

The Bahā'ī interpretation of the Antichrist-Dajjāl traditions.

Having sketched some aspects of the Antichrist-Dajjāl traditions in (largely) Christian and Islāmic sources we may now turn to their (Bābī-) Bahā'ī interpretation. ^{138.} Firstly, those Biblical texts that relate to the Antichrist tradition may be commented on along with a few notes on the figures thought to be referred to in them and who are believed by Bahā'īs to be manifestations of the Antichrist idea.

Mīrzā Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad; the Son of Perdition and the Antichrist.

Mīrzā Yahyā who was entitled Subb-i Azal (The morn of eternity, c.1830-1912) was one of the half-brothers of the founder of the Bahā'ī movement, Mīrzā Huseyn 'Alī Bahā'u'llāh. The son of one of the concubines of Mīrzā Buzurg-i Nūrī (d.1839) he was only 13-14 years old when Siyyid 'Alī Muhammad the Bāb 'declared his mission' in Shiraz (Iran) in 1844.A.D. He, like his half-brother Bahā'u'llāh, became a Bābī (follower of the Bāb) and, though not one of the 'Letters of the Living' (Huruf-i Hayy) or prominent disciples of the Bāb, was generally recognized as being the nominal head of the Bābī community after the execution of the Bāb in Tabriz in July 1850. His leadership of the Bābī community proved to be largely ineffective for, on receipt of the news of his master's martyrdom he, at least in Bahā'ī sources, is said to have fled in disguise from Tihiran to Mazandarān and to have remained for several years in a state of marked dissimulation. ^{139.} Assuming various names and disguises he eventually joined Bahā'u'llāh and his close companions at Kirmanshah in 1853 journeying with them to Baghdad ^{140.} where they had been exiled after the Bābī attempt on the life of the Shāh in 1852.

Shortly after his arrival in Baghdād Mīrzā Yahyā assumed the name Hajj 'Alī-i Lāsh-Furūsh (implying that he was a silk dealer) and forged links with Siyyid Muhammad Isfahānī (d. 1872) a Bābī then resident in Karbilā. ^{141.} Siyyid Muhammad is represented in Bahā'ī sources as being, even at this early stage, antagonistic towards Bahā'u'llāh. He is represented as an evil schemer who fanned Mīrzā Yahyā's jealousy of his half-brother's growing prestige. ^{142.} While Mīrzā Yahyā as head of the Bābī community apparently elevated Siyyid Muhammad to the rank of 'First Witness of the Bayān' (Bābī movement) Bahā'u'llāh as we shall see, later excommunicated him (sometimes between 1863 and 1866). For Bahā'īs Siyyid Muhammad has come to be regarded as one of the most notorious manifestations of the Antichrist idea.

Due in large measure to the dissension and corruption within the Bābī community in Baghdād and elsewhere in the early 1850's Bahā'u'llāh decided to withdraw to Kurdistan, initially contemplating no return:

"In the early days of our arrival in this land (Irāq) when We discerned the signs of impending events, We decided, ere they happened, to retire. We betook Ourselves to the wilderness, and there, separated and alone, led for two years a life of complete solitude. By the righteousness of God! Our withdrawal contemplated no return, and our separation hoped for no reunion." 143.

During Bahā'u'llāh's absence from Baghdad (1854-1856) Mīrzā Yahyā failed to exercise an effective or charismatic leadership. That this was so may perhaps be highlighted by the fact that some 25 prominent Bābīe, including Mullā Muhammad Zarandī (d.c.1892) the Bahā'ī poet and historian, claimed to be divine incarnations or aspired to special leadership. 144. The erudite Mīrzā Asead Allāh of Khūy named Dayyān by the Bāb is, in certain sources, said to have made such a claim and to have written a treatise in support of it which he had presented to Mīrzā Yahyā. The latter, whose ability to answer doctrinal questions had for some proven to be inadequate, wrote in response a work entitled Mustayciz ('Sleeper Awakened') in which Dayyān was denounced in the strongest terms. Then, shortly after Bahā'u'llāh's return from Baghdad at the bidding of the "Mystic Source", Mīrzā Yahyā had Dayyān executed by his servant Mīrzā Muhammad Mazandarānī. Again, around the same time, Mīrzā Yahyā is said in Bahā'ī sources to have been the instigator of the murder of a cousin of the Bāb named Mīrzā 'Alī Akbar and to have prompted Mīrzā Āqā Jān to make (another) attempt on the life of the Shāh. 145. He is thus pictured in Bahā'ī sources as an immoral murderer or one whose main concern was to consolidate his position in the Bābī hierarchy— a position he was to occupy in order to divert hostile attention away from Bahā'u'llāh.

The Bāb, during his stay in Isfahan in 1846-7 took a second wife by the name of Fātima, the sister of Mullā Rajab 'Alī. He forbade marriage to either of his wives after his passing. Mīrzā Yahyā however, married the Bāb's second wife in about 1853 and gave her a very short time later to his accomplice Siyyid Muhammad. These forbidden marriages are regarded by Bahā'īs as the abominable acts of two men who were satanic in character. Such deeds are catalogued in detail in a good many of the writings of Bahā'u'llāh and his followers in which the evils of Mīrzā Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad are exposed. 146.

Having returned to Baghdad in March 1846 Bahā'u'llāh set about attempting to spiritually regenerate the confused and decadent Bābī community. He wrote, as he had done since 1853 when he had a mystical experience in Tihiran, sometimes lengthy "tablets" (alwāh) containing thinly veiled epiphanic claims. Many prominent Bābīs were attracted to him until in late April 1863 on the outskirts of Baghdad on route to Constantinople where he and other Bābīe had been exiled, he claimed the specific allegiances of a small group of his close companions— exactly what his claims were at this stage is not entirely clear though it is likely that he claimed to be the expected 'Him whom God would make manifest' (Man Yuzhiruhu'llāh) mentioned

in the Bāb's Persian Bayān and elsewhere. Mirza Yahya, who may not have been in Baghdād when Bahā'u'llāh made his claims slightly more explicit to his admirers, joined his half brother at Mosul and, like Siyyid Muhammad, journeyed with him to the Sublime Porte. At this time or in 1863 and for another three years or so, Bahā'u'llāh's claims do not appear to have been widely known or understood by the majority of Bābīs. Though there was widespread disillusionment with Mīrzā Yahyā's leadership it was not until 1866 that it became widely known that Bahā'u'llāh had condemned his half-brother and claimed to be Man Yuzhiruhu'llāh. Only later did Mīrzā Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad come to be fully recognized by the Bahā'īs as the Yājūj (Gog) and Mājūj (Magog) or the twin evil manifestations of the emergent Bahā'ī phenomenon. ^{147.}

In 1863 Bahā'u'llāh and his companions were again exiled to Adrianople where they remained for almost 5 years and where the intrigue of Mirza Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad came to assume critical proportions. Bahā'ī sources maintain that during the early Adrianople period (1863-1868) Mirza Yahyā made several attempts to poison or have Bahā'u'llāh killed. As Bahā'u'llāh's charismatic leadership and claims became more and more explicit his half-brother's dwindling prestige appears to have led him to adopt desperate measures in order to reassert his authority. In his Sūrat al-Aḥqāb (c.1864-5) Bahā'u'llāh represents himself as the one whose coming was predicted in both the Qur'ān and the writings of the Bāb. Such claims were specifically communicated to Mīrzā Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad in a letter of Bahā'u'llāh known as the Sūrat al-Amr (c.1865). They were rejected and Bahā'u'llāh withdrew to the house of Ridā Big where he remained completely cut off for several months (about March-May 1866). The goods of what became the Bahā'ī and Azalī factions were separated during a period referred to by Bahā'u'llāh as the "most great separation" which took place during the "days of stress" (ayyām al-shidād). ^{149.}

Bahā'u'llāh, in most of his major letters ("tablets") written after the "most great separation" (1866) makes explicit reference to the corruption and ungodliness of Mīrzā Yahyā and the "detestable Siyyid (Muhammad)". A veritable interior "battle of Armageddon" ensued as may be gathered from a perusal of Bahā'u'llāh's lengthy apologia the Kitāb-i Badī' (c.1867) and his Lawh-i Sirāj (c.1867). ^{150.} A little more than a year after emerging from his self-imposed "occultation" in the house of Ridā Big Siyyid Muhammad and a certain Mīr Muhammad-i Mukārī (who frequented both the Azalī and Bahā'ī camps) arranged a confrontation (mubāhila) between Bahā'u'llāh and Mīrzā Yahyā. The latter however, failed to appear at the mosque of Sultan Selim at the appointed hour (around August-September 1867), being thus discredited in the estimation of many. This episode is referred to by Bahā'u'llāh in a number of his writings, most notably (as its title suggests) a letter addressed to Mullā Sādiq-i Khurāsānī known as the Lawh-i Mubāhila. ^{151.}

Instead of confronting his half-brother whose ascendancy was by 1867 becoming more and more obvious Mirza Yahyā sent petitions to high ranking officials in Adrianople and elsewhere with the intention of discrediting him. He apparently accused Bahā'u'llāh of appropriating his government allowance to the extent that his (now separate) family were on the verge of starvation. Such representations along with those of Siyyid Muhammad and Āqā Jān Big-i Khamsā'ī an Azalī ex Turkish artillery officer and the marked hostility of Haji Mirzā Husayn Khan (the Persian ambassador at Constantinople) succeeded in evoking from Sultan 'Abd al-Azīz yet another decree of banishment. In 1868 Bahā'u'llāh and his companions were exiled to 'Akkā in Ottoman Syria and Mirza Yahyā and others were sent to Cyprus.

The banishment of Bahā'u'llāh and Mirzā Yahyā to separate places did not put a stop to the Bahā'ī - Azalī controversy. A number of Azalīs, including Siyyid Muhammad and Āqā Jān Big, were exiled to 'Akkā with Bahā'u'llāh and the Bahā'īs just as a few Bahā'īs, among them the famous Bahā'ī calligrapher Mishkīn Qalam, accompanied Yahyā and his family to Cyprus. Some two and a half years after their arrival the 'Akkā exiles were released from strict confinement inasmuch as the citadel of 'Akkā was taken over for military purposes in 1870. The Azalīs began feeding malicious reports to their captors and tensions started to erupt. Bahā'u'llāh attempted to restrain his followers but did not succeed in preventing about 7 of them banding together and murdering at least three Azalīs. Siyyid Muhammad Āqā Jān Big and a brother-in-law of Mirzā Yahyā named Mirzā Ridā-Quliy-i Tafriḡhī were slaughtered in January 1872. This episode not only endangered Bahā'u'llāh's life and stained the annals of Bahā'ī history but served to increase that Bahā'ī - Azalī controversy which, though the Azalīs are practically non-existent, continues to the present day. 152.

Mirza Yahyā remained in Cyprus until his death in 1912. Though he had written a great deal and appointed an Azalī hierarchy and successor his support had dwindled to such an extent that he was buried according to the Muelim rite. Shortly before his own passing Bahā'u'llāh in his Lawh-i ibn-i Dhī'b (c. 1890-1) bemoaned the actions of his half-brother in the following terms:

" Alas, alas, for the things that have befallen Me!
By God! There befell Me at the hands of him whom I
nurtured (Mirzā Yahyā), by day and by night, what hath
caused the Holy Spirit, and the dwellers of the
Tabernacle of the Grandeur of God, the Lord of this
wonderous Day, to lament." 153.

Bahā'u'llāh claimed to be the return of Christ in many of his writings composed during the Adrianople (1863-8) and 'Akkā (1868-1892) periods of his ministry. On the other hand Mirzā Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad came to be seen by Bahā'īs as manifestations of the Antichrist idea whose appearance was predicted in the Bible.

More specifically, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahā'ī Cause from 1921-1957 whose exposition of Bahā'ī scripture is regarded by Bahā'īs as infallible, has identified Mīrzā Yahyā with the "son of perdition" mentioned in II Thess. 2:3f and named Siyyid Muhammad the Antichrist of the Bahā'ī Dispensation. ^{154.}

Shoghi Effendi's identification of Mīrzā Yahyā with the "son of perdition" of II Thess. 2:3ff agrees with that of the Bahā'ī poet and writer Mīrzā 'Alī 'Ashraf of Lāhījān known as 'Andalīb. He had met the orientalist E.G. Browne in Yazd (Iran) in 1888 whom he not only encouraged to visit Bahā'u'llāh at 'Akkā but for whom he wrote a Persian tract shortly before Bahā'u'llāh's passing in 1892. ^{155.} In this apologetic work 'Andalīb applies a large number of Biblical texts to the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh and thinks it obvious that II Thess 2:3ff refers to the evil of Mīrzā Yahyā. He wondered how Christian missionaries (whom he incidentally thought were the false prophets mentioned in Matt 24:24) could fail to discern this specific prophetic allusion. Was not the evil Yahyā, the "man of sin", destroyed by the "breath" (= creative word of God/Bahā'u'llāh) of his half-brother's mouth? (refer II Thess 2:8). So both 'Andalīb and Shoghi Effendi maintained. ^{156.}

Though it is not as obvious as 'Andalīb imagined that II Thess. 2:3ff refers to Mīrzā Yahyā (we shall see below that this pericope was referred to Karīm Khān Kirmānī by 'Abd al-Karīm Tehrānī) the following alleged correspondences probably contributed to the identification:-

- 1) Since Bahā'u'llāh was the return of Christ who is to destroy the "son of perdition" by the breath of his mouth Mīrzā Yahyā as the arch enemy of the returned Christ must be the "son of perdition". Bahā'u'llāh defeated his half-brother Mīrzā Yahyā by condemning him in his writings or (as 'Andalīb pointed out) through the breath of his mouth. cf. the Lawn-i Mubāhila.
- 2) According to II Thess 2:4 the "son of perdition" is to "exalt himself against every so-called god" and "eat himself" "in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God". This might suggest to the Bahā'ī exegete Mīrzā Yahyā's epiphanic pretensions and his condemnation of other claimants to divine status including Bahā'u'llāh himself. That the evil one should eat himself in the temple of God, could also be taken to predict Mīrzā Yahyā's usurpation of Bahā'u'llāh's claim to divinity: the word templ as haykal (as it is in certain Arabic translations of II Thess 2:8) suggesting not Jerusalem but the physical body of the manifestation of God (mazhar-i illāhi). cf. Bahā'u'llāh's Sūrat al-Haykal c.1873? ^{157.}
- 3) The "lawless one", according to II Thess 2:9, is to appear by the "activity of Satan" just as Mīrzā Yahyā was thought to have been deceived and prompted by the satanic Siyyid Muhammad.

Modern Biblical scholars have identified a number of OT texts that (though Paul does not directly quote them) seem to lie behind II Thess 2:1ff. i.e. Ezek. 28:2ff, Isa 14:12ff, Dan 11:36. The passage has been thought by some to have been influenced by Caligula's attempt to set up an effigy of himself in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem (destroyed in 70 A.D.) and it is of interest to note that Isa 14:12ff (which the author of II Thess drew on and which is identified as a funeral lament or mashal over the king of Babylon—perhaps Nebuchadnezzar or Nabonidus) has been applied by a few of the church fathers to the Antichrist and by a few Bahā'ī writers to Mīrzā Yahyā. ^{158.}

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of the Dawn!
(Heb = $\text{בֶּן־בֹּקֶר} \text{ שֶׁנִּפְּלָה} \text{ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם}$). How are you cut down to the ground, you
who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will
ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne
on high..I will make myself like the Most High ($\text{כְּדֹם־הַשָּׁמַיִם}$).'" 159.

What in this text evidently led to its application to Mīrzā Yahyā was the
phrase "Day star, son of the Dawn" (the Hebrew בֶּן־בֹּקֶר) suggests the morning
star and בֹּקֶר the dawn; cf. LXX eosphoros and Vulg. Lucifer) for dawn or
morn, Arabic subh, suggests his title Subh-i Azal, 'the morn of sternity'

cf. for example, the Arabic translation of the OT published by Richard
Watts in 1831 where Isa 14:12a reads: كيف سقطت من السماء كوكب الصبح
الشرق في الصباح 160.

