

Reform Bahai Faith Forum



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News:

Reform Bahai Faith Forum created for Bahais of all persuasions on August 21, 2011.

"The shining spark of truth cometh forth only after the clash of differing opinions."
—Abdul-Baha

"The conscience of man is sacred and to be respected."
—Abdul-Baha

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The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

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Author

Topic: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi (Read 2295 times)

Jenabe Fazel

Administrator
Jr. Member



Posts: 76



The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« on: January 04, 2012, 10:13:00 PM »

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From a different discussion...

Makes me think of Martin Luther, addressing the Vatican, "What is it about your decadence, depravity, and indulgences you don't understand? And then there's the fraudulent Donation of Constantine... and so forth.

Well, the Bab "reformed" Islam, Baha'u'llah both Islam and Babism, while Abdul-Baha clearly liberalized Baha'u'llah's Teachings beyond what even his father had. Baha'u'llah had emphasized that religion evolves in the Book of Certitude, so Abdul-Baha was not introducing anything without precedent, all of which is implicit in the notion of "progressive revelation."

Yet it's only after the fraudulent will and testament that the hardening of interpretation and fanaticism begins. They're caught in the Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi. Everything they do demonstrates it, though many Americans are fooled by the bureaucratic language that conceals the Shiite forms, knowing very little to nothing about Shiism. As the lawsuit in the Federal Courts showed, they're self-destructing, so I don't worry about them. The more people actually know about the Haifans the less credibility they have.

I'm more interested in continuing to build up the example Abdul-Baha left of a liberal, open, universal Bahai Movement. That's what's needed now that the actual history of events and teachings of Abdul-Baha from 1910 to his death have been recovered.



« Last Edit: March 19, 2012, 06:20:29 AM by Jenabe Fazel »

Report to moderator 
76.112.30.51 (?)

"To be a Bahai simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood." —Abdul-Baha

The Reform Bahai Faith, <http://reformbahai.org/>

pathfinder

Newbie



Posts: 15




Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« Reply #1 on: January 16, 2012, 11:59:12 PM »

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I've commented on this in a different way already, but indeed, I want no part in a Shiite paradigm. It seems Abdul-Baha expanded upon his father's teachings, taking them into the next century. And in a way, that then leads we in the next century now to look at where some of this is relevant. The whole political over organization is not the way to go. While I am sure there are mainstream Bahais and plenty who are earnest spiritual seekers, I also have seen mentions of the apologetics for why no woman can be elected to the UHJ, and for that matter, why there even is this big brother like UHJ. I don't yet know a lot of the background, but isn't there something about small assemblies mentioned in the writings? And for me, just communing online is my own "virtual" assembly. I'm using the technology of the modern era I live in as a tool to commune.

Report to moderator  71.225.44.91 (?)

Jenabe Fazel

Administrator

Jr. Member



Posts: 76



Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« Reply #2 on: January 18, 2012, 09:09:36 PM »

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In terms of women, speaking of one denomination, Professor Juan Cole at the University of Michigan makes some pertinent observations on his blog, *Informed Comment*:

"It gradually became apparent that most Baha'is do not actually believe in the equality of women and men, excluding women from their elective highest body, the Universal House of Justice, and giving speeches about how women have a different function in society than men and how men are the heads of the household." <http://www.juancole.com/toward-an-authorized-biography>

Reform Bahais don't share any of those views. When Baha'u'llah and Abdul-Baha said equality of men and women, that's what they meant, not Shiite Islam in sheep's clothing.

I don't believe Abdul-Baha preferred small communities but spoke of the local level as in control of its own affairs through its elected representatives.



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Posts: 15



Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« **Reply #3 on:** January 19, 2012, 12:36:18

AM »

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Yikes! More evidence that I could never be a Haifan based Bahai. I don't believe in the man is the head of household deal. Quite Christian fundamentalist too, and I run far from them! I know many who do abide by that and just wish them well on their way, but thank you, I'll wear the pants in the family too. I don't get into it, as it's not worth it; I just think to myself, whatever, they can live as they please, just don't tell me what they think I should do. How many women from various religions have been walked out on and left to raise kids? I'd call them the "head of the household"! Not to mention, not everyone chooses to get married, so male or female, they are the singular head of their own households. And I've read some comments from mainstream Bahais, and I see some struggle, and some who unwaiver with the whole apolgetics of women have other roles, and also regarding homosexuality as a whole, as if a homosexual should just be like a Catholic priest and not have a marriage and just suppress their sexual feelings that every human has to some level. I'm certainly not advocating wild and crazy strings of casual partners type deal, but for folks who do have one serious committed relationship, that's a okay with me. And heterosexuals have their commitment issues too, and all sorts of problems in marriages, so there is no perfect state in any of this. I don't stand in condemnation against most people, but okay, murderers and pedophiles and rapists, well, that's another matter. As for small communities vs the local level, would that be analogous to a local assembly? How do Reform Bahais go about with this? And how would one who is removed geographically do so? Is this an eventual aim of Reform Bahai?



