabil-I Zarandi” (Issues in the Study of the Chronicle of Nabil Zarandi). *Mutali' i-i Ma`arif-i Baha'i* no. 18. (Tehran: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 134 B.E./C.E. 1978). Reprinted, Lansing, Mi.: H-Bahai, 1999.

And the following works by the Báb (<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/index/albab.htm>):

Majmu'ih-'i Athar-i Hadrat-i A'la (“Collected Letters of the Báb”). Volume 40. Iran National Baha'i Archives Private Printing: Tehran, c. 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999. Notes: Contains Tafsir Surat wa'l-'Asr, Ithbat an-Nubuwwah al-Khassah, Dar Bayan-i I'tiqadat, Javab-I Su'al-i Hadrat-i Vali, Javab-i Su'al-i Mirza Sa'id Ardistani, Javab-I Su'al-i Hadrat-i Muhammad 'Ali Mudhhib, Risalat al-'Alamin al-Ukhra.

Majmu'ih-'i az athar-i Nuqtih-'i Ula va Subh-i Azal Tehran, n.d. (1950?). Digitally reprinted (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Risalah fi an-Nubuwwah al-Khassah (Treatise on the Special Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad) MS in private hands. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat al-Baqarah (Commentary on the Surah of the Cow).. Iran National Baha'i Archives, Private Printing, no. 69, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat al-Hamd (Commentary on the Fatihah) Iran National Bahá'í Archives, Private Printing, no. 69, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat al-Qadr (Commentary on the Surah of Power [Qur'án 97]). Iran National Bahá'í Archives, Private Printing, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tafsir Surat at-Tawhid (Commentary on the Surah of Unity [Qur'án 112]). Iran National Bahá'í Archives, Private Printing, Tehran, 1977. Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1999).

Tasbih Fatimah (In Praise of Fatimah). Digital publication of manuscript facsimile. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahai, 1998);

The following works by Bahá'u'lláh (<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/bahatext.htm>):

- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 26. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1976. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 35. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 42. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 48. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 49. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 57. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 61. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- “Majmu`ih-`i Athar-i Qalam-i A`la” (“Collected Letters of Bahá'u'lláh”). Volume 66. Iran National Bahá'í Archives Private Printing: Tehran, 1977. Reprinted, H-Bahai: Lansing, Mi., 1999.
- Panj Kanz (“The Five Treasures”). Oral discourse of Bahá'u'lláh in early 1860s in Baghdad to a handful of Iranian expatriate princes, recorded by Nabil Zarandi. Published in *Ahang-i Badi`* (Publication details not available). References: Adib Taherzadeh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* 4 vols. (Oxford: George Ronald, 1974-1987), 2:140-143.

and

Fadil Mazandarani, *Tarikh-i Zuhur al-Haqq* (History of the Babi-Bahá'í Religions in Iran), Volumes 5 and 6. Lansing, Michigan: H-Bahai, 1999 at <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~bahai/index/diglib/mazand1.htm>

Zanjani, ‘Abd al-Ahad. Account of the Siege of Zanjan (in Persian). Persian MS. (Lansing, MI: H-Bahá'í Digital Publications, 1999).

Notes on Contributors

Mahyar Amjadi is practicing as a dentist in the state of Victoria. He has a keen interest in the arts and its impacts on society. The implications of the life in the Bahá'í community as well interactions with the society at large, have been the points of inspiration for the on-going thinking process outlined in this paper.

Belinda Belton grew up in New Guinea and Rhodesia, before settling in Perth. She studied and worked in Japan for two and a half years and received a B.A. in Asian Studies from Curtin University in 1991. Her poem ‘Sixteen’ was awarded in the West Australian Young Writer’s Award when she was in year eleven. She has had poetry included in anthologies by the Poet’s Union and UNE. Cognizant of the passion and the poignancy with which the early Baha’i believers expressed their faith through poetry, Belinda looks forward to a flourishing of all the Baha’i arts, including verse, in the years ahead. She works as a flight attendant for Qantas and lives in the Blue Mountains with her husband Terry.

Robin Chandler is a tenured Associate Professor at Northeastern University in Boston. An artist and sociologist, Dr. Chandler has conducted research in the U.S., Brazil, southern Africa, and Australia for more than 20 years. A proponent of action research in the areas of globalism and identity, cultural policy advising, multimedia applications, and micro-enterprise development in rural arts, crafts, and cultural tourism has earned her grants from the NEA, NSF, the Fullbright Commission, and numerous awards and honors. As founding-director of Caravan for international Culture (CIC-1980) Chandler’s reputation as an educational consultant and teacher-trainer has focused on education for global citizenship. Widely published in the area of popular culture and the arts, Chandler is an exhibiting artist with the U. S. State Departments’ Arts in Embassies Program, and director of The Peace Doors Project.