Though Bahā'u'llāh does not, as far as I am aware, himself apply either II Thess.
2:3ff or Isa 14:12ff to his half-brother he does, in at least two of his writings,
refer Amos 4:13 (which describes the majesty and omnipotence of God as judge and
controller of nature) to the circumstances of his own mission and to his eclipse
of Subh-i Azal.

In a lengthy Persian "tablet" of the ^cAkkā period perhaps written in the late
1880's Bahā'u'llāh, after applying various passages from the Bāb's writings to
himself as the concealed yet "most great announcement" (cf. Qur'ān 78:2) and quoting
and commenting on a number of Biblical texts (Mk 13:32/Matt. 24:36, Joel 2:11b, Jer.
30:7a, Psalm 108:90 and Isaiah 40:9-10a), refers to Amos 1:2 and 4:12b-13. ¹⁶¹. The
translation of the latter text which is quoted in Arabic is as follows:

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, For, lo, He that formeth the
mountains and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is
his thought, that maketh the morning darkness (يجعل الفجر
ظلاما) and treadeth upon the high places of the earth (مشرف
الارض) the Lord (ربوه), the God of Hosts (اله الجنود)
is his name." 162.

Bahā'u'llāh comments on this text in Persian. He states that it refers to his
disclosure of his hidden majesty around the year 80 (thamānīna) or 1863-4. A.D.
(= 1,260. A.H.) The " high place of the earth" (glossed in Persian as بلندیهای
ارض) signifies the " great city" (مدینه کبیره) or Constantinople (Istanbul)
and " these regions" (این اطراف) or the area around ^cAkka and Mt. Carmel/
Haifa in Syria (Palestine). The "Lord of hosts" is Bahā'u'llāh himself who
after 1863 or 1,260. A.H. made Mīrzā Yahyā the " false dawn" (صبح کاذب)
darkness. The Arabic of Amos 4:13b, يجعل الفجر ظلاما is evidently taken to be
an allusion to Subh-i Azal for Bahā'u'llāh understands الفجر to imply صبح
in terms of his "spiritual defeat" of Mīrzā Yahyā during the Adrianople and ^cAkkā
periods of his ministry.

In his last major work the Lawn-i ibn-Dhi'b (c.1890-91) Bahā'u'llāh again quotes Amos 4:12b-13 in (identical) Arabic translation and adds some comments in Persian:

" He (Amos) saith that he maketh the morning (فجر) darkness (تاريك) By this is meant that if, at the time of the Manifestation of Him who conversed on Sinai (ظهور مكرم طور , i.e. Bahā'u'llāh's proclamation of his mission) anyone were to regard himself as the true morn (صبح صادق), he will through the might (قوت) and power (قدرت) of God be turned into darkness (تاريك). He truly (i.e. Mīrzā Yahyā) is the false dawn (صبح كاذب), though believing himself to be the true one (صادق). Woe unto him, and woe unto such as follow him (i.e. the Azalīs) without a clear token from God, the Lord of the Worlds." 163.

After quoting a few passages from the book of Isaiah Bahā'u'llāh goes on to state that these Biblical texts, which he has quoted in illustration of his own greatness and divinity and the falsity of such other claimants as Mīrzā Yahyā, stand in "no need of commentary" being as "shining and manifest as the sun". 164. The allusion to Subh-i Azal can readily be discerned. Then, underlining the fact that Biblical (and other) texts he has quoted point to his own exalted station and not to the pretensions of Mīrzā Yahyā and the Azalīs Bahā'u'llāh exhorts mankind to fear God and give no heed to the breakers of God's covenant:

" Say: Fear God, O people, and follow not the doubts of such as shout aloud, who have broken the covenant of God and his Testament, and denied His mercy that hath preceded all that are in the heavens and all that are on earth." 165.

Bahā'u'llāh thus himself applies Biblical texts to the matter of his eclipse of Subh-i Azal the nominee of the Bāb. Though he does not apply such texts to the person of Siyyid Muhammad he does condemn him in a large number of his writings. It is of interest to note that though Bahā'u'llāh rebuked those Bahā'īs who murdered Siyyid Muhammad and other Azalīs in Akkā in January 1872 (see below) he, in his al-Kitāb al-Aqdas (c.1873) not only refers to Mīrzā Yahyā as the "dawning place of deviation" (مطلع الأعراض) but appears to speak of Siyyid Muhammad's death as an act of God. He writes in the latter connection: " God verily, hath taken the one who led you [Mīrzā Yahyā] astray" (قد أخذ الله من أحوال). 166. Many of Mīrzā Yahyā's evils are, in Bahā'ī scripture and by Bahā'ī writers, attributed to Siyyid Muhammad the Antichrist of the Bahā'ī dispensation. Abdu'l-Bahā has described the relationship between them as like that which exists between the "sucking child" (Mīrzā Yahyā) and the "much prized breast" (Siyyid Muhammad) of its mother. 167. Similarly, Shoghi Effendi in his book God Passes By (1944) refers to Siyyid Muhammad's manipulation of Mīrzā Yahyā in the following terms:

" The black-hearted scoundrel who befooled and manipulated this vain and flaccid man [Mīrzā Yahyā] with consummate skill and unyielding persistence was a certain Siyyid Muhammad.. notorious for his inordinate ambition, his blind obstinacy and uncontrollable jealousy.. that living embodiment of wickedness, cupidity and deceit.. " 168.

The (proto-) Antichrist and associated imagery in the Apocalypse.

Though Bahā'u'llāh was, as will have been evident, familiar with the Bible and not infrequently quoted it he only rarely refers to the Revelation of John.¹⁶⁹ 'Abdu'l-Bahā however, held the Apocalypse to be a truly inspired work and, often in response to questions from occidental Bahā'īs, wrote detailed commentaries on many of its verses.¹⁷⁰ Indeed, one of his earliest communications to the Bahā'īs of America consists of a "rewritten midrash" on Rev 21:1-7 in the course of which he writes, "This is the truth and what truth is greater than the Revelation of St. John the Divine?"¹⁷¹ Shoghi Effendi similarly, in a letter to R.J. Moffett expressed his conviction that, "The Book of Revelation is a very important book and very important in teaching the interpretation of Biblical passages to Christians."¹⁷²

As Shī'ī theosophists and divines fostered an esoteric and at times qabbalistic Qur'ānic exegesis which may be traced back in Imāmī circles to the learned sixth Imām, Ja'far Sādiq (d.c.765.A.D.) so have many Shaykhīs, Bābīs and Bahā'īs given great importance, especially when dealing with eschatologically oriented materials, to an allegorical or 'spiritual' hermeneutic. The Bahā'ī interpretation of the Apocalypse is not infrequently almost as abstruse in its allegorically oriented exegesis (or one might say eisegesis) as the fantastic imagery of the seer of Patmos is bewildering. During his tour of the West 'Abdu'l-Bahā summed up his own approach to the Book of Revelation (and indeed the Bible as a whole) when he said: "The Revelations of St. John are not to be taken literally but spiritually."¹⁷³ Every word of the Apocalypse has profound significance and, in 'Abdu'l-Bahā's opinion, enshrines cryptic prophecies of events in (for the most part) Islāmic and Bābī-Bahā'ī history. Though certain texts are given a non-literal "outer" as well as an esoteric or "inner" interpretation others allude to concrete historical events associated with the rise of Islām and the missions of the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh.¹⁷⁴ The Bahā'ī interpretation of the Apocalypse overrules those texts that imply its imminent (1st-2nd century) fulfillment or realization in favour of a mystic, qabbalistic and futuristic interpretation that at times calls to mind the Biblical exegesis of the Qumran sectaries.¹⁷⁵

It will not be possible to discuss here the details of the Bahā'ī interpretation of the Apocalypse— even with respect to those images or texts of interest in connection with (proto-) Antichrist imagery. The source materials are in fact widely scattered and to some extent unpublished. Many oral statements about the significance of verses or chapters within the Apocalypse were made by 'Abdu'l-

Bahā and Shoghi Effendi. They were sometimes noted down but remain for the most part in MSS and unavailable. ^{176.}

From at least as early as the 1890's such oriental Bahā'ī writers as Mīrzā Abū al-Fadl Gulpāygānī (1844-1914) the father of the Bahā'ī interpretation of the Bible and Haji Mīrzā Haydar 'Alī (d. 1921) were "unsealing" the mysteries of the Apocalypse. ^{177.} American converts to the Bahā'ī movement have from the beginning shown a great interest in the interpretation of the Book of Revelation. In this they were much encouraged by Ibrahim George Kheir-
-alla (1849-1930) their first teacher who may be regarded as the father of western Bahā'ī Bible speculation—Kheiralla was much influenced by Abū al-Fadl who himself had a great effect on Bahā'ī Bible speculation when he visited America during 1901-1904 at the command of 'Abdu'l-Bahā. ^{178.} Though during most of the ministry of Shoghi Effendi (1921-1957) interest was centered in missionary success and administrative efficiency rather than creative Biblical interpretation or detailed study of Bahā'ī doctrine and history the last twenty years or so have witnessed something of a rebirth of interest in the Apocalypse among American Bahā'īs. E. Marssilla's Quest for Eden ^{179.} paved the way for the publication of R.J. Moffett's New Keys to the Book of Revelation ^{180.} and most recently R.F. Rigg's complete commentary on the Apocalypss entitled The Apocalypse Unsealed. ^{181.} 'Abdu'l-Bahā's hope that Bahā'īs would become sufficiently spiritually mature to be able to fathom the mysteries of the Apocalypse for themselves has, one might say, found something of a realization. ^{182.}

What now follows is a summary, based on the abovementioned sources, of the Bahā'ī interpretation of those parts of the Apocalypse that have been thought to contain (proto-) Antichrist imagery or which relate in their Bahā'ī interpretation to aspects of Bahā'ī understanding of the Antichrist-Dajjāl traditions. ^{183.}

1) The two witnesses and the beast from the bottomless pit (Rev 11:1-14).

'Abdu'l-Bahā delivered, during his "tired moments" at table during the years 1904-6, a large number of discourses some of which were recorded and (at least) two of which interpret chapters 11 and 12 (: 1-6) of the Apocalypse. ^{184.} Though there are earlier and sometimes conflicting Bahā'ī interpretations of these central chapters of the Apocalypse 'Abdu'l-Bahā's interpretation has determined their subsequent Bahā'ī exegesis—'Abdu'l-Bahā appears to have drawn on such interpretations of the Apocalypse as may be found in the writings of Mīrzā Abū al-Fadl and other early oriental Bahā'ī apologists. ^{185.} Rev 11:1ff, taken as a prophecy of events within (for the most part) Islamic and Bābī-Bahā'ī history, may be summed up as follows:

The measuring of the Temple (11:1-2) signifies the determination of the true condition of the "mystery of those holy souls who dwell in the Holy of Holies in purity and sanctity". Not measuring the outer court of the Temple which is given over to the nations for 42 months indicates the gentile or Islamic occupation of Jerusalem in the 7th century A.D. for 1,260 years (42 months = 1,260 days = 1,260 years; one day = one year on the basis of Ezek. 4:6) or from 622 A.D. until the time of the "manifestation" of the Bāb in 1844 A.D. (= 1,260 A.H.). Alternatively, or in a deeper sense, Rev. 11:1-2 indicates the eternal spiritual validity of the essence of religion (= the Holy of Holies) as opposed to the abrogation or modification of the outer form or social laws of religion (= the Holy City). 186.

The two witnesses (11:3-6) are the prophet Muhammad and Imām [°]Alī (d. 661.) whose religious cycle, the "cycle of the Qur'ān", lasted for 1,260 years (cf. above)—they are also the "two olive trees" and the "two lampstands" (11:4). The "fire" that came out of their mouths and consumed their enemies signifies their teaching and law the rejection of which results in destruction for "all their enemies were vanquished, put to flight and annihilated". That they have the power to stop the rainfall, turn water into blood and smite the earth with plagues is indicative of the exalted sovereignty of Muhammad and [°]Alī; their control over the dispersal of the bounty of their laws and teachings, their power to destroy nations and their right to educate the ignorant masses by force. 187.

The beast which rose out of the bottomless pit and which waged war on and slew the two witnesses (11:7f) is the Umayyad dynasty of Caliph which rose out of the bottomless pit of error against the "religion of Muhammad and the reality of [°]Alī" (i.e. against Shi'ī Islām as Bahā'īs understand it). This beast or these Caliphs waged a "spiritual war" against the "love of God" by flouting the divine laws and teachings. As a result the "religion of God" became as a "lifeless body without spirit". The corrupt Umayyad "beast" gained control of Jerusalem and Syria or "Sodom and Egypt" where true religion ceased to be practiced or where "our Lord was crucified" (11:8). It remained as a "lifeless body" until the advent of Bābism after 1,260 years (3 1/2 years = 42 months = 1,260 days, = 1,260 years = 1,260 A.H. or 1844 A.D. cf. above) when the "two witnesses" Muhammad and [°]Alī (spiritually) returned in the persons of the Bāb and his leading disciple Hāji Mullā Muhammad [°]Alī Bārfurūshī (Quddūs). Though brought back to life again the two witnesses were summoned by a "loud voice" to come up hither or attain the glory of martyrdom (11:11., there were both in fact martyred). Even "their enemies" testified to the greatness of their perfection. The "great earthquake" is that which took place in Shirāz after the Bāb's martyrdom in July 1850. In it many people suffered and were killed. Thus came to an end the "second woe" of Bābism which followed the "first woe" of Islām. The "third woe", the mission of Bahā'u'llāh, occurred shortly after the "second woe" of Bābism (11:14. cf. Ezek. 2:3). 188.

2) The woman, the man-child and the great red dragon (Rev. 12:1ff).

[°]Abdu'l-Bahā's explanation of the first six verses of the 12th chapter of the Apocalypse is again largely oriented around the Umayyad oppression of Shi'ī Islām: 189.

The woman clothed in the sun (12:1-2) is "that bride, the Law of God that descended upon Muhammad" (cf. Rev. 21:1ff). Her being clothed in the "Sun" and the "Moon" signifies the kingdoms of Persia and Turkey which were under the shadow of Qur'ānic law. The "crown of twelve stars" on her head symbolizes the twelve Imāms of Ithnā Asharī Shi'ī Islām who promoted the "law of Muhammad" like "stars shining in the heaven of guidance". The anguished cries and birthpangs of the "woman" are indicative of the affliction or agony of the law or reality of Shi'ī Islām the perfection of which came about with the advent of the Qā'im or the

Bāb. Due to Umayyad and neo-Umayyad suppression of Shī'ism the Bāb or the Man-child of the woman and the twelfth Imām remained in a state of occultation (ghayba) until the proclamation of Bābism aimed at the destruction of the "great red dragon" (see below) of neo-Umayyad corruption (this at least appears to have been what 'Abdu'l-Bahā had in mind when he commented on Rev 12:2 despite the Bahā'ī denial of the existence of the twelfth Imām as the son of the eleventh Imām al-Hasan al-Askarī). 190.

