BAHÁÍ STUOIES BULLETIN VOLUME 3 NO. 2.

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BAHA'I STUDIES BULLETIN

This Bulletin in primarily designed to facilitate communication between those among us emgaged in Baha'i Studies. It is hoped that it may evolve into the Bullstin of an Association for the Study of the Babl and Baha'l Religious (or the like) and be belittingly published rather than photostatically reproduced.

The success of this Bulletin obviously depends on your support and willingmess to contribute. A steady and sustained flow of scholarly contributions is
vital especially since there are so few of us. The following list is intended
only to serve as an indication of the nature and scope of contributions that
would be welcomed-:

- a) Articles or short notes whether historical, methodological, sociological, doctrinal or theological, stc.,
- b) Bibliographical essays or notes;
- c)Copies of generally unavailable letters or tablets of the Bab,Baha'u'llah, CAbdu'l-Baha or Shoghi Effendi whether in the original language(s) or in translation:
- d)Notices of recently published books, articles and reviews, etc.;
- e)Previously unpublished notes or documents;
- f)Reports of work in progress or of seminars and conferences relating directly or indirectly to Babi-Baha'l studies.

All contributions to this Bulletin should be east to-:
Mr.Stephen Lambden, 77 Rothwell Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne,
England U.K. (Ed).

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The article which fills this issue of the Bulletin has been very rapidly written with a view to getting up to date with outstanding issues. For the most part it is no more than a set of rough notes that I may revise and polish up at some stage in the future. My apol—ogies to those subscribers who may find the rather lengthy appendix on the use of the term cama! of little interest.

Stephen Lambden (Ed).

AN EARLY POEM OF MIRZA HUSAYN CALI BAHA U'LLAH: THE 'SPRINKLING OF THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING' (RASHH-I CAMA').

Bahā'u'llāh's Rashh-i CAmā' is a Persian poem of 19 couplets which takes its name from the opening words of its first hemistich. Widely regarded by Bahā'īs as the earliest extant example of divine revelation (Bahā'ī scripture) it was composed during the time of its author's imprisconment in the Sīyāh Chāl dungeon in Tehran; that is, at some time during the latter half of the year 1852 (= early 1269 AH). It was, Bahā'u'llāh in hie later writings has stated, during the "year nine" (= 1269 AH) = Oct. 15th 1852—October 4th 1853) that he underwent profound mystical experiences and resolved to attempt to regenerate the demoralised Bābī community.

It seems likely, as most Bahā'ī writers have maintained, that the Rashh-i camā' is expressive of Bahā'u'llāh's own assumption of a leading role within the Bābī community. To what extent however, Bahā'u'llāh therein alludes to the epiphanic status he later explicitly claimed (from the early 1860's) is not clear—bearing in mind the extravagant claims made by many leading Bāhīs in the 1850's, the poetic nature of this work, and the possibility that he is representing himself as a channel through which the celestial and eschatological Bābī spirit flows. He certainly makes no explicit claim to be man yuzhiruhu'llāh (the expected Bābī messiah) and could be understood to be representing himself as a leading Bābī rather than claiming to be the inaugurator of a new (though essentially secret) religious dispensation.

The well-known Bahā'ī writer Adib Taherzadeh in his The Revelation of Bahā'u'llāh (Vol.I. Oxford 1974.,p. 45) has expressed the opinion that the Rashh-i CAmā' "may well prove impossible to translate". Having (see below) attempted the "impossible" I should admit that the task was far from straightfoward. The sense of certain lines seemed clear enough though others contain expressions that could be understood in a variety of ways. No attempt has been made to be anything but as literalietic (in the translation) as possible. I may well have completely misunderstood the sense of a number of more abstruse parts of this beautiful poem and would be delighted to receive alternative renderings.

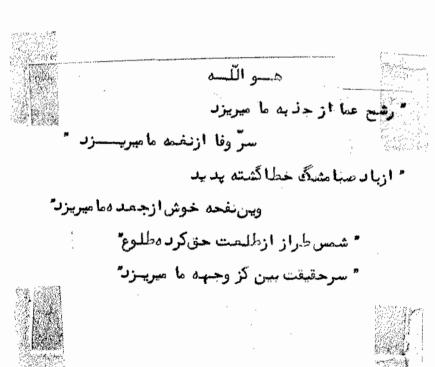
As far as I am aware the text of the Rashh-i CAma' is only printed in Ishraq Khavari's Ma'ida-yi Asmani Vol.4. (n.p.[Tehran] 129 Badic, pp. 184-6). It is this text which has been translated below. It is not, however, in complete agreement with the text photostatically reproduced in Iran National Baha'i Archives (MS), Vol.36 ([privately published=INBA.MS] pp. 460-1). Actual and probable (INBA MS text is not easy to read) variant readingswill be commented on in the Notes (see below).

If in attempting to translate the Rashb-i CAma I have "attempted the impossible" it was certainly with my 'head in the clouds' that the some-what overlengthy appendix on the use of the term cama in Babi-Baha i scripture was written. I hope it contains some points of interest for those who do not share my fascination with the byways of Babi-Baha i doctrine.

Stephen Lambden

THE TEXT OF THE RASHH-I CAMA

A) From Ma'ida-yi Asmani (Vol.4).



م ازمسوج لقا كرده خروش خروش

وین طرفه عط ۱۱ زجد به ما میریزد "

" بهجت مل ازنظره كل شدظاهـر

این رمز ملیح ازرنه را میریزد "

" نقره ناقوری جذبه لاه وتسی

" این هردو بیك نفخه ازجو سمامیرود

" دور انا دو ازچهره ماکرده بسروز

کور ه.و ه.و ازنفحه مامیریسز^ی "

* كوثر حق ازكاسه دل گشته هويدا

ميريزد وين ساغرشهد ازلعلبها

" يوم خدا ازجلوه ربّ شد كاسل "

" این نفز حدیث از غنه طا میریزد"

طفع بهائی بین رشح عمائی بین مبریزد کاینجملمزیك نفمهازلحن خدا

" ماهمى سرمد بين طلع منزه بين

صدر ممرّد بین کزعرشعلامیریزد"

" نخلمه طوبي بين رنّم ورقا بين"

"غنة ابهى بين كزلمع صفا ميريز د"

* آهنگ عراقي بين دف حجازي بين

كف المي بين كزجذ به لا ميريزد "

طلعة لا هوتي بين حوري هاهوتي بين

جلوه ناسوتی بین کز سر عما میریزد "

" وجهه باقى بين چهره ساقى بين "

"رق زجاجي بين كر كوبه ما ميريسزد"

المستراك المسترك المسترك المسترك المسترك المسترك المستراك المستراك المستراك المستراك المستراك المستراك المستراك

سینه سینابین کز کف سنامیریزد "

" ناله مستان بين حالت بستان بين

مېريزد جن به مستانېين کزصحنلقا

"غنچه هائى بين طره بائى بيسن "

" رنسه نائی بین کزکلك بهامیریسزد "

طفى طهوراست اين رشع طهوراست اين

غن الموراست اين كزعين فنا ميريزد "

b) Text from INBA (MS), Vol. 36.

[My apologies for the fairly illegible nature of the text:it should be noted that line 8 occurs after line 19].

RASHH-I CAMA: THE SPRINKLING OF THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING. Provisional Translation

He is God.

- [1] On account of [lit. from] Our Rapture the Sprinkling of the Cloud of Unknowing raineth down;

 The Mystery of Fidelity poureth forth from Our Melody.
- [2] The musk of Cathay hath appeared from the Zephyr;
 This sweet-scented Breeze raineth down from Our Ringlet.
- [3] The Sun of Oppulence hath arisen from the Countenance of the True One; See thou that the Mystery of Reality raineth down from Our Face!
- * [4] From a Wave[of the Ocean] of the Meeting [with God] the Sea of Purity hath cried out;
 On account of [lit. from] Our Rapture this Precious Favour raineth down.
 - [5] At the eight of the Rose was the Delight of the Wine apparent;

 Thie Sweet Cipher raineth down from the joyful song of [the letter]

 "Ra".
 - [6] The Stunning Trump; The Colestial Rapture;
 In the Firmament of Heaven they twain rain down as a single blast.
- * [7] On account of [lit. from] Our Visage the dispensation of "I am He[God]" hath commenced;

 The cycle of "He is He" poureth forth from Our [Trumpet-] Blast [or Breath].
 - [8] From the Goblet of the Heart the <u>Kawthar</u> of Reality hath appeared; Out of the Vermilion Lips [or, Ruby (Wine)] of <u>Baha!</u> this Cup of Honey poureth forth.
- The "Day of God" hath been fully realised on account of [lit. from] the Effulgence of the Lord;

 On account of [lit. from] the Lament [or, Song] of [the land of?]

 "Ta" thie New Beauty poureth forth.
 - [10] Observe the Glorioue (bahā'ī) Overflowing! Behold the Beclouded (cama'ī) Sprinkling!
 - From the Melody of God all this raineth down as a single Song.
 - [11] Observe the Eternal Moon! Behold the Pristine Ascendent [Sun]!

 See thou that the Pure Breast poureth forth from the Elevated Throne!
 - [12] Observe the Blessed Palm-Tree! Behold the Melody of the Dove!

 See thou that the All-Glorious (abha!) Lament[or Song] raineth down from the Brilliancy of Purity!
- * [13] Observe the Iraqi Melody! Behold the Hijazi Tambourine!

 See thou that the Rapture of "La" raineth down from the Divine Hand!
 - [14] Observe the Deified Countenance! Behold the God-like Maiden! See thou that the Terrestrial Effulgence raineth down from the Mystery of the Cloud of Unknowing!

- [15] Observe the All-Enduring Face! Behold the Visage of the Cupbearer! See thou that the Sparkling Draught[?] raineth down from Our Goblet!
- [16] Observe the Fire of Moses! Behold the Snow-White Brightness!

 See thou that the Sinaitic Bosom raineth down from the Radiant
 Palm [Hand]!
- [17] Observe the Intoxicating Lament! Behold the Orchard of Ecstaey!

 See thou that the Rapture of Existence raineth down from the Court of [the] Meeting[with God]!
- [18] Observe the [letter] Ha'-like Rosebud! Behold the [letter] Ba'-like Ringlet!

 See thou that the Song of the Flute [-Player] raineth down from the Hollow-Reed of Baha!
- * [19] This is the Overflowing Manifestation! This is the Sprinkling of Manifestation!

 This is the Melody of the [Heavenly] Birds that raineth down from the Fount of Annihilation.

NOTES

The following notes are not intended to be an extended commentary on the Rashh-i CAma . Only a few points of doctrinal and linguistic interest will be noted along with the several important variant readings contained in the INBA.MS (from Vol. 36— reproduced above).

[1] In this opening line Baha'u'llah indicates that it is "from" or "on account of" (<u>az</u>) his "rapture" (<u>jadhba</u> —alternatively, 'spiritual ecstacy', 'winning-ways' or possibly 'Enraptured Self') that the "Sprinkling of the Cloud of Unknowing" (<u>rashh-i cama'</u>) rains down. The implication may be that his mystical exp-eriencee whilst imprisoned in the <u>Sīyāh Chāl</u>('Black Pit') in Tehran

l. In the above provisional translation of the Rashh-i CAMA an asterisk (*) alongside a given line calls attention to an actual or probable variant reading in INBA.MS (See the Notes).

had precipitated the outpouring of grace from the sphere of the Divine Unknowability. His deep communion with God had actualised the outpouring of spiritual favours from the realm or cloud of the dark mist enveloping his Beloved.

The idafat or genitive construction rashh-i cama' has been translated "Sprinkling of the Cloud of Unknowing". The governing verbal noun rashh () is derived from an Arabic root (RSHH) which signifies, 'to sweat', 'to leak', 'to percolate', 'to trickle', 'to distill', 'to exude', 'to drop' to moisten' or to 'sprinkle'; hence rashh = "a sprinkling", or alternatively, "a showering", "a dewdrop" or the like. The governed noun cama' is derived from the Arabic root from the Arabic root, camiya = 'to become blind', 'to be obscure'. It could thus be translated "blindness", "secrecy" or "obscurity" (or the like) though it also bears the sense of "cloud" or "heavy and thick clouds" (which hide and obscure). Since in various Sufi and Babī-Bahā'i texts cama is indicative of the depths of God's interiority, the hiddeness of His essence, the enwrapped and beclouded locus of Divinity, it has been trans-lated "Cloud of Unknowing". 2.

In the second hemistich of the first line of the Rashh-i CAMA the genitive construction sirr-i wafa parallels and rhymes with rashh-i CAMA. Here trans-lated "Mystery of Fidelity" it might also be rendered "Secret of Faithful-

^{1.} Outside of its use in the Rashh-i cama the verbal noun rashh is occas-ionally found in Babi-Baha'i texts. It is not found in the Qur'an though
the imperfect verbal form yarshahu occurs in certain versions of the
well known Hadith Kumayl (see D.M. Donaldson, Al-Kumail: A Companion
of the Secret in The Moslem World Vol. 28 (1938), pp. 255-6).

^{2.} The phrase 'Cloud of Unknowing' is, of course, the title of an anonymous lith century English mystical treatise. It is expressive of the Christian mystical and apophatic theology or 'way of negation' found in the works of certain of the Church Fathers and set forth in the writings attributed to Dionysius of Athens (= St.Denis/ the Pseudo-Areopagite--see Acts 17: 24). There may in fact be some connection between the Islamic notion of Cama' and patristic expressions of the 'way of negation'. The writings of Gregory of Nyssa (c.330-395) contain important materials in this respect. For him Exodus 24:15ff and 20:21 (among other texts) have to do with the sublimity of the experience of God's incomprehensibility— the former text refers to the "thick darkness" or "dark cloud where "God was" (Heb. II) A TOO WAY IN TOO WAS TOO On the Babi-Baha'i use of the term Cama' see below (Appendix).

-ness"— or perhaps "Inwardly Loyal [One]" (or the like). It is probably expressive of God's absolute faithfulness in connect—ion with the pre-eternal covenant or that aspect of His Being which is indicative of His continuing to guide mankind. That the "Mystery of Fidelity" poureth forth from "Our Melody" may be understood to signify that Bahā'u'llāh's revealing divinely inspired verses ('melodies') is expressive of or originates in the sphere of the mystery of God's loyal pledge to guide His creat—ures.

The terms <u>sirr</u> and <u>wafa</u> are quite common in the writings of the <u>Bab</u> and <u>Baha'u'llah</u> though the genitive expression <u>sirr-iwafa'</u> (Per./Arab= <u>sirr al-wafa'</u>) is not. The expression <u>al-sirr al-wafa'</u> is however, found in <u>Baha'u'llah's Lawh-i Kull al-Ta^Cam</u> ('Tablet of All Food'—early <u>Baghdad</u> period):

"Since at this moment the Ant of Servitude hideth in the Vale of the Divine Unicity (wadi al-ahadiyya) in this Night through the Trusted Secret (bi!l-sirr al-wafa), I desire to (further) expound that verse (Qur'an 3:87).." 1.

The paragraph in which these lines occur is, unfortunately, obscure. It appears that Baha'u'llah expresses his desire to explain Qur'an 3: 87 (still further -- to Mīrzā Kamal al-Dīn Naraqī) despite his spiritual withdrawal (to the celestial realms) in the light of his being oppressed by his fellow Babis. In the Bab's writings the genitive expression wadl al-ahadiyya is indicative of the Sinaitic heights in which the pre-eternal covenant was made and the celestial sphere which is the mystic retreat of exalted beings (i.e. the Hidden Imam. the Bab) who represent God. As the "Ant of Servitude" Baha'u'llah has inwardly withdrawn into this heavenly realm. This during the "Night" (= the period following the Bab's martyrdom?) "through" /"in"/ or "with" the " Trusted Secret", "Faithful Mystery", "Interior Loyalty", "Inwardly " Heartfelt Loyalty " [or the like] ?). The implication Loyal One" or may be that during a period of spiritual darkness (= "Night") Baha'u'll--an's mystic withdrawal is an expression of his inner loyalty to the Bab (who exists in the celestial realm). On the other hand the phrase al-sirr al-wafa might allude to the person of the Bab himself or that sphere which is expressive of his (the Bab's) continuing to be the focal centre of inspiration; one mystically faithful with respect to

^{1.} Text in Ma'ida-yi Asmani, Vol.4. p. 274.

continuing to guide leading Babis.

Only a detailed study of the terms used in the opening line of the Rashh-i CAma' as they occur in Babī-Bahā'ī scripture will serve clarify its meaning — though it should be borne in mind that there is always the danger of reading too much into an essentially poetical work.

It may be that the expressions rashh-i cama and sirr-i wafa (in line 1) are indicative of the Bab as the celestial source of divine inspiration and guidance; the one who, subsequent to his martyrdom (1850) existed in the exalted heavenly realm or t cloud of unknow--ing' (cama') and is inwardly faithful (wafa') in terms of being a source of guidance. Certain Babī-Bahā'ī texts-- including Mīrza Yahya's early writings-- associate cama' with the person or whereabouts of, for example, the Hidden (and expected 12th) Imam. Imam Husayn the Dhikr/ the Bab and leading Babīs including Bahā'u'llah. 1: in many such texts is also used in connection with the sphere of trans--cendent realities, the sphere of the 'Sinaitic mysteries' or that heavenly realm where the primordial divine theophany took place and the pre-eternal covenant was made. Sirr-i wafat, if it is not an allusion to the person of the Bab, could be indicative of the secret of that sphere in which God or exalted beings are faithful to or mindful of the primordial covenant regarding the truth of Babism or the person of Baha'u'llah. 2. Perhaps then, the second hemistich of the first line of

^{1.} See, for some details, the Appendix below.

^{2.} In his (Musibāt-i) Hurufat-i Callīn ([† The Calamities of] The Exalted Letters (mid-late Baghdad period, c. 1857-8?) Bahā'u'llāh speaks of the adverse effect his sufferings had upon "melodies of fidelity" (naghamāt al-wafā') uttered by the "Dove of the Command" (warqā' al-amr), (see Adcīvyih-i Hadrat-i Mahbūb [Germany 1980], p. 229). At the beginning of his difficult '77th Persian Hidden Word' (See Shoghi Effendi [trans.] The Hidden Words [London 1975], pp.48-9; text in Adcīvyih, pp.470-2) there is reference to the "beauty of the immortal Being" (jamāl haykal-i baqā'= Bahā'u*llāh himself?) repairing from the "emerald height of fidelity" (caqabh-i zumurradī-yi wafā') unto the region of the Sadrat al-Muntaha or Lote-Tree of the Extremity (which exists in the all-highest Paradise) where he weeps in the presence of the exalted beings. This on account of the fact that he waited expectant on the "hill of faithfulness" (caqabih-i wafā') but did not inhale the "fragrance of fidelity" (rā'ihih-i wafā') from them that dwell on earth" (ahl-i ard). Written in about 1857 this 'Hidden Word' almost certainly has to do with Bahā'u'llāh's disillusionment with his fellow Babīs (and contemporaries in general) and his claims and role in his attempts to regenerate them. His being on the "emerald height of fidelity" or expectantly waiting on the "hill

the <u>Rashh-i</u> CAma' indicates that Baha'u'llah's revealing verses is a sign of the truth of the primordial covenant regarding divine guid-ance.

In this line Baha'u'llah apparently alludes to his inspired verses as a gentle breeze or zephyr (bad-i saba) out of which the fragrance of the "Musk of Cathay" (mishk-i khata) had wafted. The English word musk (derived from the Persian mishk/ mushk) denotes an odoriferous resin obtained from the male musk-deer or the scent derived therefrom. Cathay (khata) describes that region in China from which high quality musk was obtained. In classical Persian poetry the "Divine Beloved" is commonly pictured as a beautiful girl or maiden with musk-scented hair. In his Halih Halih Ya Bisharat Baha'u'llah speaks of the "Maid of Eternity" (hur-i baqa) appearing with "musky tresses" (gīsu-yi mishk--In). 1. Here it is from or on account of his "Ringlet" (jacdih) that a perfumed or sweet-scented breeze is diffused. He, in other words, repres--ents himself as a beautiful or divine maiden worthy of spiritual love. imagery is not uncommon in Baha'u'llah's poetical writ-Such sensual -ings.

of faithfulness" probably indicates his mystically dwelling in that sphere where a pre-eternal covenant was made regarding his person and which his contemporaries had forgotton—they did not turn to him; Baha'—u'llāh did not inhale the "fragrance of fidelity" to his person from those around him. The time however, as the latter half of this abstruse text indicates, had not arrived for the full disclosure of his claims. (cf. the letters of 'Abdu'l-Bahā' cited in Ishraq Khavari (Ed) Ma'ida-yi Asmanī Vol. 1. [n.p. (Tehran)128 Badī']pp.56-7;Vol.2. [n.p. (Tehran) 129 Badī'] pp.36-7 —it is explained that the phrase "emerald height of fidelity" in the technical terminology of Shaykh Ahmad and the Bab indicates the "world of the [Divine] Decree" ('alam al-qadr'), a station or realm (maqām') very difficult to attain [see Vol.1.p.57 — this expl—anation makes sense inasmuch as emerald is the third of the four col—ours mentioned in the Bab's writings (details cannot be given here) and qadr the third of the seven 'Causes of Creation' (see for example Sahifa yi— 'Addiyya [n.p. n.d.],p.16)]). In the light of the foregoing it should also be noted that the genitive Expression "atmosphere of fidelity" (hawā' al-wafā') occurs in the Arabic section of Bahā'u'llāh's 'Tablet of the Holy Mariner' (Lawh-i Mallāh al-Quds, 1863. [Text in Ishraq Khāvarī (Ed) Mā'ida-yi Āsmanī, 'Vol.4 [n.p. (Tehran)129 Badī'],p.335f [See p.337]).

^{1. &}lt;u>Halih..Ya Bisharat</u> line 4. For the text and my translation of this exquisite poem see <u>Baha'i Studies Bulletin</u> Vol.2.No.3. p.105f. cf. also the 2nd line of the poem of Bahā'u'llāh printed in Ishraq Khavarī (Ed) <u>Ma'ida-yi Asmanī</u>, Vol.4. p.176f.

- One" (= Baha'u'llah ?) that the "Sun of Oppulence" (= the reality of Baha'u'llah's self-disclosure ?) has arisen. It is on account of or from "Our Face" (= Baha'u'llah) that the "Mystery of Reality" (sirr-i haqiqat) is revealed. The genitive expression sirr-i haqiqat probably derives from the Hadīth Kumayl—the record of a conversation which allegedly took place between Imam CAlī (d. 661 A.D.) and Kumayl ibn Zīyad about the mystery of al-haqīqa (= "absolute truth" or "essential reality").
- [4] In the first hemistich of this line Baha'u'llah probably represents himself as one of the waves (sing. mauj = wave, billow, surging) of the eschatological "meeting"([with God] liga [Allah]) spoken of in the Qurtan and interpreted by the Bab in terms of the "meeting" with himself (see for example Qur'an 13:2 and Dala'il-i Sab a [Persian n.p. n.d.],p.3lff and 57). In Babi-Baha'i theology the "meeting with God" is understood to mean attaining the presence of his Divine Manif--estation . To attain the presence of Baha'u'llah is to experience the "meeting with God". In view of this the " Sea of Purity" (bahr-i safa') has cried out (karda khurush -- or raised a shout in announ--cement of this means of attaining the "meeting with God"?). In place of karda khurush (so MA.Vol.4) INBA (MS) Vol.36 (see above) has " has been made manifest". If this is the correct reading karda zuhur. the implication would be that the "Sea of Purity" (bahr-i safa') repres--ents Baha'u'llah whose presence is an expression, of the Meeting with God (mauj-i liqa'): the first hemistich of line 4 might thus be translated;
 - "Out of [or from] the Wave of the Meeting [with God] the Ocean of Purity [= Baha'u'llah ?] hath been manifested."

 The second hemistich of line 4 probably indicates that on account of Baha'u'llah's rapture (az jadbih ma; cf. line 1) the "Precious Favour" (turfa-i cata' --of the "meeting with God through him ?) is available.

Though the text is unclear it may be that INBA.MS., has the reading:
"On account of [or from] the Rapture of [the one represented by the letter] ha' this Precious Favour raineth dewn (عنبه المنبة)).

If this is the case it may be that Baha'u'llah is representing himself or the Bab as the letter (= the first letter of (= the is")

indicative of Divinity) whose rapture is related to the appearance of the "Precious Favour" (see also on lines 5,7,9 and 13).

[5] In the first hemistich of this line Bahā'u'llāh probably represents himself as the "Rose" (gull) at whose sight delight of the "Wine" (mul) of epiritual intoxication derives its potency. In hie Lawh-i Gull-i Macnawī ('Tablet of the Ideal Rose' c. 1865-6) similar imag-ery is used—Bahā'u'llāh is pictured as the 'Ideal Rose' in the 'Divine Ridwan' to whom the 'nightingales' (= the Babīe) should turn (see AQA.Vol.4. pp. 336-8).

- 1) Ra', being the first letter of , is indicative of the "[Holy] Spirit" (ruh --as an abstract reality) or a leading Babi with this title.
- 2) Ra', being the first letter of () (= Rabb = "Iord"), might indicate the person of the Bab () and have the same abjad numerical value [202] cf. the Bab's Letter to Muhammad Shah in INBA [MS] Vol. 64. [pp.103-126], p.110) it is less likely that another leading Babi, such as Quddus (whose name also = 202) is intended though Baha'u'llah might be alluding to himself.
- Ra', being the first letter of (= Ra'Is= "Chief"), is an allusion to Shaykh Ahmad al-Aheā'I's interpretation of the (und-erstood to be an inverted letter waw [] with an 'extended tail') element in certain Shīcī forms of the "greatest name" (of God; i.e. ** () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () | () |

^{1.} For some details and references see D.MacEoin, Some Baha'l and Shaykhi Interpretations of the 'Mystery of Reversal' in Baha'l Studies Bulletin, Vol.1. No.1. (Newcastle upon Tyne June 1982), p.llff;)In a number of his writings Baha'u'llah has referred to the sirr al-tankīs li-ramz al-ra'is.

This might at first sight seem a somewhat unlikely suggestion but it must be borne in mind that -: a) Shaykh Ahmad's description of in the Shicl greatest name diagram as the sirr the al-tankis li-ramz al-rais was understood by Baha'u'llah (in his later writings) to allude to his own advent and was related (by Shaykh Ahmad himself as well as Baha writers) to the commencement of the dispensation of the Qa'im (the Bab); b) Baha'u'llah appar--ently represents himself as "this Sweet Cipher" (In ramz-i malih) -- the word ramz ("cipher") being in genitive relationship with ratis (= "chief") in Shaykh Ahmad's statement; c) In line with Shaykh Ahmad's relating the sirr al-tankIs li-ramz al-ra'Is with successive cyclas of divine disclosure and the advent of the Qa'im lines 6-9 (those following line 5) of the Rashh-i CAma are oriented around the theme of the new cycle of fulfillment; d) If - (= " Rapture of Ha'") is the (= "Joyful Song of Ra" ") correct reading in line 4 then " Sweet Cipher") would parallel each (cf.the expression other and might be taken to indicate the letters =) which together spell (c.f. lines 7 & 8).

If the third of the three proposed explanations of ra' is correct—
it would seem to me to be likely—then it may be deduced that Baha'u'llah
is alluding to himself as the "Cipher" (ramz) of the "Chief" (ra'is

= the Bab? or God?) whose divine commission is related to the "mystery
of inversion" (sirr al-tankis) understood to be indicative of a new phase
in the Babi dispensation. Alternatively Baha'u'llah may be representing
himself as the "Chief" (ra'is > ra') whose "joyful song" (revealing
verses?) is expressive of the "sweet eigher" (ramz-i malih) of his
secret epiphanic status.

In the first hemistich of this line Baha'u'llah mentions the enchatological Trumpet Blast (nagra' naguri) and the anticipated "Celestial Rapture" (jadhba' lahuti = the rejoicing in the highest heavenly realm as a result of the eschatological disclosure?) which, we learn from the second hemist--ich, both rain down or are heard (?) as a single blast (nafkha— or breath) from the "firmament of Heaven" (jaww al-sama'). As a result of the arrivof the Babi dispensation and/or (?) the new claims of Baha'u'llah the eschat--ological consummation is being announced in the heavenly realms.

^{1.} Perhaps worth noting is the fact that the Bab refers to himself in the XCI st sura of the Qayyum al-Asma'as the "Elevated Cipher" (ramz al-rafīc).

That "The Stunning Trump", "Trumpet Blast", "Blow on the Trumpet", or the like, is the sense of قرر القرري may be deduced from Qur'an 74:8 where we read:

"And when the Trumpet is sounded"

It is only in this Qur'anic verse that <u>naqur</u> (= Trumpet, Bugle) and the passive verbal form <u>nuqira</u> (= ' to be sounded, blown into'; from the same Arabic root [NQR]) occur. Elsewhere in the Qur'an other Arabic terms are used to indicate the eschatological Trumpet (most often <u>sur</u> × 11) or 'Trumpet Blasts' which herald the onset of the last "Hour", the resurrection, assembling, judgement and meeting with God, 1. In the genitive expression is the governing verbal noun is probably to be read in (nagra) and underetood to mean (lit.) the blowing (in the Trumpet; <u>nagra' naguri</u>).

In certain writings of the Bab and in a great many of the (later) writings of Bahā'u'llāh there are references to the motif of the eschatological trumpet blast(s)— which is rooted in Jewish and Christan apocalyptic literature. ² In his <u>Sahifa-vi ^CAdlivva</u> for example, the Bab, in the course of mentioning various signe indicative of the onset of the 'last days', mentions that, ".. the Trumpet hath been sounded in the Land of Manifestation (<u>nugira al-naqur fi ard al-zuh</u>—ur)". ³ Bahā'u'llāh has interpreted the various Qur'ānic texts that mention 'Trumpet Blasts' in the light of the advent of the Bab and his own person, mission and revelation. In his <u>Surat al-Ahsab</u> (c. 1864), for example, he writes:

Say: By God! The greatest Trump (sur al-akbar) hath been made manifest in this Trumpet (al-naour) which, in very truth, hath cried out. It hath been sounded (nugira) and will cry out between the heavens and the earth with the moet elevated shout.." 4.

Baha'u'llah, ae noted, speaks of the "Stunning Trump" and the "Cel-estial Rapture" as both being heard as a single "blast" or "breath"

^{1.} See Qur'an 6:73, 18:99, 20;102, 23:103,27:89, 36:51, 50:19,69:13, 78:18 and 39:68 (= twin 'trumpet blasts').

^{2.} Refer for example, Isaiah 27:13, Zech 9:14, Targ.Ps.Jon Num 23:21; 1 Thees 4:16, I Cor 15:52, Rev 8-11, Matt 24:31.

^{3.} Sahifa-yi CAdliyya (n.p.[Tehran] n.d.),p.4.

^{4.} Surat al-Ahsab in AQA.Vol.4.p.ll. Such passages could be greatly multiplied. There are at least 50-100 passages in Baha'u'llah's writings in which the motif of the eschatological Trumpet(s) ie utilieed.

or poor.

[7]

in the "Firmament of Heaven" (jaww al-sama'). The expression jaww al-sama' occurs once in the Qur'an (16:81) as that part of the sky in which birds soar motionlees. In Babi-Baha'i scripture jaww (= 'firmament', 'air', 'atmosphere', 'sky') is frequently used in connection with the hisrarchy of celestial or metaphyeical realms. As the governing noun in a variety of genitive expressione it is quite common in the writings of the Bab. 1.

In the first hemietich of this line Baha'u'llah expresses the thought that a account of his "Visage" (chahra (Per.)= [alternatively], 'face', 'countenance', 'mein') or in visw of the existence of the Babi commun--ity a new "diepensation" (dawr [alternatively], 'time', 'age', 'cycle' 'era') of Divine dieclosure has commenced; that of "I am He" (Arab. ana huwa). The utterance " I am He" is indicative of the claim "I am God" or "I am Divine". In view of the Babi conviction that the appearance of the Bab inaugurated the cycle of the eschatological advent of Divinity certain , like the Bab, claimed Divinity -- not, it seems, absolute iden-Babis -tity with the transcendent and unknowable Godhead but "secondary Divinity". Quddus, Tahira, Mīrzā Yabyā and other leading Babis claimed godhood and lordship and were addressed by the Bab as if they were the (nafs) "essence" (dhat) and being" (kaynuniyya) of the Godhead. That this was the case may, among many other sourcee, be gathered from Baha'u'llah's Lawh-i Sarraj (c. 1867). In this lengthy Persian treatise Baha'u'llah at one point argues that the cycle of prophethood (nubuwwa) ended in the " year sixty" (= 1260 AH= 1844 AD) when the Babi cycle began. He states that this year marked the " commencement of the epiphany of God" (awwal zuhur Allah). 2. Countering the leadership role and preeminence claimed by Mirza Yahya he quotes a number of pass ages from the Bab's writings in which leading Babis are epoken of in highly exalted terms. He ststss that "Divinity" (uluhiyya) and "Lordship " (rububiyya), described as the " greatest of stations" (aczam-i magamat), were beetowed by the Bab " on any individual he deeir--ed" (bi-har nafsīkih iradih). 3.

The words "I am He" () and "He is He" () in lime 7 of the Rashh-i CAma! are derived from certain ShICT traditions (ahadīth)

^{1.} See for example, Qayyum al-Asma' (Browne Coll.MS Or F. N.); LXXVII.fol.135a; LXXXIV.fol.145b; LXXXVI.fol.150b; XC.fol.158b; CIX.fol.195a.

^{2.} Refer Lawh-i Sarraj in Ma'ida-yi Asmani Vol.7. p.69.

