

The Art of Rhetoric in the Writings of Shoghi Effendi

Jack McLean

Introduction¹

Anyone who has read Shoghi Effendi's writings carefully recognizes their strong rhetorical effects. In essence, rhetoric is eloquent language or speech that aims to impress, to move or to persuade. At the outset, it is important to note that Shoghi Effendi's rhetoric was not used merely to embellish his epistolary; it fulfilled a practical purpose. As "suasive speech" is still used in teaching, law, politics and religion to instruct, to move and to convince, Shoghi Effendi exercised his rhetorical art for similar purposes. During his administration from 1922-1957,² writing *qua* head and Guardian of the Bahá'í community,³ his main tasks were, not only to interpret the Bahá'í writings, and to instruct in matters of faith, but just as importantly, to exhort the Bahá'ís "to arise"⁴ to execute the sequential Plans he had devised for developing 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan.⁵ In fulfilling this function, Shoghi Effendi demonstrated considerable rhetorical skill, a talent that was developed, not only by divine charisma, but also by formal study and practice. The Guardian was clearly cognizant of certain classical elements of rhetoric, but owing to its Bahá'í-specific, i.e. religious content, and the originality of his magisterial style, his discourse also exhibits certain atypical features.

This paper analyses Shoghi Effendi's rhetoric by explicating the following five points: (1) The historical background to the teaching and function of rhetoric. (2) The Guardian's interest in and formal study of rhetoric. (3) The connection between Shoghi Effendi's moral authority and his credibility as a rhetorician. (4) The rhetorical effect of the Guardian's epistolary (5) A paradigm of seven rhetorical modes used in his

writings will be proposed. In substantiating these points, I will correlate selected material from the history of rhetoric and rhetorical theory to the writings of the Guardian. While some of the material on rhetorical theory is capable of standing on its own, it has been selected and analysed because of its relevance to the topic. This paper situates our author's rhetoric within a long rhetorical tradition, which his writings perpetuate, and offers an understanding of the underpinnings of his rhetorical technique.

The Function of Rhetoric

The Teaching and Study of Rhetoric

The teaching and study of rhetoric was a central element in European, and later American education, from before the time of Plato until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁶ Having waned in the Romantic era, the study of the ancient art was revived in the 1960's, and some forty-five years later (2006) is thriving again in a number of mainly American universities which offer courses in departments of Rhetoric, English Literature and Speech or Communication Studies, albeit following widely divergent theoretical schools and agendas.⁷ It seems likely that in the coming years of the Bahá'í Era, with the continuing systematic study of the sacred texts and the writings of Shoghi Effendi, the study and practice of rhetoric will be revived along spiritual and ethical lines that will serve the search for truth and the teaching of the Bahá'í Faith.

The topic of rhetoric, like so many other potentially fruitful areas of Bahá'í Studies, is a virtual open field. Although no prior study of the Guardian's rhetoric has already been written, Bret Breneman's 1991 article "Socrates'/Plato's Use of Rhetoric: A Bahá'í Perspective" offers a revised understanding of rhetoric that would make it more consonant with Bahá'í aims and purposes. Breneman observes that in the twentieth century the art of rhetoric has fallen into disrepute, but he also notes its current revival and favors its rehabilitation along new lines. (This article takes the same stance). He critiques the eristic (polemical) and logocentric (mere speech-based) aspects of classical rhetoric to suggest a remaking of eloquent speech

along ethical and spiritual lines; *viz.* a more harmonious, less adversarial style that would further truth-seeking, create unity, and carry ethical weight. In short, he favors the development of new rhetorical styles that would resemble Bahá'í consultation. By these means, the speaker/writer would persuade by a more ethically engaged, collaborative process that diverges from rhetoric's questionable past.⁸

While we can readily agree with Breneman's recommendations of a rhetoric of civil exchange, based on the moral and spiritual norms that he advocates, his recommendations cannot be applied so conveniently to Shoghi Effendi's writings which show, in fact, a pervasive use of classical rhetoric's *logos* (word/speech/reason) and eristic techniques. However, unlike deliberative/political rhetoric, the Guardian's discourse served religious purposes, and his epistolary represents a renewed and expanded model of that genre. But like classical rhetoric, the Guardian's speech is highly persuasive. When he writes as the sole authorised interpreter and defender of the Bahá'í Faith in its Formative Age (1921-), he is, at times, unrestrainedly judgmental and defensive, particularly when he condemns the present age and its godless ways, the world's rejection of Bahá'u'lláh, the "enemies of the Faith," or when he defends it or its followers from attack and/or persecution. I should add, however, that the Guardian's gentler speech also praises, guides, informs, encourages and invokes Bahá'u'lláh's love and confirmations on his fellow-believers. On balance, however, discrete elements of classical rhetoric are clearly found in Shoghi Effendi's writings, particularly Aristotle's epideictic category, the rhetoric of praise or blame, and several well-established rhetorical techniques discussed below.

The Foundation: Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*

While rhetoric is not philosophy, for Aristotle, whose *On Rhetoric* (322-320 BCE) laid the foundation for all subsequent discussion, it was the counterpart of *Dialektik*,⁹ a conversational form of Plato's search for truth by question and answer, and could be treated systematically. Rhetoric should not be reduced, consequently, to one of the decorative arts. It merits further consideration as one of the long-

standing theoretical and practical arts that is an object of study in its own right. Aristotle's understanding of rhetoric included an ethical component which related it to Athenian "politics." For it was in the ideal city-state that human happiness was to be found.¹⁰ But more pertinent to this paper, and as we shall see below, Aristotle taught that the effectiveness of rhetoric depended on the ethical credibility of the orator.

As alluded to above, rhetoric has two functions that operate as one: the first is to persuade, a goal that is attained in traditional rhetoric by eristic speech rather than deductive logic; the second is to move; ideally, to action. Thus, rhetoric may be defined simply as speech that aims to persuade and to move the listener/reader to action, a definition that well suits our author's purposes. Aristotle was wary of eristic because disputation made good use of the semi-logical rhetorical syllogisms of emotional oratory. In Aristotle's view, these syllogisms were liable to mislead since they were less sure than the formal logical demonstration of first premises and conclusions [*On Rhetoric*, 1354a3-5].¹¹ While persuasion is clearly the main goal of rhetoric, Aristotle made the following fine distinction between rhetoric and dialectic. Rhetoric, he wrote, is a faculty or power [*dynamis*] whose goal "...is not to persuade but to see the available means of persuasion in each case" [1355a14].¹² In other words, the purpose of rhetoric is to support the logical argument. Logic and rhetoric were intended to work together. While they do not employ Plato's dialectics, the conversational logic that lead to propositional truth, Shoghi Effendi's writings show proof of sound arguments based on authoritative reason. (see "The Magisterial Mode" below)

Shoghi Effendi's Formal Study of Rhetoric

Aristotle points out in his *On Rhetoric* that, unlike the philosopher, no special training is required to become an effective orator. Individuals may learn to use rhetoric effectively by intuitive means. In addition to any innate ability he possessed, Shoghi Effendi did, in fact, study rhetoric over three semesters during a two year period (1915-17) at the Syrian Protestant College, later the American University of Beirut. During the first and second semesters of his junior year (1915-16), rhetoric was included on his syllabus and again during the

first semester of his senior year, 1916-17.¹³ His native ability coupled with the three semesters of courses helps to explain the Guardian's cognizance and effective use of some of rhetoric's classical techniques.

The recollections of the Guardian's boyhood school friend, 'Alí Yazdí, who visited Shoghi Effendi at Oxford between November 4-5, 1920 and who "...stayed in Shoghi Effendi's room for a couple of nights,"¹⁴ made note of the soon-to-be Guardian's lively interest in the debating societies at Balliol College during the Michaelmas term¹⁵ of that same year:

He was intensely interested in the outstanding speakers at Oxford and especially those in Oxford Union,¹⁶ where the great statesmen had received their training. He wanted me to attend the debates with him and to hear the address by [James] Bryce. He hoped we could discuss the talks together. After my visit I received a card from him dated 6 November 1920, which bore the crest of the Oxford Union Society.¹⁷

Shoghi Effendi's card to 'Alí Yazdí reflects, not only his disappointment at his missing the debate — Mr. Yazdí had to return to London en route to the United States — but also Shoghi Effendi's keen interest in the Oxford Union proceedings: "Dear 'Alí: I have received your card, and I knew well that it would be difficult for you to come here again. I did miss you profoundly last night and the night before, particularly as I firmly anticipated that we would both enjoy and comment upon the procedures of the debate and lecture."¹⁸ This passage also conveys something of the young Oxonian's spirit of enthusiasm and love of learning which have been mentioned by Madame Rúhiyyih Rabbaní (1910-2000), the Guardian's wife, companion, collaborator, secretary and biographer, in her seminal work, *The Priceless Pearl* (1969), qualities that were first manifested when he was still a boy living in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's home in Haifa. Shoghi Effendi's lamp would burn late into the night requiring 'Abdu'l-Bahá to go to his door with the order: "Enough! Enough! Go to sleep! But this serious-mindedness of Shoghi Effendi pleased Him greatly."¹⁹ Riaz Khadem, in his period-study *Shoghi Effendi in Oxford and Earlier* (1999), also quotes William Elliot, a fellow

Oxonian, that the Guardian presented a paper to The Lotus Club, which Elliot wrote "...was the outstanding club, I think, for intellectual discussions and dialogue... The Lotus Club appreciated the qualities of Rabbani."²⁰ Shoghi Effendi's rhetorical skill was grounded, consequently, not only in constant practice, but also in his formal studies and life experience at the Syrian Protestant College and later at Oxford.

Restoring Character and Credibility to Rhetoric

Outside the academy, the credibility of public speaking has been greatly eroded thanks mainly to politicians and the political process. Political rhetoric has now become synonymous with broken promises, evasion, verbal attacks, "spin," "smoke and mirrors," and other unsavoury practices. The now stock phrase "empty rhetoric" has served to discredit the spoken word. The negative effects of rhetoric were, of course, far more sinister in the twentieth century than all the tragi-comedies witnessed in adversarial party politics. Breneman observes: "After Hitler and Khomeini, after nearly a century of sloganeering and totalitarianism, people are suspicious of eloquence."²¹ Verbal rants and harangues induced the masses to follow Hitler and Mussolini. In December of 1978, in a quiet but menacing voice, the still exiled Ayatolláh Khomeini said in an interview with Professor James Cockroft of Rutgers University about the Bahá'ís: "They are a political faction. They are harmful. They will not be accepted." In the same interview, he pronounced that religious freedom would not be granted to the Bahá'ís in Iran.²² Since the Fall of 1978, a systematic series of openly repressive measures has followed which included the execution of some two hundred innocent souls.²³ More recently, in April of 1994, Hutu extremists unleashed a genocide in which some 800,000 Tutsis were slaughtered following radio appeals by Hutu leaders that incited Hutus to "cleanse" Rawandan villages of their Tutsi populations. (The genocide also created some two million refugees). In the 1990's and 2000's, the suave talk of Osama bin Laden called his followers to sow world-wide terror in the name of Islam. Other examples of perverse rhetoric are not lacking in today's hostile and dangerous world.

Although Breneman argues for the rehabilitation of Plato's pedagogical and philosophical rhetoric as an ideal type of rhetoric,²⁴ Plato's opinion of the rhetoric of his day was, as Breneman has pointed out, nonetheless decidedly negative. The philosopher's views of the ancient art can be found, *inter alia*, in his dialogues, the *Sophist*, *Euthydemus*, *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*.²⁵ Plato charged that rhetoric had been widely abused by corrupt politicians in ancient Athens, the same politicians who had put Socrates to death by pandering to public fears, unfounded prejudices and raw emotion.²⁶ Both Plato and Aristotle believed that rhetoric had become a money-making technique in the hands of the rhetors and sophists who taught public-speaking, and who were the speech-writers for aspiring Athenian politicians and those who already governed the city-state. Aside from the philosophical differences that they had with rhetors and sophists,²⁷ and in what seems today like a lot of *déjà vu*, Plato and Aristotle believed that such men were insincere and dishonest; that they engaged in equivocation, quibbling and verbal tricks instead of truth-seeking. Only honest dialectic, Plato thought, could lead to truth.²⁸

However, Plato's and Aristotle's negative view of the rhetoric of their time was also remedied by one of the foundational principles of *On Rhetoric*: an ethical consistency between speaker and speech, between word and deed. Aristotle taught that the efficacy of the speech depended on the *ethos* (nature/disposition/moral character) of the speaker. The *rhetor*²⁹ had to be "worthy of credence" which is "...almost, so to speak, the controlling factor in persuasion" [*On Rhetoric*, 1356a4]. Thus, it was not in theory that rhetoric, the vehicle of power that Longinus, the Greek literary critic, had called a "great prince" in his noted treatise *On the Sublime (peri hypsous)*,³⁰ had become discredited, but rather through corrupt practices. In our time, the never-ending corruption and scandal scenarios that feed the media indicate that the precept of the orator's ethical credibility has been wantonly disregarded.