The great red dragon (12:4ff) symbolizes, as indicated, the dynasty of the Umayyads "who dominated the Muhammedan religion". Its "seven heads" and "ten crowns" signify seven countries and dominions controlled by the Umayyads: (1) the Roman dominion around Damascus, (2) Persia, (3) Arabia, (4) Egypt, (5) the dominion of Africa around Tunis, Morocco and Algeria, (6) the dominion of Andalusia or Spain and (7) the dominion of Turkistan and Transoxania. The "ten horns" of the "great red dragon" are the names of the Umayyad Caliphs counted without repetition and including, though not actually an Umayyad Caliph, Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb (d. c. 653 A.D.) a bitter enemy of the prophet Muhammad and father of Mu'āwiyā I who is usually counted as the first of the Umayyad Caliphs. i.e. (1) Abū Sufyān, (2) Mu'āwiyā I (661-680) + Mu'āwiyā II (683-684), (3) Yazīd I (680-683) + Yazīd II (720-724) + Yazīd III (744), (4) Marwan I (684-685), Marwan II (744-750), (5) 'Abd al-Malik (685-705), (6) al-Walīd I (705-715) + al-Walīd II (743-4), (7) Sulaymān (715-7), (8) 'Umar (717-720), (9) Hishām (724-743) and (10) Ibrahīm (744). That the "great red dragon" slew a third of the "stars of heaven" means that the Umayyads from Mu'āwiyā I to Marwan II slew a "third part of the lineage of Muhammad who were like the stars of heaven" for the second to fifth Imāms (Imām Ḥasan [d. 669], Imām Ḥusayn [d. 680], Imām 'Alī Zayn al-'Abidīn [d. c. 712] and Imām Muhammad al-Bāqir [d. 731]) were their contemporaries (omitting that is, the first Imām, Imām 'Alī who was assassinated by a Khājirite in 661 A.D., and bearing in mind that Shī'ī sources attribute the death of most if not all of the Imāms to the intrigues of the Umayyads and 'Abbāsids). Its standing before the woman about to deliver indicates the Umayyad effort to suppress Shī'ism or put the Imāms to death in the light of their fear that the Messianic al-Qā'im bi'l-jihād or "Twelfth Imām" would arise and terminate their rule. 191.

The man-child (12:5f. cf. above), as we have mentioned, signifies the Bāb who claimed to be the Qā'im or "twelfth Imām" borne of the "Law" or the pure tree of Shī'ī Islam. His "rod of iron" is a sign of his "divine power and might" (not his sword) by means of which (presumably mystically speaking) he will "shepherd all the nations of the earth". That the man-child is to be "caught up" to the "throne of God" is taken as a prophecy of the Bāb's martyrdom. The fleeing of the woman into the wilderness where she had a place prepared and was nourished for 1,260 days means that the "Law of God" was fostered or became centered in the Arabian peninsula until the emergence of Bābism in 1844 A.D. (again 1,260 days = 1,260 years taken as 1,260 A.H. or 1844 A.D.). 192.

3) The beast which rose out of the sea (Rev 13:1-10).

No detailed exposition of the 13th chapter of the Apocalypse written by or attributed to 'Abdu'l-Bahā or Shoghi Effendi appears to exist though there are written and oral traditions or "pilgrim notes" about the two beasts of this chapter that have been expanded by Bahā'ī commentators. The significance of the first beast which arose out of the sea may be summed up as follows:

First beast (Rev 13:1-10) = Mu'āwiyā I (? personifying the Umayyads). Its "mortal wound" which was healed indicates an assassination attempt on his life. 193.

Or, the first beast = the Umayyads personified by Abū Sufyān whose empire was reminiscent of that of Alexander the Great (= "like a leopard"), with its strength in Media-Persia (= "feet like a bear's") and its throne within the confines of ancient Babylonia (= "mouth like a lion's mouth" : refer Rev. 13: 2). The "wounded head" which was healed signifies Andalusia (Spain) where the Umayyad ʿAbd al-Rahmān I (d. 788 A.D.) who was the grandson of the tenth Umayyad Caliph Hisham (d. 743), established a Cordovan dynasty of Amīr that lasted for more than 300 years. 194.

4) The beast which rose out of the earth (Rev. 13:11ff).

The significance of this particular beast has been understood in different ways by different Bahā'ī writers who drew on the writings of ʿAbdu'l-Bahā and certain (unpublished) "pilgrim notes" which contain some interpretations of the Apocalypse attributed to Shoghi Effendi. It is generally agreed that the second beast symbolizes the ʿAbbāsid dynasty of Caliph (reigned 750-1,258 A.D.) though ʿAbdu'l-Bahā's explanations of the number of the beast (666) suggest otherwise.

Second beast = the ʿAbbāsid dynasty with its 36 Caliphs (+ the Ottoman Sultans) That this beast rises out of the "earth" indicates that the ʿAbbāside came to power on the ruins (= the "earth") of the Umayyads. Its two "horns" are the titles Caliph and Sultan; Or, the fact that this "beast" has "two horns like a lamb" but spoke "like a dragon" signifies the initially pro-Shīʿī orientation of ʿAbbāsid propaganda (being "like a lamb") which subsequently took on a neo-Umayyad or anti-Shīʿī dimension (being "like a dragon"). Just as the second "beast" exercises all the authority of the first "beast" so did the ʿAbbāsids mirror the "image" of the Umayyads. They produced "great wonders", the glory of medieval Islamic civilization, but were inwardly corrupt. Indeed, the "mark" of the beast on the "right hand" and the "mark" of the beast on the "forehead" which restrict the livelihood or trade of the faithful symbolize the corrupt ʿAbbāsid administration of the kharāj or land tax (= the mark on the right hand) and the jizya or poll-tax (= the mark on the forehead). 195.

The number of the beast, 666 (Rev 13:18):

- a) "Regarding the Apocalypse of St. John, the beast, the numerical value of whose name is 666: the intent is the year, inasmuch as that beast who is the Umayyad king, appeared in the year 666 of the Christian era. This prophecy relates to the Holy Land" (ʿAbdu'l-Bahā). 196.

It is clear that the Umayyad ruler alluded to by ʿAbdu'l-Bahā in this letter is Mu'āwīya I whose Caliphate lasted from 661-680 A.D. He is evidently understood to be the second "beast" of Rev 13. The number of this "beast", 666, is taken to be the six hundredth and sixty-sixth year of the Christian era. Counting from the (supposed) date of Jesus' birth around 4-5 B.C. the year 661 results: the date of Mu'āwīya's usurpation of Imām Hasan's (supposed) position as Shīʿī Imām. On the other hand it has been thought that the number 666 refers to 666 A.D. when Mu'āwīya is said to have attempted to make Damascus the centre of the Muslim world and to have desecrated the twin holy cities Mecca and Medina. 197. Exactly what ʿAbdu'l-Bahā meant by the year 666 C.E. (?) is unclear. It seems probable that he had in mind the proclamation of Mu'āwīya as Caliph at Iliya' (Jerusalem) in the Holy Land (in 661 A.D.) and the subsequent consolidation of Umayyad power (around 666 A.D. [?]).

- b) "Six hundred and sixty-six in one sense refers to Napoleon" (ʿAbdu'l-Bahā).

This statement was made by ʿAbdu'l-Bahā in reply to a question put to him in 1920 by Dr. Lutfu'llāh Hakīm on behalf of the Bahā'ī writer E.T.

Hall (c.1880-1962) of Manchester (England) and written in a notebook. The latter was probably aware of the common identification of Napoleon Bonaparte (d.1821) with the beast whose number is 666 (Napoleon was made by gematria to yield this number) or may possibly have wondered whether this were true as a result of reading or being informed of such speculations as are contained in I.G. Kheirall's Beha'u'llah (1st.Ed. 1900).^{199.} Napoleon then, becomes yet another candidate for the position of the second beast though 'Abdu'l-Bahā, who often gave sympathetic answers to all manner of questions put to him, may not have taken this identification too seriously.

c) "As to the beast referred to in the Apocalypse, he was a soul who sought with his utmost power to destroy the Cause of God. He was the King of Persia, that is, one of the early kings" ('Abdu'l-Bahā). 200.

It is obviously not clear whether this extract from a letter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā refers to the "second beast" of Rev 13 — though this would seem to be likely. Which "early" king of Persia is intended is also unclear though it is most probable that the "beast" who was an enemy of the Bāb-Bahā'ī movement is to be thought of as either Muhammad Shāh (d.1848) or, more likely, Nāsiri'd-Dīn Shāh (reigned 1848-1896) conceived as a neo-Umayyad type ruler. Perhaps 'Abdu'l-Bahā, in the light of Rev 13:15 (or less probably Rev 12:7ff) where we are informed that the "second beast" revives the "image" of the "first beast" and the Shī'ī, Bābī-Bahā'ī notion of the return (ra'ja) of the evil Umayyads and their like, thought of Nāsiri'd-Dīn Shāh as the eschatological appearance of the Beast. We shall have occasion below to note the sometimes marked hatred exhibited by certain groups of Bābīs towards the Qājārs whom they saw as manifestations of the Antichrist-Dajjāl or as neo-Umayyads.

A "pilgrim note" attributed to Shoghi Effendi, it is worth noting at this point, has it that the revived "image" (refer Rev 13:15 which to the Bahā'ī reader might suggest the notion of ra'ja or "return") of the first beast (= the Umayyads, etc) represents anti-Bābī measures taken by a corrupt Shī'ī clergy at the time of the Bāb.^{201.} If the Shī'ī clergy can be thought of as the "image" of the revived Umayyad beast then such a Qājār ruler of Nāsiri'd-Dīn Shāh might be thought of as the "beast" (that is the revived beast) itself.

On a visit to 'Akkā and Haifa in 1909 (?) an English Bahā'ī lady named Ethel J. Rosenburg (1858-1930) noted down 'Abdu'l-Bahā's explanation of the 16th chapter of the Apocalypse. These notes, summarized below along with certain other suggested interpretations, throw further light on the above. 'Abdu'l-Bahā all but identifies the Qājārs as evil manifestations despite his careful avoidance of being labelled anti-royalist or his efforts to put across a politically neutral stance (hence perhaps also the vagueness of the phrase "one of the early kings" in the passage quoted above).^{202.} The seven angels

who pour out their seven vials or bowls (Rev 16:1ff) are "seven powers" or the unleashing of various forces around the time of or at the time of the rise of the Bābī-Bahā'ī movement. The pouring out of the seven vials signifies various manifestations of Islāmic corruption and Bābī-Bahā'ī oppression.

Vial 1 (16:2) which is poured upon the "earth" signifies the corruption of earthly rulers (= the "earth") in Islāmic lands around the time of the rise of Bābism. Those who bear the "mark of the beast" are the evil hypocrites.

Vial 2 (16:3) which is poured upon the "sea" indicates the corruption of the ulamā^c and the learned (= the bloody sea) which was the cause of spiritual "death".

Vial 3 (16:4-7) which is poured upon the "rivers" and the "fountains of water" alludes to the corruption of lesser divines and teachers.

Vial 4 (16:8-9) which is poured upon the "sun" and which is allowed to scorch those who curse the name of God signifies the oppressive and ungodly rule of the Islāmic kingdoms of the East (= the sun; in particular the Ottoman Empire [or one of its Sultans?] or Persia (?) [or one of its Shāhs?]). 203.

Vial 5 (16:10-11) which is poured upon the "seat of the beast" whose kingdom is in darkness and whose subjects curse God indicates Persia and its corruption (or Constantinople-Istanbul the seat of the Ottoman Sultan whose Empire was in darkness). 204.

Vial 6 (16:12-16) which is poured into "the great river Euphrates" which was dried up to prepare the way of the kings of the East refers to the opposition of the Ottoman and Persian people to the Bābī-Bahā'ī movements (?) (or the triumph of Bahā'u'llāh and his successors [= the "kings of the east"] over a corrupt Bābism in the region around Baghdad, Irāq from the 1850's onwards [= the dried up Euphrates region]). 205.

The dragon (or mouth of the dragon= neo-Umayyad Qājārs?) is Haji Mīrzā Āqāsī the corrupt vizier of Muhammad Shah (see further below).

The false prophet = Haji Mīrzā Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kirmanī (see further below) who claimed to be subject to divine revelations or said, "My words are revealed from above" (or possibly Mīrzā Yahyā and Siyyid Muḥammad [see above]). 206.

The (three) foul spirits like frogs= the evils (anti-Bābī-Bahā'ī activities) of the Persians (or evil principles and false teachings). 207.

The battle of Armageddon= the troubles at "Roumelia and Macedonia" (very likely as noted [see fn. 150 below] Bahā'u'llāh's confrontation with Mīrzā Yahyā and the Azalis at Adrianople from 1866 onwards; or those inner and outer conflicts and wars [particularly the first world war of 1914-1918] that have troubled mankind since the advent of Bahā'u'llāh). 208.

Vial 7 (16:17-21) which is poured into the "air" (thus permeating all things) predicts a great or world war to come (? .i.e. W.W.I) in which "small kingdoms" (= "islands" and "mountains", v.20) will suffer (= "fled away") and be bombed (= (have "great hailstones" fall on them from heaven, v.20). 209.

The great city or great Babylon divided into three parts by a great earthquake= the (coming?) rule of Babylonia (= Irāq, etc ?) by three nations, or kings, the English, the Persians and the Turks as a result of (coming?) upheavals (?) (or the earthquake or irreligious doubts which will divide corrupt human civilization into those who give allegiance to the "three false gods" of Nationalism, Racialism and Communism [= Babylon in three parts]). 210.

5) The harlot and the Scarlet Beast (Rev. 17).

The Bahā'ī writers Marsella, Moffett and Riggs, who each drew heavily on the written or oral exposition of the Apocalypse attributed to ^CAbdu'l-Bahā and Shoghi Effendi (often without indicating their sources), have all to some extent commented on the 17th chapter of the book of Revelation. The following notes set out a few of their remarks of interest in connection with our theme:-

The harlot or great whore = the corrupted Word of God (the Umayyad and neo-Umayyad corruption of pure Shi'ī Islam) seated upon the "many waters" of humanity and resident in the "wilderness" of spiritual desolation or a symbol of Persia. Her glorious royal attire symbolizes her clientele, namely the corrupt priesthood and temporal rulers. 211.

The scarlet beast on which the great whore sits = the Umayyads and ^CAbbāsids who were their "image" (cf. on 12:3ff below and the comments of ^CAbdu'l-Bahā on the 7 heads and 10 horns of the first beast). That this beast "was" signifies that it existed as the empire of Alexander the Great which did not exist in the 1st century A.D. or "is not" but did exist or "is" in the form of the Umayyads and neo-Umayyads (17:11). It ascended out of "the bottomless pit of error" in the 7th century A.D. to the wonderment of "they that dwell on the earth" whose names are not written in the "Book of Life" or who are not firm in the Shi'ī (proto-Bābī-Bahā'ī) covenant.

The 7 heads or 7 mountains on which the harlot sits are 7 dominions (cf. below on Rev 12:3f) symbolized by 7 kings who are the Umayyads and their dominions. That 5 of them are fallen means that 5 of the 7 (previously mentioned) Umayyad dominions were under the control of foreign powers before the Umayyads rose from the "bottomless pit" of error. i.e. (1) the Byzantine dominion around Damascus (Syria, Palestine) dominated by the "Romans"; (2) the Arabian dominion, dominated by the Romans, Byzantines, Abyssinians and Persians; (3) the Egyptian dominion, dominated by Romans and Byzantines; (4) the African/Libyan dominion, dominated by Romans, Vandals and Byzantines; (5) the Andalusian/Spanish dominion, dominated by the Romans, Vandals, Visigoths and Byzantines. Persia is the dominion that "is" in that it was under the dominions of the Selucids, Parthians and Sassanids up until the rise of the Umayyads. The dominion that is to come or "has yet to come" and "remain only a little while" was the dominion of Turkestan-Transoxania the home of mere nomadic pastoralists and sedentary cultivators until the region became Turkish in the 6th century A.D. This latter dominion, it is further thought, was conquered in the 1st 7th-8th centuries A.D. remaining only a "little while" until it ceased to exist after the invasion of the region by Genghis Khan in the 13th century A.D.

The 8th king which "belongs" to the 7th and goes to perdition is the institution of the Ottoman Caliphate which was abolished by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1924.

