

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 Tafsīr Sūrat al-Baqara and two papers were presented. The first, Richard Hollinger's Ibrahim George Kheiralla and the Bahá'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 <sup>C</sup>Abdu'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 Bábí and Bahá'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 endogenous 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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As several would-be participants were ~~prevented from attending the Seminar due to~~ ~~not~~ 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 Bab's Tafsir-i suratul-baqara, and two papers were presented. The first, Richard Hollinger's, "Ibrahim George Kheiralla and the Bahai Movement in America", <sup>in which</sup> was read on the author's behalf, ~~based~~ ~~the~~ utilized family archives to provide a detailed account of Kheiralla's life and Bahai activities. The contrast between Kheiralla's successful missionary endeavour prior to 1900 and his lack of success after the American schism was <sup>to</sup> accounted for by a combination of factors, <sup>with</sup> ~~including~~ Kheiralla's loss of access to the original social networks ~~along~~ <sup>by</sup> which his teachings had been promulgated; the greater ~~setting~~ charismatic appeal of 'Abdul Bah as a religious leader; and ~~the~~ ~~lack~~ of ideological inflexibility of Kheiralla's post-1900 <sup>missionary activities</sup> ~~teachings~~. Hollinger's paper will be appearing in a forthcoming volume of Babi and Bahai Studies in Babi and Bahai History. The second paper, Peter Smith's "The pattern of Bahai expansion and distribution in Europe", <sup>which</sup> represented <sup>part of a larger</sup> work ~~in progress~~, ~~and~~ ~~which~~ sought to describe the variations in European Bahai 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 ~~explanatory~~ ~~factors~~ ~~whether~~ ~~endogenous~~ (the movement of pioneers, ~~or~~ ~~for~~ such factors as might account for the variations in distribution. In the smaller national communities endogenous factors (the movement of pioneers; the <sup>presence</sup> ~~lack~~ of conservatism or initiative within the Bahai community) were held likely to predominate, whilst in the larger communities, exogenous factors (religious and ethnic divisions; the <sup>influence</sup> ~~predominance~~ of ~~the~~ ~~cultural~~ ~~conditions~~) were held to be

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

Peter Smith