^{3.} Refer, ibid., p. 64.

originally expressive of the exalted statue or divinity of the Prophet Muhammad and the Imame. One such tradition, quoted by Baha'u'llah in his Jawahir al-Asrar (late 1850's) reads:

اناهو وهو انا الا الموهو هو و انا انا

"I, verily, am He[God] and He[God] is I [Myeelf] except that He ie He [Himeelf] and I am I [Myeelf]." 1.

Similar traditions are quoted elsewhere in hie writings:

انا هو ر هو انا "I am He[God] Himself and He[God] is I Myeelf" 2.

لناسع الله حالات نحن فيها هو وهو نحق و هو هو ونحن نحن

" Manifold are Our relationships with God. At one time We are He Himself, and He ie We Ourself. At another He is He and We are We." 3.

Expressions derived from these traditions are quite common in the writings of the Bab and Baha'u'llah.In Baha'u'llah's Lawh-i Kull al-Tacam (1854) the word "food" (tacam) is given a variety of eeoteric interpretations relative to the well-known hierarchy of metaphysical realms ([Hahut] Lahut, Jabarut, Malakut and Nasut). In the realm of Lahut the "Paradiee of Endless Duration", "food" is equated with the "station" (magam) of "He is He.. (.. ,)) which is the sphere of (the claim of) identity with God beyond duality. In that of Jabarut, the "Paradise of the Divine Uniqueness", it is aesociated with the "station" (magam) of " Thou are He and He is Thou" انت هو و خو انت) which is the sphere of (the claim to)distinct Divinity. In the light of such texts it may be deduced that the phraces "I am He" and "He is He" in the Rashh-i CAma" are indicative of the exalted claims made by leading Babis -- or Baha'u'llah in particular -- in the light of the commencement of a new phase in the Babi cycle of tha epiphany

^{1.} Jawahir al-Asrar in AQA.Vol.3.,p.35.

^{2.} Hadīth cited, Bahā'u'llāh Kitāb-i Īgān (NSA of Bahā'is of Germany 1980).p.75.

^{3.} Utterance attributed to the Prophet Muhammad in Bahā'u'llāh'e Lawh-i Shaykh (n.p. n.d.),p.52.

^{4.} Refer, Lawh-i Kull al-Ta^cam in MA.vol.4. p.265ff. For further details and a complete translation of the Lawh-i Kull al-Ta^cam see my article in Bahá'í Studies Bulletin, Vol. 3 Nó. 1 pp.

of Divinity.

In the second hemistich of line 7 the word occurs in conn-ection with the realization of the "cycle" (kawr) of "He is He".

Pointed nafha it means a "breeze", "gust", "breath" or "(perfumed)

fragrance" (or the like). If this reading is correct (see below)nafkha (= "blow", "puff, "breath", "blast"; cf. line 6) would be
a possibility—it probably expresses a breathing or blowing into the
eschatological Trumpet which heralds the oneet of the cycle of "He ie
He".Hence the translation "On account of Our [Trumpet] Blaet.." (for,

instead of instead instead, "the Overflowing of the letter instead in it is the correct reading, as may well be the case, then the second hemietich of line 7 should be translated:

"On account of the Overflowing of [the letter] Ba' the cycle of "He is He" poureth forth".

In Babi-Baha'i theology the letter Ba' (____ = the first letter of the basmala) is given a wide range of meanings. It is often, for example, symbolic of the locus of being from which cosmological realities and prophetic cycles originate. In the above version of line 7 of the Rashh-i Ama' it may be indicative of the person of the Bab from whom epiritual forces emanate or "overflow" such that the cycle of the claim to Divinity beyond duality is extended through Baha'u'llah and/or other leading Babis.

Also worth noting in connection with 7th line of the Rashh-i Ama (cf. also lines 6 and 9) is the fact that there may be allusion to an Islamic tradition to the effect that the expected Qa'im would utter a "Word" which would cause those of high rank in the Shīcī hierarchy to "flee in consternation" (cf. Qur'an 80:33f;101:1ff,etc.). In a number of his writings of the Akka' period (1868-92 — and possibly earlier) Baha'u'llah has identified this "Word" with the declaration "I am He [God]"(ab ii) uttered by himself in place of "He is God" (ab ii) and a sign of the greatness of the Babī-Bahā'ī cycle which is the "Day of God".

^{1.} See Nabil-i Zarandī [Trans. Shoghi Effendi], The Dawn-Breakers (London 1953), pp.10-11. cf. A. Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Baha u'llah, Vol.1. (Oxford 1974), p.46.

^{2.} See the passage from a Tablet of Baha'u'llah quoted in English translation in Tablete of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i World Centre, Haifa 1978),pp.257-9.

- [8] Here Baha'u'llah first states that from the "Goblet of the Heart" (kasa ' dil) the " Kawthar of Reality" (kawthar-i haqq) has been made manifest. The meaning is probably that the spring or fount of real truth wells out from the centre of his being. The word Kawthar means " abundance" (see Qur'an 108:1). In Islamic literatures it is usually understood to signify a Fountain which gushes forth in Paradise. It occurs quite frequently in Babi-Baha'i scripture.In his Tafsir Surat al-Kawthar (Commentary on Qurtan sura 108) the Bab, apart from alloting a variety of meaning to the individual letters which make up this word, identifies kawthar with the Frophet Muhammad, Imam CAll, Fatima, Hasan, Husayn and the other Shīcī Imams, in the light of its signifying the "Water of Life" (ma' al-haiwan) which flows into and sustains inner human realities. 1. Apart from the Rashh-i CAmat there are a good many other writings of Baha'u'llah in which the word Kawthar is used in the sense of his own person or the Baha'I revelation. In for example his 'Tablet to the Pope (Pius IXth; c.1869) Baba'u'llah writes:
 - "O Pope! Rend the veils asunder. He who is the Lord of Lords [Bahā'u'llāh] is come. On his right hand floweth the Kawthar of grace (kawthar al-fadl) and on his left the Salsabil of justice (salsabil al-cadl).."

As noted, the word <u>Kawthar</u> is in genitive relationship with <u>hadd</u> which could be translated in a variety of ways: "God", "Absolute Truth", or "Reality", etc. It is very frequently used in Babī-Bahā'ī scripture though it is not always clear how it is best translated. The first section of Bahā'u'llāh's <u>Lawh-i Hadd</u> (c. 1860-63?) provides good examples of the <u>dhikr</u> type (repetitive) use of this important term. 3. Whatever the exact sense of <u>Kawthar-i Hadd</u> it is certainly indicative of the 'stream of spiritual reality' that flows out of the heart of Bahā'u'llāh (or the Bābī Cause).

^{1.} Refer, Tafsir Surat al-Kawthar (Browne Coll. MS Or F. 10[7]), fols.16(b)ff; 34(b)ff; 96ff.Full details cannot be given here.

^{2.} Text in Alwah-i nazilah-yi khitab bi Muluk wa Ru'asa-yi ard (Tehran 124 Badic), pp.73-4; trans. (adapted) Shoghi Effendi, (in) The Promised Day is Come (Wilmette 1980), p.31.

^{3.} The Lawh-i Hagg is published in Ishraq Khavarī's Ganj-i Shayigan (Tehran 123 Badī'), pp.37-40. It should also be noted that both the Bab and Baha'u'llah claimed to be the manifestation of al-hagg. (See for example, Qayyum al-Asma LVII (fol.97), Lawh-i Az Bagh-i Illahi (MS [where Baha'u'llah at one point claims: to have appeared with the "Trumpet of 'I am al-Hagg' (ba sūr-i ana al-hagg)]).

The exact sense of the second hemistich of line 8 is not clear to me. "In may, as indicated in the translation, signify something like the "Vermilion Lips of Bahā'", the "Ruby[Rednese] of Bahā'" or the "Red Wine of Bahā' "The translation "Glorious Ruby" (—as a gem, lipe or wine) ie also possible. In view of the occurance of "Sāghar-i shahd/shuhd= cup of honey) it seems most likely that ie indicative of Bahā'u'llāh's "Vermilion Lips". Thie inasmuch as the sweet saliva of prophets and Imams was believed to be the vehicle for the transmiseion of divine grace. It appears then, that in the second hemistich of line 8, Bahā'u'llāh pictures himself as a beautiful divine maiden with vermil ion llps from which the honey of spir—itual grace is transmitted. 1.

Of intsrest inthe light of the above is the occurance of in the 4th line of Bahā'u'llāh's Halih Halih Halih Yā Bishārat (late 1862—early 1863). At the beginning of this Persian poem, which is expressive of Bahā'u'llāhsclaim to leadership of the Bābī community and intimate communion with God through a celestial maiden (hūr = his transcendent self?), the "Maid of Eternity" (hūr-i baqā') is pictured as appearing with "harp and song", "crimson goblet", "amorous glances", " the taste of annihilation", "dance and song" and (line 4) " with mucky treeses and beautiful vermilion lips "(lacl-i namakīn) probably meane 'beautiful' (lit. 'ealty') it is likely that it is descriptive of the lips of the divine maiden.

^{1.} Worth noting in connection with the imagery alluded to in the 8th line of the Rashh-i CAma' ie the following extract from a Tablet of Baha'u'llah to his daughter Bahiyya Khānum (late CAkkā period?): "She hath..tasted the sweet savours of My holy, My wonderous pleasure [lit.?My holy, My wonderous saliva (rudabi)?]. At one time We gave her to drink from My honeyed Mouth, at another caused her to partake of My mighty, My luminous Kawthar.." (text and trans. in BahiyyihKhānum [Haifa 1982], p. v and [text facing] p.93).cf. also, L. Veccia Vaglieri, Husayn..in Enc.lelam Vol. III., p. 612; M. Ayoub, Redemptive Suffering in Išlam (The Hague 1978), p.75f.

^{2.} On the Halih Halih. Ya Bisharat see my article (text included) in Baha'i Studies Bulletin, Vol.2. No. 3 (Dec. 1983), pp.105-110.

In the first hemistich of the 7th line of another poetical work of Bahā'u'llāh (untitled and printed in MA.Vol.4.pp.188-192-see p. 188) of the Baghdad period (?) the (apparently) beautiful verm-il'ion lips" (lacl-i namakīnish) are compared to choice red rubies obtained from Central Asia (yaqut-i badakhshan).

[[] _ insert: of the Divine Maiden (hur)].

[9] The meaning of the first hemistich of thie line seems clear enough. It is indicated that the eschatological "Day of God" (yaum-i khudā) spoken of in the Qur'ān (as well as the Bible) has been "fully realised" (shud kāmil; alternatively, "perfected", "completed")—INBA.MS, it should be noted has "= " made manifest", "appeared". Thie on account of the which may be translated "the effulgence (or, eplendour/ lustre /brilliance) of the Lord and allude to the ecchatological advent of Divinity in terms of the epiphany of the Bāb or (more likely) Bahā'u'llāh him—self.It is poseible that Bahā'u'llāh, in view of hie mystical exp—eriencee and leading role within the Bābī community, represents him—self as the locue of the perfection of the "Day of God" inaugurated by the Bāb.

Frequent reference to the realization of the "Day of God" is made in the later writings of Bahā'u'llāh. It is identified with the BābI-Bahā'ī cycle or diepeneation in the light of his manifestation (and that of the Bāb) in the station of "Divinity" and "Lordship". In, for example, a letter addressed to Āqā Mīrzā Aesad Allāh Nūrī (late CAkkā period) Bahā'u'llāh writes:

"After the announcement of this blessed "Word" [= " I, verily, am God, no god is there except Me."] the temples of blasph-emy (havakil-i shirk) were distinguished from the temples of the people of the Divine Unity (havakil ahl-i tawhid. The Day of the manifestation of this blessed "Word" hath been named the "Day of God". " 1.

The "Day of God" is the "Day" when Baha'u'llah appeared uttering the blessed "Word" ", "I, verily am God.." which served to distinguish those who truly acknowledgedhie Divinity and those who rejected him.

The second hemistich of line 9 could be understood in a variety of ways. What exactly the phrase .. b .. means ie not clear.

probably means 'eound/cry (of regret?'hence the translation 'lament).

"Ta'" could eignify Tehran () being its first letter) as in a good many later writings of Baha'u'llah, the person of Baha'u'llah himself () = abjad 9 like (). [f = 1]) or even the Babi poetess Tahira () = the first letter of this title) to mention the most likely poss-

^{1.} The text of this interesting medium length Persian tablet of Bahā'u'--llāh is contained in an unpublished uncatalogued MS (photocopy in my possession).

-bilities.

Since it was in the Siyāh Chāl in Tehran that the Rashh-i CAmā' was composed it would seen likely that signifies the "lament of Tshran". This could indicats-: a) the lament of Tehran personified, b) the lament of those Bābīs imprisoned with Bahā'u'llāh in Tehran or c) the lament of Bahā'u'llāh himself as one imprisoned in Tehran. The latter possibility (c) may well be the right one. If so the second hemistich of line 9 might be understood to eignify that Bahā'u'llāh 's crying out in the Siyāh Chāl dungeon in Tehran is an expression of the "New Beauty" (naghz -i hadīth) of his person or power to reveal verses; such might also be the meaning if "Tā'" is used as a cipher for Bahā'. Less likely would be the suggestion that Bahā'u'llāh is representing himself as the "New Beauty" or leader of the Bābis (of Tshran) in view of Tāhira's (= "Tā') recent or immin—ent execution (in Tehran c. late 1852).

of the Rashh-i CAma consist of genitive expressions followed by the Persian imperative bin = "Observe!", "Behold!", "See thou!" .Whils in lines 1-9 Baha'u'llah relates his status to the realization of eschatological realities and events in lines 10-18 (to generalize) has announces his high rank. It could be argued that the major theme of the Rashh-i CAma'is that of God's continuing to guide the Babi community through the person of Baha'u'llah. Expected sechatological events have come to pass such that divine guidance continues to flow down from the heavenly realm.

"Observe the Glorious Overflowing" (discounty), tafh-i baha'i bin) tafh-i baha'i bin baha'i bin) tafh-i baha'i bin ba

The uss of the verbal nouns teff (= "Overflowing") and rash (= "Sprinkling") hars and in line 19 is doubtless rooted in their occur-ance in the Hadith Kumayl (cf. above). At one point in certain versions of this tradition Kumayl ibn Ziyad asks Imam Cali what constitutes alhadida (= "absolute reality"). In response to his question the Imam
initially asks Kumayl what he has got to do with al-hadidat that he should

^{*} i.e. 'Observe what sprinklsth down from the Cloud of Unknowing'.

Thue, in the light of what is said in the Hadīth Kumayl, the lOth line of the Rashh-i CAma*, may be said to represent Bahā*u*llāh as the one from whomthe fulkness of divine knowledge rains down. On account of his revealing verses (= the "Melody of God" lahn-i khudā) the "Glorious Overflowing" and " Beclouded Sprinkling" both find simultaneous realization.

- is here translated "Eternal Moon" and "Prietine Ascendent[Sun]". If thie translation of these genitive expressions is correct Baha'u'llah probably indicates that both the "Sun" of prophethood and the "Moon" of guardianship shine forth from his interior being. He is the "Pure Breast" (? , sadr-i mumarrad; alternatively, the 'Purified/ Clear/Tranelucent/ Lustrous/Pellucid Breast/Heart or Bosom of.

 Qur'an 27:44 [the only occurance of the passive participle mumarrad]) which poure forth spiritual grace from (his seat on or the one seated on) the "Elevated Throne" (carsh-i cala') 3.
- I have translated تَعَلَّمُ "Bleesed Palm-Tree" and الماريّ "Melody of the Dove". In describing himself as a "Palm-Tree" Bahā'u'llāh is probab-ly alluding to Qur'ān 19:23ff (cf. Qur'ān 13:28) where it is narrated that the Virgin Mary retired to a distant place and gave birth to Jesus near a palm-tree (nakhla) which subsequently (miraculously) provided her with ripe dates (cf. Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew XX.lff). The "Blessed Palm-Tree"

^{1.} Text cited from the Bab's <u>Tafsir Surat al-Baqara</u> (Tehran Bahā'ī Archives MS 6014 C),p. 74 (b).

^{2.} cf. Bahā'u'llāhal-Qasīda al-Warqa'iyya line 109 (in MA.Vol.4. p. 207).

^{3.} cf. Baha'u'llah's Lawh-i Nasīr (in Majmuca-yi Alwah-i Mubaraka [Cairo 1920],pp.165-202),p.'196," He [Baha'u'llah] crieth out according to that which the Greatest Spirit (ruh al-aczam) uttereth in his purified, most-pristine breast (fi sadrahu al-mumarrad al-asfa') "; Surat al-Haykal in AQA.Vol.4 (pp.268-300), pp.286,287,288.

may be thought of as a symbol of prophethood; the tree of reality which proffers the 'fruit' of spiritual nourishment.

PAINTVEC = CALL In certain Shī^CI traditions (<u>ahadīth</u>) and in the writings of such Sufi thinkers as Ibn al-CArabī (d. 638/1240) the palm-tree (<u>nakhla</u>) is given a variety of esoteric meanings. Created from the surplus clay from which Man/Adam was made and being feminine in Arabic the <u>nakhla</u> is, for the Great <u>Shaykh</u>, symbolic of the Celestial Earth, the Divine Feminine, "Adam's Sister", the Mystic Eve. In the VIIIth book of his "Meccan Revelations" (<u>Kitāb al-Futuhāt al-Makkiya</u>,), he writes:

"Know that when God created Adam who was the first human organism to be constituted, and when he had established him as the origin and archetype of all human bodies, there remained a surplus of the leaven of the clay. From this surplus God created the palm tree, so that this plant [nakhla, palm tree being feminine,] is Adam'e sister; for us therefore it is like an aunt on our father's side. In theology it is so described and is compared to the faithful believer. No other plant bears within it such extraordinary secrets as are hidden in this one..." 1.

Both the Bab and Baha'u'llah frequently refer to themselves as a "Dove" (warqa'; or [female] pigeon); that is, an heavenly bird that cope on the branches of the celestial Tree (i.e. reveals heavenly verses). The invitation to 'Behold the Melody of the Dove!' is an invitation to experience the verses revealed by Baha'u'llah.

the second hemistich of line 12 indicates that the revelation of Bahā'u'llāh, the " All-Glorioue Lament , ghunna-yi abhā', the " All-Glorioue Lament [Song]", rains down from the " , lam-jsafā', the "Brilliancy of Purity" (alternatively, 'Glittering/Flashing/ Splendour/ Shining of the Limpidity/Clsarness/ Felicity/ Serenity —it is unlikely that is here indicative of the mountain near Mecca). As the (Arabic) elative of bahā' (= "glory/glorious") abhā' indicates the person of Bahā'—u'llāh er the nature of the "Lament[Song]" which derives from him (could be translated "Lament[Song]" which derives from him (down from that(heavenly) ephere which radiates the "Brilliancy of Purity"(?).

flows

^{1.} Trans. H. Corbin in Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shi'ite Iran | trans > English N. Pearson) (Princeton Univ. Prsss 1977), p.136. For further details on the significance of the palm-tree mentioned in Qur'an 19:23ff see p. 309.fn's 4-5.It ehould also be noted that the Divine Bsloved is pictured as the marvelloue palm-tree in Sufi postry (cf. A. Schimmel, The Triumphal Sun, [London& the Hague 1980], p.88).

[13] Bahā'u'llāh here represents himself as communicating the "Iraqi Melody" (āhang-i ciraqī) and the "Hijazi Tambourine" (or Drumbeat daff-i hijazī); the heavenly melody and rhythm the like of which was produced in, belongs to, or is expressive of. Iraq and the Hijaz (= Ottoman Iraq [ciraq-i ajam + ciraq-i carab] and Mecca Medina and the adjacent territoriee). His person and revelation communicate the highest good symbolized by the most blessed Ielāmic regions.

In several of his later writings Bahā'u'llāh, in various ways, describes himself as 'Hijazi' and 'Iraqi'. With his exile to Iraq (Baghdad) such ways of referring to himself took on a concrete dimension. In his Lawh-i Madinat al-TawhId (late Baghdad period) he, at one point writee:

"Hearken [on this] Day [in which] the [eschatological] Caller (al-munad) crieth out in the midst of the immortal realm and the Dove of Hijaz [= Baha'u'llah] warbleth in the region of Iraq (fi shatr al-ciraq) summoning all unto concord..." 2.

In the 17th line of his <u>Halih Halih Halih Yā Bishārat</u> (1862-3), possibly alluding to his exile from Iran to Iraq, Bahā'u'llāh states:

"This Hijazi Falcon came with CIraqi accents from the forearm of the Shah (or King)." 3.

In the Persian section of his <u>Lawn-i Bulbul al-Firaq</u> ('Tablet of the Nightingale of Separation'; mid 1863 — written at the time of the departure from <u>Baghdad</u> to Constantinople), it may be noted at this point, <u>Bahā'u'llāh</u> reminds his devotees that he had, in his earlier Tablets (<u>alwāh</u>), anticipated that the "Iraqi Bird" (<u>tair-i cirāqī</u>) — Bahā'u'llāh) which sings with the "Melody of Hijaz" (<u>ahāng-i hijāz</u>) would hasten on elsewhere or sing out in another accent.(i.e. leave Iraq).

^{1.} The Hijaz was, of course, the scene of the mission of the Prophet Muhammad. Iraq harbours the shrines of Imam CAli (Najaf), Imam Husayn (Karbala), Imam Musa and Imam Muhammad Taqī (Kazimayn) and Imam CAli Naqī and Imam Hasan Askarī (Samarra).

^{2.} Text in Ishraq Khavari (Ed) Ma'ida-yi Asmani, Vol. 4. pp. 326-7.

^{3.} Text in Ishraq Khavarī, Ganj-i Shavigan, p. 34.

^{4.} Text in ibid., p.44. cf. also Bahā'u'llāh, Lawh-i Gull-i Ma^cnawī in AQA.Vol.4.pp.326-8.

In place of دُو مُواري "..Behold the Hijazi Tambourine(Drumbeat)" INBA.MS appears to read رُو مُواري بين , "Behold the Rhythmic Drumbeat!"(reading: daff-i nawā'ī; alternatively 'Melod-ious Tambourine [or the liks]).

The second hemistich of the 13th line of the Rashh-i CAma literally indicates that the y ,jadhba' la (loosely) "Rapture of La" slows down "from" the "Divine Hand" (رُفَّ البِي ,kaff-i illahī [lit. "Divine Palm(of the Hand)]). What exactly is here meant by the العوت is not clear. If the y is a cipher for کریو <u>Lāhūt</u> (cf. line 6) the rapture of heavenly beings might be intended ("La" being the first two letters of Lahut- the celestial realm of the Divine epiphany). It is more likely however, that \ "La" is the Arabic particle of negation which stands at the beginning of the Kalimat al-Will y, La ilana illa'l-lah = "There is no god TawhId. but God" and is indicative of it in rewritten form as the oft-uttered Babi proclamation of Divinity, .. La ilaha illa ana = " No god is there except Me " -- a claim made countlese timee by the B ab(frequently in the Qayyum al-Asma' for example) as well as Baha'u'llah (and indeed other leading Bable). That some such claim to Divinity is alluded to here might be said to be confirmed by the use of the phraes, كفُّ المري "Divine Hand[Palm]" for فُلُّ , kaff, ie ueed in Baha'u'llah'e writings (ae doubtlese in the Rashh-i CAma here) in order to indicate the Snow-White Hand "of Moses who, on Sinai, heard the declaration of Divinity The motif of the miraculous 'snow-white' (cf. line 16 and the note). palm or hand is Sinaitic ae is that of God's voicing his absolute Divin--ity which ie indicated by "La". Baha'u'llah apparently conflates the white brightness of Moses "palm" with the Sinaitic Fire from which the declaration of Divinity was heard -- mystically speaking the interior being or "heart" of Moses himself, the locue of "Divinity" in exalted Prophets. There is a connection between the 'snow-white' palm' motif and the declar--ation of Divinity. 1.

As far as I am aware the only other use of the particle <u>La</u> (= "No") in Baha'u'llah'e writinge comparable to ite occurance in line 13 of the

^{1.} See further below on line 16. cf. Baha'u'llah, Baz Av Bidih Jamic'(in MA.Vol.4.pp.186-7) line 10 (p.187); Qasida al-Warqa'iyya (in ibid., pp.197-209) line 43 (p.201), Qur'an 20:14.

of the Rashh-i CAma* is in the 11th line of the Halih..Ya
Bisharat:

أيق نعمه جان در تردجانان از بلبل لا امد

"This Song of the Spirit came to the lovers from the Nightingale of "La"." 1.

Baha'u'llah apparently speaks of his coming with the "Song of the Spirit" from the "Nightingale of "La". It may be that he is to be thought of as the "Nightingale of "La" " which utters the "Song of the Spirit" in order to attract the "lovers" (= the Babis) to himself. Since Sinaitic imagery clusters around line ll (see lines 10 and 12) his song may be "No god is there except Me" (or the like) indicated by the use of "La".

Lying behind Baha'u'llah's use of y "La" in the Rashh-i Ama' stand a variety of complex qabbalistic passages in the writings of the Bab. He associated La" with (for example) the kalimat al-tawhīd which lies at the heart of his qabbalistic system and enshrines the alphabetic potencies which are the locus of prophethood—the letter Alif 3. the period Moees spent on Mount Sinai 4. the Christian derivation of the symbol of the cross (seen as an heretical image of God as the third of three") 5. and a host of arcane mysteries surrounding the gematric significances of the letter Lam. Details cannot be gone into here.

ا Lt ie of considerable interest that INBA.MS. reade بُرْبِهُ 'مُّ <u>, jadhba</u> ' <u>thā</u>', "the Rapture of <u>thā</u>' "and not جُرْبِهِ لَا يَّا يَّا لِهُ يَّالِمُ لَا يَّا يَّا لِهُ يَّالِمُ لَا يَّا يَّا لِهُ يَّا لِهُ يَّا لِهُ يَّا لِهُ الْعُلِيمِ لَا يَّا لِهُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَّا لِهُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَّا لِهُ عَلَيْهِ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَّا لِهُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَعْلَمُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَعْلَمُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَعْلَمُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَعْلَمُ عَلَيْهِ لِلْهُ عَلَيْهِ لَا يَعْلَمُ عَلَيْهِ لِمُ يَعْلِمُ لِمُ يَعْلِمُ لِمُ يَعْلِمُ عَلَيْهِ لِمُ يَعْلِمُ لِمُوالِمُ يَعْلِمُ لِمُعْلِمُ عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهُ عَلِيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهُ عَلَيْهِ عَلِي عَلَيْهِ عَلَيْهِ

^{1.} Text from Ishraq Khavari, Ganj-i Shayigan,p.34.

^{2.} The <u>kalimat al-tawhīd</u>, with y contains three different letters — <u>alif</u>, <u>lām</u> and <u>hā'</u>, the <u>lām</u> following the <u>alif</u> (= the source of all the letters) and being followed by <u>hā'</u> (= the temple of prophet—hood)—and also begins with "Lā" (= "No").

^{3 .} Alif, the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, is the gematric primo--genitor (its value is one) of all the other letters. Lam is its primary manifestation in the all-highest realm; cf. the Qur'anic disconnected lettere Alif. Lam. Mim ().

^{4 .} See Qur'an 7:142 and for example, the Bab, Tafsir Surat al-Aer(in INBA.MS.Vol.69), p.41; Tafsir Surat al-Kawthar (Browne Coll:MS. Or.F.10[7]), fol.19(b).

^{5.} For details see my The Bab on the deriviation of the Christian symbol of the Cross (forthcoming).

^{6.} The reader ie referred to the Bab's comments on the letter Lam
(J) of باركزاً, li-rabbika (= "to thy Lord", Qur'an 108:2) and its association with "La" (J) in the Tafsīr Sūrat al-Kawthar.

If this is the correct reading or that of an early (alternative) version of line 13 (second hemistich) of the Rashh-i CAmā' it is most likely an allusion to the leadership role of Mīrzā Yahya (c.1830-1912) Bahā'u'llāh's half-brother — he was generally considered to be the (nominal) leader of the Bābī community after the Bāb's martyrdom in 1850 and was initially supported by Bahā'u'llāh. Yahyā was referred to by the Bāb ae al-thamara = "the Fruit [of the Dispensation of the Bayān]". Since the first letter of thamara is thā' (b') Yahyā used this letter ae a means of eelf-identification. In his early Kitāb al-Wahid (early 1850'e?) he very frequently refers to himself as al-thā'.

Assuming that is no an early reading and does allude to the person of Mīrzā Yahyā the second hemistich of line 13 — which could be translated, "See thou that the Rapture of that raineth down from the Divine Hand [Palm] — might mean—:

- a) Bahā'u'llah acknowledges the leadership role of Yahya whose revealed verses originate in the Sinaitic heights, the "Divine Hand[Palm]".
- b) As the half-brother and (outwardly-in the early 1850's) mouthpiece of Yahya Baha'u'llah alludes to himself as the whoee revealed verses originate in the Sinaitic heights, the Divine Hand [Palm]".
- c) Baha'u'llah expressee hie superiority to Yahya by alluding to himself as the real "Fruit" of the Bayan or the "Divine Hand[Palm]" which is the Sinaitic source of Yahya'e inepiration.

Only further research will suggest which of these possibilities might be correct—assuming of course that $\ddot{\psi}$ is not a late (post-1850's) Azalī interpolation, unlikely though this is, and that $\ddot{\psi}$ is not used in the general sense of themara without there being allusion to Yahyā's person. 2.

- The first two imperative expressions in this line picture Bahā'u'llāh—so it seems— as the "Beified Countenance" (talcat-ilahūtī) and the "God-likeMaiden" (hūrī-yi hāhūtī). The terme lāhūtī and hāhūtī imply that he possesses an exalted status for, in the hierarchy of meta-physical realms, Lāhūt (= the sphere of the Divine theophany) and
 - 1. On the Kitab al-Wahid and the use of that see Appendix.
 - 2. Important in this respect would be the examination of more MSS of the <u>Rashh-i CAma</u>; bearing in mind possible scribal errors, diver--gent readings originating in oral transmission and/or the existence of several recensions of the <u>Rashh-i CAma</u>; originating with Baha; u'--llah himself.

Hanut (= the sphere of the Divine Ipseity; cf. , huwa, "He is[God]" and huwiyya = the Divine Ipseity) are uppermost. In Babī-Bahā'ī lit-erature talcat frequently has the sense of "countenance" (i.e.
face [reflecting the Divine Light]). The talcat-i lahūtī, "Deified Countenance" indicates a celestial visage which reflects the Divine theophany and the huri-yi hahūtī, Tod-like Maiden", a feminine being who represents the Divine Ipseity.

References in Bābī-Bahā'ī scripture to the "Divine Maiden" are rooted in the Qur'ānic mention of the houris (Arabic, hūr), heavenly maidens who are the companions of the blessed. That such feminine beings are present in paradise originally expressed the fact that the celestial abode is that wherein the most intimate human desires are fulfilled. The houris mentioned in the Qur'ān are "...' spotless virgins, amorous, like of age, resembling hidden pearls or ruby and coral, with swelling brea-sts, untouched by men or jinn, who modestly keep their eyes cast down and are enclosed in pavilions.."

In the writings of Bahā'u'llāh divine feminine beings are not infrequently mentioned. Therein they are usually symbolic of spiritual states and perfections. In certain texts a celestial maiden of the houri type personifies the Divine Beloved, the locus of Prophethood or the Holy Spirit as the link between God and His Messengers. Bahā'u'llāh also describes his own spiritual Self as a Divine Maiden.

Having, in line 14 of the Rashh-i CAma' called upon the Babis to observe himself as the "Deified Countenance" and the God-like Maiden", Baha'u'llah announces that the Terrestrial Effulgence" (jilwah-i nasuti) rains down from the "Mystery [or Interior-ity] of the Cloud of Unknowing" (jilwah-i cf. lines 1 and 10). While in the first hemistich he associates himself with the realms of Lahut and Hahut he, in the second, speaks of his manifestation in the sphere of Nasut, the human realm. This in terms of an epiphanic

^{1.} I quote here from Bell and Watt, <u>Introduction to the Qur'an</u> (Edinburgh Univ. Press 1977), p. 162. See Qur'an 44:54;52:20;55:72; 56:23.cf., 37:48;38:52; 55:56-8;56:35f;78:33;2:25;3:15; 4:57.

^{2.} Refer, for example, Baha'u'llah, Qasīda al-Warça'iyya, Lawh-i Hūriyya, Hūr-i CUjab, Halih. Ya Bisharat, Lawh-i Mallah al-Quds. cf. also the Bab, Qayyūm al-Asma' XLIV where there is reference to a vision of a divine maiden (hūriyya).

precipitation from the interiority of the 'Cloud of Unknowing'.

In the first hemistich of this line Bahā'u'llāh picturee himself as the "All-Enduring Face" (,wijha[t]-i bāoī) and the "Visage of the Cupbearer" (chihra-vi eaoī). The words wijha[t] (lit. 'side','part' 'objective: in Bābī-Bahā'ī scripture it has the eenee of wajh= 'visage', 'face','countenance' etc.,) and chihra have the same meaning: 'face', 'countenance', 'visage' or the like. The use of these terms might be taken to suggest that Bahā'u'llāh is alluding to Qur'ān 55:26-7:

كُلْ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانَ وَيَبْقَى وَجُمْ رَبِّلَ ذُو الجُلالِ وَالْكُرَامِ

"All that is upon it [the earth] shall pace away but the Face of thy Lord (wajh rabbika) will ever endure full of majesty and honour."

Though details cannot be gone into allueione to this veree are not uncommon in the writings of the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh. On one level it is interpreted in connection with cyclic prophetology and the realization of the Divine Epiphany. Because the Bābī-Bahā'ī dispensation is that of the eschatological manifestation of God and the final consummation it is the cycle of the "Face of thy Lord" (the Divine Epiphany) when (mystically speaking) "all things" (human limitations) are annihilated. In this kind of context the Bāb, Bahā'u'llāh and other leading Bābīe claimed to be manifestat—ions of the "Face" (wejh).