"The Perfect Orator is the Perfect Man"

Before validating Shoghi Effendi's moral authority, it would be helpful to further examine the background to the above maxim. We have already noted that Aristotle advocated moral

integrity as the mainstay of effective speech. “The perfect orator is the perfect man” is one of the key ideas in Roman oratory that was inherited from the Greeks. It was advocated by the great Roman orator Cicero, and the famous teacher of rhetoric, Quintilian (35-95 CE).³¹ In his discussion of tropes and figures, Quintilian influenced St. Augustine, St. Jerome and Martin Luther.³² Although he is not generally known to the public, Quintilian is still anthologized today and continues to influence both rhetorical theory and the discussion of figurative language, including post-structuralist and formalist theorists.³³

In his twelve-volume masterpiece, *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian was preoccupied in Book I with the proper education of the orator, virtually from birth. To his credit, in advocating what is called today “child-centred education,” he stressed the moral education of the child as being the most crucial factor for the adult orator. The pedagogical questions he raised in the first century CE are as relevant today to the field of education as they are to oratory.³⁴ Although Quintilian stressed a thorough training in the literary arts and in grammar, he favored exposure to many branches of knowledge, and the widest culture possible, to produce a well-rounded human being.³⁵ Compared to modern approaches to education, classical rhetoric was a more holistic, as well as a practical art. Aristotle taught that it should convince by the triadic norms of *pathos* (emotion), *thos* (character) and *logos* (rational argument) [1356a3,5], thereby fostering a healthy integration of intellect, character and emotion.

Shoghi Effendi’s Credibility as Rhetorician

It follows, then, that the efficacy of Shoghi Effendi’s rhetoric would depend on his moral authority. We are fortunate that the Guardian’s historical proximity (1897-1957) to our time renders it relatively easy to validate his ethical credibility. Chief among the sources attesting to Shoghi Effendi’s character are the *Will and Testament* of his grandfather, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and Madame Rúhiyyih Rabbaní’s biography, *The Priceless Pearl*, which presents a vivid picture and analysis of the Guardian’s personality. Several appreciations have also been recorded by those who were his

working-assistants in Haifa, or who made the pilgrimage to Akká and Haifa and met Shoghi Effendi on that occasion.³⁶ The most significant impressions of a non-Bahá'í are those recorded in *The Circle of Faith* (1956), by former professor of comparative religion and prolific author, Dr. Marcus Bach (d. 1995), through what John Barnabas (Barney) Leith accurately calls “a detached but sympathetic eye.”³⁷

These accounts of the Guardian's life, character and contributions to the development of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Faith (1921-) indicate a monumental legacy that has only begun to be properly evaluated. While accounts written by Bahá'ís are naturally biased by the love, devotion and respect of the believer, Marcus Bach's incisive pen-portrait was based on a three-hour interview at Shoghi Effendi's home in Haifa, on the evening on February 12, 1953.³⁸ Among Dr. Bach's impressions were those of “indomitable strength,” the sense that this man was “self-possessed, self-sufficient, purposeful.” Among other comments we read: his “all-seeing eyes always read my thoughts in advance, whose sharp mind had a ready answer the moment my questions were asked.” His words were “tinged with poetry and power. He spoke in melodious, faultless English, with a firm and staunch authority as if what he had to say was said by divine right.” His words could be recorded, but his faith was “something to be felt and cherished. His awareness of God was paramount.”³⁹

The Guardian's moral credibility was created by divine appointment through the *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but it does not rest in divine appointment alone. It was reflected in his every word and act, through the subtle fibre of his entire being. This moral authority creates confidence in the reader and reinforces an “interlocking relationship”⁴⁰ between author, text and reader, giving his writing weight. Shoghi Effendi was not, of course, a perfect man in the same sense that 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Mystery of God, was a perfect human being.⁴¹ Shoghi Effendi's own understanding of the Guardian as being “essentially human” rules out any misconceived comparisons of this type. In clarifying the station of the Guardians, in contradistinction to that of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi wrote:

Though overshadowed by the unfailing, the unerring protection of Bahá'u'lláh and of the Báb, and however much he may share with 'Abdu'l-Bahá the right and obligation to interpret the Bahá'í teachings, he remains essentially human and cannot, if he wishes to remain faithful to his trust, arrogate to himself, under any pretense whatsoever, the rights, the privileges and prerogatives which Bahá'u'lláh has chosen to confer upon His Son.⁴²

Nonetheless, the reference to Shoghi Effendi's "absolute perfection" is from a statement by no less a figure than 'Abdu'l-Bahá. When His grandson was born on March 1, 1897, a Miss F. Drayton of New York wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, citing a verse from Isaiah 11:6 "...a little child shall lead them," and inquired whether or not this verse referred to a "...real living child who exists?"⁴³ His reply was unequivocal: "*Thou shalt behold him endowed with the most perfect appearance, supreme capacity, absolute perfection, consummate power and unsurpassed might. His face will shine with a radiance that illuminates all the horizons of the world...*"⁴⁴ That hidden identity was later fully revealed in the *Will and Testament*, and it clearly established the Guardian's preeminent station and divine authority:

*For he is, after 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Guardian of the Cause of God. The Afnan, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause and the beloved of the Lord must obey him and turn unto him. He that obeyeth him not, hath not obeyed God; he that turneth away from him, hath turned away from God and he that denieth him, hath denied the True One.*⁴⁵

Among Shoghi Effendi's duties and privileges of office was to act as the sole authorized interpreter and expounder of Bahá'í Holy Writ: "*He is the Interpreter of the Word of God...*"⁴⁶ As I am using it in relation to Shoghi Effendi, the word perfect refers to an interaction of three distinct qualities: (1) divine endowment or capacity, i.e., attributes that are God-given. (2) striving, i.e., the sustained personal effort required to cultivate one's own innate abilities. (3) the lack of any deficiency or defect in the exercise of his powers and abilities.

In addition to naming him as His successor, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's first mention of Shoghi Effendi indicates that He is drawing the reader's attention to two important distinctions: (1) Shoghi Effendi's divine endowment as a direct descendant of both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. (2) His youthfulness:

Salutation and praise, blessing and glory rest upon that primal branch of the Divine and Sacred Lote-Tree, grown out, blest, tender, verdant and flourishing from the Twin Holy Trees; the most wondrous, unique and priceless pearl that doth gleam from out the Twin surging seas...⁴⁷

(The poetic quality of this text is retained, even in translation, not only in its rich natural imagery, but also because of the internal rhyme of 'Trees' and 'seas.')

A unique dynamic was created in the combining of Shoghi Effendi's kinship to the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, with the divine attributes mentioned in the text: "wondrous," "unique," "priceless." 'Abdu'l-Bahá expresses a special solicitude for Shoghi Effendi's well-being, thus making the community aware of the youthfulness and inexperience that would be in constant need of support and protection: "tender, verdant and flourishing" is this primal branch. Yet, Shoghi Effendi's destiny was to work largely alone, assisted by only a handful of trusted and capable co-workers, as he continued to face the relentless opposition of the members of his own family, who by all possible means attempted to misguide the Bahá'ís, defy his authority, and to obstruct his plans. Then, mixing His metaphors, and turning from the pastoral image of the tree and the bough to the gemstone, 'Abdu'l-Bahá declares the Guardian to be a "priceless pearl." This well-known phrase constitutes a revelation of Shoghi Effendi's true station.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's statements are supplemented by a more personal appreciation in *The Priceless Pearl* in which Madame Rabbaní describes "Facets of Shoghi Effendi's Personality." In one of the indexes, "Personal Attributes," she has further summarized his character by delineating his qualities under three heads:⁴⁸ (1) Spiritual and Mental Qualities (2) Artistic and Cultural Tastes and Interests (3) Relations With Others. We read under (1): "catholicity of spirit, humility, mastery of

detail, orderliness, nobility, radiance, shrewdness” – this last attribute she defines as “sense of economy, honesty, realism, ingeniousness, practicality but lack of mechanical sense,” will-power, object of his existence.” This last reference refers to his complete consecration to the Bahá’í Faith. Under (2) are found: “interest in gardens, maps, photography, zoology, love of beauty in nature, zeal for knowledge.” Number (3) reads: “love for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Greatest Holy Leaf, Milly Collins, Sutherland Maxwell, “tribute to the support and comfort given by Martha Root.” (Details and anecdotes of the headings are provided through page references by the author).

Madame Rabbaní’s pen-portrait creates the impression of a highly sensitive and gifted man, whose multi-faceted nature entitled him to the label of genius; a man who laboured much and suffered much, whose life manifested a rare combination of exceptional ability, complete love and devotion to the religion he directed, zeal for knowledge, an unusual capacity for labor, an attitude of humility and self-effacement, an intuitive sense of divine guidance, and a complete consecration to the many tasks with which the *Will and Testament* of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had entrusted him. While he was not a prophet, Shoghi Effendi’s extraordinary humanity was such that he was able to execute the duties of sacred office with superhuman energy⁴⁹ and flawless skill. Madame Rabbaní’s comment gives a favorable and fair appraisal of the Guardian’s overall contribution:

It would be hard indeed to find a comparable figure in history who, in a little over a third of a century, set so many different operations in motion, who found the time to devote his attention to minute details on one hand and on the other to cover the range of an entire planet with his plans, his instructions, his guidance and his leadership.⁵⁰

The Rhetorical Function of Epistolary

I have written above that the practical aim of the Guardian’s letters was, not only to inform and to educate, but also to move the Bahá’ís to execute the various sequential plans that he had devised for the world-wide expansion of the Bahá’í Faith.

Rhetorical criticism sheds further light on Shoghi Effendi's use of rhetoric to fulfill this aim. Edward P. J. Corbett wrote that rhetorical criticism "...is interested in the *product*, the *process*, and the *effect* of linguistic activity, whether the imaginative kind or the utilitarian kind."⁵¹ Rhetorical criticism looks to the immediate effect of a work rather than to other literary considerations.⁵² Jane Tompkins, editor of an instructive work on Reader-Response Theory, of which rhetorical criticism is a major component, writes that the rhetorical mode looks upon literature as "...existing primarily in order to produce results and not as an end in itself."⁵³ In this sense, rhetorical prose creates a close bond between the author and the reader/audience, compared with the larger spaces created by more imaginative texts. The Guardian's letters were certainly performative since they anticipated an immediate response to his directives. They were not written primarily as esthetic products, as *Ars gratiae artis* (art for art's sake).

Aristotle viewed the rhetoric of persuasion (*pistis*) as one of the practical arts, more concerned with acting and doing than the rational and speculative arts and sciences, such as metaphysics and mathematics.⁵⁴ While the Guardian's writings clearly have their own literary, historical, spiritual and theological merits, they remain, nonetheless, an exercise in the practical and the functional. Shoghi Effendi's writings are always designed *to do* something: to deepen understanding, to define doctrine, to defend the Faith, to interpret history, to report, to comment on the significance of current events and developments in light of the Bahá'í Faith, to move the reader's heart or to exhort to action.