Report to moderator  71.225.44.91 (?)

Jenabe Fazel

Administrator

Jr. Member



Posts: 76



Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« **Reply #4 on:** February 02, 2012, 09:54:43

PM »

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Sorry to be so slow in responding... life!

Professor Cole has it right in my opinion when he says there are Haifan Baha'is who believe "men are the heads of the household." Like all the negative stuff, it's not out there in front until one declares.

I agree there's "no perfect state in any of this." When we human beings start thinking we can create a Utopia on earth, history shows that's when innocent people start suffering, usually in terrible ways... I don't believe either Baha'u'llah or Abdul-Baha envisaged a Utopia. They had both had enough of that approach during their lives.

Reform Bahais are pretty scattered around, so assemblies are mostly an eventual aim and serious goal, but real assemblies that are grounded in the democracy that Baha'u'llah and Abdul-Baha clearly respected and admired, without the concealed authoritarianism.



Report to moderator 76.112.30.51 (?)

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Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« **Reply #5 on:** February 09, 2012, 12:57:37 AM »

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yes, life is busy. I suffer the same! It's quite near midnight and I ought to be asleep for early wake up for work, but here I sit. I agree about utopia. Once someone decides something is good, the power and control seeps in and corrupts. This is what makes me anxious about any official "joining" of a religious group, and the spoken and unspoken obligations that go along with it. Messages to do, give money, abide by rules. All for righteousness, and all that tend to be about politics and control. I'd like to say I'm a follower of my own path, and be free to say I'm this. For example, there are many self identified Christians who don't belong to a formal church. That's the freedom I seek, more about living a life that reflects being a caring person of God. Not some free flowing New Age thing, just a pure and simple love of God and serving God by being good to others and also caring for self, doing my best to not judge, etc.



Report to moderator 71.225.44.91 (?)

Jenabe Fazel

Administrator

Jr. Member



Posts: 76



Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« **Reply #6 on:** February 15, 2012, 08:26:10 PM »

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Yes, I so agree... "power and control seeps in and corrupts." Much the story in all religious traditions, Baha'i included. I think your sense of the freedom of the individual, in terms of conscience and so forth, is quite sane and moderate. It's really much more the down-to-earth vision of the Bahai Movement that Abdul-Baha actually had in mind, not an intrusive theocracy, harassing and shunning people.



Report to moderator 76.112.30.51 (?)

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Jenabe Fazel

Administrator
Jr. Member



Posts: 76



Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« **Reply #7 on:** February 15, 2012, 09:26:50 PM »

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Another part of it in terms of the Reform Bahai Faith comes to mind, on further reflection. All religions tend to surpass the apparent conceptions of their founders, as a result of natural evolution of consciousness, per the Will of God, I would say. Often religious leaders early on conceive of a new dispensation in the light of the old, the last one, from which the new faith emerges. Such is the case with Bahai. Even Abdul-Baha tended to conceive of Baha'u'llah's revelation as, if you will, "Islam lite..." Nothing could be less true... as the decades demonstrate, unequivocally now, more than the dominant denomination and others realize.

The Oneness of God, humanity, and all the religions is hurtling us all along into universality, non-exclusivism, beyond anything any one in the many early decades had ever conceived... We have to look at American Indian, African, and the Australian Aborigines to begin to understand what religion means in a global society, why so many people are sick and tired of "organized religion," why Abdul-Baha said the Bahai Movement could not be organized.



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pathfinder

Newbie



Posts: 15



Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi Effendi

« **Reply #8 on:** February 17, 2012, 06:34:37 PM »

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"All religions tend to surpass the apparent conceptions of their founders"

Well said! And I think many of the founders did not even set out to "start" a religion, but were inspired people of their time. Writings were done, published, and the readers took things from it and it then grows exponentially, and in the case of Christianity, into a thousand splinters that don't even remotely remember the man the person of Jesus was! I dare say if the Jesus of history knocked on the door of a conservative Christian person's house today the person would tell Jesus to get lost because they wouldn't even RECOGNIZE the REAL Jesus!

That is the exact thing that makes my skin crawl when things get too all about control and power.



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Jenabe Fazel

Re: The Shiite paradigm of Shoghi

Administrator
Jr. Member



Posts: 76



Effendi

« **Reply #9 on:** February 18, 2012,
11:50:37 AM »

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Mmm, so right. Christ as a Republican, wanting tax cuts for the ultra-wealth... ludicrous, if not blasphemous. His caring about the poor has somehow been lost sight of, for decades it seems.

Lao-si of the Tao Te Ching, is perhaps a good example of not trying to start a religion, though the poet Bai Juyi wrote a poem about his hypocrisy for writing a book whose message is "One who speaks, does not know; one who knows, does not speak." Fortunately, somebody recorded the words of the prophets and wise, or we'd really be up a creek without a paddle...

I think in the modern world, though, there is a sense in which the fact that we've all come much closer together in terms of time and space has improved conditions to a degree. It's not quite as easy to conceive of others as barbarians and heretics, at least for the more enlightened, often.



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