Furthermore, the 10 horns or 10 kings, the Umayyads, are said to have received power for "one hour" or part of a day taken as a year of 360 days transformed into years roughly indicating the period of Umayyad supremacy. i.e. the 89 years from Mu'āwiya I until Marwan II or 661-750 A.D. is alluded to as an "hour" or part of a "day" of 360 years.

Finally, the Umayyad-^CAbbāsid beast personified as the Ottoman Caliph(ate) and representing the corrupt Islamic dominions "shall make war on the lamb" or the Bāb and his followers. The latter however, will gain "spiritual victory" over the "beast". 212.

We may conclude this partial synopsis of the Bahā'ī interpretation of the (proto-) Antichrist imagery in the Apocalypse by briefly noting the way in which passages of interest within the 19th and 20th chapters of the book of Revelation have been interpreted. ^{213.}

The figure on a white horse whose name is "The Word of God" (Rev 19:11ff) = Bahā'u'llāh who rides the steed of divinely inspired doctrine or "true theology" and whose secret name, written on the "white stone" of the covenant of God, is Bahā the mystery of the "Greatest Name" (al-ism al-a'zam ; Bahā = splendour; Mirza Husayn 'Alī came to be known as Jinab-i Bahā around the time of the Bābī conference at Badasht in 1848). His "vesture dipped in blood" symbolizes his sufferings or was a red robe which he wore (cf. Isa 63:1ff) and his "heavenly army" are the people of Bahā, the Bahā'īs who are the "hosts" of the "Lord of Hosts" (Bahā'u'llāh). ^{214.}

The angel standing in the sun who calls the fowls of heaven to feast on the flesh of kings, captives, mighty men, horses and their riders, and of all men = Bahā'u'llāh (?) whose followers (= the "fowls of heaven") will "feast on" or overcome the tyranny of corrupt rulers, military leaders, false theology, war, economic injustice and ungodliness (the latter four evils being the 4 horsemen of Rev. 6:2ff). The Bahā'īs or "hosts" of the "Lord of Hosts" will also overcome the corrupt ulamā or Muslim clergy and the "false prophet" who is probably to be thought of as Karīm Khān Kirmānī or Mirzā Yahyā (see below and cf. Rev 19:18-20) as well as the "beast" (Rev 19:19-20) who is apparently to be identified in this instance with those 19th century Islamic divines who opposed the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh. ^{215.}

The angel with the key to the bottomless pit who bound the dragon/ serpent/ devil/ satan for 1,000 years = Bahā'u'llāh (?) in whose "Day" the souls of those righteous ones (Christian martyrs, etc) who were not seduced by the Umayyad/neo-Umayyad beast will "return" or be "resurrected" (mystically speaking) and reign with the returned Christ (= the Bāb, Bahā'u'llāh) for 1,000 years. (Rev 20:4ff). Those pious ones who sit on thrones may be the members of the Bahā'ī Universal House of Justice (first elected in 1963) and those who will be spiritually "resurrected", apart from true Christians, will include members of non-Christian religions (in other words, the true spirituality manifested by true believers in the past great religions will, in the "Day" of Bahā'u'llāh, be manifested by the Bahā'īs who are their "return"). The wayward souls who are not "resurrected", the Umayyad type "rest of the dead" who rejected Bahā'u'llāh or the Bāb (?) as the returned Christ, suffered the (implied) 'first death' for they had no part in the "first resurrection" or the advent of the Bābī (+ Bahā'ī) spiritual regeneration which occurred 1,000 years after the death of the 11th Imām, Imām Hasan 'Askarī (260.A.H. / 874.A.D.) or the birth or occultation of his (supposed) son the 12th Imām a millenium before the year of the Bāb's "declaration of his mission" in 1,260.A.H. or 1844.A.D. Those who did not reject Bahā'u'llāh or fall prey to the "second death" will have truly attained millennial beatitude in the new age (20:5). ^{216.}

Satan and Gog and Magog who will surround the camp of the saints but be devoured by heavenly fire = corrupt individuals with evil characteristics who, after the first millenium or so of the Bahā'ī dispensation (? roughly 1844 + 1,000 years), will reject Bahā'u'llāh's successor (another 'manifestation of God') or fail to be numbered among those souls who will attain the "second resurrection" despite another outpouring of the love of God. (20:7f). ^{217.}

As has been indicated at various points in the above synopsis, the Bahā'ī interpretation of much of the eschatological imagery within the Apocalypse has its roots in the Shī'ī notion of the "return" of Umayyad type oppression or ^{218.} oppressors who become "Antichrist" figures in the sense of being anti-Bābī-Bahā'ī. We have seen that it is either explicitly stated or implied that

certain Qājār rulers and statesmen, most notably Nāsiri'ḍ-Dīn Shāh and Hajji Mīrzē Āqāsī, or such opponents of the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh as the Shaykhī leader Karīm Khān Kirmānī and Mīrzā Yahyā, were "beasts" in the sense of being the return of Umayyad oppressors. The Bahā'ī interpretation of the (proto-)Antichrist imagery in the Apocalypse thus mirrors the Bābī application of those Shī'ī eschatological traditions that speak of the return of the hated Umayyads or their like on whom vengeance was expected to be taken by the Mahdī/Qā'im or returned Imām Husayn with some 72 or 313 or more true Shī'itee.

From around the time of the death of Muhammad Shāh in 1848 the Bābīs, inspired by such traditions as that handed down by al-Mufaddal ibn 'Umar from Imām Ja'far Sādiq, manifested a marked anti-Qājār hostility and came to raise the "black standard" of revolt in the name of the Qā'im (and/) or the returned Imām Husayn.²¹⁹ Those Bābīs who participated in the struggle that took place around the shrine of Shaykh Abū 'Alī al-Fadl Tabarsī in Māzandarān (Irān) from September 1848 appear to have thought of themselves as situated in (the new) Karbalā, led by the returned Imām Husayn (identified at times with Mullā Husayn Bushrū'ī) and constituting the 313 companions of the Qā'im (thought by some to be either Mullā Husayn Bushrū'ī or Mullā Muhammad 'Alī Quddūs) engaged in a holy war (jihad) against royalist and evil forces seen as the "family of Abū Sufyān" (Tehran being identified with Damascus). The scene depicted in such traditions as the following were thought to have been realized by Bābīs who imagined themselves "involved in the final jihad against the forces of the Antichrist",²²⁰

"When al-Qā'im will rise in Khurasan, he will proceed to Kufa and thence to Multan, passing through the jazira of Banu Kawan; but al-Qā'im among us will rise in Jilan among the people of Daylam and there will be for my son the Turkish flags.." ²²¹

In some of the eschatological Shī'ī traditions (which are far from consistent) the characteristics of the Dajjāl mentioned in the Sunnī traditions are associated with various hated Umayyads, most notably Mu'awiya I and Yazīd I who, along with al-Sufyānī (a Syrian/Umayyad "Messiah figure" who in Shī'ī traditions becomes as Anti-Mahdī/Qā'im"/Imām Husayn to appear in the last days) are to reappear and be defeated in the eschatological struggle or jihad.²²² Developed Shī'ī apocalyptic it might be said, exhibits a highly complex "Antichrist" (or more accurately though clumsily Anti-Mahdī/Qā'im) tradition which was creatively interpreted by the early Bābīs and which contributed to the Bahā'ī interpretation of the (proto-)Antichrist imagery in the Apocalypse. ²²³

The Antichrist(s) of the Johannine Epistles.

As noted below the Johannine Epistles are the only Biblical writings that explicitly mention the Antichrist figure which is 'demythologized' in the sense of signifying the eschatological appearance of a plurality of heretics or 'antichrists'. Despite the fact that Bahā'ī writers have at times 'demythologized' the mainstream Antichrist tradition like the author(s) of 1 and 2 John these texts are seldom quoted by them. ^cAbdu'l-Bahā was however, asked about the meaning of 1 Jn 4:3 in February 1909 by an American Bahā'ī couple, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Hannan. In their record of their pilgrimage to ^cAkkā and Haifa entitled Akka Light they note that they asked ^cAbdu'l-Bahā the following question:

"Question- 2 Cor., 11:14-15. St. Paul says: Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness: and in 1 John 4:3, St. John speaks of Anti-Christ as the spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. What is the application of these teachings to this day, and how may the spirit of Anti-Christ be identified to-day?" 224.

^cAbdu'l-Bahā's reply is of considerable interest. He begins by stating that these NT texts refer to the "great disturbance" that is to occur in the latter days. Exalted souls will be abased and lowly souls will attain great glory in these times just as Caiphas was abased and Peter and Mary Magdalene were elevated in the time of Christ. Thus, at the time of Bahā'u'llāh even Mirzā Yahyā became "the lowest of men, whereas remote souls became the nearest to the throne". The spirit of Antichrist which denies the bodily incarnation of Jesus in these days, ^cAbdu'l-Bahā continues, signifies Haji Mirzā Muhammad Karīm Khān Kirmānī (see further below) who rejected the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh:

"The spirit of Anti-Christ was identified at the day of the Manifestation in the person of Haji Mohammed Karim Khan, who did not confess that the Christ-spirit had become manifest in the flesh in this day." 225.

Virgie Viola Vail stands among the few Bahā'ī writers who have commented on the Antichrist/s of 1 and 2 John. She wrote a now extremely rare and little known book entitled The Glorious Kingdom of the Father Foretold which was one of the major contributions to the Bahā'ī interpretation of the Bible in the light of the mission of Bahā'u'llāh. 226. In her treatment of the meaning of the "return of Christ" she argues that Christians and others who hold that Christ will not come again as another divine man "in the flesh" (i.e. as Bahā'u'llāh) are the eschatological manifestation of the "spirit" of the Antichrist or the "antichriste". 227.

Then, in her chapter on False Christs, she quotes 1 Jn 4:1-3 and 2 Jn 7 and stresses that Bahā'u'llāh has appeared as Christ come again "in the flesh" and "in like manner" (cf. Acts 1:11). She teaches that the Antichrist/s of the Johannine Epistles are "athieste who do not acknowledge the power of God to send His word (Bahā'u'llāh) into the human realm by manifesting in human form."²²⁸. While then, hypocritical religionists are the false teachers or prophets mentioned in Matt 24:5, athiests and others become latter day docetists in that they deny the incarnation of the Word of God in the person of Bahā'u'llāh who is the return of the spirit of Christ "in the flesh".

It is possible that Virgie Vail was influenced in her interpretation of the "spirit" of the Antichrist by earlier speculations of Mason Remey (1874-1973) who championed a Bahā'ī "orthodoxy" in America and elsewhere when "covenant breaking" (conceived as indulgence in ———→ quasi-Bahā'ī metaphysical speculation or occult theosophy contrary to the teachings of 'Abdu'l-Bahā or association with his declared enemies) threatened the unity of the Bahā'ī community.²²⁹ From around the time of the first world war, Remey, who was a prolific writer and zealous Bahā'ī, had managed to establish himself as the leading occidental exponent of the Bahā'ī philosophy of the covenant.²³⁰ Writing from Hawaii to an American Bahā'ī assembly in 1913 he expressed his conviction that there is a "natural human force" in man that resists the "religion of God" and which has "ever been the spirit of the Anti-Christ". This "spirit of Anti-Christ" is "the spirit of denial of the Word manifest" which serves to quicken those souls who are "steadfast in the Kingdom."²³¹

At the time of the Chicago 'Reading Room affair' of 1917-18 which was partly triggered by the supposedly heterodox occult philosophy of a Boston metaphysician named W.W. Harmon who had been encouraged to write by 'Abdu'l-Bahā,²³² Remey and his associates initiated what was practically a Bahā'ī inquisition. A remarkable set of observations designed to foster "firmness in the Bahā'ī covenant" (privately circulated in limited mimeographed edition) entitled The Protection of the Cause of God (approved by the "Committee of Investigation") were circulated by Remey in 1918. At one point Remey writes:

"It is found in this day that many people unawakened spiritually naturally resent the doctrine of the "Manifested Word" or the "Incarnate Christ". In other words the spirit of the anti-Christ is abroad everywhere. Some people when questioned, who perhaps may bear the name Christian, are often found to be vague upon this point which is the very foundation of God's religion, for it has been found that while the Manifestation of God is the point of guidance to the believer after one is confirmed, the

Manifestation of God is also the point of the greatest test to those who are yet in doubt..Of all the religious movements in the world, I know none upon which the people place more stress than do the Bahais upon the Revealed Word, and there is no body of people who take a stronger stand against the spirit of anti-Christ than they do. Basically speaking, the spiritual war which the Bahais are now waging against the spiritual darknesses of this world is the struggle of the Christ against the anti-Christ spirit in its many forms." 223.

This passage speaks largely for itself. Remy saw the spirit of the Antichrist everywhere and believed that Bahā'ī doctrine as he and his associates conceived it constituted the true recognition of the "Manifested Word" or person of Bahā'u'llāh. He imagined himself to be engaged in a veritable "battle of Armageddon" against the spirit of the Antichrist at a time when Bahā'ī "covenant breaking" and world unrest and war threatened the recognition of the second Christ and the true understanding of the station of 'Abdu'l-Bahā.

At this point it may be noted that 'Abdu'l-Bahā in his Risāla-yi Siyāsīyya ("Treatise on Politics" written in 1892-3) which was primarily addressed to the Bahā'īs of Iran identifies the (human) Dajjāl with Bahā'ī hypocrites who are the cause of discord or who inwardly violate the Bahā'ī covenant. 234. He writes:

"O Beloved of God! Give ear, consider attentively and endeavour to guard yourselves against violation [فساد or sedition]; and if you smell the odour of corruption from anyone, even if he appear to be a person of great importance and incomparably learned, know that he is the [human (manifestation of the)] Dajjāl and the enemy of the Glorious One (al-Jalāl)." 235.

Bahā'ī writers, it will be evident, do not exactly restrict the significance of the eschatological appearance of the Antichrist/ Dajjāl to any single individual of an infamous nature. Certain individuals are however, singled out as being, as it were, supreme incarnations of the Antichrist idea. Such a perspective has been expressed by Shoghi Effendi who probably had in mind the following points:- 1) the Bahā'ī denial of the supernatural or real existence of Satan, or the Devil, (frequently mentioned by 'Abdu'l-Bahā) and 2) the fact that various Bābī and Bahā'ī writers have identified a plethora of anti-Bābī-Bahā'ī individuals as manifestations of the Antichrist/ Dajjāl idea. Conscious of the need to refute the Christian idea that the Antichrist would be a single supernatural eschatological adversary he wrote,

"We [Bahā'īs] do not believe in Anti-Christ in the sense the Christians do. Anyone who violently and determinedly sought to oppose the Manifestation could be called an "anti-Christ", such as the Vazir in the Bah's days, Hājī Mīrzā Aqāeī." 236.

Haji Mirzā Āqāsī the "Antichrist" of the Bābī Dispensation.

"[Muhammad Shāh'e] evil genius, the omnipotent Haji Mirzā Āqāsī, the power behind the throne and the chief instigator of the outrages perpetrated against the Bāb..the Antichrist of the Bābī Revelation" (Shoghi Effendi). 237.

A great deal has been written by Bābī and Bahā'ī writers about Mirzā Ābbās Iravānī or Haji Mirzā Āqāsī (1784-1849) the notorious grand vizier of Muhammad Shāh whose accession to the throne he is said to have predicted. Both his manipulation of the sovereign and his marked hostility to the Bābīe are well known. Eugene Flandin's description of him calls to mind the physiognomic characteristics of the Dajjāl though this theme, as we shall see, is more important in connection with the Shaykhī leader Karīm Khan Kirmanī,

"Haji Mirza Aqasi.. Imagine a nose, very long and curved, over an edentulous mouth and surmounted by badly dyed hair, bloodshot but lively eyes, a brusque gesture, a subtle or rather sly appearance, and one has the exact portrait of this singular personage. This little old man, still vigorous, was like all Persians, vain to excess.. his conversation was scarcely of a nature to destroy the prejudices, little favourable to his person, which had been in our minds before this presentation.." 238.