Except for his *Heilsgeschichte* (salvation/sacred history) of the first hundred years of the Bábí-Bahá'í Faith, *God Passes By* (1944), and his thousands of cablegrams, his writings are largely epistolary. Dr. Ann Boyles, in her paper "The Epistolary Style of Shoghi Effendi," points out that the differences between the letter and the epistle have to do with both content and style. While an epistle is theoretically any letter, the epistle is "...a conscious literary form" which concerns itself with "...public matters and with philosophy as well as with religious problems."⁵⁵ Several judicious reasons validate the Guardian's chosen medium. The epistle creates a bond of intimacy and

sense of collaboration between reader and author that is not characteristic of other genres. Despite their elevated tone, and his preeminence as the head of a growing world religion, his letters create an intimate bond between Shoghi Effendi and his readers. His epistolary succeeds well at fostering a sense of fraternal collaboration. (see below, “Loving Greetings” under Particular Rhetorical Techniques)

William Decker has pointed out in his *Epistolary Practices* (1998) that letter writing “...assumes the existence of a certain confidentiality as its enabling condition.”⁵⁶ Letters, he writes, “...have long been read as primary sources of biography and history, as texts brimming with informational content. Yet the performative, fictive, and textual dimensions of letter writing, and the artifacticity of the personally inscribed holograph,⁵⁷ have only recently attracted serious notice.”⁵⁸ Regarding this sense of epistolary intimacy or confidentiality, it should be kept in mind that through his estimated 26,000 letters,⁵⁹ Shoghi Effendi was writing, not only to individuals but to a faith community that constitutes a people, “the people of Bahá” (Ar. *Ahl-i-Bahá*).⁶⁰ Any faith community is a live audience, and Decker’s “performative” mention of the epistle underscores the direct, transformational potential of the letter on the audience.

Seven Rhetorical Modes in the Writings of Shoghi Effendi

In Chapter 3 of Book 1 of *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle gives three categories of suasive discourse: (1) the political (deliberative) which aimed at adopting or avoiding a policy or course of action. (2) the forensic (legal) which was used to accuse or defend someone in a court of law. (3) the epideictic, which was the ceremonial praise or blame of an individual. While the general features of Aristotle’s three types have been subsumed in Shoghi Effendi’s rhetoric, the philosopher’s categories cannot be applied holus-bolus to our author. This is because his Bahá’i-specific, religious discourse necessitates the assigning of other categories than the political and legal ones used by Aristotle. But, as is often the case in category assignments, distinctions are not always clear-cut. The

Guardian's voices, like his genres, are mixed.⁶¹ For example, proclamatory/kerygmatic rhetoric may be followed by the divine command; the imperative may show deliberation; defence may mingle with praise. However, to further elucidate the Guardian's oratorical style, the following seven modes are being proposed: (1) the proclamatory/kerygmatic (2) the imperative (3) the magisterial (4) the defensive (5) the rhetoric of praise and gratitude (6) the rhetoric of blame (7) the rhetoric of anxious concern. Aristotle's categories are recognizable in these seven modes, but they appear in a different language and context.

(1) The Kerygmatic/Proclamation Mode: Raising the Divine Call

Derived from the Greek verb *kerussein*, "to proclaim," kerygma is a specifically religious type of rhetoric that was originally associated with the preaching of the early church. In twentieth century Protestant theology, it became a technical term that established the foundations of Christian teaching on the coming, life, death and resurrection of Christ in fulfilment of the divinely appointed new age/time, the *kairos* of Mark 1:15, proclaimed by John the Baptist and promised by the prophets of Israel and Judah.⁶² For Bahá'í purposes, this mode is naturally devoid of its specific Judeo-Christian content, but it suits nonetheless the urgency and drama of the divine call, whether it summoned the Bahá'ís to fulfil the goals that Shoghi Effendi had set, made a historic announcement, or proclaimed a "victory" won. Here, for example, is the Guardian's cablegram of January 9, 1951 that announced the formation of the First International Bahá'í Council, the forerunner of the Universal House of Justice (1963-), a body that was to "forge links with the newly emerged State" (Israel), to assist the Guardian with the erection of the superstructure of the Shrine of the Báb, and "to conduct negotiations related to matters of personal status with civil authorities":

Proclaim National Assemblies of East and West weighty epoch-making decision of formation of first International Bahá'í Council, forerunner of supreme administrative institution destined to emerge in fullness of time within precincts beneath shadow of

World Spiritual Center of Faith already established in twin cities of Akká and Haifa. Fulfillment of prophecies uttered by Founder of Faith and Center of His Covenant culminating in establishment of Jewish State, signaling birth after lapse of two thousand years of an independent nation in the Holy Land, the swift unfoldment of historic undertaking associated with construction of superstructure of the Báb's Sepulcher on Mount Carmel, the present adequate maturity of nine vigorously functioning national administrative institutions throughout Bahá'í World, combine to induce me to arrive at this historic decision marking most significant milestone in evolution of Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in course of last thirty years.⁶³

The call to action is intrinsic to kerygmatic rhetoric. The noted Canadian literary critic Northrop Frye (1912-1991) observed that "the rhetoric of non-literary prose," non-literary meaning not deriving primarily from the imagination, invokes the realm of "social action" and "...the appeal to action through the ear..."⁶⁴:

The most concentrated examples of this ["social or oratorical persuasion"] are to be found in the pamphlet or speech that catches the rhythm of history, that seizes on a crucial event or phase of action, interprets it, articulates the emotions concerned with it, or in some means employs a verbal structure to insulate and conduct the current of history.⁶⁵

Among others, Frye cites Churchill's 1940 war speeches, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and Milton's *Areopagitica* as examples of this genre.⁶⁶ Although his writings belong to an expanded, higher order of religious epistolary, Shoghi Effendi's world order letters (1929-36), and his apocalypse of contemporary history, *The Promised Day Is Come* (1941), and *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957* may be generally included, *mutatis mutandis*, within Frye's description. The call to action is found throughout the numerous appeals that accompanied the launching of every new stage of the Teaching Plan. That Shoghi Effendi hoped to arouse the Bahá'ís to action

was his stated purpose, emphatically expressed. The word “action” continually punctuated his messages:⁶⁷ “My heart yearns to learn of any speedy and effective action which the valiant members of that community may determine, whether collectively or severally, to undertake.”⁶⁸ His secretary wrote on his behalf: “He is convinced, that the friends will arise and translate their enthusiasm into Action, because the keynote of the Crusade, must be Action, Action, Action!”⁶⁹ In April 1957, not quite at midpoint in the “world-embracing Spiritual Crusade” (1953-63), which he conceived to establish Bahá'u'lláh's “spiritual dominion” throughout the world, Shoghi Effendi wrote the following appeal. It contained the historical reminder that the task at hand required the same dedication that fired the apostles of the Báb at the three week conference of Badasht, held between June and July of 1848:

I appeal, as I close this review of the superb feats already accomplished, in the course of so many campaigns, by the heroic band of the warriors of Bahá'u'lláh, battling in His Name and by His aid for the purification, the unification and the spiritualization of a morally and spiritually bankrupt society, now hovering on the brink of self-destruction, for a renewed dedication, at this critical hour in the fortunes of mankind, on the part of the entire company of my spiritual brethren in every continent of the globe, to the high ideals of the Cause they have espoused, as well as to the immediate accomplishment of the goals of the Crusade on which they have embarked, be they in active service or not, of either sex, young as well as old, rich or poor, whether veteran or newly enrolled — a dedication reminiscent of the pledges which the Dawn-breakers of an earlier Apostolic Age, assembled in conference at Badasht, and faced with issues of a different but equally challenging nature, willingly and solemnly made for the prosecution of the collective task with which they were confronted.⁷⁰

Northrop Frye also indicated that the rhetoric of persuasion, with its call to social action, “...must have either a rallying point or a point of attack, or both.”⁷¹ The rallying point in

Shoghi Effendi's stirring appeals was, just as it is now under the direction of the Universal House of Justice, the pressing need to fulfill the goals of the Teaching Plan. Here is one example among many of a rallying cry, one that is at the same time a "plea" that contains its own word of warning:

Once again — and this time more fervently than ever before — I direct my plea to every single member of this strenuously laboring, clear-visioned, stout-hearted, spiritually endowed community, every man and woman, on whose individual efforts, resolution, self-sacrifice and perseverance the immediate destinies of the Faith of God, now traversing so crucial a stage in its rise and establishment, primarily depends, not to allow, through apathy, timidity or complacency, this one remaining opportunity to be irretrievably lost. I would rather entreat each and every one of them to immortalize this approaching, fateful hour in the evolution of a World Spiritual Crusade, by a fresh consecration to their God-given mission, coupled with an instantaneous plan of action, at once so dynamic and decisive, as to wipe out, on the one hand, with one stroke, the deficiencies which have, to no small extent, bogged down the operations of the Crusade on the home front, and tremendously accelerate, on the other, the progress of the triple task, launched, in three continents, and constituting one of its preeminent objectives.⁷²

(2) The Imperative Mode: The Work of Consolidation

The imperative mode takes many forms but all of them speak the language of the unconditional. Kerygma demands an immediate response: the divine command must be executed. In the following message, Shoghi Effendi urged the Bahá'ís to consolidate the goals won during the first three years of the Ten Year Plan (1953-63). "The prizes so arduously won" could not be forfeited:

The glorious and stupendous work already accomplished, singly and collectively, in the course of three brief years, in five continents of the globe and the

islands of the seas, both at home and abroad, in the teaching as well as the administrative spheres of Bahá'í activity must, as the army of Bahá'u'lláh's crusaders marches forward into new and vaster fields to capture still greater heights, never be jeopardized or allowed to lag or suffer a setback. The prizes so arduously won should not only be jealously preserved but should be constantly enriched. Far from suffering the long and distinguished record of feats which have been achieved to be tarnished, assiduous efforts must be exerted to ennoble it with every passing day.

The newly opened territories of the globe must, under no circumstances, be allowed to relapse into the state of spiritual deprivation from which they have so recently and laboriously been rescued. Nay, the highly edifying evidences proclaiming the expansion and the consolidation of the superb historic work achieved in so many of these territories must be rapidly multiplied. The local assemblies that have been so diligently and patiently established must under no circumstances be allowed to dissolve, or their foundations be in any way endangered. The mighty and steady process involving the increase in the number of the avowed supporters of the Faith, and the multiplication of isolated centers, groups and local assemblies must, throughout this newly opened phase of the Plan, be markedly accelerated.⁷³

(3) The Magisterial Mode:

(a) The Unity of Religions

(b) The Administrative Order

As already mentioned, Shoghi Effendi's discourse is strongly performative. His letters are filled with exhortations, appeals, pleas, warnings, condemnations, caveats, directives, objectives, plans, and strategies for winning teaching goals. All these discourse acts are profoundly heart-felt, expressed with deep unction.⁷⁴ Another of the dominant voices in our author's writings is that of the great teacher, deriving from the Guardian role as the only appointed interpreter and expounder

of the Bahá'í sacred writings, its history and Administrative Order in its Formative Age (1921-). This voice uses a more formal, authoritative reason, and carries with it an apocalyptic certitude. Its closest philosophical equivalent is the Aristotelean apodictic proposition (*apodeiktikos*), meaning one that is self-evident, certain or necessarily true.⁷⁵ On his own terms, he referred to his doctrinal clarifications in *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh* (1934) as “the fundamental verities of the Faith.”⁷⁶ However, the Guardian did not expound fine points of doctrine. Rather, in order to maintain doctrinal unity, he established fundamentals, basic orientations that are coherent with Bahá'í teaching that could be integrally preserved and handed down. Necessarily, this also meant excluding erroneous ideas that were not coherent with the religion's teachings.

Theologically, Shoghi Effendi's interpretations or expositions have the effect of dogma, meant here in its non-pejorative sense of a non-negotiable, normative teaching that is received on the basis of divine revelation and legitimate authority. The Bahá'í Faith has an unusual theological stance in that the Guardian's writings, as for those of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, are not *ipso facto* divine revelation,⁷⁷ but they carry the same authority. The authorised interpretation, while it does not share the preminent station of the Revealed Word, must be accorded an equal reception by the community. (This is similar to the standpoint of Shiah Islam by which the interpretations of the imams are believed to be infallible and are accorded virtual equality with the Qur'án). This does not mean, however, that our author's theological definitions must be accepted without question, i.e. silence. The Guardian was no technical philosopher, and according to Madame Rabbaní, he loathed abstractions.⁷⁸ His interpretations and elucidations are generally not matter for abstract, speculative, theological discussions, but as positive theology,⁷⁹ they are liable to further analysis.