Miriam Dixon, B.A. History Hons.(Melbourne); M.A. (History Hons. Melbourne); Ph.D. (Australian National University); D.Litt. (hon.causa. University of New England.); Hon.Fellow (University of New England). Miriam Dixon has taught history in the History Departments at the Universities of Melbourne, New South Wales, Monash, and the University of New England. She has been a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar, a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University and a member of the Federal Government’s Commission for the Future. In August 1999, the University of New South Wales Press published Dixon’s most wide-ranging analysis of Australian identity to date, *The Imaginary Australian*. This book has drawn considerable acclaim. In addition, she

is the author of many other publications including books, monographs, book chapters and journal articles.

Karel Fontaine was educated to matriculation and then secretarial training. She worked in advertising, publishing, and art gallery management. Emigrated to Canada in 1967; again managed an art gallery. Travelled and taught English in South America, 1969; married an Australian; arrived Australia 1971. Mother to three, grandmother to one, traveller, geographer, artist - currently exploring textiles, in particular felt. Bahá'í since 1983. Lives in the bush in Tasmania.

Paul Gerard is a retired librarian, living in Tasmania. He was introduced to the Australian National Bahá'í Centre's library, and its problems, by his daughter, June Perkins. Nowadays, Mr. Gerard's most important job is caring for his handicapped son - but he finds some spare time to work on projects like this one.

Michael Knopf has a Bachelor of Music with Honours in composition. He currently works as a lecturer in music at James Cook University in Cairns. He has self-published over 30 original works for solo instruments and vocal pieces including *The Mountain of God* for soli, chorus, and orchestra. He became a Bahá'í in 1971 and has served in various capacities since that time. He currently serves as an Auxiliary Board Member for Propagation.

Sepehr Manuchehri is an Electrical Engineer - Curtin University of Technology MBA (Human Resources) - University of Western Australia. His research interests are Bábí history, theology and thought. Published: "Features of the Bábí Resistance at Shaykh Tabarsi" in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies Australia* 1998. Translated many extracts from primary Bahá'í sources which are about to be digitally published. He is currently working on a biography of Mirza Yahya Subh-i Azal, the half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh. This paper started off as a Chapter to this book and gradually expanded to become an independent work. It relies mostly on primary source material, most of which have not been translated in to English before. Understanding the process of Taqiyyih gives a better insight in to the survival of the Bábí religion and dynamics of the early Bahá'í communities.

Vahid Payman is a psychogeriatrician and a cartoonist. His main interest is the human psyche and its pictorial representation. Under the name of "VADO", he held his first major exhibition called "The Bot Series" in Melbourne, December 1999.

June Perkins is a devoted parent of two, writer & academic whose poetry has appeared most recently in publications such as ANU *Poet's Lunch Compilation* (2000) and *Ulitarra*. She has worked on a number of collaborative dramas with women and youth in theatre and radio and served in a variety of committees within the Bahá'í community at national, local and regional levels since her youth. Her parents declared as Bahá'ís in Tasmania in 1975. Through them she is a world citizen whose heritage includes Mekeo, English, Irish and French ancestors. Her present goals are to finish her doctorate at University of Sydney, learn to drive, get more sleep, and move into filmmaking.

Ron Price is 57 and has just retired after a thirty-year career as a teacher in primary, secondary and post-secondary schools. He lives with his wife and son in Tasmania. He became a Bahá'í in Canada in 1959. Forty of his booklets of poetry, entitled 'Pioneering Over Three Epochs,' are now in the Bahá'í World Centre Library. They are part of the celebration of the Mt. Carmel Project and of the 'befitting crescendo' to the achievements of the Bahá'í community in the twentieth century.

Negin Sanaei graduated from Macquarie University in 1997 with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Economics. She currently works for Challenger International Ltd as the Training Coordinator for the Unit Trust Area. Her scholarly interests include global economic affairs and the international political economy climate.

Walter Waia is originally from Saibai Island in the Torres Strait, Qld. He and his family currently live on Thursday Island where he works as an Executive Officer of the Native Title Office, Torres Strait Regional Authority. Walter is a poet and a writer. In 2000, he participated in the Queensland Writers Centre's first Indigenous Mentorship Program. He is currently completing his autobiography. He was introduced to the Bahá'í Faith in 1986 and declared his belief in 1991. Since that time he states that: "My life took a new direction and my perspective to the world realised a real journey."