Bābī and Bahā'ī sources have it that Haji Mirzā Āqāsī constantly incited the fears of Muhammad Shāh in terms of the Bābīs. He is said to have prevented the Bāb from communicating directly with or meeting him.²³⁹ As early as the first year of his mission the Bāb had, in his Qayyūm al-Asmā (commentary on the Qur'ānic sūrat al-Yūsuf, 1844), called upon Haji Mirzā Āqāsī to resign his position and in a subsequent letter to Muhammad Shāh referred to him in the following terms:

"Dost thou [Muhammad Shāh] imagine him whom thou hast appointed Chancellor in thy kingdom to be the best leader and the best supporter? Nay, I swear by thy Lord. He will bring thee into grievous trouble by reason of that which Satan instilleth into his heart, and verily he himself is Satan..He comprehendeth not a single letter of the Book of God..Indeed, in the estimation of the people he is naught but manifest darkness.." 240.

Haji Mirzā Āqāsī was responsible for the Bāb's incarceration in Adhirbayjan at a time when he might have been able to meet Muhammad Shāh. He engineered the examination of the Bāb at Tabriz in 1848 at which the now self-confessed Qā'im was condemned and bastinadoed.²⁴¹ From Chihriq shortly after the latter humiliation the Bāb sternly admonished Haji Mirzā Āqāsī in a letter known as the Khutba-yi Qahriyya.

A year or so later he, having fallen from grace in the estimation of the notables of Tihran and the young Nāṣiri'd-Dīn Shāh, died in Karbilā (in 1849 before the Bāb's execution in July 1850.). 242.

We have seen that Hajji Mīrzā Āqāsī was mentioned by 'Abdu'l-Bahā in connection with the beast imagery of the Apocalypse and that Shoghi Effendi has referred to him as the Antichrist of the Bābī period. It will therefore come as no surprise to learn that certain early Bābīs thought of him as a manifestation of the Dajjāl. Mirza Muhammad 'Alī Zunuzī for example, in a dialogue with a learned Shaykhī written before his martyrdom (along with the Bāb) in 1850, not only identified Karīm Khān Kirmānī (see below) as the manifestation of Sufyān (zuhūr-i Sufyān) but saw Hajji Mīrzā Āqāsī as the evil Dajjāl. 243. Calling to mind Shoghi Effendi's identification of Hajji Mīrzā Āqāsī as the "Antichrist of the Bābī Revelation" the author of the Nuqtat al-Kāf (c.1852?) expressed the opinion that, "The point of unbelief of the age and the Antichrist of the dispensation is [Hajji Mīrzā] Āqāsī." 244.

Hajji Mīrzā Muhammad Karīm Khan Kirmānī, the "one-eyed Dajjāl".

Shaykh Ahmad Ahsā'ī (d.1826) the founder of the Shaykhī school was succeeded by Siyyid Kāzīm Rahtī (d.1843) whose passing precipitated something of a crisis in that he appears to have made no clear statement as to the identity of his successor. Karīm Khān Kirmānī (1810-1870) who had studied under the second Shaykh in Karbilā and who was the son of a cousin and son-in-law of Fath 'Alī Shāh, made a strong bid for the leadership of the Shaykhī community. From Kirmān in the mid 1840's he was able to gradually attract to himself the majority of Persian Shaykhīs who did not become Bābīs. By the end of his days he had "so consolidated his own position..that the succession passed, after a brief dispute, to his second son Haj Muhammad Khān.. descending in the same family to the present day". 245.

Karīm Khān was not only possessed of considerable political influence through his links with the ruling Qājārs but was an influential and prolific writer on most aspects of the religious sciences of his day. It has been estimated that he wrote some 278 books in Arabic and Persian which cover, "not only the field of philosophy and Shī'ite theosophy, the spiritual hermeneutics of the Qur'ān and the hadīth but also an encyclopedia of the sciences: medicine, physics, optics, astronomy, theory of light, of colour, of music, including alchemy, and related sciences.." 246.

The polymathic erudition of Karīm Khān made him a formidable opponent of the Bāb and his disciples many of whom came from a Shaykhī background. As early as July 1845 he had penned the first of a number of weighty refutations of Bābism entitled Ishāq al-Bātil ('The crushing of falsehood').²⁴⁷ This polemical treatise was followed less than a year later by his Tir-i Shihāb.. ('The Shooting Star', March 1846) and subsequently supplemented by such anti-Bābī works as his al-Shihāb al-Thāqib.. ('Piercing Star', January 1849).²⁴⁸ To the end of his life Karīm Khān remained a bitter enemy of both the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh who not only had him formally acquainted with their claims but vehemently denounced him.

In his article The Babism of Persia(II) E.G. Browne records a tradition to the effect that the Bāb, on receiving a treatise written in refutation of his claims by Karīm Khān, identified its author with the athīm (sinful one) mentioned in the 44th sūra of the Qur'ān, the sūrat-al dukhān. He wrote the letters Hā' Mīm (sura 44 is the 5th of 7 Qur'ānic sūras which begin with these detached letters) on its opening page in which Karīm Khān had written: "Thus says the sinful (athīm) servant, Muhammad Karīm, son of Ibrahim". This for the Bāb evidently called to mind Qur'an 44:43/8, "Verily (the fruit) of the tree of al-Zaqqūm [the infernal tree] shall be the food of the impious (athīm).. Taste (this); for thou art that mighty (and) honourable (karīm) person".²⁴⁹ Karīm Khān had unwittingly condemned himself:

"Eat ye your punishment for your unbelief. This is the tree of Zaqqūm.. And we have warned the sinful (athīm) of a painful punishment, of the burning and the flames, and the fire of Hell. Now hath the decree come to pass. Eat then, O thou mighty and honourable one (al-karīm)".²⁵⁰

As already mentioned Karīm Khān Kirmānī has been identified with the Antichrist or Dajjāl. This identification, in the light also of the physiognomic characteristics of the Dajjāl, most notably his being 'one-eyed', was made by Bābīs from at least as early as 1847 and even, somewhat unconvin-
-gently, attributed to Siyyid Kāzīm Rashtī the second Shaykh of the Shaykhīs.

In 1887-8 the apostle of Bahā'u'llāh Mullā Muhammad Zarandī, Nabil-i A^czām completed a lengthy history of the Bābī-Bahā'ī movements which contains some traditions of considerable interest in connection with our theme.²⁵¹ He notes that Siyyid Kāzīm Rashtī had frequently mentioned that the promised Qā'im

would be of "pure lineage" or "illustrious descent" of the "seed of Fātimih" and be "free from bodily deficiency": a notion doubtless rooted in the physiognomic descriptions of the expected Mahdī/Qā'im (as opposed to those of the Dajjāl) and the Shī'ī notion that the prophet-Imām is not only guarded from sin (ma'cūm) but a physically perfect human being ever free of bodily infirmity or disease.²⁵² Zarandī then reports that, for Shaykh Abū Turāb and other Shaykhīs, Siyyid Kāzim's mentioning the bodily wholeness of the expected Qā'im pointed to the shortcomings of certain leading Shaykhīs. Karīm Khān was "one eyed" and "sparsely bearded", Mīrzā Hasan Gawhar "exceptionally corpulent" and Mīrzā Muhīt-i Shā'ir-i Kirmānī "extraordinarily lean and tall".²⁵³ These three Shaykhīs were in other words, thought to exhibit Dajjāl-like physical characteristics.

We have seen how, in the Christian as well as the Islāmic physiognomic Antichrist-Dajjāl traditions, the eschatological adversary was often thought to be characterised by having peculiar eyes or being "one-eyed" or either lean or tall or huge or corpulent. The attribution to or the highlighting of the actual or supposed physical deficiencies of the enemies of the Bābī-Bahā'ī movements is a not uncommon feature of Bābī-Bahā'ī historiography and polemic influenced by the Antichrist-Dajjāl traditions. Mullā Muhammad-i Mamaqānī for example, a leading Shaykhī who made a leadership bid (from Tabriz) after the passing of Siyyid Kāzim and who played a leading role in the first examination of the Bāb in Tabriz (in August 1848) whose death-warrant he subsequently signed, has been described by Shoghi Effendi as a "one-eyed and white bearded renegade."²⁵⁴

Zarandī's abovementioned report of Shaykh Abū Turāb's narration continues and focuses upon Siyyid Kāzim's supposed attitude towards Karīm Khān. Shaykh Abū Turāb, who eventually became a Bābī and married Mullā Husayn's sister, relates that a disciple of Karīm Khān presented the second Shaykh with a treatise written by his master who desired approval of its contents. Siyyid Kāzim read a few portions of the treatise but declined to pass judgement on its acceptability. Then, when Karīm Khān's disciple left Siyyid Kāzim's presence, he is said to have stated in a sorrowful voice:

"Accursed be he [Karīm Khān]! For years he has been associated with me, and now that he intends to depart, his one aim, after so many years of study and companionship, is to diffuse, through his book, such heretical and athiestic doctrines as he now wishes me to endorse. He has covenanted with a number of self-seeking hypocrites with a view to establishing himself in Kirman, and in order to assume, after my departure, from this world, the reigns of undisputed leadership. How grievously he erred in his judgement! For the breeze of divine Revelation wafted from the dayspring of guidance, will assuredly quench his light and destroy his

influence. The tree of his endeavour will yield naught but the fruit of bitter disillusion and gnawing remorse. Verily, I say, you [Shaykh Abū Turāb] will behold this with your own eyes.

My prayer for you is that you may be protected from the mischievous influence which he, the Antichrist of the promised Revelation, will in future exercise." 255.

This narration, which may tell us more about Bābī-Bahā'ī anti-[Kirmānī] Shaykhī polemic than the actual sentiments of Siyyid Kāzīm clearly identifies Karīm Khān with the Antichrist of the Bābī period. 256.

Among the early Bābī apologetic tracts that dwell upon the physiognomic characteristic of Karīm Khān as a neo-Umayyad or Dajjāl-like opponent of Bābism is the Risāla in refutation of the latter written by al-Qatīl ibn al-Karbālā'ī in Karbilā in 1847. 257. The author of this brief treatise (a one time pupil of Siyyid Kāzīm), after quoting and commenting on various traditions believed to predict the date and circumstances of the Bāb's mission, poses a question. Is it more likely he asks, whether Karīm Khān, who in various letters had claimed to be the promised Qā'im who would fill the earth with justice (al-Qa'im bi'l-Amr), or the Bāb be the promised one? How can Karīm Khān make such claims in the light of the fact that he is "one-eyed" (واحد العين), "sparsely bearded" (الكوج) and "short-statured" or has Dajjāl-like characteristics? Is not Karīm Khān one given to smoking or whose "inside" is "filled with smokes" (دخان); a shoot from the Umayyad tree who busied himself opposing the law of the Prophet for no less than 15 years? 258. For ibn al-Karbālā'ī the very appearance of Karīm Khān and his company call the Umayyads, Sufyānide and the company of Mu'āwiya to mind. 259. Indeed, the third Shaykh resembles Mu'āwiya with respect to his beard, Iblīs (the Devil) in his blindness and calls to mind the "well of Eden" (بئر عدن) in having his inside filled with smoke. All are startled at the sight of this evil one who is of abhorrent countenance (كراهة الوجه), short-stature (قصر القامة) and who is of despicable birth and lineage (خبائة المولد والنسب). 260.

Following earlier Bābī tradition, Bahā'u'llāh in his Kitāb-i Iḡān (c. 1862) condemned Karīm Khān and applied the verse quoted above from the Qur'ānic sūrat al-dukhān to him noting how "clearly and explicitly he hath been described in God's incorruptible Book". 261. He believed that

the very title of his Irshād al-^cAwām or "Spiritual Directives for the [Ignorant] Masses" underlined in itself the pride and folly of one whose erudition veiled him from that supernatural and God-given inspiration that is characteristic of the true Bābī gnostic. The "Samiri of ignorance" he had rejected the "Mosee of knowledge" (the Bāb). 262.

It also appears that Bahā'u'llāh alludes to Karīm Khān's being (supposedly) "One-eyed" in his Kitāb-i Igān for at one point, in the course of entreating the learned among the Bābīs not to rely on their limited intellects in seeking the coming divine manifestation, he writes:

"And yet, notwithstanding all these admonitions, We perceive that a one-eyed man (شخصِ اعمور) who is himself the chief of the people (رؤسای قوم), is arising with the utmost malevolence against Us. We foresee that in every city people will arise to suppress the blessed Beauty. We can discern one who is reputed for such devoutness and piety that men deem it an obligation to obey him, who will arise to assail the very root of the divine Tree." 263.

Though it is not absolutely certain that it is Karīm Khān who is here alluded to— though he wielded some political influence and had consolidated his position by 1862 when the Kitāb-i Igān was written he had been explicitly named and condemned earlier in this book—a number of Bahā'ī writers have expressed this opinion. ^cAbd al-Hamid Ishrāq Khavari (1902-1972) for example, in his massive though disordered Qāmūs-i Igān in the course of commenting on the line, "We foresee that in every city people will arise to suppress the blessed Beauty", states that the "one-eyed" person is most probably Karīm Khān. He adds, it is of interest to note, that Karīm Khān had "white scales" (لکه های سفید) on one of his eyes; they grew such that though he endeavoured to cut them off he was unable to attain clear vision. 265. The implication is that Karīm Khān was not exactly or literally one-eyed but possessed one diseased eye. His photograph seems to bear this out for we do not see evidence of a missing eye. 266.

Among the major letters or "tablets" of Bahā'u'llāh, one, probably dating from the early ^cAkkā period of his ministry and known as the Lawh-i Qina^c ("Tablet of the Veil", c.1869-70?) was specifically addressed to Karīm Khān. The third Shaykh had been sent a book which made Bahā'u'llāh's claims known to him but rejected them as he had rejected the claims of the author of the Qayyūm al-Asmā. In consequence the Lawh-i Qina^c condemned him being addressed to one who "has a reputation for knowledge" but who stands on "the brink

of the pit of error".²⁶⁷ At one point in this condemnatory epistle Bahā'u'llāh indicates that Karīm Khān was present at the time of the mission of the prophet Muhammad under or with "another name" (باسم دیگر).²⁶⁸ It is possible that this application of the notion of (eschatological) "return" (ra^cja) is related to our theme. It has been noted below that the one-eyed Dajjāl, most notably as Ibn Saiyād, was believed to have lived at the time of the prophet Muhammad. On the other hand, if Bahā'u'llāh had in mind a specific even possibly 'one-eyed' Dajjāl-like individual, Abū Sufyān ibn Harb would be appropriate as the previous manifestation of Karīm Khān. This especially since Abū Sufyān was for many years a fierce opponent of the prophet Muhammad as chief of the Umayyad clan of ^cAbd Shāms and one who is said to have lost an eye in battle.²⁶⁹ His portrait was in fact, like that of Karīm Khān, assimilated to the physiognomic description of the Dajjāl as the following note makes perfectly clear:

" [The eschatological Sufyān]: His name is 'Othmān the son of 'Ataba of the children of Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sofyān. He is a thick-set man with an ill-countenance, a face pitted with small pox, a large head and blue eyes. He has never rendered service to God, nor seen Mecca or Medina, and his eyes seem to squint.. a man shall come forth from the direction of Mecca whose name is Sofyān ibn Harb. Perhaps he may be that Sofyān who has been previously mentioned.."²⁷⁰

Whether or not the passage from Bahā'u'llāh's Lawh-i Qinā^c referred to above was inspired by Karīm Khān's early identification with the one-eyed eschatological opponent, the fact remains that the third Shaykh has, for both Bābīs and Bahā'īs, been seen as one of the most infamous manifestations of the Antichrist-Dajjāl. For them at least the physiognomic descriptions of the Antichrist-Dajjāl find something of a literal fulfillment.