Two texts follow. The first is theological and uses a type of authoritative reason in the form of a caveat that advocates a qualified and guarded interpretation of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh as “the Promised One of all ages,” and the inauguration of the Bahá'í cycle as “the culmination of a prophetic cycle”:⁸⁰

Nor does the Bahá'í Revelation, claiming as it does to be the culmination of a prophetic cycle and the fulfilment of the promise of all ages, attempt, under any circumstances, to invalidate those first and everlasting principles that animate and underlie the religions that have preceded it. The God-given authority, vested in each one of them, it admits and establishes as its firmest and ultimate basis. It regards them in no other light except as different stages in the eternal history and constant evolution of one religion, Divine and indivisible, of which it itself forms but an integral part. It neither seeks to obscure their Divine origin, nor to dwarf the admitted magnitude of their colossal achievements. It can countenance no attempt that seeks to distort their features or to stultify the truths which they instill. Its teachings do not deviate a hairbreadth from the verities they enshrine, nor does the weight of its message detract one jot or one tittle from the influence they exert or the loyalty they inspire. Far from aiming at the overthrow of the spiritual foundation of the world's religious systems, its avowed, its unalterable purpose is to widen their basis, to restate their fundamentals, to reconcile their aims, to reinvigorate their life, to demonstrate their oneness, to restore the pristine purity of their teachings, to co-ordinate their functions and to assist in the realization of their highest aspirations. These divinely-revealed religions, as a close observer has graphically expressed it, "are doomed not to die, but to be reborn... 'Does not the child succumb in the youth and the youth in the man; yet neither child nor youth perishes?'"⁸¹

The second text outlines the political theory on which the Administrative Order as a system of government is based. This passage maintains that the Administrative Order is a unique salutary blend of the existing forms of government, both secular [democratic, autocratic, aristocratic] and theocratic [imamate, caliphate, Hebrew Commonwealth, papacy], while excluding their "objectionable features." Only the general argument is given here:

This new-born Administrative Order incorporates within its structure certain elements which are to be found in each of the three recognized forms of secular government, without being in any sense a mere replica of any one of them, and without introducing within its machinery any of the objectionable features which they inherently possess. It blends and harmonizes, as no government fashioned by mortal hands has as yet accomplished, the salutary truths which each of these systems undoubtedly contains without vitiating the integrity of those God-given verities on which it is ultimately founded... Whereas this Administrative Order cannot be said to have been modeled after any of these recognized systems of government, it nevertheless embodies, reconciles and assimilates within its framework such wholesome elements as are to be found in each one of them. The hereditary authority which the Guardian is called upon to exercise, the vital and essential functions which the Universal House of Justice discharges, the specific provisions requiring its democratic election by the representatives of the faithful – these combine to demonstrate the truth that this divinely revealed Order, which can never be identified with any of the standard types of government referred to by Aristotle in his works, embodies and blends with the spiritual verities on which it is based the beneficent elements which are to be found in each one of them.⁸²

(4) The Defensive Mode:

(a) The Báb's Station

(b) Attacks on the Bahá'í Faith

The defensive mode originates in the law courts and political assemblies of fifth century Greece (BCE). Its model text is Plato's *Apology* of Socrates' defence before the Athenian assembly. Since then, defence with advocacy have become the twin functions of *apologia*. Although apologetics was for centuries one of the recognized disciplines in theology, with the progressive secularization of contemporary society, this engaged, faith-driven approach has fallen out of favour, except

for confessional colleges and universities, since it has been rejected for its polemical, dogmatic, and authoritarian motives, and has been replaced with so-called “objective,” value-neutral, historical/social-scientific treatments of religion. Despite its being contrary to academic fashion, the apologetic voice can be clearly heard in the writings of the Guardian. The defensive mode takes basically two forms: (1) theoretical: as the advocacy, defence or explanation of a doctrinal point. (2) actual: as “defender of the Faith,” Shoghi Effendi defended both the Bahá’is and the Bahá’í Faith from attacks and advocated strategies for countering such assaults. The following passage from *The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh* exemplifies point (1). Its main purpose is to uphold the station of the Báb and to protect it from erosion. He admonishes his readers not to reduce the Báb’s station merely to that of “an inspired Precursor of the Bahá’í Revelation.” He is to be understood, rather, as “the object of all the Prophets gone before Him.” Consequently, comparisons to John the Baptist should not be used without qualification:

That the Báb, the inaugurator of the Bábí Dispensation, is fully entitled to rank as one of the self-sufficient Manifestations of God, that He has been invested with sovereign power and authority, and exercises all the rights and prerogatives of independent Prophethood, is yet another fundamental verity which the Message of Bahá’u’lláh insistently proclaims and which its followers must uncompromisingly uphold. That He is not to be regarded merely as an inspired Precursor of the Bahá’í Revelation, that in His person, as He Himself bears witness in the Persian Bayán, the object of all the Prophets gone before Him has been fulfilled, is a truth which I feel it my duty to demonstrate and emphasize. We would assuredly be failing in our duty to the Faith we profess and would be violating one of its basic and sacred principles if in our words or by our conduct we hesitate to recognize the implications of this root principle of Bahá’í belief, or refuse to uphold unreservedly its integrity and demonstrate its truth.⁸³

(2) During the 1955 “premeditated campaign” of persecution of the Bahá’ís of Iran, Shoghi Effendi exposed the several crimes committed against the Bahá’í community,⁸⁴ and also directed measures whereby the Bahá’í International Community could assist its persecuted co-religionists. His announcement of the persecution and its historical significance was fully developed in a detailed letter of August 20, 1955. In announcing the crisis he wrote:

With dramatic suddenness, a situation, which had been slowly and secretly developing, came to a head, as the result of the ceaseless intrigue of the fanatical and determined ecclesiastical opponents of the Faith, ever ready to seize their chance, in times of confusion, and to strike mercilessly, at an opportune hour, at the very root of that Faith and of its swiftly developing, steadily consolidating administrative institutions.⁸⁵

He immediately devised a series of counter-measures to alleviate the suffering of the Iranian Bahá’ís, and called upon the American Bahá’í Community to compensate for the losses suffered by their middle-eastern co-religionists by widening their teaching efforts and rededicating themselves to the goals of the Ten Year Plan:

Faced with this organized and vicious onslaught on the followers, the fundamental verities, the shrines and administrative institutions of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh in the land of His birth, the American Bahá’í Community cannot at this hour relax for a moment in the discharge of the multiple and sacred responsibilities it has pledged itself to fulfill under the Ten-Year Plan and must indeed display a still greater degree of consecration and a nobler spirit of self-sacrifice in the pursuit of the goals it has set itself to achieve.⁸⁶

(5) Praise and Gratitude: North America’s World-Historical Identity

The rhetoric of praise and gratitude has three basic types in our author’s writings: (1) as prayer-like expressions of thanksgiving to God and to Bahá’u’lláh. (2) to praise individuals, either living or dead, for their services. (3) to laud

the historic achievements of national communities. Here are two examples of type (1) sent as cablegrams:

Acclaim with grateful heart, on twenty-first Anniversary of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Ascension, the glorious emergence of the firmly-welded, incorruptible American Bahá'í community from severest crisis since His passing which the blindness of the breakers of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Covenants has, amidst His kindred, and in the City of the Covenant, recently tragically precipitated...

...Heart aglow with pride, love, gratitude for superb achievement of completion of exterior of the House of Worship, Mother Temple of the West. Bahá'u'lláh's high behest, enshrined in His Most Holy Book, has been brilliantly executed.⁸⁷

As for type (2), here is one of the Guardian's tributes to the peerless "Leading Ambadress of His Faith and Pride of Bahá'í teachers," Miss Martha Root:

Nor can I dismiss this subject without singling out for special reference her who, not only through her preponderating share in initiating measures for the translation and dissemination of Bahá'í literature, but above all through her prodigious and indeed unique exertions in the international teaching field, has covered herself with a glory that has not only eclipsed the achievements of the teachers of the Faith among her contemporaries the globe around, but has outshone the feats accomplished by any of its propagators in the course of an entire century. To Martha Root, that archetype of Bahá'í itinerant teachers and the foremost Hand raised by Bahá'u'lláh since 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing, must be awarded, if her manifold services and the supreme act of her life are to be correctly appraised, the title of Leading Ambadress of His Faith and Pride of Bahá'í teachers, whether men or women, in both the East and the West.⁸⁸

The best example of type (3) is Shoghi Effendi's multi-page epideictic of high praise to the North American Bahá'í

community in *The Advent of Divine Justice* (1939).⁸⁹ The Guardian's eulogy is not just praise for the sake of praise. A larger, creative process is at work: the creation of a world-historical identity, one that is based on the historical accomplishments of the North American Bahá'ís to 1939, and the conferring of their global mission by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The section "Chief Remaining Citadel" opens with a major statement on the mission and station of the North America believers. These are the main points: (1) North America "bids fair" to become the "cradle" and the "stronghold" of the "New World Order." (2) To reach his conclusions, Shoghi Effendi has relied, not only on the internal evidence of American Bahá'í history, but also on the principle of divine election based on 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prophecy:

The continent of America is, in the eyes of the one true God, the land wherein the splendors of His light shall be revealed, where the mysteries of His Faith shall be unveiled, where the righteous will abide, and the free assemble.

(3) This prophecy has been already partially fulfilled, but will be fully disclosed only in "...the light of the glory of the Golden Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh." North America is the land that has been singled out and is "...preserved by the immutable decrees of the omnipotent Ordainer" and derives "...continual sustenance from the mandate which the Tablets of the Divine Plan have invested it." These believers are laying the groundwork for the future World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. (4) Shoghi Effendi links East and West by declaring that the North American Bahá'ís are "...the spiritual descendants of the dawn-breakers of an heroic Age," but unlike the martyrs of Persia they must become a "living sacrifice" whose fruit shall be "...that promised World Order, the shell ordained to enshrine that priceless jewel, the world civilization, of which the Faith itself is the sole begetter." A further link is made. The martyrs of Persia have begotten the Administrative Order: "Its seed is the blood of no less than twenty thousand martyrs who have offered up their lives that it may be born and flourish."⁹⁰ (In a former dispensation, this statement parallels Tertullian's saying that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church"⁹¹). (5) In ¶5 of the section, the Guardian makes the

preamble to his eulogy. Along the lines of Arnold Tonybee's "challenge and response" factor in making history,⁹² the preamble records the accomplishments of the North American Bahá'ís, despite the several obstacles and handicaps that confronted them. Each clause addresses a particular handicap or obstacle that has been faced and successfully overcome:

A community, relatively negligible in its numerical strength; separated by vast distances from both the focal-center of its Faith and the land wherein the preponderating mass of its fellow-believers reside; bereft in the main of material resources and lacking in experience and in prominence; ignorant of the beliefs, concepts and habits of those peoples and races from which its spiritual Founders have sprung; wholly unfamiliar with the languages in which its sacred Books were originally revealed; constrained to place its sole reliance upon an inadequate rendering of only a fragmentary portion of the literature embodying its laws, its tenets, and its history; subjected from its infancy to tests of extreme severity, involving, at times, the defection of some of its most prominent members; having to contend, ever since its inception, and in an ever-increasing measure, with the forces of corruption, of moral laxity, and ingrained prejudice — such a community, in less than half a century, and unaided by any of its sister communities, whether in the East or in the West, has, by virtue of the celestial potency with which an all-loving Master has abundantly endowed it, lent an impetus to the onward march of the Cause it has espoused which the combined achievements of its coreligionists in the West have failed to rival.⁹³

Then Shoghi Effendi enters into the heart of his eulogy, a text that is framed by no less than thirteen rhetorical questions without a single paragraph break:

What other community, it can confidently be asked, has been instrumental in fixing the pattern, and in imparting the original impulse, to those administrative institutions that constitute the vanguard of the World