In a multitude of Sufi texts the sate of fana! (= annihilation of self or the passing away of human limitations) is followed by that of baqa! (= permament abiding 'in God'). 2. In the genitive expression with the passing away of human baqi, Baha'u'llah probably identifies himself as the "Face of God" that endures after the eschatological passing away of human limitations (cf. line 19). He is the chihra-yi saqi, the "Visage of the Cupbearer", who proffers

the wine of spiritual beatitude.

^{1.} See for example, Baha'u'llah, Halih. Ya Bisharat lines 16 and 18 (in Ganj. pp. 34-5- occurs in line 16), Haft Wadi (in AQA.Vol.III.)p. 130; trans. The Seven Valleye and the Four Valleys [Wilmette 1968], p. 37; Untitled Letter in AQA.Vol.6.p. 295f.

^{2.} In Baha'u'llah'e Jawahir al-Asrar (mid-late 1850's) reference is made to the "City of Permamency in God]" (madinat al-baqa) after that of the "City of Annihilation" (madinat al-fana").

القرنياجي What, in the second hemistich of line 15 is meant by zujaji undoubtedly means something is not entirely clear. like 'made of glass/glassy,' 'translucent', 'crystal' 'vitreous'. In Qur'an 24: 35, the "Light Verse", anjajat is used for the "glass" which is like a "brilliant star" (kawkab durri) when the "light" (nur) which symbolizes God shines out from the "lamp" (misbah)in which it is contained. زق .pointed rigg (> ragga i) exprese a condition of servitude, slavery or bondage er, among other things, indicate something 'fine; 'delicate', 'outstretched'; for example, itortoise it itambourine/drum or 'parchment'. 'vellum'. 'book'.'scroll' 'heavenly register', etc.. Pointed rage it often has the same range of meanings though in Babi-Baha'i scripture, most commonly. "[revealed]book, parchment, ecripture or volume" (cf. Qur'an 52:3 - the only Qur'anic occurance of rage, fi rage manshur, ".. in a scroll unfolded..").1. In context ["See thou that the رق زجاجي raineth down from Our Goblet"] one would expect رف زجاجي to signify some kind of clear, limpid, or glasslike liquid. This especially if -delicate or thin in the sense of the beverage (i.e. wine) in the "Goblet " (kuba). As ragg/rugg can mean 'shallow water' فراجي has been translated "Sparkling Draught". Such a translation however, presupposes that the imagery is consistent. An alt--ernative rendering (among others) might be-: " See thou that the Crystal Servitude raineth down from Our Goblet ". This in the light of the Babi-Baha'I interpretation of the light Verse (which cannot be gone into here) and, for Lawh-i Kull al-Ta cam: example, the following words from Baha'u'llah's

And that "food" was allowed for them [the Babīs]. for all who desire to ascend unto the Heaven of Bounty and to drink of the Water of Manifestation from that[or, this] Cup (zujajat, or Glass), the Goblet of Servitude (kub al-ubudiyya) which resembleth naught but a shadow in the land = Bahā'u'llāh?]."

Ae in the Lawh-i Kull al-Ta^cam it may be there there are allueions in the Rashh-i ^cAma, to Baha, u'llah, s initial support of the leadership role of Mirza Yahya. The translation "crystal servitude" might suggest this as indeed a number of other expressions in this cryptic poem. 3.

^{1.} Text in Ma'ida-yi Asmani, Vol.4.p.274.

^{2.} Unlikely though it is رق زجاجى could be translated 'Translucent Scroll' (or the like).

^{3.} It could, for example, be argued that the first hemistich of lines 10-17 (in particular) contain reference to the leadership roles of both Yahyā (first imperative expression) and Bahā u llāh (second imperative expression) though this would very likely be to go too far.

[16] In this line Bahā'u'llāh expresses his role in the light of motifs rooted in the Biblical and Qur'ānic accounts of the mission of Moses. Sinaitic imagery is much utilised in Bābī-Bahā'ī scripture and given a wide range of allegorical and mystical interpretations.

The <u>stish-i musa</u>, "Fire of Mosss" indicates the Sinaitic Fire which, mystically speaking is the fire of Divine Love in the heart of Moses; the locus of the being of Moses in which all earthly limitations are consumed; the fire of the love of God which radiates from the Divine Messengers. In various writ-ings both the Bab and Baha'u'llah claimed to be the reality or radiance of the Sinaitic Fire. 2.

The genitive expression bayda(t)-i bayda' (loosely)
"Snow-White Brightness" (less probably 'Snow White-Maiden' or
'White Sun', etc.') is doubtless an allusion to the motif of Moses'
'Snow-White Hand' (see Exodus 4:6-7.cf.9:22,10:12:22;14:16,27;
17:11., Qur'an 7:105,20:23;26:32;27:12; 28:32)—or, more precisely
the radiance emitted by it. As with the Sinaitic Fire the motif of
the 'snow-white' (bayda') brightness of Moses'hand—one of the signs
of his Prophethood—is frequently mentioned in Baha'u'llah's writings.
Therein it is often symbolic of the power and light of his divinity
drawn forth from the depths of his celestial being. The following few
select quotations must suffice to illustrate Baha'u'llah's use of
this imagery-:

[&]quot;The Maid of Eternity came from the Exalted Paradise...
With snow-white hand (ba kaff-i bayda*), with raven locks,
like the dragon[or staff] of Moses she came..
This eternal countenance came with snow-white hand (ba yad-i
bayda*) from the Divine Command." 4.

[&]quot;...This is the Day in which all things cry out, 'Dominion belongeth to God, the Peerless, the Unique'.Burn away the

^{1.} For details see my, 'The Sinaitic Mysteries in Babi-Baha'i Scripture..', (forthcoming in Baha'i Studies Bulletin).

^{2.} See for example, the Bab , Qayvum al-Asma' (Browne Coll.MS., Or. F.) XXIII., fol.34a; ZXXVII fol.135b; ZXXXV fol.147b; Baha'u'llah, Lawh-i Burhan in Tablets of Baha'u'llah revealed after the Kitab-i-Aqdas [texts] (Hofheim-Langenhaim 1980), p.129.

^{3.} In the light of the use of bayda'in Qur'an 35:45-7 for "[crystal-] white[beverage]" it is not impossible—though unlikely—that should be translated (something like) "Snow-White/Crystal Draught".

^{4.} Bahā'u'llāh, Halh..Yā Bishārat (from lines 1,7 &16), text in Ganj.. p.33f.

veils of idle fancies through this Snow-White Hand (<u>al-yad al-bayda</u>) which hath been manifested from the bosom of power and might.." 1.

As indicated above the second hemistich of line 16 is informed by Sinaitic imagery; more specifically a mystic interpretation of the sign of Moses' white-hand. According to the Qur'anic narratives God commanded Mosee to put his hand "close to thy sids" (ila janahika) or "into thy bosom" (fi jajbika "; see Q. 20:23;27:12;28:32) such that when drawn forth it would be (miraculously) "white" (bayda')—this would be a sign for Pharoah.

رنيس بنيس , eina ' sayna' has been The genitive expression translated " Sinaitic Bosom" -- for, lit., " Bosom of Sinai" . This inasmuch ae the governing noun sina (= 'bosom', 'breast', 'heart') corresponde with the jayb (= 'bosom', 'breast', 'heart', 'pocket', 'cavity') into which Moses put his hand (see Q. 27:12,28:32,etc.,) and ie allegorically expressive of heart of Mt.Sinai (also in Qur'an 23:20) -which is ssoterically the interiority of the Prophete. The kaff-i ركن سَنا sana', translated "Radiant Palm [or Hand]", corresponds with the "Snow-White Hand" of Moses (who is an archetype of all the Prophets-including Baha'u'llah-in certain Baha'i texts ; cf. line 13). The meaning then, of the second hemistich of line 16, is that the power symbolised by the "Bosom of Sinai", (the 'region' where 'Moses' put his hand' and which made it 'white',) flows through the person of Bahā'u'llāh who ie the "Radiant Palm [Hand]". 2.

Among other places, similar imagery is used by Bahā'u'llāh in the second hemistich of the 43rd line of his "Dove'e Ode", al-Qasīda al-Warqā'iyya (c.1855). Here the 'Maid of Heaven' expresses her exalted status by claiming that;

و عن كفّتى كفّ السناء تضت

"[It was] from my Palm[Hand] that the Radiant Palm [Hand] was irradiated[lit. 'drawn near']."

In explaing his meaning Bahā'u'llāh refers to Qur'ān 20:22 (+ 27: 12; 28:32).

^{1.} Untitled Tablet of Bahā'u'llāh in Alwah-i Bahā'u'llāh..['Kitāb-Haykal/Mubīn](n.p. [Bombay] 1308 A.H./1890-91),p. 357.

^{2.} It is unlikely, though not impossible, that should be trans-lated "Summit of Sinai" (sina can mean the peak or summit of a mountain).

^{3.} Text and Commentary in AQA. Vol. III.p. 204.

Baha'u'llah here refers to himself as one who utters the compliant, nala 'mastan, the "Intoxicating Lament" a piercing cry of complaint that renders its hearers spirit—ually 'drunk' or which expresses his own utterance whilst in a state of spiritual intoxication (could be translated, "Lament of the [Spiritually] Intoxicated[One]" and indicate Baha'u'llah or (perhaps) the denizens of heaven). He is the color of heaven, halat-i bustan, "Orchard of Ecstasy"; presumably (?) an orchard the fruit of the trees of which, when eaten, leads to spiritual ecstasy.

be translated "Lament of the Intoxicated (Ones)" and "Ecstaey of the Orchard (of the believers?; or the like) Baha'u'llah may be alluding, not to his own condition, but to that of heavenly beings or fellow Babis. Such a translation might be said to fit in with the reference to the "Rapture of Existence" (jadhba' hastan) mentioned in the second hemistich (of line 17) which is the result of his status and presence, the hastan', sahn-i liqa', the "Court of [the Meeting [with God" [= Baha'u'llah-see on line 4). Line 17 need not however, be understood in this way. As noted, Baha'u'llah may be referring to himself as at once the "Intoxicating Lament", the "Orchard of Ecstasy" and the "Court of the Meeting [with God]" from whom a spiritual grace pours forth that enraptures all existing things.

I have translated the first hemistich of this line as if and significantly likened to a "rosebud" (ghuncha:) and a "ringlet" (turra [of the Divine Beloved]:). It is not certain however, that haif ([letter] hai-like) and haif (hetter] hai-like) should be taken in this way though the imaginitive interpretation of the shapes of the lettere of the Arabic/Persian alphabet is not uncommon in Sufi poetical writings. In Jalal al-Dīn Rūmī's celebrated Mathnawī for example, the thought that man may be seduced by the fair forms of existence is expressed in the following couplet:

"Thou hast scribed the [letter] nun[of[like] the eyebrow, the [letter] sad (o) of [like] the eye and the [letter] jim (of[like] the ear as a distraction to our minds and

understandings." 1.

INBA.MS at line 18 appears to read not , turra ' ba'i, turra ' ba'i, ' " "Bā'-like ringlet" but לינ על , ti[a]rzī ' bā'i, (loosely) " Elegant/ Ornamented "Bā'" " (most probably a miereading).

As in the first hemistich of line 10 Baha'u'llah here uses the terms

| tafh = "overflowing" and | rashh = "sprinkling" to
| exprese the nature of his manifestation (zuhur). It is indicated that
| the full nees of the divine grace wells forth from his now manifested

^{1. &}lt;u>Mathnawi</u> V. 311 trans. R.A.Nicholson, in <u>Rumi Poet and Mystic</u> (London 1968), p.136. For further details and examples see A. Schimmel, <u>Mystical Dimensions of Islam</u>, (University of N. Carolina Press 1968), Appendix I, p.411ff.

^{2.} Text in The Kitab-i-Iqan (Hofheim-Langenhaim 1980), p. 199. It is unlikely that the fact that the precedes the alters this line of interpretation. It is not very probable that these letters have some other qabbalietic import or allude to Yahya (or the Bab) and Baha'u'llah respectively.

^{3.} As elsehere in Persian poetry the opening lines of Rumi's Mathnawi draw on the imagery of the Persian-flute (nay).

Being (see note on line 10).

The image of water pouring forth is further drawn on in the final hemistich of the Rashh-i CAma'. It is implied that the ghann-i tuyur, "Melody of the [Heavenly] Birde", the celestial music of those nigh unto God (?), is **echeed** in a revelation which cayn-i fana', " The Fount of hae its origin in the Annihilation". The genitive expression "Fount of Annihilation" prob--ably signifies an heavenly well or spring which is the source of divine revelation. It may be presupposed that those who drink from it attain the mystic state of the annihilation (fana) of human limitations -- though not essential being. A Sufi technical term fama* usually indicates a human experience rooted in metaphysical reality beyond duality and the limitations of the ego-consciousness. Beyond thie state of 'nullification' (fana')ie that of baga' a unitative "persistence" or enduring "subsistence" in God. 1. Alternatively. Baha'u'llah may be alluding to himeelf as the "Fount of Annihilation" in the sense that his manifestation and revelation lead to the "passing away" (fana') of all things before the "permamence" (baga!) of the Babi cycle of the manifestation of the countenance of Divinity (cf. on line 15).

Though once again, the text is unclear, INBA.MS appears not to have overflowing Manifestation" at the beginning of the first hemistich of line 18. but (?) مُنَّ طُور , taff-i zuhur. If so and in view of the fact that the verbal noun taff can mean 'full[liquid] measure', the meaning would be escentially the same; that ie "Overflowing Manifestation" (or the like).

^{1.} For details see A. Schimmel, Mystical Dimensione, p.142f.

Supplementary Notes

- [8] The connection between نعن and"lip " (بكب ,Per. <u>lab</u>) is clear in the 225th line of Bahā'u'llāh's <u>Mathnawī-yi Mubārak</u> (in AQA.Vol. III.p.160ff) where the expression رئي لَعَالَى , <u>lab-i laclish</u> occurs.
- [13] Also lying behind Baha'u'llah's use of y,"La'" (= "No") in the Rashh-i CAma'and the Halih..Ya Bisharat is the cryptic and mystical use of this Arabic particle in classical Sufi poetry.In her Mystical Dimensions of Islam A.Schimmel writes:

" .. Special importance is attributed [in Sufi poetry] to the connection lam-alif, 1-a, which if read as one word, means la "no," and is thus the first word of the [Islamic] profession of faith. The lam-alif, though combined of two letters, was often regarded as a single letter and endowed with special mystical meaning. It is most commonly a metaphor for the closely embracing lovers who are two and one at the same time. Because of its shape the letters lam-alif or the word la 3 has often been compared to a sword, particularly the dhu'l-figar, Ali's famous two-edged sword, or to scissors: " I made mute the tongue of speaking with the scissors of la"(B [=Ruzbihan Baqlī, "Sharh-i Shathiyat. ".. Ed. H. Corbin (Tehran & Paris 1966), paragraph 196). The believer is expected to cut all but God with the sword of la, i.e., with the sword of the shahada, " there is no deity but God. Whatever is created shouldbe destroyed by the powerful sword of la, "no". That is, however, only the first step in the path of the Muslim mystic -- he has to go upward (ba la), to reach the illa, "save Gody which is achieved, in Arabic writing, by putting an alif before the $l\bar{a}$, l..." (p.419). 1.

The same writer in the course of clarifying an aspect of the theology of Jalal al-Din Rumi explains that the,

".. constant tension between negation and affirmation, of being naughted and being quickened, was symbolized by many Sufis, and thus by Rumi, in the words of the profession of faith. The formula la ilaha illa Allah 'There is no deity but God' offered itself to the poets and mystics as the best, indeed a Divine, symbol for expressing their spiritual journey. The la points to the negation of everything besides God, including man's own wishes and ambitions, his own self; it is a fiery word which indeed 'burns the two worlds' [Diwan 155/1768]. The poet [Rumi] therefore calls man to dig out his heart and cast the net of the heart into the ocean of la [Mathnawi VI. 1376]... Rumi may also speak of the torrent 'la' which carries away joy and pain, gain and loss, fear and hope, body and soul [Diwan 152/1743]. But this..is only the preparatory stage:

* See schweel, As Those Steel 1/2 59/8/

Who knows God (<u>ilāh</u>)? Someone who is saved from the <u>lā</u>. And who goes from the <u>lā</u>, say? The lover who has exper--ienced afflication, (<u>balā</u>) [Diwan 2406/25415].

Love is the power which annihilates everything in the world. This is expressed in rather strong language in the story of the Queen of Sheba

Gardens and castles and the water of the river became before the eye like an ash-house through love, Love in the moment of overpowering and anger makes lovely things hideous for the eye.

The jealousy of love makes every emerald look like a leek: that is the inner meaning of <u>la</u>.

[Mathnawl IV. 865]

The very moment man is captured by Divine love, he sees nothing but God, everything is negated, cut off, swept away; only the Beloved—illa Allāh— remaine. Then the lover will 'cut the head of the $l\bar{a}$, and reach the illa ',[Diwan 212/2372]. or will ask the beloved to consider him to be a $l\bar{a}$ and to transform him into an illa [Diwan 1912/20116] i.e. to see him as nothing and bring him to true existence in and through God...

Rumi praises Shameoddin by saying:

Whoever found help from your hand, became an <u>illa*I</u> (a positive affirmant of God) without the vsstiage of <u>la</u>; [Diwan 2725/28944]

but in another verse he calls himself 'intoxicated by negation, not by positive affirmation' [Diwan 336/3640], which shows, once again, his inconsistancy in the use of images, which change according to his spiritual stage." 1.

Understood in the light of the Sufi use of <u>la</u> — certainly reflectin the Bab's qabbalietic interpretations of the <u>kalimat al-tawhId</u> the second hemistich of line 13 of the <u>Rashh-i ^cAma'</u> could be under--stood in a variety of ways:

- a) The "Rapture of la" is that of Baha'u'llah himself; as a lover perfectly united with the Beloved or one before whom all else is annihilated (mystically speaking), Hie spiritual ecstasy derives from the "Divine Hand" which is symbolic of the sphere of the affirmation of Divinity. (It is important to note that the year derives from the the sphere of affirmation, indicated by the use of illahi?).
- b) the "rapture of la" is that of the lovers (Babis), those in the 'sphere of negation' whose spiritual love and mystic nullification is faeled by the person of Baha'u'llah who is the "Divine Hand"—the Divinity before whom all is annihilated.

^{1.} A.Schimmel, The Triumphal Sun.. (East-West Publications, London and the Hague 1980), pp. 320-1. See also pp. 185, 308-9, 315, 351.

[16] Imagss associated with Moses and Sinai are much utilised in Bahā'u'llāh's Mathnawī-yi Mubarak (1863; see espscially lines 184-219 in AQA.Vol.III.pp. 178-182). Expressing the glories of his person and revelation by means of a daring contrast between the old 'Moses-Sinai' motifs and those of the new age he at ons point (lines 214-5, ibid, p.181) writes:

سینداش بیناد ازش نوردو کن و بینا و قلبش طوراوت این نه ان بینا که زامراً مدید این بهان بینا که امرار و پدید

The selines provide a good illustration of the kind of mystical interpretation of 'Moses-Sinai' motifs presupposed incline 16 the Rashh-i CAma Note in particular the association of the منبنه, "boeom" of the Divins Maiden/Baha'u'llah, with منبنه , Sinai, and the motif of the "Snow White Hand/ Palm" (بيفنا / كف).

S. Lambden.

I should like at this point to express my thanks to Dr.Denis MacEoin for looking over a rough draft of my provisional trans--lation of the Rashh-i CAMA.

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Appendix: Some Notes on the use of the term cama in Babi-Baha'i Scripture.

The following notes are not intended to be a comprehensive or system-atic analysis of the Babi-Baha'i use of the term ama'. Only a few
works of the Bab and Baha'u'llah have been examined with a view to
noting the contexts in which ama' eccurs . It will, I hope, be demonstr-ated that in Babi-Baha'i scripture ama' represents exalted realities
concepts and persons as well as the locus or mystery enveloping the essence
of Divinity.

The Babi- Baha'l use of the term cama' has its roots in a cryptic utterance attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. A certain Abū Razīn al-Uqayli Laqīt b. 'Amir is said to have enquired of the Prophet,"Where was our Lord before He created the creation [or, the heavens and the earth]?" The Prophet is said to have replied, "He [God] was in cama' above it [or Him] air and below it [or Him] air" (= [iii]); lead to have replied air (= [iii]); lead to have

^{1.} This hadith is found in a variety of forms in a large number of Sunni and Shici literatures. In his useful discussion of cama J.R. Cole notes that it was reported by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (See Baha u'llah and the Nagshbandi Sufis in Iraq. in Studies in Babí and Baha History Volume 2 Los Angeles 1983 p.25.fn.27). One version of it was transmitted by Muhammad Ibn cIsa Tirmidhī: "Abū Razīn told that he asked God's messenger, "Where

was our Lord before He created the creation?" to which he replied, "He was in obscurity (cama*) with no air below Him and no air above Him, and He created His Throne on the Water" (Trans., J. Robson in Mishkat al-Masabih. Vol. II [Lahore 1975], pp. 1227-8- it is here noted that Tirmidhi transmitted this tradition and that Yasid ibn Harun al-Wasiti [d. 206] said that " cama* means that there was nothing with Him[God]").

cf. also E.W.Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon. (London 1874), Bk.I.Pt.5., pp. 2161-2 where the following translation is given, "[God]..was in clouds, or lofty clouds &c., beneath which was a vacuity and above which was a vacuity" (p. 2161).

before His work of creation God was in obscurity, enshrouded in the cloud of His own Being, wrapped in a dark mist. For Sufis like CAbd al-Karīm al-Jīlī (1365-1428) ama' was believed to be indicative of of the absolute hiddenness of the transcendent Godhead, "the highest level of the divine essence which is beyond both absolute reality (alhaqq) and createdness (al-khalq)". It signfies Being sunk in itself, bare potentiality", "the eternal and unchangeable ground of Being", the absolute inwardness (butum) and occultation (istitar) "of the trans-cendent Divine Essence. The important Muslim theologian Shah Walī Allah of Delhi (d. 1762) defined ama' as the world of primal matter capable of assuming all incorporeal forms.

Such complex theosophical speculations as to the significance of ama were drawn on by both the Bab and Baha'u'llah -- they both drew on Sufi traditions and utilised Sufi terminology. Though they rejected the monistic ontology that informs and determines certain attempts to locate the myst--ery of cama this term is frequently found in the massive corpus of Babi-Baha'I scripture. Therein it takes on a wide range of meanings; its semantic field embraces key theological, cosmological and prophetological not always indicative of the hidden and unknowable essence of God. In line with the late Babi and Baha'i tendency to apply terms expressive of the transcendent Godhead to realities and persons rep--resentative of the new cycle of Divine disclosure cama' is sometimes 'de-transcendentalised'; it is sometimes given meanings that lie within the knowable Babi-Baha'i universe of discourse as opposed to being indicative of the absolute essence of the Godhead. The classical senses accorded amat in Islamic literatures do not always lie behind the Babi-Baha'i use of this term.

^{1.} So J.R. Cole, Baha'u'llah and the Nagshbandi Sufis. p. 10.

^{2.} See R.A. Nicholson, Studies in Islamic Mysticism ² (Cambridge 1967), pp. 94-6.

^{3.} Refer, J.M.S.Baljon, Shah Wali Allah's Terminology of Creation in Actes Du 8^{me} Congress De L' Union Europeene Des Arabisants et Islamisants Aix-en-Provence-Sept., 1976, p.19.

ا نوقه هواً تحتم هواً. 1. The sublime truth expressed in this hadith is, he remarks, apparent to those who consider it with the " eye of the divine unity" (bi-cayn al-tawhid). CAmas is indicative of Allah inasmuch as He has ever been alone and without relationship to anything. His nafs ('self') is al-azal ('eternity'); His dhat ('essence') al-cama' and His kaynuniyya ('being') al-qidam ('ancientness') though these terms are inadequate testimonies to God's essential and absolute isolatedness. CAma and hawa (= air) really indicate the created nafs of God as opposed to the mystery of His transcendent and uncreated reality. Just as God's resting or settling down upon the Throne (carsh; mentioned in the Qurfan) has to do with the realization of an exalted theophany (tajalli; and not the enthronement of the absolute Godhead) 2. so God's being in cama: is expressive of the station (magam) of the manifestation (zuhur) of the "First Dhikr" (dhikr al-awwal = the primal divine manifestation and locus of prophethood). 3 Even the perception of $\frac{c_{ama}}{}$ is not the vision of the unknowable God. The term cama; indicates God's absolute otherness. It is derived from $al^{-c}am\bar{1}$ (, or $al^{-c}aman^{-u}$ blindness", "unknowing") for vision is blinded before God's Face and eyes incapable of beholding His Countenance. It is expressive of a reality that is "Unconditioned" (mutlag), "Absolute" (sirf), "Uncompounded" (baht) and " Definitive" (? batt ?)-though one of the created Names of God (?).

For the Bab the 'Madith of al-cama' enshrines subtle and bewildering mysteries surrounding the Sinaitic theophany (see Qur'an 7:142). It was not the unknowable essence of God (dhat al-azal) that appeared in the "Kingdom of Ama' (malakut al-cama') and radiated forth from the Divine Light on Mount Sinai but an amr (= lit. command; here loosely 'Logos') which God created from nothing. The epiphany on the Mount was not the

^{1.} This letter of the Bab is contained in Tehran Baha'i Archives MS 6007 C. pp.1-16 (Unpublished). It was apparently written in reply to questions posed by Siyyid Yahya Darabī, Vahid (a leading disciple of the Bab; see Fādil-i Mazandaranī, Asrār al-Āthār, Vol.4. (n.p. [Tehran] 129 Badīc), p.391 (text also partially quoted here).

^{2.} As with cama the Bab equates the heavely Throne (carsh) with God's Knowledge (cilm) and His Power (qudrat) which express His nafs.

^{3.} The Bab seems to underline God's absolute otherness to such an extent that the term cama! only indirectly hints at his transcendent unknowab-ility.God's nafs and dhat are probably to be thought of as created and hypostatic realities indicative of yet ontologically distinguishable from, His uncreated and absolute Isseity. The manner in which the Bab expounds the 'Madīth of al-cama' outrules those theosophical interpretations that are monistically oriented.

manifestation of cama as God's absolute essence or a monistic type theophany of the Divine Essence' (tajalli al-dhat) but the disclosure of the Divine Light (nur) "unto, through and in His[God's] Self [nafs]." In abstruse language the Bab counters the monistic type interpretation of the relationship between cama and the epiphany of the Divine Essence' (tajalli al-dhat) found in certain Sufi treatises.

The individual letters of the key terms in the 'Hadīth al-cama' ama and hawa - are also qabbalistically interpreted by the Bab. Without going into details it may be noted that cama! is described as an "exteriorization from God" (al-zahir can Allah) and a " guide unto Him! (? al-dall alayhu) and associated with that which rose up between the "two commands" (amrayn) and stood up between the "two gulfs" (tutunjayn)probably the letter alif indicative of the "Divine Unicity" (ahadiyya)the 12th Imam and Muhammad . 2. It was disclosed in the "realm of interiority" (ghayb al-butun) not the "exterior plane" (calam al-shuhud) and appeared at the beginning of a name (ism) which God singled out for His self(nafs). Since like the creative Qur'anic imperative "Be!"(kun) the first letter (6) of camat has a gematric value of 70 it is representative of the "First Dhikr" (dhikr al-awwal) and the creative and primordial reality of the Prophet Muhammad. Such are the mysteries of the "surface level of the inner meaning" (al-zahir al-batin) of this hadith. On the innermost level of esoteric exegesis (batin al-batin) it enshrines the mystery of " the [letter alif which standeth erect between the two Points " (al-alif al-qa'im bayn al-nuqtatayn). 4. Before turning his attention to the qabbalistic secrets

^{1.} Various modes of the Divine theophany (tajalli) are mentioned in Sufi treatises; i.e. (1) tajalli al-dhat (the theophany of the Divine Essence); (2) tajalli al-sifat (the theophany of the Divine Attributes) and (3) tajalli al-afcal (the theophany of the Divine Actions). See for example, Shihab al-Din Cumar al-Suhrawardi, Cawarif al-Macarif (Per.trans, Mahmud ibn Cali al-Kashani) translated into English by H.Wilberforce Clarke (the 1891; reprint ed. Octagon Press London 1980), p.79ff.

^{2.} The Bab draws on imagery derived from Imam Call's Khutba-yi Tutunjiyya ('Sermon of the Gulf'). The fact that hawa' is said to be both 'above and below al-ama' probably led the Bab to use Arabic dual forms—common also in similarly abstruse pericopae of his Qayyum al-Asma'.

^{3.} Probably the name Muhammad as the following lines indicate or the names al-call (= the exalted) or al-calm (= the mighty)—both of which, like cama begin with the letter ayn.

^{4.} This, probably, in a smuch as it is said in the hadith that hawa' is both above and below cama' i.e. cama' = alif between 2X hawa' = the letter ba' () or the point beneath it. cf. which has an alif between two letter ba's (or two 'points') and the fully written out letter waw ()) of qabbalistic and eschatological importance in Shaykhi and Babi-Baha'i teaching.

"air" (<u>hawā</u>') and concluding his epistle the Bab states that the servant who is desirous of fathoming the mysteries of Divine Unity perceives that the outer sense of the '<u>Hadīth al-camā</u>' is expressive of the "inner sense of al-camā'" (<u>batin al-camā</u>'); perhaps that just as the hadīth outwardly states that God was in camā' compassed about by air (<u>hawā</u>') so does camā' inwardly indicate the realities enveloping the Divine Being.

Partly written before the Bab claimed to be in communication with the Hidden 12th Imam in May 1844 the Tafsir Surat al-Bagara (Commentary on the second sura of the Qurtan) contains a few passages in which the term camat occurs. 2. In his preface to this major work he, at one point, addresses those who "orient their gaze towards that Luminous Dove of the Sinaitic Tree" (= himself or the hidden Imam) and exhorts them to fear God and keep silent in the light of the imminent fulfil ment of catastrophic eschatological events. He would have them beware at time when " the Rooster sings in the land of cama, the birds cry out in the firmament of the Air (jaww al-hawa!) and the Peacock screeches at the rising [place] of[the zodiacal sign] Cancer (cinda matlac al-saratan) .. ".i.e. beware of the imminent advent of the hidden Imam being announced in the heavenly realms (?). 3. Commenting on the meaning of the word "angels" (malaika) in Qurian cama! (and have their 2:30 he seems to teach that they exist in the sphere of own cama here "cloud" ?). A xplainingthe last words of Qur'an 2:41, he writes: "The servant [of God] hath not perfected the degree of his piety (al-tagwa) until he hath risen up in the cama' of Perpetuity (istiqam fi cama' al-samadiyya)" .

^{1.} The Bab's comments on "Air" (hawa') are abstruse. The theophany (tajalli) on Sinai mentioned in Qur'an 7:142 (which is quoted) is understood to signify the manifestation of God's "image" (surat) as the "image of the fifth" (surat al-khums) and His "shape" (shakl) as the "form of the sixth" (shakl al-suds); that is, the epiphany of the letters (= abjad 5) and (= abjad 6). When joined up these two letters form the third person singular masculine personal pronoun, (a) huwa = "He is". indicative of God. These two letters are also the first two letters of "air" (hawa'=') = (hawa' = (hawa

^{2.} The MS of this work I have consulted (Tehran Bahā'ī Archives MS 6014 C) goes as far as commenting on 2: 131(141)— other MSS (not available to me) go further than this though it is not clear whether or not the whole of this commentary is extant.

^{3.} Tafsīr Surat al-Baqara [TBA MS 6014 C),p.5.

^{4.} ibid., p. 121.

^{5.} ibid., p.170.

A hierarchy of cosmological, theosophical and imamological meanings are given to the "House" (<u>al-bayt</u>) mentioned in Qur'an 2:125 (outwardly the Meccan <u>Ka^cba</u>).On the ninth and highest level of the esoteric senses of this edifice it signifies the "House of the Divine **Tpseity**(<u>bayt al-huwiyya</u>) in which the primordial Divine theophany (<u>tajalli</u>) took place while on the eighth level it represents the "House of Divinity" (<u>bayt al-ulūhiyya</u>), the "first House" which was erected in the "absolute <u>amā</u>" (<u>bi*l-camā</u> al-mutlaq).

In the Bab's lengthy Commentary of the Sura of Joseph (or Qayyum al-Asma' mid. 1844) the term cama' occurs about 75 times—in the singular, in a variety of genitive constructions and in dual form (see below). The contexts in which it is found are frequently obscure as the following notes will demonstrate, and, I hope, clarify.

It is in the Xth chapter of the Qayyum al-Asma' that cama' first occurs. The Bab appears to teach that God will cause "Our servant" (= the Bab himself or the hidden Imam) to be made manifest (lit.) "in a cloud of light" (? fī cama' min nur) to his contemporaries who look out for the Dhikr Allah (the hidden l2th Imam) or (perhaps) perform the " remembrance of God" (dhikr allah) in the morning and in the evening. 3.

The term cama occurs in a number of the Bab's elsegetical rewrites of verses in 12th chapter of the Qur'an. 4 He rewrites Qur'an 12:5 in the following manner:

"Then a spokesman among the brothers of Joseph, that is, [Imam]
Hasan son of CAli -upon him be peace-one mighty in the Mother
Book [and one] about and in the Ancient[Sinaitic]Fire, said, "Do not
slay Joseph! Rather, cast him into the depth of the pit of the
Divine Unicity (jubb al-ahadiyya) concealed about the [Sinaitic]
Fire." God, verily, hath intended by the "pit" (al-jubb) the Cama'
hidden in the secret and concealed air above the mystery inscribed

^{1.} Tafsīr Surat al-Baqara, p. 276.