^cAbd al-Karīm Effendi Tihirānī, it may finally be noted, has, in the course of a lecture delivered in the United States on June 3rd 1900, not only applied II Thess 2:4 to Karīm Khān but explicitly identified him as "the Sofyani" mentioned "in the Mohammedan books..who will appear before the real Mahdi".²⁷¹ From his home in Egypt he, as the teacher of I.G.Kheiralla, had journeyed to the United States in 1900 at the command of ^cAbdu'l-Bahā in order to guard the American Bahā'īs from the propaganda of Mīrzā Muhammad ^cAlī (the half-brother of ^cAbdu'l-Bahā who, in the 1890's had contested his being the head of the Bahā'ī community) whom Kheiralla supported from 1899. The faction headed by Mīrzā Muhammad ^cAlī had accused ^cAbdu'l-Bahā of claiming

Divinity or being an independent "Manifestation of God" (mazhar-i illāhi).^{272.}
 It appears that they quoted II Thess 2:4 in connection with these supposed claims of ^cAbdu'l-Bahā in order to underline their accusations. Consequently, ^cAbd al-Karim at one point in the abovementioned address specifically directed against the "Nakizeen" ("covenant breakers" or in this instance supporters of Mirzā Muhammad ^cAlī) writes:

" Some of these Nakizeen, in order to make things agree with their own interests and desires, are endeavouring to mislead the hearts of others through some insinuations thrown to them every now and then; and in order to strengthen their position at the present time and corroborate their false statements, they have invented, according to their own ideas and imaginations, a new interpretation of some passages of the Holy Books which refer to the appearance of a false one before the real God; claiming for others what they do not claim for themselves. But, alas, they read the Books and do not understand; rather they warp its meaning to suit their own designs in order to enable them to skillfully concoct their contrived themes. That prophecy which is mentioned in the Bible, as well as in the Koran and other books, regarding the appearance of the false God [i.e. II Thess 2: 4], first, has not the slightest connection with the well known present conditions, but in reality it refers to the time of the Manifestation [Bahā'u'llāh], and the false one, Manifestation, who appeared before him, "showing himself as God" [II Thess 2:4]." ^{273.}

Thus, in order to refute the accusation that ^cAbdu'l-Bahā claimed Divinity as indicated in II Thess 2:4 and elsewhere, ^cAbd al-Karīm denies that such texts have anything to do with the period of the ministry of ^cAbdu'l-Bahā; rather, " these emblems and signs, as mentioned in the Books, were not connected with any other appearance save that of the Manifestation, Beha'U'llah." ^{274.}
 The false claimant to Divinity should appear at the time of or before the appearance of the true manifestation of Divinity. Indeed, ^cAbdu'l-Bahā never claimed Divinity ^{275.} and the one predicted in such texts as II Thess 2:4 is Karīm Khan Kirmānī the evil Sufyānī who " showed himself as God". Perhaps influenced by that passage in Bahā'u'llāh's Lawh-i Qina ^c mentioned above ^cAbd al-Karim continues thus:

" Before the appearance of the Bab, a man by the name of Karim Khan, of the city of Karman [sic], Persia, appeared [fn reads, 'See II Thessalonians], "showing himself as God" [II Thess. 2:4, — Karīm Khān almost certainly never made any such claim], and persuaded the people to believe in him and thus succeeded in bringing to him a great number of followers; and some of his disciples have recognized him to be God. The name of Karim Khan is known throughout the country there and elsewhere. He claimed a great mission and wrote many books which can be procured by anyone who wants them. The Manifestation [Bahā'u'llāh] sent him two Tablets, but he did not believe. His followers are many and they are known by the name of the Sheikhyist [Shaykhī] Sect. The Beloved Perfection hath said that the one who is mentioned in the Mohammedan books as Sofyani, who will appear before the real Mahdi, is this one, Karim Khan." ^{276.}

Appendix I. The 7 Angels with the 7 Trumpets (Rev. 8,9,11:15f).

These chapters of the Apocalypse are, in various unpublished Bahā'ī "pilgrim's notes" held to predict events within Christian, Islāmic and Bābī-Bahā'ī history. The opinions of the previously mentioned Bahā'ī writers on the Apocalypse (see fn's 179-181 below) based in large measure on unpublished (and non-authoritative) utterances of Shoghi Effendi may be summarized as follows:-

1st Angel with trumpet (8:7) = Anti-Christian persecutions by the Roman authorities up until 238.A.D. or the mission of Imām 'Alī (d. 661.A.D.) and his struggle for the Caliphate.

2nd Angel with trumpet (8:8) = Anti-Christian persecutions from 249.A.D. under the Emperors Decius and Diocletian or the mission of Imām Hasan (d. 669.A.D.) and the suppression of his partisans by Mu'āwīya I (661-680.A.D.).

3rd Angel with trumpet (8:10-11) = The confusion and corruption of the Church on the conversion of Constantine (c. 311.A.D.), the "fallen star" named "Wormwood" or the mission and martyrdom of Imām Husayn (d. 680.A.D.) whose enemy Mu'āwīya is the "fallen star" named "Wormwood".

4th Angel with trumpet (8:12-14) = The invasion of western Rome beginning with that of the Visigoths under Alaric the Bold in 408.A.D. and followed by that of the Vandals and Huns before the rise of Islām or (?) the oppression of Shi'ism under the twelve Imāms from 'Alī until the death of the 11th Imām al-Hasan al-'Askari (d. 260.A.H. = 874.A.D.) or the "occultation" (ghayba) of the (supposed) 12th Imām Muhammad al-Muntazar (the Imām Mahdī).

5th Angel with trumpet (9:1-11) = The Muslim invasion of African and Asian Christendom under the "rightly-guided Caliphs" and the Umayyads and the suppression of Shi'ism. The "locusts" which emerged from the "smoke" (= false teachings) are the Umayyad troops and their leaders whose "king", the "angel of the bottomless pit" called Abaddon and Apollyon, is Abū Sufyān father of Mu'āwīya I the fountainhead and symbol of Umayyad and neo-Umayyad oppression.

6th Angel with trumpet = The unleashing of the Sunnī Muslim forces (symbolized by the "four angels" or four major Sunnī schools of jurisprudence: the Hanafī, Malikī, Shāfi'ī, and Hanbalī schools) beyond the Euphrates resulting in the fall of Constantinople (Byzantium) in 1453.A.D. and in the slaying or cutting off of one third of Christendom.

7th Angel with trumpet = A man qualified with heavenly attributes or Bahā'u'llāh (?) enthroned in divine majesty and surrounded by the 24 elders or the Bāb and the "Letters of the Living" (Hurūf-i Hayy) and certain prominent Bahā'īs.

Appendix II

مولانا الاكرم مرحوم حاج محمد كريم خان كرماني
(۱۲۲۵ - ۱۲۸۸ قمری)

138. The pages to follow will set down only a fraction of passages in the extraordinarily voluminous Bahā'ī Scripture that bear upon our theme. (The footnotes to follow will also note only a few of those works which record the historical events mentioned in this part of this essay).
139. Refer, for example, ^cAbdu'l-Bahā in [E.G.Browne Ed. & Tr.], A Traveller's Narrative (Vol.II.Cambridge 1891, Henceforth TN), p.51ff; Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By (=GPB, Wilmette 1974), p.114ff; H.M.Balyuzi, Edward Granville Browne and the Bahā'ī Faith (= EGB&BF., London 1970), p.3ff; idem, Bahā'u'llāh King of Glory (=BKG Oxford 1980), p.107ff; A.Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh, Vol.I (= RB.I. Oxford 1974), p.53ff; W.Mc E.Miller, The Bahā'ī Faith: Its History and Teachings (South Pasadena Calif., 1974), p.70ff.
140. Refer, Shoghi Effendi, GPB.p.114.
141. Refer, Balyuzi, EGB&BF.p.3; idem, BKG.p.107; Shoghi Effendi, GPB.p.112ff. On Siyyid Muhammad see further below.
142. Refer (as fn.39, also), A.Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh Vol.II (= RB.II. Oxford 1977), p.152ff. See Further below.
143. Bahā'u'llāh, Kitāb-i-Iḡān [written c.1862] (ET.Shoghi Effendi, London 1961), p.160. cf. also Bahā'u'llāh's "Tablet" to his aunt of the ^cAkkā period known as the Lawn-i Maryam (refer Ishraq Khavarī, Ganj-i Shayḡan, Tihiran 124.B.E./1966 A.D., p.184) parts of which are translated in E.G.Browne's Materials for the Study of the Bābī Religion (Cambridge 1918/Rep.1961), p.8, and in Shoghi Effendi's GPB.p.120.
144. Refer, for example, on the epiphanic claims of the Bābīs after the martyrdom of the Bāb (there were such claims before his martyrdom as well), Shoghi Effendi, GPB.p.125, Balyuzi, EGB&BF.p.43; idem, BKG, pp.120-132.
145. Refer, for example, Bahā'u'llāh, Lawn-i Sirāj [c.1867] in Ishraq Khavarī (Ed), Mā'idiy-i Asmānī (=MA [9 Vols. Tihiran 1963-1964]), Vol.7.p.61ff; the Azalī work Hasht Bihisht ("The Eight Paradises") ET (in part) in TN.p.357 (on this work refer, Balyuzi, EGB&BF.p.18ff); Balyuzi, EGB&BF.p.43f; idem, BKG.p.124; Taherzadeh, RB.II.p.250ff. While Balyuzi (EGB&BF.p.43. cf. BKG.p.124) and other Bahā'ī writere, it may be noted here, imply that Dayyān made an exalted claim for himself Taherzadeh (RB.I.p.250) states that Bahā'u'llāh in his Kitāb-i Badi (c.1867 ; this work though printed is now difficult to obtain) teaches that Dayyān merely circulated some prayers which he had written (without making any exalted claim) the perusal of which made Mīrzā Yahyā jealous such that he determined to have him killed. On other assassination plots attributed to Mīrzā Yahyā refer, for example, Shoghi Effendi, GPB.p.124f.
146. Refer, Bahā'u'llāh cited MA.Vol.4.p.151; ^cAbdu'l-Bahā cited MA Vol.5.p.290; Balyuzi, EGB&BF.p.34. fn.3.; Taherzadeh, RB.I. pp.248-9.
147. Refer, Bahā'u'llāh, (One of the) Lawn-i Zayn al-Mugarrabīn cited in MA.Vol.4.p.99. In his Lawn-i Ibn-i Dhi'b (c.1890, = "Epistle to the Son of the Wolf," ET.Shoghi Effendi, Wilmette, 1971), Bahā'u'llāh writes, "Wherever this Wronged One went Mīrzā Yahyā followed him.. The Siyyid of Isfahān.. surreptitiously duped him. They committed that which caused the greatest consternation" (p.168). Bahā'ī sources maintain that Mīrzā Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad followed Bahā'u'llāh (despite their enmity) in order to have the benefit of his protective charismatic leadership.

148. The text of Bahā'u'llāh's Sūrat al-Ahsāb is printed in Āthār-i Qalam-i A'liā Vol.4. (Tihiran 1968), pp.1-22. On it cf. Taherzadeh, RB.II.p.65ff. His Sūrat al-Amr is contained in, Alvāh-i Bahā'u'llāh..(Bombay 1308.A.H., 1892-3.A.D.), pp. 242-245. cf. Ishraq Khavari Ganj-i Shāyigān, pp.73-4 (date given here is 1864. A.D.[which may be a year or so too early ?]), Taherzadeh, RB.II, pp.161-2, Shoghi Effendi, (ET in part), Gleanings from the Writings of Bahā'u'llāh(np. [London], 1949) pp.130-2; "Mirza Jawad's Historical Epitome", ET in E.G.Browne, Materiale.. (see fn.143 below), p.21 (here also the Sūrat al Amr is dated 1,280.A.H. or 1863-4.A.D.).
149. On these events refer, for example, Bahā'u'llāh, Lawh al-Ruh ("Tablet of the Spirit", apparently written during his withdrawal in the House of Ridā Big around March-May 1866) printed in Āthār-i Qalam-i A'liā .Vol.4 (see fn.148 above), pp.123-154. cf. Ishraq Khavari , Ganj-i Shāyigān, p.85ff, Taherzadeh, RB.II.p.181ff., also Balyuzi, BKG.p.217ff, Taherzadeh, RB.II, pp.162-170.
150. I use the phrase "Battle of Armageddon" (See Rev 16:16. cf. 19:17ff, 20:7f) since ^cAbdu'l-Bahā according to some unpublished "Pilgrim Notes" has associated Armageddon with Roumelia and Macedonia probably having in mind Bahā'u'llāh's spiritual battle with Mirza Yahyā and the Azalīs in Adrianople (though there are other interpretations of Rev 16:16 which cannot be discussed in detail here). Bahā'u'llāh's Lawh-i Sirāj[Sarrāj], a lengthy letter addressed to ^cAlī Muhammad Sirāj[Sarrāj] of Isfahan in c.1867, replies to a number of questions (among other things) about the status of Mirza Yahyā. Despite his receipt of this letter ^cAlī Muhammad (a Babi who was the brother of the Bāb's second wife whom both Mirza Yahyā and Siyyid Muhammad had married) remained an Azalī-Bābī like his brother Mullā Rajab ^cAlī. The text is printed in MA.Vol.7. pp.4-118.
151. Refer, Bahā'u'llāh, Lawh-i Mubāhila in MA.Vol.4. pp.277-81., cf. also Shoghi Effendi, GPB.p.168f, Taherzadeh, RB.II.p.291ff.
152. On the episode of the Bahā'ī murder of Azalīs in ^cAkkā refer for example, E.G.Browne, The Bābīs of Persia.I. in Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society(= JRAS., Vol.XXI [1889]), p.517., idem., The Bābīs of Persia.II in JRAS Vol.XXI. [1889], pp.995-6., idem., TN. Note W [7], p.370f., idem., Materials..p.55ff (= "Mirza Jawad's Historical Epitome" in which the exact date of the murder of Siyyid Muhammad is given as 12th Dhu'l-Qa'da 1288.A.H. or 22nd January 1872 A.D.), Balyuzi, EGB&BF.p.34-6, idem., BKG.p.322ff; idem., 'Abdu'l-Bahā (Oxford 1971), pp.35-6., Shoghi Effendi, GPB.p.189-191; Moojan Momen, The Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions, 1844-1944.. (Oxford 1981), p.212ff.
153. Bahā'u'llāh, Lawh-i Ibn-i Dhi'b (see fn.147 below). ET. Shoghi Effendi, p.157.
154. Shoghi Effendi, letter to Isfandīyār Majzūb (Nov.17.1935) cf. Taherzadeh RB.II. : pp.298, 464 , GPB.p.164. One might have expected Shoghi Effendi (1897-1957, the Guardian of the Bahā'ī religion and great-grandson of Bahā'u'llāh) to have labelled Mirzā Yahyā the supreme incarnation of the "Antichrist" rather than Siyyid Muhammad; especially since Mirzā Yahyā is said to have disguised himself as a Jew (refer, GPB.p.165), claimed identify with God (ibid., p.165 but cf. below on II.Thess 2:1ff) where the "Son of Perdition" [= Yahyā] claims Divinity) and worked mischief "right and left" (loosely speaking) between Syria and Iraq. His position as nominee of the Bāb and his close relationship with Bahā'u'llāh perhaps saved him from this notoreity.
155. ^cAndalīb's epistle to the great orientalist E.G.Browne (1862-1926) has, as far as I am aware, never been published; it is not clear whether Browne ever received it or whether the MSS has survived. My source of information is W.A.Rice's article, A Babi Pamphlet in the Church Missionary Intelligencer (August 1902), pp. 565-573 which contains an excellent summary of ^cAndalīb's epistle. cf. H.Balyuzi, The Bāb..(Oxford 1973), p.235. fn.15 [My thanks to Dr.Moojan Momen for supplying me with a copy of Rice's article].