Order of Bahá'u'lláh? What other community has been capable of demonstrating, with such consistency, the resourcefulness, the discipline, the iron determination, the zeal and perseverance, the devotion and fidelity, so indispensable to the erection and the continued extension of the framework within which those nascent institutions can alone multiply and mature? What other community has proved itself to be fired by so noble a vision, or willing to rise to such heights of self-sacrifice, or ready to achieve so great a measure of solidarity, as to be able to raise, in so short a time and in the course of such crucial years, an edifice that can well deserve to be regarded as the greatest contribution ever made by the West to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh? What other community can justifiably lay claim to have succeeded, through the unsupported efforts of one of its humble members, in securing the spontaneous allegiance of Royalty to its Cause, and in winning such marvelous and written testimonies to its truth? What other community has shown the foresight, the organizing ability, the enthusiastic eagerness, that have been responsible for the establishment and multiplication, throughout its territory, of those initial schools which, as time goes by, will, on the one hand, evolve into powerful centers of Bahá'í learning, and, on the other, provide a fertile recruiting ground for the enrichment and consolidation of its teaching force? What other community has produced pioneers combining to such a degree the essential qualities of audacity, of consecration, of tenacity, of self-renunciation, and unstinted devotion, that have prompted them to abandon their homes, and forsake their all, and scatter over the surface of the globe, and hoist in its uttermost corners the triumphant banner of Bahá'u'lláh? Who else but the members of this community have won the eternal distinction of being the first to raise the call of Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá in such highly important and widely scattered centers and territories as the hearts of both the British and French empires, Germany, the Far East, the Balkan States, the Scandinavian countries, Latin America, the Islands of

the Pacific, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and now more recently the Baltic States? Who else but those same pioneers have shown themselves ready to undertake the labor, to exercise the patience, and to provide the funds, required for the translation and publication, in no less than forty languages, of their sacred literature, the dissemination of which is an essential prerequisite to any effectively organized campaign of teaching? What other community can lay claim to have had a decisive share in the worldwide efforts that have been exerted for the safeguarding and the extension of the immediate surroundings of its holy shrines, as well as for the preliminary acquisition of the future sites of its international institutions at its world center? What other community can to its eternal credit claim to have been the first to frame its national and local constitutions, thereby laying down the fundamental lines of the twin charters designed to regulate the activities, define the functions, and safeguard the rights, of its institutions? What other community can boast of having simultaneously acquired and legally secured the basis of its national endowments, thus paving the way for a similar action on the part of its local communities? What other community has achieved the supreme distinction of having obtained, long before any of its sister communities had envisaged such a possibility, the necessary documents assuring the recognition, by both the federal and state authorities, of its Spiritual Assemblies and national endowments? And finally what other community has had the privilege, and been granted the means, to succor the needy, to plead the cause of the downtrodden, and to intervene so energetically for the safeguarding of Bahá'í edifices and institutions in countries such as Persia, Egypt, Iraq, Russia, and Germany, where, at various times, its fellow-believers have had to suffer the rigors of both religious and racial persecution?⁹⁴

Each rhetorical question becomes, in fact, not a question, but a statement that identifies one particular facet of a distinguished history. Each question provides vital

information that invites further investigation by historians: “To appraise correctly their value [“these manifold services”], and dilate on their merits and immediate consequences, is a task which only a future Bahá’í historian can properly discharge.”⁹⁵ (This atypical use of the rhetorical question will be considered below under “Particular Rhetorical Techniques”).

(6) The Rhetoric of Blame: Denunciation of Covenant-Breakers

Although he was liberal in his praise, Shoghi Effendi sometimes found it necessary to blame. Although his denunciations were often aimed at “...the standards, the habits, and the excesses of a decadent age,”⁹⁶ the condemnations were occasionally personal. The rhetoric of blame accompanied the expulsion of a small group of ex-Bahá’ís known as covenant-breakers. Despite their few numbers, the covenant-beakers were a wily and desperate group who, first secretly, then openly, had defied Bahá’u’lláh’s, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s or Shoghi Effendi’s authority, had attempted to discredit, harm and/or injure them, to divide the community, and to create a following for themselves. Using a medical analogy, the Guardian referred to covenant-breaking as a “virus of violation,”⁹⁷ a phrase that indicates both its dangerous and contagious qualities. The metaphor is apt because covenant-breaking is a potentially fatal spiritual disease that strikes at the very heart of Bahá’í teaching, government, community life and the sanity of the mind and soul.

In the following passages, Shoghi Effendi denounces the Iranians Avarih, Fareed and Falah. His condemnation reminds us that divine punishment, even though it may disturb the modern reader, and makes for unpopular theology, is one manifestation of divine justice. To make an object lesson of such individuals, the Guardian recorded the devastating effects on those who had attempted to usurp the religion’s leadership and destroy its unity. These attacks, although they failed, caused acute suffering to the Guardian, and to Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá before him, and set back or impeded the faith’s progress:

Following the successive blows which fell with dramatic swiftness two years ago upon the ring-leaders of the

fast dwindling band of old Covenant-breakers at the World Center of the Faith, God's avenging hand struck down in the last two months, Avarih, Fareed and Falah, within the cradle of the Faith, North America and Turkey, who demonstrated varying degrees, in the course of over thirty years, of faithlessness to 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The first of the above named will be condemned by posterity as being the most shameless, vicious, relentless apostate in the annals of the Faith, who, through ceaseless vitriolic attacks in recorded voluminous writings and close alliance with its traditional enemies, assiduously schemed to blacken its name and subvert the foundations of its institutions.

The second, history will recognize as one of the most perfidious among the kinsmen of the interpreters of the Center of the Covenant, who, driven by ungovernable cupidity, committed acts causing agonies of grief and distress to the beloved Master and culminating in open association with breakers of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant in the Holy Land.

The third will be chiefly remembered by the pride, obstinacy and insatiable ambition impelling him to violate the spiritual and administrative precepts of the Faith.

All three, however blinded by perversity, could not have failed to perceive, as their infamous careers approached their end, the futility of their opposition and measure their own loss by the degree of progress and consolidation of the triumphant administrative order so magnificently celebrated in the course of the festivities of the recently concluded Holy Year.⁹⁸

Shoghi Effendi's entire letter of October 17, 1927 to the National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the West presents 'Abdu'l-Husayn Avarih's futile attempt to undermine the Bahá'í Faith and records his downfall. Avarih is presented as a once respected historian and itinerant lecturer who became deluded by his own monstrous pride and ambition. Among his other crimes, Avarih attacked the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, denounced the originality of the Bahá'í teachings, questioned

the authenticity of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s *Will and Testament*, and sought to overthrow the Bahá’í Administration. He conspired with Christian missionaries in Persia, and a hostile Muslim clergy, and sought to discredit the Bahá’is in the eyes of “...the highest dignitaries of the State”⁹⁹ with the old charge that they were rebellious enemies of the state and the wreckers of Islam. However, Avarih seriously underestimated the strength and solidarity of the Bahá’í institutions and the discernment of those who were able to see through the mask of this “sordid and treacherous mind.”¹⁰⁰ He lived to see the utter collapse of his egomaniacal projects:

Shunned by the entire body of the believers, abandoned by his life-long and most intimate friends, deserted by his wife, separated from his only child, refused admittance into even his own home, denied of the profit he hoped to derive from the sale and circulation of his book, he found to his utter amazement and remorse his best hopes irretrievably shattered.¹⁰¹

The distinguished comparative religionist Ninian Smart (1925-2000), in a book that investigates the language of moral discourse in religion, makes the point that the use of praise and/or blame is not just to congratulate or condemn someone as being either “good” or “bad.” Such value-judgments also reflect the norms of the religion. Applying Smart’s logic to Shoghi Effendi epideictic, those who read the condemnation of Avarih had their identity as faithful believers reinforced. At the same time, the condemnation would have served as warning to the wavering and punishment to the faithless:

One main function of praise or blame is to get people to do the right things and to refrain from the wrong things: it is then a form (usually but not always the mildest form) of reward and punishment. As such its purposes are controlled by the rules and valuations held to be correct.¹⁰²

I alluded above to Northrop Frye’s mention of the need for a “rallying point” and/or “point of attack” in the rhetoric of social action. As for the “point of attack,” Shoghi Effendi excelled when thundering against the evils of the age. His denunciations are a modern revoicing of the ancient prophetic

protest. The following passage decries the senseless worship of the three “false gods,” “the triple gods,” “the chief idols” of the age, gods which have exacted the tragic deaths of millions of souls in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. While this passage is noteworthy for its iconoclastic stigmatization of three forms of secularism as modern-day idol worship, it is no less remarkable for its rhetorical properties:

This vital force [religion] is dying out, this mighty agency has been scorned, this radiant light obscured, this impregnable stronghold abandoned, this beauteous robe discarded. God Himself has indeed been dethroned from the hearts of men, and an idolatrous world passionately and clamorously hails and worships the false gods which its own idle fancies have fatuously created, and its misguided hands so impiously exalted. The chief idols in the desecrated temple of mankind are none other than the triple gods of Nationalism, Racialism and Communism, at whose altars governments and peoples, whether democratic or totalitarian, at peace or at war, of the East or of the West, Christian or Islamic, are, in various forms and in different degrees, now worshipping. Their high priests are the politicians and the worldly-wise, the so-called sages of the age; their sacrifice, the flesh and blood of the slaughtered multitudes; their incantations outworn shibboleths and insidious and irreverent formulas; their incense, the smoke of anguish that ascends from the lacerated hearts of the bereaved, the maimed, and the homeless.¹⁰³

(7) The Rhetoric of Anxious Concern: Executing the Teaching Plan

The name of this rhetorical mode is taken from Bahá'u'lláh's admonition, “*Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.*”¹⁰⁴ To motivate the Bahá'ís to fulfill the objectives of the Divine Plan, Shoghi Effendi's letters contained earnest appeals, solemn entreaties and sober admonitions. The subtext to the following example is the

convenantal language of the renewed pledge, “the dual responsibility solemnly undertaken under the Seven Year Plan”:

I entreat the American Bahá’í Community, whatever the immediate or distant repercussions of the present turmoil on their own continent, however violent its impact upon the World Center of their Faith, to pledge themselves anew, before the Throne of Bahá’u’lláh, to discharge, with unswerving aim, unfailing courage, invincible vigor, exemplary fidelity and ever-deepening consecration, the dual responsibility solemnly undertaken under the Seven Year Plan. I implore them to accelerate their efforts, increase their vigilance, deepen their unity, multiply their heroic feats, maintain their distant outposts in the teaching field of Latin America and expedite the termination of the last stage in the ornamentation of the Temple. I am praying continually with redoubled fervor.¹⁰⁵

He wrote these words during the Ten Year Plan (1953-1963), less than six weeks before his passing in Knightsbridge, London:

Once again – and this time more fervently than ever before – I direct my plea to every single member of this strenuously laboring, clear-visioned, stout-hearted, spiritually endowed community, every man and woman, on whose individual efforts, resolution, self-sacrifice and perseverance the immediate destinies of the Faith of God, now traversing so crucial a stage in its rise and establishment, primarily depends, not to allow, through apathy, timidity or complacency, this one remaining opportunity to be irretrievably lost.¹⁰⁶

Particular Rhetorical Techniques

Divine charisma notwithstanding, the Guardian’s formal study of rhetoric at the Syrian Protestant College (1915-1917) familiarised him with the classical elements of speech-art which he learned to use effectively. Above we have examined seven rhetorical modes used by Shoghi Effendi that are associated with classical rhetoric, particularly the epideictic and deliberative modes. However, because they are Bahá’í-specific,

our author's writings exhibit certain atypical stylistic features which will be examined now.

(1) Loving Greetings

Shoghi Effendi's warm and loving greetings establish an immediate, personal contact with the reader. These greetings expressed, in solicitous terms, his sincere affection and open admiration of his fellow-believers. He wrote such endearing salutations as "Dearly-beloved friends!," "Fellow-believers in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh," "To the beloved of the Lord and the handmaids of the Merciful," "My dearest brethren and sisters in 'Abdu'l-Bahá," "My dearly-beloved brethren and sisters in the love of God!," "Dearest brethren and sisters in Bahá'u'lláh!," "My dearest friends" and "Dearly-beloved co-workers." The lone greeting in *The Promised Day Is Come* is found, atypically, not at the beginning of that text, but in its concluding passages, and reads simply "Dear friends!" The salutation "Dearly-beloved co-workers" indicated that Shoghi Effendi saw himself as a close collaborator with his fellow believers. His closing signature indicated, not only his profound humility, but also his strong sense of fraternal collaboration. The weighty title "Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Cause of God" he did not deem appropriate. He signed humbly, "Your true brother, Shoghi" or simply "Shoghi." In Persian, he usually signed *Bandeh-yeh-Ástánesh, Shoghi*, "Servant of His Threshold, Shoghi."

