

A Historical Coalition between the Hands of the Cause and the Covenant-Breakers

Dear Friends,

Baha'u'llah made it incumbent upon every believing Baha'i to prepare a will and testament (the most Holy Book, para 255) during his life time. And he followed his own command when he wrote a will and appointed an heir, so that his family and followers would not face any such difficulties after him.

In the same way, Abdul-Baha considered it necessary to write a will during one's life, having also written his own valuable Will and Testament, which includes his important edicts and recommendations.

According to the most Holy Book, if a Baha'i dies and does not leave a will, all of his or her belongings and properties should be divided among the following seven groups: spouse, children, father, mother, brother(s), sister(s) and teacher.

And according to the Kitab-i Aqdas, if any member of the above categories were deceased, his or her share will be inherited by the UHJ. Finally, according to that same Holy Book, all non-Baha'is, non-believers, Covenant-breakers, and those excommunicated from the Faith, are deprived from a Baha'i's estate.

Now, I would like to draw your attention to a very important event in the history of the Baha'i community. As you are well aware, the Beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, passed away in London in the summer of 1957. He journeyed to London in order to purchase necessary material to complete the archives buildings. There, he died having suffered from a previously-undiagnosed disease. (The story of his departure and all subsequent events can fill an entire article in and of itself, and should therefore be reviewed separately.)

Unfortunately, various disputes about his successor and belongings began after the Beloved Guardian's departure. Naturally, those properties of Shoghi Effendi that belonged to the Baha'i Community should have been given to his successor and the chairman of the first international Baha'i Council, Mason Remey. But the Hands of the Cause, having turned a blind eye to the previous writings of the Guardian—and other evidence of his intentions for his estate—and under the pretense that they did not find any written will from Shoghi Effendi, declared that, according to a divine abrogation of the previous determinism (Badaa), the institution of the living Guardian of the Cause will be discontinued!

By neglecting the succession of Mason Remey, and announcing the end of Guardianship, it became necessary to divide the inheritance of Shoghi Effendi among the seven groups the Holy Aqdas ordains. But because of a number of

reasons, including the absence of a majority of the heirs, the Aqdas decree was also abandoned! (Shoghi Effendi's parents had already departed; his brothers and sisters had been excommunicated as Covenant- breakers; he had no children; and no Baha'i could claim to be his teacher.)

Therefore, according to the articles of the Aqdas, around 19% of the inheritance should have been given to his living wife, Ruhhiya Khaanum , and the rest—in the absence of the heirs and non-establishment of the U.H.J—should have been given to the highest Baha'i official of that time, i.e., the second Guardian and Chair of the International Baha'i Council (the precursor to the UHJ), Mr. Mason Remey.

Some of the Iranian Hands, such as Zekrullah Khadem, Shoa'ullah Alaei, Alimohammad Vargha A. Foroutan, Mohajer, and Hassan A. Balyuzi, in cooperation with John Froby, Hadi Rahmani Shirazi, General A. Moqarrabi, and Habib Sabet, and Manoochehr Ghaem Maghami, wanted to procure the inheritance themselves and avoided handing over the inheritance to Mason Remey. Thus, they conjured up a solution: they will meet the excommunicated sisters and brothers of the Beloved Guardian, and will somehow reach an agreement as to how to divide Shoghi Efendi's inheritance.

Since the Baha'i writings explicitly forbid distributing any amount of a Baha'is estate to the Covenant-Breakers, this meant that the portion of the inheritance that was due his parents, children, and teachers would have been lost. So they decided to distribute the remainder of the inheritance of Shoghi Effendi in Iran, in accordance with the Islamic law of inheritance. And so, they needed to declare to the Iranian court that the Guardian was a Muslim!

It was duly performed, with the approval of Ruhiyya Khanum, the widow of the beloved Guardian and one of the Hands (who according to Islamic law would not have received any part of the inheritance because she was not Muslim). Thus, the first Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, was declared a Muslim. (His inheritance case was filed under No. 1464 in the Iranian Justice Ministry.) And thus, all of Shoghi Effendi's inheritance was supposedly divided among his four excommunicated brothers and sisters: Hussain, Riyaz, Rouhangiz, and Mehrangiz.

Once accomplished, the said Covenant-Breakers, having received a commission for their services, agreed to transfer the ownership of these properties to the name of Mr. M.A. Varqa, one of the Hands, and the trustee of Huquq-ullah. Mr. Varqa, in turn, transferred this inheritance to the name of some famous Iranian Baha'is, individuals like Mr. Habib Sabet. After some time, the Iranian National Spiritual Assembly established a trust, and transferred most of that inheritance to

that trust, although some of it illegally remained in the hands of those famous Iranian Baha'is!

This entire undertaking was done in cooperation with some of the Hands *and* the Covenant-Breakers from the family of Shoghi Effendi. And, it must be noted, these surreptitious acts were expressly protested by some of the Friends and LSAs and NSA; yet their concerns were mostly neglected. When they were responded to, it would be angry ripostes by the Hands, who continuously threatened to excommunicate the protesters on the pretense that they were weakening the unity of the Baha'i Community.