^{2.} I have consulted the text of the Qayyum al-Asma (henceforth QA) owned by the late E.G.Browne= Cambridge University Library Or.Ms F.ll. This work, as is now well known, is not a commentary in the classical sense. It contains a great deal apart from esoteric and exegetical 'rewrites' of verses contained in the 12th sura of the Qur'an. It has, not inappropriately, been dubbed 'the Babi Qur'an'.

^{3.} It appears that in the pericope of the QA, discussed here cama has its basic sense of cloud.

^{4.} When, usually briefly and towards the end of most—but by no means all—of of 112 chapters the the Qayyum al—Asma*, the Bab turns his attention to the Qur*ancstory of Joseph, he most often rewrites a specific verse (contained in sura 12) in an abstruse manner. Utilizing a typological and qabbalistic herm—eneutic he explains the Qur*anic narrative in the light of the rank and relat—

in the Mother Book about the line (ama al-mustasarr fi hawa al-sirr al-mustasirr al-sirr fi umm al-kitab hawl al-satr masturan). 11.

Here the words of Reuben (Qur'an 12:5) are rewritten and put into the mouth of Imam Hasan (the brother of Imam Husayn). It is not that the earthly Joseph was cast into a pit by his jealous brothers but that Imam Husayn (so it seems) was cast into the "depths of the pit of the Divine Unicity" or the mysterious realm of ama'. Ama as well as jubb al-ahadiyya (= elsewhere lujiat al-ahadiyya, "the abyss of the Divine Unicity) appear to be symbolic of the locus of the primordial, mysterious, heavenly and Sincitic heights in which the Imam Husayn exists, was originated, and experienced God. They represent the highest, the unfathomable, beclouded and celestial realm associated in the Bab's writings with the locus or light of the Prophet Muhammad, the Imam Husayn, the Hidden Imam, the mafs of God and the archetypal letter Alif which, in qabbalistic terms, is the gematric primogenitor of all the other letters of the alphabet.

A few lines later the Bab's speaks of the creation of Joseph and his brothers in the following manner:

"God, verily, created Joseph and his brothers in sanctified worlds (cawalim alequds) from a sprinkling above a name, from an existing droplet of the [Heavenly] Water (min rashh

⁻ionship between the Imams, the position of Imam Husayn or the Dhikr and his own status as the "gate" (bab) of the Hidden Imam. On another level the story enshrines qabbalistic mysteries associated with the letters which form the kalimat al-tawhid (= the twelve letters of WIV), Ithere is no god except God! — which represent Joseph and his brothers and the Prophet Muhammad and the first 11 Imams, see QA. V [on Qur!an 12:4f]).

^{1.} QA. XI. fol. 17a (the translation is tentative). The use here of both cama and hawa suggests that the Bab had the hadith quoted above (p.) in mind.

^{2.} These remarks are made in the light of a variety of passages in the QA., and a reading of many of the Bāb's major and minor works—details cannot be given here. Following the lines of QA.XI translated above the Bab, probably alluding to his role as representative of the Hidden Imam or Dhikr, states that God decreed a "caravan" (sayyarat) for travelling from "Gate" (bab) to "Gate" (bab, cf.Qur'an 12:19,67), for pilgrims who wish to journey to the "secure sanctum" (al-haram al-amm = the celestial shrine) of Imam Husayn. Those who so journey are spoken of as having found Husayn above or represented by a letter of the alphabet () or A as his locus?) which is concealed in the depths of the "pit" (the hidden celestial ream). They are the ones who travel to the "secret of the Dhikr" (sirr al-dhikr) in the region of the Sinaitic Fire.

ala ism min qatrat al-ibdac can dhalik al-mat mawjudan).

And when We inhaled from Joseph a scent of the greatest Dhikr We, with the permission of God, clothed him in the garment of prophethood. It l.

These lines probably have to do with origin of the alphabetic and creative potencies symbolised by Joseph and his brothers who are the letters of the kalimat al-tawhia (). Allusion is made to the creation of the reality of prophethood and to the origination of the Hidden Imam and his earthly representative (i.e. the Dhikr and the Bab—see the following lines of QA.XI). Worth noting is the fact that the word rashh is used in connection with celestial Water in the context of a difficult pericope in which the terms cama and hawa are found.

The term cama' also occus in the Bab's explanation of (his rewrite of)
Qur'an 12:11 in Qayyum al-Asma' chapter XII:

"The brothers of Joseph asked their father about the supreme martyr (? ala mashad al-akbar = Husayn, unless this phrase be translated 'upon the greatest 'spectacle[or the like]):

'Why do you not inform us of the knowledge of Joseph?' We are martyrs (shuhada', or witnesses) of God, the Self-Subsisting..

God created us for Husayn (= Joseph?) in the mystery of the Divine Unicity (bi-sirr al-ahadiyya) concealed about the [Sinaitic] Fire.

God verily announced in that verse (=Q. 12:11) the decree (hukm) regarding [Imam] cAli and his sons (= the subsequent Imams) in accordance with the decree of the Divine Unicity (hukm al-ahad--iyya) veiled in the cama of the Divine Ipseity (cama al-huwiyya) .. according to the decree of the Divine Perpetuity (hukm al-samadaniyya) inscribed about the [celestial] Water. 2.

This 'explanation' is as obscure as the rewrite of Qur'an 12:11 though the following lines of QA.XII suggest that the Bab believed that it foreshadowed the martyrdom of Imam Husayn and (according to Shīcī trad—ition) most, if not all, of the other ten or eleven Imams. He may have thought that a judgement or decree (hukm) was made in the most elevated heavenly realms that the Imams—Husayn in particular—would be martyred. In this context the genitive expression and all-huwiyya might be indic—ative of the sphere or realm of the cloud enshrouding the Divine Ipseity or the most celestial region in which the decree of martyrdom was pronou—nced.

^{1.}QA. XI.fol.17a.

^{2.}QA. XII.fol.18b.

^{3.} Alternatively, it is possible that the decree (hukm) mentioned in the passage translated above has to do with Joseph's brothers, the Imams, bowing down or 'witnessing' before Joseph/ Imam Husayn.

The genitive expression "land of cama" "occurs twice in the context of the Bab's exegetical rewrite of Qur'an 12:17 in Qayyum al-Asma chapter XVIII. Having abandoned Joseph in the "pit" the brothers return from the "land of the Divine Uniqueness" (ard al-wahidiyya—the region around the "pit") and say to their father:

O our father, We went racing with one another in the land of cama' (cala ard al-ama') and we abandoned Joseph (along) with the provisions of the Divine Unicity (matacal-ahadiyya) from our Lord. And the onlookers (al-nazirun') devoured (lit. ate) him by gazing[jealously] upon him (? bi'l-isharat alayhu) in the abyss of the Divine Innovation (lujjat al-badc)

Having rewritten Qur'an 12:17a in this manner the Bab states that these "onlookers" (al-nazirun) have been accorded the name of "the Wolf" (al-dhi'b) in the "Mother Book". He then rewrites Qur'an 12:17b in the following way:

"And the letters of "There is no god but God" (the letters of Will which represent the brothers of Joseph) said to CAlī in the land of Camā' (Calā ard al-Camā'):

'Thou wilt never believe us with respect to our prostration [before Joseph, see Q. 12:4 and QA.V] even though we have, in very truth, borne witness to Joseph in a praiseworthy manner. "2.

It may be deduced from these difficult passages that the phrase "land of cama" " is esoterically descriptive of the region about the "pit" (al-jubb) into which Joseph was thrown. It represents an exalted realm exp-ressive of Imam Husayn's elevated rank and proximity to God-as contrasted with the rank and role of the other Imams.

Not infrequent in the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u>! (see further below) the genitive expression "<u>ahl al-cama</u>!", which may be translated "people of <u>cama</u>!" or "inhabitants of <u>cama</u>!", first occurs in chapter XX of this work. In the context of a rewrite of Qur'an 12:19 we read:

^{1.} QA.XVIII.fol.27b.

^{2.} Ibid. The Bab's rewrite continues: "This decree (hukm -- regarding the prostration) is the truth from God our Master for God, verily, decreed the prostration of the stars [= the Imams] before Husayn [= Joseph] above the dust in accordance with the decree of the Gate (hukm al-bab) iss—ued about the [Sinaitic[Fire.." (ibid).He appears to teach that Qur'an 12:17 has to do with the great rank of Imam Husayn.Joseph's aban—donment in the "pit" symbolizes the exalted level of proximity to God attained or decreed by God for this Imam.Reuben, the eldest of Joseph's brothers, becomes a type of the first Shi Imam, Imam All.who, like Husayn, has a superior rank among the hierarchy of the (12) Imams.

And We, with the permission of God, sent the Caravan of Love (siyarat al-hubb) unto this pit (al-jubb—or well). They sent their water-carrier for water And he let down his bucket [into the pit or well] through interior perception(? bi-nazar al-fu'ad) and he said: 'Ah.there! Good news! [Here is] This Youth, the like of which eye hath not beheld! O People of CAma'! Conceal him as a piece of [treasured] merchan—dise isolated from the Divine Unity [= the divine locus of his brothers the other Imams?] perchance you may be remembered by God, the Exalted, about the [Sinaitic] Fire." And We, verily, made remote from this Youth [Joseph= the Hidden Imam/ Imam Husayn], the Greatest Word (al-kalim—at al-akbar), this Arabian Youth (fatī Carabī the Bab himself), one righteous in the land of the Heart (ard al-fu'ad).." 1.

If I understand this passage correctly the Bab represents himself as the one who discovered "Joseph" in the "Pit"— traditionally a Mid-ianite or Arab merchant. Through his interior perception or love he was able to communicate with the celestial Imam Husayn (or the Hidden Imam) while he was living on earth. He communicated his secret to the ahl al-cama' who are to conceal the Imam or preserve him in the depths of the "pit" (= the realm of cama')—isolated even from the "Divine Unity" (= Joseph's/Husayn's brothers/ the Imams= the letters of the kalimat al-tawhīd?)

In this context (cf. also below) the ahl al-cama; may be thought of as those who exist in the upper region of the celestial realm where the Hidden Imam or Imam Husayn is in occultation— in cama; (?). More concretely the major Shīcī Imams (= in one sense 'Joseph's brothers') may be intended (in certain pericopae of the Qayyūm al-Asmā;) by the ahl al-cama; inhabitants of the Divine realm of Interiority. Certain passages within the Qayyūm al-Asmā; further suggest that they may be thought of as heavenly beings existing in close proximity to God's throne, the Hidden Imam and/or the Divine Ipaeity and possibly (on another level) the Bāb's first disciples subsequently conceived to be the "return" of the Shīcī Imams (or their earthly counterparts).

The XXth sura of the Qayyum al-Asmā contains a great deal more about the mysteries of the story of Joseph which cannot be commented on in detail. It must suffice to note that "Joseph" (= Imam Husayn) is also represented as being thrown " beyond the crimson sea in al-cama (wara qulzum al-hamra fi al-cama) and hidden in "the midst of the splendour of the Sinaitic Mount" (fi qutb al-baha cala al-tur al-sina). He exists, in other words, in the centre of the Divine realm where the Sinaitic theophany took place. 3.

^{1.} QA.XX.fol. 30a

^{// 2.} Ibid. fol.30b.

^{3.} Imagery associated with the Sinai theophany is intimately related in

Some light is thrown on one level of the Bab's use of the phrase ahl al-cama in the XXIVth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma. One referred to as the "Solace of the Eye" (qurrat al-cayn: here, most probably the Hidden Imam, Imam Husayn or the Bab) is exhorted not to be wrathful with the ahl al-cama' in the light of the fact that they are a sign of what is other than the Dhikr from the "Greatest Dhikr" (al-dhikr al-akbar). They inhabit the region about cama' where the Dhikr or (here) the Hidden Imam (or Imam Husayn) is concealed and represent him.

In the same <u>sura</u>, it is further worth noting, the Bab uses the expressions "horizon of ama'" and "birds of ama'". He claims to be both the Sinaitic Mount (<u>al-tur</u>) which was the scene of the Divine theophany and a "Sun" (<u>al-shams</u>) which hath risen up from the "horizon of ama'" (<u>ufg al-cama'</u>) about which God bears witness.². The <u>Dhikr Allah</u> is exhorted to "recite in the Name of your Lord" (cf. Qur'an in a verse indicative of God's Oneness, summon the people to the "Path of this Gate" (= the Babī Cause) and make the Cause (<u>al-amr</u>) to appear with the "accents of the birds of ama' on the crimson leaves" (<u>ala lahn al-tuyur min al-cama' fī al-waraoāt al-hamrāt.</u>) of the Sinaitic Tree. 3. Like <u>ahl al-cama'</u> the expression tuyur al-cama' (or the like) is indicative of the inmates of the highest celestial realm. They, as it were, reside about the region that is the focal centre of the Divine theophany — the heart of the Sinaitic Tree and the midst of the 'Cloud of Unknowing'.

the Q ayyum al-Asma' with the notion of al-cama' (for further details see below). The expression "crimson sea in al-cama'" is probably to be understood as signifying the ethereal radiance that emanates from the region of the divine interiority as the Sinaitic Fire radiated a crimson light that enshrouded the Divine Being who existed therein—as the phrase "the midst of the splendour of the Sinaitic Mount" suggests.

^{1.} QA. XXIV.fol.35b. It might be possible to understand this pericope to be indicative of the Bab's own role as a <u>Dhikr subordinate</u> to the Greatest <u>Dhikr</u> (the Hidden Imam) in the light of his own adherants being the <u>ahl al-cama</u>.

^{2.} QA.XXIV.fol.36a.

^{3.} Ibid. cf. the passage from the <u>Tafsir Surat al-Bagara</u> quoted above (on p. 46).

In the XXVIIIth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma the ahl al-cama are commanded to hearken unto the Bab who is referred to as the "Arabian Youth" who crieth out from Sinai. He is an Arab of the ahl al-cama' and a heavenly Bird who 'according to sura XLI, "warbleth melodiously in the firmament of cama' (jaww al-cama', or 'atmosphere of cama'). This "firmament of cama'" is the locale of the "world of cama'" (calam al-cama) which was formost in assenting to the "Greatest Word of God" (kalimat Allah al-akbar = acknowledging the truth of the reality of the Dhikr or prophethood in pre-eternity) when exhibited to all creation. This "world of cama'" and its inhabitants are exalted above the "people of paradise" (ahl al-firdaws) and the "people of the garden of Eden" (ahl jannat al-cada). They were foremost in responding to the pre-eternal covenant regarding the Dhikr (?).

The Bab makes some interesting claims in a pericope of the LIVth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma' which is addressed to the "people of the abyss of Paradise" (lujjat al-firdaws). He is directed to inform the "inmates of the [celestial] chambers" (!ahl al-hujurat) that God has inspired him to say, "I,verily, am God, no god is there except Me"; that he is the "two lights in the two mysteries" (al-nurayn fi al-sirrayn), the "two forms in the two Temples" (al-shaklayn fI al-haykalayn), and the "two lamps in the two glasses" (al-sirajayn fī al-zujaja yn, cf. Q. 24: 35). He is the one who, through the "two letters" (harfayn), cried out for "not a single letter was uttered by the two primordial selves (al-nafsayn al-awwalayn) and not a single letter was found of the mystery of the two gulfs (sirr al-tutun-jayn) "except through the Bab's own self (nafs) which is the "bearer of the "two names" (hamil al-ismayn). * On this account the inhabitants of the "celestial abyss" (lujjat al-lahūt) glorified God and those in the "land of "ama' " (ard al-cama') uttered praise "in the land of that Gate (bab)

^{1.} QA.XXVIII.fol.43b. cf. QA.XXXIII.fol. 52b-53a (an address to the ahl al-cama*).

^{2.} QA.XXVIII.fol.44b and XLI.fol.65b (in this latter sura the Bab teaches that the Qayyum al-Asma should be recited according to his own celest-ial Arabic accent.).

^{3.} QA.LI.fol.86a — other heavenly concepts and realities are mentioned in this part of the Qayyum al-Asma that subsequently (in primordial times) assented to the "Greatest Word of God".

^{4.} I cannot attempt to comment in detail on these claims which are related to esoteric and talismanic speculations inspired by the Khutba-yi Tutunjiyya ('Sermon of the Two Gulfs' attributed to Imam CAll) on which both Sayyid Kazim Rasht (d. 1844) and the Bab himself wrote commentaries. cf. also for example. QA. CIX.fol.194b.196b and see below.

which is, in very truth, the greatest". 1. They, the dwellers about the region of the Divine Interiority where the mystery of the Bab's primordial being is located, give glory and praise inasmuch as the name of the Bab or his essental nafs is CAlī Muhammad (the bearer of the two names/ realities of Imam CAlī and the prophet Muhammad?). They acknowledged his occupying the office of " gatehood" (babiyyat).

The term cama occurs three times in sura LVII of the Cayyum al-Asma. Addressing the ahl al-cama (see above) the Bab invites them to hearken unto the call of God from the Sinaitic Tree on the leaves of which birds utter the declaration of Divinity. Then, addressing the "concourse of Lights" (mala al-anwar) he writes:

"We, by God, are the Absolute Truth (al-haqq)! We do not cry out according to base passion, nor hath a single letter of this Book [the Qayvam al-Asma] been sent down outside of the permission of God, the True One. Fear God and doubt not the Command of God (amr Allah). The mystery (sirr) of this Gate (al-bab) is hidden under the cama of the line (cama al-satr) and inscribed above the veil of mystery (hijab al-sirr) by the Hand of God, the Lord of both the mystery (al-sirr) and the line (satr). God, verily, created around this Gate (al-bab) oceans from the [celestial] Water, tinged crimson with the oil of existence (al-duhn al-wujud) and vitalised through the animating power of the desired fruit (al-thamarat al-magsud). For it God decreed arks of ruby, tender (al-ratb, or [refreshingly] cool), crimson-coloured, wherein none shall ride save the people of splendour (ahl al-baha!). Therein the angels of cama! (mala!ikat al-cama!) bear up the Throne of God (carsh allah) through the eight logoi (fi al-anfus al-thamin; cf. Qur!an 69: 17)... 3.

What, in this context is meant by the camaral-satr is not clear. It may, as Taherzadeh's translation indicates, mean that the mystery of the Bab is concealed beneath the verses of the Qayvum al-Asma. 4. It seems to me to be more likely however, that the Bab is teaching that the 'mystery of the Gate' (his own office) is ratified by God by being inscribed both

^{1.} QA. LIV.fol.91.b-92a.

^{2.} The Bab's not infrequent and cryptic use of the dual in the Qayyum alAsma may be related to the fact that his name was 'twofold': [Siyyid]

call [+] Muhammad [Shirazi]. As noted below, it also appears to be related to the fact that bab is spelt : having two 's with an alif in the centre. cf. also (the fully spelt out letter waw]).

^{3.} QA. LVII.fol.97a. For a less literal translation see Habib Teherzadeh (trans.), Selections from the Writings of the Bab (Haifa 1976), pp.55-6.

^{4.} Taherzadeh translates (somewhat loosely). mastur taht cama al-satr, shrouded in the mystic utterances of his writ! (ibid, p. 57).

in the realm of origination —beneath the cama' al-satr—and in the world of Divinity itself—above the hijab al-sirr. The expressions cama'al-satr (here perhaps, "cloud of the line") and hijab al-sirr ("veil of the mystery) are probably rooted in speculations surround—ing the orthography of the letter al-ba' () seen as symbolic of the levels of Being and the 'veil' or 'cloud' (the of of) separating the 'world of the Godhead' and the 'world of creation': the former being above the and the latter beneath it and symbolised by the dot or 'point' which, in Babi-Baha'i scripture, is the locus of Being.

In the second part of the pericope translated above the Bab teaches that enlivening and crimson oceans originating in the uppermost celest—ial Water surround his archetypal being in the exalted heavenly world. On these oceans none save the people of splendour (ahl al-baha¹) ride in specially created arks (or 'ships').¹ It is the "angels of cama¹, the denizens of the uppermost heavenly realm, that bear up the Throne of God (see Qur'an 69:17) through their eight inner essences (al-nufus).

In the LVIIIth sura of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u>, the Bab exhorts the <u>ahl al-ama</u>, to remain steadfast upon "this upright trace between the two traces" (<u>hadha al-khatt al-qā'im bayn al-khattayn</u> the <u>Alif</u> [= the 'Straight Path' and centre of guidance] between the two of ?) that God might enable them to drink from the "Fountain of Manifestation" (<u>ayn al-zuhūr</u>). Mention is made, in the context of the imminent fulfilment of eschatological events mentioned in the Qur'an, three suras later, of all being dumbfounded at the sight of the <u>Dhikr</u> in <u>ama</u>." (<u>al-dhikr</u> fī al-camā.)

^{1.} In a fairly large number of Baha'u'llah's writings the ahl al-baha' are understood to mean his followers. References to them in the Qayyūm al-Asma' and other writings of the Bab are interpreted in a prophetic and symbolic way. See for example, untitled letter of Khadim Allah/Bahā'u'llah in Athar-i Qalam-i Acla Vol.6 ([Tehran] 132 Badīc),p.77. cf. the untitled commentary of Bahā'u'llah on some verses of the Qayyūm al-Asma in Ishraq Khavarī (Ed) Mā'ida-yi Āsmānī, Vol.9 [Tehran 129 Badīc], p.48ff.

^{2.} QA.LVIII.fol.98b-99a. cf. the translation of Habib Taherzadeh in Select--ions..p.58., (here ahl al-cama is translated people of the Kingdom!).

^{3.} QA.LX.fol.100b. The implication appears to be that the Hidden Imam will appear from the realm of cama or come in/on a cloud (cama).

An interesting rewrite of Qur'an 7:48f is contained in the LXVIIth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma!:

"And We, verily, preserved [certain exalted] men (rijalan) upon the [heavenly] Heights (al-Acraf) who shall know the [ungodly] people (al-nas) from their marks (bi-simahum). And We decreed for the[se] men an elevation [such that]the people[of the lower realm—or hell?] did not known them from their[particular] marks (bi-simahum). And they, upon the couch of cama' (sarir al-cama') shall observe [or disting-uish] the[lower] people from their marks (bi-simahum). And We, when We entered the [region of hell] Fire, its inhabit-ants said: 'O inhabitants of the Garden[in Paradise]! Pour down a drop of water upon us, a dewdrop(marshhatan) sprinkled down (marshuhan) from that [Heavenly] Ocean." 1.

Here the "men of the Heights" (rijal al-ccraf) are understood as heavenly beings who are able to recognise those beneath them on account of their distinguishing "marks". They, it appears (the translation is tentative), sit upon the "couch of cama" (sarīr al-cama") and are requested to sprinkle down heavenly water by the inhabitants of the Fire of hell. Worth noting in the light of the opening line of Baha'u'llahs Rashh-i cAma' (see below) is the use here (as elsewhere in the Bab's writings) of derivities of RSHH in the context of the mention of cama.

While in the verses translated above there is mention of the "couch of ama'" the expression "ama' of the throne" (ama' al-Carsh) occurs in the LXXIst sura of the Qayyum al-Asma'. In the course of an exegetical rewrite of Qur'an 9:109 the Bab states:

"..Thou, verily, art, in the Mother Book (umm al-kitab) the First Mosque (awwal masjid) with its foundations in the cama of the Throne (cama al-carsh) based on pure piety towards God, the Exalted.." 2.

God is, furthermore, identified as the "Lord of the Throne and al-cama" "(rabb al-carsh wa'l-cama") in the LXXVIth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma'.

The <u>surat al-kahf</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u> (LXXIII) contains, among other things, some extremely interesting expository rewrites of verses within its Qur'anic counterpart (Q. sura 18). The term cama occurs within the

^{1.} QA LXVII.fol.117a.

^{2.} QA.LXXI.fol.123b.This may mean that the heavenly reality of the Bao is situated about the region of the 'Cloud of Unknowing' (ama') surr-ouding the Throne of God.

QA.LXXVI.fol.133a.

Bāb's rewrite of Qur'an 18:17:

when it rose up declining towards the Cave of your hearts toward the right-hand side of the [Sinaitic] Fire with crieth out from God, no God is there save Him?..And when it [the Sun] set in the Word (al-kallam) [did] it [not] attract[ed] you through the mystery of power (bi-sirr al-qudrat) unto the dawning-place of the heart (matlac al-fu'ad)[?].And did it [the Sun] not turn away from you in the direction of al-cama' [or possibly 'in the essence of cama'; dhat al-cama] while you were, in very truth, established within the spacious chamber of the Point (fajwat al-nuqtat) which sprinkleth down before the Gate (al-bab)." 1:

This passage is obviously extremely obscure and cannot be commented on in detail. Some light is thrown on the meaning in view of the fact that the Bab had, in the paragraphs preceding this rewrite, identif--ied himself with the "Cave" (kahf). Its "companions" are the 7 letters of (apparently) his own name. 2. He also taught that the episode of the sleepers in the Cave has to do with the coming to faith (so it seems) of the "forerunners" (sabigum the Bab's first disciples). The "Sun" may be symbolic of the reality of the Dhikr or the locus of the light of the Bab himself. Perhaps the rising of the "Sun" represents the disclo sure of the Bab's claims which attracted the persons or "hearts" of his first disciples. Its setting "in the Word" could be understood to signify the Bab's revealing verses which also attracted the first disciples to him. That this "Sun" turned away from the companions of the Cave "in the direction of camat" (?) may be indic--ative of the Bab's intimate relationship with the Hidden Imam who(cf. below) exists in the region of cama (?). 3.

Two addresses to the <u>ahl al-cama</u> are contained in the LXXVth <u>sura</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u>. In the first of them the Bab <u>calls</u> upon them to hearken unto the proclamation from the point of [the letter] <u>al-ba</u>. (<u>muqtat al-ba</u>! = the 'dot' beneath the —) to the effect that God

^{1.} QA.LXXIII.fol.128a.

^{2.} See ibid. fol.127b. The name ^cAlī Muhammad contains (in Arabic) 7 letters ([1] &[2] J [3] & [4] c [5] & [6] c [7] >).

Throughout his ministry the Bab referred to himself as the "master" or essence of the 7 letters (many times for example in the <u>Kitāb -i Panj Sha'n</u>, cf. QA. LXXVI.fol.135a, LXXXIX.fol.156a).

^{3.} These speculations are extremely tentative.

inspired him to announce his Divinity and that he is the one who sent down the Book (<u>al-kitab</u>) upon the "the greatest Dhikr" or "Arabian Youth" (<u>fati carabi</u>). 1. In the second he announces to the <u>ahl al-cama!</u> that;

"This Sun circleth around the two [Sinaitic] Mounts (al-turayn). And this Moon riseth up from the (loosely) two cama's (cala al-cama'ayn). And this Star circleth around the two heavens (al-sama'ayn)..." 2.

This use of the (oblique) dual of "ama" is fairly rare in the Bab's writings. In the above context it might be translated "two clouds" (= the twin loci of the Bab's reality?) and be indicative of the mystic locale from which the " Moon" of the reality of the Bab (or Dhikr) derives (i.e. the twin nafs of Muhammad and CAlī conjoined in the essence of the Bab?).

Another occurance of the (oblique) dual of cama, it may be noted here, occurs, towards the beginning of the Bab's Sahīfa bayn al-Haramayn (late 1844--early 1845):

"O people of the heavens and the earth! Hearken unto the decree (hukm) of the "Remnant of God" (baqiyyat Allah the Hidden Imam) and enquire about the Path of the True One from the Dhikr of the Name of your Lord (= the Bab), this Arabian Youth (al-fati al-carabi)..the Doubly Backuded Word (al-kalimat al-cama ayn sic!) and the Upright Trace between the worlds (al-khatt al-qa'im bayn al-calamayn the 'letter Alif' [symbolic of the link between the Divine and human realms or standing between the [two] worlds of earth and heaven?)..." 3.

It is clear from this passage that the Bab refers to himself as <u>al-kal-imat al-cama'ayn</u> (loosely ' the **Doubly Bechuded Word** '). He may mean that he is the locus of being symbolized by the letter <u>Alif</u> (= the Word, <u>al-kalimat</u>) between the two (letter) <u>ba's</u> (= the two <u>cama's?</u>) of the word <u>bab</u> (<u>cf. above</u>).

^{1.} See QA. LXXV.fol.131b.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{3.} Sahīfa bayn al-Haramayn ('Epistle between the Two Shrines[written Between Mecca and Medina]') Browne Coll. MS.Or. F.7 (9),p.6. Aside from this occurance of the dual form of cama! this work contains two addresses to the ahl al-cama! (section VII, p.163 and 105).

In the LXXVI <u>sura</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u> certain verses of the Qur'an which tell the story of <u>Dhu'l-Qarnayn</u> ('The One posessed of Two Horns') are exegetically rewritten. 1. References to the <u>ahlal-cama</u> are read into Qur'an 18:83ff:

" O Solace of the Eye[s]! The people shall ask thee about Dhū'l-Qarnayn. Say [in reply]: Yea! By my Lord! I am the King of the two Originations (malik al-bad'ayn) in the two horns (al-garnayn). I am the elevated Dhu!l-Qarnayn in the two bodies (<u>al-jismayn</u>). I am the [Sinaitic] Fire in the two [celestial] Waters (<u>al-ma'ayn</u>). I am the [Celesial] Water (al-ma') in the two [Sinaitic] Fires (al-narayn). So hearken unto my Call from these two [Sinaitic] Mounts (al-turayn). We verily, established him [= Dhu'l-Qarnayn=the Bab in the land and We , in very truth, bestowed a letter of the alphabet] from the name of the Dhikr upon this Arabian Youth (al-ghulam al- c arab \overline{i} = the \overline{Bab}) such that the ways and means to all ends became his. Say: I verily, when I followed the Path, journeyed until I reached the [place of the] setting of the Sun. I found it setting in the Fount of Salsal [= a paradisical well of limpid water]. At that place I gazed upon the people of al-cama! (ahl min al-cama; lit. people from al-cama) who were gathered about the Fount. I saw them prostrating before God, the Exalted. They spoke to me about the secret knowledge (al-cilm al-mustasirr), [concerning] a letter [of the alphabet] inscribed above the line (al-satr) and I spoke to them of a cipher (ramzan) veiled in mystery (sirr al muhajjab). Then I followed the command (al-amr) until I reached the dawning-place of the Sun (matlac al-shams). I found it [the Sun] rising from the Camphor Fount (cayn alkafur) upon a company of the people of alcama (qawm min ahlal cama). We found that they had no covering [protection from the Sun] save the verse (or sign) of the Divine Unity (ayat al-tawhid = the 'shield of 「WIVI AII У ! ?), an affair mysteriously concealed. They said: ' God, verily, is, in very truth, your Master, nothing is like unto Him'. I said to them: ' He, God, is the True One, no god is there save Him, One Exalted and Mighty. ... " 2.

In this passage the Bab identifies himself with <u>Dhu'l-Qarnayn</u>. The dual form of <u>garn</u> (='horn') leads him to give vent to a variety of

^{1.} The story of Dhū'l-Qarnayn is found in the sūrat al-kahf of the Qur'an (18:83-101). A good many commentators believe that Dhū'l-Qarnayn is Alexander the Great Babi-Baha'i interpretations tend to be allegorically oriented. In a lengthy and extremely interesting untitled letter of Baha'u'llah Dhū'l-Qarnayn is said to signify (on one level) the 'self' or 'person' (nafs) of the Prophet Muhammad who was the possessor of al-nubuwwa ('prophethood') and al-wilaya ('guardianship') and, by virtue of his primordial reality, the Lord of both East and West. (see letter in Iran National Baha'i Archives Private Publication Vol.56 pp.43-67 [esp.p.61ff].cf.also extract from a letter of 'Abdu'l-Bahā in Ishraq Khāvarī (Ed) Mā'ida-yi Āsmanī Vol.2 (n.p.[Tehran] 129 Badī'),p.43

^{2.} QA.LXXVI.fol.133a-133b.The Bab's rewrite of Qur'an 18:83ff is carried further still--details cannot be given here.

of claims connected with his role as <u>bab</u> to the Hidden Imam.God bestowed on him a letter of the name of the <u>Dhikr</u> (a celestial potency?) such that he was able to undertake heavenly journeys or travel on the path of celestial initiation.At the setting-place of the celestial Sun where the Fount of limpid water is located he saw the <u>ahl al-cama</u> and had a conversation with them.Deep qabbalis-tic mysteries were discussed.Then, at the dawning-place of the celestial Sun where the Camphor Fount is located he also met a company of the <u>ahl al-cama</u> who had no protection from the Sun of Reality save the 'shield' of an expression of the Divine Unity (<u>al-tawhīd</u>).While they proclaimed God's uniqueness the Bāb testif-ied to His unity.

The <u>ahl al-cama</u>, it may be gathered, exist at the extreme orient and extreme occident of the spiritual world; those points where the Sun of Reality rises and sets. They are privy to the secret of the Hidden Imam and converse with the Bab about deep mysteries. It appears that the journeys of <u>Dhu'l-Qarnayn-</u> transcendentalised by the Bab-are understood to be expressive of the recognition and heavenly init-iation of the Bab by the <u>ahl al-cama'</u>. In this context it is likely that the <u>ahl al-cama'</u> correspond with the inhabitants of twin cities of <u>Jarbalqa</u> (in the spiritual orient) and <u>Jabarsa</u> (in the spiritual occident) mentioned in <u>Shī'cī</u> traditions (<u>ahadith</u>). They are the company of purified souls that inhabit the interworld of archetypal realities.