(2) Persuasion By Authoritative Reason

We have already seen that at its origins in ancient Greece, rhetoric used both logic and emotion. In *The Promised Day Is Come*, *The Advent of Divine Justice* and *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, Shoghi Effendi's judgments and strong appeals to participate in the Divine Plan were accompanied by sober arguments. We have noted that the Guardian was not inclined to abstraction and speculation, nor are his writings dialectical in the Socratic or Platonic sense. Aristotle's dialectic of "a rational inference based on probable premises"¹⁰⁷ comes perhaps closest to some of the arguments presented in *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh* (1934), but the apocalyptic certitude that accompanied his theological judgments excluded

probabilities. His writings employed an authoritative reason to elucidate truth, but this reason was based on flashes of insight that were grounded in divine authority, rather than the working of an elaborate logic. Authoritative reason is akin to the apodictic statement/proposition mentioned under the magisterial mode in (3) above (*apodeiktos*=demonstrable), viz. a philosophical truth that is beyond doubt or a binding, religious command.

The following passage from the *Dispensation* rejects one of the misconceptions about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá entertained by American Bahá’ís during the 1920’s and early 1930’s: that He shared a “mystic unity” with Bahá’u’lláh. Shoghi Effendi corrected this misapprehension partly on moral grounds. Those who over-estimated ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s station were “just as reprehensible and have done just as much harm as those who underestimate it.”¹⁰⁸ This overestimation lent credibility to the complaint of the covenant-breakers that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was laying claim to divinity “before the expiration of a full thousand years”: “...they are inadvertently justifying and continuously furnishing the enemy with proofs for his false accusations and misleading statements.”¹⁰⁹ But his argument was also rational and deductive with its economical mentions of “erroneous conception,” “unjustified inference” and “inescapable inference.” Regarding the so-called mystical unity between Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, he wrote:

This erroneous conception may, in part, be ascribed to an altogether extravagant interpretation of certain terms and passages in the Tablet of the Branch, to the introduction into its English translation of certain words that are either non-existent, misleading, or ambiguous in their connotation. It is, no doubt, chiefly based upon an altogether unjustified inference from the opening passages of a Tablet of Bahá’u’lláh, extracts of which, as reproduced in the Bahá’í Scriptures, immediately precede, but form no part of, the said Tablet of the Branch. It should be made clear to every one reading those extracts that by the phrase “the Tongue of the Ancient” no one else is meant but God, and that the term “the Greatest Name” is an obvious reference to Bahá’u’lláh, and that “the

Covenant” referred to is not the specific Covenant of which Bahá’u’lláh is the immediate Author and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the Center but that general Covenant which, as inculcated by the Bahá’í teaching, God Himself invariably establishes with mankind when He inaugurates a new Dispensation. “The Tongue” that “gives,” as stated in those extracts, the “glad-tidings” is none other than the Voice of God referring to Bahá’-u’lláh, and not Bahá’u’lláh referring to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Moreover, to maintain that the assertion “He is Myself,” instead of denoting the mystic unity of God and His Manifestations, as explained in the *Kitáb-i-Iqán*, establishes the identity of Bahá’u’lláh with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, would constitute a direct violation of the oft-repeated principle of the oneness of God’s Manifestations – a principle which the Author of these same extracts is seeking by implication to emphasize....

Furthermore, the inescapable inference from the belief in the identity of the Author of our Faith with Him Who is the Center of His Covenant would be to place ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in a position superior to that of the Báb, the reverse of which is the fundamental, though not as yet universally recognized, principle of this Revelation.¹¹⁰

(3) The Rhetorical Question

The Rhetoric of Praise that created the consciousness of the world-historical mission of the North American Bahá’is was elaborated through an atypical, long series of rhetorical questions. Normally, the rhetorical question does not seek to provide information, but rather to elicit an emotional response. But while Shoghi Effendi’s rhetorical list of praise was surely well-received, it also provided vital information. The historical synopsis that it provided can still be used by historians to further investigate American Bahá’í history. The rhetorical list also opened a lens through which the North America Bahá’is could see themselves in a new light, doubtless for the first time. The courageous “little band of followers,”¹¹¹ who formerly saw themselves as individual disciples of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, acting under His personal direction, were transformed

by Shoghi Effendi's historical vision into a self-standing, cohesive, vibrant religious community that had successfully overcome the major obstacles that once stood in the way of implanting the Bahá'í Faith on North American soil. The Guardian's Rhetoric of Praise was, moreover, intended to instill the confidence necessary to complete the future tasks with which he would entrust the North American Bahá'ís.

(4) Kinetic Emotion

Northrop Frye pointed out that with rhetorical prose, "...we are moving rapidly away from literature toward the direct verbal expression of kinetic emotion"¹¹² (Gk. κινέω = to move). Frye downgrades this genre as "tantrum prose," with its tendency to "express emotion apart from or without intellect."¹¹³ While the kinetic effect of Shoghi Effendi's writings remains strong, they qualify nonetheless as "conceptual rhetoric"¹¹⁴ or prose of thought. Kinetic emotion is generally considered to be out of place in intellectual discourse. As we have seen with Aristotle, the mixing of strong emotion with reason was seen to weaken the argument. Pure logic was deemed to be closer to truth. The distrust of emotion can be traced back to Plato's *Phaedrus* in which he depicted the soul as a charioteer who is drawn up to heaven by the white winged horse (Pegasus) of reason ("good") and back down to earth again by the black horse of the emotions/passion ("bad").¹¹⁵ Plato's figure regrettably succeeded in dichotomizing reason and emotion.

Rhetorical theory has only legitimized what has long been known – emotions have a legitimate and necessary place in discourse. Even within science, sociologists G. Nigel Gilbert and Michael Mulkay argue that emotion has a valid place. In their *Opening Pandora's Box: A Sociological Analysis of Scientists Discourse* (1984), Gilbert and Mulkay find that emotions are part and parcel of the process of the scientific method and are latently present in scientific statements, even if the emotional experience of the scientist is not explicitly acknowledged in scientific formulations.¹¹⁶ Professor Louis C. Charland, who studies the philosophy of emotion, has argued against Paul E. Griffith's radical stance that the category of emotion and the word itself should be eliminated from

psychology. In his critical review "In Defence of Emotion," Charland argued that emotions form a natural status category that simply cannot be eliminated.¹¹⁷ The conceptual-affective integration of cognition and emotion has been simply and beautifully stated by Wayne C. Booth in *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (1974): "Every desire, every feeling, can become a good reason when called into the court of symbolic exchange."¹¹⁸

In *A Celestial Burning: The Writings of Shoghi Effendi*, I have identified the following predominant range of emotions in the Guardian's writings: (1) joy (2) exultation (3) justified pride (4) justified anger (5) righteous indignation (6) pathos (grief/pity) (7) shame and shamelessness.¹¹⁹ Due to the limitation of space, only one example is given here – pathos. The most outstanding example of pathos is Shoghi Effendi's ten page glowing tribute of July 17, 1932 marking the passing of his beloved great-aunt, Bahíyyih Khanum, the Greatest Holy Leaf. The Guardian's letter moves us, not only with his intense personal grief, but it also provides a sensitive appraisal of "...the towering grandeur of her spiritual life... the unique part she played throughout the tumultuous stages of Bahá'í history."¹²⁰ It begins:

Brethren and fellow-mourners in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh:

A sorrow, reminiscent in its poignancy, of the devastating grief caused by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sudden removal from our midst, has stirred the Bahá'í world to its foundations. The Greatest Holy Leaf, the well-beloved and treasured Remnant of Bahá'u'lláh entrusted to our frail and unworthy hands by our departed Master, has passed to the Great Beyond, leaving a legacy that time can never dim.

The community of the Most Great Name, in its entirety and to its very core, feels the sting of this cruel loss. Inevitable though this calamitous event appeared to us all, however acute our apprehensions of its steady approach, the consciousness of its final consummation at this terrible hour leaves us, we whose

souls have been impregnated by the energizing influence of her love, prostrated and disconsolate.

How can my lonely pen, so utterly inadequate to glorify so exalted a station, so impotent to portray the experiences of so sublime a life, so disqualified to recount the blessings she showered upon me since my earliest childhood – how can such a pen repay the great debt of gratitude and love that I owe her whom I regarded as my chief sustainer, my most affectionate comforter, the joy and inspiration of my life? My grief is too immense, my remorse too profound, to be able to give full vent at this moment to the feelings that surge within me.¹²¹

His letter concludes with this poignant apostrophe:

Dearly-beloved Greatest Holy Leaf! Through the mist of tears that fill my eyes I can clearly see, as I pen these lines, thy noble figure before me, and can recognize the serenity of thy kindly face. I can still gaze, though the shadow of the grave separate us, into thy blue, love-deep eyes, and can feel, in its calm intensity, the immense love thou didst bear for the Cause of thine Almighty Father, the attachment that bound thee to the most lowly and insignificant among its followers, the warm affection thou didst cherish for me in thine heart. The memory of the ineffable beauty of thy smile shall ever continue to cheer and hearten me in the thorny path I am destined to pursue. The remembrance of the touch of thine hand shall spur me on to follow steadfastly in thy way. The sweet magic of thy voice shall remind me, when the hour of adversity is at its darkest, to hold fast to the rope thou didst seize so firmly all the days of thy life.¹²²

(5) Caveats, Conditions and Constructive Criticism

The caveat, a caution or warning, and the condition are characteristic of Shoghi Effendi's covenantal language. When our author uses the phrases "unless and until" or "Then and only then," he is stipulating that certain conditions must be observed to fulfil the goal he has in mind. Addressing the North

American Bahá'ís on April 11, 1949, during the Second Seven Year Plan, Shoghi Effendi laid down three conditions for the success of the Plan, whose chief goal was “the completion of the Mother Temple of the West.” This project was “...of such a weighty character as to overshadow every enterprise embarked upon through the organized efforts of its members, in either the concluding years of the Heroic Age of the Faith or the first epoch of the Age which succeeded it.”¹²³ The successful outcome of this enterprise depended on the realisation of three interdependent conditions: (1) universal participation (2) sacrifice (3) systematic effort:

Nor can this campaign yield its richest fruit unless and until the community, in its entirety, participates in this nation-wide sacrificial effort. Nor can this collective effort be blessed, to the fullest extent possible, unless the contributions made by its members involve acts of self-abnegation, not only on the part of those of modest means, but also by those endowed with substantial resources. Nor, indeed, can these self-denying acts, by both the rich and the poor, be productive of the fullest possible benefit unless this sacrificial effort is neither momentary nor haphazard, but rather systematic and continuous throughout the period of the present emergency.¹²⁴

He indicated that should these three conditions be met, unsuspected “regenerative power” would flow from that “holy edifice”:

Then and only then will this holy edifice, symbol and harbinger of a world civilization as yet unborn, and the embodiment of the sacrifice of a multitude of the upholders of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, release the full measure of the regenerative power with which it has been endowed, shed in all its plenitude the glory of the Most Holy Spirit dwelling within it, and vindicate, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the truth of every single promise recorded by the pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá pertaining to its destiny.¹²⁵

While Shoghi Effendi's Rhetoric of Praise extolled the “virtues and qualities”¹²⁶ of the North American Bahá'í

community, he also drew attention to its “faults, habits, and tendencies.”¹²⁷ Here is one such observation: “The American Bahá’í Community, the leaven destined to leaven the whole, cannot hope, at this critical juncture in the fortunes of a struggling, perilously situated, spiritually moribund nation, to either escape the trials with which this nation is confronted, nor claim to be wholly immune from the evils that stain its character.”¹²⁸ More pointed critiques were sometimes made. The weeding out of negative moral and cultural traits was necessary if the two North American nations were to fulfil their high destiny.