The protesters believed that the Guardian had prohibited any contact with Covenant-Breakers, and had considered it a grave sin. And the perpetrator of such a crime would deserve the harshest of punishments, that of being excommunicated himself. This was quite true about the close relatives of the Guardian, who would unceasingly persecute him. Ruhiyya Khanum, for example, has mentioned in her diary about the Guardian:

“These events are continuous. These fights, which first began with only one of them, and which later united all of his family against him, are seriously

wearing him down. Even now, I can see him with his back bent, his heart broken, and his body physically weakened. All his relatives collectively attempt to exhaust him and indeed kill his soul...”

Then he added, “Those relatives who were around the great Abdul-Baha eventually murdered him... And will eventually kill me too.”

(Ruhyyih Khanum, the Priceless Pearl, pp. 343 & 346)

Such a coalition of Hands of the Cause and long-time enemies of the Cause shook the foundations of the Cause to its very core. Many of the believers left the Baha’i community, while many other Friends had serious questions, which still remain. And, since then, none in the Baha’i administration or current UHJ has given a single satisfactory answer to these Friends, as they continuously attempt to conceal such issues from the Baha’is of the world. Only some of these questions are listed below:

1. When every Baha’i is required to keep a will, how can you claim that the Guardian, who was a great teacher and commentator of the holy words, failed to leave a will for his heirs?!

2. If we account for the decisions and actions taken by the Hands, why should we not assume that some of them had access to the private documents of the Guardian? And having found his will before anyone else, and being unsatisfied by what it contained, took aims to conceal or even destroy it?!
3. Despite the fact that according to Baha'i Law, the Covenant-Breakers and non-Baha'is are entirely deprived from a Baha'i's estate, how could they distribute the inheritance of the beloved Guardian among his excommunicated brothers and sisters? And do so only after appealing to Islamic law?!
4. How could they claim that the Guardian of the Faith was a Muslim, simply because it was to their own benefit, and so that they could procure his properties that actually belonged to the Baha'i Community? An act, fraudulent, treacherous, and in direct violation of the Guardian's teachings and the views of the Community.
5. In the absence of the Guardian of the Cause, who protects the multi-billion dollar property of the Baha'i Community? Has the current UHJ, sans-Guardian, issued financial reports, statements, or combined financial statements of the

owned properties, assets, or the amounts received as donations and Huquq-ullah?

Has the UHJ ever published a statement of its receipts and expenses?

Unfortunately, the Baha'i administration attempts to silence all such questions under the pretext of unity in the Community, unswerving obedience to the UHJ, a possible increase in persecutions by the various states, etc. In other cases, questions and protests have been overlooked by exaggerated, and at times entirely false, reports of progress made by the Cause across the globe. And of course, a last and most intense measure taken by that House, has been that of disenrollment and excommunication of the questioners and/or protesters from the Baha'i Community!

One may suppose that the activities of the Custodian Hands could be justified, and assume they have good intentions, and try to protect the interests of the Faith. But we should know that the Guardian was *always* angry with Covenant-Breakers, and strictly refused to deal with them.

Ruhiyya Khanum writes in her diary:

“Once, the husband of the Guardian's close relative died. His widow came to our house, and requested the Guardian to accept his will and presented a donation. She was even ready to hand over to him some of Baha'u'llah's very own seals, items that Abdul-Baha, at the time of his journey to America, had

entrusted to her. Yet, since she kept in contact with the Covenant-Breakers, the holy Guardian refused her donation and gift, and asked me to tell her:

“Until she forever disassociates, in heart and soul, from the Covenant-Breakers, I will not accept it, even if it was a million seals, or a donation the size of Mount Carmel!”

Even though those seals were invaluable to the Guardian, and he in fact needed them for the Archives, he looked at me and ordered me to tell her:

“The Guardian cannot do anything until she abides by this command. Otherwise, she can take the seals, the will, and everything else she brought with her away.”

(Ruhyya Khanum., The Priceless Pearl, P. 349)

In short, a Community, devoid of a Guardian leading it, with a selfish, sinful, and profit-seeking group governing it, will suffer a quick decline and be utterly and totally lost.

It was for this reason that Abdul-Baha wrote in his Will and Testament:

“It is incumbent upon the Guardian of the Cause to appoint his successor and heir during his own life time.”

The takeaway here is that even if we do not see a written will from Shoghi Effendi—which, as they claim, he did not leave—we believe that he has clearly, albeit indirectly, appointed Mr. Mason Remey on several occasions as his

successor. Mr. Remey enjoyed a very close relationship with the Guardian until the very last moments of his life. And the Guardian regarded him as absolutely trustworthy, conferring upon him many important roles and responsibilities.

With the warmest Baha'i greetings.

Kourosh Jamali