Towards the end of the same sura of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u> in which the story of <u>Dhu'l-Qarnayn</u> is reinterpreted the <u>Bab</u> addresses the <u>ahl al-</u>
cama' after stating that he was sent by <u>God from the expected Imam</u>:

".The polytheists (mushrikun) shall ask you, Who sent you unto us? .Say: God the cleaver of the heavens and the earth, from the Proof (min cind hujiat), the expected Qa'im. He, verily, is the True One and I am one of his servants.. And say unto the ahl al-cama: God created you from clay; He will return you unto it and from it He will bring you forth yet again before this sublime Gate (al-bab the Bab). In 2.

^{1.} See for example, H. Corbin, <u>Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shi'ite Iran</u>, translated by N.Pearson (Princeton University Press 1977), esp.p.160ff,258ff.

^{2.} QA.LXXVI.fol.134a.

Here the Bab underlines the essential createdness of the <u>ahl al-cama</u>. Fashioned by God they will be suject to the eschatological 'recreat-ion' and appear before the Bab, the representative of the Hidden or expected Imam.

In a pericope addressed to the <u>ahl al-cama</u> in <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u> LXXVII the Bab seems to teach that these inhabitants of the unseen realm will have a role to play in the eschatological drama. They are commanded to "implant" themselves in the "land of the hearts" (<u>ard al-qulub</u>) from "the richly forrested (<u>alfafam</u>) breast (reading <u>janane</u> 'heart', 'breast' not <u>jinane</u> 'gardens' /'paradises'?) [possessed]of patience (<u>al-sabr</u>) and love (<u>al-hubb</u>), i.e. establish a relationship through the Bab with purified souls in this world (?). This inasmuch as the (eschatolo-gical) "Day of the Bab" (<u>yaum al-bab</u>) is a thing appointed (<u>miqatan</u>) unto (all) the "worlds" (<u>cala al-calamin</u>). When the (last) Trumpet is sounded before the Bab the people will come forth in crowds (<u>afwajan</u>) around him. Perhaps, we are led to believe that the <u>ahl al-cama</u> are, in view of the imminent parousia of the Hidden Imam, to prepare to "return" to earth as helpers of the Bab.

It appears that the Bab, in the LXXVIIIth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma represents himself as the (eschatological?) banner or standard (al-liwa* [?] text unclear) (lit.) " in al-Cama* " as well as the "Absolute Truth" (al-haqq) manifest about the Sinaitic Fire which will be disclosed to the ahl al-Cama* on the "Day of Judgement" (yaum al-dīn). He claims to be the one who proffers the "Cup of Manifestation" (kā*is al-zuhūr) to the "princes of the ahl al-Cama* (al-umara*min ahl al-Cama*). In the following sura he refers to his cause as the "Path of God" (sirāt Allāh) in i Cma** (= the verbal noun of the IVth form of "? = blinding* or beclouded [reality]) or the i Cma* of the mystery inscribed according to the mystery above the lines (al-sutūr) " in the Mother Book (umm al-kitāb).3.

While in a brief address contained in the LXXXIst <u>sura</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u> the Bab calls upon the <u>ahl al-cama</u> to give ear to his <u>Tafsīr</u> from

^{1.} See QA. LXXVII. fol. 135a. This pericope is based on Qur'an 78:16 (for further details see the next few lines of this part of QA).

^{2.} Refer, ibid., LXXVIII. fol. 136a-136b.

^{3.} Refer, ibid., LXXIX. fol. 136b (the text is unclear and the sense of the passage obscure).

" the Point of Water" (nugtat al-ma") which flows from the Camphor Fount" (al-cayn al-kafur) in the LXXXIII sura he exhorts them to hearken to his Call from the "Point of the [letter] al-ba" situated in the midst of the Sinaitic Fire and rewrites Qur'an 12:83 in an abstruse fashion. 1. In the LXXXIVth sura the Shirazi Siyyid refers to himself as the Dove (al-warqa) which warbles in the "firmament of camat " (jaww al-camat) or utters the Sinaitic declaration of Divinity. 2. He also proclaims that he is the Unique One (al-fard) on account of the "Greatest Word" (al-kalimat al-akbar) and speaks of the effect of the "sprinkling down" (arshahti > RSHH) of a reality of his Name (min ismī) upon a hierarchy of cosmological levels; upon(1)the "archetypes of the heart" (? reading suwar al-janan[?]),(2) the "Veil" (al-hijab; concealing the Divine Ipseity ?-- or the -- of the letter al-ba; ?),(3) al-cama; (4) the "Throne" (al-carsh --of Divinity), (5), "Heaven" (al-sama!), (6), the "Earth" (al-ard) and (7) the "Mother Book" (umm al-kitab). On each of these levels this sprinkling down has a powerful regenerative effect. In the sphere of al-cama (here, perhape, the Divine Cloud of Unknowing)it results in the obliteration of الاحار في اعيانا " which may mean that the blindness of (the realm of?) ama was cured. 3. The imp--lication may be that as a result of the Bab's disclosure of the myst--ery of the Hidden Imam through the revelation of verses the sphere of cama! (here 'below' that of the "Veil" [al-hijab]) is no longer (fig--uratively speaking) the blind or beclouded realm of unknowing. 4. In another pericope of the same sura addressed to the "Concourse of Lights" (mala al-anwar) the Bab speaks of himself as (lit.) "the mysteries in the concourse of al-cama'" (al-asrar fi mala' al-cama') concealed about the Sinatic Fire. 5.

^{1.} Refer, QA.,LXXXI.fol.141b,LXXXIII.fol.145a.

^{2.} Refer, Ibid., LXXXIV. fol. 145b. Taherzadeh translates jaww al-cama * "loftiest heights of heaven" (see Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 67).

^{3.} Reading <u>al-aghyar min a vaniha</u> the literal sense would be "(obliterated) the strangers from its (cama s) eyes".

^{4.} As noted above (p.10) the word cama can mean 'to be in a state of blindness'. The Bab was aware of this sense of cama' though as will, I think, be clear, he does not often use the word in this way.

^{5.} Refer, QA.LXXXIV. fol.145b. 146a,147a.

While in the LXXXVth <u>sura</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u>, the Bab is apparently referred to as the "Sun" (<u>al-shams</u>) which is rising up from the "Horizon of <u>Amas</u>, " (<u>ufg al-cama</u>) there is a further address to the <u>ahl al-cama</u> in the LXXXVI <u>sura</u>. Qur'an 14:24 is rewritten in an interesting manner in <u>sura</u> LXXXVII:

"Do you not see how God likeneth the <u>Dhikr</u> to a Tree which hath its root in the breast of the <u>Dhikr</u> and its branches rising up towards the Heaven of <u>CAmal.</u>" 3.

Here, it appears, the Sinaitic Tree (<u>al-shajarat</u>) is symbolic of the <u>Dhikr</u> (here—the Bab?) in the sense of its represent—ing the locus of communication between the Divine (= the "heaven of $\frac{c}{ama}$) and the human realms (= the "breast of the Dhikr").

That, as previously noted, the <u>ahl al-cama</u> are in one sense the denizens of the celestial world is further indicated in the LXXXIXth <u>sura</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u>. After his death the Bab is to be numbered amongst them:

"O Solace of the Eyes! Serve thy Lord until death overtake thee. Then wilt thou, above the [Heavely] Throne, be numbered among the ranks of those of the ahl al-cama who prostrate them—selves before God, the Exalted.." 4.

In the XCth <u>sura</u> the word <u>ama'</u> occurs several times. At one point the Bab is addressed in the following manner:

"By My Life! Thou, verily, art the Star of the Book (najm
al-kitab), the Sun of Heaven (shams al-sama) and the Lightening of CAMA (barq al-cama)... inscribed in the Mother Book (umm al-kitab)... 5.

Not only is he the "lightening of "Ama" " but one nurtured through the " essences of the ahl al-cama" " (jawahir ahl al-cama*). 6. The ahl al-cama are introduced into the following version of Qur'an 12:90:

^{1.} QA.LXXXV.fol.148a. cf. Qur'an 81:21f.

^{2.} See QA. LXXXVI.fol.150a.

^{3.} QA.LXXXVII.fol.151b.

^{4.} QA,LXXXVIII.fol.167a.cf. also LXXXIX.fol.155a-b.

^{5.} QA. XC.fol.157b.

^{6.} QA. XC.fol. 158b. This appears to be the sense of part of an address to the "people of peace" (ahl al-salam).

"O Solace of the Eye[s]! The ahl al-cama' will say:
'Art thou indeed the Jospeh of the Divine Unicity
(yūsuf al-ahadiyya)?' Say: 'Yea! By my Lord! I am
the fourfold form (shakl al-rubc) in the Joseph
of Origination (yūsuf al-badc) and this is my brother
the threefold form (shakl al-thulth) in shape of
finality (surat al-khatm — or 'image of the seal').
God hath graciously bestowed upon me [= the Bab] the
double mystery (al-sirrayn) in the two [Sinaitic]
Mounts (al-turayn) and the dual names (al-ismayn)
in the two luminaries (al-nayyirayn).God will not
suffer the reward of such righteous ones as believe
in the Bab and are steadfast in the Book to be lost,
even, in very truth, to the extent of a speck on a
date-stone." 1.

Here the ahl al-cama! are represented as asking the Bab whether he is the Joseph of the Divine Unicity (yusuf al-ahadiyya). He is to say that he is indeed the "fourfold form in the Joseph of origination" and that his "brother" is the "threefold form in the shape of finality". This in the light of the fact that his reality is twofold or possessed of two names. In effect that Bab is to state that he, as the bab to the hidden Imam and one named Call Muhammad, is the locus of the kalimat al-tawhid (= the mystery of the 4 words which make up All VI all V [= one one level, the shakl al-rubc] and the secret of its 3 'root letters'), d and > [= one one level the shakl al-thulth]) in human form (= 'in the shape of finality' or 'image of the seal = the letter 🕨 = 🖈 as the talismanic sign of humanity?) or the representative of the potencies enshrined in the principles of nubuwwa (= the 4 letters of Muhammad= on one level the shakl al-rubc) and wilaya (= the 3 letters of call = on one level the shakl al-thulth). 2. In talismanic terms he is to indicate to the ahlal-cama! his intimate relationship with the hidden "Joseph" (= Imam Husayn or the expected Imam).

It is in the context of difficult Sinaitic imagery and talismanic terminol—ogy that the term cama coccurs in the XCI st sura of the Qayyum al-Asma.

The Bab is referred to as one who cried out and praised God in the [Sinaitic] Mount (al-tur), the Point of the Gate (nugtat al-bab) nigh unto the

^{1.} QA.XC.fol. 158b. In Qur'an 12:90, of which this pericope is a rewrite, Joseph's brothers discover his identity. Joseph clearly states his identity and refers to Benjamin as his brother.

^{2.} cf. QA. LXXVII.fol.136a, 140a. Sahifa bayn al-Haramayn (Browne Coll.MS. Or. F.7.[9]),p.27ff.esp.p.35-7; Letter of 'CAbdu'l-Baha in Ishraq Khavari (Ed) Ma'ida-yi Asmanī Vol. 9 (n.p.[Tehran] 129 Badīc),pp.45-47. For some details on the use of such expressions as shakl al-rubc and shakl al-thulth in the writings of the Bab and Baha'u'llah see S.Lambden, A Tablet of Baha'u'llah on the Mission of Moses (forthcoming in Baha'i Studies Bulletin).

[Sinaitic] Tree (al-shajarat) planted in the land of cama... l. He is instructed by God to make the following claim: I, verily, am the threefold form (al-shakl al-thulth) amesomely inscribed in the sanctified cama! (al-quds al-cama!)... l. His name call (here = the "threefold form"?) or the alphabetic locus of his being (= J J and D as the 'essence' of the kalimat al-tawhīd?) it may be deduced, is inscribed in the sanctified sphere of cama! or (perhaps?) in the hidden sanctuary within the realm of cama! On account of the Bab's crying out as the Bird (al-dīk) perched on a crimson leaf of the blessed Sinaitic Tree "al-cama! and its people" (al-cama! wa ahliha) utter plaintive sighs. Similar imagery is found in a pericope of Qayyum al-Asma! XCII:

"O People of Ridwan! Hearken unto my Call from this Bird (al-tair) which, with the permission of God, flappeth its wings in the Point of the Air of al-cama' (fl nuctat al-hawa' min al-cama')." 5.

Allusion may be made to the <u>Hadīth of ^Camā</u>' (see below) in view of the fact that the Bāb is represented as a bird that flaps its wings in the "Air" (<u>hawā</u>') surrounding the *Cloud of Unknowing* (<u>al-^Camā</u>').

Apart from passing reference to the fact that God beareth witness unto the <u>ahl al-cama</u> and the "mystery of the Dove" (<u>sirral-warqa</u>) the XCIII rd <u>sura</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u> contains a reference to the <u>nafs</u> (= 'self', 'locus', 'logos' = the Bab?) which atands upright in the "firmament of cama' ":

"O People of the Earth! Hearken unto this Call [from] the <u>nafs</u> standing in the firmament of <u>cama</u>! (jaww alcama!)." 6.

In <u>Qayyum al-Asma' sura XCV</u> there is an extremely obscure passage in which mention is made of the <u>ahl al-Cama</u> being directed to twice strike the "private apartments" (<u>hujurat</u>) of the people situated around the

^{1.} QA.XCI.fol.159a.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{3.} As indicated above the expression shakl al-thulth is expressive of the three letters of the name call (s+5+5-the locus of wilaya) and/or the three different letters found in the kalimat al-tawhid.

^{4.} QA. XCI.fol.159a.cf. also fol.159b.

^{5.} QA. XCII. fol.160b. cf. also fol.162b.

QA. XCIII.fol.164b.See also. fol.163b.

"two names" (= those living near the Bab?). Light suras later Qur'an 12:102a is rewritten in a pericope addressed to the "Centre of [the letter] Kaf in the Word of the Command (kalimat al-amr = the sof the Qur'anic creative imperative ?). The Bab states that his Qayyum al-Asma or Gommentary on the Sura of Joseph is "one of the tales of al-cama' (anba' al-cama'-Qur'an 12:102a has anba' al-ghayb = 'Tales of the unseen') written upon the leaf of the heart (waraqat al-fu'ad) .. about the [Sinaitic] Fire.." This may imply that the esoteric senses given to sura 12 of the Qur'an are intimately related—as indicated above—to the secret of ama' and the ahl al-ama'. The Bab's 'transcendentalisation' of the Joseph story is closely connected with the mystery of the Hidden Imam (or Imam Husayn) and the sphere of the 'Cloud of Unknowing' (al-cama').

The CVIIIth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma contains a pericope addressed to the ahl al-Cama; and one in which the "people attracted by the Temple of the Divine Unity (haykal al-tawhid)" are exhorted to hearken unto the Sinaitic proclamation of the Bab. The Bab represents himself as a "Golden Leaf sprung up through the crimson oil of the [Sinaitic] Tree which moveth in the firmament of cama; (jaww al-cama;). The roots of this Sinaitic Tree reach down to earth though it was planted by the hands of the Dhikr and reaches up into the "air of cama; " (al-hawa; min al-cama; — the "air" about the 'Cloud of Unknowing; cf. the HadIth of cama;). A symbol of the link between the celestial and the terrestrial and the person of the Bab the Sinaitic Tree (al-shajarat) is rooted in the heart of the Shirazi Siyyid who is in communication with the realm about cama; the sphere of the 'Cloud of Unknowing'.

In the same <u>sura</u> (CVIII) the Bab refers to himself as the "most concealed mystery (<u>al-sirr fi mustasirr al-sirr</u>) inscribed upon the

^{1.} QA. XCV.fol.168a. The context is apparently eschatological. cf.also the pericope addressed to the ahl al-cama*in ibid., fol.168b.

^{2.} QA. CIII.fol. 184a-b.

^{3.} QA.CV also contains (unless al-culama' be the correct reading) the following rewrite of Qur'an 12:106a, "We did not find most of al-cama' (= the ahl al-cama'?) prostrating before God on account of the Word of the Bab (kalimat al-bab). The meaning is not clear (see fol. 188a).

^{4.} See QA. CVIII.fol.192b, 193a (cf. above [p.63] on QA.LXXXXVII.fol. 151b and Qur'an 14:24).

line beneath <u>al-cama</u>, beyond the heavenly realm (<u>al-sama</u>), and the "glorious pearl (<u>al-durr al-jalīl</u>) in the shell of the Friend (<u>sadaf al-khalīl</u>= the 'shell of Abraham')..preserved in the Ocean of <u>cama</u> (<u>al-bahr al-cama</u>) about [the garden of] Eden (<u>hawl al-cadn</u>).." let , furthermore, claims to be the "Bird" (<u>al-tair</u>) in the "firmament of <u>cama</u>" amd, among other things, one submerged in an ocean of crimson musk.

Like sura CVIII the CIXth sura of the Qayyum al-Asma contains many interesting statements expressive of the Bab's earliest claims. In a singularly obscure pericope the Bab at one point speaks of himself as " an ancient fruit (thamarat gadimat) from the Blessed [Sinaitic] Tree (al-shajarat al-mubarakat) dyed crimson in the Fire of the double cama! (bitl-nar al-camatayn -- or, in the Fire of the two cama's)". 3. Here, as in (at least) one other pericope the word cama occurs in (oblique) dual form. 4. Three paragraphs of Qayyum al-Asma sura CIX are addressed to the ahl al-cama. 5. The term cama! occurs in the second of them in which the Bab refers to his ascending up into the " firmament of heaven" (jaww al-sama") and, nigh unto the heavenly Throne (al-carsh), giving utterance to the " secret of the dust" (sirr al-turab) and "mighty secret of God" (sirr Allah al-cazim) among the "concourse of the Air of the elevated cama" (mala al-hawa min al-cama al-cala n). 6. The same word occurs in the context of an address to the "people of the earth" (ahl al-card);

"O People of the Earth! ..God verily, hath sent down verses upon the expected Proof [the 12th Imam] and I verily, with the per-mission of God, caused them to descend via the angels of cama! (mala!ikat al-cama!) unto the heart of my Greatest Dhikr in order that the people might believe in God and in His Book..."

As the representative of the Hidden Imam the Bab is able to reveal verses sent down by God to the Hidden Imam and communicated to him by the angels of the realm of Unknowing. 8.

^{1.} QA. CVIII.fol. 193a-193b. cf. above. As a siyyid the Bab was also a descendent of Abraham (according to Muslim genealogy).

^{2.} Ibid., fol.194a.

^{3.} QA. CIX.fol. 196a.

^{4.} See above p.58 (on QA. LXXV.fol.131b.).

^{5.} See QA. CIX.fols. 195b-196a,197a.

^{6.} This may indicate the the Bab announced his babhood unto the dwellers of the celestial region around the 'Cloud of Unknowing'.

^{7.} QA. CIX.fol.196b.

^{8.} The final, CXIth <u>sura</u> of the <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u> also contains a pericope addressed to the <u>ahl al-cama</u> (see fol.200b).

The word cama occurs about ten times in the Bab's early Tafsīr Bismillah. It is associated with the sphere in which the "hidden [letter] alif" (= the f of rot written in) is con--cealed.i.e. in the "pristine seclusion" (al-hajb al-bahtat) and the " pure cama'" (al-cama' al-sirfat). 1. On another level this same "hidden alif " symbolizes the " first Tree which emerged from the Sinaitic Mount" the taste or fruits of which may be experienced in the "orchards of glory" (hada'yiq al-baha') though it is hidden in the " seclusion of cama" (hajb al-cama").2. When related to the sphere of the Divine Unicity (al-wahidiyya) it exists beneath the c_{ama} of [the Divine] Grandeur" (c_{ama} al- c_{azimat}). 3. The letter c_{ama} of represents the manifest "essence of God" (dhat Allah), the Prophet Muhammad, the "abyss of the ocean of the Divine Unicity" (lujjat bahr al-ahadiyya) , the "sanctified manifestation of the Divine Ipseity" (sirf zuhur al-huwiyya) and the " c ama of the pristine divine Perpetuity" ([reading] cama baht al-samadiyya). 4 The final letter of , the f , is indicative the "glory of God" (majd Allah) and the wilaya of Imam CAll in the "cama' of[the realm of] Lahut " (cama' al-lahut). 5.

While the initial alif of Allah in is equated with the "benefits of God" (ala' Allah) and, in this context, mention is made of the "people of the absolute cama' " (ahl cama' al-mutlag), its final letter Ha' () is indicative of the Prophet Muhammad whose celestial reality is the source of all the Divine Names and Attributes in all spheres of existence including the spheres of the "clarity[?] of Jabarut" (reading[?] cardat al-jabarut) and the "cama' (here veiled realm) of Lahut ". 6. Towards the end of the Tafsir Bismillah the expressions "world of cama' " (calam al-cama') and "horizon of cama' " (ufg al-cama') occur in contexts which need not be examined in detail.

^{1.} Refer, <u>Tafsir Bismillah</u>, Tehran Baha'i Archives MS 6014 C .,p.304. (I have also consulted the text of the <u>Tafsir Bismillah</u> in Tehran Baha'i Archives MS 6013 C).

^{2.} Tafsīr Bismillāh, p.327.

^{3.} Ibid.,p.328.

^{4.} Ibid., p. 329.

^{5.} Ibid., p. 334.

^{6.} Ibid.,pp. 338, 345.

^{7.} See ibid., pp.371-2.

Written for Siyyid Yahya Darabi (Vahid, d.1850) the Bab's Tafsir Surat al-Kawthar (Commentary on Qur'an sura 108, written between July 1845 and Sept. 1846) contains over twenty occurances of ama. Towards the beginning of this lengthy Arabic work reference is made to the horizons of the heaven of cama' (sama' al-cama') in connection with the realm of Lahut (the realm of the Divine theophany), the sphere of the "firmament of cama" " (jaww al-cama") and the "accents of the birds of cama' " (ilhan tuyur al-cama'). 1. The first alif of sura 108 on one level signifies the "the favours of thy Lord in the heaven of cama' " (ala' rabbuka fi sama'al-cama'). 2. At one point the Bab swears by He Who (God) made the Bird of amain (tair al-cama) to soar in his breast (sadr).3. He, in the course of explaining the meaning of the letter 🌙 (108:2), mentions of "fissure" (fatg) which God cleft asunder (fatag Allah) between earth and heaven and the shining forth of the "world of cama" (calam al-camat) from the "mystery of the Divine Effulgence" (sirr al-ishraq).4. The letter رو من انعر is, on the fourth innermost level, associated with the (loosely) "incarnation" (hall) of the " First Talisman" (tilism al-awwal) which God veiled through his interior Self (nafs al-batin) and a Bird (tair = the Bab?) which makes mention of the "First incarnation" (hall al-awwal) in the " essence of the air of cama! " (jawhar hawa! al $c_{\underline{ama}}$.). 5. A few pages further on the Bab asserts that his verses are superior to ard independent of the writings of Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i and Siyyid Kazim Rashtī and refers to himself as a Bird which flaps its wings in the "firmament of cama," (jaww al-cama,). 6. On one level, he further teaches, the letter of of word" (kalimat) which exists in the "Tablet of cama'" (lawh al-cama') 7 while the > of is realted to the epiphany of the Divine Ipseity (huwiyya), "light of the morn" (nur al-subh) and one who (the Prophet Muhammad ?) ascended through al-buraq (the 'celestial steed') unto the "heaven of ama'"

^{1.} Refer, TafsTr Surat al-Kawthar (Camb.Univ. Lib. Browne Coll. MS Or F (10)) 7.fol.1 (a), 9(a) and 11 (a).

^{2.} Ibid., fol. 11(b)

^{3.} Ibid., fol. 12(b). The implication may be that the sphere of cama exists in the depths of the Bab's inner being.

^{4.} Ibid., fol.18 (b).

^{5.} Ibid., fol., 22(a).

Ibid., fol., 23(b).

^{7.} Ibid., fol., 28(b).

(sama' al-cama). 1. The Bab is not only a "Bird" which exists in the sphere of the "firmament of cama' "(jaww al-cama') but one who reveals the "verses of cama' " (\overline{ayat} al-cama') 2. and associates himself with the leaves of the "Tree of $\overline{cama'}$ " ($\underline{shajarat}$ al-cama'). 3.

The following comments of the Bab on the letter in in are of particular interest:

"The letter al-ba' () signifieth the land of the Divine
Unicity (barr al-ahadiyya) for those who journey unto God
in the forest of (the realm of) Lahut. It signifieth the
all-enduring land of cama' (barr al-cama' al-sarmadiyya) for
those who journey unto God in the forest of (the realm of)
Jabarut. It signifieth the 'beclouded land[of unknowing]'(barr
al-cama'iyya) for those who journey unto God in the forest of
(the realm of) Malakut. It signifieth the 'land of the Divine
Granduer' (barr al-kibriya'iyya) for those who, with the permission of God, subsist in the land of Jabarut (ard al-jabarut)
On account of the decree of [the letter] al-ba' the horizons of
cama' (afaq al-cama') have been filled through the two archetypal letters (bi'l-harfayn al-mathalayn) and the [letter]
alif standing between the two gulfs (al-alif al-qa'im bayn altutunjayn)."

4.

On similar lines, it may be noted here, are the opening words of a prayer of the Bab written in reply to questions of a certain Sayyid Ja^cfar Shubbar: 5.

" In the name of God. the Merciful, the Compassionate.

^{1.} Ibid. fol. 29(a).

^{2.} See fols., 30(b) and 31(a) where there is also reference to the ahl alcama .cf. also fol. 95(b) and 101(b).

^{3.} Ibid., fol. 96(a).cf. also fol.32(a).

^{4.} Ibid., fol. 35(b) -- a line omitted in the MS Or F (10) 7 has been translated from the MS of the <u>Tafsir Surat al-Kawthar</u> in Iran Nat. Baha'i Archives Priv. Pub. Vol. 53 (p.239).

^{5.} Text in Iran Baha'i Archives MS 6003C pp.316-318.

O my God! Thou art the One Who revealed Thyself unto the inmates of (the realm of) Lahut through the realities of the effulgences of ama (bi-kaynun-iyyat tajaliyyat al-cama); unto the inmates of the forest of (the realm of) Jabarut through the manifest-ations of praise (bi-zuhurat al-thana;); unto the inmates of the forest of the Dominion (ajmat al-mulk) through the grades of Glory (bi-shu unat al-baha;)..."

The Divine Epiphany (tajalli) is pictured as being realized in the hierarchy of metaphysical realms through the agency of various transcendent realities. The 'realities of the effulgencties of cama'' were made manifest in the realm of Lahut.

Among the early minor works of the Bab the term cama occurs in the TafsIr Hadith al-Haqiqat and the Bayan fi ilm al-jawamid.. 1. In the former work the Bab, commenting of Imam CAli's initial cryptic definition of "absolute reality" (al-hacTgat) as the " unveiling of the splendours of the All-Glorious without a sign" explains that " the sign (كثن سبعات الجلال بن غير اشارة (al-isharat) derives from the splendours (subuhat) " and that the "splendours" (subuhat [of the All-Glorious]) are related to the "pristine seclusion" (hajb al-baht) and the " pure cama; " (cama al-sirf) in terms of the "station of the[Divine] Names and Attributes .. [etc.] ". 2. In the Bayan fi cilm al-jawamid.. the one addressed is told that God had bestowed on him the "sprinklings (rashhat) of his lights in the reality of the mysteries" and mention is made of the the "world of the day-blind" (? reading calam al-ajhar); that is (?) those blinded by crimson-coloured radiance of the " Point of cama" (nuqtat al-cama').3.

^{1.} See Tehran Bahā'ī Archives MS. 6006C pp. 74-7 (= Tafsīr Hadith al-Haqīqat = 'Commentary on the Hadith of Kumayl') and pp.81-3 (= Bayān fī cilm al-jawāmid wa'l- Mushtaqat = 'Exposition on the underived and derived [parts of speech]').

^{2.} Refer Tafsīr Hadith al-Haqīqat, p.75. cf. the use of the terms

hajb al-baht and camā al-sirf in the Tafsīr Bismillah (see above,

p. 68)

^{3.} Refer, Bayan fi cilm al-jawamid..p.82. The meaning is obscure. It appears that reference is made to celestial beings who are blind by day as a result of the crimson light of the Sinaitic Fire that pours forth from the "Point of cama" - or "Point of Blindness". There are beings close to the Divine who are blinded by the crimson effulgence of Divinity (?)

Apparently the Bab's first major work in Persian the Sahifa-yi

CAdlivya contains two occumences of the word cama'. In the course of underlining the sublimity and transcendence of God mention is made of the fact that the name Muhammad is a "sanctified name" (ism -i muqaddas) in the "Supreme Concourse" (mala' al-acla - among the exalted heavenly beings) and the "world of cama'" (calam al-cama'). At the end of section I of this work the Bab exhorts the "concourse" (al-mala' - of the people [or Babis]) to purify themselves in the light of the imminent fulfiliment of eschatolog-ical prophecies. He asserts that "..the peacock of ama' (ta'us al-cama' = the hidden 12th Imam?) singeth before the setting[-point] of [the zodiacal sign] Cancer (cind uful al-saratan) and the cock (al-dik) croweth upon a leaf of the branches of the Tree of Blessedn-ness.."

Written around October 1846 for Mirza Siyyid Muhammad Sultan al-culama (the then Imam Jumca of Isfahan) the Bab's Tafsir Surat al-cAsr (Commentary on Sura 103 of the Qur'an) contains four occumences of cama'— all in the course of quasi-qabbalistic inter-pretations of the 73 letters of sura 103. On one level the first letter waw (of wa'l-casr ' By the afternoon..') is said to be the manifestation (zuhur) of the letter ha' (note that foll-ows in self-under the is [God]" the being indicative of the Divine Ipseity) and, as far as the "men of cama' "(rijal al-cama') are concerned, essentially the same (as). While the llth letter, alif, of sura 103 represents (among other things) the "origination of the Divine Will in the world of cama'" (ibdac al-mashiyyat fi calam al-cama') the 20th letter, sin, signifies the "brightness of God" (sama' Allah) in the worlds of cama', baha'(= glory), qada' (= the divine decree), and imda'(= realization). In the course of

^{1.} Refer, Sahifa-yi CAdliyya (n.p. [Tehran] n.d.),p.3.

^{2.} Ibid., p.4. The Sahifa-yi CAdlivya was probably written during the latter part of the Bab's confinement in Shiraz after his return from pilgrimage (l.e. late 1845). At this time he had not made an explictic claim to be the expected Imam. The pericope from which the above lines are translated is similar to that section of the Tafsir Surat al-Bagara mentioned above (p.46).

^{3.} Refer, Tafsīr Sūrat al-CAsr (in Iran Nat.Bahā'ī Archives Priv.Pub. Vol 69), p. 33.

^{4.} Refer, ibid.pp.44,46-7.

commenting on the 34th letter of sura 108 (an alif) the Bab mentions that all in the "kingdom of origination and al-cama" (malakut al-insha' wa'l-cama') humbled themselves before the sublimity of the splendour of the wilaya of Imam cali.

Among the later works of the Bab the term camat occurs a few times in the Kitab-i Panj Shatn-though not very frequently considering the length and nature of this work. 2. In connection with the realization of the "Day of God" reference is made to the contentment of the inhabitants of the all-glorious camat" or dwellers of the cama of the All-Glorious (sukkan camatal-abha). 3. Mention is also made of the inhabitants of the Jabarut of Lahut and the camat of the pure sanctuary of Malak-ut m(sukkan jabarut al-lahut wa camat quds al-malakut). 4. At one point the Bab refers to the firmament of camat 5. and at another to those who say "He[God] is He [God]" in connection with the (letter) al-hat () in the "Glorious camatal () al-hat bitl-camatal-baha!.).6.

Finally, but by no means exhaustively in connection with the writings of the Bab it should be noted that, for example, the term cama! does not occur in any of the following works: Risāla Nubuwwat Khassih, Dalā!il-i Sabca (Persian and Arabic), Khutba-yi Qahrīyya, Bayān-i Farsī (Persian Bayān) Bayān-i cArabī (Arabic Bayān), Kitāb al-Fihirist, Tafsīr Hadīth Man cArafa Nafsahu. Tafsīr Nahnu Wajh Allāh; Bayān cIllati Tahrīm al-Mah-arim; Tafsīr Sūrat al-Tawhīd; Tafsīr Laylat al-Qadr; Tafsīr Sūrat al-Hamd; Lawh-i Haykal al-Dīn; Bayān Mas!ilat al-Qadr; Tafsīr al-Hā! (I & II) — this is obviously not a complete list of the writings of the Bab (unmentioned above) or of those I have examined.

^{1.} Refer, <u>Tafsir Surat al-CAsr</u>, p. 53.

^{2.} The lengthy <u>Kitab-i Panj Sha'n</u> was written towards the end of the Bab's life. I have counted only four occurances of <u>Cama'</u> in the ed-ition published some years ago by the Azalis (n.p. n.d.—see above).

^{3. &}lt;u>Kitāb-i Panj Sha'n</u> (n.p. n.d.),p.17.

^{4.} Ibid., p. 63.

^{5.} Ibid., p.281.

^{6.} Ibid., p.197.

In view of the fact that the early writings of Mīrzā Yahyā were highly regarded by both the Bāb and Bahā'u'llāh and widely read by Bābīs it will not be inappropriate to refer to the use of the term camā' in one of them. 1. Incorrectly privately published as a work of the Bāb what is almost certainly Yahyā's Kitāb al-Wāhid (probab-ly written between 1852 and 1857 at Baghdad [?]) contains a good many interesting occumances of this term and much that throws light on his early claims and role. 2.