156. Refer, W.A. Rice, art. cit (see fn. 155), p. 572.
157. cf. Bahā'u'llāh, Sūrat al-Haykal in Alvāh-i Babā'u'llāh mushtamil bar Sūrat al-Haykal.. (Bombay 1308.A.H./1892-3.A.D.), pp. 2-49[ff] and (with textual differences) in Āthar-i Qalam-i A'lā, Vol. 4, pp. 268-300. (An on the whole unreliable translation of this "Tablet" by Anton F. Haddad, Surat 'ul Hykl [Beha'is Supply and Publishing Board, Chicago 1900] exists portions of which are reproduced in H. Holley's Bahā'i Scripturee [New York 1923/8²]).
158. cf. for example, Kheiralla's Beha'U'llah quoted fn. 192 below.
159. Isaiah 14:12f (RSV). These verses in Isaiah were probably originally based on an ancient myth about the banishment of a divine being from heaven. The דָּוִד בֶּן-לֵוִי (Day Star son of the Dawn) figure is reminiscent of the planet Venus or the deity associated with it. In the Ugaritic texts Sahar is a god of the dawn and hēlāl the morning star (see modern commentaries for details). I wonder, it may be noted here, whether the idea that the Antichrist-Dajjal would have an eye like the "morning star" (one of the most consistent features of the physiognomic descriptions of the Antichrist in Christian and Islāmic literatures; see below) is related to Isaiah 14:12?
160. Refer, Kitāb Al-Muqaddas.. Published by R. Watts, London, 1831.
161. Refer, MA. Vol. 7. p. 173ff.
162. ET. Shoghi Effendi of the identical Arabic text of Amos 4:12b-13 in Epistle to the Son of the Wolf (see fn. 147), pp. 145-6. For the Arabic text refer, MA. Vol. 7. pp. 191-2 and Lawh-i Mubarak Khitāb bi Shaykh Muhammad Taqī.. (np. nd.), pp. 171-2.
163. ET. Shoghi Effendi, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 146.
164. ET. Shoghi Effendi, *ibid.*, p. 146.
165. ET. Shoghi Effendi, *ibid.*, p. 147.
166. Bahā'u'llāh, Al-Kitāb Al-Aqdas, text from [°]Abd al-Razzāq al-Hasanī, Al-Bābīyūn wa'l-Bahā'īyūn fī Hādīrihim wa Madīhim (Sidon 1972), p. 130.
Bahā'u'llāh makes a very large number of references and allusions to Siyyid Muhammad in his Tablets of the [°]Akkā period (1868-1892). In particular refer, Lawh-i Istintāq ("Tablet of the Interrogation") in MA. Vol. 4. pp. 220-260, esp. p. 232ff (here Siyyid Muhammad is referred to as "the detestible Siyyid Muhammad" [سید منکر خبیث], 250ff. cf. fn. 192 below).
167. Refer, [°]Abdu'l-Bahā, in (E.G. Browne), TN. II. p. 95. cf. Shoghi Effendi, GPB. p. 113.
168. Shoghi Effendi, GPB. p. 112, 165.
169. Refer for example, MA. Vol. 1. p. 20 where Rev 21:2/10 is referred to and cf, H. Holley (Ed) Bahā'i Scriptures (New York 1928), pp. 116-7.
170. cf. [°]Abdu'l-Bahā in Some Answered Questions (= SAQ. London. nd.), pp. 234-6.
171. Refer, letter of [°]Abdu'l-Bahā quoted in Star of the West (= SW,) Vol. 14. No. 12 (March 1924), p. 358, Bahā'ī World Faith (Wilmette, Illinois, 1976), p. 351, Selections from the Writings of [°]Abdu'l-Bahā (Haifa 1978), p. 12-13.
172. From a letter of Shoghi Effendi to R.J. Moffett dated August 13th 1944.
173. [°]Abdu'l-Bahā in The Promulgation of Universal Peace (Wilmette 1943) p. 455.
174. Refer for example, SAQ. p. 43ff and cf. below.
175. cf. Rev 1:1, 22:10f.

176. Various sets of unpublished "Pilgrim Notes" (notes taken by those who visited 'Abdu'l-Bahā or Shoghi Effendi which are often of great interest but which are not regarded as authoritative by Bahā'īs) exist which record sometimes in detail the comments of 'Abdu'l-Bahā and Shoghi Effendi on verses or whole chapters of the Apocalypse. They remain for the most part in MSS. Of particular importance are the notes taken by Ethel J. Rosenberg in 'Abdu'l-Bahā's presence in the Holy Land in 1901 and 1909 (See below ; where I have consulted these notes I shall indicate this by the abbreviation Rosenburg PN) and explanations of parts of the Apocalypse given by Shoghi Effendi in the 1950's .
177. Most of Mīrzā Abū al-Fadl's writings from the 1880's onwards contain discussions of Biblical texts, including the Apocalypse, which have not infrequently determined subsequent Bahā'ī interpretation. Haji Mīrzā Haydar 'Alī 's Bahr al-'Irfan (Bombay 1312/3.A.H. 1896-7.A.D.) contains comments on Biblical texts again including the Apocalypse.
178. I.G. Kheiralla, a Syrian Christian who became a Bahā'ī in 1890 and arrived in America in December 1892 where he succeeded in converting a large number of Americans by the late 1890's, made constant reference to the Bible in his missionary endeavours as is amply illustrated by a reading of his Bshā'Ullah (1st. Ed. 1900). He was converted by Hājī 'Abdu'l-Karīm Tehranī a merchant resident in Cairo who had a considerable knowledge of the Bible and who, after Kheiralla abandoned allegiance to 'Abdu'l-Bahā in 1899, travelled to America where he condemned him at the same time fostering the application of Biblical prophecies to 'Abdu'l-Bahā.
179. E. Marsella, The Quest for Eden (henceforth, QE., New York 1966),
180. R.J. Moffett, New Keys to the Book of Revelation (henceforth, NKBR, New Delhi 1977)
181. R.F. Riggs, The Apocalypse Unsealed (henceforth, AU, New York 1981).
182. cf. The letter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā published in Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahā, pp. 165ff. esp. p. 167. It may be noted here that the publications of Marsella, Moffett and Riggs all draw very heavily and without clear documentation on such "Pilgrim Notes" as we have mentioned above (fn. 176 above). The use of these "Pilgrim Notes" is sometimes unsatisfactory in that their import is misunderstood and when these writers express their own opinions there are frequent errors of historical and other scriptural facts.
183. For a synopsis of the Bahā'ī interpretation of Revelation chapters 8, 9 and 11:15f (the seven angels with seven trumpets), of minor interest in connection with our theme ; see Appendix I.
184. I refer to what has become known as 'Abdu'l-Bahā's "Some Answered Questions" (See fn. 170 above). The original Persian text of the discourses collected in this volume was first printed by Brill of Leiden in 1908 under the title, An-Nūr Al-Abhā fī Mufawadat Abdi'l-Bahā and published by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd in the same year. Two sections in this volume deal with the interpretation of the Apocalypse: section XI on Rev. 11 (pp. 43-57, Persian text, pp. 35-48) and section XIII on Rev. 12:1-6. (pp. 62-66., Persian text, pp. 52-57).
185. Compare for example the interpretation of Revelation 11:19 given by 'Abdu'l-Bahā in SAQ. section XI. p. 56f (Persian text [see fn. 184 above] p. 46f) and that outlined by Mīrzā Abū al-Fadl in his Risāla-yi Istidlāl-yyih (written, on the truth of 'Abdu'l-Bahā's being the centre of the Bahā'ī covenant after Bahā'u'llāh's passing, in the year 1317.A.H. 1900 A.D.) np. nd. , p. 18.

186. Refer, SAQ.p.43f, Persian text,p.35.cf. Marsella, QE.p.218f, Rigge,AU.p.147f. cf. 'Abdu'l-Bahā'e comments on Rev. 11:1 in SAQ.p.43, Persian text,p.35 where the "reed" is interpreted as a "perfect man" (انسان کامل) who is sanctified from all save God and eubject to divine inspiration.
187. Refer,ibid.
188. Refer,ibid.A useful summary of modern echolarly opinions on Rev.11 can be found in A.Feuillet's Johannine Studies (Chap.III., = Interpretation of Chapter XI of the Apocalypse), ET. Rev. T.E.Crane (New York, 1966).
189. Refer, SAQ.p.62f, Persian text,p.52f.On Revelation 12:1-2,4b-6 eee also the letter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Selections From the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahā,p.172. cf.also, Haji Mīrzā Haydar 'Alī, Bahr al-Irfān,p.111f, Mareella, QE.,p.202f, Riggs, AU,p.157f.
190. Refer,ibid.cf. also Bahā'ī World Vol.II (Rep.Wilmette,Illinoie, 1980),p.277 on Rev.11 and 12 as interpreted by the 'Israelitish Assembly of the Baha'īs of Tihran,Persia' in a letter to the Bahā'ī Houee of Sprituality in Chicago dated May 9th 1904.
191. Refer, as fn.189.cf.also J.R.Richards, The Religion of the Bahā'īs (London, 1932),p.182f where objection ie made to the fact that 'Abdu'l-Bahā regarded Abū Sufyan as an Umayyad in order to produce (with repitition) 10 names.
192. Refer,ibid(as fn.189).On Rev 12:7ff see Riggs, AU.p.160ff.Kheiralla wae, in his interpretation of Rev.12,influenced by H.Grattan Guinness's Light for the Last Days.In his BehaUllah, Vol.2.p.467ff he states that Rev 12 concerne " the contemporary appearance of Mohammedanism and the Church of Rome, which should wage war against each other"(p.468).cf. also E.G.Browne, Materials..pp.139-140.

Kheiralla, it is of interest to note, found prophecies about the activitiee and person of Mirza Yahyā in both the Old and New Testaments.Again, in his bulky work BehaUllah (Vol.2)he writes: " According to prophecy, Satan, the "adversary" of God should appear in the Kingdom,at the time of the "Manifest-ation", and, refusing to acknowledge his authority of revelation would be cast out, loosing the name which had been bestowed upon him.This name is the "Morning Ster", "Sun of the East" or Suhh-i-Ezel[eic.].Thie casting down of Satan out of Heaven,is the battle between Michael and Hie angels against the "adversary" of God [cf. Isa.14:12f,Rev 12:7f,etc.].By it we are taught that he should be cast from his high spiritual position,into the earth,meaning that he shall become earthly,materially minded and belong to the party of Cain.In the 49th chapter of Jeremiah,the adversary ie given the name of "Eeau",in contradistinction to the "Manifestation" [i.e. Bahā'u'llāh],who ie termed "Jacob",implying that the "Satan" of the Kingdom,would be a brother of the Manifeststion.All these propheciee were fulfilled literally in Subh-i-Ezel, a brother of Beha'U'llah, who had been appointed by the Bab, but who,after the death of the Bab, refused to acknowledge "He whom God shall manifest" [the expected Man Yuzhiruhu'llah of the Bābīs],thereby accomplishing hie own dethronement and by his wickedneee,being cast out of the Kingdom of God" (pp.417-8).

In his O Chrietians Why do Ye Believe Not on Chriet?(1917) Kheiralla,in the course of a remarkable defense of the Bahā'ī assasination of the Azalīs at Akkā in 1872 (perhaps influenced by that passage from Bahā'u'llāh'e al-Kitāb al-Aqdas quoted above— which Kheiralla had translated into English but never published),applies Rev 12:7ff to the Bahā'ī- Azalī controversy. At one point he writes: "On my part it gives me great dslight to acknowledge it [the assasination of 1872] and greater satiefaction that it happened. Because, the happening of this event ie a decisive proof that Christ wae a Manifestation of God and that which he foretold was literally fulfilled.. The war in heaven which Christ prophesied was on earth where the Father manifested Himself[at 'Akkā where Baha'u'llah lived in 1872].This prophecy was fulfilled by the defeat of Satan(Azal)and his angele by Michasl(Beha'U'llah) and his angels..[i.e. in Rev 12:7ff]"(pp.62-3).

193. That Mu'awiya is the first beast of Revelation was an opinion expressed by Shoghi Effendi in a talk to the International Bahā'ī Council according to some unpublished pilgrim notes dating from the 1950's.
194. Refer, Riggs, AU.p.165ff.
195. Refer, Riggs, AU.p.168ff, 217. The letter of the 'Israelitish Bahā'īe' (Jewish converts of the Bahā'ī movement) mentioned above (in fn.190) identifies the second beast of Rev 13 with Mu'awiya (I, most probably): "Another prophecy is in the 13th chapter of Revelation , where the beast is mentioned as having " power given unto him to make war for forty and two months". This refers to the spirit of warfare which became manifest in Muaviah, who was a descendant of Bani-Umayya, who made war after the departure of Muhammad, and continued it until the secret declaration of Baha'u'llah to his disciples [i.e. until 1863.A.D.]" (p.278). Shoghi Effendi on the other hand is said to have identified the second beast with Yazīd (I) ibn Mu'awiya (in the pilgrim notes mentioned in fn.193) who reigned for about 3¹/₂ years (680-683.A.D.). For Marella the second beast is the 'Abbasid dynasty as it is for Riggs (refer, QE.p.229).
196. Letter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā quoted (in part) in ET. in Riggs, AU.p.299. The Persian text of this letter to an individual Bahā'ī is printed in MA. Vol.2.p.78.
197. In an unpublished Pilgrim Note attributed to Shoghi Effendi.
198. This line from an unpublished letter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā is referred to by Riggs, AU.p.302., who describes it as a "Pilgrim Note" though, if I remember correctly, having had the opportunity some years ago to examine the "Notebook" of E.T.Hall, the Persian original as well as its English translation (the Persian original signed by 'Abdu'l-Bahā) appear to be authentic. In this letter, it may also be noted here, there is an explanation of the "New Jerusalem" as a pyramidal shape and the "two reapers" mentioned in Rev 14:14ff are interpreted as the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh.
199. cf. Kheiralla, Beha'Ullah, Vol.2.p.368. where the "abomination of desolation" (Matt 24:15) is reckoned to be Napoleon Bonaparte I especially in the light of his besieging " the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, Akka in 1799." Many 19th century students of the Apocalypse imagined that the beast whose number was 666 was Napoleon.
200. From a letter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā published (for the first time as far as I am aware) in Riggs' Apocalypse Unsealed, p.299 in English translation (I have not been able to locate the original text -which may be unpublished).
201. A Pilgrim Note ascribed to Shoghi Effendi, cf. Moffett, NKBR.p. It may also be noted here that Riggs, (AU.p.169ff), who introduces into his volume all kinds of astrological and qabbalistic nonsense (frequently based on erroneous gematric calculations), at one point writes:
" Since Mu'awiyah committed an act of blasphemy by assuming the title of Caliph, it should not be surprising if his assumed title The Caliph has a value of 666 (p.170., He proposes the spellings 'κελλαίφ and 'οκελλειφ (sic) both of which he reckons add up to 666 by gematria [p.174]).
202. cf. D.Mac Eoin, Babism, Bahaism and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (unpublished paper), esp.p.12ff. On E.J.Rosenburg, Refer, O.Z.Whitehead, Some Early Bahā'īe of the West (Oxford 1976), p.55ff. Ethel Rosenberg's Pilgrim Notes were (I believe the original MSS have now been transferred to Haifa) kept in the British Bahā'ī Archives in London. There are also some Pilgrim Notes recording a speech of Shoghi Effendi on Rev 16 which at times differ from those taken by E.Rosenburg and attributed to 'Abdu'l-Bahā. Riggs in his Apocalypse Unsealed appears to make use of them though his own ideas are also set down in his exposition of Rev 16. (refer AU.p.197ff).