These criticisms were always tactful and constructive, but they were delivered nonetheless in clear language. Regarding racial prejudice in America, “...the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá’í community at the present stage of its evolution...,” he wrote: “The ceaseless exertions which this issue of paramount importance calls for, the sacrifices it must impose, the care and vigilance it demands, the moral courage and fortitude it requires, the tact and sympathy it necessitates, invest this problem, which the American believers are still far from having satisfactorily resolved, with an urgency and importance that cannot be overestimated.”¹²⁹ However egalitarian were (are) the teachings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on racial equality and unity, promoted as early on as the second decade of the twentieth century, the above passage makes it clear that the Bahá’ís were still far from observing the ideal standard. The Guardian presented the racial unity of whites and African Americans as a social and spiritual challenge that demanded the immediate and urgent attention of every believer.

In his eulogy of the North American Bahá’ís, the Guardian felt impelled to utter “a word of warning”:

Dearly beloved friends! Great as is my love and admiration for you, convinced as I am of the paramount share which you can, and will, undoubtedly have in both the continental and international spheres of future Bahá’í activity and service, I feel it nevertheless incumbent upon me to utter, at this juncture, a word of warning.¹³⁰

The Guardian's word of warning draws a "sharp distinction" between the North American Bahá'ís and the larger non-Bahá'í society in which they live. This sharp distinction is made, not to indulge any sense of false pride or self-satisfaction, but rather to befittingly recognize "the transmuting power of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh."¹³¹ The source of such distinction and achievements lay not in themselves, but rather in the powers dispensed by the Founder of their faith. While the source of this distinction between the Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í communities would seem to be clear enough, the point is nonetheless a subtle one. As we have seen above, the Guardian indicated that there could be no safe haven for the Bahá'í community from the trials experienced by their countrymen, nor could any immunity be claimed from the faults that stain the American character. Drawing a parallel between the sublime transformation of the apostolic heroes and martyrs of the Heroic Age (1844-1921), and "To a lesser degree..." with "...the country which has vindicated its right to be regarded as the cradle of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh," Shoghi Effendi issued this sobering reminder:

Let not, therefore, those who are to participate so predominantly in the birth of that world civilization, which is the direct offspring of their Faith, imagine for a moment that for some mysterious purpose or by any reason of inherent excellence or special merit Bahá'u'lláh has chosen to confer upon their country and people so great and lasting a distinction. It is precisely by reason of the patent evils which, notwithstanding its other admittedly great characteristics and achievements, an excessive and binding materialism has unfortunately engendered within it that the Author of their Faith and the Center of His Covenant have singled it out to become the standard-bearer of the New World Order envisaged in their writings.¹³²

Then our author proceeds to spell out the faults that need to be rooted out. As usual, he mentions the virtues and qualities that must replace them:

It is by such means as this that Bahá'u'lláh can best demonstrate to a heedless generation His almighty power to raise up from the very midst of a people, immersed in a sea of materialism, a prey to one of the most virulent and long-standing forms of racial prejudice, and notorious for its political corruption, lawlessness and laxity in moral standards, men and women who, as time goes by, will increasingly exemplify those essential virtues of self-renunciation, of moral rectitude, of chastity, of indiscriminating fellowship, of holy discipline, and of spiritual insight that will fit them for the preponderating share they will have in calling into being that World Order and that World Civilization of which their country, no less than the entire human race, stands in desperate need.¹³³

His observations are adjusted by this positive note:

Observations such as these, however distasteful and depressing they may be, should not, in the least, blind us to those virtues and qualities of high intelligence, of youthfulness, of unbounded initiative, and enterprise which the nation as a whole so conspicuously displays, and which are being increasingly reflected by the community of the believers within it. Upon these virtues and qualities, no less than upon the elimination of the evils referred to, must depend, to a very great extent, the ability of that community to lay a firm foundation for the country's future role in ushering in the Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.¹³⁴

Summary of Shoghi Effendi's Art of Rhetoric

1. The primary functions of Shoghi Effendi's rhetoric are to persuade and to move to action.
2. His rhetorical style is distinctive because it is Bahá'í-specific.
3. Seven modes of suasive speech may be identified in his discourse.

4. His rhetoric preserves some of the classical features identified by Aristotle.
5. The Guardian is credible and impressive, not only because he is an effective rhetorician, but also because he is an outstanding historical figure, of high moral repute, who executed the wide range of his accomplishments to perfection.
6. Persuasion is achieved by a judicious balance of authoritative reason and kinetic emotion.
7. His use of the rhetorical question is atypical.
8. His rhetorical language is covenantal, that is, conditional.
9. While Shoghi Effendi praises, he also judges and, when necessary, condemns.
10. As head of the Bahá'í Faith, he engages in constructive criticism of his co-religionists.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that Shoghi Effendi's rhetorical skill was not the product of divine charisma alone, but also of formal study and practice. The strong rhetorical effects in the Guardian's writings may help to insure that this ancient speech-art will be revived in the Bahá'í dispensation, and become the object, not only of rhetorical theory, but also of practice. Shoghi Effendi's exemplary character, and the excellence that he showed in guiding the world-wide Bahá'í community during his administration, gives credibility to his rhetoric. His rhetoric shows that he was cognizant of, and used effectively, some of the classical elements of the ancient art which his writings preserve. However, his Bahá'í-specific discourse resulted in an original, magisterial style that speaks in distinct rhetorical modes and techniques.

NOTES

1. This paper is a modified version of chapter eight, "Rhetoric: The Language of Persuasion," of my forthcoming book *A Celestial Burning: The Writings of Shoghi Effendi* from George Ronald Publisher. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 'Irfán Colloquium held at the Bosch Bahá'í School, Santa Cruz, California, May 26-29, 2005. My thanks to Dr. Iraj Ayman, convenor of the 'Irfán Colloquia, for including the writings of the Guardian in the 'Irfán sessions, and to Dr. Stephen Lambden whose thoughtful questioning led to a major revision of this paper.
2. Bahá'í publications usually give the dates of the guardianship as 1921-1957, that is, thirty-six years. However, the *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was not read officially until January 3, 1922 and the "provisions of the Will were not made known until it was first read to Shoghi Effendi...." By the Gregorian calendar, then, the Guardian was in office for thirty-five years, not thirty-six. But the thirty-six year period is correct if reckoned by the Jalalí solar calendar which is use in Iran. See Madame Rúhíyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1969) p. 45.
3. The qualification *Qua* indicates that the Guardian was writing in his official capacity as head of the Bahá'í Faith, in his own hand, and not through secretaries who wrote on his behalf.
4. The word "arise" frequently punctuated Shoghi Effendi's message. The Multiple Author Refer System gives 499 uses of the word.
5. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan was conceived for the world-wide expansion of the Bahá'í Faith. In its simplest form, it was outlined as a teaching plan in the fourteen Tablets of the Divine Plan which were written to the North American Bahá'ís during World War One between 1916-1917 and received after the war. In the Preface to these tablets, Horace Holley referred to the North American Bahá'ís as having been chosen by 'Abdu'l-Bahá "as a teaching agency chosen for an international mission." Beginning in 1937 with the First Seven Year Plan, Shoghi Effendi began to systematically execute this "charter" which he felt it was his obligation to establish. See 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of the Divine Plan: Revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the North American Bahá'ís during 1916 and 1917* (Wilmette, Ill: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1971).
6. David Macey, "Rhetoric," in *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books), p. 329.
7. For a good overview of the various schools and approaches in the history of rhetoric in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, see "Bedford St. Martin's—The Bedford Bibliography: History of Rhetoric," <http://www.bedfordbooks.com/bb/history.html>. Early on in the twenty-first century, this field, as for literary criticism, has become widely diverse with studies ranging from literacy and language learning, to composition theory and practice, traditional rhetorical theory,

-
- postmodernism, and social issues of gender, race, media, culture, ethnicity and class.
8. Bret Breneman, "Socrates'/Plato's Use of Rhetoric: A Bahá'í Perspective," *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, March-June 1991, pp. 1-18.
 9. For Plato, dialectic meant forming conclusions reached by the debate of question and answer. For him, dialectic was the science of first principles since it dispensed with hypotheses and was viewed as the "coping-stone" of the sciences. Aristotle's more formal logic developed the syllogism as a type of demonstration. For Aristotle, dialectic was a process of criticism which was the means of refining all principles that were asserted to be true. For a fuller history of dialectic, see Roland Hall's "Dialectic" in *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, Paul Edward, Editor-in-Chief (New York and London: Collier MacMillan Publishers, 1967), vol. I, pp. 385-389.
 10. Aristotle's notion of politics differed from modern notions of adversarial party systems which are based on the acquisition of power. Just as the Nichomachean Ethics was concerned with the acquisition of individual happiness based on the practice of virtue, Aristotle's Politics "...treats of the state as one of the chief means through which the individual attains happiness. The object of [eight books of] the Politics is both practical and speculative; to explain the nature of the ideal city (polis) in which the end of happiness may be completely realised; to suggest some methods of making existent states more useful to the individual citizen than they were in Aristotle's time, or had been in the past." From the Introduction by H.W. C. Davis, *Aristotle's Politics* trans. by Benjamin Jowett (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2000), p. 3. An unabridged reprint of the 1885 translation.
 11. See Chapter 1 of Book 1 (of 3) of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. Newly translated with Introduction, Notes, and Appendixes by George A. Kennedy (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
In the *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle identified logic or discursive reason with the rhetorical syllogism known as the enthymeme which was a popular, not a properly logical demonstration.
 12. *ibid.*
 13. Riaz Khadem, *Shoghi Effendi in Oxford and Earlier* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1999), p. 13.
 14. *ibid.*, p. 88.
 15. In British universities, Michaelmas corresponds to the North American Fall/ Autumn semester or term.
 16. The Oxford Union Society is a student society that arranges speaker meetings and social events, but debates were (and are) central to the functions of the Union. In the past, the Oxford Union Society and its

-
- counterpart at Cambridge, and their respective presidencies, functioned as a training ground for Britain's aspiring prime ministers, politicians and statesmen. But with more recent egalitarian trends in British society, the Unions are not as influential as they once were.
17. `Alí M. Yazdí, *Blessings Beyond Measure: Recollections of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi* (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988), p. 84.
 18. *ibid*, p. 85.
 19. *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 13.
 20. Shoghi Effendi in *Oxford and Earlier*, p. 110. Letter from William Elliot to Riaz Khadem, dated July 15, 1969.
 21. Breneman, *ibid*, p. 3.
 22. The interview was published originally in *Seven Days*, February 23, 1979, p. 20. Cited in William S. Hatcher and J. Douglas Martin, *The Bahá'í Faith: The Emerging Global Religion*, new edition (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing, 2002), n. 15, p. 222. Thanks to Dr. Susan Maneck for locating the above quotation.
 23. For an excellent survey of the repressive measures taken against the Bahá'í community by the Islamic Republic of Iran see Firuz Kazemzadeh, "The Bahá'ís in Iran: Twenty Years of Repression. (non-Muslim Religious Minority)," published originally in the magazine *Social Research*, June 22, 2000. <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-63787342.html>
 24. Breneman "Socrates'/Plato's Use of Rhetoric: A Bahá'í Perspective," pp. 5-11.
 25. Gorgias was a Sicilian who came to Athens in 427 BCE who used a poetic style and paradoxical arguments. He delivered and wrote speeches for others. Kennedy, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, Appendix I, p. 283. Bret Breneman points out that Plato critiqued rhetoric in the Protagoras and the Euthydemus. See *ibid*, p. 7.
 26. "Rhetoric" in David Macey, *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books), p. 330.
 27. The basic difference that Plato and Aristotle had with the Sophists was their denial of the ideal world of forms. For them, reality was confined to outward phenomena and they did not share the denial of the Platonist that the phenomenal world was not real. For Plato, the phenomenal world was merely a sham world and anybody who clung to it as being real was only deluding himself. See G.B. Kerferd's "Sophists" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Paul Edwards, Editor-in-Chief (New York and London: Macmillan and The Free Press, vol. 7, 1967), pp. 494-96.
 28. See Plato's *Sophist* and "Rhetoric" in David Macey, *ibid*, p. 330.
 29. It meant any public speaker. *Rhetor* today has a pejorative meaning.
 30. Jane P. Tompkins, "An Introduction to Reader-Response Criticism," in *Reader-Response Criticism From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*, Jane P. Tompkins, ed. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins

-
- University Press, 1980), p. xxv. Tompkins is referring to Longinus's remarkable treatise "On the Sublime."
31. "Rhetoric" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1959).
 32. "Quintilian" (Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, c. 35-95 CE) at *All Experts Encyclopedia* <http://experts.about.com/e/q/qu/quintilian.htm>, p. 5.
 33. *ibid*, p. 6.
 34. Among other principles, Quintilian advocated that the father should have the highest hopes for his child, that the child's nurse should speak well and both parents and teachers should be well-educated. In a patriarchal society, he saw a well-educated mother as an asset to the growing orator. Childhood education should begin early and be enjoyable for the child; amusement should be built into the curriculum. See 1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.1.6, 1.1.21 of the *Institutio Oratoria* in "Quintilian," the *All Experts Encyclopedia* <http://experts.about.com/e/q/qu/quintilian.htm>, p. 4.
 35. "Quintilian" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1959).
 36. In addition to Rúhtyyih Rabbani's, *The Priceless Pearl*, informative but brief pen portraits of Shoghi Effendi were recorded by Ugo Giachery, Mountfort Mills, Roy Wilhelm, May Bolles Maxwell, Alaine Locke, Keith Ransom-Kehler, Helen Bishop, O.Z. Whitehead and Leroy Ioas. See Appendix I of Ugo Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi: Recollections* (George Ronald: Oxford, 1973) and *A Tribute to Shoghi Effendi* by Amelia Collins (1958). There is also Leroy Ioas's tape-recorded talk made in Johannesburg in 1958 about the life and work of the Guardian.
 37. The chapter in Marcus Bach's book that treats the Guardian has been excerpted and published as *A Meeting With Shoghi Effendi* (Oxford: One World Publications, 1993). Barney Leith's comment is found on p. viii.
 38. Although the dust jacket says that Bach met Shoghi Effendi "one April evening in 1953," Barney Leith writes in his introduction that the meeting took place on February 12, 1953. Bach himself refers to the "February cold" that he experienced at the border crossing. The border guard instructed him to be back within a week since Israel was at war. *A Meeting With Shoghi Effendi* pp. vi, 3 and 5.
 39. *ibid*, pp. 30, 33, 35, 40-41.
 40. The phrase is that of Edward P.J. Corbett, *Rhetorical Analyses of Literary Works* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. xxiii.
 41. "He is, above and beyond these appellations, the "Mystery of God" – an expression by which Bahá'u'lláh Himself has chosen to designate Him, and which, while it does not by any means justify us to assign to Him the station of Prophethood, indicates how in the person of 'Abdu'l-Bahá the incompatible characteristics of a human nature and superhuman knowledge and perfection have been blended and are completely harmonized." Shoghi Effendi, "The Dispensation of

- Bahá'u'lláh" in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991), p. 134.
42. "The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh" in WOB p. 151.
43. *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 2. Miss Drayton is not named by Madame Rabbani, but her name appears in the salutation of the Arabic tablet. See Dr. Yunis Afrukhteh, *Khatirát-i-Nuh-Saleh-i-Akká*, p. 187. Thanks to Dr. Sima Quddusi for referring me to this text.
44. *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 2.
45. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Wilmette: Illinois, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1944), p. 25.
46. *ibid*, p. 11.
47. *ibid*, p. 3.
48. *The Priceless Pearl*, pp. 459-61. See also chapter VI "Facets of Shoghi Effendi's Personality," pp. 125-43.
49. Hand of the Cause of God Leroy Ioas (1896-1965), who served as the Guardian's assistant-secretary and representative from March 1952 to Shoghi Effendi's passing on November 4, 1957, said in a tape-recorded talk made after the Guardian's passing in Johannesburg, South Africa on October 31, 1958 that in addition to his other duties, the Guardian received 700 pages of N.S.A. minutes in one day alone which he was required to read. The above dates of service and the date of her father's talk were indicated to me in a letter of Mr. Ioas's daughter, Anita Ioas Chapman, dated January 31, 2000. However, Mr. Ioas indicates in the same talk that his period of service was "six years" (tape recorded personal copy).
50. Rúhiyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 436.
51. Edward P. J. Corbett, *Rhetorical Analyses of Literary Works* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. xxii. Italics in original.
52. *ibid*, p. xxii.
53. Jane Tompkins, "The Reader in History: The Changing Shape of Literary Response" in *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*, Jane Tompkins ed. (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p. 204. It needs to be said, however, that one would have to be selective in applying the principles of reader-response theory to the writings of Shoghi Effendi. Reader-response theory gives a predominant role to the reader in the creation of meaning compared to the "objectivity" of the text. Any reading of the Guardian's writings would have to weigh heavily on the side of the objective meaning intended by him. It is not the reader who creates ultimate meaning in the reading process, but Shoghi Effendi.
54. From the Introduction, Corbett, *Rhetorical Analyses of Rhetorical Works*, p. xi.
55. Ann Boyles, "The Epistolary Style of Shoghi Effendi" in *The Vision of Shoghi Effendi: Proceedings of the Association for Bahá'í Studies Ninth*

-
- Annual Conference*, November 2-4, 1984, Ottawa, Canada. (Ottawa: Bahá'í Studies Publications, 1993), p. 9. Dr. Boyles is quoting C. Hugh Holman, *A Handbook to Literature*, 3d ed. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1972), p. 199.
56. William Merrill Decker, *Epistolary Practices: Letter Writing in America Before Telecommunications* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), p. 5.
 57. A document written entirely in the hand of its author.
 58. Decker, *Epistolary Practices*, p. 4.
 59. Helen, John and Amelia Danesh, "The Life of Shoghi Effendi" in *Studying the Writings of Shoghi Effendi*, ed. by Morten Bergsmo (Oxford: George Ronald, 1991), p. 25.
 60. An expression used frequently by Bahá'u'lláh in His tablets and in such works as the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and *The Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*.
 61. What is meant by mixed genres is that, under one cover, the Guardian's writings blend history with scripture, theological interpretation, moral judgments, commentary on social situations and world current events and administrative guidance. In other words, the Guardian was no respecter of the strictness of genre and created his own magisterial style that blended elements of several genres. See, for example, *The Promised Day Is Come*, *The Advent of Divine Justice* and *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*.
 62. "Kerygma" in Van A. Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms* (New York: MacMillan, 1964), pp. 138-140.
 63. *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957*, p. 7.
 64. Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 326-327.
 65. *ibid*, p. 327.
 66. *ibid*. The other examples cited by Frye are: "...Johnson's letter to Chesterfield, some sermons in the period between Latimer and the Commonwealth, some of Burke's speeches..." and "...Vanzetti's death speech."
 67. The MARS program lists 269 instances of the use of the word "action" in the letters and communications of Shoghi Effendi.
 68. *U.S. Bahá'í News*, June 6, 1937, no. 108, p. 1.
 69. *Messages to the Antipodes: Communications from Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'í Communities of Australasia* (Mona Vale, NSW: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1997), p. 110.
 70. *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957*, p. 120.
 71. Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, p. 327.
 72. *Citadel of Faith*, p. 157.
 73. *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 99.

-
74. The meaning of unctio intended here is “a fervent or sympathetic quality in words or tone caused by or causing deep emotion.” *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary*, 1998.
75. “Apodeictic” in Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994 and 2005), p. 19
76. “The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh” in WOB p. 147.
77. That the writings of a ‘Abdu’l-Bahá cannot be referred to as “divine revelation” has been clearly decided by a simple statement of Shoghi Effendi. Referring to the ascension of Bahá’u’lláh he wrote: “The setting of so effulgent an Orb brought to a definite termination the period of Divine Revelation – the initial and most vitalizing stage in the Bahá’í era” “The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh” in WOB p. 143.
78. “Temperamentally Shoghi Effendi is a doer, a builder, an organizer, and loathes abstractions!” Madame Rabbani is quoting from her own diary. *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 81.
79. The word “positive” has developed a number of meanings since its empirical definition by one of the founding fathers of sociology, August Comte, in his famous Law of Three Stages. Here it refers to the Guardian’s functional, constructive, non-speculative elucidations of Bahá’í sacred texts that are used for apologetic purposes.
80. These phrases are taken from *The Promised Day Is Come* (Wilmette, IL: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1996), p. 52 and “The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh” in *The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 114, respectively.
81. “The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh” in WOB p. 114.
82. *ibid*, pp. 152-154.
83. *ibid*, p. 123.
84. In 1955 Shoghi Effendi wrote that the premeditated campaign of persecution was the most serious crisis the Bahá’í Faith had experienced since the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1921. He lists the various crimes committed against the Iranian Bahá’í community in *Citadel of Faith: Messages to America, 1947-1957* (Wilmette, 1965), pp. 134-36.
85. *Citadel of Faith*, p. 134.
86. *ibid*, p. 136.
87. *Messages to America: Selected Letters and Cablegrams Addressed to the Bahá’ís of North America, 1932-1946* (Wilmette, IL: Bahá’í Publishing Committee, 1947), pp. 58-59.
88. GPB p. 386.
89. ADJ pp. 5-11. Subsequent quotations are taken from this section.
90. *The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 156.
91. “Semen est sanguis Christianorum,” literally “The blood of Christians is seed.” From the Apologeticum, chapter 50: 13. <http://www.tertullian.org/quotes.htm>. Translation by the Rev. S. Thelwall, late scholar of Christ’s College, Canterbury.

-
92. The challenge and response factor in making history belongs to Toynbee's theory of "the geneses of civilizations" in his monumental ten volume *A Study of History*. See II:V, "Challenge and Response," in vol. 1 of D.C. Somervell's abridgement (of II). (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 60-79.
 93. *The Advent of Divine Justice*, pp. 7-8.
 94. *ibid*, pp. 8-10.
 95. *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 10.
 96. *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 30.
 97. *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957*, p. 25.
 98. *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957*, pp. 53-4, from a cablegram of December 16, 1953.
 99. *Bahá'í Administration: Selected Messages, 1922-1932*, p. 138.
 100. *ibid*, p. 138.
 101. *ibid*, p. 138.
 102. Ninian Smart, *Reasons and Faiths: An Investigation of Religious Discourse, Christian and non-Christian* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958 (reprint 1965), p. 182. See especially chapter seven "Moral Discourse and Religion," pp. 179-96.
 103. PDC 113.
 104. GWB p. 213.
 105. Cablegram June 13, 1940. *Messages to America*, p. 42.
 106. *Citadel of Faith*, p. 157.
 107. Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994 and 2005), p. 99.
 108. "The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh" in WOB 45.
 109. *ibid*, p. 45.
 110. "The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh" in WOB, pp. 137-138.
 111. *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 67.
 112. Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 328.
 113. *ibid*, p. 328.
 114. *Anatomy of Criticism*, p. 329.
 115. *The Works of Plato: The Jowett Translation*, selected and edited by Erwin Edman (New York: The Modern Library (Random House, 1956), p. 295. Jowett does not translate the colour of the "bad" horse as being black but rather as "of a dark colour."
 116. See Nigel C. Gilbert and Michael Mulkay, *Opening Pandora's Box: A Sociological Analysis of Scientists' Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Referred to by Doug Brent, *Reading as Rhetorical Invention: Knowledge, Persuasion, and the Teaching of*

Research-Based Writing (Urbana: Illinois, National Council of Teachers of English, 1992), pp. 61-62.

117. The basic thrust of Charland's arguments is that emotions form a natural status category that cannot be eliminated. See "In Defence of Emotion" in the *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, #31, 2001, p. 133-54.
118. Quoted by Doug Brent in *Reading as Rhetorical Invention: Knowledge, Persuasion, and the Teaching of Research-Based Writing* (Urbana Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1992), p. 73. See Wayne C. Booth, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).
119. In Ch. 8, "Rhetoric: The Language of Persuasion," pp. 351-359 in my manuscript copy. Forthcoming in the Studies Series by George Ronald.
120. *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 187.
121. *ibid*, p. 187.
122. *ibid*, p. 195.
123. *Citadel of Faith*, p. 68.
124. *ibid*, p. 68.
125. *ibid*, p. 68.
126. *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 20.
127. *ibid*, p. 20.
128. *Citadel of Faith*, p. 127
129. *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 34.
130. *ibid*, p.16
131. *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 16.
132. *ibid*, p. 19.
133. *ibid*, pp. 19-20.
134. *ibid*, p. 20.