The IVth <u>sura</u> of the first part of the <u>Kitāb al-Wahid</u> contains much of interest including several occurances of cama:

"O letter Alif! Hearken unto the call of your Lord from the Sinaitic Tree.. 'No god is there save Him'
..Say: O People of the Concourse.. Hearken unto my call from the Throne of Hahut ('arsh al-hahut)..

the Glorious David (al-dawud al-bahā') [who crieth out], 'I, verily, am the Leaf in the double 'ama'!
(..anā al-warag fī al-'ama'ayn).. I am al-tha'(-al-thamara = Yahyā) in the Glorious 'ama' (al-'ama' al-bahā)... I am al-'ama in Mount Sinai (jabal al-sīnā).... I am the 'ama' of the Divine Unicity ('ama' al-ahadiyya) in the seclusion of the Unseen (fī hajb al-ghayb).. I am al-tha' in the Mount of al-ha'
.. I am the Tree of 'ama' (shajarat al-'ama') through

of the Qayyum al-Asma though there are turns of phrase and expressions not

^{1.} Before his martyrdom the Bab had appointed Mīrza Yahya (c.1830-1912), a younger half-brother of Baha'u'llah, the nominal head of the Babī community. His many writings remain—more or less-completely unstudied.

the Sinaitic Mystery (bi'l-sirr al-sina) in the Mount of al-tha!." 1.

Many similar lines occur in both the first and second parts of the <u>Kitāb al-Wāḥid</u>. ² Only a few of them can be translated here. At various points in sūra IV (A) we read:

"We verily sent down al-ha! [= the Bab?] in the land of ama! (ard al-cama!) for the victory of the Dhikr in the land...

We raised up al-wahid [= Yahya?] in the land of Kaf [= here the Kaf of Kun= "Be!"?] ..in order that he might give Us victory...

Kill the unbelievers in whatever manner you desire for this is indeed a beauteous decree.. Say: O thou Concourse of the people of the Bayan! Enter the throne of al-tha!..The angels have been lined up in the land of ama! (ard al-cama!)...al-tha! hath descended in the glorious ama! (al-cama! al-baha!)." 3.

Reference is also made in this <u>sura</u> to the verses or signs (<u>ayat</u>) which God created in the "precints of the <u>ama</u>'s (<u>atraf al-cama'at</u> --note the plural), the "kingdom of the throne and <u>al-cama'</u>" (<u>malakūt al-cama'</u>) and the Beclouded Land of Unknowing' (<u>ard al-camā'iyya</u>; see pp.25-26).

found (as far as I am aware) in the authentic writings of the Bab. There are many allusions to Yahyā's key titles in this work; most notably al-thamara (= the Fruit[of the Bayan]— frequently indicated by al-thā; its initial letter), al-wahid (= the Unique= abjad 28 like Yahyā) and al-azal (= the Eternal). The author's claims are very similar to those made by the Bab in the Qayyum al-Asma and other early writings.

In terms of the date and authorship of the <u>Kitab al-Wahid</u> the following points are also worth noting. The death of <u>Muhammad Shāh</u> and his
"[prime] minister" are alluded to at several points (see VII(A), p. 28
and cf. for example, VI(A), pp. 22, 24— Muhammad Shāh died on Sept. 4th
1848 and Hajji Mīrzā Aqāsī on August 1st 1849). Various pericopae seem
to reflect the controversy surrounding Yahyā's (illicit) marriage to
and subsequent divorce of the Bab's second wife Fatima (around 1854-5?
——see X(A), p. 41ff; XVI (A), p. 83ff; V(B)p. 124f; XII(B), p. 145f; XVII(B), p. 124f).
What is apparently an address to Baha'u'llah is contained in the second
part of the <u>Kitab al-Wahid</u>: "..0 brother of <u>Wahid</u>! (yā akha wahid)
Weep not and thank your Lord that he hath made you to be numbered among
those who attainted to His[God's] meeting on the Day of Resurrection.."
(XL V (B), p. 229).

^{1.} Kitab al-Wahid(A), IV.pp.3-17.

^{2.} As in the above footnote the first part of the <u>Kitab al-Wahid</u> will be indicated by the letter A. B will indicate the second part. The Roman numerals refer to the <u>sura</u> numbers (not givem in the MS).

^{3.} Yahyā, it seems, anticipated the imminent eschatological battle. It is known that he encouraged a militant Bābism during the 1850 (see VI (A) and cf. IV(A), p.16). I am not sure that al-wahid raised up in the "land of Kāf" is Yahya since the "land of Kāf" normally indicates Kashan or Kirman (?).

At one point in sura VIII(A) the following claim is made:

" I am the Lord of the Worlds and I, verily, created the verses in the Kingdom of the cama's (malakut al-cama'at) in order that you, in your inmost essence, might bear witness that God is the Beloved.." (p. 31).

The IXth sura (A) begins as follows:

" Lam.())[is] The benevolence of God (lutf Allah) in the Tree of al-ha' which descendeth in the glorious cama'(al-cama'al-baha').." (p.35).

Later in this sura we read:

"Render thanks unto your Lord in the mystery of the line (fi sirr al-satr) through the manifestation of al-ba' (bi'l-zuhur al-ba') in the cama'of glory (cama'al-baha) ... We chose you [the Babis?] through the mystery of the command (bi'l-sirr al-amr = Yahya?) a dewdrop (rashhan) in the ipseity of rapture (huwiyya al-jadub) in the cama' of the seal (cama'al-khatm).." (pp.38-9).

At various points in the Xth(A) sura the following lines occur:

"Jim (). The revelation of verses (tanzīl al-ayat) through a sprinkling (rashhan) of the camā of al-hā..

Thus did We ornament the favoured realities of all things (tafdīl kull shay) in the camā of Hāhūt..(camā al-hāhūt)..

Wherefore did We cause the verses to send down upon you in order that the mystery of the Divine Ipseity (sirr al-huwiyya) in the camā of love (camā al-hubb-- or camā al-jubb-camā of the pit?) might teach you (or become known) before the wonderous manifestation. The mystery of the command (sirr al-amr Yahya?) was sent down in the night of camā (laylat al-camā - see Qur'an 77: If)...You [Yahya] are from the mystery which was disclosed in the camā of Hāhūt (fī camā al-hahūt) before the mystery of the Divine Grandeur (sirr al-azimat) in order that the people might be informed of the mystery of the Divine Attractiveness (sirr al-jazzabiyya) in the count-enance of the Divine Unicity (fī talcat al-ahadiyya)...Thus did God cause the Command (al-amr 'Yahyā) to be sent down in the camā (fī al-camā') in the mystery of origination (sirr al-badā')..." (see pp.40-44).

The following verses from sura XI (A) are on similar lines:

^{1.} Reference is also made in <u>sura IX</u> (A) to the <u>cama</u>'s (<u>al-cama'at</u>) being filled with light as a result of the 'spiritual attractions' (<u>al-jazzabat</u>) and the <u>cama</u>' of origination <u>cama al-bad</u> (p. 37). Yahya, at one point (p. 36) is addressed as <u>that al-azali</u>.

"We, verily, have embellished for you the verses through the letters of <u>al-waw</u>. Those who believe in them are not wayward in their deeds. Know that We sprinkled down upon you the verses from the mystery of the line (<u>sirr al-satr</u>) in the Ipseity of Rapture (<u>huwiyya al-jadh</u>) nigh unto the pristine <u>ama'</u> (<u>al-cama'al-baht</u>). "(p.46).

While in sura XII(A) the phrase "decrees of God in the ama" of al-ha" in the mystery of origination before the mountain of the seal" occurs (p.51) we, at one point read, in sura XIII(A):

"Say: O thou Concourse of the assembly of the Bayan! Are you not aware that the angels and the Spirit(al-ruh) have been lined up around the throne of Cama!? Do you not recognise that the Lord hath descended in the Cama of al-ha!?.." (p.56).

Yahyā in this sūra, it appears, also refers to himself as the one whose glory is praised by all who are in the "heavens and ..in the 'Beclouded Realms'" (cama'iyyat) (p. 57) and as al-tha' who reveals verses that form one of the "tales of al-cama'" (see Q.12:/02 and QA. CIII see above, p. 66) (p. 60). He further, in sūra XIV (A) represents himself as the "countenance" (talcat) which cries out in the "land of cama'" (p. 63) and writes:

"This [the <u>Kitab al-Wahid?</u>] is one of the tales which We ornamented for you [Yahyā?] in the land of cama before the countenance of al-hā'in al-waw [> + > = | > |] by al-tha'..." (p.67). 1.

In the last, XIXth sura of the first part (A) of the <u>Kitāb al-Wāhid</u> the following line occurs:

"We caused you [Yahya] to be made manifest in the land of aston-ishment (ard al-badīc), originating from the Ipseity of al-ba'
in al-cama' (min huwiyya al-ba' fi al-cama'). Thus beareth
witness the command (al-amr = Yahya?) from the mystery of bright-ness [or, cloudlessness; sirr al-sahw) in the cama' of efface-ment (cama'al-mahw).." (p.105).

Such are among the more interesting uses of the term cama in the first part (A) of the <u>Kitab al-Wahid</u>. Those in the second (B) part, a few of which may now be noted, are on similar lines.

l.cf. also XIV(A),p.69 where, in a pericope addressed to Yahya as "The Unique Name" (ism al-wahid) the Bab seems to be alluded to as the letter al-ha and Yahya as the letter al-waw (of _________).

While the opening sura of part II (B) of the <u>Kitab al-Wahid</u> contains some abstruse rewrites of passages in the 18th <u>sura</u> of the Qur'an including an address to the "angels of <u>ama'</u>" (mala'ikat al-cama') (p.108) sura V (B) contains a reference to Yahya as the one who illumines all things through "the light of al-tha' in the ocean of <u>ama'</u>" (bi-nur al-tha' fi bahr al-cama') (p.122).

The VIth sura of the <u>Kitāb al-Wahid</u> (B) includes a good many references to Mīrzā Yahyā and a few uses of the term camā as the following partial translation will illustrate:

We sent a luminous that in the land characterised by the letter al-ha's (ard al-ha'iyyat) to the end that all may be illumined through his light (nur)....

I am the Fruit (al-thamara)... I was, through the mystery of al-that in Mount Sinai.. I am the Eternal Fruit (al-thamara al-azali..) I am al-that in the Mount of Fidelity (jabal al-wafa').. I am al-mim which, in [the word] al-thamara is between [the letters] al-tha and al-ra!...

I am the reality (al-macna) in the 'letter ha'-like mounts' (al-jibal al-ha'iyyat) through the mystery of the beclouded realms' (bi'l-sirr al-cama'iyyat)...

O Eternal tha' (tha' al-azalī)..Sing forth with the tongue of the Absolute (min lisān al-haqq), 'I verily am God, no god is there except Me'.I created all things by my Command.Muhammad is My servant and My messenger and the Letters of the Living (huruf al-hayy = the Bāb's first disciples) are My guardians ('awliya'ī')...'..Sing forth [and say].. I am al-ba' in Mount Sinai through the mystery of realization (bi-sirr al-imdā')..I am he who dwelleth in the Mount of cama' (jabal al-camā') in the Sinai of Splendour (sina' al-bahā') through the crimson [Sinaitic] Fire beneath al-ba' (bi'L-nār al-hamra' fī taht al-ba')..." (see pp.125-130).

Within the XIVth <u>sura</u> there are many similar statements:

"In the Name of God, the All-Bountiful, the Most Holy.

We sent down in the heaven characterised by the letter all-ha' (sama' al-ha'iyyat) the letters tha', waw and yaw [and] ya [=? the tha' of thamara, the waw of huwa and the ya' of Yahya- all indicating Mirza Yahya?] in order that all levels of existence might be illumined by his light.

We sent down from his tongue the verses on all sides in order that none might assert that they have not heard the melody of al-tha' (lahn al-tha' Yahya) from the mystery of ama' (sirr al-cama')... We verily cried out through the tongue of the Dhikr (= the Bab?) in the beginning of the Cause...Follow the Dhikr (= the Bab?), O people of the Concourse, if you desire to be informed through a precious sprinkling (rasham) from the Mount of cama' (tur al-cama')...

Follow al-tha; in the land.He, verily, is a servant(al-cabd) before the Exalted Dhikr (li'l-dhikk al-cali the Bab)..

We have heard that some among the people say 'He [Yahya'] is the one whom we were promised by the Dhikr [the Bab] in the mystery of the Book from the 'Mother cama' (umm al-cama'), an ornament in the horizon of Manifestation (ufa al-zuhur). Nay! By my Lord. He [Yahya] is but a servant (al-cabd) of man yuzhiruhu'llah [the expected Babi messiah who, in the station of Godhead will appear at the eschatol-ogical consummation]. Be not in doubt as to that which We promised you [the Babis]. Bear thou witness unto the command [al-amr Yahya's leadership role] before the mystery of al-cama' (li'l-sirr al-cama')...

...He[Yahyā],verily, is al-thā' in the mystery of al-camā' (sirr al-camā')...We created the heavens and the earth in six days then we elevated the throne above the waters in the air..And we completed the number of al-waw (= abjad 6) before the mystery of the Manifestation.And We made him,in the fathomless deep of light (tamatam al-nūr) before the innermost mystery of the[letter] ha' of the Divine Ipseity, the letter tha'...And We, verily, created al-waw from a dewdrop of the effulgence in the pristine al-waw from a dewdrop of the effulgence in the pristine al-waw from a dewdrop of the effulgence in the pristine the light (al-nūr) through the innermost concealed mystery..

O Eternal tha (tha al-azali): Say, unto the Concourse of [the realm] of Hahut [or of al-ha??]..[?, text unclear] to the end that all might be guided by by your [Yahya's] command in the cama of al-ha. Testify within thyself; the mystery of cama before the Lord [Who is] manifest in the wonderous Tree of Light (shajarat al-nur Yahya)....

I, verily, am the letters (huruf) which make up the letters (min al-huruf) before the mystery of cama (sirr al-cama) in the 'Mount of [the letter] al-ha'. I am the letter waw in the word huwiyva (= the Divine Ipseity; the second letter of ...). And I am al-tha from which the letters (ahraf) of every manifestation derive. I am the Point (al-nuotat) from which the Lordship (al-rububiyya) was manifest in the mystery of the line (fi sirr al-satr) before the Attraction of cama (li'l-jauntal-cama) Bear thou witness unto what is in the Beclouded Realms (al-cama iyyat) for I, verily, am a servant (al-cabd) in the dominion of God... I, verily, am the sprinkling (al-rashh) through the Manifest-ation (bi'l-zuhur.)...I, verily, am one withdrawn[?] in the Temple of cama (haykal al-cama)" (see pp.155-164).

<u>Sura</u> XV(B) includes the following lines:.

"The Remembrance of God (Dhikr Allah the Bab) hath been made manifest in the Crimson Tree = Yahya?] before the mystery of al-cama' (li'l-sirr al-cama')... I am al-ba' in the Mount of al-ha'... I am [the realm of Hahut in the cama' of glory (fi cama al-baha')... I am the peacock(al-ta'us) in the cama' of Paradise (? cama'al-afridus)... I am the reality (al-macna) in the Tree of Blessedness (al-tuba) manifest in the cama' of al-ha'.. (see pp.165-8).

Among a good many further examples of Yahya's use of ama' in what I feel sure is his <u>Kitab al-Wahid</u> the following lines may be noted:

He, verily, hath descended in the cama of al-ha. (XIX(B),p.180). We, verily, created you (Yahya!) in the throne of ama! (carsh al-cama!) and we provided for you in the land of glory (ard al-baha!) (XX (B),p.184)...I, verily, was in the paradise of ama! (jannat al-cama!) (ibid.,p.187)...Bear thou witness unto the mystery of the Lord (sirr al-rabb) in the cama! of the Divine Unicity (cama! al-ahadiyya) (ibid.,p.189)...I, verily am the Dove which warbleth and was made manifest in the cama! of glory (cama! al-baha!) upon the throne of splendour. I am al-ba! in al-cama! (XXII(B),p.196)...I am al-ha! in al-baha! (e glory; being its second letter) in the Mount of cama! (jabal al-cama!) (ibid.,p.197)...I am the manifestation in the horizon of al-cama! (ufq al-cama) (ibid.,p.200)...Enter into my land and enter into my cama!.. (XLIII.(B),p.225)..."

It will be evident from the foregoing notes that Yabya made, at least in the <u>Kitab al-Wahid</u>, a very considerable use of the term <u>cama</u>. He was evidently much influenced by its use in the Bab's <u>Qayyum al-Asma</u>! (in particular) though he, in the light of his own particular (early) claims, addedfurther dimensions of meaning to it. Bearing in mind that he claimed to reveal verses and to speak with the voice of God it is not suprising that he explicitly (see above) represents himself as the 'Cloud of Unk-nowing', <u>al-cama</u>. Various lines translated above make it clear that the term <u>cama</u> was used of the Divine Reality as manifest on various transcendent levels of being. The absolute and unknowable Godhead may be min <u>cama</u> but those who represent him may also be said to be min <u>cama</u> (see further below).

The use of the term cama in select writings of Mīrzā Husayn calī Bahā'u'llāh (1817-1892).

As with the writings of the Bab a fairly large number of occurrences of camai are to be found in the massive and largely unstudied corpus of Bahā'u'llāh's writings— especially mystically oriented writings dating from the earlier part of his forty year ministry(1852-1892). Once again only a select amount of largely titled writings (alwah) will be referred to in the pages which follow.

The Rashh-i CAma is, as stated below, the only scriptural writing of Bahā'u'llāh dating from before the Iraq period. As will have been observed the term Cama' occurs three times in this 19 line poem. In the opening line rashh-i Cama' is probably indicative of God, the Bāb or Bahā'u'llāh's own celestial self as the source of divine revelation. The imperative expression in line 10 "Behold the sprinkling of the Cloud of Unknowing' (rashh-i Cama'i bin) doubtless has similar import; divine revelation is being vouchsafed through Bahā'u'llāh (?). In line 14 the genitive expression 'Mystery of the Cloud of Unknowing' (sirr-i Cama') may also be taken to refer to Bahā'u'llāh (as one hidden in Cama'?) Writings of the Iraq (Baghdad) Period (1853-1863).

The Tablet of all Food (Lawh-i Kull al-Tacam)

This important work of Baha'u'llah is essentially an esoteric commentary on Qur'an 3:87 written for Hajji Mīrzā Kamāl al-Dīn Naragī around 1270 AH (= late 1853 or early 1854). In its opening paragraph allusion is probably made to the Bab as the locus of divine guidance when it is menexcited the Letters of Manifestation (ahraf al-zuhur = the archetypal realities ?) in the Incomparable Point of the Realm of Unknowing" (bi'l-nuqtat al-Cama'iyya al-firdaniyya; or perhaps, 'in the Beclouded Incomparable Point = the Bab ?) 2. A few paragraphs later refer--erence to the leadership role of Mirza Yahya (then nominal head of the Babi community) who appears to be "the Light-filled Dove" (warqa' alnura') which warbles beyond the veils of ama'" (hajbat al-cama') is made (MA. Vol. 4. p. 268). At one point Baha'u'llah swears by the "Lord of cama'" (la fawa rabbi'l-cama' cf. for example Qur'an 51:23; MA. Vol. at another refers to (most probably) Yahya as the 4.p.271) and " Countenance of Light in the Heavens of cama! " (talcat al-nur fI samawat al-cama') (ibid.,p.273). Towards the end of the Lawh-i Kull al-Tacam he characterises himself as the " Dove of Servitude" (hamamat al_cubudiyya) which warbles in the " heaven of cama'" (sama'al_cama') (ibid.,p.274), refers to God (?) as the "Sovereign of cama" " (sultan al-cama,) and addresses the ahl al-cama, (refer, ibid, pp. 274-5):

^{1.} For details and full translation see A Tablet of Mirza Husayn CAli of the Early Iraq Period. in Baha'i Studies Bulletin Vol.3. No.1. pp. -

^{2.} Reference may be may to the text in Ishraq Khavarī (Ed) Mā'ida-yi Asmānī Vol.4 (n.p.[Tehran] 129 Badīc),p.265f (Henceforth MA.Vol. 4).

"Say: 'O People of CAma' (ahl al-Cama')! Issue forth from your habitations and present yourselves in the sanctum of Light(li'l-hudur fi haram al-nur; or 'before the Eminent One in the..), the manifest Cama' (Cama al-zuhur), the Most-Great House of God, as hath been decreed, with the permission of God..in the Tablet of the Heart." (ibid., pp. 275-6)

Here the <u>ahl al-Cama</u> are probably to be thought of as the denizens of the unseen world or, more concretely, the Babis (?) who are commanded to present themselves in Baghdad (?) and acknowledge Yahyā's leadership role (?). The expression "manifest cama" could refer to Yahya, Baha'u'l-lah or Baghdad as the source or centre of the Babi world.

The Dove's Ode (al-qasida al-warqa'iyya)

Written during the course of his two year withdrawal in Iraqi Kurdistan (around 1272.AH= 1855 AD) the term cama; occurs a few times in Baha'u'll-ah's "Dove's Ode". 1.

In the first hemistitch of line 3 Bahā'u'llāh refers to the fact that "the musk of camā' " (misk al-camā') has been diffused on account of the the delight of the divine female beloved or celestial Houri lauded in lines l-16 of the gasīda. She, we are led to believe in the second hemistich of line 10, resides or treads upon the "earth" (ard) or region about the "throne of camā' " (carsh al-camā'). It may be that this celestial maiden, symbolic of the vehicle of communication between God and Bahā'u'llāh, is to be thought of as inhabiting the heavenly region of the 'Cloud of Unknowing' (camā') wherein the throne of Divinity exists.

The first hemistitch of the 24th line leads us to believe— the thought is obviously poetic— that Bahā'u'llāh's love and desire for complete union with the divine Beloved was such that the "ocean of camā' " (bahr al-camā') was dried up on account of his intense thrist (for 'reunion'). The mystic cosmology of the Bāb's Qayyum al-Asmā' (and other writings), it may be noted (see above), pictures the celestial scene of God's Sinaitic disclosure from the realm of camā' as being surrounded by an ocean of heavenly water.

^{1.} On this work see J.R.Cole, Baha'u'llah and the Nagshbandi Sufis in Iraq, 1854-6 in From Iran East and West, Studies in Babi and Baha'i History Vol.2 (Ed. J.R.Cole & M.Momen)]pp.1-28; D.MacEoin, A Prov-isional Translation of the Qasīda al-Warqā'iyya.. in Baha'i Studies Bulletin Vol.2. No. pp.

^{2.} See, for example, the text in MA.Vol.4. p.197 (line 3) and p.198 (line 10).

^{3.} Refer, ibid.,p.199 (line 24).

It seems quite likely, especially in view of the rest of the Surat al-Kifaya, that Bahā'u'llāh is here exhorting the Babis (= the ahl al-hā' [al-hā' (of huwa) being the Bab) to ack-nowledge the leadership role of Mīrzā Yahyā who is referred to as the " crimson leaf in the paradise of camā' ".Yahyā certainly, as the Kitāb al-Wāhid makes clear, used this kind of language of himself (see above).

Towards the beginning of the <u>Surat al-Kifaya</u> the following words are addressed to the <u>ahl al-Cama</u>! (= in this instance the Babis?):

"O people of cama!! This is the Paradise of the Divine Unicity (jannat al-ahadiyya), the Orchard of Eternality (hadīqat al-azaliyya): Then dwell therein with the permiss-ion of God ..Hearken unto the captivating melodies of the Countenance (talcat) sitting upon the couch of proximity (sarīr al-iqtirāb), the Point of Manifestation (nugtat al-zuhūr), the mystery of Interiority (sirr al-butūn), the inner reality of the Book (mustasirr al-kitāb): Thus doth God turm you (the Babīs) by means of the two stationary [letter] alifs (bi'l-alifayn al-raqidayn = Yahya and Baha'-u'llāh?) in order that you might know that God is powerful over all things." 1.

This partially translated pericope indicates that the Babīs should acknowledge Yahya's leadership role and accept the mediatory role of Bahā'u'llah. ² Such may also be the meaning of the following paragraph in which the expression "camā'of intimacy" (= Yahyā?) occurs:

"O people of the realms of Being! Eat of the succulent fruit of the Crimson Tree which hath been planted in the land of realization, the Point of Origination, the Sealed Mystery, the Secret of the Divine Decree. Issue forth from your habitations before the Presence (li'l-hudur) in the sanctum of the Divine Decree (fi haram al-qadr), the cama'of intimacy (cama' aluns), as hath, with the permission of God the Exalted, been laid down in the Tablet of the Heart (lawh al-fu'ad).."

It appears then, to sum up, that Bahā'u'llāh during the (mid?) Baghdad period associated the term camā' with Yaḥyā or himself and referred to the Bābīs as the ahl al-camā'. The Surat al-Kifaya certainly suggests

^{1.} Ibid.,p. 278. In a further address to the <u>ahl al-ama</u> Baha u'llah exhorts them (among other things— the text is unclear) to purify themselves (see ibid.,p. 278)

^{2.} Ibid.,pp.278-9.cf. p. 279 where the phrase "incomparable cama'" (cama' al-tafrid) occurs in a difficult context (text also unclear).

this was the case though only further research will serve to confirm or outrule this hypothesis—relatively few of the writings of Baha'u'llah dating from the Iraq period (1853—1863) and currently available.

Tafsīr Hurufāt al-Muqatta^ca/Lawh-i ayat al-nur

Written for Mirza Aqa-yi Rikab Saz Shīrāzi this variously titled Arabic tablet (lawh) which contains explanations of the disconnected letters prefixed to certain suras of the Qurian and (among other things) an allegorical commentary on the celebrated 'Light Verse' (Qurian 24:35) begins as follows:

"In the Name of God, the Splendid, the All-Glorious.

Praise be to God Who created the [archetypal] letters[of the alphabet] in the worlds of cama* (fī cawālim al-cama*) beyond the pavil ions of holiness in the lofty heights of the elevated realm then gave them to drink from the goblet of eternity as ord-ained in the tablets of the decree such that He might bring life to the hearts of those who are nigh unto God in the Jabarut of realization.." 1.

Here we have an interesting use of the expression "worlds of "ama" as the celestial locale in which God created the archetypal letters of the alphabet.

The Hidden Words (Kalimat al-Maknuna)

Originally entitled the 'Scroll of Fatima' (Sahīfa-yi Fatimiyya) the Persian and Arabic 'Hidden Words' consist for the most part of brief ethical pericopae composed by Bahā'u'llāh around 1857-8 A.D. While two of the Arabic Hidden Words (Nos.23& 32) are addressed to the "Son of al-cama' [Yā ibn al-cama'- translated by Shoghi Effendi as "O Son of the Supreme!" and indicative of a member of the human race)² one of them (No. 40) contains an interesting use of the term cama':

يا ابن الاسان أُرْكُض في برّ العبا ثم اسرِع في ميدان السآء لن سجد الرّاحة الآبالخضوع المرنا و التواضع الوجهنا م

^{1.} Text in MA. Vol. 4. p. 49

^{2.} Refer Alwah Mubaraka Hadrat-i Baha'u'llah (n.p. n.d.)pp.22 (No.23), 24 (No.32); trans. Shoghi Effendi, The Hidden Words (Baha'i Pub. Trust London 1975),pp. 10-11 (No. 23),12 (No.32).

Shoghi Effendi's translation is as follows:

" O Son of Man!
Wert thou to speed through the immensity of space and traverse the expanse of heaven, yet thou wouldst find no rest save in submission to Our command and humble—ness before Our Face." 1.

A more literalistic translation would be:

O Son of Man!
Speed through the land of cama!! Then hasten through
the plain of heaven! Yet thou wouldst find no rest save
in submission to Our command and humbleness before Our
Face.

It should be noted that Shoghi Effendi has translated <u>barr</u>

<u>al-cama*</u>, literally," land of <u>cama*</u>, as "immensity of space" in line with the celestial locale of the 'Cloud of Unknowing*(<u>cama*</u>). In this Hidden Word Bahā u*llāh informs mankind that even if they should speed through the most elevated celestial realms—mystically speaking—no purpose would be served in the light of the need to identify with the Bābī Cause which is the true haven of rest. 2.

The [Calamities of the] Exalted Letters ([Musībat-i] Hurūfat-i CAllīn

The term cama occurs at one point in this eight-part tablet (lawh) written in memory of a cousin of Baha u'llah named Mīrza Muḥammad-i Vazir-i Nūrī-- it does not occur in Baha u'llah's own Persian trans--lation (or, more accurately, rewrite) of this part of the original Arabic. 3.

In the course of what is apparently a meditation on the origins, plight, ennoblement and death of man Bahā'u'llāh describes his coming to spiritual maturity. At one point reference is made to God's enabling man to ascend unto the "plains of al-hā, the throne of immortality" (miyādīn al-hā' Carsh al-baqā') and at another it is said that God came to ennoble man by giving him to drink of the "cup of piety" such that he was able to hear the "melody of the Dove in midst of al-camā'" (nagmat al-warqā' fī markiz al-camā').

^{1.} Text in ibid.,p.25; trans. Shoghi Effendi in ibid.,p.14 (see fn.above).

^{2.} It should be noted that the genitive phrase barr al-cama occurs in the writings of the Bab (see above).

^{3.} The text of the Arabic original and the Persian version is printed in Adcivyih-i Hadrat-i Mahbūb/ Prayers of Bahā'u'llāh ([reprint] NSA of the Bahā'īs' of Germany; Bahā'ī-Verlag..Hofheim-Langenhain 1980—136 [Badīc]),pp.217-285.

^{4.} See Adcivyih..pp.235-6.

The Tablet of the Test (Lawh-i Fitna)

Probably written during the Iraq period of Bahā'u'llāh's life this Arabic work comments on the catastrophic nature of the eschatological consummation. Among the many apocalptic calamities that must take place at the year of mustaghāth when the hidden essence of God will be made manifest (presumably through the advent of man yuzhiruhu'llāh) are the darkening of the "suns of radiance" (shumus al-divā'), the decrease in intensity of of the (light of the?) "moons of al-camā'" (aqmār al-camā') and the falling of the "stars of knowledge" (anjum al-culum) in the heavens of the command" (samawāt al-amr). In mentioning these particular 'signs' Bahā'u'llāh probably alludes to the future eclipse of the status of the human luminaries of the disp-ensation of the Bayan. By the "moons of al-camā" leading Bābīs are very likely intended.

The Gems of the Mysteries (Jawahir al-Asrar)

Towards the end of the first part of this lengthy Arabic epistle Bahā'u'llāh addresses its recipient Hajji Siyyid Muḥammad-i Isfahānī telling him to purify himself in order that he might find " the frag-rance of immortality from the Joseph of Fidelity (yūsuf al-wafā') and enter into the Egypt of camā' (fī misr al-camā'). 2. The place in which the Divine Jospeh resides is identified as the "Egypt of camā'". 2.

In the course of expounding the mysteries of them "City of the Divine Unity" (madinat al-tawhid; here the third of the mystic stages) Bahā'u'--llāh comments on the outer and inner senses of the occultation of the 12th Imam. He explains that all the Prophets (al-anbiyā') are essentially the manifestations of one reality. All the Manifestations of God (zuhurāt) are the bearers of the name Muhammad (the name of the 12th Imam); all have fathers named Hasan (the name of the 11th Imam). They all app-eared from the "Jābulgā of the power of God" (jābulgā gudrat Allāh) and will all appear from the "Jābalsā of the mercy of God" (jābalsā rahmat

^{1.} See Lawh-i Fitna in MA. Vol. 4 (pp. 261-5), p. 261.

^{2.} See AQA.Vol.3.p.27.

Allah). Having made these points Baha'u'llah writes:

Jabulqa signifieth naught but the treasuries of the Immortal Realm (khaza'in al-baqa') in the Jabarut of of 'Ama' and the cities of the Unseen (mada'in al-ghayb) in the Lahut of Loftiness (lahut al-cala). Bear thou witness that Muhammad the son of Hasan (= the 12th Imam = the Bab) was in Jabulqa and hath app-eared from it and that man yuzhiruhu'llah resideth therein until such time as God will cause him to appear with the station of His Sovereignty.."

In this way Bahā'u'llāh demythologises the literalistic Shīcī eschatological expectations. He identifies Jābulçā, the myster-ious celestial city in the spiritual orient of the interworld, with the Jabarut al-cAmā' and the Lāhūt al-cAlā which are indic-itive of elevated heavenly realms. The Bāb, as the expected hidden Imām has appeared from these elevated spheres and man yuzhiruhu' llāh will do so in the future. 2.

Also worth noting is the fact that, in the course of narrating the opposition encountered by the Bab, Baha'u'llah mentions that the ahl al-cama'— here the inmates of the celestial realm (?)—wept over his plight 3. Hajji Siyyid Muhammad is, furthermore, exhorted to call to mind "that which the Dove sang out in the axis of cama' (fi cutb al-cama') with respect to the meaning of the terms "life" and "death"..."

The Sura of Patience/ The Tablet of Job (Surat al-Sabr/ Lawh-i Ayyub)

In this medium length Arabic tablet (<u>lawh</u>) of the late Iraq period the expression <u>Jabarut al-CAma</u>, occurs twice. On account of opposition to the <u>Bab</u> " the pillars of the cities of the Immortal Realm (<u>al-baga</u>) in the <u>Jabarut of CAma</u> " were made to quake and

^{1.} See <u>Jawahir al-Asrar</u> (in AQA.Vol.3),pp.42-43.

^{2.} At the time when the <u>Jawahir al-Asrar</u> was written (most probably between 1857 and 1860) Bahā'u'llāh had not yet claimed to be man yuzhiruhu'llāh himself.

^{3.} Jawahir al-Asrar, p.45.

^{4.} Ibid., p.53. This latter expression is a reference to Baha u'llah himself.

one referred to as the "essence of reality" (jawhar al-haqīqat = Bahā'u'llāh?) is said to be the "possessor of a mighty bounty in the Jabarut al-CAmā' ". 1.