203. Refer, Rosenberg PN (cf. fn. 176) .cf. Riggs, AU., p. 199.
204. Refer, *ibid.* cf. Riggs, p. 200. Khsiralla in his Beha'Ullah (Vol. 2. p. 377) holds that Rome is the "seat of the beast" (Rev 16:10) being the seat of Papal authority.
205. Refer, *ibid.* cf. Riggs, AU. p. 200f.
206. Refsr, *ibid.* cf. Riggs, AU. p. 201
207. Refsr, *ibid.* cf. Riggs, AU. p. 201-2.
208. Refer, *ibid.* cf. fn. above and cf. Riggs, AU. p. 202ff. On the significance of the "battle of Armageddon" for 'Abdu'l-Bahā and Bahā'ī writers, see also, Star of the West Vol. 5. No. 11. p. 163, Vol. 7. No. 7. p. 53., Vol. 7. No. 9. p. 85. Vol. 10. No. 3. p. 32. cf. Bahā'ī World, Vol. II. p. 52 and W. Tudor Pole, Writing on the Ground (London 1968), p. 156, Khsiralla, Beha'Ullah, Vol. 2. p. 371.
209. Refer, *ibid.* cf. Riggs, AU. p. 203-4.
210. Refer, *ibid.* cf. Riggs, AU. p. 204. Instead of following the Rosenberg Pilgrim Notes Riggs (who frequently supressee the more problematic or difficult interpretations recorded in them) , inspired by Shoghi Effendi's mention of the "three false gods" in his The Promised Day is Come (Wilmette, Illinois, 1981), p. 113, makes a speculation as to the meaning of the division of the "Great City" that is his own.
211. Refer, Marsella, QE. p. 191-2; Riggs, AU., p. 207ff.
212. Refer, *ibid.* cf. also Riggs on Rev 18 in AU. p. 213ff.
213. E. J. Rosenberg on her pilgrimage in 1901 (?) also took notes on the significance of Rev 20:5, 6, 9, 10, 13 and 15 (which I shall draw on below).
214. Refer, Moffett, NKBR., p. , Riggs, AU. p. 219ff. cf. Marsella, QE. p. 251-2.
215. Refer, Riggs, AU. p. 220ff.
216. Refer, Rosenberg PN (cf. fn. 213 above), Moffett, NKBR. p. , Riggs, AU. p. 223ff.
217. Refer, *ibid.*, cf. Riggs, AU., p. 227-9.
218. Hamid Algar in his The Oppositional Role of the Ulama in Twentieth-Century Iran (in N. R. Keddie [Ed.], Scholars, Saints, and Sufis. [University of California Press 1972, pp. 231-255]) notes that it was rumored during the reign of Muhammad Shah (1834-1848) " that the Qajars had been present in the Umayyad army at Karbala" and that such rumore (still very much alive today, the late Shah having been likened to Yazīd) " gained particular currency and vigor in the period of the Constitutional Revolution." (p. 233). cf. also Mac Eoin, art. cit. (fn. 202 above), p. 4ff.
219. The lengthy tradition of Mufaddal was known to and quoted by the Bāb and the early Bābīs in their writings. It is summarized in Sachedina, op. cit. p. 161ff.
220. D. Mac Eoin, The Babi Concept of Holy War in Religion 12 (1982), p. 120 (for detailed references to the Bābī identification of persons and places mentioned in the eschatological Islamic traditions the reader is referred to this article).
221. Quoted in Sachedina, op. cit. p. 63 (the tradition is attributed to the sixth Imān Ja'Far Sādiq) and appears to be a late fabrication designed to enhance or legitimatē Safavid propaganda. Interestingly, Siyyid Muhammad Husayn Zavāra'ī's Waqayi' -i Mimiyya (Events in the Land of Mīm [= Mazandaran]) an unpublished eye-witness account of the Shaykh Tabarsi episode (MS in Camb. Univ. Lib. Or. Ms. F. 28. item. 1) refers to Mullā Husayn Bushrū'ī as the "Qa'im of Khurāsān" and to Mullā Muhammad 'Alī Quddus as the "Qa'im of Jīlān" (pp. 1, 3, etc). cf. Mac Eoin, The Babi Concept of Holy War. p. 115.

222. See further below and cf. D. Donaldson, The Shi'ite Religion (London 1933), p.237f. It may be noted here that the 'Dajjal-like' figure of the "bearded woman" (the beard probably implying a Jewese!) mentioned in Shi'ite eschatological traditions is identified in the Nuqtat al-Kaf with Sa'id al-Ulamā, a cleric of Barfurush who fulfilled prophecy by killing the Qā'im of Jilan'or Quddus towards the end of the Shaykh Tabarsi seige.
223. This is not to say that Shi'ite eschatology does not give Jesus a role to play: cf. Sachedina, op cit. p.177f and see below.
224. Refer, Akka Lights (np.nd), p.4.
225. Words attributed to 'Abdu'l-Bahā in ibid, p.6.
226. V.V.Vail's The Glorious Kingdom of the Father Foretold was published in 1940 by the Bahā'ī Publishing Committee of New York being 262 pages long.
227. Vail, Glorious Kingdom, p.23.
228. Vail, Glorious Kingdom, p.62-3.
229. Remy himself was eventually expelled from the Bahā'ī Cause as a "covenant breaker". For some details refer, Vernon E. Johnson, An Historical Analysis of Critical Transformations in the Evolution of the Baha'i World Faith (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Baylor University, 1974), p.342ff.
230. Refer, P. Smith, The American Bahā'ī Community, 1894-1917: A Preliminary Survey (unpublished essay), p.85ff.
231. Remy, Letter to a Bahā'ī Assembly written from Hawaii and dated July 19th 1913 printed in Star of the West Vol.4.No.10 (Chicago, September 8th 1913) p.172
232. For some details refer P. Smith, art.cit (fn.230), p.94ff. According to W.W. Harmon (refer his Divine Illumination [Boston, Mass., 1915], p.8) 'Abdu'l-Bahā said to him in August 1912 "I want you to write a book on 'Divine Illumination'". A year later he sent the MSS to 'Abdu'l-Bahā and it was apparently approved in a letter to him dated April 20th 1914. Harmon's other major work is entitled The Seven Principles of the Microcosm and Macrocosm applied to the disclosure of Baha'ullah in the Book of the Seven Valleys (Boston, Mass., 1915). His writings came to be seen as heterodox if not heretical and he was branded a "covenant breaker".
233. Refer, M. Remy, The Protection of the Cause of God (completed 27th March 1918 and circulated privately in a limited number of copies.) pp24-5. cf. also, M. Remy, Report of the Baha'ī Committee of Investigation 1917-1918 (privately circulated); idem, An Open Letter to the Bahais in America (dated March 21st 1918 and privately circulated); idem, Firmness in the Covenant (dated 27th March 1918, but written in the Fall of 1914, and again privately circulated).
234. On the date of the treatise refer, MA. Vol.5. p.198.
235. 'Abdu'l-Bahā, Risāla-yi Siyāsīyya (nd.np.), p.20. The text reproduced in Mirzā Assad Allāh Fādil Mazandarāni's Asrār al-Āthār Vol.2. (Tihiran 128.BE./ 1970-71 A.D.) p.232 (entry Dajjal) differs slightly from that aforementioned (omitting ج, after the word Dajjal).
236. Shoghi Effendi, from a letter quoted in High Endeavours: Message to Alaska by Shoghi Effendi (National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahā'īe of Alaska, 1976), p.69 (No.85).

237. Shoghi Effendi, GPB, pp. 82, 164.
238. Eugene Flandin, Souvenirs de Voyagen en Armenie et en Perse: II Tehsren et Ispahan (in Revede Deux Mondes. Vol. 11. Paris 1851), p. 989, ET. in Momen, op. cit. p. 155.
239. Refer, for example, H. Balyuzi, The Bāb, p. 118ff.
240. The Bāb, extract from a letter to Muhammad Shāh, ET. H. Taherzadsh in Selections From the Writings of the Bāb (Haifa; 1976), pp. 25-6 .cf. GPB. p. 23.
241. Refsr, for example, H. Balyuzi, The Bāb, p. 121ff. Momen, op. cit. p. 154.
242. cf. Shoghi Effendi, GPB. p. 27., Momen, op. cit. p. 156.
243. Refer, Mīrzā Muhammad ^CAlī Zunuzī cited in Mīrzā Assad Allāh Fadil Mazandarānī, Kitāb-i Zuhūr al-Haqq, Vol. III (Cairo nd.) p. 35. cf. D. MacEoin, "Tāhirih" (unpublished account of the life of Tāhirih) chapter, Karbīla 1844. p. iv. fn. 20.
244. Refsr, Hājī Mīrzā Jānī Kāshānī (?), Kitāb-i Nuqtatu'l-Kāf E. G. Browne (Ed) London and Leiden 1910, p. 118. ^CAbdu'l-Bahā in a talk delivered at Haifa on June 15th 1914 is reported as having stated, it may be noted here, "If from the beginning when His Holiness the Supreme (the Bab) appeared, Hadji Mirza Aghasee (the prime minister of Persia, who caused the martyrdom of the Bah, and in the orient is known as Dajjal, meaning anti-Christ or false Christ) and others, had not resisted this Cause, Persia would now have been the first country in the world and distinguished in every way" ET. Zia N. Baghdadi in Star of the West Vol. IX. No. 10 (Sept. 8th. 1918), p. 116.
245. D. Mac Eoin, "Tāhirih" (MSS. cf. fn. 243 above), chapter, Karbīla 1844. p. 3.
246. H. Corbin, Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth. ET. Nancy Pearson, (Princeton University Press 1977), p. 116.
247. Refer, Izhaq al-Bātil. Kirman 1351 Sh. 1973. A. D.
248. Refer, Tir-Shihāb. Kirman 1386. A. H. / 1966-7. A. D.; al Shihāb al-Thāqib,
249. Refer, E. G. Browne, The Babis of Persia. II (see fn. 152 below), pp. 910-911.
250. From a letter of the Bāb cited in ^CAbd al-Hamid Ishraq Khavārī, Qāmūs-i Iqān, Vol. 1. (Tehran 128. B. E. / 1971. A. D.), p. 42 ET. D. MacEoin in "Tāhirih" (MSS), fn. 23 (p. vi) to chapter Karbīla 1844. cf. also E. G. Browne, TW. II. (Note E), p. 242 where it is noted that the Bāb also stigmatized Karīm Khan as "the Quintessence of Hell-fire" (جوهر جوهر کل نار).
251. The first part of Zarandī's history was edited and translated by Shoghi Effendi under the title, The Dawn-Breakers, Nabil's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation (1932). The original text has not been published.
252. Refer, The Dawn-Breakers. (ET. Shoghi Effendi, London 1953), p. 29. The Shī'ī notion of the bodily perfection of the messengers and Imāms is discussed by Siyyid Kāzīm Rashtī in his Risāla-yi Usūl-i Aqā'id (written in 1256. A. H., 1839-40. A. D. [in MSS]) p. 140.
253. Refer, ibid, p. 29.
254. Shoghi Effendi, GPB. p. 21. A. L. M. Nicholas, it may be noted here, in his Essai sur le Shaykhisme, II (Paris 1914) writes, "If according to Karīm Khan the Bab and his followers are infamous and impious, for the Bahis, Karīm Khan is the Anti-Christ or Dajjal foretold by Muhammad" (p. 31).

255. Words attributed to Siyyid Kāzim Rashtī by Shaykh Abū Turāb and quoted in The Dawn-Breakers, p.30.
256. The extent to which the first two Shaykhs prepared the way for the advent of the Bābī movement awaits detailed investigation in the light of the many Bahā'ī sources that attribute fairly explicit prophecies to them.
257. This Risāla is printed as an appendix to Mīrzā Assad Allāh Fadil Mazandarānī's Kitāb-i Zuhur al-Haqq, Vol.3 (Cairo nd.), pp. 502-532.
258. Refer. al-Karbālā'ī, Risāla, p. 516.
259. al-Qatīl ibn al-Karbālā'ī, *ibid*, p. 517.
260. Refer, *ibid*, p.519. (I am grateful to Dr.Denis MacEoin for drawing this Risāla to my attention and allowing me to make use of his notes on it).
261. Bahā'u'llāh, Kitāb-i Igān (ET.Shoghi Effendi), pp.121-2.
262. Refer, Bahā'u'llāh, *ibid*, p.118f. Karīm Khān's Irshād al-^cAwwam was published in its 3rd.Ed. (4 vols in 2) in Kirmān 1353-1355 /1934-1936.A.D.
263. Bahā'u'llāh, Kitāb-i Igān, p.158. Text from Kitāb-i Mustatāb-i Igān (Cairo 1934), p.192.
264. Refer, ^cAbd al-Hamīd Ishrāq Khavarī, Qamūs-i Igān , Vol.4..(Teheran 128.BE. 1971.A.D.), pp.1791-2.
265. Refer, Ishrāq Khavarī, *op.cit.* (fn.264), p.1792.
266. See Appendix 2 (below).
267. Bahā'u'llāh, Lah-i Qina^c in Majmū'a-yi Alwāh-i Mubāraka (Cairo 1920), p.67f. Bahā'u'llāh, also condemns Karīm Khān in his 'al-Kitāb al-Aqdās (c.1873). He expresses concern over the condition of the 'land of Kāf and Ra'^c(= Kirman) and later names Karīm Khān as one who turned aside from him in his vanity, as one who "turned back, fleeing" (cf. Qur'an 27:10).
268. Bahā'u'llāh, Lah-i Qina^c in Majmū'a.. p. 79.
269. cf. W.M.Watt. art. Abū Sufyān in EI² .p.157.
270. Aqā'id al-Shī'a cited E.G.Browne, TN.II (Note 0/8), pp.305-6.
271. Refer, Addresses by Abdel Karim Effendi Tehrani:Delivered before the New York & Chicago Assemblies, trans. Anton F.Haddad, Beha'is Supply and Publishing Board, of Chicago Ill(1900), p.43ff. ^cAbd al Karīm was a Tehranī merchant who had settled in Egypt.He managed to convert Kheiralla in 1890 (and was instrumental in bringing about his missionary journey to the United States) and himself became aware of Bahā'u'llāh's claims during the Adrianople period(1863-8) of his ministry. During the ^cAkkā period of Bahā'u'llāh's ministry he visited him at ^cAkkā and over the years received no less than 53 letters from him. ^cAbd al-Karim expressed the purpose of his journey to the United States in the following terms, "I have come to this country to create harmony and mention peace among the believers, and praise be to God I have drawn the line of demarcation between the firm [believers] and the backsliders [' covenant breakers']" (*ibid*.p.67).
272. cf. Johnson, Critical Transformations..p.241ff., Mirza Assad Allāh, Instructions Concerning Genesis and the Mystery of Baptism (tr. Mīrzā ^cAlī Qulī Khān, np.nd), p.22.
273. ^cAbd al-Karim, Addresses, pp.49-50.

274. ^cAbd al-Karīm, ibid,p.51.

275. Refer, ibid,p.50. Though ^cAbdu'l-Bahā did not claim Divinity for himself certain oriental and occidental Bahā'īs had, by 1900, identified him with Jesus Christ and other prophets regarded by Bahā'īs as "Manifestations of God". His supporters in other words elevated him to a rank beyond that which he claimed for himself. Hoping to underline his spiritual greatness and rank in order to confound the partisans of Mīrzā Muhammad ^cAlī and other "covenant breakers" who challenged the authority of ^cAbdu'l-Bahā, many early Bahā'ī writers thought of their "Master" as an incarnate divine being. It was not in fact until Shoghi Effendi wrote his 'The Dispensation of Bahā'u'llāh' in 1934 that the rank or station of the Bāb, Bahā'u'llāh and ^cAbdu'l-Bahā were clearly and authoritatively expounded for Bahā'īs by one whom they regarded as the infallible interpreter of Bahā'ī scripture.

276. ^cAbd al-Karim, ibid.pp.50-51.
