A Brief Note on the Baha'i Studies Seminar held in Borwick, 31 March—2 April 1984.

As several would-be participants were unable to attend, it was a small group that gathered for the Borwick Seminar. Nevertheless, a constructive meeting was held. Todd Lawson read from his annotated translation of the Báb’s Tafsír Surat al-Magára, and two papers were presented. The first, Richard Hollinger’s Ibrahim George Kheiralla and the Baha’í Movement in America (which was read on the author’s behalf), utilized family archives, to provide a detailed account of Kheiralla’s life and Baha’i activities. The contrast between Kheiralla’s successful missionary endeavour prior to 1900 and his lack of success after the American schism was remarked upon and accounted for by a combination of factors, to wit: Kheiralla’s loss of access to the original social networks by which his teachings had been promulgated; the greater charismatic appeal of Ābdu’l-Baha as a religious leader; and the ideological inflexibility of Kheiralla’s post-1900 missionary activity. Hollinger’s paper will be appearing in a forthcoming volume of Studies in Babi and Baha’í History (Kalimat Press).

The second paper, Peter Smith’s The Pattern of Baha’i Expansion and Distribution in Europe (which represented part of a larger work in progress) sought to explain the variations in European Baha’i distribution; primarily by means of the quotient of Local Assembly numbers per million population. Although at present necessarily speculative, some attempt was also made to identify such major factors as might account for the variations in distribution. In the smaller national communities exogenous factors—the movement of pioneers; the presence of consensus or initiative within the Baha’i community—were held likely to predominate, whilst in the larger communities, exogenous factors—religions and ethnic divisions; the influence of “cultural” secularization—were held to be increasingly important.

There was also some discussion of the desirability of greater contact between academic Baha’i scholars and the British Baha’i Community, and it was resolved to suggest to the British Baha’i National Assembly that they might wish to arrange for annual conferences to encourage academic scholarship within the Baha’i community.

—Peter Smith—

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- Brief note on the British Study Seminar held in Bournemouth, 31 March – 2 April 1984.

- Notes:
  - Unable to attend: if not a small group.etal.
  - To法师手 Brad: read from in another translation.
  - For me: Bournemouth Seminar was held.
  - A comparative meeting was held.

- Comments:
  - For the British Study in Europe, 1986.
  - Leaves: Huxleys as people will be appearing.
  - For the American 1982. The first Richard.
  - For the British Study in Europe, 1986.
  - Hence the greater.
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