The Tablet of the Maiden (Lawh-i Huriyya)

This absruse writing of this mid-late Baghdad period begins with a prayer in which the word cama cocurs:

"Praise be unto Thee, O our God! O my God! I make mention of Thee at this moment in which the Sun of Thy Divinity hath shone forth from the horizonof the radiance of the Sinai of the Lahut of Thy Oneness and the lights of Thy Lordship have burst forth from the morn of the cama of the meeting of the immortal realm of the Jabarut of Thy Perpetuity (min subh cama liqa baqa jabarut samadiyyatuka)..."

Later in this tablet there is reference to the lamentation of the " purified essences in $al-{}^{c}am\bar{a}^{\dagger}$ " (al-jawhariyyat al-mutahharat fī $al-{}^{c}am\bar{a}^{\dagger}$). 3.

The Tablet of the Letter of Immortality(Lawh-i Harf-i Baqa')

Written in honour of Hajji Mīrza Mūsa-yi Jawahirī and also known as Subhan Rabbī al-Acla ('Praised be my Lord the Most High', the refrain) this rhythmic Arabic work is largely in praise of the "Maid of Eternity" (hūr al-baqā') who represents Bahā'u'llāh's celestial self. Towards its end she is represented as saying:

"You, O Companions of Piety, shall be sorely troubled..

And you will be witheld from the sanctum of the All-Beauteous, in the Kacba of CAma (haram al-jamal fi kacbat al-cama).."

These lines might be taken to be indicative of the fact that the foll-owers of the Bab will be troubled and perplexed with Baha'u'llah's
claim to Prophethood and leadership of the Babi community. By the
"sanctum of the All-Beauteous in the Kacba of Ama" the Cause of
Baha'u'llah is probably intended.

^{1.} Refer, Surat al-Sabr (in MA.Vol.4.pp. 282-323), pp.297 and 309.

^{2.} Text in AQA.Vol.4. (pp.342-50),p.342.

^{3.} See ibid., p. 349. The context cannot be set down here.

^{4.} Text in Ishraq Khavari, Ganj-i Shayigan (Tehran 123 Badīc), p.64 and INBA.Priv.Pub. Vol.36.pp.462-3.

From the Divine Garden.. (Az Bagh-i Illahi..)

This interesting poetic work of the late Baghdad period is expressive of Bahā'u'llāh's claim to leadership of the Bābī community. In the foll—owing line Bahā'u'llāh represents himself as the return of the Bāb who has come from the "Egypt of CAmā', the "Beclouded Egypt":

"Hasten! Hasten! This is the Divine Sweetness (adhb subhani), the Merciful Benevolence (lutf rahmani), the Becoming Elegance (tarz cadhbani); from the Egypt of Ama' (misricama'i)that Shirazi Joseph [= the Bab] come in the dark cloak of the [new?] Name [? reading ba cashwat-i nam = ' with the darkness of the name')."

The Tablet of the Youth of Paradise (Lawh-i Ghulam al-Khuld)

Written during the late Baghdad this partly Arabic partly Persian proclamatory composition was written in celebration of the initial declaration of the Bab (in May 1844). At one point in the Arabic section Baha'u'llah apparently refers to the imminent disclosure of his mission by mentioning that the "melody of Eternity" (saut al-baqa') has been disclosed from beyond the "veils of cama' " (hajbat al-cama') through a "sweet, captivating call" (bi-nida' jadhb malīh). The Persian section begins by referring to the Bab (?) as the "Herald of Eternity" (munadayi baqa') who announces the advent of Baha'u'llah(?) from the "Throne of cama' " (carsh-i cama') the ends with the following Arabic statment:

"God it is who guideth whom he willemunto an elevated and mighty path. Wherefore do We at this moment sprinkle upon the people of ama' (ahl al-cama') that which orienteth them in the direction of the right-side of Eternity and enableth them to enter an elevated realm in the Heaven of Holiness." 4.

The Babis or the inhabitants of the celestial realm are probably intended by this reference to the ahl $al-cama^{\dagger}$ (cf. above).

The Tablet of the Nightingale of Separation (Lawh-i Bulbul al-Firaq)

Also a partly Arabic partly Persian composition oriented around the theme of Baha'u'llah's imminent departure from Iraq (to Constantinople

^{1.} Text in INBA.Priv.Pub.Vol.36. (pp.457-60), p.457.

^{2.} Text in Ishraq Khavarī, <u>Risala Ayyam-i Tis^ca</u> (rep. Kalimat Press 1981 [pp.92-9]),p.96.

^{3.} Refer, ibid., p. 97.

^{4.} Ibid., p.99.

in May 1863) this rhythmic writing contains a reference to the fact that the weeping in the <u>Jabarut al-CAmā</u> (over Bahā u'llāh's exile) is greater than that of Bahā u'llāh's earthly devotees.

The Tablet of the Holy Mariner (Lawh-i Mallah al-Quds)

The term camat occurs in the Arabic section of this well-known though somewhat abstruse Tablet composed in late May 1863 and oriented around the theme of the disclosure of Baha'u'llah's epiphanic status in the face of an unreceptive Babi community. At one point Baha'u'llah, referred to as the "Holy Mariner", is commanded by God teach the "People of the Ark" (ahl alsafinat = the Babis ?) that which he had been taught " beyond the veils of al-cama'" (khalf hajbat al-cama') to the end that they might forsake the " Vale of the Snow-White Sandhill" (wad! al-kathīb al-bayda = Babism ?) and attain a supremely exalted "realm" or "station" (magam = identify with Baha'u'llah).2. Later in this Tablet a "favoured damsel" (huriyyat al-qurb) is represented as having descended from her celestial chambers in order to assess the extent of Babi receptivity to the divine reality of the person of Baha'u'llah. As her findings were negative she, having returned to her celestial abode, fell upon the dust and died as if she had been called by "her summoner in the Lahut of CAmain (or " he that summoned her unto the Lahut of CAmain ?) 3.

The Sura of the Abandonment (Surat al-Hijr)

Written for a certain Husayn at the time of Bahā'u'llāhsquitting Baghdad (May 1863) this Tablet contains a pericope in which Bahā'u'llāh mentions that he would have preferred to leave Baghdad by himself. Were this the case, he meditates, he would not be alone in the sense that he would be accompanied by celestial companions including the "people of the Jabarūt of Eternity and the Malakūt of CAmā' (ahl jabarūt al-baqā' wa malakūt al-Camā')".

^{1.} Refer (text in) Ishraq Khavari, Ganj-i Shavigan ,p.43.

See text in MA.Vol.4.p.336.

^{3.} See text in ibid.,p.338. It should be noted that the many times printed English translation of the <u>Tablet of the Holy Mariner</u> is, at certain points, highly paraphrastic.

^{4.} The text of the <u>Surat al-Hajr</u> is partly quoted in Ishraq Khavari's <u>Ganj-i Shayigan</u>, pp.188-190. It may well be that it is to be dated during the Adrianople period and not around May 1863.

Finally in connection with the occurances of cama in the writings of the Iraq period of Baha'u'llah's ministry mention should be made of the letter to Mulla(Mirza) Muhammad Hadi Qazvini (the 15th of the Bab's 'Letters of the Living'). It contains an explanation of the significance of the hadith "The [true] believer liveth in both worlds" (al-mu'min hayy fi al-darayn) the truth of which Baha'u'llah likens to ".. the Sun which hath beamed forth in this atmosphere which hath been manifested in this heaven which is in this cama'..". The use of al-cama in this context may be an allusion to the person of the Bab or possibly Baha'u'llah himself.

Writings of the Adrianople Period (1863-1868).2.

The Sura of the Companions (Surat al-Ashab)

Also known as the Lawh-i Habīb (Tablet in honour of Mīrzā Habīb[Allāh]-i Marāghī'ī) and written around 1864 this fairly lengthy Arabic Tablet contains several occurances of camā'. Towards its beginning Mīrzā Habīb is exhorted to sing out melodiously and beat rhythmically "in the Jabarūt of Eternity and the Malakūt of Amā' " (fī jabarūt al-baqā' thumma malakūt al-camā').." (presumably in announcement of Bahā'u'llāh's advent).

Several paragraphs later the Babis are addressed in the following manner:

"Say: O People of the Bayan! By God! CALT [Muhammad= the Bab] hath assuredly appeared in a new garment. He, verily [Baha'u'llah] is he who hath been named Musayn in the Kingdom of Names (malakut

^{1.} Refer, Lawh-i Mulla Muhammad Hadī Qazvīnī (in Majmūca-yi Alwah -i Mubarakā [Cairo 1920] pp.346-62),p.355.

It may be noted here that the term cama does not occur in any of the following writings of the Baghdad period -:

Lawh-i Madinat al-Tawhīd; Lawh-i Madinat al-Rida; Lawh-i Haqq; Surat al-Qadīr; Haft Wadī; Chahar Wadī (exc-ept in a quotation [see AQA.Vol.3.p.145]); Sahifa-yi Shattiya;

Kitāb-i Igān; Surat al-Nush; Surat Allah; Shikkar Shikkar Shavand;

Hūr-i Ujāb; Halih Halih Hālih Yā Bisharat; Sāqī Āz Ghayb-i Baqā (assuming the texts I have examined are complete and that I have nt missed any occurances).

^{2.} None of the extant writings of the "Constantinople Period" (mid-1863) which I have been able to examine contain the term cama. It does not occur in the Lawn-i Hawdaj, Lawn-i Nagus, Mathnawi-yi Mubarak.

^{3.} Refer, Surat al-Ashab in Athar-i Qalam-i Acla Vol.4. (pp.1-22), p.6.

al-asma') and al-Baha' in the Jabarut of Eternity (jabarut al-baqa'). In the Lahut of Ama he beareth this name which hath been made manifest in the form of the Youth. So blessed be God, the best of Creators!.." 1.

In another paragraph Baha'u'llah laments the suffering he has experienced, refers to a vision he has had which the ahl al-cama' could not bear to hear and, possibly alluding to the story of Joseph as interpreted in the Qayyum al-Asma'(see above), speaks of his being cast into the "pit" (al-jubb):

"Say: When We communicated but a letter of the vision unto the <u>ahl al-cama</u> they were unable to bear it. They cast Us into the pit (<u>al-jubb</u>) in this

A further reference to the <u>Jabarut of CAma</u> occurs towards the end of the <u>Surat al-Ahsab</u>:

"Say: ..Through him [Bahā'u'llāh]the ensigns of the Cause have been raised up in the Kingdom of Names (malakut al-asma') and the pavilions of glory (khiyam al-majd) have been erected in the Jabarut of Ama')." 3.

Surat al-CIbad

Addressed to Siyyid Mihdī-yi Dahājī during the early to mid Adrian-ople period this Arabic Tablet contains one occurrence of cama!.Res-ponding to a question about the "Great Announcement" (nabā! al-cazīm)
mentioned in Qur'an Bahā'u'llāh writes:

"Say: By God! This is the Announcement (al-naba') which (or Who) was great (cazīman) in the Height of Ama' (cula' al-cama') and mighty (kabīran) among the concourse of Eternity (mala' al-baça')." 4.

He here either represents himself as the "announcement" which was "great" and "mighty" in the "Height of Ama" and the heavenly realm of the "concourse of Eternity" or one "great" and "mighty" who, as the "announcement", resides in these celestial spheres.

^{1.} Surat al-Ahsab, text in ibid., pp.9-10.

^{2.} Surat al-Ahsab, text in ibid.,p.16.

^{3.} Surat al-Ahsab, text in ibid.,p.19.

^{4.} Surat al-CIbad, text in ibid., p.30.

The Tablet of Baha! (Lawh-i Baha!)

Probably written towards the middle of the Adrianople period (c. 1865-6?) this two part (Arabic +Persian) Tablet was apparently (in part) addressed to Khatun Jan Qazvīnī a daughter of Haji Assad-allah Farhadī. In it the term cama cocurs several times. It begins:

"This is the Tablet of Baha'! It, verily, hath been sent down from the Kingdom of Eternity (jabarut al-baqa'). Recite (it), O Concourse of CAma' (mala' al-Cama'), perchance you might ascend unto the heaven of the Command (sama'al-amr) in this atmosphere and be steadfast in the Cause of your Lord, the All-Merciful." 1.

A few lines later, in the course of dwelling upon his sufferings,

Bahā'u'llāh likens his fate to that of Joseph. Echoing certain per-icopes of the Qayvūm al-Asmā' (see above) he speaks of "the Beauty

of Bahā' (jamāl al-bahā'= himself) being cast into the "bettom of

the pit "(ghayābat al-jubb ;see Qur'ān 1215, QA.XI.fol.17). He then,

mystically speaking, advises Khātun Jān (?) to the effect that she

should sendthe "Caravan of Amā'" (sayvārat al-amā' = the company

of those travelling towards the realm of amā', the "pit" see Qur'ān

12: 19) perchance he might be rescued from the "pit" by means of the

lowering down of the "bucket of fidelity" (dalw al-wafā') and shine

resplendent unto all the worlds. The Bāb's esoteric interpretation of the

story of Joseph is applied by Bahā'u'llāh to himself. 2.

The Sura of the Pen (Surat al-Qalam)

Most likely dating early in the Adrianople period this Arabic Tablet contains two occurances of cama. Towards it beginning Baha'u'llah speaks of himself as the "Beauty of God" (jamal allah) which has shone forth from the "horizon of the unseen" (ufg al-ghayb). From an "effulgence" (tajalla) originating with him the "Sun of Might and Grandeur" beamed forth and the "hearts of the people of the Concourse of Eternity" as well as "the sanctified realities beyond the veils of cama' (hacayig

^{1.} Arabic text cited in Ishraq Khavari, Ganj..p.40.

^{2.} Refer, ibid., p.41. The full text of the Lawh-i Baha, has not, as far as I am aware, been published.

al-quds khalf hajbat al-cama,) were created. Later in this largely proclamatory composition the "Pen" (galam = Baha'u'llah as the divine mouthpiece) is, among other things, exhorted to address itself to " the manifestations of Names in the veils of cAma' (mazāhir al-asmā' fī hajbāt al-camā')." 2. They, along with other celestial beings, are commanded to celebrate the "greatest feast" (al-cid al-akbar Ridwan 186?) in which God, through His own Self, proffers the purest of wines (rahiq al-athar) unto those who stand humbly before the "Face of God "(al-wajh = Baha'u'llah ?).

The Tablet of the Spirit (Lawh al-Ruh)

In this fairly lengthy Arabic addressed to an as yet unidentified CAll the word cama occurs in the course of a reply to a question about the divine and creative power. Mention is made of the Bab (as "CAll before NabIl") and of the effects of his manifestation(?) including the fact that the " veil of the coverings of cama' in the celestial realm of Eternity (sitr al-hajbat al-cama fi lahut albaga!)" were rent asunder. 3. There is also a reference to the ahl al-cama who are assumed to be inmates of a celestial realm who might be privy to secret knowledge. 🥙

The Sura of the Robe (Surat al-Qamis)

Probably dating from the early-mid Adrianople period this fairly lengthy Arabic Tablet contains several occurances of the term cama:. Towards its beginning in a pericope addressed to the people of the earth Baha'u'llah apparently refers to himself as "this Golden Thread" [or " Yellow Cord] (al-khait al-safra) in this atmosphere (al-hawa'), which hath beamed forth in this heaven (al-sama') which was disclosed above (or, by virtue of?) this cama! which taketh on a crimson hue in the midst of this Eternity (al-baga') " and which has not been understood or perceived by the radiant inhabitants of the celestial world. 5. It is not clear whether cama in this context

^{1.} Refer, Surat al-Qalam in AQA. Vol. 4. p. 259.

^{2.} Ibid., p.261.
3. Refer, Lawh al-Ruh in AQA.Vol.4.,p.142.

^{4.} Refer, ibid., p.150.
5. See Surat al-Qamis in AQA.Vol.4.p.37. The translation is tentative.

has the general sense of "cloud" or whether it is indicative of the beclouded divinity of Bahā'u'llāh's person —both senses may underlie this difficult passage. In another hardly less obscure paragraph one is mentioned (= Bahā'u'llāh himself?) who is the possessor of a mighty bounty in the "celestial realm of camā' " (lāhūt al-camā').

Around the middle of the <u>Surat al-Qamis</u> Bahā'u'llāh is exhorted to reveal verses in the light of the fact that the "people of the unseen[world](<u>ahl al-ghayb</u>) from the worlds of <u>amā'</u> (<u>min awālim al-camā'</u>) desire to hearken unto his captivating melodies. 2.

At one point mention is made of those who have failed to recognise the divine mission of Baha'u'llah.Babi opposition to his claims was such that, among other things, the "Dove of CAma'" (hamamat al_Cama') was affected. 3.

Among those mentioned in this work is one whose name is eternal in the "jabarut al-cama" " and the "malakut al-baqa"; -probably a Babi, like Baha'u'llah, named Husayn. 4.

Referring to the stunning results of his eschatological self-disclosure Baha'u'llah also mentions the cama'iyyun, loosely, 'inmates of the beclouded realm'-- probably equivalent to the ahi al-cama':

"Say: 'By God! The mount-dwellers (<u>al-turiyyun</u>) of the Sinai of Command (<u>sinā' al-amr</u>) were thunderstruck and the inmates of the beclouded realm (<u>al-cama'iyyun</u>) were made to flee on account of this Divine Power.." 5.

Ridwan al-Igrar (The Paradise of Assurance)

The term cama! occurs once at the beginning of this Arabic Tablet addressed to Mulla Muhammad cAlī, Nabīl-i Zarandī, (as well as one referred to as Radī al-Rūh). God is referred to as the "Sovereign in the Jabarūt of cama!" (sultan fī jabarūt al-camā!).

^{1.} Refer, Surat al-Qamis in AQA.Vol.4.p.38.

Refer, ibid., p. 47.
 Refer, ibid., p. 52.

^{4.} Refer, ibid., p.53.

^{5.} Ibid.,p.56.

^{6.} Refer, Ridwan al-Igrar in AQA. Vol. 4.p. 180.

The Sura of the Pilgrimage (Surat al-Hajj=Lawh-i Hajj I)

Addressed to Nabil-i Zarandi this lengthy Arabic epistle consists. in large measure, of detailed regulations surrounding pilgrimage to the house of the Bab in Shiraz. Within it the term cama, occurs four times.

In the course of proclaiming his mission Baha tu tlah associates the "breezes of God" (nasa'im allah) with the "Ridwan of Eternity" (ridwan al-baqa) and the "Sun of CAma " with the "Plains Splendour" (miyadīn al-sanā:).1. On account of opposition to his claims it is stated that Jesus weeps in the "Jabarut of CAma" " (jabarūt al-camā'). 2.

At one point the pilgrim to the house of the Bab (Nabīl) is directed to pray:

> "With my tongue and my self, my spirit and my body I testify that this is the place at which the inmates of the Jabarut of CAma' (ahl jabarut al-Cama') prostrate themselves as also the inmates of the Kingdom of Origination (ahl malakut al-bada) and those who dwell in the heights of Eternity beyond the abyss of grandeur. " 3.

Later, the pilgrim, having circumambulated the Bab's house seven times, is to testify to the exalted Prophethood of the Bab:

" I bear witness that the Primal Point and our Lord, the Exalted, the Most-High [= the Bab] is assuredly His [God's] Manifestat-ion in the Celestial Realm of CAma' (lahut al-Cama')..." 4.

The Sura of Bounty (Surat al-Fadl)

Probably dating from the mid-late Adrianople period this Arabic Tablet is addressed to a Babī who had rejected the claims of Baha'u'llah. Within it Baha'u'llah swears by the "Lord of CAma' " (= God or the Bab?) and at one point poses a series of questions designed to underline the truth of his mission. It is indicated that his revelation originates in the "midst of ama' " (qutb al-cama'). 5.

Refer, Surat al-Hajj in AQA.Vol.4. p.76.
 Refer, ibid., p.77.
 Surat al-Hajj in ibid., p.92.

^{4.} Surat al-Hajj in ibid., p.95.

^{5.} Text in an unpublished and uncatalogued MS (photocopy in author's possession).

Surat al-Qahir

This medium length Arabic Tablet was addressed to a Babī entitled Qahīr ('Wrathful', by the Bab) during the late Adrianople period—not apparently, unless it dates from the Iraq period, Mulla Rajab CAlī Qahīr, the brother of the Bab's second wife Fatima. Within it Bahā'u'llāh comments on a pericope of sūra XXVIII of the Qayyūm al—Asmā' in the light of the Bab's claims and the gradual disclosure of his prophetic mission. As in the Sūrat al—Qamīs (see above) mention is made of the Camā'iyyūn, the inmates of the beclouded and Sinaitic heights (exalted celestial beings /leading Bābīs?).

"We, verily, [in QA. sura XXVIII) announced unto the servants [Babis] Our latter manifestation [= Bahā'u'llāh]. And We manifested the Mystery (al-sirr) to an infinitesimal degree such that the mount-dwellers (al-turiyyūn) were made to expire [through the Babī revelation]. Then We manifested Our Self once again with the name of al-abhā' [= Bahā'u'llāh]. And We desired that the Mystery (al-sirr) be fully disclosed. Before We manifested it, however, [i.e. before Bahā'u'llāh openly proclaimed his mission] the mpunt-dwellers (al-turiyyūn = the Babīs), were, just as you have heard, thunderstruck, for you [Qahīr] are one possessed of a hearing ear.." 1.

Having interpreted Qayvum al-Asma' XXVIII in this way Baha'u'llah dwells upon Babi opposition to the gradual disclosure of his claims and explains how he kept them secret. He then addresses negligent (Azali) Babis in the following manner:

"Say: O Concourse of Heedlessness!

By God! This Bird is capable of innumerable melodies; accent upon accent and song upon song. Should but one of them be disclosed even to an infinitesimal degree the spiritual ones (al-ruhiyyun), the mount-dwellers (al-turiyyun), the illumined ones (al-nuriyyun) and also the inmates of the beclouded realm (al-cama'iyyun) would assuredly swoon away upon the dust of heedlessness and annihilation; save, that is, those whom God, by the hand of Divine Favour, safeguarded through this Youth made manifest with the name of al-abha' in the Kingdom of Names.." 2.

Later in this same Tablet there is a difficult pericope addressed to the "Concourse of Waywardness" ([Azalī] Bābīs?). Bahā'u'llāh appears to admonish his opponents by referring to their attachment to Mīrzā

^{1.} Translated from an unpublished and uncatalogued MS (photocopy in the present writer's possession). For an English translation of the pericope of the Qayyum al-Asma' cited and commented on by Baha'u'llah in the Surat al-Qahir (and elsewhere—see Gleanings.. Sect. CXXIX) refer, Selections From the Writings of the Bab, p.53.

^{2.} Surat al-Qahir (MS).

Yahya (or possibly the Bab-this is less likely) whose melodies (i.e. verses) were simply those that might have been uttered by any one of the "fowls of cama" (dik min duyuk sic al-cama") or " bees of (the ([Sinatic] realm of) splendour" (nahl min nuhul al-sana! [sic.?] i.e. leading Babis?). Such negligent ones have, on the other hand, rej--ected he (Baha'u'llah) around whom cama in its being (kaynungt), essence (dhat), interiority (sirr), exteriority (jahr), outwardness (\overline{zahir}) and inwardness (\underline{batin}) , along with its attendant fowls (duyuk), bees (nuhul) and birds (tuyur), circumambulate. If, I have understood this paragraph correctly Bahā'u'llah makes the remarkable claim that even the Divine 'Cloud of Unknowing', cama', and all the real--ities associated with its celestial locale, revolve around the exalted mystery of his transcendent being. If Baha'u'llah is not referring to himself but to the Bab the statement is still obviously remarkable. Ama! refers to that exalted sphere which is the Sinatic realm of the Divine theophany. It is presupposed that the celestial domain of the disclosure of Divinity revolves around the Manifestation of God.

The Sura of the Interdiction (Surat al-Man)

Perhaps dating from the late Adrianople period this Arabic Tablet contains one occurrence of the term cama. Those who have journeyed to Baha'u'llah and met him are referred to as the ones who have attained to all good. They are blessed by the "angels of Eternity" (mala'ikat albaqa') in the Supreme Concourse, the "Mosts of Unseen beyond the Pavilion of Ama'" (junud al-ghayb khalf suradiq al-cama') and the "Temples of Names in the Kingdom of Grigination (hayakil al-asma' fimalakut al-vinsha').

The Sura of Blood (Surat al-Damm)

Written for Mulla Muhammad Nabīl-i Zarandī around 1867 this epistle contains a section in which Baha'u'llah associates his person and suffer-ings with those of Abraham, Moses, John the Baptist, Jesus, Imam Husayn and the Bab. In identifying himself with Joseph he, as in the <u>Surat al-Ashab</u> (see above, p.93) makes mention of the <u>ahl al-ama</u> and alludes to the Qur'anic account of Joseph's vision as interpreted in the <u>Qayyum</u>

^{1.} Surat al-Manc (MS).

Asma' (see above):

"Again Thou didst cast me into the prison-cell of the ungodly for no reason except that I [Bahā'u'llāh Joseph] was moved to whisper into the ears of the ahl al-camā' an intimation of the vision (al-ruya';cf. Joseph's dream) with which Thou hadst, through Thy knowledge, inspired Me, and revealed to Me its meaning through the potency of Thy Might." 1.

Here Baha'u'llah typologically equates Joseph's dream with a vision that was related to the <u>ahl al-cama</u>, the celestial archetypes of Joseph's brothers, and which led to his/Joseph's being imprisoned with the ungodly (cf. Qur'an 12: 4-5,32f).

The Sura of Afflictions (Surat al-Ahzan)

Apparently addressed to Mirzā cali Maraghā'i, Sayyāh and largely dealing with the opposition of Azalis this Arabic Tablet contains one occurronce of camā':

"O Thou Swimmer of the Divine Unicity (sabbah al-ahadiyya)!
Swim in the fathomless deep of Grandeur which hath 'been made manifest through My All-Glorious Name and on which the arks of Eternity hath sailed! Upon it travelleth those servants who have detached themselves from this world and who have soared up on the wings of holiness unto the vast expanse of this atmosphere which hath been made manifest in this heaven which hath been raised up in this CAMMAI... 2.

The celestial reality of Baha'u'llah's revelation is referred to as a heaven (<u>al-samā'</u>) which has been established in the 'Cloud of Unknowing' (<u>al-camā'</u>) and unto which selfless Babi-Bahā'is have ascended.

Lawh-i Sayyah

Also dating from the late Adrianople period and addressed to Mīrzā ^cAlī Sayyāh this somewhat abstruse Arabic Tablet opens as follows:

" O CAli ! Bear thou witness that I, verily, am the manifestation of God (zuhur allah) in the Jabarut of Eternity (jabarut albaga') and His (God's) Interiority (batun) in the heart

^{1.} Surat al-Damm in AQA.Vol.4.p.63., trans., Shoghi Effendi, Gleanings.. (XXXIX),p.88. I have transliterated ahl al-cama' which, it is of interest to note, Shoghi Effendi translated, "well-favoured denizens of Thy Kingdom"—indicative of (?) celestial beings.

^{2.} Surat al-Ahzan in AQA.Vol.4.p. 221. It may well be that the opening line of the passage translated above should be rendered: "O Sayyah [Traveller] of the Divine Unicity (sayyah al-ahadiyya)! Render Praise [to God] in the fathomless deep of Grandeur.." (cf. Ishraq Khavari, Ganj..p.114-5).

of cama' (fi ghayb al-cama'), the Ancient Beauty (jamal algidam) in the Kingdom of Glory (malakut al-Baha')..." 1.

Bahā'u'llāh makes extremely exalted claims (see also the lines which follow those translated). He claims to be the interiority of God in the midst of the 'Cloud of Unknowing' (al-camā') though this does not indicate his identifying himself with the absolute and transcendent Godhead. In line with the Bāb's interpretation of the Hadīth of CAmā' (see above, p. 44) he's most likely representing himself as the (created and hypostatic) "essence" (dhāt) of God in the midst of the Cloud enveloping his celestial being as a manifestation of the Godhead. He is the "God" in CAmā' as far as mortal beings are concerned. The Bābī-Bahā'ī 'detranscendentalization' of terms indicative of the being of the Godhead leads to their application to his Divine Manifestations.

The term cama also occurs at another point in the Lawh-i Sayyah.

"O Glorious Horseman! Communicate unto the servants [Babis] that which you witnessed on your journey at the time when you travelled from the Orient of CAma (mashrid al -Cama) unto the Dawning-Place of Eternity (matla al-baqa) in the Most-Elevated Heights.." 2.

Without going into details Baha'u'llah meditates upon a mystic journey he made from the "Orient of CAMA'" unto the "Dawning-Place of Eternity". The term mashrid al-Cama is descriptive of the heavenly point from which his journey began.

Lawh-i Sarraj

A lengthy Persian epistle composed around 1867 in reply to questions posed by Mīrzā calī Muhammad Sarrāj Isfahānī this work contains a few occurrences of the term camā. In the course of discussing the power of the Manifestation of God to substitute, transform or negate any one of the Divine Names Bahā'u'llāh mentions that even the "Celestial Realm of camā' (lāhūt al-camā') is submissive before his powerful presence.

^{1. &}lt;u>Lawh-i Sayyah</u> in INBA (MS), Vol.36 (pp. 52-59),p.52.

^{2.} Lawh-i Sayyah in ibid.,p.55.

^{3.} Refer, <u>Lawh-i Sarraj</u> in MA. Vol. 7 (pp.4-118), 0.50.

Mention is also made of the fact that Mulla Muhammad CAll Quddus revealed a few "Tablets" (alwah) at the time of the Babl conference of Badasht (summer 1848). One such Tablet predicts the advent of Baha'u'llah and purports to be "Our Command unto the ahl al-Cama'" In underling the explicitness of this prophecy Baha'u'llah swears by the "Lord of the Throne and the CAma'".

In addition to the titled Tablets of the Adrianople period and among the writings of Bahā'u'llāh translated (in part)by Shoghi Effendi is the following text: 2.

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Shoghi Effendi's and a more literalistic translation of the opening lines of this Arabic text are as follows:

"The Pen of Revelation exclaimeth:
"On this Day the Kingdom is God's!"
The Tongue of Power is calling:
"On this Day all sovereignty is, in very deed, with God!" The Phoenix of the realms above crieth out from the immortal Branch: "The glory of all greatness belongeth to God, the Incomparable, the All-Compelling.."

"The Pen of the Command exclaimeth:
"On this Day the Kingdom is God's!"
The Tongue of Power is calling:
"On this Day the Sovereignty belong—eth to God!". The Dove of CAma!
warbleth upon the Branch of Eternity:
"The Majesty belongeth to God, the Incomparable, the All-Compelling.."

^{1.} Refer, Lawh-i Sarraj, in ibid., pp. 86-87.cf. below p. 56,81.

^{2.} Text from Muntakhabati Az Athar-i Hadrat-i Baha'u'llah (= Gleanings.. [Original Texts] Hofheim-Langenhain:Baha'i-Verlag 1984),p. 31.

^{3.} I am not certain that the (untitled?) Tablet from which this pericope is taken is to be dated to the Adrianople period

^{4.} Shoghi Effendi, Gleanings. (XV), p. 35.

In these lines Bahā'u'llāh represents various realities as announcing the advent of the eschatological fulness of the Kingdom of God. Such a declaration, it is stated, was made by the warqā'al-camā' (lit.), the "Dove of cAmā'" which Shoghi Effendi, it is of interest to note, has translated, "The Phoenix of the realms above " — warqā' being translated "Phoenix" and camā' paraphrastically rendered, " realms above" (in line with the celestial locale of the sphere of camā').

Writings of the CAkka Period (1868-1892).

The term cama! does not occur in very many, if any, of the usually listed major and titled writings of the Akka period of Baha!u!llah!s ministry. The following few notes must suffice as examples of its occurrence in certain of the many thousands of the lesser known alwah of this 22 year period.

^{1.} The term cama' does not occur in any of the following titled writings of the Adrianople period: Lawh-i Amr; Surat al-Dhikr; Lawh-i Ahmad (Persian); Surat al-Dhi'b; Lawh-i Salmān I; Lawh-i Laylat al-Quds (I); Lawh-i Mubāhilla; Lawh-i Gull-i Ma'awh; Lawh-i Hajj (II); Lawh-i Ashraf; Lawh-i Nasir; Lawh-i Tuqā'; Sūrat al-Hifz; Sūrat al-Qada'; Sūrat al-Khitāb; Sūrat al-Jawad; Sūrat al-Zuhūr; Sūrat al-Macani; Sūrat al-Manc; Sūrat al-Ghusn; Sūrat al-Muluk; Sūrat al-Zubur; Sūrat al-Ra'īs.

^{2.} As far as the commonly listed major titled alwah of Baha'u'llah are concerned the term cama' becomes less frequent. This probably reflects a gradual shift away from the abstruse and mystical concerns of the Baghdad period: though highly mystical writings date from all periods of Baha'u'llah's ministry. The following Tablets of the Cakka' period do not contain the term cama'-: Lawh-i Fū'ād, Lawh-i Ra'īs, 'Tablet to the Czar'; 'Tablet to the Pope'; 'Tablet to Queen Victoria', 'Tablet to Mapoleon (II)', Lawh-i Salmān(II); Lawh-i Qinā'; Lawh-i Pisār-Amm; Sūrat al-Sultān; Qad Intaraq al-Mukhlisun ('The Fire Tablet') Lawh-i Ru'yā; Lawh-i Hirtīk; Lawh-i Tibb; Lawh-i Anta al-Kafī ('The Long Healing Prayer'); Kitāb al-Aqdas; Risāla Su'al wa Jawāb; Sūrat al-Haykal; Lawh-i Hikmat; Lawh-i Mawlūd; Lawh-i Basīt al-Haqīqa; Lawh-i CAbd al-Wahhāb Quchanī; Lawh-i Siyyid ibn Muhammad ibn Wāhid; Lawh-i Haft Pursish (Shir-Mard); Lawh-i Ittihad; Lawh-i Cāshiq wā Macshūq; Lawh-i Amwāj; Lawh-i Maryam; Lawh-i Samandar (II); Lawh-i Karīm (II); Lawh-i Amwāj; Lawh-i Jamāl-i Burujirdī (I); Lawh-i Amīn; Lawh-i Manakchi; Lawh-i Jamāl-i Burujirdī (I); Lawh-i Amīn; Lawh-i Manakchi;

Commentary on Select Verses of the Qayyum al-Asma

Printed in Ishraq Khavari's Ma'ida-yi Asmani Vol.9 (pp.47-69) is an extremely interesting commentary by Baha'u'llah on a pericope of the Bab's Qayyum al-Asma'. It probably dates from the CAkka' period and is written in Arabic. At one point within it reference is made to various eschatological signs and their fulfilment.

Baha'u'llah's advent is spoken about in the following manner:

"The Kingdom of existence was irradiated on account of the shining and beaming forth of the Most-Exalted and All-Glorious Beauty of God from the Dawning-Place of CAma (matla al-cama)."

He, it may be gathered, appeared from the "Dawning-Place of CAME", a celestial region which is the source of spiritual light.

The Tablet of the Interrogation (Lawh-i Istintag)

This medium length Arabic and Persian Tablet of the (mid-late?)

CAkka period contains important theological and historical information. The genitive expression "Celestial Realm of Amain (lahut al-Camai) occurs in the Arabic prolegomenon as the abode of heaven-ly beings.

Tablet on the Mission of Moses (= Lawh-i Jinab-i Khalil) 3.

The opening, largely Arabic part of this interesting esoteric account of the 'Call of Moses' (to be vague) is partly based on the Van Dyke Arabic translation of Exodus 3. Without going into

Lawh-i [Siyyid] Yusuf [Isfanānī]; Lawh-i Baqā'; Lawh-i Bismillāh; Sūrat al-Ismallāh al-Mursil; Ridwān al-CAdl; Sūrat al-Acrab; Sūrat al-Amīn [Effendi Baghdadī] Sūrāt al-Wafā'; Lawh-i Ittihad; Tafsir Sūrat al-Shams; Lawh-i Andalib, [I+II]; Lawh-i Aqdas; Lawh-i Ashraf; Kitāb al-Fajr Lawh-i Mīrzā Abū al-Fadl [I]; Lawh-i Burhān; Ašl-i Kull al-Khayr; Lawh-i Tajalliyāt; Lawh-i Maqsūd; Kalimāt al-Firdawsīyya; Lawh-i Tarazat; Lawh-i CArd Bā; Lawh-i Ishraqāt; Lawh-i Dunyā'; Lawh-i Bisharāt; Lawh-i Karmil; Lawh-i Shaykh ['Epistle to the Son of the Wolf']; Kitāb al-Ahdī.

^{1.} Refer, Mā'ida-yi Āsmanī, Vol.9 ([Tehran]129 Badīc), p. 67. There are other Tablets of Bahā'u'llāh in which sometimes extended interpretations of passages in the Qayyum al-Asma' are set down.

^{2.} Refer, Lawh-i Istintag in MA. Vol. 4 (pp. 220-260), p. 220.

^{3.} The first part of this untitled Tablet is printed in MA.Vol.4.pp.38-41 (The printed text is not wholly reliable). In an untitled, uncatalogued MS., contained in the Iran National Bahā'ī Archives (photocopy in my possession)it is identified as a Tablet to a certain Jināb-i Khalīl. A Persian section supplements and completes the Arabic. For details see S.Lambden, A Tablet of Bahā'u'llāh on the Mission of Moses (forthcoming).

details it may be noted that Bahā'u'llāh mentions God's initial Call to Moses from the midst of the Sinaitic Fire(in 'pre-eternity') and then s ates that he was addressed from the Supreme Horizon once again:

"Moses, Moses! Go in My peace and [with] the fragrance of My Garment unto the retreats of My Holiness and the regions of My Intimacy; then unto the Cities of CAMA! (mada!in al-CaMA!), the Kingdoms of My Spirit, the Worlds of Exaltedness the Plains of Flashing Light, the Most-Sublime Heights and the Gardens of Eternity. It is permitted that you [Moses] ascend every Heaven, enter every Ocean, and ride in every Ark but beware, beware, lest you cross over the gulf of the Ocean of Grandeur, approach the Crimson Arks or draw nigh unto the Sacred Snow-White Land for therein is a region (magam; or spiritual station) in which the realities of Names are consumed."

In this difficult paragraph Moses is commanded to frequent all manner of heavenly spheres including the "Cities of [the realm of] CAMA" but forbidden to approach realities symbolic of the Cause and person of Baha'u'llah (= the "God" Moses could not look upon? or this episode transcendentalised? cf. 'Tablet of the Holy Mariner'[Pt.I Arabic], line 8f,, and note the fact that Moses died before entering the 'Holy Land')

"YHVH ("Jehovah') it is Who, from the depth of Ama' (min ghayb al-cama') hath enabled me to hearken unto His Voice and be attentive to his Call but I have neither seen Him nor gazed upon Him.."

This esoteric expansion of Exodus 3:15bx could be taken to imply that Baha'u'llah is the tetragrammaton (YHVH, 'Jehovah' bhidden (in pre-eternity) in the 'depth of the Realm of Unknowing' (ghayb al-cama') Baha'u'llah certainly, in several of his Tablets of the Akka period claimed to be the eschatological advent of YHVH ('Jehovah'). Either God or Baha'u'llah are located in the ghayb al-cama'.

In yet another paragraph of the <u>Lawh-i Jināb-i Khalīl</u>, which likewise cannot be commented on in detail, there is reference to "the inhabitants of My [God's] concealed pavilion (<u>ahl surādiq ghaybī</u>) and the concourse

of My [God's] CAMA'" (mala'al-Cama'i); that is, to celestial beings who are not informed about specially initiated servants of God whom God did not command to prostrate themselves when He created Adam (cf. Qur'an 2:30ff; 7:11ff;15:26ff;17:61ff;18:50ff;20:116ff). Allusion is probably made to the pre-eternal and celestial realities of those who came to believe in Baha'u'llah as the eschatological advent of YHVH about whom the most elevated celestial beings were not informed.

Concluding Notes

We have illustrated below that certain categories of the writings of the Bab contain a good many occurrences of the term cama. In the commentary on the Hadith of cAma! (see above,pp.43 - 46) it is identified with the Divine Essence (al-dhat) and indicative of the absolute and and unconditioned Godhead—though expressive of the created locus of Prophethood. Though cama! is indicative of the Divine Interiority it is to be disassociated from monistic type expressions of the theophany of the absolute and unknowable Godhead. In the Qayyum al-Asma! and other writings of the Bab cama! is not infrequently related to or symbolic of the celestial locale of the Divine Theophany, the Sinaitic heights of the disclosure of the manifestation of the Godhead. It is associated with the sphere of the archetypal realities of the Imams and the realm of the occultation of the Hidden Imam /Imam Husayn. It ________ indicates a beclouded and particularly transcendent celestial realm in which the mystery of the Godhead is hidden.

The following are among the genitive expressions found in the writings of the Bab in which cama; is the governing noun:

cama' al-huwiyya = 'the cama' of the Divine Ipseity'/ 'Ipseitic cama''
cama' al-mutlag = 'the cama' of the Absolute' / 'Absolute cama' '
cama' al-cazimat = 'the cama of the Divine Grandeur' / 'Grandiose cama'

^{1.} Refer, 'Tablet on the Mission of Moses'/ Lawh-i Jinab-i Khalil in MA.Vol.4. pp.38-41.

^{2.} The term dhat, as well as nafs ('self') and kaynuniyya ('Being'), though indicative of the ipseity of the Godhead are, in Babi-Baha'i scripture 'detranscendentalised' or applied to the created locus of being, prophet—hood and the manifestation of God.Leading Babis claimed to be the dhat "essence" of the Godhead and were so addressed by the Bab. In Baha'u'llah's Sahifa-yi Shattiyya (c.1858?) for example, the Bab is referred to as the dhat allah, the "essence of God" (see MA.Vol.4.p.149).

cama al-sirf = the cama of the [Divine] Purity / the Pure cama

camā'al-samadiyya 'the camā' of the [Divine] Perpetuity'/ the Perpetual

[All-Enduring] camā' ';cf. camā baht al-samadiyya =

(loosely), 'the cama' of the pristine [Divine] Eternality '.

Cama al-satr = the Cama of the line

cama al-arsh = the cama of the [Divine] Throne:

cama al-baha = the cama of the [Divine] Glory / the Glorious ama t

In this list it is difficult to decide how cama might be rendered—
the matter is complicated by the fluidity of the Bab's grammarand the
fact that in Babi-Baha'i Arabic genitive constructions frequently are
such that the 'governed term' has adjectival force (as in the Persian
genitive [idafat] or construct state). It would be misleading, in the
light of the theology of cama', the religious ideas suggested by it, to
simply translate "cloud" (or the like). To translate 'Divine Essence'
would also be misleading since cama', though indicative of the 'Divine
Essence', obviously cannot in all instances signify the
absolute and unknowable Godhead. The context and nature of the genitive
construction must determine the nature of the translation in the light
of an understanding of the semantic field and theology of cama'.

CAME occurs as the 'governed noun' in the writings of the Bab in, among others, the following genitive constructions-:

nuqtat al-camā' = "the Point of camā' !

calam al-camā' = the world of camā' !

samā' al-camā' = the heaven of camā' !

jaww al-camā' = the firmament of camā' |

hawā'al-camā' = the atmosphere of camā' |

ard al-camā' = the land of camā' !

barr al-camā' = the earth of camā' !

ufo al-camā' = the horizon of camā' |

afaq al-camā' = the horizons of camā' |

bahr al-camā' = the lightening of camā' |

barq al-camā' = the lightening of camā' |

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{ tair al-camā = 'the bird of cama'
tuyur al-camā = 'the birds of cama'
ta' us al-camā = 'the peacock of cama'
shajarat al-camā = 'the Tree of cama'
sarīr al-camā = 'the couch of cama'
lawh al-cama' = 'the tablet of cama'
ayat al-cama' = 'the verses of cama'
hajb al-cama' = 'the seclusion of cama'

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These expressions cannot be discussed in detail. It may simply be noted that they indicate that cama! is expressive of a celestial realm peopled by heavenly beings and realities; a transcendent sphere indicative of the locale of the enshrouded Divinity but not necessarily the absolute and unknowable Godhead. The following expressions seem more likely to suggest that cama! is an inhabited heavenly sphere—in certain instances—than an abstract term denoting the transcendent Creator—:

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ahl al-cama = the people of cama cf. ahl al-cama al-mutlagerijal al-cama = the men of cama :

mala al-cama the concourse of cama the cama
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Certain texts in the Bab's writings (see above) suggest that cama' is the mystic interworld or (pre-eternal) Sinaitic world populated by lofty divine beings.

The dual form of cama, is not very common in the Bab's writings. How it might be best translated and why exactly it is used is not entirely clear. In certain contexts it might be translated and signify something like, "Doubly Beclouded" [Realm]", "Twofold Hiddeness", "Dual[Beclouded] Divinity" or the like. 3.

^{1.} cf. p.71 (above) - kaynūniyya tajalliyat al-camā

^{2.} cf. p.73 (above) - sukkan cama al-abha.

^{3.} See further below.

In what, as noted, I believe to be MIrzā Yahyā's <u>Kitāb al-Wāhid</u> a good many of the occurrences of <u>amā</u> are derived from expressions found in the Bāb's writings-: i.e. <u>shajarat al-camā</u>, <u>arsh al-camā</u>, <u>malā'ikat al-camā</u>, <u>bahr al-camā</u>, <u>ard al-camā</u>, <u>camā</u>, <u>camā</u> etc.Others, such as the following, are not, as far as I am aware, found therein-:

laylat al-cama' = "Night of cama'" (cf Qur'an sura 97)

sirr al-cama' = "the Mystery of cama'"

tur al-cama' = "the [Sinaitic] Mount of cama' "

jabal al-cama' = "the Mountain of cama' "

umm al-cama' = "the Mother [Foundation] of cama'"

haykal al-cama' = "the Temple of cama'"

cama al-ahadiyya "the cama of the Divine Unicity"/ "Unique cama"

cama al-hat = "The cama of the [letter] Hat"

cama al-hahut = "the cama of [the sphere of]the Divine Ipseity".

Rare in the Bab's writings Yahya makes greater use of the relative adjectival form of cama, amainya (also the plural, camainyat—perhaps meaning something like 'beclouded realm(s)).i.e. sirr al-camainya (loosely), the mystery of the beclouded realm'. He also explicitly, in one way or another, claims to be the Divine Reality hidden in camai. As far as I am aware this claim was not explicitly made by the Bab.

As in the writings of the Bāb the occurrences of cama' in Bahā'u'llāh's alwāh are largely found in abstruse theological contexts. The expression ahl al-camā' (common in the Bāb's Qayyūm al-Asmā') frequently denotes lofty celestial beings or leading Bābīs of greak rank while ibn al-camā' of similar import—only occurs in the 'Hidden Words' (×2). The term camā'iyyūn (loosely), 'inmates of the beclouded realm' occurs in contexts at once suggestive of mystic inhabitants of the Sinaitic interworld and also leading Bābīs. A whole host of genitive expressions with camā' as the 'govern—cd noun' appear to be unique to Bahā'u'llāh's writings; for example—: l.

ruh al-cama = " the Spirit[ual Being in/] of cama !"

^{1.} A good many of the genitive expressions having cama as the governed noun are common to the writings of the Bab and Baha ullah (see above).e.g., sama al-cama; carsh al-cama; bahr al-cama; barr al-cama; mala al-cama; hajbat al-cama;

sultan al-cama' = "the Sovereign of cama'"

ghayb al-cama' = "the depth of cama'"

qutb al-cama' = "the midst of cama'"

markiz al-cama' = "the centre of cama'"

suradiq al-cama' = "the pavilion of cama'"

kacbat al-cama' = "the Kaaba of cama'

misr al-cama' = "the Egypt of cama'

sayyarat al-cama' = "the Caravan/ Travellers of cama'"

mashriq al-cama' = "the dawning-place/ orient of cama'"

shams al-cama' = "the Sun of cama'"

hamamat al-cama' = "the Dove of cama'"

mishk al-cama' = "the Musk of cama'"

Less common in Bahā'u'llah's writings are genitive expressions with cama'as the governing noun. The following instances are known to me-:

cama' al-zuhur = "the cama' of manifestation"/ " manifest cama'"

cama' al- uns = "the cama' of intimacy" / "the intimate[sphere] of cama'"

cama' al-tafrīd= "the cama' of [the Divine] Singleness"/"the

I am not aware of any occurrences of the dual or plural form of cama! in the writings of Baha'u'llah.Quite common however, are genitive exp-ressions with one of the three hierachical metaphysical terms—Lahut,
Jabarut and Malakut— (not significantly Hahut, the sphere of the Godhead or Nasut the human realm)—as the governing noun and cama! as the term governed.i.e. Lahut al-cama!, Jabarut al-cama! and Malakut al-cama!.

These constructions might indicate that the Divine Reality which is (hidden in) cama! is manifest in the celestial worlds; the 'Cloud of Unknowing! can be spoken of as existing in a hierarchy of metaphysical realms. In this light it is also worth noting that Baha'u'llah uses the terms samawat al-cama! ("heavens of cama!), cawalim al-cama! ("worlds of cama!") and mada!in al-cama! ("plains of cama!") though cama! in such cosmological genitive expressions might indicate God as Creator or the beclouded nature of the celestial spheres.

At this point it will be convenient to sum up CAbd al-Bahā's interesting and important note on the linguistic and theological significance of Camā'. quoted in Fādil-i Māzandarānī's Āsrār al-Athar (Vol.4. [Tehran 129 Badīc], p. 394).

^{1.} Mazandarani quotes a few brief passages from the writings of the Bab and Baha'u'llah in which the term cama' occurs (most of them referred to or translated above) under the heading cama' (see pp.391-4).He,

In reply to a letter he had received Abd al-Baha, at one point during his leadership of the Baha'i community (1892-1921), wrote what he under--lined was a very brief explanation of the significance of the term camat. To one addressed as Habib (*O Thou Beloved One*) he stated that in linguistic terms cama: denotes "very light and delicate clouds" (... al-sahab al-khafif al-latif jiddan); the kind that are at one point visible and them invisible depending on the atance of the observer. Theologically speaking, or as far as the opinion of the mystic knowers or philosophers (muhaggigin -- the Baha'is ?) who contemplate cama' goes. this term signifies " the Universal Reality [Godhead] beyond designations" (al-haqīqat al-kulliyat bi-la tacīnāt), the "Universal Reality" which, being uncompounded and absolutely One, is such that its apparent "designat--ions" (tacinat) are not distinct from its "essence" (al-dhat). It is indic--ative of a level of being (magam) in which possibly contemplated "designat--ions" are subsumed in the "Divine Unicity and the CAMA " (al-ahadiyya wa'lcama!)This inasmuch as. " this level of being (magam) is that of the "Hidden Treasure" (al-kanz al-makhfi) mentioned in the [well-known] hadīth . since attributes (al-sifat) are designations (tacInat) subsisting in the Essence (al-dhat) and [theologically speaking] inseperable from it."

In this brief explanation of cama CAbd al-Baha first gives a concrete definition to this term and then bases his theological explanation upon it. Just as cama cama ignify light clouds which come and go so, theologically speaking, are the perceptable Divine Attributes constantly subsumed in the Divine Essence. Indicative of the Divinity cama is expressive of the fluctuating hiddenness of the Universal Reality. It symbolizes the essential oneness of the Divine Essence (dhat) and its privative Attributes (sifat - i salbiyya)

it is worth noting, cites a Tablet of Bahā'u'llāh (oriented around the theme of the need for spiritual unity and loving forgiveness) in which the expressions "Blind Alexander" (? iskandar-i camā') and "Passionate Gog and Blind Magog" (? vajūj-i hawa' wa mā'jūj-i cama') occur (p.393).

^{1.} The hadith mentioned reads, " I was a Hidden Treasure and I desired to be known ...".It is sometimes stated that these words were God's reply (it is an hadith quast) to the (Biblical) prophet David who asked Him why he had created the creation.

^{2.} This explanation of CAbd al-Bahā is in line with the mainstream ShīCī theological conviction that God's absolute Oneness demands that his essential or privative attributes are identical with His Essence—the dogma of the "Unity of the Divine Essence" (tawhīd-i dhatī).

^{*} Add to fn.1. For a detailed commentary on this tradition written by CAbd al-Baha for CAll Shawkat Pasha (early 1860's?) refer, Makatib CAbd al-Baha. Vol II (Cairo n.d.),pp. 2 - 55

In the preceding pages a few examples of Shoghi Effendi's trans--lation of cama' have been noted. They may be summed up as follows-:

- [1] $\underline{ibn \ al-^{c}ama^{\dagger}}$ ("Son of $\underline{c}ama^{\dagger}$)= "Son of the Supreme" (see p.85);
- [2] barr al-cama'("land of cama')= "immensity of space" (see p.86);
- [3] <u>ahl al-cama</u> ("people of cama")= "well-favoured denizens of Thy [God's] Kingdom" (see p.100).
- [4] warqa' al-cama' ("dove of cama') = "Phoenix of the realms above" (see p. 102).

Little can be deduced from these few examples save that Shoghi Effendi's translations of cama' were non-literal and rooted in the theological senses of this term in Babi-Baha'i scripture. In translating cama' as "Supreme" [1] the Godhead or realm of Divinity may be intended. Examples [2] (cama'= [celestial] space [?]), [3] (cama'= "Thy [God's] Kingdom") and [4] (cama'= "realms above") all indicate that he, on one level, understood cama' to be indicative of a transcendent heavenly realm.

In their debate over the meaning and translation of Bahā'u'llāh's al-Qasīda al-Warqā'iyya ('The Dove's Ode') J.R.Cole and D.MacEoin have made a few remarks as to their understanding of the term camā'. Cole has criticised MacEoin for translating amā' (in line 24 of the Qasīda—and elsewhere) by "unknowing" and asserted that ". al-camā' means not, "unknowing", but the unknown essence of God" MacEoin himself, in assessing this criticism, is unsure whether "unknowing" is an inapprop—riate rendering; though he agrees with Cole's definition (al-cama' = the unknown essence of God) he claims that his translation is "a less explicit expression" (for camā') and refers (in this connection) to Siyyid Kazim Rashtī's Sharh al-Khutba al-Tutunjiyya.

In the light of the above it should be clear that Cole is too categor—

-ical in asserting that cama' means. the unknown essence of

God". While, in Bābī-Bahā'ī scripture cama'can indicate the unknown essence

of God it has a wide range of secondary senses that make such a translation

-in certain the logical contexts—inappropriate (if not misleading). Though

cama' often literally means "cloud" and is theologically indicative of the

^{1.} Refer Bahá'í Studies Bulletin Vol. 2. No. 4. (March 1984), p. 44ff.

^{2.} Refer, ibid.,p.

^{3.} Refer, ibid.,p. I have not, unfortunately been able to attempt a study of the Shaykhi understanding of cama; or consult Rashti's Sharh al-Khutba al-Tutunjiyya.

unknown essence of God it has a wide range of other theological implications that invite a variety of paraphrastic translations (including MacEoin's "[Cloud of]Unknowing", see below).

The Bab's commentary on the Hadith of CAma'(see p.43f) disassociates ama' from the absolute unknown essence and associates its sublimity with the locus of being and prophethood. The Bab's use of Cama' in the dual form (cf. Yahya's use of the dual and plural forms) in theological cont—exts raises problems if the meaning of Cama' is alone indicative of God's unknown essence—as do a whole host of other uses of this term in Babī—Bahā'ī scripture.Both Yahya and Bahā'u'llah claimed to be the Divine Reality located in Cama' without intending to identify themselves with the absolute and unknown essence of God ('dhāt al—dhāt') see below,pp.74f.,/oo ,etc).

CABB al—Bahā's explanation of the significance of Cama' is not simply centered on the notion of God's absolute and essential unknowability.(see p. 111).

In brief, Cole's definition of cama' (= the unknown essence of God) is appropriate as an indication of its sense in certain theological contexts, in for example, a wide range of pre-Babl Sufi writings, but fails to account for the variety and richness of its theological and often 'detranscendentalised' levels of meaning in Babī-Babā'ī scripture. Though it is often very difficult to decide how this term might be best translated it is not always to be equated with the "unknown essence of God". It would seem to me that the theologically pregnant use of cama: in a plethora of abstruse Babi-Baha'i texts might lead, for example, to its being translated -: " the Unknowable", " the Cloud of Unknowing", " the Unfathomable", " the Hidden Realm", "the Divine Cloud", " the Beclouded Divinity". " the Enwrapped Essence", " the Absolute", " the Unconditioned", "Shrouded Reality", "the Hidden Essence", "Interiority", "Divine Unknowab--ility", "Dark Mist", " Locus of Divinity", "Cloud", "Hidden Sphere" and "Beclouded Realm" (etc). As previously indicated, only the context in which cama, occurs in the light of the semantic field and theology of its use in doctrinally evolving Babi-Baha'i scripture will serve to suggest most appropriate translation.

^{1.} Possible translations of the dual form of cama might be-: Doubly Beclouded [Divinity/Realm], Beclouded [Duality, Twin Cloud(s), etc.

Finally, I should like to point out that all the above speculations are extremely tentative. Many more texts will need to be studied and more adequately linguistically analysed before the theology surrounding the Bābī-Bahā'ī use of the term "amā' is befittingly clarified. The foregoing paragraphs are no more than rough notes. Amā is likely to remain something of a 'Cloud of Unknowing' until some brave soul determines to fathom its mysteries in a more adequate manner than I have been able.

Stephen Lambden

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RASHH-I CAMA: THE SPRINKLING OF THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING. Provisional Translation

He is God.

- [1] On account of [lit. from] Our Rapture the Sprinkling of the Cloud of Unknowing raineth down;
 The Mystery of Fidelity poureth forth from Our Melody.
- [2] The musk of Cathay hath appeared from the Zephyr; This sweet-scented Breeze raineth down from Our Ringlet.
- [3] The Sun of Oppulence hath arisen from the Countenance of the True One; See thou that the Mystery of Reality raineth down from Our Face!
- * [4] From a Wave[of the Ocean] of the Meeting [with God] the Sea of Purity hath cried out;

 On account of [lit. from] Our Rapture this Precious Favour raineth down.
 - [5] At the sight of the Rose was the Delight of the Wine apparent;
 This Sweet Cipher raineth down from the joyful song of [the letter]
 - [6] The Stunning Trump; The Celestial Rapture; In the Firmament of Heaven they twain rain down as a single blast.
- [7] On account of [lit. from] Our Vieage the diepensation of "I am He[God]" hath commenced;
 The cycle of "He is He" poureth forth from Our [Trumpet-] Blast [or Breath].
 - [8] From the Goblet of the Heart the <u>Kawthar</u> of Reality hath appeared; Out of the Vermilion Lipe [or, Ruby (Wine)] of <u>Baha</u>! this Cup of Honey poureth forth.
- * [9] The "Day of God" hath been fully realised on account of [lit. from] the Effulgence of the Lord;

 On account of [lit. from] the Lament [or, Song] of [the land of?]

 "Tar" this New Beauty poureth forth.
 - [10] Observe the Glorious (bahā'ī) Overflowing! Behold the Beclouded (cama'ī) Sprinkling!

From the Melody of God all this raineth down as a single Song.

- [11] Observe the Eternal Moon! Behold the Prietine Ascendent [Sun]!

 See thou that the Pure Breast poureth forth from the Elevated Throne!
- [12] Observe the Blessed Palm-Tree! Behold the Melody of the Dove!
 See thou that the All-Glorious (abha!) Lament[or Song] raineth down from the Brilliancy of Purity!
- [13] Observe the Iraqi Melody! Behold the Hijazi Tambourine!
 See thou that the Rapture of "La" raineth down from the Divine Hand!
 - [14] Observe the Deified Countenance! Behold the God-like Maiden! See thou that the Terrestrial Effulgence raineth down from the Mystery of the Cloud of Unknowing!
 - [15] Observe the All-Enduring Face! Behold the Visage of the Cupbearer! See thou that the Sparkling Draught[?] raineth dema from Our Goblet!
 - [16] Observe the Fire of Moses! Behold the Snow-White Brightness!

 See thou that the Sinaitic Bosom raineth down from the Radiant Palm [Hand]!
 - [17] Observe the Intoxicating Lament! Behold the Orchard of Ecstasy!

 See thou that the Rapture of Existence raineth down from the Court of [the] Meeting[with God]!
- [18] Observe the [letter] Ha!-like Rosebud! Behold the [letter] Ba!-like Ringlet!

 See thou that the Song of the Flute [-Player] raineth down from the Hollow-Reed of Baha!
- * [19] This is the Overflowing Manifestation! This is the Sprinkling of Manifestation!

This is the Melody of the [Heavenly] Birds that raineth down from the Fount of Annihilation.

PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION OF THE POEM OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, 'THE SPRINKLING OF THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING.' (RASHH-I 'AMÁ').²

He is God:

- [I] On account of Our Rapture the Sprinkling of the Cloud of Unknowing raineth down;
 The Mystery of Fidelity poureth forth from Our Melody.
- [2] The Musk of Cathay hath appeared from the Zephyr;
 This Sweet-Scented Breeze wafteth down from Our Ringlet.
- [3] The Ornamented Sun hath arisen from the Countenance of the True One; See thou that the Mystery of Reality raineth down from Our Face!
- [4] Out of a Wave of the Ocean of the Meeting with God the Sea of Purity hath cried out;*

 On account of Our Rapture this Precious Favour poureth forth.
- [5] At the sight of the Rose was the Delight of the Wine apparent;
 This Sweet Cipher raineth down in view of the warbling of the letter "Rá' ".
- [6] The Stunning Trump! The Celestial Rapture!
 In the Firmament of Heaven they twain rain down as a Single Blast.
- [7] On account of Our Visage the dispensation of "I am He" hath commenced;*

 The cycle of "He is He" poureth forth from Our Trumpet-Blast.
- [8] From the Goblet of the Heart the Kawthar of Reality hath appeared;
 Out of the Vermilion Lips of Bahā' this Cup of Honey poureth forth.
- [9] The "Day of God" hath been fully realised on account of the Effulgence of the Lord;
 On account of the lament of "Tá" this New Beauty poureth forth.

² In the above provisional translation of the **Rashh-i 'Ama'** an asterisk (*) alongside a given line calls attention to an actual or probable variant reading in INBA.MS (See text above and commentary below).

- [10] Observa tha Glorious Ovarflowing! Behold the Beclouded Sprinkling!

 Through the Melody of God all this poureth forth as a single Song.
- [11] Observe the Eternal Moon! Bahold the Pristine Ascendent Sun!
 Sae thou that the Pura Braast sprinkleth forth from tha Elevated Throne!
- [12] Observe the Blessed Palm-Trae! Behold tha Warbling of the Dove!

 See thou that the All-Glorious Lamant rainath down from the Brilliancy of Purity!
- [13] Observe the Iraqi Harmony! Behold tha Hijazl Tambourine!

 See thou that the Rapture of "No" raineth down from the Divine Handl *
- [14] Observe the Deified Countenance! Bahold the God-like Maiden!

 See thou that the Terrestrial Effulgence raineth down from the Mystery of the Cloud of Unknowing!
- [15] Observe the All-Enduring Face! Behold the Visaga of the Cupbearer!

 Sae thou that the Sparkling Draught rainath down from Our Goblet!
- [18] Observe the Fire of Moses! Behold the Snow-White Brightness!
 See thou that the Sinaltic Bosom raineth down from the Radiant Palm.
- [17] Observe the Intoxicating Lament! Behold the Orchard of Ecstacy!
 See thou that the Raptura of Existence raineth down from the Court of the Maeting with God!
- [18] Observe the letter Há'-like Rosebud! Behold the lettar Bá'-like Ringlet!

 See thou that the Timbre of the Fluta [-Player] ravarberatath through the Hollow-Raed of Bahā'! *
- [19] This is the Overflowing Theophany! This is the Sprinkling of Manifastation! *

 This is the Lament of the Heavenly Birds which sprinkleth out from the Fount of Mystical Death.

PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION OF THE POEM OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, 'THE SPRINKLING OF THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING.' (RASHH-I 'AMÁ').

He is God:

- On account of Our Rapture the Sprinkling of the Cloud of Unknowing raineth down;
 The Mystery of Fidelity poureth forth from Our Melody.
- [2] The Musk of Cathay hath appeared from the Zaphyr;
 This Sweet-Scented Breeza wafteth down from Our Ringlet.
- [3] The Omamented Sun hath arisen from the Countenance of the True One; See thou that the Mystary of Reality raineth down from Our Fecel
- [4] From a Wave of the Ocean of the Meeting with God the Sea of Purity hath cried out;*

 On account of Our Raptura this Practicus Favour poureth forth.
- [5] At the sight of the Rosa was the Delight of the Wine apparent;
 This Sweat Cipher rainath down in view of the warbling of tha lettar "Rá" ".
- [6] The Stunning Trump! The Calestial Repture!
 In the Firmament of Heaven they twein rain down as a Single Blast.
- [7] On account of Our Visage the dispensation of "I am He [God]" hath commanced;*
 The cycle of "He is Ha" pourath forth from Our Trumpet-Blast.
- [8] From the Goblat of the Heart the Kawthar of Reality hath appeared;
 Out of the Varmilion Lips of Bahā' this Cup of Honey poureth forth.
- [9] Tha "Day of God" hath been fully raalised on account of the Effulgence of the Lord;
 On account of the Lamant of [tha land of?] "Tá" this New Baauty pourath forth.

- [10] Observe the Glorious Overflowing! Behold the Beclouded Sprinkling!
 Through the Melody of God ell this poureth forth as e single Song.
- [11] Observe the Eternel Moon! Behold the Pristine Ascendent Sun!
 See thou that the Pure Breast sprinkleth forth from the Eleveted Throne!
- [12] Observe the Blessed Pelm-Treel Behold the Werbling of the Dove!

 See thou that the All-Glonous Lement raineth down from the Brilliancy of Purity!
- [13] Observe the Iraqi Harmony! Behold the Hijazi Tambourine!

 See thou that the Rapture of "No" raineth down from the Divine Hend! *
- [14] Observe the Oeified Countenance! Behold the God-like Meiden!
 See thou that the Terrestrial Effulgence reineth down from the Mystery of the Cloud of Unknowing!
- [15] Observe the All-Enduring Face! Behold the Visage of the Cupbearer! See thou that the Sparkling Oraught raineth down from Our Goblet!
- [16] Observe the Fire of Moses! Behold the Snow-White Brightness!
 See thou that the Slnaitic Bosom reineth down from the Radiant Palm.
- [17] Observe the Intoxicating Lament! Behold the Orchard of Ecstecy!
 See thou that the Repture of Existence raineth down from the Court of the Meeting with God!
- [18] Observe the letter Há'-like Rosebud! Behold the letter Bá'-like Ringlet!

 See thou that the Timbre of the Flute [-Pleyer] reverberateth through the Hollow-Reed of Bahā'! *
- [19] This is the Overflowing Theopheny! This is the Sprinkling of Menifestation! *
 This is the Lament of the Heavenly Birds which sprinkleth out from the Fount of Mystical Oeath.

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